Indian president backs river-linking project

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Indian President API Abdul Kalam on Wednesday favoured going ahead with the ambitious riverlinking project to avoid simultaneous recurrence of drought and flood in the country.

Addressing the legislative assembly of the southern state of Andhra Pradesh, he said transfer of water from one river basin system to another is necessary for develop-ment of the country and he will talk to the federal government on the

The fate of the inter-linking project, highly favoured by the previous BJP-led government, has become uncertain following installation of the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) dispensation, which is not very enthusias-

The UPA has not yet declared

abandonment of the project but says techno-economic viability of the inter-linking of rivers has to be done before taking a decision.

Indian water resources ministry headed by Priva Ranjan Dasmunshi has meanwhile reportedly recommended winding up of the Task Force set up by the previous government for the project. The recommendation is now with the Prime Minister's Office. The Task Force had suggested linking of 30 rivers.

As the Task Force headed by Shiv Sena leader Suresh Prabhu with the rank of a cabinet minister has submitted its reports, its closure is on the cards. Prabhu stepped down to contest the parliamentary elections in April-May this year.

The project, first conceived by the Congress government two decades back, has been met with opposition by a number of Indian

10 more die

many areas. But the government is not willing to seek foreign help at this moment, BBC said.

The Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre said flood situation is deteriorating in the central region of the country and is improving slowly in some northern and northeastern districts. It warned the worst floods this season would hit the country towards the end of this month.

The Ganges-Padma continued to rise at all points, the Brahmaputra-Jamuna rose further at all downstream points and fell at upstream points.

Water level at 24 monitoring points out of 86 across the country was above danger level vesterday morning. It rose at 31 points, fell at 36 points and remained steady at other points, the

Flood situation in Gaibandha, Jamalpur, Sirajganj and Pabna is likely to deteriorate further and fresh areas in Manikganj, Narsinghdi, Madaripur, Shariatpur and low-lying areas around Dhaka and Narayanganj may gounderwatertoday

The situation in Sylhet, Sunamganj, Moulvibazar, Sherpur, Netrokona, Kishoreganj, Rangpur, Dinajpur and Kurigram is likely to improve further and that in Bogra and Naogaon may remain unchanged.

Our Gaibandha Correspondent reports: A one-year-old child in village Baguria and a child of two -- Emran-of the same village in Gaibandha upazila drowned in flood waters yesterday. A boy of 12-- Mamun--

drowned in a nearby area. Three people died of diarrhoeal diseases in Sundarganj upazila of the district and over 100 people were attacked with the water-borne diseases. The thana health complex has run out of the medicine.

ing collapsed partly due to river ero-tricts.

Our Sherpur correspondent said floods took a serious turn yesterday. A five-year- old boy -- Efath -- of village Koroitola in Srebordi upazila, and Md Kurshed Alam, 55, a madrasa teacher at village Charbabna under Sadar

upazila, drowned yestarday. Rolling flood waters have marooned more than one lakh people in Sadar upazila and Nakla pourasava.

The district administration is yet to take any relief operation for the affected people.

Our Manikganj correspondent reports flood situation worsened in the last three days inundating fresh

A five-month-old baby named Manik in Andharmanik village of Harirampur upazila drowned in the earlyhours of yesterday.

Road communication between the district town and some upazilas stands snapped due to inundation of Ferry service in Paturia-Daulatdia

and Paturia-Kajirhat routes has been affected due to submersion of ferry Our Sylhet correspondent said the

situation is improving in northeastern

One person was electrocuted vesterday while going by boat in fllodhit Jagannathpur of Sunamganj.

Our Natore correspondent reports at least 10,000 people in six villages have been marooned in singra upazila. Many of them have shifted to lood control dam.

Different non-government organisations have started relief operation in the affeted areas.

A non-governmental organisation, BRAC, said in a press release yesterday it started relief operation in Fulchhari Upazila Parishad build- 16 northern and northeastern dis-

Bangladesh ranks 138th

neighbours Nepal (140) and Pakistan (142) and was on the heels of India

The report, 'Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World', lauds Bangladesh as the third best performer among developing countries in reducing child mortality from 144 deaths a thousand in 1990 to 77 in 2000.

