

# AL to join parliament,

**FROM PAGE 1**  
opposition lawmakers' attending the House to table the proposals," Hasina said, calling a countrywide day-long hartal for February 15.

Marchers from different districts started to enter the city through Gabtoli, Uttara, Sadarghat, Kamalapur, Syedabad and Jatrabari early in the morning amid police obstructions in places.

They waved banners and chanted slogans like "let's go to Dhaka" and "no election without reforms".

People from different parts of the capital started joining the marchers at around noon. With small processions streaming into the rally venue, the historic Paltan Maidan was filled to overflowing with people by 2:00pm.

The long march began Thursday in places furthest from the capital. Over the next three days opposition supporters from the other parts joined the march that culminated into a huge gathering yesterday.

The government deployed around 8,000 security personnel including those of police, Rapid Action Battalion, BDR and Armed Police Battalion at all the entrances to the capital as well as in and around the rally ground.

**HASINA'S SPEECH**  
The AL chief said despite all possible sorts of obstructions by the government, people from the four corners of the country flooded Dhaka to say 'no' to Prime Minister Khaleda Zia.

Accusing once again the ruling parties of harbouring the Islamist militants and turning the country into a failed state, she demanded the government step down immediately for its failures.

The AL chief blasted the ruling alliance for harassing the opposition leaders and workers all over the country. "Khaleda Zia has exploited the state mechanism to the maximum to resist people marching towards Dhaka, but failed," she said.

In her speech, the former prime minister alleged that over 10,000 leaders and workers of the opposition alliance have been arrested in the last few days. She accused the government of engaging Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and other law enforcement agencies to persecute the people with allegiance to the opposition parties.

Hasina called on the administration, police, Rab and others to dissociate themselves from the 'failed and terrorist government' whose 'days are numbered'.

Speaking on rampant corruption, she said she wonders how the prime minister's family has become one of the richest families in only a few years when it is widely publicised that Ziaur Rahman left behind nothing for his family.

**WHAT OTHER LEADERS SAID**  
Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain said, "Now is the time to say goodbye to this government. Turn this unity into a sheer force that willoust this tyrant government."

He said the people would not stand any election engineering.

In reference to a recent statement by the prime minister, AL General Secretary and 14-party co-ordinator Abdul Jalil said, "People won't give you a chance to materialise your blueprint for grabbing power."

Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon said ouster of the present government is now a matter of time and the countrymen will never allow it any opportunity to return to power.

JSD President Hasanul Haq Inu asked the government to quit, admitting its failure to deliver.

Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Abdul Razzak, Tofail Ahmed, Suranjit Sengupta, Motia Chowdhury, Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, Mohammad Nasim, Obaidul Quader, Mohammad Hanif,

## Cartoon Upoar

**FROM PAGE 16**  
In a statement under rule 300, the government lodged a strong protest with the Danish government through its mission on November 7 for publishing the cartoons by Danish daily Jyllands Posten, Khan said.

He said it is the responsibility of Denmark and certain other western countries to reduce tensions created by the publication of the cartoons on the holy Prophet.

Khan said such act has been done on a very well planned manner to provoke hatred and malicious feelings among Muslims against other religions.

"We've also told the Danish government that religion of Islam was seriously ridiculed through drawing of the cartoons that insulted the profound faith of the Muslims who constitute one-fifth of the global population," the foreign minister said.

Khan said excuse is being made for the cartoons on the plea of freedom of expression. "It's very painful and disappointing that some major western newspapers have reprinted the cartoons tormenting the religious belief of the Muslims."

The foreign minister said Bangladesh as a democratic country believes in freedom of expression. At the same time it believes that this freedom of expression will not cause any hatred, intolerance or ridicule against any faiths or followers of other religions.

Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya of AL, Chittagong and Sylhet mayors ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury, Badruddin Ahmed Kamran, Saifuddin Ahmed Manik of Gono Forum, Bimal Biswas of the Workers Party, Nurul Islam of GonoJantri Party and Dilip Barua of Samyabadi Dal, among others, spoke at the rally.

Our correspondent from Comilla reports: At least 20 people were injured and some 25 vehicles were vandalised when ruling BNP activists attacked the Dhaka-bound long march at the eastern side of Gumti Bridge in Daudkandi upazila yesterday noon.

