NEWS

Petrobangla men

demand would fall behind the supply growth significantly," said a

"Now if we decide on exporting gas, there are a number of issues which we would consider to make it profitable and meaningful for Bangladesh," he added.

"Firstly, Bangladesh will not export gas discovered by its own subsidies because it is very cheap and cost effective for us.

"Gas export under the PSC needs separate agreement. We will seek export fee. We will determine how much gas (10 to 20 per cent of upfront gas share as per other international practice) should be kept for us as export fee or whether foreign currency."

In addition, Bangladesh will also have its share in the PSC gas

The second issue would be what and how gas price would be fixed. Gas price at well-head level (the first point from where gas is being extracted, processed and supplied) would be low.

In dealing with gas price, the oil company must ensure that gas price at well-head must be equivalent to the price at which it is selling gas to us as per PSC. But it may not recover the cost (of investment) from the well-head pricerather it would recover the same from the buyer. Petrobangla will not get any price lower than that as per the PSC's clause on Pricing of Commodity. In addition, Petrobangla must have its production share, as per PSC, in the

As a precaution to avoid conflict of interest, the PSC operator should not be allowed to be the pipeline authority. Pipeline company would be separate and it would purchase gas from the oil companies.

From the pipeline company, Bangladesh should get wheeling charge and right of way. It can be generally assumed that PSC gas export would require around 300 km pipeline up to the border. This pipeline would not fall under the purview of the PSCs.

"If all these issues are economically viable for the oil companies and us, we can decide to export gas from designated gas fields of the IOCs. What happens with the gas across the border will not be our headache," said the source.

"We can assume that the IOCs would get a minimum average

border gas sales rate of three dollars per thousand cubic feet (mmcf) as India would not buy gas that costs more than three dollars." he said. "At that price, the IOCs would have to cover all expenses and keep

it profitable for us," he said.

Under the first round block bidding for oil and gas exploration in the mid-nineties, Bangladesh signed six Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs) for eight blocks12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 22 with Cairn, Occidental, Oakland and UMC through unsolicited negotiations. Under the second round competitive block bidding, the country signed four more PSCs for blocks 5, 7, 9 and 10 with Shell (which took over Cairn's concerns), Unocal (which took over Occidental's concerns), and Chevron-Texaco-Tullow (Tullow took over Okland's concerns). None of these PSCs have any option to export pipeline gas. However the PSCs under the second round block bidding left room for future export

negotiations. Intending to be a regional energy player, Unocal had been hammering on pipeline gas export to India ever since it came to the local scenario in late '96. Later. Shell joined the campaign.

India has a power demand growth requirement of 10,000 MW ner year while it has to depend to a great degree on imported energy source. The ready-made bulk demand for gas in India is a much lucrative option for oil companies working there. On the other hand, energy deprived Bangladesh would need billions of dollars of investment over a long period to build gas and power infrastructure to ensure sale of the gas being developed by oil

in October '99, Shell officially projected that Bangladesh could earn 800 million dollars a year by exporting six trillion cubic feet (TCF) gas to India. The company also pinpointed that cost of gas production by international oil companies (IOC) in Bangladesh was 1.2 dollars per unit and therefore Bangladesh should seek a gas cost above 1.2 dollars per unit to make a profit Unocal made a similar projection.

Both the companies had hinted at a border gas tariff of three dollars. But it excludes transmission cost export fee and other sharing issues which are internationally practised.

Complainant PM: Minorities

FROM PAGE 1

BNP, was arrested in Dhaka yesterday following the case filed by Zahur Sunday evening complaining that his younger brother was abducted at gun point by cadres of Bachchu Molla and taken to their leader. Bachchu set him free only after written undertaking of presenting Zahur before him within five

Majibur Rahman, OC of Daulatpur thana, told UNB by phone that Zahurul Islam seeking to withdraw the case in writing said Monday night that dispute with Bachchu Molla has been settled through reconciliation

Zahur was not immediately available to confirm the matter. But his family members said the petition to withdraw the case was made under pressure from local BNP musclemen and police

Police said the petition for withdrawal of the case against Bachchu Molla would undergo legal process. other criminal cases against him,"

FROM PAGE 1

Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan and Political Secretary to the Prime Minister Haris Chowdhury were present at the meeting.

