

## Crime investigations

**FROM PAGE 1** said the official who preferred not to be named.

For other agencies, the situation is quite pitiful. Most police stations in the country do have fingerprinting kits, but they are hardly used, a top police official said.

"Besides, only one per cent of policemen know how to collect fingerprints or footprints," he said, requesting anonymity.

"It is crucial that the first officer on the crime scene properly protect the area to restrict access and prevent evidence destruction. The entire investigation hinges on that first person being able to properly identify, isolate and secure the scene by establishing a restricted perimeter, mainly with rope, tape or barriers."

"But most of our policemen do not even know how to secure a scene to prevent evidence from being tampered with or destroyed inadvertently," said the official.

As a result, investigations are often stalled halfway through the process for want of such concrete evidence. In cases where direct evidence like witness testimony is unavailable or hard to get, investigation officers are forced to press charges based largely on circumstantial evidence, which in many cases is not enough to plug the legal loopholes.

In the absence of forensic evidence, prosecutors are unable to make a strong case and rapists, murderers, arsonists — many of whom are repeat offenders — walk away with impunity.

"Even in neighbouring India, police at all levels know how to protect a crime scene or collect fingerprints and footprints," he said.

The government has reportedly undertaken a project to set up a

## 3 killed, 5 hurt in Sitakunda road mishap

**BSS, Chittagong**

Three people were killed and five others injured in a road accident at Fakirhat under Sitakunda upazila on the Dhaka-Chittagong Highway yesterday morning.

The accident took place at around 9:00am when a Chittagong bound fish-laden truck from Bhola overturned and fell into a roadside ditch, leaving one person dead on the spot and seven others injured.

Two of the injured were admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) where they died at noon.

The dead were identified as Syedul Islam, 28, Habib Ahmed, 44, and Gedu Bhuyian, 28.

The injured are Abdul Gani, Mohammad Yunus, Mohammad Aziz, Saiful Islam and Ruhul Amin. They were admitted to the hospital. Sitakunda police rushed to the spot and seized the truck.

## Anti-graft

**FROM PAGE 1** League and past BNP government respectively, are supposed to sit on the commission.

Even the Bureau of Anti-corruption (Bac), to be abolished after the creation of the commission, was critical of it.

In a report it said although Bac filed 2,632 graft cases in the last three years, the commission would fail to lodge even 86 percent of the figure because of reduction in its authority in the draft law.

Saifur yesterday said that if the parliamentary standing committee backed the idea of not including ministers in the commission, a member of the civil society would head the commission.

One of the few measures taken by the government in the last two years to erase corruption is approval of the public procurement policy last week under pressure of the World Bank.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs on September 13 held its first meeting after the bill on Anti-corruption Commission was sent to it for scrutiny on July 10.

The committee decided to seek expert opinion on the bill before finalising it.

"If need be, we will hold several meetings with the experts," Khandaker Mahubuddin Ahmed, chairman of the committee, told newsmen after the meeting.

Talking to The Daily Star last night, Mahubuddin said the committee would take decision on the bill after consultation with Moudud, who is now undergoing treatment abroad.

"A meeting of the parliamentary committee will be convened once he returns home," he said.

## Shibir, JCD

**FROM PAGE 12** Himel, both Fazil (degree) students at the madrassah.

Madrassah authorities suspended all classes till Sunday. A tense situation prevailed in the area and additional police were deployed.

An ICS activist was killed during Monday's JCD-ICS shootout on the polytechnic campus and two cases were filed in that connection.

DNA laboratory under the Forensic Department of Dhaka Medical College Hospital, which is expected to be complete by December this year.

The police official also told this correspondent that Bangladesh had no expert to investigate arson or motor vehicle accidents.

Another major problem in crime investigation is lack of a comprehensive criminal database, said an official of the Detective Branch (DB) of police.

Criminal database has become an indispensable part of modern crime investigation and contains a vast array of information needed to successfully hunt down criminals or keep track of suspects. Criminal conviction records, information on fugitives, prisoners including those released on parole, their family members, neighbours, and a lot of other helpful things are available on such a database. They may also give access to court records.

But in the absence of any such database in Bangladesh, information is written down in record books, which is very inefficient and presents a numerous pitfalls, said the DB official. For example, lack of comprehensive information can lead to cases of mistaken identity. Also, it is entirely possible that no one will recognise a criminal walking down a police station hall since photographs are usually unavailable, he added.

He said investigators on the field also have to frequently rely on memory for various other related data, which cannot be readily cross-checked in the absence of a computer database.

