# NEWS

# **Eid tomorrow**

#### exchange greetings

President lajuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia in separate messages greeted the nation on the eve of the Eid. They have sought divine blessings and peace, progress and prosperity of the country and the Muslim Ummah.

Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina in her message urged the rich people of the country to share their joy with the poor who face a hard time due to the high price of essentials. Sharing the joy with poor neighbours and relatives is the main theme of the Eid festival. Hasina said.

The 18-member National Moon Sighting Committee led by State Minister for Religious Affairs Mosharref Hossain Shahiahan sits today at the conference room of Islamic Foundation Bangladesh at Baitul Mukarram National Mosque to gather information about moon sight-

If the moon is sighted, the committee will declare the Eid. Otherwise, the festival will be celebrated across the country on Wednesday

The district-level moon-sighting committees will inform the national committee if the moon is sighted anywhere in the country. The deputy commissioners will also hold meetings at the district headquarters in this regard. The committee will also collect

information about the moon sighting from the meteorological department. Thousands of people have already

left Dhaka to celebrate the Fid with relatives and near and dear ones. giving the busy and crowded city a bit deserted look.

The main Fid congregation will be held at the Jatiya Eidgah on the High Court premises in the morning.

President lajuddin Ahmed, senior ministers, government high-ups and the elite will say their Eid prayers at the Jatiya Eidgah on the High Court premises where the main Eid congregation of the capital will be held. Several large Eid congregations will also be held at the Baitul Mukarram National Mosque.

BSS adds: All preparations have been made to hold congregations of the holy Eid-ul-Fitr in the city as well as across the country.

Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) will arrange the main Eid congregation at the National Eidgah at 8:30am. There will be special arrangement for women at this venue. The DCC has taken necessary steps to supply water and

### Shazneen case

#### FROM PAGE 16

Thursday, the lawyers argued that an HC Death Reference bench had earlier acquitted Shaniram in connection with the case filed under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act. The acquittal order was sent to the trial court that on September 2, 2003 septenced Shaniram and five others to death for raping and killing Shazneen.

Following the order, the defence The bench also upheld the lawyers submitted a criminal appeal erdict of the lower court on five to the HC challenging the legality of convicts -- Shahid, Hassan, Badal, Minu and Parvin.

set up mobile toilets for the devotees. In case of inclement weather, the main congregation will be held at Baitul Mukarram National Mosque at the same time.

The DCC will also organise more than 350 Eid congregations at different locations in the city. Five congregations will be held at Baitul Mukarram National Mosque at 7:30am, 8:30am, 9:30am, 10:30am and 11:15am. Congregations will also be held at all mosques in the city.

Two congregations will be held at the Dhaka University Central Mosque at 8:00am and at 8:45am. Two more will also be held on Shahidullah Hal lawn and Salimullah Muslim Hall

premises at 8:30am and at 8:00am. Three congregations will be held at Arambagh Bab-e-Rahmat at 8:00am, 9:30am and 10:00am, one at Gulshan Central Masjid and Eidgah at 8:30am, one at Lalmatia Block-G Masjid-e-Baitul Haram at 8:30am, one at Rahmatgani Muslim Friends' Society Maidan at 9:00am, one at Siddeshwary High School Jame

Mosque at 8:30am, one at Abuzar Gifari College at 8:00am, one at Kalyanpur Housing Estate Maidan at 8:30am

The last Eid congregation in the city will be held at Dayemia Shahi Jame Masjid at Azimpur at 11:30am. In Chittagong, preparations have

been completed to set up 220 congregations. Of them, 93 will be arranged by the Chittagong Central Eid Jamaat Committee while 127 others by the Chittagong City Corporation. Congregations at the Chittagong

MA Aziz Stadium will be held at 8:45am and at Jamiatul Falah Mosque at 8:00am. In Khulna, the main congregation will be held at Khulna Circuit House Maidan at 8:30am. One will be held at

