The Daily Star

CHILD'S BAIL DENIAL **US top brass cleared HC grills Ctg** over Iraq abuse

AP. Washington

Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, faulted by some for leadership failures in the Abu Ghraib prisoner abuse scandal, has been cleared by the Army of all allegations of wrongdoing and will not be punished, officials said.

Three officers who were among Sanchez's top deputies during the period of the prisoner abuse in the fall of 2003 also have been cleared. An Army Reserve one-star general has been reprimanded, and the outcome of seven other senior Army officer cases could not be learned Friday.

Sanchez, who became the senior US commander in Iraq in June 2003, two months after the fall of Baghdad has not been accused of criminal violations. It is unclear, however, whether the controversy surrounding his role in Irag will stand in the way of his earning a fourth star. He is nearing the end of his tenure as commande of the Army's 5th Corps, based in Germany.

After assessing the allegations against Sanchez and taking sworn statements from 37 people, the Army's inspector general, Lt. Gen. Stanley E. Green, concluded that the allegations were unsubstantiated, according to officials familiar with the details of Green's probe.

taken stronger action in November Green reached the same conclu-2003 when he realised the extent of sion in the cases of two generals and a colonel who worked on Sanchez's problems among the military intelligence and military police units run-

The officials who disclosed the findings spoke only on condition of anonymity because the results on Sanchez and 11 other officers who were the subject of Green's scrutiny have not yet been publicly released and Congress has not been fully briefed The question of accountability

among senior Army and Defence Department officials who were in positions of responsibility on Iraq detention and interrogation policy has been hotly debated in Congress Some Democrats accuse the Pentagon of foisting all the blame onto low-ranking soldiers.

In a statement issued Friday that did not mention Sanchez or other specific cases, Sen. John Warner, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said that as soon as all Pentagon assessments of accountability are complete he will hold a committee hearing "to examine the adequacy of those reviews' and to hear senior civilian and military officials address the issue.

Warner, R-Va., said he strongly agrees with one investigation report that concluded last year that commanders should be held accountable for their action or inaction and that military as well as civilian leaders in the Pentagon "share this burden of responsibility

The office of Michigan Sen. Carl Levin, the ranking Democrat on the Senate Armed Services Committee. declined to comment on the matter.

three persons with 35 dead fowls Asked about public expectations from Mirpur about six months ago.

Border tension



of punishment for senior officers The High Court (HC) yesterday associated with Abu Ghraib, the grilled a magistrate of Chittagong for Army's chief public affairs officer, refusing bail to a mother and her Brig. Gen. Vincent Brooks, said the Army went to great lengths to make baby accused in a theft and ransackits investigations thorough and fair. ing case. On summon, magistrate In addition to clearing Sanchez,

Mohammad Ali Noor appeared before the court and faced a vollev of questions. He fumbled to the apparent dissatisfaction of the court.

Wojdakowski; to Maj. Gen. Barbara "Have you gone through the FIR," questioned the court As Ali Noor nodded his head, the Mark Warren, Sanchez's top legal

court said all the charges were under the bailable section. Defending himself, the magistrate said he refused bail to the accused as the prosecuting police officer opposed.

That angered the court. "Should you not apply your judicial mind? Should a magistrate go by the dictate of a police officer? Why have you not apply your mind to probity that a housewife of the minority community stormed into the house of an influential neighbour and ransack?"

As the magistrate stood mum the court told him, "You have been granting bail even to the accused of murder.

The bench comprising justices AK Badrul Hug and M Fazlur Rahman set May 23 for passing an order on the suo moto rule issued on March 1 following media reports.

Ctg ammo haul

Hafiz are absconding. The rest 14

were on bail so far but the court

vesterday rejected the bail of eight

seized 10 truckloads of smuggled

arms and weapons in the port city

and filed two cases with Karnaphuli

ted charge sheet against 41 people

on June 11. Two more were included

in the charge sheet on instruction

The investigation officer submit-

On April 2 last year, law enforcers

FROM PAGE 1

Police Station.

from court.

