US slams Musharraf Rupsha Bridge for his bid to broaden powers

AFP, Central Point, Oregon

US President George W. Bush steered clear of criticising Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf's controversial moves to broaden his powers, praising instead his help in the "war on terrorism."

"He's still tight with us on the war against terror, and that's what I appreciate," the US leader told reporters Thursday during a brief trip here before vowing to "work with our friends and allies to promote democracy.

"We'll stay in touch with President Musharraf in more ways than one," Bush said, two days before Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage was to convey US concerns over Musharraf's initiatives during a stop in Islamabad.

Bush's comments, which came in response to reporters' questions about the political situation in Pakistan, appeared to strike a less challenging tone than reactions from his own spokesman and the US State Department. Farlier White House spokes-

man Ari Fleischer upbraided Musharraf, saying the US president "expects" the army chief, who seized power in a bloodless 1999 coup, to fulfill his promise to hold free and fair elections. "It's important for Pakistan to

follow the path to democracy. The president believes that the path to democracy is the best path for all nations." Fleischer told reporters.

"We're continuing to monitor events in Pakistan and be in touch with the government in Pakistan." Fleischer said, as Bush stopped here to lay out a plan to prevent

2 snatchers held with revolver at Motijheel

UNB, Dhaka

Two snatchers along with a foreignmade revolver were arrested from a bus in the city's Motijheel area

Police with the help of local people arrested Salam and Chanchol alias Kaiol during their bid to loot the belongings of passengers in the morning.

The two sustained injuries as the passengers beat them.

N' ganj clash

The bullet-injured were identified as Zakir Hossain, Salimullah, Jasim, Mokter, Jahangir, Monir, Abu Salam and Rahman.

Of them, Zakir and Salimullah were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

In an instant protest, transport workers put up barricade on Dhaka-Munshiganj road, disrupting traffic for four hours. Additional police were deployed in the area to fend off

Musharraf, who declared himself president in June 2001 announced several "irreversible" constitutional changes Wednesday, declaring that he did not need parliamentary approval.

Among the most controversial is the establishment of a powerful National Security Council comprising four military chiefs and eight civilian politicians who will oversee government and "foreign policy decisions and national issues.'

"We are concerned that his (Musharraf's) recent decision could it make more difficult to build strong democratic institutions in Pakistan," said deputy State Department spokesman Philip

For nearly a year, the United States has tried to strike a balance between acknowledging Pakistan's help in the "war on terrorism" Bush declared after the September 11 terrorist attacks, and pushing Musharraf towards

On Wednesday, the Pakistani leader, who also gave himself the power to sack an elected parliament, defended his National Security Council plan by saying that including the military in politics would prevent future coups.

Malibagh incident ISA demands arrest of killers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Islami Shsantantra Andolon (ISA) vesterday demanded arrest of and stern action against persons responsible for the killing of three madrassah students and another person at Malibagh in the city

It also announced a fresh agitation programme to press its

The programme includes a rally on August 30 at 4:00 pm at the North Gate of Baitul Mukarram mosque, visiting the spot at Malibagh where

acy' against Islam and the Muslims.

demanded adequate compensation for auto-rickshaw drivers and work-

Munshigani on August 28 to protest firing' in Munshiganj recently.

Earlier, leaders and activists of the ISA gathered near the Muktangon premises chanting slogans demanding arrest of Towfiq, the alleged mastermind behind the

capacity of 100,000 MW to fill the gap

Environmental experts say

between demand and supply.

Gas pipeline

work of pipelines has a capacity of

"We have a lot of experience in

IOC is also assessing opportuni-

Delhi: Energy plan

action-plan over the coming weeks

and months," the prime minister said and added that India's 29 state

ments provide the lead, the private sector and even households will surely follow, not least because energy conservation makes economic sense." he said

Abdul Kalam, too has agreed to a comprehensive audit of power consumption in his 330-roomed presidential palace, which is serviced by 1,200 employees besides the secret service.

world, energy 'conservation' has in 'walk the talk'," the premier added.

The two-day global conference is being jointly hosted by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FICCI) and the government, which only recently passed

legislation on energy consumption. The legislation, which India claims is the world's "most comprehensive law," provides for provisions such as energy audits, energy labelling and

managing demand. Demand for power in India is steadily rising by eight per cent per annum, and it is estimated that the

country needs a staggering 200 billion dollars to generate new power

Ctg port FROM PAGE 1

Organised gangs of criminals attacked crew of foreign ships inside the jetty area on several occasions last month and snatched valuables. A container was broken and goods looted on June 30. Snatchers stabbed a crew and snatched money and valuables from him on July 8 from jetty no. 3.

