

Carbon dioxide level reaches record high

AP, Mauna Loa Observatory

Carbon dioxide, the gas largely blamed for global warming, has reached record-high levels in the atmosphere after growing at an accelerated pace in the past year, say scientists monitoring the sky from this 2-mile-high station atop a Hawaiian volcano.

The reason for the faster buildup of the most important "greenhouse gas" will require further analysis, the US government experts say.

"But the big picture is that CO2 is continuing to go up," said Russell Schnell, deputy director of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's climate monitoring laboratory in Boulder, Colo., which operates the Mauna Loa Observatory on the island of Hawaii.

Carbon dioxide, mostly from burning of coal, gasoline and other fossil fuels, traps heat that otherwise would radiate into space. Global temperatures increased by about 1 degree Fahrenheit (0.6 degrees Celsius) during the 20th century, and international panels of scientists sponsored by world governments have concluded that most of the warming probably was due to greenhouse gases.

The climatologists forecast continued temperature rises that will disrupt the climate, cause seas to rise and lead to other unpredictable consequences unpredictable in part because of uncertainties in computer modeling of future climate.

Before the industrial age and extensive use of fossil fuels, the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere stood at about 280 parts per million, scientists have determined.

Average readings at the 11,141-foot Mauna Loa Observatory, where carbon dioxide density peaks each northern winter, hovered around 379 parts per million on Friday, compared with about 376 a year ago.

That year-to-year increase of about 3 parts per million is considerably higher than the average annual increase of 1.8 parts per million over the past decade, and markedly more accelerated than the 1-part-per-million annual increase recorded a half-century ago, when observations were first

HC asks IGP

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IGP was convicted was civil in nature.

The court turned down the argument, saying the petition has no nexus with the appeal of the IGP to the Supreme Court.

The petitioner had referred to the relevant sections of the Public Servants (Dismissal on Conviction) Ordinance 1983 and submitted that Sahahudul Huq on the delivery of conviction of criminal offence stands dismissed forthwith.

On January 27, the same bench found IGP Huq guilty of gross misconduct in a contempt case and fined him Tk 2000 and ordered that he would have to serve out a one-month jail term if he defaults on paying up the fine.

Meanwhile, the Chamber Judge of the Appellate Division yesterday extended its stay order on the High Court verdict against the IGP till April 17 upon a petition moved by Barrister Mainul Hosen, counsel for the IGP whose service contract expires this month.

Azad blames

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of Islamic fundamentalism that has raised its ugly head in the country. Although the fundamentalists have failed (to kill me) this time, I know they will continue their attacks."

He expressed his gratitude to people for the compassion and love he received from them following the attack on him. "I am indebted to people of the country, the vice chancellor of Dhaka University, my colleagues at the university and the employees."

The writer said he can't remember anything between February 27 when the attack was made and March 3 as he was "virtually dead".

"I came to life in the afternoon of March 3, started knowing about the outside world and that people of Bangladesh are so anxious about me," he added.

Three armed youths attacked the writer with butchers' knives near the Teacher-Student Centre while he was returning from the Ekushey Book Fair at around

WB to provide

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programmes instead of usual small-scale projects.

This six-year programme aims at increasing gross enrolment ratio and net enrolment ratio to 107 and 88 percent from 97.5 and 80 percent in 2002. The education achievement of girls is expected to reach the same level of boys in 2009.

The project has four main components -- quality improvement through organisational development and capacity building; quality improvement in schools and classroom; quality improvement through infrastructure development and improving and supporting equitable access to good schooling.

made here.

Asked to explain the stepped-up rate, climatologists were cautious, saying data needed to be further evaluated. But Asia immediately sprang to mind.

"China is taking off economically and burning a lot of fuel. India, too," said Pieter Tans, a prominent carbon-cycle expert at NOAA's Boulder lab.

Another leading climatologist, Ralph Keeling, whose father, Charles D. Keeling, developed methods for measuring carbon dioxide, noted that the rate "does fluctuate up and down a bit," and said it was too early to reach conclusions. But he added: "People are worried about 'feedbacks.' We are moving into a warmer world."