Dy secy

of them.

A subsequent Army investigation, made public last summer in what was called the Kern-Fay-Jones report, concluded that although Sanchez and his most senior deputies were not directly involved in the bases at Abu Ghraib, their "action and inaction did indirectly contribute" to some abuses.

the Army inspector general has

letermined that there should be no

punishment given to Sanchez's former top deputy, Mai. Gen. Walter

Fast, who was Sanchez's intelli

gence chief in Baghdad; or to Col.

In an interview Friday, three senior

defence officials associated with the

Green investigations cited mitigating

circumstances in the Sanchez case,

including the fact that his organisa-

tion in Iraq, known as Combined Joint

Task Force 7, initially was short of the

senior officers it required. They also

cited the upsurge in insurgent vio-

lence shortly after Sanchez took

command and the intense pressure

the military faced in hunting down

The three officials spoke on

A separate investigation by a

panel headed for former Defence

Secretary James Schlesinger con-

cluded that Sanchez should have

adviser at the time.

Saddam Hussein.

ing Abu Ghraib.

condition of anonymity.

Sanchez and Wojdakowski were cited in the Kern-Fay-Jones report for failure to "ensure proper staff oversight of detention and interrogation operations" in Iraq, specifically at the Abu Ghraib prison where Iraqi detainees were physically abused and sexually humiliated by military police and intelligence soldiers in fall 2003.

5 nabbed FROM PAGE 16

Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka that sent them to jail. "The arrestees during interroga-

FROM PAGE 1 tion admitted they had collected the 50 deserving public servants. dead chickens, abandoned by local Eleven officials have been deprived poultry farms, to sell those to restauof their seniority for the second time. rants and poor labourers," said the Apart from this, six have been nvestigation officer of the case. promoted despite not fulfilling the Earlier on April 2, Sutrapur police requirements for promotion. arrested mess operator Jahanara

Begum with 21 dead chickens. Mirpur police also arrested a mar with 53 dead birds he was going to

supply to local restaurants on March 29 The police said they had arrested

He said such promotion in violation of rules is rare. The entire batch of 1985 was dropped from the list of the promotion.

Those who have been deprived of their seniority for the second time are Mikail Shiper, SM Kamruzzaman, Abul Kalam Azad, Khorshed Alam Chowdhury, Moveenuddin Abdullah,

Based, Syed Ahmad and Ashraf Ali

It will also urge the speaker to

"We want to give the speaker a

Hena told reporters after the meet-

ing. "We want his [speaker's] per-

mission to place the bills. Let the

Committee and Awami League

lawmaker AKM Jahangir Hossain

said, "As the speaker himself has

stood against the placing of the

private members' bills, he has to

speaker and the law minister in its

affairs and blamed them for making

speaker does not take proper steps.

2003 sent a letter to the law minister

seeking his recommendations on 15

private members' bills instead of

giving his (speaker) go-ahead to

Justice and Parliamentary Affairs

Minister Moudud Ahmed in a letter

to the speaker suggested taking

prior approval from the leader of the

private members' bills is now in a

But on February 3 this year, Law,

place the bills in parliament.

members' bill.

state of uncertainty.

The speaker on October 27.

the committee dysfunctional.

take steps to clear the obstacles."

Another Member of the

House decide the fate of the bills."

Khan.

JS body

"Incompetent and junior officials

have been promoted, depriving

competent and senior ones on

political grounds." Said AN

Shamsuddin Azad Chowdhury,

Faridpur district council secretary.

Rab to go hi-tech

NEWS

information network with other

related organisations like BRTA,

passport and immigration depart-

Under the IT communication

development project of the Rab, a

195-member "communication IT

directorate" would be formed to

make coordination and IT communi-

cation work among the countrywide

Jahid at about 10pm yesterday.