Reduction in income poverty was also referred to as a sector where Bangladesh was effective as the percentage of citizens living under the poverty line came down from 51 to

Bangladesh's life expectancy also jumped up to 61.1 years while GDP per capita based on purchasing power parity (PPP) stood at US\$1,700.

The UNDP, however, said the place was non-comparable to previous vears as a number of new countries and new data augmented the criteria each year.

The level of key indicators such as life expectancy, school enrolment and literacy rates and a decent standard of living determine the HDI rank.

The report labels Bangladesh as a non-secular country, citing the government's formal alliance with Islam is exclusively benefiting the religion, which goes against constitutional emphasis on secularism.

It says Bangladesh fails to fit the bill for a secular state defined in the report as a country that "...accords equal respect to all religions (and to nonbelievers).

The report also stresses that among the three dimensions for a non-discriminatory state to protect an important one is, "All religions have numerous interpretations and practices...and no single interpretation should be sponsored by the state."

Acting UNDP Resident Representative Larry Maramis presented the report in Dhaka while The Daily Star Editor Mahfuz Anam gave the keynote address at a ceremony at Sonargaon Hotel.

The report argues that the freedom to choose one's identity and exercise that choice without discrimination is vital to people's lives and an essential element of human development.

Laramis said the report states that although the exact size of the problem is difficult to measure, its urgency at a time when cultural diversity is under pressure is in no doubt.

Cultural diversity can enrich societies but if managed poorly it can

added. Observing that 900 peoples in the world do not have their culture -language, religion and social practiceadequately recognised or respected, the report, Laramis said, encourages countries to pursue multicultural

become one of the greatest sources of

instability that may trigger conflict

and push development backwards, he

Bangladesh with more than 45 different ethnic groups is also considered a multicultural society, as the groups make up approximately two percent of the population.

The report also observes majorityrule-based democracies can ignore and silence minority groups' language and culture and have to be reformed through adopting policies that redress past wrongs against minorities through affirmative action, legal pluralism and inclusive language policies, such as bilingual education.

People in Bangladesh have to stop limiting the definition of minority to religious groups and give up the belief that the country is so homogenous that there is no diversity, Anam said in his keynote address.

Putting emphasis on recognising and respecting numerous indigenous groups, such as Chakmas and Santals, Anam also warned of losing out on cultural creativity and opulence by ignoring them.

He said a crisis stemmed from a tendency of narrowing down diversity globally and in South Asia because of dominant societies submerging minor cultures.

Referring to the declaration of 'Ecologically Critical Areas' and rights to biological resources and associated traditional knowledge.

Laramis said the mention of a cultural crisis in Bangladesh was multifaceted that also included a threat from the West and even Bollywood that threw sectors such as the Bangladeshi movies into dire

Globally, this year's report also reveals that the exchange of cultural goods -- literature, cinema and music across borders amounts to around

The devastation caused by HIV/AIDS in income levels and life expectancy in sub-Saharan African countries also got primacy in the

Banned Islamist group leader gets bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

proclaimed commander of the country's only banned Islamist outfit Shahadat-e- Al Hiqma, was released on bail in a sedition case Tuesday after he surrendered to the Chief. Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM)

CMM Abul Hossain passed the order while none from the state opposed the petition. Advocate Abul sain pleaded the bail petition. The court sub-inspector was absent.

Kawsar, the key accused in the sedition case, had been absconding since he was out on bail in a cheating

Sub-Inspector Shamsuddin of Detective Branch of police lodged the sedition case with Boalia Police Station on March 25, 2003 following a home ministry clearance. At least nine people including Kawsar were accused in the case filed under Sections 123 (Ka) and 124 (Ka) of Bangladesh Penal Code for hatching anti-state plot. The other accused are-Shamim Uddin, Rahmat Ali Sarkar, Nizam Uddin, Azhar Ali Mridha, Abdus Subhan, Rabiul Islam, Abdul Hannan and Mojibur Rahman.

Home ministry banned Al-Hiqma on February 9 after the Rajshahibased organisation in a press conference the previous day declared for an armed struggle to turn the country into an Islamic state.

Police earlier arrested five Al Higma members and gathered the organisation's constitution, declaration paper and other documents that allegedly suggested its subversive motives. The arrestees were remanded and interrogated at the joint interrogation cell in Dhaka, but the High Court later

Egyptian

for auditing. Rahman Rahman and Huq, a chartered accounting firm of Bangladesh, is working as a co-

Sheba sources said they are expecting a new management in a month or two. Sheba is the smallest of the country's four cellphone operators with 195 staffs.

