# **GK** project

said in the official note on the decision to re-tender." He went on. " If the ministry sends any proposal with specific suggestion, the cabinet purchase committee can consider it. But the ministry can decide on its own if it wants to re-tender it. It does not need the cabinet committee's decision on this matter."

Sources say a business group using political connection had been trying to get last year's bidding scrapped and a fresh tender floated so that a pre-determined company gets the deal for a much higher cost.

This scheme is being implemented mainly by using a Japanese Debt Relief Grant Aid of \$17.99

Although the WDB found Ebara's financial proposal and technical qualification outstanding, the water resources ministry, through its interministerial tender committee, stopped the project awarding, saying that the WDB did not ensure wider participation in the tender.

The tender committee in last November said the scheme should be re-tendered as per the Public Procurement Regulations, 2003.

On January 10, parliamentarian from Kushtia Shahidul Islam complained to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on water resources ministry that the interministerial tender committee's attempt to re-tender the project was suspicious, baseless and made with "ill-motives".

Later, a sub-committee of the parliamentary body investigated the re-tendering process and found that the inter-ministerial tender committee ignored the WDB technical committee report for awarding the work to the lowest bidder. It remarked that the suggestion to retender was faulty

"This type of decision is unacceptable in the national interest." the sub-committee headed by Kazi Rafiqul Islam, MP, said in its report, which was later sent to the water resources ministry. The standing committee then

suggested the ministry to go ahead with the existing offer of Ebara as it was cost effective and transparent. But the ministry once again

ignored this suggestion. **Background of the Project** The ministry has been trying to get

Bangladesh would seek help from

the foreign ministry, he said, "We

condemn in the strongest possible

terms the heinous and cowardly

The explosion at the shrine of

Speaking at a press briefing at

Britain to probe the incident.

Govt may seek

the project implemented at a much higher cost since 2001.

On May 28, 2001, the ministry first sought the Cabinet Purchase Committee's approval for appointing a contractor on 'sole source basis' -- selected without any tender. The 'sole source' asked for an amount of Tk 202 crore. But the cabinet rejected the project although the ministry tried to convince it that the amount rather showed 'low cost' while rehabilitation of the GK Project was urgent.

But the water resources ministry was persistent. It again sought the cabinet's approval on June 27 at the fag end of the Awami League rule, but the cabinet did not approve it.

The ministry went ahead with the same proposal during the caretaker government's tenure and continued the process when the BNP-led coalition came to power. It insisted that Tk 202 crore was 'cost-effective for this 'very urgent' project.

Finally, the finance ministry last year asked the water resources ministry to go for open tender. When the WDB floated the

tender in June-July last, eight companies participated in it and two got technically qualified The decision to re-tender the

project will delay the implementation of the project by at least another year besides making the project cost still unspecified.

The ministry in its summary for the Cabinet Purchase Committee stressed the urgency of rehabilitating the GK Project saying that installation of a new pump will increase the irrigation coverage to 1.42.000 hectares from 1,00,000 hectares now.

"This will increase the annual rice production by 2,86,650 tonnes," it said, adding this will also raise the income of the beneficiaries.

The GK Project was implemented in the '60s by installing three pumps to increase crop production in the southwestern region. During 1981-93, the project was rehabilitated in two phases with the Asian Development Bank loan, but the original pumps were not replaced. The ministry says if the original

pumps are not replaced, they could go out of order anytime affecting crop production in the region and consequently harming lakhs of

## UK mission

including a leader of the AL's stu-dent wing Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), taking the total number of arrests to nine.

An intelligence source said Scotland Yard and MI-5. the UK agencies for national criminal investigations and military intelligence, might initiate probes into the terrorist

Our Sylhet correspondent adds: he regional office of the British High Commission and Visa Application Centre in Sylhet were kept closed vesterday.

Bangladesh Rifles kept the spot of explosion at the shrine's main gate and adjacent places cordoned off Shoes and chappals left by people who fled in terror after the bomb went off are still lying scattered in the area. ASI Kamal Uddin, who joined

Sylhet Special Branch of Police on May 19, succumbed to his injuries 3:00am yesterday. He received splinters while working as a bodyguard of the British envoy.

