Creation of media | Tyrant Bangla Bhai finally captured

in two weeks." Babar said. The drive against militants will continue until their bases are

uprooted, he stressed. Trial of the militants, he said, will

Asked if the government would take action against ministers, lawmakers and the then superintendent of police of Rajshahi, who allegedly patronised Bangla Bhai, Babar said, "Our drive is against militant activities and any one found involved in them will face action as per law." The state minister thought the

number of JMB suicide squad they were driven in a wrong direc tion and that they are now repentant for their activities, he mentioned.

"Some quarters are taking our success negatively. And someone is also terming it a drama but people

The state minister praised Rab, police, ulema and the people in general for their cooperation in

will judge it, " he said without naming

Bangla Bhai are a major success of

Replying to another question. Babar said the government has no intention to grant amnesty to mili-

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Abdul Quayyum said three cases -- one for assault on law enforcer, one under Explosive Substances Act and one under Arms Act -- will be filed against Bangla Bhai in connection with the Muktagachha incident. Besides, investigation is going on in murder cases against Bangla Bhai in Rajshahi and Bogra regions.

He said charge sheets have already been submitted in 44 cases against Bangla Bhai for the August 17 serial blasts last vear

Lt Colonel Gulzar Uddin Ahmed director of Rab intelligence wing, who led the operation in Muktagachha, narrated it.

Those present at the briefing included Home Secretary Safar Rai Hossain. Additional IGP Anwarul Igbal, Director General (DG) of Rab MA Aziz Sarkar, the DG of National Security Intelligence and directors of different battalions of Rab.

Villagers clueless

they yesterday learnt was Bandla Bhái, used to visit him and stayed at

The local residents told journalists that Chan had secluded himself from his family members and lived on his own. "He did not have friends, neither had any contact with his

bearded-men coming to his [Chan] house for the last one year." said Chan's aunt Ajufa. Chan never bothered to answer to the queries of the villagers. "Once I asked his wife about the visitors," Ajufa, also the

months gap and stay a night or sometimes a couple," said Chan's sister-in-law Sakina.

The villagers and Chan's relatives said they saw the guests bathe in the adjacent pond, offer prayers in Paniakhana and stay within themselves. They used to talk among themselves in the room where Bangla Bhai used to stay.

feet by four feet enclosure with mud walls on the premises claiming that his guests would bathe there. Rab found weapons hidden in a

who also lives with him, said he knew nothing about the guests as he was not on good terms with his

son. Chan provides for his family by

cultivating his own farmlands. Chan was educated at Shukur Fakirer Madrasa in Gayeshpur village under Muktagachha Upazila, his father told journalists, refusing to make any more comments either on

his son or Bangla Bhai RK MISSION ROAD TENANTS

Mujahidul Islam alias Imtiaz, 30, rented the ground floor of a fourstorey house at 166/A/3 RK Mission Road in Mymensingh City, from where Rab arrested Fahima Khatun, 22, wife of Bangla Bhai.

The owner of the house Sekandar Ali lives abroad and his wife Asma lives in Dhaka with her family. Sekandar's nephew Hira. 30. looks after the house.

Asma told The Daily Star that Istiag Ahmed, who introduced himself as a vegetable wholesaler, rented the ground floor at Tk 2,500 a month to live with his pregnant wife Roksana Khatun and brother-in-law Mushfiqur Rahman Ronny.

"I saw another veiled woman in the flat when I went to visit my house two months back," said Asma. "When I asked Roksana about the other woman she told me the woman was her sister-in-law who came to take care of her as she was carrying.

Other tenants of the building said they did not know the identities of the tenants on the ground floor, as they remained aloof

Substance Act and the third for

FROM PAGE 16 Hossain, 23, Faruq Hossain alias Kosai Farug, 25, Mohammad Wahiduzzaman

First hearing

alias Pintu, 20, Abdus Salam, 22, and Nurul Islam, 23. Of them. Sentu in now in custody

Earlier, the District Magistrate's Court issued warrant of arrest against seven absconding JMB members and on March 1 the court transferred the case to the sessions judge's court for Investigation Officer of the sedition

case filed with Dhamrai Police Station Sub-Inspector Iqbal Hossain on December 27 last year submitted the charge sheet of the case against them to a first class magistrate's court in the city, showing 25 people as prosecution vitnesses.