Khulna Town Jame Mosque at 9:30am. Congregations will also be held at other mosques of the city. Meanwhile, some people in different parts of the country, especially the

inhabitants of 40 villages in Chandpur district, are celebrating the Eid-ul-Fitr today following the Saudi Arabian lunar calendar, report our correspondents

#### Babar FROM PAGE 16

reporters went to home ministry to meet him on his last day in office. He described the arrests of militant kinopins Abdur Rahman and

Bangla Bhai as the sweetest moments during his tenure as the state minister for home, while termed the grenade attack on an Awami League (AI) rally on August 21, 2004 and countrywide serial blasts on August 17, 2005 as the bitter ones.

Babar also said that he too feels disappointed as he could not complete the Machine Readable Passport (MRP) and the National Identity projects, two very urgent ones, even after being so close to it.

On the militant issue, the state minister said it was a challenge, which his government has faced successfully. "Militancy can not be rooted out so soon. It is a continuous process," he said adding that he has formed a dedicated team, which will work on militancy.

He also said that the alliance government has done majority of the work of arresting and punishing the militants.

Babar said they ensured a peaceful atmosphere at the restive southwest region through Rab and police, but now attempts are on to destabilise the area again. He has alerted the law enforcers regarding the matter, the state minister added.

On grenade attack on British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Anwar Choudhury, Babar said the clue has been detected adding that Mufti Hannan and his associates carried out the grenade attack.

PM opens FROM PAGE 16

Bhaban (Bangladesh Textile Mills Association building) at Moghbazar. The PM also opened the newly built building of the Institution of Engineers Bangladesh and unveiled the plaque of the foundation stone of Bangladesh

Government Employees Welfare Board Bhaban near Dainik Bangla crossing in Motilheel Textiles and Jute Minister

Shajahan Siraj, Public Works Minister Mirza Abbas and State Minister for Liberation War Affairs Prof Rezaul Karim were present at the inaugural functions

### Essentials

FROM PAGE 1 milk is 50 litres but distributors supply only five to 10 litres that we buy at Tk 30 a kg, which is its regular market price." he said, adding, "To cope with the demand, we have to buy it from the

black market at Tk 35-38 a kg." On the eve of the Fid, the demand of milk will further increase and its price may be unimaginably high, said several retailers in the city

Price of a kg Diploma milk powder rose to Tk 320 at the retailers' Despite Dhaka City Corporation's

regulations on the price of beef, price of a kg of it rose from Tk 140 to Tk 160. Due to higher demand and much

less supply, price of cattle rose by at

### Saifur doubts

FROM PAGE 16

across the country. He posed a question whether a handful of those institutions was established by Prof Yunus or the BRAC.

Citing examples of the country's development during the BNP government's rule, he asked how much of it was the result of microcredit system.

Though Prof Yunus won Nobel Peace Prize for microcredit Saifur claimed the then government of 1979-80 actually initiated the system

Meanwhile, in his last speech as a minister of the outgoing government, Saifur vesterday discussed a number of other issues

Regretting the current political trend, the minister said he would not involve in politics any further, as unethical "things" have to be done in this arena

He stressed that these unethical 'things" are the reasons behind corruption.

He mentioned an incident when a World Bank official informed him of a serious corruption attempt in a project.

Saifur however ruled out onesided criticism of Bangladesh in connection with corruption, saying officials from international organisations are equally involved in irregularities

He expressed his frustration over

### Mufti Hannan

#### FROM PAGE 16

Department (CID) produced two brothers before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) Court, Dhaka yesterday afternoon. The remand had been granted in connection with the killing of Bazlur Rahman.

