NEWS

said the official

source said.

BCL STRIKE

ties under suspension.

a board official said.

hartal in Sylhet Division.

source informed.

Hossain Saidee.

spoke.

fund

leaders and activists of Sylhet city

and district units of pro-Awam

League Bangladesh Chhatra

League (BCL), meanwhile, were

yesterday sent to jail custody on

completion of a five-day remand.

Investigators could squeeze no crucial information from them, a

The BCL enforced a strike at

schools and colleges in the city

today demanding immediate

release of its leaders arrested after

the blast, putting educational activi-

Secondary Education, Sylhet has already shifted two tests of the

Higher Secondary Certificate exam-

inations scheduled for today. These

exams will now be held on June 19,

PRE-HARTAL AL RALLY

The main opposition Awami

League's Sylhet district and city

units held a rally and took out a

procession in the city yesterday ahead of today's dawn-to-dusk

programmes may be announced

after the general strike today, a

The party's presidium members

Mavor Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran

Ministry seeks

The shutdown brings to a close a

The Board of Intermediate &

NGOs

told The Daily Star.

association with police are demand-

ing money from me to get the case

support to the innocents who were

Blast (Bangladesh Legal Aid

Services Trust) are providing legal

support to some victims," said

Mostafa Qayyum Khan, executive

director. Coalition for the Urban Poor

(Cup), a networking organisation of

legal support to every victim, so it

would be best if the government

withdrew the cases filed in connec-

tion with the April 30 deadline," Khan

negative effect on the society as a

whole as most of those rounded up

are poor and insolvent to run cases

The financial burden will make them

inclined to adopt unfair means to pay

for litigation. This will encourage

"We extended financial support to

Scores of innocent people were

Following a writ petition on April 27

challenging the mass arrests, the

High Court issued a rule asking the

government to explain in three weeks

why Section 86 of Dhaka

Metropolitan Police Ordinance under

which police made the arrests,

should not be declared extra-

ernment to submit a report detailing

the names and other particulars of

the arrestees and steps for their

Commissioner Ashraful Huda mean-

while told The Daily Star he is

unaware of any such High Court

The court also directed the gov-

Dhaka Metropolitan Police

nearly100 people fined by the court

after their arrest," said Abu Obaidur

also arrested on arrival in Dhaka from

other districts during that period.

criminal activities," he observed.

Rahman, an Ask official.

constitutional

release from iail.

"The legal procedure will have a

"But it is not possible to provide

arrested over the deadline issue.

Some NGOs have extended

"Ain 0 Salish Kendra (Ask) and

withdrawn." Mannan said.

PM pleads

FROM PAGE 1

that can ensure fair play, justice and compassion for the poor," she said while addressing the opening session of the World Bank-sponsored global conference on poverty reduction here.

Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao delivered the keynote speech at the opening session. President of Tanzania Benjamin William Mapa, President of Brazil Lula da Silva, Finance Mnister of China Jin Renguin and President of World Bank James D Wolfensohn also addressed the opening session at the Shanghai International Convention Centre.

Referring to the Bangladesh experience, the prime minister said the resource gap could be overcome partly by implementing a suitable strategy. "The experience of Bangladesh

indicates that lack of adequate resources is an important handicap but not an insuperable obstacle," she observed

Khaleda told the conference that Bangladesh had received significant dividends from the consistent policy

on human development. "I am happy to inform you that Bangladesh, according to the assessment of the UN human development report. has for the first time graduated from the low human

Evil forces

FROM PAGE 12 are obstructing investigation and sheltering the criminals.

Asked if he feels involvement of Islamist fundamentalists in these incidents, he said, in some of the incidents, linkage and presence of those who abuse religion could be noticed. He grieved over the seizure of a

huge quantity of illegal arms and the murder of Commodore (Retd) Rabbani in Chittagong, killing of awyer Manzurul Imam and journalist Manik Saha in Khulna, brutal slaugh ter of a businessman and his son in Dhaka and the murder of lawmaker

Ahsanullah Masterin Tongi. The Gono Forum chief said the indifference to the popular demand for an effective investigation into the bomb blast at Hazrat Shahjalal Shrine that killed seven people in January last led to the heinous attack on British High CommissionerAnwarChoudhury.

