

## Khaleda off to NY

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Briefing diplomatic correspondents yesterday afternoon, Foreign Secretary Hemayetuddin said Khaleda will lead the Bangladesh delegation to the summit to be held on September 14-16 and is scheduled to address the High Level Plenary Meeting on September 14. She will also make country statement at the general debate of UNGA on September 17.

The PM is also due to meet with UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and heads of different UN agencies, including the UNDP and UNICEF.

Hemayetuddin said the PM is expected to hold bilateral meetings with a number of world leaders, including the presidents of Pakistan, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Mozambique and the prime minister of Thailand, during her stay in New York.

On not having any schedule to meet with the Indian PM, the foreign secretary said Khaleda will be extremely busy in New York and will meet those who have already sought appointment.

He said that US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice will call on PM Khaleda Zia at her hotel suit in New York and discuss all aspects of Bangladesh-USA bilateral issues. The PM is also likely to meet with the US president at a reception in honour of the participating world leaders.

At the sidelines, Khaleda Zia will also attend the inaugural session of the first meeting of the Clinton Global Initiative on September 15 in New York.

During her stay in the USA, she will attend and address a reception hosted by the Bangladeshi community. Ministers and high officials will accompany the PM in her tour to USA.

Turning to the UN summit, the foreign secretary said that the PM in her speech will reaffirm Bangladesh's commitment to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter.

She will underscore the centrality of the UN in dealing with global issues, particularly development, environment, disarmament, democracy etc and will highlight Bangladesh's contribution to and role in various UN programmes and activities.

She will also focus on the progress made by Bangladesh in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The foreign secretary said the reform of the UN will receive attention during the summit as well as the regular session of UNGA. The report of UN secretary general on UN reform has generated much debate and interest as he has made a number of specific proposals to enable the UN body to better respond to the need of the 21st century. "Some of his proposals have far reaching implications and we are considering them carefully," he

added.

On Bangladesh's role as a facilitator in UN reform proposals, Hemayetuddin said, "We believe that any effort regarding the UN reform should primarily focus on strengthening the role of the organisation in meeting the charter objectives and in the promotion of sustainable development. There should be a system-wide reform, beginning with revitalising the general assembly."

On UN Security Council reform, he said Bangladesh will underscore that any such reform should be considered as package encompassing both the issues of membership and working methods. The broadest possible consensus on various countries and groups is desired on this issue, he added.

He said the Economic and Social Councils should play more active roles to help make and implement coherent UN policies for development and Bangladesh delegation will engage fully on areas that are priorities for our country, including those where summit follow-up action is needed.

As a major partner of the UN in its peacekeeping operations, the foreign secretary said, Bangladesh will continue to highlight that a clear mandate, robust rules of engagement and political will of the parties concerned are critical to the success of the UN peacekeeping.

