US senator

also said Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Bangladesh will require close US attention as both Nepal and Sri Lanka have been facing violent insurgencies and Bangladesh's commitments are being threatened by extremists.

looks forward to ensure that the South Asia Bureau achieves the goals of building US strategic and economic relationships, supports nascent democracies and combats instability and extremist movements, according to the US Senate official website.

states with the South Asia Bureau and Boucher as the new head of it.

Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and

security," he said. He said that in addition to a land-

mark visit to India later this month, President Bush would go to Pakistan, a key partner in the war on terror "Islamabad has made significant continuing threats to the country's stability from extremist and sectarian

Turning to Central Asia, Senator Lugar said transition to stable and democratic political systems has been slow since the break-up of the former Soviet Union. "Corruption continues to be a problem in Central Asia and criminal groups in the region have become conduits for smuggled narcotics from Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan and elsewhere to markets in Russia and Europe.

"I am also concerned about the direction of Russia's economic and security activities in Central Asia and look forward to hearing how the administration plans to deal with energy security in this critical region. Most of the natural gas exported from Central Asia is sent through pipelines controlled by Russia," Senator Lugar

In his speech before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Richard A Boucher said "The success of US policy in South and Central Asia is critically important to our national

into results is as challenging in South and Central Asia as in any other part of the world, adding "It is a challenge

Load-shedding

As per official statistics, the country generated 2,800-MW electricity

Dhaka city alone faced about

demand for 1,400-MW.

consuming electricity after the weekend. The closed power generation

units, which are now under a maintenance schedule, include 360-MW AES Haripur plant, a 210-MW Rauzan plant, 80-MW Tongi peak-ing plant, 100-MW Bahgabari plant, 45-MW unit of Westmont Baghabari plant and a 35-MW Mymensingh RPCL unit. look forward to tackling with the advice and counsel of this Committee, it confirmed.'

Turning to Bangladesh, he said, "We are looking forward to free and fair parliamentary elections next year with the full and active participation of all

world's most serious threats are found in this region: narcotics, terrorism. corruption, weapons proliferation, HIV/AIDS, failing institutions, ethnic strife, stunted economies and natural disasters. In each of the country under the bureau, the US encounters unique and challenging issues with which to deal, he added.

engagement with India, we also continue America's long friendship with Pakistan. A stable and friendly relationship between these keystone nations is essential for South and Central Asia."

Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Tajikistan, yrgyzstan and other nations in working towards a modern, moderate

career diplomat, has served most recently as Spokesman for the Department of State. He also served as the Senior US Official for Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation from 1999 to 2002, as well as Ambassador to the Republic of Cyprus from 1993 to

FROM PAGE 20

officials were meeting in New Delhi to discuss the report.

There was no immediate comment available from government

The Bhopal laboratory is one of just 10 high security disease facilities in the world and the only one in Asia.

With migratory birds from affected countries such as China passing through the subcontinent in the winter. Indian officials have become increasingly concerned about the possibility of infection.

Cheap ride ends

them of their lives and last savings. Fixing the truck fare at Tk 25 to Tk 35, they set out the journey with the hope to meet their family. All of them came to Dhaka to earn a living, but none of them had ever thought they would not return home.

Idris Ali and Belal Hossain, two brothers from Bogra, came to the capital together. They were returning together and died on their way home, just because they had thought bus res would cost them extra money.

"I don't feel comfortable in the polluted environment. There's no refreshment here. I'm afraid I'll have to return to this polluted city," wounded Nazrul quoted Idris as saying before

the iourney. Like other survivors of the accident, Nazrul, a rickshaw-puller, thought they have had a nightmare. He said in a

"I was feeling sleepy and most of suddenly heard a loud bang and saw

sparks as the truck was rolling down the road into a ditch." he said. When I came around, I found a cement sack on my chest. I struggled hard to remove the burden to find that

He alleged some local people snatched their money in the name of

rescuing the wounded Bogra, are wandering aimlessly near

Mirzapur Police Station as they have no money to carry his body home. Neither the police nor the locals came forward to help them except listening for a while to their 'sob story'

