The Daily Star

Harbin hid actual

FROM PAGE 1

year 'guarantee period' during which time the company is contract bound to replace poor parts and deliver a performance as was committed

Although PDB asked the Chinese company to replace inappropriate spares and supply the absent ones as the contract says Harbin is "liable to supply all consumable items within the warranty period", Harbin refuses to comply and asks PDB to pay additional prices.

It is also maintaining a silence to the PDB letters asking it to provide the necessary manpower to ensure that the plant is running as per the warranty clause, which it failed to achieve

In a letter PDB wrote to Harbin on September 27, 2005, "The Tongi power plant has been facing frequent forced outages and in many cases it takes few days to put the machine into operation. You are not cautious about the operation and maintenance of the power plant. Every outage of power causes load shedding and a huge loss of revenue. BPDB will not take responsibility of this revenue loss and I request you to explain why this loss will not be realised from Harbin". Harbin did not reply to this letter, but PDB also did not try to 'realise' the losses.

Due to frequent tripping of the plant, the 'cheap' Tongi plant is imposing a huge financial burden on PDB.

"Frequent tripping means every time the machine has to be restarted, there is a significant start-up cost. Again. due to frequent tripping. outages, and start-up operations the expensive machines will have an accelerated wear and tear, and depreciation, resulting in requiring pre-mature overhauling ahead of the regular schedule had the machines run properly. Then, with every overhauling and maintenance. PDB will have to spend a significant amount for purchasing new spares and deployment of experts for successful overhauling of the plant. And finally due to early overhauling of the machines and accelerated depreciation, the replacement cost will come sooner and it will be costlier to keep the plant running in the long run," said a power plant expert.

While the company does not technically qualify, Harbin also won PDB's tender for the 90mw Fenchuganj combined cycle power plant and the 150mw Chandpur power plant. Regarding both these tenders, serious allegations were made against PDB for siding with Harbin, while PDB has been arguing that it picked Harbin because of its verv low price offer.

In the Fenchuganj project Harbin turned out to be the lone bidder, as the other bidder Mitsubishi withdrew from the tender accusing PDB of siding with the Chinese company. In the Chandpur project, Harbin was picked as the lowest bidder amid gross procedural flaws. But PDB's argument s that Harbin offered a price 11 million

government's newly formed Electric Generation Company Ltd (EGCB). Sources said Harbin's price offer here also turned out to be suspiciously lower than its rival Bhel. The Tongi plant's frequent trip-

ping and shutdowns already drained out Tk 35 crore of potential revenue from PDB. "Plus to make it functional. PDB will ultimately have to pay Harbin extra for the missing spare parts." noted an insider.

In addition, Harbin is charging PDB an operation and maintenance cost for the plant. As per the contract, Harbin is supposed to train PDB engineers during the two-year warranty period so that PDB can operate and maintain the plant by itself. But till now the progress is very little. Harbin men at the site speak little English making it too difficult for PDB to have the benefit of 'technology transfer' PDB already paid for 18 extra

technicians from Harbin.

"Under the guise of low price bid of Harbin, PDB is already paying a high price through taxpayers' money by purchasing a dysfunctional power plant. PDB continues to bleed through paying extra money for spares and services which were supposed to be provided by Harbin free of cost," the insider added. The records show that Harbin

changed the list of spares in the middle of the project and is pressurising PDB to accept it. But since such changes need approval by PDB's board and also by the Purchase Committee, it is resorting to maintaining silence on the issue.

Again, the company brought some inappropriate spares and consumable goods without permissions from PDB. Harbin brought the spares and

consumable goods of its own choice. But these are lying in the airport warehouse, as Harbin is now demanding that PDB pays VAT and other taxes for these items after having it already pay for them once.

"Harbin's performance guarantee of 10 percent is lying with PDB which should have been forfeited long time back due to the company's repeated flouting of the terms and conditions but till date no such action has been taken." comments a PDB source.

BNP MP

FROM PAGE 1 in the court when the judgement was delivered.