After the namaj-e-janaja held at Sylhet Police Lines in the afternoon. his body was sent to his village home n Muradnagar, Comilla.

One of the bomb casualties whose identity could not be ascertained immediately was identified yesterday as Hobil Miah, 35, son of Tahir Ali of Baishtila, Khadimnagar. The body of the apparently innocent victim was handed over to his family in the afternoon.

The five who were arrested Yesterday are Selim Ahmed, BCL Sylhet district unit joint convenor Harunur Rashid, BCL Sylhet district unit social welfare secretary, Abdul Muktadir, a local BCL leader, Shafiur Rahman Solaiman, a businessman and brother of local Juba League eader and Sylhet City Corporation (SCC) Ward Commissioner Azadur Rahman Azad, and Shirajul Islam.

Earlier on Friday night, police arrested four persons including BCL Sylhet City Unit Convenor Habibur Rahman Selim and Central Committee Member Alam Khan Mukti, and local leaders Abdul Quaiyum and Khokan Ali in Dargah Gate area.

All the nine arrestees were produced before a magistrate's court yesterday. The court placed all of them in five-day police remand.

The ruling coalition in Sylhet has announced to observe May 28 as Doa Dibash' (prayer day). According to the announcement, specia prayers will be offered at mosques, temples and other places of worship on the day. Prayer and a milad mahfil will also be held at Hazrat Shahialal Mosque that day after the juma prayers.

At a press conference yesterday, SCC Mayor Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran alleged the security arrangement in the shrine area last Friday for a VVIP like the British high commissioner was very poor. "It was a failure on the part of the local administration. specially of the police," he said.

Briefing journalists yesterday, Foreign Minister Morshed Khan said The high commissioner's condition s much better now. He is talking with nis relatives and visitors.

"He received pellets in his legs and small pieces of steel objects hit under his thigh," he told reporters at the foreign ministry, adding, "He may be flown to London for further check-

The foreign minister said, if needed, the government might seek cies. "But, we have received no such

After visiting Hazrat Shajalal's shrine yesterday, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Shahudul Hague refused to make any hasty conclusion about the motives and identities of the attackers. "It is very difficult to jump to any conclusion at this point,' the IGP said, adding police would hold talks with the injured and locals to pinpoint the place of occurrence and identify the attackers.

Security was beefed massively up at and around all diplomatic missions, key point installations and other important places in the capital. Security checks have been introduced at all entry points to the city.

reported that security was also intensified at all key point installations, shrines, diplomatic missions and foreign offices based in the port city from yesterday.

President Prof laiuddin Ahmed vesterday visited British High Commissioner Anwar Chowdhury, who is under treatment at the Combined Military Hospital (CMH).

will always remain beside him."

condemned the heinous incident and the government has already taken appropriate steps to nab the culprits, President Ahmed said when Maior General Ali Akbar apprised him that appropriate measures had been taken for proper treatment of Choudhury and that he would recover soon.

thanked the president for his personal concern and expressed his gratitude to him. He appreciated the government actions following the ncident and the measures taken for proper treatment of the injured

The president, accompanied by the deputy British high commissioner, also visited the Deputy Commissioner of Sylhet Abul Hossain and Sub-Inspector Abdur Rahman, and personal staff of the British high commissioner who are also undergoing treatment in the same hospital.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia last ight talked over telephone with British High Commissioner Anwar Chowdhury, who is under treatment at the Combined Military Hospital (CMH). She wished him an early

ecovery of his injuries. According to highly placed sources, the authorities concerned are keeping the PM informed round the clock on the high commissioner's health condition

## Hasina blames

and arms seizures if it declines

international inquires," said Hasina. The AL chief referred to the bomb blasts in Mymensingh, Satkhira, Dinajpur, Tangail and Joypurhat and huge arms hauls in Chittagong, Bogra and Kuril in Dhaka (adjacent to the diplomatic zone) and said an international probe is necessary to find out where the munitions came from, who sent them, what materials were used in the bombs and who

She alleged that Jamaat was always against the shrines and Urs and that leaders of the 'fundamentalist party' including its lawmaker Delwar Hossain Saidee publicly delivered speeches many times against the shrines and asked people not to go there.

