More bodies, more cries

College Hospital (DMCH) while two others at Orthopaedic Hospital, sources at the army's control room

The rescuers removed 30 percent of the debris till yesterday evening, third day into the collapse.

It may take up to five days to complete the rest of the work, Brigadier General Nizam Ahmed, who is coordinating the rescue works, said vesterday afternoon.

"We're trying our best to complete it at the earliest. We have to work with utmost care so that we can rescue if anyone alive is inside the rubble." he said.

"Possibility of rescuing anyone alive is now very little. It's too hot inside and a long time has already

passed," said a fire fighter. Brigadier General Nizam also believes that there is no one alive inside the debris now.

"Rescuers have broken in, by making passages into the debris and searched for the trapped, two dog squad have also searched. But nothing could be found." he said.

However, digging out the body of electrician Humavun Kabir from the first-floor debris yesterday morning proved wrong Nizam's idea expressed on Sunday night that possibility of any dead victim's remaining inside is thin as it would have sent out strong stench due to the hot weather.

Recovery of Humayun's body came as a shock to his elder brother Shamim, also an electrician, who was lucky to make his way out of the rubble one and a half hours after the building collapsed on Saturday.

Traumatised with seemingly unending wait, Shamim made several attempts on Sunday and vesterday morning to enter the rubble to find his brother, but rescuers held him back, saving that there was no one inside.

Five minutes after Shamim started for their Jatrabari house taking Humayun's body in an ambulance, their mother Ambia Begum and father Shahjahan Jamaddar reached the site. They reached Dhaka Sunday morning from their village home in Shankarpasha in Nalchhiti of Jhalakathi district on getting news of the misfortune.

"I stayed here for you the whole day yesterday and waited till 11:30 in the night. Were you alive then, my son?" the mother was uttering, as if talking with her son, hitting her chest in a fit of trauma

A sudden outburst of howling was heard over the sound of the large equipments' operating when rescuers brought a part of the mutilated body of Sved Rustom from the eastern side of the collapsed building at 12:30pm.

Rustom's son Al Amin and nephews Babu. Kazimuddin and Mizan were holding each other with tears rolling down their cheeks as rescuers were bringing out Rustom's body from the ground floor.

Most of Rustom's boned were broken and his right arm was hanging from a thin skin.

the help of the telephone index and a calculator kept in the pocket of his

prove that the body was his father's, the ill-fated boy uttered the first telephone number in the index that was his (Al Amin) cellphone number.

Convinced, the army men handed over him the body, which he took to Dhaka Medical College

Earlier on Sunday night, the rescuers told Rustom's relatives who had been waiting near the site since the collapse that there was no

because we knew for sure he was supervising the works during the incident. When we called at his mobile phone half-an-hour after the incident, the phone rang. But it did not respond after 1:00pm on Saturday." Al Amin said.

all the hospitals in Dhaka." he said.

they took Rustom's body to their village home at Lamchar in Laxmipur for burial

male victim identified his body at the DMCH vesterday

Rahman, 25, was a labourer working on the third floor during the incident. His wife Aklima Begum and nephew M Hasan, who rushed to the capital from their home village Mothbari under Rajapur of Jhalakathi district, went to the DMCH yesterday noon after failing They took his body to their village

FRANTIC EFFORTS ON

Please respond, if anyone alive is staying inside, please respond, Fire Brigade Deputy Director Selim Newaz Bhuiyan was saying through a loudhailer, sitting on a hole made at the north-eastern part of the collapsed building.

Three fire fighters were moving inside the debris to see whether anyone, alive or dead, could be found as Selim continued with the loudhailer: "If you are too weak to talk, please make sound with whatever you get near your hands. The rescue team is inside to bring you out. Please attract their attention."

debris with air blower to help the alive, if there was anyone inside, to breathe

VIOLATING RULES

approval, said Emdadul Islam, Chief Engineer of Rajuk and a member of the six-member probe team.