Coming down heavily on the vigilante activities of 'Bangla Bhai', he accused the man and his followers of taking the law into their own hands to murder and terrorise citizens in the Rajshahi region. Not only has the law not been

tioner, saying, despite changes in the enforced against such crimes but the past through movement, there has not police seem to provide them with cover. In spite of extensive media been any qualitative change in the tenor of power. coverage of the medieval forms of "What we want is a meaningfu torture and killings, the cabinet demmovement, a meaningful change.. onstrates nothing but paralysis," he

not merely a change in power, but a bitterly censured Referring to the nomenclature of Bangla Bhai, Dr Kamal said this name change in character of power with honest and competent people," the must have come from outside and it eminent lawyer explained

Al slates attack

development category to the medium human development category in ening pace battery

2003," she told the audience. The prime minister said starting with a fragile resource base and a war-devastated economy in 1971 Bangladesh has reduced poverty, from more than 70 percent in the early 1970s to less than 50 percent in 2002. She, however, said, "What has night.

been achieved so far is encouraging but not enough." The prime minister said said reforms are necessary, but they are

tice session.

rain in Grenada.

noon training session.

draw in Grenada on Monday.

looked hard and bouncy to me.

team also reached St Lucia without

their captain Brian Lara, who opted

out of the one-day series that the

home team won 3-0. The gifted left-

hander is expected to join the after-

(captain), Rajin Saleh, Javed Omar,

Hannan Sarker, Mohammmad

Ashraful, Faisal Hossain, Manjarul

slam, Mushfiqur Rahman, Khaled

Mashud (wicketkeeper),

Mohammad Rafique, Tapash

3 Bangladeshis

Dumont belonged to al-Qaeda's

ogistics arm and police suspect he

was engaged in raising funds,

money laundering and forming a

terrorist network while hiding here

Baisya and Taerq Aziz Khan.

FROM PAGE 12

agencies said.

said, quoting police.

Koizumi.

several calls from Dumont.

The selected 12: Habibul Bashar

not sufficient for poverty alleviation. The poor need opportunities to participate in equal terms. They cannot at all enter the highly competitive global market unless they are given access to education, health electricity and information highway,

she added. Rcognising the role of nonvernmental organisations (NGOs) poverty reduction, Khaleda said poverty is a complex problem with many faces. It cannot be solved from

the top by the government alone. Referring to the importance of NGOs, the prime minister said NGOs can never be the substitutes for government programme. They can play a very useful role in developing innovative approaches and supple

menting the public sector, she added.

must be found which outsider gave the

armed groups which he said were

patronised by political parties, neutral

function of law-enforcing agencies

and the administration, separation of

the judiciary, impartial investigations

into killings and bomb explosions and

publication of investigation reports

"People earnestly yearn for a change"

through election to establish healthy

caution against any manipulation in

the upcoming by-election in Dhaka 10

in the style of Magura-2 by-election,

saying people would not accept the

results and those who would obstruct

fair voting must be punished. "We

have been issuing warnings for long;

we cannot wait further... The time to

with other parties, including the 11-

party alliance, to unite on common

issues. "We want a fundamental

change -- a change for healthy politics

against sick politics," he told a ques-

He said his party is in consultation

act is now," he announced.

He also sounded a strong note of

Dr Kamal demanded disbanding of

name.

politics.

Kapali dropped UK detectives share FROM PAGE 1 Tareq was preferred to left-arm

FROM PAGE 1 spinner Enamul Haque for strength-Hazrat Shahjalal Shrine, sources

Coach Dav Whatmore and chief said. The Scotland Yard officials selector Faruque Ahmed, who is arrived in Dhaka on Sunday to investigate deadly blast that accompanying the team as tour operations manager, is going to wounded Bangladesh-born British have a one-to-one talk with the top-High Commissioner to Bangladesh order batsmen after the training last Anwar Choudhury and 69 others and killed three. The team went to "We will talk with the top order

Sylhet the next day. batsmen individually. It is verv The UK police officials earlier in important because if we are to do the morning went to the police well in the five-day game the top headquarters and met the Inspector order must show a disciplined General of Police (IGP) Shahudul approach against a four-pronged They also went to the Haque. West Indies pace attack", said Special Branch (SB) of Police office Faruque during the morning pracand talked with Additional IGF Nohammad Abdul Qaiyum. The Tigers reached St Lucia on

Alan Shaw, head of political Tuesday but not before they were section of the British High battered and bruised by the West Commission, and a SB team Indies Cricket Board XI in a threeaccompanied the British officials, day practice match that ended in a sources said.