Khaleda Zia further said that the government would not show any sympathy to lawbreakers even if they were close relatives of ministers, MPs, BNP leaders or

She instructed the authorities concerned to bring the terrorists and anti-social elements to book whatever their political identity or affiliation may be, and take stern actions against them.

The prime minister will hold an important meeting with the secretaries of the government at Bangladesh Secretariat this morning. She will conduct her official duties from the secretariat

She will also hold a joint meeting of all the DCs and SPs at the Prime Minister's Office tomorrow morning and give necessary directives regarding government's policy towards development, rule of law

Powell calls for talks

Islamabad, Pakistani officials said two people were killed in the gunbattle

India, facing calls at home to fight its own battle against terrorism rather than rely on the United States to take care of the Kashmir problem after rooting out militants in Afghanistan, said it had opened fire in self-defence to stop militants crossing the border.

India has long accused Pakistan of sponsoring cross-border terrorism by sending militants to fuel a 12year separatist insurgency in the

Indian part of Kashmir.

Pakistan says it gives only moral support to the militants, whom it describes as freedom fighters.

Washington, fearing instability in Pakistan, has urged Islamabad and New Delhi to cool tensions while it attacks Afghanistan to root out Osama bin Laden, accused of masterminding the September 11 suicide hijack attacks on in the United States

"Issues must be resolved through peaceful, political and diplomatic means. Not through violence or reliance on force but with a determined respect for human

rights," Powell said. Powell told his Pakistani hosts that he saw improved relations between Washington and Islamabad because of the current crisis over Afghanistan and Pakistan's backing of force against the ruling Taliban there for refusing to hand over bin Laden.

"I also reassured Pakistan of America's support and the support Pakistan joins the international community in this campaign," he

Earlier, meeting in Islamabad, Musharraf and Powell agreed any future Afghan government should include the opposition as well as moderate elements of the Taliban.

Powell also said military action would not stop until all objectives had been met, but he hoped it would be short something Musharraf also

Facing intense opposition from Islamic groups opposed to the USled attacks. Musharraf is walking a fine line between backing Washington's campaign and a public upset over reports of rising numbers of civilian casualties in

Another report says, Musharraf promised Powell during his visit to Islamabad that he would hold elections next year as planned, a senior U.S. State Department official said in Delhi yesterday.

Musharraf, who seized power in an army coup on October 12, 1999, has promised to hold elections by the third anniversary of the military takeover. "He said he intended to go forward with the election." the State Department official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. "He gave a very firm commitment about proceeding with the election a year

The official was briefing reporters as Powell flew to New Delhi on the second leg of a visit to Pakistan

Elected MPs

FROM PAGE 12 any such accounts while meeting

the election expenses.

Meanwhile, the EC yesterday asked the winning candidates to submit reports on election expenses in prescribed forms with proper affidavits to the returning officers either through their election agents or in person within 15 days of publication of their names in the official

It also asked them to send a copy of the report to the EC Secretariat by registered postal service.

The Representation of People Order, 1972 says that if a candidate fails to submit his or her report within the stipulated time, he might be subject to a maximum of seven years in prison with fine or a minimum of two years' rigorous imprisonment.

Although the EC did not make registration of the political parties mandatory, it has asked the parties to submit reports on their election

"Each of the political party should also submit an attested statement of election expenses including primary balance and closing balance from the time of announcement of the election schedule to the day of election and also the account of the fund collection from different sources," said a EC release

Water treaty

FROM PAGE 1 flow of the common river aiming to solve water crisis in the country under the impact of Farakka

The minister said the people voted the four-party coalition to power to salvage the country from corruption, terrorism and repres-"We'll root out these evils to fulfil the aspiration of the people."

