### The Baily Star

# NEWS

# Separate constituencies, Ensure safety direct elections sought

### Women at roundtable outline women representation in parliament

### STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Women activists at a roundtable in the city yesterday demanded separate constituencies and direct elections to women's seats in parliament.

They said there had been enough discourse on the issue; now it was time for action to ensure true and effective participation of women in policymaking.

"Women must have their own constituencies to make sure their representation." Rabia Bhuiyan, senior Supreme Court lawyer and former lawmaker, told the roundtable jointly organised by Women for Women, The Hunger Project Bangladesh and Kanyashishu Advocacy Forum.

Women have to determine their demands and then promote them precisely, she said.

Salma Khan, president of National Committee on Beijing Plus, said, "Political parties must make an honest commitment to nominate women candidates in constituencies that have electability.

Alluding to certain difficulties in introducing direct elections to women's reserved seats in parliament, Law Minister Moudud Ahmed

### Hasina favours direct polls to women's seats

### STAFF CORESPONDENT

Opposition chief Sheikh Hasina yesterday said direct elections to the seats reserved for women in parliament is needed if women leadership were to be promoted.

"The proposed 14th amendment to the constitution providing for indirect election to the reserved women seats cannot be accepted...," the opposition leader told leaders of a women-rights group styled Social Resistance Committee.

The women leaders told Hasina they would intensify their campaign to draw support for a direct election to the reserved seats. They handed over a memorandum to the opposition leader stressing the necessity of a direct ballot.

The memorandum said proper representation of women could never be ensured unless direct elections were held in the constituencies reserved for women. A mere increase in the number of women seats in parliament would not ensure women's will he a

said, "By increasing the number of reserved seats, we are proceeding gradually in women's empower-

ment, as nothing can be achieved overnight. Agreeing to the suggestion that the equal number of constituencies

reserved for women would facilitate their more effective representation, the minister said. "But the influence of money and muscle power in politics and elections must also be taken into account."

In its last election manifesto Bangladesh Nationalist Party pledged to increase women's seats parliament and arranging for direct elections to them. Moudud said the issue was just a proposal. "We are waiting to see

public opinions on that." He advised the women to join the political parties, work with women

politicians and those who had experience of elections at various levels, in their movement for direct elections for women. Citing some examples of the last

union parishad elections, rights activist Sharmeen Murshid of Brotee said women had proven their ability in successfully contending in direct elections. Obliging political parities to nominate women to vie in

Jewllery heist

for 7 days

day remand yesterday.

remand prayer.

remand expired.

FROM PAGE 12

corruption cases

3 remanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three people arrested in Bagerhat on

charge of the Karnaphuli Garden City

market heist were placed on a seven-

The Criminal Investigation

Department (CID) produced Lutfar

Rahman, son of Habibur Rahman

Anisuzzaman Chapal, son of Abul

Kalam Azad, and Milon before the

Court of Chief Metropolitan

Magistrate, Dhaka with a 10-day

other arrestees on the same charge to

Dhaka Central Jail after their five-day

Zafar returns

The magistrate also sent eight

Zafar was taken to a Dhaka

hospital in 2002 with a kidney com-

plaint. He returned to Australia to live

with one of his daughters settled in

Sydney. He underwent kidney trans-

pre-independence movement in the

1960s as a Maoist leader and com-

manded a huge following. He held

Zafar took up to politics during the

plantation on October 8 last year.

direct elections is a key area for women groups to work in, she added.

Former law minister Abdul Motin Khosru said ensuring women representation in parliament by doubling the reserved seats and introducing direct elections to them were among the election pledges of Awami League (AL). Terming the issue as a national one, he said his party was ready to support any effort in that direction

AL lawmaker Faruk Khan said all major political parties should nominate at least 20 to 25 percent women candidates for elections.

In his keynote paper, Hunger Project Country Director Professor Badiul Alam Majumdar observed, "Direct election is the only method consistent with both parliamentary democracy and empowerment of women. It will not only make the women MPs people's representatives but also help them develop their own constituencies, making the reservation system unnecessary in the long run.

Taleya Rahman of Democracywatch and Khushi Kabir. among others, also attended the roundtable chaired by Professor Rounag Jahan.

Human-chain

president of the BFUJ, alleged

government-supported goons were

harassing pressmen throughout the

Rajshahi, Jhalokathi and Pirojpore.