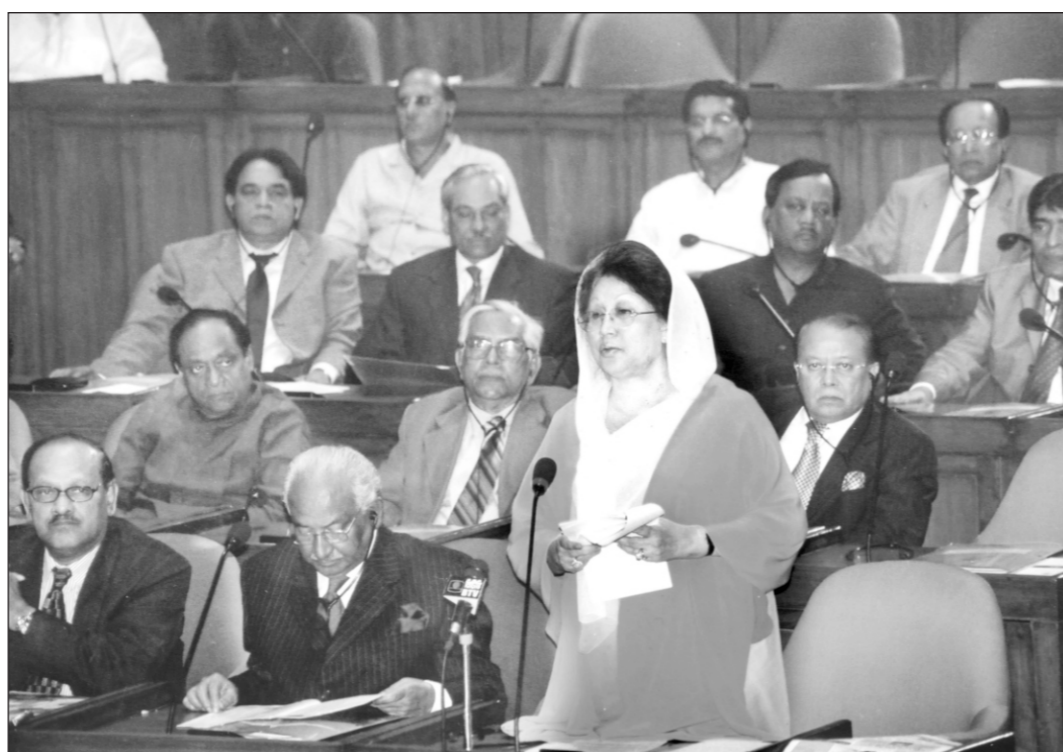
"Today we are the second largest troop contributing country in the world with more than 8,000 Bangladeshi peacekeepers now participating in 12 missions. Bangladesh will emphasise her role and contribution to UN efforts of peacekeeping in the debate," he said.

To ensure a more strategic approach in helping countries make the transition from war to lasting peace, Bangladesh will support establishment of a new UN body—a Peace Building Commission, he said.

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan will attend the ministerial meetings of the Non-Aligned Movement, G-77, Commonwealth, D-8, ACD, Saarc, and Saarc-Asean dialogue, Hemayetuddin said.

He said these meetings will provide the foreign minister with an opportunity to underline Bangladesh's abiding commitment to and continuing interest in various regional and economic groupings.

As Bangladesh takes over Saarc chairmanship this year, the Saarc ministerial meeting will be a useful forum for discussing various aspects of the forthcoming summit in Dhaka on November 12-13. The foreign minister will also meet his counterparts from friendly countries at the sidelines.



Prime Minister Khaleda Zia addresses the House on the first day of the 18th session of parliament yesterday.

## Jute workers

**FROM PAGE 20**  
Successful meeting between the Collective Bargaining Agent (CBA) and the mill management.

Several thousand students who trek to CU by shuttle trains or buses suffered a lot while some scheduled examinations were also delayed due to the incident at the Mills where such agitation by the workers occurs frequently.

## Bangladesh

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According to New Delhi-based magazine Business Standard published yesterday.

Senior officials told Business Standard that Petroleum Minister Mani Shankar Aiyar conveyed India's decision to Bangladesh leaders during his visit earlier this week.

"Before the minister left India, he had met Prime Minister Manmohan Singh who mandated him on giving an assurance to this effect. Singh wanted that Bangladesh's concerns be addressed in order to speed up the implementation of the project," an official said.

India already permits duty-free import of 90 items from Bangladesh but the South Asian neighbour had been complaining of non-tariff barriers coming in the way of export of these products, particularly for leather, food and textile items. The balance of trade lies in favour of New Delhi, with India exporting goods worth \$3 billion while imports are at \$100 million.

Aiyar said India will permit transmission of power from Bhutan and Nepal to Bangladesh once a grid for the entire Saarc region is established.

On the issue of permitting transit of Bangladeshi vehicles, India said as and when the traffic flow increases, more points will be made available. At present, the Phulbari transit point is opened for two hours daily and on an average 40 trucks pass through it in a month.

ONGC and Gail together hold 30 percent stake in two oil and gas blocks in Myanmar. India was also looking at the options of bypassing Bangladesh or setting up a power plant in Myanmar and importing electricity from there.

"Once the pipeline route is finalised, preparation of a detailed project report and finalising the funds for the project will take two years. The pipeline could be operational by 2009," the official said.

