## Deadly H5N1 bird flu found in UK

Tests have shown that a wild swan found dead in Scotland had the lethal H5N1 strain of bird flu, the British

Britain becomes the 14th country in the European Union to find on its territory a disease that has been blamed for 109 human deaths else-

where since 2003. A spokesman for the Scottish executive confirmed that the Mute swan, found last week in Cellardyke

deadly flu strain. The partially eaten carcass of the swan was found late on March 29 and sent to a laboratory in Weybridge,

Amid a media frenzy over the discovery of H5N1 in Britain, govern-

ment and officials tried to calm the public's concerns about the risk of transmission of the disease to "There is a better chance of a

person winning the national lottery than catching bird fluin the U.K. today. doctor Jim Robertson from the National Institute for Biological Standards and Control said.

"This is an unwelcome and important development from the point of view of poultry health, but there are no implications either for human health or consumers," the National Farmers'

Charles Milne said it was not known whether the swan was from a local or

Milne said there was no indication of infections in domestic poultry, and no reason to believe the carcass had been partially eaten by a domestic

Officials have set up a 3-km (1.8mile) protection zone around where the swan was found

Owners of birds within the zone have been told to take them indoors. A further 10-km surveillance zone is in

Government officials reviewed bird flu contingency plans at a London meeting on Thursday and concluded that "all relevant steps are being

Bird flu remains essentially an animal disease, but can infect people who come into direct contact with

infected birds. Milne said properly prepared poultry and poultry products were

entirely safe for human consumption. Bob McCracken, past president of the British Veterinary Association, said that contact between wild birds that

may be infected and poultry should be kept to a minimum. "We also have to work on the assumption that there is some spread among wild birds ... There is no doubt we are getting closer to the day when moving birds indoors will be neces-

sary," he said. Scientists said they were confident that surveillance for possible cases of the disease was good enough.

The injured, mostly hit by splin-

ters and arrows, were admitted to

Chapainawabganj Sdara Hospital

and Shibganj Upazila Health

Range Deputy Inspector General of

Police Baharul Alam could not

confirm the deaths to The Daily Star

When contacted, Rajshahi

Complex.

**COURT CORRESPONDENT** 

August 17 blast case said that JMB Military Commander Ataur Rahman Sunny and its Majlish-e-Shura member Abdul Awal gave important information on the last year's countrywide serial blasts.

Both were placed on fresh mand yesterday for further inter-

They will provide more information and disclose names of their accomplices if they are interrogated intensively. Detective Branch (DB) Inspector Shah Mohammad Moshiur Rahman, the IO, said in his

The case was filed with Ramna Police Station in connection with an August 17 blast on the Supreme Court premises.

Meantime, JMB (Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh) chief Abdur Rahman was taken on a 10day remand in the case and is being

bullet-proof vests.

The IO sought another seven days' remand for them for further interrogation in the case of the Supreme Court premises blast, which the court granted. When the magistrate asked the accused whether they want to appoint any lawvers to defend themselves, they remained silent.

Earlier, operations commander of banned Harkatul Jihad (HuJi) Bangladesh chapter Mufti Abdul Hannan and JMB Gazipur Regional Commander Enayet Ullah were shown arrested in the case and placed on remand for interrogation.

#### Khagrachhari AL calls off hartal for April 9-10

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Khagrachhari district Awami League (AL) yesterday cancelled the district town tomorrow.

Protesting the attacks and false cases lodged by BNP cadres and police, AL had called the hartal in Khagrachhari but cancelled it due to an opposition parliamentary team's coming to Khagrachhari, AL

The team will visit Maischhari, ollege Gate, Muslimpara, Golahar BNP activists attacked AL men, he

#### Next polls

FROM PAGE 20

students to intermediate class for the Sudha Sadan The rule is returnable in two

in Bangladesh, the process of holding dialogue between the the coming polls.

