Ammunition haul Rob murder case transferred to

the two were linked to the Dinajpur blast earlier this year and an investigation was underway to find their involvement in Joypurhat firefight.

The Detective Branch of police was given the charge to investigate the militant activities as hunt for the militants continued under a joint drive of police and paramilitary BDR.

The investigation officer of the firefight, also the officer-in-charge of the Khetlal Police Station, was relieved of his duty.

Officials said he was served with a show cause notice for neglect of duty and was likely to face action for his 'mysterious absence' in the police raid on Uttar Maheshpur village defying specific orders.

A senior police officer of Joypurhat yesterday reasserted that they had evidence the militants were plotting a major act of sabotage when police raided the house of Montajer Rahman.

"We are now sure they were planning destructive activities in the night of the firefight," a senior police official said.

Police said they would continue searches in Uttar Moheshpur as they believed the militants left many things in the area.

Thakurgaon police said they believed the arrested suspects Fazle Rabbi, 22, and Lutfar Rahman, 44, were trainers of the outfit. They were held on Thursday from Rani Sankail in Thakurgaon district.

Police arrested Rabbi, a college student of Gaibandha, for his suspicious movement as he tried to flee the scene kicking a policeman after being asked about his identity.

Police arrested him chasing nearly four kilometres and later captured Latifur, a businessman, from a nearby place basing on Rabbi's statement

Police said Rabbi was earlier held by locals in Hibildarpara in the area when he was imparting "training" to some 20 youths. But he was released with the intervention of one "influential man".

The pair is now being interrogated. "They have already given important information about their activities," a police official said.

Police camp suspended, 2 others closed at Patuakhali

UNB, Patuakhali

Patuakhali police outpost in charge has been suspended and two other cops have been closed for negli-

The action againt them followed the looting of a medicine shop near the camp

Officials said Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury ordered the actions against Abul Kashem, the camp in-charge, and a havilder and a constable at a meeting on the law and order here yesterday.

Medicine worth about Tk 6.50 lakh were stolen from the shop, Dina Medical Hall, about 75 yards off the police outpost, on August 14.

supplying millions of people in

Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka

states with more reliable drinking

and irrigation water, The Guardian

Indian daily The Hindu in an

editorial on August 6 said, "A

number of states, from Punjab in

the north to Kerala in the south.

have expressed their opposition to

a transfer of river waters from their

territory to other states. The latest

example is the considerable anxi-

etv in Kerala about including a link

between the Pampa and the

Achankovil (flowing through

Kerala) and the Vaippar (in Tamil

Nadu) in the proposed national

the Ganges water-sharing treaty

with India in 1996, expectations

ran high that the two neighbouring

countries would gradually move

forward to signing similar treaties

on sharing of 54 other common

rivers. The last JRC meet took up

the issue of water-sharing of the

Teesta but it ended inconclusively.

The coming meeting, officials

hope, would take up water-sharing

of seven common rivers -- Teesta

Dharla, Dudhkumar, Khowai

day, water resources expert Di

Ainun Nishat said the catchment

areas of the Brahmaputra that

originated in Tibet are spread over

four countries -- China, India,

dam in Tibet to divert Brahmaputra

water to drought-prone central

China regions, India is going to

divert water from its part of

Brahmaputra too. In the process

flows to Bangladesh and Bhutan

would dry up," observed Nishat, a

former professor at the

Bangladesh University of

sentative of the International Union

of Conservation of Nature (ICUN),

felt that the four co-riparian coun-

tries should sit together and work

out plans so that the Brahmaputra

serves all of them in the best

possible way, doing injustice to

UNB reporter

rescued after

A gang of criminals, angered by

press reports on their activities,

kidnapped the Keraniganj corre-

spondent of UNB and the Ajker

Kagoj, HM Amin, from Dakpara Link

an abandoned house in Chunkutia

Bangalbari area of Keraniganj as

the armed kidnappers fled away in a

microbus firing gunshots at the

Keraniganj Police Station alleging

that local criminals abducted him as

he exposed their criminal activities,

including those of land grabbing and

accused named in the FIR till

President Zahidur Rahman,

Keraniganj Press Club President

Haji Mohammad Salahuddin and

General Secretary Delwar Hossain,

Keraniganj Journalists Welfare

Association president and local

political leaders have condemned

the incident and demanded immedi-

ate arrest of those involved

yesterday evening.