Siddigui said the four-party government would not serve any particular community. "We'll be always with all the communities. including Hindu, Buddhist and Christian, to protect their interest."

ETV case

FROM PAGE 12 cause notice on ETV Chairman A.S Mahmud and on the secretary to the Ministry of Information asking them to explain why the licensing agreement forged on March 9, 1999 between the private television channel and the ministry should not

be declared illegal.
Prof. Chowdhury Mohammad Hossain of the Department of Pharmacy and Prof. Abdur Rob of the Department of Geography at Dhaka University, and President of a faction of the Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) Gias Kamal Chowdhury jointly filed the

writ petition.

The writ petition said international bids were invited for setting up of a private television channel in the

On July 9 1998, the tender evaluation committee, after scrutiny, sent a list of bidders to the Ministry of Information terming the ETV that participated in the bid disqualified. The same day, another list was sent to the ministry showing the ETV on

They further alleged that the licensing agreement was forged with A.S Mahmud despite the fact that he did not participate in the bid offers at all. But subsequently, the licence was transferred to the ETV

The ETV did not obtain any clearance certificate as per the Telegraph Act for functioning as a TV channel, and set up key-point installations (KPI) at the BTV building without permission from the National Security Intelligence (NSI), they also alleged.

Saitur

FROM PAGE 1 Earlier, the minister indicated that the government might go for gas to the country.

There are contrasting views on the issue, but we have to take a decision based on the economic he told officials of the reality." Planning Commission and External Resource Division on Monday.

"No resource is a resource as such, if it remains under the soil and is not properly utilised," the minister told The Daily Star Monday after-

noon. The BNP in its election manifesto made it clear that all necessary measures would be undertaken to increase revenues from oil, gas and other mineral resources to bolster up the economy.

Priority, however, would be given to meeting the domestic need, it

AL for reforms

FROM PAGE 1 The rank and file of the party, however, consider reform as an issue 'no too much discussed' within the party. They recalled that the last two councils of AL did not go for much of a change in party leadership and just announced new committees, almost like the previous ones.

Party workers now expect the central leadership to replace leaders with bad public image by a new band of leaders at different levels. They hope that this would further strengthen the party and also boost the morale of party rank and file.

Meanwhile, AL sent teams to all areas of the country yesterday to find facts about 'rigging' that stole 'AL's victory' in the October 1 elec-

Hasina had said earlier that she would present before the nation a 'White Paper' on polls irregularities and 'rigging.'

The party which bagged 62

seats in the election has rejected the polls results alleging 'crude rigging', restrained its MPs-elect from taking oath as lawmakers and demanded a fresh election.

BNP, allies killing AL men

election and post-election violence

AL's election campaign steering

committee accused BNP of entering

into an understanding with the

caretaker government as the elec-

horrified to witness the partisan

caretaker government bend back-

ward to please the BNP-led alli-

"The nation", he said, "was

Kibria alleged that the caretaker

government headed by Justice

Latifur Rahman initiated the may-

hem and carnage. "And what is

happening now is the continuation of

the violence and intimidation at that

Awami League men and minorities

were part of a "systematic campaign

bilise the situation prior to Durga

Puja of the Hindu community in

nous, motivated acts by the vested

groups" Altaf Chowdhury made it

clear that such "ill efforts would not

to take all necessary steps to make

sure that the Hindus can celebrate

their greatest religious festival in a

Reminding that all is equal to the law, State Minister for Home Affairs

Lutfuzzaman Babar asked the

police "not to be biased to anyone'

Babar said they would not use

Assuring the police that there

police to serve party interest like the

would be no political or administra-

tive interference in curbing terrorism

and anarchy, Babar asked the

police to take all necessary steps to

Among others, Home Secretary

secure public life across the country.

Dr Sadat Hossain, IGP Nurul Huda, additional IGPs, DMP commis-sioner Anwarul Iqbal and senior

metropolitan police officials were

present in the meeting.

