The Daily Star

NEWS

Deep-sea port in Ctg must

Professor Rehman Sobhan, convener of Nagorik Committee 2006, said new areas of opportunities will open up in the region in the coming years and Bangladesh has to take advantage of it.

Citing an example, he said India's imports amount to around US\$150 billion now and Bangladesh has to think how it can get a share of this huge emerging

economy. "Some are exporting goods worth \$150 billion to India from different parts of the world. So, we have to think whether we want to get a share of these huge imports to India with or without trade preferences. And the business community has a very important role to play in this regard," he noted.

Not only China or India, other Asian countries are also going to move ahead and their economies will change significantly in the coming years, he said noting that Bangladesh has to identify short. medium and long-term supportive activities so that it can benefit from all these

Citing another example Professor Sobhan observed that countries like Japan and Korea will face workforce shortages due to their aging populations. Manpower will also become a big commodity and a lot of investments will take place in skill and language trainings. Dr M Rahmatullah, an expert on

transport, communications and infrastructure development, said Bangladesh has not taken advantage of its geographical location.

Stressing the need for changing mindsets, he said the country should open up its economy and transportation system creating a win-win situation for all the parties concerned.

Growth of container handling at the Chittagong port is 15 to 20 percent annually and the port has also become very congested, Rahmatullah said adding that rail communication has been neglected for long and presently only 11 percent of the containers are transported by railways.

M Syeduzzaman, former finance minister, said the cost of using inland river system is very low and it is one of very important factors for

expanding trade and service activi-Suhel Ahmed Choudhury, former

commerce secretary, said Bangladesh can become a regional hub if there is a deep-sea port in Chittagong. "I don't think that Saarc or Safta will work smoothly but we can get

benefits if we concentrate on Asean," he said. Anisul Islam Mahmud, a former minister, felt that it will be very

difficult to become a regional hub without changing the political reality in the country and without improving its infrastructure significantly. "To become a regional hub, we

need to change our mindsets and think seriously whether we will allow other countries to have transit or Mahmud said stressing the not." need for concentrating more on man resources development

M Mujibul Huq, former cabinet secretary, observed that every country cannot become a regional hub and there can be competition in this regard. "Labour will continue to be cheaper in Bangladesh for the next 15 years and the country can concentrate on labour intensive backward areas," he suggested.

Annisul Huq, former president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, said there is a need for prioritising the vision and it should be implemented within the next five vears.

Pointing to the port problem, he said Bangladeshi exporters are paying one lakh dollars more than usual cost for a single vessel coming to the port. So, it is the infrastructure that needs to be focused on, he added "ICT (information and communi-

cations technology) sector can be an important area for Bangladesh. We had a bad time in ICT in the last couple of years and it has not regained momentum yet," Huq said.

Mirza Azizul Islam, former chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission, mentioned that foreign investors do not face any problem on the capital market and there is no restriction on foreign companies now to go public and to issue initial public offerings.

Abul Ahsan Chowdhury, former state minister for foreign affairs,

nymity

observed that there are some areas

where it is necessary to take decisions without political interference. "We need to think seriously about offshore drilling to see a better energy sector," he recommended.

Fazlul Hug, president of Bangladesh Knitwear Exporters and Manufacturers Association (BKMEA), said the government prepared the poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP) but it did not consult major trade bodies that generate substantial employment.

The government did not have any comprehensive plan in place, he said adding that it will be very difficult to move forward without changing attitudes of the government and its bureaucracy.

Syed Abul Hossain, an opposition lawmaker, said Bangladesh should seriously think about setting up a nuclear power plant.

Sayeeful Islam, former president of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industries, said economic priorities of the ruling BNP and opposition Awami League are the same. "So, there is no conflict in setting economic priorities and whoever will come to power through the next election will have to develop a roadmap towards the vision.

Earlier, making a presentation on the subject. Debapriva Bhattacharya, executive director of the Centre for Policy Dialogue, said Bandladesh needs to utilise its strategic geographical location to become a regional economic and

commercial hub. China and India will be the world's two largest consumers and global companies will want to use Bangladesh as a base for producing and exporting goods and services to these countries, he said adding that as China and India move up, market and labour shortages will occur and

new opportunities will be created for the country.

position regarding joining the alli-

behind bars again, sources men-

years during the tenure of the previ-

on bail from cases one after another

VERDICT IN GRAFT CASE

judgement dates twice.