A home ministry official, wishing "I have seen the pitch and it anonymity, meanwhile, yesterday said the government wants the anti-There is nothing to fear for the terrorist group to help track down the criminals. He added that police batsman", said Faruque, who was delighted to see the sun shining on lack the expertise to investigate the the ground after being chased by bomb explosion and people have little confidence in the police force. Meanwhile, the West Indies

INVESTIGATORS AGAIN OFF TO SYLHET TODAY six-day agitation programme in the city declared after the blast. Fresh The British team will again fly off to the northeastern city this morning to carry out further enquiry, our staff correspondent from Sylhet reports.

The UK detectives will meet the deputy inspector general of police, Sylhet Range, and may visit the shrine, an official said. The team is likely to head back to the capital in the afternoon, he added.

NO LEADS AS YET

The local investigators have found no clue to the blast at the shrine. "...We were chasing all possible links and interrogating people suspected for suspected links to the blast," said an official yesterday, asking not to be named

The transfer of the case to the Criminal Investigation Department from Kotwali police is still in process,

Indians held

10 locations, was aimed at "getting to the bottom of Dumont's fundraisng activities in Japan," Jiji Press Jiji said another 33-year-old Bangladesh man had received

said. Police and security agencies nave refused to comment on Dumont's reported stay in Japan, although it has been tacitly acknowledged in comments by politicians including Prime Minister Junichiro

engaged in trafficking people, police added. Investigators also questioned

FROM PAGE 12 to know of its potential adverse

matter.'

impacts on Bangladesh from experts and hopes that the new adjacent district headquarters of Indian administration will review its implementation. But, the recipient, a worker of the

"There are riparian rights," he underscored, adding, "I will have an HC stays RPCL MD

FROM PAGE 12 notice issued a letter on the termina-The nine arrestees, including

tion of Sabur on May 17.

Sabur, who says a group of corrupt REB officials and a businessperson, who is also the local agent of the RPCL's consultant Lahmeyer, have victimised him, challenged the REB letter in the High Court.

A High Court bench comprising Justices MA Matin and Tariq-ul-Haqim yesterday in its rule stayed the REB decision until the previous High Court order is disposed of. The final hearing of the dispute

will be held within two weeks Sources said the RPCL MD became a target of a vested interest group when he had objected to some corrupt deals hatched by an influential businessperson in the donor-funded first phase 280-

megawatt Dhaka North Power Plant (DNPP). With an estimated cost of 153 million Euro the tender for the pro-ject's consultant in a way has tampered the DNPP so that only a certain company gets the lucrative contract. Only one company --Alsthom-- submitted bid documents in February's tender and was found qualified.

The project's consultant Lahmeyer itself was selected without any bidding allegedly because of the lobbying by the Lahmeyer's local agent. The agent virtually enjoys strong command over the REB and even attends the REB Board Meetings illegally.

Central AL leaders at the rally As The Daily Star in a report against blamed ruling coalition revealed this corruption, the pro-ject's German donor KfW launched partner Jamaat-e-Islami for the shrine blast and asked the govern-ment to arrest its leader Delwar a probe and found severe inconsis tencies in the power project. KfW recommended appointment of an international auditor to review various aspects of the RPCL and Abdus Samad Azad and Suranjit Sengupta, Chief Whip of the also put a question about how the Opposi-tion in parliament Abdus local agent's participation in the RPCL's board meetings. Shahid, Sylhet city AL President and

Ageing F-28 FROM PAGE 12

up maintenance cost. The Rolls-Royce-manufactured engine will cost Biman no less than \$5.25 lakh, FROM PAGE 12 asked it to ensure proper use of the 35 percent of the price of a similar

> The purchase goes against Biman's fleet planning committee's modernisation plan, which recommends procurement of new generation planes to expand operation and earn profit.

