

The World On Time

current fiscal year and held the

'corrupt tax department' re-sponsible for this. "The com-

mon people pay VAT, but only a

portion of the money goes to the public exchequer," he said.

Citing statistics, the JP leg-

islator told the House that the

country's annual development

programme suffered due to the

About the proposed en-hancement of defence budget,

the JP lawmaker said that it

was contrary to what the gov-

ernment had said earlier. "The

government repeatedly told the nation that signing of the CHT accord would help reduce the de-

deliberation included Treasury

sain Daru, Anisul Huq Chowd-

hury, S M Shahin Monwara

PDB offices

attacked in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent

Hundreds of residents including

football fans demonstrated at

different places of the city, put

up barricades on roads and

damaged vehicles last night

protesting loadshedding, police

mobs also attacked power sub-

stations at Kalurghat

Sholoshahar and Newmooring,

pelting stones and damaging

tions at Jalalabad and Sher-

shah colony areas and put up a

barricade on the Chittagong-

Hathazari road at 11 pm last

night, halting traffic move-

and removed the barricade.

330 MW. PDB sources said.

Later, police chased the mob

Loadshedding in Chittagong

was around 200 MW last night

against the requirement of over

Tribal extremists

damage vehicles

in Khagrachhari

group of tribal extremists at-

tacked a tempo here today,

damaging the vehicle and injur-

ing two of its passengers, re-

with lethal weapons, attacked

the Khagrachhari-bound tempo

in Swanirbhar area, four-km

Mohsin Bhuiyan, 30, and Abul

Hossain, 30, were admitted to

construction workers. Three of

them, however, managed to es-

tremists also damaged

medicine van at the same spot

BJMB toll

From Page 1

toll rate through an announce-

ment in parliament or through

the issue of toll would be re-

solved by July 15, Rabbi said it

would be better if the toll issue

was resolved before the opening

sentatives of transport sector

including two Treasury Bench

lawmakers, had issued state-

ment declaring withdrawal of

the transport strike, movement

of vehicles did not resume,

causing immense suffering to

He said though some repre-

Quoting a press report that

Police said the tribal ex-

The injured identified as

The tempo was carrying five

from the town, at about 8 pm.

the sadar hospital.

cape the attack.

at about 7:45 pm.

the electronic media.

of the bridge today.

ports UNB.

KHAGRACHHARI, June 22: A

Police said the group, armed

Mobs also staged demonstra-

Police and PDB sources said

and witnesses said.

cranes and pick-ups.

CHITTAGONG, June 22:

Hug and Mukhlesur Rahman.

bench members Shakhwat Hos-

Others who took part in the

revenue shortfall.

fence budget," he said.

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From Page 1

garded as among the favourites.

were ousted in the opening round of the 1994 World Cup af-

ter an own goal by Anchres Esco-bar led to a 2-1 upset loss to the

United States. When he returned

home, Escobar was shot dead in

a parking lot outside at bar at

at Lyon, things looked shaky again for the South Americans.

After a 1-0 loss to Romania

With Faustino Asprilla no

longer on the squad having been dropped for criticizing

coach Herman Dario Gomez in

a radio interview, the Colom-

bian attack was missing one of

its biggest stars as it main-tained its bid to make the sec-

Medellin.

ond round.

The Colombians, then re-



PHILIPS

JS discussion on budget continues

By Staff Correspondent

The ruling Awami League MPs yesterday hailed the 'propeople' national budget for 1998-99 placed in the Jatiya Sangsad by the finance minister recently.

Jatiya Party lawmakers criticised the minister "for his failure" to give a sense direction to raise per capita income of the

The legislators were taking part in the general discussion on the proposed budget in parliament.

Begum Dilara Harun of the ruling party said the proposed budget "reflected the hopes and aspirations of the common people." She particularly appreciated that "the budget did not cause price hike of essential commodities" and proposed increased allocation for the agriculture sector.