Of the injured, the condition of Bangladesh Chhatra League activists Adnan, Tipu, Wasim, Raju, and Shechhwashobok League leaders Subrata, Warin and Haji Monir was stated to be critical.

## Taher killed

**FROM PAGE 16**  
insisted on Taher's going to Rajshahi for the meet.

"They were sure Taher will join them, but they did not ask me anything when he was absent from the meeting," Zia Uddin Ahmed, Taher's relative, quoted Sultana as saying.

"My father was under treatment at a Dhaka clinic for heart ailments and was supposed to return to Rajshahi in a week. But he went there in the wake of repeated requests," Himel told The Daily Star over phone.

He quoted his mother as saying that a number of influential teachers pressed Taher for playing an active role in the teacher's promotion.

Taher did not agree with the teachers about the promotion as the concerned teacher "is lacking in his academic efficiency to be a full-time professor," said an RU high official.

On February 1, Taher went missing just after he reached Rajshahi from Dhaka. His body was found in the sewer behind his campus house in the morning of February 3.

Jahangir told the police a teacher asked him in mid-January if he would kill Taher, adding, the teacher planned the murder at Taher's house.

Jahangir orchestrated the killing with his relative Nazmul and brothers Salam and Sohrab Hossain after he was offered job and money.

Jahangir said in his statement he met Taher when the latter reached his Rajshahi residence and killed him between 8:00pm and 10:00pm during load shedding.

He said they were lurking in the house and Salam hit Taher on the head with an iron rod on the second floor and dragged the badly wounded teacher to Jahangir's ground-floor room.

They confirmed his death by strangling him with a pillow and stabbing the wound by a knife, he confessed.

He said the mastermind teacher and another masked man turned up to be sure that the crime was done. The body was dumped into the sewer at the teachers' diklat.

**RU PROTESTS**  
The university yesterday came to a standstill as all academic activities were suspended on the second day of the strikes by teachers and students demanding speedy trial of the murder.

Progressive Students Alliance is enforcing the students' strike, while RU Teachers Association started a two-day work abstention programme.

The students locked every department offices yesterday, forcing teachers and officials to return without attending offices.

Different students' bodies held protest processions and rallies. Students of geology and mining department staged demonstration in front of the administration building and announced a three-day strike to be enforced from today.

**AUTHORITIES DRAW FLAK**  
The RU authorities are busy recruiting teachers when teachers are observing a three-day mourning programme.

The teachers and officials of geology and mining department led by its Chairman Prof Shamsuddin Khokon took out a silent procession protesting the teacher selection process at zoology department.

The authorities on February 4 appointed about 35 teachers to 19 departments.

## Murder case

**FROM PAGE 16**  
the police station to protest against looting of a jewellery shop at Bashurhat Bazar.

The victims' relatives filed three cases with the Fourth Cognisance Court of the district regarding the incident.

The court later sent one of the three cases to the police station for investigation, and the subsequent investigation found former OC Ayub, SI Sudhangshu and the 16 other policemen guilty.

As all the accused are policemen, permission for filing a case against them was sought from the police headquarters.

The Inspector General of Police yesterday gave approval order for filing the case.

# USS Cole attack planner escapes, says Interpol

**AP, Lyon, France**

A man considered a mastermind of the USS Cole bombing that killed 17 sailors in a Yemeni port in 2000 was among 23 people who escaped from a Yemen prison last week, Interpol said yesterday.

The international police agency issued an "urgent global security alert" for those who escaped Friday from the prison via a tunnel. It called the escapees "dangerous individuals."

A Yemen security official announced the escape of convicted al-Qaida members Friday but did not provide details.

Interpol said in a statement that at least 13 of the 23 escapees were convicted al-Qaida fighters, who escaped via a 140-yard-long tunnel "dug by the prisoners and co-conspirators outside."

Yemeni officials confirmed to Interpol that a man considered a mastermind of the Cole attack, identified as Jamal al-Badawi, was among those who escaped.

al-Badawi was among those sentenced to death in September 2004 for plotting the USS Cole attack. Two suicide bombers blew up an explosives-laden boat next to the destroyer as it refueled in the Yemeni port of Aden on Oct. 12, 2000.

