## Ignored complaints

Husain also wrote about alleged ill manners of the public prosecutors in the speedy trial tribunals, their

failures and forgery. Husain accused PP Hassan of his court and Special PP Moinuddin of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court of misbehaviour. He alleged they threatened him with transfer, using their political influence on the law ministry, as he did not pander to

They were accused of threatening to harass him and damage his good reputation and interfering in judicial work in violation of Articles

116 and 116 (A) of the constitution. Husain wrote in the letters that PP Hassan untowardly wanted to see a file of an ongoing case at his chamber. Court employee Abu

Taher gave the PP the file. The PP then requested the tribunal to release the on-trial prisoners mentioned in the file prior to the Dhaka-10 by-election. The PP became angry as Husain told him that the case would be

resolved by law in court. Special PP Moinuddin told tribunal bench assistant Minara Akhter that the judge (Husain) did

not work according to his wishes. In his letters, Husain also mentioned that the special PP concealed official statements of two important witnesses taken in the sensational murder case of Haris Ahmed of Tongi

As a result, the accused did not get copies of the witnesses' statements despite their prayers. The copies were vital to cross-

examining the witnesses The judge directed Taher, Minara and Moinuddin to submit written statements and all except for the special PP complied with the order. The statements by the other two say the special PP refused to release the statements of the

witnesses from case documents. When Moinuddin was asked for the copies, he shouted verbal abuses at them, threatening to 'sever their tongues" and force them out of work, Taher and

Minara alleged. "Special PP Moinuddin Ahmed lost the trust of the tribunal, Husain said in his letters.

His letters also reveal that he took charge of Dhaka-2 Speedy Trial Tribunal on January 26 last year. A case filed with Mohammadpur Police Station and pending with the Third Dhaka Metropolitan Additional Sessions Judge's Court was transferred to his tribunal through a gazette But the files of the case did not

reach his tribunal even after a month and he notified it to the secretaries of law and home, Supreme Court registrar and two

The same day, PP Hassan and Special PP Moinuddin went to the judge's chamber together and asked him to agree to resolve the case in the previous court instead

As he declined, they said he the case proceedings fitting into their wishes. They submitted a 'false' complaint against him to the law secretary apparently in a show of power on June 28.

His letters contained more similar complaints and he appealed to the authorities: "To conduct the judicial work with integrity and as per the responsibilities (vested on me) I want security for a free judicial environment.'

## REACTIONS

President of the Supreme Court (SC) Bar Association Barrister Rokanuddin Mahmud told The Daily Star that the judge made some sensitive complaints. If they are true, it means justice is at stake

### Bikalpa Dhara FROM PAGE 12

Army has to be deployed at the polling centres and not on the streets, he stressed.

"We want a peaceful polling environment so that voters can turn up spontaneously," Mahi said. The Election Commission can ask for army deployment as per Article 120 of the constitution, he said at a press show of a video on polls campaign at the party's Panthpath election office.

The video also showed why BDB chief and former president AQM Bodruddoza Chowdhury and Abdul Mannan quit the BNP, and a chronology of attacks on the party since its inception.

The government resorted to violence by letting loose BNP cadres on "my party men and myself on the eve of the floating of BDB and vandalised Mannan's business concerns", the video showed the former president as

The reality in the country now proves the BNP has failed to keep its election pledge to fight violence, crimes and corruption and check price hike of essentials, he said

Abdul Mannan was quoted as saying the ruling BNP has defied its election pledges and is serving the interests of its own men ignoring

people's interests. "I left BNP to find some political

solution to such malpractice," he Mahi said, "As we cannot carry out our election campaign in the streets, we intend to reach 10,000

video CDs to voters' houses by

Rokan said it now seems all verdicts by lower courts are influenced by ministers and other highups. The lower court judges are trapped in this circle and the complaints by Husain should be prop $erly \, investigated, he \, stressed.$ 

Husain commands credibility as sessions judge, Rokan said. The overnment decision to transfer him on the basis of complaints by the PP is injustice and unethical especially because he had already sought protection from the SC, he

"If the accusations against the public prosecutors are true, we have to say our judicial system has llapsed," Rokan said.