Political Adviser Saber Hossain Chowdhury said the opposition leader informed the Canadian diplomat about the rationality of 14party combine's proposals for

Magazine that she came to know about militancy in Bangladesh only after serial bombings across the country on August 17. But Sheikh Hasina and other party leaders came under grenade attacks on August 21 in 2004. So, Khaleda's statement is clearly incorrect,"

### FROM PAGE 1

secretary to Ershad, arranged the meeting. But he was not present at the meeting attended by JP (Ershad) presidium member Kazi Zafar Ahmed.

Ershad requested Manju to return to

Ershad told Manju that the way he (Ershad) expelled Tasmima Hossain, former lawmaker and wife of Manju, from the party was not logical, the sources added

### FROM PAGE 20

said a press release

hang Ataur on a tree and beat him to death while the rest managed to escape the scene.

Major Sheikh Asad of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) said that he has heard the news of one being critically injured, but he did not receive any information of anyone's

The BDR will take necessary steps after receiving confirmed information, he added.

# Sunny, Awal

remanded

again

The investigation officer (IO) of an

forwarding report.

interrogated.

Sunny and Awal were produced

President Jatindra Lal Tripura said.

also includes Birbahadur MP. Rafiqul Anwar MP and Fazlul Karim

Hasina the current political situation government and the opposition and

Briefing the reporters, Hasina's

Saber described Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's remarks on militancy her interview with the Time

## Ershad, Manju

The JP (Ershad) sources said his party, but Manju showed reluc-

#### Husband

FROM PAGE 1 been absconding

Afzal's dead body was taken to the Khulna Medical College and Hospital morgue for autopsy.

called Afzal's wife. 28. to his house offering a job of house help and

## ADB outlook 2006

the city's Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, ADB Country Director Hua Du said, "The national elections scheduled for early 2007 is likely to limit the major policy initiatives. Risks to medium prospects include external shocks and domestic political uncertainties".

However, Du admitted that if investments can be raised, the GDP growth rate may not slip.

**FDI TO RISE** The report forecasts that Bangladesh will see much higher FDI inflow, primarily because of FDI from India. "The latest data indicate that FDI inflows increased to \$776 million in FY 2005," it noted, adding, "FDI is expected to maintain steady growth in FY2006 and FY2007, but can pick up significantly if ongoing negotiations over several large investment projects prove success-

Flagship companies like Microsoft, Orascom and Singapore Telecom have recently begun to invest in the country. The government has also received a host of large FDI proposals from various business groups including Tata of India, Asia Energy of the UK, Dhabi Group of the UAE and Kingdom Group of Saudi Arabia.

The ADO notes, "The Board of Investment estimates that total foreign investment proposals are worth about \$10 billion, well in excess of historical levels." TRADE ISSUES

The ADB outlook cautions that, though the country's garment sector has been expanding even after the MFA quota abolition, its competitiveness can not be understood clearly until 2008, when the temporary quotas for China expire. In the quota-free world.

enhance its competitiveness, the ADO 2006 observes and for that it suggests a number of steps to reduce the lead-time. The report also advises the

government to address three major "behind-the-border" trade barriers that affect the country's export competitiveness

The first barrier, weakness in governance, includes corruption and a weak state of law and order, which vitiates the business environment and long-run growth, it says.

In this regard, the ADO adds, "Although the regulatory procedures involved in starting a business in Bangladesh compare favourably with other benchmark countries, the cost of transacting business in terms of per capita income is one of the highest. On other indicators too, Bangladesh lags behind comparator countries, particularly on the measures relating to regulatory

Secondly, it names the poor physical infrastructure for power, gas ports and telecommunications which significantly increases the cost of production, impedes productivity growth and hampers export competi-

"The third main barrier stems from high operating costs, partly due to steep bank borrowing charges, in turn grounded in longstanding structural and other problems, particularly among NCBs. Such high operating costs discourage investment and constrain the ability of local firms to integrate into global supply chains," the ADO

