NEWS

Bank Pallabi Branch is also in the

Treasury Department intelligence

experts yesterday in separate

sessions oriented four officials each

of the attorney general's office and CID police, and some BB officials on

how the US government's financial

King of US Treasury Department's

Financial Crimes Enforcement

Network (FinCEN), in Powerpoint

presentations illustrated their sys-

tems and operations at work to

safeguard the US financial system

from abuses and crimes like terrorist

financing and money laundering

gated now," he told the press after

the launching ceremony of an

extended phase of a project titled

Enhancing Capacity of Immigration

Officials to Combat Irregular

He said the government detected

some bank accounts of militants but

declined to give any details of the

investigating. "The investigators are

trying to get to the roots of (terror)

financing, modes of fund transfer and

Mary Jo Melancon and Kristen J

intelligence unit works.

meeting sources said.

From page 1

Bangla Bhai

Migration in Bangladesh.

other related matters.

Meanwhile, the two visiting US

name of Saidur.

Cry for life goes

FROM PAGE 1 Bangladesh attacked his house just after Fajr prayers. "After staying three days home, Yasin went to his cousin Nasima Akhtar Bokul's house," said his

brother Ibrahim Ali. Five JMJB men -- Hamirkutsa camp in-charge Abdul Kuddus, Jamal Uddin of Shitlai, Abdul Kuddus of Kathalbaria, and two masked men -- stormed Yasin's house around 11:00pm on June 29.

"We'll kill you and all of your family if you don't bring Yasin before us in two days," Ibrahim quoted JMJB camp in-charge Kuddus as saying. The militants searched a few of

their relatives' houses for Yasin the same night. Reinforced by madrasa teacher Sohrab Hossain and JMJB leader Abdus Sattar Master, they turned up next morning and picked up Yasin's 65-year-old father Ismail. They took Ismail to Bakul's

house and called Yasin out showing his father. As Yasin gave in, the JMJB men started shouting at him, "You are a terrorist, a Sarbohara [outlaw], you have no right to live Come with us," Ismail quoted the JMJB militants.

They dragged him to Kudapara Ahadia Dakhil Madrasa premises and started beating up him with hockey sticks, hanging him upside down in a tree.

Niko resumes supply

The militants tortured him to admit that he had murdered Azhar and Afsar and was involved in a clash in Kushtia. "Yasin continued to

(PDB) sources said they wanted to

re-start the troublesome 80 mega-

watt (MW) Tongi power plant yester-

day but could not do so due to

shortage of gas supply. One mmcfd

power plant was shut down recently

The technically substandard

Presently there is a gas supply

shortfall of about 20 to 30 mmcfd

This is affecting the northern part of

Dhaka. The country consumed

1,440 mmcfd gas on Wednesday,

"Niko's behaviour is question-

able. Its intention is bad," observed

a top official. "If it had any technical

problem with Feni field, which may

hinder raising gas supply, it can

simply pick up the phone and con-

vey that to the appropriate authori-

ties. But they did not. It only shows

Niko is not sincere about resuming

company has resumed gas supply

from Feni field just to avoid legal

action threatened by the energy

ministry adviser. We are watching

The Canadian company that

struck a joint venture deal with

Bapex in violation of several rules

had shut down the Feni field on

EC extends time

Niko's activities closely. If this con-

tinues, we will certainly take action.

He went on, "It appears the

gas can produce four MW power.

for mechanical glitches.

sources pointed out.

Feni gas supply.

FROM PAGE 1

continued up to March 20.

say 'I'm not guilty', but his groans died down soon," said a witness.

The JMJB men after killing Yasin took his body to Bagmara police station. The police, sensing he was

Bagmara Health Complex. Yasin's family said the terrorists killed him to intimidate district AL

Sobhan The then Rajshahi superintendent of police, Masud Mia, seemed delighted while talking to a group of journalists about the killing. "Yasin

not show any documents to support his claim The killing sparked violent pro-

Ishwardi police in the very night

the case, at a hotel in Pabna.

ruling coalition leaders. Pabna district BNP General Secretary Habibur Rahman Tota

and Jamaat-e-Islami leader Amzad Hossain told newspersons the arrestees belonged to BNP.

for gas sales.