"They violated the rule of taking

following which both sides traded

The lawmakers of BNP, Jamaat-

A remark by State Minister for

e-Islami and AL took part in the

discussions on point of orders that

Youth and Sports Fazlur Rahman

about the leader of the opposition

triggered off heat in the House for a

Leader of the Opposition Sheikh

Hasina's behaviour audacious. "I

condemn this kind of statement," he

said quoting a statement of Hasina

who on February 26 demanded

arrest of the prime minister and

industries minister on charge of

started making noise to protest

against the state minister's state-

In response, the AL lawmakers

Taking floor earlier, AL lawmaker

Abdur Razzak said Islami Chhatra

Shibir has threatened police admin-

istration with severe consequences

if its leader Mahbubul Alam Salehi is

arrested in connection with the

killing of a Rajshahi University

administration cannot discharge its

duty. Jamaat-Shibir is responsible

for downslide in the country's law

and order as they are involved in

Hossain Saidee taking floor pro-

tested against the AL lawmaker's

remark, saying there is no evidence

of Jamaat's involvement in mili-

Another Jamaat lawmaker Shah

Ruhul Quddus demanded that the

speaker should expunge a word

used by an AL lawmaker in a notice

for imposing a ban on Jamaat

Talukdar taking part in the discus-

sion used an offensive word against

AL lawmaker Mohammad Nasim. In

the face of the AL lawmakers' pro-

the speaker expunged the

BNP lawmaker Abdul Mannan

Jamaat lawmaker Delwar

militant activities." he said.

"Amid such threats, the police

patronising militancy.

teacher.

politics.

The state minister termed

blames against each other.

lasted over half an hour.

few minutes.

Factory safety

permission before redesigning. We

could not sense it as they were

working by covering the building

with clothes," he told reporters at the

site yesterday, adding that the

Phoenix building authority's claim of

having the permission to build a

As the authorities demolished

some walls on the ground floor

during reconstruction, the building

which stood on 2000 square feet

area failed to bear the load and

collapsed, he said, adding: "The

design was not appropriate for such

Nabi said they were trying to identify

the architect and engineers of the

building. "Everything will be clear if

we can talk with them," he said,

adding that they would submit the

There should be a regulatory body

to ensure that construction of build-

ings go in line with Rajuk approval,

said Monaj Ahmed Noor, an assis-

"People get their design

approved by the Rajuk but construct

their buildings according to their will

without complying with the

we had a regulatory body or moni-

toring team to see it, he said, add-

the building collapse was trans-

ferred to the Detective Branch

yesterday. Inspector Shafiq will

Charges framed

Rickshaw-puller Atoar Rahman,

Dulal, Ahab adherents Azizul Bari

Mintu, Jahangir Alam, Rabiul Islam

confessed before magistrates

Azizul Bari Mintu in his confes-

sional statement said 10 persons

were involved in seven blasts at four

places and the bombs were distrib-

Ahab's cultural front Al Hera Shilpi

Gosthi Chief Shafikul Islam, Ahah

mosque Imam Hafez Md Shafikul

Islam, Majnu Mia, Dulal Hossain,

Mozammel Haque, Idris Ali, Abdul

Jabbar, Aminul ISlam, Ziaur

Rahman, Redwan Bari Akhand,

Mustafizur Rahman, Md Selim, and

madrasa teacher Mehdi Hasan.

Former union Jamaat-e-Islami

president Montezar Rahman is

among the four accused who are

moved for the state and Advocate

Ekramur Rasul, Ashraful Alam,

Sarwar Jahan moved for the

accused. The state employed

lawyers for the accused as none

came forward to defend them. The

case was transferred to the tribunal

from Joypurhat on December 24

Public Prosecutor Ketab Uddin

Other arrested accused are

uted from Bazla Ahab mosque.

FROM PAGE 16

under Section 164.

ing, "It is a demand of the age."

Such practice could be stopped if

The case filed in connection with

tant professor of Buet and a mem-

report in five to seven days

A DEMAND OF TIME"

ber of the probe body.

approved design," he said.

REGULATORY BODY IS

Head of the probe body Golam

hospital is false.

a massive building."

units, are under their supervision. Each of them is supposed to inspect at least 10 factories a month.

Thousands of small unregistered factories in various sectors are not under their jurisdiction. From 1995 to 2004, a total of

23,989 factory accidents occurred--3,412 serious and 20,414 minor-claiming 163 lives and leaving thousands injured, according to the factory inspection office.

But other sources said the number of casualties was much higher.

A survey conducted by a nongovernmental organisation --Bangladesh Occupational Safety, Health and Environment Foundation -- said more than 400 workers (including construction workers) died and more than 3,000 were injured at their work places last

Some sources said inspectors cannot take any effective steps against faulty and risky factories due to bureaucratic tangles and corruption, resulting in recurrence of accidents.