Police could not arrest any of the

Dhaka District Journalists Union

Amin lodged a case with

Local people rescued Amin from

Road yesterday morning.

abduction

UNB, Dhaka

Dr Nishat, now country repre-

Engineering and Technology.

"While China is planning to build

Talking to The Daily Star yester-

Monu, Gumti and Muhuri.

Bangladesh and Bhutan.

Meanwhile, after the signing of

river arid.'

JRC may meet

mandated to meet at least three times a year, not a single meeting was convened since the last one in January 2002 due to India's reluc-

Sources said Bangladesh will take up at the coming meet the issue of India's \$200 billion river interlinking project, which is designed to divert water from major international rivers including the Ganges and the Brahmaputra to drought-prone

Bangladesh depends on these two rivers for 85 per cent of its dry season surface water supplies. But India is going ahead unilaterally with this project without any talks with its lower riparian neighbour and has formed a taskforce headed by former minister Suresh Prabhu to finalise a report on it. It is trying for foreign funds.

Dhaka sent a protest note to Delhi on August 13 in this regard.

In an interview with the Kolkata daily The Statesman recently, Suresh Prabhu said, "The foreign ministry is handling some of the work. I will speak with Yashwant Sinha (external affairs minister) to discuss issues with neighbouring countries like Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh '

Officials in Dhaka said Bangladesh has already brought to the notice of international financing agencies how badly the riverlinking project is going to affect it environmentally, ecologically and agriculturally. The project, envisaged by the

National Water Development Agency (NWDA) of India and to be implemented in 10 years, involves building hundreds of reservoirs and digging more than 600 miles of canals. For this, the Indian government is going to seek international funds

British daily The Guardian said on July 24 India plans to divert vast quantities of water from major rivers, including the Ganges and the Brahmaputra, threatening the livelihood of more than 100 million people downstream in Bangladesh.

Up to one third of the flow of the Brahmaputra and other rivers could be diverted to southern Indian rivers to provide 173 billion cubic metres of water a year,

4 killed

FROM PAGE 1 could not be known immediately, police and hospital sources said.

The accident occurred at about 1:15pm in front of Anwara School and College leaving one of the bus drivers dead on the spot while three fatally injured passengers died on way to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). Four of the injured were also admitted to the DMCH while others to different hospitals.

Deceased Lekha's father Idris Mia said he and his daughter were going to their native Monohardi Lekha was a student of class III of Bagha Primary School at Barogram, Kamranmgirchar.

Police and witnesses said all four deceased were travelling in the front of their bus. Both vehicles were severely damaged, said the duty

Injured Siddik Mian, father of victim Javed Mia, alleged that local miscreants looted Tk 3,500 and a watch from him as well as valuables belonging to other victims at the accident spot and also at the DMCH. Police arrested one person

at the DMCH in this connection. Police seized both buses. A case transferred to Speedy Trial Tribunal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

The sensational SMA Rob murder case has been transferred to the Speedy Trial Tribunal, Khulna, court sources said.

Awami League leader Rob was gunned down in front of his residence at Sonadanga in the city at 1:30pm on August 11, 2000.

After investigation, ASP of CID submitted charge sheet on June 13,2001 accusing 15 people of the

Of the chargesheeted accused, six are now on bail, five in custody and the rest have been absconding since the murder.

The trial of the case was delayed as complainant Aribur Rahman Mithu, eldest son of the slain AL leader, and his wife did never turn up in the court for deposition.

AL leader. listed criminal killed in Pabna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

An Awami League leader and a member of an extremist group were killed yesterday in two separate incidents in Pabna district, police

Akhtar Hossain, 38, was killed by fellow members of a local extremist group in Sripur under Ataikula Police Station after they called him out of his house on Thursday night.