A joint team of the DB and sadau

police came under the GMF attack

at Swastipur farmers' club on their

way to Swastipur in a bid to seize

firearms at about 4am. Jahid got

caught in the crossfire while

attempting to escape from the police

van and died on the spot as the

bombs and eight bullets from the

spot. Meanwhile, Mirpur police said a

GMF group fired on them when the

police were on their way to village

Chitholia at 4am following a piece of

information that a GMF group was

preparing to attack the outlawed

Purbo Banglar Communist Party.

bullets from Amjad's possession.

Police recovered eight live

23 companies of the Rab

2 outlaws

police also returned fire.

FROM PAGE 16

ment, the SB and the ministries,

Saber Sharif said.

FROM PAGE 16

will keep biometrics data including fingerprints and photographs. Saber Sharif, commanding officer of the Rab-4, vesterday said the microwave link has already connected Dhaka with Chittagong and Rajshahi. The Dhaka-Khulna link will be set up by this month. "It will ensure a communication backbone for the Rab, reducing dependence on the T&T." he added.

Saber, who is taking care of the IT programmes, informed that 30 cars have been equipped with auto vehicle location (AVL) and some 20 more would be equipped with the devices to trace the location of the patrol vehicles.

Mobile data terminals (MDTs) will also be set up in 50 vehicles to transfer wireless data and messages, Saber said adding that six MDTs have been installed.

According to the Tk 145-million master plan for digitalisation of the Rab, video conferencing has already been introduced and around 300 officials have been provided training on digital communication system and network management.

Ten Rab personnel recently went to Malaysia to have a three-week training on cyber crimes, the Rab official added. Besides training abroad, 3-6 months' extensive training on networking would be provided to select personnel at country's leading universities

"We have also plans to develop

US envoy to report

FROM PAGE 1

added

so that we can keep an eye on Chowdhury and leader Meer Tareq them." he said. Ali were present at the meeting. Satkhira Deputy Commissioner Asked whether they seek a third party intervention to resolve the issue, Prof Mobashwer answered in

the negative and said: "We ourselves can settle the discord prevailing among us." "Our well-wishers come over to

know how we are whenever they hear anything bad about us," he SATKHIRA CALMS DOWN

Our Satkhira correspondent reports: Situation in Jyotindranagar has calmed down in the face of local administration's measures to stop Ahmadiyyas. intimidation of the Ahmadivvas.

Announcements have been made from loudspeakers vesterday that no gathering of more than 50 people, and no political or religious programme or conference in the area would be allowed without permission from the administration. "We have taken the decision to

respond better to the situation." Satkhira Superintendent of Police (SP) Abdur Rahim told The Daily Star yesterday. "There is already a law in this regard. We want all to register with us before a programme

Why ombudsman

JS secretariat FROM PAGE 1

Chowdhury, denied the allegation and applied for a new diplomatic passport on March 1 after the embassy had seized the passports of Mizanur, his wife and son, alleging that those were grossly tampered with

The Parliament Secretariat referred his application to the foreign ministry but the ministry sent it back to the secretariat along with the note verbal of the Danish embassy.

But sources said the Parliament Secretariat has not taken any step for issuance of a new passport for the lawmaker who was elected from Nilphamari-3

There are little chances of granting him a new diplomatic passport as the foreign ministry has asked the Parliament Secretariat to take "necessary steps," the sources hinted.

"How will we take steps as the allegation of tampering with his previous passport is vet to be resolved." a senior official told The Daily Star yesterday wishing anonymity.

"Even there is no steps yet to dispose of the allegation that suggests there is no chance of issuing a new diplomatic passport for the lawmaker," he added.

After an hour-long gunfight, the police found Amjad Hossain's dead body while the other gang members The Parliament Secretariat has managed to flee police said Police however informed the Jamaat-ealso recovered a shutter gun and eight Islami high-command of the matter and requested it to take necessary The dead bodies were sent to steps. The party, a partner of the Kushtia General Hospital for BNP-led four-party coalition, has started investigating the matter.