He also said a look into the complaints against the PPs, accused of lobbying for release of criminals, shows the executives often make such illegal requests to judges. The complaints also indicate when lower court judges seek protection from the SC against such illegal acts of the executives, it does not take steps.

The SC Bar president said if the SC had started investigation under Articles 109 and 116 of the constitution following Husain's May 30 letters, the issue would not have surfaced in public and tarnished the image of the judiciary.

The judge has put the government in the dock through specific accusations against the administration. He has taken such a bold move because he could not give in to undue pressure, Rokan said.

"I am not saying his (judge's) complaints should be believed instantly. But I am saying these

should be investigated. "I believe the Supreme Court will play its historical role in this case and restore public confidence in the judiciary by addressing it

### satisfactorily.

**Anisul Haq** Anisul Haq, former chief special public prosecutor in the Jail Killing Case, said he and other prosecutors in the case had to resign

because of persisting misbehaviour of PP Hassan. "I made accusations against him. Although he is supposed to

play a neutral role, he was siding

with the accused," Anisul said. "He (Hassan) has been working not as a PP, but a government lobbyist. He is supposed to present a case and not to pressurise a judge in his chamber. It is a proof of a government attempt to influence and interfere in judicial activities,"

## Kidnapped

along with his force followed him.

Mizan cried for help as the gang charged him for his delay. Sirajul ished to the spot and arrested one

of the gang members. Nazrul Islam Jewel was shot in his leg when police fired at the gang members as they tried to escape Sirajul was also injured and his walkie-talkie damaged during the

Police arrested Nazrul Islam Jewel, owner of the City Hairdresser, his assistant Mofazzal Iossain Rubel, and Aliya Madrassah student Shadat Hossain Sohel. Jewel is a city JCD leader and Sohel Aliya Madrassah hostel unit JCD leader. Two others managed to flee.

The arrestees were sent to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's court in the afternoon.

Earlier, local BNP leaders threatened to damage camera of a photographer of the public relation department of the Detective branch of police when he tried to take pictures of the arrestees at the Motijheel police station. The photographer then left the police station without taking the picture of the abductors.

A police assault case and a kidnapping case were filed with Motijheel thana.

## National maths

FROM PAGE 12

math-drill, science exhibition and cultural programmes were other remarkable events on the first day of the festival. Bangladesh Math Olympiad

Committee has organised the festival in collaboration with the Dutch Bangla Bank and national daily Prathom Alo.

Principal of Notre Dame College Father Benjamin Costa inaugurated the maths festival hoisting national and maths Olympiad flags and releasing balloons in the morning.

Noted scientist Prof Jamal Nazrul Islam, Vice-chancellor of BRAC University Prof Jamilur Reza Chowdhury, Prof Mohammed Zafar Iqbal, Prof Mohammed Kaikobad and editor of the Prothom Alo Matiur Rahman, among other renowned personalities, were

Speakers at the inauguration secession said mathematics is an easy subject if practised well. The objective of the festival is to popularise maths among the students, they

Teachers from across the country exchanged their views on aspects of maths at the teachers' workshop secession. They emphasised introducing information technology to words standing to the second sec tion technology to upgrade stan-dards of maths at school and college levels.

Bangla Innovation through Open Source (Bios), a voluntary organisation, presented software on maths explaining how the subject can appear to be easier and interesting to students and teach-

## Bank-owners to go to court over amended Bank Co Act

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Association of Banks (Bab), a platform of bank owners, has decided to challenge the newly amended Bank Company Act at the

A meeting of the Bab members yesterday, after discussing various aspects of the amendment, termed the amended act a 'black law'. The discussion mainly focussed on the amendments that made bank directorship more accountable and limited the board members' tenure.