He explained that warming itself releases carbon dioxide from the ocean and soil. By raising the gas's level in the atmosphere, that in turn could increase warming, in a "positive feedback," said Keeling, of San Diego's Scripps Institution of Oceanography.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change projects that, if unchecked, atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations by 2100 will range from 650 to 970 parts per million. As a result, the panel estimates, average global temperature would probably rise by 1.4 to 5.8 degrees Celsius (2.7 and 10.4 degrees Fahrenheit) between 1990 and 2100.

The 1997 Kyoto Protocol would oblige ratifying countries to reduce carbon dioxide emissions according to set schedules, to minimize potential global warming. The pact has not taken effect, however.

The United States, the world's biggest carbon dioxide emitter, signed the agreement but did not ratify it, and the Bush administration has since withdrawn US support, calling instead for voluntary emission reductions by US industry and more scientific research into climate change.

Fish farming

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A section of officers, employees and teachers of the university are reportedly making money from the fish cultivation project, sources said. Asking not to be named, a member of JU Central Resources Management Committee alleged that individuals and firms having links with university authorities and the JU unit of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, the ruling BNP's student wing, usually get the lease.

The JU earns Tk 5 lakh a year from the lease.

Meanwhile, members of the Nature Study and Conservation Club (NSCC) protested the university's decision to lease out the lake beside Al-Beruni Hall. The NSCC last Thursday formed a human chain in front of the JU administration building and handed over a memorandum to the vice-chancellor demanding an immediate end to fish cultivation in the lakes.

"The lake beside the hall was leased out like the other lakes and I don't know anything more than that," said Lutful Hai Zami, provost of Al-Beruni Hall.

"We leased out the lakes for fish cultivation to meet the increased demand for protein and it has also increased campus security due to the presence of a large number of workers associated with the project," said Prof ABM Enayet Hossain, convener of the central resources management committee.

9:30pm on February 27.

Initially admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Azad was later shifted to the Combined Military Hospital at Dhaka Cantonment and remained there till leaving for Bangladesh. "I have recovered partly but I need more phases of treatment," he said.

Security personnel initially prevented journalists from talking with Azad but allowed them after a heated exchange of words.

Azad's family members, DU Vice Chancellor SMA Faiz, DU Teachers Association President AAMS Arefin Siddique and General Secretary Akhtaruzzaman were at the airport to see Azad off.

Gulshan lake

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Over the last few years, influential quarters including some big business houses and multinational companies have carried out indiscriminate and widespread encroachment upon the lake, sources said.

Sources alleged that some Rajuk officials are directly involved with the systematic land-grab by helping the grabbers prepare forged documents. Some of the land-grabbers have already obtained court order in their favour by using these forged papers.

"Though we are helpless in some situations, preparations are underway to take legal action to recover some land," said a top Rajuk official, preferring anonymity.

In 2002, the prime minister asked Rajuk to take necessary steps for demarcation of the lake to protect it from further encroachment. Afterwards, Rajuk took up a project to build a walkway at some places along the lake, but ignored the prime ministerial directive for demarcation.

Arrested NBCP's third man sent to Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

The arrested third in line of command of outlawed New Biplobi Communist Party (NBCP) was brought to Khulna from Dhaka yesterday.

Khilgaon police nabbed Kazi Shafiqul Islam Litu, the second-in-command of the NBCP, in the capital's Sipahibagh area Saturday noon.

Following the launch of Operation Spider Web by joint forces of army, Bangladesh Rifles and police in the south-western region, the top NBCP leader went into hiding to dodge arrest, sources said.

He used to stay overnight in various parts of Dhaka and identified himself as a journalist of Onnayer Protibad, a daily published from the capital, to book his security in those areas, they added.

Litu is a charge-sheeted accused in five murder cases with Dumuria Police Station, including those of the journalists Nahor Ali and Shukur Hossain killings, police said.

He was also one of the most-wanted criminals of the region and an accused in as many as 51 other criminal cases with various police stations in Khulna, said the superintendent of police, Khulna.

