The Baily Star



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

they would win the case.

told a press conference.

office.

arsenic patients.

in South Africa."

JS budget

patients against the British

Geological Survey (BGS) at a

London court hoped yesterday that

"This is the beginning of a dar-

ing task we have taken up and hope

to win the case. Now we are prepar-

ing on behalf of thousands of

arsenic victims who have been

exposed to the heavy metal poison-

ing just because the BGS acted

irresponsibly," Sharmeen Murshid

of Brotee, an NGO, and representa-

tive of Bangladesh International

Action Network (BIAN), a London-

based organisation of expatriate

Bangladeshis, addressed the press

conference at Brotee's Banani

Brotee first sought assistance

from BIAN to help file the case with

the British High Court in March

2000 in favour of 750 Bangladeshi

The court in the ruling on

Thursday removed all obstruction

to the next steps of running the

for Bangladesh. Never before has

the British government faced such

a challenge in court except for one

Murshid said: "It's a milestone

lawsuit against the BGS.

Murshid, chief executive officer

Two killed in two days in Pabna

OUR CORRESPONDENT

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah Two people were murdered while the limbs of another victim were severed in Pabna during the past two days.

Abul Kashem alias Tipu, 35, an activist of outlawed Biplabi Communist Party (BCP) was arrested hurt after a gunfight with police at Goalkhali village of Sailkupa upazila, Jhenidah in the earlyhours of Sunday. This takes the death toll in the district within the past 10 days to eight.

One victim has been identified Three policemen were also injured during the fight that lasted over an hour. as Mohammad Raja, 30. He was hacked to death in Alokdia village Cops recovered a Pakistan-made gun and 22-round ammuni-tion from the possession of Kashem. in Dhulauri union under the Sathia Police Station in the early hours of Saturday

Raja's head was severed and dumped in a nearby pond. It was later found floating.

Acting on a tip-off, a contingent of police led by Assistant Sub Inspector (ASI) of Bhatai Police Camp Ismail Hossain raided the house of Motleb Mollah at about 2 Police suspect that enmity with leaders of an outlawed party may have been the cause behind the The armed outlaws started firing on police as soon as they had sensed the police presence. murder.

In another incident in South Freekholpara in Shahidullahpur under sadar upazila, Khura Pramanik, 28, was hit on the head with an iron rod. He was rushed to a hospital where the doctors declared him dead.

Police said land dispute with neighbours might have led to the incident.

In yet another incident, miscreants severed the right hand and leg of Abdus Sattar,28, on Sunday morning in Badalpara village in Sadar thana

Sattar is now hospitalised and said to be in critical condition.

RMC reopens tomorrow

BSS, Rangpur

In response, Law Minister Moudud Ahmed and Jamaat-e-Rangpur Medical College (RMC) will reopen on Tuesday after remaining closed for 20 days, said Saidee said there was no confusion over the government's firm posian RMC press release yesterday. tion against the killing of Muslims

All resident students have been in Iraq. asked to return to their hostels before the classes start.

Siddiqui, who was chairing the session, observed that the opposi-The RMC was closed on April 22 tion could move a fresh proposal to after 50 people were injured in condole the deaths of Iraqi Muslims. But there was no scope to clashes between two rival student organisations over occupation of a nclude any fresh condolence in seat at Pinnu Hostel.

the obituary reference taken on the inaugural sitting on Thursday. RMC interns also observed strike protesting the ransacking of their rooms at Pinnu and Mukta hostels and closing of the hostels. Khosru

Under the new provisions, all students, doctors and staff should FROM PAGE 1 have to bear identity cards and no outsiders will be allowed on the The local press club in a press release said a human chain, which campus after 10pm. Police will be could not be formed in Sitakunda posted to avoid any untoward incidents. yesterday, would be staged in front of the Chittagong Press Club at

Cyclone FROM PAGE 1

positioned at about 1460 km southsouthwest of Chittagong Port, 1380 km south-southwest of Cox's Bazar

Movement on for Cops nab one 6th wage board outlaw after for newspaper firefight at BSS, Dhaka

Jhenidah

They fired at least 50 shots while plice replied with 25. The other ssociates of Kashem managed to

The injured cops including ASI Ismail and the arrested outlaw were rushed to Jhenidah Sadar Hospital.

