be undeniable," he observed.

Two evewitnesses to Yunus

murder in statements before a

magistrate already confirmed that

notorious Shibir cadre Zafar Babu

and his accomplice Zillur Rahman

were among the group of four that

killed the RU teacher.

"The statements seem quite

convincing as they were corrobo-

rated by other witnesses, docu-

ments and circumstantial evi-

dence," a senior police official said,

Police attached all movable

properties of Zafar Babu on

February 24 last for his implication

accused in seven cases for murder,

blasts and other crimes, was

arrested in August 2004 at Katakhali

including Katakhali municipal

administrator Mazedur Rahman,

RU syndicate member Siddik

Hussain, and Ward Commissioner

Gias Uddin lobbied instantly to get

But as police recovered a

He. however, was released on

Rajshahi police included him in

their list of most-wanted criminals

shortly after Yunus murder. "He

escaped several raids. His arrest

will help to unravel the murder

Babu through a third party and

proposed to make him the principal

witness in Yunus murder case for

Jamaat Ameer Ătaur Rahman, Babu

said, "Contact him. I will surrender

only if he asks me to do so." said a

police source quoting from police

Police reports to the home minis-

try cell formed to monitor the sensa-

tional cases too said that the clues

unearthed so far suggest that 'a

section of a fundamentalist political

said Babu held a meeting at RU

TSCC on the night before Yunus

murder. Sirajus Salekin, former

president of Islami Chhatra Shibir in

Binodpur, took part in the meeting

Sources at RU and Binodpui

party' was involved in the murder.

But referring to Rajshahi City

his surrender, added the source.

Police in 2005 had contacted

mystery," said a police source.

revolver following his confession the

securing bail from the High Court in

next day, Jamaat disowned Babu.

A number of Jamaat leaders

Sources said Babu, who stands

replying to a question.

n the grisly crime.

him released.

October 2004.

# Sri Lanka poised

But even before the Lankans completed a predictable whitewash, they had more reasons to celebrate on the third day after champion off-spinner Muttiah Muralidaran picked up two wickets to become only the second bowler in the history to cross the 600-wicket mark in Tests after Australian Shane Warne, who has

Funnily though Bangladesh's wicketkeeper batsman Khaled Mashud, who had earlier become Murali's 1000th international victim

Murali's two wickets in the second innings after a five-wicket haul in the first also saw him becoming the Test playing nations.

While Murali will remember the Test for all the good reasons, Bangladesh will rue it as a lost opportunity especially after the heroics of their young medium pacer Shahadat Hossain, who picked up two wickets in the morning for his first-ever five-wicket haul.

Tharanga (165) to finish with 5-86 as Sri Lanka, resuming the day on 302-8, were bowled out for 316.

Bangladesh came out to bat for a second time. But it was the same old story of brittle batting where Bashar and Rafique were only exceptions.

innings 69 with an equally impressive 73 before being unfortunately adjudged leg before. Rafique scored an entertaining 78-ball 64 that contained six fours and three massive sixes. Had he got a little support from the tail-enders the southpaw could have turned his third Test fifty into his second hundred. But why blame the tail when the

top-order failed to cope against a decent attack on a day when Murali

a rising delivery from Malinga behind the wicket while his partner Javed

while trying a ridiculous slog sweep. Bangladesh stumbled to 71-3 at lunch from where they had never recovered.

Bangladesh's hope of a turn-

around was shattered when

Mohammad Ashraful slashed a leg

break of Malinga Bandara but only to

batsman who batted with authority, welcoming Murali with a confident

four through mid-wicket. Bashar

struck another eight boundaries in

Two new ball bowlers Lasith

Malinga, who became quickest Sri

Lankan bowler to scalps fifty wickets in 13 Tests, and Fernando shared six

wickets while Murali took two for 62

He was sent back to his father at

11:30 pm on Thursday, Monowara

Huda Shams said Sumon, Rumi

and Masum were caught following

information that they were in pos-

session of illegal arms and the three

Col Shams, however, denied

The matter has been brought to

the notice of Rab Director General

Gangster killed

police, Javed's accomplices opened

fire, forcing the law enforcers to

bullets during the "shootout" and

was taken to Dhaka Medical

College and Hospital (DMCH)

where the doctors declared him

dead. He was shot in the hand,

chest and head, hospital sources

four bullets from the scene.

police sources said.

murder case.

