Hon Speaker

Wouldn't you agree that what you permitted in the name of a debate

was nothing but a one-sided tirade

against the main opposition? Now let us examine the nature and content of what the treasury bench MPs said under the 'general debate' that you so generously permitted after having duly 'protected' the judicial inquiry by refusing the opposition demand for an adjournment motion under rule 62 Almost all the MPs of the ruling coalition, in speech after speech. stated mostly directly and some not so directly, that it was the AL that was responsible for the grenade attack on its own rally. Anybody who listened to the speeches would be left without any doubt as to who the perpetrators were of that heinous act of August 21. The ruling party MPs even 'laid bare' the possible motive as to why they thought the AL was the culprit. Some of them even named Abdul Jalil (who himself is an MP, protecting whose prestige and dignity is also in your hands) as a possible culprit because he had 'threatened' to destabilise the government following his party's failure to topple it on April 30 last. If this is not trying to influence the

If your intention was to protect the investigation from a prejudicial debate, and we believe that it was, then we urge you to go through the records of Wednesday's proceedings and see for yourself how well vou served that cause. You may say that you permitted the discussion with a fair mind and good intentions and that naturally you had no idea what the MPs would say. We accept that. But then shouldn't you have stopped them when you heard what they were actually saying.

investigation, then what is?

For the sake of fair investigation, which you wanted, shouldn't you have asked the MPs to refrain from saying anything that would prejudice the investigation, the very reason for which you rejected the opposition's plea for debate under rule 62? For nearly four hours, in the name of debate (which consisted of very little other than vilification) the opposition were put on the dock, accused and found 'guilty' as charged of the grenade attack on its own rally -- all this in your presence. May we also humbly point out that although officially you allocated five to seven minutes for each speaker, you actually allowed many of them much more.

Rules 61 to 67 deal with adjournment motions. Of them, rule 63 deals with restrictions to make such motions. For the purpose of our discussion the relevant portion is contained in paragraph X of rule 63, which we reproduce below:

"the motion shall not raise a discussion on a matter pending before any statutory tribunal or statutory authority performing any judicial or quasi-judicial functions or any commission or court of enquiry appointed to enquire into, investigate any matter but the speaker may, in his discretion, allow such matter to be raised (emphasis added) as is concerned with the procedure or subject or stage of enquiry, provided it is not likely to prejudice the considauthority, commission or court of enquiry, as the case may be."

The reason we reproduce the paragraph is to humbly ask as to whether or not you had some scope for discretion here. To help understand the issue better we can also read paragraph XI which states: "the motion shall not deal with any matter which is under adjudication by a Court of Law having jurisdiction in any part of Bangladesh:" In contrast to the previous paragraph, paragraph XI is categorical, and does not give any discretionary power to the speaker. In fact among all the 12 paragraphs of rule 63 (that deal with restrictions on adjournment motion) only paragraph X provides scope for discretion of the Speaker. The framers of our constitution and the rules of procedure for running parliament must have foreseen a purpose for providing scope for discretion of the Speaker in this specific paragraph.

You are, of course, the best judge of the House rules, but a question has risen in our mind- and we would be most grateful if you correct us- that you could have used your discretionary powers to permit the adjournment motion given the gravity of the situa-

If you had done that then we may have been spared the spectacle of the opposition denigrating the House by chanting slogans inside it. We agree with you that such behaviour does not go with the dignity and prestige of this august body, and the opposition should not have done it.

Honourable Speaker, reportedly eight to ten powerful grenades were thrown at a rally that was addressed by the second most important member of the House over which you preside -- namely the leader of the opposition. She is also the former leader of the House. By all accounts it was a miracle that her life was saved. Several MPs of your House were injured, 20 people were killed along with an eminent woman leader and over 200 wounded. And vet vou couldn't bring yourself to use your discretionary powers. If your slight gesture could have brought a united House to debate on this serious matter, wouldn't the public have been better served?

Mr. Speaker, we, the ordinary citizens of this country, do not know much about the rules of procedure or the technicalities of how a parliament functions. But we do know that parliament is the House of the People. It is here that the voice of the people is heard. If nowhere else, it will be on the floor of this august House where people's wishes and concerns get reflected. We think you know, like everybody else, that the events of August 21 shocked us all to the very core. People are worried and they want to hear about a way forward. It is in moments like these, more so than ever, that people look up to parliament for guidance, courage, strength and most of all unity.