Two CPA security men and an employee of a stevedoring firm were stabbed by snatchers last month, port

the four were killed and submitting a memorandum to the home ministry on September 12

The ISA made the demand and announced the programme at a rally on the road beside the Muktangan in

Addressing the rally, Chairman of the ISA and Pir of Charmonai Maulana Fazlul Karim called for a united movement to foil the 'conspir-

He stressed building a movement for establishing Islami

Turning to other issues, he ers of Adamjee Jute Mills.

The ISA will also hold a rally at the killing of Rezaul Karim in 'police

energy consumption is the only administrations too must participate escape route from further degrada in the national programme. tion of the environment. "If the central and state govern-

The haze, known as the "Asian brown cloud," which currently spans an area seven times the size of India across all of South Asia, could modify rainfall patterns and the intensity of Vajpayee said India's new president,

For too long, throughout the

43.45 million tonnes a year. practice meant energy 'conversapipelines. We are keen to do overtion'. This time I ask of all of us, to seas jobs," he said

ties in Bangladesh for gas pipeline projects and a team of officials had been asked to assess the market in IOC is keen to sell products such as diesel, bitumen and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) to Bangladesh. It hopes to supply products from its

refineries in the east coast, which have spare capacity. IOC plans to bid jointly with Emirates National Oil Co for a contract to maintain refineries in Bahrain

and Jordan, he said. There is a refinery coming up in Oman. Right from day one they want to give an operation contract," he

IOC has seven refineries with a capacity to process 770,000 barrels per day. It also has two subsidiaries, hich can refine 200,000 bpd.

The company, along with its subsidiaries, controls more than 40 per cent of India's capacity of 2.3

IOC has operated its refineries at about 85 per cent of their capacity in recent months, down from 90 per cent a year ago because local demand has fallen.



visited the project area to see real

According to RBP sources. the bridge will be constructed on 308 pile nillers, which will take a load of at least 3.000 tonnes at a time.

When asked, authorities of the construction firm 'Shimsu-ITD' did not take a serious view of such faults. They cited examples of Pakshey bridge

Soil condition is mainly responsible for pillars failing to bear the capacity load, they said.

It has been alleged that low quality stone and cement were used in making pile pillars. On the basis of this allegation, engineers and consultants have rejected a huge quantity of low quality stones used by local contractors.

There are allegations that low quality stones have been imported from Thailand by Shimizu-ITD company and 'choked cement dust' is being used for making pile pillars.

The last consignment of such 'low quality' Thai stones reached the RBP site on August 10.

Shimizu imported 10,500 tonnes of such low quality stones, which have been stored in the godown, said day labourers who are agitating since last Sunday in protest against nonpayment of wages, alleged misconduct and sexual harassment of women labourers by Thai personnel

Seventeen women have stopped work at the washing plant and another six women at the kitchen of Shimizu-ITD company, they claimed.

Court fees

FROM PAGE 1

Amir-ul-Islam, also convenor of the council, told newsman that the government increased the court fees three to four times than the normal. He also urged the government to withdraw the stamp duty on certificate of hereditary.

He demanded repeal of the Special Powers Act, the Public Safety Act and the Speedy Trial Act, and an end to the unfair use of section 54 of the Criminal Procedure Code

Among others, Barrister Shafiq Ahmed, Advocate Abdul Baset Maiumder, Advocate Md. Ozaer Faruq, Advocate SM Altaf Hossain and Advocate Sayed Ahmed, and presidents and general secretaries of 56 district bar associations were present at the press conference.

Cell phone

FROM PAGE 12 to launch the service by June next year," Posts and Telecommunications Minister Aminul Haque told The Daily Star.

The minister also said there should be a BTTB subsidiary to run the cell phone services. The latest tender cancels an

earlier bid to implement the project on a turnkey basis. The turnkey project was on supplier's credit, which ECNEC did not approve of French telecommunications

vendor Alcatel, Germany's Siemen's, Sweden's Ericsson, Korea Telecom and China Machinery and Equipment Import and Export Corporation (CMEC) had participated in the turnkey

The BTTB mobile project would increase, in phases, to one million cellular phones and cost about Tk 2,500 crore, sources said.

