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Delhi to free 148 Pak fishermen ahead of tomorrow's talks

NEW DELHI, Nov 2: In a bid to create a congenial atmosphere for the Indo-Pak talks beginning here on Thursday, New Delhi today announced that it was releasing all 148 Pakistani fishermen languishing in Indian jails, reports BSS.
"We feel that innocent fish-

ermen should not remain in jail, an External Affairs Ministry spokesman said here to-

The spokesman said New Delhi had already informed Pakistan of its decision to release the Pakistani fishermen. AP adds: Negotiations that

begin here this week on trade, terrorism, drug trafficking and other issues will be a tough test of India's contention that it doesn't need to talk about Kashmir to improve relations with uneasy neighbour Pak-

Pakistan made a concession when it agreed to the New Delhi talks, but now insists they're merely a sideshow to negotiations on the Kashmir territorial dispute that has fueled two

Delay promotions From Page 1

With all the cadres having their specialised service-related administrative ministries, the particular type of cadre officers should run the respective administration, they argued.

According to the BCSCS leaders, the administration cadres should not have anything to do with controlling the ministry of establishment, "as the work they have been practically doing is magistracy and collection of the land revenue"

However, the parliamentary body headed by Awami League MP Khandaker Asaduzzaman, gave a patient hearing to the BCSCS leaders. A member of the parliamentary committee told The Daily Star that they had so far given hearing to most of the 29 cadre associations, including the one representing the

"Once the hearing is completed, we would prepare a set of recommendations for the government. We would try to devise some ways of resolving the in-

administration cadre.

hammad Abu Hena and Shah Mohammad Abul Hossain were present at the meeting, which was chaired by Asaduzzaman.

Pakistan's top foreign office bureaucrat and his Indian counterpart discussed Kashmir in the Pakistani capital last month, but their consultations

to meet again in February. Pakistani foreign ministry spokesman Tariq Altaf told The Associated Press on Monday he expected no breakthroughs in New Delhi, saying there could be no increased cooperation until the "core Kashmir problem" is solved.

yielded little more than pledges

From Page 1
They were accused of undermining the bureaucracy with remarks attributed to them at a cabinet meeting. They reportedly held the "sluggish bureaucracy" for "slowing" implementation of government decisions.

Akramuzzaman, secretary general of BASA, in a letter on October 4 had asked them to explain their reported comments within seven days. Akramuzzaman was joint-secretary of establishment division at that time. He was recently transferred as Managing Director of the Muktijoddha Kalyan Trust.

The transfer was seen by some as a punitive action. Others said it was a prized posting.

The issue of four senior secretaries stirred a debate at an extended meeting of BASA on Oct 21which decided to take it up vesterday.

But it remained unresolved at the meeting vesterday. The meeting was chaired by

Abdul Muyeed Choudhury, Chairman of NBR and a vicepresident of BASA. He chaired the meeting in absence of BASA President Kazi Shamsul Alam who is out of the country now.

Meeting sources said Muyeed Choudhury, a memebr of the erstwhile CSP cadre, tried to take the steam off the issue. All the four secretaries also belong to the former CSP cadre. Muyeed told the meeting that

they did not make any comment taunting any particular person or say anything that was attributed to anybody. The meeting ended without

any resolution of the issue. But there were comments by some members that they should have given a reply that could have taken the heat off the issue and resolve it, meeting sources said.

Among others R. A. M Minister, Mobarak Hossain, DC. Dhaka, Mizanur Rahman, ADC, Dhaka, Abul Kalam Azad, Ajmal Choudhury, Mosharraf Hossain and Abu Alam Khan Shahid spoke at the meeting.

From Our Correspondent NARAYANGANG, Nov 3: A light aircraft flying very low over the river Sitalakhya hit and killed a boatman near Kanchanbazar under Rupganj thana in the district at around

Nazrul Islam (25), who received multiple injuries in his neck, head, chest and hand, died of bleeding on way to a doc-tor at Kanchanbazar, Narayan-

Nazrul Islam, in control of a trawler, was hit by the propeller

Cessna-150 aircraft of the Flying Club and was on a training session for low flying, sources

to Narayangani General Hospital Morgue for autopsy.

Taslima asked to show up in court: Bail rejected

A magistrate yesterday rejected bail petition to Taslima Nasreen, an accused in a blasphemy case

The lawyer for the feminist hurt his religious feelings.