1989 to merge the two offices got

point of order raised by Krishak

Kader Siddique on the govern-

Siddique criticised the govern-ment as the parliament did not

listen to the main opposition

Awami League's plea for inclusion of deaths of Iraqi Muslims in the

US-led war on Iraq in the obituary

Islami lawmaker Delwar Hossain

Deputy Speaker Akhtar Hamid

The parliament also heard a

amik Janata League leader Abdul

the necessary legal coverage.

e, police said.

5,500 jobs

ment's stance on Iraq.

reference.

10.30am today.

Leaders of Sangbadik Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad (SSKOP) yesterday urged the gov-ernment and newspaper owners to take immediate steps to implement their 7-point demand including announcement of the 6th wage board for newspapermen.

"Announcement of a new wage board for the newspaper industry is very urgent as newspapermen are very much affected by the unusual price hike," the leaders said while addressing a rally of journalists, press workers and general employees of newspapers and news agen-cies in front of the Daily Janakantha here.

Presided over by President of Dhaka Union of Journalist (DUJ) Elahi Newaz Khan, the rally was addressed by SSKOP leaders Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, Akhter Ahmed Khan, Omar Faruque, Abdus Shahid, Fazley Imam, Afsar Uddin Khan, Abul Hashem and Motiur Rahman Talukder.

The leaders criticised the anakantha management for not allowing its journalists, press workers and general employees to carry out trade union activities.

They also urged Janakantha authorities to implement the 5th wage board award in every section of the newspaper and remove discriminations supplemental

agreement

The High Court yesterday issued a

rule asking the government and UNOCAL to show cause why the

supplemental agreement between

them on November 25, 1998

cancel and rescind the supplemen-

before payment of compensation

Magurchhara gas field in the light

A division bench comprising

Engineer M Shamsul Alam,

Professor and Head of the Department of Electrical and

Electronic Engineering and

Coordinator for Energy Technology of Bangladesh Institute of Technology (BIT) filed the writ petition challenging the supplemental agreement between

the government and Occidental of

Bangladesh Limited, now repre-sented by UNOCAL of Bangladesh

The petition also sought to ensure realisation of compensa-

tion for the resources lost and the

along with advocates Waziullah, Amatul Karim and Khandaker Aminul Haque moved the petition

environmental and

Magurchhara blowout.

on behalf of the petitioner.

should not be declared illegal.

BSS, Dhaka

tal agreement.

A large number of journalists, press workers and general employees from different newspapers and news agencies attended the rally with banners and festoons.

SSKOP leaders thanked the journalists, press workers and general employees for attending the rally by observing symbolic work stoppage for two hours from 11am to 1pm in different newspapers and news agencies

The leaders urged them to attend the SSKOP's next rally to be held in front of the Daily Jugantor on May 20.

Parks FROM PAGE 1

Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) and the Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (RAJUK) to complete the process of demarcation of all open spaces within six months.

of the inquiry report on July 30, It also asked them to submit reports in every two months stating 1997.the progress achieved in imple-menting the time-bound direction Justice Mohammad Abdur Rashid and Justice Siddiqur Rahman Miah of the court. passed the order upon a writ peti-tion moved before the court. The rule has been made return-

able within four weeks. The petition was moved by Advocate S. Rizwana Hasan and she was assisted by Advocate M. Iqbal Kabir.