Caab grounds plane

fly safely came hard on the heels of a recent humiliation the national flag carrier had experienced because of operating faulty craft. In late September last year, a

Biman flight on Dhaka-Dubai-Brussels-New York route was forced to remain stranded at John F Kennedy Airport in New York for three days as the US Federal Aviation Authorities (FAA) did not let the aircraft take off without repairing at least 17 mechanical faults it had detected. Biman sources yesterday said one

of the DC-10s that was grounded after being struck by a bird in Kuwait, is in operation again while the one that has been lying without an engine in the hanger for several months will be fit for test runs by noon today as it will have the engine of another DC-10 that went in for D-check last Tuesday. The DC-10 that was grounded

twice in 16 days in Brussels is also expected to return home by late tonight or tomorrow after repair, said Biman But till Biman gets back its full fleet-

strength, officials fear that miseries of the passengers over flight schedule disarray are unlikely to lessen Biman has a small fleet of 13 aircraft

comprising five DC10-30s having 274 seats each, four Airbus A-310-300s with 220 seats each and four F-28s having 80 seats each.

As per the changed flight schedules, the departure time of Thursday's BG 037 flight on Jeddah-Rome-Frankfurt route has been set for 4:00pm Saturday while departure time of Friday's BG 037 flight on Chittagong-Jeddah route has been set for 12:01am Monday, Friday's Kuwaitbound BG 043 flight has been rescheduled at 9:00pm Saturday, Friday's Hong Kong-bound BG 078 flight will

011 flight on Dubai-Brussels-New York route will depart at 11:59pm Sunday, and Sunday's BG 055 flight on Dubai-Paris-Rome route will depart on the same day at 10:00pm.
Besides, Thursday's Riyadh-bound

BG 039 flight has been shifted to Thursday's Abu Dhabi-bound BG 027 flight has been shifted to 2:30am Sunday, Saturday's BG 029 flight on Mumbai-Dubai route has been shifted to 7:30pm Sunday, and Saturday's BG 019 flight on Kuwait-Abu Dhabi route has been shifted to 10:45pm Monday.

stance, which calls for the destruction of Israel.

Haniyeh will be the prime minister for the next government," Aziz Dweik, a Hamas leader and the new speaker of parliament told reporters.

The sweeping victory of Hamas tough new restrictions to pressure a Hamas-led government

Butenis

FROM PAGE 20 Butenis is expected to join the US mission in Dhaka shortly, official

sources said. President George W Bush formally announced the nomination of Patricia Agatha Butenis of Virginia on January 4 as the ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of the United States to Bangladesh.

The nomination was sent to the Senate for hearing on January 18 while the Committee on Foreign Relations chaired by Senator Lincoln Chafee testified Butenis on February 2. According to the US Senate

website, the foreign relations committee approved a number of nominations, including that of the new US ambassador to Bangladesh, on February 15.

Butenis, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service who most recently served as the deputy chief of mission in Islamabad, will be the 12th US ambassador in Dhaka since the US opened its embassy in Bangladesh.

Butenis has earlier served as the consul general to Bogota, Colombia and Warsaw, Poland. She also served as the chief of post liaison for visa services in the consular affairs bureau at the department of state. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Pennsylvania and her master's degree from Columbia University The post of the US ambassador

n Dhaka fell vacant when Harry K Thomas, who served as the ambassador to Bangladesh from August 11, 2003 to July 2, 2005, was appointed the executive secretary to the Office of the Secretary of State on July 25 last year. Since then US Chargé d' Affaires

to Bangladesh Judith Ann Chammas has been carrying out the responsibility of the US ambassador in Bangladesh.

Pakistan, India FROM PAGE 20

The service between Khokhropar and Munabao was discontinued during the 1965 India-Pakistan war over the disputed Himalayan region of Kashmir.

The service will be operated using a Pakistani train for the first six months and an Indian train for the subsequent six months.

It will be the second rail link established between the nucleararmed rivals since they launched a peace process two years ago after

they went to the brink of a fourth war. A train service linking India's Punjab state with Pakistani Punjab was restored in 2004.