Taslima did not appear before the court. Magistrate Lokman Ahmed rejected the petition and asked her to appear in the court before January 5, the next date for hearing of the

resident of Keraniganj, filed a petition reviving a case he lodged against the writer accusing her of hurting his religious feelings in her publication, Selected Columns.

pearing for Taslima Nasreen said his client had come to know about the case from newspaper reports after her return to the country. She had been abroad since 1994.

Amartya Sen

"Amartya has by choice identified himself as an Indian and a Bengali who comes from Manikganj, his paternal ancestral home," Prof Sobhan said. Sen himself was, for a period, a student at St Gregory's and stayed at 14, Larmini Street in Wari, which he visits every time

Sen came to Dhaka he wanted to visit his Wari residence. "But velopment projects in unfortunately that house has changed hands and belongs to someone else," Rahman said appealing to the government to consider giving Sen the house where the world famous economist spent his childhood.

with Myanmar and hold talks on completing repatriation of

granted bail By SC Correspondent Former Whip of the Treasury

A Division Bench of the HC comprising Justice Md Sirajul Islam and Justice Bijan Kumar Das granted the bail for three weeks and directed the accusedpetitioner to surrender before the Court Magistrate. Feni by

From Page 1

Mukuli Begum is a chargesheeted accused in the case. It was alleged in the charge sheet that she instead the DB men to arrest Rubel who subsequently died in police custody.

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

this time.

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Flying Club Cessna-150 kills boatman

12.30 pm today.

ganj police said.

of the aircraft. He was a resident of Daspara of Palash thana in Narsingdi district. The killer place was a

Body of the victim was sent

By Court Correspondent

writer sought bail for her at the magistrate's court, Dhaka in a case filed against her by a citizen alleging that her writings

One Zainal Abedin Babul, a

Counsel Idrisur Rahman ap-

She could not appear before the court as certain groups of people staged demonstrations and issued threats against her. They would lynch her, he ar-

The magistrate rejected the petition.

From Page 1

he comes to Dhaka.

He said Sen's work represents a commitment to the people of Bangladesh, whom he supported in crucial ways during a critical phase of the Liberation struggle.

Md Anisur Rahman, in his paper entitled "Amartya Sen, Flood, Deprivation and Rabindranath" said that Sen's work on famines was his best as an economist. "This masterly investigation has exposed the nature and working of some of the cruellest processes of deprivation of man by man."

Rahman said that every time

Prof Yunus From Page 1

tion appeared to have originated from Greater Mymensingh, Greater Rangpur. Madaripur, Barisal and Natore. The concentrations coincide to a large extent with traditionally vulnerable zones during the lean period.

Others who presented papers were Carlo del Nino, M Abdullah and Sajjad Zohir during the first session of the seminar. The seminal observed a minute's silence in respect of the death anniversary of the four national leaders who were killed in the Dhaka Central Jail 23 years ago this day yesterday.

Windies

bandhu National Stadium will be day-night affairs.