Hilshas FROM PAGE 1

Meanwhile, leaders of the Chittagong Union of Journalists and the Chittagong Metropolitan dred maunds this season. About 290 fish traders have invested Tk 150 crore as 'advance' given to the fishermen. Union of Journalists talked to the

As the catch of the fish is extremely poor, traders are worried about getting back their money, let alone making profit. The fisher-

67 65 Leaders and activists of the left-leaning 11-party alliance parade down Dhaka streets in a procession, demanding a motion of censor on the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq in the ongoing session of the House. 3 held in Ctg Govt, UNOCAL showcaused on

house ablaze

Police yesterday arrested two persons and remanded them for

Banshkhali.

alive when miscreants set fire to their house with kerosene. The incident occured at Nathpara of Chambal union under the Banshkhali Police station on

One Jahangir, a neighbour, was suspected to have been involved in

The Court also asked them to show cause why UNOCAL should not be directed to stop exploration Police later arrested Ram Dulal and Tuntu Devnath, two neigh-bours, and Dilu Jahan, wife of the prime suspect Jahangir, on for the resources destroyed at aturday morning.

> remand prayer yesterday morning. However, the court granted seven days, police said.

FROM PAGE 12

land. The murder might be a sequel to the enmity, they added. An employee of Shaidullah said on condition of anonymity that he

said the issue is very crucial. Since the High Court gave a historical judgement about abuse of the

Diarrhoea kills Brotee hopes to win arsenic four in Barisal case in UK

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Diarrhoea has broken out in Barisal at an alarming rate claiming four lives in the last two days, sources at hospitals and office of the civil surgeon said yesterday. The organisations that won a judgement for Bangladeshi arsenic

Three of the four victims were children who died at the Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital (SBMCH).

Sources said 42 children with diarrhoea were admitted to the SBMCH yesterday raising the num-ber of such children at the hospital to over a hundred.

On Friday, 70 children with diarrhoea were admitted to the hospital.

Twenty-six people were also admitted to the Sadar Hospital yesterday for treatment of diar-rhoea.

The office of the civil surgeon said 32 diarrhoea patients were admitted to different thana health complexes yesterday.

SBMCH interns postpone strike

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Striking interns of the Barisal Shere-Bangla Medical College Hospital (SBMCH) yesterday postponed their strike for 10 days asking authorities to meet their demand within that time, hospital sources piracy and obscenity to protect said.

The interns, who launched an indefinite strike on May 3 protest-ing non-payment of their three months' salary, however threat-ened to resume their strike if the The number of viewers at cinarrears are not paid by May 20.

With the judgement, the path is Hospital authorities however now clear for the trial to move claimed that a month's salary had already been paid to the interns. ahead, lawyers fighting the case in Britain said in an e-mail

Azad Chy FROM PAGE 12

FROM PAGE 12 "He came before me and pointed a revolver at me when we came out of the lounge," said the ex-VC. "I got hold of the boy's hand but he managed to slip away and fired two Minster's Parliamentary Affairs Advisor Salahuddin Qader Chowdhury and Opposition Chief Whip Abdus Sahid the members of shots. Fortunately I escaped," Prof. committee. Chowdhury said on the phone when contacted last night. Development and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan

He said he had no idea about the attacker and the reason behind the attack.

Prof. Chowdhury now lives in France. He came here few days ago and was planning to stay for some days, family sources said.

Employees of the ICD found the body on the sunshade and called police who recovered the body and sent to the DMCH morgue for

autopsy.

Hartal FROM PAGE 1

bring the present government down through mass agitation.

Local Government, Rural

Finance Minister M Saifur

Rahman, Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister

Moudud Ahmed attended the

meeting, among others.

"She (the prime minister) had also made such comments in past. But this time she has to resign,' said Member of Parliament (MP) and AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil vesterday

They expressed satisfaction at

the development works carried out

by the government in their areas

and said law and order situation in

the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT)

leaders that special attention

would be given for improvement of

neglected areas to bring them at

participation of the local people, their representatives and local

government institutions in all

stages of planning and implemen-

tation of the development

She stressed the need for greater

par with rest of the country.

