River-link scheme to benefit taskforce chief

proposed project of interlinking rivers, says Suresh Prabhu who heads the taskforce on the contro-

On how India will get countries like Bangladesh to agree to the project, Prabhu told the Economic Times in an interview, "We are negotiating. Even Bhutan and Nepal must agree. If Nepal agrees, it would be the biggest beneficiary of this project. We have to convince

Bangladesh originates from Indian rivers ... Bangladesh would actually be a beneficiary of this project," says

"Anyway, our objective is to do what is within our best interests without violating any international law, without being unfair to Bangladesh." he said adding "but if they still object, it is not right thing for

ity of water in Bangladesh is 12 times higher than in India.

But experts in Bangladesh said the Indian plan of diverting up to a third of the water flow of the Brahmaputra and some other rivers to southern Indian rivers to provide 173 billion cubic metres of water a year for Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka states, would impact

Water resources ministry officials told The Daily Star that Bangladesh having 54 rivers common with India depends on the water flow of the Ganges and Brahmaputra for 85 percent of its water in dry season.

Bandladesh depends on the Brahmaputra the most, as it is the from the rivers, particularly in dry season, it would cause immense sufferings to people in the lower riparian country, they added.

The interlink project envisages construction of some big and medium dams for inter-basin transfer of water from surplus river basins to water deficit basins.

About the opposition to building of large dams on environmental grounds. Prabhu said, "We have not created as many dams as are required. In fact, we need them more than the US because our peninsular water system is largely rain-fed and not snow-fed like the

Acknowledging that construction dams would have a "seismic fect and displace a lot of people, he said, "There has to be a trade-off. We should have the maximum storage with the least damage. Some damage is inevitable. But the benefits of the project would far outweigh the damage.

Asked if the project is technically feasible, the taskforce chief said all Indian institutes of technology, dubbed as premier institutions of learning, have been asked to oversee the technological aspect of the project.

The project, he said, is expected to create 35 million hectares of additional irrigation and about 35,000 megawatts of electricity, develop waterways and increase agricultural production by 40-50

On how Indian states will be made to agree to the project, Prabhu said, "We have to take them along. And that is only possible if the project is a win-win proposition for the states. So we are asking all the states to prepare a master plan."

Biman and Saudi Arabian Airlines has resulted in smooth carriage of pilgrims between Dhaka and point, thereby reducing inconvenience and possible disruption of the pilgrimage.

Biman protested a comment, reported in the news item, of President of Hajj Agencies Association of Bangladesh on civil aviation ministry officials in a deal with Saudi Arabian Airlines.

Terming the remark "malicious and malafide", Biman said the ional flag carrier would take legal action against him.

Our Reply

Our report was on a monopolistic market which permitted only two airlines to carry Hajj pilgrims leaving the non-ballottees with no option but to fly with Biman or Saudi Arabian Airlines. This was not contradicted

M-16 rifle

FROM PAGE 12

bullets of Chinese rifle, posters and leaflets from the house but failed to arrest the leader, Tapan Mahmud who was learnt to have been coordinating PBCP activities from

A top official of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) said police were on alert after the

ammunition while leaving their dens in a hurry. Assistant Commissioner (Uttara zone) of DMP Meer Ashraf

Meanwhile, police are interrogate ing arrested PBCP activists -- Raju and his wife Maksuda now on a twoday remand since Monday -- after they confessed to have been working as members of the PBCP's

the two said their headquarters is in the capital and they have an active

countrywide network. Acting on their information, police have arrested 19 people from

poverty reforms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Visiting Deputy Managing Director (DMD) of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Shigemitsu Sugisaki yesterday expressed satisfaction over reform measures taken up under the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Programme (IPRSP).

His satisfaction indicates that Bangladesh would get the second instalment of the IMF loan worth 70 million for implementing the IPRSP.

"The government has a good economic programme in which we are giving assistance," the IMF DMD told the press after a meeting with Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman at the finance ministry yesterday. "The government has undertaken credible reforms."

"We are aware of the difficulties n implementing the reforms. But the government must face them. The government has already taken some measures that succeeded to create jobs and economic stability."

