NEWS

Jyoti Basu

"I have a sad news for you. Jyoti Basu is no more. He has left us. I cannot speak anything more at this moment," said a sobbing Biman Bose, a long-time associate of Basu.

Chances of his surviving the latest bout of illness had dimmed last night when his personal physician A K Maity said, "Given the complications he is suffering from, there is little hope of any good result".

Basu, who was West Bengal chief minister for 23 years from 1977, was shifted from his residence "Indira Bhavan" in Salt Lake and admitted to hospital on January 1 following an attack of pneumonia and resultant chest congestion.

Cremation of Basu will take place tomorrow. As soon as his death news broke, the entire Indian political circle plunged into deep

mourning and gloom. President Pratibha Patil, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, Congress chief Sonia Gandhi and a galaxy of other Indian leaders condoled the death of Basu, describing him as one of the tallest communist

leader of the country. Leader of the Opposition Sushma Swaraj described Basu as a "leader of stature whose work ethic was worth admir-

Trinamool Congress leader Mamata Banerjee, a long-

standing political adversary of Basu's party, said, "I'm grief stricken. Jyoti Babu was a great politician." She also announced cancellation of her party's anti-Left Front government agitation in the next three days as a mark of respect for the departed Streams of grief-stricken

people from all walks of life assembled before AMRI hospital and Basu's Salt Lake house, and CPI(M) headquarters in New Delhi and Kolkata soon after his death news was beamed by television channels. Born in 1914, Basu became a

growth, Debapriya added.

to natural shocks.

from this group.'

A number of countries,

including Maldives and

Samoa, have shown good

growth but remain vulnerable

they are capable of withstand-

some countries are not gradu-

ating from their impoverished

state. Interestingly, the number

of LDCs has increased from 25

in 1973 to 49 now and only two

countries--Botswana and

Cape Verde--have graduated

Incidentally, Bangladesh

has made a lot of progress but

still remains in the LDC strap

because of high population,

Debapriya said. "It has met the

graduation criteria of over-

coming economic vulnerabil-

ity but its high population is

holding back its per capita

So, the viable approach for

Bangladesh for graduation is to

improve its human assets by

improving secondary school

enrolment, malnutrition and

child mortality rate, Debapriya

This is an opportunity for

Bangladesh to compare its

development achievements in

the context of the region and

join the other LDCs to work out

a programme to improve the

international policy environ-

ment more supportive to LDC

international development

under the United Nations, it

was found that some countries

were not only economically

deprived but also structurally

handicapped because of their

savings instrument situation,

lack of diversification or spe-

cialisation, and also for geo-

gathered at international

conferences in 1981, 1991 and

2001 to agree on a plan of

action. Two conferences were

held in Paris and one in

"Currently, we are monitor-

Brussels Programme of

Action was a development

contract between LDCs and

their development partners to

identifying mutual responsi-

partnership based on the

actions--who will do what.

poverty reduction strategy.

ing the implementation of

Action," Debapriya said.

graphical locations.

of LDC was formed.

In the second decade of

development, he said.

ing external shocks," he said.

Time has come to rethink if

"A question remains why

member of Bengal provincial assembly in 1946. And he had strode the Indian political scene like a colossus for more than 60 years.

He had played a significant role in the signing of Ganges water sharing treaty between Bangladesh and India. Basu was deputy chief min-

ister of United Front government of West Bengal twice between 1967 and 1970 and became chief minister in 1977.

He came very close to being the first Bengalee prime minister of India in 1996 but his party rejected the proposal, a decision Basu had criticised a few years later as a "Himalayan blunder".

Even after he stepped down as chief minister due to old age and indifferent health in 2000, Basu continued to be the mentor, guide and patriarch of CPI

President Pratibha Patil, in her condolence message, said, Basu "earned the unique distinction of being the longestserving chief minister of any

"During his political career, he displayed his abilities as a leader of the people, an able administrator and an eminent

In Basu's deat, the nation has lost a veteran and an eminent public figure", she said.

In a condolence message to Chandan Basu, the prime minister said Jyoti Basu's death marked "the end of an era in the annals of Indian politics."

Manmohan Singh said "During his more than 20 years at the helm of affairs in West Bengal, he proved himself to be one of the most able administrators and politicians of independent India.'