Police recovered Hossain's body the following morning from a nearby village and suspect the killing might be linked to a feud within the group. The body was sent to Pabna General Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Akhter Hossain was a listed criminal and had several cases against him, police said. In another incident on

Wednesday night, miscreants hacked to death Hazrat Ali. vicepresident of Dhopadaha Union Awami League while he was on his way home in Halughar village under Sathia Police Station The miscreants severed his head

and took it along. Hazrat Ali was also a member of Dhopadaha Union Council and was

on the managing committee of a local school. Police said the killing might be a seguel to previous enmity and might

Two separate cases were filed for the murders but none was arrested till. filing this report vesterday evening.

have been carried out by an outlawed

JCD men allegedly beat up BCL activist at JU

JU CORRESPONDENT

A Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) activist was beaten up allegedly by activists of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), the ruling BNP's student wing, on the Jahangirnagar University campus on Thursday night.

ANM Mujibullah Rupom, BCL's social welfare secretary and a student of Philosophy department, has been undergoing treatment at the university's medical centre after he was beaten up allegedly by the JCD cadres for his BCL affiliation.

"Harunur Rashid, secretary of the JU unit of JCD, asked me to meet him at 9:30pm. When I went to him he handed me over to a group of JCD cadres who took me behind the library and beat me up with iron rods and pipes," said Rupom.

Jubo Dal men seize tenders for LGED road construction project in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Armed Jubo Dal cadres on Thursday stormed into the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) office and expelled 17 contractors waiting to submit tenders for a road construction project, sources alleged.

The LGED had invited tenders for the Tk 2.2 crore project and Thursday was the last day to submit tenders when a group of armed Jubo Dal cadres, reportedly backed by a ruling party lawmaker. approached and ordered the contractors to surrender their tender

When they refused to do so, the miscreants compelled the contractors to leave the LGED office building at gunpoint. They also snatched the tender schedules and tore those nto pieces.

Eyewitnesses said armed cadres of the outlawed PBCP and NBCP of Rupsha and Dumuria upazilas assisted the Jubo Dal cadres in the attack.

LGED Executive Engineer Noor Mohammad said he was not sure about the hooliganism over tender submission but admitted receiving a petition from the 17 general contractors seeking re-tender for the work.

Polls fair: BNP

Election Commission deployed a class one officer and a class one magistrate in each polling centre alongside army, paramilitary BDR, police and ansars to maintain law and

As a result, no untoward incident was reported and the election was held peacefully. "Even a large number of Awami League leaders who stayed in the constituency for the last few days could not raise any allegation about the polls," he added.

Replying to a question, he said the AL calls polls fair when it wins but terms the same unfair and rigged when it loses. "After defeats in the 1991 general elections, the AL alleged subtle rigging and in 2001, it claimed the polls to have been overtly rigged. Now it is trying to say the byelection was invisibly rigged. But it termed the 1996 national election fair because it won it."

He said the AL held a press conference prior to the end of voting at Tarabo municipality and rejected the ballot, but after counting it found that the AL candidate had won. The AL called a press conference

at 9:30pm at the Netrakona Press Club Thursday night, but called it off as it did not receive any complaint from any place of the constituency, he Bhuiyan, who is also the LGRD

and co-operatives minister, said it is not true that the minorities could not cast their vote in the by-polls. There is no instance or allegation of obstruction to voters going to the polling centres, he added. About the low turnout of voters, he

said usually the voters' turnout is above 80 per cent, but the percentage of voters was nearly 63 in the by-

elections. "There was no long queue in Kendua-Atpara because there were large numbers of polling centres and booths and the voters

On the defeat of the AL candidate Bhuivan said the AL candidate was defeated in the last two general elections in the constituency and there were rifts within the party.

however, thanked the main opposition party for participating in the polls and hoped that it would join the Jativa Sangsad session.

He thanked the people of Kendua-Atpara for electing the BNP nominee. He also thanked the EC officials, troops, law-enforcement agencies and others concerned for ensuring a free, fair election.