FROM PAGE 20 Kalam's visit, the first by an Indian head of state to Myanmar, has focused on business interests

between the world's largest democracy and its military-ruled neighbor. India has been jockeying with

dead, asked them to take him to

leader and his relative Abdus

was a Sarbohara," he said but could

tests in Bagmara and local police were forced to record the case against the JMJB men.

of the murder held Abdul Kuddus, Zakir Hossain and Hafizur Rahman of Gaibandha, who were accused in

But the police had to release them the next day apparently in the wake of pressure by a number of

February 26, demanding immediate

settlement of gas price and payment

overall gas supply situation, energy

ministry adviser Mahmudur

Rahman on Tuesday asked Niko to

resume Feni gas supply within 24

hours or face legal notice for take-

Venture Agreement (JVA) with

Bapex, in which it promised to

develop the previously-abandoned

gas fields of Feni, Kamta and

Chhatak west and an unexplored

Niko had previously declined a

government gas price offer of \$1.75

per thousand cubic feet (mcf) and

demanded \$2.35 for Feni gas that

started flowing to the national grid

late in 2004 while its price was not

Niko's inefficient and negligent

a bank guarantee of Tk 250 crore as

Tengratila blowout compensation

and for further drilling there. Niko is

yet to respond to this demand.

Niko's activities violate its Joint

over of the gas field by Bapex.

field in Chhatak east.

fixed

As the Feni shut down affected

Biman loses profitable Myanmar, India

FROM PAGE 1

having 40 percent passengers in each flight makes a break-even point.

"Biman must have such high China to tap Myanmar's natural gas ratio of passengers to reach the break-even point because its operareserves off the Arakan Coast, and is tion, procurement or leasing cost is already involved in exploration very high," the source pointed out.

A reason for high procurement cost is that Biman remains stubborn India has been trying to negotiate a three-billion-dollar deal to run a about not changing its large aircraft pipeline from Myanmar and across type of DC10 and Airbus. DC10 has Bangladesh to the eastern Indian city become obsolete and its spares, of Kolkata, but has failed to make any being scarce, are very expensive.

However, aviation industry experts believe Biman can still minimise the losses.

"Considering Biman's constraints and socioeconomic condition, its most important route should be the Middle East as we have over 2.5 million immigrant workers there," said a source

building a pipeline from the Arakan "With limited number of aircraft, Biman should focus its entire opera-The satellite deal would allow tion on the profit-making routes to Myanmar to use Indian satellite imagery, the Middle East. The number of which could be applied to agricultural passengers on these routes have risen so phenomenally that most The third deal agreed to improve Middle Eastern airliners are trying to increase their flights to Dhaka," said The rest of Kalam's trip aims at furthering business ties, including a

an aviation industry expert. "Biman should consider closing down the loss-making routes and divert the flights entirely to the profitmaking ones," the expert added.

During each Tokyo and New York flight, an aircraft remains engaged for four days. Moreover, the entire crew stay at expensive hotels in

Bangladesh's HR

FROM PAGE 20

standing committee Terming the report as a routine affair of the US administration that recorded human rights situation in 196 countries, Moudud said, "I think the information on which the report is prepared ought to be examined and we have to take note of it."

He said the problems of human rights and corruption are more or less prevalent in all developing and developed countries including the United States.

Asked about extra-judicial killings by Rab and police, he said Rab has earned trust and praise for its successful crackdown on terrors and organised criminals. People who were the victims of criminals are now living in peace and are happy with the way Rab is containing the law and order situation.

He observed that Rab has become a "popular institution" after the capture of JMB leaders Shaekh Abdur Rahman and Bangla Bhai and it has enhanced the nation's prestige and image to a large extent. The credit goes to both Rab and police.

On the allegation against Rab for violating human rights, he said there is an existing law for investigation into any complaint and punishment. About 150 members of Rab have so far been punished for their unlawful acts

About the deaths in encounter, the law minister said there is also a criminal law to investigate any such death by a first class magistrate and actions are taken on the basis of the inquiry report.