Another of the 23 escapees was identified as Fawaz Yahya al-Rabeeie, considered by Interpol to be one of those responsible for a 2002 attack on the French tanker Limburg off Yemen's coast. That attack killed a Bulgarian crew member and spilled 90,000 barrels of oil into the Gulf of Aden.

## Bangla Bhai

**FROM PAGE 16**  
known, locals said.

Saiful had trained madrasa students in the forest area there, police and locals said.

Ikram is a 'regional leader' of the JMB (Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh), sources said.

After Saiful's joining Aghana Fazil Madrasa, Bangla Bhai visited the madrasa and held several meetings in the area, villagers told this correspondent.

The arrestees are being quizzed at Mirzapur Police Station under tight security.

## Caretaker Govt

**FROM PAGE 1**  
adviser and not more than 10 advisers.

Regarding appointment of the chief adviser, the article says the president will at first call the last retired chief justice to become the chief adviser. In case of his unwillingness, the president will ask the ex-chief justice who retired before the last retired chief justice.

If no retired chief justice is available or willing to hold the office of chief adviser, the president will appoint the person who among the retired judges of the Appellate Division retired last.

If such retired judge is not available or is not willing to hold the office of chief adviser, the president will appoint the person who among the retired judges of the Appellate Division retired before the last such retired judge.

And if no retired judge of the Appellate Division is available or willing to become the chief adviser, the president will then, in consultation with the main political parties, pick a Bangladeshi citizen who has the required qualification for becoming an adviser of the caretaker government.

Two senior ministers said BNP is in power for another eight months and they are not going to bring in any major changes to the constitution.

"It is very difficult to find out a person who is accepted by all the political parties of the country. When the prime minister and the leader of the opposition have never even met once in the last four years, how can we expect to sit together and choose one of everybody's liking," one of the ministers observed.

About the opposition plan to place the caretaker government reform plan in the parliament, Communications Minister Nazmul Huda last night told BBC Bangla Service that "it is very positive sign from the opposition side."

"Any proposal can be placed in parliament in line with the constitution, discussion can be held on that proposal and decision may be taken on it," he said. "That's why we have been trying to convince the opposition to place their reform proposals in parliament for a lively discussion."

Another BNP standing committee member said the party has made its position clear about the reform of caretaker government system and it is ready to discuss if the opposition comes up with any specific proposals for reforms of the Election Commission (EC).

"BNP also wants to see a strong Election Commission for holding free and fair elections," he said.

The prime minister and BNP chairperson has already rejected the opposition's demand for reform of the caretaker government system from a number of political rallies.

# Urea output hiccups

**FROM PAGE 1**

As against 28 lakh tonnes of urea demand in the current fiscal year, BCIC had projected that its factories would be able to supply 19 lakh tonnes. But repeated production halts at urea factories now cast a long shadow over meeting the target.

BCIC factories produce per tonne urea at Tk 6,000 and market it at Tk 4,800 while the gap is supposed to be met by government provided farm subsidy.

Attributing the frequent production drops at its factories to serious liquidity crisis, BCIC sources said there have been lapses in proper maintenance of the aging urea factories.

BCIC is handicapped in proper repairing and overhauling of its factories because of government's failure in paying off its Tk 1,000 crore outstanding dues accumulated over the last five years as unmet subsidy bills.

Cash-strapped BCIC's poor maintenance budget could hardly ensure round-the-year smooth operation of all six state-run urea factories in the country thereby forcing the government to import urea from abroad at three times higher rate.

Seeing no prospect of the finance ministry's paying off BCIC's dues, industries ministry in late last year forwarded a proposal to the former asking for raising the market price of urea so that BCIC's loss is minimised.

But the government is sitting on that production and market price adjustment proposal considering severe backlash from farmers as well as from urban consumers in the election year.