They (Jamaat adherents) were involved with the previous bomb blast at Hazrat Shahjalal Shrine and are also with the latest one... they are doing so to scare common people off the shrines." she said

#### US probes FROM PAGE 12

President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali opened the session.

The Arabs "look forward to results that would rise to their ambitions of cooperation and solidarity," Ben Ali said to open the meeting of Arab kings, emirs, presidents, prime ministers and delegates from the Arab League's 21 countries. He asked delegates to stand in a moment of silence for the Palestinian victims of Israeli attacks.

A draft resolution to be submitted to the leaders for approval includes a strong condemnation of the abuse of Iraqi prisoners by US soldiers, while backing trials for officials of the former regime of Saddam Hussein for crimes committed against Iragis and others during their rule.

"The leaders strongly condemn the crimes and inhuman and immoral acts" committed by troops against the Iragi people, particularly those imprisoned. The draft resolution demanded trials and punishment for the perpetrators' "ugly

## C'wealth lifts

implement amendments to its constitution "in letter and in spirit". including "the issue of the separation of the offices of the president and chief of army staff". The decision brings to an end the

four-and-half-year suspension imposed after Musharraf seized power through a military coup. It seals the reintegration of the world's second largest Muslim country into the international community.

Hasina, also the former prime minister, asked the government to immediately stand down for what

she said was its failure to ensure

people's security and due to the fact

that even lawmakers and foreign

envoys were not safe under its rule The AL chief also took a swipe at the government for the arrest of four leaders of her party's front organisations in Sylhet after Friday's incident and said the arrests were 'a bid to shift public attention'.

She also said the BNP-Jamaatled ruling alliance tends to blame the AL for every such crime.

On the emergence of Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB) led by dreaded operations commander Bangla Bhai in the Raishahi Division, Hasina wondered whether the government exists. She said the government has engaged such

## Proshika chief

opposition Awami League's April 30

deadline to unseat the BNP-led alliance government. Meanwhile, Gonoforum General

Secretary Saifuddin Ahmed Manik condemned the arrest of Faruque and demanded his immediate

In a statement yesterday, he said police were harassing Faruque and his colleagues for the last few days.

## Bhola

FROM PAGE 12

More than 20,000 people have left their houses and moved to higher land. The marooned people, who are in acute crisis of food and drinking water, blamed the WDB authorities for their failure to bring the situation under control. Locals have also underlined the

need for preparing a master plan to protect Bhola from the threat of flood

#### Truck, bus FROM PAGE 12

telephone from Itanagar.

"Preliminary estimates suggest the death toll could be 35 although it could be even more. It is unlikely there would be any survivors as the spot where the bus finally landed is rocky."

Incessant rains and heavy mudslides in the state could have been the cause of the accident, the official said, adding that the bus had been carrying at least 45 passen-In the northern Himalayan state

of Himachal Pradesh, at least 29 bodies were recovered Saturday after a truck carrying workers plunged into a gorge in a remote forested region late Friday, a police

# AL calls hartal

international probe into the incident and immediate release of the party men arrested after the bomb blast.

They said the target of the bomb attack was British High Commissioner Anwar Chowdhury. They blamed "government-patronised fundamentalists" for the attack that left three people dead and about 70, including the British envoy and the deputy commissioner (DC) of Sylhet, Injured.

Our Staff Correspondent from Sylhet reported that the four-party alliance at a press conference vesterday afternoon strongly condemned the blast at Hazrat Shahjalal Shrine and announced a protest programme

The programme includes mourning procession and rally in Court Point area today, special prayers at mosques and other places of worship on May 28 and special munajat and milad mahfil at the mosque of Hajrat Shahjalal (RA) after Juma prayers the same day.

The alliance leaders demanded publication of the probe report of January 12 blast at the shrine. They,

however, ruled out the necessity of enquiry by any international agency.

Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran at a press conference yesterday morning strongly blasted Friday's bomb

ment alleged that the security arrangement in the shrine for a VVIP like the British high commissioner was too poor. It is a failure of the local administration, he added.

Kalapara upazila of Patuakhali, damaging about 200 tin-roofed houses and uprooting hundreds of

ipal area remained snapped as electric poles were uprooted by the tornado that lasted only for eight minutes. One fishing trawler with nine people on board remained missing till the filing of this report at 6:00pm yesterday.