Later, the two ministers visited

the directorate of prisons and held a

meeting with senior jail officials.
IG (prison) Liaqat Ali briefed

them on the situation of prisoners

inside iails and other related prob-

lems of prison administration. The

ministers assured them of solving

The minister directed the police

Cautioning against such "hei-

to influence the election results.

He claimed that the attacks on

time throughout the country.'

Govt: Police

order to capitalise on it.

be allowed to find success.

secure atmosphere

previous government.

n their action.

FROM PAGE 1

tion was held during its tenure.

The former minister who headed

and lawlessness.

minister and AL's chief election coordinator SAMS Kibria, AL General Secretary Zillur Rahman, former water resources minister Abdur Razzak, former education minister ASKH Sadique, former state minister for foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdury, former deputy minister Saber Hossain Chowdhury and former chairman of Privatisation Board and newly elected MP Kazi

Envoys, charge d' affaires or counsellors from the EU countries, the Australian High Commissioner, the French Ambassador and political heads of the US and UK missions were present, among others. Heads of the World Bank, IMF, UNDP, ADB missions and the NDI Representative in Bangladesh also

attended the briefing.

Kibria said BNP has created a terrifying situation following the election.

"In the post-election mayhem and carnage, a sense of total insecurity has been created among AL workers and supporters." he said. BNP and its alliance partner

Jammat, he said, have engaged in

violent activities jeopardising secu-

rity of a large section of the people including minorities and women. Kibria said that since July, some 1500 people have been killed and more than 10,000 injured in pre-

Saifur leaves for Algiers today

Finance and Planning Minister Saifur Rahman leaves today for Algiers via London and Paris on a 10-day tour to join the Board of Governors meeting of Islamic Development Bank (IDB).

In his first official visit after taking oath as minister, he will lead a 4member delegation to the meeting to be held during Oct 23-24.

Other members of the delegation are ERD secretary Dr Masihur Rahman, Bangladesh Ambassador to Morocco Maj General Mohammad Anwar Hossain and Finance Minister's PS Kazi Nurun Saifur, who is Bangladesh gover-

nor of IDB, is scheduled to return

military targets in the Kheir Khana

section of northern Kabul and two

more bombs around the airport,

An Associated Press reporter

raising a huge cloud of black smoke.

with opposition forces on the

Shomali plain north of Kabul could

hear huge explosions from the

bombardment and the roar or heavy

International Red Cross warehouse

at Kheir Khana, sending Afghan

workers running to try to salvage

blankets, tents and medicine from

the burning building. One guard was

the ICRC said in Islamabad,

Pakistan. ICRC spokesman Mario

Musa said the building's roof was

Witnesses said they also saw

The north of Kabul holds four

several Taliban military trucks near

Taliban military bases, a govern-

ment transport depot and a fuel

depot. Fuel and the government

vehicles are believed to have been

marked with a Red Cross insignia.

One security guard was injured,

injured, officials said.

One bomb struck

guns

home on October 27.

US gunship pounds target

Nearby, another bomb injured three farmers working in their fields when the US jets roared overhead, residents said.

relocated since the US-led strikes

Taliban Information Ministry official Abdul Himat said 13 civilians died in the pre-dawn assault at Kandahar. The Taliban also said two people were killed in Tuesday's attack on Mazar-e-Sharif The claims could not be independently

In Washington, a defense official confirmed the overnight attack was led by an AC-130, marking the first acknowledged use of special-forces aircraft in the offensive, which began on Oct. 7. The official spoke on condition of anonymity.

Previous raids had targeted antiaircraft artillery sites and other military installations with the aim of making the skies safe for aircraft like the AC-130. The Taliban are believed to still hold an unknown number of shoulder-fired Stinger missiles capable of bringing down aircraft, however.

High-firepower AC-130s typically

gunship's deployment meant special forces had entered the battle on Aiming to make the skies safe,

are used to support ground forces

trained for small-unit operations.

There was no word whether the

US forces have made particular targets out of airports in Taliban territory throughout the campaign. Attacks put the Jalalabad airport in eastern Afghanistan out of commis sion almost from the start.

