Matiur Rahman

equivalent of the Nobel Prize, are a Thai senator, an Indonesian anti-graft campaigner, an Indian physician, a South Korean Civil Society leader and

Matiur won the award for journalism, literature and creative communication arts. The foundation praised "his wielding the power of the press to crusade against acid throwing to stir Bangladeshis to help its many vic-

About 300 people, many of them young women, are permanently disfigured every year in Bangladesh in attacks often motivated by spite after victims deny the attackers sex, marriage or suitable dowries

Our Staff Correspondent adds: Matiur Rahman said he will donate the prize money (\$50,000) for the victims of acid throwing, oppressed journalists and for anti-drug campaign in

The Prothom Alo naturally covered the alarming rise of acid throwing in Bangladesh. But in 2000 a heartrending case involving a 15-year-old girl riveted Matiur's attention. He determined to harness the resources of his newspaper to fight the scourge, says

In prominent daily appeals, Matiur declared war on acid throwers and called upon his readers to contribute to the Prothom Alo Aid Fund for acid

solicited donations at rallies and press conferences and called upon celebrities and volunteers to carry the appeal throughout the country. People from all walks of life and even Bangladeshis abroad became donors.

Matiur steered help directly to the victims: money for burn treatments, plastic surgery, legal fees, and living expenses plus new dwellings for some and income-generating assets such as milking cows, sewing machines, cultivable lands, and shops for others.

had been coursed to over one hun-At the same time, the Prothom Alo

pressured the government to strengthen laws against acid attacks and the reckless sale of dangerous

In 2002, the country's Acid Crimes Prevention Act and Acid Control Act stiffened penalties for acid throwers and tightened licensing requirements

navigator of positive social and cultural

change" in Bangladesh. He used his authority as editor of the Prothom Alo not only to fight the crime of acid throwing but also to raise public consciousness about HIV/AIDS and drug abuse and to reveal the role of certain Muslim extremists in fomenting militancy and violence, says the

Born in 1946, Matiur founded the Prothom Alo in 1998 and established the daily's credibility by exposing the missteps of both the government and its foes and by aggressively covering corruption terrorism, and human rights violations.

The Magsaysay award was introduced in 1957 and named after the Philippines' most popular president. Each award-winner is to receive a cash prize and will be asked to take part in a series of public lectures at the foundation offices in Manila. **OTHER RECIPIENTS**

Thai Senator Jon Ungphakorn was cited by the Philippines-based foundation for "his impassioned insistence as a senator that Thailand respect the rights and attend humanely to the needs of its least advantaged citi-

Teten Masduki of Indonesia Corruption Watch won the award for public service for "challenging Indonesians to expose corruption and claim their right to clean the govern-

Indian physician V Shanta, a second public service awardee, was honoured for "her untiring leadership of the Cancer Institute as a centre of excellence and compassion for the study and treatment of cancer in

South Korea's Yoon Hye-Ran, founder of the Citizens Opening the World for Welfare, won the award for emergent leadership. She was cited

for "her catalytic role in enabling (her nometown) Chengan's civil society to exercise its social responsibilities dynamically and democratically." Laotian Sombath Somphone won the award for community leadership. The founder and executive director of

the Participatory Development Training Centre was recognised for 'his hopeful efforts to promote sustainable development in Laos by training and motivating its young people to become a generation of leaders

> Board of Investment (Bol). He said with this growing interest among the foreign companies, the country should revise the existing rules, regulations and laws related to

the coal mine. He mentioned that the present rules allow only 6 percent royalty for the government when a private company invests to develop coal mine. Éven the licence fee is remarkably

low, as for any exploration activities a private company has to pay only Tk 3,000 for the first 100 hectares and Tk 100 for every additional hectare.

On the other hand, for mining purpose, a company has to take licence from the government by giving a fee of Tk 75,000 for the first 30 hectares and Tk 300 for each additional

"This is really too low compared to other countries," the adviser said. adding that this goes against the interest of the country.

He said the government has sought help of USAID to carry out a study to have a clear picture about the open-cut coal mining and deep coal mining in the country.

"Determining the negative and positive aspects of the two methods of coal mining is the main objective of the

Boy victim

FROM PAGE 16 BHRH Sunday night filed a general

diary (GD) with Shyampur police. who following the lead unchained the boy from the ground floor at 419 Nurpur of Dhania under the police

The washroom where police found the boy was only four feet by four feet. "It was dark, damp and stinky," Advocate Shajahan of BHRB described to The Daily Star Sunday night. "The washroom was so small that he had to stand all the time there." he added.