Lutfozzaman Babar, Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal President Nazrul Islam Khan and BNP central leader Ahmed Musa were present at the press

reported to be an associate of Abul Kashem Chowdhury, the prime

nabbed Kader in a pre-dawn raid at the Bayezid area.

arrested so far. obviously to little effect. The murder of another million-

aire businessman Rezaur Rahman Zakir too remains to this day

Israel vows more strikes

FROM PAGE 12

in September 2000. "We urge all our cells of fighters in Palestine to strike in every corner of the Jewish state, said a statement by Hamas, which like kindred group Islamic Jihad is sworn to Israel's destruction.

Reformist Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas had sought to curb violence through negotiations, rather than directly confronting Islamic militants, for fear of a sparking a Palestinian civil war. He broke off communication with

Hamas and Islamic Jihad after Tuesday's bus bombing and pledged the crackdown on militants called for in the U.S.-backed "road map" to peace which aimed at a Palestinian state by 2005. Abbas denounced the midday

nissile strike on Abu Shanab's car in Gaza City as "an ugly crime." Fourteen bystanders were also wounded.

Hamas lobbed more than a dozen mortar bombs at Jewish settlements in Gaza and at least two of its makeshift Qassam rockets hit homes in Sderot, a town in southern Israel military sources said on Friday. There were no reports of casualties.

Israeli forces have flooded Hebron -- the home town of Tuesday's bomber -- and other West Bank militant bastions, conducting searches for weapons and roundups. arrested on Friday.

The Gaza Strip, which is densely populated and fenced-off from Israel, has not been subject to broad ground

Allahr Dal FROM PAGE 12

Their remand will end today while fresh remand will be sought. Three of them were caught from Sunamganj and two from the Sylhet city.

The arrestees are Sohel Ahmed, 25, from Dargah Mohalla of Sylhet city and now living at Hasonnagar of Sunamgani town: Sohel. 20. of Badhonpara in Sunamganj and Siddiqur Rahman Sohel, 20, of Pallabi in Dhaka, Ramzan Ali, 22, of Sardarpara under Bhangura thana of Faridour, and Rafigul Islam, 22, of Bhagalpur under Sujanagar thana of

They were held as police were probing the missing of a boy from Sunamganj town recently. Police also recovered some papers, diaries and letters from their possession, sources said

When contacted, the deputy nspector general of police, Sylhet Range, said yesterday the arrestees might be sent to Dhaka for further interrogation by the joint interrogation cell.

Rigging FROM PAGE 1

The AL leaders made the allegations at a press briefing at the party's Dhanmondi office.

In the past, as in the much criticised 1994 by-election in Magura, the BNP had captured polling stations to win the election, the leaders recalled Though the voter turnout in

Netrokona was 25 to 30 per cent, it was shown to be 62 per cent, AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil said. The party would meet foreign polls observers and discuss this, he

AL President Sheikh Hasina's Political Secretary Saber Hossain Chowdhury later told The Daily Star that the party would decide its next course of action on the by-election fraud after the party chief returns from abroad today (Saturday). AL Acting President Abdus Samad Azad alleged that the

government failed to ensure security of the voters. Party leaders Zillur Rahman MP. Sajeda Chowdhury, Dr Abdur Razzak MP and Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin were also present at the

operations. That could now change the Israeli security source said.

in Gaza," he said. He named Rafah, a town straddling the Gaza-Egypt border and favored by Palestiniar gunrunners, as one likely taraet. Faced with the prospect that the

of State Colin Powell turned for help on Thursday to Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian president whom Washington has tried to sideline and a pariah to the Israelis. AFP adds: The Palestinian militant groups Islamic Jihad and

air strike that killed a top militant leader. The statement blamed Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon for wrecking the truce that the Palestinian militants declared unilaterally on June 29 and which Israel considered dead

Jerusalem Tuesday. Hamas effectively called off the truce Thursday after Ismail Abu Shanab, one of its top officials, was killed with two bodyquards in a hail of rocketfire on his car in central Gaza. But Islamic Jihad waited until Friday.

"We announce together today that Sharon assassinated the truce and delivered the final blow in killing political leader Ismail Abu Shanab, the joint Hamas-Islamic Jihad statement said.

were expected to jam the streets of Gaza for Abu Shanab's funeral Friday as anger mounted over the

impromptu rallies in various parts of Gaza Thursday crying for vengeance, and more were expected for a funeral likely to turn into an outpouring of grief and anger.

