# **UNDP: Opposition**

tightening of the security system of the parliament building.

Jorgen Lissner said after the meeting that it is always good if the ruling party pays due attention to the

He said the opposition should be given a 'real' chance to speak in parliament, as 57 million voters elected the public representatives to see them play an effective role in lawmaking

The representative of the UNDP, which is providing assistance to a 10-year project titled 'Strengthening Parliamentary Democracy,' also pointed out that staging walkouts and boycotting parliament sessions were not the best way to settle differences

"There is no alternative to dialogue. Sometimes it is difficult to agree (with each other in politics) but the two sides should be respectful to each other," commented Lissner, who is also a member of the steering committee of the 'Strengthening Parliamentary Democracy project. launched in 1997 and scheduled to be complete by 2006.

The UNDP representative said they discussed, among other issues, ways of improving the functioning of the parliament secretariat and raising the efficiency of the support staff in parliament.

Delwar Hossain said his opposition counterpart had raised the issue of microphones of opposition MPs being switched off and complained about non-allocation of slots in the standing committees propor-

"One cannot speak endlessly in parliament. Besides, there is precedent of putting off microphones . On the question of proportionate sharing of chairmanship and membership of standing committees, the Awami League is demanding chairmanship of 10 committees, but it did not give us (the BNP in opposition) chairmanship of even a single committee," said Delwar Hossain.

He expressed his readiness to discuss with the opposition the possibility of bringing in amend-

ments to the Rules of Procedures of narliament as recommended by the UNDP to make room for the opposi-

The chief whip, however, hoped that the main opposition that did not attend the last session of parliament would come back to the House in the upcoming budget session beginning from June 10.

tion to lead some of the important

standing committees.

He said the UNDP representative lauded the formation of 11 standing committees in the last session of parliament and expressed the hope that the remaining committees would be formed

Opposition Chief Whip Abdus Shahid said the UNDP representative talked about the AL's boycotting parliament sessions. "I told him that we were not given the chance to speak in parliament; even the microphone of the opposition leader was turned off and notices served by the opposition lawmakers were tentertained."

About Lissner's observations on the opposition staging repeated walkouts, Shahid said, "When the treasury bench suppressed our right to speak we did walk out to register our protest. Walking out is a permitted strategy in parliamentary prac-

Shahid asserted that if the government continues to ignore the opposition's rights and privileges in parliament, the Awami League might be forced to take 'tougher decisions.

It transpired from yesterday's meeting that Merlin Udho, project implementation adviser of the 'Strengthening Parliamentary Democracy,' would be leaving the project later this month and a new official would take over.

The meeting discussed about taking some steps to strengthen the security system of the Sangsad Bhaban against the backdrop of recent attacks on some legislative houses around the world, including

# **New municipality**

It found that the country's 100 out of 252 pourasavas do not fulfil the requirement of the existing laws. As a result, people do not receive

The PERC suggested withholding formation of any new pourasava in next five years. Thereafter, each municipality formed must satisfy the proper criteria.

As municipalities always depend on the government, the sevenmember PERC suggested increasing their own revenue through taxes. It suggested that no government allocation should be made for pourasavas that are unable to generate at least 75 per cent of their expenditure from its own resources of revenue.

The report suggested that the Gas supply railway sector has remained neglected so far and should receive increased investment on a priority basis. It stressed the need to open a direct rail link from Dhaka over the Jamuna Bridge and dual rail-tracks on Dhaka-Chittagong route on a priority basis, and to increase line rolling stock and line capacity.

It also emphasised that an early decision should be made on monorail as an important urban transport.

Responding to the PERC report, Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman said he already announced that the railway sector would get priority in

the next budget alongside power

The minister also told the PERC members that he would try to reflect the Commission's views in the budget and mentioned that they have already been reflected in the

The minister also extended the Commission's tenure by six months to enable it to submit its final report

The PERC that started work last July had submitted its first interim report in December last year emphasising that the ADP allocation should be made on the basis of high-low priorities.

### FROM PAGE 12

crisis. Experts said without the two new pipelines in Ashuganj-Monohardi point and Bakhrabad-Meghnaghat point, gas crisis would be unavoidable this summer.

