A waste of Tk 60cr?

CEC MA Aziz yesterday declined to talk to journalists about the fate of the ongoing task, while the two election commissioners, who always opposed the preparation of a fresh voter list, welcomed the HC judgement.

"It is a relief for us. People might think we are against the election as we opposed the move for a fresh voter list. After the judgement, our position has been cleared and all confusions have been removed,' Election Commissioner M Munsef Ali told journalists yesterday at his

Election Commissioner AK Mohammad Ali said people's right has been established through this judgement. He, however, expressed doubt about the implementation of the court order as the government controls the EC. "The implementation of the High Court order depends on the willingness of the EC secretariat," he said. **EXPENDITURE ON RISK**

The CEC on August 6 decided to prepare a fresh voter list for the next parliamentary elections, ignoring the objection of the two election commissioners.

The same month, the EC sent a budget of Tk.146 crore to the government for the purpose and started preparatory work after receiving Tk 60 crore in the first installment of the budget.

The secretariat has spent most of the money for printing a huge number of manuals, nine crore voter's registration forms and training programmes for the manpower recruited for the task.

The large number of voter's registration forms will, however, not be useful for revising the existing voter list and new forms will have to be printed for the purpose. The crew will also have to be trained afresh.

Besides, the 2,16,722 enumerators who started the work for preparing the fresh voter list on January 1 will have to be paid for their four days' work.

On the wastage of money, Mohammad Ali said the department concerned will look into the matter. "If there was any irregularity in spending the public money, it will take action," he observed.

Meanwhile, the EC remained silent about the sector-wise allocation of the budget from the very

EC Deputy Secretary Mihir Sarwar Morhsed, who coordinates the budget, vesterday declined to provide any information on this and suggested contacting the public relation department of the EC. The officials of the said department also failed to provide any

However, the expenditure of the previous voter list prepared in 2000 will give an idea of the sector-wise allocation for the task.

In 2000, the EC secretariat spent 14.89 crore as the remuneration of the enumerators and over Tk 2.22 crore for the training of the manpower recruited for preparing the voter list.

As the officials at the EC secretariat had earlier said the amount would be increased this time, a budget of Tk 146 crore was proposed for preparing the fresh voter list. About Tk 100 crore was spent in 2000 for preparing the existing voter list.

WHATWILLBENEXT

About the next course of action, Election Commissioner M Munsef Ali said a fresh timetable will be declared for the task. This time the crew will go from door to door to correct the existing voter list and then it will be declared as the draft electoral roll.

"We will also have to keep provision for lodging complaints about the draft list. The final list will be published after resolving the com-

manpower will be used for revising the existing voter list, he said the EC will take the decision at its meeting.

the ongoing process should be stopped at first. "We will sit and chalk out the plans to prepare a fair voter list," he said.

EC has to take fresh decision on the matter as the allegation of politicisation was raised against the recruitment, "The manpower must be neutral and non-partisan to complete the task," he added.

charges against the Ahle Hadith Andolan, Bangladesh (Ahab) Ameer Asadullah Al Galib and three others in connection with the bomb blast at Laxmikola village on January 14 last year.

13 for the trial.

Action Battalion (Rab) arrested four suspected militants at the court premises during the hearing and recovered some jihad related

arranged a rally yesterday at the district's Edward Park area and demanded release of Galib and other Ahab members claiming the organisation has no links with

14-party rally at Paltan Jan 23

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Maidan in the capital on January

announced from the rally.

Besides, the meeting also decided to hold grand rallies at Chittagong, Sylhet, Barisal and Rangpur before the February 5 long march towards Dhaka.

diate postponement of preparing the new voter list as per the verdict of the High Court and proper steps to ensure the voting rights of the

Hannan gets lawyer

with two other lawyers submitted a petition with Vokalatnama for conducting the case filed against Hannan in connection with the explosion at Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue near Shahbagh.

in-law of the JMB chief Abdur Rahman, were shown arrested in the case and placed on remand yesterday. Hannan was placed on remand for the 14th time and Abdul Awal for eighth time.