Shigemitsu made his courtesy call on the finance minister yesterday evening. Bangladesh Bank Governor Fakhruddin Ahmed and Finance Secretary Zakir Ahmed Khan attended the meeting, among

"Within a couple of months, we are expecting an IMF review mission to ensure disbursement of the second instalment of the IPRSP funding," Saifur said. "It is not the volume of the IMF funds but the fact that we got it which is important. Other donors will then feel confident to lend us." "Our economic health is good.

We expect our growth to exceed 5 percent by next year," Saifur said. "We are taking steps to beef up

Cop guns down brother-in-law over his second marriage brawl

STAR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Police constable Abul Hossain gunned down his wife's brother Shamsul Alam Sajal in Badhbazar in Kumarkhali upazila here yesterday when a family dispute

According to police, Sajal, 33, a trader from Jessore, had gone to Badhbazar police camp to meet his sister's husband, police constable Abul Hossain to ask why he was not taking better care of his family in Jessore.

Abul was transferred to Kushtia last year from Jessore, and his wife and two sons are still living in Jessore. Abul has allegedly neglected his family in Jessore since his transfer.

During his discussion with Abul, Sajal arned that Abul had recently married again in Badhbazar. This news angered him, resulting in a violent altercation, and the on-duty Abul drew his .303 rifle and shot Sajal, killing him instantly. Kushtia police superintendent Abdus

Salam arrested the killer constable. A case has been filed against Abul Hossain with Kumarkhali police station

JS body

FROM PAGE 1

and the accommodation subcommittee shall be maintained," say the Rules of Procedure of Parliament.

Whip Ashraf Hossain, convenor of the sub-committee, first raised the question of the meeting's legality, convened without inviting a member of the sub-committee, Abu Yusuf Mohammad Khalilur

Hossain argued that though Khalilur Rahman's name was dropped from the House Committee, he was still a member of the sub-committee and that's why he should have been invited to vesterday's meeting.

Abdus Shahid, opposition chief whip and a member of the subcommittee, came up with the counter-argument that as all other members were present the meeting could be held.

Then the convenor asserted that the meeting would be held but its minutes would not be recorded. The members signed the attendance sheet and started discussing allocation of NAM (non-aligned movement) flats to the parliament secretariat, Abdus Shahid told

reporters after the meeting. Whip Ashraf Hossain presided over the meeting and subcommittee members Whip Rezaul Bari Dina, Whip Wahidul Alam and Opposition Chief Whip Abdus

IMF happy with | Sierra Leone

Both sides are also expected to discuss the establishment of permanent diplomatic relations

According to sources, Sierra Leone is expecting investment from Bangladesh, mainly in the garments sector for the purpose of utilising Sierra Leone's facility of duty and quota free access to the US market. Under the Trade and Develop-

ment Agreement of 2000, the US permits duty and quota free access of narment from 72 African and Pacific nations, including Sierra Leone, President Kabbah may also seek

further assistance in the reconstruction of infrastructure damaged during his nation's long civil war. Sierra Leone also needs assistance setting up key social and administrative nstitutions devastated by the war. The ties between Dhaka and Freetown were forged when

Bangladesh took part in UN peacekeeping operations in Sierra Leone around five years ago. Troops from Bangladesh, numbering as many as 5,000 at any one

time, were deployed to maintain law and order in the war-rayaged country. Around 2,000 Bangladeshi troops are still on active duty in Sierra Leone. The peace-keeping forces took

part in the construction of some key civil and military installations in Sierra Leone. Bangladeshi troops also provided emergency healthcare services to the local people. Bangladesh thus has a very positive image in Sierra Leone. Ahmed Tajen Kabbah led the

Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) to victory in presidential and parliamentary elections in May 2002. The UN declared the elections free, fair and violence free. This was the second time that

Kabbah was elected president. He was elected president in March 1996 in the first multi-party elections in

Sierra Leone's 23 years history, but was overthrown by a military coup in May 1997.

President Kabbah was restored to power nine months later when the rebel military junta was removed by troops of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and loval civilian and military forces.

Before his election as president Ahmad Taien Kabbah had a long and distinguished career as civil servant both at national and international levels. He served as deputy chief of the West Africa division of UNDP in New York.