Ali Ashraf of the AL, who is also chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on finance ministry, said that the finance minister had 'tried to address problems of all sectors of our national economy". He thanked the government

for 'going ahead' with economic reforms. In this connection, he criticised the finance minister of the past BNP government for what he said talking about economic reforms without doing those. G M Kader of Jatiya Party

criticised the government for the 'revenue shortfall" in the

10 hurt as BCL factions clash at Sylhet

From Staff Correspondent SYLHET, June 22: At least 10 people sustained injuries including one with critical wounds in an armed clash between rival factions of Bangladesh Chhatra League in Shibganj area of the town this afternoon. Among the injured condi-

tion of Naimul Hossain Belal elder brother of Jakir Ahmed, former joint convenor of district BCL, is stated to be critical, physicians at the Sylhet M.A.G. Osmani Medical College Hospital informed. The clash took place as a se-

quel to an incident that occurred in Shibganj area yesterday, when rival student leaders had an exchange of hot words over parking trucks in front of a cement shop owned by Jakir

Today's incident took place after filing of a case with the Kotwali thana against 2 BCL activists. Both the groups traded gunshots. A tense situation has been prevailing in the

Water supply in some city areas disrupted

Water supply in West Rampura, Wapda Road, Bagichartek, part of DIT Road, and some adjoining areas is being seriously disrupted since Sunday evening due to the damage to the strainer of a deep tubewell, reports UNB. Following the trouble in the

deep tubewell of the city water pump at West Rampura road, sands and stones are coming with water, said a press release of Dhaka WASA last night. It said alternative measures

have been taken to establish a one cusec-power pump on urgent basis.

Emergency supply of water in the area will continue until restoration of normal supply, the release added.

BJMB to have a significant role in regional communication network: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said that the Jamuna Bangabandhu Bridge would not only help develop country's communication network and enhance the national economy, but also make positive contributions to the progress and prosperity of the SAARC region as a whole, reports BSS.

Referring to the proposed Asian Highways and the Trans-Asian railway system, the Prime Minister said the bridge would have a potential and significant role in regional and global communication net-

Sheikh Hasina was exchanging views with foreign journalists who are now in the capital to cover the historic inauguration of the Jamuna Bangabandhu Multipurpose Bridge. Some 30 renowned journal-

ists, including editors from Japan, Korea, India, Pakistan, Bhutan and Nepal have come to Bangladesh to witness the historic ceremony and cover the

Replying to a volley of questions on the recent nuclear tests by India and Pakistan, the Prime Minister observed that any problem or issue between neighbours should be solved through bilateral discussions and negotiations. About her recent visit to In-

dia, the Prime Minister said she had talks with her Indian counterpart on wide-ranging bilateral issues. "We have also discussed some regional issues. she added. She also said that she would

discuss with the Pakistan Prime Minister bilateral and regional issues during her forthcoming visit to Pakistan. About BNP's criticism of the CHT peace accord, the Prime Minister said it was their nega-

tive attitude and she believed that the sovereignty of the country in no way was affected because of the peace accord. About BNP's parliament boycott, she said it is their culture — they started boycotting the House within half an hour

of the beginning of the first session of the present parliament. In reply to a question whether any negative effect would be made on her proposed Pakistan visit because of her government's demand for an apology for the war crimes, she said, "We can forgive, but we can't forget."

Bus dacoit

From Page 1

unidentified man dead at about

The body was sent to DMCH morgue for autopsy. A case was filed with Demra thana in connection with the attempted dacoity while Demra police were preparing to register another case in connection with the killing of the alleged dacoit.

Highlights From Page 1

the European Union countries, and also lifting of ban by the EU countries leading to resumption of shrimp export. 4) Introduction of direct elec-

tion of female candidates to the

Union Parishad. 5) Establishment of an Employment Bank providing easy

access to loans for the poor and unemployed youths. 6) Introduction of old age al-

lowance for the poor elderly cit-7) Housing funds for slum dwellers and distressed fami-

8) Projects for rehabilitation of people rendered homeless by river erosion and natural

calamities. 9) Initiation of economic diplomacy aiming at increasing export, foreign investment and building image of the nation

abroad. 10) Construction of bridge over Korotoa and initiative to construct more bridges over the rivers Padma, Bhairab, Paksey