The meeting, held at the Bab's Gulshan office and chaired by Syed Manzur Elahi, noted that the amendments go against their basic rights as citizens of the country. It is entirely up to a bank board to decide its size

and tenure, the meeting maintained. There is already a case on bank directorship at the Supreme Court. The court is expected to give its verdict on July 4. The Bab meeting decided, upon scanning the verdict, they will file a case against the

amendment. The Cabinet on Monday approved the amendment that restricts the number of bank directors to a maximum of 13. It also bars appointment of more than two persons as directors from the same family. And again, there can be two directors from the same family only if it holds more than 10 percent shares of the bank. Below this percentage,

there will be just one director from a family. Another clause of the amendment limits tenure of a director to two terms in a row. Under the third such amendments, the tenure of

directorship has been set for three Besides, another amendment clause prohibits obtaining lower court injunctions by directors against central bank directives.

## Ahsanullah Killing

# Charges to be pressed against

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police are going to press charges against some 25 people, dropping two from the list of 17 accused in the FIR (first information report) on the Ahsanullah Master MP murder case.

Assistant Superintendent Khalequzzaman, leader of the four-man team from the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), is likely to submit the charge-sheet in two weeks, sources privy to the investigation into the gruesome

They, however, declined to disclose whether charges would be pressed against alleged mastermind Nurul Islam Sarker, a Jubo Dal leader in Tongi.

"The CID has already finished field investigation and will wind up the probe within 10 more days," said atop CID officer.

Some 20 gunmen opened fire on a rally of Awami League's volunteer wing Shechchhasebak League at Noagaon near the legislator's house in Tongi, killing the AL lawmaker and executive president of Sramik League and schoolboy Omar Faruq Ratan, and injuring at least five others on May 7.

Ahsanullah's brother Motiur Rahman charged 17 persons with Nurul Islam as the mastermind, but police could arrest only three --Mahbub, Monir and Dulal.

Of them, Mahbub confessed to have fired on the rally, confirming that Nurul Islam Sarker plotted the

The other accused on the run are Nurul Islam Dipu and his two brothers-- Shahidul Islam Shipu and Ohidul Islam Tipu, and Kana Hafiz, Ratan Mia, Anowar Hossain Anu, Sohel, Shohagh, Jahangir, Al Amin, Faisal, Rony, Bulu Mia and Syed Ahmed Majnu.

Police also arrested Kabir Hossain, a North Badda landlord who sheltered the three accused, and four suspects -- Nasiruddin, Suman,

Oli Mian and Qaiyum. On the absconders, a CID officer said they were trying their best to nab them. "We will press charge against all who are found involved in the killing. We'll not wait for their arrest and the court may try them in absentia," he said.

## Thai Airways FROM PAGE 1

pany will get Tk 5 crore for as many years of service.

The committee, however, rejected a Power Division proposal to set up the 450 megawatt Sirajganj Power Plant that was awarded to single bidder Summit Group as it found flaws in the proposal.

It also approved setting up of a medical college in Dinajpur, reha-bilitation of Dhaka-Sylhet road and some other schemes.

## 41 dengue FROM PAGE 12

haemorrhagic fever, a potentially dangerous illness that may lead to internal bleeding, putting the patient in a state of shock.

Symptoms of the Aedes mosquito-borne viral disease are sudden onset of high fever, severe headache, joint and muscle pain and skin rash. Nausea and vomiting, loss of appetite and altered taste sensation are the other symptoms

A rash may appear three to four days after onset of fever and may spread from the chest to the arms, legs, and face.

Medical experts say the disease is usually harmless and self-limiting after about seven days. Dengue fever may be confused with other infectious diseases like influenza and malaria.

The fever is now spreading in different parts of the capital.

## Hasina blasts govt

refusing to grant bail to notorious criminal Sweden Aslam.

Hasina demanded immediate resignation of the government for its failure to run the country and urged the people to wage an all-out movement against the BNPfamaat-led ruling coalition.