BTTB officials said the tariff plan for its mobile phones is vet to be

"It largely depends on the suppliers, as it is a turnkey project," one key official of the BTTB mentioned. However, he said the tariff would be competitive

Another BTTB official said the mobile phones would have fixed line connectivity and there would not be any charge for incoming calls. According to a government-

sponsored study, the country, with a population of 13 crore, is likely to have a demand for 25 lakh mobile phones and 10 lakh fixed line phones by 2005.

It currently has some 700,000 landline phones operated by the BTTB and about 900,000 cellular phones operated by four private

This move would allow the BTTB, which currently enjoys monopoly in landline telephony, to enter the cellular mobile market.

Careers

FROM PAGE 12

They are the modern version of coach supervisors of earlier times, looking after passenger comfort during long journeys. Most of these young men are graduates and some are even pursuing further studies at the university. Their duties include supplying snacks and cold drinks to passengers as well as attending to their other needs.

Lately, new opportunities have opened up in the field of elementary computer work, employing many young men and women in fax, email and courier services

There are still many unemployed youths in the capital, some of whom lead a life full of frustration due to unemployment as they would not work blue-collar jobs mainly due to the social stigma attached to it. Yet, there are some others who have the spirit of enterprise and challenge, and do not mind doing an honest day's work, and would take up any honest occupation. They are not deterred by the sneers of some sections of the society who regard such occupations as lowly. They ignore such social prejudices and strive ahead with determination.



Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the House Abdul Hamid holds a press conference outside the Jatiya Sangsad Building yesterday, as TV cameramen were denied entry inside.

> already been shifted as an agenda of the JEC meeting, it was learnt.

Considering the asymmetrical economic parameters, Dhaka is likely to request Delhi to make unilateral concessions in several areas as a manifestation of a policy gesture to create congenial conditions for furthering improving bilat-

eral economic ties houses and offices in India.

Hundreds of Indian business concerns and citizens are working in Bangladesh. This has to be reciprocated, they feel. The issue of frequent incidents of

innocent Bangladeshis is also likely to come up for discussion at the talks. The Indian minister may be requested to take steps to minimise the incidents that strain bilateral Outstanding border issues

notorious name in the transport

Munna had been staying with

Titon, another most wanted crimi-

nal, at a rented house in the canton-

ment area before the latter was

accused of murders and others

crimes in ten cases filed with Kafrul.

Kotwali and Cantonment police

stations, is now hiding at Kafrul,

Arman, accused in three cases

with Ramna police station, is report-

edly staying in the city's Eskaton

area. He is a close associate of the

Jubo League (youth front of the

criminal cases with Ramna police

station, including one under the

Public Safety Act. is now abroad. A

former madrassah student. Masud

is a close associate of Trimoti Bain

alias Subrata Bain, another notori-

ous criminal charged with multiple

accused in 14 cases filed with

Cantonment and Kafrul police

stations, is hiding at Ibrahimpur,

sources said. The cases include

four under the Explosive

Substances Act and two under the

Arms Act. His brother Ataur Rahman

alias Azad, accused in 19 cases

including one for murder, was

gunned down on the court premises

notorious 'Seven Star' group and

accused in 17 cases filed with the

Ramna police station, left the coun-

try after the murder of Chanchal, a

changed his name to Fateh Ali. He

had formed the 'Seven Star' with

Moallah Masud, Tikka, Jov.

Chanchal and Babu before he

He married a Muslim girl and

Subrata Bain, leader of the

in Old Dhaka on June 29, 1999.

member of the group.

Mashiur Rahman Kochi.

Mollah Masud, accused in nine

Awami League) leader Liakat.

Abbas alias Killer Abbas,

arrested.

sources said.

Bangladesh side is also

make a courtesy call on Acting President Jamiruddin Sircar and Prime Minister Khaleda 7ia

Hasina tomorrow. He will also hold talks with

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman. the martyrs of the War of Liberation.

Foreign Minister Morshed Khan, on whose invitation the Indian minister is coming, will host a dinner in his honour this evening.

affairs and a member of the Indian Cabinet Committee on Security. Yashwant Sinha was involved in the Agra Summit between Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf and Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. He had served in diplomatic postings in Bonn and

Most wanted yet free to roam

Mohammad Alauddin, accused of murders and other crimes in 11 cases filed with Tejgaon police station, was staying in Tejgaon area when he was killed. He ran in the last Dhaka City Corporation election

for ward commissioner Mohammad Hannan alias Pichhi Hannan, accused in 11 cases filed with Tejgaon police station, is hiding at Joydevpur, sources said.