Police recovered a revolver and

Javed had a close relation with

Family members said Javed was

former officer-in-charge (OC) of

Motijheel Police Station Rafiq,

not supposed to be killed in

crossfire; rather a trial could take

place as he was an accused in a

adviser to top terror "Kala" Jahangir.

leader and JMB supremo Abdur

Locals said Javed was an

Police said layed was injured by

Abdul Aziz Sarker, sources said.

admitted to their criminal activities.

torturing them physically.

FROM PAGE 1

Rab-6 Director Col Shamsul

and Bandara captured two for 32.

2 students

FROM PAGE 16

nis flawless 104-ball knock.

Javawardene at slip.

brilliantly caught by Mahela

Bashar however was the only

militants and protested price hike of

Jahangir Kabir Nanak alleged that Iman Ali was killed in a planned way as he protested land grabbing in a Savar village by the cousin of a state minister.

against persons responsible for the

He alleged that some high-ups in the ruling alliance are patronising the militants and demanded proper action against them.

Imam Ali's wife Rabeya Khatun read out a written statement at the

nel took Imam away from court on Wednesday when he appeared before it in a 'false case' against him and was 'killed' that night.

Rabeya demanded fair trial of the killing' of her husband.

Jubo League General Secretary Mirza Azam MP, Joint Secretary Faruk Hossain and other leaders were present at the press confer-

## Wife of slain

FROM PAGE 16

their demand was not met He filed a case with Raninagar

However, the police dropped the names of two top associates of Bangla Bhai -- Sariatullah and his deputy Mustafizur Rahman Khaza -from the charge sheet submitted on

Jasim, plaintiff of the case, challenged the charge sheet, which accused 20 people, in a petition expressing his lack of confidence in

He said the police dropped the names as they being Bangla Bhai's associates had close connection with political high-ups

LOCAL JMJB MEMBERS Sources said Bangla Bhai held a nightlong meeting with about 25 associates at local JMJB leader Kadir Sheikh's house at Bashbari in Raninagar on November 17. Local leaders Akhter, Habibur, Mukul, Rahman, Dulal and Ismail Sheikh

attended the meeting. Locals told journalists Bangla Bhai dressed as before went to Raninagar with over 10 associates in two microbuses and was seen on November 18 as well.

most wanted criminals after the prime minister ordered the police to arrest him on May 23. Bangla Bhai's men used to patrol

several localities including Shikdari, Palashi, Goalkandi, Hamirkutsha, Sajuria and Majhgram villages in Bagmara upazila. Raishahi prior to his visit to the areas.

Villagers alleged JMJB leaders Prof Lutfar Rahman, Mahtab Khamaru, Atabor, Yasin, among many others, extorted huge money

Abdus Sattar of Sakoa, Mantu of of Palashi set up houses and bought land after joining the Islamist outfit. Earlier, they could hardly have a square meal a day.

## WHO

FROM PAGE 16

countries to probe outbreaks of bird flu, as well as getting in place measures to slow and stop the spread of

"The team itself will not be a single standing team," Fukuda said.

"We will develop a roster of people who have received a great deal of Later, at a party meeting in training about what in fact are the Naogaon, State Minister for containment procedures, what is Housing and Public Works Alamgir influenza, what is the nature of the

> Concern has been rising over the spread of the highly pathogenic H5N1 strain of avian influenza, which has infected 175 people in seven countries, killing 96 of them, according to WHO figures. The virus resurfaced in poultry

> flocks in Asia in 2003 and has since struck in the Middle East. Africa and Europe

> H5N1 can infect people in close proximity to birds, but experts worry that it may mutate to become easily transmissible between humans.