JMB's Aug 17 blasts

FROM PAGE 1

scope to undermine their strength. To overthrow the government, JMB top leaders Abdur Rahman and Siddiqul Islam "Bangla Bhai' planned to weaken it by raising the bomb attacks, said the charge

sheet But the investigators did not work further on the militants' plan to attack the army or depose the government and form one of their own as they had not found concrete evidence of any such strategy. The government also not even once in the last one year disclosed that the militants decided to attack the army.

'The militants rather worked to force the government to establish Islamic rule," said an investigator.

The investigators of the sedition case filed against seven members of the top policymaking JMB body, Majlish-e-Shura, at Muktagachha are also working to prove that the militants plotted a conspiracy to raise countrywide bomb attacks on August 17 last year to establish shariah law. They have also recorded the statement of seven witnesses in this connection.

according to sources. "We have made significant development to prove the charges in this case and it will be possible to submit the charge sheet now," Golam Mostafa, assistant police superintendent of Criminal Investigation Department, told The Daily Star. He, however, declined to give details

POLITICAL PATRONS

Although names of some ruling party political leaders, ministers and lawmakers have surfaced since the JMB leaders started operating in the northern districts in 2004, the investigators have shown no move to detect and expose them

bombs " an investigator said "We have found no evidence in support of the allegation against the can we investigate their activities as ruling party leaders," an investigator they work inside mosques and

said Another investigator, seeking anonymity, told The Daily Star that it is rather safe for them just to prove the conspiracy than to go for the political patrons

FOREIGN LINKS

While refusing to admit that the militants have foreign links, the investigators said a few militants have had training in Afghanistan and Muzaffarabad in the Pakistanadministered Kashmir. An investiga tor said the militants had training on bomb-making in Afghanistan and used Taliban techniques of the trade in Bangladesh.

ance as he does not want to be Besides his training in Afghanistan, JMB chief Abdur Rahman also had training in Muzaffarabad. The JMB had con-Ershad, who was in jail for five nection with the Pakistan-based militant group Lashkar-e-Taiveba ous BNP government, was released which is also active in India, according to intelligence sources.

on political understanding with the The investigators have also Awami League (AL) government for come to know about the militants supporting the AL to form the govalleged link with several other foreign militant groups but said they do not have any evidence for it. "It is The special court on August 10 for not likely that foreign groups initithe third time fixed a date for delivated the work to raise the bomb ery of judgment in the corruption attacks. The Bangladeshi militants have perhaps just received training, case against Ershad for illegal withdrawal of his income tax money. logistics and fund from them." an investigator said preferring ano-The same court had earlier fixed

nymity. While smuggling in explosives The court first deferred the through India, the militants had judgement in September 2003 meeting with foreign militants in the when defence lawyers stated that bordering areas, said sources. Bu their client would not get justice from

SA games FROM PAGE 1 rode on another late penalty to draw took help of their foreign links to 1-1 with 10-man India in the second

smuggle the explosives. "But we have not found any proof that the match of the day. Nepal, who have scored twice foreign groups plotted the bomb and conceded as many goals, enjoy attacks in Bangladesh," he added.

superior goal difference over Foreigners visited Bangladesh at Bangladesh and India have identidifferent times in the name of religious cal records of scoring one and conceding one. Afghanistan have activities and some of them gave training to the JMB men, he said, yet to score in the competition. adding, "But it does not prove that Santosh Shahukhala, who international groups are actively converted a stoppage time penalty

involved with the militants. against Bangladesh to snatch a 1-1 Although the law enforcers seized huge quantity of explosives cool from the 12-yard spot in the from different militant dens across the country, at least one-fourth more given by Soshil Kumar 14 minutes explosives still remain hidden. Investigators would have got all the information about the explosives and training if they could capture Mollah Omar alive. He was killed

for his second bookable offence. during an operation in Comilla in March this year. shuttlers were eliminated from the "We are still looking for 'Boma' quarterfinals in the singles and Mizan of Jamalpur who can give doubles events after winning all significant information about all their first round games.