## DCC staff

**FROM PAGE 1** engineer of the same department, are accused of selecting only 19 guidelines instead of the exact number of rules, formulated by a committee and approved by the mayor to check the quality of 150 waste containers.

A case was filed against Sujat and Sattar with Ramna Police Station on September 30, but the DCC did not take any departmental action against the engineers who are still attending office.

Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka said, "It is a criminal offence and we filed a case. Police will deal with the case in line with the law."

However, the mayor's Personal Secretary Ruhul Amin (on deputation) has been withdrawn from the post for his alleged involvement in doctoring and Chief Estate Officer AKM Fazluzzoha (on deputation) has been appointed in his place.

On other allegations of irregularities and graft against the two engineers, AFM Solaiman Chowdhury, the DCC chief executive officer, said, "We are trying to find out the documents to confirm their corruption."

## Arafat

**FROM PAGE 12** considered whether or not to carry out its threat to "remove" the 74-year-old Palestinian leader, who has appeared pale in recent days.

"It would be very convenient if nature were to take its course," an Israeli foreign ministry official, Jonathan Peled, told the paper.

"But Mr Arafat is a cat with nine lives and we do not believe he has used all of them yet."

If Arafat needs medical treatment not available in Ramallah, where he has his headquarters, he would be likely to travel to Egypt or Jordan, but only if the Israelis guaranteed his return to the West Bank, the Guardian said.

## Ecneec rejects

**FROM PAGE 12** Enayetpur areas from erosion of the Jamuna river. Later, the allocation was increased several times to Tk 43 crore without Ecneec approval.

Similarly, against an approved allocation of Tk 5.17 crore, the B h u a p u r E m b a n k m e n t Rehabilitation Project implementers spent over Tk 16 crore. In another project to protect Bhairab Bazar town from river erosion, Tk 23 crore was spent against an approved allocation of Tk 6.23 crore.

Yesterday, these project implementers sought approval of their extra spending,

but after reviewing the past records of the projects, the finance minister suspected corruption and rejected them.

The 17 other suspected projects are: Coastal Embankment Rehabilitation (Second part), Command Area Development, Chandpur Town Protection, Ramshil-Kafulabari Flood Protection, Bhola Town Protection, Shikalbaha Canal Bank Protection, Cross Dam Building, Conserving Mymensingh Town Riverbank, three projects on river conservation and development, protection of bordering rivers, 93 pilot schemes under small scale flood protection measures, crash programmes to rehabilitate damages caused by the 1998 flood, rehabilitation programmes of the Water Development Board (WDB) projects damaged by the 1998 flood and rehabilitation of the WDB's infrastructure damaged in 37 districts in the 1995 cyclone.

## Biman staff

**FROM PAGE 12** inform the Biman higher authorities of the meeting resolutions, they added.

Assistant District Manager Sirajul Alam, Finance Manager Rafiqul Alam, Commercial Officer MA Sadeq, Station Manager SR Khan, Employees Union (CBA) President Jamal Uddin and General Secretary Monwarul Islam attended the meeting.

In the past few months, Biman officials and staff members in its Chittagong office have come under a series of physical assaults by former assistant cultural secretary of the JCD city unit, Ali Akbar.

"Everyone present in the meeting spoke in favour of tough action against the criminal activities of Akbar," said CBA president Jamal Uddin.

Another union leader said, "We have requested the officials to ensure our security."

In the last two incidents, Akbar assaulted security in-charge Iqbal Hossain on October 1 and electrician Mansur Ahmad on October 3. Earlier, he beat up junior supply officer Farid Ahmed, damaging Farid's left eye.

## OIC summit

**FROM PAGE 1** together can make the OIC a useful organisation to further enhance cooperation amongst Islamic nations in a wide range of political, social, economical, cultural and other issues of interest to the Muslim ummah."

Khaleda hoped that Bangladesh and Malaysia along with other Muslim countries would work together to play an effective role in the ensuing OIC Summit for upholding the interests of the Muslim ummah and its development.

She further hoped that the OIC would emerge from the coming summit as a stronger organisation and praised the commitment and role of Dr. Mahathir for the Muslim ummah.

Referring to the active support of Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Brunei and other OIC countries to Bangladesh's candidature for the next OIC secretary general, the prime minister hoped that Malaysia would extend full support to Bangladesh's candidature.

Khaleda hoped that the existing good and friendly bilateral relations between Bangladesh and Malaysia would intensify further in the days to come.

She hoped that Malaysia would import more goods and avail itself of the friendly investment climate by increasing its investment in Bangladesh.