In his forwarding report, CID Inspector and Investigation Officer (IO) of the case ZM Altafur Rahman mentioned that Hannan and Mafiz gave important information on the killing and the information was being verified. So, they should be in custody until investigation completes, the IO wrote

Later CID Inspector Humayun Kabir put forward a forwarding report asking for a 10-day remand for the Sutrapur murder case. In his report he mentioned that Hannan and Mafiz were involved in the killing

He mentioned that the two brothers along with their accomplices killed the victim and dumped the body into a drain at Dinanath Sen Road near Wasa pump in Sutrapur on November 5, 2001. So, they need to be guizzed to find out the vital clues to the killing and the whereabouts of their accomplices. the IO added

Defence lawyer Advocate Lutfar Rahman submitted a petition seeking cancellation of the remand prayer. He argued that his clients were not involved in the killing. Moreover, the murder took place lamented for the "good old days". "We miserably lack democratic mentality." he bemoaned. Though Bangladesh has a permanent civil service, Saifur said corruption occurred too frequently in

this sector and it must be stopped. Admitting that his ministry had delayed project implementation process, he said, "The prime minister used to say that the planning ministry is to blame for these.'

the mammoth size of the govern-

ment and the differences among the

ministers. MPs and bureaucrats and

The planning ministry actually holds up the project proposals from the concerned ministries as it finds various problems during scrutiny and thus the implementation further slows down. The accusation is 99 percent

appropriate. Saifur observed. adding, though he formed a committee to avoid such circumstances it did not work The minister started working at

10:30am and except for two to three hours, he was busy signing files even at the farewell venue.

Saifur also attended a programme at the Finance Division

vesterday

five years back and five people were arrested in this regard. Later these five were released on bail. So, there

there was no change in the schedwas no room for placing them on uled dates and confirmed the beginremand, the lawyer added ning of the holidays from tomorrow. After listening to both parties, Metropolitan Magistrate Mamun Al Rashid placed Mufti Hannan and confused yesterday whether the government offices will remain open

Mahibullah on a four-day remand. Earlier on September 10, todav Hannan was shown arrested in the Ramna Batamul blast case and were seen waiting for a declaration court placed him on a 13-day clarifying the situation, but no such declaration came as of yesterday

remand. On September 19, he was shown arrested in connection with the bomb blasts at the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) rally at Paltan on January 20, 2001, and was placed on a 14-day remand in

two phases **REMAND ON HUJI MEMBERS** 

IN CPB BLAST CASE Another Dhaka court yesterday placed Hannan's two accomplices on a 10-day remand for interrogation after police showed them arrested in connection with the bomb blasts at the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) rally at Paltan

on January 20, 2001 On completion of their seven-day remand in the Ramna Batamul blast case. CID Inspector Sved Momin Hossain, also the IO of the case. said the two were involved in the blasts and they need to be questioned to find out the clues to the

#### Mad rush for home FROM PAGE 1

sell tickets at Tk 20 less as the demand was low before.

To cope with the Eid rush, Bus Owners' Association yesterday amassed a total of 500 city-service buses for outbound services and hope to arrange more today.

The city streets already started to look deserted due to the Éid exodus. Usual rush in the shopping malls, however, continued. Tickets were scarce at Sadarghat

launch terminal. However, on the black market tickets for all destinations were abundant for much higher prices. A Barisal going Salahuddin Mia at Sadarahat launch terminal managed a ticket from a 'cabin-boy' at a cost of Tk 2300 after failing to purchase his ticket at the counter. The regular price of the ticket is only Tk 600. Overload vessels were seen to sail

away from the terminal as well. Seven launches were fined yesterday for overloading, terminal sources said. Many train passengers returned empty-handed from Kamalapur Railway Station as advance tickets for

October 15 to 19 for all inter-city trains were sold out. However, tickets were found with the black marketeers right around the corner

When asked, Asok Kumar Dey, the station manager, denied the allegation

Long queues were seen for tickets for local and four private commuter trains at the terminal Meanwhile, crowd in the commer

Confusion

FROM PAGE 1

evening

added

N Korea

A South Korean newspaper said the

same day that Kim had expressed

regret about the test and willingness

to return to the disarmament talks if

Saturday on Kim's reported apology

and said his country wanted an

In Moscow, Rice cast doubt

"I don't know whether or not Kim

"But the Chinese, in a fairly

Jong-II said any such thing," Rice

told journalists accompanying her

thorough briefing about the talks,

said nothing about such an apology

for having launched a test," she

Official media in the North main-

on a flight from Beijing to Moscow.

the US eases its pressure.