Abir said he lived there with his mother, Swapna Chowdhury, who, the locals said, claimed her profession alternatively as a journalist, a politician or sometimes an advocate. Abir also told newsmen that his father. Kabir, used to come to the house sometimes.

Rescuers at first could not get into the house as it was locked from the outside, and yelling through the ventilator they learnt that the boy

The policemen then broke into the house and found Abir alone. Hiring an ironsmith, police released the left hand of the boy from the wall and brought him to the police sta-

His mother only left some muri in a small bowl and some water in a bottle - his only meal for the whole dav. As a result, he was suffering from malnutrition.

"Even if she was the mother of the child, she cannot do this to the bov. It is a violation of rights by any means." Advocate Shaiahan told The Daily Star.

Police picked up Swapna at around 11:00pm Sunday night from the house when she reached home. "We still could not learn what she does or the whereabouts of her claimed husband." Officer-in-Charge of Shyampur Police Station told The Daily Star at zero-hours

vesterday. Yesterday police produced the boy to the court, requesting it to send him to safe custody. The boy's mother was also produced before the court under section 54 of the

King Fahd passes away

have pledged allegiance to Abdullah. An official ceremony confirming him as king is due to be held tomorrow.

King Fahd's funeral is scheduled for today.

Defence Minister Prince Sultan is next in line to the throne after Abdullah, his half-brother, and was named crown prince.

A Saudi source said the kingdom's oil policy would not change after King Fahd's death.

Diplomats said they did not expect major changes in Saudi foreign policy under King Abdullah. who as crown prince has been running the day to day affairs of the Gulf Arab country since Fahd suffered a debilitating stroke in 1995.

US crude oil jumped up almost 50 cents a barrel after reports the

largest Arab bourse, suspended trading, a broker said.

Fahd, who was believed to be 83 and had been in poor health, had entered hospital on May 27 with

yesterday at the King Faisal Specialist Hospital in the capital,

acknowledged Crown Prince Abdullah as sovereign of the country ... after which the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques and ruler of Saudi Arabia King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz chose Prince Sultan as crown prince and the family members acknowledged that," the state-

dom has faced a violent al-Qaeda

The portly, goateed Fahd inadvertently helped fuel the rise of Islamic extremism by making con-

body has not had a meeting in last

three months, ignoring the Rules of

The AL deputies said the

According to the Rules of

Procedure, parliamentary bodies

are obliged to hold meeting at least

once in a month and if a committee

fails to do so, the speaker has the

power to intervene to arrange such

The parliamentary standing

committee on law, justice and

parliamentary affairs at a meeting

held in camera on July 21 blasted

the law minister for not giving appro-

priate opinion on examining the

documents on Jhintu for presiden-

the same meeting accused the

home ministry of concealing facts in

Shahjahan Mia, chairman of the

parliamentary standing committee

on home affairs, admitted that there

was no meeting of the committee

since April 28 and said, "It was not

held due to various preoccupations

home affairs was busy, Shahjahan,

also a ruling BNP lawmaker, told

Besides, the state minister for

preparing the case summary.

of the committee members."

Law Minister Moudud Ahmed at

Professor Mohammad

speaker's not asking the committee

to hold meeting amounts to flouting

Procedure of parliament.

the constitution



New king: Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz

cessions to hard-liners in an effort to boost his Islamic credentials. But he also brought the kingdom closer to the United States and agreed to a step that enraged many conservatives: basing US troops on Saudi soil after the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

In his last years, the sickly Fahd was mostly a figurehead as the close relationship he nurtured with Washington deteriorated after the Sept. 11 terror attacks. Fifteen of the 19 hijackers were Saudis, and many in the United States blamed the kingdom's strict Wahhabi school of Islam for fuelling terrorism.

Fahd, born in Riyadh in 1923, was proclaimed the fifth king of Saudi Arabia on June 13, 1982 at the height of Saudi Arabia's petrodollar boom, but his 23-year reign was marked by three regional wars and al-Qaeda militancy in his final years.

He assumed the throne just three years after two events in 1979 that would fuel extremism in Saudi Arabia: Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini founded the strictly religious Islamic Republic in Iran just across the Persian Gulf, and radical

Muslims briefly took over the holy mosque in Makkah, proclaiming the Saudi royal family not Islamic enough to rule.

