METROPOLITAN/NEWS

Confrontational politics, rise of militancy threaten sovereignty

Speakers tell workshop

DHAKA THURSDAY JANUARY 5, 2006

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Confrontational political culture and alarming rise of Islamist extremists paved the way for proliferation of small and illegal arms, threatening the human security, constitution and sovereignty of the country, speakers at a workshop said vesterday.

Terming the August 17 country wide serial bomb blasts a symbol of muscle power of the religious fanatics, they said the secular space is shrinking in the country. Bangladesh Institute of Law and

International Affairs (Bilia) in collaboration with Bangladesh Development Partnership Centre (BDPC) organised the workshop on 'The implementation of the UN Plan of Action on Small Arms: Perspective Bangladesh' at the Bilia auditorium in the city.

Blaming the Harkat-ul Jihad Al-Islam (Huji), Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) and Hizb-ut Tahrir for masterminding the latest bomb attacks, Bilia Director Wali-ur Rahman said, They are making our nascent democratic architecture even more fragile.

The latest addition to the terrorist network is the public appearance of Hizb-ut-Tahrir, which is the political ideologue of all the terrorist groups in the world, he

noted "We must tell the world that that the Holy Quran has been misinter-preted by the Wahabis, Salafis, Takfiris and Hizb-ut-Tahrir and they are being financed mostly by the Middle Eastern countries, Wali-ur Rahman said, urging the government to update the banking

country.

mainstream political parties, he said.

They join the political parties to

his paper.

(Retd) AMSA Amin said the politicisation of the administration

laws to stop such funding. The terrorist activities cannot be resisted unless there is an international and regional agreement and a counter-terrorist strategy, he

Pointing out a link among arms, black money and election, BDPC Director Sharif A Kafi said the use of illegal arms increases sharply during the major elections in the

There are about six lakh illegal gun users in the country and 40 ercent of them are below 18 years of age. Most of them are cadres of

misuse power and use the gun not only against political opponents, but also for hired killing, tender snatching, extortion, robbery, mugging, land grabbing, prawn

farm grabbing, rape, smuggling

and human trafficking, Kafi said in

country

esaid

"Unless the government estab-

lishes the rule or law, no opposition

party can help the government

although it has the responsibility to

make the parliament fully active,

Speaking as the chief guest, Law Minister Moudud Ahmed said the

government is now vetting an anti-

terrorist law that might be placed

The law will cover the areas of

in the next parliament session.

Substances Act does not cover.

Plan of Action on Small Arms

Indian High Commission in Dhaka on Tuesday said the Indian govern-ment at several meetings of Joint Rivers Commission had conveyed that the Tipaimukh Dam is a multi-He urged the government to purpose project meant for power generation and flood moderation adopt and implement the UN Programme of Action or at least set only. "It will not only mitigate the flood problem in the Barak Basin but would also enable regulated releases up a national commission on small arms and declare its own programme of action against illegal of water in the lean season to the benefit of both countries," said a trade, transfer and use of small arms. Former ambassador Maj. Gen.

High Commission press release. The release said the project has no irrigation component nor is a diver-sionary structure envisaged at s responsible for the failure to check terrorist operation in the Fulertal

Tipaimukh Dam

generation, flood

only for power

moderation

Says Indian HC

UNB, Dhaka

It said the decision to undertake a roject on the Barak river was taken at the instance of the government of Bangladesh during the first meeting of the Indo-Bangladesh Joint Rivers Commission (JRC), held in June 1972.

The 1972 JRC, after taking into cognizance the phenomenon of annual floods which afflict the Sylhet area of Bangladesh as also the adjoining areas in India, had decided to formulate suitable measures which would reduce the "flood damage" in these areas.

damage in these areas. To this end, the 1972 JRC had "noted that a project for the con-struction of storage reservoir on the Barak river has been investigated" and "felt that this was a useful project and formulation of this project should be expedited taking into consideration conditions in Bangladesh." every crime related to financing the rrorist outfits and supporting them ideologically or technologically, which the present Explosives The minister assured that he would initiate a dialogue with the Bangladesh. foreign ministry on signing the UN

The project proposal on the River Barak (which becomes the rives Surma and Kushiara in Bangladesh) was discussed during subsequent JRC meetings, specifically during the 14th (January 1978), the 35th (Sep-tember 2003) and 36th JRC (October 2005)

The Indian side had consistently conveyed that particulars of this project would be conveyed, as and when finalised, to the government of Bangladesh, the release added.