When the government is letting us down, when the opposition is extremely negative (they seem to have lost their entire vocabulary except NO), it is from the Jatiya Sangsad that people expected a way out. Parliament, as the supreme lawmaking body, the most powerful institution of democracy and the ultimate repository of the core values of our people, it remains our last hope to extract us out of the political quagmire in which we find ourselves today.

As the guardian of that supreme body you carry a very heavy burden on your shoulder. Wasn't it possible for you to take a broader picture of the present situation and think how the whole nation was looking up to you to create scope for both sides to participate in a debate? We know all too well that by itself a debate would not have produced much (except perhaps more mutual recrimination), but it could have provided, under your able guidance, an opening -- a ray of light through a crack in their mutual hatred -- for something constructive. fact, Honourable Speaker, you could have been a catalyst for a historic breakthrough. You could have taken parliament to a greater

FM off to NY

Secretary of State Colin Powell, British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw and South Asian foreign ministers, among others, on the sidelines of the UNGA session. Morshed is also expected to

attend ministerial-level meetings of 8 and Saarc-Asean dialogue.

He hinted at meeting his Indian counterpart Natwar Singh depending on their schedules.

would raise the issue of collaboration in counter-terrorism efforts by Bangladesh, India and Pakistan at the Saarc foreign ministers' meet on the sidelines of the UNGA session.

expected to address the plenary session but she is not making the trip because of pressing domestic issues. Morshed said.

Indigenous

long beard believed to be linked to underground militants, and some members of notorious chairman Kashem bahini have long been roaming the hilly villages close to Chittagong's Fatikchhari upazila. Kashem is the prime suspect in the sensational businessman Jamal

Uddin (Chittagong) abduction case. UPDF men Royal Marma, Topan Jyoti Chakma, Amor Bikash, Milon Chakma Sugota, Robi Chandra Chakma, Vaskor Chakma and Shamir Bikash Tanchangya led the repression on the villagers, people sheltered at Ghagra alleged.

Kalonjoy Chakma, a village doctor of Dolupara, said the UPDF men have become violent after they faced a strong encounter from pro-peace accord armed men about a month back. "Since then, they (UPDF men) are forcing villagers to back them with money and other necessary things,

he told newsmen. UPDF men killed Chikon Chan Chakma, 65, of Dolupara and abducted two others-- Singha Moni Chakma, 30 and Shappya Chakma, 35. The two were yet to be recovered, said village headman

Budhamoni Karbery. "Firefight between armed men of both the sides -- pro and anti-peace accord-- goes on intermittently till now," said Bono Kumar Chakma and Shushil Chakma, former member of Fatikchhari Union Parishad, who are among people at the community centre.

When contacted yesterday Additional Superintendent of Police (crime) Khosrul Haque admitted the rampage in the villages and said he has sent the officer-in- charge of Kawkhali Police Station to Ghagra community centre but he is yet to

Thursday, the Upazila Nirbahi Officer of Kawkhali visited the victims, officials said.

Deputy Commissioner of Rangamati Jafar Ahmed Khan last night told The Daily Star he has instructed the UNO to make a list of the affected families to provide them relief immediately.

"Since the problem is political, I have asked a senior member of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council, Ushaton Talukdar, to look

Kakri joins Gumti in flooding

said. "There will be light to moderate rains in Dhaka and the rest of the country in the next three to four days. But the situation is improving.' KAKRI FLOODING

The rain-engorged Kakri washed away stretches of the flood protection embankment at Ramchandrapur and Kala Bagan in Chouddogram upazila Wednesday night submerging 50 villages.

Water Development Board Chief Engineer Aminul Islam said nearly one lakh people are marooned in the flooded area.