## Manmohan sworn in

increased investment in agriculture. D Raja, a Communist Party of India leader, told Reuters. The government would encour-

age foreign investment and reduce the fiscal deficit but slow down privatisation of state firms, other party officials said. There were few surprises in the

policy agenda, which also called for deeper ties with the United States and promoting friendly ties with neighbours, including old enemy "I think the approach is right,"

said Tapan Kumar Bhaumik, of the Confederation of Indian Industry "It is an extension of reforms to those areas which were neglected.

Reforms will be taken to the state level which is what is required now." But another analyst said the devil would be in the details.

targets, but it has not spelt out how it will bridge the deficit and meet those targets," said Gopi Shenov. assistant vice-president at IDBI Capital Markets. At least 18 regional, socialist and

that each ally would be given one ministerial berth for every four lawmakers in parliament. Congress has only 145 seats in the 545-Communist parties will provide

Singh has pledged to give top the British HC suddenly decided to priority to carrying on a nascent peace process with nuclear neighbour Pakistan, days before the South Asian rivals were due to hold

talks on nuclear confidence-building

appeared in the FIR (first information report) or they were held on Analysts are pessimistic about prospects for early progress on a their political identities. confirm adequate number of police

> explosion was similar to that of the January incident, he said they will disclose their findings only after

investigation closes. Sylhet police are still probing the blast, sources said.

## AHSANULLAH MURDER Accused landlord sent to jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The North Badda house owner who sheltered the three accused of murdering lawmaker Ahsanullah Master was sent to jail yesterday.

Criminal Investigation Depart-

ment (CID) of police produced Kabir Hossain before the First Class Magistrate's Court, Gazipur on completion of his five-day remand. Police yesterday raided the house of prime accused Kana

Hafiz's sister in Joydevpur but returned empty handed. CID sources said of the three accused and four suspects now in iail, some have admitted that Kana Hafiz initiated gunfire on the meeting of the Awami League's volunteer wing Shechchhasebak League near

Noagaon in Tongi on May 7. Ahsanullah and schoolboy Omai Faruq Ratan were killed and at least five others injured in the indiscriminate fire. Two people died receiving bullets later while protesting the killings the same day.

the slain legislator's house in

The four-member CID team that is currently probing the case is interrogating the three accused, Mahbub, Monir and Dulal, who are on a 10-day remand and will be produced before the court on May 26. The CID arrested the three listed

in the FIR (first information report)

from Kabir's house in Purbanchal in

North Badda on May 14. The other accused, whose name could not be known, managed to flee. Kabir admitted to police that four accused hired a room in his house at Tk 700 a month immediately after

Asked on the interrogation, head of the team Assistant Superintendent Khalequzzaman said, "We're verifying the information they're giving us. We don't want to disclose anything without verification.

#### FBCCI mulls FROM PAGE 12

Mintoo presented a set of proposals

the killings.

to reform key areas of governance and politics, which he described as extremely confrontational. The FBCCI chief's proposals

were for increasing the president's power, reducing the number of ministries to 20. strengthening the Supreme Judicial Council, introducing two posts of deputy speaker in parliament -- one each from the treasury and the opposition benches -- and formation of citizens committees to curb police corrup-

Another member of the FBCCI board of directors, who was also present in the emergency meeting compared the government's order to amend the federation's MAA with what he said was its controversial role in last year's election of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) "The government interfered in

the BGMEA election last year, as a state minister and some other influential ruling BNP lawmakers favoured a certain panel and were against holding the election in time At one stage, the Prime Minister's Office asked the commerce ministry to defer the election," the FBCC director recalled. He deplored such government interference in trade associations terming it utterly undemocratic.

## Bashar rested

FROM PAGE 1

had to postpone training on Friday after facilities at the Queen's Park became unfit due to overnight and morning showers.

Bangladesh will field a threeman pace attack for the first time on the four with Alamgir Kabir and Tareg Aziz partnering the experienced Tapash Baishya. Left-arm spinner Enamul Haque, the top wicket-taker in the last U-19 World Cup, is the lone specialist spinner.