Amiya Ghatak Pulak and Sheikh

Meanwhile, Ain O Salish Kendra

government to protect newsmen.

the rule of law especially in Natore

following threats on journalists'

government's role after miscreants

allegedly belonging to ruling BNP

ablaze the houses of opposition

Awami League supporters in Natore

recently and threatened to attack

forest department involvement in

the crime, but it was based on local

people's information. However, the

story carried a mistake. It should

have read Tk 4,000 crore worth of

trees have been stripped of, instead

of Tk 4 crore. We regret the inadver-

tent error in figures. Besides, Ashit

himself admitted -- again keeping

the forest department officials

above the allegations -- that in the

last eight years, trees worth Tk

Iwo cops hurt

criminals were getting ready for a

killing mission in the city. They

belong to notorious 'Ahad Bahini' of

Khulna linked with an outlawed

organisation, said the officer-in-

Combing operation is on in the

city to nab the rest of the members

Avenue office yesterday and senior

leaders there asked people to

observe the hartal to show 'no-

confidence' in the present govern-

AL leaders Amir Hossain Amu,

Tofail Ahmed, Mukul Bose, Abdul

were arrested at their city resi-

dences ahead of the hartal.

charge of Khulna Police Station.

2,000 crore were stolen.

FROM PAGE 1

of the outfit.

Hartal

FROM PAGE 1

ment

chair.

strike.

dent.

The ASK also criticised the

FROM PAGE 1

country.

meeting.

lives.

iournalists there.

auoted

Our reply

Rejoinder

#### FROM PAGE 1

chairman of the BDMS. "We will wait another week to observe what steps are being taken by the authority."

"We want to run our businesses without interference of extortionists and other criminals. And we want the guaranty for a safe return home," Amir remarked.

The business leaders said they would hold a co-ordination meeting and finalise the course of movement. "We are under pressure from the business community to go for tougher movement," another member of the delegation said.

Bellal Hossain Chowdhury organising secretary of BDMS Chittagong unit, said, "We also have asked the minister to help stop random abductions of businessmen n Chittagong."

Bellal alleged police failed to arrest the principal accused of the abductions, muggings, robberies and killings in Chittagong, which rose to a new high recently. He said the reputation of Chittagong as a port city was marred and business

firms started winding up from there as law and order deteriorated.

The business leaders also recommended tracking mobile phone channels to hunt down the criminals, alleging mobile phones were used in 90 percent of crimes.

The inspector general of police. who was also present at the meeting, said they had certain limitations in combating crime. In reply, the business delegation urged the government to invest more money for logistic facilities and firearms for the sake of people's welfare. "We want to see the police functioning properly," a member of the team

said. The business leaders suggested installing close circuit televisions at some 20 major points in the capital to contain crime. They also voiced introducing lathi-bashi system in different parts of the country.

meeting.

# Mayor again pleads

#### FROM PAGE 1

Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka at a meeting with the members of Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Dhaka vesterday.

Top business leaders however suggested the government form an urban development regulatory council for better coordination among these agencies.

Khoka pointed out that it is difficult for the mayor to implement and bring about a positive change in the current situation. "Besides, we have serious resource constraint. We don't have the logistical support to provide better services for a massive population of Dhaka," he

explained. Journalist leaders asked the For instance, the mayor said, the government to ensure safety of DCC spends Tk 60 crore on keeping ournalistsespecially in Natore, the city clean but it has only Tk 14 crore earmarked in its budget for the job. "So, we have no option but to Among others, Wahidur Rashid increase taxes. Two more city Murad, Abdul Jalil Bhuiyan, Omar corporations have been created but Faruk, Shah Alamgir, Biman the budget has been reduced .. " Bhattachariya, M Kamal Uddin,

Khoka agreed to some proposals of MCCI President Kutubuddin Mohiuddin, were also present at the Ahmed to involve the chamber to maintain the parks and road islands including Pantha Kunja, Farmgate (ASK), a legal aid agency, issued a Udyan, the stretch opposite of the press release yesterday urging the Adamjee Court and the road islands from Dainik Bangla crossing to It urged the government to revive Raiuk Bhaban.

The DCC is involving the private sector in managing its wards for a longer period. "We need to make our organisational activities smaller and involve the private sector to improve the situation," Khoka added.

