

# Speaker's role

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tion as the Saarc chairperson.

Instead of starting the one-hour question answer session, the speaker went on to allow a half-hour unscheduled discussion and gave the floor to opposition lawmakers at the suggestion of some senior lawmakers of the treasury bench, who virtually directed him to do so.

Taking the floor, Jatiya Party (Ershad) lawmaker Rawshan Ershad and Jatiya Party (Manju) lawmaker Anwar Hossain Manju, congratulated the prime minister. The speaker did not interrupt them, but when another Jatiya Party lawmaker Golam Habib Dulal participating in the discussion mentioned former president HM Ershad's role in the implementation of the dream of late president Ziaur Rahman through the formation of the Saarc, the ruling party lawmakers protested and the speaker switched off his microphone.

On Tuesday, Sircar responded to Krishak Sramik Janata League's lone lawmaker Quader Siddiqui's allegation against him of violating the RP, by saying that his Sunday's decision was in accordance with the RP.

But the speaker had not informed the members of parliament (MP) anything in advance on Sunday when he allowed the unscheduled discussion. There is no scope in the RP for the speaker to keep any decision about a change in the schedule within himself while conducting a session.

Quader Siddiqui also challenged the propriety of the note of congratulation by the finance minister, as he is a member of the government. The speaker however did not respond to the comment.

Sircar allowed the ruling alliance lawmakers to go on a venomous attack on the free media. He did not expunge a single unparliamentary word delivered by the ruling party lawmakers against journalists.

**SPEAKER IN DEFENCE OF THE GOVT**  
While dismissing the opposition lawmakers' demands for discussions on different important issues including rise of militants and price hike of essentials, the speaker's argument sounded like a reply from the treasury bench.

Dismissing the opposition law-

## Smuggled

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tonnes are sugar loaded in one boat, the duty officer of Patenga Police Station told this correspondent yesterday evening.

Police said the gang was trying to enter Bangladesh territory illegally with the goods, being smuggled from Myanmar.

## Opposition

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"They (BNP) must make their proposal clearer. We want reforms in the caretaker government and the Election Commission," Tofail said, questioning the sincerity of the BNP proposal.

"We must think why Mannan Bhuiyan all on a sudden made the proposal."

Workers Party President Menon said, "We must think whether the proposal is of the BNP or of Mannan Bhuiyan's."

Gono Forum General Secretary Saifuddin Ahmed Manik said the current anti-government movement will be continued at the instruction of Hasina. "We must wait to see from which seat of power the proposal has been made."

JSD President Hasanul Huq Inu said: "We've not yet got any specific formal proposal from the government. We'll take a decision jointly after receiving it." He however said the atmosphere for a dialogue with the ruling party does not exist.

"Mannan Bhuiyan did not clearly say what subject he wants to discuss with the opposition," he said, adding, "We want reforms for fair elections, we don't want elections of blueprint."

## Ashraf

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Islamist militancy given to a Bangla dailyn on Thursday.

Accusing the coalition partner Jamaat-e-Islami for the rise of militancy, Ashraf in that interview said most of the arrested militants are Jamaat members.

"One minister and a few MPs know better about the rise of the Islamist militants in North Bengal," he said.

The meeting also took up several programmes, including a rally at the Paltan Maidan in the city on December 21.

Other programmes include meetings at district level on December 6, at thana level on December 12, and a four-day programme to mark the Martyred Intellectuals' Day and the Victory Day.

The expulsion of BNP leader Abu Hena from the party reflects the BNP top brass' tough stance to quell intra-party discussion on the coalition government's role in dealing with the militants.

However, the moderates in the party did not seem happy with the concept of crushing leaders for difference of opinions. Some of these leaders requesting anonymity told The Daily Star that the problem could be tackled in cool brain.

Chaired by Bhuiyan, the meeting was also attended by Senior Joint Secretary General Tarique Rahman, Housing Minister Mirza Abbas, State Minister for Cultural Affairs Salima Rahman, State Minister for Labour Aman Ullah Aman and Joint Secretary Gayeswar Chandra Roy.