## Saifur

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raise the issue of tagging hard conditions by the donor agencies while giving loans and aids to the developing countries like Bangladesh, which makes it difficult for the governments to implement the poverty reduction programme in their respective countries.

He will try to make them understand how difficult it becomes for a democratic government to fulfil those conditions in the given socio-political circumstances.

In his meetings with WB and IMF executives, Saifur is going to apprise them of the various reform programmes the government has undertaken, including initiatives to improve law and order situation, eradicate corruption and facilitate good governance.

He will also try to persuade the WB to release the third tranche of Development Support Credit, as well as make sure that the next instalment of IMF's PRGF loan is available on time.

Saifur will urge the four donor agencies led by the WB, who are participating in the implementation of the government's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), to relax their tough conditions like administrative and judicial reforms.

He is expected to meet high officials of the UK Department For International Development (DFID) in London on his way back home for the same purpose.

Besides, the finance minister during his meeting with the US congressmen will ask for more access for the Bangladeshi products to the US market as well as try to restore the country's image against the backdrop of the recent bomb blasts.

## Real damage greater

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The BEA president while reading out a statement of Citizen Commission for Gas-Oil-Coal formed by the association said there is sharp difference between the damage assessments of Magurchara and Tengratia blow-outs.

A government committee comprising Unocal representatives assessed that 265 bcf gas worth about Tk 3,900 crore was destroyed in Magurchara, Kholiuzzaman said.

"But the Tamim Committee reported only three billion cubic feet gas damaged in Tengratia."

However, both the blowouts witnessed about 300-foot-high blazes on an average for 10 days, the BEA president argued.

Total loss caused by the Tengratia blowouts will stand at Tk 3,500 crore to Tk 3,600 crore if the 265 bcf gas at Chhatak (west) field assessed by Bapex-Niko in 2000 cannot be extracted due to the blowouts.

"Moreover, if we fail to extract 1,100 bcf gas of the Chhatak field assessed by Petrobangla in 2002 due to the latest blowouts, the loss would stand at Tk 14,000 crore to Tk 15,000 crore," the statement added.

It urged to form a fresh committee comprising the experts and members of the Citizen Commission to determine the actual loss.

Blaming Niko for the Tengratia disaster, speakers at the news conference also demanded exemplary action against the company.

They demanded that those behind the controversial agreement with Niko and those who are trying to spare the company be detected immediately.

Citizen Commission members Justice Golam Rabbani, Dr Abul Barakat, Prof Badrul Imam, Nuruddin Mahmud Kamal, Rafidul Islam Khan, MA Sattar Mandal and Prof Syed Abdul Hye were present.

BDNEWS adds: The National

Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Natural Resources, Power and Port is going to file a case against Niko for compensation.

Eminent lawyer Dr Kamal Hossain, Barrister Sara Hossain and Barrister Tanjilul Islam will assist in filing the case, Committee president Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah disclosed it at a round table discussion at the Jatiya (national) Press Club yesterday.

Professor of Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology M Shamsul Alam presented a report of the probe committee on Tengratia catastrophe.

Former chairman of Petrobangla SK Abdullah, Workers Party of Bangladesh Politbureau member Haider Akbar Khan Rono, former chairman of PDB Nuruddin Mahmud Kamal, Dr Badrul Imam and economists MM Akash and Anu Muhammad also spoke.

Disagreeing with the report by Prof M Tamim of Buet on losses from the blow out, SK Abdullah said none could reach within the radius of one mile of the gas field, but now the nation wants to know how the probe committee made its investigation. "How did the government measure the amount of losses?" he questioned.

Nuruddin Mahmud Kamal said the government has confused the nation through its probe report.

Dr Badrul Imam said the probe committee mentioned that the two blowouts caused losses of three bcf gas while the same blow-out in Magurchara had shown losses of 265 bcf gas. "So, the question arises as to how the probe committee has judged the amount of losses," he said.

MM Akash said the crime and the criminals behind the Niko deal must be identified for information of the people.

Anu Muhammad alleged the energy ministry has been working to protect the interest of the multinational companies.

## No IMF loan

**FROM PAGE 1**  
ample opportunity for various quarters to make unjust financial gains in this form of credit has always tempted them to carry on the trend.