Khaleda Zia conveyed her best wishes to the Malaysian Prime Minister Dr Mahathir through the high commissioner.

## Commonwealth

**FROM PAGE 1** dampen the mood of the holidaymakers.

Singing, dancing, gossiping in an atmosphere of joy and happiness and eating food together, they tore down the barriers of cultures and geographical boundaries to fashion friendships.

Since the CPA conference began in the city on October 4, the participants have been busy holding a series of meetings — of the working party, executive committee, small countries and women parliamentarians. On October 7, they attended the official launch.

Yesterday's river cruise was a real energizer before the delegates from the 46 Commonwealth countries enter the main plenary sessions, workshops and seminars from today.

Braving the morning showers, CPA conference President Jamir Uddin Sircar, Executive Committee Chairman Bob Speller and Secretary General Denis Marshall and other delegates, observers and their spouses came out of their hotels, boarded cars and buses to reach Pagla Ghat from where the cruisers set off.

Shipping Minister Akbar Hossain, the host of the river cruise, welcomed all.

The guests were treated to a cornucopia of oriental food, fruit and beverage and music performed by professional artists.

In a lighter vein, Speaker Sircar chatted with the CPA delegates on board a ship and taking a microphone in hand proposed for visa-free entry to all Commonwealth countries.

Cameroon's Vice Speaker Rose Mgia termed the river cruise as very interesting and expected many happy returns of the day in the life of Commonwealth parliamentarians.

The morning spell of showers made Speller sceptical about the cruise and he shared his view with colleagues later.

The rhythm of folk songs brought out the artiste in some of the delegates, both local and foreign. BNP lawmakers Salahuddin Ahmed and Ali Newaz Mahmud Khaiyam showed their skills to the praise of many.

A delegate from Gibraltar danced with the band of Kuddus Boyati.

## Toll collectors

**FROM PAGE 12** 9:00am yesterday in the pond of one Alauddin Khan.

Police have sent the body to Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

As of 8:30 last night, no case has been filed and no-one has been arrested in connection with this crime.

## University teacher

**FROM PAGE 12** committee for public universities and stakeholders with University Grants Commission (UGC) Chairman Prof Mohammad Azaduzzaman in the chair.

The education ministry formed the committee following widespread criticism of appointments made in public universities in the recent past.

Leaders of the associations of university teachers, officers and employees attended yesterday's meeting, which also discussed new salary structures at public universities.

The meeting recommended that a candidate must have at least 15 publications to be eligible for promotion to the post of professor and eight for associate professor.

It said there should be clear cut definitions of national and international journals.

The committee will sit again on October 19 to have written recommendations from its members, which will be placed before the Vice-Chancellors Council on October 21.

Meanwhile, sources said the government is considering amendments to the University Act of 1973, which is believed to have been hinder-

ing the smooth functioning of the public universities.

It is necessary to evaluate controversial appointments at the Shahjalal, Jahangirnagar and Dhaka universities, Education Minister Dr Osman Farruk told The Daily Star recently.

The UGC has asked the public universities to stop fresh appointments for two months in line with the government's decision. During this period, it will examine irregularities in appointments, promotions and upgrading of teachers and submit a report to the education ministry, an official said.

There are allegations that public universities often recruit teachers and other staff in excess of allocated posts on "political considerations" and press the UGC for additional funds.

Besides, less qualified candidates allegedly get preference over the deserving ones in appointment of teachers due to 'group politics' linked to 'national politics,' nowadays.

There are 21 public universities in the country.

## Schwarzenegger

**FROM PAGE 12** hardly ever voted, easily won the governorship of California in a recall election that saw voters boil over in anger and throw out Democratic Gov. Gray Davis less than 10 months into his second term.

Political experts said that had the recall process allowed legislators to be thrown out, all 120 members of the California senate and assembly would have gone with Davis as well.

And instead of years of experience, they voted to make as their governor a man known by film fans around the world as "The Terminator" and "Conan the Barbarian." Only in America and only in Hollywood could such a scenario come true and no one was more grateful than the jut-jawed Schwarzenegger.

Beaming broadly and surrounded by the extended family of his wife Maria Shriver, a niece of assassinated President John F. Kennedy, Schwarzenegger promised supporters at a Los Angeles hotel to work to end the partisan squabbling that has riven the state.

"I want to be the governor for the people," he insisted. "I want to represent everybody."

**'TOUGH CHOICES AHEAD'** "We have tough choices ahead,"

he told a crowd of wildly enthusiastic supporters. "Shall we rebuild our state together or shall we fight among ourselves?... For the people to win, politics as usual must lose. I will reach out to Republicans and Democrats and independents — to those who supported the recall and those who did not."