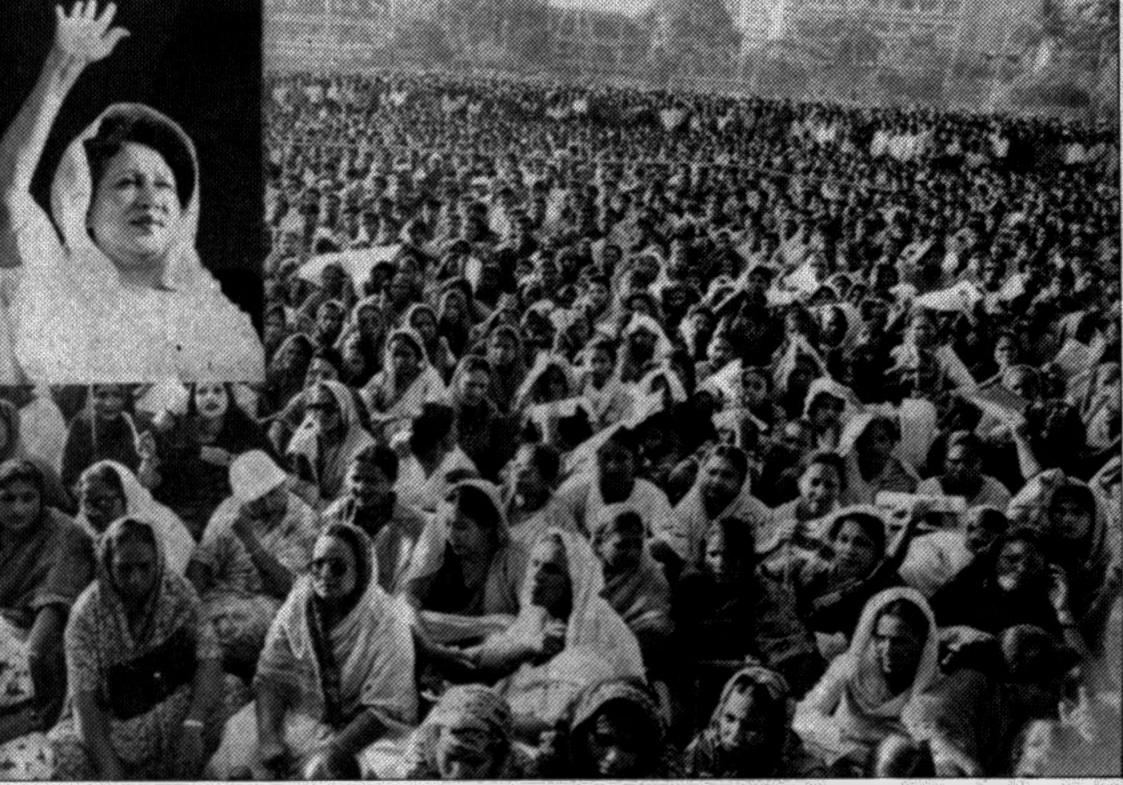
and Rupsa 11) Introduction of Gram Parishad. 12) Introduction of Prime

Minister's question hour in Parliament to make the country's chief executive accountable to the people. 13) Programmes to uphold

the spirit of Liberation War, establishment of Independence Monument at Suhrawardy Udyan, Bangabandhu Smriti Jadhughar and Intellectual Martyrs Monument at Rayer-

14) Formation of a permanent Law Reforms Commission to change the judicial system suiting to the needs of time. 15) Initiative to set up rural courts.

16) Indemnity Ordinance repealed and self-confessed killers of Bangabandhu brought to trial in 1996 after 21 years of the gruesome killings.



BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia waving at the people at the huge public meeting held at Paltan Maidan in the city yesterday. -Star photo

Khaleda: Quit power

From Page 1

sion, the BNP chief claimed that 200 of her party workers were killed while thousands of others were harassed in different ways including sending to jails after this government came to power. The former prime minister

said it was her government that laid the foundation of Jamuna Bridge after mobilising necessary funds and completed most of its construction work. She ridiculed the present government for claiming credit for the bridge. "The AL had called hartal on

bridge was laid," she said. On prices of essentials she said people have to buy rice at Tk 22 a kg, salt at Tk 70 and pulses at Tk 50 a kg now.

the day the foundation of the

On law and order situation she said. AL terrorists are now committing dacoity in the guise of policemen."

The opposition leader criticised the government for its claim that the four-point agreement with BNP was implemented. "Not a single point has yet been implemented. Turning to the CHT accord

Begum Zia said, her party will compel the government to scrap it through agitation. Commenting on the prime

minister's recent visit of India in her bid to defuse the tension after the nuclear tests by India and Pakistan, Begum Zia said, "But the envoy of peace did not utter a single word when India conducted the tests. She kept mum while all the countries, even a country like Nepal protested. The so-called peace move aimed at converting Bangladesh into a vassal state.