Liakat Hossain and his brother Hannan, both accused in a case filed with the Motilheel police station, are now hiding in Keranigani near the city. Hannan is the former general secretary of the Siddeswari College students union. Agha Shamim, another most

wanted criminal and booked in three cases filed with the Kotwali police station, has left the country for Sweden along with his family mem-Jafar Ahmed Manik, accused of

murders and other crimes with Motijheel and Sabujbagh police stations, has also left the country. Sagar alias Tokai Sagar,

accused in seven criminal cases filed with Cantonment, Kotwali and Ramna police stations, is now in the United States. The cases include two under the Explosive Substances Act. The Detective Branch (DB) of

Police arrested Khorshed Alam alias Rasu from the city's Dhanmondi Club on May 28. Rasu, who operated in the

Moghbazar-Siddheswari area, is accused in two cases filed with Ramna police station. The DB also arrested Khondokar

Naim Ahmed alias Titon from his rented Cantonment house on June Titon is accused of murders and other crimes in five cases filed with Dhanmondi and Hazaribagh police

this, sources pointed out.

Hamid to boycott CPA confce

they need to gather experience as the next CPA conference would be held in Dhaka

The deputy leader of the opposition said he wrote to the acting speaker on Aug 7 requesting him to include an opposition member in consultation with the leader of the opposition, but his request went

Following a reminder on Aug 20, a deputy secretary replied that none else could be put on the delegation at this stage and requested him not to stay out of the delegation. Asked whether acting Speaker

Siddiqui could lead the delegation, as there is no deputy speaker to take up the presidency in case the president falls sick, the opposition leader refrained from making any com-Hamid, however, termed the

attitude of the acting speaker naked partisanship and said he informed the acting speaker about his decision not to attend the conference as

He said he would inform the CPA secretary general about the matter and convey to him his regrets about not attending the conference.

Opposition whip Mirza Azam was resent in the press conference.

Meanwhile, parliament authorities vesterday barred photojournalists and cameramen of both print and electronic media from entering the Sangsad Bhaban to cover a press conference of the opposition.

The parliament security first

obstructed all the journalists. Later,

getting the green signal from the

higher authorities, only the reporters were allowed in. Deputy Leader of the Opposition Md Abdul Hamid Advocate requested the Sergeant at Arms to allow cameras, but to no avail Finally he held the press conference

sitting on the wall by the lake outside

An angry deputy leader of the opposition said, "The acting speaker

the parliament building

and forced me to hold press conference outside the parliament building. What they (govt) are doing across the country was manifest in

their behavior today in parliament." He said earlier also, the speaker had not let the cameramen in the parliament that forced them to hold press conference outside the parliament building.

Reacting to the incident, Awami League whip Mirza Azam, who was also present in the press briefing, said the speaker (acting speaker) did not do the right thing and this showed that "this government does not believe in democracy".

Regarding the 48th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association conference in Namibia. he questioned how eight officials could be inducted in a 16-member delegation that will attend a parliamentary conference on global

Official talks today

dollars.

The two foreign ministers will lead their respective sides in the official talks, to begin shortly after Sinha's arrival

The sources said the entire gamut of bilateral relations will come up for discussion in an effort to strengthen neighbourly coopera-Dhaka will take the opportunity to

express its concern over its huge trade imbalance with Delhi and is likely to reiterate its plea for dutyfree access of Bangladeshi products to India, agreed to by the top leadership there earlier. Dhaka's annual exports to India

(CPD), a leading non-government think tank in Bangladesh, noted that Bangladesh's formal and informal trade deficit with India stood at 2.74 billion dollars in 1999. In this regard, Dhaka is also likely to insist on an early meeting of

the Joint Economic Commission

(JEC), where issues of Dhaka's

is worth around 50 million US dollars

against imports of about 1.2 billion

The Centre for Policy Dialogue

concern on bilateral economic ties are likely to get focussed attention. The issue of trans-shipmment which the Indian side has been

demanding for many years has

area in Moghbazar and is often seen

near a sporting club at Gopibagh.