Last month, the two countries

know if it is morally preferable [to address this]."

But Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya,

allows better distributive justice in policy management, institutional development and good governance

In the darkness of the shine with per capita income growth or absolute poverty reduction. But the

FROM PAGE 1 the urban-rural income difference also continually increased up to the mid-1990s, and this trend was reversed only in the later half of the 1990s with a strong agricultural

The Household Expenditure Survey of the BBS shows that onfarm income is more unequally distributed compared to the rural income as a whole, and it became increasingly so throughout the 1990s. In urban areas, poverty declined substantially both in the seven-year period of the 1980s and in the first half of the 1990s, but in the later period there was also a marked increase in inequality. In the later half of the 1990s, there was only a modest increase in income, but there was not much further worsening of income distribution. The result was only a slight decline in poverty.

But many economists would pause for a moment before condemning such a process of inequal-

ity.
"Overall, it seems that
Bangladesh is precariously positioned in the growth-inequality link as in the initial stage of the Kuzets process," says Dr Wahiduddin Mahmud. "The problem assumes special significance in a situation whereby the very process that brings some initial dynamism in the system also contains factors that lead to deterioration in the distribution of The Kuzets process is a curve in

growth and inequality. It shows that any economy in its primary take-off increases inequality, as only a section of the population can reap most of the benefits of the new opportunities. Then, as the economic growth progresses, the rich-poor gap narrows down.

But then growth comes as a tricky question for many. The episodes of nigher growth in both urban and rural areas seem to have been associated with increasing inequality, thus reducing the favourable effect of

income growth on poverty reduction. Dr Mahmud still prefers this to having lower growth with equity having a smaller impact on poverty reduction. "But this can hardly be a happy choice," he adds. "A serious challenge in achieving a pro-poor growth, therefore, is to modify or reverse this adverse growth-

nequality link." Dr Zahid Hossain, economist at the World Bank, said in Bangladesh inequality has increased but poverty has also reduced. "It could be that without inequality there would not

have been any growth." His argument lies in the assumption that as new opportunities emerge with the opening up of an

economy, it is the richer class that grabs the benefits first. The immediate beneficiaries will be the well-off people and then the opportunities will trickle down " Dr Zahid says. "But it will not benefit the poor as much as it will benefit the rich. But that does not mean poverty will not decrease. We don't know how to address such outcome, we don't

executive director of the CPD, says one need not accept the Kuzets curve as economic fatalism.

"One can see from historical experience that a society which economic growth based on improved alleviates poverty faster," he says. There is a cavalier assumption that growing inequality has nothing to do

fact is the higher the income inequality the more difficult it is to alleviate poverty and Latin America is a case in

Debapriya points out that the level of inequality not only affects poverty alleviation rate -- decrease in the number of the absolute poor -- but also ieopardises the future growth prospect, as has happened in the 1990s in Bangladesh.

But as long as this process is not reversed, consumption patter also keeps changing fast, both in urban and rural spheres. New chains of shops keep mushrooming in cities, and even in villages marketing companies keep expanding their networks, shipping newer and newer goods for the better A walk through Agora, the city's

largest new chain shop, is just a testimony to this new phenomenon. Imported luxury items rake up the shelves. Freezers are stuffed with imported fast food -- pizza slices chicken nuggets and meat loaves, to name a few. Beside the fruit shelf of imported exotic fruits such as kiwi and black currants is the meat freezer showing imported Australian lamb priced at Tk 600 a kg. Dhaka is now turning into a city of mega shops -every main street now has its own sideshows of swanky malls. Shop prices are shooting up. A barely 120 square feet shop in Bailey Road changes hands fast, passing on from one broker to another, to finally sell at

At Chandrabati village in Bhairab, shops are selling Tk 10 packs of chips, Tk 2 shampoo mini packs, coke, condensed milk and Meril soaps. Nazim Mollah runs such a shop in the village. The small outlet is sparsely stuffed. "Where are the customers?" he asks. "Somehow I manage to survive." And yet he has a handful of takers for the items, people who have managed to make that difference between them and the