these," an investigator said. Investigators believe that the JMB has not the strength to regroup for further attacks but an intelligence source said a few JMB ehsar (fulltime) members have held meetngs at places, including Bogra and Muktagachha, to discuss reorganis-

for the Talibans in Afghanistan.

they hold any criminal activities. We

also failed to detect the JMB's

militant activities when their work

was based in mosques. We could

go for them only after they blasted

hotels or other places," he said

rainfall was 493.4 mm against 125 mm in July this year.

Aman growers particularly. The seedlings are drying up in the fields and only the well-off farmers are

because of power outage due to load

playing truant in Bangladesh this

Director at Raishahi University Prof

Sarwar Jahan said, "There is nothing

to be worried at the strange climate

as rains in the country depend on

monsoon wind that is currently

inactive over the Bay of Bengal,

Prof Dr Chowdhury Sarwar Jahan

Sajal of Geology and Mining

Department, however, said scientists

in the world are divided on whether

climate changes are results of E

Niño events in recent decades, or E

Niños are contributing to global

But evidence is mounting that there is at least an indirect relationship

between El Niño and climate

decided to ignore the legal provi-

sions regarding public procurement

and rewarded Huawei with a multi-

million dollar deal instead. Now the

Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman,

who will be scrutinising the deal in

Meanwhile, in another recent

As a result. BTTB's clients of this

The poet's youngest daughter

Sheba Rahman said the application

made earlier to the government for

sending the poet abroad is still

the poet, told The Daily Star that around Tk 2.5 lakh has been spent

so far for the treatment of the poet.

Of the amount, Tk 20,000 was

received from Channel i and the rest

Tia Rahman, daughter-in-law of

pending

There is no consensus on it yet.

Weather experts said monsoon is

ear though it was 'fully active' in

Environmental Science Institute

arranging supplementary irrigation. The supplementary irrigation is also uncertain in most cases

The prolonged drought has hit hard

North dates

FROM PAGE 1

shedding.

ndia and Myanmar.

creating depressions.

warming.

"There are many groups but how

30 hurt ing. The investigators, meantime,

earlier.

FROM PAGE 16 to Maijdi from Chhatarpaia Bazar, also do not have any concern about other militant organisations like witnesses said. Harkatul Jihad al Islami and several

Islamabad in 2004

The factions locked into chase hundred others that also received and counter-chase and blamed training and fought as Mujahideen each other for the spar Followers of Mofizur Rahman "We cannot arrest them unless

later vandalised a public bus and put up barricades in road at Shebarhat Bazar for an hour.

draw, was the hero again as he kept

77th minute to cancel India's lead

The penalty was awarded when

Meanwhile, Bangladeshi

Coach Golam Aziz Jilani was still

happy with the show as they man-

aged to beat Nepal, who had beaten

Bangladesh in the last edition in

defender Gobin Singh handled the

ball inside the area and was sent off

The Senbagh upazila correspondent of The Daily Amar Desh and seven others were injured in the clash and admitted to hospital. District Correspondent of The

Daily Shamakal and two police personnel named Abdul Hakim and madrasas? It could be easier for us to Jalal Ahmed also received injuries. detect their activities if they met at Police arrested seven people in this connection and called up additional reinforcements to bring the

situation under control

FROM PAGE 16 moving to other places in the hope of getting better living conditions.

Hard times

There is no official estimate on how many families or people left the waterlogged villages.

However, Waren Mandol of Dumurtola, one of the 96 villages where the cent percent inhabitants are Hindus, said 10 to 12 families have left the village in the last two years.

Seventy-year-old Khirbashi Bairagi of Baje Kultia said four of her five sons who once worked on their farmlands now go to Noapara to work as cargo handlers while one lives in Jessore with his family now. Bidhan Sarkar of Monoharnagar

in Keshabpur said everybody has become poor now. He said, "Rich or poor, everybody is becoming day labourers and they go to distant places where people buy labour."