Although the Malaysia-Bangladesh joint venture had high potentials when it obtained licence in 1996 and launched operation in the last quarter of 1997, the relationship between the two recorded to be online yesterday.

Established in 1998, Orascom is the largest and most diversified GSM network operator in Egypt, Iraq, Middle East, Africa and Pakistan under nine licences cover-

TRI which too had been the largest mobile telecom company of Malaysia was bought by Malaysian Telecom last year, after a 50-percent fall in its annual turnover, company

German

afterwards.

talks with his counterpart at the foreign ministry.

Fischer is also scheduled to call on Main Opposition Leader in office in the afternoon before visit-German Doctors in the city

of bilateral relations between the countries and exchange views on development in regional and international arena," says a foreign ministry announcement.

Bangladesh exported goods worth \$1,019 million, mainly in the RMG (ready made garments) and leather goods sector, to Germany last year.

Fischer is entertaining an official invitation extended to him by Morshed Khan during the latter's visit to Germany last November.

The German minister will leave at 7:05pm tomorrow evening on board a German airforce airbus.

PC becomes

FROM PAGE 12 schooling were up to par.

Emphasising the importance of learning English, he said students need English to succeed in trade and commerce as well as excel in communications and information

Acting Director Charles Nuttal, American Centre Deputy Director Michelle Jones, British Council Teaching Centres Manager Mark Bartholomew and Belta President Arifa Rahman also spoke at the session.

Arifa underscored the need for training and developing English language teachers for improving the standard of English.

She questioned the wisdom of the government's decision to set up language laboratories in the regions and suggested setting up an accreditation body to monitor the private teacher training colleges.

Marginal savers hit

NEWS

necessary to reduce lending rates. If savings certificates offer high interest rates, people tend not to deposit noney with banks," he said.

But the government move is now being taken with a pinch of salt by

"The move is not so much for reducing cost of fund for the private sector but for the government itself," said Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya, executive director of the Centre for Policy Dialogue. "It is an effort to back a dysfunctional banking system by taxing the marginal savers.'

Explaining, he said the govern-ment needs funds to foot the bill for its own expenditure. Last fiscal year, in the face of low off-take of foreign financing and shortfall in aggregate revenue target, the government had to rely more on domestic sources for underwriting fiscal deficit. Within the domestic sources, it resorted to borrowing from non-bank sources more than the banking system. Nonbank fund is low inflationary but high cost. Now the government is trying to reduce that cost.

But this is happening at the cost of marginal savers, he pointed out. "If one looks at the annual nomi-

nal rate of the savings instrument, which is only 7 percent, it becomes

benefitted after adjusting with above 5 percent inflation rate. The rate cut was justified only when rates were high years ago," Dr Debapriya said.

He said the new instrument for the retired is not going to cover all the disadvantaged groups like the widows and single-head families in saving. Moreover, socio-economic institutions that rely on interest income to carry out their activities will also be increasingly handicapped. He further added that evidences

show reduction in cost of fund for the private sector has limited impact in terms of investment promotion in the backdrop of high infrastructure Since the BNP-led coalition took power, interest rates on savings

instruments have been lowered four times with the latest round, making the schemes unattractive by 5 per-But given the little scope for investment, the reduction did not affect the demand for the savings

instruments.

In 11 months till May of last fiscal year, the government sold savings schemes worth Tk 8,884 crore compared with Tk 8.691 crore of the previous fiscal year.

Holding tax

area of Dhaka municipality into four categories -- residential, residentialcum-commercial, commercial and industrial. Eight lawmakers yesterday launched the programme in their constituencies that fall under the DCC jurisdiction.

The DCC has deployed around 45,000 volunteers from students and Bangladesh National Cadet Corps (BNCC) members to distribute the new tax assessment forms and collect it. They are to finish their task in the next 15 days, the sources said.

"We want to be very much clear in our new tax system. The owners themselves will fill out the form and assess their holding tax. The volunteers will help them out and we will just supervise the process," said Shakhawat Ullah, chief revenue officer of the DCC.