## 8 JMB men

**FROM PAGE 1**  
involvement in the bomb attack at Rajarbagh in the capital on August 17.

He also confessed to receiving training on shooting and bomb making.

Monwar had been hiding at Kamanna village under Kalihati upazila posing as a weaver since the countrywide orchestrated bomb blasts.

The police said Monwar is named in the charge sheet in the Rajarbagh bomb blast case.

Our staff correspondent in Rajshahi adds: The police yesterday arrested JMB cadre Jakaria Hossain Rony, a former ICS member, at his Basua Terokhadia home in the city.

The arrest was made on information provided by detained JMB leaders Abdur Rahman alias Shaikh Khaled and Zahangir Alam. The police also recovered a number of books on Jihad (holy war) from a neighbouring house Zakaria showed.

Zakaria, an undergraduate student of the Rajshahi College, confessed to being an ICS member in the past and later joining the JMB.

BDNews from Narayanganj reports: JMB member Ariful arrested Wednesday at Pagla bus stand in Narayanganj was sent to Dhaka Thursday night for quizzing at the Joint Interrogation Cell (JIC).

After his arrest Ariful admitted to being involved in the planning of the August 17 bomb blasts in Narayanganj and also disclosed some sensational information about JMB and its operations, police sources said.

Ariful, who hails from Shibpur of Narsingdi, was produced before a court amid tight security. The court put him on a seven-day police remand.

Meanwhile, five suspected JMB militants arrested Tuesday afternoon at a house in Tamaruddi under Hatiya upazila were taken on a three-day demand on Thursday for interrogation, reports UNB.

They were identified as Abu Taleb, 24, of Chittagong, Mizanur Rahman Dulal, 25, of Dinaipur, Mozammel Haq, 25, of Baguna, and Yusuf, 16, and Tarikul Islam, 20, of Bhola.

## Contractor

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For this reason, Alam's former companions Masud, Sakha Kabir and others recently threatened him over mobile phone, said Selina.

No case was filed and nobody was arrested in this connection until 8:00pm last night.

In another incident, Tejaگون police recovered the body of an unidentified young man wrapped in a sack from the Farmgate Park in the city and sent it to the DMCH morgue for autopsy.

The police suspected that miscreants had murdered the person aged about 20 somewhere around and left the body in the park at night.

Morgue sources said marks of stabbing were found on the youth's neck and wrist.

A murder case was filed with the Tejaгон Police Station in this regard.

## Dense fog

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or in the mid-river, causing a severe traffic congestion and acute sufferings to the passengers.

According to the officials of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC), two ferries--Shah Mokhdum and Bir Shrestha Jahangir--were forced to anchor in the middle of the river while other ferries--Shah Paran, Shah Ali, Keramat Ali and Bir Shrestha Hamidur Rahman--tied up at Paturia ghat.

The ferry services resumed at 9:00am yesterday.

Our Barisal correspondent reported that dense fog hampered ferry and launch services on the river routes on the Meghna yesterday.

Three passenger launches--MV Suravi-6 and 7 and MV Tipu--plying the Dhaka-Barisal route reached Barisal, delaying two hours.

MV Modern Sun and MV Parabat-6 plying the Dhaka-Hularhut route were delayed by four to six hours to reach Banaripara station.

Crew and passengers of the launches said the dense fog forced the water craft to anchor at different points of Hizla Channel, Baher Char and other spots on the Meghna for several hours.

Ferry services were also delayed for hours at different points.

## Bangla Bhai

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mander who led the operations in Rajshahi, told The Daily Star over cellphone yesterday.

Sources in the intelligence agencies have also confirmed the use of the government vehicle by Bangla Bhai and other militants.

The JMB commander said Bangla Bhai was one of 12 key figures, who attended a meeting at the residence of a deputy minister in the region on April 10 last year.

He however did not say whether JMB chief Abdur Rahman attended the meeting.