Ershad

FROM PAGE 16 admitted that JP had put their demand

Israel sends mixed

burial was postponed "There are names which are not

clear," said Dr Moustafa Jradeh.

bury them in their villages. If we

bury them here it will cause a lot of

'There are people who want to

deployment of the Lebanese army," Israel's army chief Dan Halutz told parliament's Foreign Affairs and Defence Commitee, according to a spokesman. "If the Lebanese army does not

FROM PAGE 16

Halutz said

Salloukh.

force now in Lebanon.

_ebanon within two weeks.

Tuesday it wanted to deploy up to

3,500 new soldiers in south

deployment of the Lebanese army

takes place as quickly as possible,

Douste-Blazy said after meeting

Lebanese Foreign Minister Fawzi

Hizbollah, which fought an

Israeli onslaught for 34 days until a

UN truce took hold on Monday, has

said it has the right to attack Israeli

forces remaining on Lebanese soil.

the south is an aggression and the

resistance reserves its right to face

such aggression if it persisted."

Sheikh Nabil Kaouk, Hizbollah's

top official in south Lebanon, told

Hizbollah guerrillas "was not on the

table" -- especially with the Israelis

ness to vacate the area south of

forces, but has made clear it will

keep its weapons -- although

political sources say it has offered

Douste-Blazy said France,

which might lead the strengthened

UNIFIL, was ready to play an

important role in the force, but said

it was vital that many other coun-

Douste-Blazy also urged Israel to

end an air and sea blockade

roamed for two decades.

to keep them out of sight.

"LIFT THE BLOCKADE"

tries contributed

the war.

Hizbollah has shown no willing-

He said the idea of disarming

reporters in the port city of Tyre.

still in Lebanon.

'The presence of Israeli tanks in

"It seems to me vital that the

problems. move down within a number of Two tankers carrying fuel were davs to the south ... the way I see it. due to arrive in Lebanon, where the we must stop our withdrawal," blockade has caused shortages and power cuts. The UN Security Council last

"Two ships have got permission veek adopted a resolution calling and guarantees to dock today and for a truce. It authorised up to one should be coming in tomor-13,000 well-armed troops to augrow," said Bahij Abu Hamze, head ment the 2,000-strong UNIFIL of Lebanon's Association of Fuel Importers. The United Nations said on

Prime Minister Fouad Siniora hosted a lunch for Douste-Blazy and his counterparts from Turkey, Malaysia and Pakistan, some of which may also contribute troops to UNIFIL.

Germany could contribute to the force but will not decide whether to participate until the exact nature of the operation is known, a govern-

ment spokesman said in Berlin. Indonesia is ready to send 1,000 troops as part of the UN force for Lebanon, officials in Jakarta said.

At least 1,110 people in Lebanon and 157 Israelis were killed in the conflict that erupted after Hizbollah captured two Israeli soldiers in a cross-border raid on July 12.

In Tyre, hospital workers struggled to deal with an overflowing morque, as more bodies were found in the ruins of buildings and other corpses remained unclaimed.

A temporary mass grave was the Litani, where its guerrillas have dug in the city for more than 100 people unclaimed bodies, but the The group has promised to burial was postponed. cooperate with Lebanese and UN

"There are names which are not clear," said Dr Moustafa Jradeh. There are people who want to bury them in their villages. If we bury them here it will cause a lot of problems."

Tamil targets FROM PAGE 16

Jayawardena said the main aim of the LTTE was to retake Jaffna, part of a de facto separate state they ran from

1990 to 1995 until troops drove them In the latest fighting, the military lost at least 150 soldiers killed and over 300 wounded and said it killed over 250 guerrillas and hurt more than 300. The querrillas said their losses in the first two days totalled only 22 dead.

due to arrive in Lebanon, where the blockade has caused shortages and power cuts.

'Two ships have got permission and guarantees to dock today and one should be coming in tomorrow," said Bahij Abu Hamze, head of Lebanon's Association of Fuel Importers.

Prime Minister Fouad Siniora hosted a lunch for Douste-Blazy and his counterparts from Turkey, Malaysia and Pakistan, some of which may also contribute troops to UNIFIL.