Court sources said two lecturers of the college. M Sadigur Rahman Babul and M Safiuddin Bhuiyan, filed a case against them for not paying salaries and allowances to five other teachers and preventing them from signing in the attendance book. The court, later, ordered the authorities to disburse the salaries to the teachers. Lawmaker Munshi and the

principal faced the contempt of court proceedings as they ignored the court orders, the sources added. When contacted, Advocate

Salman jailed FROM PAGE 16 ago, officials said.

"The accused committed a heinous crime and hence he is being given five years of rigorous imprisonment." Judge Vijender Kumar Jain told stunned fans and lawyers in the northern Indian desert city of

Jodhpur. He also slapped a 25,000-rupee (560-dollar) fine on the 40-year-old actor.

Khan had already been given a suspended one-year jail sentence in February and fined 5,000 rupees (113 dollars) for killing two of the socalled "black bucks", known as chinkara in Hindi, during a 1998

hunting expedition Khan, clad in blue denims, a white cotton shirt and a baseball cap, appeared nervous as police took away his mobile phone and led him to a prison cell, where he was expected to remain for at least two nights before a bail appeal can be heard.

"This is a wrong decision... This is a wrong decision," repeated Khan as his lawyer Hastimal Sashwat said he would appeal to a higher court in

Rajasthan state. "We will challenge the verdict as well as the sentence," Sashwat said. The court freed four other suspects, handed down a one-year term to a fifth and registered cases against two prosecution witness for retract-

ing their testimonv. Khan, one of India's most familiar actors, is no stranger to controversy. He also faces charges of manslaugh ter after a road accident in 2002 left

one person dead and four injured. The actor has denied allegations that he was at the wheel, drunk and without a licence, when his car ran over people sleeping on a sidewalk in western Mumbai, home to the country's film industry.

Khan is currently involved in several unfinished films including a multi-million dollar Bollywood project where he was to perform along side former Miss World Privanka Chopra.

AL parliamentary FROM PAGE 16

discussion under the relevant rules, they said. The team members talked with

the affected people during their day-long visit 12 days into the incident. Later, they exchanged views with local AL workers and journalists at the district AL secretary's house at

Khagrachhari. The lawmakers blamed the administration for failure to maintain law and order and release of those accused of rape and torture. The team included AL lawmakers Faruq Khan, Rafiqul Anwar and Fazle

Karim Chowdhury. Party leaders Amsa Amin and Abu Baker were with them at the exchange of views.

Traders protest FROM PAGE 16

intersection as the agitating students also damaged several vehicles. Shop owners and police said

clashes followed heated altercations between shop owners and some five students who allegedly attempted to take away five shirts paying much less

At one stage of the altercation, the

BNP stalwarts

NEWS

auestion

wants."

FROM PAGE 1

Mizanur Rahman Minu MP and local lawmaker Shahjahan Miah from discussion for a solution to the electricity problems.

"The government does not believe in democracy in the true sense. Like Hitler and Mussolini. they are resisting people's movement for fundamental rights. But such moves will only spark anger among people", Rabbani told journalists at a mango orchard at Karimbazar, some 5 km from Kansat.

"We want that the government withdraw false cases against us and sit in discussion to meet our demands", he said, adding that local lawmaker Shahiahan Miah is influencing Mizanur Rahman Minu and instigating the local administration to act against people.

"The firing on people and resisting movement are indicators of the government's intention to lock in war with people. A democratic government should not act in this way", he said.

"We are people of this land for which we fought in 1971. But the education. government has behaved with us like enemies from a foreign land. If we have no right to express ideas freely, what is the fruit of the Independence?

"Out of envy, the local lawmaker on the basis of merit. took me for his political rival due to my popularity and is trying to resist me to destroy the movement. I earned the popularity by staying beside the people in last nine months that the MP has failed" he said. strengthen the activities of national universities, including latest tech-

A visibly frightened Rabbani said he had leant from a reliable source that two government lawmakers discussed plans to kill him in 'crossfire'.

