

## Cry for infrastructure

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sustainable development of the country was not possible keeping Chittagong sidelined in the development process. Still, there were some impediments to the process of bringing about desired development of Chittagong, he pointed out.

The Daily Star wants to identify and make a priority list of such impediments and publish a series of investigative reports with specific suggestions and guidelines from experts to overcome them, Mahfuz Anam mentioned.

The barriers to development process must be brought to the knowledge of government high-ups and other quarters concerned and they should be pursued constantly for resolving the problems, he said, pledging continued support from The Daily Star for this.

He also suggested creating mass awareness in this regard and proposed formation of a group comprising several wings to lobby for the required development in different sectors in Chittagong.

Saifuzzaman Chowdhury said that situated at a strategically important geographical location, the country's premier seaport at Chittagong has a huge region, including the landlocked seven northeastern states of India, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar and a large portion of China, as its hinterland.

Providing this hinterland with transport facilities side by side with bridging two exclusive economic zones of the Saarc (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) and Asean (Association of South East Asian Nations) countries, Chittagong port could easily be transformed into one of the main ports of the world, he noted.

The CCCI president regretted the negligence to Chittagong and said, "I don't know whether any port city in the world is neglected so much or not. This city has immense potentials and what we need most now is a proper policy to reap benefit from it."

CCCI Director Dr Moinal Islam Mahmud said Dhaka is the 'brain' and Chittagong is the 'heart' of Bangladesh and that the port city pumps blood in the national economy.

Moinal stressed building Chittagong as a regional hub and said greater connectivity with the neighbouring seven sister states of India and Thailand and Myanmar is needed for this.

In case of one failure to miss this opportunity, we might miss the bus, and Haldia and Kolkata would seize the opportunity."

He criticised the role of finance minister in the implementation of the much-needed Karnaphuli third bridge.

He demanded setting up of a deep sea port by giving top priority to it.

Honorary Consul General of Japan M Nurul Islam said, "We can't utilise the potentials of Chittagong because of political idiosyncrasies of the people here."

He emphasised the need for a complete package for greater economic growth and development of Chittagong.

He also urged the policy-makers to take into consideration the huge potential of 'recycling industry' in Chittagong, saying it has developed in the port city as a unique industrial sector.

"Besides, we want see such lawmakers in the next parliament who would give top priority to the economy," Nurul Islam added.

Former CCCI president Farid Ahmad Chowdhury demanded that Chittagong should be "constitutionally declared as the 'second capital' and a province of Bangladesh to implement the road map of economic growth of the port city properly."

Farid Chowdhury criticised the dilly-dallying in constructing the Karnaphuli third bridge. "How many times shall we have to beg the finance minister for the bridge?" he asked.

The seized drugs were handed over to the Department of Narcotics Control.

The teachers will also start a fast-unto-death from June 24 in the capital to force the government to meet their demands.

No classes were held in the capital's government primary schools yesterday. Some students, who were not aware of the strike, came to the schools only to return home.

Earlier on Thursday, the teachers held a rally at the Central Shaheed Minar where the leaders of the association announced the strike programme. After the rally, they took out a procession and submitted a memorandum to the prime minister.

## Morshed

**FROM PAGE 1**  
along the border... Political leadership should take necessary steps to reduce the tension, he told the news agency prior to his departure for Baku, Azerbaijan, to attend the 33rd Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (ICFM).

He however said one or two incidents may happen along the 4,200-km porous border between the two countries, but "unnecessary tension" should be avoided for good neighbourly relations.

Asked about recent statement by British High Commissioner Anwar Choudhury about some issues related to the upcoming elections, Morshed said this might be his personal opinion. "As a friend one can advise, but there is no scope for showing any guardianship in a sovereign country."

Asked about ICFM meeting, the foreign minister said Bangladesh will stress the need for effective economic cooperation among the OIC member-states to improve lifestyle of the common people alongside implementation of the political agenda.

Bangladesh has long been pressing for Islamic common market for the benefit of the member countries. "We will insist on identifying common economic ground and cooperation in shipping, insurance, removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers," Morshed said.