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here on Monday.

imposed on Lebanon at the start of Israel has indicated it will keep up the blockade until measures are in place to prevent Hizbollah from earming. Two tankers carrying fuel were Tamil towns in the island's north

and east observed a strike Wednesday to protest against a bombing raid which the Tigers said

killed 61 children in rebel-held territory Monday. Similar strikes gripped the island's Muslim towns along the east of the island to protest alleged Tamil Tiger attacks against Muslims who form the second largest minority in the country

after the Tamils Shops and offices in Muslim towns closed and streets were deserted. residents said.

Security was also stepped up in Colombo after an unprecedented bomb attack on a Pakistani diplomat

President Mahinda Rajapakse met newspaper editors Wednesday and called for "responsible reporting. Indonesia is ready to send saying the country was not at war. 1,000 troops as part of the UN journalists who attended the meeting force for Lebanon, officials in "The president said the military was At least 1,110 people in only engaging in defensive action to stall an LTTE offensive," an editor said. Lebanon and 157 Israelis were killed in the conflict that erupted "He asked newspapers not to carry after Hizbollah captured two Israeli reports that could inflame communal soldiers in a cross-border raid on hatred The Swedish-led Sri Lanka

BNP, JP meet as court delivers

and defence lawyers completed

their final arguments in a day and

the court fixed the date for delivery

of judgment," a senior lawyer told

The Daily Star on condition of ano-

BNP has moved to bring Ershad in

its electoral alliance ahead of the

Joint Secretary General Tarique Rahman and State Minister for

Home Affairs Lutfozzaman Babar

on July 27 met Ershad at his resi-

dence and proposed his joining the

ruling alliance. They met him follow-

e prime minister on July 2.

ing Rawshan Ershad's meeting with

Ershad, who heads the second

largest opposition party in parlia

ment, declared that the BNP

assured him of exemption from the

graft cases pending against him.

Following the July 27 meeting,

In a surprise move, BNP Senior

next parliamentary election.

"It happened so as the ruling

FROM PAGE 1

against Ershad.

deposed president, verdicts in two more are ready for delivery, 13 cases are under trial, two under investigation and two pending with the High Court after lower courts gave their verdicts.

The Special Court of Dhaka Division is scheduled to deliver today its judgement in a case against Ershad for illegal withdrawal of income tax money. Delivery of the judgement, which was almost readied about three years ago, was deferred twice. Judge Malik Abdullah Al Amin of

the special court will also give his

decision whether charges would be

framed in another two graft cases

Metropolitan Session Judge's Court

on Sunday fixed August 27 for

delivery of its verdict in a case

against Ershad concerning allot-

Meanwhile, the First Additional

people w plots to was president. Hearing of gold smuggling case against him will be held at this court on the same day.

Lawyers of the Dhaka bar and political analysts said the verdict is likely be delivered today as the government has initiated steps for quick disposal of the cases against the JP chief, who could not contest the 2001 parliamentary election for conviction in a graft case

"The case was at the final stage for the last three years. It is interesting that suddenly the prosecution

Jamaat to work Ershad

also on the list.

Madaripur-3.

election.

FROM PAGE 1

ernment

ture of the institutes.

FROM PAGE 16

four-party coalition leadership will finalise everything through discus-sion," the Jamaat leader told The Daily Star.

Jamaat is working to ensure its dominance in the coalition by keeping control over 60 seats directly and 40 more indirectly. Jamaat leaders think this will help them be in command of the next election.

Party sources said Jamaat has targeted 40 seats in Cox's Bazar, Chittagong, Laxmipur, Comilla, Sylhet, Faridpur, Rajbari, Mymensingh, Jessore, Jhenidah, Kushtia, Meherpur, Sirajganj and Chapainawabganj won by BNP, IOJ and BJP in the last election.