Father kidnaps daughter!

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A right organisation with the help of police yesterday rescued a child, who was allegedly kidnapped by her own father, from a house at Pallabi in the city.

Police also arrested the father on Tuesday night on charge of kidnapping his own daughter and demanding ransom from his wife.



Prime Minister Khaleda Zia decorates a police officer with a medal at the inaugural function of the Police Week-2006 at Rajarbagh in the city yesterday.

INDIAN RIVER-LINK PROJECT 'Form regional commission under UN to solve river issue'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

India cannot go ahead with the river interlinking project ignoring international laws and the rights of its neighbour as its implementation will lead to the desertification of Bangladesh, speakers at an international conference said

yesterday. Taking such an initiative with-out any discussion with

on the country, they said. They also called for forming a regional water management commission for the South Asian coun-

The two-day conference on

Upstream Water Diversion: Disaster for Bangladesh' began at the Institution of Engineers auditorium in the city yesterday, organised by the International Farakka Committee (IFC), a US-based environmental organisation formed by the expatriate

Bangladeshis in 1993. LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan attended the inaugural session as the chief guest while State Minister Water Resources Goutam Chakraborty was present as special

Awami League presidium member Abdur Razzak MP, Workers' disappear soon.

Party President Rashed Khan M e n o n , B a n g l a d e s h e r Samajtantrik Dal (BSD) President name only while only 60 or 65 rivers continue to flow during the winter, Khalequzzaman and Bangladesh he added Sammyabadi Dal General Secretary Dilip Barua were also without having any discussion with Bangladesh, India has already

LGRD Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said the existence of the country would be endangered if it loes not receive adequate water from the upstream.

The river water problem of in its northeastern region for the Bangladesh has been created in a planned way and India is now construction of dams. planning to build dams on 35 rivers, he said.

Despite all these issues which went against Bangladesh, India is our friendly neighbour, the minis-ter said, adding that the problems have to be resolved through dialogue.

Abdur Razzak MP said the national unity is a must to resolve the national problem. This unity should be among people, not at the personal level or leader level, he added.

State Minister Goutam mer vice-chancellor of Chakraborty said the desertification of the country must be pre-vented. "If India implements the project, it would be a violation of presentation on the upstream nternational law and we have to realise our rights through dialogue and mobilising support of the international community.

Khalequzzaman said that according to Bangladesh Water Development Board, 25 rivers will

The Daily Star

Boy stabbed to death in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A teenage boy was stabbed to death at Postogola in Shyampur in the city sometime between Tuesday night and yesterday morning

The victim, 14-year-old Mohammad Jony, was a class VII student of Postogola Cotton Mills High School.

Following information from an unknown person, police recovered Jony's body yesterday morning and sent it to Mitford Hospital morgue for autopsy. Hospital sources said the body bore marks of stabs and bruises.

Sajuddin Saju, maternal uncle of Jony, told reporters at the hospital that four friends of Jony--Sohel, Billal, Jummon and Emy -called him out of their Kalimullahbagh house at around 7:30pm on Tuesday.

"While going out Jony told his mother that they would go to a marriage ceremony in the locality and would not be back home at night," Saju said.

Jony's mother Saleha Begum filed a case with Shyampur Police Station yesterday accusing seven youths of murdering her son.

Police said they arrested Banga Rajib, an accused in the FIR, yesterday but could not find any lead to the murder as of 8:00 last night.