The Detective Branch (DB) of police accompanied by Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) produced Hannan and Awal, wearing helmets and bullet proof vests, before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka yesterday afternoon on completion of their five-day remand in the August

In the forwarding report, the investigation officer (IO), seeking a 10-day remand period, mentioned that the two were directly involved with the August 17 countrywide bomb blasts, including the blast at Shahbagh in the city. They need to be interrogated further to find out the vital clues to the case, the report said.

cancellation of the remand saying the IO could not gather any clues about the August 17 bomb blasts even though Hannan was in police custody since his arrest on October 1 last vear.

On the other hand, Awal had no lawyer to defend him. He was in custody since his arrest on

Following the hearing, Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Shamsul Alam placed On the manpower he said the

Charges framed against Galib in **Bogra blast case**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

The Bogra unit of Ahab

17 bomb blast case.

APP Emdadul Haque Lal along

Hannan and Abdul Awal, sonbus at Thakurgaon on November

17 Jatiya Press Club bombing case.

The defence lawyers prayed for

plaints," he said. On whether or not the present

Mohammad Ali, however, said

A Bogra court vesterday framed

The other accused in the case are Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) chief Abdur Rahman, Shafiq Ullah of Narayanganj and Joynal Abedin of Gabtoli, Bogra. Police excluded previously accused Monowara, oynal's wife, from the charge sheet. The court scheduled March

Meanwhile, members of Rapid

Awami League (AL) led 14-party combine will hold a rally at Paltan

The next programmes of the ongoing movement will be

The decision came from a meeting of the liaison committee of the 14 party combine at the Awami League president's Dhanmondi office last night with AL presidium member Abdur Razzak, MP in the

The meeting demanded imme-

people updating the existing voter

them on a seven-day remand. Mufti Hannan is already shown

> Motijheel and Demra police sta-JMB's regional chief of Rajshahi, Awal (Ashique), was another Majlish-e-Sura member and was captured from a Dinajpur-bound

arrested in four other blast cases

filed with the Tejgaon, Ramna,

JS body

FROM PAGE 20

committee on the civil aviation and tourism ministry at a meeting asked the ministry to investigate why the crisis persisted, meeting sources said.

People responsible for the crisis should be punished since it has tarnished the government's image, committee members said at the meeting held at the Jatiya Sangsad

Senior officials of the civil aviation ministry held the religious affairs ministry responsible for the situation.

"The religious affairs ministry first informed us that there are 40,000 intending pilgrims. But later they said the number is 60,000. Due to this, the civil aviation ministry is facing difficulties to provide adequate flights to ferry the pilgrims to leddah," a meeting source quoted a senior official as saying.

The state minister for civil aviation however assured the meeting that the government has taken adequate steps to resolve the crisis. "We will be able to send all the intending hajj pilgrims to Jeddah," he said.

A ruling BNP lawmaker criticised the authorities for negligence to take proper care of the pilgrims at the hajj camp in Dhaka.

Revise present

regard, the EC will be considered to

parties, it observed.

stitutional duties The EC will discharge the responsibility of making a voter list without entertaining the demands of any particular political party or

have failed in discharging its con-

The court also observed that the right of a voter does not depend on an enumerator's going to his house. A citizen can still be a voter if he fails to be present when the enumerator visits his house. So the EC will have to ensure that the absentee voters are not excluded from the list.

Petitioners' counsel Dr Kamal ossain submitted before the court that updating the voter list for general elections is a continuous process being practised for long.

"The voter lists were updated through correction and revision from 1982 to 1995 as per unanimous decisions of the election commissioners. The court can make some guidelines for the EC regarding preparation of the voter list," he said.

About the court's observations, he told reporters that the CEC cannot take a decision unilaterally to prepare a voter list. He can take such a decision after discussing it with other members of the com-

Barrister Amir-Ul Islam. another counsel of the petitioners, submitted that the court's interference in the preparation of the voter list by the EC is inevitable for hold ing the next general elections Explaining the court observa-

will be the major basis and it can be revised through inclusions and exclusions "Vigilance of people and the media is necessary to ensure proper compliance of the High

Court guidelines," he told news

tions, he said the existing voter list

Counsel for the CEC, advocate Khondker Mahbubuddin Ahmed told reporters that the work on making a fresh voter list that started on January 1 will continue but it will have to be made in the light of the existing one prepared in

Criticising the petitioners' counsels for their celebration after disposal of the petitions, he said: "It seems from their excitement that the court has issued a rule or an injunction on EC's voter list move. But the court has disposed of the petitions merely making a few remarks."

AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil filed one petition while his party lawmakers Rahmat Ali and Asaduzzaman Noor filed the other on December 12 last year. Hearing of the petitions was first held on December 15 and resumed on

Attorney General AI Mohammad Ali was present in the court for the government while Barrister Tanjib Ul Alam assisted Dr Kamal and Dr Shirin Sharmin Chowdhury and barristers Moyeen Firoji, Shamsul Hasan and Maniruzzaman Asad assisted Amir-Ul Islam.

Sedition case

report (FIR) of the case filed by Shah Alam, Advocate BD Zaman on December 13 sent seven letters bearing the name of the banned Islamist militant group to several lawyers, threatening to kill them and blow up their houses within seven days.

The sedition case is yet to be recorded with the police station since it requires the permission of the home ministry, said Superintendent of Police Abdur Rahim.

The police arrested one Hafizur Rahman, a typist on the court premises, for typing the letters.

Hafizur told the police that Zaman forced him to type the letters and gave him Tk 25. Zaman was expelled from the Bar and his licence was seized, Shah

Alam said. Shahjahan, officer-in-charge of e Satkhira PS, confirming the incident said proper measures will be taken after receiving the home ministry permission.

2 killed

FROM PAGE 20

Superintendent Shamsul Alam Khan later said two people died in the

Their identity could not be known immediately. Police opened fire on the agita-ors, who under the banner of Palli Biddyut Unnayan Sangram Parishad, laid a siege to the Palli Biddyut Samity office demanding withdrawal of meter-charge and uninterrupted power supply.

Of the injured, Babu of Chakriti Laoghatta village, Monirul and another unidentified man of Khasherhaat, were admitted to the Rajshahi Medical College and Hospital (RMCH) in critical condi-

Thirty people, who were injured by bullets, were admitted to Shibganj Upazila Health Complex.

According to a witness, thousands of people took position around the Palli Biddyut Samity office on the Chapainawabganj-Sonamasjid road after the incident. Policemen cordoned off the office

The assistant police superintendent said the law enforcers were compelled to open fire to bring the situation under control. A tense situation was prevailing in

after the incident.

A temple of neglect

closed. A ghastly blow of stormy wind will break down all the concrete and wooden pillars.

The Thakur Ghar, residence of the temple priest, is half broken and may collapse any time. The government has launched a project in the locality, some 60 to 70 yards off the temple, for the housing of the Rakhines, but the temple failed to draw its attention.

Except providing the indigenous people with houses, the government seems to be reluctant to make other living facilities available to them.

As the Rakhines are unable to reserve the temple, Wema Ching, 55, an unpaid caretaker, had appealed to the local upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) for help. However, the appeal of Ching, who has been looking after the

her earning, yielded no positive response. The poverty-stricken community could not even perform the last puja as its members failed to manage a fund to hire a priest and collect other necessary things.

temple since she was 23 leaving aside

Ching in a letter sought the UNO's help on the occasion of puja three months ago, but again no reply was

m a d e . "All the Muslims and the Hindus get government assistance on their religious occasions. But where is mine? I cried for help to the local administration and returned empty handed," said Ching in tears. Locals said priests Mogiche and Momiakhai had set up the temple 120 years ago.

Unarenda Bekhu was the last appointed priest who died 10 years ago and since then all religious performances have remained almost stopped. The Rakhines only perform puja when they can afford hiring a Γhakur. "I am so tired as all Rakhines have

about our plight and help preserve the heritage as well as our religion,' asked Wema Ching whole-heartedly. Abdul Barik, UNO of Kalapara, said, "I have no authority to sanction any amount for such purpose except from my own pocket. Only the dep-

"However, during my tenure a large amount of money was spent for renovation of the temple," he

uty commissioner of the district can

ADP projects turn

FY06 ADP is Tk 17,000 crore, of which only Tk 2,503 crore or 15 percent was expended in the first four months. In July-October of FY05, this rate was 21 percent.

Of the ADP this year foreign project aids account for Tk 7,500 crore, of which Tk 1,280 crore or 17 percent was spent in July-October, which was 20 percent in the same period in the previous year.