One gets life for murder

BSS, Naogaon

A court here on Thursday sentenced a man to life imprisonment for killing a rickshaw-van workers union leader Azhar Ali Sarder in 1997.

Additional District and Sessions Judge-2 SM Solaiman also fined the convict, Zillur Rahman, Tk 10,000, in default he is to suffer one more year

not proved.

from the ceiling of a local club.

Ametun, the victim's wife, filed a murder case with Manda Police Station on June 21 the same year. After investigation, police submitted chargesheet to the court accus-

1971 war

Sources said the external affairs ministry is against the publication of these accounts considering the possible effects it might have on ndia's relations with its neighbours.

But the defence ministry is now learnt to have addressed the concerns of the external affairs ministry.

Sources said the official history of 1971 war contains information on, among other things, the Mukti Bahini.

'We are not ruling out major action

peace "road map" could fold under the weight of new violence, Secretary

Hamas issued a joint statement Friday formally ending their sevenweek-old truce because of an Israeli

after a massive suicide bombing in

Tens of thousands of Palestinians

latest Israeli airstrike. Nearly 20,000 Palestinians held

in Naogaon

The judge acquitted four others as charges brought against them were According to the prosecution

Azhar Ali, 40, of Rampur village under Manda upazila of the district crore of which Tk 20.36 crore has was killed by the convict and his already been spent. The budget for accomplices on June 19.1997 as the projects in the current fiscal is Tk they could not extort money from him. Azhar's body was found hanging

another project?' made public for over a decade now.

one suggested in the IPRSP.

tees non-transparent.

Hasina returns home today

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina returns home today from the United States

She left Dhaka for Montreal Canada, on August 7 to attend a ceremony where her daughter Sayma Wazed Putul received the prestigious " Certificate of Merit for Excellence in Student Award" for research work Then she went to Miami, USA Sheikh Hasina will return to

Dhaka from Miami via London, party sources said.

2 killed in Bogra road accident

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Two people were killed and a physician was critically injured in a road accident involving a private car and a truck on the Bogra-Dhaka Highway under Sherpur upazila yesterday morning.

One of the deceased is car driver Shaheen Alam, 28, while the other

person could not be identified. Seriously injured Bangladeshi expatriate in London Dr Gias Uddin son of late Kasim Uddin of Nataram village under Badorgonj upazila in Rangpur district, was first taken to Bogra Mohammed Ali Hospital and later shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital at about 12:30pm yesterday. He is a relative of former home minister Dr MA Matin and State Minister Iqbal Mahmud Tuku. Police and witnesses said the

accident occurred near the Ghoga Bridge at about 6:30am when a Bogra-bound truck (Bogra-TA-11-0204) hit a Dhaka-bound private car (Dhaka-Metro-GA-13-3861) smashing the vehicle. A case was filed with Sherpur

Police Station

Merchant's son FROM PAGE 1 ransom of Tk 30,000 at around

1:30pm Thursday. Another source said the abductors demanded Tk 30 lakh for release of Simon, who has recently

returned home from Darjeeling ir Simon's family could not be contacted to confirm it. **BRTA**

heavy vehicle like bus, a driver must

have a three-year experience of

driving light vehicles such as car, pickup and microbus," said a traffic sergeant. "But most public transport drivers don't have even a one-year experience let alone three years, '

FROM PAGE 12

said the traffic sergeant on condition of anonymity. "If I find a driver without driving licence, I can fine him only Tk 200 which is not enough to check such a malpractice," he said.

"And if I find any vehicle unfit, can fine its driver only Tk 700 which is too inadequate for a penalty. The drivers or owners pay the fine and get back to the street." the sergeant

Asked why police do not take

action against the drivers without valid papers, he said, "Our law has so many loopholes and offenders can escape punishment easily.' Another traffic sergeant said police often do not penalise fake licence holders, mindful of their poor

economic condition. "I understand

such sympathy encourages them to use fake licences," he said. A top BRTA official admits to the presence of the fake licence rackets. "We have formed a mobile team to check the proliferation of fake fitness certificates and licences. If any BRTA official is found quilty, the authorities will take stern disciplinary action against him," said the

Poverty

official requesting anonymity.