The Danish embassy said Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury had applied on February 23, 2005 for visa for him his wife Esmat Ara Begum and son AT Mahedi Chowdhury.

The embassy refused them visa finding clear evidence of tampering with the passports and informed the foreign ministry of the matter. It also requested the foreign office to take necessary steps.

The lawmaker however in a statement outright denied the embassy's allegation and said he has applied to the Parliament Secretariat for a new diplomatic passport because his previous passport had been lost.

Govt eyes \$1b

Petrobangla Director (Planning) Major Muktadir Ali and Deputy Director of HvdroCarbon Unit Zobaer Siddig for technical negotiations with Tata.

After the Tata officials expressed their interest to use coal from Barapukuria and the Phulbari coal mines, the ministry asked Petrobangla to give their opinion within the shortest possible time, sources said.

Tata also proposed the export of coal to India, which will be carried by the wagons used for bringing raw materials for their steel plant in Chittagong.

The Tata team told the minister they would finalise their site selection after getting assurance about availability and the supply of gas and coal for their projects. The Tata officials are scheduled to meet the industries minister, the state minister for power, the prime minister's principal secretary and the executive chairman of the Board of Investment today. After its feasibility study, the Tata Group has showed interest to invest a total of US\$ 2.5 billion for a million ton capacity urea fertiliser factory in Chittagong, a 1,000mw power plant in Sirajganj and a 2.4 million ton on the Savar tragedy. steel mill in Ishwardi

Tarique Rahman

DHAKA SUNDAY APRIL 24, 2005

security valued Tk 1 08 crore. Milon Miah, a civil engineer, provided the collateral security with a piece of 1.02-acre land in Mirpur.

The complainant said Milon had purchased the land for Tk 2 lakh that had been assessed at a value of Tk 1.08 crore only five days after the

purchase. Tarique and others took the loan in connivance with bank authorities, the complainant added.

The court earlier cleared Tarique, Iskander Mirza, Al Mamun, former managing director of Sonali Bank M Ehsanul Hag and Abdul Khaleg Pathan of charges in another graft case

accused on July 27, 1997. The Bac filed the case with The case said Tarique and others Motijheel Police Station on on January 1, 1992 applied to the September 14, 1996 and the IO IFIC Bank's Motilheel branch for a pressed charges on May 22, 1997. loan of Tk 60 lakh to import machin-The complainant said Tarique ery to set up an export oriented garment factory

and others took a loan of Tk 15.3 crore showing equity of Tk 1 crore instead of Tk 5.6 crore. They also showed the value of the mortgaged land Tk 18 lakh, which was Tk 1.2 lakh only, the complainant added.

BGMEA has been working relent-

lessly to help the victims of the

Faisal Samad, vice-president

(finance) of the BGMEA executive

committee, probe committee mem-

bers and labour leaders Selim

Bhuiyan and Tauhidur Rahman

owners of the factory," said chair-

man of the probe committee and the

BGMEA standing committee on

safety measures. "But, we don't

know Shahriar's whereabouts -- we

"We are working on behalf of the

garment factory collapse.

were present.

A Dhaka court also discharged The head office sanctioned the Tarique and two of his friends in loan on the condition of collateral another graft case on April 16, 2002.

Rallies, human chains

FROM PAGE 16

ant.

FROM PAGE 16

Chowdhurv.