Those developments, coupled with Fahd's reputation as a former gambler and womaniser, made the liberal-leaning king move toward appeasing the powerful Saudi religious establishment, including the morals police who enforce strict social codes that oblige women to wear veils and ban men and women from minaling.

France's President Jacques Chirac expressed "profound sadness" at the news in a message of condolence to the Saudi govern-

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan on Monday paid tribute to Saudi monarch King Fahd and expressed sadness at his death.

"Under King Fahd's leadership, the country witnessed remarkable progress in areas ranging from industrial development to education." said Annan in a statement issued by his spokesman's office.

His death drew expressions of sadness from many Arab nations, with Jordan announcing a 40-day mourning period and officials jetting to Saudi Arabia to attend his funeral on Tuesday.

In Cairo, an Arab League official said this week's Arab summit in Egypt may be postponed following the death of King Fahd and consultations on the meeting will take place in the next few hours.

In a bid to reassure oil markets where prices topped 61 dollars after Fahd's death was announced, a Saudi official said there would be no change in the oil policy of the world's top producer and exporter.

Saudi Arabia will not change its oil policy and will work on providing the oil supplies needed by world markets and is keen on avoiding troubles." said the official

(Reuters, AFP, AP, BBC Online)

11 food shops, factories

the expiry date on the label of the packets," said ABM Abdul Fattah.

The court then raided three small roadside restaurants, fining them a total of Tk 11,000 for preserving and preparing food in very unhygienic environment.

The second mobile court, led by magistrate Md. Rokanuddoulla. raided two bakeries in old Dhaka.

"In the Anando bakery we did not find any unsafe chemicals and the environment was not so bad," said Rokanuddoulla

The court did not file any case against the owner of the Anando

The court then raided City Bakery, where they found a lot of unsafe chemicals in their factory,

situated at Abul Hasnat road.

The court sent Sheikh Anawar Hossain, the owner of the bakery, to jail for one month and fined him Tk one thousand "They use oily chemicals to

make the chanachur and Zilapi crispy," the magistrate said. They also use unknown chemicals in their products, he added. The magistrate court of the City

Corporation did not conduct any raids vesterday BSTI makes a probe commit-

The Bangladesh Standard and Testing Institution (BSTI) has instituted a three-member committee to investigate so-called fruit juices that lack fruit ingredients, exposed recently by a non-government watchdog of consumers rights.

The survey findings of the Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB) showed that 'fruit juices' of different brands carrying a BSTI certification in the market contained various harmful chemical ingredients such as colouring, flavouring and preservatives beyond the permitted level, instead of fruit ingredients.

The probe committee, led by a BSTI Field Officer KM Hanif, has no time limit for submission of its findings in this regard.

Drive in other districts

The special mobile court branch of the police has apprehended 360 bags full of rotten wheat intended for use in flourmills. The magistrate, checking the receipt of the wheat.

found they were officially cattle feed. But there is no cattle feed mill in that area. The dishonest traders were flourmill

trying to release them in to a The police arrested a storage owner, Monirul Haq Titu, in this regard. Sources said a group of

dishonest traders have been running this sort of business for a long

Our Chittagong office adds: A mobile court here yesterday fined four renowned companies Tk three lakh and twenty-eight thousand for making sub-standard food products in a very unhygienic atmo-

sphere in the port city. Chittagong City Corporation Magistrate Shafigur Rahman, with the help of BSTI representatives and police forces, conducted the mobile court raid at the food products factories of Panda Ice-cream. Dvnastv - a bakerv trusted for confectionery items - Daffodils Food Products and Purabi Sweets.

The factories of all the fined companies were located at the city centre under Kotoali thana. None had any BSTI certificate for their

Of them, Panda was fined Tk 1 lakh 80 thousand as the mobile court during the raid at Batali Road found expired milk powder and other raw materials left in a most unhygienic condition. Panda has been producing food items without a BSTI certificate since its establishment in 1991. The latest application. for a BSTI certificate of Panda was rejected in 2003 for substandard products. However, the company continued its production.

The court fined Dynasty Tk 71 thousand for preparing substandard confectionery items in an unhygienic condition.

Daffodils Food Products - a company supplying products to the rains on the Chittagong-Dhaka and Chittagong-Sylhet section of Bangladesh Railway, was fined Tk 46 thousand. The court found slaughtered and undressed chickens and creams preserved together inside Daffodil's factory at Chaitanva Goli.