Chaired by city BNP chief Sadek Hossain Khoka, MP, the public meeting was also addressed by 22 leaders of the party and its front organisations. The speakers included BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, MP, Standing Committee members Dr Khandakar Mosharraf Hos-

sain, MP, Moudud Ahmed, K M Obaidur Rahman, MP, and central leaders Mir Shawqat Ali, Tariqui Islam, Shahjahan Siraj, Abdullah Al Noman, RCC Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu, Col. (Retd) Akbar Hossain, MP Fazlur Rahman, MP, Khurshid Jahan Haq, MP, Amanullah Aman, MP, Abul Hasnat, Mirza Abbas, Salahuddin Ahmed and Goyeshwar Roy.

During the meeting, a large portrait of the prime minister was burnt. The rally over, a procession

was brought out. The BNP chief led the procession that marched up to Shahbagh crossing amid police guard.

New 500 taka note from Bangladesh Bank will issue

new 500 taka note from July 8, reports UNB. The newly designed notes

will be launched primarily from the Bank's Motifheel office and later issued from other offices of the bank in time, said a Bangladesh Bank notification yesterday. The size of the new notes will

be as those in circulation with the picture of National Mausoleum on the front side and the Supreme Court Bhaban on the The new notes will be in cir-

culation simultaneously with the existing 500 Taka notes as valid currency. KNM engr held

From Page 1 according to the FIR filed on

Sunday afternoon. The alleged rapist has been

placed on police remand for three days for interrogation. Till the time of writing this report last night, the victim now undergoing treatment at a clinic could not be medically examined due to deteriorating health condition.

Tk 3.75 lakh in city Armed muggers snatched Tk

3.75 lakh from a salesman of Keya Cosmetic Ltd at Shymoli in the city yesterday, reports Witnesses said the muggers, who were in a car, intercepted

his assistant when they were going to deposit money to a bank at Shymoli. The terrorists fired gunshot

Rafiq sustained bullet wounds in his left hand. He was rushed to Dhaka Medical Col-

lege Hospital. Khulna Ward Commissioner

attacked under police escort

van carrying KCC Ward Commissioner Taslimuddin Babul came under bomb attack near Sangeeta cinema hall at about noon today. Babul, 40, also a leader of

city AL, was returning home under police escort after appearing at the court of the District Judge for deposition as one of the witnesses of the murder case of his elderbrother Moslemuddin.

Babul, however, escaped unhurt along with his associates and policemen engaged for his security.

pected that Ward Commissioner Ershad Ali Sikdar, the principal accused in Moslem murder case, was behind the attack.

Ward Commissioner Ershad Sikdar, 52, who joined Awami League from BNP last year, is facing 21 criminal cases including four murders.

Muggers snatch

Khandakar Rafiq Hassan and at them and took away the

From Staff Correspondent KHULNA, June 22: A police

When contacted, Babul sus-

But Adolfo Valentia almost gave the South Americans the lead in the opening when he col-lected a slick pass from Fredd'y Rincon, only for a back-track-

ing Tunisian to block his 16meter drive. At the other end, Skander Souayah moved into a wide open shooting position outside the Colombian penalty area but

shot tamely wide. Souaveh had another chance in the 18th minute from a simi-

lar position but still shot wide of the post. The Colombians were denied the lead by a wonder save from Chokri el-Oauer in the 22nd

minute when Jose Santa floated over a cross from the left and Wilmer Cabrera moved up to power in a long-range header. The Tunisian 'keeper reacted with an acrobatic one-handed punch over the bar. Four minutes later the keeper raced off his line to

block an angled shot from Anthony De Avila with his foot after the Colombian had broken clear of the Tunisian defense. With the Colombians show-

ing signs of getting on top, Tunisia broke out to almost take the lead in the 29th minute when the unmarked Mehdi Ben Slimane was allowed a far post header. Fortunately for the South Americans, 'keeper Farid Mondragon was alert and

AJM workers clash: 3 hurt NARAYANGANJ. June 22:

Three persons were injured in a clash between two rival groups of Adamiee Jute Mills workers at Godnile under Siddhirgani thana this morning, reports BSS. Of the three, Saidur Rah-

man, 21, and Zakir Hossain, 22, received bullet wounds while Ripon, 23, sustained injuries from cocktail blast, according to police sources. Several gunshots were fired

and cocktails exploded during the clash that occurred over the conflict in leadership.