Dhamrai police arrested Sentu, Wahab, Yaqub, Anwar, Faruq and Salam with nine manuals on bomb making and other contraband materials on the Dhaka-Aricha Highway on February 20.

They showed the six men arrested under the Section 54 of the Criminal Procedure Code and produced them before a first class magistrate's court in Dhaka on February 22 last year with a prayer for a seven-day remand to nterrogate them. The court granted a two-day remand. Thirteen days into their arrest, the six

operatives of the banned Islamist militant outfit were released on bail. Sentu was re-arrested in November while the others have been absconding since then.

Investigating into the case, Dhamrai police later found that the activities of the accused were of sedition in nature. With approval from the home ministry, SI Zehad Hossain of the police station filed the sedition case against the six arrestees and their accomplice Pintu on September

Killing of Dulu's

Communist Party (PBCP) murdered Mazedur Rahman Mridha, a cousin of deputy minister Ruhul Kuddus Talukhdar Dulu in April 2003. In February next year, they killed Dulu's nephew Sabbir Ahmed Gama and threatened to kill the

lawmaker too. A retaliation was on the cards. Over 50 friends of Gama, a Jubo Dal leader, with assistance began hunt for outlaws in villages of the Naldanga, Bagmara and Atrai, Raninagar upazila. But their efforts were not enough to deal with highly organised outlaws.

Siddikul Islam Bangla Bhai, reportedly a well-wisher of Dulu's family, was active in these areas since 2001.

Some elderly people said Bangla Bhai's father Nazir Hossain Pramanik was a zaigeer (live-in tutor) at Dulu's village home at Ramsa Kazipur in Naldanga of Natore, a claim the lawmaker saw as conspiracy.

"Bangla Bhai father never stayed at our house. How is it possible? My house is at Naldanga in Natore and his at Bogra. It is a tale told by those who are conspiring against me," Dulu told The Daily Star.

However, Bangla Bhai kicked off his infamous reign of terror soon after the killing of Gama. On April 1 2004, Bangla Bhai began his jungle rule by hacking Osman (Babu) to death with swords. Later, the group along with some 300 cadres from outside killed some 22 people and tortured several hundreds between

Rakkha Mujahidin Oikyya Parishad). By the second week of April the party was named as Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh.

assaulting the law enforcers. **POST-OPERATION**

The Rab men handcuffed the militant leader and took him to Muktagachha Hospital where he was given first aid as he was severely bleeding. Then Bangla Bhai and Masud were taken away from the spot by a rickshaw-van.

The Rab vehicles were waiting at Battola, five kilometres off Rampur. The two injured militants then were taken to the MMCH where doctors operated on Bangla Bhai at 11:30am. His bodyguard Masud with a severely burnt arm and injuries all over the body was treated at he same hospital.

While the infamous militant leader was undergoing operation, the Rab men took his wife to the hospital. And she identified him.

The doctors after checking pulse and blood pressure said his nealth condition is stable. "At one stage, he started telling his past at the operation theatre." Dr Mohammad Ali Siddiqui, who operated on him there, told reporters

After the surgery, Bangla Bhai was taken to Mymensingh Circuit House. A helicopter of Bangladesh Air Force from the capital landed on the Circuit House ground and left for Dhaka with Bangla Bhai and others THE TYRANNY OF BANGLA BHAI

Bangla Bhai, who used to introduce himself as Azizur Rahman and Omar Ali Litu while conducting militant operations in the northern region in the name of outlaw cleansing, started his activities openly with direct patronage from local administration, police and some ruling party awmakers and ministers in 2004.

Bangla Bhai and his men killed 22 people and maimed and tortured over 300 in its vigilante operation in the northern region from April to July 2004. He went into hiding on May 23, a week after the government ordered his arrest. But he continued to lead his militant organisation from

Although newspapers published series of reports on JMJB killing and torture, the government denied the reports and blamed newspapers for 'creating fictitious character'.

the formation of Rab, to free the country from terrorism. And the

government succeeded, she told her

She criticised the main opposition

The prime minister alleged the

opposition and the previous govern-

PM claims success

rights bodies strongly decried the government inertia in taking action against Bangla Bhai and other JMJB leaders.