The worst-affected villages are Kashinagar, Shuvapur, Munshirhat, Alkhara, Bakgram, Sripur, Mongolpur, Poranpur, Alipur, Hilalnagar, Shibpur, Balimuri, Hazaripur, Dhanispara, Gozariya, Bitorpur, Sharifpur and Kalikapur. They are under five to six feet of

Chouddogram Upazila Nirbahi Officer Sultan Nasrin said the local administration has already started

AL-BNP CLASH Cadres of ruling BNP allegedly attacked and severely injured 14 Awami League activists, including four leaders, while they were going to Devidwar to distribute relief among the victims of the Gumti dam burst.

The condition of an injured, a businessman named Raoshan Ali. was reported to be critical.

The BNP men also allegedly looted Tk 2-lakh relief money and two cellphone sets. According to an AL press state-

with various ministries concerned.

She hoped that a positive result

Although the minister did not

make any direct response as to

why the two articles were not

ratified during past two decades,

she said two other governments in

Khurshid Jahan said mere

ratification would not ensure an

end to women repression, adding:

'Women have to earn self-

reliance through economic and

educational capacity-building to

get rid of repression and discrimi-

"Elimination of discrimination

against women primarily at the

family level is a vital precondition

to implementing the CEDAW

convention meaningfully," said

Khushi Kabir of Nijera Kori, a

alteration of family laws may hurt

people's religious sentiment,

Khushi said while criminal, com-

mercial and other civil laws are

not determined by religion, why

personal matters should be gov-

scribed by different religions are

discriminatory to women and

On the government stand that

the past did not do the job.

would emerae.

ment, a group of about 40 to 50 AL activists and leaders was attacked by BNP cadres when it reached Shailchar Bridge on Comilla-Sylhet highway at Vinglarbari.

The raiders beat away at the AL members with hockey sticks and also chased senior AL leader Fakhrul Islam Munshi

At a press conference in Comilla, Fakhrul demanded arrest of the attackers and exemplary punish-

GUMTIFOLLOW UP

A 100-foot stretch of the Gumti dam was washed away Wednesday evening near Comilla town, 150km off the capital.

Around 5 lakh people in 13 unions are marooned. The local administration has opened six shelters in Devidwar. Many of the affected people took refuge on the embankment and local educational nstitutions. As the Comilla-Sylhet highway

near Devidwar was reeling under floodwater. Roads and Highways Department prohibited all traffic on the road. Locals said the strong river

current stormed through a crack in Gumti embankment at Bara Alampur area developed three weeks ago. Onrushing floodwaters submerged five unions in Devidwar. Chouddogram and Burichang upazilas until Thursday night and devoured more villages until yesterday noon.

Fatehabad, Bara Alampur, Elahabad and Gonaighar unions. Devidwar municipality, and Varella, Mokam and Peerjatrapur unions of Burichang upazila.

Heavy current has damaged almost all the roads in those areas.

Army contingents have been deployed to check further crack in the riverbank but the repair works was yet to begin until yesterday, as the breach was very wide and current too strong to carry out any

The Shalda, a tribute of Gumti, was also overflowing yesterday submerging some adjacent villages. RAINS IN DHAKA

After incessant torrential downpour for six days, city dwellers enjoyed sun for a considerable time yesterday. But the plight of people living in the low-lying areas was same as before, still waiting for water to recede from their houses.

Although Dhaka Water and

Sewerage Authority pumped out water from most parts of the city, there was stagnant water inside the DND (Dhaka-Narayangani-Demara) embankment, old part of the city and Mohammadpur. This week's deluge forced thou-

sands of families in the suburban DND embankment area to flee their homes, with about 17,000 people taking shelter on the embankment and in various high-rise buildings.

The city roads looked quite normal yesterday as most vehicles started plying again. Many markets resumed business and more people came out of home.

8 Ctg bus crash victims still in critical condition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Eight of the injured in Thursday's fatal bus crash remained in a critical condition yesterday while the rest were improving.

Including the eight, 47 of the injured were receiving treatment at Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) until yesterday.

Meanwhile, a number of the injured were discharged from the hospital as their conditions improved. CMCH sources said. "The eight are still unconscious

and not out of danger", Resident Surgeon of CMCH Dr Motiar Rahman Khan told The Daily Star last evening. Sources said Dumurua of

Anowara from where most of the victims hailed was smarting from the midnight crash. A sense of desolation gripped the villagers while many of them crowded the CMCH to attend to the injured. Relatives of the injured said they were struggling to meet the huge

medical expenses. Besides, they have to count the cost of living in the city to take care of the patients. Residents of Dumurua, however raised a fund of some Tk 15 thousand to help the victims on

Thursday. But the amount is negligible considering the huge cost of treatment, locals said. A case was filed with Karnaphuli

Ctg port security (Operations) Kamrul Hossain.

