

## JS body puzzled

**FROM PAGE 19** Sangsad Bhaban yesterday expressed dissatisfaction with "systematic faults" in statistics furnished by their officials, sources said.

The state minister for energy said that for the recent rise in gas production now there is no shortage of gas supply for the country's power plants. "There should be a correct assessment of the situations prevailing in the power sector. The figures supplied by the ministry officials are confusing and incorrect," a meeting source quoted him as saying.

State Minister for Power Iqbal Hasan Mahmud at the meeting proposed an audit to have a real picture of the sector. "There are no actual figures regarding generation and consumption of power and gas. So, we give approximate figures," the state minister told The Daily Star after the meeting. "Different countries in the world use such an auditing system to grasp the power and gas situations."

The meeting was apprised that the electricity shortage in the country now stands at 200 megawatts, with only 3,700 MWs of electricity being generated against a demand of 3,900 MWs. The power division of the ministry in a report submitted to the committee said the load shedding resulting from the shortage of a gas supply amounts to 766 MWs.

The country now produces up to 1450 million cubic feet (mmcf) of gas a day, which meets the current demand. Absence of a pipeline in some areas reportedly accounts for the lower gas supply, which in turn affects the power generation. The Power Development Board needs 749-mmcf of gas every day for its power plants. Petrobangla, however, claims it is meeting the plants' present demand for gas.

"The officials for the last two and half years have been giving us confusing stats. They could rarely inform us clearly about the generation and consumption of gas and power. The officials feed us varying figures even about the load shedding," Committee Chairman Shahidul Islam told The Daily Star.

The statistics that the officials have provided us about the power plants' electricity-generating capacity are based on writings on the plant equipment. But as some of the power plants have grown old, they do not

have the same capacity to generate power as suggested by the figures," said the committee chairman.

Committee member and Awami League lawmaker Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim told The Daily Star that the report submitted by the power division of the ministry is inarticulate.

"The state minister for energy told the meeting that the supply of gas has been ensured. But the generation of electricity has not been improved. People still suffer from acute load shedding," he told The Daily Star after the meeting.

## Advisory body

**FROM PAGE 1** could be absorbed into the ACC only after screening as per rules. But the commission is yet to formulate the rules.

The dispute over the status of the Bac staff put the commission and the government at loggerheads. Moreover, internal conflict surfaced in the commission as the chairman on different occasions initiated moves to attach the Bac staff to the ACC.

As several former Bac officials continued issuing letters and office orders using non-existent positions in the commission ignoring the government order, the government warned that such activities are punishable offence.

The three members of the commission are also divided over the size of the ACC staff. Commissioner Prof Maniuzzaman Miah suggested an organogram with 964 staff while another Commissioner Maniruddin Ahmed drafted a body of 1,449 staff.

Against this backdrop, the commission formed the six-member advisory committee in February for screening of Bac staff.

In its recommendation, the advisory committee said the commission will have to formulate an organogram, rules for appointment and service, and fix the jurisdiction of the staff before their appointment.

Organisational structure of the commission would be like that of a taskforce, it said suggesting a small staff to reduce administrative burden and costs. It said the number of lower tier officers will have to be logical.

"It will make the organisational structure and management strong," the committee recommended.

## Stop Rab 'crossfire'

**FROM PAGE 19** adding that criminals should be executed through proper judicial procedure.

He also said that instead of killing petty criminals, the Rab should arrest those who give shelters to these criminals. Rakan also voiced his concern over the rampant use of section 54 of the CrPC.

Former law minister Abdul Matin Khasru accused the government of violating the human rights and rule of law. He said the Rab cannot do anything extra-judicial and that it should not be given excessive power. "The task of the Rab is limited to arresting of criminals and up to the rest of the process is up to the country's judicial system," he added.

Taking part in the discussion, former justice Habibur Rahman Khan termed custodial death the most heinous crime in the world and said it should be stopped.

Referring to the killing of Independent University student Shamim Reza Rubel in 1998, he said section 54 of the CrPC is being misused.

Responding to the points raised by the discussants, Moudud claimed that the misuse of the two sections has reduced compared to earlier times. He also said Sections 54 and 167 of the CrPC cannot be repealed totally, adding that the amendment of the sections 54 and 167 of the CrPC is under process.

"But the Rab is very popular among the common people. Now we don't see reports of 10-12 murders every day in the newspapers,"

Moudud said adding that people are very happy following the improvement of law and order situation in the country after the formation of Rab.

Executive Director Dr Samsul Bari and Assistant Director Soma Islam of the Blast also addressed the roundtable.