The court fined Purabi Sweets of Station Road for poor quality and unhygienic products

ondon braces.

at Finsbury Park mosque in North London, where some of the 7/7 terrorists are also known to have stayed, The Times reported.

parliamentary meeting though the Meanwhile, police are planning to pick out young Muslims for stopnd-searches as part of the security response to the bombings.

Hazel Blair, the Home Office

Minister, defended the plan to the BBC yesterday, saying she believed the Muslim community would accept such searches as a neces sary response. The transport police also made it

clear that it will target 'specific ethnic groups' in its hunt for terrorists. lan Johnston, the chief constable

of the British Transport Police, said: "We should not waste time searching old white ladies.' He said he was confident there

was every sign that the Muslim community understood the predicament that officers faced and that it would continue to support the police even if young Asians become the focus of most searches. But Shami Chakrabarti, the

director of the civil rights group Liberty, said that "racial profiling" was a disaster and could play into the hands of those who wanted to recruit terrorists. Meanwhile, police said yester

day's arrests of five suspected bombers in house raids in Birmingham, London and Rome has not ended the threat. Deputy Assistant Commissioner Peter Clarke, head of the anti-terrorist branch, said: "The threat remains and is very real." Authorities are now worried

about how long such a huge contingent of policemen 6,000 strong can be mobilized for such intensive operations to "lock down London" while a threat remains. Police leave has been cancelled, costing Britain an additional 500,000 pounds to ensure security. Police are still on the hunt for the key persons behind organising and planning the terror

Sudan FROM PAGE 16

were also killed, an official statement said. The crash site was found near the Uganda-Sudan border, a Ugandan official said. Ugandan officials said Garang

and the others were flying in one of President Yoweri Museveni's personal helicopters, but the Sudanese statement said it was a plane. The conflict could not be immediately reconciled. Ugandan and Sudanese forces had been searching for Garang's aircraft since Sunday.

"It has now been confirmed that the plane crashed after it hit a mountain range in southern Sudan because of poor visibility and this resulted in the death of Dr. John Garang DeMabior, six of his colleagues and seven other crew members of the Ugandan presidential plane," according to a statement released by the office of Sudanese President Ómar el-Bashir.

The 60-year-old former rebel, Night Sun, a well known Chinese who was sworn in as vice president restaurant, all shared their experijust three weeks ago, left on a flight from Uganda for southern Sudan at 5:30 p.m. Ugandan time Saturday afternoon, Sudanese and Ugandan officials said. It was not clear when the last contact with his craft took

The disclosure that Hussain Osman, a suspected bomber in the botched July 21 attempt, had fled to Paris unchallenged by using the Eurostar train at Waterloo has compelled Britain to think of reintroducing permanent passport checks

The government contends that Osman's slip from the country exposed that Britain's border is

Outgoing British passport hecks were abandoned at the Eurostar terminus last year. The Home Office said that checks by embarkation points were reintroduced at the request of the police after the 7/7 bombings but lifted on July 17. They were introduced again after the July 21 attacks and were

still in force. Osman, also known as Hamdi Issac, apparently got through despite CCTV pictures of the bombing suspects being displayed promi-

No payment

and 190 vehicles daily in regular days while the number rises to 650 on hartal days.

On special occasions like elections, public examinations, special drives, and other functions of the government and law enforcement agencies, the number exceeds the one thousand mark. Of the vehicles requisitioned, 60 percent are buses

The vehicle owners claimed that they have been asking the DMP authorities for the payment since 1991, but the officials who deal with the requisition said they have records only on the vehicles requisi-

"The claims for compensation that we have in our file date from 2001. The amount of arrears is around Tk 6.5 crore and we are yet to pay any," said a source in the DMF accounts section. "The number of claims are increasing everyday."

Owners of different transport companies claimed through Dhaka Sarak Paribahan Samity (DSPS) and Bangladesh Sarak Paribahan Samity (BSPS) Tk 4.6 crore for the period of 2001 to date

The Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC), the stateowned transport company, has claimed Tk 1.58 crore in compensation for its vehicles requisitioned to DMP in the same period.

"We have been asking the metropolitan police authorities to pay the arrears since 1991, but to no effect. DMP owes us more than Tk 18 crore for requisitions during the period of 1991-2005," said Saiful Alam, general secretary of DSPS and

BRTC Chairman Advocate Taimur Alam Khandaker said, "DMP is bound to pay us the arrears.