## Held man

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in Rajshahi said yesterday noon the man, Abu Bakkar Siddik of Ramkrishnapara of Daulatpur in Kushtia, was wrongly identified as Saifullah. "He is completely a mentally

disabled man and bears a little resemblance to JMB Shura member. Khaled Saifullah." Maior Faruk of Rab-5 told The Daily Star in Raishahi at 2:00pm. The media ran reports vesterday on Saifullah's arrest on the basis of

confirmation by top officials of 6 Battalion BDR in Chapainawabgani BDR Commanding Officer Lt Col Lutfar Rahman had acknowledged Saifullah's arrest at 1:30am vesterday. Major Sarwar and Captain

Nawroze also corroborated the A BDR patrol team of Telkupi border outpost (BOP) led by a tea stall, 500 yards off the BOP, around 12:30am. ABDR source had earlier tipped the BOP officials off about Saifullah, who has a Tk 10 lakh bounty on his head, being seen

A Rab team rushed to Chapainawabganj BDR headquarters just after the arrest and took him to Rab office in Rajshahi around 3:00am.

After hours of interrogation and examining Saifullah's photograph, it became evident to the Rah officials the person was not the absconding JMB terror.

"Although he claimed himself to be Khaled Saifullah, we were suspicious of his real identity after massive quizzing," Major Faruk told

As the Rab brought Khaled

Saifullah's acquaintances to the office, they confirmed it was not him. Rab men eventually came to

was Abu Bakkar Siddik, son of Mansur, and was missing for the last

answered in the affirmative when asked if he was Khaled Saifullah. "He even nodded when asked if he was JMB chief Abdur Rahman," a Rab officer said, adding, Bakkar's built and identification marks do not match those of Saifullah's.

When The Daily Star contacted Lt Col Lutfar of BDR again, he said: "We arrested him for several resemblances to Saifullah and some other circumstantial leads "

sure about the man's identity, the Chapainawabganj BDR chief replied: "We found his (Bakkar's) face, height, age and beard to be similar with Saifullah's. "He also identified himself to be

Khaled Saifullah and identified

Saifullah's photograph to be his

the JMB leader. "Moreover, we kept keen watch on the area after busting a militant training camp and arresting four

explained. "We may be wrong as we don't have any specialisation on militants. But our move proves that we are

The Rab personnel have informed Bakkar's family to come and take the person back to Kushtia.

## ACC to probe

bringing in a car from abroad,

remains silent over the allegation. "The matter is very sensitive as the politicians are involved in it. It's in fact not possible for us to probe the allegation," a senior NBR official said, wishing anonymity. He said most of the lawmakers

do not pay income tax. They don't even submit the tax return. "But we have to pretend not to notice the irregularities for fear of consequences." he said. An NBR source said some lawmakers have imported duty-free

luxury cars by whitening the black money, giving five percent tax. Foreign Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) at a meeting with NBR on Wednesday called for a probe into the allegation against

lawmakers selling cars to business-

Hafizuddin, also former comptroller and auditor general, supporting the demand said, "The government or parliament should investigate whether the lawmakers misuse their entitlement to duty-free cars. The Anti-Corruption Commission too can investigate the matter."

He said he wonders how come a decision taken by the 'despotic regime of Ershad' is still in effect. According to a circular issued

during Ershad rule, a lawmaker is entitled to import a duty-free car for his or her use during the tenure of a parliament. The coalition government on August 22, 2005 added a new

provision [to the circular] that says a

lawmaker cannot import duty-free car unless at least two years' time is left in the tenure of parliament after their election. The amendment means for the women lawmakers a restriction on importing cars as they were elected at a time when the current parliament had less than two

Of the 275 luxury cars imported during the current parliament, each of 55 BMW was bought for up to Tk 84 lakh, 40 Mercedes-Benz cars and jeeps for Tk 1.18 crore and Tk 73 lakh, 10 Porsche cars for highest Tk 3 crore, 23 Lexus cars and jeeps for Tk 45 lakh and Tk 47 lakh, 16 Range Rover SUVs for Tk 54 lakh, four Cadillac for Tk 50 lakh, four Hammer jeep for Tk 91 lakh, 42 Toyota Land Cruiser [utility and SUVs] for Tk 34 lakh to 35 lakh, three Lincoln Navigator for up to Tk 50 lakh, three Infinity cars for Tk 40 lakh, 37 Mitsubishi Pajero V6 for Tk 25 lakh, and 17 Nissan Patrol and

### Hartal called

Farid Mamud Hasan spoke at the

briefing among others.

