Stormy debate

FROM PAGE 12 are in a face-off on the issue. The speaker has accepted a notice submitted by Opposition Chief Whip Abdus Shahid demanding discussion on the price spiral of essential com-modities and the issue has been included on the day's agenda, Parliament Secretariat sources said

The main opposition Awami League (AL) at a meeting of the Business Advisory Committee (Bac) on October 28 placed the demand for holding general discussions on the pricehike, among other issues.

The ruling party however rejected other issues such as 'crossfire' killings in the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) custody, 'government interference' in the Jail Killing Case and the prevailing

Aide of Jamal Uddin's abductor hospitalised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, CIR

Kala Mahbub, a close aide to the prime accused in magnate Jamal Uddin Ahmed Chowdhury abduction case, was admitted to Chittagong Medical College and Hospital (CMCH) in custody of the CID Tuesday night.

The Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) Monday arrested Mahbub from Kanchannagar in Fatikchhari and handed him over to Criminal Investigation Department (CID). The associate of the prime accused Kashem Chairman fell sick soon after the handover Tuesday night.

The CID, which is probing the case, will further interrogate Mahbub after he is discharged from CMCH for giving contradictory statements.

Mahbub, also a listed top criminal

of the district, told the Rab during interrogation that Jamal was killed as the demand for ransom was not met. He also claimed to have heard that the magnate was still alive in custody of some indigenous criminals.

Khaleda

Earlier, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia received Pakistan Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz on his arrival at Zia International Airport (Zia). He was

given a red carpet reception The Pakistani leader flew in here from Bhutan accompanied by his wife

Bangladesh and Pakistan yesterday agreed on combining their efforts to keep up the momentum generated at the Islamabad Saarcismonik to boost cooperation among the South Asian

nations in socio-economic sectors.

Addressing a dinner hosted in honour of Pakistani Prime Minister and incumbent Chairman of Saarc Shaukat Aziz, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia pledged total cooperation to go in line with the decisions of the

Islamabad meet.

She said the 12th summit in Islamabad succeeded in bringing the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (Saarc) back on track. We're attaching great importance to a successful holding of the 13th summit in Dhaka," she said.

Members of the Pakistani prime minister's entourage, ministers and senior officials of Bangladesh attended the dinner at International Conference

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, the opposition lawmakers said they would protest at the government's failure to control the prices of essentials, especially in Ramadan, while the

Homage paid

FROM PAGE 1 half-mast. Black flags were also flown and party leaders and workers wore black badges to mourn the gruesome

coalition lawmakers said they are

ready to counter the opposition attack.

A group of army men gunned down Syed Nazrul Islam, acting president of Bangladesh government in exile, Tajuddin Ahmed, prime minister, M Mansur Ali, finance minister, and AHM Qamaruzzaman, home, relief and rehabilitation minister, in Dhaka Central Jail on this day, November 3, in 1975. The day is known as the Jail Killing Day.

AL leaders and workers led by Acting President Zillur Rahman placed wreaths at the portrait of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the graves of the national leaders at Banani Graveyard. They offered fateha and organised milad mahfils and special

In observance of the day, the AL will also hold a discussion at the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh auditorium in the city at 11:00am today, with senior party leaders as

A Dhaka court on October 20 handed down death sentence to three, life imprisonment to 12 and acquitted five of the accused in the long-awaited verdict of the historic Jail Killing Case. Families of the slain leaders, however, rejected the verdict and termed it politically motivated

Huda's new theory on Hasina's security

UNB, Dhaka

Communications Minister Nazmul Huda yesterday said the August 21 grenade attack proved that by the grace of Allah no-one will be able to kill Leader of the Opposition Sheikh

"And for this, by the grace of almighty Allah, the opposition leader will not require the Special Security Force (SSF) or any special security measure for her protection," Huda said in a statement.

The statement came in the wake of some Awami League (AL) leaders' Tuesday's demand of redeploying the SSF for Hasina.

Referring to the grenade attack, the minister said eight grenades went off around the truck from where Hasina delivered her speech.

AL leaders and supporters were killed and many others injured in that heinous incident but surprisingly the truck was not damaged. Even no grenade exploded during

Hasina's speech, he added. Huda said: "Although claimed that the target was the Awami League president, there's no doubt in the public mind that almighty Allah had ensured the security of the opposition leader."