In 2001-2002, BCIC factories produced 15 lakh tonnes of urea and incurred a loss of Tk 180 crore as price gap due to non-payment of the subsidy, in the following FY it produced 20 lakh tonnes to incur a loss of Tk 240 crore and as this FY's projected

output is 19 lakh tonne, BCIC is set to count a loss of Tk 228 crore. Shortfall in domestic urea production is a costly affair, as the government has to import urea at Tk 18,000 a tonne compared to BCIC's production cost of Tk 6,000 only.

output is 19 lakh tonne, BCIC is set to count a loss of Tk 228 crore. Shortfall in domestic urea production is a costly affair, as the government has to import urea at Tk 18,000 a tonne compared to BCIC's production cost of Tk 6,000 only.

output is 19 lakh tonne, BCIC is set to count a loss of Tk 228 crore. Shortfall in domestic urea production is a costly affair, as the government has to import urea at Tk 18,000 a tonne compared to BCIC's production cost of Tk 6,000 only.

output is 19 lakh tonne, BCIC is set to count a loss of Tk 228 crore. Shortfall in domestic urea production is a costly affair, as the government has to import urea at Tk 18,000 a tonne compared to BCIC's production cost of Tk 6,000 only.

output is 19 lakh tonne, BCIC is set to count a loss of Tk 228 crore. Shortfall in domestic urea production is a costly affair, as the government has to import urea at Tk 18,000 a tonne compared to BCIC's production cost of Tk 6,000 only.

output is 19 lakh tonne, BCIC is set to count a loss of Tk 228 crore. Shortfall in domestic urea production is a costly affair, as the government has to import urea at Tk 18,000 a tonne compared to BCIC's production cost of Tk 6,000 only.

output is 19 lakh tonne, BCIC is set to count a loss of Tk 228 crore. Shortfall in domestic urea production is a costly affair, as the government has to import urea at Tk 18,000 a tonne compared to BCIC's production cost of Tk 6,000 only.

output is 19 lakh tonne, BCIC is set to count a loss of Tk 228 crore. Shortfall in domestic urea production is a costly affair, as the government has to import urea at Tk 18,000 a tonne compared to BCIC's production cost of Tk 6,000 only.

output is 19 lakh tonne, BCIC is set to count a loss of Tk 228 crore. Shortfall in domestic urea production is a costly affair, as the government has to import urea at Tk 18,000 a tonne compared to BCIC's production cost of Tk 6,000 only.

output is 19 lakh tonne, BCIC is set to count a loss of Tk 228 crore. Shortfall in domestic urea production is a costly affair, as the government has to import urea at Tk 18,000 a tonne compared to BCIC's production cost of Tk 6,000 only.

output is 19 lakh tonne, BCIC is set to count a loss of Tk 228 crore. Shortfall in domestic urea production is a costly affair, as the government has to import urea at Tk 18,000 a tonne compared to BCIC's production cost of Tk 6,000 only.

output is 19 lakh tonne, BCIC is set to count a loss of Tk 228 crore. Shortfall in domestic urea production is a costly affair, as the government has to import urea at Tk 18,000 a tonne compared to BCIC's production cost of Tk 6,000 only.

output is 19 lakh tonne, BCIC is set to count a loss of Tk 228 crore. Shortfall in domestic urea production is a costly affair, as the government has to import urea at Tk 18,000 a tonne compared to BCIC's production cost of Tk 6,000 only.

output is 19 lakh tonne, BCIC is set to count a loss of Tk 228 crore. Shortfall in domestic urea production is a costly affair, as the government has to import urea at Tk 18,000 a tonne compared to BCIC's production cost of Tk 6,000 only.

output is 19 lakh tonne, BCIC is set to count a loss of Tk 228 crore. Shortfall in domestic urea production is a costly affair, as the government has to import urea at Tk 18,000 a tonne compared to BCIC's production cost of Tk 6,000 only.

output is 19 lakh tonne, BCIC is set to count a loss of Tk 228 crore. Shortfall in domestic urea production is a costly affair, as the government has to import urea at Tk 18,000 a tonne compared to BCIC's production cost of Tk 6,000 only.

output is 19 lakh tonne, BCIC is set to count a loss of Tk 228 crore. Shortfall in domestic urea production is a costly affair, as the government has to import urea at Tk 18,000 a tonne compared to BCIC's production cost of Tk 6,000 only.

output is 19 lakh tonne, BCIC is set to count a loss of Tk 228 crore. Shortfall in domestic urea production is a costly affair, as the government has to import urea at Tk 18,000 a tonne compared to BCIC's production cost of Tk 6,000 only.