Litu also became the elected chairman of Bhandarpara union parishad of Dumuria upazila last year, but his seat fell vacant as he failed to show up during the oath-taking ceremony.

Altaf blames

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They are also indulging in rape, robbery in a bid to create anarchy across the country... They will be banished once for all with the help of the people," home minister told the rally organised by the ruling four-party alliance.

He referred to the recent murder of Abdul Halim, Salam Howlader, Partha Protim Roy, Sarder Habibur Rahman and Sahidul Islam of BNP and Abu Bakar Siddique of Jamaat and said the killers have now targeted Bagerhat.

Chowdhury asked the police to immediately arrest the killers and prosecute them in the speedy trial tribunal.

The home minister said leaders and activists of four-party alliance had been implicated in false cases during the Awami League rule. List of such cases should be forwarded to him for withdrawal.

Food Minister Abdullah Al Noman and local BNP and Jamaat leaders also spoke at the rally at Rimjhim square.

Later, the home minister held a meeting with senior police officials of ten districts under the Khulna range.

Sources close to the meeting told the news agency that the minister reviewed the law and order situation in southwest region where rising incidents of killing and extortion were reported in the media.

The meeting decided to strengthen the ongoing drive of the joint forces against terrorism.

Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Police, Khulna range, senior officials of Navy, BDR, Coast Guard, police superintendents of Bagerhat, Khulna, Satkhira, Jessore, Chuadanga, Jhenaidah, Magura, Kushtia, Narail and Meherpur attended the meeting.

Roads depts

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DCC Chief Engineer Habibur Rahman however denied receipt of any letter from the R&HD till yesterday. " They can make complaints and I can say something only when I get such complaints," he added.

Every year, especially during the monsoon, service providers including Desa, Titas, Wasa and T&T dig over 100-km stretch of different city roads causing immense sufferings to the commuters.

Last year, the DCC set up a one-stop clearance centre and asked service providers not to dig any roads without its permission and fixed compensation rates. The step was taken to avoid lack of coordination among the organisations concerned and maintain the roads properly.

ADP

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crore of the ADP and so far only 30 percent of this allocation has been utilised.

"The streamlining will take place in the donor-funded programmes only," said a planning ministry source.

Since the last budget, Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman had been saying that the ADP should be utilised in full. But the government has been compelled to think otherwise. "During the last fiscal, we made a pragmatic layout forecasting how much project aid may come to Bangladesh," the planning ministry source noted, "but the government high-ups asked us to increase project aid by 59 percent. The approved ADP had such a weak base from the very beginning."

The ADP allocation for the last fiscal met a similar fate.

The ADP for 2002-2003 was set at Tk 19,200 crore, but was trimmed down to Tk 17,100 crore. Still, the government could actually utilise Tk 15,000 crore.

Arabs call for revenge after Yassin killing

REUTERS, Cairo

Arab leaders have condemned the assassination of Hamas leader Ahmed Yassin by Israel and have predicted a new wave of violence in the Middle East.

Angry Arabs and Palestinians in exile called for revenge and blamed the United States for its pro-Israeli policies.

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad called the killing on Monday "an ugly crime" and an official Syrian statement said it was "the climax of the terror that Israel practices continuously."

King Abdullah of Jordan, which has a peace treaty with Israel, said: "This crime would only lead to more escalation, violence and instability in the region."

President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, the biggest recipient of U.S. aid in the Arab world after Iraq, condemned the assassination as a savage act which killed off peace prospects.

"With this act we have aborted the peace process today. It will have big effects on the region," he told reporters.

Mohamed Mahdi Akef, leader of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood, called it "an unforgivable crime" and said the Palestinians should not lay down their arms because violence was the only language that Israel understood.

"We will not rest, we will not sleep until the last Zionist leaves our territory," Akef told Reuters. The influential Brotherhood shares the Islamist views of Hamas.

The head of Lebanon's Hizbollah guerrillas said Israel would pay the highest price yet for Yassin's assassination.