Tk 25 lakh cellphones, gold haul at ZIA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The customs at Zia International Airport yesterday seized gold ornaments and mobile phone sets worth about Tk 25 lakh.

A customs team challenged Tofazzal Hossain, holder of passport No. O-0519323, as he was sneaking out through the green channel. He arrived on a Biman flight (BG-085) from Singapore.

They found five packets tied to Tofazzal's ankles. The gold chain weighs 1,100 grams and is worth Tk

Customs officials also seized an untagged luggage at the transit lounge that contained 123 cell phone sets. They also seized ten mobile sets from another passen-

UN role in Iraq

pass more authority to the Iraqi

Provisional Governing Council in mid-December. "The UN should be the one that

supervises, undertakes the whole

exercise and it would be easier for it to have international legitimacy, Malaysian Foreign Minister Syed Hamid Albar told reporters. The summit in Putrajaya, Malaysia's new administrative capital, will be the largest gathering

of Muslim leaders since the September 11, 2001 attacks on the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, who had been due to attend,

pulled out due to negotiations at the Security Council in New York over the latest US draft on Iraq. The United States revised its

draft resolution on Monday to

Janatar Mancha

Shahid Khan, Sirajuddin Ahmed and Rabiul Alam -- were present in the court.

In the case filed with the Court of the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM) on April 8, 2002, it was alleged that the accused erected a 'Janatar mancha'(people's dais) in front of the National Press Club in March 1996 and instigated government officials and employees to join the agitation to 'overthrow' the then BNP government.

Md. Saifur Rahman, officer-incharge of Ramna Police Station, filed the case.

CJ summons FROM PAGE 1

tions against the judge for quite

some time, it was learnt. Sources said Prime Minister Khaleda Zia before leaving for Malaysia to attend the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC)

Summit made it known that she wanted the judge to resign. Law Minister Moudud Ahmed Sunday told iournalists that the Supreme Judicial Council should

probe the allegation. The Supreme Court now on vacation resumes on October 18. Lawyers have demanded resignation of the judge before the court

According to Rokanuddin, when the judge sought money from the bail-seeker, she was hesitant to pay the fee, as the judge was no longer a lawyer he used to be a few months back. But the judge assured him that the judge in that particular case was his close friend and that he could easily 'manage' the bail, according to the Bar president.

"The judge who used to be a lawver before he was inducted in April this year hired a junior lawyer to draft a bail petition." Rokanuddin said at an emergency general meeting of the Bar Association that enforced a countrywide court

boycott on October 1. "The client then came to me and shared the incident." he said. "I was so stunned. How could a judge do this?

include a deadline of December 15 for the handover of power to the Iragis, with the Governing Council performing the role as interim administration.

Some delegates welcomed that as a step forward.

"Of course this is a serious and genuine move and if implemented in good faith, and conditions are conducive to the restoration of Iraqi sovereignty, it will be good for the Iraqi people, the region and the Muslim world," Musa Braizat, a senior Jordanian Foreign Ministry official, told reporters.

But the US draft resolution did not create a provisional govern-

Nor did it give the United Nations a central role in drafting a constitution and organizing elections, putting in doubt whether Annan would return political staff to Iran following the August 19 bombing of UN offices in Baghdad that killed 22

It was unclear whether the latest US draft would find favor among the Muslim countries Washington hopes might share some of the burden of stabilising and reconstructing Iraq. "We have to study the document

before we can make any assessment," a senior Saudi delegate told Reuters. "But any move to enhance the role of the UN is a positive move.' Annan had been expected to

open a business forum on Wednesday on the sidelines of the OIC summit and the meetings leading up to it, before attending the summit itself.

"He's involved in delicate negotiations at the Security Council, so he can't leave the country," a UN official, who asked not to be identified, told Reuters.

Drug crisis FROM PAGE 1

health ministry tap donor funds for the additional amount.

The health ministry was asked to explain why it prepared such a huge budget when it knew the ADP allocation.

Since June, the government has cleared and disbursed only Tk 11.84 crore, leaving the public sector healthcare in disarray.