Bangladesh (for three-dayer) Rajin Saleh (Captain), Hannan Sarker, Javed Omar, Mohammad Ashraful, Alok Kapali, Faisal Hossain, Khaled Mashud (Wicketkeeper), Tarek Aziz, Tapas Baishya, Enamul Haque (Jr.) and Alamgir Kabir.

### Envoy visited FROM PAGE 1

"Sylhet police were well informed of his visit, but Mr Choudhury went to the shrine which was not checked out beforehand as part of his trip, Massive security measures

could not be taken at the scene as

visit the 700-year-old shrine, said the top police official. Mannan described the incident as regretful, which left three people killed and 47 others injured.

Replying to a question, Assistant Inspector General of police Mohammad Tariq said Sylhet police had so far arrested nine people on charge of the blast. Tariq, however, did not explain

whether the detainees' names

suspicion. He also failed to provide "Forces were deployed there and a policeman was killed during the explosion, but we are yet to

presence during the incident," he Asked whether the Friday's bomb blast.

njured to know what they saw and heard. The evidences of the explosion would be thoroughly examined,

## Bangla Bhai arrest

Some other BNP leaders, mostly from greater Rajshahi region however, have been opposing the

cabinet minister, a deputy minister and several lawmakers hailing from Khaleda Zia. greater Rajshahi region are backing Bangla Bhai. They maintain that local people have welcomed Bangla Bhai and his men since police have completely failed to tame the out-

May 17 meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Law and Order chaired by Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan discussed the matter. It asked the home ministry to go for immediate egal action against Bangla Bhai. The officials said State Minister

instructions by the cabinet committee, ordered the inspector general of rendered them helpless. A top home ministry official told

The Daily Star yesterday, wishing anonymity, that the order to arrest Bangla Bhai is not being implemented due to heavy pressure against the arrest.

Sources at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said the minister-incharge of Rajshahi, a deputy minister and several lawmakers of Raishahi region recently brought the issue of elimination of outlaws to the attention of Prime Minister

They told her that police failed to protect local people of greater Rajshahi who have long been repressed by the outlaws. The police failure prompted local people to launch the JMJB and the hunt for outlaws in the area side by side with the law-enforcing agencies.

They also argued that a stop to the ongoing vigilante operations of the JMJB would only fuel outlaw activities.

Home ministry officials also said they have information that besides the local ministers and lawmakers. some Islamic organisations and ruling coalition partner Jamaat-e-Islami's local units are indirectly supporting Bangla Bhai.

A home ministry official quoting intelligence reports said that two religion-based parties, including the Jamaat-e-Islami, are not only backing the JMJB and Bangla Bhai, but also helping the Islamist outfit with manpower and light weapons

## JCD calls the shot

the JCD staged a weeklong demonstration on the college campus from April 16 demanding removal of the principal for alleged corruption and admission fee-hike JCD leaders met the education

minister to press home their demands on April 24. The college authorities also

formed hostel committees that

included 20 representatives of gen-

eral students for each hostel to look into irregularities. No JCD leaders were on the committees. The authorities attempted to allot seats to students on the basis of their merit and need and evict students

Almost all teachers at the college were against the JCD's illegal activities. Many of them said JCD leaders were agitating as they feared they would no more be able to continue their illegal practice of taking money from the newcomers in exchange of

staying illegally at the dormitories.

nostel seats. "We have been driven out from the college as we opposed JCD's illegal activities." one of the teachers said. "Our departure from the college is a silent protest against all illegal

activities," she said in an emotion-

of Bangla College and Prof Jahan-e-Gulsan of Dhaka Music College, newly appointed principal and viceprincipal of Eden College, took over charge on May 13. Former viceprincipal of the college Tahmina Hossain joined as head of Bangla department at Badrunnesa College the same day.

opposed Tahmina's transfer and confined her in the office on May 12. 'We have complaints against the principal but not against the viceprincipal and other teachers," one JCD leader said. Prof Dilara Hafiz, who has been

Earlier, JCD leaders strongly

Textbook Board (NCTB), joined her new post on Wednesday. She told The Daily Star over telephone, "Unruly students wanted to establish their supremacy at the college but we did not allow them to continue their

"I have left the college as I did not want to compromise with my conscience on the unruly students' illegal

emergency meeting with officials of

law enforcing agencies and the

airport and formed two probe bodies

One of them, a two-member

committee headed by the chairman

of Civil Aviation Authority, has been

asked to submit a report within 24

hours. The other, a one-membe

body, was formed with the sales and

nto the incident.

