

## Bombers kill 41

FROM PAGE 1

army were waiting outside the base when hot shrapnel scythed through the air.

"Suddenly there was a huge explosion. Ten or 15 others were on top of me on the street. I can't go back. No way," said army volunteer Ibrahim Ismail from his hospital bed.

"This was a cowardly attack. It is a demonstration again that these attacks are aimed at the stability of Iraq and the Iraqi people," Prime Minister Iyad Allawi said at the scene.

Iraq's new defence minister promised a military crackdown on insurgents.

"We will cut off their hands and behead them," Hazim al-Shaalani said. Iraqi forces would lead the raids, with only logistical help from US troops, he added.

Visiting US Deputy Defence Secretary Paul Wolfowitz said Iraqi security forces would need "substantial help" for some time and US troops would stay in Iraq as long as necessary.

### OPINION POLL

But an opinion poll conducted for the US-led authority since a prison abuse scandal became public found that 55 percent of Iraqis would feel safer if US troops left the country now.

Interior Minister Falah al-Naqib blamed suicide attacks on foreigners. "These bombings are not being done by Iraqis," he said. "I think there is some link to Zarqawi."

The US military blames a group led by Jordanian militant Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, with suspected links to al-Qaeda, for orchestrating much of the violence roiling Iraq.

## Workers Party

FROM PAGE 1

gress decided to form an alternative third force outside the domain of the BNP and Awami League. But the party leadership including its president and general secretary have deviated from that decision. They are now working to implement the AL's agenda, he added.

He also alleged the party lacks democratic practices within it.

The alternative third force that was slowly gathering strength over the last 15 years has been destroyed by the party's present policy and activities, he felt.

Meanwhile, the party central committee at its meetings scheduled for June 20 and 21 is likely to take up the issue of action against the rebels, sources said.

## UN agency

FROM PAGE 12

International Atomic Energy Agency official told a meeting of the agency's 35-nation board of governors.

IAEA deputy director general Pierre Goldschmidt said the IAEA "acknowledges that it omitted to take notice of the oral statement made in January with respect to the importation of magnets" but he also said Iran had failed to mention in written statements made in February and March to the agency the importation of magnets.

IAEA director general Mohamed ElBaradei told reporters: "This is not a major mistake. Iran could have corrected it."

He said a resolution of the IAEA board is to consider on Iran's nuclear program will "reflect" the mistake but "this technical correction doesn't change the fact that we need more transparency from Iran" in reporting on its nuclear programme.

The IAEA is investigating US charges that Iran is secretly developing nuclear weapons.

## Bush disputes 9/11 panel's no-Saddam link conclusion

AP, Washington

President Bush yesterday disputed the Sept. 11 commission's finding that there was no "collaborative relationship" between Saddam Hussein and al-Qaeda terrorist network responsible for the attacks. "There was a relationship between Iraq and al-Qaeda," Bush insisted following a meeting with his Cabinet at the White House.

"This administration never said that the 9-11 attacks were orchestrated between Saddam and al-Qaeda," he said.

"We did say there were numerous contacts between Saddam Hussein and al-Qaeda, for example, Iraqi intelligence agents met with (Osama) bin Laden, the head of al-Qaeda in Sudan."

The independent commission investigating the Sept. 11 attacks said Wednesday that no evidence exists that al-Qaeda had strong ties to Saddam Hussein.

Although bin Laden asked for help from Iraq in the mid-1990s, Saddam's government never responded, according to a report by the commission staff based on interviews with government intelligence and law enforcement officials. The report asserted that "no credible evidence" has emerged that Iraq was involved in the Sept. 11 strikes.

A Saudi member of Zarqawi's group carried out a suicide bombing in Baghdad that killed 13 people, including five foreign contractors Monday, the man's brother said.

The US military said a third soldier had died after a rocket attack on a base north of Baghdad on Wednesday. A Hungarian soldier was killed and a Hungarian civilian driver was wounded when an explosion hit their convoy.

Since the U.S.-led invasion to oust Saddam last year, at least 612 U.S. soldiers have been killed in action in Iraq.

The scandal over abuses at US-run prisons in Iraq has severely damaged Washington's image in the country.