He also refused to give details about the meeting, but admitted that it assured them of full administrative support.

Following the meeting, the deputy minister and some important personalities of the ruling party extended them full support for about 10 months.

The JMB source said now that they have withdrawn their support, the militants demand action by their top tier against the deputy minister and others.

The 'promise-breakers' would face the same actions now being launched against the judges, he added.

# Oceans, greenhouse

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come mainly from burning coal and other fossil fuels in power plants, factories and automobiles.

Miller and his colleagues analysed five 500-meter (1,650-foot) deep samples to look for fossils, sediment types and variations in chemical composition, giving them data on the past 100 million years.

They also analysed data from satellite, shoreline markers and by gauging ocean tides, among other measures.

"It allows us to understand the mechanisms of sea level change before humans intervened," Miller said in an interview.

His team did not determine whether the rate is accelerating.

The research, funded mostly by the National Science Foundation, also found ocean levels were lower during the dinosaur era than previously thought. They were about 100 meters (330 feet) higher than now, not 250 meters (820 feet) as many geologists had thought, Miller said.

Measurements also showed that, while many scientists had thought polar ice caps did not exist before 15 million years ago, frozen water at the poles did form periodically.

"We believe the ice sheet was not around all the time. It was only around during cool snaps of the climate," Miller said.

In another report published in Science, European researchers using three large samples of polar cap ice found carbon dioxide levels were stable until 200 years ago.

"Today's rise is about 200 times faster than any rise recorded" in the samples, study author Thomas Stocker said in an e-mail interview with Reuters.

The historic data "put the present rise of the last 200 years into a longer-term context," he added.

Trapped gas bubbles in the ice,

drilled out from Antarctica depths of about 3,000 meters (9,900 feet), provided scientists with information on the Earth's air up to 650,000 years ago.

Researchers participating in The European Project for Ice Coring in Antarctica measured levels of carbon dioxide as well as methane and nitrous oxide -- two other gases known to affect the atmosphere's protective ozone layer.

"The study does not directly address global warming. But what we provide is an important new baseline for the climate models with which we investigate global warming," said Stocker, a professor of climate and environmental physics at the University of Bern in Switzerland.

## George Best

**FROM PAGE 16**  
"The thoughts of all staff at Cromwell Hospital are with Mr Best's family at this time."

Best died at 12:55 p.m. (1255 GMT), the spokesman said.

Best played 37 times for Northern Ireland, who were never able to qualify for the World Cup during his international career which spanned 13 years from 1964 to 1977.

Despite the lack of international success, he was the first footballer to attract a worldwide following because of his good looks, his mercurial talent and the fact he played for a glamorous Manchester United team that was an integral part of the Swinging Sixties.

Regarded by many as the greatest player to come from the British Isles and considered among the sport's greats with Pele and Maradona, he was a member of Manchester United's European Cup winning team in 1968, the year he was named European Footballer of the Year.

*Details on Sports Page*

# Biman at height

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missed schedules by hours and by days," a Biman official said seeking anonymity.

When contacted, Biman's acting Managing Director Mahmoodur Rahman admitted the flight disarray, attributing it to shortage of aircraft crises and ageing of the DC-10s.

He however could not properly explain why Biman is operating so many domestic and international flights at the expense of taxpayers' money. With only 12 aircraft in its fleet, Biman is still showing the luxury of operating Dhaka-New York flight twice a week, incurring a loss of Tk 70 lakh a week.

For months, Biman operated Dhaka-Barisal flights with only four to six passengers in its 80-seater F-28 aircraft, and only recently cancelled the huge loss-making flight. Besides, it reduced flight frequencies on Dhaka-Syedpur route to four from seven a week.

In view of the lingering hajj flight fiasco, the national flag carrier has also stopped booking tickets for one of the two weekly flights on Dhaka-New York route from December 9. It might decide to use one of the two flights to carry hajj pilgrims to Jeddah, sources said.

