Public security

"My experience at both the Bar and the Bench tells me that women lawyers lag behind their male counterparts in court appearance and handling of briefs," he said.

He suggested that in order to make their mark in the profession women lawyers would need to pursue their career in a more aggressive manner and defy social or cultural resistance.

The chief justice said women lawyers need to keep up with new ideas about dispensation of justice and cultivate the use of new information technology.

He emphasised the need for trust and cooperation between Bench and the Bar for achieving $greater goal \, in \, the \, legal \, process.$

Speaking at the two-day congress, organised by Khan Foundation, Minister for Science and Information and Communication Technology Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan said at present the main challenge is to speed up the trial process.

"Because of lack of manpower, the trial process, specially in the lower courts, are slow. Lots of innocent people are living their life in custody, which is unfortunate, the minister observed.

He said though there is technicality in the trial process, human aspects should also have to be

KCC by polls Litu's wife lone contestant

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Sabina Zaman Shampa, 30, wife of listed criminal Asaduzzaman Litu, was the only commissioner candidate to file nomination paper on Saturday as no one else dared to contest the bye-election to ward 24 of Khulna City Corporation (KCC) fearing reprisal from her husband, sources said.

Litu, the prime charge-sheeted accused in Shamsur Rahman murder case, has been absconding since the Jessore Bureau Chief of Dainik Janakan thaw as murdered.

Sources said Litu did not allow anyone else to file nomination paper for the bye-election scheduled for March 20. The last date for withdrawal of candidature is

The ward 24 seat fell vacant after notorious criminal Asaduzzaman Litu failed to take oath following his election to this seat in the KCC election held on April 25 last year.

When the Election Commission announced bye-election, Litu and his wife filed nomination papers on October 29 last year but Litu's wife withdrew her candidature in favour of her husband.

However, the seat again fell vacant as Litu failed to take oath for

Pakistan industries minister due today

BSS, Dhaka

Pakistan Industries Minister Liaquat Ali Jatoi arrives here today on a two-day visit to Bangladesh,

The Pakistan minister will be received at the airport by State Minister for Industries Professor Mohammad Rezaul Karim.

During his stay in Bangladesh, Jatoi will have a formal meeting with his Bangladesh counterpart MK Anwar and visit some industrial units at Dhaka Export Processing Zone at Savar.

Besides, the Pakistan minister is expected to make a courtesy call on Prime Minister Khaleda Zia.

US envoy

FROM PAGE 12 government

"I don't want to disclose the details...Bangladesh is a partner of US in the war against terrorism."

"Your foreign minister said on many occasions that Saddam must comply with the UN resolution,'

She denied the allegation that the US is more interested to grab oil resources in Iraq and other Middle

Eastern countries. "This (allegation) is unjustified and insulting to my country. Had we have any plan we could have done this in 1991 (during the Gulf War), "Peters said, "We have plenty of money to meet our energy

"Our government thinks anybody other than Saddam Hussein would be a better option," she said in reply to whether the US thinks of anybody as replacement for

Wahed murder

notknown Anisur Rahman, Superintendent of Police of Rajshahi, expressed ignorance about the leaflets but said hewould look into the matter.

Professor Abdul Wahed Mondol, vice-president of the district BNP was murdered in broad daylight at Taherpur bazaar in Bagmara on

Within minutes of the murder, angry mobs went on the rampage and torched the local police outpost.

considered.

The minister said women lawyers face two challenges; to ensure rule of law and ensure women

Australian High Commissioner in Bangladesh Lorraine Barker said despite existence of constitutional guarantees and legislative safeguards women in Bangladesh continue to face discrimination, various forms of violence, harassment and degradation including trafficking.

She said a comprehensive effort from both the government and non-government sector is needed to bring about a transformation in the human rights situation of women in Bangladesh.

Speaking at the congress as special guest, The Daily Star Editor Mahfuz Anam said law makes the difference between savagery and civilisation.

"Because of the law, we are civilised and lawyers are valued citizens of the society," he said, adding that women lawyers should come forward to ensuring legal rights of women.

Justice Mohammad Fazlul Karim of the Appellate Division of Supreme Court, Justice Nazmun Ara Sultana of the High Court, Dr Mahmuda Islam of Dhaka University and Advocate Rokshana Khondoker, executive director of Khan Foundation, among others, spoke.