## 2 outlaws

**FROM PAGE 19** cases including eight for murder and was awarded 104 years' rigorous imprisonment for killing a police constable and snatching firearm from him, and Nabab, accused in three criminal cases including two murder cases, were at once taken to the Sreepur Police Station for interrogation.

In the early hours yesterday, police took Waliur and Nabab to Do-Sotina village of Sreepur upazila to recover more firearms, following leads extracted from the two, police said.

As they reached near a bridge in the village, Sarbahara operatives opened fire on them at around 2:30am. Police also retaliated, said a police officer.

Both Waliur and Nabab attempted to flee from the police van during the hour-long shootout and died on the spot, police said.

Police claimed they retrieved four firearms and 26 bullets from the Sarbahara men.

Two policemen -- Sub-Inspector (SI) Akkas Ali and Nayek Modasser Ali -- were also wounded during the shootout.

## Illegal structures

**FROM PAGE 1** The drive began on March 29 with the demolition of illegal structures on Kalyanpur canal in Agargaon Janata Housing area under Kafur and Mirpur police stations.

The Dhaka City Corporation (DCC), Rajuk and district authorities are assisting the Wasa in carrying out the drive to implement a government decision.

A demolition squad along with a police team led by two magistrates at 11:00 am yesterday started its operation in Lalkuthi-Harirampur area pulling down two boundary walls and several tin-shed and bamboo-made houses on the branch canal. Some encroachers themselves removed their houses.

The squad then demolished several semi-pucca and bamboo-made houses on the branch canal near Mirpur Mazar road.

In Tolarbagh, a number of people on Wednesday removed their bamboo-made houses on the canal.

Wasa Managing Director ANH Akhter Hossain visited the spot.

A Wasa official said in Tolarbagh, the DCC has built a road filling up a major portion of the branch canal and installing drainage pipes, which is not proper. The higher authorities should look into the matter, he added seeking anonymity.

The Wasa will remove illegal structures on eight canals on a priority basis. They include Begunburi canal, Mohakhali canal, Zirani canal in Rampura, Katsur canal in Mohammadpur,

Ramchandrapur canal in Mohammadpur and Ibrahimpur canal. A cross-dam on the Gulshan-Banani Lake will also be removed.

A high-powered eviction implementation committee headed by a joint secretary of the home ministry is overseeing the canal recovery drive.

There were 43 canals in and around the capital and 26 of them are still recognisable. Of the 26, 19 still have lean flows despite encroachment and the others have partial existence.

## River-linking

**FROM PAGE 19** issues for their early resolution.

The visiting minister also pointed to the effects of the Farakka barrage on the "diminishing flow of waters of many of the common rivers entering into Bangladesh", the release said.

Damsunshi told him that the proposed river inter-linking project would focus on peninsular rivers and it would not do anything that could have implications for its neighbours.

Mosharraf invited Damsunshi to visit Bangladesh, with Damsunshi hinting that he might do so next month, according to the release.

Mosharraf, who is in New Delhi to attend a WHO-organised seminar on maternal and child health, also met Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh during a joint call on him by the participating ministers in the seminar.

## Bangladeshi

**FROM PAGE 19** and other leading US dailies reported that the girls are being held in a family detention centre in Leesport, in southeastern Pennsylvania, after their arrest on March 24.

The document, which describes the background of the case, said the FBI believed the girls presented "an imminent threat to the security of the United States based on evidence that they plan to be suicide bombers." It does not describe the nature of that evidence.

But one federal official, not connected to the FBI, expressed scepticism that the teenagers represented a real risk of a suicide bombing.

"There are doubts about these claims, and no evidence has been found that such a plot was in the works," the unnamed government official in Washington was quoted by the NYT. A law-enforcement official in New York voiced the same doubts.

Police detectives, and then federal immigration agents, searched belongings of the Bangladeshi girl and confiscated her computer and the essays that she had written as part of a home schooling programme. One essay concerned suicide. The family maintained that the essay asserted that suicide is against Islamic law, but it led investigators to question her about her political beliefs.

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The three-year tenure of the posts had expired, the land ministry last month requested the establishment ministry to extend the tenure of the posts, the CHT affairs ministry said in a report submitted to the parliamentary body.

Reviewing the report, the parliamentary body blasted the chairman of the land commission for not initiating any step to make the commission functional, sources said.

The meeting observed that recruitment of manpower in the commission could not be possible due to bureaucratic tangles between the land and establishment ministries.

The parliamentary committee asked the commission to start functioning immediately to resolve the land disputes which are a major problem in the CHT.