Biman now has in its fleet only five wide-bodied DC10-30s having 274 seats each. But one of these is now at ZIA's hanger due to engine trouble. Besides, it has four mid-haul Airbus A-310-300s with a seat capacity of 220

each on average and four F-28s having 80 seats each.

This year, it lost one DC-10 in a mishap in Chittagong while one of its F-28s, badly damaged in a Sylhet accident is now in the process of being converted into a fancy restaurant in Dhaka.

Biman has got no 350 plus-seat wide-bodied aircraft like Boeing 777 or 747, showing its dismal condition.

Mahmoodur Rahman said the national airlines put forward a proposal to the government months ago for procuring a few wide-bodied craft with no response as yet. Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman, on several occasions, stressed bringing management discipline in the overstuffed Biman.

DC-10s are now used 12 hours a day on an average and Airbus A310-300s about 11 hours. Such high utilisation is impeding proper maintenance, resulting in frequent technical faults and flight disruption and schedule irregularity, sources pointed out.

Biman came into being on January 4, 1972 initially with a Second World War vintage Dakota and a DC-3, gifts from the air force. Its domestic service with the DC-3 began within a month of its inception. Its journey as an airline actually started with the acquisition of a Boeing 707 and four F-27 aircraft. It entered the big league with the induction of three DC10-30s in 1983.

# Terror-financing

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firearms and executing attacks, they learned.

Intelligence sources said, apart from a 7-member majlish-e-sura, the central governing body, the JMB has 16 regional commanders, 64 district heads, hundreds of operations commanders and around 200 Ehsars or full-time cadres. Among the operational commanders, Bangla Bhai alone has the distinction of being a member of the majlish-e-sura.

The JMB also has a suicide squad. The family of every suicide bomber is slated to get Tk 50,000 to 1 lakh or more in compensation for a 'sacrifice'.

A high-ranking JMB source told The Daily Star he handles Tk 46,000 to Tk 50,000 a month to run his regional network encompassing four districts.

Last year JMB chief Abdur Rahman told the media he had a network of 10,000 full-time trained operatives and one lakh part-time activists, run with more than \$10,000 a month.

### SUSPECT NGOS

The RIHS is on top of the list of suspected donors of the Islamist militants. Following the intelligence recommendation to ban the RIHS, its chief Abdul Aziz Khalaf Matullah of Kuwait visited Dhaka in August 14 to 21. He called on three cabinet members and lobbied for the RIHS.

Investigators believe Malullah left a large amount of money with the local RIHS officials. Sources said he has recently sent a letter to the Bureau of NGO Affairs seeking permission for another visit to Bangladesh.

On insistence of intelligence agencies, Dhaka Metropolitan Police arrested RIHS Director Ekramuzzaman in September but had to release him as he had an anticipatory bail in his possession.

In 2002, the US Department of

## Allow duty-free

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bodies, trade unions, rights organisations demanded transparency in the discussions to be held during the sixth WTO conference. Commerce ministers from 148 countries are expected to take part in the meet.

Expressing pessimism about the outcomes of the conference, they said the WTO seems to have turned into a body to serve the interest of the developed countries while depriving the LDCs of benefits of globalisation.

They urged the commerce minister of Bangladesh to play a robust role as a LDC member in the conference so that interests of the developing nations are better protected.

"In the name of open market, the developed countries are gaining unfair advantages over the LDCs," said Tofail Ahmed, former commerce minister and Awami League (AL) leader.

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal President Hasanul Huq Inu said the sixth conference would not be successful unless it ensures the access for less-skilled especially women workers to the international labour market.

Nasrin Awal Mintu, president of Women Entrepreneur Association of Bangladesh (WEAB), said the businessmen in LDCs like Bangladesh are losing markets due to open-market policy.

Khushi Kabir, co-ordinator of Nijera Kari, said the conference will not be much good if it fails to redress the ever-widening trade gap between the industrial and developing countries.

Karmajibi Nari President Shirin Akhtar presided over the rally addressed among others by Trade Union Kendra President Nurul Islam, AL leader Shahajahan Khan, and Mahfujullah.