"escalation of tensions."

FROM PAGE 16

cial banks started to thin out after 12:00 noon. Rate of call-money was also stable vesterday.

# Ministers pack bags

A number of ministers, including some senior ones, however, did not attend their secretariat offices.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia came o secretariat around 1:45pm. She delivered her last address to the secretaries at the Cabinet Secretariat and formally thanked them for extendng cooperation to her government to complete its term

The PM asked them to continue the welfare programmes started by her come to the secretariat office in the government and work sincerely so that evening to finish some "urgent" busino vacuum is created during the period of caretaker government. She also spoke of various development and achievements the country made in the last five years.

A total of 51 secretaries attended the programme and thanked the PM for her guidance during the last five vears.

LGRD Minister and BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan came to his secretariat office around 11:30am to attend a prize-giving ceremony for the poura chairmen

under a development project. After the function, Bhuiyan spent 10 minutes in his chamber before eaving.

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman, however, did not turn up at his secretariat office during office hour. He spent the day at the planning ministry office at Sher-e-Bangla Nagai and signed pending files. He also held a meeting with the ministry's high officials.

Saifur attended two farewell meetmeting scheduled for 2:00pm today.

Dialogue dead end Justice Hasan's possible assumption of the office of the caretaker government chief. It also threatened to launch

massive street agitations with oars

and poles in hands on the day Justice

Hasan will take oath in a bid to make

the caretaker government unable to

function. The opposition also threat-

ened to enforce an indefinite strike

protesting the possibility of Hasan

"We will continue our agitation

programmes with oars and poles if a

ruitful result does not come out of the

dialogue," said Jalil, who is also the

coordinator of 14-party opposition

BNP announced that it will take control

of the streets at any cost and will hold

rallies at Paltan Maidan for three days

from October 27 to 29. Apart from that

BNP, which has been favouring

Justice Hasan as the chief of the next

caretaker government, directed its

grassroots level leaders and activists

to remain on the streets to counter the

Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday told

reporters that his party will remain

active on the streets after the tenure of

and order situation, Dhaka

Metropolitan Police is likely to impose

a ban on processions with oars and

Sensing deterioration of the law

Besides, directed by the home

ministry, the police administration

planned to initiate a 'foolproof' security

measure in the capital as it fears a

severe downtrend in law and order

during handover of power or soon after

the caretaker government takes over

The police administration is actine

the present government expires.

BNP Secretary General Abdul

To counter the opposition, ruling

suming the post.

opposition politically.

oles, sources said.

the helm of the country.

coalition.

ings vesterday--one in the morning at

the planning ministry and another in

Communication Minister Nazmul

Huda and Minister for Food and

Disaster Management Chowdhury

Kamal Ibne Yusuf also did not come to

An official of the ministry told The

Law, Justice and Parliamentary

Affairs Minister Moudud Ahmed came

to his secretariat office in the morning

Formal farewell meetings were

also organised at the ministries of

home affairs, land, fisheries and

livestock, forest and environment, jute

Minister for Science and

Information Technology Dr Moyeen

Khan, Minister for Housing and Works

Mirza Abbas, and State Minister for

Shipping Mohammad Quamrul Islam

attended office and signed all pending

were not approved by the law ministry.

Sources said he was busy preparing a

proposal to place before the cabinet

Quamrul rejected two files as those

and attended a farewell meeting.

and textile.

