The roundtable on "State of ence room of The Daily Star.

system so that the grassroots cacy programmes and the monitoring system is important.

The Daily Star Editor Mahfuz Anam moderated the discussion while Abdul Muyeed Chowdhury, executive director of BRAC, Dr Zafrullah Chowdhury, project coordinator of Gono Shastha Nagar Hospital, Major General (Dr) ASM Matiur Rahman, chief advisor to the National HIV/AIDS Programme, Frank Matsaert, enterprise advisor to the Department for International Development (DFID) of the government of the United Kingdom partici-

Dr Vikarunnessa in her keynote paper said Bangladesh is one of the top five highly TB affected countries in the world. A total of 70,000 TB infected persons die each vear and 300,000 new TB cases are expected every year in the country. Globally, one third of the world population is already infected with TB, while more than 10 million

ent TB detection rate is 46 percent than in females, she said.

The National TB Programme (NTP) mobilises resources through effective partnership to ensure quality diagnostic and treatment services under directly observed treatment strategy (DOTS) to fight

health complexes, by NGOs, hospitals and community members, she added.

Abdul Muyeed Chowdhury, executive director of BRAC, said monitoring and advocacy have to be decentralised down to the union parishad level.

The public-private partnership is weak, which should be strengthened by including more partners to curb the spread of the disease, he

Dr Zafrullah Chowdhury said medication and hospitalisation is not the ultimate solution, instead raising of social awareness about

He stressed the need for special training on TB for healthcare professionals including doctors, nurses

All the necessary information on TB should be available in Bangla for the sake of the common people, he

Major General (Dr) ASM Matiur Rahman said the prevalence of TB is still on the rise due to illiteracy, malnutrition and poverty. On TB detection, he said only sputum smear test is not sufficient, other methods should also be incorpo-

Dr Abdul Hamid Salim, country director of Damien Foundation, said due to lack of social awareness among the poorest section of the population TB patients are not coming to the clinics despite offers of free treatment and drugs.

Afsan Chowdhury, director of the advocacy and human rights unit of BRAC, said "We have a publicprivate partnership in place but it is weak. We need to build a strong partnership."

Faruque Ahmed, director of the health programme of BRAC, emphasised the need for making the healthcare system more functional so that the partnership does not remain limited only between the donors and service providers.

He also said healthcare service providers should include the affected communities into the

Frank Matsaert of the DFID said as 60 percent of the TB cases are still undetected it should be a priority to detect those cases

The Daily Star Editor Mahfuz Anam stressed the need for developing effective ways for advocacy programmes for holistic healthcare. as it has not been successfully emphasised vet.

He concluded by saying there is a tremendous scope for amassing national resources for advocacy programmes on holistic healthcare approaches by involving the mass

Among others, Dr Duangvadee Sungkhobol, representative of WHO in Bangladesh, Dr Peter Herzig, health advisor to the delegation of the European Commission. Dr Dinesh Nair, health specialist of the World Bank, Dr Salahuddin Ahmed of BRAC University, Dr Asif Mujtaba Mahmud of National Institute of Diseases of Chest and Hospital (NIDCH), Dr AKM Shamsul Haq, former director of NIDCH, Dr Mirza Mohammad Hiron, president of Chest and Heart Association, Dr M Amanullah MP. Dr Tahmina Aziz director of National TB Control Programme (NTP), and Dr Abbas Bhuiyan of the ICDDRB also took

Nation recalls

Abu Taleb, Nizamuddin Ahmed, SA Mannan (Ladu Bhai), ANM Golam Selina Parvin.

Thirty-four years have passed with the families of the martyred intellectuals still waiting to see punishment to the perpetrators.

They had lodged cases since 1972 seeking justice. Until March

No progress has been made to a case filed during the tenure of previous Awami League government demanding punishment of the

On September 24, 1997, Farida Banu, sister of slain intellectual Giasuddin, filed a case and subsequently some police investigations were carried out. But as the old files

and police records became untracesources of our inspiration in taking able, things did not advance much. Bangladesh to the desired destina-Dhaka City Corporation has built tion through development and enrichment," the prime minister

"Following their ideals, we monument that was affected by last year's flood, has not been done due the nation," she said.

She also expressed deep sympathy for the bereaved family members of the martyred intellectuals.

Rare species

the Forest Department office at Mohakhali. The department sources said it will take care of the birds and animals and later release them in the wild.

