

# Shova's eyes

**FROM PAGE 12**  
"Many of us have been starving since the nightmare," said Paingraio Marma, a villager of Babupara. "Only a few lucky families have got rice handouts from the government."

A few animals, mostly pariah dogs, pet pigs and poultry birds, roamed the battered homesteads seemingly in a daze.

**SCORCHED EARTH APPROACH**  
The indigenous people claim that Bangalees, both Hindu and Muslim, torched and looted about 350 houses in the villages under Mahalchhari Police Station, killing two and raping at least 10 women.

The marauders also ransacked three Buddhist temples and razed one and took away four Buddha statues, they alleged.

The abduction of a Bangalee youth, Rupan Mahajan, allegedly by a gang of indigenous people on August 24 triggered the violence.

Rupan's family said the hostage-takers demanded Tk 5 lakh in ransom.

"I was working at my yard, unaware of the disturbance brewing elsewhere. Suddenly a group of 60 to 70 Bangalee settlers came shouting towards our village. They were armed with machetes, sticks and spears and jerrycanful of kerosene," said Padma Shova.

"Before I could make out the situation, they stormed houses, looting and burning everything. I saw some people of the neighbouring village with whom our villagers had good relations, in an unbelievably marauding mood."

"Our villagers ran helter-skelter for cover. They were crying, calling out relatives and running towards the Kalabanya jungle. I asked my daughters to follow me and run to save life. We had no time to think of property or anything else."

She said the gang in their two-hour frenzied attack on the village torched all the 63 houses one after another. They looted valuables, farm animals and burnt everything including rice, wheat and maize in an apparent 'scorched earth policy'.

"I came out of the jungle the next day to find the village of lost hope. Nothing was standing, ashes of burnt thatched houses were scattered all over."

Proggajyoti Chakma of Lemuchhara village said some hills people rushed to the police camp, just 100 metres off the village, to inform them of the raids, but the law-enforcers never responded to their cries for help.

"We had no other way but to flee

to the jungles," he said.

"Our indigenous people say the situation in all the eight villages is the same. Even after seven days of the arson, we've got only a handful handout of rice from the government," Padma Shova said.

She and other villagers like Joyotibikash Chakma, a school-teacher, Sonaratan, headman of the village, Amal Kumar Chakma, Union Parishad member - all live in the Kalabanya jungle.

They have no shelter and no way to save them from monsoon rains. Those who had flimsy shelters in the jungles were drenched in the cloud-burst yesterday.

Living a precarious life in the jungles is better than living in damaged houses under the spectre of unceasing fear of mindless acts of bestiality, say the indigenous people.

Avinas Chakma, a student of Dhaka State College and a resident of Babupara village, had read about the incident when he was in Dhaka. He went to his home village five days after the incident to see the scars of the plunder.

"What remain of my house are only ashes. If I tell the barbaric story to my friends in Dhaka, they won't believe. It's totally unbelievable in a society that claims itself to be democratic," he said.

**ADMINISTRATION INDIFFERENT**  
The indigenous people allege that the administration is soft-peddling on bringing the criminals to justice and trying to shift the blame onto rival political groupings of indigenous people.

The administration has no definite information on how many houses were burnt and how many indigenous people became homeless.

According to the indigenous people, 63 houses were burnt in Lemuchhara village alone and the loss ranged between Tk 30,000 and Tk 12,00,000 a house.

The Bangalee settlers say the violence was the act of ethnic people. Some of them set fire to a house in their simmering conflict raging in the area and the fire soon leapt to neighbouring houses and villages, they claim.

Local legislator Wadud Bhuiyan said it was not the Bangalees, but the indigenous people were their own enemies.

The Prime Minister's Office is planning to allocate Tk 30 lakh for the rehabilitation of the victims.

# Jitu not abducted, fled due to poor exam result

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati**

Schoolboy Devjit Dutt Jitu, who was missing for the last three days and feared to have been abducted, returned home Saturday night, family sources said.

Jitu's relatives and a team of police led by Sub-inspector Intiaz found him at the residence of a lawyer Mohammed Helal Uddin in Andorkilla of Chittagong and brought him back to Rangamati at 11:30pm. Jitu's mother told The Daily Star yesterday.

Helal found Jitu loitering in the Chittagong rail way station and took him to his Andorkilla residence Thursday night.