Although Nazim Mollah's lots have not changed much, many like him have graduated to a higher level to crate another kind of inequality in the villages. They are basically the landless people who somehow found ways into non-farm activities, such as small shops and rickshaw repairing shops. Like Nizam they were selfemployed with low productivity, but their business increased rapidly in the 1990s, because of more microcredit interventions. They graduated from microcredit borrowers to more productive entrepreneurs like small rice mill owners. "The inequality happened at this

stage in two ways," says Dr Mahmud. "First, the entrepreneurs who graduated were richer than the selfemployed small operators. And the more productive entrepreneurs employed salaried skilled workers These workers had better pay than the unskilled workers to create another layer of inequality.

"The worsening of income can be alleviated to some extent if there is strong growth in agricultural income,' Dr Mahmud argues.

"The sectors which are inequality neutral or which can lower inequality such as agriculture, are witnessing a low growth," says Dr Imran Matin, director, research and evaluation division of Brac. "This phenomenon is fuelling inequality."

But agriculture, specially the crop sector, has been limping for the last few years. After a relatively better growth of 5.53 percent in FY01, agriculture growth plummeted to a negative of 0.62 percent the next vear, FY03 and FY04 saw a little

Industries care

FROM PAGE 20

progress when growth reached 3.29 percent and 4.38 percent, much less

than the overall economic growth

rates of both the years, and then it

again slid to a negative of 0.37 per-

came from farmers like Mahbubur

Rahman of Netrakona who wit-

nessed another bad crop this year

my harvest in many years. It has

always been 40-45 maunds from an

acre." Mahbub savs. "Rather it often

flops like this year when I am hit by

floods or drought. This year, prices

increased, but I am a small farmer

with hardly anything to sell."

And agriculture spins out inequali-

ties in its own way. When the crop

sector that contributes near to 17

percent of the GDP stagnates, fisher-

ies and livestock sub-sector that

contributes only about 3 percent to

the GDP do quite well, growing from

2.81 percent in FY01 to 7.82 percent

in FY05. This happens because of a

boom in poultry and fishery projects

section of the rural rich. On his return

from Kuwait three years ago, he

invested Tk 3 lakh in a poultry

scheme that has now grown to a 200-

says Barkat, also from the same

village of Mahbub. "Not bad if you can

a pie of that market. "I don't have

money," he says. "You need a lot of

money for poultry. I am a poor farmer.

fertilisers and pesticides often on

delayed payment. I have no luck

the BMW owner are the faces of the

inequality that have been becoming

sharper by the day. And the fallout

can be widespread and cyclical --

from increase in violence and mili-

tancy to a retarded growth. Domestic

demand will be squeezed and human

capital development process will be

constrained that will jeopardise the

Gaibandha, Salzar Rahman, 26,

Idris Ali, 31, and Bellal Hossen, 25

of Shibganj and Sanwar Hossen,

26, of Kahalu in Bogra, Korban Ali

32. and Aktar Ali. 30. of Ghoraghat in

Dinajpur and Saiful Islam of

Noldanga in Natore. The identities

Most of the dead are day labour-

The police said at least 45 people

were travailing on the truck and

Unable to afford bus fares, they

were sleeping at the time of the

got on the truck from the capital.