The three-day ICFM begins on June 19 against the backdrop of recent developments in the Muslim world. This meeting bears a special significance as it will pave the way for the forthcoming Islamic summit scheduled to be held in Senegal later this year with a number of important issues on the agenda.

The meeting is expected to deliberate on Palestine and Arab-Israeli conflict, Middle East peace process, situation in Iraq and Afghanistan, problem of refugees in the Muslim world, reform of the United Nations, Iran and IAEA, combating international terrorism and 'Islamophobia'.

The bank incurred a loss of Tk 12 crore in the last few months as it failed to maintain statutory liquidity ratio (SLR) and paid high interest in call money market.

Besides, its deposit growth is also declining. Last year its deposit growth dropped by three percent from the previous year.

As of last Thursday, its borrowings from the call money market stood at Tk 41 crore while it owes more than Tk 300 crore to nationalised banks as well as other financial institutions, which are continuously pressurising Oriental to pay up, it will be very difficult for the bank to run even day-to-day business.

Besides, other banks are also reluctant to give it any new loans in the call money market putting the bank in dire straits.

**OWNERSHIP CHANGING AND LOSSES MOUNTING**  
When the bank was set up in 1987, a Jeddah-based Al-Baraka Investment and Development

confidence of the electorate. Aziz said false and fake voting cannot be stopped without introduction of voter ID cards while the election cannot be free and fair without curbing the influence of musclemen.

Prof Anisuzzaman and Dr Zafar Iqbal spoke on behalf of the 27-member Jatiya Nagorik Committee formed for preparing a vision paper on the basis of people's voice raised at the regional dialogues throughout the country.

Abdul Quaiyum, deputy editor of the Prothom Alo, Sharmeen Murshed of Broty, an NGO for election monitoring, and Anisat Ulfat Fatema of the CPD also took part in the discussion.

The main objective of the civil society initiative is to create pressure on the administration and the political parties for good governance, said Prof Anisuzzaman.

He expressed the hope that the people would get the message and would not make mistake after getting proper information about the candidates.

"I am very hopeful that Bangladesh would achieve economic growth very soon as it was established through massive sacrifice," said Dr Zafar Iqbal.

If people become aware of it, they would carry forward the movement for honest and competent candidate, he said.

The other speakers who participated in the discussion include, advocate Bedananda Bhattacharya, advocate Abdul Hai Khan, Syeda Zabunessa, Shafi Ahmed Chowdhury MP, advocate Mujibur Rahman Chowdhury, Safwan Chowdhury, Faruq Mohammad Chowdhury, Brigadier General (Rtd) Zobaer Siddiqui, advocate Gholam Rabbani Chowdhury, Dr Kabir Chowdhury, Irfanuzzaman, Chowdhury Delwar Hossain, Aslam Kabir Tiru, Hirmadri Sheikh Roy, Abul Fateh Fattah, Bahauddin Selim, Dr Syed Shamsul Alam, Azharul Islam, Uzzal Roy, Shaymoly Rani, Farzana Siddiqui, AFM Kamal, Dr Mostafa Hasan, Shamimur Rahman, Zaida Sharmin, Akhtarul Islam, Shushanta Kumar Dash, Dr Mohammad Yunus, Dr Mizanul Haque Kazal, Ashraf Ali, Anisul Islam, Govinda Pal, Syed Abdul Hannan, Abdu Samad Nazrul, Abdul Hossain, Abdul Wadud, Lokman Ahmed, and Prof Habibur Rahman.

**Barapukuria**  
**FROM PAGE 16**  
The authorities detected hundreds of technical faults and shut down the plant several times.

The plant is being set up under a supplier's credit of more than \$250 million while the much bigger Meghna 450MW gas-fired AES power plant was set up at a cost of \$170 million.

With the help of a section of unscrupulous PDB officials, CNC is killing time to end the guarantee period, sources said.

Operation and maintenance of the power plant has become impossible due to CMC's non-compliance with the contract and its non-cooperation with PDB, said a source.

There are also allegations of gross irregularities in procuring the plant's turbine by changing the design without approval of the authorities.

The plant requiring 2,500 tonnes of coal a day consumes 65 per cent of the estimated 1 million tonne yearly coal production from the mine.