## Bill seeking 2-yr

**FROM PAGE 1**

Meanwhile, Health and Family Welfare Minister Khandaker Mosharrat Hossain, on behalf of the state minister for home, told the House the government has already approved the draft of the anti-terrorism act.

The minister who was replying to lawmakers' queries about the recent spate of bomb terrorism said police are investigating the sources of the bomb and arms of the militants.

"We will inform the nation about it once the investigation is completed," he said. He also informed the House about the government's steps to check militant activities.

Replying to another written question by Awami League lawmaker Faruk Khan, Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan said 5,868 Bangladeshis are now detained in different countries.

The foreign minister however said initiatives are on to bring the citizens back.

## Cops release

**FROM PAGE 16**  
carry those away on Saturday night.

But locals ran to the spot, seized the truck and beat up Mojibar.

Later, the highway police arrested and took him to the Shibganj Police Station, but the Shibganj police released him without lodging any case.

Contacted, Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Shibganj Police Station Abdur Rashid admitted the incident of tree felling. When asked why Mojibar was released he, however, refused to make any comments.

Upazila BNP President ABM Kamal Selim and General Secretary Motiur Rahman told The Daily Star that they had no knowledge of the incident of felling trees.

## Three Rab

**FROM PAGE 16**  
stand area at about 11:00pm on Saturday looking for a Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) member.

They picked up a bearded man, identified as a pir (religious leader), and allegedly threatened to arrest Khaleq too. Later the Rab men took Tk 11 lakh in cash, a mobile phone and gold ornaments from the house and left.

Acting on a tip-off, a Savar police team led by SI Saurif, caught the Rab personnel at about 1:30am yesterday near Savar bus stand area.

A huge amount of money, a mobile phone set and gold ornaments were recovered from their possession, the police said.

On information, a team of Rab-4 led by Major Zayed visited Savar Police Station and returned the cash and other valuables to Khaleq.

A Rab high official told UNB yesterday afternoon that the three Rab men were closed and a 'court of inquiry' will investigate the matter.

## Tata investment

**FROM PAGE 16**  
major issues except pricing of gas and coal have been settled," said a senior energy ministry official yesterday after a preparatory meeting for today's negotiations held at the ministry with Adviser Mahmudur Rahman in the chair.

"We have concluded three rounds of negotiations and we are hoping to conclude the investment proposal. There are some fundamental issues like coal mining, gas supplies and gas pricing which are likely to get high priority in this round of talks," said a Board of Investment (BoI) official.

The preparatory meeting discussed how the Tata Group would be given gas and coal, a meeting source told BDNEWS.

He said the government developed the Barapukuria coal mine with its own resources. "The government should think twice about the price before giving coal from a ready-made mine," the source said requesting anonymity.

Sources said the national board of revenue (NBR) is ready to give Tata a five-year tax-holiday as per the existing government policy.

A senior official of Tata hinted earlier that it might drop its proposed \$2.5 billion investment venture in Bangladesh over differences on the availability and pricing of gas. "If we do not get gas at a price which we are looking for, there is no point of doing business there," said Tata Sons Director J J Irani in Kolkata in December. "This is simply because Bangladesh does not have any iron ore. So the only advantage there is gas," he added.

## Opposition

**FROM PAGE 1**  
meet the demands of reforms in the caretaker government and Election Commission and resignation of the coalition government.

She announced countrywide demonstrations in district and upazila headquarters on February 8 to protest obstructions and attacks on the long march. Grand rallies will be held in Dinajpur on February 25, in Chittagong on March 1 and in Barisal on March 6.

Top leaders of the 14-party opposition alliance, that also includes left leaning 11-party, Jatuya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) and National Awami Party (NAP), took the fresh agitation programmes at a meeting presided over by Sheikh Hasina at her Sudha Sadan residence in the morning yesterday.

At the opposition alliance's mammoth gathering at Paltan Maidan in the afternoon, the AL chief gave a 24-hour ultimatum to the government, warning of tough programmes if those who were arrested in a few days ahead of the Paltan rally are not released.