"The Zionists will discover soon that they have committed a very big folly, to add to their series of previous follies," said Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah. He said Yassin's death would have ramifications "more important and dangerous than all that this cancerous entity (Israel) has witnessed until now."

Egypt backed out of plans to send officials to Israel to mark the 25th anniversary of their peace treaty on March 26.

But Mubarak also called for a return to direct talks between the Israeli government and the Palestinian Authority.

JS body scrutinises bill

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Committee Chairman Khandakar Mahbub Uddin Ahmed told journalists that he will "again contact the opposition parties and request them to take part in the discussion at the parliamentary forum".

At yesterday's meeting, Kader Siddiqui rejected the provision of displaying the portraits of the president and the prime minister in specified offices and proposed display of three portraits in a single frame.

"Portrait of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman should be placed above and portraits of the commander-in-chief of the liberation war MAG Osmani and Ziaur Rahman below Bangabandhu's portrait on his left and right respectively," Siddiqui proposed. This will end all debates on the display of portraits, he thought.

He also proposed inclusion of a new provision in the constitution to put an end to the long drawn debate on declaration of independence. "Everybody knows who declared the independence of Bangladesh. But it has become a controversial matter. Ziaur Rahman's declaration said, 'I major Ziaur Rahman hereby declare the independence of Bangladesh on behalf of our great

Lebanese President Emile Lahoud said Israel was mistaken if it thought violence could suppress the will of the Palestinians.

"Assassinating any symbol cannot kill those rights but will increase the resistance... Israel will find the same fate in the occupied territories as it found in south Lebanon," he said.

"This will only serve to foment violence because violence begets violence," Kuwaiti Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Ahmed al-Sabah told reporters.

The head of Jordan's Islamic Action Front, Hamze Mansour, said Israel had "opened the gates of hell".

In Tehran, Iranian supreme leader Ali Khamenei said that after killing Yassin Israel was "doomed to extinction".

Sheikh Mohammed Hussein Fadallah, a top Shi'ite Muslim cleric, said in Beirut that U.S. President George W. Bush was as guilty as Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon.

"President Bush was the one who gave the green light to the criminal Zionists to continue the assassination operations against the Palestinians using the most advanced American weapons," said Fadallah, who shares Hamas's objectives.

Shops and schools closed in north Lebanon's Palestinian refugee camps and residents took to the streets to vent their anger and vow revenge. Thousands of Palestinians also took to the streets of al-Yarmouk camp near Damascus after holding a symbolic funeral prayer and chanted slogans against Israel, the United States and Arab governments allied with Washington.

Erratic power

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Officials at Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation at Bogra said their daily supply of diesel to different northern oil depots varies between 12 and 20 lakh litres against a demand of 45 lakh litres.

There are also reports that the low voltage of electricity is damaging the pumps of the irrigation machines to render them inoperative.

leader Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman," he mentioned.

"Let the declaration (Zia's) be played in the Jatiya Sangsad and included in the constitution as the declaration of independence," Siddiqui said. It will end the entire debate on the matter, he added.

He also proposed 150 seats in parliament for women to be elected directly instead of the government-proposed 45 seats through indirect election.

The opposition legislator rejected the proposed provisions on the CEC administering oath to the lawmakers if the outgoing speaker fails to do so within three days of gazette publication of polls results, and on election to local governments.

The committee chairman later said, "He (Kader) is very fair. He wants to uphold the truth. But we have to take the decision considering all aspects."

The committee will discuss the issue at length to satisfaction, he said. "We will not pass the bill in a hurry".

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Moudud Ahmed told newsmen after the meeting the government wants to pass the bill on reaching a consensus.

Hanoi to support

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the schedule will be worked out later. Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Dy Nien and ambassadors of both countries were present at the meeting.

Vietnam has agreed to import a number of commodities including jute products, leather and ceramics, which have a great demand there.

"Bangladesh has also agreed to help Vietnam promote its pharmaceutical industry (through joint venture)," said Foreign Minister M Moshed Khan, who was present at the meeting.

Both sides agreed to hold meeting of the Bangladesh-Vietnam Joint Economic Commission on a regular basis to sketch out a roadmap to perk up trade and investment.