BNP lawmakers Alamair Md Mahfuzullah Farid, Mohammad Shahiduzzaman and Shahjahan Chowdhury from Cox's Bazar, Whip Syed Wahidul Alam and Col (retd) Oli Ahmed from Chittagong, Abul Khayer Bhuiyan and Shahiduddin Chowdhury Anny from Laxmipur, Kazi Mofazzal Hossain Kaykobad from Comilla-3, Dr Mokbul Hossain from Sylhet-6, Food and Disaster Management Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Eusuf and his brother Akman Ibne Eusuf from Faridpur. Nasirul Hug Sabu from Rajabari-2, Khairul Kabir Khokon from Narsingdi-1, Shamsuddin Ahmed from Mymensingh-6, Habibul Islam Habib from Satkhira-1. Nurul Islam from Khulna-4. MH Selim from Bagerhat-2, Ali Qader from Jessore-1, Mashiur Rahman, Shahidul Islam and Shahiduzzaman Beltu from Jhenidah, Prof Shahidul Islam and Sved Mehedi Ahmed Rumi from Kushtia. Akbar Ali and Justice Mozammel Huq from Sirajganj, Prof Shahjahan Miah and Harunur Rashid from Chapainawabganj are among those targeted by Jamaat. Coalition partners IOJ and BJP

ment and other facilities enjoyed by the government teachers," said lawmakers MA Matin, Kazi Anwar Quazi Faruque, chief coordinator Hossian, M Aminuddin, Kazi and convenor of the NFTE.

opment Rawshan Ershad on Monday met Prime Minister and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and demanded 50 seats for JP in the

next parliamentary election. The ruling party's desperate move to have the JP in the alliance fold triggered debates in the political arena. Even several senior leaders of the JP reacted sharply over Ershad's declaration for joining the ruling alliance and threatened to form another fraction of the party. But Ershad remains rigid on his

Alauddin, Mufti Shahidul Islam are

other constituencies, including

Gaibandha-3, Kurigram-4, Rangpur-1, 2 and 5, and

I almonirhat-2, where the present

lawmakers were elected from the

JP-Ershad. It will also seek Awami

League lawmakers' seats in

_almonirhat-1, Nilphamari-2,

Thakurgaon-2, Bagherhat-3,

Jessore-6, Sherpur-1 and

Dinajpur-1 and Moulvibazar-2 seats

of independent lawmakers

handed over the list of these seats to

BNP high command. Jamaat leader

Abdul Ŏader Mollah met the prime

minister on Sunday and informed

her about his party's view on the

is no need to expand the coalition

meeting they are unable to deposit

the tuition fees collected from stu-

dents to the government fund as the

ment ensures providing the same

house rent, medical allowance.

retirement allowance, annual incre-

Pry teachers

He later told reporters that there

Monoranian Shil and MM Shahin.

They are also planning to seek

Sources said Jamaat officially

Jamaat will also seek seats in

Julv 2004 due to illness of the judge. In the case filed with Ramna Police Station. it was alleged that Ershad, while in power, paid Tk 7,43,416 as income tax for six years (1983-1989). Later, he withdrew Tk

tioned.

ernment in 1996.

2.76.324 from the income tax money without submitting any documents in favour of his action. HEARING ON CHARGE-FRAMING

the court. The date was re-fixed in

The court on August 12 fixed August 17 for hearing on charge-framing against Ershad and five others in two graft cases.

In the first case, Ershad and former energy and mineral resources minister Anwar Hossain Manju are accused of causing a loss of \$79,000 to public exchequer.

The case, filed with the Tejgaon Police Station, alleged that the then president Ershad and Manju awarded a contract to the Scimitar Oils for drilling and exploring 1,650 square kilometres of area in Haripur oil field in 1987, which caused the loss to the state. The investigation officer (IO) of

the case pressed charges against them on May 2, 2003.

In the other case, Ershad, former education minister Sheikh Shahidul Islam and three others are accused of purchasing two ships from Pakistan during 1988-1991 causing a huge wastage of public money.