Jitu, a student of class nine and son of lawyer couple Poritosh Dutt and Bani Dutt, remained missing for three days since he went out of his residence for a private tutor's Thursday morning.

Jitu told his mother that he fled home due to his poor performance in the school examinations.

# Little success in special drive at Bandarban

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban**

The joint forces of army and Bangladesh Rifles Saturday launched a special anti-crime drive in the remote areas of Bandarban.

On the first day of the drive, they arrested Shah Alam with a sawn-off rifle and six bullets.

Law enforcers had also seized AK-47 rifle, M-16 rifle, rocket launcher, grenade launcher, live grenade, land mine, high frequency walkie-talkies, bullet proof jackets, army uniforms, and other arms and ammunition from the area on August 25 and August 26.

They also arrested some alleged criminals in Nihanchhari, Alikadam, Ruma, Roangchhari and other areas in the last few months, sources said.

Recently, 10 persons including a Union Parishad chairman were abducted. Moreover, five murders and other incidents of extortion that took place in the area forced the authorities to launch a joint drive, sources said.

# 'Criminal' drafted in Ctg Gram Sarkar unit

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg**

An alleged criminal has been included in the Gram Sarkar Committee in ward No. 6 of Fatehpur union under Hathazari upazila.

Abdul Malek, accused in cases including one for rape, has been made a member of the committee from the dignitaries quota, sources said.

Union Parishad Member Noor Mohammad Shah of Fatehpur yesterday submitted a memorandum to the deputy commissioner (DC) of Chittagong protesting the inclusion of a 'controversial person accused in many cases' in the Gram Sarkar Committee.

The committee is scheduled to take oath today, said Jahiruddin Babar, upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) of Hathazari.

Sources said Malek, also a former UP member and BNP activist, had allegedly raped a teenage girl a few years back. A case in this regard is pending at the Women and Child Repression Prevention Court in Chittagong.

The UNO said he received a copy of Noor's letter and would look into the matter.

# Adult illiteracy

**FROM PAGE 12**  
The literacy rate among seven-year-olds and above is 62.66 per cent and the percentage of literate people, aged 15 and more, is 54.80.

Health Minister Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, also in charge of the primary and mass education ministry in parliament, said the literacy rate is 65 per cent in his speech on the budget session in parliament. But an independent survey conducted by Education Watch put the overall literacy rate at 41.4 per cent.

The Unesco finds that appeared in the "Education For All Global Monitoring Report: Is The World On Track?" said 870 million people were defined as illiterate in 1980 and 862 million in 2000.

Over one-third of the illiterate population lives in four of the world's high-population countries combined - India, China, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

It reconfirms the forum's diagnosis that achieving the EFA goal remains a dream in those countries, said Professor Christopher Colough, director of the report.

Eighty-three countries were on track to deliver by 2015 education for all. But at the same time, the other countries would fail to reach the target and some are actually going backwards, it said.

Major educational and economic reforms as well as a significant increase in budgetary resources for basic education will be required in many countries to achieve the goal.



Visiting Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee of Pakistan Armed Forces General Muhammad Aziz Khan calls on Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at her office yesterday.

# Musharraf's letter

**FROM PAGE 12**  
Cooperation (SAARC) summit to be held in Islamabad in January next.

Pakistan President General Pervez Musharraf in his letter expressed his eagerness to meet the PM at Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) summit due in Kuala Lumpur from October 16-18.

The OIC summit would adopt meaningful programmes in alleviating poverty, spreading education, improving health care and ensuring

# Missiles miss

**FROM PAGE 12**  
Another report says: British troop reinforcements began arriving in Iraq yesterday as US President George W Bush prepared to seek more international help to stem violence and spread the cost of occupying the country.

Most nations remain wary of sending troops to Iraq under US leadership, and it was left to Washington's most faithful ally, London, once again to take a symbolic lead in responding to the American call for help.

Only 120 soldiers flew in from Cyprus to British-controlled southern Iraq yesterday.

But the government of Prime Minister Tony Blair - mocked by critics as a poodle of Bush - is considering sending up to 3,000 more troops to swell its 11,000-strong contingent.

In London, a minister in Iraq's interim government said yesterday he wanted to see US and British soldiers pull out of Baghdad and other major cities within six months.

# Latif banned

**FROM PAGE 1**  
working to resolve conflicts in Gaibandha, Gazipur, Mymensingh (north) and Manikganj and is expected to complete formation of the district committees soon.