Police reports say he has close ties

accused of murder and other crimes

in eight cases filed with

police stations, has recently left the

Joy had links with a gold smug-

Haris Ahmed accused in 18

gling racket and was seen in the

cases filed with Mohammadpur,

Dhanmondi Motiiheel and Mirour

police stations, is occasionally seen

at Mohammadpur and stavs at the

brothers. One of his younger broth-

ers is a lieutenant colonel in the

army and another, Tipu, was killed

while Haris was in jail. Joseph,

another brother of Haris, is now in

most wanted and accused of mur-

ders and other crimes in three cases

filed with the Gulshan police station.

has recently left the country

leader of the Jativatabadi Chhatra

Dal (JCD), student front of the ruling

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP)

and had links with influential leaders

Prakash Kumar Biswas,

accused in an arms case filed with

the Mirpur police station, is also out

of the country. He is the brother of

notorious criminal Bikash, a rival of

Jabbar Munna, accused in nine

criminal cases with Tejgaon police

station, is reportedly hiding in

Keraniganj. He was a leader of the

Jubo Dal. vouth front of the BNP.

and a close associate of Hiron, a

He is a former Titumir College

recently.

of the party.

Kala Jahangir.

Syed Imam Hossain, listed as

Haris is the eldest among five

Noor Jahan Road of the area.

airport area prior to his departure.

Khondokar Tanvir Islam Joy,

with some ruling party men.

Bangladeshi business leaders say they are not only facing insurmountable difficulties in exporting 'a limited basket of items' to Indian due to high tariff barriers but also being discouraged in setting up business

border firing by BSF and killing of

including demarcation of 6.5 kilometres, transfer of enclaves and adverse possessions are also likely

During his two day trip to Bangladesh, Yashwant Sinha will

over around 20 fugitive criminals

who have taken refuge in that coun-

The Indian external affairs minister will call on Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh

Yashwant Sinha is arriving on a special flight from Kathmadhu. From Zia international Airport, he will go straight to the National Memorial at Savar to pay homage to

Knowledgeable on foreign coming to Kurigram from the capital this correspondent that all the four

> for confirmation. upazila; Enamul Huq, 22, from Pabna town and Mokshed Ali, 38,

The civil surgeon's office yestertake steps to ascertain if Aedes mosquitoes exist in Pabna. For this, an experts team from Dhaka is likely to arrive here today.

repeated calls for arranging extra beds for them, the government could allocate only 76 beds. could not arrange extra beds for

dengue patients in any hospital

while the number of patients contin-

Patients with symptoms of dengue usually rush to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital for admis-

sion and they have to be accommo-

dated on the floor. Most of the

Nuri Begum. She hailed from Rajibpur upazila.

When contacted over telephone last night, Deputy Commissioner of Kurigram Mezbaul Alam said, "I have not heard of any death from dengue in the district. I came to know about Nuri from newspaper

Civil Surgeon of Kurigram Dr Md Mzaffar Hossain also denied that Nuri died of DHF. "Nuri died on way to Gaibandha

from Rajibpur, 35 km from the district town. It is a remote area, close to Jamalpur district." he said. Asked if he had taken steps to confirm if the girl died of dengue, he

which are available only in Dhaka." The deputy commissioner has asked the local paurasava authorities take measures for spraying insecticide in all passenger buses

Our Pabna Correspondent reported that four persons with suspected dengue fever are under reatment at the Sadar Hospital. The civil surgeon yesterday told

had symptoms of dengue, but doctors were waiting for blood tests The four are Munirul Islam, 22; Laluddin, 35, from Sujanagar

from Dogachhi in Sadar upazila. day urged the higher authorities to

dengue patients continued in most of the city hospitals. Despite Till vesterday, the health ministry

Meanwhile, crisis of beds for

patients are children, doctors said. Meantime, entomologists have cautioned that the current dengue outbreak will last at least till late October since Aedes population in

the city and other urban areas is

stated to be quite substantial. "From previous experience, we know that dengue outbreak usually lasts till September, but this year we apprehend a longer period of Aedes breeding than in the previous years," said Dr Monzur Choudhury,

He went on. "From house to house surveys, we know that density of Aedes population in the city is guite high. With the frequent rains, Aedes has an added advantage for laying eggs and that favours denque attack this year."

Vehicle vacuum

FROM PAGE 12

vehicles charge the passengers the same fare as two-stroke autorickshaws, despite the price of CNG is about five times lower than petrol. When asked, some owners and

drivers of CNG-run three-wheelers

have reasoned that the fare is the same because the price of a CNGrup three-wheeler is around Tk 55 thousand more than that of a twostroke three-wheeler The price of a cubic metre CNG is

Tk 7.45, while petrol sells at Tk 28 a litre. A CNG-driven vehicle with gas of Tk 6 runs the same distance as a two-stroke three-wheeler with petrol of Tk 28.