The PM said her government has given topmost priority to education socio-economic development, "Fearing murder by either their advancement, prosperity and party cadres or law enforcers, I can everything of a country depends on not stay at my house, and have to education move to different villages," he said. "Educated society means devel-

country.

oped society. We are working relent-lessly to build a developed society," Miladunnabi she observed.

FROM PAGE 1 world.

The prime minister said the prophet had eliminated disparity between man and woman by break ing the chain of all sorts of exploitation, deprivation and repression.

Islamic Foundation Bangladesh announced a fortnight-long programme to mark the day. President lajuddin Ahmed inaugurated the programme yesterday evening at Baitul Mokarram National Mosque.

The programmes include seminars, discussion, girat and Islamic cultural competitions for children, and book exhibition. Bangladesh Beter, Bangladesh

Television and private TV channels ernment is thinking setting up will air special programmes on the English-medium model school in each upazila of the country to occasion while newspapers will publish special articles on the day. upgrade the quality of education. Road islands and important places

in the capital will be decorated with national flags and banners.

Myanmar bird flu worse than thought: UN

UN officials expressed grave concern yesterday over the bird flu situation in Mvanmar, which they said is more serious than previously thought

David Nabarro, the senior UN coordinator for avian influenza, told a press conference that impoverished Myanmar and Cambodia are considerably weaker in fighting the deadly H5N1 virus than nearby Thailand and Vietnam.

"In Myanmar, we have some major problems," Nabarro said. "We're going to be focusing on Myanmar a lot, trying to make sure that the authorities and civil society will be able to cope better."

Myanmar first reported a case in early March, but officials fear the problem is much greater than they originally projected.

"Eventually, we found that the situation there was more serious than what we imagined," said He Changchui, regional representative for the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

Furthermore, the experts were More than 100 outbreaks in two also of the opinion that higher-education curriculum should be districts around the central city of Mandalay have been detected, he said. prepared in line with poverty reduc-Because of the country's poor ion and appoint of teachers given economic situation and its lack of information and technology, non-The report recommended setting up a postgraduate university and a central national laboratory for higher government organizations have renewed their focus on stabilizing

the bird flu problem there. FAO, the World Health Organisation and other international groups have already sent teams to assess the situation in Myanmar, and have come up with a three-month plan to better equip the country to combat bird flu.

Tigers serve

FROM PAGE 1 breakthrough as early as in the third over when he trapped Mathew Hayden (6) leg before wicket with only six runs on the board. But the She also mentioned her governreal shock came into the world ment's efforts, including setting up champions' fort when Shahadat got educational institutions and steps to the prize-wicket of Ponting, who maintain congenial academic came here on the back of a rich vein atmosphere, to educate the nation of form. The master batsman went She said they have stopped unfair back to one that swung in from means at public examinations and middle and kept low and struck him now it is necessary to ensure "qual-

right in front of the wicket for 21, the ity education". She believes that the 20-yearscoreboard reading 42-2. Then it was the story of two leftlong strategic plan will be considarm spinners who simply moped up ered as an important document for the Australian top order expanding higher education in the

Earlier in the morning, legspinner Stuart MacGill picked up the remaining five Bangladesh wickets to return career-best figures of 108-8, but his party was marred by the efforts of the Bangladeshi bowlers towards the end of the day. The 35year-old leggie's previous best was 7-50 against old-foes England.

Rajin Saleh made a compact 67 to take the Tigers' total beyond the 400-run mark for the fourth time in their 43rd Test. The total is also their second highest after their 488 against Zimbabwe in early 2005 in

Chittagong. Earlier ahead of the second

Violence flares

DHAKA TUESDAY APRIL 11, 2006

the police.

