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## Ganges, Brahmaputra water won't be diverted

### No breakthrough in Teesta talks in JRC

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**  
The two-day Indo-Bangla water talks concluded in the city yesterday with no major breakthrough in sharing of Teesta water and India assuring Bangladesh of no water diversion from the Ganges and Brahmaputra under its multibillion river linking project (RLP).  
Both Bangladesh and India agreed on a joint inspection by their water ministers of the bordering areas affected by erosion of transboundary rivers after Eid-ul-Fitr, the water resources ministers of the two countries Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi and Hafiz Uddin Ahmed told journalists after the meeting.  
After examining the ground realities, both the countries will start re-vent work from January 2006



Indian Water Resources Minister Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi, left, accompanied by his Bangladesh counterpart Hafiz Uddin Ahmed, enters the venue of the Bangladesh-India Joint Rivers Commission meeting on Monday.

on respective sides to prevent erosion.  
The 36th Indo-Bangla Joint Rivers Commission (JRC) meeting also resolved to review the "operational implementation" of the 1996 Ganges Water Sharing Treaty.  
Despite Bangladesh's concern over desertification of greater Sylhet caused by India's building of Tipaimukh Hydrological Dam (THD) at the confluence of river Barak, the main feeder of the Meghna river system, India expressed its willingness to go ahead with the project, JRC sources said.  
India, however, agreed to provide Bangladesh with detailed plan of the THD beforehand. If Bangladesh finds any problem upon reviewing the THD plan, India shall take that into account, sources said.  
India, however, dispelled Bangladesh's concern over THD, saying Tipaimukh is a power generating venture, not an irrigation scheme, and it will not affect Barak's

## Khaleda assures US of fair polls ahead

### 14-party enforces hartal today

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**  
Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has assured Bush administration that the next general elections in Bangladesh will be free and fair and that foreign observers will be invited.  
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**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**  
The main opposition Awami League (AL), left 11-party alliance, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal and National Awami Party (NAP) have enforced a 14-party hartal today.  
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## POLITICISATION OF EC

# 150 JCD men made election officials

**HASAN JAHD TUSHER**  
At least 150 activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), the student wing of the ruling BNP, and relatives of BNP lawmakers were recruited recently as Upazila Election Officer (UEO) through the Public Service Commission (PSC) ahead of the next parliamentary election.  
Of the total 328 UEO posts, at least 150 were recruited from a list of JCD leaders of different universities and colleges prepared by top leaders of the organisation and BNP lawmakers, sources said.  
The identities of about 150 appointees were found who are involved in BNP or JCD politics. Sources said there might be many more persons loyal to the government in the controversial appointments.  
All the appointees have been asked to join in their respective positions by September 26, according to an Election Commission (EC) notification.  
Sources said a total of 328 candidates were primarily selected as the UEOs. Later, 28 were dropped after police verification reports found they were not loyal to the coalition government.  
Of the appointees, 80 are JCD leaders and the rest are of Rajshahi University, Chittagong University, Jahangirnagar University, Islamic University, Bangladesh Agriculture University and different colleges  
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## BOMB SQUAD TRAINING

# Ex-lance corporal held on suspicion

### 60-member team carried out attacks in capital

**STAR REPORT**  
Detectives arrested retired lance corporal of the army Harun-ur-Rashid, suspected to have trained up the bomb squad of Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), in city's Mirpur area early yesterday.  
Acting on the information obtained from Obaidullah Sumon, who was arrested in Kishoreganj on Wednesday, a team of Detective Branch (DB) of Police raided Harun's in-laws' house at Monipur at about 5:30am and arrested him.  
Sumon, who was arrested with four kilograms of powder explosives and 50 detonators, told police that Harun and retired honorary army captain Mohiuddin had trained them in making and detonating bombs.  
A team of Kishoreganj police came to Dhaka yesterday to take Harun to their custody for interrogation.  
But since he was arrested following up leads from Sumon, who had claimed to have seen him once, Harun will be taken before him to see whether he was in fact the 'trainer'.  
Though Harun during primary interrogation has denied the accusation of training up the militants, Kishoreganj police are convinced that he was the trainer.  
Harun retired from army in 1998. A 60 MEMBER-TEAM STAGED DHAKA BLASTS  
A 60-member team of militants was seen in making and detonating

## Neighbours to be consulted before any river linking

### Dasmunsi tells The Daily Star

**REAZ AHMAD**  
Dispelling Bangladesh's deep concern over India's multibillion-dollar river linking project (RLP), Indian Minister for Water Resources Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi yesterday told The Daily Star that his country will not interlink the Himalayan rivers, including the Ganges and Brahmaputra.  
In an exclusive interview at his suite at Sonargaon Hotel in the city, Dasmunsi acknowledged completion of feasibility reports on the project.  
A good number of shrimp enclosures have also been washed away by the tidal surge, causing huge losses.  
In Cox's Bazar, over 1,000 fishermen remained missing since Saturday, as about 50 fishing trawlers sank in the rough weather of the Bay on that day.