Describing Basu as "a man of great integrity with a deep commitment to secular values"

he said "throughout his long career his first priority remained the workers and the peasants".

the welfare of ordinary citizens,

sibilities for governments and

their development partners,

good governance, productive

capacity development, aid,

environment, trade, invest-

ment, human asset, health and

now decided to hold the fourth

Brussels action programme

was that it did not have a dedi-

cated financing programme for

lack of which resources did not

flow from the rich countries to

little market access and tech-

Furthermore, there was

Moreover, external shocks

the poor," Debapriya said.

nology transfer."

summit in Turkey in 2011.

A decade later, the UN has

The responsibilities include

Debapriya said.

education.

hearing on the petitions. Human assets

for hearing all the petitions against the HC verdict. Earlier on January 3, the Appellate Division of SC lifted its four-year old stay order on the HC verdict and also

FROM PAGE 1 There are two regional court adjourned after the syntheses going on. Thirteen second day's proceedings on LDCs will take part in the Asia-December 8 giving the Pacific regional discussion-accused 27 days to seek their now being held in Dhaka. It will counsels either from BDR or design a future course of

BDR Director General "The problem with the | Major General M Mainul Islam will head the three-member court with two others, Lt Col Gazi Khalid Hossain and Maj

> The trial of the BDR accused is being held under

Haitians

FROM PAGE 16

like commodity price collapse Truckloads of corpses were and natural shocks like tsubeing trundled to mass graves Saturday. Search teams also nami and cyclones played havoc with small economies. recovered the body of Tunisian diplomat Hedi Annabi, the At the same time, governments United Nations chief of miswere inadequate to put in right sion in Haiti, and other top UN policy environment and instiofficials who were killed when their headquarters collapsed.

Debapriya suggested that Bangladesh should have a graduation objective built into its overall development strategy with a definite timeframe, which it should use to appeal to the international community for actions. This dialogue also offers

Bangladesh a chance for better understanding of development experiences and "how we can make the international policy environment more LDC friendly".

This also offers a chance to explore new instruments like full effective market access to At that time, a new concept the US," Debapriya said.

It may be noted that the EU Since then, world leaders had offered the LDCs Everything But Arms (EBA) facility a decade ago at the Brussels summit, but the US has yet to commit itself for the LDC cause, he added.

FROM PAGE 16 Brussels Programme of

Though the Officer-in-Charge of Bagmara Police Station Rafikul Islam said they were being interrogated. However, he declined to give any more details.

Sources in the police said bilities. The programme set the two militants were recruiteight goals to identify concrete ing youths for a secret outfit in exchange for Tk 1,000 each during the enrolment and a Designed as a framework of

monthly salary of Tk 6,000.

The youths were supposed shared but differentiated responsibilities of LDCs and to be provided with firearms and training in a few week, development partners, it has become the first-ever resultssaid the police sources adding oriented comprehensive a police team of the district detective branch had been Brussels Programme of monitoring the group's activi-Action defined specific responties for last 15 days.

will ring around why the number of LDCs has increased from 25 in 1973 when the LDC concept was formed to 49 now and why only two countries -

Botswana and Cape Verde -

have graduated from the status.

The high level presence of ministers at the three-day conference will also send out a strong political message for change of business.

The countries will also get to discuss the ways to fight nontariff barriers, new forms of financing and formulating new guards against any future financial crisis with lessons from the current one.

Co-organised by the government of Bangladesh and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the conference will be held at Sonargoan Hotel. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the conference.

The conference will also decide on what issues they would focus in the fourth UN high-level LDC summit to be held in Istanbul next year.

The countries will also prepare its document for action programme to be sent to the UN Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee meeting in New Yorkin 2011.

Bangladesh became an LDC member in 1973 and for the last three decades it has been enjoy ing all the benefits for the group.

5th amendment FROM PAGE 16

year seeking reinstatement o a stay order on the HC verdict. BNP Secretary Genera

Khandaker Delwar Hossain and three SC lawyers Tajul Islam, Kamruzzaman Bhuiyan, and Munshi Ahsan Kabir filed the six petitions. The SC's Appellate

Division is set today for hearing all the petitions, which have been enlisted as item No-6 for hearing on today's cause list of this court. Tajul Islam, one of the

petitioners, yesterday told The Daily Star that they filed the petitions seeking eight weeks adjournment on today's The SC on January 5 this

year fixed January 18 (today)

masses, she said. allowed withdrawal by the incumbent government and nist leader. Muktijoddha Kalyan Trust of two leave to appeal petitions against the HC verdict.

Mutiny

lawyers for self-defence.

Lutful Karim.

Bangladesh Rifles order, 1972.