> The fear is that it could then spark a human flu pandemic like those which have claimed millions of lives in the past. Fukuda said that a key role of the

taskforce would be to hunt for unexplained human cases of H5N1 -- a possible sign that the virus has turned into a more dangerous form. Earlier this week, the WHO organ-

ised a meeting of experts focussing on plans for coordinated global action in the event of a pandemic. "It is clear that if we try to contain a

pandemic -- and there is no precedent for that -- then there's a very good chance that we will fail," Fukuda "However, there's also a very

good chance that if we mount this kind of effort, we may slow down the spread of a pandemic virus early on. And if we do that, and we buy some substantial amount of time -- that means weeks -- then we can really increase the chances for having more vaccine available, more rapidly, and it'll give countries more time to

The agency has said that the success of any plan would depend on detecting the virus quickly, swiftly mobilising resources including drugs to slow its spread, and getting people to comply with control measures, including possible quarantines.

# KTS burn victims

FROM PAGE 16

"My daughters have grown up. I do not know how I will marry them off." says Salam's worried wife Shamsunnahar.

Noorjahan, 17, from Kalurghat, took the job of a helper at the doomed KTS garment factory six months ago to supplement the income of her father Noor Islam, a boatman who remains jobless throughout the year except for fourfive months. "I would get paid Tk 1,700 from which I used to send Tk 1,000 for my family. I don't know if I will be able to go back to work again," says a sobbing Noorjahan.

Her mother Farida who is attending her ailing daughter at the DMCH has other worries. "The fire has burnt her face badly. How will I marry her off?" she asks.

Another victim Farzana Begum went back to her father's family after her husband deserted her a year ago. There she found that her young brothers and sisters worked hard to run the family as their aged father could not work any more. The little kids, however, could not earn even two meals a day. Finally, a desperate Farzana came to Chittagong and joined the garment factory. A large part of her body, including

the face, throat and legs, has burnt in the fire. "Doctors say I will recover, but they keep silent when I ask if I will be able to work again," Farzana says.

The attending doctors told The Daily Star that she may never be able to work again. Farzana who once came out of her home to assist her poor family may now herself

become a burden on her family.

## Foreign ships

mately 4,500 tonnes of petroleum are being supplied to ships by the vendors

BPC officials admitted the clandes tine sale but claimed not more than 10 percent oil can be collected in this way.

"We have asked the Coastquard to step up patrols in the outer anchorage and stop such illegal business," said Mohammad Ishaq, BPC director (marketing), when contacted over

He claimed this illegal market is not very big and only a meagre amount of fuel is being transacted. But sources said oil worth no less

than Tk 100 crore is annually being supplied through this way to the foreign As per customs rules, bunkers are treated as bonded store and the ship-

ping agents are required to collect those following the rules. But in maximum cases shipping agents buy the bunkers from vendors.

violating the rules and depriving the government of profit On the other hand, the shipping agents collect the foreign currencies from the ship owners by supplying fuel.

In most of the cases the money is transacted outside the country. The shipping agents also hardly disclose the actual price of the oil as they collect it from unofficial market.

Around 1,800 ships call at the Chittagong Port a year and each of those take 300-500 tonnes of fuel on an aver-The BPC annually sells around 20,000 tonnes of fuel at \$275 a tonne to the foreign ships, said the sources

# Policy being framed

non-agricultural or low productive "Upazila and Zila Land Use

Committees headed by the UNO and the DC respectively should be formed to consider and recommend land allocation for non-agricultural purposes ' Meanwhile, Agriculture Minister

MK Anwar has expressed deep concern at the decrease of farmland at a rate of around one percent a

"Theoretically speaking, there would be no cultivable land left in Bangladesh in 50 years if lands are taken away for non-farm purposes at the current annual rate." Anwar said at the 5th annual meeting of the Consortium for Unfavourable Rice Environment (Cure) in the capital on Envisaging no increase of

cropland in the country, the minister emphasised gearing up agricultural research to raise productivity.

But the BRF-proposed rice policy noted, "It is shocking to find that government expenditure on agricultural research has been steadily declining in Bangladesh.'