Wildlife experts said all these birds breed only in the wild and cannot procreate in the cage.

been continuing the illegal business of wild birds for a long time although the Wildlife Protection Act-1974 prohibits capturing and hunting of wild birds and animals

The Forest Department did not conduct any raid on the Kataban market in recent times. However, officials concerned told reporters that from now on the department will

Dhaka division Magistrate MA Fattah and police forces accompanied the Forest Department team during the raid.

14-party meet

FROM PAGE 16

call, the senior opposition leader said. "It is not sensible to sit in dialogue for tackling militancy with the people who have been patronising it."

The 14-party letter will set some pre-conditions for the dialogue and ask the prime minister to prove her sincerity to root out militancy by axing the Jamaat from the government and taking action against other BNP leaders and lawmakers involved in militancy, an opposition source said.

Meanwhile, Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina vesterday separately met Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain and top leaders of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) at her residence. In the meetings the opposition

leaders talked about gearing up the ongoing movement against the BNP-Jamaat-led coalition. Dr Kamal Hossain and Sheikh

Hasina, also president of the main opposition Awami League, discussed the prime minister's letter for dialogue and opposition's strategy. CPB President Manjurul Ahsan Khan and its General Secretary

Muiahidul Islam Selim in their meet-

ing with Hasina discussed strengthening the ongoing movement to 'dislodge the ruling coalition and eliminate the Jamaat-e-Islami". "The country is passing a critical juncture when militants with government protection are killing innocent people and for this we the opposition hink it's a time to wage united move-

ment to force the government quit,"

Mujahidul Islam Selim said after the

Bangla-Pak

FROM PAGE 1 the same venue at 4pm (BST). Although Pakistan hold an edge in

their previous seven meetings with four wins, Bangladesh, however, go into the latest clash with a refreshing memory of a 4-0 thrashing when the two team's last met in the 1999 SAFF Championship in Goa.

It is the third time that Bangladesh are playing Pakistan on their home soi in full internationals. Bangladesh eliminated Pakistan 2-1 in the semifinals of Quaid-e-Azam Trophy in 1985 before losing to North Korea by a solitary-goal defeat in the final. Pakistan took their revenge by beating Bangladesh 1-0 in the final of the SAF Games in 1989.

The other Bangladesh victory came at the 1985 SAF Games in

Dhaka when the hosts won 2-1. Pakistan will miss Imran Hossain after the kev striker picked two yellow cards but Bangladesh will also field their full-strength side -- the team that started in the first two games - after nine players were rested against India on Monday.

Jamaat man FROM PAGE 1

After some time, he made another attempt to go inside the building through the second floor. But a security guard who was watching him caught Rasul and took him to the intelligence officials deployed on the court premises.

The intelligence men found a diary in his pocket and a money receipt of Chanpainawabgani unit of couple of sentences like 'we will have to work plan wise'; 'Police have arrested Waliullah.' It also has some ottings of expenses, said intelligence

Under interrogation, Rasul claimed himself to be the superintendent of Ranigani AB Dakhil Madrasa. He said he came to Dhaka for a

work he had to do at the Madrasa Board and went to the High Court ouilding just to sightsee.

Rasul said he checked in Hotel Kader on Alauddin Road in Old Dhaka on December 11.

Later when he was handed over to Ramna police, they arrested him under section 54 of Criminal

Procedure Code. He will be produced before Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka today. Rasul told Ramna police that he is an activist of Jamaat-e-Islami

ADB sees

FROM PAGE 1 and transhipment centre for the subregion." Because, it explained, "Bangladesh borders India and Myanmar and is in close proximity to the landlocked countries of Bhutan and

Nepal. Besides, the report said, "With the opening of the Jamuna Bridge and development of the Padma Bridge, the DhakaChittagong transport corridor and other strategic transport corridors can serve to link the northeastern states of India to Bhutan, Nepal, and West Bengal.

But, the ADB observed, "Deficiencies in key infrastructure and a lack of transit rights frustrate opportunities for economic integration with Bangladesh's near neighbours." To address the shortcoming, it prescribed improving regional initiatives under the Saarc and, particularly, the bilateral agreements with India to facilitate trade in energy, to enhance crossborder transit trade and to effectively promote environmental co-operation, among other things.