Daily Star that Huda was supposed to

their secretariat offices until 2:00pm.

the evening at secretariat.

briefing the newsmen after the 14-party will approach the president. meeting of the secretaries with the Political observers say if the presiprime minister vesterday said that dent is saddled with the responsibility of picking a caretaker government chief, it could lay out a win-win situation for both BNP and AL. But for that to happen, Hasan will have to decline to Many ministers also became assume the post and then the president can pick somebody else. In such a case, BNP can claim that it did not cave in to the opposition's demand The officials and employees while AL can bask in the glory of

On the eve of today's round of talks

that began on October 5 amid height-

ened hope in the public mind of resolv-

ing the ongoing crisis, Prime Minister

also BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia

yesterday talked to her party's' senior

leaders and finalised the last moment

Leader of the Opposition also AL

Chief Sheikh Hasina who returns

home this morning, will talk to her

party's senior leaders at Zia

nternational Airport to review the

Senior leaders of BNP and AL

"We are optimistic about the suc-

vesterday again reiterated their hope

that the dialogue will succeed in

cess of the talks. I believe a solution

will come out through the discussion,

AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil told

also Health Minister Dr Khandaker

Mosharraf Hossain yesterday said

they are sincere and optimistic about

the success of the talks. "We hope the

opposition will sit tomorrow with a mind

to reach a consensus," the health

BNP Standing Committee Member

strategy to be adopted in the talks.

latest situation of the talks.

breaking the standoff.

The Daily Star last night.

comes out of the final meet, the AL-led

FROM PAGE 1

'achieving' its goal.

Shazneen Tasnim Rahman, 15, a student of class nine of Scholastica School and the youngest daughter of Latifur Rahman, chairman of Transcom Limited, was raped and killed at her Gulshan residence in Dhaka on April 23, 1998.

The following day, Latifur Rahman filed a murder case with Gulshan Police Station accusing Shahidul Islam alias Shahid, a domestic help at his residence.

### Huda's 'discretionary'

#### FROM PAGE 1

The 'discretionary fund', which has no legitimacy, was allegedly manufactured by Nazmul Huda to spend the money in sectors which are deemed politically expedient by him, added the sources.

The Tk 30 crore 'discretionary fund' was created by the minister by siphoning the amount from a Tk 40 crore fund approved by the finance ministry only for repairs and maintenance of roads, bridges and highways.

The remaining Tk 10 crore allegedly was allotted to a new fund, which is dedicated to pay off the unpaid bills of the contractors for the Department of Roads and Highways, an account which does not exist on the finance ministry's list of funds.

According to ministry sources the new fund will be distributed to contractors following recommendations of some lawmakers.

Earlier, the finance ministry had selected 10 sectors and allocated Tk 38 crore for those but the communications minister rearranged the schedule of allocation according to his own whim, the sources said.

The finance and communications ministries sources said Tk 915.50 crore had been allotted to the Department of Roads and Highways under the communications ministry in the 2006-07 fiscal budget and the government already approved spending of Tk 179 crore on eleven sectors

The finance ministry allocated Tk 40 crore of the already approved Tk 179 crore spending for repairs and maintenance of roads and highways. But ignoring the finance ministry recommendation the incident. The HC on February 7 stayed

The Criminal Investigation

Department (CID) pressed charges

against Shahid. contractor Hassan.

his assistant Badal, carpenter

Shaniram, and domestic helps Minu

The court framed charges

and Parvin on September 17, 1998.

against Shahid and five others on

November 1 of the same year.

proceedings of the murder case, pending with the First Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court. Dhaka.