## BB worried

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Sources said Bangladesh Bank's governor also talked with the Oriental Bank's owner who gave assurance that fresh capital would be injected into the bank to rejuvenate the bank. The owner said the money would be injected through issuance of right shares, the sources added.

The face value of the shares of Oriental Bank is Tk 1000 while it was traded at Tk 790 at Dhaka Stock Exchange on Thursday. Sources said looking at the present condition of the bank it is very unlikely that shareholders of the bank would go for further investments.

A number of top bankers said seven banks were identified as 'problem banks' back in 1994. Six of them have already come out from that status but Oriental continues to be in bad form and has become the only 'problem bank' and its condition is deteriorating. If it is not restructured in line with BB's proposal it might have a negative impact on the entire banking sector.

**FINANCIAL CONDITION OF ORIENTAL**  
In December 2001, Oriental's accumulated loss stood at Tk 86.34 crore which has climbed up to Tk 450 crore in March 2006. Again at the end of March 2006 the bank's overall capital deficit stood at Tk 877 crore.

Only four out of 30 private commercial banks have provisional shortfall. Three of them have a provisional shortfall below Tk 60 crore, while Oriental's shortfall stands at Tk 322 crore in March 06.

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The remaining 35 per cent coal will be used for brick-fields and domestic purposes.

## 51 killed

**FROM PAGE 16**  
possible step to safeguard national security," he told a press conference.

Sri Lankan jets pounded rebel targets on Thursday and Friday in retaliation for an attack on a civilian bus that killed 64 people in the worst violence since a 2002 ceasefire, raising fears of an imminent return to a two-decade civil war.

Meanwhile, the Tigers, who deny Thursday's bus bombing, threatened retaliation if air force bombing restarted.

They said that if air strikes near the northern rebel stronghold of Kilinochchi resumed they would retaliate.

"We have clearly told the Norwegian facilitators and (the Nordic trace monitoring mission) SLMM that if the air strikes continue the LTTE will definitely take retaliatory action," head of the rebel peace secretariat S. Puledevan told Reuters.

The government said air force attack helicopters flew to Mannar and took part in the clash but there were no other air strikes. Rebels and officials said other front lines were calm.

The government said it had captured three Tigers in diving gear as they came ashore on the island's west coast just north of the capital Colombo and not far from the beach resort of Negombo. Two of the men took cyanide and were taken to hospital.

Tiger fighters wear poison capsules around their necks and are renowned for committing suicide to avoid capture. The military said they were captured with magnetic mines they had intended to attach to the hulls of naval patrol boats.

Two explosions took place underwater near the beach as the men were arrested, the military said, but no one was hurt.

## Sundarbans

**FROM PAGE 16**  
accomplices opened fire on the Rab team and Kamal was bullet hit while trying to escape Rab custody during the gun battle. He died on the spot.

Rab men fired 38 shots during the 20-minute encounter, the press release said. One pipe gun, one air gun and 24 different kinds of ammunition were recovered from the spot. Kamal's accomplices however managed to flee.

Kamal, ringleader of notorious Kamal Bahini, was wanted in 27 criminal cases including eight murder cases, rape cases, robbery cases, extortion cases and theft cases filed against him with different police stations of Bagerhat.

## Ghanaians stun

**FROM PAGE 1**  
With the victory, Ghana assured that the United States would not be eliminated from contention even with a loss later Saturday against Italy. A USA win would put all four teams even at three points in Group E.

Sully Muntari added the second goal after Cech made save after save. He seemed to have intimidated the shooters until Muntari sent a rocket of a shot into the upper right corner of the net with the Czechs down to 10 men.

Gyan picked up a pass from captain Stephen Appiah and easily beat Cech from just inside the area only 68 seconds into the match. Heavily outnumbered by Czech fans in the crowd, Ghana's supporters roared with delight and danced in their seats in the 45,000-seat Cologne Stadium.

Gyan missed a penalty kick in the 67th after Czech defender Tomas Ujfalsui was sent off. He hit the right goalpost moments after putting a shot into the net -- but before the referee blew his whistle to restart play.

Ujfalsui brought down striker Matthew Amoah to draw the penalty. The Czechs were missing strikers Jan Koller and Aston Villa's Milan Baros with injuries, but it was the defense that broke down.

