influence different tender proce-

dures. And that happened most of

the time in the last three years,

is mainly responsible for poor

performance of the energy minis-

Another source said Iqbal

came under tremendous pressure

ness lobbies are pushing ahead

an unsolicited deal for the

Meghnaghat phase three 450 mw

The lobbies are also hammer-

ing on awarding the Meghnaghat-

2 project to disqualified bidder

Belhasa of the UAE along with

Orion Power. Belhasa and Orion,

blessed by the 'alternative source

of power' in the government

some rules. This slowed down

both the projects and made the

four years of rule, also realises

that it did not do much in the

power sector and that power crisis

has become a major political

cost of Tk 1,200 crore in one year

megawatt mission is not a prag-

matic one. The government will

have to abide by its own rules.

And these rules are major hin-

drances to speedy implementa-

tion of power projects," a top

official of the energy ministry

'Under the (principal secretary's)

proposal. I shall do my part as fast

as possible. But I cannot take the

responsibility of the pace with

which a project proceeds through

the other ministries like the plan-

ning ministry or the finance minis-

When contacted, Iqbal said,

Now the principal secretary's

"But the fact is that the 430

issue, the sources noted.

is aetting top priority.

pointed out.

The government, after nearly

powerful lobbies very unhappy.

in recent times as powerful busi-

"It is the role of the PMO which

he pointed out.

power project.

Power minister

record criticising Iqbal's perfor-

mance at a high-level meeting on

the power sector. This prompted

the state minister to reply to that

through the press, shrugging off

performance in the last three

vears as regards implementation

of some power projects was

affected by interference from the

Citing an instance, the sources

mentioned that in early 2004

when the Sirajganj 450 mw power

project under the Power

Development Board (PDB)

reached the final stage of launch

and the bid winner Summit power

was finalising arrangement of

\$186 million funds, the PMO

cancelled the project on the pre-

text that this project should be

supervised by the Power Cell, not

simply political -- the chief of

Summit is the brother of an Awami

League lawmaker, and the BNP

government will not award a

contract that will 'benefit' the main

opposition party directly or indi-

The Fenchuganj 90 mw power

project that saw re-tendering five

times in the last two years was

also delayed because of interfer-

ence from the PMO. The project

has been recently awarded to a

PMO sources however say that

ender process for the

Fenchuganj project was repeat-

edly tampered with by the PDB,

and the state minister should

have addressed the issue from

On the other hand, the state

minister claims success in imple-

menting the Siddhirganj 210 mw

power project and the 100 mw

Tongi project. "There was almost

no external interference in these

"It is not fair to judge his (Igbal)

performance as he could not act

independently. Various lobbies

and vested interest groups always

projects," an official said.

the beginning to avoid such re-

disqualified Chinese bidder.

The reason behind this was

PDB

According to sources, Iqbal's

the blames.

# 40 killed as Iraq

exclusively Sunni Arabs, a minority that had dominated Iraq until Saddam Hussein's ouster two years

The explosions on both days were carried out at times when large crowds are on the capital's streets. Wednesday night's bombs came hours before an 11 p.m. curfew when many residents are out at eateries or chatting on the streets before locking themselves inside

Thursday's twin explosions took place when many are just beginning their daily routines. The attacks in Karradah happened nearly simultaneously, police Lt. Col. Salman Abdul Karim and officer Ahmed Hatam al-Sharie said. Five police officers were among the 15 dead.

A young boy, his left leg missing from below the knee, sat on the sidewalk near a mangled bicycle, screaming as a man tried to comfort him. The force of the blasts blew off store shutters, and the surrounding sidewalks were covered with debris, including shattered glass, concrete slabs and charred vegetables and

A few trees were toppled, scattering leaves on the sidewalk.

Separately, a car bomb detonated by remote control hit an Iraqi police patrol in Tuz Khormato, north

## Interpol, FBI men talk with investigators

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The visiting Interpol and FBI members yesterday held talks with the investiga tors concerned and top officials of Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of police regarding the August 21 carnage at an Awami League rally in the capital last year.

Interpol terrorism expert Marc H Beauchemin and ballistic expert Grey Lee George, and FBI special agent Trung Vu were also learnt to have quizzed George, a suspect in the grisly grenade attack that left 23 people, including AL's women affairs secretary Ivy Rahman, killed and at least 200 others maimed.