Under the new procedure, the DCC will also re-evaluate the rental values of the establishments in terms of how much income they will have after 15 years. The last evaluation of the house rent and income from the houses was done way back

The DCC expected to collect Tk 170 crore in holding tax in the last financial year, but Tk 15 crore could not be collected from the government holdings and Tk 10 crore due to legal tangles

We hardly can collect as much as 85 percent of the total expected holding tax," said the chief revenue officer.

Self-assessment

process The process and tax rate is same for all the four categories of holdings residential, commercial, residential-cum-commercial and indus-

The owners will give detailed description of their holdings including the present tax rate and acknowledge the annual value or income of the holdings. Value of two months' income will

be deducted from the annual income as maintenance cost and a 12 percent flat tax will be fixed on the rest of the income. If the owners have a bank loan

against the holdings, the annual interest will be cut from the 10 months' income before the holding tax is fixed. Owners living in their holdings will get a 40 percent rebate on the 10 months' income.

Rokan's statement

FROM PAGE 1

panicking the justices through such derogatory remarks and asked him to stop interfering with affairs of the chief justice and the judiciary as a

Rokan told The Daily Star last night he would comment on Huda's remarks after seeing the statement.

The Bar members across the political divide at a general requisition meeting on Wednesday, presided over by Rokan, asked the chief justice to appoint efficient judges to the High Court or stop appointing judges if he does not find competent

people. Huda said Rokan's 'vicious' remarks threatening the High Court judges amount to contempt of court and is a punishable offence. He has to answer to general lawyers for his

"Who has given him (Rokan) the right to raise an accusing finger at the judges? As a citizen of the county he has the responsibility to show respect to the judiciary and the judges, and he is not above the law," he observed.

"The judiciary of our country is free and sovereign, and nobody has the right to make such derogatory remarks.

"The remarks of Rokanuddin is a threat to the country's free and sovereign judiciary and the judges," said the former Bar president.

"Barrister Rokan has forgotten that he is the president of the Bar, not the country... How dare he interferes with the jurisdiction of the chief justice in constituting benches and gives him two weeks' ultima-Huda said, adding no-one tum.' would be allowed to tarnish the image of the judicial system and the

The former Bar president alleged Rokan is ripping hapless justice seekers off millions every day through his publicity stunt to attract clients and asked income tax authorities to look into it.

MOUDUD SAYS RESOLUTION UNFORTUNATE

Law Minister Moudud Ahmed termed Wednesday's resolution unfortunate and said it goes against the lawyers' ethics. He said the Supreme Court Bar Association could have discussed the matter with the chief justice instead of going public over such a sensitive

Such an incident makes people think that undue pressure is being put on the judiciary and its functioning is interfered with. "Will it boost the image of the Supreme Court," Moudud questioned while talking to newspersons vesterday.

"It is not clear to people why lawyers initiated such a step. We are all for separation of the judiciary, but will it (the resolution) be supportive to separation of the judiciary from

He said the lawyers' responsibilities are to uphold the image and independence of the judiciary. But the step is inconsistent with their

Khulna BNP

FROM PAGE 12 attacked Sekandar Zafrullah Khan Shacchu, senior vice-president of the city BNP, in a roadside teashop close to his home in Khulna city shortly before 9:00pm.

Khulna Mayor Shaikh Tayebur Rahman in a statement expressed concern at law and order downslide and the recent spate of killings and bomb attacks.

The mayor accused an unnamed group of creating anarchy and political instability and called for unity to fight criminals.

Professor Feroze Ahmed, president of BNP's Bayeentala union unit in Rampal in Bagerhat, escaped the bomb attack that left two prominent businessmen Barin Mitra, 42, and Bikash Mitra, 37, severely injured at 8:30pm Wednesday. The injured are being treated at the KMCH.

Witnesses and police said unknown assailants hurled two bombs targeting the 48-year-old likely to make his one-day debut BNP leader when he was returning against Hong Kong, who have never home from Gilatala Bazar in won a single match against Rampal. The bombs exploded in front of a

photographer's studio, blowing up the legs of Barin and Bikash, but the BNP leader escaped unhurt. The bombs missed the target, as

there was no electricity, said the

security.

officer-in-charge of Rampal Police Station. Superintendent of Police in Bagerhat Mahbub Alam visited the The police said the attack came after unidentified callers threatened the BNP leader with death. Feroze filed a general diary with Rampal Police Station last month, seeking

The police picked up 14 people for interrogation.