Experts have said rescue of people trapped beneath wreckage after three days is unlikely. But an American team pulled a woman alive from a collapsed university building where she had been trapped for 97 hours. Another crew got water to three survivors whose shouts could be heard deep in the pancaked ruins of a multistory super-

At the Hotel Montana, the son of co-owner Nadine Cardoso said he could hear her voice from the rubble, and the effort to pull her to safety began. Twelve hours later, with more than 20 friends and relatives of the prominent community member watching early Sunday, she was lowered from a hill of debris on a stretcher.

The rescue was bittersweet for Cardoso's sister, because rescuers also told Gerthe Cardoso they had abandoned a search for her 7-year-old grandson after an aftershock closed a space where he was believed to be. "Well, we can't have them

both," she said after her sister was saved. Later Sunday, UN

Secretary-General Ban Kimoon was expected to arrive in Haiti to discuss aid delivery, which appeared to be speed-

Florence Louis, seven months pregnant with two children, was one of thousands of Haitians who gathered at a gate at the Cite Soleil slum, where UN World Food Programme workers handed out high-energy biscuits for the first time.

LDC meeting Bangladesh leaders

institution. I must go there to

pay my respect to the great

the liberation war of

Bangladesh, she said along-

side the Indian government

Jyoti Basu and his party

worked to ensure food, shelter

eliminate poverty and

improve social and economic

lives of ordinary people,'

Hasina said, adding that he

Ganges Water Sharing Treaty

with India, she said "Without

his support, it was difficult for

Bangladesh to have fair share

Hasina also recalled his

over Ganges water."

Tracts Peace Treaty.

yesterday's sitting.

great politician.

per his wish.

Recalling his role in signing

worked for the commoners.

"He set up a role model to

and medical facilities for us.

Calling back his role during

leader," Hasina said.

FROM PAGE 1

The premier will leave Dhaka for Kolkata on Tuesday morning by a special flight, reports our Delhi correspondent quoting official sources there.

PM's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad told The Daily Star, "There is a possibility that prime minister will go there to pay tributes to the veteran leader.' The Jativa Sangsad unani-

mously adopted a condolence motion yesterday paying tribute to Jyoti Basu and recalling his contribution to liberation war of Bangladesh and for welfare of people. In a condolence message,

Zillur Rahman said Jyoti Basu had made massive contributions to socio-economic development of the general masses of West Bengal through his wise and dedicated leadership. He hoped that his ideals

would inspire all politicians. The president prayed for salvation of the departed soul

and conveyed sympathy to his bereaved family members. In another condolence message to Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina

also expressed her profound shock at the demise of Basu. "Today, we recall with deep gratitude Basu's enormous support to our War of Liberation in 1971," Hasina

The Bangladesh PM also recalled his role and personal initiatives in strengthening bilateral relations between India and Bangladesh, particularly the efforts he had made in the conclusion of the Ganges Water Sharing Treaty in 1996.

Hasina prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul and conveyed sympathy to his bereaved family members.

She hoped that Basu's family members will have courage and strength to bear the irreparable loss.

In a similar message, Opposition Leader Khaleda Zia said, the death news of the veteran political leader has come as a great shock to all democracy-loving people everywhere.

Basu was a widely respected leader because of his integrity and dedication to welfare of the

Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus has also expressed his deep shock at the death of the veteran commu-In a condolence message,

Yunus, also managing director of Grameen Bank, said the death of Basu is a great loss not just to Bengal but also to the world as a whole. "We have just lost a great

son of the Bangla speaking world, Jyoti Basu. I am shocked and saddened that such a great leader and fighter against oppression and inequality, whose career spanned over seven decades, has left us." JS PAYS CONDOLENCE

MOTION The House followed an hourlong discussion on the condolence motion to show respect to Jyoti Basu adjourning other businesses scheduled for yesterday.

"He was not only a veteran politician, but also a guardian in politics in the subcontinent. India lost a great leader and great politician on his death. Bangladesh lost a well wisher and I personally lost a guardian," Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said in an emotion-choked voice.

'Jyoti Basu was not a name for South Asia, he was an

A friend

FROM PAGE 1 The famous communist leader also urged the Indian government to support the Liberation War and express solidarity with the people of Bangladesh in their struggle for independence, the Workers' Party president told The Daily Star.

Jyoti Basu helped Bangladesh obtain its rightful share of water from the Ganges in 1996. He was the first highprofile Indian leader to raise the issue and spoke on the radio to

convince the people of India. "Jyoti Basu had been very active in strengthening relations between India and Bangladesh. With his death, Bangladesh has lost a true friend," said Menon.