The Awami League (AL) president led the colourful procession, followed by a rally, participated by thousands of activists and supporters of her party. Senior AL leaders also took part.

Addressing the rally in front of the party central office at Bangabandhu Avenue, Hasina said since its inception the AL has been struggling to establish democracy and people's rights. People will ever remember AL's contribution

to the Liberation War, she noted. Hasina said after the killing of Bangabandhu Shiekh Mujibur Rahman, the successive governments trampled democracy.

The former prime minister

accused the BNP-led four-party

alliance government of using police force to harass opposition eaders and workers. " One the one hand the government is using police force to crack down on AL leaders and on the

other, cadres of the BNP's student

wing Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal are

killing police," Hasina said

The opposition leader blasted the government for deteriorating law and order and spread of cor

About the proposed budget for fiscal 2004-5, she said it will only benefit leaders of the coalition

Hasina urged people to unite against the government to end its

Bangabandhu Avenue and ended in front of Bangabandhu Museum at Dhanmondi. Earlier in the morning, Hasina

The procession started from

along with other AL leaders placed wreath at the portrait of Bangabandhu at the museum. The AL will hold a discussion today at the Institution of Engineers as part of the party's

## anniversary programmes. Shiekh Hasina will be the chief guest on

### Owners FROM PAGE 1

have no place to go. "We're living at the Goura temple building in Shankhari Bazar but the temple authority has told us to leave within 15 days," said Minati, wife of Schindra Nag, one of the owners of the collapsed house.

# Italy face press fury

The press concentrated on the performance of the Italians, pre-tournament favourites whose mediocre draws in their first two matches left them hoping that Sweden and Denmark would not achieve a high-scoring draw.

"Everyone home," screamed the Corriere dello Sport daily. "A little Italy is out of the Euro and the Danes and Swedes made a mock

Their worst fears were con-

ery of us." Like most of the press, Corriere dello Sport called for coach Giovanni Trapattoni to be replaced by former Juventus boss Marcello

"Out with 'Trap', get Lippi in But the revolution must be total," it

A Gazzetta dello Sport editorial writer said Trapattoni "showed us the worst Italian team of recent years, even of recent decades. "I cannot recall an Italy team

that was so lacking in ideas and which couldn't score Evoking the names of Italian footballing legends of the past, the paper called for a return to basics to counter the behaviour of the team's star player, Francesco Totti,

"Italian football still has real values - we are thinking of players like Riva, Facchetti, Zoff, Rivera. Let's begin there, with what football is really about," said Gazzetta.

who was banned for three matches at the championships after spitting

After the game, Italy goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon immediately accused the Scandinavians of colluding to fix the result.

"I can't believe that two nations

## COP MURDERS

## Suspects yet to be nabbed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Investigators till yesterday night failed to arrest any of the suspected murderers of two policemen in the capital's Motijheel on Sunday.

Police claimed they raided different parts of the city to nab the eight suspected killers including Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leader Tanjilur Rahman Tanjil.

A detective, seeking anonymity, said, "We're also collecting per-sonal and family details of the suspected killers to unearth their possible hideout." Sending a letter to the offices of various dailies yesterday, Tanjil said he was not involved in the

Jahurul Haq Hall, Dhaka University, had Tanjil's signature On Tuesday night, police picked up Nasir Uddin Sarker, uncle of one of the accused 'Killer' Sohel, for

Sunday afternoon shootout with

police in Motijheel. The letter, typed on the pad of the JCD unit of

Sohel, also known as 'Kangali' Sohel, suffered bullet wounds during the gunfight with police and his uncle Nasir secretly arranged his treatment at a clinic, police suspect.

interrogation.