Special Powers Act, he said no

but not on political grounds.

FROM PAGE 20 machinery and paying interests with Tokvo and New York for a week our foreign currency. forcing Biman to incur further loss,

Saifur

When license fee is a very good

There are lots of companies

operating in Bangladesh, most of

licenses. Saifur said. "They will now

"The cellphone companies were

The mobile companies did not

"I did not intervene previously

With the mobile phone industry

recording a tremendous growth, the

meeting reviewed whether the

government is getting its proper

But now I have to look into the

matter," he went on.

he explained. source of earnings in other coun-"These two aircraft could earn tries, our poor regulatory control allowed these cellphone companies big profits on the Middle East routes to operate getting nothing in return, instead of incurring huge loss in the minister lamented

these two destinations," he said. But such ideas are typically shelved as Biman must obey the which obtained literally free wishes of the policymakers. "It is such a tradition that Biman has have to compensate and increase never even hired any professional revenue sharing," he observed.

marketing personnel," he added. "Biman's one of the weakest not under good regulatory control in area is its marketing," said another the past. But now we need to official. "We get huge booking for change the practice." he observed. the Middle Eastern routes not offload shares in the stock market because our marketing department and there is no local equity particifacilitates it. It's because the pation in most cases, Saifur said, Bangladeshis abroad love everyunderlining the need to address the thing Bangladeshi. issue

"Unfortunately, that love has never been reciprocated. Biman's ticket booking system is flawed, its outstation offices are outrageously ill-equipped and office bearers are mostly rude. "Above all, the service given to

the Middle East-bound immigrant workers is nothing but a sham. The crew in general are rough and impatient with the half-literate officials of the Bangladesh Bank immigrant passengers, not keeping attended the meeting. in mind these are the people, who have still kept Biman alive.

Replying to a question, he said I haranga steals such report will not harm the image of the country. "Rather, our image will

revenues.

FROM PAGE 20 His deft approach that saw him producing 39 runs for the ninth wicket with Lasith Malinga also denied Bangladesh a chance to bowl the visitors out below 300 after Sri Lanka lost their eighth wicket at 263.

Rahman, former Habiganj district amir of Jamaat-e-Islami, who has Bangladesh however made a dream start while defending a been on the run since Rahman's arrest. The account with Rupali modest first innings total when Shahadat served a double strike in successive overs that saw Sri Lanka JMB behind lose two wickets in addition of 18 runs to their overnight 25-2. FROM PAGE 1

The young right-arm medium fast bowler struck in his second over by removing Thilan Samaraweera (20), who chased a rising delivery only to edge into the safe hands of

Khaled Mashud behind the wicket. The Narayanganj lad then won an lbw verdict against dangerman Kumar Sangakkara with the first ball of his next over. But Sri Lanka captain Mahela Jayawardene not Fariduzzaman Swapan, JMB only successfully negotiated his hattrick ball but also played a vital role in repairing the damage with Tharanga

Jayawardene launched a counterattack along with his junior partner Tharanga to relieve the pres-sure and took the team to lunch at 121 without further damage.

Bangladesh bowling looked ordinary against the pair in the session until Mahela second whipped a ranked longhop from part-time leggy Mohammad Ashraful straight to the throat of Mushfiqur Rahim at mid-wicket to give Bangladesh a lucky breakand Bangla Bhai.

through. Mahela's departure not only

Islami Bank staffs

FROM PAGE 1 Branch to its Lal Dighirparh Branch

in Sylhet, sources at the BB said. The eight transfers made in the last two months amounted about Tk 4.15 lakh. In each transfer, the sender mentioned an account held with the Islami Bank branch and a fake account holder's name. But, in all the eight instances, the bank officials did not apply the standard process of verifying the sender's name and other information pro-

vided, the sources said. They said officials at Gazipur and Savar Islami Bank branches claimed it was simply by mistake that they did not crosscheck the sender's information.

But, the investigators think repetition of the same mistake in all the cases is highly unusual and suspicious. There is much chance that a few bank staffs of the two branches might have connived with the sender, a source remarked

The BB probe however did not find any transaction in many years in the other two accounts with Rupali and Janata banks.