Even the government top brass denied any existence of Bangla Bhai, Jamaat--e-Islami Ameer and Industries Minister Matiur Rahman Nizami accused newspapers of having links with Bangla Bhai questioning how could newspapers publish his exclusive interviews without having any relations with

Even after the prime minister ordered arrest of Bangla Bhai, law enforcers did not comply it and rather assisted Bangla Bhai to carry out his vigilante action.

With the arrest of Bangla Bhai the second top man of Jama'atu Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) which claimed responsibilities for the serial bombings since August 17 last year, five members of JMB's Majlish-e-Shura have been captured

Before capturing Rahman and Bangla Bhai, the law enforcers had arrested JMB Shura members Ataur Rahman Sunny, Abdul Awal and Hafez Mahmud. The rest two members -- Salahuddin, JMB's in-charge of Sylhet-Mymensingh region, and Khaled Saifullah, responsible for Rangpur-Dinapur region -- are still

TIPS LEADING TO CAPTURE

The Rab men were on a manhunt on information extracted from Abdur Rahman, his brother Ataur Rahman Sunny and son-in-law Abdul Awal who are now being quizzed together by Task Force Intelligence (TFI) in Dhaka.

Talking to journalists after the operation, Commander Mashuk said the information on Bangla Bhai's whereabouts had been extracted from JMB chief Abdur Rahman, who was captured from Sylhet on March 2.

"Senior officials of different intelligence agencies interrogated Rahman extensively Sunday night He disclosed some information on his whereabouts and we conducted the operation after verifying that information." said Mahsuk

parliament, they were involved in

politics of hartal, arson and chaos to

destroy public property."

Referring to 'clean heart opera-

tion', she said the opposition had

opposed it as their terrorists and

godfathers had to flee the country in

the face of the crackdown. "When all

are happy with Rab and their activi-

Mymensingh: "We verified the information given by Rahman and became sure that Bangla Bhai is hiding somewhere in Muktagachha."

"We first captured his wife from a house in Mymensingh town. She later guided us to Bangla Bhai's hideout at Rampur." said Gulzar.

MASSIVE RAIDS Inspector General of Police

Abdul Quayum yesterday said the law enforcers raided 40 places across the country on Sunday night to arrest Bangla Bhai.

"Rab and police have been working for several months to arrest top militant leaders and Bangla Bhai's arrest is a success that came after their relentless efforts. It's not a success that came in one day." he told reporters yesterday

CROWDS REJOICE

As the information of Bangla Bhai's capture spread, hundreds of people from nearby villages rushed to Rampur. The cheerful crowd stood on the rooftops of houses, trees and both sides of the road as the militant leader was being taken away from In Mymensingh town, hundreds

of people came out of their houses, offices and shops to have a glimpse of notorious criminal Bangla Bhai and kept on clapping as the Rab men were was taking him to the MMCH in a motorcade. Defying law enforcers' barricade.

curious people forced into the MMCH when Bangla Bhai and his bodyguard were taken there. Rab men, reporters, photogra-

phers and cameramen of local and national newspapers and electronic media even entered the operating

Jamaat bemoans FROM PAGE 16

did not correctly present their earlier statement about the creation of Bangla Bhai

said in parliament that a section of the media gave wide coverage of an ordinary leader like Bangla Bhai whereas they give small coverage of a big rally organised by Jamaat,' he said, adding, "There would not have been any misunderstanding had our statement been published

official residence following the arrest of militant kingpin Bangla Bhai, Mujahid said, "A section of the media are presenting false and fabricated news of Jamaat's involvement with militancy."

Avoiding direct answer to whether Bangla Bhai was a creation of the media, as they claimed earlier, the Jamaat leader alleged incorrect presentation of their previous statement in the media

politics in the country are presenting (JMB) to mislead the people, Mujahid said.

party and believes in the democratic process.

would have been much easier had the top terrorists been arrested

Awami League for terming the arrests of Abdur Rahman and Bangla Bhai as a staged drama, the Jamaat leader said the AL has started a nasty politics for going to power using the issue of terrorist

crimes happened before that."