It is alleged that Ershad, Sheikh Shahid, two high officials of Bangladesh Shipping Corporation (BSC) and a businessman in collusion with others bought the ships by forging documents. This caused a loss of Tk 2,95,698,000 to the public exchequer

The IO pressed charges against Ershad and four others on August

Khelafat

money is spent to meet the expendi-FROM PAGE 16

27, 2003.

over 30 vehicles Following the month-long indefi-The campaigners for Islamic rule nite strike of the non-aovernment also put up a barricade on the road teachers, the government on and vowed to continue the blockade August 6 announced 100 per cent until their demands were met. basic salary for them but asked to Their demands include recognideposit the tuition fees to the gov-

tion of Qawmi madrasas, declaring Ahamadiyyas non-Muslim and "We will deposit the tuition fees to setting up an Arabic university in the country. The situation heated up as soon the government fund if the govern-

as police intercepted a Khelafat procession towards Muktangon. The Khelafat activists became agitated and started vandalising the passing vehicles.

change an investigator said the JMB leaders

Telecoms gives deal

FROM PAGE 1

Interestingly, although the exhibition ended on October 22, the two BTTB officials were allowed to stay five more days in China in accordance with the GO for reasons unexplained.

Subsequently, in February 2006, Monday's meeting of the CCPP. Mahmood Hasan Mansur, the then telecoms secretary and SM Munir deal, Huawei supplied a grossly Ahmed, BTTB's member (maintedefective 15,000-line telephone nance & operations), visited Spain exchange in Sayedabad, Dhaka. and China to attend '3G World According to BTTB's internal docu-Congress' again at Huawei's ments. Huawei deviated from a expense, according to telecoms contract by not providing 27 various ministry's internal documents.

critical features of this exchange. In this case, the telecoms ministry grossly fabricated the purpose of brand new exchange are facing a great deal of difficulties. Sources said the trips. The 3G World Congress was actually held in Barcelona from BTTB has been unable to take any February 13 to 15, 2006. The GO for measure against Huawei since the these two senior officers' trips, vendor's local agent is a family memhowever, provisioned five extra ber of a very powerful minister. days (February 10 to 17) and tagged China as the fictitious second venue Family urge of the event that was actually held in Spain. FROM PAGE 1

Since the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) approved the overseas trips of these officials, it is only logical to believe that the telecoms ministry bluffed the PMO regarding the objectives of these visits

The CPTU found both the trips to be in 'clear conflict of interest' because these BTTB officials were members of the Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC) that was assessing Huawei's bid proposal at that time. Besides, the telecoms secretary was also the head of the procuring entity. On March 27, 2006 the CPTU

asked the telecoms ministry to cancel Huawei's bid on ethical ground followed by blacklisting the company as per regulation 15 of the Public Procurement Regulations (PPR)

The ministry replied on April 6, which the CPTU termed as irrelevant. The latter again. on May 5. asked the ministry to cancel Huawei's bid followed by blacklisting the vendor.

In reply, on June 6, the telecoms ministry tried to bypass the PPR by labelling both the overseas trips as general matters'. This time, the ČPTU came down hard on the ministry and said the PPR forbids such overseas trips by members of the bid evaluation committee at the expense of a bidder.

The telecoms ministry, however,

for 50 parliamentary seats from BNI on the table for negotiation.

Meanwhile, several JP lawmakers and party leaders yesterday gathered at the JP office at Gulshan to find out if their names were included in the list of 50. They were firm not to compromise on or sacrifice their seats to their alliance partners.

"Being a sitting lawmaker, there is no point for me to sacrifice my seat," a lawmaker told reporters at the JP matter is totally in the hands of office. The other leaders were also expecting that their 'sir' [Ershad] would not disappoint them and would not ask them to 'sacrifice' their seats.

JP's demands to BNP include 50 seats in parliament, withdrawal of all cases against Ershad, and more seats and ministry portfolios than Jamaat-e-Islami, sources in the party said.

wells were found irrigating farm-

lands at Kahalu upazila in Bogra as

surface water was not available for

adequate irrigation, said locals

Aman plants in Mahasthan Garh

14 fuel

FROM PAGE 16

the drought.

irrigation.

in three decades of ethnic conflict.