High Court on June 12, 2005, DMP plans to bring some changes in the 1976 DMP ordinance, under which it equisitions vehicles The proposed changes will

incorporate into the ordinance a clear provision regarding compensation and the period of requisition. Besides, they would rid the ordinance of the existing ambiguities he added.

a Laotian community leader

tims,"saysAFP.

the foundation in a citation for him.

With scarred women at his side, he

By June 2005, about Tk 8.2 million

Matiur has been described as "the

minister and the leader of the opposition have expressed profound grief

over the death of King Fahd.

The Bangladesh leaders also congratulated Prince Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud as the new King of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and Defense Minister Sultan bin Abdel Aziz as the Heir Prince. President lajuddin Ahmed left for

Saudi Arabia to attend the funeral ceremony of King Fahd. He is leading a 10-member delegation that includes State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin. The president in his condolence

message sent to the new King Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud, who succeeded his brother, expressed deep shock at the death of King Fahd. "He (King Fahd) was the most respected leader of his people and

symbolised the unity and solidarity of

the entire Muslim Ummah," the presi-"The late King will be long commemorated among all his friends and admirers for his prudent leadership and individual contribution to the cause of peace, stability and progress of the humanity. He was also a close and revered well-wisher of

Bangladesh," he said. The president prayed to Almighty Allah to grant eternal peace to the departed soul and courage and fortitude to the bereaved members of the royal family and the people of the kingdom to withstand the irreparable

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia also expressed profound shock at the demise of King Fahd. In her message to the new King

Kingdom as well as the entire Muslim She noted that King Fahd's sagacious leadership was a source of inspiration to remain united for the Muslim brethren all over the world.

"The late King's great service for

the Muslim world and his noble deeds

Abdullah, she said, "His [Fahd's]

demise is an irreparable loss for the

of charity and assistance for the poor humanity will long be remembered with reverence," she said. Khaleda Zia said the brotherly relations between the two countries reached a new height in different areas

of cooperation during the reign of King "The people of Bangladesh will ever recall his very kind attention and care for the service of the people of

Bangladesh," she added. She prayed for eternal peace of his departed soul and divine blessing for the bereaved family and the brotherly people of Saudi Arahia Awami League chief and Leader of

the Opposition Sheikh Hasina expressed her profound shock at the agriculture ministry of both the In her message, she recalled the countries will sit to solve the issue in late King's leadership in strengthening the Muslim Ummah as custodian of

> meeting will be convened in October next for resolving the imminent problem of payment against letter of credit (LC). Both the teams raised the issue of some banks in both the

joint secretaries of the commerce ministries of the two countries, are leading the two teams. Bilateral trade is currently tilted

heavily in favour of India. which enjoyed a \$1 billion trade surplus in 2003-2004, sources said.

Hasina prayed for peace of the departed soul and expressed deep

sympathy for the bereaved members of the royal family. Sheikh Hasina also welcomed Prince Abdullah as the new King, expressing the hope that bilateral relations between the two brotherly countries will further strengthen under

his dynamic leadership.

also expressed deep shock at the death of King Fahd and sent a message of condolence to his Saudi Meanwhile, the condolence mes-

Abdullah M Al-Obaid Al-Namla, who called on the foreign minister vesterday afternoon.

Talking to the reporters, Morshed Khan said the people and the government of Bangladesh joins in the mourning with the Saudi people at the demise of King Fahd bin Abdul Aziz.

of Bangladesh, the foreign minister Recalling the great contribution of Kind Fahd, he said relations between

He expressed the hope that bilateral relations between the two brotherly countries will strengthen further

Trade accord

Bangladeshi testing laboratories to

recognise them for certification.

added. withdrawal of requirement of certification from Khamarbari for the imported poultry products from India

the future It was also decided that a special

countries dilly-dallying for payment against L C MVPC Sastry and Elias Ahmed.

Bangladesh observes

sages of the president and the prime minister were formally handed over to the Saudi Ambassador in Dhaka

Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan

Subsequently, the messages of congratulation were also handed to the ambassador, official sources said.