Out of the total 859 projects, 333 are foreign-funded. Of them 51 projects were unapproved at the beginning of FY06, but 44 of them had been approved by December, the planning ministry told Saifur at yesterday's meeting. As almost all the projects have been approved, the meeting observed, so the delay in implemen-

the decelerated pace of implemen-The finance minister directed the Economic Relation Division to sit with the line ministries every month

tation was not caused by approval-

related complications. Saifur said he

will sit with all the line ministries on

January 18 to identify the causes for

to monitor and assess the progress of the foreign-funded projects. He also asked the Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Division to make field visits and submit reports to the finance ministry on the status of ADP implementation.

"The current ADP is much bigger in size than the previous ones. At the beginning of the year, the projects mainly been occupied with floating the procurement process. So, the pace of implementation seems a bit slow," State Minister for Planning Anwarul Kabir Talukder

told The Daily Star yesterday. He said the speed of implementation will pick up gradually in the

coming days. But, a finance ministry official expressed the apprehension that much of the ADP money will be misused during the end of the fiscal year, when the projects will spend their moneyhurriedly and haphazardly.

The amount and rate of ADP project spending became so huge at the fag end of FY05 that around Tk 4,000 crore was borrowed from the banks in the last couple of days alone to feed the project expenditure.

Sangsad

FROM PAGE 1

lawmakers, may generate much heat as the opposition is likely to raise the issues of reforms in the caretaker government system and Election Commission and the alarming rise of militancy.

President Iajuddin Ahmed will

address the House in accordance

with the constitution and the lawmakers will take part in a long discussion on his speech. The much-talked-about Antiterrorism Bill will be placed in the coming session that was drafted

amid alarming rise of Islamist militancy in the country. The main opposition lawmakers are at risk of losing membership due to absence of 90 consecutive days.

As the ongoing anti-government movement has yet to gain momentum, the AL side is pondering joining the session to save membership. They also contemplate utilising the joining in favour of the opposi-tion's demand of bringing reforms

electoral rules before the next general elections, sources said. Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdul Hamid said the Awami League Parliamentary Party will meet before the session to decide

in the caretaker government and

whether it joins the House or continues the boycott. He said the AL will join the session if the party thinks it reasonable for the sake of ongoing anti-government movement. "There is

enough time to think about it.' The parliamentary seat of AL chief and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina will fall vacant if she remains absent from the House 13 more working days. Hasina did not in the House for consecutive 77 days until the last session.

A senior AL lawmaker said if the

AL seats fall vacant, the government

may go for early polls after dissolving parliament as it may not take f holding by-ne large number of constituencies. The AL side thinks if this happens, it will help the government hold the polls under the existing

caretaker government and electoral The opposition wants to force the government to meet its demands in the present parliament, AL sources said.

system without reforming the

"The decision of joining parliament has not taken yet, but many leaders are in favour of it," said an ALlawmaker. On Tuesday, AL allies suggested

Sheikh Hasina that the main oppo-

sition should not quit parliament

before the current anti-government movement reaches its peak. The AL lawmakers are pondering placing their reform proposals in the House and initiate a heated debate on the issue, opposition

that police stations in Dhaka metropolis would be increased to 51 and there will also be a women police station. Process is underway to set up 36 "model police stations".

About 2,000 new apartments are

being constructed in the capital for

accommodation of policemen starting from constables to subinspectors, she told the function. Ministers, MPs, chiefs of the three services, diplomats, elite and senior police officials were present.

The prime minister said the capability and efficiency of the police have increased manifold due to various reforms and logistic supports provided by the government. She said 10 percent quota has been kept reserved for employment of children and dependants of the

police for constable posts. Despite

resource constraints, she said

ration, food allowance and risk

allowances have been increased substantially. She also referred to the formation of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), highway police unit and supply of 2,844 new vehicles to make the force more skilled and dynamic.

Police Medals among 52 recipients for their best performances. Of them, seven were given Bangladesh Police Medal and 11 the President Police Medal. Besides, 6 recipients were given Bangladesh Police Medal (Service)

and 28 the President Police Medal

(Service) for their outstanding

performance in different fields.