"It is unfortunate that the commission could not yet start working due to the bureaucratic tangles," Committee Chairman Mosharraf Hossain told The Daily Star after the meeting held at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

"We are ready to extend all-out cooperation to the land commission in performing its assigned tasks," he said.

Responding to the lawmakers' criticism, the land commission chairman told the meeting that he could not convene a meeting of the commission as he has not yet received the official gazette on the formation of the commission.

"Drawing remuneration without work is a matter of discomfort for me. I

Earlier, formalities were almost completed to make Quaiyum the new IGP and he even had met Prime Minister Khaleda Zia on Wednesday. Hadis had been working as Additional IGP (Finance).

The contract of Ashraful Huda, which was extended thrice, expired Wednesday.

The government had originally planned to appoint Hadis, who is in its good books, as a secretary, but shelved the move after the establishment ministry raised objections saying that the additional IGP is equivalent in status to joint secretary, the official said.

"So, the government appointed him (Hadis) as the IGP, which is equivalent to additional secretary, to clear way for making his secretary," the official added.

Hadis hails from Netrakona, the home district of State Minister for Home Lutfozzaman Babar. He is the 23rd IGP of Bangladesh.

## No trace

**FROM PAGE 19** day filed an abduction case with the Rajoir Police Station implicating some 50 unidentified persons of villages surrounding the spot of abduction in Rajoir upazila of the district.

DB Inspector Hasnain Azam and head assistant of the department Kamrul Islam were abducted in Ishibirpur union of Rajoir upazila of the district in the morning of April 4 while they were visiting the place for police verification of a 24th BCS candidate there.

Meanwhile, males of 20 villages of the upazila left their villages for fear of police harassment.

## Nor'wester

**FROM PAGE 19** Kuthipara, Boali, Kuptola, Kholahati, Kamarjari, Laxmipur and Gideri under Sadar upazila.

The storm started lashing the villages at about 3:00am and lasted for an hour, damaging over 2,700 tin-roofed houses, seven educational institutions and uprooting trees and electric poles.

Power supply in the affected areas remained cut off till filing of this report at 6:00pm yesterday.

## Ahsanullah

**FROM PAGE 19** fabricated and concocted, adding that the accused were implicated in the case to harass them politically.

The charges brought against Mahbub on the basis of his confessional statement cannot be tried, the lawyer said, arguing that Mahbub's statement was coerced through physical and mental torture while he was in police custody. Moreover, the magistrate recorded Mahbub's statement, violating the rules and provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC).

Advocate Nazrul will argue again tomorrow on various points ranging from the first information report (FIR), the inquest and post-mortem reports, to the charge sheet and statements of 34 prosecution witnesses.

Earlier, the prosecution had completed their arguments and sought exemplary punishment for the killers.

Ahsanullah Master was killed when about 20 gunmen fired on a rally of the Swechchhasebak League, the volunteer front of the AL, at Naogaon near his residence in Tongi on May 7 last year.

Schoolboy Omar Faruq Ratan was also killed and at least five others were injured in the incident.

## BNP candidate

**FROM PAGE 19** Mobin Chowdhury was elected uncontested as four other candidates withdrew their candidature yesterday, said a press release.

The parliamentary seat fell vacant after the assassination of Awami League lawmaker and former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria in a grenade attack in Habiganj on January 27.

## CHT land body

**FROM PAGE 1** held in camera.

The government formed the commission in accordance with the CHT peace accord initially for a three-year term, but later extended its tenure twice. The tenure of the present commission will expire in November 2007.

Following a directive of the PM, the CHT affairs ministry in 2003 asked the land ministry to recruit necessary manpower to make the commission functional but the land ministry did not appoint staff against the sanctioned posts in the commission.

As the three-year tenure of the posts had expired, the land ministry last month requested the establishment ministry to extend the tenure of the posts, the CHT affairs ministry said in a report submitted to the parliamentary body.

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## 3 get life, prime

**FROM PAGE 19** one of whom is absconding, while proceedings against another accused, now in hiding, were suspended following a High Court order.

Mohammad Selim, Mohammad Hashim and Abdul Malek Sohel received life term, while prime accused former Korean Export Processing Zone general manager Abu Naser Chowdhury and his chief security officer Humayun Kabir Chowdhury were sentenced to five-year imprisonment.

The tribunal acquitted pro-Jamaat Islami Chhatra Shibir cadre Saiful Islam alias Bilal Saiful, who has been absconding on bail, and Mansoor Alam, brother of top Shibir cadre Gittu Nasir recently killed in 'crossfire'.