The HC had also said the stay order would be valid till disposal of the case pending with the Second Special Tribunal for Prevention of Women and Children Repression, Dhaka.

communications minister made

changes and transferred Tk 30

crore to the 'discretionary fund', the

sources said adding that there is no

finance ministry provision for

approving discretionary spending

rules and the communications

minister cannot commit to such

expenditures," said a finance minis-

The sources said, Nazmul Huda

informed the finance ministry about

the possible expenditure of a total

Tk 78 crore on October 18 but the

finance ministry did not approve the

proposal. But Huda began spending

the money anyhow. He even took

initiatives to show that the total

amount of Tk 78 crore allocated to

the new fund was spent before the

handover of power to the next

ministry can disburse a highest of Tk

50 lakh for any special road repair

project. But violating the rules the

communications minister allocated

Tk 10 crore for repairing roads in

Sylhet. He also allocated Tk 5 crore

for maintenance of roads across the

country. Tk 5 crore for forestation.

Tk 5 crore for maintaining rest

houses of the roads and highways

division, Tk 4 crore for land acquisi-

tion, and Tk 9 crore for paying the

arrears and for emergency works.

According to government rules a

interim government

"This is absolutely a violation of

by ministers.

trv official.

least 10 to 15 per cent, butchers in the two cases filed for the same different markets said, fearing its further increase on the eve of the Eid.

A kg atta that sold at Tk 22 only three days back now sells at Tk 24 in the retail market.

At the end of Ramadan price of per kg gram rose from Tk 62-65 to Tk 70-75 at the retailers end. They attributed the price rise to severe shortfall of gram supply in wholesale markets during the last few days.

Prices of different kinds of rice rose by Tk 0.50 to 1 per kg.

As a price control measure in the beginning of the Ramadan, the authorities arranged shopping centres temporarily run by Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) in the city but they ran short of most items three days ago and all the centres closed vesterday

Despite regular supply, food items at the shops were sold off fast due to increased demand ahead of the Eid, said BDR officials.

#### PM asks

FROM PAGE 1 We and you together have advanced the country a long way. We will have to go further." she told the secretaries. adding that if the trend of this development continues, the country will make strides towards achieving self-reliance

by next two or three years She thanked them for their close involvement as top-level officials in deciding government policies, formulating and implementing programmes.

After the meeting that lasted about one and a half hours from 1:45pm, Cabinet Secretary Abu Solaiman Chowdhury briefed newsmen about the outcome of the consultation.

Asked about election preparation of the administration, he said the Election Commission would conduct the election and they, as the executive, extend whatever cooperation needed. About preparation for installation of

the caretaker government, he said they would issue invitation for taking oath and it would be decided after fixing the date of swearing-in of the pre-election interim government.

Replying to another question, he "Power transfer to caretaker said: government may take place after Eid vacation."

About today's (Monday) office schedule, the cabinet secretary said offices would remain open and probably there may be optional holiday.

The finance ministry sources said only the fund for land acquisition had been approved by the ministry and all the rest are unapproved

Unfit buses, launches

FROM PAGE 16 Around 250 to 280 launches including a large number of unfit ones depart from Sadarghat with passengers beyond their capacity. Usually, only 150 to 160 large and small launches ply on different routes from Dhaka.

The Department of Shipping has recently sent notices to the owners of the 63 launches to upgrade their launches' lower level but most of the owners failed to comply.

The launches which received the notice are MV Saikat-8. 14 and 15. MV Patarhat-3 and 5. MV Tarika-1 and 7 MV Parabat-1 and 6, MV Dipraj-2 and 4, MV Rajhonsha-1 and 6, MV Asha-Joya, MV Prince of Barisal, MV Silvar Sun MV Achal-6 MV Sandin-1 MV Sundarban-6, MV Mitali-2 and 6, MV Tipu-1, MV New Sun, MV Red Sun-2, MV Naugan Express, MV Kali, MV Kamaphuli-1 and 3. MV Himalava, MV Sabbir-3 and 4, MV Prince of Awalad-4, MV Reaz-2, MV Balia-1 and 2, MV Manshi-2 and 3, MV Pubali, MV Green Tower-3, MV King Samrat, MV Mahanagari, MV Rajdhani, MV Nabik, MV Bogdadia-6, MV Miraj, MV Manik-5 and 6, MV Putul Express, MV Sonar Tari-1, MV Saikat-15, MV Shariatpur-3, MV Sampad, MV Agradut Plus, MV Shanta Express, MV Pankaj-4, MV Takawaya, MV Jaltaranga, MV Sadia MV Jharna, MV Emdad and MV Sureshar-1.