(retd) Syed Iskander Mirza, MP

Giasuddin Al Mamun, Reazuddin Al

Mamoon, Mohammad Belal Millat

alias Mesbahul Millat and former

executive vice-president of IFIC

Bank Ltd AHM Shawkat Ali

The defence lawyers earlier

submitted discharge petition and

made submission on it, while the

prosecution praved for framing

Corruption (Bac) filed the case with

Motijheel Police Station on October

10, 1996. The investigation officer

(IO) pressed charges against the

The branch office recommended

and forwarded the application to the

head office on January 24 the same

year without examining records of

the promoters, said the complain-

Now-defunct Bureau of Anti-

charges against the accused.

during a series of separately held rallies, human chains and meetings Other organisations will continue

Jativa Samaitantrik Dal brought out a procession with black flags in all districts of the country, protesting the severe negligence of the owners in the building collapse. In Dhaka JSD held a rally on the premises of the GPO, where Hasanul Hag Inu the chief of the party, said garment workers, although the main contributors behind the country's foreign

severe negligence because they are made to work in 'death traps. SKOP leaders criticised the

arranged a separate rally to demand that the government impose exemplary punishment on the owners of the factory and provide compensation for the victims. Their views were echoed in human chains organized by Jatiya Bastahara Jot and the Garments Workers Unity Forum. Protests are set to continue

sations, including Jatiya Garments Sramik Federations, Ganamukti and Jatiya Sampad raksha Samilitta Andolon, and Jativa Oikva Mancha planning to organise human chains and rallies.

Although he declined to give

The probe committee yesterday

details about the owners, he con-

firmed that Shahriar did not leave

exchanged views with the journal-

ists and informed them that the

Sony to amend

A few days after Chinese news

service Xinhua reported that the

government of Bangladesh was

irate over the portrayal of its country

in the upcoming PlayStation 2

tactical shooter SOCOM 3. Sonv

A Sony spokesperson told

GameSpot "We have decided to

remove any reference to

Bangladesh from the final version of

porting, or harbouring terrorists

It said SOCOM 3 should be

Yesterday, the GameSpot

ready for release this fall, sans

reported that the government of

Bangladesh was angry over what it

alleged was a portrayal of its country

Sonv if all references to Bangladesh

were not removed from the Zipper

The country threatened to sue

as a terrorist state in SOCOM 3.

Interactive-developed game

and/or other criminal activities."

Bangladesh settings.

Bangladeshi demands.

SOCOM 3."

spokesperson.

to the latest news on its website.

the country.

FROM PAGE 1

"We showed courtesy for about a BDNews reports, meanwhile month but they (Teletalk) did not that the Bangladesh Garment reciprocate. They launched service Manufacturers and Exporters without any interconnectivity agree-Association (BGMEA) yesterday ment with us and continued it," a said they are keeping close contact senior official of the Association of with the owners of Spectrum Telecom Operators Bangladesh Sweaters Industries Ltd. to ensure (ATOB) said reasonable compensation for the For testing their network, Teletalk victims as well as an enquiry. took one E-1 connectivity from the "In the absence of Shariar private operators --Hossain, one of the owners of the GrameenPhone. Telecom Malavsia factory, we are keeping contact with International Bangladesh (TMIB), the general manager of the factory Pacific Bangladesh Telecom Limited and with the owners' relatives," said (PBTL) and Sheba Telecom, service Ali Azam Khan, chairman of the provider of Banglalink BGMEA-formed probe committee

their protests today and tomorrow.

reserve, have become victims of

aovernment for not including them in the probe committee tasked with investigating the tragedy, and announced that they have formed their own seven-member probe committee, which will submit a

report within the next seven days. Bangladesher Samyabadi Dal

tomorrow, with a number of organi-

are in touch with him over the phone," he added. Refuting the accusations of media reports regarding BGMEA's weak performance, Ali Azam Khan said, "Emergency medical teams with ambulances were deployed at the site soon after the disaster. "Till Friday, the BGMEA disbursed Tk 5.42 lakh from its fund to

assist the survivors and to carry the bodies," he said. He said the BGMEA will give Tk one lakh to each person killed. Khan, however, admitted that the incident had tarnished their image outside Bangladesh.