Meanwhile, Rajshahi Gas Andolon Parishad declared a daylong hartal for April 17 if no clear announcement was made within April 16 regarding the implementation of Rajshahi gas supply project.

### 40 militants

area of North Waziristan The army said Wednesday that eight bodies had been recovered in that incident and that another eight were either buried or taken away by fleeing militants.

The tribal administration's statement said information gathered from the 19 people arrested indicated that around 150 militants had arrived in the area to launch attacks on security forces.

Pakistan has deployed 80,000 troops along the border to hunt down militants who sought refuge in the rugged tribal area after the Taliban regime in neighbouring Afghanistan was toppled in late

President Pervez Musharraf last month warned foreign insurgents to leave the tribal belt or be killed.

#### Patients suffer

FROM PAGE 20

of the CMCH from tomorrow. The change was made on humanitarian grounds, they said.

Later, the IDA leaders met CMCH Acting Director Dr Nur Har Begum to demand a positive response to their demand from the authorities by 2:30 pm.

"No response to our demand within the given time forced us to declare the sit-in programme," said IDA Convener Dr Moniruzzaman Maruf, "If our demand is not met, we will have no option but to go for a tougher movement like paralysing the administrative activities of the hospital." he told this correspon-

He said, "Considering the plight of emergency patients, we have also formed a 40-member team to attend to critical patients."

Doctors at the hospital said the strike by interns has also created tremendous pressure on them in providing treatment to patients.

Dr Abdur Rahman, assistant registrar of Surgery Ward-24 said with the 22 interns of the ward on strike, only five doctors were left to take care of around 150 patients in the ward vesterday.

He also feared that the situation might force them to cancel two operations scheduled for yesterday afternoon. Dr Nur Har Begum declined to

talk to newsmen who waited for

about two hours in front of her office vesterday. Intern doctors enforced the strike as they were being deprived of the increased allowance of TK 6.500 each as per the prime minister's announcement that went to effect from July 1 last year in all other

#### government hospitals in the country. Murder case

FROM PAGE 20

when it came under fire, they added. As the police returned Guddu was bullet-hit in 'crossfire' when he tried to run away, claimed a

police press release Sub-inspector Azizul Haq and constables Nurul Islam and Alamgir Hossain suffered bullet wounds and were admitted to Rajarbagh Police Lines Hospital, the release added.

Guddu was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) around 2:50am where doctors declared him dead.

Police said they recovered two firearms and three bullets. Bina's wife Sarika Sarkar, commissioner of Ward 72 of Dhaka City Corporation, alleged Guddu was a

member of the gang that killed her husband on May 22, 2002. Dreaded criminal Dakat Shaheed is the prime accused in the

### murder case.

JCD leader

Mandol, Nasrin Sultana Jhara, Rimi. Chandra Roy Tumpa, Nijhum, Akhin, Fancy, Happy, Kona, Afsana Koli, Trina, Babli, Tania, Akhin, Rabu, Polly, Mishu, Reshma and some unidentified students of the

On March 29, a guardian of an Eden College student filed a case of attempted murder against ruling BNP lawmaker Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu, former principal of the college Prof Feroza Begum, the chief of college hostel supers Julekha Khatun and 11 JCD leaders in connection with the incident of March 14. In her complaint, Rehena stated

that the accused, some of whom are leaders and activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League and Samajtantrik Chhatra Front, along with outsiders, launched a movement on the campus in a pre-planned way for fulfilling They also did not comply with the

kept occupying the Hasna Begum The complainant alleged that Shamima Akter instigated the demonstrators further by patting

them while she was passing by their

## **NY-flight reroutes**

'This would save Biman Tk 2 crore a year in ground handling charges, he added without giving details. In a recent interview, Mah-

moodur Rahman hoped rerouting of the NY-flight would enable Biman to halve its loss in this prestigious cross-Atlantic route. Biman used to operate an ageing DC-10 twice a week on Dhaka-New