Other strikes have pounded Taliban jets at Kabul and the sprawling airport complex at Kandahar, which holds at least 300 housing units of Osama bin Laden's follow-

The only other major airfields in Taliban territory, at Shind and in southwestern Afghanistan and in Herat, have also taken repeated

Taking advantage of the massive assaults, opposition forces on the ground claimed Monday to have advanced within miles of their former stronghold of Mazar-e-

Don't fight the press

the same area

motivated". Halfway in the report, The Daily Star says, Nevertheless, the home minister admitted that there was some truth in the press reports about attacks on the minorities and said investigation into those had already been ordered." The remarks attributed to the home minister are to a degree contradictory. If they are 'baseless' they could not be 'exaggerated'. You can exaggerate only when there is actually something in existence. Since, the honourable home minister does admit of the existence of 'some violence' at a later stage. He should not have begun by uttering the word 'baseless'.

This was the honourable home minister's debut with the press. He has to go a long way and you cannot have a smooth journey with an unfriendly companion, in this case the press. According to a report in a Bengali daily published on October 16, 203 persons were killed in political violence in the 87 days of the caretaker government. Included in this figure are 40 deaths in October only. The current home minister does not have to take the burden or liability of the period of the caretaker government between October 1 to 10. But that is well said on paper, on the ground, the assets

and liabilities all accrue to the cur-

rent political government. A weak-

ness about constitutional provisions

regarding handing over of power

between two different governments

has been highlighted. Whatever be

the case theoretically, there was no

government worth mentioning in the

is God's mercy and maturity of the citizens that the situation has not

The home minister has been in change only since Thursday, October 11. In a fluid situation it is difficult to go by calendar dates. Over the years the rural society of Bangladesh has become politically anguished. The reign of terror, which existed in the five years of the AL rule, may have added momentum to the process. Therefore, changes of people settling personal score and passing it on as political or communal violence is great. The vice-versa is also true. The country does not want the focus of the home minister's effort to be on how the violence is being created or inaccurately (i.e. exaggeratedly) reported: the country wants the focus to be on preventing violence by all means and saving lives at all cost. The minister's concern and anguish must be on loss of life and in no way complacency by finding excuses or scapegoats

Begum Khaleda Zia in her firstever general directive as the prime minister said to the nation, "No revenge, no atrocities on any particular group or community and no disrespect to any photograph." We feel that the very well-meaning directive of the prime minister has been given very poor effect by the rest of the government, because of ill planning. The home minister has also said good things like, "arrest BNP men first when there is any allegation of their involvement in any incident of violence, terrorism or attack on minority community members any where in the country", but such good words have not been well circulated.

According to some media men that I came across, the LGRD minister, who has been a politician for long time, fared reasonably well during the news conference of October 15. He played the political flute. However, about the instigation of 'a vested quarter' to destabilise the political situation and created a feeling of insecurity among the Hindu community members, or to defame the BNP government, the government had better been more prepared. In a country where political rivalry is legal and political defamation is well practised, it is the obvious to have been expected. The BNP government will not have a safe pass, by saying all that. Mind you, the international community and the expatriate community beyond our borders in all continents, the diplomatic community at Dhaka and local 'neutrals' are all observing the new government with watchful eyes. Not only those who are actually in the government, but also those who were visibly active for the party to have come to power, all carry the burden of good governance. This is the second chance for the BNP in running the government; therefore, it must demonstrate its knowledge of the 'teething

(We invite civil society leaders to express their views on the issue, if

Bangladesh to send relief for Afghan refugees

BSS, Dhaka

"Terrorists are now ruling us. They

has been elected to the present

parliament said, "What is happening

is a staged drama, a planned game.

hyperbolic language. On the one

hand, he (home minister) says

reports of repression and attacks

are "baseless" and on the other he

also claims the reports are exagger-

party has created "an absolute reign

restore discipline and law and order.

and order with serious conse-

could aggravate the situation," he

"Our people may hit back and this

ASHK Sadique said that terror-

ism and violence continued to be

unleashed by BNP. "If we want to

nourish democracy in the parlia-

ment, this sort of violence must

ruling party leadership, this cannot

violence, it could have been ignored.

introductory speech welcomed the

diplomats and thanked them for their

interest in democracy in

Bangladesh. He hoped that they

would get a clear picture of the post-

election situation from the briefing.