Sources said DB police quizzed Nasir yesterday but failed to extract any substantial information from Hospital sources said the condi-

tion of Shahidul Islam Idul, who received multiple bullet injuries during the 40-minute firefight with police, was improving. He is undergoing treatment at Suhrawardy Inspector (DB police) Nurul

Amin, who has been investing the case, yesterday took formal charges of the investigation. Assistant Sub-Inspector Aminul Islam and Havilder Liakot Ali of the elite police team, Cobra-7, died in a shootout with dreaded Idul Group

in Motijheel when the thugs were

leaving the place after looting a

money exchange shop.

like Denmark and Sweden who pride themselves on morality

"There has been talk for days about the possibility of a 2-2 draw and now it's happened - incredible "What kind of example does this

could do such a thing under the eyes of the watching world,"

Buffon said.

set to the children who come to watch football? Someone should be ashamed and it isn't us." But Denmark coach Morten Olsen reacted angrily to sugges

tions of a foul play. "Everyone who saw this match will find such accusations ridicu-lous so I will not answer these questions. We wanted to win this match," Olsen said.

## Plan on for uniform

FROM PAGE 12 education system of the country has already submitted their recom-

mendations to the government and necessary steps are being taken for improvement, the prime minister told the House. To another question, the prime minister said 58 families in each of 400 upazilas have been brought under goat-rearing project as part of government's poverty-alleviation programme in the current fiscal

BSS adds: Education Minister Osman Farruk told the House yesterday that the government would take necessary step for reducing tuition fee of the private universities to keep it consistent with the socio-economic condition of the country.

Replying to question from Syed Abdullah M Taher of Jamaat-e-Islami, he said the step would be taken after getting report of the high-powered committee headed by UGC Chairman Prof M Asaduzzaman. Responding to a question from SA Sultan of BNP, the minister said 59 university teachers have been terminated as per University Act as

they failed to return home on completion of their higher studies Of the teachers 51 are of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, six of Jahangirnagar University and two of Bangladesh University of Science and Technology (BUET), he said.

## PPs to sue judge

Hassan said at a press conference at the Court Reporters' Association

Jahangir, district and sessions judge, in the unusual petition accused Hassan and Special Public Prosecutor Mohammad Moinuddin of putting heavy pressure on him to set free some notorious criminals before the Dhaka-10 by-election slated for July 1.

The petitioner, who was transferred to Barisal on June 13 from the Speedy Trial Tribunal (STT), Dhaka said he was also threatened with dire consequences and had to bear with unlawful interference in discharging his judicial duties. The judge alleged the PPs illegally influenced and interfered in the

administration of justice to fulfil their own ambition at any cost in collaboration with and also at the instance of the high-ups in the government. "He (Jahangir) made false allegations against us to stop his transfer,

Hassan told reporters while reading out a written statement. "We'll stand down from our posts and quit the profession if any judge can prove that we influenced any of them in granting bail to any top

Hassan alleged Jahangir acquit-

ted Dhaka City Corporation Commissioner Shahid in Michael murder case although there were evidences of his involvement in the The judge also acquitted seven top criminals including Pichchi Helal of different criminal charges

although there was substantial evidence against them, he said. Jahangir did not provide them with certified copies of the judgements they needed to appeal with the HC against the acquittal orders of the criminals, Hassan also alleged.

## 2 Kushtia abducted people

### OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

rescued

Police on Tuesday in three separate incidents rescued two abducted people and arrested one in Kushtia and Meherpur and recovered skeleton of an abducted person in

On information, police raided a house in Kumargara village in Kushtia at around 10:00pm and rescued Azim-ul-Islam, 22, and arrested one of his captors Akhteruzzaman alias Akhi, mem-

ber of an organised clique. Akhi, a relative, called Azim, son of businessman Aslam of Thanapara in town, out of his house Sunday night and confined him in the house belonging to

Yunus Ali. He also demanded Tk 5 lakh for his release. In Meherpur, police rescued Enamul, 20, son of Sirajul Islam, a shopkeeper in Bhomordah in

Gangni upazila, from Tekala field.