However, Managing Director of duty-bound to protect the common Biman Akhter Hossain Khan said people, but it has rather penalised the the aircraft, maintained in European poor for its brawl with the opposition. standard, are still in good condition He said after registration by civil Bhasantek. is now absconding after aviation authorities, the planes may Kafrul police filed a case against him start operation on domestic and sometime before April 30. regional routes in two-three days.

Four Indonesian pilots, who have flown the planes from Indonesia, wil leave Dhaka after familiarisation of local pilots with the aircraft, he said. State Minister for Civil Aviation

and Tourism Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin yesterday pay a visit to the F-28s at Biman's engineering hangar at the ZIA.

The minister told newspersons that the new planes will help Biman to maintain its schedule and increase flight frequency on some important routes.

Biman has bought the planes with the money it got from the sale of two ATP (Advanced Turbo Prop) planes earlier this year, he said

Double trouble

spent seven days in jail in inhuman condition. Police misbehaved with me as they did with thousands of other detainees like me.

Police filed a case against her on charge of organising people for antigovernment movement. Fatema is now out on bail, but she had to spend Tk 9,500 to bribe police to get out of ail. "I am the only bread earner of my family and have nine mouths to feed How can I bear the legal expenses? am a victim of the political wrangling between the government and the opposition. Who will compensate me for the damage caused to my familv?"

Many others like Fatema who were caught up in the governmentopposition standoff and ended up being accused of anti-government

conspiracy. More than 15,000 were picked up in an eight-day dragnet after the government launched an unprecedented drive, indiscriminately arresting opposition leaders and activists and workers of a non-governmental organisation (NGO), Proshika, to counterAL's much-hyped ultimatum.

Most people arrested under Dhaka Metropolitan Police Act and section 54 of Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) were sentenced without their appearance in court, let alone scope for self-defence.

Jahanara Begum, 40, another resident of Kuril slum, was also arrested under Section 54 on the same day along with Fatema and spent seven days in jail without any specific charge.

"Now I have to appear before the court as Gulshan police have accused me of organising an antigovernment movement," she said. Abdul Jabbar, 40, a resident of the

city's Bhasantek area, worked for an insurance company when he was rounded up on April 19 and subsequently charged for theft. During his 17 days behind bars, Jabbar got fired from his job for being absent for five consecutive days.

Meanwhile, Additional Attorneys "I was never involved in politics in General Abdur Razzak Khan and AJ any way or the other but had to pay Mohammed Ali were unwilling to talk for the political turmoil centring AL's about the mass arrests when this April 30 deadline. Who will feed my correspondent contacted them over seven family members now that I have lost my job?" phone. Jabbar said the government is

order.

Attorney General AF Hassan Ariff was also unavailable for comment but his secretary said the attorney general would rather not talk about the matter as the mass arrest is a political issue. But a source at the attorney general's office revealed that a reply will be given to the rule after the HC reopens on June 12.

"Now some people claiming close

Abdul Mannan, a slum-dweller at

Currents hobble

FROM PAGE 12 and Narayanganj, and MV Lighting Sun, bound to Dhaka from Madaripur, sank in the mighty Meghna early Sunday.

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) frogmen also failed to reach the sunken launch and coastquard ship Shoibal could not attach towline to the vessel because of strong currents.