# Ferry with 9 trucks

**FROM PAGE 16**

Saha, 30, of Jessore. Witnesses said at least 35 people including the truck drivers, their helpers, ferry staff and a few vendors were on the ferry when it capsized in the middle of the Karnaphuli amid fog at about 4:30am.

"The survivors swam to the shore with help from fishermen and local people," said Kotwali Thana Sub-inspector Jamal Uddin, who is investigating the case.

Witnesses said the accident occurred when the Roads and Highways Department ferry no 28 with the nine trucks on it, each loaded with about 13 tons of boulder, sailed from the Feringee Bazar Bridgeghata point of the river towards the Shikalbaha point on the other side of the river. As the ferry reached the middle of the river after 10 minutes, it started turning upside down and within the next 10 to 15 minutes it capsized.

The trucks were en route to Chakaria in Cox's Bazar from Jafflong in Sylhet, said Abdul Malek, a truck driver who survived the accident.

He told journalists that the ferry operator is to be blamed for the accident.

"As soon as we saw water entering the ferry we immediately cautioned the operator but he didn't pay attention to our concerns. I finally jumped into the water and swam to the shore to save my life."

## SC orders full

**FROM PAGE 1**

A three-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Syed JR Mudassar Husain issued the deferment order following an application moved by EC counsel Khondker Mahbubuddin Ahmed yesterday.

Citing ATN Bangla talk show 'Onnodisti' aired yesterday morning, Mahbubuddin told the court that Awami League lawmaker Dr Alauddin Ahmed made derogatory remarks on the sickness of the chief election commissioner (CEC).

Replying to a question from BNP lawmaker Nurul Islam Moni during the talk show, the Awami League lawmaker said: "Wait till the Supreme Court judgment on February 6. You will see Aziz Saheb going home," the EC counsel said.

On January 4, the High Court observed that the EC should prepare the voter list based on the existing list that was prepared in 2000.

The HC observation followed two petitions filed by AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil and two lawmakers Rahmat Alii and Asaduzzaman Noor challenging the validity of the CEC's 'unilateral' decision to prepare a fresh voter list.

# US, UK, EU hail AL

**FROM PAGE 1**  
said the decision to return to parliament by the opposition is "very welcoming and good". "Parliament is the best place to have dialogue between the parties," the spokesperson said.

Earlier, European Union's troika delegation and US Assistant Secretary for South Asian Affairs Christina Rocca flew in on a three-day visit. At a press conference, she dubbed the next general elections in Bangladesh as 'critical', and said that only a level playing field and a free and fair election will give the winners legitimacy.

"There is more to a strong democracy than elections: we would also like to see the opposition contribute to public debate in a meaningful way through public institutions such as parliament rather than through disruptive means such as hartals," she said.

In question answer sessions, both the EU delegation and the US official denied to get involved in mediating the two major political parties.

# Defiant Iran

**FROM PAGE 16**  
Non-Proliferation Treaty hands the IAEA stronger inspection powers and is central to the UN watchdog's now three-year-old effort to determine what Iran is actually up to.

Mottaki did not specify what other steps had already been taken, but Iran's voluntary measures had notably included a freeze on uranium enrichment.

Iran says it only wants to enrich uranium to make reactor fuel. It prompted the latest crisis by resuming uranium conversion activities last August and enrichment research on January 10.

US President George W. Bush, however, said the text "is not the end of diplomacy or the IAEA's role" and merely the "beginning of an intensified diplomatic effort".

"This important step sends a clear message to the regime in Iran that the world will not permit the Iranian regime to gain nuclear weapons," Bush said.

Although Iranian retaliation is set to worsen tensions, the Islamic regime also signalled it was ready to press on with negotiations with Russia - which now has a one month window to talk with Tehran before the Security Council actually takes up the matter.

Moscow's proposal is for enrichment to be carried out on Russian soil in order to allay proliferation concerns whilst at the same time allowing Iran to have nuclear fuel for civilian purposes.

"The second round of talks will go ahead, but the Russian proposal must be adapted to the new situa-

Deputy Director of Fire Service Rashidul Islam Majumder, however, rejected Malek's accounts and said the accident occurred due to allowing of the overloaded