Farm research expenditure declined to less than 0.2 percent of the agricultural gross domestic product (GDP) in 2002-05 from about 0.3 percent in 1999-2002, the BRF mentioned.

Speaking at a city workshop on Diverse Agriculture and

Crops' on February 27, the agriculture minister said allocation for agricultural research should be raised to 2.0 percent from 0.2 percent of the agricultural GDP to reduce the dependence on imports.

The BRF has recommended, "The government should take prompt action to allocate more resources to rice research. The allocation should at least be 0.4 percent of the agricultural GDP." Agriculture ministry officials

attributed the fast depletion of rice land to the growing demand for land for non-farm purposes like urbanisation, industrialisation and setting up habitations. When contacted. Head of Social

Science Division of the International Rice Research Institute Dr Mahabub Hossain said investing more on agricultural research is vital for Bangladesh since it is losing cropland quite fast. Experts pointed out that

Bangladeshi farmers having an average farm size of only 0.68 acres have already put in their best efforts to produce a huge quantity of food crops during dry season by extensively using shallow pumps.

"Now that yield increase potentials in favourable eco-agricultura zones have largely exhausted, increased food grains have to come from unfavourable farm zones like flood-prone and drought-prone areas as well as areas with salinity,"

### Agribusiness for Poverty Alleviation through Promotion of Secondary

Chowdhury's close friend Shabbir Ahmed in the Sylhet Sadar Cognizance Magistrate Court tomorrow and seek to take him to a remand. He was brought to Sylhet from Brahmanbaria on Thursday

The police will interrogate him in connection with the two cases. A chequebook issued to Shabbir Ahmed from the Brahmanbaria branch of Janata Bank was found in the East Shaplabag house Surjodigholbari in Sylhet, from where Abdur Rahman was arrested.

Shabbir, 38, is son of Abdul Haque of village Mohammadpur under Brahmanbaria Sadar Upazila. The police picked him up from a private firm at Purana Paltan in Dhaka on Wednesday. Owner of the firm Fariduddin, who hails from Rangour might have links with JMB. the police suspect.

Meanwhile, the investigators still could not extract any significant information from Abu Walid Chowdhury, a branch-manager of Islami Bank, Nurunnabi Deshi, a local Union Parishad member, and Abdul Haque, a mason, who have been on four-day remand since Wednesday. Abu Walid told the interrogators that he had just signed the paper works as an officer of the bank for an account opened by Saidur Rahman with the Laldighirpar branch of Islami Bank. Saidur Rahman, former amir of the Habigani district unit of Jamaat, is currently wanted by the law enforcers in suspicion of his links with Abdur Rahaman and JMB.

Sub-inspector Waliullah of Sylhet Kotwali Police Station (PS) filed a case under the Explosive Substance Act and another one under the Arms Act against Abdur Rahman after his surrender. Rahman's two associates Abdul arrest of JMB leaders Abdur Aziz alias Hanif and Hridoy Chowdhury are also accused in the arms case. Inspector Shafiqur Rahman Mukul also officer-in-

investigating the case filed under the Explosives Act. while Subinspector Sankar Nandi is investi-

Hunt for the Sylhet divisional chief of JMB, Salahuddin, Saidur Rahman, and Shaekh's eldest son Nabil is still on in Sylhet, Habiganj and Sunamgani districts. Rab and the police made several attempts in the hilly areas of Habiganj as well as in Sylhet City and its suburbs during the last four days without any suc-

## Bangla Bhai

Mymensingh on March 6.

Rab members continued drives to net two absconding JMB Majlishe-Shura members Salahuddin and Khaled Saifullah on information gleaned from detained JMB chief Abdur Rahman.

quizzed at the Task Force Interrogation Cell. Meanwhile, Inspector General of

Police Abdul Quayyum yesterday said investigators have not yet found any international link with JMB. Media reports have helped the law enforcement agencies to arrest

said at a courtesy call on the leaders of Crime Reporters Association of Bangladesh at his office. The IGP said the bounties that the government announced for the

charge of the Sylhet Kotwali PS is

## Sons blame MP

FROM PAGE 1

to be held on AJ Chowdhury College ground at Pashchim Patiya in the morning today, the third one will be held on Mohsen Aoulia Mazar premises after the Zohr prayers and the fourth will be held at his village home at Jheori under Anwara Upazila after the Asr prayers today. Jamal Uddin was abducted on

July 24 in 2003 and later was killed. As the remains of Jamal reached his city residence at Chandgaon Residential Area at noon a heartbreaking scene occurred.