While Davis was gracious in defeat and offered Schwarzenegger an orderly transition to power, many Democrats warned of problems ahead, predicting that Schwarzenegger will have a hard time promoting his programs.

They also questioned his ability to govern or even understand how government works.

Democratic state Treasurer Phil Angelides said he planned to hold Schwarzenegger to his campaign promises. "He has been less than truthful with the people of California about what it's going to take to restore fiscal integrity and get the economy going," Angelides said.

Schwarzenegger won a commanding victory from voters, who embraced his lack of political experience and outsider status and shrugged off a last-minute blizzard of sexual harassment allegations by 15 women.

## Back to business

**FROM PAGE 1** Today's workshops are on 1) Parliament and the Executive: Building a More Effective Partnership, 2) Do We Have Adequate Peacekeeping Mechanisms for Preserving World Order? 3) Are the Millennium Development Goals Achievable? 4) Reconciling Human Rights with Cultural Diversity, 5) How can the Doha Round Contribute to Increasing Trade and Investment Opportunities for Developing Nations? and 6) Anti-Terrorism Legislation: Have We Achieved any Tangible Results?

Talking to The Daily Star at Sonargaon Hotel last night, CPA Executive Committee Chairman Bob Speller expressed satisfaction at the progress of the conference so far and said, "After the river cruise, we're going to resume hectic business from tomorrow."

Meanwhile, the three-member probe body, which Prime Minister Khaleda Zia constituted to investigate the alleged technical glitch in playing the national anthem on the inaugural day of the conference, had made no headway as of yesterday. It is headed by Chief Whip Khandakar Delwar Hossain.

Talking to reporters during the river cruise, Delwar said he hopes to begin the probe today. He could not tell the names of the two other members of the probe body.

Commonwealth Secretary General Don McKinnon, who attended the formal inauguration of the CPA conference Tuesday and addressed an open session, left countries.

## Rains

**FROM PAGE 12** drizzles continued last night.

Reports received from Kuakata said rainfall recorded there since Monday night totalled 243mm and wind velocity reached 60mph. The sea was rough but defiant fishermen were still fishing deep into the sea hoping for a big haul at the end of a dull Hilsa season.

Erosions in coastal areas of Bhola, Patuakhali and Barguna districts have reportedly taken a serious turn. River and coastal embankments at Ramnabad, Dhankhali and Lalua of Kalapara, Baufal and Dumki of Patuakhali, Hijla, Muladi, Mehendiganj, Babuganj and Uzirpur of Barisal, and parts of Tazumuddin, Borhanuddin, and Monpura of Bhola district were freshly washed away by heavy rains and erosion.

River ports of the region were advised to show precautionary signal no. 2 and stop operation of river transports less than 60 feet in length.

## AL concerned at India's

## unilateral

## water diversion

## plans

## Says govt response

## lukewarm

### STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The main opposition party Awami League (AL) yesterday expressed concern over the proposed inter-basin water transfer project by India and criticised the government for failing to raise the issue properly at the recent Joint Rivers Commission (JRC) meeting.

"As an upper riparian country, India cannot take such a decision without consulting lower riparian Bangladesh," AL leader Abdur Razzak said while addressing a press conference at the party's central office in the city.

Razzak termed the unilateral Indian move unjust and said the country's ecosystems will be endangered if India goes ahead with the project.

"The government needs to lodge vigorous protests against the proposed project during JRC meetings and also initiate bilateral talks with India on the issue," said the former water resources minister.

The AL leader criticised Water Resources Minister Hafizuddin Ahmed for his recent comment that Bangladesh is not getting enough water due to some lapse in the Ganges water sharing treaty with India signed by the previous AL government.

## 2 Feni Jubo Dal cadres get life in heroin case

**UNB, Feni**

A court here yesterday sentenced two Jubo Dal cadres, arrested with heroin two and a half years ago, to life imprisonment.

The convicts are Nurul Haq and Kafiluddin of village Pathannagar in Chhagalnaiya upazila. Police said the arrestees are listed criminals in the area.

On a secret information, police nabbed Haq and Kafil at a house of the village and seized 350 grams of heroin, a Pakistani passport and Tk 20 lakh from their possession.

## Alliance rally

**FROM PAGE 12** called off when the organisers saw no sign that the rain would stop.

Asked why the fresh date that has been set is so far away, a policymaker of the BNP said it would not be possible to reorganise the rally within the next couple of days and the prime minister will also be leaving for Malaysia shortly to attend the OIC conference.