There are only 13 inspectors in three categories -- general, safety (engineering) and medical -- for more than 14,000 factories, including nearly 5, 000 garment factories, in the city and Narayanganj.

The number of factory inspections and cases filed are amazingly high compared to the number of inspectors. In 10 years from 1996 to 2005, factories were inspected 4,42,462 times and 10,3024 cases were filed. But that improved the safety situation very little as evident from the number of accidents.

A labour court source said inspectors are keen to file cases because when they do so, factory owners negotiate with them and make payments for withdrawal of the cases. But they hardly file cases regarding violation of safety mea-

"I cannot remember if they (inspectors) have filed any case here for violation of safety measures in recent past. We get cases mainly concerning wages and job discrimination," said a labour court official, requesting anonymity

Meanwhile, the factory inspection office filed cases against 92 garments factories with civil courts after the Spectrum Garment collapse, the biggest factory tragedy in recent times. Despite this, safety system in the factories hardly

People's interests

ruling parties including the BNP had considerably been in favour of allowng parliamentary discussion on issues of immediate importance. Since its first meeting on October

28, 2001, the current parliament held discussions on law and order, price hike of essentials and August 21 grenade attack on an Awami League (AL) rally. The main opposition AL ioined the debates on law and order and price hike. But the party boycotted the discussion on August 21 blasts on September 13, 2004 after the speaker had denied its demand for holding the discussion adjourning all other business of the day. The AL lawmakers started boy-

cotting the House since then. On its return to parliament, ending a 17-month boycott on February 12, the argest opposition in parliament demanded urgent discussion on 10 issues including crises of power, diesel and fertiliser, price spiral of essentials, law and order, grenade attacks on AL rally.

But the treasury bench refused to allow any discussion on the pretext of having little time to do so and urged the main opposition to raise the issues rather during the motion of thanks on the president's address.

In response, the AL lawmakers demanded that at least one or two of the issues be discussed on every workday of the current session. By this time, more than five hours have been spent on debating whether to hold formal discussion on the burning

More time is likely to be wasted on the same matter in the next workdays as the AL lawmakers have decided to keep calling for discussion each time they would take the floor on a point of

How much time will it take up if the treasury bench allows general discussions on the issues? Discussion on a single topic should not take more than an hour. It may even be held for half an hour. Besides, the ruling alliance's refusal to discuss the matters on grounds of shortage of time appears to have been done without rhyme or reason.

The facts available in the proceedings of the House indicate that none of the previous governments had so bluntly opposed a call for a discussion in parliament.

Since restoration of parliamentary democracy after the fall of Ershad regime, the previous two parliaments--fifth and seventh--were much

Bird flu

FROM PAGE 16 Khursand said workers had started killing birds at the farm in Abbottabad. One of the farms had around 10,000 chickens and the other had around 15,000.

The industry was acting even though the government should have waited for confirmation by the English lab before announcing the presence of the virus, Khursand said.

"We are sure the chickens are safe but our ultimate goal is the health of the nation," he told AFP.

The poultry industry had started ordering bird flu vaccine from abroad and would launch a "fullblown" vaccination campaign as soon as it got the first consignment, he added. Pakistan last week banned

mports of poultry and live birds from neighbouring India and Iran, as well as France, after all three countries reported H5N1 cases. The broad H5 virus category only

kills birds, unlike the highly pathogenic H5N1 sub-type of the virus that has claimed dozens of human lives in Asia and Turkey. In 2003 Pakistan destroyed 3.5

million birds after an outbreak of the less virulent H9 and H7 forms. The cull and a drop in prices cost the industry one billion rupees. Chicken accounts for up to 45

percent of total meat consumption in Pakistan, which has a population of 150 million. There are about about 25,000 poultry farms across the

Robber leader FROM PAGE 16

cases, was caught in the crossfire while trying to flee and died on the

This is the first incident of death in 'crossfire' with police in the disMinister faces from the meeting.

The existing system of distributing fertiliser is faulty, he said, adding, "Two years ago, we recommended appointing one or two dealers at each union parishad across the country. Now there are 10 to 20 dealers in a upazila. who confine their distribution activities mainly to the headquarters."