Bid to reintroduce

change some 10 to12 points of the regulations," Saifur told reporters after

the meeting The Public Procurement Regulations were put into force in June last year, but following complaints from various ministries the planning ministry asked them to let it know

about the problems facing them. It also asked for their recommendations for changes to the regulations.

Eight ministries including the com-

munications, LGRD and telecommunication put forward their suggestions. Yesterday's meeting took a look at

the suggestions and accepted a few including stretching the limit for bidding out works in the restricted tendering system. Government offices can now give work orders worth Tk 10 lakh instead of Tk 5 lakh only among listed contractors in cases of procuring

goods and in cases of public works the listed contractors would now get orders worth Tk 25 lakh instead of Tk 10

Under current system of multiple dropping, three hours are the maximum time limit for opening up tender boxes. But it was decided yesterday that from now on if within a district the tender boxes could be opened in a day and the time limit would otherwise be

Meeting sources said the planning ministry officials told the minister that f the changes are brought to multiple dropping system, the donors might oppose it. But Saifur assured them of

dealing the issue with the donors. Abolishing an earlier restriction, the meeting however reintroduced the provision that government offices can procure goods from public commer-cial enterprises without open bidding.

Tokai Mizan dies

But, during a visit to the place yester-day morning, locals told The Daily Star they had heard a couple of gunshots in the early hours but did not see any one apart from the Rab members. Mizan's body has been sent to

A URCHINTURNED KINGPIN Mizan was accused in around two

dozen criminal cases including eight for murders filed with the city's Ramna, Lalbagh and Dhanmondi police stations.

He came to the capital a homeless boy in 1988 from a village in Chandpur and lived for a while as a street urchin (Tokai, in vernacular slang). Eventually he got a job as a canteen-boy at Jahurul Haque Hall of Dhaka University (DU). But the nickname -- Tokai -- became a

Mizan, later started to work as carrier of arms and ammunition for the student political cadres staying at the DU dormitories and became close to Shamim Ahmed alias Pichchi Shamim, a kingpin of Bangladesh Chhatra League in the DU in early

In 1999 Mizan shot at a deputy commissioner of police when a police team went to Jahurul Haque Hall to arrest him. That incident earned him notoriety enough to be considered a gangster. His killing of a leader of autorickshaw drivers, Ashik Goala, in Azimpur added to that status and adorned him with the title of 'Killer

As a close associate of Pichchi Shamim, he had run all the key crime routines including arms purchase, toll collection, establishing control over auto-rickshaw stands, committing necessary murders, tender snatching, threatening, blackmailing and occu-pying DU dorms until his arrest in

Police shot and arrested him at Dhaka City Corporation office as he tried to bar other contractors from filing tenders for a contract. He received about seven bullets in the incident and was sentenced to rigorous imprisonment. He was released from Dhaka Central Jail just five

While in prison, he became acquainted with other top-notch criminals and underworld dons that helped him after coming out of the jail to build and run a criminal network comprising a core team of 60 accomplices of Lalbagh, Mohammadpur, Dhanmondi, Arambagh and Mirpur

Sources said he worked mostly as a gunman for political leaders regardless of party identity. He was also known to be directly involved in electioneering of a recently elected lawmaker of a constituency in the capital.

2 outlaws killed, mob lynches 1

AMANUR AMAN, Kushtia

Cadres of Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP-ML) slaughtered aged father of an UP member allegedly belonging to PBCP-Janajuddho on Tuesday night, while Janajuddho cadres killed another UP member and injured four as retaliation in Alamdanga upazilla yesterday morning.

Angry mob lynched an alleged outlaw in Jhenidah early hours of

A gang of PBCP-ML cadres stormed into the house of Farid Uddin, member of Khaskarra union parishad in Alamdanga upazila at about 11pm Tuesday and looked for him, Chuadanga police said.

Not finding him, the cadres took Farid's father Safi Uddin, 55, to a nearby field and slaughtered him

Police recovered the body in the morning and sent to Chuadanga

sadarhospitalforautopsy.

A gang of Janajuddho cadres went to Munshiganj bazar in the same upazila and hurled three bombs, killing Baradi UP member Badsha Mia and seriously injuring Rakib Uddin, 45, saiful Islam, 33 Hasanur Rahman, 26, and Abdu Gan, 30, fellows of the slain. Police sent the dead body to

Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

They injured were taken to Chuadanga Sadar Hospital and later

shifted to Kushtia General Hospital. Later Janajuddho claimed responsibility of the killing, terming it revenge for the killing of innocent

aged person Safi Uddin. Angry mob mercilessly beat Saidul Islam alias Saidu Kana, an alleged outlaw at village Loudia under Sadar Upazila in Jhenidah

early hours of yesterday. He died at about 4am at Jhenidah

HC stays case against Prothom Alo

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court on Tuesday stayed the proceedings of a defamation case filed against the editor, the publisher and a reporter of the daily Prothom Alo.