"Sadly, the only gas pipeline project that is being pursued enthusiastically is in Bogra, where the gas market is nil. This is politically motivated," said a source. The demand for gas shot up to 1,250 mmcfd early last month from last year's 1,130 mmcfd. But so far only stopgap arrangements have been made to address the problem.

#### Giuseppe **Tornatore** retrospective

In a retrospective of the films made by the celebrated Italian filmmaker Giuseppe Tornatore, Zahir Raihan Film Society will screen his four films. On the second day, two films will be screened: The Star Maker (1995) and 'Malena' (2000). Venue: Goethe Institut, Dhanmondi. Time: 5.00pm and

### Film show

Academy Film Society will screen an Italian film titled 'Stealing Beauty'. Venue: 21/C, Jigatola. Time: 6.30pm.

### **Environment fair**

The inaugural ceremony of an environment fair, organised by environment and forest ministry, will be held with Minister Shajahan Siraj as chief guest. Venue: Osmani Memorial Hall. Time:

### **PPRC** meeting

Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC) organises a meeting to present a policy brief on Gram Sarkar with LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan as chief gust. Venue: LGED seminar room, Agargaon. Time: 3.00pm.

### Discussion

A discussion on 'Water and Biodiversity' will be held with State Minister for Agriculture Mirza Fakhrul Islam as chief guest. Venue: Osmani Memorial

DCCI meeting

The Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) organises a meeting with the Trade Ministers of Lesotho. Sierra Leone and Uganda. Venue: DCCI auditorium, Motijheel. Time: 11.00am.

### Inauguration

The inauguration of the Intensive Care Unit at Holy Family Red Crescent Medical College Hospital will be held with Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain as chief guest. Venue: Hospital complex. Time: 10.00am

#### Foundation anniversary

The celebration of the seventh founda tion anniversary of the People's University of Bangladesh will be held with Communications Minister Nazmul Huda as chief guest.

Venue: Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh, Time: 10.00am.

### **Rotary Dhaka**

Weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Dhaka will be held. Venue: Pearl Restaurant, Gulshan. Time: 5.30pm.

### Rotary Sonargaon

Weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Sonargaon Dhaka will be held. Venue: Dhaka Club. Time: 5.30pm.

## Swindling FROM PAGE 12

The two were produced before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka. The Investigating Officer Nazrul Islam filed a sevenday remand petition while defence lawyers filed for a bail petition.

However, Magistrate Siraiul Haider granted one-day remand The company had a stall in the

trade fair at Sher-e-Banglanagar in January where they signed agreewith some customers to supply 73 CNG three-wheelers. Several customers swindled by

the company came up with their complaints.

A woman had allegedly sold all her belongings to borrow one lakh taka from an NGO to buy a threewheeler for her husband and signed agreement with the company. Getting no return from her investments, she claimed she was in dire

"Even my daughter's schooling had to be stopped because we are unable to pay the fees," the woman

Similarly, one Kamal Hossain of Dhanmondi had signed a contract and paid Tk 1,95,000 to the company on January 23 and was swindled.

### G8 asks Iran

technology was not passed on irresponsibly.

Since last year's G8 summit in Canada "events in the world have underscored the relevance of those principles and the urgency of implementing them," the statement said.

Deputy Defence Secretary Paul Wolfowitz said Monday that Washington had imperfect intelliabout communist North Korea's nuclear capability, but took seriously Pyongyang's assertions it

Britain has voiced concerns about Iran's influence on Iraq's longsuppressed Shi'ite Muslims, but wants dialogue with Tehran.

The G8 said it would create its own Counter-Terrorism Action Group to offer aid to countries to prevent them becoming safe havens for terrorists and to boost their security arrangements.

"For the peace and security of the world, it is essential for all countries, including developing countries, to enhance such capability," it

#### AL sends letter FROM PAGE 12

all ambassadors from the OIC member states in Dhaka about the controversial personality

"We will visit OIC member states f needs be, and inform them about nis dark past." The nomination of Salauddin is insulting to the nation as a whole, said the letter

You (prime minister) are aware that Salauddin Quader Chowdhury was suspended from the BNP several times for his indecent behaviour. The Awami League thinks such a man is unfit for the OIC secretary general's office," said the

Bangladesh's prospect of winning the post is bright, as the AL had got assurance from the OIC memper countries during its rule, said the

The AL government had nominated Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury, the late career diplomat and speaker, to run for the post.