The Pentagon acknowledged yesterday the military had been improperly holding a suspected Iraqi "terrorist" in a prison near Baghdad for more than seven months without informing the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld ordered military officials to hold the suspected member of the Ansar al-Islam group last November at the request of then-CIA Director George Tenet without telling the ICRC, officials said.

Pentagon spokesman Bryan Whitman said the United States now planned to give the ICRC access to the unidentified man.

In March, Maj Gen Antonio Taguba, the US Army officer who investigated abuses at the Abu Ghraib prison near Baghdad, criticised the practice of holding "ghost detainees."

## BNP, AL MPs

FROM PAGE 1

not stopped is that many in the ruling party are involved in it," said Shajahan, prompting BNP lawmaker SA Khaleq to speak.

On a separate point of order, Khaleq accused the AL lawmaker of extortion. "He (Shajahan) is the number one extortionist," said the BNP lawmaker, who has transport business.

In a counter-accusation, Shajahan then said, "He (Khaleq) has taken toll even from me and I have related documents. He also grabbed public land."

Earlier, Speaker Jamir Uddin Sircar expunged the word 'extortion' from the communications minister's speech. He however did not say anything about the allegations raised by the two lawmakers against each other.

## SQ Chy

FROM PAGE 12

nominating a 'controversial person'.

Lawmakers from the main opposition Awami League, led by Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina, pilloried the ruling coalition for the defeat in parliament on Wednesday, saying the debacle stemmed from the nomination of 'an anti-liberation and controversial man' for the prestigious office.

Legislators from the key ruling party BNP shifted the blame onto the AL, saying its hate campaign against the prime minister's parliamentary adviser brought the defeat for the nation.

Salauddin also came under fire for reportedly terming the win of Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu of Turkey and his supporters as a victory for the "Jewish lobby".

His loss went against Dhaka's repeated claim of strong support from at least 30 countries before he left for Turkey on June 12 to attend the International Conference for Foreign Ministers of the OIC.

But diplomats say Bangladesh had only secured five written endorsements including from Saudi Arabia, Indonesia and Brunei.

## Army

FROM PAGE 1

Mahi B Chowdhury swept back to parliament from Munshiganj-1 by-election while Abdul Mannan is contesting the Dhaka 10 by-election against BNP candidate Mosaddek Ali Falu.

Defending the EC's decision on army deployment in each polling centre, the CEC said it was not taken on a whim, rather it was a very well thought out decision.

The EC made the decision after considering appeals from the voters and the candidates and also the report of the electoral inquiry committee on the constituency, he added.

While asked about the Munshiganj-1 by-election where army was not deployed in each polling centre, the CEC said, "The prevailing situation in Dhaka-10 constituency is different compared to Munshiganj-1 and everybody knows it."

Meanwhile, BDB yesterday lodged a complaint with the EC about attacks on its activists and supporters while they were campaigning for BDB candidate Abdul Mannan.

The CEC sent the application to the home secretary and the inspector general of police (IGP) asking them to take necessary steps through investigation.

Replying to another query the CEC said by-election to Gazipur-2 constituency will be held after the election in Dhaka-10.

Gazipur-2 constituency has been vacant since Ahsanullah Master MP was gunned down on May 7.

## Robbers shoot dead father, son at Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A former union parishad member and his son were shot dead by robbers at a village in Mirersarai upazila in the early hours of yesterday. Five others were injured in the attack.

The dead are Abdul Ghani, 55, and his son Abdul Ahad Minto, 24.

According to police and locals, a gang of 15 stormed into the house of Ghani at village Baro Komaldaha at about 2:15am. As the gang members faced strong resistance from the inmates, they opened fire, leaving Ghani and Ahad dead and five others injured.

The injured are Ghani's two other sons Abdul Qayyum and Abdul Naem, daughters Parvin and Jasmine and an unidentified neighbour. Of them, Qayyum was shot in the abdomen and admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH).

However, some locals suspected that the killing might have been a sequel to past enmity. The gang reportedly took nothing from the house, they said.

Ghani's injured son Naem filed a case with Mirersarai Police Station.

## SP Baten

FROM PAGE 1

Shahudul Haque of the alleged offer of bribe.

The police official was arrested immediately and turned to Ramna police.

Quamruzzaman, Babar's personal secretary, lodged a case with Ramna Police Station the same night accusing Baten of offering bribe to the state minister.