A division bench comprising Justice SK Sinha and Justice Shahidul Islam also issued a rule on the government to show cause why the case would not be dismissed.

A magistrate who was assaulted for frisking a female SSC candidate in Kushtia in search of copies in 1999 filed the case against Prothom Alo Editor Motiur Rahman, Publisher Mahfuz Anam and Kushtia correspondent Tariqul Haq Tariq after the news was published in the Bangla

Results to mark

FROM PAGE 1 would continue if he (Bush) is still president.... Clearly you know, he is not the one to easily change his mind," said Thomas, referring to the policies carried out by the incumbent Bush administration.

But, he said a Kerry administration would not diverge from the current administration's commitment to a strong relationship with Bangladesh exemplified by highlevel visits during the incumbent administration's rule, including by US Secretary of State Colin Powell and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld.

Thomas made the observations at a press briefing at the American Centre yesterday organised to take questions on the US elections.

The envoy also said there is no way to know of the changes in US plans to assist least-developed nations, such as Bangladesh, until the next fiscal budget is passed next year either under the Bush or Kerry administrations. He however added, "As the ambassador to Bangladesh I would like to see the aid increase."

Asked about the difference in strategies of Bush and Kerry for the 'global' war on terror, Thomas said both Bush and Kerry are equally committed to the war on terrorism across the globe.

He also said the "deep wound" inflicted by the September 11, 2001 attacks were perhaps a reason for US voters to back President Bush strongly in this year's polls, when asked of the role of Bush's homeland security or the attack on Iraq in the elections.

Thomas also praised the participation of Bangladeshi-Americans in the election process and said US citizens vote as Americans, which transcends races and ethnicities. ARMITAGE. TORKELVISITS

The US ambassador vesterday did not rule out the possibility of a visit to Dhaka by US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage during his eight-day South Asia and Middle East trip starting November 4.

"I am not ruling it out," said Thomas when asked if Armitage was making a stopover in Dhaka during the trip. The ambassador confirmed,

however, that US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Torkel Patterson would visit Bangladesh on November 8. Patterson would leave on the November 12, he added.

Republicans tighten

FROM PAGE 1 chamber since the dozen years that ended in January 1933.

"The American people have spoken tonight, and all indications are that they have hired a Republican House of Representatives for the sixth straight election," said DeLay, whose push for redistricting in Texas helped the GOP knock off four veteran Texas

Republicans also gained seats in the Senate, keeping Congress under party control. But Democrats will retain enough votes there to make it hard for Republicans to push through

Nevertheless, Republican leaders sought to portray the results as an affirmation of their priorities in Congress. The vote is "an endorsement by the American people that you're moving in the right direction when it comes to security and safety and more -- on terror, prescription drugs and education," Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist of Tennessee

By early yesterday, Republicans had won 228 seats and were leading in five other races, which could give them at least 233 seats. Democrats had won 199 seats and led in two Republicans hold a 227-205

advantage over Democrats in the outgoing House, plus two vacant seats fermierly held by Republicans who have retired and one independ

ent who sides with Democrats. A minimum of 218 seats are needed for House control.

In case of a tie in the Electoral College between President Bush and Sen. John Kerry, the House chooses the next president, which likely means another four years in the White House for Bush.

Democrats did find a couple of bright spots in their otherwise bleak

They were heartened by the strong showing from the party's rising-star Barack Obama, who became the lone African-American senator after beating ultra-conservative talk show host Alan Keyes in a landslide in

Obama, 43, soundly defeated Keyes in the contest to replace a retiring one-term Republican, garnering more than 70 percent of the vote to Keyes' 27 percent, according to figures early Wednesday.

Democrats were also cheered by the victory of Democrat Ken Salazar Colorado's attorney general, who has now become the state's first-ever Hispanic senator. (AP/AFP)

Hartal passes

hartal hours. Different government and private organisations and banks functioned normally and attendance was almost normal. But educational institutions across the country remained closed. Police picked up 24 people, most of them reportedly innocent pedestrians, from different parts of the city during

In Lalbagh, law enforcers clubbed and dispersed AL activists when they made an attempt to bring out a procession in the morning.