The agriculture minister agreed to the committee's recommendation to appoint dealers at the union parishad AL lawmakers and committee

member Abdur Razzak said after the meeting, "In the meeting, I presented adequate documents on the fertiliser crisis. But the agriculture minister denied any crisis. Another committee member

Motahar Hossain, an AL lawmaker from northern Lalmonirhat district narrated the acute fertiliser crisis faced by the farmers in his constituency. But the minister rejected the allega-

tion, saying that the media has 'created'the crisis He also criticised the AL for 'enforc-

ing' agitation programmes over the issue, meeting sources said. Asking why the crisis prevails if

there is adequate stock of fertiliser, AL lawmakerAbdurRazzak said, "It is the ruling party men who created an artificial crisis to make

money while the farmers are forced to purchase fertiliser at higher cost." Whatever the minister claims about the stock of fertiliser, the truth is that farmers are not getting fertiliser. Jatiya Party lawmaker and committee

member GM Quader said after the Referring to the committee's recommendation for recruitment of dealer at the union level, the committee chairman said. "There would not have been the fertiliser crisis had the ministries initiated steps earlier to improve the fertiliser management

"I suspect a section of unscrupulous officials at the ministry did not comply with the committee's recommendation in a bid to please the present fertiliser dealers." he said.

system.'

The agriculture minister refused to talk to the press after the meeting held at the Jatiya Snagsad Bhaban.

Tejgaon collapse FROM PAGE 1 Tk 2,000 each.

The injured and their relatives alleged the money given by the building owners is insufficient for treatment. "I have already spent Tk 4,000," said injured M Musa, helper of a mason. A woman named Jobeda gave him Tk 2,000 at 10:00am yesterday, he added.

His nephew Shah Alam, one of the injured, received no money as yet, he mentioned.

Four others said none has offered them any assistance.

Doctors at Ward-32 of the DMCH, where nine injured are under treatment, however said no victims had to buy any medicine. "We've provided them medicine

available at the hospital and also

bought them medicine worth over Tk 20.000." said Dr Kazi Eusuf. assistant registrar of the ward. Relatives of most of the injured however refuted the doctors' claim

and said they had to buy some medicine from outside They also demanded immediate

payment of the compensation offered by the building owners

Relatives of the dead told this correspondent that they have heard about the offer of compensation. But none came to us with the offer. We don't know whom to contact for this," said Aklima, wife of one the dead, Mizanur Rahman.

Sved Al Amin, son of another dead. Sved Rustom Ali, who was working at the building as a subcontractor, said, "Owners of Phoenix building owe us over Tk 30 lakh and none has contacted us as vet about the money.

Indians' bid FROM PAGE 16

thousand Indian nationals from Nasirpara village in Karimpur upazila of Nadia district carrying lethal weapons entered Bangladesh at Thotarpara at about 6:00am and started ploughing the lands.

As the landowners informed Mohishkundi border observation post (BOP), BDR Subedar Nurul Islam went to the spot and asked the Indians stop the cultivation. But the Indian people and BSF men accompanying them ignored his request. Later, Deputy Commander of 9

Rifles Battalion Major Tareque Masud Bhawali with two platoons of BDR personnel rushed to the spot and protested the incident. After a brief altercation between

the BDR and BSF men, BSF Inspector RG Sharma asked the Indian people to stop ploughing and go back to the Indian territory. Sources said the BSF official claimed ownership of the land. BDR

officials said it has become difficult to demarcate the border at Thotarpara due to river erosion. At present there is no border pillar at the place. Locals said the Padma devoured

25,000 acres of land in Thotarpara, Mohammadpur Chardoba Gacherdia and Gangerdoba villages in 1996, rendering 2,000 families homeless. This year the lands emerged again.

enhanced patrol in the area amid tension among the villagers. The BSF also strengthened its power at the border point.

Trawler sinks of the four-day long gathering a large

number of followers of the Pir headed home by different types of water transports and connecting road transports via Barisal yesterday

"Every year both of us come to attend this mahfil and return home safely, but this year one of us returning alive with the dead body of the other, Nurul Islam said with tearful eyes

The trawler which capsized and went under 40 feet of water while trying to depart the station had a capacity of carrying only 20 to 30 passengers but was loaded with 80. Local people rushed to the spot

and rescued the passengers and recovered the floating dead body of Nur Muhammad. A team of divers from Barisal Fire Service Station tried to salvage the capsized trawler and find the missing

persons for few hours yesterday without any success. Shaeb Ali, head of the divers, said heavy current at the spot affected by land erosion with 40 to 50 feet depth of water and some technical problems hindered the rescue operation.