The three foreign experts began their work yesterday, a day after their arrival on invitation from Bangladesh government following recent disclosure of 'crucial clues' to the incident by three arrestees.

They visited the CID office at Malibagh in the morning and reviewed the progress of previous investiga-

tions.

They examined pieces of evidence that included post-carnage video tape, footage of the rally, statements of the three arrestees -- top criminal Arman Khan, George and Mokhlesur Rahman, an AL leader and former ward commissioner of Dhaka City

Corporation -- sources said. Besides, they examined statements of AL leaders and activists who were injured in the incident.

Sources said the visitors inquired about criminal records of top criminals operating in Dhaka and adjacent areas and also those of Arman George and Mokhlesur.

'crucial clues' which the government

claimed to have got mainly from Arman and Mokhlesur. A seven-member probe body comprising CID and Rab intelligence

personnel was present at the meeting. The Interpol and FBI men are vet to talk with Arman, now on remand and being quizzed by Rab-4, which arrested him from Dhanmondi on June

Rab sources yesterday evening said the visitors did not ask for talking with Arman.

### Political, religious

Referring to the European human rights conference held in London on June 17, Avebury said, "The facts and figures presented at the conference show that Bangladesh has turned to be a dangerous land for opposition political parties and

religious minorities ' BBC Bangla Service last night said Avebury had mentioned the August 21 grenade attack, the killing of former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria, the persecution on the Ahmadiyya community and the extra-judicial killings by Rapid

Action Battalion. "Although human rights organisations and international community repeatedly drew the attention of Bangladesh government, they (government) are acting in such a way as if nothing happened there." said BBC Bangla Service quoting

Avebury. He also told parliament that

although the Bangladesh government has banned two Islamist organisations, it is not taking any action against the Khatme Nabuwat, which is spreading hatred and instigating against the Ahmadiyyas in Bangladesh. Speaking in the House,

Baroness Paula Uddin, the first member of Bangladesh origin in the House of Lords, also cited violation of human rights in Bangladesh.

But the Labour Party MP said Bangladesh has achieved success in different fields.

"Bangladesh government should not ignore the violation of human

rights in the country," BBC quoted

her as saying. The Labour Party representative also urged the Bangladesh government to invite a British parliamentary team to observe the human rights situation in Bangladesh.

of Baghdad, killing one policeman and wounding seven civilians police Brig. Gen. Sarhad Qadr said. Tuz Khormato is 88km south of the northern city of Kirkuk

In all, at least 32 people were killed Wednesday across Iraq, including a prominent Sunni law professor assassinated by gunmen. . Jassim al-Issawi was a former judge who put his name forward at one point to join the committee drafting Irag's constitution. The assassination appeared aimed at intimidating Sunni Arabs willing to join Irag's efforts to create a stable political system.

Al-Issawi's killing, potentially the most politically significant act of violence since Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari came to office nearly two months ago, marked the first direct attempt to scare moderates away from political participation.

It sent a powerful message to the Sunni Arab community to either boycott involvement in the fledgling government or risk death.

Insurgents bent on starting a civil war to overthrow Iraq's US-backed government have maintained nearly eight weeks of relentless attacks, killing more than 1,240 people since April 28, when al-Jaafari announced his Shia-dominated government.

Al-Issawi, thought to be 50, was shot dead with his son, according to Abdul-Sattar Jawad, editor-in-chief of al-Siyadah, a daily newspaper where the lawyer was a contributing

### **CEC** not credible enough to hold fair election

Hamid says on Narsingdi by-polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdul Hamid yesterday said "rigging" in the Narsingdi-1 by-election has proved that the present Chie Election Commissioner (CEC) MA Aziz is not credible enough to hold a free and fair election.

"He [CEC] has failed to hold a byelection fairly, how can he hold the next general election in a free and fair manner?" asked the senior Awami League leader at a press briefing at his parliament office.

Hamid said the Narsingdi by-poll was a test for the new CEC to prove his credibility when the mainstream opposition parties rejected his appointment. "But MA Aziz has failed miserably." he observed.