An AL press release claimed police

charged baton on AL processions in Pallabi and Dhanmondi, injuring about 15 leaders and activists, and picked up Some senior leaders and workers stayed in front of the party central office

sions inside the barbed wire fences twice. AL presidium member Motiva Chowdhury, city AL General Secretary Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya, Sramik Legue President Abdul Matin

on Bangabandhu Avenue during the

Master and other leaders took part. Police barred a procession led by former lawmaker Dr HBM Igbal and picked up three in Farmgate at 10:00am. AL Mahila League marched in procession from Purana Paltan to Motifheel

but was intercepted by police. Some AL lawmakers brought out another procession from the Jatiya Sangsand Bhaban at around 10:30am. They marched on Mirpur Road to hold a

rally at Russell Square.

Lawmakers Mohammad Nasim,
Opposition Chief Whip Abdus
Shahid, Talukder Abdul Khaleq, Dr Abdur Razzak, Shahjahan Khan, Panchanan Biswas, Mostafizur Rahman, Ekabbar Hossain and AL leader Abdul Matin Khashru and Jubo League leader Jahangir Kabir Nanak were present.

Nasim, son of the jail killing victim M Monsur Ali, said his family and the people of the country have rejected the verdict. He alleged the verdict was made at the whim of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and Law Minister Barrister Moudud Ahmed.

PM opens

FROM PAGE 1

flyover on November 7, but busy schedule of the prime minister and other ministers on that day, National Revolution and Solidarity Day, led them to fix today for its opening. The 1.12km long and 17.9 meter

wide flyover was designed to ease increasing traffic congestion in city's Mohakhali area. It rests upon 19 spans on 552 piles.

The construction of the flyover costing Tk 114 crore was financed by the World Bank

First Metallurgical Construction Company of China constructed the

Lovers on a stroll

Aklima and her boyfriend, Rubel a stroll towards West Dhanmondi yesterday morning, merrily exchanging tête-à-têtes. "We were at Shukrabad bus stand when we heard some noise. Sensing some trouble or strife between police and political activists we were about to

flee the place," Rubel narrated. "But to our surprise, they [police] rushed towards us and hauled us un into the van paying no heed to our protests and assertions that we have nothing to do with any politics," he went on. The van took both of them

to Dhanmondi Police Station. Besides them, at least 16 others were arrested by police in the area at around 11:00am yesterday morning during the hartal enforced by the major opposition Awami League and taken to the police station.

Rubel said he and her girl friend would be in a number of troubles besides being socially stigmatised if any one comes to know about their being arrested by law enforcers. He implored, "Please don't publish our names or photographs in your paper, as only our mothers know about our affair."

"For the first time in my life, I came to a police station. You know, how I am feeling. I cannot say any thing more," Aklima broke into

She was kept in a separate room along with Sabina Akter Tuhin, general secretary of Dhaka City North Unit of Jubo Mohila League, AL'syoung women's wing.
Others who were locked up in the police station repeated tales more or less similar to Aklima and Rubel. All tion with any political party.

One of them, Abdul Kabir, who works at Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation, was taking his friend Delwar Hossain to Bangladesh Medical College Hospital in Dhanmondi to get medical help when police held them. "It seems one can't even walk the

streets during a hartal any more. They should have told us that the streets are off limit to commoners,' Kabir said in visible anger. "They [police] didn't even let us contact our families. I wonder if they would let us go today." Zafrul Hasan, a lawyer and mem-

ber of Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST), said arresting any one without a specific charge except under Section 54 of Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) is a violation of human rights. "Police can hold and take a per-

son to police station for interrogation. But they can't put him in lockup without any specific charges,' Hasan confirmed.

However, when contacted, duty officer of Dahnmondi Police Station Sub Inspector Mamun said some people were indeed brought in from Russel Square, adding, "But they will be released if we find them innocent

after interrogation." On why they did not make sure of the identities of people before arresting them, a police high official said it was not possible during such chaotic and turbulent time.