Earlier, the MCCI president suggested setting up of a mobile court under a first class magistrate at every important crossing from

6 to die FROM PAGE 12

e court also fined all the six Tk duhhad 20

### Customs official Tk 27 lakh looted shot dead in Ctg

### UNB, Chittagong

customs official of the Export Processing Zone (EPZ) unit was gunned down by unknown assailants at Halishahar in the port city last

Mokhter Hossain Afrat, 35, a resident of Halishahar Block-L

came in a microbus and called Afrat out of his residence at 8:30pm. Witnesses said the gang members had an altercation with him and, at one stage, they shot him point

Afrat was shot in the chest and abdomen. He died instantly.

could not be known immediately. On information, police rushed to

**BNP** leader hurt

The Dhaka Metropolitan Police commissioner and high officials of the ministry were also present at the

(BNP), was critically injured in a bomb attack in front of the party

9:00am to 6:00pm to deal with the law-breakers

He urged the mayor to take steps to increase civic amenities ease the intolerable traffic congestion, free the footpaths of hawkers and improve law and order in the capital. The unbearable traffic jam in Dhaka has adversely affected the

image of the country as well as its economic development, the MCCI president noted. "It is undoubtedly a negative experience for a foreign investor to get stranded in traffic jam for hours on end before reaching Motijheel from Sonargaon or

Sheraton (hotels)." "The corporation should take urgent steps to project our image as a civilised society, "Kutub felt.

Financial constraint is the main problem to the development of Dhaka city. For the last 10 years, there has not been any increase in the holding tax collection. Besides corruption, there is a shortage of trained and experienced manpower to collect holding tax, The MCCI president added.

MCCI Vice-president Shahab Sattar, former MCCI president Laila Rahman, Bangladesh Employers Federation President M Anis Ud Dowla, and Women Entrepreneurs Association, Bangladesh President Rokia A Rahman also spoke

### **RPC** project FROM PAGE 12

The 'bhaban' top shots are asking for an unusually high commission and it has scared some bidders away, they said.

Partly funded by the German financier KfW, the RPC floated the tender few months back for engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) contract for the first phase of the 450mw power plant at

Kadda, near Savar. The first phase of the project naka

FROM PAGE 1 provided by civil security provider Vigilance Razzak left his fourth-floor office a

Tuesdav.

prayers

FROM PAGE 1

less victims.

turned down.

SP's office also.

number of policemen.

few minutes before the robberv in the The dead was identified as

Witnesses said a gang of 10 motivated kidnaps over the years.

blank

The motive behind the killing

the spot and recovered the body.

Liaquat Sarder, senior vice-

president of Rampal upazla unit of

Bangladesh Nationalist Party

in bomb attack STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

office at about 8:00pm on Tuesday. According to witnesses, uniden tified miscreants hurled a bomb at Liaquat, also a former chairman of

Gouramva Union Parishad, while he was talking to some people. The miscreants left the scene, exploding two more bombs.

### JP wants govt FROM PAGE 1

Party yesterday evening at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban. "An assurance on fulfilling the demands should be made on the floor of the House," Fazle Rabbi

said Asked if they had made any contact with the ruling deputies, the JP leaders said they talked on the phone earlier in the day, but no discussion on a meeting between the two sides took place Earlier in the morning, a joint meeting of the party's presidium mem-bers and lawmakers, chaired by Ershad, censured the government for barring the former president from going abroad.

GM Kader, a JP deputy and asking for police protection during the brother of the deposed president, planned visit, but their request was told reporters the meeting termed the government action a flagrant violation of constitutional rights. DC's office for two hours yesterday

The joint meeting also expressed deep concern over the downslide of law and order and demanded an immediate halt to violence in Natore.