Earlier, Khaleda distributed

State Minister for Home Affairs

Lutfozzaman Babar and IGP MA Qaiyum received the prime minister at the venue. She was given guard of honour by a contingent drawn from 14 different law enforcement forces. The prime minister inspected the march past and took salute from a podium.

2 stolen

house in the locality

police.

sources said

One of the recovered infants is a boy aged about 16 days and the other a girl aged about nine days, said the

12:00noon as Monir Hossain, father of another stolen child, informed them an infant was seen with her. The police rushed to her house and arrested her with the baby boy and rescued the girl from her rented

The law enforcers arrested Jharna at Chhayaneer around

as no-one showed up to claim them until the report was filed at 9:00 last Earlier on December 30 last year. Monir of North Mugda filed a complaint with Sabujbagh Police Station after their newborn baby

Mostafizur Rahman was stolen.

The infants are in police custody

29 and asked his wife, Amena Begum, for some food. Amena went to her kitchen to fetch the woman, who identified her as Swapna, some food and on return found she disappeared with

A young woman in a veil

appeared on the night of December

Graft, poor FDI

asked the energy adviser not to pro-

sectorwith any 'motive'. The adviser recently said the country's total energy reserve is 100 tcf -30 tcfgas and 70 tcfcoal -- which can meet its energy requirements for decades, the BEA president men-

vide inappropriate figures on energy

But, he pointed out that a consultant firm of Petrobangla estimated the gas reserve at around 10 tcf, which would exhaust by 2015. Moreover, experts think the country's probable coal reserve is to the tune of 6 to 7 tcf that can meet the demands for another two to three years only.

Nuruddin Mahmud Kamal former chairman of Power folded their hands to pay for its Development Board, also blamed the maintenance. Please say someone energy adviser for making impulsive remarks on energy reserves.

Coal should be considered as the second source of energy next to gas, he said, urging the government to frame a coal policy.

BEA General Secretary Prof Abul Barakat regretted that the country is now facing a serious energy crisis despite having adequate energy

No question

FROM PAGE 1

them to take part in the dialogue. Tough action will be taken to punish the bombers according to the law, the sponsors behind the bombings will be unmasked, she told the freedom fighters at the International Conference Centre

Referring to success so far achieved in containing the outra-geous act, Khaleda said bomb terrorism would be stopped at any cost and none would be spared if involved in the carnage.

She said the activists of a banned organisation had killed innocent people and attacked some institutions using the name "They are acting against Islam,

development and democracy in the name of Islam," she told the leading freedom fighters. A 31-member delegation led by Chairman of Bangladesȟ Muktijoddha Sangsad Central Command Council Kabir Ahmed Khan and its Secretary General Shah Alam Chowdhury met the

prime minister. The prime minister said a party instead of cooperating with the government in its initiative to stop bomb terrorism wants the government's resignation. She urged all to forge unity on the national issues.

Talking to newsmen after the meeting, Muktijoddha Sangsad Chairman Kabir said they put forward 12 suggestions for curbing the bomb terrorism. Those include finding out masterminds, source of money behind the bomb blasts, shutting down those institutions involved in the bomb terrorism and formation of a strong probe committee comprising competent persons to identify the suicide

The freedom fighters extended "all-out support to the government the bomb terrorism" LGRD Minister and BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan

Bhuiyan, who gave the introductory speech, said the government is implementing many of the suggestions given by the freedom fighters. State Minister for Liberation War Affairs Rezaul Karim also took part in the consultation while Prime Minister's Political Secretary

Harris Chowdhury was present.

30 killed

The bombing in Muqdadiyah left tombstones covered in blood. Police said more than 100 mourners were at the cemetery for the burial of

a nephew of the director of the local

Thirty-six people were wounded along with the 30 killed, said Firas al-Nida, a doctor at hospital. Muqdadiyah is about 60 miles north of Baghdad. The director of the hospital had

survived an assassination attempt on Tuesday, when his nephew was fatally wounded. The director is also the head of the local al-Dawa party, a junior partner in the country's largest Shia

political coalition, the United Iraqi

Alliance, police said.

Iraqi Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari is the head of the Dawa party. Police Lt Salam Hussine said the bombing was aimed at igniting a Shia-Sunni civil war. Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the

extremist Sunni leader of the terror-

ist organization al-Qaeda in Iraq, has made Shias his chief target. The three major political parties the Shiite United Iraqi Alliance, the Sunni Arab Iragi Accordance Front and the Kurdish coalition -were working on a coalition government, an Alliance official said Wednesday, and were discussing a nominee for prime minister.