Gold worth Tk 35cr seized at ZIA in 2 years The authorities have seized

719,301.07 grams of smuggled gold at the Zia International Airport from June 1996 to April 1998 period, reports UNB.

Disclosing this in Parliament yesterday, Finance Minister SAMS Kibria said the value of the seized gold is over Tk 34.68 crore. While replying to a question,

he said during the period 12 people were arrested for their involvement in smuggling.

WC: Colombia's hope pushed the header onto the post. Valencia maintained the pressure by firing a 25-meter

shot just too high and then heading against the post from a But Tunisia also hit the bar two minutes before halftime when Mondragon fisted away a corner, the ball hit Bouazizi on

the back of the head and rebounded onto the frame. The Tunisians went close to taking the lead 10 minutes into the second half when Souayah fed Ben Slimane in front of goal but Mondragon managed to

block his shot with his legs. Ben Slimane wriggled through the Colombian defense again two minutes later but Modragon and a defender man-aged to scramble the ball for a

corner. The Tunisians continued to create the better chances and Bel Slimane managed to get in a right-wing cross despite being crowded out by three Colombian defenders in the 66th minute only for the unmarked Zoubeir

Baya to volley wide from a good

position in front of goal. The Colombians hit back with a low shot from substitute Prediado that flashed across the face of the Tunisian goal Then Victor Aristizabal arrived unmarked at the far post to nneet a right wing cross from Authory De Avila only for 'keeper El-Oauer to scramble back and palm his looping header away.

At the other end, Mondragon macle two reflex-action saves, blocking a header from Souayah and then a follow up effort from 13en Slimane.

Gas pipeline From Page 1

faintest chance. If there was no such bloomer, the authorities would probably have used a hurriedly-built 3-inch line from Elenga to the eastern bank of the river to give credence to her commitment.

But 'lack: of commitment and professionalism' among officials who handled the whole thing has spoiled a unique opportunity for the nation to celebrate. The bridge, the railway, the

electricity inter-connector and the gas pipeline together would have given the ciream event that is taking place today a much higher status. Everything else is ready except for the gas line.

On June 11 morning, the 30inch pipeline beneath the bridge collapsed due to what sources said "serious technical faults". Petrobangla insiders said there was no monitoring and that the contract was awarded to "a company which does not have a pipeline background".

"The pipeline collapsed," according to a Petrobangla expert, "because the support mechanism was inadequate. There were not enough clamps for the pipeline to cling on to the bridge structure. A local company supplied these stuff, which did not go through any quality control

A high-level committee gave the job to bridge contractor Hyundai at a high price — nine kilometres for 8 million US dollars, while the 58-kilometre Ashuganj-Bakhrabad pipeline, a project completed in May last year, cost 35 million dollars.

Some Tk 20 crore saving from the A-B project was diverted to the construction of the 9-kilometre pipeline, originally proposed to be a 6-kilometre one. It was stretched by two kilometres on each bank of the river. (See Page-8)

people of the northern districts. Bangabandhu Bridge

From Page 1 nearly four years of hard work by more than 10,000 people from home and abroad and Tk 3,700 crore that came from the Bangladesh government. Japanese government, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank.

of thousands of people involved in the meticulous process of building the world's eleventh largest bridge using a state-ofthe-art technique in offshore hydraulic engineering made the dream come true for Bangladesh.

The colourful opening ceremony is expected to cost around three crore taka. The main opening function will be held on the western side

of the bridge at Saidabad in

Sadar thana of Sirajganj. The

Prime Minister and the invited

guests are expected to arrive at the venue from the eastern side of the bridge at Bhuapur. Sheikh Hasina will address a public meeting after the inauguration. Later she will inaugurate railway communication over the bridge which is presently extended up to Bangabandhu East Station, some 150 yards from the bridge. The Prime Minister will cross the river from the Sirajganj end on the train along with some selected guests.