President, PM condole death of UAE PM

eight others are underway, Khalequzzaman said, adding that **UNB.** Dhaka India has also identified 64 points

PHOTO: PID

Now there are 230 rivers in

Defying international laws and

opened 16 big dams at the

crore people, he said.

water diversion.

upstream and construction of

have a disastrous impact not only

Political will and unity is a must

Prof Jasim Uddin Ahmad, for-

Jahangirnagar University, gave a

on Bangladesh but also on India.

to tackle the problem, he added.

President Iajuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia The Farakka dam, which was expressed their deep shock at the death of Shaikh Maktoum Bin built in 1974, has led to the fall in groundwater level, increase in salinity in southern districts and Rashid Al-Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of desertification of 18 southern the UAE and ruler of Dubai. districts, severely affecting four

"Rashid AL-Maktoum was a great leader of the UAE as well as Rashed Khan Menon said the of the Islamic Ummah. He shall be river inter-linking project would long remembered among all his friends and admirers for his services to the Ummah," the President said adding, "In his death, Bangladesh has lost a close and trusted friend."

Iajuddin also prayed to Almighty Allah to grant the bereaved family and the people of the United Arab Emirates courage and fortitude to withstand this irreparable loss.

Workers Party leader Haider In a separate message of condo-Akbar Khan Rono, IFC chairman lence, the PM said the demise of Atiqur R K Eusufzai, Secretary Rashid Al-Maktoum is an irrepara-General Sayed Tipu Sultan and ble loss to the UAE as well as the senior vice-chairman Mohammad Muslim Ummah. Saleh also spoke at the conference.

Khaleda

departed soul.

"The services of the late leader for the Muslim world and his

noble deeds of charity and assis-

tance to the poor humanity will

be long remembered," said

would always recall his kind atten-

tion and care for the causes of

Bangladeshi people, Khaleda said

praying for eternal peace of the

BIPAA executives

A 23-member committee of

The people of Bangladesh



Party leaders see off Awami League President Sheikh Hasina at the Zia International Airport in the city yesterday prior to her departure for Saudi Arabia to perform Hajj.

VOTERS' LIST **Comply with HC** verdict

Fatema Begum, mother of the child, told the press that her hus-band Rahmat Ullah Selim abducted their three-year-old daughter Nilima from Pallibi on October 29, when she was not at home.

present.

Bangladesh is a violation of inter-national laws on the part of India, as the project will have an impact

tries under the supervision of the United Nations so that no country can withdraw water from transboundary rivers unilaterally.

Enumeration goes on in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The controversial voter listing process continued yesterday in a lax manner with enumerators appointed under political consideration.

Hasna Hena, younger sister of a ward BNP leader and teacher of City Corporation Gul-e-Zar Begum High School at city's Chandanpura area, said she was surprised to see her name as an enumerator.

"I don't know how my name came into the list of enumerators despite the fact that I've no training or basic idea about the job," she told reporters while visiting a house at Panchlaish Residential Area vesterday morning.

Hasna Hena, who took up teaching only six months ago, further said, "the atmosphere in the school is very much new to me and this extra responsibility involving election at this stage of my life is all the more embarrassing.'

The apparently "embarrassed" young teacher was found more interested in school activities than doing this "odd" job.

"I've to attend an important meeting at my school. So, please fill these up and I will come after 1:00pm to collect these," she asked the owner of the aforesaid house, leaving ten forms there.

Hasna said she has not received any money for doing the job.

Replying to a query, she disclosed that her brother Rezaul Karim is a BNP leader of West Bakalia ward in the city and said, "He (my brother) might have included my name, although I'm not sure.

Supervisor of enumeration staff Ranjit Biswas, however, claimed that they rendered training to the enumerators including Hasna Hena.

Shahidul Alam, ward commissioner of West Bakalia, alleged that around 100 to 150 ruling party activists or supporters were entrusted to the task of information collection and each was supposed to get Tk 500.

"A BNP high-up has appointed them," he alleged.

Hasina urges govt, EC

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Congratulating the High Court Verdict on preparing voters' list, Awami League President Sheikh Hasina said the Election Commission (EC) and the government should respect the verdict.