A rescue team of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) with a salvage vessel reached the scene at noon and tried to mark the spot where the trawler had

Shahjal Huq, senior deputy director of BIWTA in charge of the salvage and rescue operation said the position of the sunken trawler was marked under fifty feet of water and due to strong current in the river, immediate recovery of the trawler might not be possible and a salvage vessel, Hamza, might have to be called in for the rescue

Musaddek Billah, a son of Charmonair Pir, and Shahidul Islam Kabir, media cell chief of Charmonair Mahfil, alleged that the local administration did not provide adequate security to the large gathering of the Muslims.

Only three police constables who were put in duty at the launch terminal failed to control over loading of the trawler and the heavy rush of homebound passengers causing the fatal

Outage leads

Dhaka Wasa's supply has fallen from 1.73 crore gallons a day to a maximum of 1.43 crore gallons now and that too has been made possible by operating alternate power generators.

"Providing Dhaka residents with piped water by using alternate power is not Wasa's mandate. Still the situation is forcing us to operate generators at many of our waterifting points. But these generators can't be run for more than two hours at a stretch because of tripping problems resulting in supply shortage of water at various

hope they will stay there to the last," Khaleda told a big a public meeting at Bagharpara ground at Kaliganj in the district yesterday. The prime called for making the

n every sector," she said

officially announced the name of Ghorasal Bridge after Shaheed Moijuddin, an Awami League leader and former MP. She said her party believes in

Gazipur will realise this just observing the development work in their areas. The prime minister urged people

to vote for the BNP-led alliance in the next general elections to continue the development activities. Terming the killing of judges in

she said they are now engaged in 'conspiracy in the name of

"Islam is the religion of peace: those who have done this are against Islam, democracy and development." the prime minister

Presided over by local MP Fazlul Hua Milon, the meeting was also addressed by Communications Minister Nazmul Huda, Agricultural Minister MK Anwar, State Minister for Communications Salahuddin Ahmed

Earlier, the prime minister inaugurated the Ghorasal Bridge over the Sitalakhya (now Moijuddin Bridge) and Kaliganj Bazar bypass

mark after Sanath Jayasuriya. The match will start at 9.30am with ESPN and state-run Bangladesh Television beaming the live coverage of the match from the port city stadium, which will also

competitive in the 41st Test rather than fancying anything beyond a Bangladesh think-tank on

Monday announced a 12-man squad with an eve on a long batting line-up. Local boy Aftab Ahmed, young wicketkeeper batsman Mushfigur Rahim and experienced paceman Tapash Baisya were ignored for the first Test.

to throw two inexperienced new ball bowlers Syed Rasel and Shahadat Hossain into the deep end after country's premier bowler Mashrafee Bin Mortuza was declared unfit for the longer-version games. "The two bowlers might not be

experienced but we considered them for their current form. Both have also impressed in the last series in Sri Lanka by picking up four wickets each in the last Test. We did not pick a third seamer because of the nature of the surface," said chief selector Faruque Ahmed.

wicket. Yes. there is grass on it but it will hold the surface just to avoid any early cracks," he explained.

ing 82 percent of water for pipeline supply from underground aquifers using 421 deep tube wells while the remaining 18 percent comes from two rivers the Buriganga and the Shitalakhya through treatment plants at Chandnighat and ayedabad. Wasa sources said it has 270

city neighbourhoods," Dhaka Wasa

Managing Director Quazi Ali Azam

Dhaka Wasa lifts an overwhelm-

in the city. Besides, 25 more mobile generators remain handy for emergency dispatch at deep tube well points wherever and whenever nower fluctuates. "To cater to the people suffering

from the dearth of water supply, we're also providing water from truck-mounted containers at various city neighbourhoods," said the Wasa MD. Asked about water supply prob-

lem at the diplomatic enclave, Quazi Ali Azam told The Daily Star that a rig has been set up at Road-74 in Gulshan area for installing a deep tube well. "We're ready to install more deep tube wells in the city but there is a problem of land acquisi-

While there is no assurance from the government about any immediate let up in power outages, Abdul Mannan Bhuivan vesterday directed Wasa authorities to ensure water supply to all key point installations (KPIs) and enhance alternate

power capability. Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (Desa) sources told this correspondent last night that against 1500 MW power demand, Dhaka got 1050 MW yesterday, on Saturday and

"Day in, day out, I remain under tremendous pressure in the office as people from areas with the dearth of supply call me with repeated

complaints of water scarcity," a Wasa engineer said. Wasa is worried about its water supply capability in the summer

Farmers

take a turn for the worse

about six hours.