However, his nomination was vithdrawn upon assurance from the OIC allies that they would support Bangladesh's candidate in the next polls, said the letter.

Meanwhile, the Muktijoddha Sanghati Parishad yesterday came down heavily on Chowdhury for his eported comments on Bangladesh's women and its cul-

Terming the remarks arrogant and vulgar, the Parishad said these proved that not only Chowdhury has no regard for women's rights.

Chowdhury reportedly said Bangladeshi culture has now been reduced to unmarried women walking the streets barefooted at the midnight singing "Aa Mori Bangla

He was also reported to have said Bangladeshi women wear saree exposing navel, while speaking at the closing ceremony of a book fair organised by Jamaat-e-Islami, a component of the BNP-led coalition government.

### Port stalemate

FROM PAGE 1 have to take waiver certificates from

the Principal Office of Mercantile Marine Department, which verifies that there are no local vessels available at the port.

Akbar said to scrap the ordinance it needs approval of parlia-

"Our only demand is to repeal the law," said Jamaluddin Quader Chowdhury, managing director of QC Container Line Limited, after the meeting with the ministry. "We would wait for the cabinet

decision and then decide our future course of action," Jamal told The Around 10 representatives of

MLOs and members of the Chittagong Feeder Trade Committee (CFTC) attended the meeting. They include APL, Hunjin, P&O Nedlloyd, K-Line, PIL, Sea Consortium, Gold Star, Hapagloyed, KMTC, MOSK, United Arab Shipping and QC Container Line Limited. The minister admitted that it was

really difficult for a foreign vessel operator to get a waiver certificate before making a call at the port. Chairman of the Bangladesh

Oceangoing Ship Owners Association (BOGSOA) Sayeed Hossain Chowdhury refuted the allegation of deadlock at the port. He said only a few MLOs and

CFTC members have been refraining from loading goods to create an artificial crisis. The situation would be normal very soon, Sayeed said.



POLITICAL AMITY: BNP leader Taimur Alam Khandaker presents an election panel to Awami League leader Tofail Ahmed. They cast vote in Dhaka University senate elections yesterday.

# Khaleda: LDC mechanism

addressed for their integration into global trade. "We should receive full support from the developed counlegitimate interests of the most disadvantaged countries of the

If the LDCs adopt a common stand on matters of interest, they can significantly increase their negotiating capability, she felt. The prime minister said the LDCs

must hammer on the implementation issues, as may be relevant to them, within the framework of negotiations in the WTO General Council. They should approach their development partners for implementation of their repeated commitments

differential treatment and other areas, approved and decided at the third UN LDC conference in Brussels, she said. The prime minister felt the LDCs should also press for measures to benefit would go to both the OECD reduce or remove tariff escalation

on subsidies, services, special and

exports to the developed countries. About free flow of labour in the globalised world, Khaleda said a good number of the LDCs have abundant and unskilled manpower. but some barriers do not allow them to participate effectively in the

He said the government may

provide the local shipping industry

various financial benefits like duty

and tax breaks, soft loans and

foreign buyers are threatening to

suspend business with us and close

their offices," said Tapan

He said buyers are not obliged to

BGMEA President Quazi

Moniruzzaman said, "Not only the

garment sector, but the total export-

import business is at a great risk as

choose the shipping lines for trans-

specific demands were made under

The declaration expressed

concern over the non-

implementation of issues in favour

of LDCs as pledged during different

The 13 specific demands are:

Binding commitment on duty- and

quota-free market access for all

products from LDCs on a secure.

long-term and predictable basis with

realistic. flexible and simplified rules

of origin to match the industrial

canacity of LDCs to raise their

The declaration demanded

resolution of all implementation-

related issues and concerns, and all

special and differential (S&D) pro-

posals by the Cancun meeting to

strengthen them and make them

precise, effective and operational as

mandated by the Doha Declaration.

binding special and differential

treatment provisions to reverse the

continued marginalisation of LDCs.

temporary movement of natural

persons, particularly unskilled and

semi-skilled service providers, to

the market of developed countries,

recognition of professional qualifi-

cations and simplifying visa proce-

Allowing the LDCs flexibility in

making commitments and undertak-

ing obligations consistent with their

individual development, financial

and trade needs or their administra-

Other highlights of the

declaration are:

It also called for expanding and

The declaration demanded

market share in world trade.