A colourful procession brought out after the rally marched different roads.

## Oli Ahmed

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militants, Oli Ahmed said he was not aware about the condition of Hena's constituency.

"But through the media I had learnt that he informed, more than once, the senior leaders about the existence of JMB and other undesirable elements who want to establish the rule of Allah with honest people and honest administrators."

"If his information are correct and if there is proof that he had informed senior leaders then why we have not taken any action?" he questioned.

On whether any political party's leaders or any ranking official of the government are patronising the militants, the senior BNP leader said every body knows it more or less as the newspapers are continuing to write about it. "During the last few days many militants were caught. And now the prime minister has clear view about the militants as the intelligence agencies informed her about it," he said.

On whether he would raise the issue in the party's highest policymaking level, the senior leader said they did not meet in the last four years to discuss how the country should be run.

"The cabinet is above the party policymakers. They do not have any role over the cabinet," he said.

## Hena's expulsion

**FROM PAGE 1**  
right thing...His expulsion only exposed the government's secret entente with Jamaat and Jama'atul Mujahideen," Awami League Presidium Member Abdur Razzak MP said, adding, "Action against Abu Hena also showed the BNP is suffering from political bankruptcy and its members have no right to speak the truth."

"Abu Hena's expulsion shows that whatever Jamaat will say BNP has to follow," Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon said.

After witnessing the militants' activities in his own constituency, Abu Hena "correctly projected" the links between BNP, Jamaat and Islamist militants, he added.

"The action [of expulsion] is a reflection of fascist mentality that does not tolerate the voice of dissent," Menon said.

CPB General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim said, "We had repeatedly cautioned BNP about the danger of Jamaat and militants. But due to greed of power, BNP joined hands with them."

"What we have been saying for long about the link between the government and militants has now been exposed from within the ruling party," JSD President Hasanul Huq Inu said.

"Hena's expulsion is a reflection of conflict between the four rightist conspirators and the centrists within the four-party alliance," he said, adding, "This is not the conflict of power, but of politics that signals the fall of the alliance government."

## Road barricade

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anyewitness.

The aggrieved people soon took to the street and put a barricade that lasted till noon.

The road barricade was withdrawn when Local Ward Commissioner Shahidul Islam Babul went to the spot and assured them of taking action against the driver and paying compensation to the victim's family.

The deceased, a resident of Purbal Islambagh of Old Dhaka, was a member of retail skin dealers' association of the old town.

Police seized the truck and the body was sent to Midford hospital morgue for autopsy.

# Terrorism a threat

**FROM PAGE 16**  
that killed more than 73,000 people underscored the importance of solidarity among Commonwealth members.

"These times of trial have brought us together as they have also shown how vulnerable we can be alone and yet how much more we can do together," she said.

Turning to poverty, the queen noted that while there had been progress in achieving the UN millennium development goals, which seek to halve poverty by 2015, there was "greater and more sober recognition that much still remains to be done if the goals are to be achieved by 2015."

"There are development challenges that weigh heavily upon so many of our members. It is our collective responsibility to help," she said.

Queen Elizabeth also hailed the spirit of solidarity binding the Commonwealth yesterday that is set to put its full weight behind a new global trade deal to help combat poverty.

The British monarch praised members of the Commonwealth for their generosity and aid after last December's tsunami in Asia, the London bombings in July and the devastating earthquake in Pakistan in October.

"These times of trial have brought us together as they have also shown how vulnerable we can be alone and yet how much more we can do together," said the queen.

The three-day summit is to make a strong push for progress in tearing down trade barriers at next month's World Trade Organisation (WTO) talks in Hong Kong and give poor countries greater access to rich markets.

"We joined together in the struggle against apartheid at the end of the last century. Now it is the scandal of poverty that demands our attention," said Commonwealth Secretary General Don McKinnon.

"Trade is not just an engine for economic growth but is the most potent weapon to combat poverty," he said.