"Even the chief election commissioner has failed to provide security for the independent candidate

during the polls," Hamid said. Referring to a comment of Shipping Minister Akbar Hossain in parliament on Wednesday, Hamid said, "The minister spoke the truth to sav that BNP has set Rapid Action

"BNP has let loose the Rab against Awami League ahead of the next general election as people already rejected the present government for its misrule and misdeeds," the deputy opposition

## Two muggers lynched in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A mob lynched two unidentified muggers in Chawk Bazar in the city on Wednesday night.

The muggers arrived in front of Oli Khan Mosque in an autorickshaw and made an attempt to mug two rickshaw passengers at 10:30pm.

As the women in the rickshaw cried out for help, locals rushed to the scene and held the muggers, Kotwali police said.

The mob beat up the muggers until police rescued and sent them to Chittagong Medical College and Hospital where they died after an

Speculations have been rife for the last few days that he will soon join the main opposition.

When contacted last night Akhter told The Daily Star, "I am considering joining a grand alliance that the party has already initiated move for. I will join the alliance only if Awami League accepts the four conditions that I have given."

He however declined to disclose the conditions, and said he would make those public at today's press conference to be held at the Jatiya Press Club.

The former BNP lawmaker said he would take the final decision after having discussions with the AL leaders about his conditions. The talks were supposed to take place last night

A top AL leader wishing anonymyesterday said that two of Akhtar's demands are the charge of Kishoreganj district AL, and a position in the party's policy-making

NARSINGDI BY-POLLS

## Defeated candidate asks CEC to quit

BDNEWS, Narsingd

The defeated independent candidate Shahadat Hossain Munna has demanded cancellation of the results of Narsingdi-1 by-election and resignation of the

Chief Election Commissioner

He placed the demands at a oress conference held at Narsingdi Press Club yesterday

In a written statement, Munna said the supporters of the fourparty alliance candidate threatened his supporters and ousted them from almost all the polling booths during the by-polls on Wednesday.

He alleged that the cadres of the ruling alliance candidate cast false votes with the help of presidng officers and law enforcers at the polling stations.

He said police arrested his driver Nader prior to the election. I informed it to the local administration, but they did not pay attention to the matter. Rather, they played a key role to ensure the victory of the four-party alliance candidate in the by-polls," Munna

He also alleged that the activists of the four-party alliance candidate attacked the houses of his activists even after the by-

'They also threatened my family members over my wife's mobile phone, he added.

He alleged that the ruling party activists attacked the house of his brother Shahajuddin at Comilla colony in the town, forcing him to take refuge at his ancestral home at Baushia.

Munna also alleged that the supporters of alliance candidate fired on his workers on Wednesday night at Sheba Sangha intersection, leaving many of them injured.

FIRING EXERCISE

## Army to give Tk 50,000 to family of killed girl

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Army authorities will give Tk 50,000 to the family of a four-year-old girl who was killed during an army firing exercise in Savar Wednesday afternoon.

According to ISPR (Inter Services Public Relations), the authorities will pay the money to the

victim's family as assistance. Besides, a three-member committee has been formed to investi-

A bullet hit Alo, daughter of Mohammad Alam of Baipail, while she was playing at Basundhara

playground at about 5.30pm She was rushed to local Halima Clinic and then shifted to the Combined Military Hospital (CMH)

where she died. The army men were practising firing inside the Savar Cantonment. which is about one mile from the

AL celebrates

1949 with a view to establishing a

nation free of communalism and

But the dream has been shat-

tered with the rise of anti-liberation

forces in the government, the lead-

"The people are now living in

utter misery, which needs an imme-

diate change, and we're determined

to bring the change by ousting the

government." AL General Secretary

Recalling the historical March 7

speech by Bangabandhu Sheikh

Mujibur Rahman in 1971, he said,

assassination of Bangabandhu in

1975. The plot is still continuing and

the killings of the AL leaders are not

be successful to build a democratic

and non-communal nation through

implementing the AL's development

the Liberation War, which witnessed

a loss of three million lives. But the

sacrifice of the martyrs is yet to reap

its result," AL lawmaker Abdur

AL presidium member Tofail

Ahmed said the victory in the

Liberation War has become vulner-

able today, as the law and order has

seriously deteriorated with the

government violating human rights.

"Let the pledge of the 56th found-

ng anniversary of the Awami

League be revival of democracy and

human rights by ousting the auto-

cratic and corrupt government," he

Razzak, MP told the rally.

"It's the Awami League that led

He expressed the hope they will

stray incidents, he added.

programmes.