Int'l film festival begins Mar 27

BSS, Dhaka

The eight-day International Film Festival begins in the city on March

At least 25 countries will take part in the festival organised by the Bangladesh Federation of Film

Accord signed Modern traffic signalling systems for 7 railway points

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Communication Minister Nazmul Huda said in order to avoid train accident the government has taken to improving the condition of rail tracks and traffic signaling system.

"We need to improve the railway infrastructure to build up an efficient rail management system,' said the minister yesterday while speaking as chief guest at a con-

tract signing ceremony in the city. Additional Director General (Infrastructure) of the Bangladesh Railway (BR) Md. Nurul Amin Khan and Director (marketing and sales) of Vialis NMA railway signaling company of Netherlands Dirk Haarsma signed the agreement.

As per the contract, the government is to install modern traffic signaling systems at seven stations om Jamtoil in Sirajgonj to Ishurdi in the west zone of the BR at a cost of Tk 59 crore with the assistance of the Netherlands government. The deadline of the project is September 2004.

The seven stations are Jamtoil, Ullapara, Lahiri Mohanpur, Sharat nagar, Bhangura, Chatmohor and

The minister said the project is a part of the extensive programme of establishing direct dual gauge rail network between the east and west zones of the railway over the Jamuna bridge.

Installation work of computerized signaling system in seven stations from Joydevpur to Jamuna Bridge (east zone) is going on in full swing with the financial assistance of the French government, he

ADP

FROM PAGE 12

The finance and planning minister said the ADP size might need to be trimmed further depending on the Iraq situation and thus the chain effect on export-import trade.

"We have the willingness, but we are resource-scarce," said the minister, explaining that the foreign aid flow now just reversed to limit development. He noted that the country was now carrying out development programmes with 65 per cent internal financing.

The minister said only 30 per cent of the development programmes under original ADP allocation had been implemented in the first half of the current fiscal year. In some cases, the implementation rate was only 5 percent.

To avoid overlapping in implementation of road-development projects between LGED and Roads and Highways Department, the commission decided that Upazila road works would be carried out by

Roads and Highways Department would develop the highways and comparatively bigger roads connecting the highways and Upazila roads.

Taramon issue **Ministry warns** of legal action if remarks found baseless

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Ministry of Liberation War Affairs yesterday asked the convenor of the Kurigram District Muktijoddha Sangsad to explain why he questioned the honour of Taramon Bibi as freedom fighter.

The ministry vowed to take legal action against Md Nuruzzaman, if found guilty, said a press release yesterday.

Newspapers reported on Friday and Sunday that the convenor described Taramon Bibi, Bir Protik, as a 'fake' freedom fighter at a meeting of the Muktijoddha Sangsad because of his conflict with her.

The state minister for liberation war affairs, Redwan Ahmed dismissed the remark as malicious and said the honour of a brave freedom fighter like Taramon cannot be questioned or suspected. Such a comment will put the

vernment efforts in finalising the list of freedom fighters at stake, says the press release. Taramon was awarded Bir

Protik in 1995 for her contribution to the liberation war.

Water meet FROM PAGE 12

French President Jacques Chirac said in a taped message to the forum that access to water should be "seen as a fundamental right".

Chirac, who was to have attended the forum but cancelled his trip due to the Iraqi crisis, said "partnerships between industry and investors" have to be rein-

Vivendi Environement and Suez of France are two of the largest businesses active in the water

Chirac said it was necessary to determine a fair and just price -both a socially and politically delicate question"

"By its very nature, water is a public good. Nobody can claim ownership of it. It is up to the community to define rules for ensuring adequate supply and proper sanitation along with rules to limit waste in the spirit of social justice, sound economics and respect for the environment," he said.

The opening ceremony was also attended by Japanese crown prince Naruhito, Dutch prince Willem Alexander and Prince Maulay Rashid of Morocco. The Netherlands hosted the second water forum three years ago and Morocco hosted the first one in

A public water fair, featuring exhibitions on water issues, concerts and other festive events, is expected to draw 150,000 people, forum organisers said. There will also be youth meetings of young

Bangabandhu

FROM PAGE 1

various programmes to observe the day as 'National Children's Day'an idea introduced by the past Awami League government. But the present government dropped it after coming to power.