After attending the funeral, President lajuddin will meet with King Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud on behalf of the people and government

Bangladesh and KSA further cemented during the tenure of the late

under the dynamic leadership of King

FROM PAGE 16 He said it was decided that a joint team comprising officials of the Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI) and Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) will be formed to scrutinise the ten

technical expert team will visit Dhaka soon to assess the capabilities of these laboratories. Ahmed The Indian team argued for

India assured Bangladesh that a

and withdrawal of the ban on import of one-day old chicken from India. The meeting decided that the

criminal procedure code.

The Saudi stock market, the

acute pneumonia

"The royal family members have

In the past two years, the king-

opposition lawmakers' demand for discussion on the pardon issue," he

dential pardon to double-murder convict Jhintu, has made the ministry shy of holding the meeting, alleged the AL lawmakers. place before us the file that had been prepared for Jhintu's pardon and sent to the law ministry." AL

lawmaker and former home minister

Mohammad Nasim told the press He said the government had appeared to be afraid of discussing also the August 21 grenade attacks. and the killing of former foreign minister Shah AMS Kibria in the

Nasim said, adding the government skip the meeting because they do not want to be brought to account for the 'wrongs' they have done. He also told the reporters that a letter has been sent to the speaker, calling for his intervention to hold

The Daily Star yesterday. He however said he would soon Perks of president

24.650 from Tk 17.000.

Ministers' salary has been raised to Tk 29,000 from Tk 20,000, state ministers' to Tk 26,100 from Tk 18,000 and deputy ministers' to Tk

The cabinet secretary and the

principal secretary to the prime

minister will now get Tk 24,500 a month which was earlier around Tk 15.750. Under the new pay scale, the secretaries get Tk 23,000 (previously Tk 15,000) while one in the

lowest grade gets a basic pay of Tk 2,400 (previously Tk 1,500). In the current budget, about Tk 9 crore has been allotted for the salaries and allowances of the ministers. The amount will increase in the revised budget due to the salary hike, said sources in the

finance ministry.

In the seventh parliament, the PM's salary was increased, keeping unchanged other facilities while the salaries, allowances and other facilities of the ministers were increased

The PM's salary was only Tk 2,000 a

month in 1973. Other facilities

included a block fund equivalent to

the real expenditure, free govern-

ment vehicles, a Tk 2 lakh optional

fund, and house decoration at the

government expenses if the PM

FACILITIES OF THE PM

stavs at own house. In 2003, the rent of the PM's house was fixed at Tk 50,000 and daily allowance Tk 1.000.

Other facilities were also revised furniture worth Tk 1.5 lakh if the PM decides not to live in government allotted residence. Tk 14 lakh for insurance, an optional fund of Tk 50 lakh and public vehicles as required August 8. for the PM and her family.

meeting of the standing committee

A minister's salary was Tk 1.500 in 1973. Other facilities included a Tk

1,000 block fund, a Tk 25,000

optional fund. Tk 20,000 for furniture

if a minister lived in his own house or

Tk 1,000 as house rent a month, Tk 1 lakh for insurance and Tk 50 as daily allowance. A state minister then used to receive Tk 1,300 as monthly salary, a block allocation of Tk 750. Tk 15,000 for furniture or Tk 750 as monthly house rent. Tk 1 lakh for

During the same period, a deputy month. Besides, he used to receive Tk 15,000 for furniture for his own house or Tk 750 as monthly house rent, a Tk 7,500 optional fund and some other facilities. In 2003, the house rent of a

Daily allowance of the ministers was increased to Tk 750 while of the state and deputy ministers to Tk

FROM PAGE 16

Ministries of home affairs and law, in conjunction with the Prime Minister's Office, have orchestrated the presidential mercy to Jhintu, alleged the AL lawmaker. They demanded documents regarding the controversial mercy to be made Senior AL lawmaker Suranjit Sengupta said, "The speaker has

failed to discharge his constitutional

obligation by not arranging the

rules of procedure empowers him to do so ' He said it rests with the speaker to look into whether the standing committees are running properly or

Al leader Tofail Ahmed alleged that Jhintu had managed to have the mercy through underhand dealings. "He (Jhintu) would not have come home had he not got a green signal from the government high-ups." he

"Mercy was granted in exchange

for huge sums of money, not in a

Speaking at the briefing, senior

legal process," he alleged.

further programmes.

Parishad.

food ingredients.