Police quoting family members said criminals picked Enamul on Saturday night when he was returning home from local market and demanded Tk 1 lakh in ran-

In Jhenidah, police recovered the skeleton of Hasem Ali, 40, who was abducted 10 months back from Dhankhali crematorium in Sailkupa upazila. Police said criminals led by

Matiar, leader of an outlawed party

in Raeda village, kidnapped him on

August 5, 2003. Earlier, Matiar

threatened to kill Hasem as the latter protested his activity. The criminals demanded Tk 3 lakh in two days for his release. Hasem's brother Kasem filed a case with Sailkupa Police Station accus-

ing Matiar, Tuku Master, Zohur and Mafiz of the village. Police on Monday arrested Matiar and following his confession, recovered the skeleton.

### Qaeda threat FROM PAGE 12 detention facilities such as

Guantanamo Bay. "We warned you and you ignored it," one of the men said. Enough lies. Your army is not here for the sake of Iraqis but for the sake of cursed America."

Al Jazeera said the tape then showed a man cutting off Kim's head with a knife. It did not broadcast that part. South Korean President Roh

Moo-hyun denounced Kim's

killing and said his country would

### still send 3,000 more troops to Iraq to join its 670 engineers and medics

**USSTRIKE** The US military said it launched a 'precision strike" on a safe house used by militants linked to al Qaeda operative Abu Musab al-Zargawi in the Iraqi city of Falluja on Tuesday

But witnesses and a hospital official said the strike hit a garage, killing four civilian guards and wounding six other people in Iraq's most rebellious town.

Brigadier General Mark Kimmitt, deputy director of operations for the US military in Iraq, said in a statement that the strike was based on "multiple confirmations of actionable intelligence."

"Wherever and whenever we find elements of the Zarqawi network, we will attack them, he said.

car and truck garage. Iraqi police and US troops sealed off roads

leading to the scene of the attack,

Witnesses said the air strike hit a

the witnesses said. An Iraqi national guardsman was killed and two wounded yesterday trying to defuse a bomb in the northern city of Mosul, an officer said.

"A guard was killed and two others wounded in trying to defuse a bomb in the Dawassa district in Mossul," said National Guard Captain Ibrahim in Mosul, 370 kilometres (230 miles) north of Baghdad.

A doctor from the local hospital said the two wounded were seriously hurt.

(Reuters and AFP)

## Khaleda sees

in the region.

and military officials.

Khaleda praised the rapid transformation of Singaporean economy into an Asian Tiger, which she said has become a role model of discipline and efficiency

She mentioned the efforts of her government in improving the lot of the people, consolidating multiparty democracy and establishment of the rule of law in Bangladesh.

The prime minister said her government is trying to achieve sustained economic growth, pur-suing an investment-friendly economy driven by a vibrant private sector. Khaleda also mentioned the

numerous projects for empowerment of women, poverty alleviation, mass education and basic healthcare.

She said Singapore has been an important partner in development of human resources and capacity building in Bangladesh. Khaleda referred to the coordinated efforts of both Bangladesh and Singapore in bilateral and

global issues, including fight against international terrorism, regional security, environment protection and economic develop-

She expressed gratitude for Singapore's support in Bangladesh's effort to be a dialogue partner of Asean and a full member of Asean Regional Forum. Expressing her belief that

Fong's visit would add new dimensions to the bilateral relations, Khaleda said: "This landmark visit befittingly goes in line with my government's "Look East" policy Earlier in the afternoon, Goh

three-day official visit to Bangladesh. His arrival was heralded with

Chok Tong was accorded a red

carpet reception on his arrival at Zia International Airport on a

9-gun salute. Tong is leading a 30-member delegation that includes Minister in the Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister for Foreign Affairs Lee Yock Suan, Minister for Home Affairs Wong Kan Seng and Minister for Manpower Dr Ng Eng

A baby girl presented him a bouquet as he alighted from his aircraft. Prime Minister Khaleda

# Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan and Singapore Counsellor to Dhaka K Ramachandran Nair were

Official talks between the two

countries will be held today.