He said the communist leader held a great fascination for Bangladesh. But his desire to visit his ancestral home in Narayanganj for the last time remained unfulfilled. Jyoti Basu was very modest

and became emotional if any issue relating to Bangladesh came up for discussion. He also had affection for Sheikh Hasina. Menon said he spoke to the veteran Indian leader on

Bangladeshi people.

added Menon.

Bangladesh within a day,"

request from a top BNP leader when India stopped exporting rice to Bangladesh during the tenure of BNP-led government. engine boats. Menon requested Basu to ask the Indian government to Ijtema ground into different lift the restriction on account of

khittas so that people from different zones could stay the sufferings of the among their neighbours. "The Indian government took initiatives to send rice to

participants.

OMS of rice FROM PAGE 16

Chapainawabganj and Kushtia trader in the city's Karwan stern actions against them, held the administration respon-

sible for the increase in price. Food Minister Abdur Razzak too thinks that prices are high mainly because of international price hike. "But we are intervening. As the OMS starts, prices are expected to decline, "he said.

of around 10 lakh tonnes of rice. We would continue OMS for five months if we could sell 2 lakh tonnes a month," said Razzak. **IMPORTS OF RICE** ANDWHEAT

role in Bangladesh govern-To maintain public food stock ment's move to bring back refugees from India after signing the Chittagong Hill The premier said Jyoti Basu's home at Sonargaon in Narayanganj district would be underway, Razzak said. transformed into a library as

import extra wheat considering Before the discussion, the fact that procuring 3 lakh lawmakers started expressing MT of Aman will not be possible their deep shock at his death almost at the beginning of the During question-answer session in the afternoon, they

also expressed their respect to Jyoti Basu. In the evening, Speaker Abdul Hamid formally informed the House about the BRAC, earlier suggested that the death of Jyoti Basu and read government imports wheat in out a short biography of the bulk amount to maintain its

"I stand here to show my respect to a great hero of Asia. He did not hesitate to suffer for the welfare of the party and people," Finance Minister AMA Muhith said during the

discussion. Awami League lawmakers Abdur Razzaq, Tofail Ahmed Suranjit Sengupta, Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, Fazle Rabbi Mia, Chief Whip Abdus Shahid and Jatiya Party lawmaker Ruhul Amin Hawlader, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal lawmakers Hasanul Haq Inu and Mayeen Uddin Khan Bada and Industries Minister Dilip Barua took part in the discus-

Knock down

claimed Babul.

Rajuk Chairman Nurul Huda told the Daily Star that they are serving notices upon buildings that violated approved designs following a decision of the housing and public works ministry and Rajuk.

"The decision was taken last week, and we directed officials concerned to serve notices upon the errant buildings," he said.

He said they identified over 5,000 buildings in the city with additional floors constructed violating approved designs, and which are using designated car parks for other commercial purposes.

Serving notices against errant building owners is a routine job and Rajuk will go into action against all identified errant buildings one by one, said Huda.

Biswa Ijtema

FROM PAGE 1 any militant attempt to carry out subversive activities at the Ijtema ground.

State Minister for Home Shamsul Haque Tuku, local MP Zahid Ahsan Russell, Home Secretary Abdus Sobhan Inspector General of Police Nur Mohammad and Rapid Action Battalion's Director General Hassan Mahmood Khandker were present at the meeting among others.

Rab DG Hassan Mahmood told the Daily Star, "We have projected our security plans in three phases--pre, during and after ijtema.

"Adequate numbers of CCTV were set up in and around the area -- a five-square kilometre area on the Turag river -- that will help in policing and intelligence to resist militant threats", he said.

A correspondent from Gazipur reports that bomb disposal units, dog squads and other vigilances will remain in the area while medical teams and utility facility services were arranged

More than two million devotees from across the country and world are expected to join the ljtema. Around 11,000 security

personnel, including over 1,000 Rab members, forces this provision," the health from the Armed Police minister warned. Battalion, Ansar, policemen and several hundred members of various intelligence agencies will be deployed. Two helicopters would

hover the sky and a huge number of forces will patrol the waterways by speedboats and The organisers divided the

BRTC will run 50 buses and Bangladesh Railway will run 21 special trains to carry the

"It's rice millers in whose syndicate is behind the rice price hike," said a retail rice Bazar. If the government takes prices will automatically come down, he said. The trader also

"The government has a stock

the government will import 50,000 tonnes of rice from Myanmar. One lakh tonne of wheat has already been imported while import of five to six lakh tonnes from Russia is The government decided to

as its price is higher than the government procurement rate. The government has set price of 1 kg rice at Tk 22 and paddy at Tk Talking to The Daily Star, economist Dr Mahabub Hossain, executive director of

food stock. He said the government must be aware of rice smuggling attempts to the neighbouring countries. "Boro is the crop on which the authorities must put special emphasis, so that its production is in no way hampered," said Hossain.