paying the driver and the helper Tk

25 to Tk 35 each, reports our JU

aged to escape the scene. Police

said they had overloaded the truck

and were carrying passengers,

making it difficult to properly operate

abnormally on Dhaka-Jamuna

Multipurpose Bridge Highway since

and over 500 injured in road crashes

Electoral reforms

Mosharraf, also a standing committee

anonymity said, "The possibility of

having a solution in parliament to the

crisis is somewhat remote. Because

BNP will not deviate from the constitu-

tional provision concerning appoint-

ment of the chief adviser to the care-

He added, "First, an agreement

has got to be reached between BNP

and Awami League on the caretaker

government chief. And to make that

happen, the government is thinking of

that the ruling coalition leader might

compromise on the KM Hasan issue

According to article 58C(3)of the

constitution. Hasan, the last retired

chief justice, is supposed to be the next

chief adviser. But the opposition

parties have already raised objection

to his being the caretaker government

and Cooperatives Minister Abdul

Mannan Bhuivan recently said. "We

are ready for discussion on any con-

structive suggestions as we too

believe in ridding the elections of black

Apparently, the ruling party is more

interested in the proposals for

strengthening the EC than those for

Besides, stringent laws should be

framed to stop the use of black money

and muscle power and the govern-

ment and opposition should have a

opposition, as both the camps seem

But, he said, it would not be fair that

money and muscle power."

BNP Secretary General and LGRD

Another source in the BNP hinted

Another policymaker seeking

At least 100 people were killed

the inauguration of the bridge.

on the highway last year.

The driver and his helper man-

ers and rickshaw pullers, locals said

of the rest could not be known

12 killed

FROM PAGE 1

immediately.

accident.

correspondent.

the vehicle.

Road acci

FROM PAGE 1

member of BNP.

taker government."

forming a committee."

auotina the injured.

Barkat and Mahbub, Farida and

use my own seeds and buy some

"I sell them at Tk 70 a kg now,"

But Mahbub has no chance to get

chicken farm.

pull through."

Abdul Barkat represents that

involving the rural richer section.

"I have not seen any increase in

following a deluge.

Much of these low-case figures

hazardous waste management and Tk 1.3 crore for other similar activi-

The report pointed out that only 39.2 percent industry establishments have so far made some capital expenditure for environment protection since their inception. Around 72 percent establishments engaged with health and social work have had no such expenditure, the report said. Those who have had some

expenditure for the purpose have not done it on a regular basis. The report found only 64 out of 605 establishments that have had some capital expenditure in 2004. Again, around 60 percent estab-

ishments have some investment plans for procuring equipment for environment protection. The BBS survey, styled "Environment Protection Expenditure

Survey 2005" and supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), is the first such review of the environment protection system and its expenditure in the industrial units of the country. Mostly from Dhaka and

Chittagong, 605 out of 900 initially chosen industrial units and establishments--agricultural, manufacturing, electricity, gas, transport, hotel and health service units, among others--took part in the survey.

The BBS has been bringing out a report titled "Compendium of Environment Statistics of Bangladesh" since last year, depicting the present condition of the country's environment and offering a large number of supporting statistics and data. The report also describes the adverse impact of the industrial wastes, especially on

This year's report pointed out that the standards set by the DoE for various industrial and vehicular air pollutants cannot be effectively enforced due to lack of resources. It observed that most old industries lack treatment facilities and dump untreated effluents into the nearby ponds, lakes and rivers, polluting soil as well as groundwater.

environment and human health.

According to the report, the DoE has identified around 1,176 major environment-polluting industrial units in the country, including 365 textile mills. 189 tanneries. 118 chemical and pesticide factories and 149 pharmaceuticals. An environment ministry source

however, claimed the statistics as incorrect, saying the number of such industrial units is much higher.

Baby trade booms

their relatives have been running

the racket for long before the very eyes of the hospital authorities. A Daily Star investigation

three-room unhygienic clinics run by the traffickers in Chankharpool, Nawab Katra, Nazimuddin Road and Hosni Dalan areas are used for the money-spinning trade. In some cases, the racketeers

tate the delivery of the human goods. Sometimes they even steal

instead to come to those shoddy clinics and sell their babies secretly for adoption after delivery. "We try to convince the four to

If the baby sold is born in a clinic,

Poor women abandoned by their husbands and ultra-poor couples

One such mother is Monwara

A few months back, when these correspondents went to Mousumi Clinic posing as customers looking for a boy to adopt, a staff named Firoza Begum told them a baby boy could be managed for Tk 12,000.

newborn boy along with his parents' identity, it may take one to four weeks Though a middle-aged woman

who owns Chowdhury Clinic at Nawab Katra claimed to these correspondents that they were not involved in this 'business', a staff of the clinic seeking anonymity said they could arrange a baby. A DMCH birth attendant said

On January 3 last, the police

recovered two newborn babes from a housewife who claimed to have bought them for Tk 22,000. She bought one of them from a poor couple of Chanmari Slum in

Chashsara of Naravangani, she told the police, adding the baby's father.

doused the fire with the help of locals after a one-hour struggle. The injured were admitted to Sirajganj Śadar Hospital. Of them,

About 150 oil lorries are moving

daily from a single oil installation to northern districts, he said, explaining the huge government operation to keep the supply to the region steady.