According to the BGMEA, at least 74 workers were killed and 85 others iniured in the nine-storey building collapse in Savar on April 11.

Teletalk users FROM PAGE 16

(DC) Mohammad Elias and the SP visited the Ahmadiyyas in Jyotindranagar Friday afternoon and made the announcement later before local Nabuwat leaders at Harinagarbazar.

autopsy.

As Nabuwat leaders demanded that the pulled-down signboard be hung again at Jyotindranagar

Satkhira police meanwhile have yet to arrest any of the six Nabuwat

accused.

Ahmadivva complex, the DC said that it would not be posted again. He also cautioned the Nabuwat workers against taking up any

FROM PAGE 16 violent programme against the

leaders blamed for the Sunday's attack. Local Ahmadiyya member Ohidur Rahman filed a case on Wednesday accusing the six of making attempt on his wife's life and looting their house. International Khatme Nabuwat Movement Bangladesh Amir Mahmudul Hasan Momtazi, Naveb-e-Amir Nur Hossain Nurani and local Nabuwat leader Nur Hossain are among the

FROM PAGE 1 message to their relatives across the border, sources at 9 BDR Battalion said quoting the victims'

families They were killed near pillar number 49 on the no man's land about half a kilometre off Gopalpur border observation post (BOP) of BDR, sources said. The bodies had been lying near the border pillar for a long time, they said, adding BSF troops later dragged them into

Indian territory. The incident triggered off widespread panic among the people living in the bordering areas of the southwestern district.

BDR yesterday sent a letter to the BSF high command strongly protesting against the killings of two innocent Bangladeshis without any provocation, UNB guoted the commanding officer of Jessore-based 25 BDR Battalion, Lt Col Motahar Hasan, as saying. Hasan said the letter also urged

BSF to return the bodies and pro-posed a flag meeting to BSF.

BDR asked the people living in frontier areas to move carefully and not to go near the zero line, he

BSF VERSION

Talking to BBC Radio last night BSF officials in Kolkata admitted that two Bangladeshi youths were killed early yesterday in firing by BSF personnel

According to their narration, a group of five to six Bangladeshis tried to enter North 24 Pargana of West Bengal through Madhupur border at 3:00am. The BSF personnel asked them to retreat. but the miscreants pelted brickbats at the BSF troops. The BSF men then fired four rounds and killed two Bangladeshis.

The BSF officials also admitted to having two bodies at their possession. The bodies would be sent for autopsy and every thing would be done according to the law, a BSF official told BBC

BSFINTRUDES INTO B'BARIA

UNB reports: Some 25 BSF men intruded 200 yards into Tarapur village in Kasba upazila at about 11:00pm Friday night

Villagers said apprehending trouble they raised alarming cries and started running in panic. Hearing them, a BDR patrol party came quickly but refrained from firing at the trespassers and allowed them return to their territory.

The villagers termed the BSF action provocative, intended to escalate the border trouble.

An earlier report said BDR-BSF flag meeting at Akhaura border on Thursday night ended in a fiasco. The meeting broke at 8:30pm on information of BSF firing at Singerbeel border that left three

people of Nalgoria village injured. Sources close to the meeting said the BSF side was stubborn, even unwilling to accept Indian press reports that they had tresbassed into Bangladesh territory on

April 16 triggering the gunfight. BSF also rejected a BDR proposal for joint inquiry into the April 16 cident, the sources added. **INDIA DENIES EXTRATROOPS**

border

The additional director general (East) of BSF under the ministry in a etter to the Indian high commission in Dhaka on Friday said, "no additional deployment of BSF or deployment of Army has been made on ndian side as has been reported in Bangladesh Newspapers.'

The letter then narrated another shooting at border on Thursday night. "Fact of the case is as under On 21/04-05 at about 1945 hrs (IST) BOP Bhagalpur (Tripura) observed 7-8 Bangladeshi miscreants

Bangladesh."

the letter claimed at the end.