York route and incurred a loss of Tk

35 lakh per flight. Due to an acute shortage of aircraft, it cut the flight frequency to once a week from The national airlines is unlikely to raise the number of flight on this route to twice a week until it leases two more wide-bodied aircraft. Its tender for two-year lease of two

three companies making offers, official sources said. Biman's New York flight is considered the costliest but most prestigious of all its international flights. But the flight appears to be an increasing burden on it as the staterun airlines is already struggling to buy fuel and new generation aircraft

aircraft was closed yesterday with

because of financial constraints. Fakhrul Islam, who took over after the axing of Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin in November last vear, is learnt to have given Biman management two months' time to avert the

record loss in its New York flight During the previous Awami League rule, the New York flight used to operate on Dhaka-Delhi-Brussels-New York route incurring a

Khaleda

FROM PAGE 20

Commission during its rule, Khaleda said her government appointed neutral people to the EC, as she said the BNP believes in free and fair polls The prime minister said people

want to see the BNP in power as

democracy remains safe, people

live in peace and all religious com-

the Awami League for appointing its

own men to the Election

munities perform their religious activities freely under its (BNP) rule. She said the opposition does not want economic development and progress as it creates chaos

through hartal and carries out "false

campaign" against Bangladesh.

She urged people to vote for the BNP-led alliance in the next general elections. Khaleda said her government

has curbed terrorism by forming

some special forces and taking drastic actions against the terrors. Criticising the Al for patronising godfathers during its rule, the prime minister urged people to remain alert so that the godfathers, who left the country, could not return during

the next caretaker government. Presided over by local BNP MP Mohammad Shajahan, the meeting was also addressed, among others, by Health Minister Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, Law Minister Moudud Ahmed. Prime Minister's Political Secretary Harris

#### Chowdhury and MA Hashem MP. PDB incurs

FROM PAGE 20 Rupantarita Prakritik Gas Company Limited, said the cost of the CNG-driven vehicles is one-fourth of what people spend for other fuel. "Using compressed natural gas

[CNG] helps the country save Tk 81

crore a month in foreign currency,

loss of Tk 50 lakh per flight. Mir Nasir rerouted the flight through Dubai instead of Delhi and as a result Biman's operational loss on this route came down to Tk 22 lakh per flight but increases in the price of jet fuel raised the loss to Tk 35 lakh

Asked about the rationale for operating such a loss-making flight, a top Biman official said, "Stopping flights on a particular route that causes loss is too easy but it is always tough to regain slots, particularly to North American destinations Biman's Dhaka-New York flights cater to two million ethnic clients living in the East Coast of US

and in Canada. Three-decade old DC-10s in Biman's 13-strong fleet, which usually operate on Dhaka-New York route, have been grounded at least thrice in the last six months in Brussels and New York for various mechanical faults. Late last year, the US federal aviation did not allow a Biman aircraft to depart John F Kennedy Airport without fixing 17 faults they found in it.

### Iran, US talks on Iraq likely next week

AFP, Tehran

Talks between Iran and the United States on the situation in Iraq will probably take place in Baghdad next week, the state news agency IRNA quoted an unnamed official as saying yesterday.

"The negotiations are likely to

start next week in Baghdad," the

source at Tehran's embassy in Baghdad said, denying Iranian press reports that the talks were due to start in two days' time. "The negotiations must be open and transparent with the Iragi government representative's

participation. Iran's condition is that Iragi people be informed of the results," he added. Press reports said the Iranian delegation is likely to be headed by top Supreme National Security Council official Ali Hosseini-Tash, who was appointed to nuclear talks with Moscow in February

over a compromise deal to enrich Iran's uranium on Russian soil. Any direct meeting would mark a break in a near three-decade pause in direct contacts between US and Iranian officials following the country's 1979 Islamic revolution despite heightened tensions due to the standoff over Iran's

India to skip

nuclear programme.

concessions, they said.