IMPORT OF LENTIL

Meanwhile, an inter-ministerial monitoring committee on commodity prices decided to increase supply of lentil. To that end the government will participate in an international tender to import 14500 tonnes of lentil from Nepal on January 20. The decision came from a meeting at the commerce ministry around noon. Chaired by commerce min-

istry acting secretary Mostafa Mohiuddin, the meeting also recommended strengthening of social safety net programmes, including Food for Works and Test Relief, said a meetinginsider.

Proshika

FROM PAGE 1 Saifuddin, Kazi Khazey Alam, Abdul Haq Howlader, Shahtab Hossain and Afzal Hossain

Bhuiyan--were earlier sacked

from Proshika. Khondokar Mohammad Kamrul Hossain in his complaint mentioned that the organisation chucked them out due to their alleged involvement in corruption, misuse of power and misappropriation of

the office funds. On May 24 last year, the governing body of Proshika removed Faruque from the organisation and appointed MA Abdul Wadud as its chairman and Mahbub Ul karim as its

chief executive. Following his removal, Faruque filed cases against the company's decision with First Assistant Judge's Court and District Judge's Court at different points of time but all the cases were rejected. At last he filed a civil revision case with the High Court.

Upon filing the case, the HC asked both the parties to maintain the status quo.

Since then Faruque has been

trying to take over the office. On January 11 this year, a group of people backed by Faruque drove the staff out of the head office of the NGO and took control of the building.

Some 25 to 30 people stormed into the Proshika Bhaban in the city's Mirpur area and beat five to six Proshika officials on the day.

Single-child FROM PAGE 16

He said the government will take measures to prevent private medical practitioners from

taking excess fees from patients. "Doctors working in the government hospitals can not visit their private patients during office hour. Stern action will be taken if any doctor violates

In response to another query, he said the government has moved to update the policy for setting up private hospitals. He said providing ambu-

lances to all hospitals across the country are under process. The health ministry and home ministry will jointly take necessary steps to amend the post mortem law, which was enacted during the British regime, he added.

In absence of the health minister, State Minister for Heath Mujibur Rahman Fakir replied supplementary queries of lawmakers in the House.

PM's visit a failure FROM PAGE 1

minister has "sold" the country to India, but the people did not give her that mandate.

In her written statement, the former premier said, "The prime minister could not bring anything. She returned from Delhi with an empty hand...She gave all the things to India. "Whatever happened in this

tour has gone in India's favour and against the interest of Bangladesh. The prime minister's India visit was not only a failure but also a harmful event for the country," Khaleda said.

"People of the country are worried about the outcome of the prime minister's India trip. The government has left no option [for us] but to forge a movement to protect our national interest, security, and independence and sovereignty," she said.

The opposition leader said the movement will go ahead step by step. She, however, did not specify any possible timeframe for the movement. Khaleda also asked the

government to make public the three treaties, one memorandum of understanding and one protocol signed between Bangladesh and India since "the people are still in the dark about them". The BNP chief dodged the query if she will scrap the deals

if elected to power again, saying, "I have not yet seen the agreements.' Asked how she can term the treaties anti-state without seeing their contents, Khaleda said, "It can be understood

easily if you go through the

joint communiqué. "We are not anti-India. We are opposing the policy of making everything favourable to India and India-oriented. That is why we are rejecting the joint communiqué and people have to be united against it.'

Khaleda held the press conference a day after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina told a press briefing that she was successful in securing national interests through the agreements. Most TV channels broadcast Khaleda's speech live. A number of senior BNP leaders and advisers were present at Khaleda's press conference.

Regarding the prime minister's appeal to the opposition to return to parliament for discussing her India visit, the opposition leader said, "Where is the scope of discussion in parliament after signing a bond of slavery through the prime minister's India tour?"

As part of a greater movement, the BNP will soon hold talks with students, youths, workers, women, businessmen and professionals in phases alongside ongoing programmes, Khaleda told newsmen.

Saying the country is at a 'critical juncture" at present, she urged people to get prepared to resist all conspiracies against the country. "I am urging all to participate in the struggle to save the country and the people and build a national unity," she said.