He called upon the diplomats to

assess the events following the

a slide presentation of pictures and

clippings from newspapers display-

ing victims and stories about

reported violence by the ruling party

similar views and said extremist

religious elements have been

encouraged to resort to violence.

Kazi Zafrullah also expressed

in different parts of the country.

Saber Hossain Chowdhury made

happen," he alleged.

election.

"Without the connivance of the

He added that if there was limited

Abul Hasan Chowdhury in his

of terror.

quences.

and torture on women.

"If something is baseless, how

He said, the home minister uses

The former finance minister who

are in the government"

Bangladesh will soon send relief materials for the Afghan refugees, a top official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs told the agency yesterday.

Relief goods are to be sent as per ecision of the government taken Monday night in response to United Nations call for humanitarian assistance to the Afghan nationals who have become refugees or displaced internally because of war.

can it be exaggerated," Kibria Replying to a question, the Zillur Rahman said the ruling official said the assistance which will be sent "immediately" includes tea, medicine, jute bag, jute mat and jute He accused BNP of indulging in blanket. The relief goods would be indiscriminate "violence against worth take five crore, he said.

women, repression on minorities The decision was taken at the first cabinet meeting of the new The AL General Secretary government with Prime Minister demanded immediate steps to Khaleda Zia in the chair.

The dispatch of relief goods has Abdur Razzak demanded that become necessary following recent violence by the ruling party must developments in Afghanistan, he stop. Otherwise, he said, there would be further deterioration of law Replying to another question, the

official said. "We are in the process of intimating the current chairman of NAM about the decision of the government with regard to holding of the next summit.

The government decided not to hold the NAM summit in view of the global political scenario and the country's financial condition.

South Africa is the current chairman of NAM which has brought in its fold 113 countries.

37 ministers

FROM PAGE 1

Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan at 25 Baily Road, Textiles Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury at 24 Baily Road, Jute Minister Major (retd) Hafizuddin Ahmed at 30 Minto Road, Fisheries and Livestock Minister Sadeque Hossain Khoka at 20 Park Road Water Resources Minister LK Siddiqi at 7 Minto Road, Labour and Employment Minister Abdullah Al Noman at 4 Minto Road, and Disaster Management and Relief Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf at 2 Hare Road.

The 34 Minto Road residence allocated to Food Minister Tariqul Islam was reportedly occupied by the supporters of State Minister (technocrat) for Civil Aviation and Tourism Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin.

The houses to the rest of the ministers and three advisors with the rank of minister will be allocated

In a related development, at least two ministers namely Prof. AQM Badrudozza Chowdhury and Sadegue Hossain Khoka have

refused to receive police protocol. As per a provision, a cabinet minister is entitled to a three-strong

Meanwhile, the government has decided not to allocate suites in the MP Hostel to those who illegally occupied them earlier. Most of the MPs have already left forcibly occupied suites following an

instruction from the party chief. Agood number of MPs belonging to the BNP occupied suites and rooms immediately after its victory in the October 1 general election.

Saudi national

FROM PAGE 12 Indian and three Saudi passports along with 25 Medical Examination

reports and 11 different seals. The arrested Saudi national had been staying in the guest house since August 6, 2001, the police added.

A case was filed with Gulshan police station in this regard.

Saadat University College closed sine die

UNB, Tangail

Authorities closed Government Saadat University College for indefinite period yesterday amid tensions following a terrorist attack on its principal Muhammad Sultan

In the face of threat by the terrorists, the teachers of the college on Monday left the campus with police escort and held a meeting at Government Kumudini Women's College in the town where they took the decision.

The angry teachers also decided not to take any examinations to be held from October 18.