Chairman of the National Board BB Governor Ahmed last night of Revenue Khairuzzaman told The Daily Star he was yet to Chowdhury, Chairman of the read the probe report. When asked Bangladesh Telecommunication f he is going to forward the report to Regulatory Commission Md Omar he intelligence agencies, Farooq, Chairman of the Salehuddin said [before doing that] Bangladesh Telegraph and We will first discuss with the bank Telephone Board (BTTB) and top concerned.

The BB will continue investigating into this issue, the governor added

Branch in Sylhet.

tional links.

The BB sent the probe teams On fugitive JMB leaders like following last week's surrender of Jama'atul Mujahedin Bangladesh Khaled Saifullah, Salahuddin and Mahatab Khamaru, Babar said the (JMB) chief Abdur Rahman, when government is not resting on the the police found some banking aurels of arresting Abdur Rahman documents in his Sylhet hideout, and Bangla Bhai. including three chequebooks of the "We need to make serious efforts three banks. One of the accounts is continuously to arrest them. We need with Rupali Bank Pallabi Branch in some time to get result," he said. Dhaka, another with Janata Bank Asked if the government consid-Brahmanbaria Branch and the last

ered taking actions against alleged with Islami Bank Lal Dighirparh patrons of militancy in the ruling alliance, the state minister said, "I The account with the Islami Bank we find any evidence of militant-links Lal Dighirparh Branch is in the name we will take actions against them, no of Sabbir Ahmed, though it really matter whoever he is. had been operated by Saidur

He also did not rule out the possibility of investigation into terror financing allegedly by some NGOs. No one will be spared as the government declared war against terrorism he added

RAHMAN MAY BE TAKEN TO SYLHET

Law enforcers are likely to take The Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh official also said they are trying to get (JMB) chief Abdur Rahman to information about JMB's interna-Sylhet tomorrow or Sunday on completion of remand

Sylhet Sadar Cognisance Court had placed Rahman on a 10-day remand on March 2 for interrogation in two cases filed under arms and explosives laws after his arrest the same day.

"We are now focusing on JMB's operational side and are yet to guiz Chittagong Divisional Speedy Rahman about the patrons of his Trial Tribunal, meantime, asked the vigilante operations in Rajshahi government to produce Rahman and Bangla Bhai before it on March 21 in two cases under Explosive

He said they have not vet interrogated Bangla Bhai and will not do Substances Act. that until doctors approve it.

Replying to a query, Rab Director

General MAAziz Sarkar said they will

try to collect evidence about those

who patronised militant leader

Siddiqul Islam alias Bangla Bhai.

region," the Rab DG said.

SYLHET Additional Inspector General of Police yesterday took Shabbir Ahmed, 38, who was arrested at Police Anwarul Igbal in a written speech said their attention is drawn Paltan in Dhaka on Wednesday, to to the reports published in a section Sylhet for interrogation. Earlier he of newspapers regarding the arrest was taken to Brahmanbaria. and interrogation of Abdur Rahman

Shabbir, a friend of Moizul Islam alias Hridoy Chowdhury who was He urged reporters to contact arrested with Abdur Rahman, was learnt to be a medium of JMB's financial network. Law enforcers found a chequebook of Shabbir at Rahman's Svlhet hideout. Shabbir opened the account in 1993 with Janata Bank's Brahmanbaria branch. Sources said the Rab and police have come to know the names of at least 18 JMB cadres in Sylhet

their statements.

August 17last year and Sobhar

face-to-face and cross-examined

From their separate interroga-

tion afterwards, Rab became

certain that Kala Mahbub and

Sobhan were with kidnapped Jamal

While on remand, Shahid admit-

ted that he was involved in Jamal's

abduction until handing him over to

another group for carrying him to

BNP lawmaker plotted the abduc-

tion and had it carried out with the

taken to a house reportedly of a sex

worker where he was kept for two

davs. Then he was shifted to the

house of Alamgir, a close associate

of Kashem. On August 16 in 2003

he was brought to Fakirer Tila

about two km from Alamgir's house.