The agitated farmers also assaulted the upazila agriculture officer and locked the office of the upazila nirbahi officer.

Satkhira-Jessore road in front of Kalaroa Upazila Parishad office disrupting vehicular movement for two hours. Farmer and Krishak League leaders and activists in Tangail laid a siege to the local Pally Bidyut office

supply. They held a rally to protest against the ongoing crises of power,

demanding uninterrupted power

nirbahi officer. Krishak League in Thakurgaon laid a siege to the district Pally Bidyut office around 11:00am,

protesting recent deaths of farmers in police action in Kansat in BDNEWS.

and ensuring proper electricity Jamalpur Krishak League took out a procession in association with

non-governmental organisation for

Sircar rejects

afterwards, the treasury and opposition bench lawmakers traded blames against each other in an

unscheduled debate.

Sircar defending rejection of the notices on crises of diesel, power and fertiliser, price hike of essentials, corruption, and law and order slide said he hopes the government will take steps to deal with these. On the issue of rise of militants,

arrested. "I hope activities of the militants will be stopped." Rejecting the notices, he also referred the Business Advisory Committee's decision for not holding any discussion on any specific

the speaker said intelligence agen-

cies are investigating it and some

kingpins have already been

About ongoing fuel crisis, the speaker referred to a statement of the minister in charge of the energy ministry in parliament.

Thirteen opposition lawmakers,

12 from Awami League (AL) and

one from Jatiya Party, submitted the The AL lawmakers also demanded discussions on preparation of fresh roll ignoring the High Court directives, appointment of two election commissioners "on political consideration", August 17 blasts last year and August 21 carnage on an

AL rally in 2004. On the August 21 carnage, the speaker said the House has already held a discussion on the issue. He did not specify the reasons for rejecting the notices demanding discussions on opposition's reform proposals.

The speaker however said contents of some notices are not related to any contemporary matters and some are not clear. "The lawmakers will have a

motion on the president's speech. Besides, every day unscheduled discussion is being held in the House on the issues," he said. **UNSCHEDULED DISCUSSION**

yesterday locked horns with the AL lawmakers over different issues,

Al Amin identified his father with

As army men asked Al Amin to

Hospital (DMCH) later.

one inside the rubble, dead or alive.

"We were sure he was inside it.

We did not find father searching

After post-mortem at the DMCH

Meantime, relatives of a dead The deceased, Mizanur

to find him at other city hospitals.

The rescuers passed air into the

"CONSTRUCTION RESULTED IN COLLAPSE" The building owners were transforming the garment factory building into a hospital without Rajuk's

Khaleda

placed in parliament 15 days ago. Apart from the reforms, issues like militancy, price hike of essentials and the crises of electricity, diesel and

fertiliser may also feature in their speeches. The two leaders last faced each other in the Jatiya Sangsad on July 14, 2004 when they debated the history of Liberation War, Since then the opposi-

tion leader started boycotting the

Ending the 17-month boycott, the opposition leader joined parliament on February 12 this year and placed the reform proposals. But Khaleda was not present during her speech. Since her return to parliament,

out of nine workdays. Before Hasina's joining, Khaleda was present during the proceedings of four workdays. The prime minister's response to the reform proposals is vital for the opposition camp to decide about its next course of action as reform is the focal point for the opposition move-

Hasina attended the session on seven

The 14-party opposition combine, led by Hasina's Awami League, is spearheading the movement to force the BNP-led four-party government to accept the reforms for holding free and fair election. The opposition is likely to

ment, political analysts say.

from a grand rally in Chittagong tomor-In a quick response to the reform proposals on February 12, LGRD Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan had said the government was ready to discuss ways to make the future elections more credible, free and fair.