According to a survey conducted by officials of the Department of Shipping, 210 out of 312 launches plying on different routes in Dhaka region are unfit. The survey revealed that the designs of these vessels do not comply with the requisite standard. An inquiry committee recently examined 123 launches and found 25 of them unfit and 22 almost unfit (category C).

"Accidents may occur at any time if the weather becomes rough during a journey," said Kamrul Islam, manager of a launch named Sreenagar that operates on Dhaka-Bhola route.

Shipping department Director General AKM Shafiqullah said three teams of officials from Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA), the Department of Shipping and the shipping ministry are working to investigate the allegations and a number of cases have already been filed against the companies putting unfit vessels into service

Anumber of launches having faulty designs received registrations, route permits and fitness certificates by socalled 'managing' a section of officials of the Ship Surveyor and Registrar's Office, workers at the terminal said. "According to existing inland

#### navigation rules, the BIWTA approves the design of the launches. The Department of Shipping is responsible for checking whether the launches are

blasts, the IO added.

built as per the designs prior to the issuance of route permits," said A Shahidul Islam Chowdhury, chairman of the BIWTA.

He also said all-out measures have been taken to avert any accidents and magistrates, law enforcers and ministry officials are actively overseeing aunch operations both at the termi nals and on the river routes. Referring to the findings of investi-

ons into a few launch accidents, BIWTA officials said most of the mishaps had occurred because of overoading and the vessels being unfit for operations

by the director general of the shipping department is going at a snail's pace encouraging a section of launch owners to operate their unfit vessels taking advantage of the lack of monitoring, sources said.

accidents occurred over the past five years leaving 1,758 people dead. But sources said the death toll is much hiaher.

the DPRK (North Korea) and the US represents the most serious and fiercest confrontation between the progressive and the reactionary, between peace forces and aggression forces,' said ruling party newspaper Rodong Sinmun.

tained a hard line on Sunday.

"The US imperialists are desperately trying to ignite a new war on the Korean peninsula, having designated the DPRK as a major target of attack," it said in a commentary warning other nations against compromise with Washington

"A way for a country and nation to defend its destiny is to respond to the US use of force with force and with merciless punishment," it advised.

#### Prisons

#### FROM PAGE 16

authorities to explain why collection of such funds should not be declared illegal.

Responding to another writ petition filed by Senior Superintendent SA Amit, the HC issued a rule against the jail authorities for a transfer order allegedly issued as a punishment to Amit.

The jail authorities had transferred Amit from Kashimpur jail to Sunamganj jail lowering his rank to superintendent and filling his post at Kashimpur with a junior official.

Sources said the transfer order came as a punishment to Amit, who along with 44 jail staff earlier filed a writ petition against the 2006 jail recruitment rules.

The HC bench stayed the transfer order and asked the jail authorities to explain in two weeks why the order should not be declared illegal. According to jail sources, a few more officials are also going to file writ petitions soon against some similar "illegal" transfers.

The jail authorities lately transferred some of its officials, including four head assistants, violating the rules

Sources said some jail officials are preparing to file writ petitions against the authorities for giving "immense power" to some guards by sending them to different jails without mentioning their job description

These guards are allegedly misusing the authority, bossing even on their superior officials.

"The present stand-off between minister said. The left leaning 11-party coalition at a meeting yesterday discussed legal aspects regarding appointment of the chief adviser other than Justice Hasan, whose possible appointment as the chief of the interim government, in accordance with the constitution. the opposition coalition has been opposing vehemently terming him a BNP partisan

The meeting also observed that the 14-party opposition coalition should meet the president on the same grounds.