Awami League leaders and workers will pay tributes to Bangabandhu placing wreaths on his portrait at Dhanmondi Bangabandhu memorial museum in the city.

A rally of children and juveniles will be held at the museum premises at 8:00am and an art competition for children at the same venue at 9:00am.

Other programmes of the day include milad mahfil, special prayers and discussion at the

museum premises. Similar programmes have also been taken up to observe the day at Tungipara, where sleeps the nation's founding father in eternal

The programmes include laying wreaths at the mazar of Bangabandhu, children's rally, art competition for children, a discussion meeting and a cultural programme.

Front organisations of the Awami League will also organise a series of discussion meetings on the occasion in the capital, beginning tomorrow.

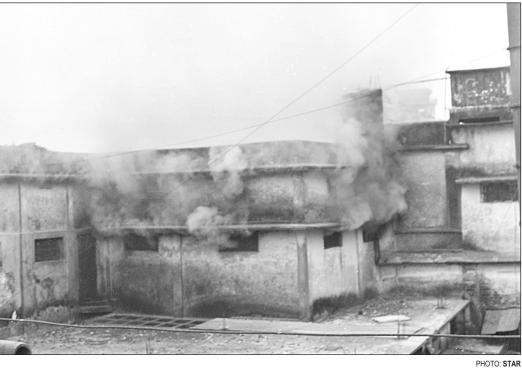
In a message on the occasion, Awami League chief and leader of the opposition Sheikh Hasina said Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is the father of the nation and supreme leader of its inde-

She called upon the people to foil all conspiracies by the anti-

She urged people to come forward to build 'Sonar Bangla of Bangabandhu' that would be free from hunger, poverty, exploitation and deprivation.

The message also urged people to build united resistance against repression and human rights violation patronised by the BNP $led\,alliance\,government.$ She accused the present gov-

ernment of distorting the history of the Liberation War.



Smoke billows from the Sadhona Oushadhalay factory that lost Tk 5 lakh worth of herbal medicine to a fire at Dinanath Sen Road in Gendaria yesterday.

Fewer ships moor at Mongla

to the local shipping agent that the procedures were very slow in Bangladesh and every party behaved like a "hungry wolf."

An unforeseen problem forced Gunkul Marine Line Company's ship Gunkul-3 to stay at the port from April 30 to November17, 1998 and the company incurred a loss of nearly \$1 million.

Even the local ship owners are not willing to use this port. "We actually become 'panicked' when we are sending a ship to Mongla, said Saveed Hossain Chowdhury, president of Bangladesh Ocean Going Ship Owners Association

"It is costlier than Chittagong because of corruption and poor During the eighties and the

nineties, Mongla was a buzzing sea port and shipping agencies had to lobby and make 'extra payments' for getting a berthing space for a ship. During that time, a ship had to wait for two to three days at the

the main channel, said an official of a shipping company. But now the port often remains completely vacant for several days. Between February 17 and 26 this year there was no ship at the

outer anchorage before entering

The Khulna City Corporation Mayor Sheikh Tayebur Rahman, while talking to the Daily Star, also expressed concern about Mongla "We are very much worried about the future of the port," he said.

According to sources, it has failed to attract ships even after waiving landing charges for those

front a growing danger, to protect

ourselves, to remove a patron and

protector of terror, and to keep the peace of the world," Bush said.

US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage said yesterday

that "the window on diplomacy is

Baghdad spat back defiance. "It

is impertinent and pompous of these two administrations to take a

decision to wage such a dangerous attack with this level of immorality

Saddam's Revolutionary

Command Council ordered the

four newly established military

districts to "take the necessary

steps to repulse and destroy any

foreign aggression," the state news

was put in charge of Baghdad and

on Sunday that the Bush adminis-

tration had identified Saddam,

Qusay, Saddam's other son Uday and six other Iraqi officials as

among those who would be put on

the Lajes air base on the Portuguese islands 900 miles west

of Europe aimed to increase pres

sure on Saddam, which they said had been diluted by a French vow

to veto any Security Council reso-

They said it was a last chance for diplomacy but, barring an 11th-hour compromise in the divided council, the White House would

Once diplomacy was exhausted.

officials said, Bush would address

the nation, issuing a final ultima-

tum to Saddam and giving aid workers and others time to leave

Madrid have been trying for weeks to build a nine-vote majority on the

15-nation Security Council for a

resolution paving the way to war, but only one other council mem-

ber, Bulgaria, has publicly backed

Some UN diplomats say the summit trio may decide to withdraw the resolution rather than risk

the humiliation, and legal compli-

Bush has said he needs no

further UN backing for a war on grounds that last November's

cations, of seeing it rejected.