JYOTI BASU FOR DIALOGUE

Against the backdrop of the recent border skirmishes, veteran CPI (M) leader and former chief minister of West Bengal Jyoti Basu said India should immediately initiate dialogue with Dhaka to resolve the bilateral issues

"We want friendship with Bangladesh, but there are some problems. The UPA government is also concerned," Basu told reporters in Kolkata last Friday responding to the question whether India should start a peace process with Bangladesh similar to that with Pakistan, reported daily the Hindu.

insurgent groups are taking shelter in that country. So, dialogue should begin immediately to resolve these problems." Basu remarked.

Khondaker Anwarul Islam. Rebecca Sultana, Bhimcharan Roy, Iqbal Khan Chowdhury, ANM Khalilur Rahman and AN Shamsuddin Azad Chowdhury. The persons, who have been

Meanwhile, the ministry of home affairs of India denied Bangladesh press reports on its deploying additional troops along the Akhaura

FROM PAGE 1 The meeting in a resolution said it would send a letter to Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar on May 2 seeking his go-ahead to place the bills within a certain deadline. initiate steps for making the stand-

ing committee functional and free it from any interference by the executimeframe for taking steps in this regard," Committee Member Abu

attempting to breach fence. The miscreants were challenged and directed to surrender. But they did not pay any heed. Instead they started pelting stones and other missiles including Dah towards BSF

party. Sensing imminent danger to their life, the BSF party fired only 3 rds in a professional and restrained manner to thwart attempt of fence breaching. Miscreants fled away to

"BSF, individually or in group, did not enter into Bangladesh territory. Report 'a group of BSF of India entered 400 vards inside of Bangladesh territory is malicious and mischievous with evil design,

"Reports also say that Indian

FROM PAGE 1

ability of the members of parliament and public servants, ombudsman as promoted despite not fulfilling the requirements for promotion, are provided by the constitution is Nazimuddin Chowdhury, Nurul necessary," the petition noted. Islam, Dr Zakirul Islam, ADM Abdul

Respondents of the petition are the secretaries of parliament secretariat and the law ministry.

In 1980, the government passed an act for installation of an ombudsman, and after 22 years, on January 6, 2002, the coalition government brought the act into force through a gazette notification.

However, on February 11, 2002, the law ministry proposed to the cabinet for amendments to some provisions of the act, which in turn formed a committee to scrutinise the bill. Since then no-one knows what has happened to the bill.

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE

The petitioners said the EC should gather the information and disclose them to the public to help them properly choose their representations through voting and to make sure that the candidates cannot cheat the voters by their rhetoric.

The rule followed a petition that says, "The members of the legislature must have gualification and suitability, but the people have seen

members in the legislature who are not at all eligible for becoming members of the legislature." "Evil-doers having evil motive

should be prevented from coming to the legislature," observes the petition filed by three Supreme Court lawvers-- Abdul Momen Chowdhury, KM Zabir and Zaherul Islam

"(A) law breaker should not be allowed to become (a) lawmaker," the petition adds.

. The EC is responsible for checking if an election candidate stands accused in a criminal case and if he or she has had past criminal record. The EC should also obtain a statement on assets and liabilities of the candidates, particulars and amount of loans taken from banks or financial institutions.

The respondents of the petition are the chief election commissioner and the EC

Cabinet body

The committee once again FROM PAGE 1

denounced 'interference' by the maximum capacity of 30 mw. When bid selection was final, the government cancelled the tender in a controversial way.

The government then asked the Members of the committee Power Cell to float the same tender, however hinted at the possibility of which was supposed to do it earlier taking hard decisions like resignathis month. tion from the committee if the

Pressure from businessmen involved in BNP politics however led the government to consider lifting qualifying restrictions, sources said. DOWN PAYMENT FOR **FENCHUGANJ POWER** PLANT

The cabinet committee also approved down payment of Tk 52 crore or 10 percent cost of the 90 mw Fenchuganj Power Project to Chinese company Harbin.