They said the party high command decided to form all thana and district committees by August 31 prior to holding the national council by the end of the year.

But there is no sign to work to the schedule, as most of the 75 organisational district committees will not be formed even in next few months.

"I think Tareque Rahman will have to take the responsibility of district committee formation as he succeeded in resolving conflicts in many districts peacefully," said a BNP policymaker.

Other assigned leaders are reluctant to form the committees and waiting for the party high command to ask them to hand over the responsibility to Tareque, he said.

Latif becomes the third player this year after Australian Darren Lehmann and Pakistan fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar to be punished under the ICC Code of Conduct.

# Khulna fright

**FROM PAGE 1**  
stepped up in a city caught with unusual panic following two sensational political murders since August 25. Teams of riot police wearing bullet-proof jackets have been posted in front of the AL, BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami offices and also at other vulnerable points including the industrial belt.

The bomb that killed Kutu was thrown on the AL office when district leaders including MP Talukdar Khaleque and city AL Joint Secretary Mizanur Rahman Mizan were coming down from the first floor of the office with other leaders and activists to bring out a procession in protest against the attack on lawyers in Dhaka.

The leaders said they were the targets of the bomb attack. Mizan's private microbus (Dhaka-Metrocha-11-3978) was badly damaged in the bomb attack.

AL central leaders Faruk Khan MP, SM Kamal and Begum Monnujan Sufian called on Khulna Metropolitan Police Commissioner Bazlur Rahman yesterday noon and requested him to arrange security for the city AL leaders. But the police commissioner expressed his inability to do so for 'certain reasons', sources said.

AL leaders held an emergency meeting on Saturday night at the party office, half-an-hour after the murder was committed. They blamed the ruling four-party alliance for the killing and observed that the

social justice for entire Muslim Ummah, the letter said.

Begum Zia requested Aziz to convey her best wishes to President Musharraf and PM Jamali saying she was also looking forward to meet the Pak leaders.

Aziz, now on a five-day official visit to Bangladesh, praised Bangladesh's role in the United Nations peacekeeping missions.

He lauded the high standard of Bangladesh Institute of Peace Support Operation Training, National Defence College and Staff College for providing training to army personnel at home and abroad.

The Pak general also commended the progress Bangladesh achieved during the last two years under Begum Zia's leadership.

He also hoped the ties between Bangladesh and Pakistan would be strengthened.

Prime Minister's Principal Secretary Dr Kamal Siddiqui, Principal Staff Officer of Armed Forces Division Maj General AM Mahmud-uz-Zaman and Pakistan High Commissioner in Dhaka Iqbal Ahmed Khan were present during the courtesy call.

# FBCCI

**FROM PAGE 1**  
The outgoing directors of the country's apex trade body also called upon all quarters to come forward to ensure an investment-and-business-friendly environment for the sake of economic self-reliance.

# Party cohesion

**FROM PAGE 12**  
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# Kidnapped boy escapes captivity

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg**

A schoolboy, abducted Friday, managed to escape captivity in Raozan yesterday.

Three kidnapers in an autorickshaw abducted Noor Hossain Shoyeb, a student of class ten and son of Anwar Hossain, from Dabua in Raozan at gunpoint and took him to a rubber garden in remote forest area at Hingaia, family members said.

He managed to flee as all four guards to keep watch over him fell asleep in the early morning yesterday, they added.

Meanwhile, a demand for Tk 20 lakh ransom yesterday confirmed that Mohammad Zunayed, a student of Rangunia Fulbagicha Madrasah, was abducted. He was missing from Gahira in Raozan since Friday noon, sources said.

However, police could not rescue him till filing of this report at 9:00pm yesterday.

# Literacy Day

**FROM PAGE 12**  
Adviser to the Prime Minister on Primary and Mass Education Prof Jahannara Begum will lead a procession at 8:30am today from the Central Shaheed Minar. It will end at the Osmany Memorial Hall after parading city streets.

She will also inaugurate a three-day education fair at 3:00pm today at the National Press Club auditorium.

The Islamic Foundation, Bangladesh has organised a procession at the Baitul Mokarram Mosque at 10 this morning to be attended by students of the 'mosque-based mass education programme for children.'

On September 8 and 9, folk songs and street dramas on mass education will be arranged at several important places in the city. Besides, special slides on mass education will be screened at every cinema from September 8 to 10.