"It took him (Jamal) more than two and a half years to reach home from his business place at Chawk Bazar, which is at best a kilometre away from here. Not alive, not as dead but as a skeleton and that too after a lot of trouble," said Jamal Uddin's wife Najma Akter Khanam in a tone that moved everybody to

Jamal Uddin's elderly mother was seen wailing and striking her own chest cursing Sarwar and Yelling out the name of Sarwar

and Maruf's father, Kalu, she said, "Kaulla, you were an employee of Jamal's father and now your sons have killed my beloved son.' Meanwhile, Sarwar Jamal Nizam

MP denied the allegations against him and his brother. He termed the allegations as a conspiracy against

Members of Jamal Uddin's family after being traumatised for more than 31 months received the DNA report on Thursday, which confirmed that the skeleton Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) had dug up from a remote village in Fatikchhari on August 24 last year is of Jamal Uddin

Rab had recovered the remains of Jamal from a remote forest on a hill named Satkainda Tilla under Fatikchhari Upazila, about 40 kilometres from the port city, 25 months after his abduction.

### 14-party FROM PAGE 16

Urging the people to make the siege programme a success, Jalil reiterated their no-election stance if the opposition's demand of reforms to the caretaker government and the EC was not met.

The meeting also condemned the killing of Juba Leagues leader Haji Masudur Rahman Imam Ali in the name of "crossfire" by the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab). Jalil accused the State Minister for Home Lutfozzaman Babar for the killing as Imam had protested an occupation of land by Babar's cousin.

Suranjit Sengupta, Obaidul Quader, Aktheruzzaman, Jahangir Kahir Nanak. Mirza Azam also attended the meeting. The 14-party city unit yesterday

also held a preparatory meeting at the Gono Forum office with General Secretary Saidur Rahman Sayeed of Dhaka city unit in the chair Coordinator of 14-party city unit Mofazzel Hossain Chowdhury Maya told The Daily Star after the meeting

that they have made preparations for the siege programme to succeed. Maya said they would force the government to meet their demand for reforms in the caretaker government and EC.

Fourteen-party leaders Saifuddin Ahmed Manik, Abdul Gani, Omar Ali, Haii Mohammad Selim. Shafigur Rahman, Sheikh Bazlur Rahman, Harun Chowdhury were also present in the meeting.

## Hasına

FROM PAGE 1

counter the foreign minister's March 7 briefing, Hasina's Political Secretary Saber Hossain Chowdhury said it is not so.

"It is social rather than political," he said, adding that the dinner is for greeting the heads of foreign missions as the opposition leader could not meet them on Eid Day due to staying out of country. On March 7, Foreign Minister M

Morshed Khan and State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfozzaman Babar briefed the heads of foreign missions and international agencies on the recent capture of militants. including Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh chief Abdur Rahman and his deputy Bangla Bhai. The foreign minister also spoke

about the PM's offer for the formation of a bipartisan committee to discuss the opposition's reform proposals.

## India Visit

FROM PAGE 1

memorial of India's Farther of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat on March 21 morning, she will be accorded a ceremonial reception at the forecourt of Rashtrapati Bhawan. She will then have talks with Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh at the Hyderabad House. Singh will host a banquet in honour of her the same afternoon.