A gang of miscreants attacked the Principal at College gate on Monday. The Principal is now undergoing treatment at local general

Meanwhile, police arrested 17 persons in connection with the attack on the principal.

Minister's son FROM PAGE 1

activities, the government had

earlier ordered the local police administration to arrest Bachchu. Police raided the Daulatpur residence of the state minister on Monday but failed to arrest his son

who reportedly left the house to escape arrest. Sources said Prime Minister Khaleda Zia got annoyed at the news about Mollah's son during her visit to Saudi Arabia. She ordered the Home Minister and State Minister for Home to take legal

action in this regard. They said the issue was also discussed at Monday's cabinet meeting where the prime minister and other ministers expressed their unanimous views on legal actions against all terrorists irrespective of their party affiliations.

Hunger strike

FROM PAGE 12 ple in the post-polls period, they

A large number of Hindus fled their homes in Gournadi and Agailjhara due to violence, and took

nelter in Gopalganj, they said. Criticising the inaction on the part the law-enforcement agencies, they demanded exemplary punish-

ment to the culprits. They also protested the comnents by the home minister on the incidents, and reiterated the demand for proper inquiries into the

Report on ministry

FROM PAGE 1 Ministry of Labour and Employment

and the newly proposed Ministry of Over three million Bangladeshis working abroad annually remit nearly two billion US dollars (Taka

10,000 crore), the single largest source of foreign currency for Bangladesh. The BNP was committed to the people for the well-being of Bangladeshi expatriates and the government in principle has given priority to look into the interest of the Bangladeshi expatriates as they are

currency for the national economy, the minister said. He said a lot of Bangladeshis have to suffer miseries in different ways and the proposed ministry will look into their problems and try to

remedy the situation.

one of the major sources of foreign

Old gangsters

wiped out all opposition activities for five years. BNP activists were either chased away from the area or framed in various criminal cases. The local administration acted according to their wishes and came

down heavily on the opposition.

stabbed a young man brutally right in front of their shop a few months ago. The young man was carrying a bundle of posters, which announced the opening of a training centre in the area for sewing classes. "The local AL activists thought it was a BNP poster and attacked the

Khokon said that AL activists

poor boy without even verifying. When the assailants left, the boy lay there with the posters stained in blood," Khokon said. The young man is still recovering but he could not attend the training course again. "The police remained totally

indifferent to the incident while the assailants moved freely in front of our eyes. The same people are now hiding in different villages of Kotalipara." Khokon said. At Morrelgani thana about 30 kilometres from Bagerhat, the new police chief. Yunus Ali, directed his

office to intervene in places where troubles erupted over forcible occupation of shops and party offices. The thana was informed that the MP-elect from the area, Mufti Mohammad Abdus Sattar was on

his way to Dhaka to take oath as a

staff over walkie-talkie from his

lawmaker. A few minutes later, the land phone on the OC's table rang. Yunus Ali replied, immediately brightening

phone was the Mufti himself, asking Yunus for some incomprehensible favours. Yunus assured the new MP that he would definitely "look into the matter as suggested" in a docile voice. Meanwhile, an AL leader and

withdraw his revolver and the hunting gun from the thana custody. "I can return you the hunting gun but I am yet to receive any instruction about revolvers or any other

Chairman of the Khaulia Union

Parishad, Abul Khaer appeared in

the room and enquired if he could

small arms," replied Yunus. Khaer told the police chief that all AL activists were living in extreme fear in his area and that many had left their home. He needed the revolver to protect himself.

"Most of these hoodlums have emerged after the election, and they are threatening us everyday," he said to the OC, who remained unmoved about the plea to release Khaer's revolver from his custody.

At Morrelganj bazaar, by the river

Panguchi, people still discussed

about the elections. They talked about how the AL had "insulted" the elderly, religious minded people by widely circulating a poster that depicted a street dog with a beard wearing a white round cap. "This poster angered my father,

my mother and also everyone in my locality," said a local journalist. Hostility always has a long leg-

"It does not end automatically on petition. Besides, there are several