## Hasina

FROM PAGE 12

withdrawal of false cases filed against AL leaders and workers.

"They (BNP-Jamaat) have planned to kill and eliminate our popular leaders one after another," she said urging the people to unite against the killing, repression and misuse of the alliance government.

Earlier, the district unit of AL brought out a silent procession in the city and offered doa for the slain leader.

AL leaders Abdul Jalil, Tofail Ahmed, Kazi Zafar Ullah, Obaidul Kader, Akhteruzzaman, Nazma Rahman, Jahangir Kabir Nanak, Mirza Azam and two sons of Ahsanullah Master, Sohail and Rabid, were present.

## Arambagh Club

FROM PAGE 1

Jishan Group who were angry with Bhulu for his refusal to withdraw a case that implicated them in the murder of his son Farid two years ago might have killed him.

"We're also investigating whether the executive positions he used to hold in Arambagh Sporting Club and nearby Dilkusha Club have any link with the murder," said Investigation Officer of the case Shahabuddin Azad of Motijheel Police Station.

Bhulu, a contractor, was also the acting joint secretary of Dilkusha Club.

## Curb on rowdy

FROM PAGE 1

sion of wrong information to the Bangladesh Bank and directors taking illegal loans and facilities from their own banks. The amended Act will put the maximum penalty at Tk 10 lakh with a provision for jail term.

The government is also changing the definition of bank loan defaulters. Presently, a borrower failing to repay loan six months into the expiry of deadline becomes a defaulter. The new definition, however, puts a borrower on the defaulters' list as soon as their loan is marked as classified under the Bangladesh Bank rules.

The central bank earlier determined the size and nature of bank boards and the tenure of directors through a circular, which will also be incorporated in the Act.

Banking sources believe the amendments will definitely help the banking sector move in the right direction.

A top official of a nationalised commercial bank said the amendment will improve the working environment in the state-owned banks.

"Trade union leaders who are third or fourth class employees get to use bank cars for personal and family purpose round the clock. In contrast, officers below the rank of general manager do not get such facility," noted the official, who asked not to be named.

Officer association leaders also take such unethical and illegal benefits.

Trade union leaders are against any reforms. For instance, the government selected a private management team to run the Agrani Bank, but many potential senior bankers declined to head the team under trade union threats.

## Dengue strikes back

FROM PAGE 1

the city.

But, in the last two years there has been no such study, which implies the DCC presently has no knowledge on density and locality of Aedes population.

"Dengue may make a massive comeback as it attacks in a cycle. In last two years we have had no significant attacks. But, surely we have the infection and we also have the vector or the transmitters to cause widespread infection like that in 1999 and 2000," said a leading entomologist.

The DCC's preparation on checking Aedes population meanwhile has been going very slow. Sources in the corporation said, few of the 10 zones have sufficient stock of the larvaicide for spraying. In fact, in the last one month there was virtually no spraying of larvaicide due to lack of it.

Rain favours Aedes in breeding. In many areas, the millions of eggs already laid by the mosquitoes will start hatching soon and those carrying the dengue virus start the deadly transmission, experts apprehend.

There are four types -- DEN-1, DEN-2, DEN-3, and DEN-4 -- of the dengue virus. As infection of one of these serotypes does not provide the patient with cross-protective immunity, so a person living in a

dengue-endemic area can have as many as four dengue infections during his lifetime.

Dengue is primarily a disease of the tropics, and the viruses that cause it are maintained in a cycle that involves humans and Aedes Aegypti, a domestic, day-biting mosquito that prefers to feed on humans.

Infection with dengue viruses produces various clinical illnesses, ranging from a non-specific viral fever to severe and fatal hemorrhagic disease.

Symptoms of typical uncomplicated dengue usually start with fever within five to six days after an infected mosquito bit a person. Dengue infection symptoms include:

High fever, up to 105 degrees Fahrenheit

Severe headache

Retro-orbital (behind the eye) pain

Severe joint and muscle pain

Nausea and vomiting

Rash

The rash may appear over most of the body three to four days after the fever begins. A second rash may appear later.

Interestingly, most children infected with dengue virus never develop the typical symptoms.