On her return, the PM can attend the rally scheduled for the fresh date, he added.

Earlier, the news of the postponement of the rally was aired by radio and television and also by microphones across the city. Despite that move, a large number of people went to attend the meeting.

## Cops club

**FROM PAGE 12** Shaheed Minar on assurance from senior police officials that action would be taken against those responsible for the attack on them.

The strikers held a rally at the Shaheed Minar, demanding punishment of policemen involved in the attack within 24 hours and steps to ensure proper treatment of the injured.

Meanwhile, sufferings of patients at the DMCH and Mitford Hospital continued for the second consecutive day yesterday due to the student nurses' indefinite strike from Tuesday.

"As an orthopaedic patient, I need nursing badly. But no nurse attended me in the last two days," said Abdus Salam, who is undergoing treatment at the DMCH for his broken legs.

## FTA talks

**FROM PAGE 1** concern. India needs to fulfill some prerequisites, including special and preferential treatment of Bangladesh's goods, to obtain positive results in the FTA negotiations," the official added.

India exported goods worth \$1.1 billion to Bangladesh in fiscal year 2001-02 while it imported only \$50 million worth products. Trade deficit between the two countries stood at \$590 million during the first six months of fiscal year 2003.

A string of state-mandated non-tariff barriers is causing serious problems to Bangladesh's exports to India. A Dhaka trade delegation recently went to New Delhi to raise the issues at a meeting with AP Singh, chairman of the Central Board of Excise and Customs, India, seeking an end to the hurdles.

## Syria ready

**FROM PAGE 1** group who killed 19 people in a restaurant in the northern city of Hama.

Israeli jets roared over Lebanon yesterday, without launching any strike and only breaking the sound barrier, two days after an Israeli soldier and a Lebanese boy were killed in border flare-ups.

Sharon has been buoyed by support from President Bush. Washington has accused Syria of being a state sponsor of terrorism.

## Political reaction

**FROM PAGE 1** On the other hand, Hasina, who also rejected the TI report three years ago when she was the prime minister, for rating Bangladesh as the worst performer, said this time that 'widespread corruption of the BNP-Jamaat-led coalition government is responsible for inclusion of Bangladesh's name as the most corrupt state.'

"The present BNP-Jamaat alliance government is totally corrupt and the report has projected their character," she told a group of private primary school teachers yesterday.

"How can countrymen expect something good from this government which established a rule of corruption, violence and nepotism?" she asked.

Meantime, after a meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council, Saifur said: "It is not correct to condemn a nation on the basis of some unproven allegations reported by newspapers and the general impressions of some people."

Coincidentally, at the meeting, he rejected three projects about which he suspected corruption.

Saifur noted, "We want to curb corruption. Despite many problems, an Anti-Corruption Commission bill has been placed in parliament, which

is now being scrutinised by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Law."

"Transparency International has suggested that an Anti-Corruption Commission should not include any minister. If the parliamentary standing committee suggests the same, we will not include any minister in it," he said.

"We might nominate someone from civil society to head the commission," he added.

Mentioning the report of TI's Bangladesh chapter on corruption published recently, the finance minister said, "It was prepared on the basis of some newspaper reports. It is not correct."

He then went on: "The newspapers report on the basis of allegations. But the rule of thumb is until you prove an allegation in court, you cannot term it as corruption."

"I was an auditor. There are thousands of audit objections. But it does not necessarily mean all the objections are true. Therefore, no-one should use newspaper reports or surveys as the basis of perception to rank a country."

## HC judges

**FROM PAGE 1** former minister for law and parliamentary affairs Abdul Matin Khosru. "They must resign as we have lost faith in them."

Sanctity and image of the judiciary have been tarnished by the government's appointing corrupt judges to the High Court (HC), he added.

Barrister Hafiqul Islam, former minister for public works, said, "The judiciary is facing a grave threat because of the government's corrupt influence and interference."

"The government wants to destroy democratic values and the rule of law by rewarding those who can create divisions among the lawyers with posts of HC judge, attorney general, PP and APP," said Barrister Amir-UL Islam.

The lawyers called upon the government to implement the 12-point Supreme Court directives to ensure independence of the judiciary.

They gave a call to free the judiciary from politicisation and corruption in the process of appointment of judges.

"The movement for the implementation of six-point demands is not for the lawyers alone, it's for establishing the rule of law," said Advocate M.A. Kuddus.

The lawyers expressed grave

concern at the lack of clarity in the process of appointment of HC judges and the government initiative to amend the