Kashem ordered the killing of Jamal, Kala Mahbub told journalists

later

As asked by the kidnappers

Kala Mahbub, Kana Sultan

Chhoto Osman and Shahjahan--al

accomplices of Kashem --strangled

Jamal to death and hanged him

from a tree for a while. Later, they

buried him at the remote hill in

Fatikchhari. Shahid was present

nearby at the time of the

Although Rab dug out Jamal's

skeleton, his family was initially

August 25 last year at the Rab-7

headquarters in Patenga, Jamal's

wife Nazma Akhtar Khanam said

she was not sure if it was her hus-

band's. She however did not rule

out the possibility that it could be

Nazma told journalists on the day

that they seek DNA test of the

After looking at the skeleton on

killing Mahbub said

doubtful if it was his

remains

FAMILY WAS IN DOUBT

From Fatikchhari Jamal was

He also said the brother a ruling

the hideout under Kashem

help of his business partners.

at the last stage of the abduction.

stand-off was "matter of destiny". "If the Iranian people and the povernment retreats from its right to nuclear technology, the (American) adventure will not end and the Americans will come up with another pretext," the top cleric

Australia FROM PAGE 20

projects in Myanmar waters.

The agreement signed yesterday

would also allow studies into running a

much longer pipeline through north-

east India, which borders Myanmar, or

converting the gas to liquefied natural

signed a deal to allow China to study

Coast to its Yunnan province.

projects or to survey for minerals.

leaves on Saturday.

FROM PAGE 20

atomic weapons.

week

said.

UN action

cooperation in Buddhist studies.

dinner with the Chamber of

Commerce on Friday before he

France, Russia and the United

States -- the five veto-wielding,

permanent members of the

Council -- have already discussed

the issue and could formally take

up the case in the course of next

Unlike the IAEA, the Security

Council has enforcement powers

and can impose punitive mea-

sures, including sanctions. The

aim is to force Iran to abandon

uranium enrichment work, which

can provide the fuel for civilian

reactors but also material for

But Khamenei argued that the

China and Myanmar have already

neadway in the talks.

gas for shipping

Australia is gradually taking skilled professionals from Bangladesh. During the discussion, both the

prime minister and the Australian minister stressed the need for operation led to two blowouts in training for better human resource Tengratila gas field last year. The development in Bangladesh. government claimed 8.9 bcf gas and

Khaleda thanked the Australian minister for her country's cooperation in tackling the devastating flood in 2004.

Vanstone appreciated the tremendous development of Bangladesh in education sector. especially the prime minister's initiative for female education across the country.

She also informed the prime minister about her meetings with different ministers in Bangladesh.

Australian High Commissioner to

present.

On political detention under the

political leader or worker is detained under this law. Only some 100 or 150 people have been detained under it,

ployment problem. Our positive gains in microcredit, poverty alleviation and in health sector have enhanced our image," Moudud noted.

Khair.

large.

last vear.

Court asks cop FROM PAGE 20 that since the IO did not submit probe

depend on how quickly we achieve

economic growth and resolve unem-

reports of the cases under section 173 of the Criminal Procedure Code he is being instructed to do so immediately. The two cases -- one under the

Arms Act and the other under the

Explosive Substances Act -- were

filed with Sabujbagh Police Station

against Sunny and six others on

Other accused of the cases are

regional commander of Gazipur

Enayet Ullah alias Jewel, Monir

Kamrul, Alamgir alias Bijoy and Abul

brother of JMB chief Shaekh Abdur

Rahman, and Jewel are now in the

custody while the rest five are still at

Of the accused, Sunny, younger

Sunny, one of the seven members

of the Majlish-e-Shura, the top tier of

the JMB that masterminded the

August 17 blasts across the country,

was arrested at the Polytechnic

Institute at Tejgaon on December 13

from him, Rapid Action Battalion

Following information extracted

December 14 last year.

at the directive Election Commissioner (CEC) MA Aziz, who enjoys majority at the EC with support from the two new election commissioners

Sources said the time was

Election commissioners M Munsef Ali and AK Mohammad Ali, who have all along opposed the preparation of a fresh voter list, yesterday expressed their ignorance about the time extension

"No file was forwarded to me seeking my opinion in this regard, Mohammad Ali told The Daily Star vesterday. Munsef Ali echoed him.