WTO's ministerial meetings.

the lone clause no: 14.

He said it is the buyers who

Chowdhury, president of the MCCI.

do business with Bangladesh. "The

market is open and very competi-

tive. So they can easily shift to other

"The crisis is so acute that the

But it should not adopt any

that hampers trade, Haroon said.

preferential berthing facility.

he had turned away.

since it adversely affects their

Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury said the multilateral trade system gives very little attentries because we are highlighting the tion to the LDCs' needs, primarily because it is dominated by developed countries "We are asked to make commit-

> extremely restrictive. There is no coherence in the policies followed by multilateral institutions," the commerce minister said The developed world would like the LDCs to free all trade in goods. capital and those aspects of services

that interest them. Little attention is

ments, and accept rules that are

paid to the LDCs' interest, such as in temporary movement of labour, he mentioned "Researchers estimate that if the OECD countries open up just three per cent of their labour force to temporary workers from the LDCs, the total benefit would be between \$150 and \$200 billion annually. This

Khosru pointed out He hoped the Dhaka Declaration would convey the message that the LDCs have genuine concerns that need to be addressed at the Cancun conference of the WTO in

Abolished flag rule

countries as well as to the LDCs,

Kipkorir Aly Azad Rana, who

portation of goods and the exporters

buving houses have already

stopped inspecting apparels ready

for export because of the deadlock.

government has hampered the

growth of the export sector.

immediately.

He informed the press that the

BKMEA President Monjurul Hug

Huq said the exporter would

The government will have to

have to airlift goods at a huge cost

unless the crisis was resolved

think about the impact of the crisis

because it is going to spoil \$6billion

worth of exports, said Amir

Humayun Chowdhury, president of

suffer because of the protection to a

few companies," said AK Azad,

16-point Dhaka Declaration

Substantial increase in technical

and financial assistance to the

LDCs for their development.

strengthening and diversifying their

production and export base as well

as for institution and capacity build-

Strengthening of the Integrated

Framework (IF), with enhanced

funding, to meet the needs of the

LDCs, particularly for overcoming

their supply side constraints and for

the diversification of their export

base along with simplification of

procedures to improve access to

from anti-dumping, countervailing

Exemption of the LDC exports

Devising appropriate compensa-

tory and other mechanisms to fully

address the erosion of preference

margins due to lowering of Most

tion of the guidelines for accession

of LDCs adopted by the WTO

Expeditious and full implementa-

Continuing with the technical

work and studies to clarify the

implications of the Singapore issues

for the development aspirations of

help the LDCs address the inherent

problems of very small size, land-

locked state, remoteness and

Establishing an international

A legally sound solution for the

mechanism to protect the genetic

resources, traditional knowledge

Developing the mechanism to

Favoured Nation (MFN) tariffs.

inancial resources.

General Council.

extreme vulnerability.

and farmers' rights.

the LDCs.

and safeguard measures.

tive and institutional capabilities.

president of the BCI.

"The whole nation is going to

have hardly any say in the matter.

He noted that many of these people are from the world's 49 LDCs. Recent UNCTAD estimates

spoke on behalf of the WTO Director

General, said about 1.2 billion

people are now living in extreme

poverty with less than \$1 a day.

suggest that over 50 per cent of the population of the LDCs live in abject poverty. The current trends show this will increase by about a third unless urgent steps are taken to redress the situation, he added.