Earlier, the Titas and Kapot rescue vessels of the BIWTA, reconfirmed the location of the Digonto Jahajmara with sonar reading. rescue and salvage operations.

ies, 40 were handed over to the deputy commissioner of Madaripur

and 16 bodies were buried in

Chandpur, officials in Chandpur said. Meanwhile, relatives of the missing passengers from Gournadi, Agailjhara, Muladi in Barisal and Kalkini in Madaripur were milling around on the Meghna bank, crying for information about their loves ones

Saiful Islam, port official in

UNB adds: The shipping ministry

Siddigur Rahman, brother of missing passenger Giasuddin from Torki, accused the authorities of neglect and mindless delay' in the

He also promised to talk to the USAID and the World Bank to fund a water purification project for the arsenic-affected areas, which he

Sikri pushes

aircraft Jatiya Party (Ershad) lawmaker Golam Mohammad Kader demanded subsidy on all agricultural inputs including electricity, diesel, seeds and expressed despair at the slow process of fertilizer import "There is no crisis of fertilizer, but

the process initiated by the government to import the agricultural input is very tardy. I am doubtful whether the government will be able to import fertilizer on time. I think farmers will be hit hard by a fertilizer

crisis in the next season. The state minister, however assured the committee that there would be no fertilizer crisis in the next season.

who are over-staying in the US in

the next session of the Congress.

Committee chairman Abdul Mannan presided over the meeting held at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

Gilman for tighter

The trio passed immigration channel as passengers but Pargas

Singh holed up on the roof of a toilet 16 hours after the Biman flight had arrived from Hong Kong, police

Meanwhile, police yesterday started quizzing the owner and manager of the guesthouse, Euro Garden where the Indians stayed. They revealed that Guru Bhajan and Har Bhaian used to visit Dhaka for

between July 2002 and September 2003, according to earlier reports. The arrest of several foreign FROM PAGE 1 detained Indians nationals during raids at more than Singh, Nirmol Singh, Manjeet Singh, Mangas Singh and Sandeep

the last two years and were

the six suspended Biman officials in

Dumont had been wanted by nterpol in connection with various incidents including an attempted bomb attack against the Group of the morning. Seven summit in Lyon, France, in

June 1996. He was sentenced to life mprisonment by a French court in 2001 in his absence. (AFP/REUTERS)

human-rights organisation says, adding harassment of human rights defenders continued.

tribunals, increasing the risk of convictions based on flawed evi-

to death and two men executed, the

Over 130 people were sentenced

FROM PAGE 1

dence, the report says.

Immunity from prosecution was granted to officials and army personnel associated with human-rights violations during the anticrime "Operation Clean Heart" in which at least 40 people died after being detained by soldiers, the report says

Dozens of people died in violence during and after local elections in the first guarter of 2003.

The report says several opposition politicians were assassinated and corruption and poor governance were key factors in blocking economic prosperity.

It says the government reportedly pressured judges to dismiss criminal charges against ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party supporters

The main opposition party, Awam League, boycotted most sessions of parliament, the report notes.

The report mentions the case of journalist Enamul Haque senior Chowdhury who, upon his release

US slated over rights

FROM PAGE 1 "The global security agenda proterrorism laws that allow indefinite detention without charge of trial. The moted by the U.S. administration is laws have been criticized by lawmakbankrupt of vision and bereft of ers, civil rights groups and Muslim principle," Khan said in a statement. associations. Violating rights at home, turning a blind eye to abuses abroad, and that more than half the 572 people

using pre-emptive military force where and when it chooses have damaged justice and freedom, and made the world a more dangerous place.

Amnesty said the US-led war on terror continued to be waged using indiscriminate and disproportionate means The report cites the hundreds of

foreign nationals who remain in indefinite detention without charge or trial in US custody at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. It also details alleged unlawful killings of civilians by coalition troops in Iraq and allegations of abuse of Iraqi prisoners by US soldiers

The recent publication of photographs of U.S. troops torturing and humiliating Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib prison in Baghdad was met with international condemnation.

"By failing to protect the rights of those who may be guilty, governments endanger the rights of those who are innocent and put us all at risk," Khan said.

The report criticized several novernments, including those of France and Uzbekistan, Spain. which it said have introduced "regressive" anti-terrorist legislation and restrictions on freedom since the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks.

Britain was singled out for holding 14 foreign nationals under anti-

force during opposition or trade union demonstrations, but no officer was known to have been brought to justice for the attacks, the report

from jail on January 5, said he was

beaten, tortured with electric shocks

and threatened with death at gun-

point in police custody. He was

accused of misquoting the home

minister in a news agency report.