On September 10, a cultural function highlighting aspects of mass education will be held at 7:00am at the Shaheed Zia Auditorium of the National Museum.

# 20 wounded

**FROM PAGE 1**  
identified as SM Sultan Mahmud, 32, police and witnesses said.

The bus hit Sultan from behind when he got down from an autorickshaw in front of the factory, police said.

The agitating workers set four buses afire and obstructed movement of traffic. When police attempted to clear the road, the angry mob tried to resist them. Police baton-charged the agitators to force them to retreat.

Later, they lobbed teargas shells to disperse the agitators and bring the situation under control.

Police said four persons were picked up from the spot during the clashes.

Of the 20 injured, six persons including a woman were admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) in critical condition while others were released after first aid.

The critically injured are Shahidul Islam, 25, Arif Uddin, 22, Shohag, 20, Shamim, 20, Rafiqul Islam, 20, and Nurun Nahar, 20.

Police were deployed in and around the CEPZ that houses over 100 factories.

Sources said production in some of the factories was hampered due to the incident as most of the workers joined the agitation.

Hired private buses carry the workers regularly to and from CEPZ factories, CEPZ sources said.

# Cop kills mate

**FROM PAGE 1**  
half a dozen police.

Sarod and Nirupam hailed from Khagrachhari and were formerly members of the Shanti Bahini. They were inducted into police service after surrendering with arms.

Police said they are yet to know the motive behind the killing, adding that the two were on strained relations for the last few days.

Deputy Inspector General of Police Golam Mostafa and other senior officers visited the Police Lines yesterday.

# AL blames PM

**FROM PAGE 1**  
away from the place of occurrence and instigated her 'private force' to launch an attack on the lawyers who were staging a peaceful demonstration.

Reading out a written statement at the briefing, AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil alleged that the pro-alliance activists set on fire the houses of AL adherents at four villages in Pabna on August 29 and demanded a judicial probe into the incident. The AL arranged a video show at the news briefing of hundreds of distressed people rendered homeless in Pabna.

Expressing deep concern at the recent incidents of violence in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), the AL blamed the BNP-led government and the anti-CHT peace treaty groups for deterioration of law and order in three hill districts.

Besides, the AL also came down heavily on the government for what it said signing a secret pact with the United States agreeing not to seek trial of any US soldier in future. Abdul Jalil explained the August 17 US-Bangladesh pact as going against the independence and sovereignty of the country.

"Why is the question of giving immunity to US soldiers against prosecution being raised now? Is the US going to set up a military base in Bangladesh? Are US soldiers coming to our country?" AL presidium member Tofail Ahmed asked.

Replying to a query, Tofail said the US knew it for sure that pressure would be mounting worldwide for trying US soldiers in the International Court of Justice for the killings in Iraq and that's why "it (US) is signing immunity (against trial) pacts with other countries by exerting pressure".

On the issue of attacks on lawyers at the court building on Saturday, AL leaders also questioned the role of the law enforcing agencies. After visiting the spot, some of the senior opposition leaders narrated to journalists yesterday that a 'private force' of the prime minister launched the attack on the lawyers at her behest.

AL presidium member Abdus Samad Azaad said "We want to blame Khaleda Zia for the attack. Police gave protection to the private force when the latter attacked the lawyers yesterday."

The AL leaders deplored killings of party leaders in Khulna and other places and criticised the home minister for failing to contain the slide in law and order.

They said the AL would support the September 16 hartal called by left-leaning groups to protest whole-

# Hamas alert

**FROM PAGE 12**  
ring to Hamas leaders. "We won't give them a moment's rest. We will continue to hunt them because they have only one objective: the destruction of Israel."

In the West Bank, the search began for a successor to Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas, who resigned Saturday after a debilitating power struggle with Yasser Arafat.

Arafat has not yet accepted the resignation in writing, as required by law, but told Palestinian lawmakers he considered Abbas' Cabinet a caretaker government, implying recognition of the resignation. Yesterday, Arafat aide Nabil Abu Rdeneh said the leader hoped to persuade Abbas - also known as Abu Mazen - to remain and form a new government.

Abbas, responding to speculation he might reconsider his decision to step down, said yesterday his resignation was final, according to Reuters.

Asked whether he would accept the post again, he told reporters: "It's very premature to talk about this right now. My resignation is final."

