# NEWS

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government appointed MA Syed as

the CEC after the post had remained

alliance government has all along

been rejecting the opposition's

demand for discussion on the issue

Local Government and Rural

Development Minister Abdul Mannan

Bhuiyan and Law, Justice and

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Moudud

Ahmed categorically rejected the

demand. Moudud in an interview with

the media said so far there is no

instance of discussion between the

government and the political parties on

Justice Aziz was born in Amboula

village of Agailjhara, Barisal, on

September 30, 1939. He had his

Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in History from

Dhaka University in 1961 and Master's

in 1962. He completed Bar-at-Law

from Inner Temple, London, in 1969

and then started practising as a lawyer

MA Aziz became a High Court

Judge in 1996 and was elevated to a

judge of the Supreme Court's appel-

late division in January 2004. His term

as the judge is scheduled to end in

Officials of the EC secretariat were

waiting at their offices till yesterday

evening to welcome the new CEC. EC

secretary SM Zakaria along with other

officials received MA Aziz when he

CEC MA Aziz while speaking with

arrived at the office at 6:00pm.

appointing the CEC

in the High Court.

September 2006.

**CEC IN HIS OFFICE** 

**PROFILE OF NEW CEC** 

This time, the BNP-led Four-Party

vacant for over two weeks.

# HC bans agitation

when he is already a judge in this court and his certificate is suspended and when the cancellation was challenged before this court and the matter is sub judice they convened a meeting of the Bar Council with such sub judice matter [on] the agenda." the court noted.

It further observed that "a group of lawyers entered the courtroom of the judge and tried to obstruct him in the administration of justice. They took out a procession that paraded the corridors of the court while the judges were engaged in conducting the cases inside and thus interfered with the administration of justice"

"They took resolution to boycott the court of the judge and threatened to boycott the court of the chief justice. They [laid] siege on two occasions [to] the entrance of the chief justice to obstruct him from entering the court and they are giving out that they will paralyse the entire court if their demand of removing the judge is not accepted by the chief justice knowing full that a sitting judge can alone be removed and his capacity or conduct can be enquired into only under Article 96(4) (b) of the Constitution by the Supreme

Judicial Council.' The High Court also observed that the Bar Council could have taken disciplinary action against these lawyers, but it failed.

"The judicial function of this court cannot be allowed to be stonewalled by these activities, browbeating, bullying methodology whether it is by public, litigants or lawyers," the ruling said.

It observed that another group of lawyers is opposing these lawyers. "The Supreme Court Bar Association, the symbol of the legal fraternity both on and off the Bench, is on the verge of disintegration and state of confrontation is looming large on the horizon threatening the whole justice deliverv system." it said "VOICE GAGGED"

In his reaction to the unprecedented ruling, SCBA President Mahbubey Alam gagged his mouth with a handkerchief and said, "Our voice has been gagged."

"We will go for a legal battle against this order," he added.

Bangladesh Bar Council Member and Chairman of Human Rights and Legal Aid Committee of Bangladesh Bar Council Advocate ZI Khan Panna told The Daily Star "This order is unconstitutional and unlawful. Even the martial law regime could not gag the voice of the lawyers.'

"This order is an interference in the basic, professional and political rights of a lawyer," Panna added "The Bar Council is considering

legal steps against this order." Ruling BNP's Law Secretary and General Secretary of Jativatabadi Ainiibi Jote Advocate Jainal Abedin welcomed the order. however. "The judge has the right to issue such an order if someone illegally hinders judicial works. After this order there will not be any hindrance to administration of justice according to the constitution by the judges. CHRONOLOGY

Judge Faisal Mahmud Faizee were tampered with, prompting the SCBA to boycott Faizee's court The chief justice temporarily withdrew Faizee from his bench and the controversy-dogged judge did not sit in any bench for more than five months.