House before tabling any private Government rules restrict making such down payments on As the speaker is yet to take a grounds that bidders misuse them decision on the matter, the commitand even misappropriate the tee members said, the fate of the 20 money

The PDB tender in its notice however promised such payment to

make the bid attractive, and the cabinet body also approved it.

Harbin was awarded the contract although it was disqualified in the bid, which lacked participation of other bidders. The tender floated for the sixth time by the PDB received another offer from Japanese company Marubeni but it withdrew from

the PDB sided with Harbin. The Fenchuganj project saw

sure from different political and business lobbies

DIESEL PLANT & OTHERS

Bangladesh Army. It rejected a proposal to hand over several food godowns of the food directorate at Halishahar in Chittagong to the Bepza authorities. The committee however directed the authorities to make a proposal to

hand these over to local investors.

India reaffirms FROM PAGE 16

and African leaders gathered for the summit in the Indonesian capital.

His remarks came after the second successful run Thursday of a trans-Kashmir bus service launched April 7 between Indian Kashmir's summer capital Srinagar, and Muzaffarabad, capital of the Pakistani zone.

The bus service is seen as the biggest achievement of a 14-month peace process between the nuclear-armed neighbours who have fought two of their three wars over Muslim-majority Kashmir.

Singh also expressed his appreciation for a comment made by Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf on the Kashmir issue during his address to the summit on Friday.

"I appreciate the positive sentiments expressed by President Musharraf yesterday, which I fully reciprocate. We are sincere in our desire to resolve all issues in a mutually acceptable manner," Singh told the conference.

Musharraf said Friday that Pakistan and India "can be jointly proud of showing how sincerity, flexibility and courage can lead to bilateral achievement of peace and harmony."

Kashmir is in the grip of a 15year-old insurgency that has so far left 40,000 people dead by official count. Separatists put the toll at between 80.000 and 100.000.

India and Pakistan hold the scenic region in part but claim it in full

Earlier this week, at a meeting in New Delhi. Singh and Musharraf said the peace process between the two nations was "irreversible" and pledged to reach a "final settlement" on the territory.

Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the ATOB for temporary use of interconnectivity, which expired on March 25.

ATOB officials said they have not snapped interconnection with Teletalk but its subscribers are facing problems due to over exploitation of capacity.

" No-one from Teletalk contacted us so far. Rather, we signed a MoU with the BTTB. So, we first need to know the status of the company for further cooperation," another ATOB official said

Meanwhile, Teletalk has suspended its subscription drive because of lack of its capacity to handle the huge rush for its service. has announced it will give in to and for technical problems

> India ready FROM PAGE 1

any date agreed upon by the mem-"In a recent prototype, it has come to our attention that one of the ber states.

Singh expressed this view when game's missions may have Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan offended some communities due to called on him on the sidelines of the its setting in Bangladesh," said the Asian-African Summit in Jakarta

"The SOCOM franchise has vesterday. never depicted any government or At an earlier meeting, Nepalese country as a terrorist operation, and King Gyanendra had also reiterany depiction of independent terrorated his support for the Saarc ist groups is purely from a fictional process. He also expressed his standpoint. Within the storyline of readiness to attend the Dhaka SOCOM 3, there has never been summit as soon as a consensus on any reference to Bangladesh sup-

the date is reached. Morshed also held separate meetings with the prime minister of Laos, foreign minister of Cambodia and president and foreign minister of the Philippines. He sought their support for Dhaka's bid for the membership of the Asean Regional

Forum (ARF) Both Laos and Cambodia assured the foreign minister of their support, while Manila has reaffirmed its assurance to support Dhaka

the bid giving rise to allegations that

repeated tenders because of pres-

The cabinet body also approved a proposal to hand over Bandladesh Diesel Plant Ltd in Gazipur to