The proceedings against Noor Hossain, owner of the private car used in the killing, were put on hold by the High Court.

Gunmen shot and fatally wounded Rabbani, also former Chittagong Port Authority chairman, on the city's busy Muradpur Road when he along with five colleagues was going to the KEPZ site in a microbus around 11:00am on April 11 last year. Rabbani died from his wounds at Bumrungrad Hospital in Bangkok on April 24.

Rabbani also was a witness in Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman murder case.

## 9 accords penned

**FROM PAGE 1** framework agreement on provision of concessional lending by China to Bangladesh.

Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing and Bangladesh Minister for Science and ICT Abdul Moyeen Khan signed the Bangladesh-China Cooperation Agreement on Peaceful Usage of Nuclear Energy.

An MoU (memorandum of understanding) on cooperation in agricultural field between the two countries was signed by Chinese Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Wu Dawei and Bangladesh Secretary in charge of the Ministry of Agriculture Kazi Abul Kasem.

The Ministry of Public Security of China and the Ministry of Home Affairs of Bangladesh signed an agreement for cooperation between them. Chinese Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs Wu Dawei and Home Secretary Safar Raj Hossain inked the accord.

An MoU on installation of digital telephone exchanges in metropolitan cities, important district headquarters and upazila growth centers in Bangladesh was signed by Zhu Hongjie, vice president of the Export and Import Bank of China, and Mahmudul Hossain Mansur, secretary in charge of Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board.

A contract on management and production service of Baropukuria Coal Mine was signed by Chen Weigen, chairman of the Board of Directors, China General Technology (Holding) Ltd, and SR Osman, chairman of Petrobangla and Chairman of BCMCI board.

Ministries of Water Resources of China and Bangladesh exchanged letters on cooperation in water management. Chinese Ambassador in Dhaka Chai Xi and Md Abdul Aziz, secretary in charge of the Ministry of Water Resources, exchanged the letters of accord.

want to work but nobody filed any case to the land commission," he said.

Replying to the commission chairman, the parliamentary committee chairman said people do not know about the commission. That's why they are not filing complaints.

Following the High Court's nomination the government appointed retired Justice AM Mahmudur Rahman chairman of the commission on October 10, 2001. Dipen Dewan, a deputy secretary-ranked official, was appointed the secretary.

Tenure of the chairman expired in October last year and he got extension for another three years as the commission could not start functioning.

The other members of the commission are the CHT regional council chairman or his nominated representative, chairman of the three hill district councils, three circle chiefs, and Chittagong divisional commissioner or his representative.

**BUREAUCRATIC TANGLE** The CHT ministry in its report said the nine-member land commission was assigned to settle land disputes in the CHT. The establishment ministry on September 8, 1999 created 11 posts apart from the chairman and secretary of the commission.

The CHT affairs ministry on July 22, 2003 requested the land ministry to appoint the 11 third and fourth class employees but the land ministry said it did not have surplus manpower to work in the commission on deputation.

Later the CHT affairs ministry asked the establishment ministry to take necessary steps. But the establishment ministry said the posts of the land commission were created on temporary basis and that their tenure has already expired.

Finally, the land ministry requested the establishment ministry on March 23 this year to extend the tenure of the posts in the land commission, said the report.

## Dhaka, Beijing to work

**FROM PAGE 1** and on common issues in the international arena.

During the summit between the two premiers, China pledged all-out assistance to Bangladesh's development endeavours, particularly in social, economic, agricultural, education, science and technology, telecoms, extraction of coal, public security and energy fields.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao led their respective sides in the official talks held at the Prime Minister's Office in the city yesterday afternoon. Before that, the two heads of government had a 20-minute tête-à-tête.

Nine accords -- five agreements, two memoranda of understanding (MoU), a contract and an exchange of letters -- were signed after the summit.

**THE SUMMIT** The talks were held in an uncommonly cordial atmosphere in a free and frank manner, said Foreign Secretary Hemayetuddin briefing the press.

He termed the meeting "completely fruitful, very positive, constructive and highly significant" and said, "Both the sides are extremely happy."

The visit of the Chinese premier takes place at a time when the two countries are celebrating the 30th anniversary of establishing diplomatic ties, the foreign secretary pointed out.

At the talks, he said, the Chinese premier declared Bangladesh as the approved destination of Chinese tourists in 2005 and said his country will chalk out elaborate programmes to celebrate the 30th anniversary.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at the meet highly praised the economic progress China has achieved in the recent years and said Jiabao's visit will definitely promote bilateral trade and relations.