Early harvest

FROM PAGE 1 much benefit the day labourers in the acute poverty-striken districts as their wages for harvesting are extremely low. "We get only Tk 40 a day for cutting and carrying paddy from the fields," said Asgar Ali

Mondal of Goraipar char. In some areas the agricultural labourers get even Tk 20 for a whole

Hundreds of young people were seen sitting idle at different road crossings. Some of them told these correspondents that they would go to Dhaka and Chittagong for job just after Eid as a severe joblessness is prevailing in the entire northern There is no mills or factories in

the district. So we have no option

but to go elsewhere in search of job,"

said Ansar Uddin of Adam village.

The rickshawpullers were also seen waiting for passengers for long. A rickshawpuller in the area cannot earn more than Tk 30 a day. "I have been waiting since the morning but did not get any passenger," said Rafiqul Islam at Pautana crossing yesterday noon. Talking to The Daily Star, many

rickshawpullers like Belal, Abdur

Rashid, Shahidul Islam and Mohammad Yusuf said their earning is not sufficient but they do not get relief materials as they are not enlisted by the union parishads. "We cannot survive with the

money we earn by pulling tick-shaws," Rafiqul Islam said, He alleged that the names of rickshawpullers were not included the list of VGF (vulnerable group feeding) card programme.

Banned Islamist outfit calls press conference

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The commander of Rajshahi-based militant group Shahadar-e Al Hiqma has reorganised his group and called a press conference at a city community centre on November 6.

Sayed Kawsar Hussain Siddiki on Tuesday claimed himself as the general of Al Hiqma in a news release sent to the press club and different newspaper offices inviting reporters to the conference.

The outfit's motto was marked on the press release that read "a traditional republican political party of the world since 1996."

Siddiki, self-proclaimed commander of the country's only banned Islamist outfit, was bailed on July 14 in a sedition case. He was absconding since receiving bail in a fraud case filed in August 2002 and later surrendered to the Court of Chief

Metropolitan Magistrate.

The court granted bail as no-one on behalf of the state opposed the petition in absence of the court sub-

The home ministry banned the organisation the next day in the wake

'Pirate' gang lord killed in 'crossfire'

UNB, Cox's Bazar

A gang leader was killed in 'crossfire' with the police and three other pirates were arrested Tuesday night, six days after the grisly murders of 14 fisher-men allegedly by them on a trawler in

Police said gang leader Kalu, 32, and his accomplices--Tazu, Shajahan and Abu Bakar--were arrested at Samitypara and Charpara in the town on Tuesday night. They were rounded up following a confessional statement of Nazrul, the

driver of the trawler. Police said they took Kalu to a village near the town to recover arms. When they reached the village, Kalu's accomplices opened fire. Police

During the shootout, Kalu received bullet wounds and died instantly, police said. Our Cox's Bazar correspondent

said Kalu confessed to his involvement in the killing of 14 fishermen aboard the trawler in the Bay on October 27. Bid to push in 50 Indians

foiled UNB, Lalmonirhat

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) personnel and villagers foiled a BSF (Border Security Force) bid to push 50 Indian nationals into Bangladesh through Panbari border of Patgram upazila on

Tuesday night. Villagers along with BDR have been guarding the 286-km border of the district after the incident.

Local BDR Commander Helal said the BSF tried to push the Indian nationals into Bangladesh at midnight.

Faizee

FROM PAGE 1 Sources said the Bar Council, lawyers' regulatory body that issues enrol-

ment certificate for legal practice, will also discuss similar allegations against some other lawyers. Chief Justice Syed JR Mudassir Husain withdrew Faizee from the bench on Sunday in the wake of the allegation and lawyers' threat to boycott his court. He also thrust full responsibility of the bench upon Justice Ali Asgar Khan, Faizee's senior

judge in the bench, as Asgar declined to sit with him in the court. Two major dailies reported that Justice Faizee, one of the 19 additional judges whose appointment on August 23 drew sharp criticism, had tam-pered with his marks-sheet of LLB degree obtained from Chittagong Law College in 1989. An enquiry committee of Chittagong University has unearthed the fraud.

President of Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) Rokanuddin Mahmud, meanwhile, protested Law Minister Moudud Ahmed's Tuesday's comment that questioned why Rokan did not notice the certificate tampering when Faizee was his junior.

check the certificate when he appoints a junior lawyer, the SCBA leader explained. "Did his (Moudud) senior lawyer check his certificate when he worked as a junior lawyer? Or did he check the

A senior lawyer does not need to

certificate of his junior when he appointed them?" Rokanuddin asked. Seized

FROM PAGE 1 implementation officer of Mushiganj Sadar upazila, received the rickshaws

Sources said 400 rickshaws have

been sent to the constituency of Agriculture Minister M K Anwar last month and 200 more will be sent there.