Officials at the EC Secretariat, however, said they issued the circular on extension of time limit following the directives of the EC.

This is for the third time that the EC extended the deadline. The EC first extended the time

limit up to February 20 after it failed to meet the January 31 deadline for completing the task. Later, it once again extended the time up to March

At first, the CEC sent a file regarding the time extension to his four colleagues in the EC. On the next two occasions, however, he only consulted with newly appointed election commissioners Justice Mahfuzur Rahman and SM Zakaria, who have always supported him.

Meanwhile, despite extending the deadline repeatedly, information about a large number of eligible voters has not been collected till date. The field level task has also come to a halt as enumerators and supervisors working since January 1 are refusing to work at many places over uncertainty of their remuneration

The progress of the work is also not satisfactory, specially in the capital. EC Secretariat officials who have visited different areas of Dhaka informed the EC that at least five to seven percent eligible voters are still remaining out of the list.

Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina and election commissioners Munsef Ali and Mohammad Ali have refused to register for the fresh voter list as it is being prepared ignoring a High Court (HC) directive to revise the existing electoral roll.

The EC filed an appeal with the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court against the HC directives on February 1. which the Appellate Division will hear on March 12

Meanwhile, the field level officers were asked yesterday to complete preparation of a draft electoral roll-that began on February 21--by March 20

But the EC is yet to fix the date for publication of the draft and final rolls as it waits for the outcome of its appeal against the HC directives.

3 KIIIed FROM PAGE 1

(PBCP), and Mohon Molla, a robber. UNB says Rapid Action Battalion arrested Iman Ali, 40, on Wednesday on the premises of Dhaka Judge

Court. He was taken to Khagan village FROM PAGE 1 in Savar in the early hours yesterday

to recover hidden firearms. According to Rab, Iman Ali was killed in "crossfire" in a shootout between his accomplices and the Rab members during the operation. Rab recovered a sawn-off rifle, a pipe gun and four bullets from the spot.

Iman Ali was wanted in a number of murder and other criminal cases, Rab sources said. JHENIDAH

Police arrested Janaiuddho leader Nurul Islam at Baka village of Jibonnagar upazila of Chuadanga district on Wednesday. After interrogation he was taken to Shuti-Durgapur village in Jhenidah Sadar upazila to recover firearms.

The superintendent of police at Jhenidah said a shootout occurred when a police team took the outlaw to the village at about 3:45am vesterday Nurul was killed and constables Shafiqul and Masum were injured during the shootout.

One pipe gun and six bullets were retrieved from the spot, reports our correspondent BAGERHAT Rab arrested Mohon Molla, a notori-

ous robber of the Sundarbans, at Kumarkhali village in Mongla upazila of Bagerhat on Wednesday. He was taken to West Govindapur village under Rampal upazila in the early hours yesterday to recover firearms.

According to Rab, Mohon Molla 49, was killed in "crossfire" in a shootout between the robbers and the Rab members at the village during the ms recovery operation, reports our staff correspondent at Khulna. One pipe gun, one air gun and four

bullets were recovered from the spot. Rab sources said Mohon Molla had been wanted in 10 criminal cases filed with different police stations of Bagerhat and Khulna districts.

Ctg court FROM PAGE 1

Station submitted the chargesheet against them. Earlier, the Chief Metropolitan

Magistrate's (CMM) Court had issued an order to show arrest of Abdur Rahman and Bangla Bhai in connection with the August 17 seria blasts and seizure of explosives from JMB divisional chief Mohammad's house on December 13.

Bangladesh Douglas Foskett and Bangladesh High Commissioner to Australia Ashrafuddowla were

Fire again

Meanwhile, two workers of KTS textile and garments factory, who sustained severe burns in the February 23 fire, died yesterday raising the death toll in the worstever factory fire in the country to 63.

Fire Service sources said a fire broke out at the storehouse of Intimate Garment and Sweater Factory on the fifth floor of the

Central Plaza Shopping Centre at around 11:00pm. The fire spread fast, engulfing the whole floor.