The JP (Ershad), second largest opposition in parliament, has been boycotting the House since February 8 following a stormy walkout to protest government bar on Ershad's visit abroad. The 11th session of the eighth parliament which has been running without the main opposition Awami League like in three previous sessions, passed last three days without opposition.

vesterday. Local AL claimed police Among others, Shamsul Haque, were declining to record any case in Syeda Razia Fayez, TIM Fazle connection with the arsons on the plea Rabbi Chowdhury, ATM Ruhul Amin of the minister's order. Hawlader, HM Abdul Gaffar, Muiibur allegations, saying police were actu-Rahman, Abul Kashem, Syed Abu Hossain Babla, Sarder Amzao

Mobiphone Director Rajaul Kabir CCCI, and Abdur Razzak, security Shahin said his firm and Lucky guard of the Comtextile (HK) Limited International lost Tk 22 lakh in cash

and valuables The gang looted Tk 3.5 lakh in cash from Seastar, said the firm's Assistant Manager (Finance) Mahtabur

building, owned by the CCCI, the apex Rahman organisation of businesspeople, The robbers also took away valuheightening security fears in the prime ables including three digital cameras worth over Tk 1.5 lakh from lan Burke port city, plagued by ransom-Limited and Tk 30,000 from the EPB According to the CCCI guards, five

police said quoting their staff. robbers -- four in jeans and one in lungi The officials of the affected firms barged in on them during a shiftexpressed dissatisfaction at the laxity change in duty at about 10:20pm n security of the Chamber building, guarded by three men in shifts.

Two of the robbers, believed to "Three-man security of the building have been lurking in the upstairs in is not sufficient," one of them said, adding: "The incident exposed the run-up to the robbery, led the guards to the under-construction fifth floor at poor security of the building thought as aunpoint and held them hostage in a ell secured so far." room there, Double Mooring police Some policemen and locals linked quoted them as saying.

the robbery to a gang with close ties to Agrabad-based Kader group. The gang then robbed all the 11 rooms of the CCCI office and the Chittagong is in the harsh glare of offices of the EPB. Lucky International

media attention for ransom-motivated firm, its sister organisation Mobiphone kidnap of magnates in recent months. Cellular Limited, Seastar Shipping On July 24 last year, Jamal Uddin Ahmed Chowdhury was kidnapped Lines Ltd of the Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) and Hong Kong-based and no-one knows his fate.

morning. Identifying themselves as

Dulu's men, the callers threatened to

kill the newsmen if they dared to visit

that most men of the torched home-

steads went into hiding fearing further

women from a distance as we

approached the village," said

Janakantha photojournalist Selim

"We have nothing left -- mat-

resses, glasses, bowls -- nothing," 70-

/ear-old Abbas Ali was quoted as

saying. Once an affluent farmer.

Abbas Ali said his poutry farm, power

tiller and stocks of rice were burnt. His

four goats were also burnt to death

out of unconsciousness while wailing

over the rubble of her burnt out six-

Sheherjan Begum drifted in and

Another woman Fulera Begum

"Why was my house torched? Who

said, "Isn't there any government in

this country? Are ministers made for

burning our houses? Are police in this

will feed me now." said Moslem Uddin

Shah, an elderly doctor of the village

who said his house, dispensary and

drug store of 35 years were burnt

down although he never harmed

anyone in any way. Hundreds of relatives of the

affected people as well as neighboring

A temporary police camp with

/illagers rushed to the village trying

console the grief-stricken people.

country meant only for ministers?"

and six others and two cows looted.

attack and harassment by police.

The visiting journalists reported

"We could hear loud cries of

Natore again

Jahangir.

room house

buving house lan Burke Limited before On August 8, the body of abducted leaving a few minutes before Fajr shipping magnate Rezaur Rahman Zakir was retrieved from roadside CCCI President Amir Humayun During the last Fid-ul-Azha vaca

Mahmud Chowdhury said deposits tion, businessman Nasiruddin bought submitted by the participants of the his freedom in Chittagong, reportedly upcoming Chittagong International paying a ransom of Tk 10 lakh. Trade Fair (CITF) might have been the Another businessman Bablu was target of the robbers. kidnapped in Bandarban during the

The assistant commissioner of the vacation in the latest of high-profile Detective Branch of police in kidnaps in the port city. Chittagong, Safiquddin Chowdhury, said police were probing the incident that appeared mysterious He refused to give further details.

BDR deployed

and called upon the government to

declare emergency in the affected

village and arrange relief for the home-

A seven-member committee

formed by Natore district AL and local

Awami Lawyers' Council (ALC) is

seeking to visit the victims. The team,

which is to be led by former state

minister for fisheries and livestock Prof

Abdul Kuddus, wrote to the Natore

deputy commissioner (DC) and SP

The AL staged a sit-in in front of the

morning protesting the administra-

tion's non-cooperation. Later, an hour-

long sit-in was staged in front of the

the requested security could not be

arranged due to the inadequate

Natore AL also organised a protest

Meanwhile, Dalim and Dollar, two

other nephews of the deputy minister,

who allegedly led the arson attacks

were seen moving freely in town

The SP however refuted the

rally in front of the DC's office and

brought out processions in the town.