Chammas said the US government is working with Bangladesh government in imparting training to police personnel as part of the US government's anti-terrorism assistance

programme that began Sunday, which is one of seven courses. As many as 10 courses will be con-The US diplomat said the two

countries have separate military-tomilitary programmes under joint exercises. **UK GOVT**

The UK government yesterday lauded the continuing efforts of Bangladesh government in taking action against extremists and "This is excellent news for the

people and friends of Bangladesh who'll be delighted and relieved at the arrest of Bangla Bhai," a spokesperson for the British High Commission in Dhaka said in the wake of the arrest of the high-profile Islamist extremist. "Combating terrorism requires a

respect for human rights and the rule of law," said the spokesperson.

IAEA chief eyes deal to allow fresh Iran talks

UN nuclear watchdog chief Mohamed ElBaradei said vesterday he hoped an agreement resolving the question of Iran's small-scale enrichment work could be reached in about a week, clearing the way for

ElBaradei, speaking as the International Atomic Energy Agency here began a meeting that could lead to punitive UN Security Council action against Iran, said there was a 'flurry of activities" trying to get Tehran and the European Union back to the negotiating table.
"The sticking point remains the

question of the centrifuge-related R and D (research and development)," he said. "That issue is still again being

very much hopeful that in the next week or so an agreement could be reached.' Talks between Iran and the European Union on guaranteeing that the Islamic republic is not seeking nuclear arms broke off last

August when Tehran resumed

discussed this week and I'm still

enrichment activities toward making what can be nuclear reactor fuel or A resumption of Iran-EU negotiations could head off Security Council action over fears that Iran is secretly working on making nuclear

weapons. Iran, which claims it has the right to enrich uranium for nuclear reactor fuel as part of a peaceful energy programme, began actual enrich ment in February but on a small-

scale, which it says is only for ElBaradei said there were "contacts going on trying to reach agreement on modalities for Iran and the Europeans to go back to the negoti-

ating table.
"There has been lots of progress on many elements of that agreement. I think there is agreement that industrial-scale enrichment should be suspended.

"I think there is an agreement

that Iran should continue to imple-

ment the additional protocol and ratify it as early as possible," he said, referring to the protocol on wider IAEA inspections. The United States and Europe have called on Iran to bow to IAEA

demands to suspend all enrichment-related activities, including research. But Iran's ambassador to the AEA, Ali-Asghar Soltanieh, reitered

Tehran's defiance. "We will not show any flexibility on research and development," he told AFP Vienna. Iran wants to be able to do this small-scale work while pledging not to do full-scale enrichment, diplo-

mats said. Tehran's top nuclear negotiator Ali Larijani said Sunday that it would not freeze small-scale nuclear fuel

work even if referred to the world

"Going to the Security Council will certainly not make Iran go back on research and development, Larijani told reporters in Tehran. adding that the Islamic republic would retaliate to any such move by pressing ahead with large-scale

The IAEA's 35-nation board of governors will hear ElBaradei's go to the Security Council.

ElBaradei said he was concerned that after three years of IAEA nvestigation there were still "uncertainties" about Iran's nuclear

But he said Iran was continuing to cooperate. "We are getting some transparency but not with the magnitude and the speed expected. hope Iran will continue to show transparency to be able to clarify the

The IAEA board reported Iran on February 4 to the Security Council but left a month open for diplomacy until the world body gets ElBaradei's report.

"I think the Security Council will have to have a serious discussion about what the next steps will be. JS Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said at the weekend, but added there was no need to rush to sanc-

Pray for me FROM PAGE 1

Mohammad Ali Siddiquy, an assistant professor of anaesthesia department of Mymensingh Medical College said. "Pray for me so that I can go to

quoted him as saying. Talking to journalists at the home ministry yesterday afternoon, Rab officials said the infamous militant eader looked furious when he

the gallows with a smile." the doctor

sensed that Rab members had cordoned him. "He did not even hesitate to shoot Sergeant Rafiq to the head when he tried to peep into the room to see whether Bangla Bhai was inside," a Rab officer said, adding 'As we neared the house, we heard

there to get reward by arresting Despite suffering injuries in the bomb explosion. Bangla Bhai was looking furious, said a Rab officer.