Reaching within 500 yards of the

"We don't want any police here",

policemen deployed there, the

protesters demanded withdrawal of

"we don't want to see police rule

here", "no curfew here" and "we are

citizens of this country, we don't need

police" were the most chanted slo-

gans in the procession led by Joynul

police and BDR personnel attempted

to go to Dhobrabazar removing the

After the procession, about 500

When a bicyclist was passing by

The protesters hurled brickbats at

The police lobbed 20 tear gas

Different groups of protesters

When the policemen were return-

The protesters kept bringing out

"All the attacks on the locals are

canisters and fired at least 50 rubber

made querrilla style attacks on the

deployed policemen at different

ing to Kansat, the protesters vanda-

lised two trucks, as many pick-ups

and a microbus near a filling station

bullets to disperse them.

to retaliate.

points

at Kansathazar

Abedin. PBUSP ioint convener.

FROM PAGE 1 realise its 14-point charter of

demands. The police and Bangladesh Rifles deployed there on Sunday tried to quell the violent protests. They fired rubber bullets and lobbed tear gas canisters to disperse the mob when it attacked the police with brickbats protesting Thursday's skirmishes that claimed four lives. The protesters said they will continue the hartal until their demands are met.

A curfew-like situation prevails in the area

HOURS OF TENSION

barricades at Dhobpukur. They, As the Sangram Parishad activists were gathering at different points however, retreated when several around Kansat in the morning yester-day, the police forced shopkeepers hundred protesters armed with sticks chased them. at Kansat to close their shops around The police this time entered the 9:30am. houses next to the road and threat-

They beat up a man named Mofiz ened people not to come out of their of Shukur's shop and another man Nasurul who works at Anu's shop, for houses. As the police and BDR men were going back to Kansat, the delaying to pull down their shutters. The local administration declared protesters followed them, chanting slogans accusing local lawmaker a fresh imposition of section 144 Shahjahan Mia for the killings and around 10:00am banning any gath-ering in 17-kilometre area from attacks on the local residents since Bekipara intersection to Sonamasjid

January 4. Land Port. Earlier, the administration had the police, they charged batons on mposed section 144 on Sunday on him, sparking a protest. 5-kilometre area from Bekipara intersection to Kansat. the policemen, prompting the police

As the declaration of the ban was being made on loudspeakers the policemen in riot gears started marching slowly towards Sonamasjid. Reaching Dhobrabazar, where the pickets put up a barricade with large logs as part of their hartal, the police removed the barricade.

Few hundred of Sangram Parishad men armed with spears, sticks, spades, axes and large knives chased the police defying the section 144 As the police retreated, the pick-

ets lied down on the road and put up barricades there again. The police entered different houses at Kansatbazar around A group of protesters, meanwhile 7:00pm and charged batons on the damaged a culvert at Takshaldighi on residents, injuring at least 10 includ-

Chapainawabganj-Sonamasjid Land ing two women. Port road to obstruct movement of police vehicles. While the policemen were marchsmall processions at different parts in ing towards Sonamasiid, the protestthe area since the morning. The ers made announcements through chase and counter-chase continued bullhorns from different mosques till 5:30pm. and rickshaws, asking the local residents to join a stick procession at

being made based on the tips from 3:00pm and to defy the 'unjust the local MP," Sangram Parishad section144'. convener Golam Rabbani told The A few thousand protesters includng women and children brought out Daily Star, reiterating his yow to a stick procession from Mahilabazar continue the hartal until their and went to Kansatbazar at 5:00pm. demands are met.

CEC appeals to SC

FROM PAGE 16 opposition Awami League, challeng-ing the validity of CEC's unilateral

move to prepare a fresh voter roll. On having to publish the directives in the media, the counsel for the CEC said since the EC has appealed against those, the publication should be delayed till the matter is resolved. Otherwise, it can hamper the merits of the case.

Barrister Amir-Ul Islam, counsel for the writ petitioners, pointed out that the controversy surrounding the voter list was caused by the CEC taking a unilateral decision, ignoring opinions of the other two election commissioners. But according to the general. law, any decision of the EC must be Attorney General AJ Mohammac taken on the basis of the majority Ali told the court that he did not view. receive any notice from the Supreme He said it is the right of an adult Court regarding the contempt rule on individual to become a voter. Their Aziz and Moni. At that time, the court being listed as voters should not depend on the whims of the EC or its produced the document containing enumerators. The commission signature suggesting that his office cannot drop name of a person from had received the court's notice. the list just because an enumerator The bench then asked visited their house but could not find

issued against them.