The one-to-one talks between Singh and Begum Zia would be followed by a delegation-level meeting between the two countries, diplomatic sources said. Congress President and ruling

United Progressive Alliance chairperson Sonia Gandhi will meet Khaleda on March 21, according to the sources. Some Indian cabinet ministers are likely to call on the Bangladesh PM. The Bangladesh premier is also

likely to call on Indian President APJ Abdul Kalam. Leading a high-powered delega-

understand how isolated they are. how unacceptable it is for them to could see progress," he said. the captains of Indian businesses

determined, it seems, to develop a

Murder of Prof Yunus along with a pro-BNP RU teacher's

FROM PAGE 1 be true, Jamaat's link with JMB will Police had arrested Zillur Prof Yunus was murdered while Rahman, a RU section guard, in on a morning walk on December 24,

connection with the murder, but he too came out on bail. Zillur during police interrogation said he was with his second wife on the night before the killing. But his wife denied the claim. Though he came up with some sort of documents supporting his claim, evidence and statements of other

involvement, said sources. The police had also arrested Sirajus Salekin for suspected links with the murder. They had obtained

witnesses made police sure of his

some vital leads from him. The other arrestees were Salekin's accomplice Habib, Jubo Moitree and Chhatra Moitree leaders Rabbi Hossain Zia, Mizanur Rahman Rummon, Monirul Islam and Nazibul Islam Bachchu.

Police freed Habib and Zia after interrogation the same day while Salekin, Rummon, Monirul and Bachchu got bail later.

Meanwhile, plaintiff Abdul Halim claimed that his elder brother Yunus had no personal enmities. He was very much active in politics for the last three months preceding his murder. Halim said 'fundamentalist anti-Liberation forces' might be

hehind the murder. PBCP LEAFLET Purbo Banglar Communist Party

(PBCP) in a leaflet had purportedly claimed responsibility for Yunus murder. But local crime experts question the authenticity of the leaflet as well as the claim.

They say the leaflet, ironically bears several similarities to a press release of Chhatra Shibir, the student wing of ruling coalition partner Jamaat, and it was different in many ways from the other PBCP leaflets.

ocals in Binodpur, Dharampur and Kaila areas said photocopies of the PBCP leaflet were mainly in the possession of Shibir activists. In 1995, Yunus filed a case

against 60 people including many Shibir cadres for an attack on him near RU central Shaheed Minar. He had developed an enmity with Shibir cadre Zillur over shrine affairs

in Puthia of Rajshahi.

# Draft coal policy

domestic demand for energy and if open pit mining is allowed, Nuruddin Kamal, also a member of the Citizens Commission said, adding that this may prove a recipe for disaster and the entire northwestern region may get isolated from economic activities.

"Coal, petroleum products, natural gas and hydroelectricity are the main commercial energy sources of the country while electricity is the major secondary energy. So, framing coal policy without linking it with the other energy resources is not practical, Kamal, former chairman of Powei Development Board (PDB), added.

The present policy does not offer any direction as to how it will fit into the national energy policy, he said, adding that it has put energy security on the back burner. "Such contradictions need to be removed from the policy.'

Terming the dealings in the environmental aspects as 'built-in bias', the paper said the draft policy seems more concerned with opening pit mining as could be observed from different provisions in terms of rehabilitation and reclamation of

It said the refilling of the excavated area in the mining sites would make it hard for the ecological issues to return to its near original position in future. "These have not been addressed adequately in the

Terming the commercial aspects 'too premature', it said fixing the coal

price upfront may not be an ideal way to attract foreign investors. A low return of the six-percent royalty proposed in the policy will be of no use for the country, rather it will make some foreign investors rich,

The draft policy also does not hold the foreign investors liable in case of defaults that may cause national losses, the paper noted suggesting contracts of profit or production sharing, along with

The provision that the investor will determine the mining method is said BEA General also wrong Secretary Dr Abul Barkat, adding that the method must be approved

by the government. He noted that the Citizens Commission on Gas. Oil and Coal may consider preparing an alternative coal policy considering the total

Going against coal export in the wake of short reserve of energy in the country, Dr Badrul Imam of Dhaka University said from now on Bangladesh should think how it can import hydroelectricity from Nepal

Presided over by BEA President Golam Murtoza of Saptahik 2000 and Golam Kibria of Bishwa Sahitya