"I sought Tk 52 crore worth of medicines for different thana health complexes last month as most complexes informed me that they ran out of drugs," said one of the directors dealing with government's primary healthcare. "But I did not receive any medicine so far."

A family planning employee, who did not get her salary from July to October, said, "Every year, we face the same problem. It's a total

Of the Tk 250 crore ADP allocation for health ministry plans, Tk 186 crore will be provided from government funds, with the rest from the donors, sources said.

The development partners have not yet given their committed amount of money (though approved) for this fiscal

Criminal Alauddin, his 9 accomplices held in Mirersarai

UNB, Chittagong

A top criminal of the district and nine members of his gang were arrested after a gunfight with police in Muhuri Project area under Mirersarai upazila in the early hours of yester-

Acting on a tip-off, a strong contingent of police from Sitakundu, Mirersarai and Hathazari police stations raided the project at about 4:am. Sensing their presence, top criminal Alauddin and his accomplices opened fire. Police returned fire. Both sides fired over 100 bullets

during the clash that continued for nearly two hours, police said

At one stage, Alauddin, accused in 27 cases, and his accomplices surrendered. Police recovered a rifle, a double-barrel foreign-made gun with 13 bullets, two airguns, two powerful bombs and six other weapons from them. The other arrestees are Masudul

Karim alias Sabuj, Akhter, Fakrul Islam, Noor-e-Alam, Moslehuddin, Didarul Alam, Mizanuddin, Nizamuddin and Zahangir Alam.

Quizzina of officials on over nat'l anthem fiasco

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Seven days after its formation, the probe body yesterday started interrogating the officials for the alleged technical glitch that stopped playing the national anthem at the October 7 formal inauguration of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) conference. The three-member body, headed

Hossain, interrogated 11 officials of the Public Works Department and the Jatiya Sangsad Secretariat at his Sangsad Bhaban office. It is scheduled to submit its report to the prime minister by tomorrow

by Chief Whip Khandakar Delwar

The body includes Home Secretary Omar Faruk and Public Works Secretary Aminur Rahman.

The prime minister, who inaugurated the CPA conference, constituted the probe body on that very day and asked it to submit a report within 48 hours. But it could not do so and sought extension of time.
On October 10, the speaker

announced the names of two members of the probe body and asked it to submit the report by October 16.

FROM PAGE 12 Holcim

FROM PAGE 1 accounting terms and the Companies Act". the Holcim release

Holcim, the Switzerland-based cement company, is preparing a detailed reply to the Bol to clarify the confusion. "Unfortunately, without waiting for the company's response to the letter, the Bol executive chairman has released it to the press." it said.

The company also strongly reacted to the Bol chief's reported comment accusing Latifur Rahman, chairman of the Holcim board of directors, of using media against him (Bol chief).

"While Latifur Rahman is the chairman of the board of directors of Holcim (Bangladesh) Ltd., the question of his misusing media to respond to simple clarifications requested by the Bol just does not arise as the company is run by an independent executive management," the release added.

Holcim maintains strict adherence to corporate ethics and international accounting standards, the clarification said.

All financial transactions and accounts of Holcim's new project that got the Bol approval on October 1 have been audited and certified by independent auditors, said Holcim.

"We believe that Bol plays an active role in foreign investment in the country and hasty comments made by senior officials of the Bol could have an adverse impact on foreign investors," feared Holcim.

Scared minister

FROM PAGE 1

passenger planes.

later started his journey by road Talking to the UNB, Milon expressed his dismay over the operation of ATP planes in Biman's fleet.

Milon and his family members had escaped an accident a few months ago when they were on an ATP aircraft on way

The ATP aircraft drew nothing but complaints since those were added to Biman's fleet in the late 80's. Biman currently operates two ATP aircraft. Mahmudur Rahman, Biman's

marketing and sales director, said there is

no specific plan to stop operation of the

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Corporation (DCC) who face charges for tampering with the mayoral decision were also found involved in corruption and irregularities earlier, DCC sources said.

Engineer Khandaker Sujat Ali and Executive Engineer Abdus Sattar of mechanical division.