Bangla Bhai saying inside the room

that we [Rab members] had gone

Even when he came out follow-

ng my order, he seemed unbending, he said. As reporters asked whether

killing of people is approved in Islam, injured bodyguard of Bangla Bhai said as he was being carried to the MMCH, "It is legal in Islam to kill the taguts (enemies of the

His condition stable

Bangla Bhai was still conscious

when he was brought to the health complex. As doctors asked him about his condition, he replied: "I'm ling pain in my hand

touching his skull, said a doctor of the health complex. Bangla Bhai was taken to the

MMCH at 11:30am. "He did not seem worried then," Prof Mohammad Ali Siddiqui told report-Prof Ali took his pulse and moni-

tored the blood pressure. "His condition was stable," he stated. The operating theatre was already prepared and on arrival he

was given primary treatment. On knowing the blood group of the militant leader, doctors injected blood into his body.

"Through X-ray, we spotted a splinter in his stomach," he said, adding that there were burns in the chest, upper abdomen, left part of his body. left hand and testicles

He had a minor injury in the left eye too.
"At one stage, he began to talk about his past. We could hear some

of it, but not all as we were busy in our job," said Ali.
On consultation with the Rab officials, doctors decided to shift him to Dhaka for better treatment, he

Masud lost two fingers of the left hand while his right hand was badly thrashed. He had an operation and was put in the post-operative theatre at the MMCH.

Meantime, Sources in the BDR Hospital said Bangla Bhai's condition is not that serious. "He was talking till start of the operation and answered all questions. Doctors operated on him at the

BDR Hospital late in the afternoon. The procedure started at 5:30pm and continued for two hours, added the sources. "He is yet to regain conscious-

ness," a source in the hospital told The Daily Star at 8:30 last night. Four doctors--two from Dhaka Medical College Hospital and two

from BDR hospital-- took part in the operation. SITUATION IN DHAKA

Apparently, to dodge the media, on paper he was shown admitted to the DMCH at 1:30pm, but in fact the authorities never took him there.

Some 30 members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), alongside eight platoons of policemen were deployed at the DMCH at that time giving the impression that Bangla Bhai was being brought there. Besides, there were a huge number of intelligence officials posted in the area. The security arrangements drew more than a hundred journalists to the spot.

By this time, the law enforcers took Bangla Bhai to the BDR Hospital at 2:23pm.

No iournalist was allowed in the hospital premises. Later, only the private TV channel NTV granted the access. The Daily Star

removed later Notorious for his ruthless ways to

kill people, Bangla Bhai sustained a number of scars and wounds on his face, hands, legs and chest. A part of his beard and his testicles have been burnt and blistered. At the DMCH, the drama centring

Bangla Bhai left the press surprised. The DMCH authorities kept two trolleys and a team of doctors ready at the emergency.

"bomb blast" injuries. In this book his registration number was

set the tone for the Liberation War. With anger already boiling inside

at repression and injustices to the then East Pakistan, people in thousands descended on Dhaka's Suhrawardy Udyan (then Race Course Maidan) to hear from Bangabandhu.

Swadhinatar Sangram' (this struggle is for our freedom, this struggle is for independence).

themselves for an impending fight against the Pakistan regime Credited with one of the worst genocides in the human history, Pakistan army began the war 18 Bangladesh Awami League (AL) and different socio-political organi-

programmes to commemorate the The AL programmes include

headquarters at 6:00am, placing of wreaths at the portrait Bangabandhu at 7:00am and a discussion at Engineers Institution at 3:00pm in the afternoon.