Earlier this year, the High Court punished Prothom Alo and Bhorer Kagoj journalists for contempt of court, saying that the reports did not prove Faizee's certificate fake, clearing way for Faizee to return to the court.

the vehicle.

managed to flee.

vesterday morning.

said.

Akbar

FROM PAGE 16

ers in the country.

sector.

resulting in their death on the spot.

The boat with ten people aboard

sank at Charlaikkha point in the river

when its propellers hit an anchor-

rope of a vessel there, witnesses

of the boat swam ashore, they said.

prime minister is with me," he said

when asked what prevented him

from implementing decisions taken

earlier to bring discipline in the

The minister had earlier cited a

set of government steps to reduce

accidents following launch disas-

of steps including introduction of

the qualification of launch masters.

powerful rescue vessels from South

Korea will be given in November this

launch terminal, the government is

planing to appoint Magistrate Munir

Chowdhury again, the minister said.

Sadarghat two years ago, had

brought some discipline at the

from the influential launch owners.

gas is not used during the initial

operating period (IOP). But the bid

rules dictate that the contractors pay

for gas even when it is not used

"As a result, the lowest power

tariff in the Sirajganj bid will be

around 4 cents per kilowatt hour. In

during the IOP," the source added.

FROM PAGE 1

it will be 2,78 cents.

Munir Chowdhury, appointed at

To bring discipline at Sadarghat

ocal classification society.

year, he told reporters.

However, the other passengers

But the SCBA members continued boycotting Faizee's court, saying that it has not been proven that Faizee's certificate is genuine. Bangladesh Bar Council then cancelled Faizee's certificate of enrolment, a basic prerequisite for anyone to practise law in the coun-

The SCBA intensified its movement, and staged demonstrations at Faizee's court and at the entryway of the chief justice demanding Faizee's removal. Pro-government lawyers and government law officials, meanwhile, threw their weight behind Faizee and took a stand against the SCBA.

Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar in the Jatiya Sangsad last week issued a ruling against the agitating lawyers. Law Minister Moudud Ahmed also made strong remarks against the agitation, prompting the SCBA to cancel memberships of both the speaker and the law minister

At this, the pro-government lawyers, the speaker and the law minister made statements against the SCBA. Finally, on Saturday the pro-government lawyers declared three SCBA leaders "unwanted" on

the Supreme Court premises. Private news agency BDNEWS adds: Senior lawyers of the Supreme Court vesterday termed the High Court order the "first precedent in the history of the country's judiciary"

"I'm feeling very much disheartened, frustrated, disappointed and scared at the order of the High Court," SCBA chief Mahbubey Alam told the news agency. Former vice chairman of

Bangladesh Bar Council and convener of Sammilita Ainjibi Samannay Parishad Barrister M Amir-ul Islam said this is for the first time the High Court has imposed injunction on the movement of the

lawyers As far as I know, the High Court previously did not pass such order imposing injunction on the movement of the lawyers "he said

He observed that independence of the judiciary is linked to the independence of the Bars. "I am sure that the High Court

will consider the matter of independence of the lawyers and Bars, and freedom of speech in the next hearing on the case. Independence of the judiciary is needed to establish rule of law in society," he said.

justify some faulty and corrupt bids, Former SCBA Barrister Shafique Ahmed said if they wish, the SCBA and the Bar Council can fight a legal battle against the High Court order.

## Indigenous people's temple Two muggers FROM PAGE 16 and legs tied, and tried to flee with

### FROM PAGE 16

As the driver cried for help, locals month ago, setting off a wave of and traders of a nearby market panic. intercepted the muggers and caught

Since then, all the male memtwo of them, while the remaining two bers of some 32 Mahato families in the village have been fleeing their They beat up the muggers, homes, fearing harassment by police, who, they say, have been Meanwhile, one elderly man siding with the influential Abdus dentified as Abul Hossain, 52, Sattar, a wealthy man loyal to drowned when an engine boat Jamaat-e-Islami capsized in the river Karnaphuli

Left behind, the women and children of the families allege that, in the absence of their men, they are now living in anguish amid intimidation by Sattar's men and frequent threats of crossfire by police.