Food traders FROM PAGE 1 shops, bakeries and sweetmeat shops. The call was announced vesterday at a press conference held at the Jatiya Press Club. BKBP said it would also arrange a rally on Thursday from where they may announce

leaders termed the operation of the mobile courts as harassment, saying it is nothing but a conspiracy to introduce foreign food items in the country. "The government should have given us some time to be prepare and then started raiding." said Mohammed

Jalaluddin, the joint convenor of the

At the press conference, BKBP

"All the restaurant owners and food traders cannot be dishonest. But the court has been fining everybody. It seems we are committing a crime by our business," he said. The leaders of the BKBP alleged that the members of the mobile courts

do not have any expertise about the

system of the food production and

"They charge fines instantly with-

out any laboratory test," he said, adding that the court should have some proof before charging fines. They also said that, as they buy food ingredients from the market, where adulterated items are available,

the government should also control

"Nobody from the concerned

authorities went to us and warned us

about the hygiene and standard of the food in the last three decades." Jalaluddin said, questioning the purpose of the sudden drive. At the press conference, the owner of Swiss, a prominent fast food shop on Baily Road, as well as Dhansiri, a popular restaurant in Gulshan and Mid

their food.

at all British border points.

British immigration of

nently at Waterloo

and minibuses.

tioned since 2001.

additional general secretary of

In response to an order from the

Dhaka in November Manmohan stressed the need for

FROM PAGE 1

ple of this region".

the two holiest places of the Muslim Khaleda

death of King Fahd.

strengthening the regional forum and hoped that the Saarc would be much stronger under the future leadership of Khaleda Zia. The Indian prime minister hoped

that the Saarc would emerge as a "more effective forum for ensuring socioeconomic welfare of the peo-

FROM PAGE 16

several injured.

FROM PAGE 1

FROM PAGE 16 around 2:45am

The law enforcers said accomplices of the robbers opened fire on them, forcing them to counter the

2 'robbers' die

During an attempt to flee, Benu and Dulu were bullet-hit and pronounced dead on arrival at Araihazar

Health Complex, they added. Four policemen were injured in the gunfight. Police seized a revolver and 14 bullets from the

the spot and engaged in clashes

with the agitating people that left

There are a number of laws and

rules regarding coal exploration, coal

mine development and leasing of the

coal fields. These laws and regulations

were formulated between 1910 and

found all these existing rules and

regulations more or less obsolete and

inappropriate to deal with foreign

companies in the new context of coal

very old and insufficient to protect the

interest of the country in dealing with

the foreign companies who want to

invest in our coal mine sector." he told

journalists after the meeting.

Mahmudur Rahman said the

worldwide focus on the use of coal as

an energy source is growing following

the recent rise in fuel price on the

also came to the focus in recent days,

as many foreign companies are

showing interest to invest in the coun-

"Actually, almost every day, we're receiving investment offers from

different foreign companies to invest in

coal exploration and mine develop-

ment...These companies are based in

the USA, Korea, Australia and other

parts of the world," said Mahmud, who

is also the executive chairman of the

The coal reserve in Bangladesh

international market.

"The existing rules and laws are

mine business in the country.

The adviser to the energy ministry

Coal policy

than 1.7 billion metric tons.

Headmaster Following the incident. Shahabuddin's supporters put up barricades on the Dhaka-Dohar road, disrupting traffic for two hours. On information, police rushed to

king had died.

The Associated Press news agency says the king died early

campaign to end seven decades of his royal family's rule in Saudi Arabia, home to Islam's holiest

AL demands JS body talks convene a meeting in consultation with Lutfozzaman Babar, the state minister for home. "Though agenda of the next meeting has already been fixed, we will still consider the

"We will ask the home ministry to

Deteriorating law and order

situation, coupled with the home

ministry's 'shady role' in the presi-

parliamentary watchdog body. "Despite repeated contacts with the chairman of the committee. I haven't vet got any response.

FACILITIES OF MINISTERS

insurance. Tk 25 as daily allowance and a Tk 10,000 optional fund. minister's salary was Tk 1,100 a

normal as the ceremony takes place when several new ambassadors and high commissioners arrive, the foreign ministry source said, adding that two other foreign envoys to New Delhi will also present their credentials on

minister was raised to Tk 25.000. that of a state minister to Tk 20,000 and of a deputy minister Tk 18,000. The optional fund was re-fixed at Tk 3 lakh, 2 lakh and 1.5 lakh for ministers, state minister and deputy

Delhi sets Aug 8 for presentation of credentials is

ences and claimed they were punished without proper grounds. However, those owners were punished recently by the mobile courts either due to their unhygienic environment or for using unsafe chemicals in