Saber, an accused in the Sergeant Rafiq, who was shot in false news involving Jamaat with a the head by Bangla Bhai, survived narrowly as a bullet went past barely Mymensingh cinema hall blasts case, terrorist syndicate like the outlawed said after the Netrakona blasts, the Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh LGRD minister and the state minister Ahsanullah MP and Nganj BNP General Secretary Taimur Alam

Saber said the investigators must dig out the links of the militant leaders with the government and the administration, and Jamaat chief Maulana Matiur Rahman Nizami should be quizzed for his statement that Bangla Bhai was a creation of media.

Arrest 'dramas'

Khandakar.

the alliance government to prevent publishing of the names of the

JMB inside the government. She said the alliance governterror and looting in the country.

during the AL period. Prices of daily necessaries including rice, oil, sugar, fuel, fertiliser, seeds and others have hiked during the rule of the coalition gov-

She said the alliance government does not believe in the Islam of great Prophet Hazrat Mohammad (sm), rather they believe in the Islam

alliance government. The government will have to meet the opposition's proposed reforms in the electoral system to ensure free, fair and neutral elections in the country, Gono Forum President and eminent jurist Dr Kamal Hossain said.

ongoing anti-government movement through their stage-managed drama of the arrests of Abdur Govt

attempting to kill Awami League leader

Tarapada Poddar at Mollahat in

FROM PAGE 16

Bagerhat, but 'mysteriously' released after 17 days. "f he was not released so many innocent people would not have lost their lives in his hand." the AL leader said, asking the government to explain why actions were not taken against the

rise of militancy and extremism for home affairs had announced that the militancy problem would be resolved within two months, and subsequently no blasts took place

during this period. "How could they declare a precise timeframe for halting the militant bombings and arresting the kingpins?" he said, adding: "Why the government chose this particular time to arrest the JMB leaders?"

Hasina expressed fear that militant kingpins Abdur Rahman and Bangla Bhai may be killed at the direction of masterminds and patrons of the

ment has created militancy in the country and established a reign of The former prime minister mentioned different development works

ernment, the AL chief said.

of Moududi. Hasina urged the people to unite to get rid of misrule, corruption, militancy, and repression of the

He said the alliance government

Rahman and Bangla Bhai.

Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon said the alliance government is conspiring to come back to power using black money and muscle power.

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal

why they are conspiring to hold a Senior leaders of 14-party Abdur

5 conditions

approved by the cabinet was a

condition for the release of the DSC-3. The law has already been placed has been greatly altered.

over the amendments

"Actually our Ameer Nizami had

Those who want to han Islamic

He said Jamaat is a legal political

The minister, however, said it

earlier. Criticising the main opposition

FROM PAGE 16

In reply to a question about counter-terrorism capability.

ducted this year.

terrorists, saying that it needs sustained effort to combat terrorism.

was denied access all along. ources said the milita wounded while resisting the arrest is physically out of danger. The splinter in his stomach will be

In his absence, the doctors put down his name in the first aid registration book as "Siddiqur Rahman" and age 45. The registration number was 2324/214. In the admission register, he was shown admitted under the name of Siddiqur Rahman, 45, at ward No 32 CB-1 (casualty block). His name was recorded as the one of a patient with

Exuding a firm determination, Bangabandhu on this day in 1971 delivered the historic speech that

In a deep, thunderous voice, he

The forceful and eloquent speech swayed the people to brace

historic mass gathering at Ramna

for filing sedition case have reached a stage. So, we will file sedition case the government, he said.

be completed in the shortest possi-

members and activists is not big. Many JMB members are writing letters to the home ministry saying

Babar said the JMB network has been broken to a great extent, although not completely, but their ideology now has no footing.

arresting the militant linchpins.

relatives," a villager said. have been seeing those

next-door neighbour, continued, " to which she meekly replied 'guests'.' "The guests used to come after

Chan secluded his tin-roofed 12 feet by 24 feet mud house with a six feet long verandah and two rooms, by putting fences all around the boundary and constructed a four

ditch inside the walled enclosure Newaz Ali, father of Chan Miah

FROM PAGE 1 herself, while exchanging views with editors in August 2004, said there is no Bangla Bhai.