FROM PAGE 16 widespread water scarcity and

Jakarta said

rapidly increasing water prices." Rangpur regional agriculture office The Sri Lanka-based institute sources said the department had funded by international agricultural plans to plant Aman in 20 lakh research organizations, is due to hectares of land, but a vast track of formally release its findings at a land may end up uncultivated due to conference in Sweden later this month A large number of shallow tube

Rijsberman said water scarcity in Asia and Australia affected about 1.5 billion people and was caused by over-allocating water from rivers. while scarcity in Africa was caused by a lack of infrastructure to get the water to the people who need it. area have turned yellow without

"The water is there, the rainfall is there, but the infrastructure isn't there," Rijsberman told reporters.

He said more needed to be done to promote rain-fed agriculture and to increase water storage in Africa. where many people live with water scarcity

THE PRICE IS NOT RIGHT

'Irrigation needs to be reinvented,' said Rijsberman, adding irrigation in many countries was inefficient.

But scarcity problems could also be overcome by more efficient water use, recycling and better pricing of water, which in its bottled form was already rivaling the cost of oil.

Rising living standards in India and China would lead to increased demand for better food, which would take more water to produce, he said.

Riisberman said the price of water would have to increase to meet an expected 50 percent increase in the amount of food the world will need in the next 20 years.

He said in Australia, five years into a drought, irrigation water costs less than five U.S. cents a cubic meter, compared to \$1 to \$2 per to the United States.

July 12. Monitoring Mission has said that the In Tyre, hospital workers struggled to deal with an overflowing February 2002 ceasefire now "exists morgue, as more bodies were only on paper." The Tigers and the government found in the ruins of buildings and have blamed each other for the other corpses remained upsurge in fighting which has claimed more than 1,400 lives by official count unclaimed.

A temporary mass grave was dug in the city for more than 100 people unclaimed bodies, but the

Billions face water

cubic meter for drinking tap water and \$100 to \$200 per cubic meter for bottled drinking water.

since December.

Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer, whose constituency covers the mouth of Australia's longest river system, the Murray-Darling, said solving water problems was a pressing problem for the world.

More than 60,000 people have died

"Improving the efficiency of agricultural production and water use is fundamentally important to improving economic growth, sustainability and reducing poverty,' Downer said.

The Murray-Darling runs through Australia's main crop and foodgrowing region but water flows have dropped dramatically because of drought and large amounts of river water pumped out to irrigate cotton.

Downer said Australian researchers were working with counterparts in China to develop new irrigation methods for rice, while Australian aid programs were working to improve water in the Mekong River through Laos, Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam,

US-bound

FROM PAGE 1

off the plane on the tarmac and being loaded onto a bus. Orlandella said their carry-on luggage was being checked. The flight was from London's Heathrow Airport to Dulles.

Last week. British authorities said they foiled a terror plot to blow up trans-Atlantic flights from London

FROM PAGE 1 They alleged that the government has failed to control law and order in Mirpur where criminal incidents one year, they said.

Earlier, angry locals hearing the death news of Monir on Tuesday

the last few weeks, and his gang.

Meanwhile, Jahanara Begum, arrested for her alleged involvement in the attack, was placed on a twoday remand by Mirpur police for interrogation.

The body of Monir has been kept in the mortuary of Birdem Hospital. He will be buried after his parents arrive from America, family sources said.

continue to rise alarmingly. At least 10 businessmen of the area were murdered by extortionists in the last

night vandalised a number of vehi-

cles near Sony Cinema Hall. Monir's family filed a murder case against Shahadat, a listed criminal of Dhaka City who had been threatening Monir for toll for

August 6.

blood pressure.

This made the poet's family members anxious as well as spread

A doctor said the poet's breathing fell to a very low level and the

poet alive. For the last one year, poet Shamsur Rahman has led a verv lonely life due to illness. He has been staying at his Shyamoli residence where the number of visitors has been very limited. The poet's daughter-in-law used to look after

Meanwhile, the doctors noticed further deterioration of the poet's health as the blood pressure fell significantly yesterday morning. They had to administer additional doses of medicine to control the

negative rumours among people.

doctors are trying hard to keep the

Half-day hartal was spent by the poet's family. Poet Shamsur Rahman has been kept at the intensive care unit of Bangabandhu Sheikh Muiib Medical University Hospital since