The ADB's Regional Cooperation Strategy and Programme (RCSP) for South Asia (2005-2008) prioritises sub-regional projects for improving networks connecting Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal, and developing regional

The ADB also noted that Bangladesh's economic ties to East and Southeast Asia have increased as a result of foreign direct investments, particularly in the apparel sector. The bank envisages deepening of these ties with these regions by easing trade and investment barriers as central to Bangladesh's progress in regional

Benapole land port

and Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) welcomed the government decision.

The prime minister who inaugurated the three-day fair organised by BKMFA said knitwear sector is becoming one of the main foreign exchange earners of the country.

One-third of the total export earnings comes from the knitwear sector, she added.

The prime minister said the government is ready to meet all logical demands of the entrepreneurs to promote local industries. but the businessmen should pay taxes regularly and in due time as part of their social responsibility.

She urged the apparel exporters to maximise the use of the opportunities of duty-free access given by EU, Canada, Australia, Norway and New Zealand.

Khaleda also asked the business community to utilise tariff facilitates offered by Thailand, India and China, and take the GSP (generalised system of preferences) offer recently given by Russia to Bangladesh Exporters have to diversify

export products and maintain international standard to boost exports under these facilities in different markets of the world, she sug-Addressing the function Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman also said

Benapole land port should be reopened for supporting knitwear "We have taken a lot of initiatives to resolve the problems of yarn pricing in the local market," he observed and said spinning mills have to reduce yarn prices following

"Time has come to allow import of yarn through Benapole land port," he said adding that World Bank (WB) also recommended reopening

"They now rather depend on the

member countries," said Dr

Rahmatullah, former director (trans-

From the next meetings, the

signatory countries will start negoti-

ation on standardisation of the

roads, safety measures, movement

of traffic, border crossing and mak-

ing the giant highway operative, he

"As Bangladesh decided not to

sign the agreement, it would not

have any right to place any proposal

A high official at the Ministry of

Communications said Bangladesh

could have rather signed the agree-

ment first and then lobbied other

countries for the change of route

instead of staying completely out-

the present-day world, he said,

adding that Dhaka will face difficul-

ties getting into the network after the

deadline is expired as the member

countries will then proceed for

Dhaka's joining the Asian

Highway is necessary for boosting

Bangladesh's "look east" foreign

policy, said a high official at the

foreign ministry. This would

strengthen the government in

forging cooperation and gaining

to join the network, it would also lose

support of the donor agencies in

developing road network, he added.

not vet agreed to sign the agree-

ment. The four other countries are

North Korea, the Philippines,

to lay the groundwork for a global

treaty by the end of 2006 that would

cut trade barriers across a wide

array of sectors, from agriculture to

services, wrapping up the so-called

But an impasse over farm trade

has brought the negotiations to a

virtual halt, with developing nations

accusing the US, EU and other rich

economies of not cutting agricultural

tariffs and farmsubsidies enough,

keeping out exports from poorer

nations that depend heavily on

emerged as a key figure in the talks,

said that while it would be hard for

149 WTO members to reach an

agreement on farm trade, he didn't

foresee an outright collapse like the

previous ministerial gathering in

Cancun. Mexico, two years ago,

which fell apart amid acrimony.

Differences over agriculture was the

"I don't see a repeat of Cancun,"

Indian Commerce Minister Kamal

"Cancun was an outburst of a lack of

Still, Nath insisted that "develop-

EU Trade Commissioner Peter

Mandelson has said that the

ing countries do not want to see the

perpetuation of inequities in global

Nath told the Associated Press.

hope. Now countries are hoping."

culprit there, too.

India's trade minister, who has

agriculture as an income source.

Doha round of talks.

Singapore and Turkmenistan.

As Bangladesh has decided not

Five of 32 Asian countries have

economic benefit, he pointed out.

It would not be wise to be isolated

side the network.

further progress.

om such an interna

or opinion on these issues," he said.

port) of Escap.

Dhaka's not joining

international market. "They are

doing injustice by charging high

The government will release maximum amount of cash incentives to knitwear exporters before the Eid-ul-Azha, the finance minister said responding to the demands of BKMEA. But he said: "I will stop all

kinds of subsidy from next year." **BGMEAWELCOMES DECISION**

Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) welcomed the government decision, saving the resumption of yarn import under back-to-back LC (letter of credit) through Benapole port would help flourish the apparel industry.

"This will accelerate the growth of knitwear industry and expand the market especially in the European Union and the United States," BGMEA said in a statement.

BTMAREACTION

Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA) President MA Awal yesterday told The Daily Star that most of the local textile industries will close down if government implements the decision to allow yarn import through Benapole port.