The villagers alleged that the men of Abdus Sattar, acting on earlier threats, seized a piece of 88 decimals of cropland and forcibly reaped paddy from the field on April 21. When villagers protested, the musclemen injured an indigenous member named Abas.

"They (Sattar) want to evict us from our land, on which we have been living for years. Some 144 families in four villages are under threat of eviction," said Sreebas Chandra Mahato. president of Handial Union Adibashi Samabay Samity.

He had also talked of setting Since then, their attempts to radar stations and taking a number seek justice have only added to their woes, resulting in further harassment that underscores the extent of The main causes of frequent police bias, they said.

launch disasters in the country are Guided by a NGO called untrained masters and defective Samata, the indigenous villagers vessels, the minister said, adding went to file a case, but local police that the government is examining refused them, said Chibas Das Mahato, one of the affected. A work order for collecting two

Police, however, recorded a case of Abdus Sattar accusing 25 indigenous men and 5 Bengali men,

including a Samata worker, Golam Maola, for reaping the paddy.

As the villagers were making preparations to file the case with a magistrate court, Sattar's men raided their village on the night of April 23, the villager alleged. Finding no men, they beat up female members, including Chandana Rani, Molina, Dipali and Bonoda.

Among those who participated in the raid were Sattar's wife, Feroza Begum, his sons Shariful, Faruk, his relatives Fazlu, Rajab, Bellal, Samad and others unknown, according to villagers. The attackers left the village by the temple road, threatening to kill the villagers and destroy their temple if they dared to

file a case. On the following morning, the villagers discovered their temple was destroyed, their Gods and Goddesses toppled to the ground.

In a silent protest, the indigenous families have left the temple unchanged, saying they will not clear away the broken idols until higher authorities look into their problems

Abdus Sattar denied the allega tions against him and told The Daily Star that he bought the disputed land in 1986. "We are quite brotherly to the indigenous people," he said adding "Is it not very natural that I reap my own harvest?"

Asked about the temple attack the 55-year-old bearded man replied, "Why should I go to harm another's religion?" The indigenous families eventu-

ally went with local Bengali villagers to the Chatmohor police station to lodge a complaint. Police recorded

# Rights groups vow

### FROMPAGE 16

premier launch terminal braving IKNMB said it will seize the mosque pressure from unscrupulous launch if a case filed against IKNMB leadowners, but sent back after two ers is not withdrawn by May 30. months following alleged pressure Ahmadiyyas filed the case with the Shamnagar Police Station after supporters of the anti-Ahmadiyya outfit attacked them, injuring over 50 people, including women and Malaysia company children, and looted at least 10 houses at Sundarban Bazar of material for power generation) when Shamnagar upazila on April 17.

IKNMB has also demanded that a signboard, which they posted on the Ahmadiyya mosque on April 17, be hung again by May 30. The sign read, 'A place of worship for the Ahmadiyya Community, Sundarban Bazar' and advised Muslims not to mistake the place as a mosque.

Police did not stop Sunday contrast, for the unsolicited deal of night's rally, which began as soon as Meghnaghat-3 and the disqualified bidder of Meghnaghat 2, which get IKNMB's Navebe Anir Mufti. Noor Hossain Nuruni, reached Mantala at the benefit of 'no use no pay' for gas, about 8:30pm. Mufti Nuruni. an accused in the case filed by Even if the Sirajganj bid is con-Ahmadiyyas, said supporters of ducted fairly, the prices of IKNMB will compel the government Meghnaghat-2 and 3 will look attracto declare the Ahmadiyyas as nontive and desirable. That makes the Muslim by December 31 by launch-Siraigani bid look like a farce where ing a mass movement. the bidders are just being used to