"It's a propaganda against the

government and the country. And it the propaganda) is aimed at causing a rift within the four-party alliance," she said in parliament on March 15, 2005, pointing the finger at the main opposition Awami League (AL). But Political Secretary to the PM Harris Chowdhury on May 30, 2004 told BBC Bangla Service that

the PM had ordered the law enforcement agencies to arrest all people with criminal records including Bangla Bhai. He said the government has announced a bounty of Tk

He. however, brushed aside the

The bounty for information

leading to the capture of Bangla

50,000 on the banned outfit chief.

media reports on Bangla Bhai.

Bhai was raised to Tk 50 lakh after the August 17 blasts across the NIZAMI Ameer of ruling coalition partner Jamaat-e-Islami and Industries Minister Matiur Rahman Nizami on

July 22, 2004 said, "Bangla Bhai

was created by some newspapers."

Accusing newspapers of having links with Bangla Bhai, he said: "If

they (newspapers) do not have any relations with him (Bangla Bhai) then how come they publish exclusive interviews with him. "Police have nothing to do when there is no existence of so-called Bangla Bhai. Whom should they arrest?" said Nizami on June 22 the same year while speaking at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban with report-

ers from different national dailies.

The Jamaat ameer on March 13 2005 said: "They (AL) want to split the four-party alliance through peddling propaganda on the exisso called militancy Because they (AL) know it well that if the alliance exists it won't be possiole for them to win the next election.' BABAR State Minister for Home Affairs

Lutfozzaman Babar on January 26

last year said there is no official

the existence of the JMJB. Only

"We don't know officially about

existence of the JMJR

some so-called newspapers are publishing reports on it. We don't have their [JMJB] constitution in our records," he told the BBC radio. On the government's inaction to capture Bangla Bhai, he said, "I oppose very strongly that our ministry has failed to take action, because we are still trying. How would we

arrest someone who is absent physically or not available at all?" But after banning the JMJB last year, Babar told the same radio,

'Fictitious character' "We are embarrassed, as it is not being possible to arrest Bangla

Bhai. We have put extreme pres-

tancy across the country as nothing

but a 'foul propaganda' by a section

freedom, some media outlets have

"Taking advantage of the press

sure on the police to nab him."

On the day the government banned the JMJB last year, Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman dubbed the onset of Islamist mili-

SAIFUR RAHMAN

been propagandising fake issues like human rights violation, emergence of fundamentalist forces and repression of minorities," Saifur told a gathering of grassroots leaders of the ruling BNP. He said, "A section of print and

electronic media is carrying out a

well-orchestrated propaganda

against the government. Such

things should be protested." AMINI After the government launched a crackdown on militants in February 2005, Islami Oikya Jote Chairman Fazlul Hague Amini in different public meetings and statements said that 'an evil force' has launched

the propaganda of Islamist militants

Zahirul Haque, director general of

the external publicity wing of the

foreign ministry, on January 25,

2005 quoted an official of the US

Embassy in Dhaka as that saying

there is no existence of Bangla Bhai.

FOREIGN MINISTRY

But the US embassy later refuted the comment. POLICE The then Raishahi superintendent of police (Masud Mia) welcomed the JMJB team and said. "We (police) hail you (JMJB) as you are helping us eliminate the Sarbaharas from Rajshahi. We must cooperate

with you in the coming days so that

people can rest without fear."

But he told The Daily Star in May 2004. "There is no one called Bangla Bhai and no party called JMJB. It's the locals who have forged the resistance. I have come to know about Bangla Bhai through newspapers." DIG (Deputy Inspector General)

there is no 'so-called Bangla Bhai' in the region. Like it was in case of the Bangla Bhai issue, the government has been bashing the media also as spinning stories of power, diesel and fertiliser crises.

powerful bomb went off inside the tin-roofed room where Bangla Bhai was staying. The explosion destroyed the roof and a corner of the room caught fire.

"While the room was burning, we saw Bangla Bhai at the windows," Lt Col Gulzar told reporters. "Then I again asked him to surrender...I told nim that I'll be forced to open fire since he has injured our man

As the injured militant leader asked Rab to douse the fire, the Rab men told him to come out first. "We put pressure on him to surrender and he had no other alternative, said Gulzar. "We told him to throw away his firearm.