Abdul Jalil told a rally yesterday.

economic and political disparity.

FROM PAGE 1

ers said.

# resorted to higher authorities to Building research

Jamilur Reza Chowdhury and assigned by the housing ministry in 1986, are still pending, he added.

The poor facilities are resulting in brain drain, an HBRI research said on condition of anonymity, describing that many skilled researchers have already left HBRI, which is severely hampering the consistency of the

"It is enough that the researchers of the HBRI still continue different research works with so limited capacity," he mentioned.

The HBRI has to carry on its research activities with backdated equipment, which was collected in the 1970s, the researcher aggrieved.

"Although expected results have come from the research works of HBRI in recent years, other activities like training on building construction and different building materials testing are going on well," he asserted.

Among other projects, HBRI researchers are presently trying to utilize dust materials produced by a stone mine in Dinajpur district. They have already initially succeeded in inventing a special type of brick by using the dust materials, but it will take more time to get the final result of

The housing ministry, meanwhile acknowledged HBRI's fund and manpower crisis. The matter of recruiting new

researchers to HBRI is now underway, a housing ministry official On the other hand, presently HBRI is facing another alarming

problem, as vast areas of HBRI land have already gone to the hands of local influential people. The HBRI authority said a local organised group has grabbed one

fourth of the total land of HBRI and built a good number of slums. "Ten acres of HBRI land out of a total of 50 acres have already been have no boundary wall," Akhtar

Uddin apprised. "Last year the illegally occupied land of HBRI was restored by evicting the people who resided there, but it did not take much time to grab the land again due to the inaction of

police," he added. The housing ministry source said, however, that HBRI employees are directly involved in encroaching on the land. The HBRI authority denied

the accusation

## the research work, researchers said. 2 JCD cadres killed

Wednesday, and arrested Tapu and his accomplices Zahid, Rajib, Saiful, and Shahadat.

Tapu was accused in at least four murder cases including the one for slaying Dhaka City Corporation Commissioner Raju while Rajib in at least three cases for murder and robbery, said Rab press release.

The arrestees during interrogation disclosed that more firearms and ammunition were still left with Masud, Rana, and Naim at Rayer

the arms hidden at Naim's house at Godighar in Rayer Bazar and took the Rab men there. The Rab team arrested Naim and recovered the AK-47 (7.62mm sub machine gun) and its 88 bullets, one pistol, one revolver, one airgun, 11 bullets and two hand-bombs.

Then the crime-busting men to nab the rest of the gang -Abul and Sohel--bulldozed Tapu into making a phone call to Abul and asked him to come to the capital. Abul, who was holed up in

Savar, refused to come to the city on security grounds. But when Tapu quoting Emon told him that they needed some firearms and ammunition by the morning, he gave the address of Khorshed.

Following the information, Rab men arrested Khorshed and recovered eight bullets from his posses-**GUNFIGHT** 

Taking Tapu and Rajib with them, a

Rab team went to Niribili at about

and Sohel. But as soon as they reached there, some criminals opened fire on them, prompting the Rab men to return fire, said the Rab press release. During the gunfight, Tapu and

3:45am Thursday to catch Abul

Rajib, while trying to escape got shot and died.

The Rab men recovered an Italian Petra Berreta pistol, one German revolver, one one-shooter gun, nine bullets two cartridges, five used bullets, two walkie-talkie sets, three torch-lights and 18 bottles of phensidyle from the scene.

autopsy. Separate cases were filed against Zahid, Saiful, and

Shahadat with Pallabi Police Station and against Masud, Rana, Nayeem, and Khorshed with Rayerbazar PS Saiful, Shahadat, Zahid were handed over to Pallabi police,

while Rana. Masud and Naim to Mohammadpur police. Meanwhile, Tapu and Rajib's relatives yesterday blamed the local ruling BNP leaders for the

"They [BNP leaders] made my brother a criminal by giving him arms, and making him kill people, said an elder brother of Tapu adding, "And it was again the BNP men who had him killed by Rab."

JCD STATEMENT JCD Senior Vice President Sultan

Salahuddin Tuku and General Secretary Shafiul Bari Babu in a statement yesterday said Tapu and his accomplices have never been involved in Chhatra Dal politics.