"If they [main opposition] remain in

the House and make any constructive

announce its next spell of agitation

proposal, we are ready to accept that," he told parliament immediately after the leader of the opposition placed the reform proposals. In the last 15 days, the prime minister addressed a number of public meetings at different places but she did not make any comments about the

The ruling party lawmakers and some senior ministers participating in the thanks giving motion on the president's speech have termed the opposition's reform proposals 'absurd and unacceptable'

reform proposals.

better than the current one in terms of discussing issues of urgent importance. General discussions on dozens of topics during the terms of those two parliaments were possible because of the then governments

attitude favourable to discussion. The fifth parliament held at least 11 discussions on the same number of issues ranging from foreign policy to the prevailing situation in educational institutions across the country. State of the educational institutions back then was debated for two days. The House even formed a 15member parliamentary body to review the way developments were

push-in attempts by India, Jamaat Ameer Golam Azam and Gono Adalat [people's tribunal], miserable conditions inside the prisons, cyclone in the southern districts, transport strike and accompanying hassles in the northern region.

and Gono Adalat to continue for three consecutive workdays. The sixth parliament, constituted

policy, water-sharing treaty, share market fiasco, transit and regional cooperation, and price of essentials. olicy, environment and

to the Middle East were also talked The third and second parliament held discussion only on foreign policy while the first parliament held no

general discussion.

FROM PAGE 1

FROM PAGE 16

about 6:30pm. On information, firefighters from Agrabad rushed to the spot, rescued the injured and sent them to Chittagong Medical College and Hospital. Six of the injured were

released after first aid Australian

A highly placed source at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs yesterday said the visit is seen as very important as the Australian government

source at the

Bangladesh and Australia, the source added.

precede the Australian cricket team's tour of Bangladesh in April. Home help

Amanda Vanstone's visit will

College Hospital morgue sources said the injury marks on the body indicate that the victim died due to cruel physical torture. She might have died a day before the recovery of the body, they added. Police could not arrest the family

The body is now lying in the morque as no one came to receive

taking place at the institutions. Besides, discussions on sevenmurder in the city's Lalbagh area.

The then ruling BNP allowed the general discussion on Golam Azam

after the controversial election of February 15, 1996, saw only 11 workdays with no general discussion. The seventh parliament held at least 11 general discussions on as many number of issues ranging from foreign policy to law and order. Besides, there were debates on national energy policy, education

AL was the ruling party then.
The fourth parliament during the Ershad regime held at least on eight occasions discussion on foreign topics. National education policy, greenhouse effects, population control, health policy, sending troops

Explosion

sending its one of the federal ministers to Bangladesh considering the growing good bilateral relations. Minister Vanstone's visit will contribute greatly towards further

strengthening the ties between

Official sources here said Australia has been funding for largescale bilateral programmes on food security, primary education, governance, micro-finance, HIV/AIDS, arsenic mitigation and Australian Development Scholarships (ADS) in Bangladesh.

FROM PAGE 16 around 8:00pm. The body was covered with a cloth. After autopsy, Dhaka Medical

members of Nasima's employer as

BDR sources said they have

generators for 421 deep tube wells

PM hopes FROM PAGE 16 decision to join the parliament. I

country developed and prosperous. 'We don't want to be dependent; we want to make the country self-reliant At the rally, the prime minister

development and the people of

Jhalakathi and 11 people in Gazipur a conspiracy of a vested quarter,

told her audience.

and former State Minister Brig Gen (retd) ASM Hannan Shah.

First Test FROM PAGE 16 player to achieve the unique land-

make its debut as a Test venue after hosting the first ODI on February 25. Bangladesh had earlier lost their last five games, four by an innings. on Sri Lankan soil. But despite playing their first Test against the Lankans on home ground, Habibul Bashar's men with only one series win and that too against a depleted Zimbabwe last year wanted to be

The selectors have also decided

"It's a pure batting-friendly

confining all officials and staff for

fuel, fertiliser and price hike of

In Manikganj, Karmajibi Nari, a

irrigation machines.

tion for the purpose."

Sunday the supply was 885 MW each day, and it was a mere 750 MW

when the power cut problem might

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In Kalaroa upazila, farmers besieged the upazila agriculture office and put up a barricade on

essentials. Thousands of farmers at Bera upazila in Pabna formed a human chain demanding immediate action by the government to resolve the crises. The agitators also gave a memorandum to the Bera upazila

Chapainawabganj, reports A memorandum was submitted to the Pally Bidyut office demanding withdrawal of additional tax, proper irrigation during IRRI-boro season.

Kendua union Awami League demanding an end to the persistent electricity crisis.

working women, formed a human chain on Dhaka-Paturia Highway near Manikganj bus stand demanding diesel, fertiliser and adequate

scope to discuss the issues while taking part in the thanks giving

The ruling alliance lawmakers