He refuted the BKMEA claim of high yarn price and urged the prime minister and the finance minister to constitute a committee immediately to verify to what extent yarn prices have increased in the local market compared to the international

"We contribute to the national economy by operating 210 textile mills. We should encourage local industries...I don't understand why we should import varn from India."

Awal said the local textile mills have made great contributions to the increase of knitwear exports in the world market by supplying 75

The Philippines is an island

country and does not need to join

the highway: Singapore has reser-

vations about road communications

with Malaysia; and Turkmenistan is

a central Asian country that might

have conflicts with the neighbouring

states. North Korea did not sign the

agreement as it is politically isolated

from the world, the experts said,

adding that Bangladesh does not

have any valid reason to stay out of

deadline for signing the agreement

may be extended if Bangladesh can

persuade the other member states

Dhaka should lobby the countries

concerned for this. Myanmar is the

first country as it is directly involved

indirectly involved with the route

Bangladesh wants to include into

the network. If the proposed Dhaka-

Yangon Highway is declared as part

of the Asian Highway, maximum

traffic from Thailand will go through

this route reducing the pressure on

India. So, India and Thailand also

should be requested for their con-

Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury said,

"If there is a window in the Asian

Highway with Myanmar, the govern-

ment should consider signing the

European Union won't change its

offer of an average 46 percent cut in

farm tariffs unless he sees some

movement from developing nations

on offering to reduce their trade

barriers on manufactured goods

Mandelson said that parties

gathered in Hong Kong summit

should try to narrow their differ-

ences so that a treaty can be com-

pleted by year's end, saying that

developing nations depend on a

problems of the round in Hona

Kong, Hong Kong must help us to

find solutions of balance and of

ambition in the endgame of the

downgraded as a midterm stocktak-

ing," said Mari Pangestu,

Outside the convention centre.

various protest groups staged

demonstrations to vent their anger

and concerns about the WTO and

globalisation, which many of them

believe benefit primarily the rich and

"This meeting has already been

"Whilst we cannot solve the

agreement.

and services.

successful round.

round," he said.

full modalities."

Rich, poor nations

Former commerce minister Amir

sent to the change, he observed.

India and Thailand are also

with the cherished change.

On change of the route, he said

Rahmatulah observed that the

the network.

Biman

their days in agony in the hajj camp. Biman sources told The Daily Star vesterday that so far the airliner could make only one of its chartered aircrafts operational, a 576-seater Boeing 747, while failed to make operational another one, an Airbus A330-300, due to non-availability of landing permission for it from Jeddah, and it is yet to charter a third one, a Boeing 747.

After Bismillah Airlines had failed to provide two aircrafts to Biman even after signing a contract last week, Biman started its desperate search for aircrafts from other companies. It succeeded in getting one from Airluxer of Portugal and the Airbus reached Zia International Airport (ZIA) at 2:00pm vesterday.

But, Biman sources are afraid that until the airliner succeeds in chartering another wide-bodied aircraft, which may not be possible before December 20, the anxiety over flying all the pilgrims to Saudi Arabia for performing the January 2006 hajj would remain a

However, situation at ZIA eased to a large extent yesterday after Biman authorities succeeded to operate three of its chartered flights carrying 1,000 plus ballotee (under government management) and non-ballotee (under private management) pilgrims and also managed to embark 194 more pilgrims on a regular scheduled flight of the Saudi Arabian Airlines.

Ending overnight waiting at ZIA, several hundred pilgrims finally made their way to Jeddah yesterday afternoon as Biman could fly out two DC-10s with 272 passengers each on board at 5:50pm and 6:30pm and flew out a Boeing 747 with 576 pilgrims on board last midnight. Issuing a press release last night,

Biman authorities assured that upon departure of last midnight's flight, a total of 3932 pilgrims would have been left Bangladesh and there would be no pilgrim stranded at ZIA.

Magistrate court FROM PAGE 16 December 7 granted bail to

Shaheen and his brother Zaheen of South Jatrabari in the Abdul Hye alias Raia murder case.