"We believe that the bilateral cooperation between the two countries will not remain limited within these agreements, but extend to other areas as well," said Foreign Secretary Shamsheer Mobin Chowdhury, who was also present at the meeting.

He said at a press briefing at the foreign ministry later that the two leaders emphasised joint-venture cooperation instead of confining the cooperation to only export and import.

He also said Bangladesh could also supply raw materials to Vietnam's growing garment and leather industries. Being the second largest rice exporter in the world, Vietnam could share its expertise with Bangladesh in agriculture and agro-processing industries.

Chowdhury said both sides at the meetings discussed ways of expanding trade and economic cooperation as two-way annual

Saarc chamber

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risks? It's the businessmen."

"So you must have the say in case of need... that's the point also in my country... by not supporting or opposing either party," he said congratulating the FBCCI president and its Board of Directors who, on Sunday, decided to move with an agenda to go beyond the political humdrum.

Hashim, now in Dhaka to attend the general meeting of Saarc women entrepreneurs council, said he was very impressed to see the FBCCI statement in Monday's newspapers on current situation.

In a meeting with the FBCCI at its office, he also talked about SCCI's role in the region and entertained a number of questions from the business people.

FBCCI President Abdul Awal Mintoo, Vice President Kamaluddin Ahmed and Directors Dewan Sultan Ahmed, Akhtaruzzaman Manju and Delwar Hossain also spoke.

Jamuna Group

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Rokanuddin, aided by Advocate Rafiqul Haque, pointed out that all six men arrested for their suspected roles in the murder were granted bail.

Metropolitan Sessions Judge Motiur Rahman asked defence lawyers to wait for the order of the lower court that sent Babul to Dhaka Central Jail on Sunday and fixed March 28 for further hearing on the bail petition.

ATTEMPTED RAPE CHARGE

The woman alleged in the FIR she met Babul at office in Motijheel on March 17 for a job and he took her to Kuril Bishwa Road in Badda by car, aided by an armed gang. She accused Babul of forcing her into a tin-roofed house near Bishwa Road and attempting to rape her.

The woman claimed locals rushed to the scene and rescued her, as she cried for help.

Police said locals brought out a procession in Badda yesterday, demanding Babul's punishment.

But Awami League General Secretary Abdul Jalil termed the arrest as the ruling coalition's revenge on the businessman and demanded his freedom.

Former lawmaker Mahi B Chowdhury, national committee member of Bikalpa Dhara, an alternative political stream, condemned Babul's arrest and demanded his immediate release.

"Babul was arrested as part of a conspiracy," Mahi said in a statement, describing the arrest of the newspaper owner as infringement of the fundamental right to freedom of expression.

US soldier

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Added to an official Pentagon tally, the latest death raises to 281 the number of US soldiers killed in action since US President George W. Bush declared major hostilities in Iraq over on May 1.

Another six soldiers were lightly wounded in attacks from a rocket-propelled grenade, small arms fire and homemade bomb, while sweeping for insurgents and weapons in Baghdad, the army said, adding that they had returned to duty.

Seven suspects were arrested and several weapons and ammunition seized in the sweeps, the statement said.

Near the town of Samarra, 125km north of Baghdad, a US soldier was killed in a live-firing accident that took place before he was due to head out on patrol, a statement early Monday said.

The soldier died when his unit made a pre-patrol test fire before moving out on a mission. The accident is being investigated and the name of the soldier withheld until his family is notified.

IRAQI JUDGE BLOWN UP IN HIS CAR

An Iraqi judge was killed when his car blew up over the weekend in the city of Hilla, 100 kilometres (miles) south of Baghdad, a spokesperson from the regional Babylon court said yesterday.

"On Saturday at 6:30 pm (1530 GMT) the judge, Abdel Amir al-Rubaie was killed when his car blew up after he started the ignition," said the spokesman, Khaled al-Feyhan.

Secretariat

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meetings with officials and employees' union leaders, who were refused promotions under the present government, 'to unite and use them' in 'an anti-government movement'.