The LDCs have a significant and rowing stake in the multilateral trading system and the Doha Development Agenda (DDA) negotiations. As a group, the LDCs constitute over 20 per cent of the WTO's membership, Kipkorir said. In terms of results to be expected

from the DDA, one of the highlights will be the improvement in market access of goods from the LDCs, he said. Additional measures like simplified standards and origin requirements are also high on the priority list for the LDCs. Reducing barriers to South-South trade may also be pursued, he added. The Dhaka Declaration will send

a powerful signal to the LDCs' negotiating partners, Kipkorir

in the name of school decoration without floating any tender. They were also alleged to have gobbled up Tk 3.30 lakh by submitting fake

In another case, HBM Iqbal along with the now suspended school headmaster Shah Alam, two members of the school manage ment committee -- Reazuddin Ahmed and Joinal Abedin -- and Uttam Kumar Saha, managing director of Nandan Architect, were sued for appointing a consultant by not following proper procedure. The contract with the consultant was worth Tk 5 lakh.

Shah Alam, Joinal Abedin, Reazuddin Ahmed and engineer Uttom Kumar Dev were implicated in another case for misappropriating Tk 9 lakh. The BAC official alleged that these persons manipulated requirements to float a tender of Tk 23 lakh, exceeding the approved budget of Tk 14 lakh.

### **HBM** Iqbal

FROM PAGE 12

advertisement bills.

LDCs who face difficulties in making

effective use of compulsory licens-

ing, without restricting coverage of

Dhaka Declaration would be a

useful tool to protect the legitimate

interest of the LDCs at the fifth

ministerial meeting of the World

Trade Organisation (WTO) at

Cancun in Mexico in September this

three-day trade ministers' meeting

is the inclusion of the demand for

free movement of natural persons in

the Dhaka Declaration, from which

Bangladesh would be benefited

enormously," Khasru said in his

issues included in the Dhaka

Declaration would help the LDCs to

with the African LDCs that are

affected by subsidies on cotton

provided by developed countries,

and strongly supporting actions

initiated by some African LDCs in

the WTO to urgently remedy the

negative consequences of these

subsidies that affect millions of

farmers" the Dhaka Declaration said

expressed disappointment at the

lack of progress in making the

Special and Differential provisions

operational. It took note of the WTO

General Council's adoption of the

quidelines for the accession of the

The Dhaka Declaration also

on subsidy issue.

negotiate at the Cancun meeting.

He, however, said the other

"Expressing our full solidarity

"The major achievement in the

The commerce minister said the

diseases.

# Suu Kyi brought back to Yangon

Myanmar's opposition leader Aung San Suu Kvi has been brought back to Yangon by the ruling military and was being held in an intelligence guest house yesterday, her party sources said

"We saw a convoy enter into

the annex of Insein prison. Aung San Suu Kyi was separated from the rest of the entourage and taken to a military intelligence guesthouse in downtown Yangon," a source from the National League for Democracy (NLD) told AFP. She was brought back in a

military-escorted convoy at around 2:00 am Sunday (1930 GMT Saturday), the source said, adding the military had ordered people to stay inside along the route she

Aung San Suu Kyi was put under "protective custody" in northern Myanmar along with 18 members of her entourage after clashes between her supporters and a pro-

### UP chairman murdered in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Sardar Habibur Rahman, 42, chairman of Baintala Union Parishad and president of Rampal Upazila unit of BNP was killed by unidentified gunmen last night, police said.

Eyewitnesses of the incident said the gunmen sprayed bullets on the victim as he was on his way home from Baintala bazar. The assassins left the spot in a microbus and chanted slogans in the name of Purbo Banglar Communist Party. The slain UP chairman was also

wanted in many criminal cases, sources at the Rampal thana said.

The deputy commissioner and the superintendent of police of Bagerhat visited the murder spot.

junta mob Friday left four dead and 50 injured.

Meanwhile international pressure to release Suu Kyi has been mounting on the government. Britain and France have called on the Myanmar junta to release Aung San Suu Kyi immediately and to begin genuine talks with the prodemocracy opposition.