"Police have violated the constitution as well as Islam by trying to

urged all, including the government, to create public awareness for protecting the rights of the Ahmadiyyas at the local level. 'Religious bigots are acting against freedom of speech and freedom of religion - which is contrary to the spirit of the Liberation War and the Independence of Bangladesh - by launching attacks on the Ahmadiyyas," said Sultana Kamal,

Other speakers accused the government of turning a blind eye to the harassment of the Ahmadiyya community. "It is clear to us that the BNP-Jamaat government is giving indirect support to the religious bigots," said Advocate Ruhul Quddus of Jatiya Ainjibee Parishad. Maksuda Akhter of Bangladesh

Lina Jamin of Nari and Manabadhikar Foundation were

present. The other organisations taking

the case against 18 suspects, but instantly arrested a villager, Abdul

Latif, over the paddy reaping case. Latif, who was freed on bail, told a group of visiting newsmen that the police tortured him and forced him to provide a statement saying it was the indigenous people who damaged their temple.

"Police are biased to Sattar and are still haunting innocent indigenous people, who are fleeing their homes as Sattar's men raid the village, often to humiliate the lonely girls." said Jotish Chandra Mahato a villager.

Local indigenous leader Bheem Raj Mahato explained that the Raja Prodanath Roy's son, Protibhanath Roy, bestowed the land for the temple, but that the government came to own it after Independence. "We have been enjoying the land from time immemorial and the temple is run with production from the land."

Handial union BNP organising secretary Anwarul Islam said that local people have held several demonstrations, including processions and meetings, to protest the temple attack and the land capture. "We informed local Jamaat-e Islami lawmaker KM Anwarul Islam, but he did not paid heed to us," Islam said.

Speaking with The Daily Star, Abu Bakkar Siddique, officer in charge of the Chatmohor police station, said that police were investigating the matter without any bias to anyone. "We will take action if any policeman has beem proven to pose threats to the indigenous people."

He was apparently annoved a the dereliction of duty on the part of administration and said the Supreme Court had two years ago directed the government to ensure adequate number of life saving buoys in all vessels, legal documents before issuing route permit and prevent overloading. But no action had been taken against the

Dr Kamal, also president of Gono Forum, asked the Shipping Minister Akbar Hossain to resign immedi-3,000 people died in launch capsize

since Akbar took over the office. He also blasted the shipping minister for failing in his moral obligation to visit Aricha ghat where hundreds of wailing women and men waited for days together for their dear and near ones stuck up in sunken launch MV Raipura.

He suggested the family of victims to file case against the launch owners for operating faulty vessels without necessary equip ment and the authorities as well for failure of responsibility.

"We will extend all out support to the litigants," assured Kamal. Pointing to the government's

indifference toward purchasing modern rescue vessels Kamal said vears old MV Hamza and MV

**Justice Aziz** 

### FROM PAGE 1

opposition parties of his appointment, he said he is not involved in politics. " I am nobody's man. I rather am a friend of everybody. I will try my best to serve the nation," he added.

The mainstream opposition parties, which have long been demanding appointment of the CEC through political consensus, strongly criticised the 'unilateral appointment'. The main opposition Awami League (AL) rejected outright the appointment. Sources said AL has already taken the issue seriously, and plans to add it to the ongoing movement.

By appointing Justice Aziz as the ninth CEC, the government has carried on the long tradition of appointing the CEC from the judiciary. With the exception of Abu Hena and MA Syed, all the previous CECs were from iudicial services.

The new CEC will oversee the next parliamentary elections on dissolution of the current parliament on October 27, 2006. Political observers believe holding the next general elections would be a tough task as the main opposition parties have already declared that the polls will not be free and fair unless reforms in the EC and the caretaker government system are

carried out. Justice Aziz will assign new Election Commissioners (EC) before the next parliamentary elections, as the tenure of the present three ECs will expire in the coming years.