DHAKA-10 BY-POLLS

BDB submits affidavits on vote rigging to EC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The counsel for Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB) yesterday submitted to the acting chief election commissioner (CEC) a set of affidavits containing, what the plaintiff terms, evidences of ballot rigging at the Dhaka-10 by-polls on July 1 and ouster of BDB candidate's polling agents from the polling stations, BDB candidate Abdul Mannan's

counsel MK Rahman submitted the 57-page affidavits to Acting CEC Safiur Rahman in accordance with an Election Commission (EC) directive, and claimed those prove the by election was not held in a free and fair manner The affidavits assert that ruling

BNP candidate in the by-election Mossadak Ali Falu rigged votes at a minimum of 89 out of the 103 polling centres, after driving away BDB polling agents.

The BNP candidate's counsel-

was asked to submit its affidavit by

July 18 and the EC will then fix the date of delivering its verdict. The EC on July 8 heard both sides' lawyers on a petition filed by Abdul Mannan challenging the validity of the by-election held in violation of a High Court order to deploy army personnel at each of the polling

10 Mymensingh FROM PAGE 12

have already been made. Journalists who received death threats are: Habibur Rahman Sheikh of Dainik Jahan, Ataul Karim Khokan of Jugantar, Sultan Uddin Khan, local Reporters' Unity chief, Abul Kasher of Ajker Kagoj, Zillur Rahman Khan of Sangbad, Golam Mostafa of Ittefaq, Mosharraf Hossain of The New Nation, Nawab Ali of the Independent, Anwarul Hasan Rumi of ATN Bangla, and

Badol Acharja of Banglar Bani. Besides, the outlaws also threatened to gouge out the eyes of 10 other journalists who are Matin, Pranab, Jagadish, Hashim, Mozammel, Matiul, Mahiuddin, MA Motaleb, Ayub Ali and Ujjal.

Journalist leaders met

Superintendent of Police (SP) Kohinoor Mia Wednesday and handed over a copy of the letters that carried the threats SP brought the matter to the

deputy inspector general's notice. Meanwhile in Chuadanga, criminals who earlief threatened to kill two local journalists,

yesterday ransacked their offices and issued further death threats. One Naitul with his accomplices stormed the offices of the journalists at Anwar Palli area. They hunted for the journalists who at that time were

not in the office. The gang then ransacked the office. Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) reportedly threatened to kill Sarif Uddin, Darshana correspondent of Aiker Kagoi and Azad Hossain, a staff correspondent of regional daily,

Loksamaj, sources said. They received threats after their reports on alleged irregularities in the tender process of Darshana Sugar Mill angered some BNP lead-

ers, sources said.

Robbers loot FROM PAGE 12 Locals alleged an organised clique of criminals and outlaws is committing abduction in the district. Allegations also were made against police that they do not pursue abduction cases vigorously and often ask victims' families to pay the

Asia Cup

FROM PAGE 1 'We have put the Canada nightmare behind us. We are not worried

"We know that a win tomorrow will not only be the first for us in five Asia Cups, but it will also take us into the second round," Bashar told reporters after practice.

"Batting in the morning is always difficult at the SSC. We will play safe but if conditions suit us, we will definitely bat first. I think a 230-240 total will be good enough to defend against any team here," said the top

Bangladesh. Hong Kong captain Rahul Sharma however sounded optimisticahead of their big match. "In cricket, anything can happen.

have a winning formula," quoted

Sharma, who played first-class one-day debut at the age of 43.

Hasina trashes

new day begins after the midnight. Bangabandhu was arrested after the midnight of March 25 and prior to his arrest he announced the independence, and every one counts March 26 as the day independence was declared".

The AL chief was addressing the newly elected office bearers of Supreme Court Bar Association at he Institution of Engineers Bangladesh auditorium in the city, where president of the association, Rokanuddin Mahmud, also spoke.