McKinnon asserted that achieving a fair global trade deal "is a test of Commonwealth leadership", warning: "If we can give the WTO the shot in the arm it requires, then our organisation will have shown again its global worth."

The Commonwealth -- which together represent some 1.8 billion people and one fifth of the world's trade -- is a loose collection of mainly former British colonies including wealthy Canada and Australia, as well as poor Sierra Leone and Malawi.

Developing countries will urge British Prime Minister Tony Blair, attending the summit, to press the European Union for further cuts in farm subsidies at the WTO talks in Hong Kong in three weeks' time.

## 100 BNP leaders

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"I only held a minister responsible for the rise of the militancy, not the entire government ...I thought that BNP would take action against him... but, unfortunately, the party expelled me."

"The prime minister expelled me on Jamaat-e-Islami directive," Hena reiterated his suspicion.

He said he had not damaged the image of the BNP but the government made the dent itself.

When his attention was drawn to the rumour of his arrest that was spread in the capital yesterday, Hena said, "I am not anxious about this... I'm not a criminal."

# Spectrum Sweater

**FROM PAGE 16**  
tion by Buet was more detailed and substantive.

In light of the findings of the probe, the Buet teacher said the concreting was weak as construction workers did the concrete casting on clay that somehow soaked into the column frame may be for overnight rain. The site engineer and the contractor posted there overlooked the unfinished state of the column before casting concrete mixture.

The entire building collapsed as it was constructed in flat slab system, which is costlier than beam frame. Had it been a beam-framed structure, some parts of it would not have crumbled, the expert noted.

He also pointed out that beam-framed structure usually shows various signs of collapse at least five years before the cave-in occurs. A test of disturbed sample of the rods carried out in Buet confirmed use of grade 60 deformed bars. Also the quantity and quality of the building materials used were found to be sufficiently satisfactory to carry the load of the building.

"No individual is to be held responsible for the collapse, rather it should be blamed on the construction culture. If the mason and the site engineer were careful and sincere, such tragic incident could have been averted," added the Buet teacher.

The design had no major flaws, the expert said, adding that if the lift core was in the middle of the building, parts of the structure might have been spared.

The Buet investigation also reveals that the pile cap was intact although the huge structure had impacted on it and even the underground piles did not subside despite a great load resulted from the collapse.

At the beginning, experts considered that the collapse might have caused the subsidence in the north-east corner. They also thought the building collapsed because formation of the soil did not have the ability to take the load of such a heavy structure.

Owner of Spectrum Sweater Shabiriyar Hussain in his first ever

The EU and other rich nations have agreed to cut agriculture subsidies and boost aid, but developing countries say much more needs to be done if they are to have fair access to their markets.

As host of the biennial affair, Malta's Prime Minister Lawrence Gonzi also put the focus squarely on the urgent need to address the widening gap between rich and poor countries.

## Relatives

**FROM PAGE 16**  
200 bullets were recovered from their possession, the sources said.

The arrested outlaws were quizzed at Kumarkhali Police Station on Monday and Tuesday. Later, police killed them under pressure from the ruling party men, the relatives said.

However, they admitted the involvement of the five in various crimes including murder, extortion and abduction.

When contacted, the officer-in-charge (OC) of Kumarkhali Police Station told that they countered only when the gang attacked them.

## 2 top Janajuddha

**FROM PAGE 16**  
inside the Janajuddha, Zahur told The Daily Star.

Sharifuzzaman Sumon recently split with Janajuddha over differences of opinion with Malitha on ways of implementation of the killing missions and share of money collected from different sources. Sumon formed his own faction and named it Gonofouz.

Of the 24 criminals on the KMP list, three are now in Khulna district jail, while others are yet to be caught.

### CHANCHAL'S CONFESSION

In his statement given to Magistrate Dewan Abdus Samad, Chanchal said the plan to attack the police was made at a secret Janajuddha meeting on November 18 at Harintana in Batiaghata upazila of the district.

Malitha and other operatives, including Abir Hasan, Biplob, Bulbul, Ashim,