Qatar minister

FROM PAGE 20 Qatar tomorrow when top officials of

the two countries meet in the capital. A 17-member delegation led by Ahmad Bin Abdullah Al Mahmoud minister of state for foreign affairs of

Qatar, arrives here today. The meeting is a follow-up of toplevel talks between Bangladesh and Qatar recently, official sources pointed

The two sides will also discuss expanding trade and commerce, Qatari investment in Bangladesh and technical cooperation in exploration of According to the draft of (MoU), Bangladesh will allow additional three

Qatar will hire a large number of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers from Bangladesh. Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan who visited Qatar this month, had earlier told journalists that Qatar authorities indicated hiring over

flights of Qatar Airlines a week, and

50,000 workers from Bangladesh. already bagged the massive Dhaka hopes that fresh employ-Gulisthan-Jatrabari flyover proment in Qatar might go up severa times following the signing of the MoU While Iqbal is not resisting both as it requires a huge number of workthese faulty deals, the governers for implementing its 10-year ment procedure itself requires development programme. that the interested parties obey

The oil rich Qatar is implementing development programmes involving around \$10 billion a year. It is also carrying out huge infrastructure development for holding the next Asian Games. Over 50,000 Bangladeshis now work in Qatar and send home over \$120 million in remit-

tance annually.
The Emir of Qatar Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani visited Bangladesh in April this year and indicated plan to add 430 mw power at a hiring a large number of workers it Bangladesh permits increased frequency of Qatar Airlines flight between Dhaka and Doha.

Bangladesh was not ready at that time to accept the offer considering the business loss of Biman Bangladesh Airlines on the route. Both Biman and Qatar Airlines operate two flights a But Dhaka later agreed to allow more Qatar Airlines flight on the route,

ment of Bangladeshi workers there Qatar was informed about the latest development during Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's visit to Doha in the first week of this month. The delegation from Qatar is now coming to Dhaka to execute the

expecting a large-scale fresh employ-

The foreign ministry has already prepared a draft of the MoU and will place it at the meeting between the two

### 40 crocs

sides, sources mentioned.

FROM PAGE 20

reptiles will land at Zia International Airport at 11:00pm by an Al Italian

The crocodiles, once a very common species in rivers across the country, are now on the verge of extinction. Now there are only four such freshwater carnivorous reptiles, three in Chittagong and Khulna zoos and one in Khan Jahan Ali Mazar in Bagerhat.

The Ministry of Environment and Forest has taken an initiative to reintroduce the reptiles in the country's natural habitation.

The freshwater crocodiles were available in the Padma, Meghna, Dhaleshwari and Karnaphuli rivers and in their tributaries about two decades ago These reptiles play an important role in the water ecosystem and in

the marine food chain. Among the 40 crocodiles arriving tonight, 32 are females and eight are males. Twenty-nine of them will be sent to Dulahaiara Safari Park in Cox's Bazar, six to Khan Jahan Ali Mazar and the rest to Dhaka Zoo.

Sources in the forest department said the main objective of the safari park is breeding, rehabilitation and preservation of rare and nearextinct wildlife in the country.

The forest ministry in 2003 took

an initiative to this end and sought

assistance from the Indian govern-

ment for collecting freshwater crocodiles. Three species of crocodiles now available in the subcontinent are salinewater crocodiles (Crocodi lus palustris), freshwater crocodiles (Crocodi lus porosus) and gharial

crocodiles (Gavialis gangeticus). There are 150 to 200 salinewater crocodiles in the Sundarbans and only a couple of gharials at Dhaka

## BCL returns

FROM PAGE 1

wing of ruling BNP, on two counts had beat up the general students and workers of the opposition student organisations for demonstrating against police atrocities and calling for resignation of the VC and BCL President Liaqat Sikder

said, "This is our campus and we will come here whenever we wish, and none has the right to prevent us." The organisation would stage

demonstrations on the campus to press home their demands including resignation of the university proctor. BCL acting general secretary Saifuzzaman Shekhor, Rafique Kotowal, Baloram Podder, Khan

Moinul Islam Mustak, Istak Ahmed Shimul, among others, accompanied the BCL activists On the other hand, leaders of other student organisations including Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal backed-BCL, Bangladesh Chhatra Moitri Jatiya Chhatra Dhara, Chhatra

Oikya also came to campus yester

# Bidisha asked

force comprising officials of different intelligence agencies are continuing to interrogate Bidisha at the prison cell of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital (BSMMUH).