Fourteen fire fighting units from the city's different fire stations rushed to the spot and managed to extinguish the blaze after a threehour effort.

Fire brigade sources said the fire might have originated from electric short-circuit

Two more KTS workers die

Two KTS workers Al Amin, 20, and Dipa Dhar, 17, died at the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) at around 12:30am and 5:30am yesterday respectively, sources said.

Both of them were undergoing reatment at the surgery ward but were later shifted to the ICU on deterioration of condition.

Among the 49 KTS fire victims admitted to the CMCH eight succumbed to their injuries so far. They are Moni, Mohammed Hannan, Monir, Kamrun Nahar, Nasima Akter, Jhumki Das, Al Amin and Dipa, hospital sources said.

Eighteen injured workers are undergoing treatment at the CMCH at present

Another six critically injured -- Noor Jahan, Abdus Salam, Farzana, Sima Barua, Lovely and Marzina Akhter -were earlier shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) for better treatment. Of them Marzina Akhter died at the Burn and Plastic Surgery unit on March 7.

Fifty-four people died and hundreds were injured on the night of February 23 in the devastating fire at KTS garment factory of Kalurghat BSCIC Industrial Area in Chittagong

Asked about repression on reli gious minorities as mentioned in the report, he outright rejected it claiming that there is no repression on religious minorities. "It is a harmonious society. All the religious communities live here together in peace.

Asked about the problem of corruption, Moudud said, "We've already established an independent Anti-Corruption Commission to deal with it. Besides, a bill on Public Procurement Act is now pending for consideration of the parliamentary

ammunition, explosives, bomb making materials and books on jihad from the house of Abul Khair at South Manda in the city's Sabujbagh area. Police so far have submitted the charge sheets of five cases out of 25 filed with different police stations in

the capital. The trials of four cases, now pending with two Sessions Courts, Dhaka did not start as Sunny was not produced before the courts on the dates fixed for hearing

IMF suggests tighter

FROM PAGE 20

Growth momentum in Bangladesh's economy has been maintained during this fiscal year," Thomas told the briefing on their observations.

He expected that the GDP growth would be about 6 percent but observed that inflation, though declined slightly, at 6.5 percent was still higher than desirable.

Thomas added that the external current account was better than expected in the first half of FY06 with strong growth in exports and some slowing in non-oil imports.

"Despite these positive developconsiderable macroecoments. nomic challenges remain there." he said, suggesting that Bangladesh Bank should continue the tightened

policy during the days to come. Apart from further raising the interest rates and the prices of fuel oil, the IMF also suggested increasing revenue collection as a matter of priority as the government is preparing the budget of FY07.

On petroleum prices, it observed that the present policy entails considerable and growing economic costs, mainly benefiting higher income consumers, reducing economic efficiency, and only delaying the inevitable adjustments as losses continue to mount on the BPC and the NCBs financial position deteriorates.

Replying to a question, Thomas said there are some liquidity problems in the foreign exchange market while the market needs some improvements in terms of efficiency. In response to another query, he said it would be possible to register faster GDP growth even if there are some difficulties in agriculture as the industry and services sectors are showing robust growth. The 3-year PRGF arrangement

was approved in June 2003 with a total lending commitment of \$493 million, being disbursed in seven instalments, which were later augmented by about \$75 million under

(Rab) seized 56 items of arms

IMF's Trade Integration Mechanism (TIM).

BB has already launched a probe Five instalments worth \$409 into this matter million have so far been released with the latest one (\$97 million) in The factor that overshadowed

quite a few others the bankers February. Discussions on the blamed for making the greenback release of the sixth instalment will scarce was this: Some of the take place in May this year if the smaller banks often issues letters of government continues to implement credit (LCs) worth more than they policies, particularly on the NCBs can really afford. So, when the time and the NBR. comes for translating the LCs into

PDB FROM PAGE 20

a change was illegal. But the same committee went on to approve it in June

The two agreements with the BON are grossly deviated from the PPA and LLA of the first phase AES Meghnaghat project. The cabinet too mandated that the second phase should be implemented as per the

power tariff is being shown at 2.78 cents per kilowatt hour (or kWh) but the effective tariff will be around 5 to 6 cents per kWh in reality because of verv unusual concessions being given to the BON, observed experts.

to the BON would be worth no less than \$70-80 million. Some of these concessions will financially deprive the PDB. These along with other concessions alone will double the real tariff for this project, they pointed

The BON is now finalising a gas sale agreement with the Titas gas, seeking more concessions. It has already finalised an implementation agreement. Once these accords are signed, the BON is supposed to start project implementation.