Tenure of EC Safiur Rahman will expire on June 24 this year while the terms in office of the other two ECs-- M Munsef Ali and AK Mohammad Ali-will run out on April 18, 2006.

journalists at the EC secretariat sought The present government totally gnored the main opposition's demand co-operation from all especially the for talks on the appointment of the political parties, as, he said, they are CEC. The AL government in 2000 had the major players in the electoral initiated steps to consult with the process. opposition in this regard. Even the The new CEC stayed at his office then prime minister Sheikh Hasina for over 20 minutes and the leader of the opposition THE FIRST CHALLENGE Khaleda Zia called on the president to The first challenge for new CEC MA

discuss the appointment. Aziz will be June 22 Narsingdi-1 by-But the attempts failed as the then election where main opposition AL BNP-led opposition alliance kept after a long break will take part in. The saying that they would select a CEC in party has already nominated consultation with all parties only after the AL government hands over power Narshingdi district AL President Advocate Asaduzzaman as its candito a caretaker government. Against this backdrop, the AL date

16 Iraqis, 5 GIs die

Both men had been in a car that was A fifth soldier was fatally injured in a entering the mayor's office compound when the bomber struck.

vehicle accident at 2:30 p.m. near Kirkuk, 235km north of Baghdad, Insurgents also have been target officials said. The cause of the accing the US military. dent was under investigation. Three American soldiers were The names of the five soldiers were killed in separate attacks in the north-

being withheld pending next-of-kin ern city of Mosul on Sunday, the military said, and another US soldier notification. Police said a car bomb blew up

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was killed by a bomb blast near Tikrit. outside a restaurant in northern Baghdad at lunch time, killing at least povernment officials have been killed four people and wounding more than 100

The truck bomb exploded near the recent weeks. mayor's office in the town of Tuz Khurmatu, south of the oil city of suspected insurgents in the western Kirkuk, killing five and wounding 18. Baghdad district of Abu Ghraib after a

Insurgents also struck in Samarra argeting a US base with two car bombs and a suicide bomber strapped with explosives, killing four Iraqis and wounding four US soldiers.

widespread search, the US military said. It said the operation called "Squeeze Play" was designed to kill or capture guerrillas who have been staging attacks in the capital Iraqi officials are hoping to give

Tit-for-tat killings between Shiaa

and Sunnis have raised fears that

violence will push Iraq toward civil war

A senior US official said he didn't think

such an outcome was likely, but added

it was on his "list of things to worry

Leaders of Iraq's two Muslim sects

Moqtada al-Sadr, a young cleric

who led two armed uprisings against

US troops last year, on Sunday sent a

delegation to see the Sunni Muslim

Clerics'Association, and another team

met representatives of SCIRI, the

main Shias party, and its militia, the

Badr Organisation. Officials in Sadr's

office said a summit between the two

sides may be held. (Reuters, AP)

have moved rapidly in the past few

days to try to dispel the rising sectarian

about."

tensions.

More than a dozen senior Iraqi

n Baghdad in well planned attacks in

US and Iragi forces detained 285

executive director of Ain o Salish

Kendra (ASK).

Mohila Parishad. Dr Kaustina Pereira of Jatiya Ainjibee Parishad SM Moniur Rashid of Action Aid Bangladesh, Farida Yasmin of Nari Pakkha, Maksuda Akhtar of Bangladesh Mohila Parishad and

Dr Kamaı FROM PAGE 16

the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

violators, he added.

ately for failing to prevent tragic launch disasters. He estimated

In October 2004, vernacular national dailies the Daily Prothom Alo and Daily Bhorer Kagoj ran reports that results of law graduation examinations of Additional

Moudud gets back

effective. Moudud received the court, it observed. letter on May 21.

The SCBA president, secretary, executive committee. and the Bangladesh Bar Council secretary were made defendants in the suit.

After hearing, Judge Mohammad Mojibur Rahman directed the SCBA not to give effect in any manner whatsoever to its May 17 decision to expel Moudud as an associate member of the Bar and the May 18 letter to him conveying the decision.