FROM PAGE 1

PRSP by December 2004. This will help the government get loans from "But we believe the conventional

structure of the government will not

help eradicate poverty," said a Perc member. The Perc in its latest report maintains that there are already four similar technical projects being implemented by the Planning Commission at a cost of Tk 50.22

4.87 crore. "Undertaking several technical projects for the same purpose creates unwanted duplication and wastage of public funds," a Perc member observed. "When the Planning Commission already has a huge number of computers, cars and air-conditioners under the existing projects, what could be the justification for buying more under

In addition, the technical project prescribes a structure for implementation of the PRSP that is altogether different from the possible structure. The structure also did not follow the Moreover, it has suggested that

one person -- a member of the GED -- will head all the three committees, which the Perc feels will create imbalance and make the commit-

Ozone hole may get to record size

REUTERS, Sydney

The ozone hole over the Antarctic is growing at a rate that suggests it could be headed for a record size this year, Australian scientists say.

A study by Australian Antarctic bases attributed the development to colder temperatures in the stratosphere where the ozone hole forms. "The growth at the moment is

similar to 2000 when the hole was a

record size," Australian Antarctic Division scientist Andrew Klekociuk told Reuters on Friday. Ozone is a protective layer in the atmosphere that shields the Earth from the sun's rays, in particular

ultraviolet-B radiation that can cause skin cancer, cataracts and can harm marine life. In 2000, Nasa said the ozone hole expanded to a record 28.3 million sq km (10.9 million sq miles), three times the size of Australia or

the United States, excluding Alaska.

"This is in contrast to the situa-

tion in 2002 when unusually warm conditions produced the smallest ozone hole since 1988." Klekociuk The ozone hole in 2003 presently

covers all of the Antarctic. Klekociuk said scientists at Australia's Davis Antarctic base saw the first signs of cooling of the lower stratosphere, 15 to 25 km (nine to 15 miles) up, about six weeks earlier

would grow rapidly this year, scientists at Australia's Mawson base have reported the early appearance of stratospheric clouds, which create a spectacular lightshow by defracting sunlight around sunset.

Chemical reactions in these clouds convert normally inert manmade chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) into ozone destroyers. CFCs are commonly used as propellants in

The 1997 Kyoto treaty set in place a global process to reduce greenhouse gases which deplete the ozone layer, but the world's biggest polluter the United States has yet to sign.

Clouds do not usually form in the

stratosphere due to its extreme dryness, but during some winters temperatures become low enough to allow their formation. "In 2000 we didn't see the stratospheric clouds until the beginning of July. This year we saw

them about the middle of May which

is the earliest we have seen them, Klekociuk said. The full extent of the 2003 ozone hole will not be known until the end of September, as August and September are the coldest months for the South Pole. Temperatures begin to warm by early October and the ozone layer will then start to

Sanwar Hossain also departed with

a LBW decision to paceman

The morning also started brightly

for the Tigers, who took only 23

overs to remove the remaining five

Pakistan wickets, conceding 45

runs. The hosts were bundled out

for 346 in their first innings giving

real discipline and bowled accord-

ing to the field placement, and just

three runs were scored in the first

half an hour. Fast bowler Mashrafee

bin-Mortuza gave the breakthrough

when he trapped Misbahul Haq

plumb in front with the score on 304.

In his hostile first spell,

Mashrafee bowled seven overs and

conceded seven runs with two

maidens while his new-ball partner

Taposh Baishya supported him with

Mohammad Rafigue were the most

successful Bangladeshi bowlers,

evenly sharing six wickets among

them. However, the biggest cheer of

the day was reserved for captain

The only resistance came from

Masharfee and left arm spinner

Bangladeshi bowlers showed

them a 58-run lead.

figures of 5-3-2-0.

Shabbir Ahmed 10 runs later.