Police continued to use exce

Some prominent detainees including Shahriar Kabir. Professor Muntasir Mamun, Saleem Samad and Awami League leaders Bahauddin Nasim, Saber Hossain Chowdhury and Tofail Ahmed, continued to suffer harassment and threats of detention after their release from jail. In June, warrants of arrests were

issued against Mahfuz Anam, edito and publisher of The Daily Star Matiur Rahman, editor of the Daily Prothom Alo, and Abdul Jalil, general secretary of the Awami League.

A government official filed a criminal defamation case against them after publication of a letter in which Jalil criticised the nomination of the official to an executive post in an international organisation.

British police disclosed last month

arrested in anti-terror raids in Britain

since Sept. 11, 2001 have been

released without charge, and fewer

than one in five have been charged

European nations -- including Portugal, Spain, France, Britain,

Ireland and Malta -- for tough new

Khan said she was heartened by

millions of people who took to the

streets in capitals around the world to

protest the war in Iraq, Spaniards

who marched following the March 11 terrorist attacks in Madrid, and the

said. "In times of uncertainty, the

world needs not only to fight against

global threats but to fight for global

the war on terror have obscured the

greatest human rights challenge in

recent history -- the tendency of

many developing countries to spend

billions of dollars a year on weapons

Millennium Development Goals such

as reducing child mortality and

halving the number of people without

access to clean water, will not be

achieved because resources have

been diverted to the war on terror.

Khan said there is a risk that UN

instead of tackling poverty.

The report also said that Iraq and

'Governments need to listen," she

World Social Forum in Brazil.

justice "

Amnesty also criticized severa

with terrorism-related offenses.

policies on asylum seekers.

ce mill named Assiruddi the mean time had left this planet due to a prolonged illness in the first week of February 2003, escaping the letter somewhere at the middle

Twin blasts

followed by a much larger one to

maximise the number of casualties.

The blasts came two days after

police in Karachi arrested six mem-

bers of Harkat-ul Mujahideen al-

Alami, an al-Qaeda-linked group

that tried to assassinate Musharraf

"It is sheer terrorism, it looks like

they have used locally made

bombs." said Manzoor Mughal, a

senior police official told Reuters at

battle against Islamic militancy

since joining the "war on terror" after

the September 11 attacks on the

December. Western concerns,

government officials and religious

minorities have also been militant

targets in the past three years

United States in 2001.

mining his government

arrested so many of them.

FROM PAGE 12

in 2002.

the scene.

mosaue

Nilphamari on May 24, 2004.

Snail mail

FROM PAGE 1

of its tedious journey. At least Assiruddin was spared the pains of answering the anxious enquiries that the letter carried from his daughter Omeda Akhter, who was then 18, about his health. The man had been an operator at the rice mill since 1969. His family lived in Noupara

The envelope bears two seals, one of Bangla Hili post office dated 23.07.2001 and the other of Nilphamari post office dated 24.05.2004, although the postmaster of Nilphamari, Biplob Kumar Das, says it should not have taken more than one or two days for a letter to cover the distance

Bangladesh readvmade garment producers as a 'discrimination'. He said he will ask the US trade representatives "to take a good hard look at why Bangladesh is being discrim inated while Caribbean and African

> countries are receiving special treatments. Upon his return to the US he promised to encourage a greater US investment in Bangladesh, try to solve trade-related problems and urge US traders to explore jute products for US market.

Gilman also took it on himself to work with the current chairman of Bangladeshi caucus, Joseph Crowley, to revive the stalled congressional bill which sought to legalise over 100.000 Bangladeshis

said he already has discussed with the country's business community. opportunity to talk to the US state

Prompted by a question on the department and the UN on the nature of Bangladesh's politics, Gilman advised the country's politi-The founder of the Bangladeshi cal leaders to start reforms to end caucus in the US Congress finds the confrontational politics. "In our termination of US concessions to country we shed our differences after elections and work together," the veteran congressman pointed out, adding that the political leaders here should adopt the US political principles

> Gilman came to Dhaka on an invitation from the Bangladesh-US Friendship Association. During his stay, he met with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia on the eve of her departure for China, and a number of ministers and opposition leaders. He also visited various development projects across the country.