The prime minister the CHT

Police suspect the killers took the victim to the roof of the build-CHT councils ing and threw him from there. There were marks of injuries on his FROM PAGE 12

her office yesterday.

has also improved.

programmes.

ema halls has decreased because of illegal marketing of videocassettes, video compact discs and digital video discs, they said. The delegation requested the industry.

Police believe the killers might have killed the three family members to grab the their property. Sukumar and Sanjib, two sons of Arati Bala, were feeling insecure, sources said.

Vulgar movies FROM PAGE 12 for setting are facing the same problems, but they have enacted laws to control

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg.

ing because of legal loopholes, they seven days on charge of burning alive three members of a family in

Arati Bala, her school-going daughter Champamoyi and her mother Jhunu Bala were burnt

The Court asked the respon-dents to explain why a direction shall not be issued upon them to Friday.

the crime.

Dulal and Tuntu were produced before the court with a 10-day

Businessman

Hearing enmity with local tribal people over FROM PAGE 1

opposed the government plea and

minister to take effective steps in ten days to remove the cloud of uncertainty hanging over the film The minister assured the delegates of looking into their demands and said the government is also

their film industry.

nphasised.

The problems are mushroom-

against vulgarism. He asked the film producers and distributors to stop making vulgar films and persuade others to

refrain from such a business to respect religious and social sentiments of Bangladesh.

DMC

PHOTO: STAF

The government has formed a taskforce to stop vulgarism and piracy and seeks their cooperation,

Managing Director of the Driver dies Bangladesh Film Development Corporation Washimul Bari Rajib FROM PAGE 12 and other officials were present The man is in his mid-twenty and during submission of the memowas clad in trousers and striped T-shirt. randum.

the minister said.

coast and 1385 km south-southwest of Mongla Port.

"It is a seasonal cyclone of the bay. At this point it is too far from the country's coastal zone to pre-dict where it may hit," said Samarendra Karmaker, director of the met office.

However, the sea will remain very rough, he added.

Maritime ports of Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Mongla have been advised to lower distant cautionary signal number two.

All fishing boats and trawlers over north bay and deep-sea have been asked to be near the shore till further notice

"The situation is not so critical as yet as to ask people to move from coastal regions. Actually, we do not know whether it is going to hit or not. It may head towards Chennai, one met official told The Daily Star.

Land ports

FROM PAGE 1

Divisional Customs Commissioner Ali Ahmed denied the allegations of tax evasions

C&F Association Vice-president Sohel Ahmed Polash said the customs authorities have the power to provide them a discount of at least 20 per cent on fruits. He questioned the authority of the BDR to seize goods five miles from the border, which they said was beyond the paramilitary force's authorised territory to take action.

Meantime, the 15 Indian truckof the Supreme Court. ers, arrested with 'smuggled' jute seeds at the Benapole land port, were rejected bail yesterday. The four customs officials also arrested would be placed under the commission. with the truckers on the same The ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) had charge were however granted bail.

This may once again worsen the pledged during the national polls situation at all three land ports of to set up an independent anti-corruption commission. Soon after the south-western zone as release of the Indian truckers was one of coming to office, the party made the pre-conditions for calling off several drafts, but in the face of the indefinite strike by customs opposition within it could make staff.

The BDR also did not withdraw its case against the alleged smug-glers as promised by the government.

commission by April 30 -- has seen Goods movement through the things move at a faster pace. Bhomra land port did not resume yesterday despite the postpone-Although the government has missed the deadline, it is now ment of the strike. placing the draft act for cabinet

The C&F Agents Association approval and the Foreign Exchange Association of Khojadanga of India yesterday unanimously decided cannot investigate any graft charge or take steps against ministers and not to let any traveller cross the government officials without border at Benapole unless the approval of the Prime Minister's Office.

filed men are in deeper trouble-- many OC Quamrul Hasan assured the journalists that he would try to rescue Khosru as soon as possible.

officer-in-charge (OC) of the

Double Mooring Police Station

with which the abduction case was

charge of extortion on May 6 was placed on a two-day fresh remand Saturday, said the officer.