Test day Now it's river staff's turn to bowler Shoaib Akhter for 13

recover.

threaten strike **OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal**

River transport employees and workers have put forward a 26-point demand with an ultimatum that if the authorities do not meet their demands by September 24, they will go for an indefinite strike from the next day.

The Noujan Sramik Federation,

an organisation of the employees

and workers of eight types of river

transport, gave the ultimatum at a rally at Barisal launch terminal Thursday night. The river transports include passenger launches, cargo ves-

Federation President and oil trader Golam Mowla chaired the which was addressed by Khwaza Iqbal, district unit president of the pro-government Jatiyatabadi Noujan Sramik Karmachari Dal, and federation leaders Abdul Malek, Sheikh Abul Hashem, Abul Bashar and Abdul

sels, fishing trawlers and oil tank-

They said a memorandum containing their demands was submitted to the ministries concerned on March 15 this year but a

response was yet to be received. Their demands include increase in pay and other benefits of the employees and workers, an end to toll collection, enforcement of relevant laws for operation of launches, filling up of all vacant posts of master and driver of vessels, modernisation of river transports as per rules, steps to ensure navigability of river routes and marking the danger points in the

An indefinite strike by launch

owners from August 12 to press

certain demands ended on its

seventh day without any of the

Khaled Mahmud, who at last claimed his elusive Test wicket by taking the return catch of Danish It was only Mahmud's second wicket in eight Test appearances.

Pakistan captain Rashid Latif, who was unbeaten on 54 5 Barisal AL

men FROM PAGE 12

Station yesterday morning as complainant. In the FIR, the BNP worker alleged that the five AL men led by Siraj and Jalal Sikder stormed into Sikderpara Club in Alekanda area of the city late Wednesday night and damaged the portraits. Police could not nab any of the accused till yes-

Mars not a watery mass

demands met.

routes.

FROM PAGE 12 gist at Arizona State University, Tempe. "We're not seeing the white cliffs of Dover or anything like that."

Some have argued that early in

Mars Global Surveyor has been

looking for signs of these rocks with

the 4.5 billion year history of Mars.

its climate was much warmer and

wetter. If this was the case, oceans may have formed, producing extensive carbonate rock layers like those seen on Earth.

its infrared spectrometer instru-The fact it has not found large quantities of carbonates suggests Mars is an icy wilderness that could

never have supported life. "This really points to a cold, frozen, icy Mars that has always been that way, as opposed to a warm, humid, ocean-bearing Mars sometime in the past," said coresearcher Dr Philip Christensen.

the view that Mars has always been a cold, inhospitable planet, they are unlikely to satisfy everyone. Many scientists believe the argument will only be settled by landing robotic probes, and perhaps

While the findings add weight to

one-day astronauts, on the Martian The European Space Agency's Mars Express spacecraft, carrying the Beagle 2 lander, is currently on

the way to Mars Following close behind are two Nasa rovers that will search for

terday evening.

geological evidence of water or

Beagle 2 and the Mars

Exploration Rovers will land around

Christmas, and more missions are planned for later in the decade. Dr Jim Garvin, Nasa's lead scientist for Mars exploration, says the significance of the latest results may have to wait for the discoveries to be made by the Mars Exploration Rovers in 2004 and the Mars

and beyond. "What's important is that we have found carbon-bearing minerals at Mars, which may be linked to the history of liquid water and hence to our quest to understand whether Mars has ever been an abode for

Reconnaissance Orbiter in 2006

The research is published in the journal Science.

Wild elephants FROM PAGE 12 seven to eight elephants went on

the rampage on the village on the eve of Fazr pravers. The upazila nirbahi officer and officer-in-charge of Rajasthali have visited the village.

In May and June last, herds of

wild elephants killed five persons in series of attacks on Shafipur village and its adjoining areas.

The marauding wild elephants have so far this year killed at least 16 people in Rajasthali and Langadu upazilas of the district

officer of Araihazar Police Station.

was filed with Araihazar Police

cast their votes without any delay."

The BNP secretary general,

State Minister for Home

Jamal

A special team of the Detective Branch and Chandgaon police

have been Twelve persons