The task force interrogated Bidisha for about two hours yesterday morning mainly on the source of £16.10 lakh deposited in one of her bank accounts in London and her India visit, but could not glean any important information. The interrogators asked Bidisha

repeatedly about who she had met in India and the content of their discussions. She was also guizzed about her connection with a foreign intelligence agency and one Keramat Ali who deposited Tk 9 crore in one of her accounts. "We have quizzed her to

foreign connections, but we could not extract any important information," said one of the interrogators wishing anonymity. Meanwhile, the High Court on Wednesday asked the government to present relevant information and

documents on the money launder-

ing case against Bidisha before the

squeeze information on her bank

accounts, source of money and her

Bidisha on charge of funnelling abroad local and foreign currencies worth Tk 21 crore

BDNEWS adds, a Dhaka court vesterday extended the bail of Bidisha up to June 30 in the mar-

riage-cheating case. Bidisha's counsels alleged that despite obtaining bail, Bidisha could not enjoy the benefit of the court order as the Central Jail authorities did not release her after police filed another case against her and

After hearing the submission, granted her an ad-interim bail.

produce her in the court although she was scheduled to be. Bidisha is now at the prison cell of the BSMMUH where she has been staying since she had been arrested

counsels sought before the court her bail in the money laundering the next hearing date.

## Series of talks

court on Saturday.

Foreign Secretary Hemayetuddin,

Banaladesh side in the June 21-22 foreign secretary level consultations, told reporters that this talks are not for

communications, science and technology, agriculture etc will start within next couple of months to resolve issues as well as enhance cooperation. between the two neighbouring coun-

been reached on visits of parliament members of the two countries

Our New Delhi correspondent adds: Bangladesh Foreign Secretary Hemayetuddin yesterday said his country could examine the idea of

hould not improve. Khan and Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman to India "demonstrated how committed we are to developing relations with India. It will be wrong to

gas to India, Hemayetuddin said, "We are yet to assess how much gas reserves there are-if at all there would be exportable surplus."

power, steel and fertiliser plants, "they will be using our gas.'

He pointed to the agreement between the two countries to revive the separate joint working groups on the issues of boundary demarcation, adverse possession of enclaves, and trade under which para-tariff and nontariff barriers to entry of Bangladeshi products to India will be considered.

Replying to a question, Hemayetuddin priority is development. There is no time for all this. We will make sure no militant finds shelter in Bangladesh.'

presence of ISI operatives in Bangladesh, he shot back, "We have better things to do than giving shelter to them. Tell me why should we allow ISI? Tell me what is our interest?

of our survival. Meanwhile, on a question about

Police filed the case against

showed her arrested.

Additional District and Sessions Judge Qamrul Hossain Mollah passed the order. The same court on June 16 had The police, however, did not

in the money laundering case. Earlier on Wednesday, Bidisha's

case and the court fixed Saturday as

speaking at a press briefing on his arrival at the Zia International Airport, however, said, "The talks were held in a very positive and constructive manner and now both the sides can move forward to resolve differences and further enhance bilateral coopera-Hemayetuddin, who led the

immediate implementation but they facilitated the talks of various joint working groups, which will resolve differences through discussion. In this context, he said a series of talks between the joint working groups and committees of home, commerce.

The foreign secretary said both sides laid importance on exchange at all levels, especially high profile regular exchange visits at both political and official levels, and consensus has

"We are hoping that Indian commerce and water resources ministers will visit Bangladesh soon to hold talks with their counterparts for resolving issues," he said, adding, "some trade related agreements will also take

exploration of its natural gas jointly with India and said there was no mindset in Dhaka that relations with New Delhi "India is central to Bangladesh's foreign policy," he said, adding that the visits by Foreign Minister Morshed

assume that there is a mindset." Replying to a question about the possibility of Bangladesh exporting

Bangladesh is a developing country with an economic growth of 5.5 percent and it needs gas as a source of energy, he said, adding that when the Tata Group makes investments in

Commenting on the outcome of his three-day visit to India, Hemayetuddin said there was a "lot of forward movement" and a "positive frame of mind on both sides to address each other's concerns and issues and take forward bilateral ties."