A staunch Republican. Gilman is known as an influential lobbvist and the immediate past chairman of the Congressional Committee on International Relations

HC stays Dhaka-10

FROM PAGE 1

attorneys sought constitution of a special bench to hear the matter during vacation. The High Court goes on vacation from today until June 11 and will hear the matter when it resumes on June 12.

The returning officer (RO) of the Ramna-Tejgaon (Dhaka-10) constit-Asked if they could be related to uency on May 20 refused to allocate the arrest of the militants, he said: 'kula' for the BDB on the grounds that "Yes it could be a reaction, we have he did not get any letter from the Election Commission (EC) recognis-Karachi police chief Taria Jamil ing the BDB as a political party. said the blasts did not appear to

Mannan, a retired major and also have been caused by suicide bomb-BDB secretary general who resigned ers, unlike an attack earlier this from parliament and the ruling BNP month that killed 15 minority Shi'ite on March 10, rejected the allocated Muslims and wounded 125 in a election symbol, 'bench', and chalsectarian attack on a Karachi lenged the RO's order to the High Court on May 23. Musharraf has stepped up a

"As the secretary general of a political party. I cannot contest the bypolls as an independent candidate with the symbol allocated by the returning officer," Mannan said.

Militants enraged by the crack-The High Court the same day down and Musharraf's backing of directed the RO to reconsider allocathe US-led war in neighbouring tion of 'Kula' to the BDB candidate, Afghanistan have responded with but the RO on May 25 once again repeated attacks aimed at underrefused the election symbol.

The RO said he allocated 'Kula' to Musharraf survived two more independent candidate' Mannan by assassination attempts in the city of lottery, as several candidates vied for Rawalpindi near Islamabad in

The petitioner's counsels told the court yesterday that the RO did not go by the HC directive for a review of the decision. They also alleged seat FROM PAGE 12 and State Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources AKM Mosharraf Hossain also attended it.

Huda said sub-standard Indian goods are being dumped into Bangladesh and urged the envoy to look into the issue. "I know many poor quality vehicles entered into Bangladesh after two-stroke threewheelers were banned," he said.

Mosharraf said Bangladesh has overcome a crisis of CNG refuelling station which was there even a few months ago. "Now it is possible to make CNG-run vehicles popular in the country and mobile filling stations can solve the problem in areas where there is no gas transmission line."

Tariqul said as CNG-run vehicles are saving around two-thirds fuel cost and the commuters should benefit from it. He also urged Green Arrow Express, to charge less and increase passenger facilities.

Anwarul Islam Tarek, chief executive officer of Green Arrow Express, said they have hit the road with 50 Tata buses which run only on CNG and plan to push the number to 500 in a year.

Proshika

FROM PAGE 12 detained Proshika staff could form the human chain for few minutes before police barred them for holding a gathering 'without prior permission from Dhaka University Vicechancellor Prof SMA Faiz'.

Police asked the family members to leave the area saying they would be arrested if they staved there any longer. Fearing arrest, the agitating group left the place and tried to assemble in front of Dhaka Medical College Hospital gate, but police chased them again and thwarted their attempt.

Before leaving the area Faruque's wife Shahana Ahmed said. "The alliance government has violated human rights by foiling our peaceful programme. I demand immediate release of my husband and dismissal of all cases filed against him and Proshika staff."

She also urged the government to stop harassing Proshika employees and officials and ensure family members' visit to the detainees at Dhaka Central Jail.

Faruque's daughter Rifat Zebin Bohnni demanded release of her father. She also urged the prime minister to ensure proper treatment of her father in jail. Demanding Faruque's immediate release, 8 year-old Qazi Rubayet Ahmed said 'I want to see my father.

The BIWTA sought the help of salvage vessels Rustam and Hamza Chandpur, said by phone legal action and navy and coastquard ships for would be taken against the owner immediate rescue and salvage operamaster, sareng and driver of MV tion Digonto.