The rickshaws will be distributed among the people enlisted by union parishad chairmen and members, said Mohammad Sumon, who came to Agargaon on Thursday to receive the

rickshaws allotted for Daudkandhi upazila. He said the rickshaws will be distributed among the poor almost free of cost. "Only Tk 300 will be taken as transport cost.

Asked, Deputy Commissioner (South) of DMP Ansar Uddin Khan Pathan denied the allegation of 'quota' for ministers and ruling party eaders. He said the rickshaws are being sent following requests from the district administrations.

Bush wins

A Democratic source said Bush called Kerry a worthy, tough and honorable opponent. Kerry told Bush the country was too divided, the source said, and Bush agreed. 'We really have to do something about it," Kerry said, according to

White House spokesman Scott McClellan said Bush told Kerry, "I think you were an admirable, honor-

able opponent."

Advisers said the campaign just wanted one last look for uncounted ballots that might close the 136,000vote advantage Bush held in Ohio.

An Associated Press survey of the

state's 88 counties found there were about 150,000 uncounted provisional ballots and an unspecified number of absentee votes still to be In a dispute that evoked memo-

ries of the prolonged election recount in Florida in 2000, questions about provisional and absentee ballots in Ohio had delayed the final outcome of the presidential election Ohio's 20 electoral votes had been the final hurdle to Bush win-

ning an Electoral College majority of 270 votes after a divisive campaign that focused on the war in Iraq, the battle against global terrorism and Republicans also celebrated expanded majorities in the House of Representatives and the Senate in

results likely to build the president's mandate and ease Bush's conservative agenda in Congress. Bush himself planned to declare victory before long. Republican Party Chairman Marc Racicot said

the president put it off temporarily as a courtesy to Kerry, "to allow the opportunity to look at the situation in the cold hard light of day." Bush, who watched the results in the White House with his family, including his father, former presi-

evening he was confident of victory. 'We're very upbeat, thank you, Bush told reporters. "I believe I will Kerry, watching the results in his hometown of Boston, did not make

dent George Bush, said early in the

an appearance before reporters but sent out aides to predict a win. Demonstrators were due to take to the streets of Columbus later on Wednesday, to protest against what they called voter disenfranchisement and a repeat of the botched election in Florida in 2000. The Florida race was ultimately decided by the US Supreme Court, which

gave the election to Bush. Continuity-was-the-result else where in government, with the GOP padding its Senate majority knocking out Democratic leader Sen. Tom Daschle of South Dakota in the process and easily hanging on to the House. That will be the state of play on Capitol Hill for the next two years, with the chance of a Supreme Court nomination fight looming along

Glitches galore cropped up in

overwhelmed polling places as

Americans voted in high numbers,

fired up by unprecedented registra-

contest and the sense that these

with legislative battles.

Badarpur Bazarin the sadar upazila.

the assailants and caught the four. The robbers also stabbed two peo-

were unusually consequential Shafiqul Islam visited the spot.

there for sometime. At 3:25pm only 43 lawmakers were present. The speaker withheld the process for passage of five bills at the request of Law Minister Moudud Ahmed and

tabled the annual report of Bangladesh Energy Commission in the House. State Minister for Cultural Affairs Selima Rahman introduced The Registration (Amendment) Bill 2004, which was sent to the standing com-

ALTAFSERIOUSLYSICKI Deputy Speaker Akhtar Hamid Siddiqui yesterday told the House that Commerce Minister Altaf Hossain Choudhury failed to respond to a call

Kader Siddiqui, the deputy speaker said the commerce minister informed the speaker about his sickness by telephone on the day. When the call attention notice

was being read out in the House, the

minister was in the lobby and as he

felt unwell he left the parliament," he

attention notice on Tuesday as he had

Sramik Janata League lawmaker

Replying to a question by Krishak

suddenly fallen sick.

Hamid agreed with Kader that it was an unprecedented incident in the parliament. "None of us has any hand in the sickness and we, includingyou, [mayfall sick] anytime."
On Tuesday, Altaf failed to respond to a call attention notice

Ahmadiyyas ask govt

press conference in Dhaka yesterday. 'We've already gone through a lot of torture, please stop it now," said the Ahmadiyya leader and alleged that two constituents of the ruling coalition are patronising and taking active part in the persecution of the

propaganda and false accusations against the Ahmadiyyas because of the ban on their publications.