# **UNSC** seeks united

and reversible if Iran goes back to suspension," he added. In his report discussed at a three-

day meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) board of governors in Vienna, ElBaradei cited concern that "uncertainties related to the scope and nature of Iran's nuclear programme have not been clarified after three years of intensive agency verifica-

said "the overall direction of what we are pursuing is clear: to try to strengthen the hand of the IAEA and increase international pressure on the Iranians to get them to reconsider the strategic decision that they have been pursuing these last 18plus years, to try to acquire nuclear weapons.

pursuit of nuclear weapons, we'll have to make a decision of what the next step will be." he added. "If they begin to show that they

sanctions as a means to solve a crisis has ever achieved a goal in The deepening crisis over Iran's

But Russian Foreign Minister

Sergei Lavrov said here

Wednesday: "We are convinced

that there is no military solution to

Iran, which insists that its nuclear programme is peaceful and that it has the right to conduct uranium enrichment work under the Non-Proliferation Treaty it signed, for its part remained unfazed.

hardline President Mahmoud

86-member council of top clerics, also issued a statement warning the country's opponents of a "heavy price" if tensions escalate further. The previous day, another Iranian official also threatened Washington with "harm and pain".

FROM PAGE 1 first Test in the first session on the

in the first Test, also emerged as the 600th Test scalp of the great off-

only bowler to achieve the unique feat of taking fifty wickets against all

Shahadat removed two overnight batsmen Lasith Malinga (12) and Upul

Bashar followed up his first-

was not in his devastating best. Opener Nafees Iqbal (13) gloved

Left-handed Shahriar Nafees (6) became the first victim of Murali

with political leaders. "Since the links are an open secret, they don't feel it very urgent

to quiz the arrested militant leaders

about that," pointed out a source. "Sometimes they do ask about

PATRONISATION, LINKS At the very beginning, the 2004 launch of the so-called vigilance Bangla Bhai and his men expressly to cleanse the northern region of wide-spread allegations that certain ministers, BNP lawmakers, officials

in local administrations and police were backing them Although all but one ruling BNP leaders of the Rajshahi region denied any link with Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) and ts wing Jagrata Muslim Jánata Bangladesh (JMJB), BNP lawmaker

Abu Hena made it clear that it would be impossible for Bangla Bhai to make the rapid rise and open operation without the knowledge and acquiescence of the government, administration and law

year, with the party high command terming his statements antiorganisational An investigation by The Daily Star in 2004 found that some ministers. MPs and BNP leaders turned to the JMJB with a view to rout out the communists and avenge the harms including murders of their relatives, friends or neighbours. The failure of the police to contain the operations of the outlawed commu-

in aligning the ruling party members with the JMJB. The JMJB "cleansing operation" started in certain upazilas of Rajshahi, Naogaon and Natore districts following the killing of four relatives and friends of Deputy Minister for Land Ruhul Kuḋduś Talukder Dulu and other lawmakers

nist outfits also played a major role

Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) operatives killed Bagmara Upazila BNP President Abdul Hamid in November 2003.

as Sarbaharas.

Durgapur Municipality Ward Commissioner Anwar Hossain, a close associate of BNP Lawmaker from Raishahi-4 Nadim Mostafa. was slain in March 2004. Before that, in February, the

Furious at the murders and death unleashed the JMJB fanatics to exterminate the Sarbaharas, and the police were asked to cooperate with Bangla Bhai and his band. "They [local BNP leaders] sup-

found involved with militants and militant activities, no matter whoported our drive," JMJB's spiritual ever he is.'

### Rahman told The Daily Star in an interview in May 2004. He said they had talked with some local lawmakers over telephone, besides holding meetings with the municipal and union parishad chairmen and members of the region.

A JMJB regional commander

said he was present in meeting of

Bangla Bhai with a deputy minister on April 10, 2004. He also told the press that police sometimes in uniform and usually in plainclothes used to guard the JMJB militant camps. The JMJB also received a vehicle of an agriculture

ministry directorate, which Bangla Bhai used for two months. Sources said the Raishahi and Naogaon police supers at that time used to advise and inform Bangla Bhai over mobile phone.