Two inquiry committees formed by the DCC last year and in 2001 found the two engineers involved in underhand deals for payment of bills amounting to lakhs of taka to contractors before completion of their works. They also neglected their duties and failed to manage the staff

formed on April 26, 2001 and headed by the then DCC chief engineer M Mahmudur Rahman Khandaker in its report said Abdus Sattar recommended payment of running bills of Tk 16, 59, 960, though the amount was supposed to be only Tk 2,20,000, for installing two Chinese asphalt plants used for road repair and maintenance. Sattar took money from the firms concerned for recommending the payment.

44,6,3000 was also an inflated figure, the report said.

Moreover. Sattar recommended similar bills of Tk 14,06,300 instead of Tk 1,80,000 for a Russian asphalt plant. The cost of the plant was estimated at Tk 36, 90,500, which was also exaggerated, according to the report

The committee recommended departmental action against Sattar but

The allegation against Sujat Ali and his fellow engineers in the mechanical division was that he paid a bill of Tk 1. 29, 600 to a firm for repair of a container truck although no repair was

A three-member probe body headed by the then additional chief

SEC chief

Harun-ur-Rashid and Sultanuzzaman Khan.

A former Pakistan civil servant Islam served in senior positions with the World Bank

He was also a director of Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) of the United Nations.

Tampering with mayor's decision not first crime of accused DCC duo

engineer M Idris Miah, formed on

February 9 last year, said this in its

Meanwhile, The Daily Star carried

a report on November 19 last year that

a probe body headed by the then chief

engineer started investigating

allegations of misuse of funds and

other corruption of the two engineers

and recommended departmental

posts only to be reinstated later.

They were withdrawn from their

Sources alleged the probe

documents disappeared when

Sadeque Hossain Khoka took over as

The mayor expressed his ignorance about the matter.

DCC Chief Executive Officer AFM

Solaiman Chowdhury, however, said

he asked the DCC secretary to look

into previous records of the two

engineers and that action will be taken

BIWTA opens

new channel

but ferries still

near Daulatdia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Four ferries got stuck in the shallows

near the Daulatdia ferry terminal

esterday morning as the authori-

ties failed to restore navigability of

the main Paturia-Daulatdia channel

After being stranded for hours,

three of the ferries were rescued by

a tugboat while the fourth was still to

be salvaged, BIWTC (Bangladesh Inland Water Transport

Earlier on Monday, two ferries

Corporation) sources said.

getting stuck

action against both.

as per the probe.

in the Padma.

Two engineers of Dhaka City

The two are Superintendent

The DCC filed a case with Ramna Police Station accusing them of tampering with the specifications laid down under mayoral orders for making 150 garbage containers costing Tk 75 lakh.

under them, the probe reports said.

A three-member committee

The estimated cost of the plant Tk

nothing has been done so far.

ran aground on shoals lurking in the waters near the Daulatdia terminal and the risk is very much there. Authorities are faced with the daunting task of removing shoals that emerged at places in the river due to a fall in water level. The

problem has seriously hampered ferry services on the route since Saturday. Sources said the BIWTA (Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority) opened up a new channel on the route to avoid disruption of

carrying two-thirds of their normal load due to the navigability problem. Some 500 vehicles lined up at Paturia and Daulatdia terminals at 5:00pm yesterday waiting to be

ferry services, but ferries were

Suicide bomb

FROM PAGE 12

Two days ago, a car bomb targeted the Baghdad Hotel, home to US officials and members of the Iraqi Governing Council. At least eight people including the bomber were

Turkey's parliament has approved a government request to send peacekeeping troops to Irag, a move hailed by the US, which is seeking more international forces to help ease the burden on US soldiers. The Turks would be the first major contingent from a Muslim

But Iraq's Governing Council and the country's Kurdish minority have expressed sharp opposition to the presence of troops from Turkey, Iraq's neighbour. Many Iraqis fear Turkey seeks to dominate or grab territory in their country or that the

Ctg Port FROM PAGE 1

and Principal Officer Captain Shafiq Ullah of the MMD. During the investigation, the

committee interrogated 18 people including the captains, pilots, chief officers and other crew members of the merchant vessels and some other witnesses including those from the navv. Panamanian cargo ship the Eagle Strength collided head-on

BNS Flotilla naval base at around 6:30pm on September 21. The crew of the Eagle Strength claimed that it hit Banga Birai while trying to avoid ramming into a small

with the Banga Birai of HRC

Shipping, a local company, near the

feeder vessel at the entry channel. However, the officers of the Banga Birai and other witnesses dismissed the claim. The probe committee also reportedly failed to trace the small feeder vessel

deployment will cause friction with

ferried across the river.