Washington, London and

quickly shift to a war footing.

lution for war.

US officials said the summit at

trial if captured after any attack.

some other central areas of Iraq.

Saddam's younger son Qusay

The New York Times reported

Thawra newspaper said.

agency INA reported.

FROM PAGE 1

rapidly closing.'

Bush meets allies

carrying some particular items. Landing charge for ships carrying bulk fertiliser and cement clinker has been waived completely. On the other hand, a 50 per cent landing charge discount has been declared for garments, clothes, fabrics, leather and tea.

Mongla Port Authority Chairman, Commodore (rtd.) M K Alam, however, denied all allegations of corruption and mismanagement. He said the arrival of ships has declined because of reduction of food grain import to the country and border trade with

Earlier, Mongla was used for importing food grains, fertilisers and cement, but now the import of food grains has declined because of the country's near self sufficiency in food production. On the other hand, import of fertilisers and cement also declined because of huge local production,

According to him, Mongla was never a vibrant port and the highest number of ships arriving at the port was 380 during the 1998-99 fiscal. The number rose because the government imported a huge quantity of food grains, following he devastating flood. Normally, the arrival number is around 300 a vear, he claimed.

Alam said Chittagong has overshadowed Mongla because of the vast improvement in road communication. Earlier, the entire North Bengal was the hinterland of the Mongla port, but with the commissioning of Jamuna Bridge, North Bengal has become the hinterland of the

Chittagong port.

by road, rail, water and air routes with other parts of the country. Other than the river route, Mongla is not connected even with Khulna. The road communication is disrupted because of the river Rupsha On the other hand, the port

users, shipping agents, importers, exporters and clearing forwarding agents held unruly dock workers, corrupt officials of the port and harassment by customs officials responsible for damaging the image of the port. They said that the businessmen

of Khulna and Nawapara in Jessore mainly used the port for importing goods. But now they have also moved to Chittagong because of rampant corruption and lengthy procedures at Mongla. "We have to pay money at every

point for loading and unloading goods at the port. The 'unseen amount meaning tips and kickbacks is around three to four times higher than the actual bill," said a businessman of Khulna giving an example of corruption at the Mongla port. The frozen food exporters are still using the port but they are

also thinking in terms of shifting their business from Mongla. "We would not use this port, if we get any alternative," said Shadat Ali Khan Managing Director of New Food Limited. According to him, harassment by dock workers at Mongla has

gone beyond control, "Whatever we export and import, other than frozen food, we use the Chittagong port to avoid harass-

Chittagong is well connected

resolution 1441 is sufficient.

up over Iraq.

FROM PAGE 1

the seized bag.

portafter9:00pm.

tightlipped.

FROM PAGE 12

cent this time.

dismissing the incident.

UP polls

France, Russia and Germany

rush to war -- have issued a joint

call for emergency UN talks early this week in an effort to bridge the

diplomatic chasm that has opened

They suggested there could be compromise on time limits set for

UN arms inspections in Iraq -- an issue that lies at the heart of bitter

rifts across the world. Washington

says the inspections are getting nowhere, but France and others

say they should be given longer provided Baghdad shows coopera-tion.

Embassy staff

Iraq Embassy officials went to the

airport to receive the bags and filed a

lost complaint with the Civil Aviation

Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) for

Unconfirmed sources said the

Iraq Embassy officials refused to

The Airport police, immigration

police or customs officials remained

He came under severe criticism by

the ruling party stalwarts for hav-

ing made the comment. The row prompted two BNP lawmakers to

demand in parliament removal of

without responding to any query

by newsmen waiting outside his

total voters' turnout in the election.

Figures for the first three days show

office yesterday afternoon.

Syed left his office hurriedly

The EC is yet to estimate the

On the last day yesterday, voting

took place in 30 Union Parishad. The EC so far has published gazette

of election results of 2,736 UPs.

official was allowed to leave the air-

comment on the incident. One of

them said, "We are not confirming or

contain explosives, sources said.