The court also issued summons on the defendants to show cause within seven days from the date of receipt of those as to why an order of temporary injunction should not be passed against them.

The SCBA at its May 17 meeting chaired by its President Mahbubey Alam observed the speaker's ruling on the SCBA lawyers' movement was "undue and beyond his jurisdiction." It termed the ruling an ill move to destroy their ongoing agitation.

The speaker in a ruling on May 16 said the Supreme Court lawyers' movement against Faizee is a "violation of the constitution." He also said the chief justice could ask the Bar Council to take action against the lawyers for such illegal agitation.

The law minister criticised the Supreme Court for not taking action against the agitating lawyers for blocking the chief justice's entryway. Parliament would consider taking action if the Supreme Judicial Council does not take any move about the judges not signing their verdict after pronouncing it, he added

The SCBA meeting said the law minister's statement has undermined the image of the judiciary and the judges. His remark is not only indecent, but

Former attorney general AF Hassan Ariff would not make an instant comment on the order " can comment only after going through the details," he said.

also tantamount to contempt of

his duty and responsibility to

respond to statements on the

issue made in parliament and

whatever he said are true and

factual. He made his statement as

a minister and not as an associate

member of the Bar. and his state-

ment being a part of the House

proceedings is immune from any

proceedings in any court under

Article 78 of the constitution.

Moreover, he made the statement

without naming the SCBA, any

lawyer or any particular judge

other than the chief justice, he

sion violating the rules of the Bar

and to tarnish his image in the

society, the law minister said

The defendants took the deci-

said.

the minister.

FROM PAGE 16

back.

BSF pushes

nine children into the country

through Poladanga border in

nolaňat upazila at about 4:00am.

from Poladanga outpost reached

the spot and held the Indians.

Admitting the incident. Commander

of 28 Rifles Battalion Lt. Col. Zahid

said they were trying to push them

border guards pushed 15 people

into Bangladesh territory through

Gilabari border of the upazila. They

were later pushed back.

On Friday night, the Indian

On information, BDR personnel

Moudud in his suit said it was

e source mentioned. Genting had been participating in various bids, including Meghnaghat he said.

1, since 1998. Sources said to avoid fresh conflicts, the Power Cell did not even inform the power ministry about Genting's withdrawal. Officials declined to make any comments to The Daily Star.

The Meghnaghat-2 bid that is being processed is set to go to the UAE-based company Belhasa along with Bangladeshi Orion Power Company. They do not have any experience to match this bid. Orion's proximity to a 'bhaban'

considered an alternative centre of power, which already ensured its bagging the massive Gulistan-Jatrabari flyover project, remains the only qualifying factor.

Last year, the PMO cancelled the original bid for the Sirajganj project after it reached the final stage. Upon winning the bid, Bangladeshi Summit Power got the cabinet purchase committee's nod and even closed its financial arrangements with support from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, but the PMO cancelled it. No reasons for the cancellation could be known.

# Tk 381cr

FROM PAGE 1 Moreover, the defendants took government raised the diesel price the decision without two-thirds by Tk 3 per litre, the agriculture majority at a special meeting of ministry expressed concern, saying the Bar convened to censure it would affect agricultural producsuspend or expel any member for tion, and proposed a 25 percent wilful breach of its constitution or subsidy for the diesel used in agriviolation of any decision of its culture.

general meeting, Moudud added. Advocates Lutfe Alam, Masud But the finance ministry did not Ahmed Talukder, Sanaullah Miah respond positively. and Khorshed Alam appeared for

Now, as the government mulls another round of diesel and petro-

leum price hike, the agriculture ministry has decided to appeal to the prime minister to arrange for a diesel subsidy for the agriculture sector subsequent to the hike.