From Page 1

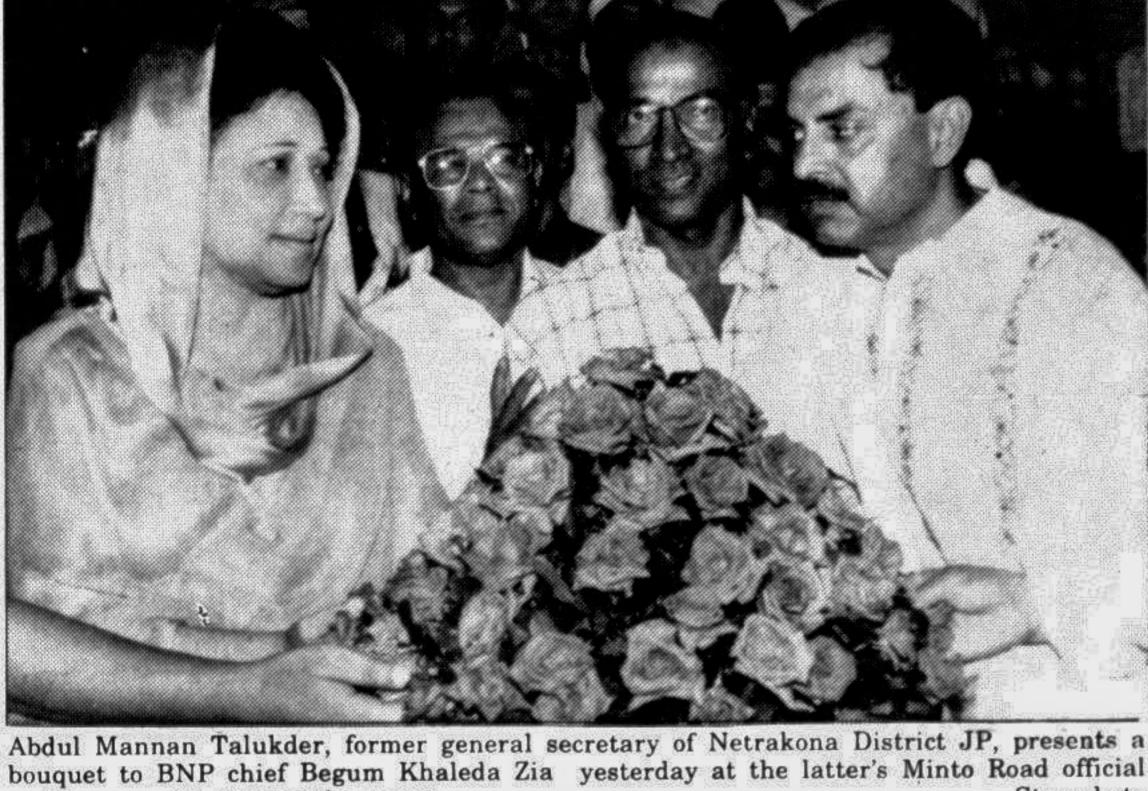
The Caribbean team with a blend of youth and experience will play the other limited-over match at the Rajshahi Stadium on November 9. The three-day match starts on November 12 at

The West Indies 'A' will leave the city for their month-long tour to India on November 15.

the Bangabandhu National

Stadium.

The squad: Ian Bishop (captain), Sherwin Campbell, Floyd Riefer, Keith Sample, Adrian Griffith, Wayne Philip, Courtney Brown (wicketkeeper). Carl Tuckett, Wavel Hinds, Pedro Collins, Neil McGarrel, Rawl Lewis and Reon King.



bouquet to BNP chief Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday at the latter's Minto Road official residence on his joining the party. - Star photo BNP meeting

Bumper production

Govt to buy 10000 MT of salt for buffer stock

The government will soon buy 10,000 tonnes of salt from the producers to build up a buffer stock, reports APB.

An official announcement said vesterday that the decision was taken to give price incentives to the farmers who garnered a bumper output of salt this year.

The suppliers will have to procure salt through tenders from the growers in Cox's Bazar. They will also have to submit certificates from the local BSCIC unit and Cox's Bazar Salt Producers' Association to ensure that the supplied salt has been purchased from the salt farmers of the coastal district. "There has been a bumper

areas of Cox's Bazar and Anwara in Chittagong this year." the government handout said. adding that a huge quantity of salt is still under processing in those areas. Country's total demand for edible and common-use salt is

production of salt in the coastal

8,34,000 tonnes. The production target this year was fixed at 8 lakh tonnes. But the output surpassed the target, said the The bumper harvest coupled with smuggled salt brought

down its prices at grower's level, reports from the area said re-In addition to the current stock, salt producers are being

engaged in developing saltbeds

for the next season which commences in the first week of December.

"Under this circumstances, the government has decided to purchase salt in order to encourage farmers to produce salt, although there is no deficit or short supply in the country. said the announcement. Meanwhile, Bangladesh

Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) has launched a massive awareness campaign to motivate some 35 thousand salt producers for producing white salt. "If the farmers can produce

white salt, Bangladesh will soon be a salt-exporting country," the government hopes.

50 people From Page 1

The official added: We are

keeping ourselves on alert to face any untoward events." Other law enforcing agencies are also keeping track on pro-

fessional killers and hard core

criminals across the country. "Normally, police maintain a list of professional killers and criminals. But on special occasions police keep track on their movement," said the police official.

Directives have been issued to all the police stations and field-level units across the country to keep on alert.

From Page 1 Awami League from Netrakona

district yesterday evening. District JP vice-president Abdul Mannan Talukdar and organising secretary Khairul Huq Khasru along with 500 activists and supporters expressed loyalty to the leadership of Be-

gum Khaleda Zia. BNP chairperson said the government's intention to turn the country by introducing undeclared one-party BKSAL system has to be resisted unitedly.