## Over 3,000 fishermen missing in rough sea

**BDNEWS, Dhaka**  
At least 200 fishing boats with over 3,000 fishermen aboard went missing as of yesterday as the trawlers sailing from the coastal districts are believed to have capsized in the turbulent sea under the influence of a deep depression.  
Of the total fishermen missing in the sea, over 1,000 are from Cox's Bazar while 2,000 are from Barguna.  
Meanwhile, among the missing trawlers and fishermen, Indian police held at least 40 trawlers along with 250 fishermen when they took shelter in the West Bengal coast.  
The fishermen who survived said they saw 40-50 trawlers floating overturned.  
"I haven't faced such a horrific situation in my 26 years of life in fishing," said elderly Abdul Khaleq, narrating the Saturday's disaster.  
It was learnt that trawler owners are enquiring about their missing vessels by telephone in different coastal belts.  
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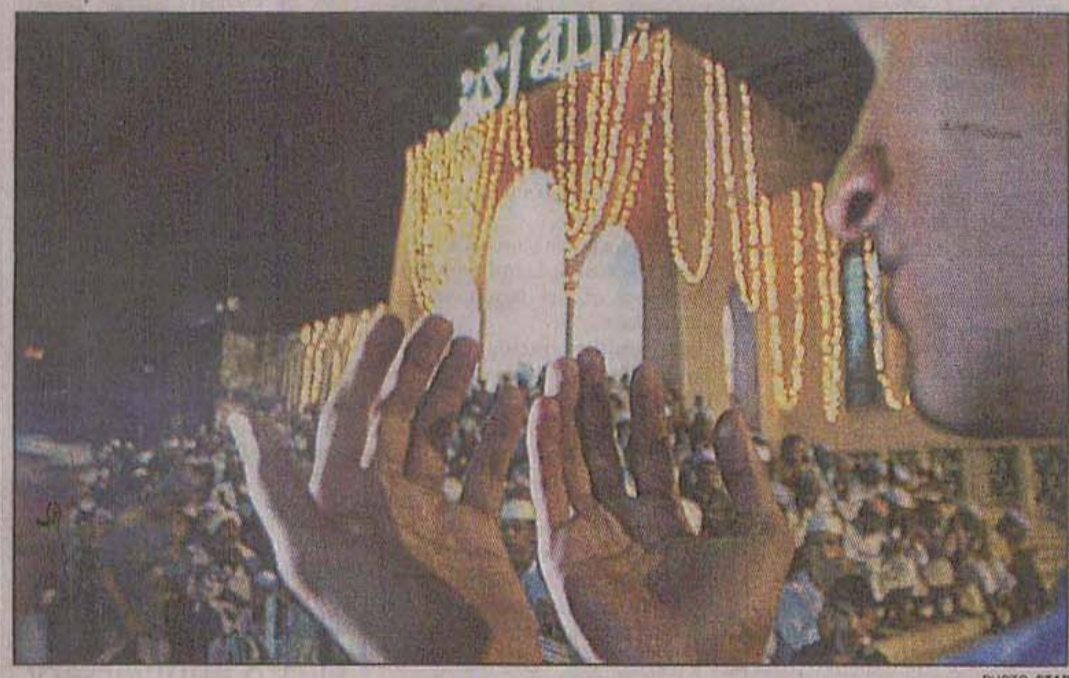
## Niko plans to drill 7 wells violating deal with Bapex

**SHARIEF KHAN**  
Canadian company Niko is pushing ahead plans to drill seven gas wells including an exploratory one in violation of its joint venture agreement (JVA) with Bapex, competent sources said.  
The company will be seeking the approval of the Bapex-Niko Joint Management Committee (JMC) at a meeting Tuesday to drill an exploratory and a development well in the unexplored Chhatak east area, three development wells in Chhatak west and two development wells in Feni gasfield area.  
The blown-out Tengratilla gas field is located in Chhatak west area. The government had awarded Niko the unexplored Chhatak east in the name of "marginal gas field" area. However, Niko's latest plan clearly shows that this is an unexplored area.  
According to the faulty JVA, which is now under question of the High Court, Niko is not supposed to do any activity in the Chhatak east till it has drilled four development wells in the Chhatak west and brought into production 50 million cubic feet per day (mmcf/d) gas.  
But Niko failed to drill a single well in Chhatak west due to the

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## Shab-e-Barat observed

**UNB, Dhaka**  
The holy Shab-e-Barat was observed across the country on Monday night, seeking divine blessings for the wellbeing of mankind.  
The Muslim devotees passed the night in prayer and fasting.  
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Devotees take part in a special munajat at the Baitul Mukarram National Mosque after nightlong prayers on the occasion of the Shab-e-Barat.

## Samaraweera, Dilshan belt Bangladesh

**AL MUSABBIR SADI from Colombo**  
Bangladesh's P Sara Stadium nightmare revisited once again when Sri Lanka plundered 449 for seven in their first innings on the first day of the second and final Test here.  
Sri Lanka had amassed a record 449 in their first innings on the first day of the second and final Test here.  
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