Aziz and Moni had denied doing anything contemptuous.

Regarding Moni's February 4 letter to Khandaker Mahbubuddin. which the court found to be the source of the contempt. Abdur Razzak argued that the letter did not contain anything contemptuous.

Mahbubuddin opposed Barrister Amir's move to place his argument during this hearing. He said the court issued a suo moto rule and therefore the only person to argue against the accused should be the attorney

"Why did he [Minu] suddenly term me a terrorist just after March 6 violence?" Rabbani posed the AFP, Bangkok "Why did Shahiahan release me

from jail being my guarantor on January 31, and why did Minu sit with me for discussion at my house on March 2? If I am a terrorist, they are my godfathers. They branded me a criminal for fighting for people. If it is a crime, I will continue to

commit it," he said. He refuted the government claim that most of their 14-point demand had already been met.

The government could have avoided violence and discussed impartially with people, he said, adding. "Our movement will continue

until our demands are met. It may

end tomorrow, if the government

FROM PAGE 16 for ensuring standard of higher

research, giving internet connec-

tions to all universities and colleges,

setting up supervisory units in six divisions to

nology-based subject in ICT, and

She suggested that as 20 years

The PM disclosed that her gov-

is long time so there should be provision of changing and addition

to the document in the light of

changed world scenario

expansion of UGC authority.

20yr higher

dollars lower than that of another Chinese bidder. A section of PDB officials are backing Harbin.

But such a difference between the offers of two companies both owned by the Chinese government -- itself has raised questions about the soundness of Harbin's bid.

Harbin recently submitted a tender bid for the 120mw Siddhirganj power project of the

FM defends

lobbyist, he said, "Some of our political leaders have launched false campaigns abroad against our beloved country and the people and tried to brand Bangladesh as Taleban, Al Qaeda and a fundamentalist state. Being in the government it is our responsibility to uphold the nation's image foiling that vile propaganda.'

"Despite the false campaign, we have been successfully able to rectify the damage done by some responsible Bangladeshi leadership." he added.

Replying to a question, the foreign minister said. "We have got good response from USTR (a wing of Washington Group) after the appointment of the lobbyist."

Contradicting, Awami League's allegation that the government hired the lobbyist firm through corrupt measures to legitimise its previous corruptions, the foreign minister said, "If it is corruption to uphold the country's interests, we will do it hundred times. As long as we get benefits, it will continue.

Replying to another question regarding why the lobbyist was appointed secretly as alleged by the opposition, he said there is no hide and seek in it. The government takes many decisions and steps to protect the interest of the country and it is not expected to consult with the opposition every time, he added.

"Is it necessary to float tender bids to appoint lobbyists?" he questioned and said appointing a lobbyist is traditional and all the successive governments so far had appointed lobbyists.

In this context, Morshed Khan said not only Bangladesh but also many other countries in the region and around the world have their own lobbyists in the US to serve their purposes.

While in power, the foreign minister said, Awami League had also appointed a lobbvist firm named Dierman and Zola during its

zan the counsel fr said this verdict is a civil one and no warrant would be issued at this "Body warrant would be stage. issued after some procedures, and if the accused did not appeal against the verdict "he added

Mizan said an appeal is likely to be lodged with Judge Court tomorrow against the verdict.