They said the officials, who formed the staff of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and were backers of the main opposition Awami League of which she is the president, earlier succeeded to fuel a commotion among the employees.

"But the situation was brought under control through the realisation of some of the demands of the staff," one of the officials said.

He, however, said the government raised intelligence surveillance in the secretariat as part of a decision to beef up security in government offices.

Hamas chief killed

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Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades.

Deputy Defense Minister Zeev Boim, in the first Israeli reaction to the strike, said Yassin deserved to die for his part in the deaths of hundreds of Israelis since the start of the Palestinian intifada in September 2000.

"Sheikh Yassin deserved to die for all the terrorist attacks committed by Hamas," Boim told public radio.

Yassin's was the highest-profile targeted killing by Israeli forces since the start of the uprising three and half years ago.

Boim hinted that more attacks on Palestinian militant leaders were possible, warning that "no terrorist leader will be immune".

Confirming the death, Israeli army spokeswoman Major Sharon Feingold said Yassin had been "responsible for numerous murderous terror attacks, resulting in the deaths of many civilians, both Israeli and foreign."

"The Hamas leadership, led by Yassin, was directly involved in planning directing and launching terror attacks carried out by the organization," she told AFP.

Following the attack, Israel completely closed down the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, she added.

Hamas' armed wing, the Ezzedine al-Qassam Brigades, vowed to kill "hundreds" of Israelis in retaliation.

"Those who have taken the decision to kill Sheikh Yassin have signed the death warrant for hundreds of Zionists," said a statement received by AFP.

The statement also hinted that revenge attacks would be carried out against US targets.

"The Zionists would not have perpetrated such an act without obtaining the green light from the terrorist American administration and it must assume responsibility for this crime," it added.

Hamas' political leader in the Gaza Strip, Abdulaziz Rantissi, made a declaration of war in the aftermath of the strike.

"War is henceforth open with these murderers, these criminals and these terrorists," Rantissi told the Gulf-based satellite channel Al-Arabiya.

"They know it's opened, there will be no revenge, it's an open war," he added in English, warning the Israelis they would not enjoy peace.

"Inside Palestine, there will be no security for the Zionists and Jews," Rantissi vowed to a background of

chants from hundreds of supporters calling for jihad, or holy war.

Thousands of Palestinians poured onto the streets of Gaza in the aftermath of the strike, marching towards Yassin's home.

Thousands more took to the streets in the West Bank, calling for revenge.

Many set fire to tyres, blanketing the skies above Gaza in thick black smoke, an AFP correspondent reported.

Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat condemned the assassination, and called for three days of mourning.

Palestinian prime minister Ahmed Qorei denounced the killing as a "big and atrocious crime."

For his part, Palestinian negotiations minister Saeb Erakat "strongly condemned this ignoble crime perpetrated by Israeli forces."

"The Israeli government has thus chosen the path of escalation and confrontation," Erakat added, demanding international protection for the Palestinians.

"This new crime must move the international community to think seriously about providing international protection for the Palestinian people."

For its part, the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, a radical offshoot of Arafat's Fatah movement, promised a response "in the coming hours", an anonymous caller told Al-Arabiya television Monday.

Earlier, a statement from the group received by AFP said "thousands" of Israelis would be targeted in retaliation, naming Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz as its prime target.

It called in a statement received by AFP for all Palestinian factions to "proclaim a war without mercy against the Zionist people."

"We promise the Palestinian people that we will avenge the assassinations of the Nazi terrorists," added the statement.

In Cairo, hundreds of students at Al-Azhar University called for revenge, in a demonstration on campus.

"The Jews have killed Yassin, where is the response of the Muslims?" the students chanted. "Sharon, coward, Yassin's blood is not worthless," they warned Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon.

The demonstrators urged the Ezzedine al-Qassam Brigades, the military wing of Hamas, to "avenge" the assassination of the founder of the Palestinian radical movement.

Liberation War-based

FROM PAGE 12
environment digitally created in close resemblance with three historically-true battlefields -- Akhaura, Chittagong and Rajshahi.

The first "First person shooting game" made in Bangladesh and one that contains detailed survey of a game