Tendulkar

FROM PAGE 1

Giles. The Don had compiled 29 centuries in his illustrious career. Tendulkar's maiden century at Headingley, also meant he is now only four tons behind the all-time

mark held by another legendary

compatriot Sunil Gavaskar.

Law and order

taking no pre-emptive steps despite prior information from intelligence agencies on some major incidents

They mentioned that the government has already taken various short-term and long-term measures to detect roots of crimes and deal with criminals and their godfathers. They referred to enactment of the anti-terrorism law and deployment of paramilitary BDR in the city to check crimes and said those did not yield desired results due to a section

of law enforcers' negligence to duty.

But a member of the cabinet

committee told this correspondent

that some steps taken by the com-

mittee, including BDR deployment, failed due to opposition from within the ruling party. He however did not want to be identified. He said that despite inadequate cooperation from police, deployment of BDR was causing gradual improvement of law and order. But most of the ruling party leaders in the city deadly opposed BDR deployment as criminals were

being arrested irrespective of their

party affiliation. Officials noted that the prime minister had asked the home ministry to take all steps needed to curb crimes. especially killing, abduction and extortion. But she is now quite annoyed with the performance of the home ministry in this regard.

Against this backdrop, the prime minister has now given directives for immediate formation of judicial probe body after any major incident of crime and for taking stern action against those involved in it. As per her directives, several

udicial probe bodies have already een formed, including one for the Dhaka University incident and another for the mosque-related incident at Malibagh Meanwhile, the government has

decided to deploy BDR in the capital again to improve law and law order

play their role in a massive hunt for criminals to improve the prevailing situation. Besides, a number of long-term steps like modernisation of police

force, strengthening of the CID,

better training of police and forma-

tion of counter intelligence unit are

in progress, sources mentioned Fertiliser

FROM PAGE 1 the agriculture ministry on August 17 asked the customs commissioner to help enable the importers unload the

But customs officials said the

quality of the fertiliser must be chem-

ically tested before unloading. The

fertiliser "as early as possible".

ships are now being guarded by customs security personnel President of Mongla Customs C&F Agents' Association Syed Mustahid Ali said that 15 importers opened LC for importing 19,213 tonnes of TSP fertilizer from Yunan Phosphate Fertilizer Industrial

Company Ltd of China. He claimed

that customs officials stopped unloading the fertilizer without asking the importers to show necessary documents and properly checking those. The ships will have to pay 7000 dollars per day as demurrage due to the "unreasonable" decision of the customs authorities to "serve ill

correspondent. It was learnt that the customs authorities have sent samples of the TSF fertilizer to BSTI and Soil Research Development Institute for chemical test.

motive of another group of import-

ers", Ali alleged while talking to this

Meanwhile, the Chinese exporter has expressed dissatisfaction at this. The importers have been informed by the exporter that another contract for supply of one lakh tonnes of TSP now stands cancelled, the sources said.

Secretarial probe report FROM PAGE 1 Netrokona, and Manikganj outright have become active to influence the Till yesterday, the food ministry

probe body headed by Joint Secretary Yakub Ali however remained tightlipped, not to divulge anything of the findings. Meanwhile, another committee headed by a director at the director-

ate of food -- Aminul Haq -- is now on a whirlwind tour of nine districts to probe allegations of purchase of low-quality imported wheat during the procurement. Following a government instruction to segregate the low-quality

insect-infected wheat from good

lots in all public granaries, district

controllers of food (DCFs) in Pabna,

Bogra, Mymensingh, Satkhira,

Dinajpur, Tangail, Jamalpur,

denied having any bad quality wheat in stocks under their disposal This irked the food ministry and

the food directorate alike, prompting the authorities to form the committee for verification. Meanwhile, on Monday, the disaster management and relief ministry also cautioned the food

ministry against distribution of lowgrade foodgrains under its postflood relief programmes. The relief ministry also wanted the food ministry to segregate the bad lots from the good ones. Meanwhile, some food officials

reportedly involved in the scam

media in an effort to shift the blames and responsibilities on others. On Thursday, when the prime minister reportedly scolded a ruling

ment were behind the scam.

body did not mention anything like

party lawmaker for his alleged involvement in irregularities in wheat procurement, a news agency quoted unnamed sources to report

that three ministers of the immediate past Awami League govern-This report was a talk of the town yesterday. It came as a great surprise to all concerned because there was no such allegation hitherto, and the food ministry probe

a leading entomologist. said, "We don't have the facilities for such sophisticated diagnostic tests,

Dengue onslaught