## 5 Indians found

taken to the engineering hanger at about 12:45pm for routine cleaning and maintenance, said a

landed at ZIA at 8:30 Friday night, and for reasons still unknown remained inside the plane, although all other fellow passengers disembarked. The five, who hold Indian pass-

ports and are Sikhs, first came to Dhaka from Kolkata by road last week. From here, they went to Hong Kong last Sunday and flew back Friday night.

The arrestees were handed over to airport police for interrogation. The reasons behind their myste rious stay within the plane could not

Police investigators also said they had found a number of 'inconsistencies' in their statements. Hearing the news, State Minister

for Civil Aviation and Tourism Mir

marketing director of Biman to formulate a strategy to prevent recurrence of such mishaps. Budget session

FROM PAGE 1 awmaker Ahsanullah Master as the House adopted a condolence motion on his death. AL lawmakers, however, kept themselves out of the

The AL's participation in budget session is still under clouds as the government failed to nab the killers of its lawmaker. Saber Hossain Chowdhury

organising secretary of the AL and political secretary to AL chief Sheikh Hasina, said, "There is a possibility of joining the House as we want to participate in parliamentary proceedings. The AL Parliamentary Party will soon decide whether it will join the House or not.'

# Eerie similarity

ever yet to submit any report.

The Deputy Inspector General of Police (Sylhet range) Ali Imam Chowdhury said,"On the basis of primary investigation, we think it was a hand grenade."

He told The Daily Star that the

bombs blasted on January 12

during the Urs, and on Friday last were of similar type. Police officials seeking anonym-

The Inspector General of Police(IG) Shahudul Haque visited the spot yesterday and talked to the

high officials of the police and detective branches. "It is very difficult to draw any conclusion at this moment," he said when asked about the possible identity and the intention of the persons or group responsible for the

incident. Last time a five membercommittee was formed with Superintendent of Police Shahadat Hossain in the lead. The findings of that investigation committee however are yet to come to light. Ali Imam Chowdhury claimed that though an investigation com-

Till yesterday,no investigation

committee was formed to probe the

mittee was yet to be formed, they started investigation on their own right away The IG said the investigation

RAB Director Sadequr Rahman and Lieutenant Colonel Gulzar, arrived Sylhet yesterday. They have started

According to another source, the powerful hand grenade that was hurled at the shrine was not a homemade device, rather it was brought from abroad.

devices usually used in the southern region by the extremist outfits, the

#### Make wealth FROM PAGE 12 finance minister said, "This is a bad

came to power by making public

#### Hazrat Shahjalal in Sylhet left three have no comment to make on a colleague's statement." people killed and the envoy and The British authorities have not about 70 others injured. "The government is determined to find out who are behind this act,"

said Morshed. "We do not want to obviously because of security reasons. "We know what happened, but we do not know who committed the

act and why. The investigation will

continue until they are found," he

distract us from the investigation, so

we need to exercise restraint."

"Jumping to conclusions will

said.

Morshed replied when asked if religious militants were involved in Morshed read out a letter sent by

British Foreign Secretary Jack

## Army deployment

after election. Police, BDR, armed police, ansars will also be deployed to ensure security.

"We have to make sure that that

voters cast their vote without any

difficulty." Chief Flection Commi-

ssioner (CEC) MA Syed told the meeting The CEC asked the law enforcers to discharge their duties efficiently and honestly so that the polls

are held peacefully.

They also assured the CEC of all out cooperation and said they have already take necessary measures to maintain law and order. The CEC told newsmen that he received some allegations of violation of electoral code of conduct and

directed the returning officers to

#### take stern action against the persons responsible. Election commissioners, home secretary, EC secretary, inspector general of police, chief of armed forces division were among others

### who attended the meeting presided over by MA Syed.

practice and it is non-transparent. I will propose a bill in parliament to curtail such practices.' A BNP MP pointed out, "We

commitment against corruption and crime. We must keep it. We should take two steps first --to determine the source of black money and recover default loans. He asked what is the source of

income of customs officials sporting expensive cars.