Contacted, lawmaker Munshi told UNB that he was yet to hear about such court verdict.

rule from 1996 to 2001.

attacks.

said.

students ran away from the market

Recently, he said, Awami

League appointed Maurice

Kurland's Alcalde and Fay to

request the US Institute of Peace to

organise a briefing on Bangladesh

focussing on the next general

election and rise of terrorism partic-

ularly in the aftermath of bomb

my nephew and I was in politics with

his father. As an educated person of

modern era, Saber is very much

aware that every country has lobby-

ists in the USA," Morshed Khan

Confusion reigned as large crowds

milled around the devastation in

Meerut, which has a population of

more than one million and is well-

known as the site of the outbreak of

how the fire broke out at the five-day

fair which was set to close Monday

First reports spoke of an electrical

Chief Minister Mulayam Singh

Yadav announced a payment of

200,000 rupees (4,500 dollars) to the

The fire was the worst such acci-

dent since 90 school children were

killed in a fire that whipped through

classrooms in the southern state of

250 Hindu devotees, mainly women

and children, were crushed to death

during a stampede after fire broke out

and gas canisters exploded at a

religious festival in western India in

In a similar tragedy, more than

relatives to each victim.

Tamil Nadu in July 2004.

hazardous safety conditions.

January 2005.

Authorities were still to find out

the 1857 mutiny against British rule.

Blaze kills

FROM PAGE 1

short circuit.

"AL leader Saber Chowdhury is

and informed JCD leaders and activists about it, who then rushed there and attacked the shop owners. Protesting the attack, around 800 traders of five markets in the area brought out a procession on Mirpur

han their prices.

Road and held a rally in front of Chandrima market yesterday noon. Many of the traders were holding sticks in their hands.

Addressing the rally, leaders of traders' bodies of the markets urged the college authorities to identify the attackers and expel them from the college.

President of Chandrima Super Market Byaboshahi Samity Nurul Karim Zinna said they also asked the police to take proper action against the attackers.

A number of traders at the market alleged that JCD leaders and activists of the college unit used to take away shirts and other clothes from them without paying for those. They also used to tease female customers

They also said the brother of a BNP lawmaker from Dhaka leads the JCD activists who made Sunday's attack. The main entrance to the college

was kept locked yesterday and students remained inside the campus. Large contingents of police were deployed in the area yesterday to avert further incident.

Earlier, JCD leaders and activists at the college were arrested in Paltan area in August last year after they mugged Tk 11 lakh from a businessman. The JCD unit at the college was then dissolved but its leaders are still active there.

Gas supply

FROM PAGE 16 ministry said the situation will improve by June when over 50 million cubic feet (mmcf) new gas supply will be added

According to the ministry report. now the daily deficit in gas production is 57 mmcf but Shahidul Islam, chairman of the parliamentary body on the ministry, quoting the energy advisor, said the daily gas deficit is 100 mmcf.

The committee also discussed Tengratila gas field blowout and urged the ministry to immediately realise compensation from

Canadian company Niko. Meanwhile, Rajshahi Gas Andolon Parishad on April 5 staged a demonstration demanding supply of gas to Rajshahi while Khulna Division Unnayon Sangram Parishad on April 5 observed a 24hour hartal demanding different development activities including

supply of gas. Large crowds pose regular safety The demonstrators also warned threats at events throughout India where of more agitation programmes to realise their demands. at times millions of people mass under

Dhaka to seek

FROM PAGE 1

"The relationship with Turkey is very deep-rooted and traditional. The visit of Khaleda is highly significant as the two countries are set to realise their potentials for increased 2003. bilateral trade," said Foreign

Secretary Hemayetuddin. Briefing diplomatic correspondents at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs yesterday, he said the PM would lav emphasis on the possibility of increasing Bangladeshi

exports to Turkey. She will also request her Turkish counterpart for duty free access of Bangladeshi products and propose reconvening the Joint Economic Commission which has not had a meeting since 1992.

Hemayetuddin said the volume of trade between the two countries was \$114 million in 2004-05, "which we believe is much below its potential. But trading with Turkey is in favour of Bangladesh.

Bangladeshi exports to Turkey were worth \$76.24 million while imports were \$37 million in 2004-05 fiscal year and exports since 2002 showed the tendency to increase, he said.

The foreign secretary said Dhaka would also like to benefit from the Turkish business links with the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries. Turkey can be a conduit for Bangladeshi products to those countries.