"According to our survey, there are around 11 lakh deep and shallow tube-wells across the country," said the official. The Department of Agriculture Extension and Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation are now preparing a list of farmers using these wells, which will be completed by next month, he

The ministry will bring the whole situation to the PM's knowledge, he added.

prevent them from holding the rally, which is part of their religious rights,"

In light of such activities, human rights organisations yesterday Network and Odhikar.

# I don't understand

FROM PAGE 1 The new CEC said, "During my tenure, I want to ensure free, fair and impartial elections which will be acceptable to all.

Asked what he will do if Awami League does not accept him on the grounds that the ruling party did not appoint him through discussion with other parties, Aziz said, "I shall try to convince them.....I am nobody's enemv.

"It is a political culture of our country that the government [unilat-erally] appoints the CEC," Aziz Aziz pointed out. "But this should change. This should take place through negotiation. Our country lacks the negotiation culture. This should be developed.

On how would he deal with problems of black money and violence, which typically influence elections, and whether he thinks it is necessary to discuss these issues with the two main political parties to find out solutions, the new CEC replied in the affirmative. "It is necessary to hold discussion with them. I shall try as per my capacity."

"The country is now passing through a crisis....Black money and muscle power are the dominating forces now. Human qualities and ethics are absent. Tolerance, which is the prerequisite for democracy, has withered," he observed.

"In such a situation the CEC has huge responsibilities." Aziz said. "It is not possible to do such huge task without cooperation of the main political parties, journalists and the people

Aziz said full cooperation of the main political parties and the media is essential to eliminate false voting, irregularities and corruption in vote counting, tampering with results and other election irregularities.

Aziz said he will be guided by the constitution, ethics and his conscience in discharging his duty as the CEC. "In the face of all adversities, I will do what I think right and reasonable." he added.

Asked to comment on his predecessor MA Syed's six-point proposal for reforms of the Election Commission and electoral system, Aziz said, "I have not seen his suggestions. I shall decide my course of action after seeing them

part in the conference included Rustam are now obsolete to meet the needs.

Bastabayan Sangstha, Durbar led by Dr Kamal on Sunday visited the place in the river Jamuna where

MV Raipura capsized five days ago. Advocate Zahirul Islam read out the statement on behalf of Dr Kamal. Saifuddin Ahmed Manik and Dr MA Hakim were present.

### The government informed Aziz Robber leader about his appointment as the CEC FROM PAGE 16 Sunday night. He however went to

Char Bhelamari in Nandail unazila They said Harun was wanted in at least six criminal cases.

Police arrested Harun in Hotapara area of Gazipur district in the morning. On his confessional statement, they took him to Balurghat village to recover illegal firearms at about 11:30pm.

When police reached the village Harun's accomplices opened fire on the law enforcers, forcing them to retaliate.

Police said Harun was caught in the 'crossfire' while trying to flee and died instantly.

### PM warns FROM PAGE 16

through shedding blood," she said.

Gaibandha District and Sessions Judge's court fixed July 26 for framing charge against Galib and She said no one in Bangladesh is minority -- all are Bangladeshis his followers when he was produced irrespective of before the court yesterday in con-nection with the Takier Bazar bomb

religious, racial and cultural identity.

"There is no difference between the inhabitants of plain lands and hilly areas since all enjoy equal rights in Bangladesh," she said.

Listing a number of programmes and schemes, Khaleda said her government has been working to ensure basic needs of people--food, clothing, education, medicare and shelter

Responding to some demands of the Buddhists, including expansion of land of Buddha Bihar at Merul Badda in Dhaka and preservation and renovation of

Buddha Bihars in many areas of the country, the prime minister assured of meeting their demands to preserve their religious heritage. State Minister for Religious Affairs Md Mosharraf Hossain Shajahan, also chairman of the Bangladesh Buddhist Welfare Trust, and Deputy Minister for CHT Affairs Moni Swapan Dewan presented bouquet to the prime minister on behalf of the community on the occasion of Bouddha Purnima. They also spoke on the occasion.

en in Baghdad shot and killed Wael Rubaie, an official in Sunnis a bigger role in politics after the operations room of the Ministry of they were sidelined in Jan. 30 elec-State for National Security, a governtions, in a strategy designed to defuse ment statement said yesterday. His the Sunni-led insurgency. driver was also killed.

al-Qaeda's wing in Irag, led by Jordanian militant Abu Musab al-Zargawi, said it was behind the assassination.