Describing various repressive measures to immobilise the opposition, Begum Zia warned that time is not far away when the ruling party leaders will face the wrath of the people.

The former Prime Minister said the government has totally failed to run the country. The economy has been shattered, food crisis now acute

power shortage crippled the mills and factories, foreign exchange reserves declined. The government is now hatching conspiracy to hand over gas resources to foreign companies. Begum Zia said. She referred to a recent report on deteriorating law and

people were killed and 78 women violated in October Begum Zia was critical of the government for its alleged failure in post-flood relief and rehabilitation of the distressed people. She also alleged misap-

propriation of relief goods and

order situation and said 138

Reports of death from hunger, malnutrition were coming in from the countryside. Hungry mothers were selling children and committing suicide, she added.

corruption.

30 more held in Karachi

KARACHI, Nov 3: Gunmen killed two people here today as police and paramilitary troops detained around 30 people in-cluding political activists in an ongoing crackdown on crimi-

nals, police said, reports AFP.
An unidentified man was shot dead in central Liaquatabad area and another was killed when assailants smashed his head with a hammer in the Eastern Lines area. they said.

A large quantity of arms was also seized during overnight raids at the hideouts of suspects in several neighbourhoods of violence-marred Karachi, police said. The 30 detained included

suspects involved in the murder of retired army colonel Bilal Ahmed who was shot dead by unidentified assailants on Monday, they added.

Around 50 angry women of Lines area, a thickly populated poor neighbourhood, staged a protest against the 'highhandedness' of paramilitary troops

Hasına

From Page 1

position's street agitation. It was predicted that the recent deluge would claim some two crore lives, she said. "Insha Allah, the prediction did not come true. Only 1018 people died."

She also gave a brief account of the on-going relief and rehabilitation activities for flood victims and the government's

Regarding price-hike of some essentials, she said her government reduced import duty whenever price of an item went up. She also alleged that BNP had a hand in such abnormal price-rise. The PM blamed the party for

obstructing the post-flood re-

habilitation programmes

through hartals and sought

people's co-operation in this re-

With Sheikh Hasina in the chair, the meeting was also addressed by Awami League leaders Syeda Zohra Taajuddin, LGRD minister Zillur Rahman. Forest and Environment Minister Syeda Sajeda Choudhury, Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak, Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed, Amir Hossain Amu, Telecommunications Minister Mohammad Nasim, Abdul Jalil, DCC Mayor Mohammad Hanif, State Minister for Information Prof. Abu Saveed and State Minister for LGRD Mofazzal Hossain Choudhury

Tight security measures were taken at Paltan Maidan and its surrounding areas during the public meeting.

2 gunned down, huge arms recovered and police during search opera-

A women Sakina Bibi said her son was badly beaten up. "We need peace but not armoured vehicles and harassment by the policemen," another woman in the area said. Officials said security forces

arrested 'terrorists' and criminals accused of involvement in murders, car-thefts and extor-Armed with a list of 800 suspects, they have detained scores of people since Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif dissolved the government in Sindh last week

and vowed to stem lawlessness, eradicate terrorism and restore peace in the provincial capital and the country's commercial hub of Karachi.

Wrist of young man severed By Staff Correspondent

A gang of terrorists severed a

Pirerbagh.

wrist of a young man at Taltola under Mohammadpur thana in the city yesterday afternoon. The victim was identified as Selim, 26, son of Lutfar Rahman, a resident of East

According to police, the incident took place when Selim went to a saloon at Taltola at about 3 pm. The gang attacked him in-

side the saloon as a sequel to previous rivalry. They severed the wrist of his left hand and stabbed him.

Selim was rushed to Orthopaedic Hospital and later shifted to DMCH where he was operated upon last night.

Dry Chilli From Page 1 market, onion was still being sold at its earlier price between Tk 52 to 60 per kg yesterday.

Retailers at the city's Mo-

hammadpur, Hatirpool and

New Market wet markets yesterday alleged that the prices of the two spices, dry chilli and turmeric, shot up due to hoarding by a section of wholesale dealers. "Dealers of spices started hoarding for more profit as

onions had become scarce in

the market, pushing its price

higher up," the retailers alleged. Turmeric which was being sold at Tk 70 a few days back was now selling for Tk 75 per kg in the retail market Masoor daal was at Tk 38 to 40 per kg. Tk 2 to 4 higher than

its previous price. The price of dry chilli which was at Tk 90 to 100 a couple of days back, was selling for up to Tk 120 per kg. Prices of other essentials, remained more or less stable.