Hasina said Khaleda once again proved her ignorance about the country's struggle for independence by asking how did people publicise Bangabandhu's proclamation of independence over loudspeakers after March-25 crackdown by Pakistani forces. "She [Khaleda] should know that

different places of the then East Pakistan remained free for months even after the crackdown, as liberation fighters and the masses put up resistance and barricades against Pakistani Army's movement," the eldest daughter of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman said making a contrast on Khaleda's remark. "If Khaleda Zia's argument is

true, then how did her husband Ziaur Rahman announced independence on March 27, two days after the crackdown?" Hasina coun-Refuting the prime minister's

comments that "The leader of the

opposition initially had not recog-

udiciary and alluded to High Court lawyers' protests against the present-day judicial system which they said was turning into a 'farce'.

log of pending cases".

Bogra dam-cut

rescuing their relatives alive.

pitched makeshift tents with polythene sheeting and most passed two days in the open in rain. Day-workers are looking for work

nomes for fear of flooding. The government allocated 100 tonnes of rice, 40 sanitary pans and 20 tubewells, but the local adminis-

distribute sanitary pans, nor did

FROM PAGE 12 After hearing the arguments by two sides yesterday, Judge Rezaul Karim Khan of the Special Court for Dhaka

Division fixed the date.

pose of the case. filed the corruption case accusing Ershad and three tax officials on July

27, 1992 In the case filed with Ramna

case submitted the charge sheet naming Ershad as the lone accused on December 19 the same year. The court framed charges against

The investigation officer of the

trial began on June 26, 2003. Ershad was present at the court during the argument vesterday. Additional police forces were deployed on the court premises to

avoid any untoward incident. Momin passes away

The first namaj-e-janaza for the AL

leader was held at Road no 7 in

Dhanmondi at 10:00am. The body

FROM PAGE 12

was then taken to the South Plaza of the Jatiya Sangsad. After the second namaj-e-janaza at the South Plaza, Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar, LGRD Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan on behalf of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Abdul Hamid on behalf of AL President Sheikh Hasina and senior AL leader Abdus Samad Azad on behalf of the party placed wreaths on the coffin of the law-

Cabinet members, Deputy Speaker Akhter Hamid Siddiqui and MPs were present

Momin was buried at his family graveyard at Mohanganj in Netrakona. His qulkhwani will be held at Khan Shaheb Bari at Mohanganj on July 18. President Iajuddin Ahmed,

Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar and

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia in sepa-

rate messages expressed deep shock

at the death of Abdul Momin. They also prayed for salvation of his departed soul and conveyed their heart-felt sympathy to the bereaved family.

Rahman as a freedom fighter from the very beginning. In consideration of his contributions to the Liberation War the then Awami League government promoted him to the rank of major general from major after the war" But it is unfortunate that after seizing the power, Zia killed thou-

billed him as a heroic freedom

fighter a few days ago," Hasina said,

Awami League recognised Ziaur

sands of freedom fighters and rehabilitated the collaborators of Pakistan, the AL leader added. She said, in continuation of the process of rehabilitating war crimi-

nals, Khaleda appointed them as ministers and is now distorting In his speech, Rokanuddin Mahmud expressed dissatisfaction over the poor performance of some Supreme Court justices. He said the present government in its over twoyear rule has put 'black spots' in the

Rokan said a number of justices of the High Court are inefficient, while one was ousted for bribery, adding, "We are alarmed by their poor performance, which has resulted in an ever-increasing back-

AL General Secretary Zillur Rahman, Supreme Court Bar Association Secretary Bashir Ahmed and AL Law Secretary Shahara nised Zia as a freedom fighter, but Khatun also spoke.

out. A medical team was providing

primary treatment for the villagers

and asked them not to drink

floodwater without giving them

took refuge on the road with seven of her family, died from want of food,

village said she was without food for

the last two days. "The government should provide food at least for the elderly and children," Ramzan, a

"Give us at least polythene sheet-

Hungry villagers surrounded

ing so that we can protect the elderly

local lawmaker Golam Mohammad

Siraj asking for relief, medicine and

People living close to the

shelter when he visited Tituliapara.

embankment blamed the sabotage

on Bhandarbari Union Parishad

Chairman and BNP leader Belal

Hossain Babu and another BNP

leader Jahurul Islam Nannu who

feuded over the repair of the

embankment that stretched 262

kilometres from the northern dis-

reaction said the feud did not lead

to the sabotage but delayed the

repair. In a contradictory state-

ment, he told local reporters: "The

sabotage would not have taken

place if the WDB (Water

Development Board) had allowed

that they were ready to begin the

work but failed because of the 'feud'

Top Ctg 'criminal'

other Jamaat-Shibir leaders and

activists with crests and bouquets.