Wheat

FROM PAGE 12 policy aim at checking irregularities during the purchase drive from March 15 to June 30. eading opponents of any US-led

> procurement target from three lakh metric tons to two lakh metric tons. The policy also makes it manda tory for food officials to closely

The government has lowered its

monitor the purchase drive. The officials have been asked to keep the purchase ceiling at a maximum of five metric tons from each to spread price supports to as many farmers as possible. This year, the government has increased the price

from Tk 9,000 a quintal to Tk 9,250. The officials have been instructed to send daily reports to upazila controllers of food who will tally procurement accounts and

report to district controllers of food. Currently, the government runs short of food reserves with its granaries having only five lakh metric tons

Tapan murder

FROM PAGE 12

Niranjan Bhattacharya. Niranjan, elder brother of slain fish farmer Tapan, the prime target, said Idris Ali who claimed to be a supporter of the ruling BNP.

Earlier on March 11, Bagerhat police arrested Abdul Jalil and Zohra Begum, parents of Idris, from Komorpur village. Jalil and Zohra's statements were recorded under 164 of the Criminal Procedure Code in the Court of First Class Magistrate after expiry of a three-day remand.

Both of them in their judicial confession said their son Idris was among six others who were involved in the murder and rape. After committing murder and rape they stayed in my house at night and left Komorpur in the small hours of the following morning," Jalil said. Jalil and Zohra have been made

the turnout was 81.19 per cent. In the 1997 polls the total figure was the main prosecution witness of this case, said Officer-in-Charge of In the previous UP polls, voting was suspended in 1.6 per cent of Bagerhat Sadar Police Station Ishaque Ali Dukhu, also the investithe polling stations. However, the gation officer of the case. percentage came down to 0.36 per Idris also told the police that the

murder and gang-rape were planned beforehand. He said they had also taken four grenades, but did not use them, as they did not

Enamul's statement

statement of Chowdhury blamed Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina and her Political Secretary Saber Hossain Chowdhury for conspiring against the government and instigating him to write a fictitious quote of the home minister.

Chowdhury earned the wrath of the government for quoting Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury in a report on Mymensingh bomb blasts on December 7. The report quoted the minister as saying that al-Qaeda or terrorist groups of the opposition political parties might have been responsible for the bomb attacks. The home minister later

claimed that no Reuters journalist had talked to him. Within a few days it became known that Chowdhury had actually talked to another person, mistaking him to be the home minister.

On December 13, police arrested Chowdhury without any warrant by detaining his wife and brother- in- law as hostage. He was then taken on a three-day police remand and on December 17, a 'confessional statement' of Chowdhury was recorded.

Later, he was shown arrested in two bomb blast cases.

Finally on March 5, he was released on High Court bail. Chowdhury's petition gave a detailed account of how he was tortured by police in custody.

"The DB police, upon taking me on remand, repeatedly wanted to know who instigated me to quote the home minister. I told them that I thought I had talked to the home minister and that was why I quoted him," Enamul Haque Chowdhury said in the petition.

The police then asked him whether he did so under the influence of any opposition politician. When the answer was negative, the police began to torture him. "Using a hard baton, the DB

police started hitting me on my ankles and my soles. They blind-folded me with a black cloth, gave

Trader shot at

Fatikchhari STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Armed miscreants shot one trader at Dinejiri village under Fatikchhari upazila here in the district on Saturday night

The victim was identified as Md. Hossain, 41, owner of a local tea-Police said, Hossain was returning home after closing his shop when some armed miscreants shot

him killing on the spot at around The incident was learnt to be a sequel to previous enmity.

Hossain's wife Rina Begum filed a case in this connection The accused includes Moslim,

Salim and Mostafa.

me electric shocks and threatened to kill me by pointing a revolver on my head, demanding a confessional statement. When I refused, they threatened to kill my wife and children and told me that none would ever know who

killed them.' "The DB police pressed me to give a statement that Saber Hossain Chowdhury had asked me to file the report as per an instruction of Sheikh Hasina. When I refused, they again started torturing me. At one stage, I became almost unconscious lying on the floor."

Enamul Haque Chowdhury said yesterday that the torture continued from December 13 to 16 in police remand.