"The project is aimed at effective monitoring of all activities and controlling traffic at the port's outer anchorage," he said, "as the present system of traffic control with VHF radio doesn't ensure a comprehensive vigilance." The project was first proposed

two years ago when CPA faced a volatile situation of frequent piracies, ships fleeing from its harbour and recurring accidents. What lent urgency to its implementation and got it rolling this time was the advice of International Maritime Organisation (IMO), a UN agency concerned with safety of shipping and cleaner oceans.

"Installation of such a video surveillance system is a need of the hour under the ISPS Code enforced in this port from July 1st this year as per the advice of IMO against the backdrop of various security threats," Hossain said. "We can also prevent the ships detained at the port from fleeing.

Sophisticated video cameras will be set up near the Karnaphuli estuary to cover the entire port limit areas, while some others will be positioned inside the port to watch over jetties, protected sheds and other building, officials said.

Eng-SL tie Opener Marcus Trescothick hit an

The winners will take on world champions Australia in the semifinals next week.

Sri Lanka could have restricted England further in the 32 overs bowled if they had taken their catches, Mahela Jayawardene spilling an easy chance at slip when Andrew Flintoff, batting on 21 at the other end, was on one.

Nuwan Zoysa and Sanath Jayasuriya also dropped catches in the deep off Trescothick and

Strauss was run out for seven soon after his escape, attempting to run two after tickling the ball to third

Opener Vikram Solanki edged Farveez Maharoof behind for 18 after Sri Lanka captain Marvan Atapattu chose to field first with menacing clouds overhead.

Captain Michael Vaughan was bowled middle stump by Zoysa for five when he wandered across his stumps to leave England on 52 for two after 15 overs.

hours of efforts.

reportedly worth about Tk 1.8 lakh.

Police had arrested four and recovered some of the ornaments. The arrested Sujan, Nasiruddin, Jahangir and Liton alias Abul were from the same neighbourhood.

when a group of youths came to play in the nearby field at around 3:30pm.

He and his companions asked the boys not to play cricket as a ball had already hit a lady attending the witnesses.

headed by chief traffic manager The youths numbering around (eastern zone) and asked it to 20 left the field grudgingly at that time. But after an hour, they came back and looked for Salauddin, said his friend and colleague Khorshed.

Salauddin's friend Shishir said as he and Salahuddin were about to But oil traders said their loss was

stabs in stomach, chest and back He was rushed to DMCH but the doctors declared him dead on

| Materials for fake bomb

Commons chamber at Westminster have now been released on police

Commons leader Peter Hain is reportedly "absolutely furious" about the latest breach of Vestminster security.

Dudman said reporter Anthony France was able to get a job as a waiter using false references which were not checked in any way but "couldn't have been more

The materials he smuggled in in the midst of heightened security on Thursday included batteries, wire, a timer and modelling clay.

Dudman said it "couldn't have been anything other" than a bomb, the only difference being it was 20g of modelling clay instead of semtex.

Photographs of the reporter also show him serving tea to Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott while at Westminster.

Dudman told the BBC's Today programme: "It just simply beggars belief that on the day that ... everybody was saying: 'I can assure you we are going to ratchet up security it's never going to be tighter', that same day a man from the Sun walks in carrying what could have been a

"It's simply unbelievable."

The reporter's picture had already been on the paper's front page after he smuggled a fake bomb onto a plane at Birmingham International Airport.

Hain said the stunt had confirmed all his worst fears about security in the Commons, exposing "the amateurish and old-fashioned culture which threatened the very cockpit of our democracy". "It's not just government minis-

15 Hindus hurt in attack in Rangpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

At least 15 Hindus were wounded, five critically, and their temple was burnt to ashes in an attack allegedly led by a BNP leader in Menujchhara village in Pirgachha upzila Thursday.