Industry insiders say that the inexperienced BON have not made any progress in financing the project which might require an investment of no less than \$200 million

ended a 124-run fifth wicket stand but also saw left-arm spinner Mohammad Rafique and his junior partner Enamul Haque bowling with their tails up. Rafique produced an armer that bowled Tillakaratne Dilshan (33) while Enamul Haque the better of the two bowlers, took two wickets in quick succession.

Shahadat was the most success ful bowler with 3-81 while Enamul captured two for 71.

of the country, Salehuddin said the

Forex

FROM PAGE 20

concerned authorities before publishing any reports on Rahman and Bangla Bhai to avoid confusion

He also urged the reporters not to publish any confusing reports quotng any Rab officials.

Iqbal said the health condition of Bangla Bhai is improving and Rahman is being interrogated at the TFI, where no-one except the designated members is allowed to enter. region.

Jamal Uddin Murder

FROM PAGE 1

hand over the mortal remains to his family today.

Chowdhury Forman Reza Liton eldest son of Jamal, said he would receive the mortal remains of his father, and the first namaj-e-janaza will be held at Laldighi Maidan after Asr Prayers.

"We will then take the remains of our father to Anwara and three more janaza will be held tomorrow. Our father will be buried at our family graveyard at village Jheuri in the afternoon," Liton said yesterday evening

Replying a question, Liton and his younger brother Arman Reza Rana reiterated their demand for exemplary punishment of the culprits and their godfathers responsible for the abduction and killing of their father.

They again accused a local lawmaker and his brother as the two masterminds behind the inci-

HOW THE SKELETON WAS RECOVERED

Rab recovered the skeleton of Jamal from a remote forest-clad hill- Satkainda Tilla- in Fatikchhari upazila, about 40 kilometres from the port city, 25 months after his abduction.

The elite force dug up the skeleton from the hideout of Kanchan Nagar Union Parishad (UP) Chairman Abul Kashem Chowdhury, a prime accused in the abduction case LEADS TO THE DISCOVERY

Sobhan, driver of the microbus used in the abduction, said Shahidul Islam alias Shahid, chairman of Anwara Sadar UP, and Kashem are the masterminds, and Nazim Uddin of Hiledhar. Ishaq Ahmad, Shafiuddin and Yusuf were directly involved in the abduction. Rab arrested Shahid at Patenga

beach on August 13 last year.

Rab personnel then brought Jamal's eldest son Liton also Kala Mahbub, an alleged killer of expressed similar views on that Jamal arrested on November 1 in day 2004, Shahid, UP Chairman Shahjahan who was arrested on

money from the forex market scaling up the demand and price of dollar. As a remedial measure, the bankers suggested the BB asking each of the "mismanaged" banks to prepare in advance a foreign currency budget for every month,

payments, they are forced to buy the

mentioning the amount of foreign currency it has and the amount it can spend.

The bankers in the meeting also asked the central bank to undertake an initiative for introducing a system in which the National Board of Revenue and the banks would work closely in overseeing whether the same quantity of goods is coming in as is shown in the LC

Salehuddin asked for the bank ers' opinion about the request of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) on Wednesday to release some \$500 million from the central bank's forex reserve, as it looks quite healthy, to ease the dollar crunch

In response, Pubali Bank Managing Director Khandker Ibrahim Khaled termed the request not a good idea. If this amount of dollar is injected into the market, import will rise sharply and the situation will become the same as it is now, he argued.

The Pubali Bank MD also said since it is an open market, the central bank should not intervene but should strengthen its monitoring system.

first project. Although the Meghnaghat 2

These concessions being given