Criticising the ruling party's reception to Hasina upon her return from India, she said people have never seen such a reception to the prime minister. The reception was actually meant to cover the failures of the prime minister, keeping the people in the dark, she added.

She said there has been no development regarding Bangladesh's fair share of water of the 54 common rivers.

Rejecting the PM's allegation that the BNP did not do anything about water sharing when it was in power, Khaleda said, "I boldly raised all the issues relating to national interest whenever I was in power...But the prime minister did not make any appeal to review the Ganges water treaty.'

did not feel the necessity to raise the issue of making Bangladesh's private TV channels available in India, which she termed a "serious offence".

Khaleda said the PM has told the media that during her visit they decided to celebrate the birth anniversary of poet Rabindranath Tagore jointly but she ignored Kazi Nazrul Islam although both the poets bridge the cultural bond between the two countries. She said the whole nation is

n't know anything on the mat-"Such ignorance is unforgivable," said Khaleda.

concerned about the

Tipaimukh project but the

prime minister said she does-

"Everyone had expected that Tipaimukh would be the main agenda of her [Hasina's] tour but unfortunately she returned with some old assurances," she said.

She said, "Three treaties, a memorandum of understanding and a protocol were signed during the prime minister's visit. But people are still in the dark about their contents. Those treaties are sensible as they are closely linked to national security, sovereignty and territorial integrity. People

have the right to know the contents of the treaties. "Reports have been published in newspapers that a 'secret security deal' has been signed during the premier's visit. There are doubts in people's mind as the premier remains silent about the issue. We want a clear official state-

joint declaration proved that the prime minister has sold the country's interests. She unilaterally gave her consent to allow India to use the seaports, road, rail and waterways and assurance about supporting India's bid for permanent membership in the Security Council. She also gave the nod for building the Tipaimukh dam and providing permanent transit

ple cannot be run only by renting out roads and ports. Our industrial sector will lose competitiveness if India gets port and transit facilities," she The opposition leader said

it will hamper industrialisation

and reduce the country's

export. Besides, Bangladesh

Indian products. On India's assurance of giving Bangladesh \$1 billion loan assistance, she said, "Why should we take such loans? This money will be spent for building infrastructure for movement of Indian vehicles and purchasing Indian rail engines and coaches. But the poor people of Bangladesh will have to pay the debt with inter-

Khaleda said, "India gave assurance that it will sell 250MW power to Bangladesh. But it will take at least three years. You all know that the ruling party made an election pledge of generating 7,000MW

giving permanent transit facilities to India to transport heavy machinery through Bangladesh territory to build power stations," she said.

"No solution could be reached regarding the disputes over maritime boundary. The prime minister did not even protest the killings of Bangladeshis in border areas,'

of organisational strength. In reply, Khaleda said, "The party is neither weak nor struggling with indecision. We want to give the government time for continuation of the democratic

process.' Replying to another query,

only India.

AL'S REACTION

In an instant reaction to Khaleda's remarks on the prime minister's India visit, Awami League standing committee member Obaidul Quader said the BNP chief's views prove that she does not

think about the country. "She [Khaleda Zia] will not be able to confuse people. She made the remarks out of habit," Obaidul said.

Khaleda Zia's remarks, he

said their operational expenses would shoot up if they allow special accounts for farmers across the country.

sources said the number of active farmers in the country now stands at 1.82 crore.

Rangpur College unit Raqibul Islam Shyamol and activist of the organisation Rahel. President of JSD backed

He demanded action against the police who illegally

custody.

They protested the project several times when the BNP arrested and tortured them in was in power, said Khaleda.

ment on the matter," she said. Khaleda said, "The 50-point

facilities to India. "A country of 15 crore peo-

will become a market for

power by 2013. "The major objective was not purchasing power but

she added. Referring to her remark that they will welcome the premier with flowers if she can protect the country's interests, otherwise they will put thorns in her path, a reporter asked Khaleda if BNP failed to keep its word because of its indecision or lack

she said they are in favour of having connectivity with all countries in this region but the government gave "corridor" to

The AL will soon come up with a formal reaction to

He however acknowledged they must do it in national interests.

Agriculture ministry

Rangpur college FROM PAGE 16 Tanvirul Zaman, president of

Chattra League of the district unit Rafiqul Islam said to the journalists that police tortured Shyamol, Raqibul and Rahel.

added. Khaleda said the PM also Farmers FROM PAGE 16 A state-owned bank official