Vratislav Lokvenec, the lone striker for the Czech Republic, was quiet for most of the game and will be suspended in the third group match for getting his second yellow card of the round.

Ghana coach Ratomir Djukovic shook up his team's defense following a 2-0 loss to Italy. His strategy worked, in great part because of the early score by Gyan.

Ghana dominated with Appiah and Michael Essien repeatedly exposing weaknesses in the Czech defense. Cech did well to stop a shot at close range from Amoah in the 70th, and again from Muntari three minutes later.

With Essien and Appiah running the Czech defense ragged, Cech also stopped a barrage of late shots, with Gyan missing another one-on-one chance in the 79th.

But Muntari found the net with a shot that left Cech no chance -- and the Americans a better chance.

## 3 DEPZ units closed

**FROM PAGE 1**  
when there are no officials to supply the raw materials," said Nazmul, a worker of the factory.

Owners and investors of the factories thronged the DEPZ office soon after the workers expressed their dissatisfaction yesterday. They feel they cannot keep their factories operational until the situation improves.

"Workers' demands are increasing alarmingly. The 11-point demand placed on June 11 by workers of our factory became 17-point on June 17 and we are afraid of the present situation," Hedayetul Islam of Goldtex said.

"Overall situation in the DEPZ is normal as production in most of the factories continues uninterrupted," said AZM Azizur Rahman, general manager of DEPZ.

## Koirala leaves for medical treatment in Bangkok

**AFP, Kathmandu**  
Nepal's ailing Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala left for medical treatment in Bangkok Saturday, a day after hammering out a deal with Maoists that will see the rebels join an interim government.

"Prime Minister Koirala left Saturday afternoon for medical check ups in Bangkok," said Suman Kumar Gautam, the premier's assistant.

The 84-year-old prime minister is reported to have serious problems with his lungs and recently ended a lifelong smoking habit.

He was accompanied by three Nepalese doctors and was expected to remain in the Thai capital for a week, his aide said.

Friday saw a historic meeting between the prime minister and Maoist leader Prachanda that resulted in an agreement to dissolve the recently reinstated government and form an interim government, containing the rebels.

The elder statesman of Nepalese politics, Koirala has served as prime minister numerous times in the past. He assumed the top job in April again after weeks of protests forced King Gyanendra to end 14 months of direct rule.

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## Iraq attacks

**FROM PAGE 16**  
of Iraqis, launched a security sweep on Wednesday with 50,000 Iraqi troops backed by 7,000 US troops to pile pressure on al-Qaeda.

But the operation, mounted one day after US President George W. Bush made a surprise visit to Baghdad to bolster Saddam's month-old government, has failed to stop attacks.

In more violence of the type carried out by al-Qaeda, a bomb killed six people and wounded 11 in a crowded market in central Baghdad and mortar rounds killed two people and wounded 14 in another market in the Shi'ite district of Kadhimiya.

"Attacks on crowded markets are a common tactic used by al-Qaeda as part of what US officials say is a campaign to ignite a sectarian civil war between majority Shi'ites and Saddam Hussein's once-dominant Sunni Arab minority."

In the town of Mahmudiya just south of the capital, a car bomb targeting an Iraqi army checkpoint killed seven people.

Four days into the crackdown, the Interior Ministry has not yet announced any arrests or other results.

As the wounded from Saturday's blasts were being treated, state television broadcast footage of Iraqi soldiers marching to the sound of martial music, part of a government campaign to bolster the image of its security forces.

The US military has said it expects al-Qaeda's new leader, who it identified as Abu Ayub al-Masri, to use the same tactics as Zarqawi, a Sunni Arab militant who had concentrated mass attacks against Shi'as.

## Fire breaks out

**FROM PAGE 16**  
factory building," said a reporter. A director of a nearby garment unit shouted at the newsmen at that time, saying they should be killed by shooting, the reporter said.

Police rushed to the spot and clubbed the factory staff. They also picked up three staff.

Rafez Alam Chowdhury, managing director of the factory, said some of their staff misbehaved with the journalists as the journalists were asking them questions when they were trying to extinguish the fire.

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