# DFP dogged by graft

**FROM PAGE 1**  
with Information Minister Tariqul Islam in the chair discussed the allegations of corruption at the DFP. The minister then formed an investigation committee headed by Joint Secretary Mizanur Rahman Majumder.

According to the committee report, the investigators went to the DFP on August 7 and wanted to see seven documentaries and video films - Jibon Jemon Jebhabe, Tourism, Gonotntr Uttaran, Esho Sundorer Pathay, Shishu Apaharan Rodh, Tomar Moto Bondhu Ke Achhey and Festival of Bangladesh.

The deputy director (Films) of the DFP surprised the investigators, saying that only three of the seven films are available, namely Jibon Jemon Jebhabe, Gonotntr Uttaran and Shishu Apaharan Rodh. Again, the film librarian told the investigators that the DFP had only one film titled Gonotntr Uttaran that was made back in 1979.

The investigators found that Jibon Jemon Jebhabe was a documentary recorded in videocassette rather than on film.

And Shishu Apaharan Rodh was not made available to the investigators. The video copy submitted to the investigators had a label that read "Amar Phul".

The investigators finally concluded that none of these movies was ever made. Yet, the producers and directors collected bill totalling Tk 18.09 lakh claiming to have produced these films.

sale closures of state-run enterprises and freewheel retrenchment of public sector employees and workers.

On the question of forming an alliance with like-minded parties, the AL general secretary said the party was very much in the process of having dialogues with other progressive opposition parties to wage a united movement in future against the BNP-led ruling alliance.

On the six-point agenda put forward by the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) to the AL early last month, Jalil said, "Not that we have agreed to all their points rightaway, but we can make progress by taking those as the basis for further talks."

AL leaders Matia Chowdhury, Abdur Razzak, Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, Obaidul Kader, and Mohammad Nasim were present, among others, at the press briefing.

# Female NGO staff stabbed to death

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

A female NGO employee was stabbed to death and dumped in a bush at Toynebe Circular Road by unidentified assailants.

Police recovered the body of Hasina Begum, 35, a Durjoy Nari Shanga employee at around 6:20am and sent it to Dhaka Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

Quoting the inquest report, police said there were marks of stab injuries in her chest, abdomen, thigh and left wrist.

A case was filed with Motijheel Police Station.

# Land grabbers

**FROM PAGE 1**  
The meeting observed that such problems should be resolved through the spirit of good neighbourly relations.

Committee Chairman Mahbubur Rahman presided over the meeting, also attended by committee members M Shamsul Islam, Kabir Hossain, Nurul Huda, Abdullah Al Kafi and Ali Kadar, among others.

# ADP benefit

**FROM PAGE 1**  
chief executives of all banks on August 30, a string of decisions including allowing private banks to take deposit of the government's development funds was made in a move to cut lending rates.

Even local PCBs out of the 30 are eligible to avail themselves of the facility as they meet the prerequisite. They are Pubali Bank, Uttara Bank, AB Bank, National Bank, City Bank, IFIC Bank, UCBL, Oriental Bank, Eastern Bank, NCCBL and Islami Bank.

In most cases, the ADP funds are deposited in the current account with the nationalised commercial banks (NCBs), which carry no interest, sources at the planning ministry and commercial banks said. At present, the amount of interest-free deposit in banking system is over Tk 13,000 crore.

The PCBs will get the facility of receiving a large amount of low cost deposit due to the decision. Each year, the finance ministry releases around Tk 14,000 to 15,000 crore from ADP funds.

According to the proposal, the PCBs, in business for over five years, can also take up to 25 per cent of government funds as deposit instead of the current 15 per cent.

The total amount of government deposit is now more than Tk 13,709 crore. So, as per the proposal, the PCBs can keep government deposit of Tk 3,000 crore.

Besides, the DFP made five documentaries in 2002-2003 fiscal without permission from the ministry. Similarly, it made six documentaries and one video film in 2001-2002. The DFP DG has no authority to make such films, the investigators pointed out.

On November 14 last year, the DFP procured 34,050 feet of 35-mm colour films through 51 orders, which is an all-time high. It broke the previous record of 10,600 feet of colour films procured against 21 orders. In November 20 alone, the DFP procured 5,640 feet of films through eight orders.

"This is not realistic," observes the probe committee. "Although Supervisor Shahid Abdullah is not entitled, he drew over 97,2