Double murder FROM PAGE 12

ing.

Sumon and 16 others are in cus-

Latif Talukder appeared for the state, while advocates Nazrul Islam, Mahbub Ahmed, Khondaker Abdul Mannan, AFM Abdul Wadud and Emdadul Haque Lal defended the accused.

Hundreds of trucks with goods

are stranded at the Haridaspur

border. Three-hundred rail wag-

ons with goods from India are yet

to get clearance for unloading at the Darshana rail yard due to strike

by customs officials and employ

Anti-corruption

eadway on the matter.

The Bureau of Anti-corruption

However, continual pressure

The Anti-corruption Bureau

from the donors -- who finally

asked the government to set up the

FROM PAGE 1

Mahmudul Haq arrested on

tody. Fifteen others are abscond-Special Public Prosecutor Abdul

truckers are released.

of them have not yet been able to pay back the loan taken last season and are in no position to pay it this

year. According to the information received from the fishermen's cooperative society of Kalapara upazila under Patuakhali district,

the river mouths.

many trawlers go out to sea every day in search of hilsha, but most of them are coming back empty.

Iraq, but the border is 500 kilome-Sea-going trawlers are finding it ters. How can you close it? I told Mr difficult even to meet the expenses Powell, 'you have an army, you control it.'" of the fuel consumed. Same is the position of the trawlers and fishing

Assad

FROM PAGE 12

Limited.

boats engaged in catching hilsha in US Secretary of State Colin Powell met with Assad in Damascus on May 3, following heated criticism from Washington Leaders of the Kalapara cooperative society informed that about Tk 90 crore has been given to fishover Syria's alleged links to antiermen this year as advance. "But there is little hope of getting the money back," said the leaders. regime

According to the fisheries department office at Barisal, indiswhen he said there were no plans for US military actions against criminate catching of 'Jatka' is Syria, despite the spike in anti-Syria rhetoric.

> President George W. Bush's administration, the Syrian leader was quoted as saying.

ecologica found some armed tribal people damage caused by the roaming near the estate in the afternoon. Senior advocate Fazlul Karim

Gazi established his estate on 25 acres of land in Kaiapara area 15 years ago.

Saudi diplomat FROM PAGE 12

Virginia Kice, a spokeswoman for the Department of Homeland Security, told the Times.

Thumairy held a diplomatic post in the consulate's Islamic and cultural affairs section. He also served as a prayer leader at the King Fahd Mosque in Culver City, one o Southern California's largest Muslim houses of worship.

"I don't have any comment right now on that," a State Department spokeswoman told AFP.

Ties between the United States and Saudi Arabia have been strained since September 11, 2001, terror attacks on the United States. Saudis accounted for 15 of the 19 people who hijacked four US passenger jets and turned them into suicide weapons, killing more than 3,000 people.

Section 54 and 167(applied to remand a person) of the CrPC, it should be placed before the full bench, he maintained. He also argued that full bench should hear the appeal petition, not the stay

prayer. The judge agreed with him. The High Court in a 15-point directive on April 7 had set out to ensure that human rights of a person under arrest or detention or on remand are not curbed. It had observed that some of the provisions of the Section 54 and Section 167 were not consistent with the fundamental rights of the citizens.

It had asked the government to amend the relevant sections of the CrPC within six months from the date of the ruling.

The High Court ruling had also made it mandatory for a police officer to produce a person before the nearest magistrate within 24 hours of his/her arrest.

The government argued in the appeal that Section 54 and Section 167 of the CrPC were not inconsistent with the fundamental rights guaranteed by the constitution. these notices," he said.

body of Khagrachhari District Council A case was filed with the and Ma Ma Chin of Bandarban District Council met Khaleda Zia at Motijheel Police station.