In his 2005 exposé, BNP MP Abu

Hena named Telecommunications

Minister Aminul Haque and both the

Jamaat-e-Islami cabinet members

among the government bigwigs backing the JMB-JMJB fiends. Besides Dulu and Nadim, the name of Rajshahi City Corporation Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu also cropped up in his allegations.

Kabir also said Dulu and Aminul were behind the militant activities. So, it may appear funny but not strange when Dulu after the August countrywide terror strike told The Daily Star, "I don't think they [JMB] have such a strong network [to synchronise a near-simultaneous bomb explosions in all the districts but one]. Awami League must have done this and used fake leaflets to

destroy Bangladesh's image to the

Before being banned and going underground, in just four months from April 1 to July 31, 2004, the JMJB killed 22 people, and maimed and injured hundreds of others in the northern districts. **ONLY PROMISES** According to well-placed sources,

the police are now mainly focused

on hunting down the absconding

militants and the interrogators

extracting information about the

motive for the August 17 serial bomb blasts from the arrestees. One of the investigators said, "The interrogators are trying to ascertain whether another group was operating behind the militants or assigned them to carry out the bomb attacks from a different motive "

Referring to the law enforcers

significant evidence to justify legal actions against the patrons and allies of the militants, Rab chief MA Aziz Sarkar told journalists on Thursday they would try to collect the evidences. The same day, on the widely reported-accused-alleged ministers-militants entente, State Minister for Home Affairs

Lutfozzaman Babar told the media.

"Action will be taken against anyone

Jubo League

punishment of the 'patrons' of essentials and power, fuel and

fertiliser crises. Chairman of Jubo League

He demanded immediate action

killing.

press conference. The statement said Rab person-

of duty', police sources said.

Jasim said JMJB activists had been demanding toll for several days and threatened to kill his son if

Police Station against 10 people, following which the police arrested four militants

February 7.

He finally became one of the

Sources said JMJB members

Shaekh Rahman

gating the other one.

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remand for quizzing. Second-in-command of banned Islamist organisation Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) Bangla Bhai was arrested wounded from a hideout at Muktagachha in

Rahman is being intensively

criminals and curb crime, the IGP

Rahman and Bangla Bhai and other JMB cadres are already to hand. "We will distribute it soon after Rab submits a report mentioning the names of the receivers."

tion including a few senior ministers of her cabinet, Khaleda will address

and industry on March 22.

the next day.

She is slated to return to Dhaka

the analysis said.

energy reserve in the country.

and Bhutan in future. Dr Kholiquzzaman Ahmad, the dialogue was addressed also by Professor MM Akash of Dhaka University, Dr Mustafizur Rahman of Institute of Development Studies,

US Ambassador John Bolton

"If the Iranians do not back off from their continuous aggressive

acquire a nuclear weapon, then we US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice described Iran Thursday as "a country that is

foreign ministers Friday in Salzburg, Austria.

Ahmadineiad said Thursday. Iran's Assembly of Experts, an

### nuclear weapon in defiance of the 'The action will therefore be gradual international community, that is determined that they should not get

this crisis." adding: "I don't think the recent history.' nuclear plans was also expected to be discussed at a meeting of EU

"The Iranian people are not bullies and will not be bullied,"

659 scalps.

A lot was expected when

Omar ended his miserable stay peculiarly fending another bouncer on the leg-stump from Dilhara Fernando to wicketkeeper Kumai Snagakkara

Patrons left out about their or their superiors' links

such links, but that is only to verify the information they already have." OVERVIEW OF operation by Siddigur Rahman alias

Abu Hena confirmed and blamed a section of his party colleagues for sponsoring the Islamist extremists.

enforcement agencies. The exposé cost Hena his party membership on November 24 last

by the communists popularly known

Dulu's nephew Sabbir Ahmed Gama was shot to death in Naldanga Upazila of Natore in February 2004, followed by the murder of his aide Wahidul Haq Pakhi in Puthia Upazila of Rajshahi two weeks later argument that they do not have any

PBCP Lal Potaka, or red flag, faction publicly distributed a leaflet threatening Dulu, Nadim, and their relatives and aides with death. threat the desperate BNP leaders