Finally Bangla Bhai, in trousers

and black T-shirt, came out of the house at around 7:30am and the Rab men took him into their custody. Injury marks were seen in his lef hand and lower abdomen. His beard and hair were burnt.

Bangla Bhai's bodyguard Masud was found lying badly injured in the explosion. His right arm was burnt. The whole house was burnt and only the pillars were standing amidst the debris. "The bomb exploded

whether he tried to commit suicide. Gulzar told The Daily Star Sources said JMB Shura member Salahuddin, now absconding. had arranged the Muktagachha

house for Bangla Bhai.

inside the house, but we cannot say

After the operation, the Rab men

extinguished the fire with the help of

Injured Rab Sergeant Rafiq was in the meantime flown in the capital by a helicopter and admitted to Combined Medical College Hospital (CMH) The Rab men recovered a submachine carbine, its magazine, one foreign-made pistol, one machete, a knife, four batteries, torchlight and a

made revolvers, six bullets, four knives, two rifle bullets, one live bomb and two machetes from a hole adiacent to the house. Rab sources said they were about to file three cases -- one under arms act, another under Explosives

cellphone set from the burned

house. They also seized two locally-

alliance to power in 2001 general elections 'to get rid of the reign of terror of the previous government After assuming power, the coaliwhile the others are still at large. tion government took various steps, including 'operation clean heart' and

FROM PAGE 16

audience.

Awami League for not arresting and trying any bombers for bomb blasts that began during its rule.
"We have captured bombers and terrorists," Khaleda told her audience amidst claps and mentioned the arrest of main 'bomb terrorist' few days ago and another 'top terrorist'

> nent was in favour of terrorism while RNP is against terrorism Chaired over by local MP Mohammad Giasuddin, the meeting was also addressed by Commerce Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury, Prime Minister's Political Secretary Harris Chowdhury, State Minister for Liberation War Affairs Rezaul Karim, Ataur Rahman Angur MP, Abu Salam MP. Begum Shamsun Nahar Khwaia

> pace of development to make Bangladesh a self-reliant country. "When Bangladesh is praised both at home and abroad for its march. forward, the opposition is displeased and trying to launch a movement without any issue to topple an elected government," she told the meeting. Taking a swipe at the opposition

for conspiring to block the country's

ongoing development and the inflow

of foreign investment, she criticised

Awami League for abstaining from

parliament for years enjoying all

Khaleda urged people to vote for

the BNP-led alliance in the next general elections to maintain the

blueprint election. Razzak, Tofail Ahmed, Motia Chowdhury, Saifuddin Ahmed Manik, Sawkat Hossain Hira, Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, Bimal Biswas, Obaidul Quader Mahmudur Rahman Manna, Sylhet Mayor Badar Uddin Áhmed Kamran, Dr Mostafa Jala Mohiuddin, Nurul Islam, Fazle Hossain Badsha, Lutfor Rahman, Abdus Samad, AKM Jahangir

Hossain, Abul Hossain, Jahangi

Kabir Nanak and Mirza Azam.

FROM PAGE 16 Getting the public procurement law

properly." Addressing a press briefing at his

activities.

US for full

President Hasanul Haque Inu said programme the BNP-Jamaat government wants She said five US experts are to destroy democracy and that is conducting a two-week training

in parliament after the cabinet okayed it. But some amendments have been made to the draft bill. specially the provision of constituting an independent review panel A planning ministry source said the WB may express dissatisfaction

sustained effort and support from the people of Bangladesh across the political spectrum to ensure that the country does not succumb to extremism and is able to deal with the threat without compromising

Historic FROM PAGE 16

declared 'Ebarer Sangram Amader Muktir Sangram, Ebarer Sangram

days later. sations have taken different Race Course ground.

hoisting of national and party flags at Bangabandhu Bhavan and at AL

April 1 and July 31. Police [Rajshahi range] Noor created militancy and used them to On the first day, local journalists destroy the country. AL General Secretary and 14-Mohammad on June 23, 2004 said heard the name of their organisation as al-Qaeeda, on the second day it party coordinator Abdul Jalil said the became Mujahidin Alliance Council alliance government has tried to for protecting Muslims (Muslim divert people's attention from the