According to the prosecution, the two brothers along with 25 unidentified people beat the victim to death on November 27 last year. The victim's wife had filed a murder case later with Demra Police Station accusing the brothers On October 28, the brothers

surrendered to the High Court (HC)

seeking bail. The HC, refusing them

bail, directed Shaheen and Zaheen to surrender before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) Court. Dhaka within two weeks. The brothers appeared before the CMM court on November 6 and sought bail again. The court

rejected their bail petition and gave the order to send them to Dhaka Central Jail. Following the rejection, the defence lawyers filed a criminal appeal with the Metropolitan

Sessions Judge's Court. The court scheduled January 5 for the hearlower court record (LCR) on the hearing date. Another defence lawyer filed a

bail petition with the CMM court on December 7 and the court granted bail saying the brothers were implicated in the case as part of a conspiracy to harass them. A lawyer requesting anonymity

told The Daily Star that no lower court can pass any order on an issue that is pending with the higher

Father disowns

the district appeared before a Notary Public yesterday and formally announced his decision to cut off his relations with his son Mamunur-Rashid, a JMB leader. Mamun was a student of honours

class at Gaibandha Government University College He joined JMB activities and

maintained no contact with his family for long.

About two years ago, he was arrested by Joypurhat police in connection with armed confrontation with police at Khetlal and was released on bail. He is absconding

Submarine

FROM PAGE 1

presence of the 16 consortium partners involved in the project as well as government, business and media representatives.

The 16 companies forming the consortium are Algeria Telecom Bharti (India), BTTB (Bangladesh), Cat Telecom (Thailand), Etisalat (UAE), France Telecom, MCI (a telecommunication giant), PTCL (Pakistan), Singapore Telecom, Sri Lanka Telecom, Saudi Telecom, Telecom Egypt, Telecom Italia Sparkle, Telecom Malaysia, Tunisie Telecom and VSNL (India).

BTTB Chairman Abdul Maleque Indonesia's trade minister, who Akhand representing Bangladesh heads a grouping of 45 poorer termed the submarine cable 'a countries within the WTO. "We hope symbol of international cooperaby April to reach an agreement on "This cable will enable

Bangladesh join the information super highway, bring international telecom services within reach of common people and open up opportunities for rapid growth of information & communication technology (ICT) in the country," he added.

Ershad bows

by a meeting source.
In reply, Khaleda Zia said it is not reasonable to take action against anyone until the accusation against him s proved, added the source.

Earlier on the first day of the diaogue, Krishak Sramik Janata League of Kader Siddiqui accused Jamaat-e-Islami of bearing links to the militants and proposed the prime minister purge the party from the government. The government high-ups felt

extremely embarrassed at Siddiqui's suggestions and took the precaution of restraining JP from doing the same vesterday, said a source at the PMO. Meanwhile, the last-minute change

in the proposals split the JP high-ups, resulting in Firoz Rashid, political adviser to the party chairman, withdrawing himself from the delegation to the dialogue, said the JP source.

Firoz Rashid however told The Daily Star last night that he skipped the talks on personal grounds. After over an hour dialogue held at

the PMO, Ershad told reporters that the orime minister said the government will take stern action if anybody is found nvolved in militancy. The other participant in vesterday's dialogue, Council for National Agenda

(Can), also suggested the government properly investigate the allegations against some of the ruling alliance members of connection with the mili-The prime minister told the delega-

tion that her government has taken the matter seriously and measures will be taken to this end. Can leaders told reporters after the meeting. Former chief election commissione Justice Abdur Rouf led the Can delega-

tion, which also proposed that a specia session of the Jatiya Sangsad should be summoned to discuss the militancy JP PROPOSAL

The JP placed a nine-point proposal to

the prime minister, proposing a number of national committees to be formed to stop militancy. Explaining the proposal for a judicial probe body headed by the chief justice. Ershad said the high-powered judicial

an international conspiracy is behind "It will also look into whether any

commission would investigate whether

section of the government or any component of the four-party alliance or anyone outside the alliance is involved in the militancy," read the written pro-

"The government will have to trace the sources of the militancy, their

similar situation. It suggested further the prime minister form a national advisory committee drawing representatives from all political parties, professional bodies and civil society for suggestions

on how to tackle the menace of militancy. The prime minister will lead the committee while the leader of the opposition or any leader of the opposition party will be the co-ordinator of the

national body. About the proposals placed by the political parties and professional bodies. LGRD and Co-operatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan told reporters that after examining those,

national disaster, he said, "We have to esist the bombers politically, socially and administratively.

orime minister spoke separately to HM shad and Rawshan Ershad. Ershad, who met Khaleda Zia after

without the main opposition party. Referring to his individual meeting with the prime minister, he said nothing political was discussed.

was no discussion whatsoever on JP's ioining the ruling alliance. Leaders of the Jatiya Press Club and pro-government factions of Bangladesh Federal Union of

Journalists will take part in the dialogue

sented the kevnote paper in the work-

shop on Socio-political Context of

Right to Information. The workshop

recommended forming a national

'Women and Right to Information'

stressed the need to properly empower

Speakers in the workshop on

platform to campaign for the law.