The DC and SP told reporters that

repeat of the previous system, the memorandum said.

All political parties including the BNP pledged to hold direct polls to the reserved constituencies before the last general election, the memorandum added.

The women leaders said women play a vital in role on the economic and social fronts, yet their political rights are being denied.

Hena Das, Ayesha Khanom, Aivi Rahman, Khushi Kabir, Rokeya Kabir, Salma Ali, Sahara Khatun, Momtaz Begum and Dil Afroz Begum were, among those, present.

### AL, BSD FROM PAGE 1

#### said the alliance government had

failed to run the country and "we are anxious about overall situation. including terrorism, communalism and corruption.'

"But we have been talking about an alternative stream apart from the bipartisan system," he said. "Awami League proposed for simultaneous movement... we will convey our decision later after discussing the matter in the party and with the Left Front," he added

Amir Hossain Amu, Abdur Razzak, Tofail Ahmed, Suranjit Sengupta, Obaidul Kader and Akhteruzzaman took part in the discussion from the Awami League, while Mobinul Haider Chowdhury, Abdullah Sarker, Shuvrangshu Chakraborty and Bazlur Rashid Firoz from the BSD.

## AC Akram

### FROM PAGE 1

Earlier, the Supreme Court had stayed the High Court order granting bail to AC Akram, but the order became inoperative as he had been set free from jail before the order came. Apparently embarrassed amid a public outcry over his release, the government decided to file a fresh leave to appeal petition.

Additional Attorney General AJ Mohammad Ali submitted that the High Court had granted bail to Akram for three months on health grounds on the basis of "mere statement" made by his counsel.

"No substantial document or medical certificate in support of his health condition was produced before the court," the attorney contended.

TH Khan stood for AC Akram

several important portfol being appointed prime minister by President HM Ershad in 1989.

### EWU convocation FROM PAGE 12

providing almost seven percent of their tuition revenue receipts as merit scholarships." Dr Md Farashuddin, president of

that 30 percent of its students have come from outside Dhaka. Education Minister Osman Farruk, former chief Justice Mustafa

Dr Sved Ferhat Anwar also spoke. A total of 268 students -- 199

received degrees at the ceremony. Three students -- Mamunur Rashid

received gold medals for their outstanding academic performance.

Tk 1,761 crore for it under the annual development programme, with the health ministry still negotiatng for an additional Tk 2,019 crore from them.

The HNPSP began last January

FROM PAGE 12 TSP fertiliser.

"We have also asked the district monitoring cells to mount a keen surveillance on the market so that no body can create any artificial crisis," the minister reportedly told the meeting, chaired by A Mannan, with committee-members and officials present. ANOMALIES

Shah Shahid Sarwar, a BNP lawmaker and committee member alleged anomalies in appointment of 25,000 block-supervisors during the tenure of Matiur Rahman Nizami as agriculture minister. Questions were leaked before

examinations, but the exams were not cancelled. Some joined the service before getting appointment letters," Sarwar told the meeting. The parliamentary body asked the ministry to probe the allegation and submit a report at its next meeting.

in 1,39,755 acres It also claimed that Regional Forest

the Board of Directors of EWU, said

Kamal, EWU Pro-Vice Chancellor

undergraduates and 69 graduates --

from BBA. M Rabiul Haque CSC, and Arif-uz-Zaman from FMBA -

### Health plan FROM PAGE 1

on expiry of the five-year Health and Population Sector Programme (HPSP), which critics say was unsuccessful due to lack of proper management and supervision.

### JS body

ndustries Corporation to import

50,000 each.

Those awarded life imprisonment are Ruhul Amin and Motiur Official Ashit Ranian Pal was mis-Rahman Montu. They were fined Tk 25,000 each, in default, they are to suffer one more year in jail. The story did quote Ashit as denying

According to the prosecution, Salamatullah Moznu, former chairman of Bakhil Union Parisad under Sadar upazila, was shot and stabbed to death by the convicts near Khordajogami Government Primary School on May 5, 2000 while he was returning

home from a marriage ceremony at Khordaiogami village.