"The government and the EC should take necessary steps in compliance with the verdict, otherwise people will be united against the bid to deprive them," she said while talking to journalists at the airport prior to her departure for Saudi Arabia to perform the holy

Haii. Hasina said the BNP men and the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) tried to gobble up Tk 164 crore in the name of preparing new voters' list.

UNB, Dhaka

over the country.

country in the next 12 hours till 6:00pm today.

Chittagong and lowest 8.3 degrees at Srimangal

in Celsius

Max

26.0

28.1

25.8

25.5

26.2

27.1

27.5

cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town Temperature

Dhaka

Chittagong

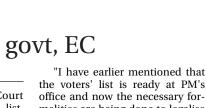
Rajshahi

Khulna

Barisal

Sylhet

Cox's Bazar



office and now the necessary formalities are being done to legalise the money," she added. Hasina, also Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, said that the alliance government tried to prepare a voters' list without enlist-

ing the supporters of 14-Party, minorities and pro-liberation forces. "It is the legitimate right of all to

be enlisted in the voters' list and none could snatch such right of the people," she added

She called upon the people to be united against the alliance government saying "I pray to Almighty Allah to free the people from the misrule of this government."

Rise in night temperature likely

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the

Light to moderate fog may occur over the river basins of the country

Highest temperature 28.1 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at

The sun sets in the capital at 5:25pm today and rises at 6:43am tomor-

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major

percentage

Min

14.4

15.3

10.5

13.5

12.0

13.4

16.4

Humidity in

Morning

66

81

93

78

96

66

73

Evening

60

61

70

71

--

--

72

during morning, Met Office said, predicting slight rise in night temperature

Selim demanded a ransom of Tk 5 lakh from her over phone, otherwise he threatened to kill the child, she claimed Fatema filed a case with local

guest.

police and searched everywhere to find her daughter.

Selim, however, denied the allegation of abducting his daughter. He alleged that his wife stole his valuables including ornaments with her two brothers and took away the child.

Gold. valuables worth Tk 5.3 lakh looted **STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Robbers yesterday looted gold and cash valuables worth around Tk 5.3 lakh from a house at Shyampur in the city.

A gang of around four robbers stormed into the house of Rafiqul Islam Majumder at east Dhania at about 1:30pm and took his two sons hostage at gunpoint.

The robbers then took away cash and 38-tola gold ornaments and fled the place.

Rafiqul filed a case with Shyampur Police Station in this connection, but nothing was recovered until last evening.

Arsenic problem not being addressed properly Experts say at international confce

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Experts from home and abroad yesterday expressed concern that the arsenic problem in the country is not being addressed properly. They called for evolving and

implementing a coordinated programme to combat the arsenic contamination.

"Though some progress have been made to contain arsenic contamination and mitigate its

adverse impacts, including treatment of affected patients, we are yet to take up the issue with the seriousness and diligence it demands," said Prof Mahmudur Rahman, trust coordinator of Dhaka Community Hospital (DCH), while reading out the Dhaka Declaration of the 6th International Conference on 'Safe Water and Safe Food Options in

Arsenic Mitigation'. Jointly organised by the School of Environment Studies, Jadavpur

Girl burnt to

nearby shops and houses, burning

Fire fighters from Sadarghat

The extent of damaged was

estimated at Tk 45 lakh by the shop

and house owners.

death in

University, India, and the DCH, the two-day conference began at the DCH auditorium in the city yesterday. The experts called on the media to highlight the threat of chronic arsenic poisoning and sensitise all concerned to adopt measures to fight the threat.

They also called for ensuring supply of safe drinking water in all arsenic-affected areas as there is

no known cure for Arsenicosis. Referring to the research findings that the irrigation water containing arsenic affects soil and crops and thus enter the food chain, the experts said more research activities are needed to establish the relationship between arsenic in irrigation water and its accumulation in crops.

They also stressed the need for evaluation of all deep tubewells by an independent agency and maximum use of rainwater as safe drinking water.