Right to information

'In our work across the globe, we have found two things to be elemental for people's wellbeing. They are access to ustice and access to information. These two again are inter-linked, with the former depending to a large extent on the latter," Daruwala observed while speaking at the plenary presided over by MJ Steering Committee Chairperson Hameeda Hossain.

and MJ Team Leader Shaheen Anam. Aruna Roy described how their movement to ensure people's minimum wage and protect land rights in six Rajsthan districts turned into a war on widespread corruption and then into a campaign for access to information for social audit and bringing transparency and accountability at all levels of administration. The graft was so pervasive that only 15 percent of the development funds, sne said, used to

Their local movement eventually She said corruption at their locality

reduced by 50 percent after the national Right to Information Act 2005 was enacted in May last. Shailaia Chandra in her turn illustrated how the Delhi Right to

commission. "My experience in Delhi shows the law has made government The conference host. Shaheen Anam, said previously access to information was considered as an important development tool, but lately it has been widely recognised as a

The Bangladesh Law Commission, she said, drafted the proposed Right to Information Act 2002 without any consultation with the socio-political stakeholders. The draft, which is yet to be tabled at parliament as a bill, tells nothing about repealing the Official Secrets Act of the British colonial people. She also listed a number of other restrictive laws and legal provisions including the Evidence Act, the Rules of Business, Penal Code and Code of Criminal Procedure that need to go to provide the people with free

Anam decried the tendency among both the government and the nongovernment quarters to carry on with 'the culture of secrecy' and urged all from the grassroots to the social elites to join and bolster the campaign for the legislation, as otherwise "we may not see this law enacted at all."

egard is much similar to Bangladesh, observed Kishali Pinto-Javawardena. There, too, an archaic Official Secrets Act keeps information confined to the people in power. Pinto-Jayawardena was a member of the team that drafted a right to information act and submitted to the then information minister and prime minister of Sri Lanka in 2001. But, the document has been put on

issues related to the conference theme and a roundtable on role of media in promoting the right followed the ple-

move

finance and training," the proposals The party also asked the government to take assistance from the

countries that also are faced with the

the government might accept some for implementation. Describing the bomb terrorism as a

After the formal discussion, the

about five years since his deserting the four-party alliance in 2001, however said the dialogue will not be fruitful

Replying to a query, both the LGRD minister and the JP chairman said there

Journalists and Dhaka Union of

The other panellists were Mazdoor Kisaan Shakti Sangathan leader Aruna Roy of Raisthan and Delhi Public Grievances Commission Chairperson Shailaja Chandra from India, legal consultant to the World Bank Kishali Pinto-Jayawardena from Sri Lanka

reach the target beneficiaries.

became a national one. "The demand was made from the grassroots and we put pressure on the political parties to include it in their manifesto," Roy said, adding they also compelled the political parties to implement the commitments.

Information Act 2001 has complemented in grievance mitigation by her

officials more accountable." she noted. fundamental human right, which has both a rights and a governance per-

access to information

The situation in Sri Lanka in this

cold storage since then, she regretted. Four parallel workshops on various

With Gono Sayshtha Kendra Chairman Dr Zafrullah Chowdhury as the moderator, Unnayan Shamunnay Chairperson Dr Atiur Rahman pre-

women to enable them to press for their rights to information as well as other basic rights. Prof Mahbuba Nasreen of Dhaka University (DU) presented the

Prof Borhan Uddin Khan of DU law department presented the keynote paper in the workshop on 'Access to information: Violation and Justice. chaired by BLAST Executive Director (ED) Shamsul Bari.

Development Research Network ED Dr Ananya Raihan read out the keynote paper in the workshop on 'Access to Information and Poverty Alleviation', chaired by Brac ED Abdul Muyeed Chowdhury.