# and religion, the minister said, "

told a questioner. the diplomatic community in Dhaka has been beefed up and the foreign ministry is handling the matter since

the high commissioner was injured.

back home, the foreign minister said

Asked if the envoy will be taken

life is threatened Secretary Shamsher Mobin

BDB's appeal

Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh

(BDB) candidate Major (retired) Abdul

Mannan, meanwhile, lodged an appeal

with the EC seeking justice to the returning officer's refusal to allocate him 'Kula' as the election symbol. The CEC said he received an appeal lodged by Abdul Mannan nd would examine it.

tion symbol. The RO cited the EC's not recognising the BDB as a political party as the reason. Mannan refused to accept 'Bench' as his election symbol and

decided to take legal step against

On Thursday, the returning

officer (RO) refused to allocate

'Kula' to Abdul Mannan as his elec-

#### Khaleda, Hasina

two peoples," Khaleda added.

"I look forward to working in concert with you to deepen further our bilateral cooperation and to promote peace, stability and economic development in the region through the SAARC process. Sheikh Haisna, also the Awami

League president, in her message

wished Dr Manmohan Singh good

health and long life. She hoped that the existing friendly relations between India and Bangladesh would be further strengthened in the coming years during the new government's tenure.

She said the existing relations between the brotherly peoples of the two countries would flourish to a eater degree in the days to come. Hasina in the message also congratulated the Congress

President Sonia Gandhi

the blast victims and their families and gratitude to the Bangladesh aovernment for promptly flying the high commissioner to Dhaka. Asked to give his reaction to Straw's comments to BBC on Friday, linking the incident to terror

Straw, expressing his sympathy for

made any comments if security was slack on the shrine premises," he

the British authorities have not said anything about this, but it is a normal practice to take envoys home if their Adviser to the foreign ministry Reaz Rahman and Foreign

Chowdhury were present at the

# Our Chittagong correspondent

Expressing his deep anguish over the incident, the president said, "We "The people of the country have

High Commissioner Choudhury

"The government has set growth

communist parties have pledged to support the coalition. The communists have said they will not join the government but the others have been jockeying for ministerial posiOn the other hand. City Mayor

The mayor in his written state-

Twisters kill 6 FROM PAGE 12 At midnight on Friday, a tornado hit Kuakata coastal area under

Power supply to Kalapara munic-

The formula thrashed out was

member house and its committed allies have another 70-odd. support for a majority.

But analysts have questioned whether Congress was willing to offer concessions Pakistan wants over the divided state of Kashmir, at the heart of decades of hostility between the countries and the

cause of two of their three wars.

FROM PAGE 12

Armored Division.

promised India-Pakistan dialogue and some worry Pakistan's military may take advantage of the transition in New Delhi by promoting an upsurge of insurgent incursions into Car bomb

duty after treatment. All the casual-

ties were from the US Army's 1st

# condition of anonymity.

home ministry order since its issuance and supporting the Bangla

Bhai outfit all the way. Allegations are there that a

laws in the northwest. Home Ministry officials said the

police the following day to arrest Bangla Bhai. High civil and police officials claim that the split in the government over the issue has

for Home Lutfozzaman Babar, on

Meanwhile, Prof Feroza Begum

transferred from the post of Eden College principal and made Chairman of National Curriculum and

illegal activities "

Bangladesh Biman press release They came from Hong Kong by flight BG-079 of Biman which

be known immediately. But, quoting the arrestees, a high official of police said a gang had assured them to send to London in exchange of a huge sum of money.

House for the remaining working

#### Nasiruddin and State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfozzaman Babor visited the airport. They held an

ity told The Daily Star that they believe the same group is responsible for both the incidents. They,however,could not say anything about the identity of the group and also about the motives behind the blasts.

He said he would talk to the

committee would be formed and other necessary steps taken as soon as he returns to the capital. Meanwhile.two high officials of the Rapid Action Battalion(RAB,

the investigation and are likely to be

It also bore similarities with the

ioined by more RAB men soon.

source claimed.