Hakil Bepari, is a rickshaw-puller The other baby, she said, she bought through Shila, a DMCH

revealed about half a dozen two- to

just broker between the willing sellers and purchasers, and facili-

babies and deliver them to the But, in most cases, they persuade poor women coming to the hospital for menstrual regulation (MR) to abstain from abortion, and

five months pregnant women coming for MR that it's a sin to kill a foetus and to make them agree to sell the babies," said one of the DMCH brokers, who had recently coaxed a pregnant woman into taking admission to a clinic.

the lion's share of the proceeds from the sale goes to the clinic owner, with the mother or the parents and the broker sharing the rest. But if the infant is sold from the DMCH, the broker pockets 40 to 50 percent of the money and the mother or parents the rest.

already having some offspring are more prone to sell their newborn babies. Some poor women who have become pregnant from illicit sexual relations also often opt for selling the unwanted infants.

Begum, 30. Her husband divorced her when she was three months pregnant. After five months, in January 2005, Monwara came to the DMCH seeking an MR. But, soon a birth attendant wooed her to Mousumi Clinic in Nazimuddin Road.

She also said, "If you want a

"It's not a business, rather we work as mediators to help child-less couples buy a baby for adoption.

10 injured FROM PAGE 20 Firefighters rushed to the spot and

pump owner Abdul Mannan's condition is stated to critical.

Energy adviser FROM PAGE 20 (Bangladesh Petroleum Corpo-

ration) personnel are supervising delivery staying on the river bank.

special birth attendant. But, Head of DMCH Gynaecology Department Prof

Saveba Akhter claimed taking infants out of the maternity ward without guardians is strictly prohibited. "In most cases." she said. "the mothers themselves sell their unwanted babies. If mothers sell the

authorities do?" The police apparently are clueless about the fate of the traded babies, whether they are adopted or trafficked.

babies secretly, what can the

Police Commissioner SM Mizanur Rahman said. "I don't believe the babies are trafficked abroad." He suspects some DMCH staffs have hands behind these incidents and said they would take necessary

Meanwhile, as on 9 last night, the police were yet to find the newborn baby stolen last Friday from a

siblings -- eight-year-old Johnny and his five-day-old brother. Johnny somehow managed to escape from captivity at a place in Narayanganj e same evening.

Johnny, a police team along with the boy and his father raided some places in a village under Bandar Police Station in Narayanganj. Some of the villagers said they

2 on bus top die

had several passengers travelling on the roof and they were struck by the first of at least 20 archways built to welcome Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman in the district.

while Motai Miah, 16, died at Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College and Hospital. Both were construction workers. The injured six are receiving treatment at the Moulvibazar Sadar Hospital. Saifur was scheduled to lay the foundation stone of Moulvibazar Polytechnic Institute.

FROM PAGE 20

Only 57 survivors have been found none so far Saturday out of a population of 1,857. At least 24 bodies have been pulled from the mud, and a child who was rescued died overnight from head injuries. Farnacio said the troops were

evidence of bodies because of the danger that the soft, unstable mud could shift and claim new victims.

digging only where they saw clear

he said. "We cannot go too deep."

grated Friday morning after two weeks of heavy rains, covering the village's 375 homes and elementary school. Rescue workers trudged slowly through the sludge, stretchers and ambulances waiting for survivors or the bodies of victims. Joining them was Dionisio Elmosora, a 42-year-old farmer who