Cab discussion

Press Club. Time: 3:00pm

Blue for Peace

Consumers Association of Bangladesh

conference. Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman said

the rapid urbanisation and economic transformation should be taken into consideration while dealing with the arsenic contamination issue.

Mahfuz Anam, editor of The Daily Star, suggested bringing out a periodic report on the state of arsenic problem in the country in every six months.

He also expressed his concern, saying that the arsenic problem has not been focused sufficiently in the media during the last two years as it had been done earlier.

Acting Editor of The New Age Nurul Kabir, Editor of The Independent Mahbubul Alam, DCH Chairman Prof Quazi Quamruzzaman, Prof Richard Wilson, Prof Willard Chappell, Prof Ravi Naidu, Prof Dipankar Chakravarty, Prof Alan Smith, Prof Dr Meera M Hira Smith, Prof Ainun Nishat, Prof M Firoz Ahmed and Mujibur Rahman took part in the

Rehab seminar

Time: 12:30pm

(Cab) organises a discussion on Rehab, FBCCI and BSTQM jointly Barriers to enacting consumers' rights organise a seminar on 'Impact of total law and our duties'. Venue: National quality management on corporate performance'. Venue: Hotel Sheraton Time: 5:30pm

Family of slain former finance minister Discussion

DHAKA

Shah AMS Kibria will stage a silent sit-in Gonosanghati Andolon organises a as part of Blue for Peace Programme discussion on 'Bomb, state and demanding trial of the killers of former democratic revolution'. Venue: Moni minister. Venue: Front road of St Josef Singha-Farhad Trust Bhaban. Time School, Mohammadpur. Time: 4:30pm.

Seminar on education Memorial meeting

Pedagogy, a school for human Moni Singha-Farhad Smriti Trust will development, organises a seminar on hold a meeting in memory of Moni 'Standard education for human Singha. Venue: Trust Bhaban. Time: resource development'. Venue: IDB 4:00pm Bhaban meeting room-1, Agargaon

Bangladesh Intellectual Property Attorneys Association (BIPAA) has recently been formed, says a press release Advocates Mohammad Muhiuddin and Mohammad Zahirul

Islam were elected as president and general secretary (GS) for 2006 at its Annual General Meeting (AGM) at a cityhotel. The other office bearers are Vice-Presidents Mohammad Moazzem

Hossain and MA Mukit Khan, assistant GS Khondaker Shafiqul Islam, Organising Secretary Rezwanul Haq, Treasurer Mujibur Rahman, Library Secretary Khan Hassan Zaman, Office Secretary A Kader Khan, Publicity Secretary Mohammad Shahid Ullah and Cultural Secretary Sultana Begum. Advocate Abu Bakar Forhad and 11 others were elected members of the association.

Death anniversary



Today is the 20th death anniversary of Alhaj Sharif Ullah Chowdhury, a businessman and social worker of Narayanganj, says a press release.

He died on this day in 1986 in Narayanganj at the age of 66.

On the occasion, a milad and doa mahfil will be held at his elder son's residence at Dhanmondi in the city at 11:00am.

Relatives have been requested to attend the milad mahfil.



others.

operation during the weekly holidays on the occasion of the Eid-ul-Azha while no Inter-city train will be available on Eid Day.

mail and local trains will remain suspended on Eid day and a number of inter-city trains will not be avail able on the day after the Eid.

Bangladesh Railway has requested the concerned passengers to contact the local stationmaster for detailed information.

Special trains on Eid

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Bangladesh Railway has arranged special trains on different routes for the convenience of homebound passengers on the occasion of the holy Eid-ul-Azha.

Two special trains will be in operation on Dhaka-Jamalpur route while four special trains will ply on Chandpur-Chittagong route from January 8 to 20 except the Eid Day and January 15, says Bangladesh Railway in a press release.

All inter-city trains will be in

Taslima, 9, alive and inuring five Besides, movement of several and Keraniganj rushed to the spot and put out the blaze after 90 minutes of frantic efforts.