Kurds in northern Iraq

and turned journalists away as ambulances and a fire crew rushed to the scene. An angry crowd gathered nearby, and Iraqi police fired into the

around the embassy with razor wire

US troops sealed off the area

air to disperse them. Iraqi guerrillas have attacked US troops and foreign and Iraqi targets seen as linked to the US-led occupation of the country.

A Turkish foreign ministry official n Ankara condemned the attack Just like the attack on the United Nations, this attack shows the security situation in Iraq is terrible, the official said.

"Allies of the United States must move quickly to help stabilise the country." the official added.

Admission test

stances GPA-based admission would prevent many from pursuing higher studies.

38.43 per cent. In particular, none passed from 95 educational institutions, mostly under the Rajshahi Education Board, and the state minister said

Elsewhere, pass percentage was below five at 58 institutions, below 10 at 174 and below 20 at 588 institutions.

FROM PAGE 1 future, but under the current circum-

Over 60 per cent of examinees flunked this year's HSC exams. The average pass percentage was

those institutions will be served show cause notices. "The government will take stringent measures if those institutions fail to raise their standard within a reasonable time."

Pass percentage was lower at the

upazila than in the district level, an official of the education ministry said

Bangladesh: Indian

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh will benefit from India's versial multibillion-dollar plan.

"Eighty percent of the water in

them to do". Prabhu said per capita availabil-

Bangladesh

source of 65 percent of its dry

Hazari

Court sources said ADM Mobizul Islam framed the charges. Hazari reportedly fled the countrv. six of the accused are absconding and six others are on bail.

Tipu Sultan was brutally

assaulted allegedly by Hazari's

cadres on January 25, 2001.

He suffered multiple fractures in his hands. Tipu filed a case on January 28 accusing Hazari and the others.

Tipu underwent treatment in

Bangkok, funded from Tipu

Chikithsa Tahabil created by The

Daily Star and the Prothom Alo.

DoE

launch.

project.

FROM PAGE 12 air. The DoE set up an air quality monitoring camp station last year, but it couldn't gather important data as some of the equipment went out of order within two months of its

Now the DoE has asked the

government to extend the

programme till 2006, sources said. The amount of the project money has also been increased to about Tk "We have revised the project profile and submitted the proposal to extend it. after an inter-ministerial

meeting. But nothing has been

decided yet," said an official of the

inter-ministerial meeting that the

project office would be asked to

submit a detailed account Tk 98 lakh

However, it was decided at the

that it spent on seminars and workshops. Out of an allocation of Tk 29 crore, the project could spend only Tk 9 crore during the three years of its existence, official sources said. The World Bank funded project was originally scheduled for a June 1999 launch, but it took off a year later. In 2001, it set up the camp

station for constantly measuring the

ratio between gaseous pollutants

and particles (floating dust) in the But its hydrocarbon-measuring machine went out of order just two months after it was installed. The price of the machine was 8,000 Australian dollars, sources said.

Gaseous pollutants in the city

atmosphere have decreased in

recent times due the ban on two-

stroke vehicles. But the level of

floating dust in the air is much higher

than the limit set by the World Health

Organisation. In the winter, air particles increase considerably to an average of 140 microgram per cubic meter.

Biman clarifies

"Operation of direct Hajj flights by Jeddah without involving any transit

alleged involvement of Biman and

Sunday. Police had also recovered 21

Operation Spider Web in the southwestern region in July so that criminals leaving the region cannot take refuge in or around the city. As they were alarmed at frequent raids across the city, they might have abandoned the arms and

Janajuddha (combat) wing. Police said the two provided important information about killings some political leaders in the southwestern region. Police said

the city over the last two days.