FROM PAGE 20 access to Bangladeshi goods, India says it has already given concessions on import of many of the items from the neighbouring country. India cannot give across-the-board

try in certain sectors. Besides, the facility can be misused with some other countries routing their products under this garb.

The sources said this issue was

being addressed under the South

Asian Free Trade Area (Safta)

India argues giving across-the-

board concessions could have an

adverse impact on domestic indus-

# Thaksin must quit

before entering politics, without paying taxes. Thaksin called elections three years early to head off the protests

abstention votes against him. The People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD), a broad coalition of civic groups, was planning another demonstration Friday against Thaksin, whom they accuse of corruption and undermining

"We aim to bring down the Thaksin regime. He just stepped aside from the prime minister's post but still rules the country's largest political party," said Suriyasai Katasila, an alliance spokesman. "We want Thaksin to be com-

pletely out of politics." Sondhi Limthongkul, a key PAD leader, called Thaksin's tearful departure a "show" and warned that the protest movement would give him one more month to step down

strong in rural areas. But victory was undermined by

the opposition boycott and a strong protest vote that saw 37 percent of voters cast a "no vote" or spoiled

The events have left Thailand in uncharted political waters and raised demands for constitutional

reform to limit the influence of the

prime minister, strengthen the

legislature and introduce more

checks and balances.

By-elections are scheduled for 39 seats on April 23 and the Democrat Party has also threatened court challenges over election The Democrats have again

dates must win at least 20 per cent of the vote under election law. The tactic casts doubt on

"You have a series of legal complications that may or may not come up over the next month or so, which is why no one is willing to speculate about what is going to happen," said James Klein, head of the Asia Foundation in Thailand.

But some see Thaksin's departure as a milestone for the young democracy.

the last 30 years is a great step forward," said economics professor Pasuk Phongpaichit, who has coauthored a book on Thaksin.

#### of this report at 10 last night. the petitioner.

are hopeful to resolve all disputes through discussion," he told the reporters.

Jalil wrote to Bhuiyan.

Jalil, the meeting also authorised the AL to represent the opposition side in the proposed dialogue. Jalil signed the letter in his hospi-

proposing the ruling BNP to nominate its leaders in the committee.

Bhuiyan responded to Jalil's letter after nine days, inviting nomi-Under the circumstances, possination of five representatives of the 14-party opposition combine to the to complexities regarding formation Meanwhile, an emergency

"We think we must sit as soon as

Presided over by AL Presidium member Tofail Ahmed in absence of ailing 14-party Coordinator Abdul

The High Court (HC) yesterday issued a rule upon the education secretary and the chairman of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board, Raishahi, to explain why the proceedings for contempt of court should not be

judgement.

2005-'06 session.

HC rule on

chairman

edn secretary,

Rajshahi Board

petitioner seeking remedy to noncompliance with the November 9. 2004 High Court judgement that directed the education secretary and chairman of the education board to grant permission to Matrai Model College in Joypurhat for admission of

drawn against them for violating its

Justice MA Matin and Justice ATM

Fazle Kabir issued the rule upon a

contempt petition filed by a writ

A division bench comprising

weeks ANM Shawkat Habib Talukder, founder president of the college, set up in 1999, filed the contempt peti-Advocate Shamsuddin Babul assisted by Kanailal Saha and

Mukhlesur Rahman appeared for

The BNP secretary general sent the first letter to the AL general secretary on March 20, seeking names for a committee to discuss the opposition's reform proposals. The AL leader on March 22 wrote back to Bhuivan, seeking clarification of a number of specific aspects.

meeting of the AL central working committee will be held today at 10:30am at the party's Dhanmondi office with opposition leader and AL President Sheikh Hasina in the AL Acting General Secretary