Joint Secretary General of BNP

Goyeshwar Chandra Roy was pres-

ent as chief guest. South District

Unit President Ahmad Khalil Khan,

North District Unit General

Secretary Shahjahan Siraj and

Chittagong City Unit Joint Secretary

Goyeshwar said the joining of

among the pro-BNP contractors.

WDB officials told The Daily Star

But the lawmaker in his instant

trict of Kurigram to Pabna.

Babu to do the work.'

FROM PAGE 12

her granddaughter Swapna said.

Chuniapara villager, said.

and children from rain.'

Buchi of Collegepara village, who

Khatemun Bewa, 70, of Guadubi

pure drinking water.

they set tubewells although waterborne diseases are breaking

The homeless villagers took with them whatever they could save. People taking cattle, clothes, cot, rice and wheat have streamed onto Goshaibari-Dhunat Road, the only place yet to be submerged. Witnesses said some people

in adjacent unaffected villages but found nothing, as people of other villages are also abandoning their

tration distributed relief only in Tituliapara village that was partly ffected by the flooding.

Locals alleged officials did not

Ershad

carrier the judgment of the case had been adjourned after the defence awyers submitted a time petition seeking an adjournment. Ershad's counsellores had also filed a criminal appeal with the High Court for transferring the case to some other court. In the petition they stated that their client would not get justice from the court. The High Court, however, had

directed the divisional court to dis-The Bureau of Anti-corruption

Police Station, it was alleged that Ershad, while in power, paid Tk 7,43,416 as income tax for six years (1983-1989). Later, he withdrew Tk 2,76,324 from the income tax money without submitting any documents in favour of his action.

Abu Sufian attended it as special guests. Ershad on January 26, 1994 and the Ahmad chairman would not have negative impact on the BNP in Satkania. "The law will take its own course," he said referring to the

> Ahmad pledged to fight against terrorism and all social odds as a BNP activist.

> > Car bomb FROM PAGE 12 (68 miles) southwest of Baghdad. Fire erupted in an oil pipeline in northern Iraq yesterday near the country's main Kirkuk oilfields, witnesses said. The country's northern export pipeline runs through the

criminal cases against Ahmad.

HOSTAGE CRISIS In Manila, the Philippine military awaited orders to pull its small contingent out of Iraq in a bid to save the life of a civilian hostage as the United States piled pressure on its Asian ally not to cave in to militants demands "In a time of test where enemies demand you kneel...I just ask you

or your friends," US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone said after a meeting with Philippine Defence Secretary Eduardo Ermita yesterday. Militants have threatened to kill truck driver Angelo de la Cruz unless Manila withdraws its 51 personnel

by July 20, a month ahead of sched-

please don't confuse your enemies

Bulgaria watched a deadline for the execution of a Bulgarian hostage pass without news on Wednesday but stood firm on its pro-US policies and refused to pull out its troops. Reuters/AFP

Biodiversity Action Plan, the report also pegs Bangladesh as a rare example of recognising community-based

\$500 billion ayear.

Sayed Kawsar Hussain Siddiki, self-

case last August.

parties turned bitter from the beginning. As a result, when companies like GrameenPhone exceeded a client base of one million. Sheba could create a base of only 59,000 users, of whom 49,000 are regular. Only 28,000 Sheba cellphone service users were

FROM PAGE 1 tomorrow. He will pay a courtesy call on Prime Minister Khaleda Zia He will also meet the press after

Parliament and Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina at her parliament ing a German initiative styled "The two foreign ministers are expected to review the entire gamut

British Council Bangladesh

the executive? "Moudud asked. The law minister feared that it could also affect the judiciary at district level.

about any team but we will not be careless as well. The way we've been playing recently would be good enough to beat Hong Kong," said Bangladesh captain Habibul Bashar yesterday.

batsman of the country. Left-arm spinner Abdur Razak is

As Robin (Singh) once said, if seven players out of 11 perform, then you

"We are expected to lose against Bangladesh and Pakistan but they have to win the games from us. So, the pressure will be on them," said the veteran, who played nearly ten games against Bangladesh at ICC associate level.

cricket in India, is excited to make