"What's important is for me to find them even if they're dead," said Elmosora, his eyes bloodshot and his face grief-stricken. "I've not eater

The landslide left Guinsaugon looking like a giant patch of newly plowed land. Only a few jumbles of corrugated steel sheeting indicate the

South and Central Asian countries, he

Lugar said the senate committee On February 9, the State Department merged five Central Asian

President Bush nominated Richard A Currently Christina B Rocca heads the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, which now comprises of

Senator Lugar pointed out the diplomatic and economic ascension of India as the region's most exciting and promising transition. "The US . Congress welcomes India's progress as we seek to work more closely on the global stage to address mutual concerns, such as countering terrorism, promoting democracy, preventing HIV/AIDS, and improving energy

economic strides, but continues to face challenges, including a lack of strong democratic institutions and violence".

interests. He also said that turning policies

during the peak hours yesterda against a demand for 3.800-MW leaving a shortage of 1,000-MW.

business establishments will start

FROM PAGE 20

received only 1023-MW against the Power Development Board (PDB) officials believe that the extent of load shedding will go up today when industrial units and

parties. Boucher also said many of the

He said, "as we begin new strategic

The success of Pakistan,

launched a third cross-border bus While confidence-building measures undertaken by the two countries have strengthened transport, cultural, sporting and commercial links since starting the peace process, they have made little

progress on Kashmir, cause of two of their three wars since 1947. Pakistan accuses India of dragging its feet in resolving the dispute while New Delhi says Islamabad is not doing enough to rein in Islamist militants fighting its rule in the

Muslim-majority region. Kashmir is divided between India Pakistan and China India says the Himalayan region is an integral part of its territory and is not interested in redrawing its borders, while Islamic Pakistan wants to find a solution that includes all

CJ decries

vales.'

tional.

FROM PAGE 1 'To promote the rule of law, we must have a strong judiciary and conductive atmosphere having mutual trust and democratic

judiciary and civil society should work together for ensuring human rights and the rule of law, he said. "It is now imperative for all of us to work together in the spirit of patriotism to make our behaviour civilised and protect the rights of

each individuals, which are the

foundation of democratic norms."

It is unfortunate that in some

Parliament, the executive, the

countries the government cannot recognise and acknowledge the link between the human vital rights and sustainable development, Mudassir Husain said. "In the present thrusts of our national life and political culture we may think about the establishment of national infrastructures for securing effective enjoyment of human rights and their promo-

tion," he said, adding that ensur-

ing human rights is more a

domestic concern than interna-

Emphasising the need for a sound and effective legal system, the chief justice said the propensity of denying human rights at the hands of the executive cannot be checked without a sound and effective legal system. Presided over by BSEHR Secretary General advocate

Sigma Huda, the meeting was addressed, among others, by Manusher Jonno Team Leader Shaheen Anam, BSEHR national committee member Dr Mizanur Rahman Shelley, Project Director Albert Prasad Basu and upazilalevel human rights representatives from six districts. BSEHR Executive Director advocate Elina Khan presented

the keynote speech on the occa-

Govt must carry out

alliance government could implement some of their proposals right now through executive orders. She accused the government of maintain-

ing a double standard in this regard. Earlier they (government) used to say 'place the proposals in the House' and now they are saying that the proposals are nor placed in the form of a bill or in a proper way," Hasina said adding, "The government must prove its sincerity by placing and passing a bill in the House to implement our reform proposals, as they have the

She said the people would not tolerate it if the proposed reforms were not carried out. She alleged that the alliance government had politicised all the organisations including educational institutions and the EC. She said the government is now trying to rig the next election to stay in power. But the people do not want the

alliance government anymore as they

witnessed militancy, extra judicial

killings, repression, looting, price hike of essentials and spread of corruption under the current regime. The former prime minister also said if her party is voted to power in the next election, it would form an independent recruitment commission, introduce separate pay scale, pay full salaries to the teachers and employees, and also increase other facilities for them.