Sources said the Rustam reached Chandpur Madrasa terminal at about yesterday formed a three-member 1:30pm and was preparing to plunge probe committee to investigate the into the salvage operation. The recent launch accidents in the Hamza will also join the drive if need Meghna. be, Chandpur port officials said.

nient time between high and low tides

to attach towropes to the sunken

from the MV Lighting Sun and MV

Digonto, relatives received 24 bod-

The committee, headed Deputy Shoibal swung into action imme-Secretary of the ministry Md Abdul Matin, was asked to submit its report diately after reaching the scene at about 2:30pm. Lt Emdad of the ship in 10 days, according to a handout. said they were waiting for a conve-

Koreas meet

FROM PAGE 12

Three more decomposed floating signals for vessels to help avoid bodies were retrieved from the river naval skirmishes, Yonhap news near the sunken Digonto yesterday. agency said. Of the 80 bodies retrieved earlier

Seoul also wants general-level talks to be held in a regular format for tension reduction, Yonhap said.

Bangla Bhai

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launch.

The pullback began hours after Rajshahi Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Noor Muhammad in a surprise meeting on Tuesday night asked senior police officials in Naogaon and Bogra to arrest the fanatic outfit's operations commander Bangla Bhai and his supporters.

Denving an allegation against police of helping the JMJB to pull out, the DIG told The Daily Star that police were acting tough against the JMJB and its lynchpin.

"I am under pressure to arrest Bangla Bhai, I ordered his capture without delay, but it did not yield any result yet."

A senior police official in Naogaon went to the JMJB camp in Bhiti village of Raninagar Monday night and asked Bangla Bhai to surrender with the help of local politicians.

Raninagar Police Station Officern-Charge Mashiur Rahman on Tuesday midnight reportedly asked Bangla Bhai to stop JMJB activities at Bhiti camp. Police also asked camp leaders in Bagmara to go underground and suspend their vigilante action. Top police officials n Naogaon and Rajshahi denied

the allegations Villagers said none of the JMJB operatives were seen on the prowl vesterday. Also vacant were the campsites at Aloknagar AHM High

School that was dominated by Bangla Bhai and his nephew Babu and Bhiti Siddikia Fazil Madrasa run by Mowlana Abdur Rahman.

DEMONSTRATION

Several thousand JMJB men staged an armed showdown in the northwestern city under police escort on May 22 and declared by loudspeaker that "even Allah himself cannot protect journalists of Janakantha from JMJB men" and asked all local reporters to be mindful of death before writing against

JMJB operations. About 100 local journalists under Raishahi Journalists' Union (RUJ) marched in procession in Raishahi city yesterday morning and held a midday rally at Shaheb Bazar Zero Point to protest the death threats.

Chaired by RUJ President Mustafizur Rahman Khan Alam, the rally was also addressed by Rajshahi University teacher Dr Sujit Sarkar, North Bengal Federa Journalists' Council Vice-President Alamgir Kabir Tota, Metropolitan Press Club General Secretary Hasan Millat and Rajshahi Press Club Joint Secretary Mahtab Chowdhury.

The journalists demanded immediate arrest of the JMJB men who announced in the presence of law-enforcement agencies that journalists reporting on them would be killed.

Rahman. Barrister Tanjib UI Alam appeared for the petitioner. Dr Kamal also submitted that since prevention is better that cure. the election proceedings should be stopped to prevent a repeat of farci-

cal election like the Magura-2 bypolls of 1994. The government attorneys, as usual, opposed their submission.

The HC bench observed that a full hearing is needed to resolve the case

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) MA Syed told newspersons after the HC order that the EC would not appeal against the judgement 'The government can do it," the CEC

said The constitution stipulates holding of the polls in a parliamentary constituency within 90 days of its falling vacant and the deadline expires on June 8, the CEC said. "We will seek legal expert views on the matter. We will also look into the issue after receiving the judgement's copy. In the seventh parliament, Bhola-

constituency remained nonrepresented for five years due to a High Court stay on by-polls to the

discrimination in the allocation of 'Kula' saying that a BDB candidate

was given it but another was refused. Dr Kamal Hossain, Barrister Rokanuddin Mahmud, Barrister Amir -UI Islam, Advocate MK Khalilur