Six pandals, one for the Sincere and dedicated efforts Prime Minister's rally, two for guests and three for journalists. have been erected on the westthe bridge and its approach roads.

ern side of the bridge. More than seven thousand posters with photographs of Bangabandhu, Maulana Bhashani, Sheikh Hasina, four national leaders killed in the Dhaka Central Jail and some prominent thinkers and philosophers have been printed to decorate

A massive security ar-

rangement has been under-

taken for the opening cere-

mony. A total of 5,000 security

personnel will be deployed in

With the opening of the bridge, travel time to the northern districts will be reduced by two to three hours.

and around the venue.

nomic development Asked about her feelings on stepping into the third year of her office coinciding with the opening of the historic Bangabandhu Bridge, Hasina said "Today, I must express my gratitude to Almighty Allah for enabling me to fulfill the dream of

the Father of the Nation." "It's really difficult to perceive the miracle of Allah. The task that the Father of the Nation had started, being her daughter. today I'm going to complete it.

The Prime Minister also pointed to a dramatic coincidence of the three major events, saying "We formed the government on this day two years ago, Awami League was formed on this day in 1949 at Dhaka's Rose Garden, and it is on this day. I am going to open the

(Bangabandhu) bridge. She recalled the initiative taken by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to construct the bridge over the river Jamuna, which was an election pledge of 1970. A Japanese team came in 1973 for survey and submitted its report.

She said in the 1991 Awami League election manifesto, the issue of Jamuna Bridge was one of the main agenda. "Specially during my government, the provision of rail and gas links were incorporated and steps taken to mobilise the fund." - Asked how far she has been

Hasina said: "I want to leave this to the judgement of the "Our country is plagued with so many problems that it's hard to cope with all these. But what I can say is that I have made tireless efforts in last two years. I have identified some problems and tried to resolve those. Still

many problems need to be ad-

dressed and for that we will

successful as the Prime Minis-

ter in resolving the pressing

problems of the country.

resolved the long-standing problem by signing the Ganges water sharing treaty and settled the delicate problem in the Chittagong Hill Tracts through the peace accord and restored

peace there. In last two years, progress was made in the industrial sector, literacy rate increased to 51 per cent from 47 per cent and steps were taken for infrastruc-

ture development. Besides, special emphasis was given to micro-credit programme, Employment Bank set up to help the educated unemployed people and Old-Age Allowance introduced to assist the hapless people in society. "This will obviously contribute to rural economy

Responding to a question about the main thrust of her government in the third year, the Prime Minister said: "Economic development will be my government's main focus in the third year - how to increase production, speed up industrialisation and attain economic self-reliance." She said: "We know what is

position and after coming to power, we felt that the image of Bangladesh should be projected in a correct perspective in the outside world to attract foreign investment." "In the first year, we undertook extensive tours to foreign countries, talked to foreign in-

our problem. While in the op-

nitaries to Bangladesh." Hasina said: "It's our major success that we have been able to enhance the image of Bangladesh as compared to the past and created a congenial climate for foreign investment in Bangladesh." . In these two years, Hasina

said:"We've prepared all the

ground works for foreign in-

vestment in a good democratic

environment to advance the

vestors and invited foreign dig-

At least, we didn't try to sidetrack the problems like my predecessors who tried to hide all the problems under the carpet and enjoy power and make fortune. We tried to face the problem and worked hard for their solutions.

On the economic situation, the Prime Minister said. "Bangladesh's economy is now in a most stable condition despite economic turmoil in East Asian countries. Even Japan stumbled."

"Because of our very cautious steps, we could withstand the storm," she added. On the increasing rate of inflation, the Prime Minister said

with increased economic activi-

ties, GDP grows and inflation

On the burning issue of

also goes up.

power crisis in the country, she mentioned several factors for the present situation. These are, she said, lack of experienced people, indifference of the past BNP government. misuse and pilferage of

electricity and ill motive by her

political adversaries. The Prime Minister said the previous government did not take care to generate more power, nor did they overhaul the electricity lines. The dilapidated power distribution centres were also not renovated during their regime.

"But after assuming power,

we took necessary steps on

emergency basis — we prepared papers and policy guidelines and enacted laws to generate power in the private sector," she said. Besides, she said, the donors who suspended their aid to the power sector during the BNP

government has now agreed to

release the fund following her

government's discussion with

them. Hasina said while giving contracts to the private sector. See Page 10 Col 1

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Editor: Mahfuz Anam

PM: I'll not cling to power country towards a sound econ-From Page 1 have to work." Hasina said, the government