Indian insurgents

Asked about the allegation of

Water sharing Referring to sharing of waters of

common rivers, Hemayetuddin said, There was a lot of concern in Bangladesh over India's proposed inter-linking of rivers but it should not be seen as anti-India but only as an expression of our view on the question

Bangladesh's opposition to erection of fencing by India along the border during the press briefing in Dhaka Hemayetuddin said this should be within the 1975 border guidelines which have "served as a useful mechanism to maintain peace. Both sides were unanimous about having a peaceful border." The foreign secretary said the joint

working group on boundary issue will have to find "an acceptable solution. and once this is done, other problems along the border will be solved.

Trade

Regarding trade imbalance with India, Hemayetuddin said, "Right now what we are thinking is to come out with a basket of goods for which India can provide duty-free or lower duty access under the Bangkok agreement among BIMSTEC countries for Least Developed Countries." He added, "The Indian side

would be to discuss how to bring down para-tariff and non-tariff barriers to Bangladesh's exports to India." He said Indian Commerce and Industry Minister Kamal Nath made certain proposals on the issue of trade

expressed sincerity to address the

trade imbalance and the first thing

imbalance between the two countries which Bangladesh will examine. Asked about a bilateral Free Trade Agreement between India and Bangladesh, he said, "We are not averse to FTA. But we need to convince ourselves about the benefits of FTA. We want to be assured that it will not be detrimental to us." He, however did not mention any date as to when Dhaka can agree to it, adding that the movement towards FTA could be paved if the para-tariff and non-tariff

arriers to export of Bangladeshi products to India were removed. He said the joint working group on trade will examine the goods to be imported from Bangladesh free of duty or at lower duties because there was no point in having a big range of goods from which Bangladesh can export

Hemayetuddin told reporters that he apprised the Indian side of Bangladesh's concern about India's river-linking project and that the Indian de gave assurance implement any project that will be harmful for Bangladesh. On another question, he said the

Indian side sought Bangladesh's

support for India's candidature for the

permanent membership in the UN

Security Council. "I replied that this is

still in fluid condition and Bangladesh will consider the request, Hemayetuddin said

Naser FROM PAGE 20

he asked while taking part in the discussion on the proposed budget. Naser however proposed fixing 15 percent interest rate for whitening olack money in the next fiscal year. In this regard, the BNP lawmaker referred to the provision for 12 percent

interest rate charged for whitening the

the black money holders will get the

opportunity to pay only 7.5 percent interest against their illegal income?"

black money during the Ershad regime and 10 percent during the Awami League rule. Naser was also critical of the Opposition Leader Sheikh Hasina's remarks that "the finance minister has proposed to continue the provision for

whitening black money for Tarique Rahman and Naser Rahman. "I will request the leader of the opposition to check my income tax papers at the end of the coming fiscal,

Naser also criticised the system of

providing agriculture subsidy, saying

the subsidy hardly benefits the real

farmers. He said the middlemen get the maximum benefit from the government's farm subsidy. Referring to the increase in subsidy amount to Tk 1.200 crore for the next fiscal year from existing Tk 600 crore. Naser said, "Even Tk 12,000 crore

farmers. "Huge allocation will not bring any good to the farmers if the government does not improve the existing system. of providing agricultural subsidy," he The BNP lawmaker opposed the

subsidy will not change the fate of

SIM (subscriber identity module) card of mobile phone and proposed reduction of the tax to Tk 600. He said there is no such tax on SIM cards in the neighbouring countries.

mposition of Tk 1,200 tax on every

Naser however said the mobile phone companies have to pay millions of dollars as licence fees in India and Pakistan while in Bangladesh the private operators got the licence at nominal fees.

### "We have to launch a new move-The DU campus went through a Akhtaruzzaman ment to build the country as dreamt series of violence after the death of ruled out Bangladesh providing After the interrogation, Rab men After the bodies were handed by the father of the nation." Shammee Akhter Happy in a road shelter to northeastern Indian insur-**FROM PAGE 20** raided Rayer Bazar area and over to police, they sent those to AL presidium member Amir gents. "Northeastern militants cannot accident on May 28. desertion of the ruling party and the arrested Masud and Rana. Dhaka Medical College and Hossain Amu said a conspiracy Activists of JCD, the student find shelter in Bangladesh... our main possibility of joining Awami League The two confessed to having Hospital (DMCH) morgue for against the AL began with the