Operatives of International

Committee Bangladesh and Aamra Dhakabashi, who failed to capture Narayanganj Missionpara Ahmadiyya Mosque in the wake of strong police watch and civil society

The country exposed its rifts on matters of great import in Tuesday's voting. Exit polls found the electorate split down the middle or very close to it on whether the nation is

moving in the right direction, on what to do in Iraq, on whom they trust with their security. The electoral map yesterday looked much like it did before; the question mark had moved and little

Bush built a solid foundation by hanging on to almost all the battleground states he got last time. Florida fell to Bush again, close but

no argument about it. And so all eyes turned to Ohio, where Democrats clung to hopes that provisional ballots would overcome Bush's lead.

Bush's relentless effort to wrest Pennsylvania from the Democratic column fell short. He had visited the state 44 times, more than any other. Kerry picked up New Hampshire in perhaps the election's only turn-In Ohio, Kerry won among young

adults, but lost in every other age group. One-fourth of Ohio voters identified themselves as born-again Christians and they backed Bush by a3-to-1 margin. A sideline issue in the national presidential campaign, gay civil unions may have been a sleeper that hurt Kerry who strongly supports that right in Ohio and elsewhere. Ohioans expanded their law banning gay marriage, already consid-

with an even broader constitutional amendment against civil unions. In all, voters in 11 states approved constitutional amendments limiting marriage to one man and one woman.

For all the stumping in Ohio, nine

ered the toughest in the country,

10 voters had made up their minds before the last week, and they favored Bush. True to his reputation as a strong closer, Kerry performed better than Bush among those who decided late. In Florida, Kerry again won only among voters under age 30. Six in 10

voters said Florida's economy was in

good shape, and they voted heavily for Bush. Voters also gave the edge to Bush's handling of terrorism. Mob lynches 4 robbers, ex-army

man shot dead

UNB, Patuakhali A mob yesterday lynched four alleged robbers after they shot a retired army person to death in

Police said the robbers gunned down sergeant (retd) Malek Talukdar, 40, at 8:00pm when he suspected them of being criminals. Hearing gunshots, locals chased

ple -- Aziz and Shajahan -- in their tion drives, the excruciatingly close desperate bid to flee from the spot.

Superintendent of Police Md

Quorum crisis

FROM PAGE 12

adjourned the session at 3:45pm. The question-answer session was however held and call attention notices were placed. The law minister

mittee concerned for scrutiny. The committee will submit a report on the bill in the next two months.

either in person or by proxy that was brought by BNP lawmaker Manzur Quader. AL lawmakers made a noisy protest against it.

resistance on October 8, have been

learnt to have prepared to make another attempt on either tomorrow

Encouraged by their success in

pulling down signboards of three

Ahmadiyya mosques in Chittagong

Khulna and Patuakhali, the anti-

Ahmadiyya zealots planned to hang

news signboards at Nakhalpara,

Narayanganj and Brahmanbaria

mosque, branding the mosques as

Kadiani (Ahmadiyya) Place of

Worship'. They cautioned people

against getting deceived by saying

1912, the Ahmadiyyas follow the

same rituals as the Sunnis, apart from

their belief that Imam Mahdi, the last

messenger of Prophet Mohammed,

has already arrived to uphold Islam

as it was preached 1400 years ago.

Hailing from Brahmanbaria since

prayers there.

or last Friday of Ramadan.

Ahmadiyyas. The AMJB leaders pointed out that they cannot refute the bigots'

International Khatme Nabuwat Movement, one of the several anti-Ahmadiyya groups, has announced to capture Ahmadiyya mosque in Tejgaon's Nakhalpara after the Juma prayers today.

Tahaffuz-e-Khatme Nabuwat Committee Bangladesh, who razed a mosque, vandalised houses of and injured 11 Ahmadiyyas at Bhadughar in Brahmanbaria last Friday, threatened to burn the Ahmadiyyas should they gather to say their prayers at the mosque tomorrow. Fanatics of Khatme Nabuwat

The Sunnis believe Mahdi has not arrived as yet. The anti-Ahmadiyya capmpaign gathered momentum across the country after mid-2003 with an attempt to capture Nakhalpara

mosque on November 20 last year and the Islami Oikya Jote (Islamic Alliance) of ruling coalition government is alleged to be tacitly support-