She alleged that the alliance

government had fired more than 2000

teachers from their jobs and stopped paying salaries and allowances to 36.000 teachers. She demanded that the government pays all the salary arrears and other allowances to the teachers of both government and nongovernment schools. She stressed the need for formulating a new policy to raise the standard of educational institutions in the country and more educational institutions to

attain 100 percent literacy rate. She

also emphasised on rehabilitating the

governing bodies of all colleges and

schools by replacing the BNP-Jamaat

men in them with the educationists.

She said the number of trained teachers needs to increase to attain the international standard in educathe story and regret the damage tion. She emphasised on science-

based education to face the challenges of 21st century.

government in their election mani-

esto had pledged to give all facilities

to the teachers, they did not keep

their promises. Rather, they stopped

She said although the alliance

their promotions and other facilities to She also said the alliance government should be held accountable for Tk 500 crore they have 'looted' in the name of uni-track education system. Urging the teachers not to teach

their students distorted history

Hasina said the present government

comprising anti-liberation war forces had destroyed the country's glorious She said the alliance government had established a reign of terror in all educational institutions. Though a leader of Islami Chhatra Shibir killed a teacher at Rajshahi University, he has not been brought to book yet, she said adding that the government is

only issuing false orders to arrest him

but in reality not arresting him. Presided over by the association's president, Azizul Islam, the inaugural session of the council was addressed, among others, by Nurul Islam Nahid, Prof AK Azad Chowdhury, Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, Advocate Mahbubey Alam, Prof M Aktheruzzaman Principal Kazi Faruk Ahmed. Dr Kamrul Hasan Khan, Prof Kamruzzaman, Sheikh Amanullah

Scholastica's FROM PAGE 1 The rejoinder said Scholastica is committed to working closely with

parents and community at large to promote good health and safe and secure environment for youngsters. The school has a zero tolerance policy towards drug abuse and strong disciplinary action has always been taken when required. Our Reply We agree that Scholastica school should not have been singled out in

reforming the caretaker government system A minister who is also a standing committee member of the party said and Khan Mosharraf Hossain. an independent EC is the most crucial to having the elections conducted fairly. "An independent and stronger EC Secretariat needs to be in place.

head.

parties should make demand merely to win an election. They should not be saying that "this man is good or that man is bad". The minister, however, doubted whether there would be any talks between the government and the

consensus about it."

rigid and unbending.

However, Dhaka Metropolitan

measures to stop it. STOLEN BABY STILL MISSING

DMCH maternity ward. A woman allegedly stole two

That night, Mahfuza Begum, the mother of the stolen babies, filed a case with Ramna Police Station under the Women and Children Repression (Prevention) Act. On information provided by

saw a veiled woman accompanied by two men coming to the area with

baby, said Sub-Inspector Akhter

Morshed who had led the raid

FROM PAGE 20

Juned Miah, 18, died on the spot

Hopes for

"We can only focus on the surface," Low clouds hung over the area obscuring the mountain that disinte-

was looking for his wife and two sons. since this thing happened."

town ever existed.

Hamas

"Hamas has decided that Ismae

in last month's parliamentary election has put it on a collision course with President Mahmoud Abbas's peace policies while Israel is mulling

and democratic future is essential to ensure peace in this neighborhood and will have major implications throughout the world, Boucher further Richard Boucher, a distinguished

India reports

chocked voice how the accident took

bodies were scattered around me," he

The family of Sanwar, a resident of

FROM PAGE 1 Caab's initiative to see all Biman craft depart at 3:00pm Sunday, Friday's BG

> 11:45am Saturday, Friday's BG 049 flight on Dammam-Riyadh route has been shifted to 5:30pm Sunday Saturday's Rivadh-bound BG 039 flight has been shifted to 12:45am esday, Wednesday's BG 021 flight on Chittagong-Mascot route has been shifted to 4:00pm Saturday, Sunday's BG 021 flight on Chittagong-Mascot route has been shifted to 7:00am Monday, Friday's BG 084 flight on Bangkok-Singapore route has been shifted to 8:00am Sunday, Saturday's Kuala Lumpur-bound BG 082 flight has been shifted to 8:30pm Sunday

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