"We will urge the president to resolve the crisis if the present government does not carry out the reforms," AL Joint General Secretary Obaidul Quader told The Daily Star yesterday replying to a query.

If Hasan refuses to take oath as the chief of the caretaker government and if the president takes time to form the caretaker government, the possibility of street violence will increase as both the parties are preparing to establish their supremacy on the streets, particularly in the capital.

The AL-led opposition coalition launched a fresh spell of agitation programmes yesterday opposing

## Rejoinder, our reply

FROM PAGE 1

amended in December 1995. It was given the licence as per the existing terms and condition of the mines and mineral rules. "So the question of unsolicited dealing is not correct," it added.

On being involved in making the Barapukuria coal mine project Supplier's credit deal, Hosaf said it was done by the government and it did not have any role as a local agent.

The rejoinder pointed out that Hosaf consortium completed 14 boreholes at Khalashpir, not just three, as mentioned in the report.

It contradicted with the costs of the Barapukuria mine and the power plant as mentioned in The Daily Star report and said the mine's contract price "still stands" at \$194 million and the power plant's \$220 million. **OUR REPLY** 

An unsolicited deal is one that has no competition and transparency. There has been no tender for the Khalashpir exploration licence and nobody knows how Hosaf got the deal. The rejoinder did not even try to argue how its deal is not unsolicited. This deal grossly violates the Public Procurement Regulation (PPR), 2003 by being an unsolicited one.

This rejoinder denies Hosaf's role in the Barapukuria Supplier's Credit deal. But Hosaf's September 30

to that end while the 14-party opposition coalition is preparing for a massive showdown on the streets to protest against the possible handover of power to Justice KM Hasan-led care-

ker government, sources said. Contacted by The Daily Star esterday some senior police officials however said they will not go for any action to foil any political agitation unless they find any unruly activity

FROM PAGE 1 been deployed at Justice Hasan's Dhanmondi residence, signifying that he is the man to take up the job. The deployed force includes

uniformed and plainclothes men, keeping a strong watch on the movement of Justice Hasan, his house and its surroundings

Hasan

Daily Star on the Barapukuria mine said when the World Bank and the ADB turned down financing of the Barapukuria mining project, "Hosaf requested CMC and its consortium to finance this project." We responded saying that it was the job of the Economic Relations Division (ERD) to knock the doors of donors for a project's finance. By its own admission in

that rejoinder, Hosaf claimed to have 'found' Bangladesh the supplier's credit. Then how can Hosaf now deny its involvement in the deal.

rejoinder on another report by The

While we stand corrected about 14 boreholes instead of three, the main question remains unanswered. The Daily Star wrote that Asia Energy had drilled 108 holes before coming to the conclusion that the Phulbari zone has 572 million tonnes of recoverable coal In contrast, Hosaf made just 14 holes to come to its conclusion about the Khalashpir reserve and submitted a

easibility report. The costs mentioned by Hosaf are old and simply travesty of truth. Both the Barapukuria mine and power deals were given "add on deals" in different times and the figures mentioned in The Daily Star are official. We stand by our report.

6th wage board FROM PAGE 16 to the information ministry much earlier but the award has not been announced due to the dilly-dallying attitude of the ministry, the parishad leaders said.

The salaries of government formed in July 2005.

The members of the newspaper industry have long been facing utmost difficulties in leading their dayto-day life due to the price hike of

essentials, they said. Signatories to the statement are co-conveners of the SSKOP Mozammel Haq, Manzurul Ahsan Bulbul and Fazle Imam, Member Secretary Ruhul Amin Gazi, join member secretaries Abdul Jalil Bhuiyan and Motiur Rahman Talukder, members Altaf Mahmud. Elahi Newaj Khan, Sardar Farid and Omar Faruque, Abul Hashem and Khairul Islam.

officials and employees were raised much earlier, they said, adding, "But it is a matter of great regret that the government has not yet announced the 6th wage board award which was

Official records showed that 61

The work of the probe body formed