"I broke down in the face of relentless torture and the threat of killing my wife and children and agreed to give a confessional statement. I gave a statement as per their wish and that was recorded audio-visually in police custody," the petition said. Upon recording the statement, the police told me to repeat the same statement before the magistrate's court or face torture

On December 17, he was taken to the magistrate's court where police asked him to sign a statement written by the police. "When I refused again, the police entered the magistrate's room and pointed a revolver at me to force me to sign the statement,

"The controversial statement issued on December 17 is not mine," Enamul said. " I did not sign the statement voluntarily. It is baseless. I was not even allowed to read the statement and they did not read it out for

JCD activists 'assault' **DU** teacher

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Activists of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) yesterday again allegedly assaulted Shafikur Rahman, a lecturer of the law faculty of Dhaka University (DU).

He also alleged that JCD activist Sabuz, Halim and Mahbub assaulted and confined him in his office. They also ransacked his office on Saturday. Shafik said he had submitted

three applications to DU Vicechancellor (VC) SMA Faiz demanding punishment of the miscreants. The VC has not yet taken any steps, he said. Meanwhile, a group of students

of the faculty, in a statement, called for an indefinite strike demanding the removal of Shafikur Rahman and declared him unwanted. Shafik yesterday recorded a General Diary (GD) against those, Sabuz, Mahbub, and Halim

had allegedly assaulted him.

Chinese premier

ous Great Hall of the People have already appointed Wu Bangguo as chairman of China's 2,900member parliament, replacing the

retiring party loyalist Li Peng, 74.

With Wen's appointment,

China's five top state posts have been filled by the men in the top five posts within the Communist Party's Politburo Standing Committee. The picture of the "Fourth Generation" of communist leaders will be complete Monday when

Wen selects his ministry with the National People's Congress drawing to a close Tuesday. Both Wen and Hu have much in common and could become allies in an elite Chinese powerbase stacked with men loval to former president Jiang Zemin, who retained considerable clout by

being reappointed head of the military Saturday. In particular, Jiang's right hand man Zeng Qinghong has been made vice president. According to the constitution, Zeng would become president should the post be vacated for any reason.

Despite Jiang clinging onto power, delegates sent him a clear message that they did not entirely approve. More than 200 of the nearly 2,950 delegates voted 'no' or abstained, giving him a rating of

picked parliamentary deputies is generally nearly unanimous. Zeng faired even worse, with 13 percent of the votes going against

iust 92.54 percent, a low endorse-

ment where voting by the hand-

In sharp contrast, only four delegates voted against Hu with three abstaining, giving him a 99.76 percent approval rating

Hu also Sunday retained his

Shuttle train

FROM PAGE 12 student.

Railway sources said a Tk 9-crore project for renovation of the rail track of the university is now awaiting approval from the

CU vice-chancellor Professor AJM Nuruddin Chowdhury said the project has failed to win approval despite meetings between university authorities, railway officials and post as a vice chairman of the state Central Military Commission, making him the head of state and the country's second ranking

military chief.

Hu and Wen are both 60 and were both sent to work in the countryside in the late 1960s, receiving key promotions while working in remote northwestern Gansu prov-

favour prioritising the desperate plight of China's 800 million rural "Apart from Zhu Rongji, he Apart from Zhu Rongil, he (Wen) has the backing of no other political heavyweight," said Wu Guoguang, a former leading official in Beijing, now with the Chinese

And they are both believed to

University of Hong Kong. "He is a compromise candidate -- Preside the Jiang Zemin is not against him but Wen is not his

protege either." Both men will have to carefully try to consolidate power while not antagonizing Jiang.

Wen nevertheless is seen as an expert technocrat in rural economy and finance, the very two areas in which China is crying out for massive reforms, and appears to be well liked.

4 bodies

FROM PAGE 1 accident.

District administration officials said the bodies were recovered after a three-hour rescue operation with the help of the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority's salvage ship Hamza.

The salvage ship lifted the launch from the riverbed at about 1:00pm yesterday.

Building collapse

FROM PAGE 1 turewithoutanyfoundation.

anotherlocal alleged. He also did not take permission for electricity and gas connections.

building. Local people fear that more bodies might be trapped inside the

Sabujbagh police were guarding the

Police were looking for the owner

"The owner first planned to build some tin-sheds and accordingly, he erected some pillars. Later, he built a concrete building on the thin pillars,