Victim's brother Salimullah Dulal filed a murder case with Sadar Police Station the same day. Police. after investigation, pressed charges against nine people.

After examining records and 21 witnesses, tribunal judge Abu Hanif handed down the verdict. He acquitted one of the accused, Hasmat Ali, as the murder charge brought against him could not be proved

DFP graft

allegations of corruption.

### FROM PAGE 12

Sources said the information secretary wrote to the establishment ministry failing to find 'a competent official' at his ministry after a fourmember probe body last year found Mahbubur misappropriating about AL's Dhaka city unit organised a Tk 36 lakh. rally in front of its Bangabandhu

The information ministry probe headed by the joint secretary (development) said the DG embezzled the fund showing fake bills for four documentaries and three video films resorting to tender manipulation and irregularities from 2001-Mannan, Abdur Rahman, Mofazzal 2003.

Hossain Chowdhury Maya, Habibur According to the summary Rahman Siraj, Nazma Rahman and approved by the president's and the Dr Abdur Razzak addressed the prime minister's offices giving green rally with Mohammad Hanif in the light to the probe, Mahbubur undertook a project for the production of They alleged that a number of the documentaries and videos opposition leaders and activists without approval from the ministry and illegally bought raw materials, causing loss to the exchequer.

If the sleaze charges against Later, a procession paraded city Mahbubur in the rank of a joint roads in support of the general secretary, are proved in the final report, he will be dismissed from the The government also has taken measures to maintain law and order post and a corruption case will be during hartal hours, including filed against him.

assigning a joint force of around Mahbubur replied to the show 5,000 police, BDR and ansars in the cause notice issued by the information secretary 10 days after the capital to avert any untoward incideadline and protested his inno-

Project (DNPP) will generate 280mw and involve an estimated cost of 150 million euros.

The KfW is funding 40 million euros while the rest will come from a dozen Palli Biddyut Samities (PBSs), assured of high dividends by the RPC in exchange for investment

The Daily Star last month reported that though this was an EPC contract tender, which clearly bars participation of any EPC contractors in the bidding, the bid terms were set by consultant Lahmeyer. The KfW even imposed two

conditions. demanding Lahmeyer be made the consultant and only the original manufacturers of gas turbines allowed to submit bids. Surprisingly, the KfW funding is an 'untied' grant that means it is not supposed to have any conditions.

But no official investigation was made into these anomalies till today, and the REB and RPC kept refuting

cence, asking him to drop the

charges and departmental proceedings against him. The ministry expressed dissatis-

faction at his reply and decided to appoint an inquiry officer to prepare the final report, sources said.

Most information ministry officials raised questions about Mahbubur's holding of the office despite the probe body report and expressed the concern that he could manipulate the final report using his authority.

Talking to The Daily Star, a number of senior officials said the authorities should remove the DG immediately before the formation of the final probe body.

A senior official of the information ministry alleged that higher authorities tried to remove him after the information ministry probe report, but failed to do so as Mahbubur enjoys the backing of influential officials at the Prime Minister's Office

"The officials are causing obstruction to every step against him to protect him from punitive measures," alleged an official, requesting anonymity.

Hossain and Golam Habib Dulal were present at the meeting held at party's Banani office.

### One teacher FROM PAGE 12

in lower secondary education, according to the Unesco study.

Although the report did not specify the reason for the region's largest share of dropouts -- 46 million or 45 percent of the 104 million around the world -- it linked the trend to learning difficulties and inadequate teachers' training.

The report says there is one teacher for every 21 students in primary schools in East Asia, compared to one for every 40 in South and West Asia.

The government plans to recruit 35,000 teachers under the Primary Education Development Project-2 involving Tk 4,933 crore, education officials said.

The government will recruit 1 000 assistant education officers to strengthen school monitoring and 216 instructors to primary teachers training institutions.

The immediate past Awami League government appointed 26,902 assistant teachers to primary schools and 219 assistant teachers to secondary schools.

### Microcredit summit

FROM PAGE 1 microcredit by NGOs, is hosting the summit.