Since Turkey is negotiating for membership in the European Union (EU), a good trade relation with Turkey may have long-term benefits.

The foreign secretary said the PM would have two luncheon meetings with leading businessmen in Ankara and Istanbul where she will invite Turkish investors to invest in Bangladesh and take advantage of the incentives provided by the government

Turning to Bangladesh-Turkey relation, he said both the countries have a close and friendly relationship and they are members of Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC), Developing-8 (D-8) and the UN. Both the countries have similar positions on most international issues. "It is a country with which we seek close engagement and mean-ingful cooperations," Hemayetuddin added

Turkey recognised Bangladesh in February 1974 while late President Ziaur Rahman visited Turkey in 1976 and 1978 and laid the foundation of a friendly relationship, the foreign secretary said.

Turkish presidents Kenan Evren visited Bandladesh in 1982, Turgut Ozal in 1986 and 1989, Suleyman Demirel in 1997 and 1999. While President Shahabuddin Ahmed visited Turkey in 1999. Besides, a good number of

ministerial level visits took place in recent years and the Turkish parliament has established the Friendship Group of Parliamentarians for Bangladesh in

A number of Bangladeshi students are pursuing higher studies in Turkish institutions as well.

Khaleda will lead a 35-member delegation which includes Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan, secretary to the PM, the foreign secretary and other high officials. A business delegation will also accompany the prime minister.

Foreign Secretary Hemayetuddin said the visit would offer an opportunity for the top leader of Bangladesh to exchange views with the Turkish political leadership on issues of common concerns. This will also strengthen the efforts to forge closer bilateral relations between the two countries, he added.

According to the schedules, Khaleda will be given a red carpet reception and a guard of honour when she reaches Ankara tomorrow afternoon.

On April 13, she will visit the Kamel Atartuk Mausoleum first and place wreath to show her respect to the father of modern Turkey. Following that she will be given a ceremonial reception at the office of the Turkish prime minister.

Official talks between the Bangladesh and Turkish sides will take place there during which the two prime ministers will lead their respective delegation. The delegation level talks would be preceded by tete-a-tete between Khaleda Zia and Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

address a business lunch organised by the Turkish Union of Chambers and Community Exchange.

Later that afternoon, she will unveil the plaque of president Ziaur Rahman Avenue in Ankara and in the evening she will attend the official banquet to be hosted by the Turkish prime minister in her hon-

On the concluding day of her tour, Khaleda will travel to Istanbul where she will call on the Turkish President Ahmet Necdet Sezer, who will be on a visit there on that day.

Khaleda will then meet the elite business people of Turkey during a lunch cruise. The governor of Istanbul will host a dinner party in her honour after which she will leave Turkey for Bangladesh. She is scheduled to reach Dhaka on April 15

day's play, Australia received a cheque for 500,000 dollars for being this year's top side in the LG ICC Test Championship and ICC ODI

Championship. They retained a comfortable advantage in both official tables over the course of the 12-month period. This is the second consecutive year in which Australia have them. benefited from their dominance of both the Test and ODI tables on the April 1 cut-off date.

Power minister FROM PAGE 16 during this time

The systems loss in the power sector has been brought down to 22 per cent from 29 per cent earlier, he said, adding, "The government has diagnosed the root cause of the problem in the power sector and will take treatment measures v ry soon. The people will get benefits of the present steps in future."

Forum for Energy Reporters Bangladesh Chairman Mollah Amzad and Executive Director Mahmud Hafiz were present at the meeting.

Two jailed

FROM PAGE 16 joint team of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) at a bordering village in Komolgan that left six people killed on May 27 last year. Rajkanta and Hamir Dev were arrested from the spot.

The BDR and Rab raided the area suspecting that a group of Indian criminals gathered there. They seized one sub-machine gun, six grenades, four wireless sets, 134 bullets, three mobile phones and some Bangladeshi and Indian currencies from the spot.