Obaidul Quader has urged all

members of the central working

committee to attend the meeting,

### BSF kills 1

The police said the advocate

before the court of Metropolitan Magistrate Shafique Anwar yesterday on expiry of their eight-day remand in another August 17 blast case filed for the explosion near the TSC on Dhaka University campus. They were wearing helmets and

their dawn-to-dusk hartal called for April 9 and 10, as an opposition parliamentary team starts visiting

and Modhupur areas, where the Led by Faruq Khan MP, the team

opposition leader Sheikh Hasina at Barbara said she discussed with

Magazine as untrue. "Khaleda has told the Time

know from Kushtia police that he

Rab sources said Bakkar

Asked what leads made him so

when shown several photographs of militants here a few months ago," he

active." said Lt Col Lutfar.

college.

#### Nissan Pathfinder for Tk 31 lakh their whimsical demands. college authorities' direction to vacate the hostels on March 13 and

On March 14, the demonstrators assaulted Julekha Khatun, chief of college hostel supers, and attacked her without any provocation in a bid to kill her, the complainant added.

## he explained.

and give himself a fresh mandate. But the gamble backfired when the opposition boycotted the polls and millions of Thais cast protest

democracy through cronyism.

as leader of the TRT, or organise major rallies to oust him. Thaksin's party won nearly 56 percent of the vote in Sunday's election, with support especially

Thaksin said he was stepping

down out of respect for revered King Bhumibol Adulyadei, who cele-

brates 60 years on the throne in

irregularities. refused to field candidates in the byelections, creating a hurdle for the TRT because unopposed candi-

whether the seats will be filled and a parliament will be in place by May 1.

"Removing the most antidemocratic figure in Thai politics for

# REUTERS, Edinburgh

government said vesterday.

harbor in eastern Scotland, had the

southern England, for analysis on

Scotland's chief veterinary officer

Kansat stained announced to hold a stickprocession at Shibganj yesterday afternoon to press its several demands including uninterrupted

electricity supply home and then to

hand over a memorandum to the

BNP called a meeting at the upazila

headquarters, also in yesterday

afternoon, to protest a hartal

enforced by PBUSP at the upazila

On the other hand, Shibganj

upazila nirbahi officer.

and obstruction of BNP people from going to Rajshahi to attend a meeting of the prime minister on March Witnesses said BNP activists, expressly to foil the PBUSP procession, took position at some key points and on rooftons of roadside

buildings with brickbats and bombs

even as far as 10km off the BNP

themselves with brickbats and bows

and arrows to resist the anticipated

The PBUSP activists also armed

meeting venue.

BNP attack. Children and women headed the long procession of some 30,000 people, some of them riding on trucks and in other vehicles including bullock carts. When the procession reached the Paily crossroads, the BNP men waiting on rooftops hurled bombs one after another at it. The PBUSP

activists retaliated by throwing

bricks and arrows, said witnesses

scattered the procession, with

people running for life to take cover,

while police watched the fierce

impassively, they added.

The blasts of some 50 bombs

including some photojournalists.

Some PBUSP activists, however, chased and caught two bombers. Witnesses said the two held with bombs were lynched on the spot. Police let the skirmishes con-

tinue up to 8:00pm and only then

moved in to take control of the

deployed in the area, where a tense

situation was prevailing as on filing

Additional police have been

Opposition proposes

Bhuiyan said he will reply very

soon after discussing the matter

with the party high command. "We

bility of holding a dialogue between the BNP and AL is fading away due

possible ending talks over letters," ing of the liaison committee of the 14-party opposition at the AL central office approved the draft of the letter. The meeting decided that the opposition will not sit in the dialogue

tal bed before he was flown to Singapore for treatment. The opposition reply came after six days of Bhuiyan's second letter

# dialogue, the letter said,

of the committee. Nevertheless, both sides are optimistic that problems will be resolved through discussion.

Earlier in the afternoon, a meetif there is any Jamaat leader or anti-Liberation War element from the government side.