

## Policemen shot in clash with drug dealers

**By Staff Correspondent**

Two policemen and a truck driver were injured in an exchange of fire between police and drug traders in the city's Agargaon slum area on Wednesday night.

Two drug traders arrested during the incident however escaped with their handcuffs, sources said.

The injured policemen are Havildar Babar and Detective Branch (DB) Havildar Jalil. Both were bullet hit in their legs. Babar was injured reportedly in a shot fired by police during the crossfire.

The injured truck driver was identified as Motaleb, allegedly an accomplice of the drug traders.

The two havildars were now under treatment at the Police Hospital and Motaleb was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Acting on a tip-off, DB police raided Agargaon Panir Tanki See page 11 col 6

# BNP lawmaker triggers lively debate in JS

**By Staff Correspondent**

The Jatiya Sangsad yesterday heard a lively debate on the parliamentary stalemate due to continued boycott of its sessions by the Opposition.

BNP lawmaker Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan, who attended the sitting to protect his membership, suggested immediate dissolution of the parliament in view of the crisis.

This prompted Prime Minister's Parliamentary Affairs Adviser Suranjit Sengupta to go for a rebuttal, creating a usual scene in the House missing for long. Refusing to accept that there is a crisis in parliament, Sengupta said rather there is a crisis in BNP and its political culture.

Unlike other legislators form BNP following the boycott, Dr Khan remained in the House almost for the whole sitting yesterday.

Rising on a point of order, the BNP lawmaker spoke for 20 minutes on the current state of politics and a way out of the crisis.

The soft-spoken former state minister for planning expressed his frustration over the trend of politics in the country. "I am here not to explain why BNP is boycotting parliament sessions ... The unusual and uncomfortable political situation prevents me from speaking what I want to ... I feel like revolting against the political atmosphere."

He noted that politicians are locked in a confrontation while trying to serve the people. Referring to the situation arising See page 11 col 4

## Restructuring of Biman Search for Strategic Partner still on

**By Special Correspondent**

Citibank Group, Bangladesh Biman's consultants on restructuring and commercialisation, have assured Biman officials that they are still working hard to find a Strategic Partner (SP) to acquire a 40 per cent share of the national airline.

They said they are hopeful of the prospect of different airlines participating in the bid for acquiring a stake in Biman.

Citibank Group representatives told Biman executives yesterday that a number of airlines have shown interest in the airlines, Biman sources said.

The Citibank consultants who designed Biman's restructuring plan under a two-million-dollar World Bank aided programme, met top Biman executives at a See page 11 col 6

## Charred body of woman found Death toll may rise in slum fire

**By Staff Correspondent**

The charred body of a 30-year-old woman, named Rashida, was recovered yesterday morning from under the debris of two thousand gutted shanties of Baspatti slum at Mogbazaar.

The shanties were gutted when the bombs exploded by a group of terrorists sparked off a fire at the north end of the slum on Wednesday afternoon.

That a number of children were missing until yesterday heightened the fear that the number of fire victims would be more than one.

Meanwhile, Harunur Rashid, husband of the dead, filed a case with the Tejgaon thana yesterday, accusing a local Jubo League leader and his accomplices of hurling petrol bombs which resulted in a fire in the slum, police said.

Police and hospital sources identified the dead as Rashida, wife of Harunur Rashid. The body was sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Slum dwellers informed that Rashida was sleeping inside her shanty on Wednesday afternoon when the fire broke out.

In his FIR Rashida's husband alleged that local Jubo League Leader Kiran and his accomplices hurled petrol bombs in a clash See page 11 col 5



In demand for free and fair elections, and measures to strengthen the Election Commission, FEMA organised a demonstration in the city yesterday.

-- Star photo

# Int'l IT confce puts accent on dissemination of knowledge

**By DU Correspondent**

Speakers at the inaugural ceremony of an International Conference on Computer and Information Technology 2000 yesterday put accent on dissemination of knowledge and technology for overall development.

They were unanimous in their observation that Bangladesh has immense potential in IT but needs much to do live up to it.

While inaugurating the three-day conference, organised by North South University, Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism, Mosharaf Hossain said information technology has opened the floodgates to maximum utilisation of global resources to enhance living standard.

"In consideration of the global IT need, the government has made the IT sector a priority in the Five Year Plan and declared it to be a thrust sector," he said.

Information technology plays and will continue to play a crucial role in developing a nation on all fronts, the minister observed.

MA Kashem, chairman of the board of governors of NSU Foundation, said that importance of information technology in everyday life is increasing.

"The theme of the conference - 'Development of Computer and Information Technology of the See page 11 col 7



# AL views Paltan blast as a ploy to discredit govt

## Rightist forces out to reap dividend in election year, say leaders

**By Reaz Ahmad**

The Awami League leadership is convinced that rightist anti-liberation forces carried out last Saturday's bomb attack on a Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) rally to discredit the government in the election year.

According to sources in the party, senior AL leaders, including some ministers, have had discussion on the issue at informal meetings since the powerful blast at the Paltan Maidan, which left four people killed and injured more than 50.

They view the incident as deliberate attempt to tarnish the government's image by rightist forces and gain political dividend in the upcoming general elections, a minister told The Daily Star yesterday.

Overall law and order situation also featured prominently at these informal meetings and some leaders argued that if the government could improve upon its record, the reactionary forces' would not succeed in their plan to discredit the ruling party.

Meanwhile, the AL has planned to launch an aggressive campaign to offset an opposition-

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## Mixed fortune for CID, home ministry probes

**By Staff Correspondent**

The CID investigation into the last Saturday's powerful explosions at a Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) rally at the Paltan Maidan and later at Bangabandhu Avenue has made little progress for lack of new clues, sources said.

However, the Home Ministry Investigation Committee "has found a vital clue and is proceeding accordingly," said Additional Secretary Aftab Uddin, who heads the probe body.

CPB General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim and Presidium Member Morshed Ali gave their versions of what had happened at the CPB rally on last Saturday. In addition, the committee took statements of DC, ADC (East), OC of Motijheel Thana and other police officials.

Meanwhile, CID released Sunil, a friend of Himangshu who died in the explosion. Sunil, who was injured in the explosion, is now in CPB custody.

The CID has also made a map of the two explosion spots.

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Jan 26		5.41 pm
Jan 27	6-41 am	

Prayer Timings		
January 26		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fazr	5-30	6-10
Juma	12-15	1-20
Asr	4-05	4-20
Maghrib	5-40	5-45
Esha	7-15	7-35
Source: Islamic Foundation		