Judge Biplob Goswami senenced Rajkanta to 31 years and Hamir Dev to 17 years in jail

Interns call

FROM PAGE 16 "We have called off our indefinite strike but if our demand is not met by April 17 we will resume our programme from April 18," said Muhidul Hasan, joint convener of the Intern Association. The interns will join their duties today, sources said

The six-day work abstention of some 287 interns almost paralised the healthcare services at the hospital and forced hundreds of patients to leave the hospital

The interns enforced the strike on April 5 demanding increased allowance as per declaration by the prime minister on January 1 last

Mohammad Ali to take action against the person who had received the Amir noted that voter-listing is a notice, since he has not seen it. continuous process which [in case of Bangladesh] was started back in 1972. It will continue to be updated. The hearing on this matter was also adjourned till tomorrow.

The Supreme Court adjourned Mahbubuddin told the press that the attorney general will submit his Earlier the court heard submisaroument at the next hearing. sions of Khandaker Mahbubuddin

On March 27, the SC issued the contempt rule against the two for lacking confidence in the apex court ings on suo moto contempt rule dealing with the voter list case.

Defence experts say a military

strike on Iran would be risky and

preoccupied with Iraq and

Afghanistan, and an attack against Iran could inflame US problems in the

complicated. US forces already

EU mulls sanctions

FROM PAGE 16 While stressing that diplomacy is the first course for dealing with Iran's nuclear ambitions, the White House is not ruling out a military response and says "normal defence and intelligence planning" is under way. The White House, sensitive to

Ahmed and Barrister Abdur Bazzak

representing CEC MA Aziz and BNP

lawmaker Nurul Islam Moni at hear-

the hearing till tomorrow.

Muslim world. The UN Security Council has President Bush's image as a war demanded Iran suspend its uranium hawk, is trying to play down the possibility of a military strike on the country that Bush included among nations forming the "axis of evil."

"The president's priority is to find a diplomatic solution to a problem the entire world recognises," Bush counsellor Dan Bartlett told The Associated Press on Sunday. "And those who are drawing broad. definitive conclusions based on normal defence and intelligence planning are ill-informed and are not knowledgeable of the administration's thinking on Iran.

Bush and other administration officials have said repeatedly that the military option is on the table. Several reports published over the weekend said the administration was studying options for military strikes, and an account in The New Yorker magazine raised the possibility of using nuclear bombs against Iran's underground nuclear sites.

British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, in an interview with the British Broadcasting Corp., called the idea of a nuclear strike "completely nuts." Straw said Britain would not

launch a pre-emptive strike on Iran and he was as "certain as he could be' that neither would the US He said he has a high suspicion that Iran is developing a civil nuclear capability that in turn could be used for nuclear weapons, but there is "no smoking gun" to prove it and rationalise aban doning the plodding diplomatic pro-

"The reason why we're opposed to military action is because it's an infinitely worse option and there's no justification for it," Straw said. disease.

enrichment programme. But Iran has so far refused to halt its nuclear activity, saying the small-scale enrichment project was strictly for research and not for development of nuclea weapons. Bush has said Iran may pose the greatest challenge to the United States of any other country in the

world. And while he has stressed that diplomacy is always preferable, he has defended his administration's strike-first policy against terrorists and other enemies. "The threat from Iran is, of course,

their stated objective to destroy our strong ally Israel," the president said last month in Cleveland. threat, a serious threat. It's a threat to world peace; it's a threat, in essence, to a strong alliance. I made it clear I'll make it clear again, that we will use military might to protect our ally

Pentagon spokesman Lt. Col Mark Ballesteros would not comment Sunday on reports of military planning for Iran. "The US military never comments on contingency planning," he said.

Stephen Cimbala, a Pennsvlvania State University professor who studies US foreign policy, said it would be no surprise that the Pentagon has contingency plans for a strike on Iran But he suggested the hint of military strikes is more of a public show to Iran and the public than a feasible option.

"If you look at the military options all of them are unattractive," ' Cimbala said. "Either because they won't work or because they have side effects where the cure is worse than the

Also on that day, Khaleda will