She said Bangladesh considers the visit as very significant and asked China to be a major development partner of Bangladesh.

## Caravan

**FROM PAGE 19** Separatists tried, firing two rifle grenades at one of the Muzaffarabad-bound buses soon after it left. But no one was hurt, the bus was not hit and did not stop.

Two guerrillas also staged a suicide attack on a fortified government complex housing the passengers on Wednesday just a few hundred metres from the Lion of Kashmir stadium.

They torches the complex. The passengers escaped, although five have since pulled out, including two who got off almost as soon as the buses started. As the passengers, many elderly, boarded, the complex continued to smoulder nearby.

In commemorative green caps, they waved as the two white-and-green buses draped with marigolds pulled out.

One hundred and seventy kilometres away by road in Muzaffarabad, wellwishers threw roses as garlanded passengers boarded a green-and-yellow bus for the "Peace Bridge" -- newly repainted a neutral white.

Large billboard greeted passengers at the Peace Bridge with the message: "No religion teaches animosity towards each other."

## Asma hopeful

**FROM PAGE 19** Many of the demonstrators sported blue headbands and carried placards reading "Nation wants neutral probe into Kibria killing" and "No More Alliance Rule, No More Grenade Attacks", etc.

The procession started from the Muktagong and marched through Paltan intersection, Dainik Bangla intersection, Shapla Crossing before ending at Ittefaq corner. Many of the passers-by joined the parade to express solidarity with Kibria's family.

Besides, a human chain was formed between Paltan intersection and Shapla Crossing as the procession silently went past.

On completion of the demonstration, Asma Kibria said she is optimistic that the killers will be tried as people have been spontaneously responding to her calls.

"I am confident that the killers will be punished as you are with me," she told a gathering after the procession.

"We will be able to unmask the mastermind behind the slaying of Shah AMS Kibria," she added.

Kibria along with four others were killed in a grenade attack in Habiganj on January 27.

Among others, Kibria's six sisters, daughter-in-law Rina Kibria, AL leaders Obaidul Quader, Saber Hossain Chowdhury, AKM Jahangir Hossain MP, Mofazzal Hossain Maya, Dhaka University Teachers Association President AAMS Arefin Siddique and cultural activist Ramendu Majumder took part in the programme.

Prior to the procession, demonstrators formed a human chain near Muktagong area at about 11:00am.

## Rome ready

**FROM PAGE 19** night vigil to be among the last to see John Paul's body lying in state in St. Peter's Basilica.

The line was far shorter than on Wednesday when anxious authorities told pilgrims to stay away from the saturated city.

Among the kings, queens and powerful to attend today's funeral, President Bush led the way late on Wednesday, visiting the Pope's body along with his two immediate predecessors -- his father, George Bush, and Bill Clinton.

In response, Jiabao lauded the progress Bangladesh has made, especially in establishing democracy, poverty alleviation and improving law and order. He also praised Dhaka's socio-economic development endeavours and its active foreign policy.

Recalling his earlier visit to Bangladesh as a party leader 11 years ago, Jiabao said he is highly impressed by the present-day Bangladesh.

The Chinese PM expressed the hope that Dhaka would continue maintaining one-China policy and extending support to Beijing on international issues.

Hemayetuddin said the Chinese premier readily assented to constructing the di-aluminium phosphate (DAP) fertiliser factory in Chittagong entirely on concessional lending instead of supplier's credit.

The immediate past Awami League government signed an MoU with China to set up the DAP plant with 50 per cent investment in the supplier's credit and the rest in concessional loan.

The foreign secretary said the Chinese side also showed very positive attitude towards the requests of Khaleda on reducing trade gap and duty-free access of Bangladeshi goods to China.

He said the Chinese premier promised to look into the matters very positively. Jiabao also asked the Bangladesh premier to send official and business delegations to China to resolve the issues.

Jiabao also assured the Bangladesh side to extend all possible co-operations for the benefits of Bangladesh and its people and offered greater number of scholarships for Bangladeshi students to study in China. He also proposed the vice chancellors of Bangladeshi universities to visit Chinese educational institutions regularly.

**THE ACCORDS** Elaborating the accords inked yesterday, the foreign secretary said Bangladesh would receive six million US dollars for capacity building of civil servants.

About an agreement on peaceful use of nuclear energy, Hemayetuddin said this is absolutely for peaceful usage in the fields of medicine, agriculture and biotechnology. "There is nothing military or related to weapons in this agreement."

Under an agreement on public security, the foreign secretary said, China will help in capacity building

image?" she said. The AL president accused the BNP leaders of using money from the government exche