## Canada questions

FROM PAGE 12

Acting High Commissioner Philippe de Varennes pointed out the inconsistencies of the bid. "We wish to ensure that our companies can compete on equal terms with those from other countries," the letters said.

He noted that the fourth re-tender of the project closed on December 23 last year despite the fact that Lavalin previously submitted a bid which complied with all major tender technical requirements.

"Three companies had been found technically qualified for the tender, including one which appeared to have been manifestly not qualified under the tender specification," he pointed out, adding that the PDB finally opened financial bids of only two bidders -- Sumitomo and Lavalin.

"It appears to us that [PDB] is now negotiating terms of the tender exclusively with Sumitomo.

This is outside the bounds of acceptable norms for such commercial transactions, and Canada considers this unacceptable," he observed.

Sources said the Canadian government officials will also visit the Prime Minister's Office soon to register their protest.

The PDB argues Sumitomo's bid did not violate tender process and it does not want to sit on the bidding as the project has already been delayed for one reason or another.

"This additional cost was optionally there in the original offer of \$83 million. So, we did not really add this extra cost," said a top PDB official, requesting not to be named.

Since September 2002, a lobby belonging to the alternative powerhouse of the government has been trying to make the PDB to sign the deal with a certain company, sources said.

## ADB finds

FROM PAGE 1

there are views that it has rather turned into an opaque body by removing a shred of check and balance as well as transparency and accountability in the activities of the organisation," the mission's report said.

It maintained that part-time members from government and private sector could bring in fresh ideas and ensure the check and balance and accountability in the capital market regulator.

On separation of dealership from brokerage operation, the mission said, due to some distinct characteristics of Bangladesh's capital market, the firms concerned have chosen to withdraw altogether from dealer business.

"In this regard, dealers, or firms trading for their own account, are believed to perform an important economic function in terms of providing greater depth and liquidity to the capital market," the report pointed out.

Explaining further the negative impact of dealership-brokerage separation, the mission said, "It has been noted that in the past brokers performed the function of underwriter and that valuable capacity has been lost in requiring that brokers not act in the capacity of underwriter."

On segregation of merchant banking, portfolio management and stock brokerage, the ADB audit team pointed out that deposit-taking commercial banks are also being permitted to conduct merchant banking activities through a 'separate' wing of the bank, without establishing a subsidiary or affiliate company, in compromise of the objective and spirit of the separation of roles and functions.

"These are in fact departments of the banks concerned and have no capital earmarked as investment for the purpose. There have been allegation that the commercial banks are in fact employing depositors' money without prudential compliance and provisioning requirement," the report said.

It also pointed out that due to a number of non-compliance of policy conditions, the market continues to suffer from lack of investors' confidence similar to that in the post-1996 period.

It said a total of 58 out of the 95 conditions tagged to the loan conditions are presently being complied with. Prior to release of the first loan tranche, only 35 out of 52 conditions were met, while 17 conditions were met before release of the second tranche. Out of the 20 non-tranche release conditions only six were met, according to the report.

The report also pointed out to a number of unresolved issues in some key programme areas that caused the less-than-expected outcomes. The issues include

## Proposed housing

FROM PAGE 12

loans for the poor and middle class people to resolve their housing problems.

It also called for creating a 'Land Bank' comprising lands from both urban and rural areas for putting up dwelling houses.

The policy discouraged allocation of plots to individuals and proposed construction of highrise housing clusters for groups of people.

The policy favoured planned roads and utility facilities in the housing clusters to preempt future problems.

The policy also called for stopping the flow of the poor to urban centres, but did not suggest any anti-migration measure.

Some speakers proposed for a more elaborate national human settlement policy.

Prominent urban expert Professor Nazrul Islam recommended offering housing to the poor in both urban and rural areas.

He also asked the authorities to preserve old buildings considering their archaeological value.

Representatives from utility service providers, government finance institutions and private and public housing organisations were present at the seminar.

The policy-framers decided to meet at another meeting to finalise the policy incorporating expert opinions.

## Proshika chief

FROM PAGE 1

granted him bail in nine out of 15 cases filed by the Bac. The bail orders, however, are yet to reach the Dhaka Central Jail, where he has been confined to from May 22.

Dr Kamal Hossain and Barrister Amir-ul-Islam moved the bail petitions while the Metropolitan Public Prosecutor Abdullah Mahmud Hassan stood for the state.