The two leaders will review the state of bilateral relations between the two countries and discuss ways for further cooperation, especially in the fields of trade and investment, scientific and technical cooperation, manpower and consular and other regional and international issues of mutual

concern. It is expected that one agreement and one protocol on matters of mutual interest will be signed after the talks.

The Singaporean prime minister will lay wreath at the National Memorial at Savar to pay homage to the martyrs of Bangladesh

Liberation War. He would also lay wreath at the Mazar of President Ziaur Rahman and call on President Iajuddin

Ahmed at Bangabhaban. He would hold talks with a number of government leaders including Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman, LGRD Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan and State Minister for Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment M Quamrul Islam.

Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry will hold a dinner in honour of Goh Chok Tong at Hotel Sheraton today.

Before leaving Dhaka on Friday, the Singaporean premier will meet leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina.

"The visit of the Singaporean prime minister conforms to the present government's "Look East" foreign policy aimed at strengthening bilateral ties with the countries of the East," says an official announcement.

## Police, Rab

## FROM PAGE 12

that his ministry would further tighten law enforcement. Under the purchase proposal, the home ministry will buy 75,000 firearms, 70,000 for police and the rest will go to Rab. Most of the arms will be bought from China and the

remainder from Pakistan. The arms include pistol, Chinese rifle, single-loading rifle (SLR) and sub-machine gun (SMG).

# Rumsfeld okayed

The documents showed Rumsfeld in December 2002 approved harsh interrogation techniques for Taliban and al Qaeda prisoners at the U.S. Naval Base in Guantanamo, only to rescind many of those weeks later and approve less aggressive

Treatment of the Guantanamo

detainees, including interrogation methods, has come under scrutiny following a scandal over abuse and sexual humiliation of Iraqi prisoners by U.S. forces at The Guantanamo Bay leaders requested permission to use a wet towel and dripping water to

induce "the misperception of

suffocation" and the use of "mild,

techniques in April of 2003.

non-injurious physical contact such as grabbing, poking in the chest with the finger, and light pushing." In response, in December 2002 Rumsfeld approved tactics such as forcing a detainee to stand up for up four hours, forced isolation for up to 30 days, deprivation of light, use of 20-hour interrogations, removal of clothing, forced shaving of facial hair, "inducing stress by use of detainee's fears (e.g., dogs)," and use of mild physical contact that

did not cause injury. A Pentagon legal brief recommending the use of the tactics argued that the proposed techniques were likely to pass constitutional muster as long as they were applied "in a good faith effort and not maliciously or sadistically for the very purpose

"The federal torture statute

will not be violated as long as any

of the proposed strategies are not

specifically intended to cause

severe physical pain or suffering

or prolonged mental harm," the

of causing harm."

White House legal counsel Alberto Gonzales played down some of the documents produced by lawyers as "abstract legal theories" that "do not reflect the policies the administration ultimately adopted."

White House officials insisted the broad policy was that prisoners should be treated humanely, but included in the documents was an active discussion of how far interrogations could go without being called torture. "We're going to be ag in our interrogations. There's no question about that," Gonzales

States would not engage in tor-ture and said the administration uses the definition of torture provided by Congress as "a specific intent to inflict severe physical or mental harm or suffering." The documents outlined previous and current techniques for nearly 600 al Qaeda and Taliban prisoners now at

said. He insisted that the United

Guantanamo Bay, most taken in Afghanistan. A Feb. 7, 2002, memo from Bush to top members of his administration said al Qaeda and Taliban detainees were to be "treated humanely and to the extent appropriate and consistent with military necessity, in a manner consistent with the principles" of the Geneva

Gonzales denied Bush's determination contributed to the abuses at Abu Ghraib. "We categorically reject any connections," ĥe said. A top Pentagon lawyer, Daniel

onvention.

Dell'Orto, said it was clear from the start that the Geneva Convention would apply in Iraq.

(AFP and Reuters)