"We can say that the (three

parties) are close to forming a new government," said Ridha Jawad Taqi, a member of SCIRI, the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, which is coalition partner in the United Iraqi Alliance. "Meetings between the tickets will be resumed after announcing the final results of the elections. An international monitoring

team this week began to review results from Iraq's Dec 15 parlia-mentary elections, including some of the hundreds of complaints filed. A member of Irag's election commission said final results won't be announced until the international review was completed, meaning results might be delayed until mid-

Illegal Ctg salt factory

different brands without BSTI

Burning stolen gas taken through two illegal connections from the BGSL's main supply line for two and a half years, the factory owned by one Siddique Ahmed Sawdagar has consumed gas worth over Tk2 crore, BGSL sources said.

As the manager, staff and workers of the factory fled the scene at 11:00am, the mobile court team led by CPA Magistrate Mohammad Munir Chowdhury broke open the main gate and seized some salt, 24 large iron trays and other equip-

They disconnected the illegal gas supply lines and destroyed all the infrastructures of the factory.

BGSL officials, disconnecting team members, and Chittagong Metropolitan Police assisted in the disconnection and demolition drive that continued till 3:00pm. There was attempt to thwart the

drive as some CPA men threatened the BGSL officials and delayed the arrival of the crane, sources said. Many other salt factories in the district are producing salts burning BGSL gas taken through illegal

connections, said BGSL sources preferring anonymity. Our Staff Correspondent adds: Mobile courts yesterday filed cases against three diagnostic centres at Jurain and fined another at Malibag in the capital on charge of

cheating patients in the name of

diagnosis and treatment. Cases were filed against City Lab Diagnostic Centre, Doctors General Hospital and Diagnostic Centre, and Roagmukti Ğeneral Hospital and Diagnostic Centre at

the owner of Padma Diagnostic Centre at Malibagh, Tk 20,000. Besides, a court filed a case under the Special Power Act

against Shahialal Bager Unani

(herbal) Medicine Company at

East Jurain for producing adulter-

Earlier, another mobile court

A court fined Harunur Rashid,

fined Tk 5,000 to Al Amin Food and Fruits Industries at Kalimullahbagh in Shyampur for duplicating the brand products of

Al Amin Bread and Biscuits of Noakhali. Eighteen mobile courts fined a total of about Tk 9.5 lakh, filed 126 cases and arrested 19 people yes-

Criminal killed

FROM PAGE 20

release said. The arrestees are Nazmul Hossain, Ramzan, and

Sujan Mia. Following leads extracted from the arrestees, the Rab members arrested Kalam at Kanchpur in Narayanganj the same night.

During interrogation Kalam admitted to the Rab personnel that his gang use to gather in a den at Konabari Eastern Housing project in Demra to work out plans for robbery.

Following his confession, Rab

members went to the spot at around 2:00am to nab his men and seize illegal weapons taking Kalam with them. As soon as the Rab members reached near the spot. Kalam's accomplices opened fire on them prompting the elite force members to retaliate, the press release said.. After 20 minutes of gunfight,

Rab members found Kalam lying

on the ground with bullet injuries

and sent him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where doctors declared him dead. The dead received 17 bullets, hospital Kalam's accomplices, however,

leaving behind two machetes and a A top listed criminal of Rupganj and Demra police stations, Kalam was accused in 13 cases, including murder. He was also a leader of a

gang of robbers, the press release

are government officials and

employees, Piren's father said

Angikar Bangladesh Foundation organised a rally at Jaynagachhi village in Modhupur, where Muhammed Hilaluddin, executive

director of Angikar Bangladesh, Prof

Preeti Ranjan Das, indigenous

leader Jerum Hagidod, Ajay A Mri,

Bidyut Mang Sang spoke. They

placed floral wreaths on the grave of

the Piren Slan, Piren's father Neien

Nakrek, widow Seeta Nakrek were

Hossain said indiscriminate killing

of the shark will obviously harm the

ecological balance and the envi-

The whale shark known to the

managed to flee the scene unhurt,

Trial of Piren killing

yesterday.

forests.

ated medicines.