The Australian government summoned the ambassador of Myanmar yesterday to demand the immediate release of detained prodemocracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi and other members of her

Foreign Minister Alexander Downer said he had instructed Australia's ambassador in Myanmar to convey the same protest to that

### Teenage girl gang-raped in Barisal

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal** 

A 14-year old schoolgirl of Uttar Patarchar village in Muladi upazila under Barisal district was gangraped in front of her parents in the early hours of yesterday, police Police quoting family members

of the victim said Shihabuddin, 20, of the neighbouring village along with five other men broke into the house and raped the girl right in front of her family members who were held hostage at gunpoint. The rapists left after more than

an hour, leaving the girl unconscious. She was sent to Barisal town for treatment of her injuries. Father of the victim filed a case

with the Muladi police yesterday Police said the rape was a sequel to a dispute with the victim's family None was arrested till filing of this

## Tanzanian minister

with the two-day Dhaka official-level talks and the ministerial meeting that ended vesterday.

The meetings are good avenues

for preparation, as they give a clear

idea of complex issues, which will

come up at the WTO (World Trade Organisation) negotiations, he said. About the difference of opinion that surfaced in the official-level talks on Sunday, the Tanzanian

minister said such differences only justify the reason for such meetings. "This meeting is the perfect place for us (LDCs) to point out and resolve differences so that we can go to the negotiating table with a clear conception and unitedly

Ngasongwa. The Tanzanian minister disagreed on a comment of the WTO deputy director general that the I DCs were not looking for long-term measures to increase their share in global trade and were pursuing quota and other concessions. The minister argued that the share of LDC trade has been declining over the last four decades.

pursue our issues," said Dr

Because of the LDCs' low eco nomic development, the chances of further marginalisation within the global economy are too real to be ignored unless further measures are taken in their favour, said Dr

The multilateral trading system

Deadlines for some Doha devel

Singapore Issues.' The WTO agenda has to take into account LDC concerns, said the minister. "This, I believe, is the only way to have a sustainable multilateral trading system."

M Saifur Rahman will open the

Development and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan will join the closing function as the chief guest. Awami League General special quest.

chair the inaugural session.

rate venues. The inaugural session includes statements by the co-organisers --Mahfuz Anam, editor of The Daily

will be held at three venues -- the CIRDAP Auditorium, Academy for Planning and Development Auditorium and National Press Club.

budgetary discipline and fiscal programme, financial sector reforms, industrial policy and privatisation and SME will be discussed.

Development and governance of

should address major concerns of the LDCs, he thinks. Pointing to the supply side constraints in respect of infrastructure, human resources and capacity of the LDC economies, the minister underscored predictable and easy market access for LDC products.

opment agenda, including implementation of special and differential treatment, agriculture and public health, have not been met, which affected the LDCs, he said. "At the same time, we are under extreme pressure to start negotiations and assume new obligations on

## **Policy Review Forum**

Club.

tackled

ernment.

dialogue as the chief guest while Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdul Hamid Advocate will attend the event as special guest. Local Government, Rural

Secretary Md Abdul Jalil will be the Prof Rehman Sobhan, chairman of the CPD and convenor of the Policy Review Task Forces, will

The three-day forum, split into several working sessions, will discuss a range of issues at sepa-

Star and Motiur Rahman, editor of the Prothom Alo and presentation of policy review reports. The working sessions on June 4

At the CIRDAP, the issues of

At the Academy for Planning and Development, the working sessions will tackle governance (corruption and judiciary), democratic process (election and parliament) and gender equality and women's empowerment issues.

the energy sector, environment policy, information and communications technology and administrative reform and local government issues will be discussed at the Jatiya Press

at the Academy for Planning and Development, rural economy, agriculture and non-farm activities and poverty eradication and

employment generation will be

The working sessions on June 5

At CIRDAP, the issues of trans-

port and infrastructure and urban

governance will be discussed while

will also be held at the same venues.

At the Jatiya Press Club, education, health and population policies will be discussed. The concluding ceremony of the forum will be held at Hotel Sheraton

on the same day. The idea behind the dialogue was to prepare a set of policy brief, prior to the national election, 2001 to provide inputs to the pre-election debate and discussions on critical development issues. The policy brief put forward a set of recommen-

dations for the newly elected gov-

In review meetings, fresh recommendations will also come up for the government, which might be used as inputs for finalisation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) The newly constituted 17 Task Forces include more than 200

eminent specialists, business leaders and representatives from civil society and grassroots organi-The National Forum 2003 will

finalise the review reports of the Task Forces