The six-member IMF mission led by Tomas R Rumbaugh, IMF advisor for the Asia Pacific, arrived in Bangladesh on September 3 to review the overall economic state of the country. They are expected to stay here until September 11.

Earlier the IMF missions would come once a year, but since Bangladesh took Poverty Reduction Growth Facilities (PRGF) Loan in 2003, the United Nations financial agency has been sending missions to the country in every three months.

Tomas Rumbaugh on meeting the finance minister said it was not a formal review meeting of the PRGF, it was just a stocktaking exercise. He however said another IMF mission which is due towards the end of this year will review the PRGF situation.

About the economic reforms of the country, Rumbaugh observed that Bangladesh has made some progress, but it certainly needs to press ahead with the reform programme and improve further.

While briefing the reporters on the meeting, Saifur said he has told the mission that the government has already brought about a lot of reforms. But the World Bank (WB) and the IMF sometimes ask it [government] to go for tax increases and then again suggest reducing the taxes. These are contradictory conditions they impose.

"I have told them reforms will go on if you give money and if you don't there won't be any," he observed.

Saifur said Bangladesh's relations with the IMF are fine while those with the World Bank are going through a rough patch.

He said the government has reduced taxes [on some 3,000 items] and raised oil prices at the wishes of the WB. "If they still don't feel like giving us money, we are not going to take money from them, we will manage it on our own," he said.

Besides, the finance minister said, "We are the ones to take decisions on our economy as well as the reform programme, we are supposed to be in the driving seat. Lately, it seems like we have been pushed to the back seats while they [WB and IMF] have got into the driving seat. But it simply cannot be like this."

## Eight killed

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rammed into the roadside tea stall at Ice Factory Road near Chittagong railway station under Double Mooring Police Station at around 6:00am.

Four people were seriously injured in the accident. They were rushed to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) where three succumbed to their injuries.

The victims were identified as Jasim Uddin, 35, of Murad Nagar, Abdul Motaleb, 40, of Daudkandi, Comilla and Abdus Salam, 35, of Perorzpur.

The injured identified as Ali Fakir Salim, owner of the tea stall, was undergoing treatment at CMCH. The truck was captured but the driver escaped.

## 2 PBCP outlaws

**FROM PAGE 20**  
Abdul Jalil murder in Akkelpur in Joypurhat on Wednesday.

Following their confessional statements, police arrested two alleged outlaws - Rasedul and Harun with one gun, four bombs and PBCP leaflets and booklets in Adamdighi and Durgapur of Naogaon.

The police said they took Kuddus and Sazzad to Akkelpur to seize the firearms in Jail killing at around 4:30am. Outlaws opened fire on them when the law enforcers reached Keshail, they added.

The police said they returned fire and drove away the attackers. Ruhul and Sazzad received bullets during the gunfight and were declared dead at Naogaon Hospital, the police added.

A sub-inspector and two constables were injured in the shootout. The police seized eight bullets, one knife and one sword from the scene.

The police said Ruhul and Sazzad were accused in seven criminal cases filed with different police stations.

## Ittefaq staff

**FROM PAGE 20**  
from a decade, and the owners have locked into clashes couple of times.

Kamal's wife Mahmuda Begum filed a case with Sutrapur Police Station in this connection.

**BODY RECOVERED, INJURED DIES**

In a separate incident, the body of an elderly man was recovered from Uttara Model Town yesterday morning.

Police recovered the body of an unidentified 70-year-old man from Road-1 in Sector-7 near the local mosque of Uttara at around 8:30am.

Police headed the body over to Anjuman-e-Mofidul Islam as an unclaimed body.

An unnatural death (UD) case was filed with the Uttar Police Station in this connection.

Meanwhile, the extortionist Mohammad Fazlu, who received severe burn injuries when traders at Karwan Bazar set fire to his body Wednesday, died yesterday noon while undergoing treatment at the Dhaka Medical College and Hospital.

## Firearms, training

**FROM PAGE 1**  
it stops crackdown on JMB men following recent confiscation of movable properties from JMB chief's Jamalpur house, well-placed sources said.