Of the injured, Shudha, 3 Dinubala, 60, Śujan, 25, Ranjit, 27, and Kalicharan, 38, were admitted to Pirgachha Health Complex in critical condition, while others received first

Sources said criminals led by

Anisur Rahman, president of Parul union unit BNP and former Union Parishad chairman, carried out the attack. They also abducted Manoranian and set fire to the Hindu

A team of police led by Additional Superintendent of Police Golam Rabbani rushed to the spot and later rescued Manoranjan from a nearby

The sources said there has been a feud between the Hindu community and the BNP leader over setting up of a Brac school. Both the sides wanted the Brac, school to be set up in their own village, they added.

with dire consequence a few days back if they did not withdraw their demand. However, the Hindu community stuck to their demand. Police have picked up three

accused in this connection. A platoon of police has been deployed in the village as tension prevails.

About a month ago, criminals carried out arson attack on another Hindu village in Pirgachha.

73 Iraqis killed FROM PAGE 12

began before dawn near around the Haifa Street area. The US military said its troops had fired on a car packed with explosives that was driving toward a checkpoint, killing two men in the vehicle. Later, blasts and gunfire echoed from Haifa Street as US troops moved in.

Iraqi police said they had arrested 63 militants, including Syrians, Egyptians and Sudanese, in a sweep in Haifa Street.

West of Baghdad on Thursday three US marines were killed in action in separate incidents, the American military said. At least 777 US military personnel have died in action in Iraq since the US-led nvasion last year.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's assertion that the US-led war in Iraq was illegal, saving it was "not a very useful statement to make at this point." "We should all be gathering

In his interview, Powell disputed

around the idea of helping the Iraqis, not getting into these kinds of side

The United Nations has played down Annan's statement, which spokesman Fred Eckhard said Annan felt was no different from what he had been saying for more than a year.

On Thursday, in the latest kidnappings of foreigners, gunmen abducted two Americans and a Briton from a house in an affluent neighborhood of central Baghdad. Police said they had found the

body of a man believed to be a Westerner, apparently dead for some time, late on Thursday near

Samarra, north of Baghdad. Australia has been investigating a claim that two of its citizens were kidnapped in the area.

Two male French journalists and two Italian female aid workers have also been taken hostage in the past

ters at risk but the 14,000 other people who work in the Palace of Westminster who are at risk in this

modern age of suicide bombers," he "I have immediately asked the security services to close the loop-

hole exposed by the Sun." Hain has called for the appointment of a central director of security to oversee the protection of Parliament, to take over responsibility from the serjeant-at-arms and his

Shadow leader of the House Oliver Heald described the latest breach as a "scandal" and said security checks needed to be tight-

The Liberal Democrats also said Commons security needed an overhaul, with a greater role for Scotland Yard.

Incessant rain Thousands of fixed phones go out of order

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

phone network of Bangladesh elegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB) in the capital. As many as 7,640 telephones

dented deluge started on Saturday. BTTB personnel are yet to repai the telephone connections despite repeated complaints, many subscribers alleged.

keep the network active." They repaired about 3,000 phones till Many telephones went out of order as rainwater entered tele-

phone cables and cabinets. Repair work is being impeded as opening of telephone cabinets during rain may damage other phones, he said.

Citing example of Fakirapool

telephone exchange, he said, the lines have been kept active using generator during persistent power failures. The BTTB has procured two generators to face such situa-

dating the cable chamber of the central exchange. It has opened a central complaint coordination centre at the chair-

man's office in addition to its camps and complaint centres. Call completion rate and voice quality have dropped substantially

alleged. Normalcy in telephone service will return as soon as the floodwater

The state-owned fixed phone monopoly provides around one million fixed phone connections of which about 4,50,000 are in the

in Kurigram road accident

others injured, 31 of them seriously, in a road accident on Kurigram-Bhurangamari road yesterday.

The dead are Abdul Majid, 35 Mahbub, 12, and Asiron, 50. Majid and Mahbub died on the spot, while

The injured are now undergoing treatment at Modern Hospital Rangpur Medical College Hospital and Nageshwari Health Complex.

The driver and helper of the minibus managed to flee the spot soon after the accident.