The bloodshed came as mostly Sunni Muslim insurgents stepped up a campaign of attacks that have killed more than 500 people in the three weeks since a new Shia-led government came to power with the promise of stability.

The wave of suicide bombings, assassinations and ambushes have raised fear that violence could spark civil war.

Among the dead in Tuz Khurmatu was the brother of a senior official in one of Iraq's main Kurdish parties, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, police said.

The official, Mohammed Mahmoud Jigareti, was wounded in the blast.

AL rejects CEC

FROM PAGE 1 government," Jalil said.

"In their (ruling coalition) last effort to politicise the Election Commission, the government has made the unilateral appointment of the chief election commissioner ignoring all demands of democratic forces and the people as well," he said.

The AL general secretary said the government did not take a single nitiative to get opinions of the opposition parties on the issue. "But, in the appointment of the last chief election commissioner during the Awami League government, the then prime minister Sheikh Hasina sent two letters to the then opposition leader. but they did not discuss the issue," he

added. Asked if a fresh movement would be waged against the new CEC, Jalil said, "We are in movement against the government and it will continue."

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday Jatiya Party (JP) Chairman HM Ershad said he has no doubt about the competence of Justice MA Aziz since he is a judge of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court. However, many may ask if he is partisan, Ershad added.

Chairman of the other JP faction Anwar Hossain Manju said it was the expectation of the people that the government policymakers would discuss the issue with political parties

before appointing anyone to the important office.

President of the Communist Party of Bangladesh Manjurul Ahsan Khan said the government should have discussed the matter with political parties before making the appointment. The CPB would give its detailed reaction later. he added

Rejecting the appointment of the new CEC, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) President Hasanul Hag Inu said the government has appointed the CEC unilaterally and hurriedly in an ill motive ahead of the next general elections.

"The government could have consulted the mainstream opposition parties to avoid any debate over or stalemate centring the new chief election commissioner," Inu noted.

Workers Party General Secretary Bimal Biswas also criticised the government for making the unilateral appointment and said it will deepen the political crisis.

"We, the opposition parties, had been urging the government for discussions before the appointment of the new chief election commissioner who will be acceptable to all." he said.

"The unilateral appointment has created scope for one to say that the BNP-Jamaat-led coalition has made a person Chief Election Commissioner who is loyal to them," he added.

seven of them critically, in the bomb blasts by the Jamaat-ul-Mujaheedin activists on the stage for a drama at Takier Bazar in Palashbari upazila. Galib was shown prime accused as per confession of his arrested followers in the charge sheet submitted before court by the investiga tion officer (IO) on April 27.

vear.

Galib looked shattered during his half an hour stay in the dock.

The court was jam packed with the supporters of Ahle Hadith Andolon, Bangladesh.

attack on December 25 night last

Twenty-one people were injured,

IO of the case submitted charge sheet against six people including Galib, the prime accused.

Galib is also facing another case of bomb blast at Mohimaganj Brac office. The IO of the case forwarded charge sheet of the case to the home ministry's monitoring cell for approval.

Following Galib's lawyers' bail prayer, the court fixed June 6 the te of hearing.

Galib was sent to attend a similar bomb blast case with a Sirajganj court under tight security.

**OUR CORRESPONDENT,** 

Galib to be 26

framed July

Charge

against

### Nijera Kori, Bangladesh Mohila Ainjibee Samitee, Manabadhikar A team of Jativa Oikva Mancha