Drilling at Bibiana

Bangladesh Petrobangla did not accept Occidental's assessment right away. Instead, it suggested

a threeconducting dimensional survey and drilling of the appraisal well with a budget of around 20

million dollars. Petrobangla went through Occidental's work programme and after holding detailed negotiations, streamlined the programme and approved it with a budget of 11 million

operation which would be undertaken to maximise

"The Bibiana field is located in a swampy area and normal seismic operations are usually very slow and not very thorough. The 3-D seismic operation would unveil a lot of information which can not be obtained otherwise. Petrobangla and BAPEX people are eager to learn from this operation," another source

"Occidental had been insistent about this seismic operation which is much costlier than normal seismic' procedure. Ultimately, Occidental agreed to bear 50 per cent of the cost for this operation and Petrobangla

"This had been a negotiation which truly upheld Bangladesh's interest." the

by Petrobangla are recoverable by foreign oil companies from the gasfields they would develop. A loosely conducted negotiation could mean financial loss for the country.

government is delaying the extension of the PSC on different grounds, the US company has made major progress in Block 12.

also big, has a reserve of 1.5 TCF of gas.

It is now expected that Occidental would go ahead with the setting up of a gas processing plant later this month and would start supplying gas to Petrobangla's gas systems from early next year, the sources said.

The gas from Jalalabad would be much cheaper than that from the off-shore Sangu field but higher than the government-fixed gas price. At the present rate, price of Jalalabad gas would be around 1.8 dollars per unit. The price of Sangu gas is 2.25 dollars per unit and the government fixed gas price is around 1.1 dollars

per unit. "The Bibiana gas would also be cheaper," said the source. "It should be immediately developed if Bangladesh wants to benefit from gas by utilising it in productive sectors," the

source said. Prothom Alo

From Page 1 habuddin Ahmed in a message hailed the publication of the

"Newspaper is the mirror of the country and society. As a mouthpiece of the people, newspapers have to bring into consideration the entire scenario of the country and have to nurture liberal attitudes to help expedite social upliftment," the

"Newspapers have to prioritise the national interest keeping it above any narrow outlook of individual, group or party,"

President said.

"Matiur Rahman is an experienced journalist and he has made his mark in the realm of honest and value based journalism in the country," he said.

In another message Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina welcomed the publication of the daily and wished its success. "The role of newspapers is

the prime minister said in her message. Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia also welcomed the publication and hoped for its success.

important in establishing a

democratic, transparent and

accountable administration.

"Independent newspapers are one of the preconditions for democracy and there is no alternative to independent newspapers to unveil faces of oppression and injustice and to establish transparency and account-

ter-cadre rivalry," a member of the parliamentary body said adding that the state could not function smoothly with the present level of inter-cadre ri-Ruling party legislators SM Muktadir, PS-II to the Prime Akram, MS Akbar, Ahsan Ahmed, BNP lawmakers Mo-

Bangla-Thai JC meet begins in Bangkok today

Bangkok yesterday on a twoweek tour of three Southeast Asian and Pacific countries, reports APB. Azad will lead a delegation at a two-day meeting of the Bangladesh-Thailand Joint

Commission (JC) that begins in

Foreign Minister Abdus

Samad Azad left Dhaka for

the Thai capital today. His Thai counterpart Surin Pitsuwan will lead the Thai team at the talks which are likely to address measures for narrowing the huge trade gap between the two countries. At present, Bangladesh is

suffering heavily from imbal-

the Joint Commission set up

This is the sixth meeting of

ance in its trade with Thailand

between the two countries in

Petrobangla From Page 1 Block 9. Tullow will also be invited to go for partnership with Malaysian-US joint venture

Tetronas-Mobil for Block 11.

It is currently holding nego-

tiations with Danish company

Maersk Olie for deep sea explo-

ration in blocks 19 and 20. Once the bidding committee finalises negotiations and the government announces the bidders as winners, these companies would hold talks with the

PSC negotiation committee. Although there had been talks on prioritising Bangladesh's exploration unit BAPEX, anything substantial is yet to be spelled out about BAPEX's share in various blocks.