Chhatak blast

Both the cases were transferred to

the Criminal Investigation Rahman Manik

cousin Abul Lais Chowdhury, Biplab Bhuiyan, son of Abdul Hannan Bhuiyan of Itna upazila of Kishoreganj, Billal Ahmed, son of Khairul Islam of Jamtala under Chhatak upazila, Zakaria Chowdhury of Chhatak and MP's bodyguard Abul Kalam Babul of village Silam and Arif Haider of Pathantola, Sylhet. Babul and Arif

but they were released on bail. Manik also submitted a 'naraji' petition against the charge sheet to the Special Tribunal at Sunamganj, which rejected the prayer.

the Divisional Speedy Trial Tribunal, Sylhet in January last year.

minister said he is likely to meet US

the Non-aligned Movement, Organisation of Islamic Conference, Commonwealth, Group of 77 and D-

The foreign minister also said he

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia was

Patindralal Chakma and

The leaders announced a series of programmes including a grand rally and demonstration on DIT Mosque ground on September 24, flag procession on October 1 and truck procession on October 6 from the mosque

not declared non-Muslims by October Narayanganj Ahmadiyya complex and are ready to sacrifice our lives to this end," said Shamsul Haq, president of

complex ignoring any obstacle put up by the Ahmadiyyas or the government," said Jamal Nasser Chowdhury, secretary general of the organisation. Ahmadiyyas for the August 21 greThe worst-hit areas are

to property and personal decision making," she said.

Govt wants to fully implement

Reservation to a key article, which deals with laws on women's equal inheritance to property and equal rights in personal and family matters, makes partial ratification of the convention virtually meaningless, said Professor Mizanur Rahman, who teaches law at Dhaka University.

Bangladesh's reservation to

Article 2, which is regarded as the 'heart of the convention', is a major impediment to establishing the very spirit of the convention -equal rights and elimination of discrimination against women, said Ayesha Khanam of Mahila Parishad, who also attended the UN committee meeting on the "The government's reservation

to it is virtually a departure from the spirit of the convention." she said. "Moreover, it corroborates the country's constitution and does not contradict social values

and practices either. She said that the existing family laws were the root cause of

rising dreadful domestic violence.

If a Bangladeshi man marries a

children automatically become

Bangladeshi citizens, but the

woman the wife and

and enforce appropriate laws and repeal discriminatory ones to ensure equality of women with men in property, inheritance, marriage, divorce and guardian-

ship over children," said the

"The government must enact

marries a foreign man, she said.

Parishad leader Dr Maleka Banu. Although the government has increased maternity leave from three to four months, women working in the private sector can not enjoy the benefit, she said. A 17-member government delegation led by the women

affairs minister attended the 31st

UN committee session, which

reviewed Bangladesh's 5th peri-

odic report on the status of CEDAW implementation in the first week of July in New York. Advocate Salma Ali, who attended the UN committee session, said the government committed to the UN committee that it would withdraw reservations to

the articles, but without specific She said ratification of the convention would not make any sense until and unless articles 2 and 16.1/C were ratified and a uniform family code was framed against domestic violence.

Dhaka, Delhi agree

deprive them of their equal rights same is not true in case a woman

advance.

rights group.

erned by it.

would coordinate their operations on both sides of the 4,126 km borders by exchanging information and modalities of any movement by either border patrols in

Speaking at a joint press conference after the three-day meetng, the two home secretaries, Bangladesh's Omar Farooq and India's Dhirendra Singh, refused to give any specific detail on the Indian allegations of 195 Indian insurgent camps in Bangladesh. "We exchanged our positions

and explained our perception. We noted that these are the problems that exist for a long time and we agreed to work closely on these matters," replied Singh when asked if the Indian allegation was discussed at the meeting. "We discussed all security

issues, we have reached an

understanding and we agreed to

work very closely on all security issues to effectively tackle the

Ahmadiyya

They threatened to go for tougher

programmes if the Ahmadiyyas are

"We'll say our Juma prayers on Aamra Dhakabashi. "We must enter the Ahmadiyya

The leaders blamed the nade attacks on an Awami League rally that left 20 killed and over 200 Abdul Kader, Fakrul Islam, Shavekh Masud Rahman, Ruhul

Amin, Naser Chowdhury and Sharafat

Ali, among others, addressed the rally.