## Opposition

FROM PAGE 1

any competition in international forums and would never compromise on its sovereign and independent foreign policy.

"Bilateral relations with the neighbours have further improved in the recent times," she said.

Chairmen of parliamentary standing committees on five ministries called on the prime minister. They are Maj Gen (Retd) Mahmudul Hassan (industries ministry), Barrister Ziaur Rahman Khan (foreign affairs), GM Fazul Huq (post and telecommunications), Abdul Hai (social welfare), and Delwar Hossain Sayeedi (religious affairs).

Prime Minister's Political Secretary Harris Chowdhury, who was present at the meeting, told reporters that the meeting was part of a continuous programme for interaction between the standing committee chairmen and the Leader of the House.

The prime minister expressed satisfaction at the performance of the parliamentary standing committees when the chairmen apprised her of the activities of their respective bodies.

During the discussion on Hajj management, the Leader of the House asked the standing committee on religious affairs ministry to take adequate measures for keeping the Hajj management free from all sorts of irregularities. She appreciated the progress in the rehabilitation of the old, children and physically handicapped.

On the matters of post and telecommunications ministry, the prime minister reminded that Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTB) would have to survive in the present world of competition.

She appreciated the measures taken by the board and suggested more intensive programmes for improving the important public utility service.

## Blanc warns

FROM PAGE 12

Blanc, a star of the 1998 World Cup-winning side, said that he had heard many people saying that France's other Group B games against Croatia and Switzerland were little more than formalities.

"That attitude would be the worst thing the French team could do," he told L'Equipe newspaper.

"Giving full respect to your opponent is the best way to ensure that you perform to the best of your abilities and win the game."

"That shouldn't be too hard to do for them as without being catastrophic, there was nothing exceptional about the way France played against the English."

The reigning champions trailed England 0-1 going into injury time, but two late goals from midfielder Zinedine Zidane turned the game around.

Blanc said that while the escape act had worked against England, it would be stupid to count on that happening again.

Turning to Croatia, Blanc said it was true that they lacked the talent of the 1998 side that made it through to the World Cup semifinals before losing to France 1-2.

Blanc was sent off in that match after a Croatian player simulated being hit by him and the former Marseille and Manchester United stopper was tragically forced to miss the final in which France defeated Brazil 3-0.

"In 1998 I remember (coach) Aime Jacquet telling us that they were a team of tough nuts, many of whom played for major foreign clubs," he said.

## Politics dominates budget talks

UNB, Dhaka

The Jatiya Sangsad yesterday opened a hectic general discussion on the national budget for FY2004-05 as the treasury and opposition benches apparently focussed more on partisan politics than economic issues or new fiscal measures.

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman placed a Tk 57,248 crore budget in parliament on June 10 for consideration of parliament members.

The new budget, expected to be passed by parliament on June 30, will be effective from July 1.

Jamaat-e-Islami member Maulana Abdul Khaleque Mandal initiated the debate, saying that the new budget would contribute to making Bangladesh self-sufficient. He suggested measures for development of madrasa education.

Abdur Razzak, Atiqur Rahman Atique and Delwar Hossain of Awami League and Harun-Or Rashid of BNP took part in the discussion till 8:00 last night.

The two sides blamed each other for wrongdoing and projecting stories of successes during their tenures in office and spent most of their time on discussing political issues instead of the budgetary measures.

Abdur Razzak came down heavily on the government for patronising Jamaat and other fundamentalist forces and warned that these forces would emerge as Frankenstein and some day put them in deep trouble.

He said the fundamentalist allies of the government were out to destroy the spirit of independence and trying to harm Islam in the name of religion.

"The BNP does not perceive that their main enemy are their allies within the government," Razzak said and demanded a stop to religion-based politics.

He referred to the activities of Bangla Bhai, Harkatul Jihad and Mujahideens as well as the recent discovery of training camps in Hathazari in Chittagong and said their activities have earned Bangladesh the label of a "terrorist" nation.

He alleged there were two bomb attacks on Hazrat Shahjalal Shrine in Sylhet following provocative speeches by Jamaat member Delwar Hossain Saidee and observed that the bomb attack on the British High Commissioner

had tainted Bangladesh's image.