113 motions FROM PAGE 1

and Shamsur Rahman Sharif of AL and Golam Mohammad Kader and Masiur Rahman Ranga of the Jatiya Party moved the motions.

Their notices also covered the issues of law and order situation, price hike of essentials, looting of arms and ammunition from lawenforcers, non-formation of parliamentary standing committees, repeated ferry accidents, acute power crisis, separation of the judiciary, exchange of fire by BDR and BSF on the frontiers and a spate of violence by outlaws.

Khaleda Zia hoped that avail-Explaining reasons of cancellaable resources and scope for develtion of the notices, Abdul Hai, one opment of CHT would be fully of the panel chairmen, said those utilised to ensure people's welfare either lacked evidence or were not and the chairmen would contribrelated to recent issues, the basic ute significantly to that effect. characteristics of adjournment State Minister for Chittagong motions.

Hill Tracts Affairs Moni Swapan "Therefore, I cannot accept Dewan and Secretary Syed Mushtaque were also present.

Gas, power price

FROM PAGE 1

factors, not just economic factors. The ministry, under pressure from the donors to increase price, has already started working on a revised formula that is likely to be placed before the council for approval within a few weeks, sources said.

State Minister for Energy Mosharraf Hossain later told journalists that the council had a look at the proposed pricing but made no decision. The ministry would work on it further and come up with a revised pricing formula, he said

"We had prepared a permanent draft policy for pricing of gas, power and fuel," he said adding that there is no such policy in place. State Minister for Power Iqbal Mahmud said there is no reason to be concerned about this pricing issue

The energy ministry earlier PHOTO: STAF formed a gas pricing committee with experts from the Hydrocarbon Unit and Petrobangla that came up

with a six-yearly pricing formula on a 'commercial' basis.

The proposed new price sought to push up domestic gas rate to Tk 169.39 per 1000 cubic feet (cft) or per unit from the present rate of Tk 120. Gas rate for power plants under the Power Development Board (PDB) has been proposed at Tk 88.40 per unit instead of the present Tk 70. Fertiliser factories were to pay Tk 84.41 per unit instead of the present Tk 60.

The proposal however cuts down gas rate for small-scale private power plants to Tk 93 per unit from Tk 100. Price for captive power generation was also to come down to Tk 99.24 per unit from the present Tk 100. Gas price for industries would have been slashed down to Tk 99.24 per unit from the present rate of Tk 140.

Commercial consumers were to pay Tk 177.38 for per unit of gas instead of the present Tk 220 and brick kilns Tk 104.37 against the present rate of Tk 220.

The widely used brands of

Dr Hazera Mahtab of BIRDEM said the patients should avoid taking insulin not preserved properly.

cations if they use such insulin," she said. "Patients suffering from type-1 diabetes need insulin and their number is small

number of diabetes patients in the country is around 50 lakh.

responsible for the present crisis.

But fishermen believe that due

to formation of shoals near the

seashore, the fish might have

changed their course of movement

and have gone to the deep sea,

outside the fishing zone of trawlers.

of hilsha (medium size) to Tk 10,000 per maund, while it was

Hilsha export to India has also

been stopped. According to an

exporter, the available quantity of hilsha is not enough to export the

The crisis has pushed the price

that they were selling smuggled insulin. The price of imported

FROM PAGE 1

around Tk 2,500 last year.

fish to India

insulin is Tk 580, while the same brand of smuggled insulin is selling between Tk 400 and 500.

"The patients may face compli-

Insulin trouble

However, many of them denied

insulin in the country are Mixtard HM, Actrapid, Insulaterd, Lente and Novopen imported by the DAB and some companies.

According to the DAB, the

Israeli groups and the former Iraqi Assad said he believed Powell "Powell is the rational wing" of



President of the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB) Qamrul Islam Siddique yesterday presents a crest to Dr Iqbal Mahmud, former vice-chancellor of BUET, at a reception jointly organised by the IEB and The Daily Star.