Both sides repeated the same stand during a flurry of questions by reporters on the allegations of renewed Indian insurgent activities in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, anti-Bangladesh elements on Indian soil and Bangladeshi civil-

Singh said criminals and insurgents were taking advantage of the long porous borders and both sides would work closely to develop an effective mechanism to prevent such infiltration. Asked about any discord between the two nations during

ian deaths caused by the BSF.

understood each other's perception on all matters and their work would progress from that point. Faroog said for the understanding the two home secretaries for the first time would try to work through matters by communicating by phone to quickly resolve issues rather than a pro-

the meeting, he said he was satis-

fied with the fact that both sides

longed wait for formal talks. Farooq also said a double-entry and exit visa for Bangladeshi citizens was already provided by India and Dhaka's agreement to grant Indian citizens the doubleentry and exit visa was only a reciprocal move on Bangladesh's Speaking on India's prevarica-

tion on ratifying the 1974 Land

Boundary Agreement, known as

the Mujib-Indira agreement, Singh

said there were legal constraints

on the Indian side as India required

notification of demarcated bound-

aries before ratification while for Bangladesh notification comes after ratifying agreements. "The main point is the boundary should be properly notified...What is needed as far as the people are concerned is that there should be no gap as far as boundary is concerned." said Singh on long-standing issues, including enclaves inside both countries and a 6.5 km undemarcated

The two sides also reached an agreement to share information between the agencies concerned

to eliminate drugs and human trafficking along the borders. They also agreed to tighten border patrolling to prevent movements across the border without legal

A joint press statement issued by both sides said the talks between the 15-member Bangladeshi delegation led by Faroog and the 14-member Indian delegation led by Singh tackled all issues based on mutual understanding of their sensitivities to

Two stabbed

FROM PAGE 1

Mahfuza was under treatment at the DMCH till yesterday. Salauddin, 22, an employee of a cloth store at Ayesha Shafi Shopping Complex at Mauchak, was attending a wedding party at Shantibagh Ershad High School

party and spoilt her dress, said

leave the scene on a motorbike, the gang attacked. People attending the wedding rushed to the spot and found him lying in a pool of blood with several

he added.

and octane from Chittagong in nine wagons was immediately suspended, railway officials said

Rail links FROM PAGE 12

adjacent haor. The incident appar-

ently caused a huge damage on the

local ecosystem and water bodies.

There were no reports of casualties but railway officials said the fire gutted a house and two women were slightly injured as they jumped into the nearby pond in panic. They said the fire also burnt a big tree near the rail tracks. Fire fighters from Sylhet rushed

to the scene and brought the fire

under control at about 3:00am after

Sylhet Fire Station Chief Jahid Hossain said the derailed wagons caught fire at about 9:00pm about one-and-half-an-hour after the accident Railway authorities formed a three-member enquiry committee

submit report in three days. A railway spokesman quoting primary estimates said damage caused by the accident has been estimated at Tk 65 lakh. Tk 50 lakh was assessed for loss of oil, Tk 10 lakh for the damaged wagons and the rest for damaged rail tracks.

The locomaster of the train carrying kerosene, diesel, petrol

much higher than the railway esti-

But BTTB Chairman Nurul Islam "Maintenance workers have been working round the clock to yesterday, he mentioned.

The BTTB sought help from fire brigade as rainwater started inun-

due the heavy rain, subscribers

recedes. BTTB officials said.

3 killed, 49

UNB, Kurigram Three people were killed and 49

Witnesses said the mishap took place at about 7:30am when a Kurigram bound minibus from Bhurangamari fell into a roadside ditch at Jamtala in Nageshwari.

Asiron at Ranpur Medical College Hospital at about 4:00pm.

Locals blocked traffic on the road protesting the accident. Police later brought the situation under control.

FROM PAGE 1

Department (CID), which gave a final report on the case filed by the MP. The CID ASP Aminul Islam submitted a charge sheet against seven people including Muhibur The other accused are Manik's

died on the spot. After the charge sheet, police arrested Manik and other accused.

The case was later transferred to

Incessant rain has thrown thousands of subscribers out of the fixed went out of order since the unprece-