By 2001-end, around 54.9 million people in the world were covered by microcredit programmes. Of them 47.9 million live in the Asia Pacific region. Bangladesh alone has more than 11 million microcredit borrowers.

This is for the first time the microcredit organisations are going to hold such a high profile gathering to exchange views and share experiences with comprehensive programme and target, organisers said

Finance ministers and central bank governors from a number of countries in the region and first ladies of some other countries would also join the summit.

They will also be taken to rural Bangladesh for them to get firsthand knowledge about microfinance.

Queen Sofia will visit Comilla on February 14 to observe microcredit programmes run by Grameen Bank.

The PKSF alone lent around \$300 million to 210 microfinance institutions covering over 3.8 million borrowers, 90 percent of whom are women.

ly looking for t two men. He also said the reason no case was recorded is no-one came to lodge any formal complaint.

seven policemen was set up at the Natore journalists yesterday village vesterday. formed a human chain in front of the DC's office in the morning protesting the attack on Janakantha reporter GM Iqbal Hasan earlier.

Excess money Hasan was among a small group of FROM PAGE 12 are having a bearing on investment, iournalists who visited the village in disguise amid death threats by alleged Khondkar Ibrahim Khaled, managing armed cadres of the BNP.

director of Pubali Bank, said. Two other journalists of leading A number of top executives said national dailies received death threats they did not discuss law and order over phone Tuesday and yesterday with the governor as it was not the proper forum.

### 14 dead FROM PAGE 12

"But it is the slide in order that is thwarting investment," noted another banker. "Entrepreneurs are opening fire and drawing a intimidated by extortionists and the response from masked gunmen using assault rifles and anti-tank government is doing nothing about t. Who would dare to invest in such rockets. a risky situation?"

Medics said 12 Palestinians. including at least six gunmen and one policeman, were killed. Another wo were shot dead in another raid be careful in investing their foreign currencies abroad. on the southern Gaza refugee camp of Rafah. Scores were wounded.

TSP fertiliser

last year, according to sources.

houses

provide the rest.

sources said.

47 die

FROM PAGE 1

February 1

blood-dappled rag.

produced 14 lakh tonnes.

tives to import fertiliser.

The minister however ruled out

The urea demand was fixed at

The BCIC factories have so far

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at a

They also decided that MOP

fertiliser would be imported if need

be. The government would also

bear the additional cost for import

and distribution of the fertilisers, the

slowly, suddenly he exploded... I hit

a tree," said Mohammad Jassim, as he dabbed cuts on his head with a

The latest attacks follow a pat-

tern of targeting Iraqis seen as collaborating with the US occupa-

tion. Twin suicide bombings in

northern Iraq against two Kurdish parties allied with the United States

killed more than 100 people on

meeting with the agriculture minister

on Monday asked him to take initia-

any crisis of urea fertiliser, saying there are around 4.30 lakh tonnes of

urea stored in government ware-

Banking sources said some banks recently incurred losses in such investment. A two-decade old bank made a loss of over Tk 50 crore. An FROM PAGE 1 went up to Tk 505 a bag from Tk 448 Islamic bank incurred a loss of Tk 20 crore and fired one of its high officia

At yesterday's meeting, the

governor also asked the bankers to

# Pet shop

### owner

FROM PAGE 12 ounned down a car mechanic at

him dead.

with a girl

Tuesday.

23.58 lakh tonnes this year, of which ddiqbazar in Kotwali the BCIC factories would produce The victim Mohammad Ali Badal, 28, worked at an automobile work-20.50 lakh tonnes. The Karnaphuli Fertiliser Company (KAFCO) would shop at Mohakhali

Sources said a gang of four sprayed Badal with bullets near the customs warehouse at Siddiqbazar at around 10:30pm as he was returning home from work.

An assistant sub-inspector of

otwali Police Station rushed him to

The victim's younger brother

Yunus Hossain filed a case with

Kotwali Police Station. He indicated in

the first information report that the

murder might be linked to his love affai

unidentified man to death at South

Peererbagh at about 9:45pm on

30-year-old from near a box culvert at

South Peererbagh about an hour after

the murder. The man was wearing a

sky blue jacket and a trouser. The body

Station. Police are unsure about the

A case was filed with Mirpur Police

bore numerous stab injuries.

motive for the murder.

In Mirpur, criminals hacked an

Police recovered the body of the

the DMCH where doctors declared