Power and Participation Research Centre FD Hossain Zillur Rahman moderated the roundtable on 'Freedom of Information and Role of Media' with Maja Daruwala and Pinto-Jayawardena among the discussants. The discussants recommended provision for inclusion of egovernance in the draft of the Right to Information Act. They said the draft law should be open to scrutiny by media people and legal experts so as not to leave it to the whims of

the lawmakers. Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, editor of the Bangladesh Observer, Mahfuz Anam, editor of The Daily Star, Mahbubul Alam, editor of the Independent, Matiur Rahman, editor of the Prothom Alo, Nurul Kabir, executive editor of the New Age, and Farid Hossain, bureau chief of AP, Prof Sakhawat Ali Khan, head of the department of Media Studies and Journalism, University of Liberal Arts, attended the

HC halts

validity of the move by the Sea Beach

roundtable, among others.

beach to introduce tourist facilities like water sports, cruises and floating restaurants and aids for rescue and ecurity operations Moving for the PIL writ, Advocate

Ozair Faruq said the SBMC has not

authorised introduction of commercia

repeated attempts to construct the jetty clearly indicate the respondents are not sensitive about the protection of the fragile ecology of the beach. They are reluctant to protect the beach from indiscriminate commercial activities

their dismay over the construction

Communications Salahuddin Ahmed inaugurated the construction work of

Management Committee (SBMC)

disparaging the Environment onservation Act and rules.
On November 13, the SBMC approved a plan to construct a jetty in the ECA of the world's longest sea

activities in the sea beach as such activities are prohibited in the earmarked ECA. "So the authorities' decision is liable to be declared unlawful and construction of the jetty is liable to be directed to be dismantled." he He said the actual intention behind the construction of the jetty is hidden and it is against public interest. The

and exploitation, he submitted. The construction of the jetty started at the Diabetic Hospital point of the Cox's Bazar coast amid protests from the locals, professional groups, NGOs and other civil society members. Locals undertook various programmes including human chain, token hunger strike, sit-in and memorandum submission to the authorities concerned to express

On November 24, State Minister for

Tuberculosis in Bangladesh 2005", organised jointly by The Daily Star and BRAC, was held in the confer-To cut down the prevalence of TB

the speakers stressed the need for launching effective advocacy programmes and a monitoring population have access to information as well as to the facilities. They also said decentralisation of advo-

develop TB each year, she said. Dr Vikarunnessa said the preswhile the rate of successful cure was 85 percent in 2004. The disease is more prevalent in males

the spread of the disease, she said. The DOTS is ensured at upazila

medical problems is needed to control the spread of the disease.

Thakurta, Prof Santosh Chowdhury, journalists Khandaker

Mustafa, Sved Nazmul Hag and

1973, a total of 42 cases were filed against the Razakar, Al-Badr and Al-Shams but over the years files of the cases gathered dust only.

a public toilet close to the Rayerbazar monument, showing the authorities' utter negligence to the memory of martyrs. Besides, repair work of the

to "want of funds".

the tragedy that took place only two days before the fall of the Pakistani army on December 16 after the bloody war that left some three million Bangalees killed. To mark the day, different sociocultural and political organisations have chalked out elaborate

programmes, including seminars,

discussions and wreath-laying at

Political, cultural and civil society

organisations will commemorate

Mirpur and Rayerbazar monuments in Dhaka. President lajuddin Ahmed, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina delivered messages on the eve of the Martyred Intellectuals Day. "The defeated forces of the

great sons of the soil," Opposition leader Sheikh Hasina said. She called upon the people to build a united movement for holding the flag of independence high so that "the future generations can live in an open, democratic and noncommunal society.'

Liberation War had wanted to take

revenge for their defeat by killing the

To mark the day, different sociocultural and political organisations have chalked out elaborate part in the discussion

programmes, including seminars.

discussions and wreath laying at Mirpur Shaheed Intellectuals graveyard, and Intellectuals' lemorial at Rayerbazar. The president, the prime minister and the leader of the opposition will

place floral wreaths at Mirpur

Shaheed Intellectual graveyard

Wednesday morning Different political parties, including BNP and Awami League, have chalked out elaborate programmes to mark the day. UNB adds: Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has called upon the people to build up a strong unity like

1971 burying all hostilities and

differences of opinion at this critical

juncture of the country and the

"The occupation forces killed the intellectuals on the eve of the nation's independence in a planned way to weaken our existence," she said on the eve of Martyred Intellectuals Day. "Shaheed intellectuals are

should be uncompromising in securing independence, sovereignty, democracy and welfare of

The bird traders at Kataban have

conduct such raids on regular basis.