Bangladesh authorities hope that the Interpol will soon issue red notice across the world against Abdur Rahman and his ally Siddiqui Islam alias Bangla Bhai, chiefs of banned militant organisations JMB and Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB).

Law enforcers, in another development, arrested two suspects of the August 17 incident—a Bangladeshi expatriate in the USA and a nephew of a person who coordinated the bomb blasts in a division—from Sylhet and Satkhira.

The Rab members raided the house of one Anwrul Karim at about 3:00am after AHM Shamim, a bomb blast suspect arrested from Bahubal in Habiganj on Wednesday, admitted that some people linked to the August 17 explosions are residing there.

They arrested five people from the ground floor of the house.

The Rab men also seized one cut rifle, one revolver with a bullet, 700 capacitors, 60 CDs, 92 books and four audiocassettes on jihad, 17 masks made of black cloth, one computer with two printer machines and 10 floppy disks.

Other seized items include one electric blower, three books of madrasa toll receipts, three diaries, nine books of districts maps, one motor cycle, one punching machine and Tk 2 lakh.

The arrestees are Noor Azam alias Yasir, 29, son of Abu Bakar Siddiq of Peerganj upazila in Rangpur, Aleya Ferdousi alias Ayesha, 26, wife of Yasir, Akramul Islam, 23, son of Ishaq of Mirzapur upazila in Tangail, Belal Hossain, 21, son of Harunur Rashid of Joypara upazila in Joypurhat, and Mohammad Zakaria, 21, son of Azhar Hossain of Gomostapur upazila in Chapainawabganj.

"The CDs and the computer are protected with passwords, but we have so far managed to run a few CDs containing the militants' training manual," said Director General (DG) of Rab MAAziz Sarkar.

"Our efforts are on to open the other CDs, but it may take two to three days to open them all."

About the capacitors, the Rab DG said the capacitors used in the bombs blasted on August 17 functioned after 15 minutes, while those recovered from the house start functioning after seven minutes.

**FAX TO JAMALPUR DC**

The fax message sent to Jamalpur DC Golam Mostafa asked him to stop the operation against the JMB and threatened with dire consequences if the operations continue.

The DC, however, said he had not received any such message.

**INTERPOL RED NOTICE**

The Interpol is likely to issue a red notice soon all over the world against

JMB chief Abdur Rahman and JMJB operation commander Bangla Bhai in case they are hiding in foreign countries, Abdur Quayum, inspector general of police (IGP), told The Daily Star last night.

An Interpol Red Notice is not an international arrest warrant but it allows such a warrant to be circulated worldwide with the request that the wanted person be arrested with a view to extradition.

Meanwhile, Sayeed Nazami, co-ordinator and accounts officer of Farid Uddin Masud's Islahul Muslimin Parishad Organisation, who was arrested on September 1 in connection with the August 17 serial bomb blasts, was placed on a four-day fresh remand yesterday.

On completion of his five-day remand, Nazami was produced before the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka, with a seven-day remand prayer, reports our court correspondent.

The forwarding report said excessive money was withdrawn from Masud's bank account prior to the bomb blasts and being Masud's accounts officer, Nazami needs to be questioned further to find out who drew the money and who were involved in the bombing.

After hearing, the court sent Nazami on a four-day remand.

**SATKHIRA ARREST**  
The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) yesterday arrested Azam, nephew of JMB's divisional commander Fakar Uddin Raji of Patharghata village, reports our correspondent.

The CID men also seized Raji's motorbike from Azam's garage at Kalara.

A Satkhira court, meanwhile, placed three JMB cadres Nasir Uddin, Maniruzzaman Munna and Mahbubur Rahman Lilon on a six-day fresh remand each yesterday.

The three were taken to Satkhira from the Joint Interrogation Cell (JIC) in Dhaka for seeking the remand.

**SYLHET ARREST**  
Our Sylhet correspondent reports the Rab yesterday arrested a Bangladeshi expatriate in the USA—Idris Ali, 50, of Chandpur—from his house in Sheikhghat area of Sylhet for his alleged complicity with the August 17 incident.