"So far, the negotiations have actually been directed by a third committee, the high powered committee of four secretaries headed by the Principal Secretary", one source said. The PSC negotiation com-

mittee would now discuss tech-

months to complete. It is the

hardest part of PSC negotia-

"This may take many

nical details of the PSC.

tions," the source added.

ters relating to further expanding bilateral ties in other fields. including economic cooperation and investment. During his stay in Bangkok, the Foreign Minister will also discuss with the Thai authorities on extradition of Major (retd) Bazlul Huda, an alleged

JC will also deal with mat-

Murder Case, who is now detained in a Thai jail. Azad will fly to Tokyo on November 6 on a six-day visit to Japan where he is expected to seek Japanese assistance for the post-flood rehabilitation works and investment for de-

accused in the Bangabandhu

Bangladesh. On his way back home, he is scheduled to visit Myanmar on November 11-12. During his stay in Yangon. the Foreign Minister is likely to sign a land boundary treaty

the remaining Rohingya BNP leader Tara

Bench and BNP leader Mahbubul Alam Tara yesterday obtained anticipatory bail from the High Court in a corruption

Mukuli

Senior Advocate M A Malek moved the petition.



Wan Azizah Ismail, left, wife of Anwar Ibrahim, and two of their daughters, Nural Issah, 18, second from left, and Nurul Hana, 6, leave the court where Anwar is being tried on

charge of corruption and sexual misconduct in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. -AP/UNB photo

First prosecution witness says Anwar asked police to tamper with evidence

KUALA LUMPUR. Nov 3: The first witness in the sensational corruption and sexual misconduct trial of Anwar Ibrahim said today the ousted deputy prime minister asked police to tamper with evidence showing he had committed adultery and sodomy, reports AP.

Mohamed Said Awang, the

former chief of the country's top

police unit, the Special Branch,

was the first of 52 prosecution

witnesses expected to take the

occurred to

stand in the government case against the jailed dissident. Anwar faces five counts of corruption and five counts of illegal sex acts. He denies the charges and says they were cooked up to undermine his growing challenge to the 17year leadership of Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad.

operation Solid Grip, an investigation into sexual misconduct by Anwar, back in 1992. That was before he was named deputy prime minister and finance minister in 1993. It wasn't until August 1997,

however, that the investigation

Mohamad testified that the

Special Branch had launched

Anwar of adultery and sodomy. Anwar got police officers to force retractions by the writers of the two statements, the prosecution said. The statement by Anwar's personal driver, Azizan Abu Bakar, said Anwar sodomised

him 15 times. The other, by

Ummi Hasilda Ali, the sister of

turned serious with a letter and

a sworn statement that accused

Anwar's private secretary, said her brother's wife had sex with Anwar. Both statements were also sent to Mahathir, who said he fired Anwar after he himself talked to people who said they had sex with his handpicked

successor.

morally unfit to run the Southeast Asian nation and dumped him on Sept. 2. "Whatever witnesses and documents the prosecution will bring to the court will prove beyond doubt that the accused

abused the position as deputy

prime minister and finance

minister for his own personal

gain," Abdul Gani Patail, the

chief prosecutor, said in his

Mahathir said Anwar was

It was unclear whether the police who are alleged to have forced the retractions would be charged with any crime. "A poison-pen letter has be-

opening statement.

war, just after the trial adjourned and he was whisked off to the lock-up in the court basement. Earlier, Anwar's mother could be seen hunched over during the humiliating testimony.

At one point, Anwar mouthed to

come evidence," snapped An-

Defense lawyers on Monday opened their case by asking the judge to hold Mahathir in contempt of court for saying publicly that Anwar should be convicted. Mahathir was also on the

witness list, but it was doubtful

her, "have you eaten?"

he would actually be called. Today, riot police with shields and tear-gas launchers stood guard across the street from the red-bricked High Court at Independence Square where Anwar led a huge antigovernment protest just hours before his arrest.

From Page 1 To remain cautious,

Occidental to confirm the gas reserve by going with the next step of exploration, drilling the appraisal well. Occidental came up with its workplan for the next step two months ago. The plan includes

dollars. "The 3-D seismic would be the first of its kind in Bangladesh. This is a high-tech

geological data on the Bibiana

approved it," he said.

source said. All expenditures approved

the source added. While Occidental is in limbo in blocks 13 and 14 as the

has completed drilling of four gas wells in Jalalabad gasfield. The Jalalabad field, which is

Beside the Bibiana field, it

ability of government," she