FROM PAGE 20 and forest guards opened fire on demonstrations protesting creation of an Eco Park in the Modhupur

On January 14, 2004, Piren's father Nezendra Nokrek filed a

murder case with a magistrate court in Tangail, accusing nine people including Divisional Forest Officer Abu Hanif Patowary and Officer-in-Charge of Modhupur Police Station Abu Zafar Alam. As the court directed First Class Magistrate Moklesur Rahman to

probe the incident, the magistrate

witnesses. "Involvement of officials and employees of police and forest departments in the killing is not proved," the report said.

On November 17, as the case was

taken up by the court, Piren's father

submitted a 'naraji' petition against

the probe report.

the 'next' hearing.

Accepting the petition, the court fixed December 27 for hearing but it was not held on that day. The court fixed March 30, May 10, June 25, August 30, November 14

in 2005, and January 4 this year for

lengthy hearing on a 'naraji' petition, said advocate Abdul Karim

Miah, Tangail District Coordinator

of Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST).

By not holding the hearing on the

naraii' petition, there has been

planned time passing in order to save the culprits as all the accused

There is no other instance of so

submitted a report on August 26 Fourth whale after recording statements of 24 FROM PAGE 20 District Fisheries Officer Shahadat

ronment of the Bay.

also present there.

locals as "Bagha Hangor", is the largest of all sharks and the largest fish of the planet. By nature, they are the least aggressive of the shark family and harmless to people. The whale shark leads a solitary

life living mostly on small fishes

and invertebrates. Unlike its other

shark cousins, its mouth is at the

These sharks have a wide, flat

front of its head, not underneath.

head, five very large gill slits, two dorsal and two pectoral fins. Its lifespan ranges from 100 to 150 years.

were caught on December 17, 21

The previous three whale sharks

were thought missing. The landslide slammed into houses at about 5:00am (2200 GMT Tuesday) after three days of monsoon rains. Television footage showed workers using two excavators and hand tools to dig into the mound in

about 170 people live unaffected.

He did not say how many people had been accounted for. Local

television said some 300 people

flattened brick and concrete homes. Rescue worker Dedi Suromli said the search was called off due to bad weather and would resume early Thursday.

were visible, along with smashed timber debris and other semi-

He said the landslide covered about six hectares (15 acres) and the mud was as deep as five metres (yards) Banjar Negara deputy police chief Gusti Indra Cahyadi told the

sludge.

He said the area was prone to landslides during the rainy season but in the past only 10 houses had been affected at most.

"The evacuation of bodies is still continuing. Twenty bodies are still at the scene but they have been included in the tally," Teduh Tedjo, who is coordinating police rescue

Four villages in Jember district, 800 kilometres east of the capital were affected. About 5,000 refugees sheltered in mosques, schools and other government buildings as 400 police and troops built emergency bridges and ferried medical aid, food and water to survivors. Environmentalists blamed both

disaster if they don't stop (deforestation) and if they don't reforest areas with original species to make new natural forests," Greenpeace Southeast Asia forestry campaigner

"This is a sign for the Indonesian government to be more serious." More than 140 Indonesians were

Hapsoro told AFP.

Jakarta after days of heavy rains. In 2003, more than 200 lives were claimed when flash floods tore through Bahorok, a popular riverside resort in North Sumatra. Some officials denied deforestation was

200 feared dead

the hope of finding survivors. Only the top of tiled roofs of some houses

"It is raining and foggy and it's not safe to continue the search," he told AFP, adding that 95 people were thought to remain under the

online Detikcom news agency that the road leading to the village was damaged, hampering efforts to bring in more heavy rescue equip-

The landslide came as rescuers continued to sift through debris and mud in the aftermath of flash floods in East Java province which have killed at least 57 people and left

efforts, told AFP by telephone from Misdarno, from the disaster coordinating centre in East Java's capital Surabaya, said the death toll was still at 57 but added that 17 more people were listed as missing.

disasters on rampant illegal logging as well as land conversion for farming on Java, one of the world's most densely populated islands, as they called on the government to take action. "We can look forward to another

killed in February last year when a garbage slide buried more than 60 houses in a village southwest of

the cause of that tragedy.

Give no concession