The Rab claimed Idris confessed during interrogation to his involvement in the August 17 bombing.

Idris went to the USA 12-14 years ago and returned to Sylhet only four-five days before the countrywide bombing.

After interrogating him, the Rab handed Idris over to the Kotwali police who immediately sent him to the Osmani Medical College Hospital as he fell sick during the interrogation.

Police also seized Idris' US passport.

## Evacuation showdown

**FROM PAGE 20**  
other people were rescued from the building.

The body count, while not exact, was not added to New Orleans' official death toll of 83 announced Tuesday by New Orleans authorities.

In Washington, President George W. Bush asked lawmakers for a further \$1.8 billion dollars in emergency funding to cover costs tied to the hurricane relief and recovery effort.

As the extent of the disaster became apparent, the estimated cost of the relief operation doubled from 500 dollars to one billion dollars a day, US Senate budget committee chief Thad Cochran said.

Bush, who has come under fire for the federal response to one of the worst natural disasters in US history, had signed an initial emergency package totalling some 10.5 billion dollars last week.

"We are sparing no effort to help those who have been affected by Katrina and are in need of help," White House spokesman Scott McClellan said.

Congressional leaders, meanwhile, battled over the question of who should handle the inquiry into how the Katrina crisis was managed.

Democrats are demanding an independent probe like the one, at first resisted by Bush, that looked into the September 11, 2001 attacks. They have also started a petition to sack the much-criticised head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency,

## 7 children

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detailed information and addresses of the children and given those to the home ministry. The ministry passed those on to the upazila nirbahi officers and officers-in-charge of the thanas concerned to verify the information, BNWLA Executive Director Salma Ali said.

A team comprising officials from the ministries of foreign affairs, home, Unicef, BNWLA, International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and Astec was formed to monitor the process of reunion of the children with their families. Local 'care committees' for the children have also been formed in the areas.

Seventy-four former camel jockeys are still staying at BNWLA shelter home and Ahsania Mission in Dhaka, awaiting return to their families. More than 100 such children are yet to be brought back from the UAE.

The reunion function yesterday was attended by Abdur Rouf, additional secretary of the home ministry, Firoze Salauddin, deputy commissioner of Narsingdi, Ghasan Khalil of Unicef, Mizanur Rahman of IOM, Salma Ali of BNWLA and Imranul Haque Chowdhury of Astec.

Michael Brown.

Bush's majority Republicans only agreed Wednesday to a joint Senate-House of Representatives investigation to look into the actions of "all levels of government."

After promising to lead his own inquiry, Bush would not say whether any aides would be fired over the slow response that he has admitted was "unacceptable."

Republican Senator Pete Domicini called on Bush to appoint an official to oversee the recovery effort. "I propose that we create a New Orleans and Gulf Coast Redevelopment Authority," the Massachusetts lawmaker said.

A USA Today survey released Wednesday said 42 percent of Americans felt Bush had done his job handling Katrina "badly" or "very badly". Thirty-five percent backed the president's effort.

Twenty-five percent criticised local authorities and 18 percent the Louisiana state for the chaos.

## Oikya Mancha

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like epidemic, but the government is sitting idle and doing nothing to stop it," Kamal said.

Speaking at the gathering, BDB chief Badruddoza accused the government of harbouring criminals instead of bringing them to book.

He alleged the prime minister has failed to run the country properly, saying corruption and criminal activities have surpassed all the previous records.

On the August 17 serial explosions across the country, he said contradictory statements by the ministers are creating confusion and hindering the investigation.

"Nonexistence of the deputy leader of the House and a cabinet minister in the home ministry proves how ineffectively the government is functioning," Badruddoza observed.

Dr Kamal said general public want the government's accountability and parliament to be properly functioning.

"The people want to know why price of essentials are spiralling, separation of judiciary is being delayed and criminals involved in bomb attacks are escaping punishment," he added.

He also alleged the government is using the law enforcement agencies for its political gains instead of curbing crimes.

Oikya Mancha leaders Abdur Rouf, Mostafa Mohsin Montu, Abul Kashem and BDB leaders Firoz M Hasan also addressed the gathering.