NEWS

PM for direct road

FROM PAGE 1 She said her visit would strengthen friendly relations between the people of

of China.

Bangladesh and the people

Often known as "The City of Eternal Spring" for its year-round temperate climate, Kunming is the political, economic, communications and cultural nervecentre of Yunnan.

transportation hub in Southwest China, with a rail Myanmar. link to Vietnam, and road links to Laos and Burma. The proposed road connectivity between Kunming and Chittagong would link with the road running from Myanmar to the Chinese

Once it is established, Bangladesh would be connected by road to almost the whole of the important Association of South East Asian Nations regional bloc's lucrative markets, which include Singapore,

Thailand, the Philippines and Indonesia.

Efforts at reviving the connectivity that existed between the various regions of China and the lands that now comprise Myanmar, India and Bangladesh in olden times received a boost in 1999 with the birth of the Kunming Initiative, in which it was first proposed that a road link be established It is also the leading between China and Bangladesh through

The PM told guests at the banquet how impressed she has been by the remarkable progress she has witnessed in China on this tour, and said Bangladesh is learning from the Chinese experience of economic development.

She invited leaders of the Yunnan province, including Li Jiang, to visit Bangladesh at a time convenient for them. The PM and Li Jiang also exchanged gifts at the

VoIP watch

having considered their rights while shutting down operations of these telecom service providers.

The BTRC will serve showcause notices on operators already accused of conducting illegal VoIP business.

"If they fail to give satisfactory reply, the commission will go for tougher actions like cancelling licences or imposing penalty or both," BTRC Chairman Zia Ahmed told The Daily Star yesterday.

Industry insiders said the

VoIP-based call termination business has already captured over 40 percent of the market of incoming and outgoing international calls. This has tremendously affected telecom companies licensed to handle international calls while the government is being deprived of huge revenue.

Illegal VoIP operation has been thriving in Bangladesh since the late 1990s amid the authorities' silence. At one point in 2006-07, such operators were taking away around Tk 15,000 crore annually, the money too being illegally transacted internationally.

During the last caretaker government rule the BTRC fined five mobile phone operators and a few landline service providers for their involvement in the illegal business. It realised around Tk 650 crore in fines from

By 2008, illegal VoIP business shrank amid strong drives spearheaded by the Rapid Action Battalion and

the BTRC. Soon after the political government came to power, the VoIP business reappeared on the scene.

The prime minister in a decisive move recently directed the telecom ministry and BTRC to take steps against illegal VoIP opera-

Twelve landline operators and six mobile phone operators have more than 56 million customers in Bangladesh with mobile operators serving around 54

More than one crore nonresident Bangladeshis generate over three crore minutes' calls to Bangladesh every

The BTRC chairman

claimed that after the recent drive international call termination through legal channels jumped over 4.5 crore minutes a day as of yesterday from 3 crore a week ago.

The telecom regulator filed a case against 12 officials of RanksTel with Tejgaon Police Station yesterday.

BTRC seized huge VoIP equipment from Dhaka Phone and WorldTel on March 14 and March 16. Dhaka Phone's five top officials were arrested and sent

With 2,88,272 subscribers throughout Bangladesh, Ranks Telecom Ltd is the largest private fixed line operator. Dhaka Phone has 75,000 customers while WorldTel has 14,000.

organising secretary for

by central leaders, several

hundreds of local leaders and

workers also took part. A

PowerPoint presentation was

shown on Tarique Rahman

which was applauded by the

to the BNP chairperson, bit-

terly criticised the government,

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina

and her son Sajeeb Wazed Joy,

saying people are now waiting

for the call of Khaleda Zia to

forge a movement led by

Bangladesh Chhatra League to

join Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal,

BNP's associated student body.

"Otherwise, you'll face prob-

lems during wedding. Even the

marriage registrars will not

agree to conduct your wed-

He urged women workers of

Tarique Rahman.

ding," he said.

Shawkat Mahmud, adviser

Besides huge participation

Chittagong Division.

audience.

In two recent raids, the

Problems not

instructions after hearing our problems. But none of us got any opportunity to place our problems."

Asked about the conference's outcome, Abdur Rahim, general secretary of 6 Kushumpura union in Chandanaish upazila, said, "It was just an organisational meeting, nothing else. But it would be helpful for the party if field level leaders were allowed to speak."

The guests and speakers were busy praising Tarique Rahman and most of them termed him the future prime minister of the country, meeting sources said.

Former state minister Salauddin Ahmed, also joint secretary general of BNP, coordinated the meeting where at least 1,200 field level representatives from Chittagong (South), Cox's Bazar and Khagrachhari took part.

places across the country to

review the role of union repre-

sentatives supervised by

Tarique Rahman, senior vice

chairman of the party, when

Lutfur Rahman Kajal, MP

presided over the meeting held

at a hotel in Cox's Bazar, while

National Press Club President

Shawkat Mahmud was the key

Prof Siddique Ahmed

BNP was in power.

discussant.

Several local journalists expressed resentment over the The conference was organspeech of the National Press ised as part of BNP's decision to Club president. hold grassroots meetings in 10

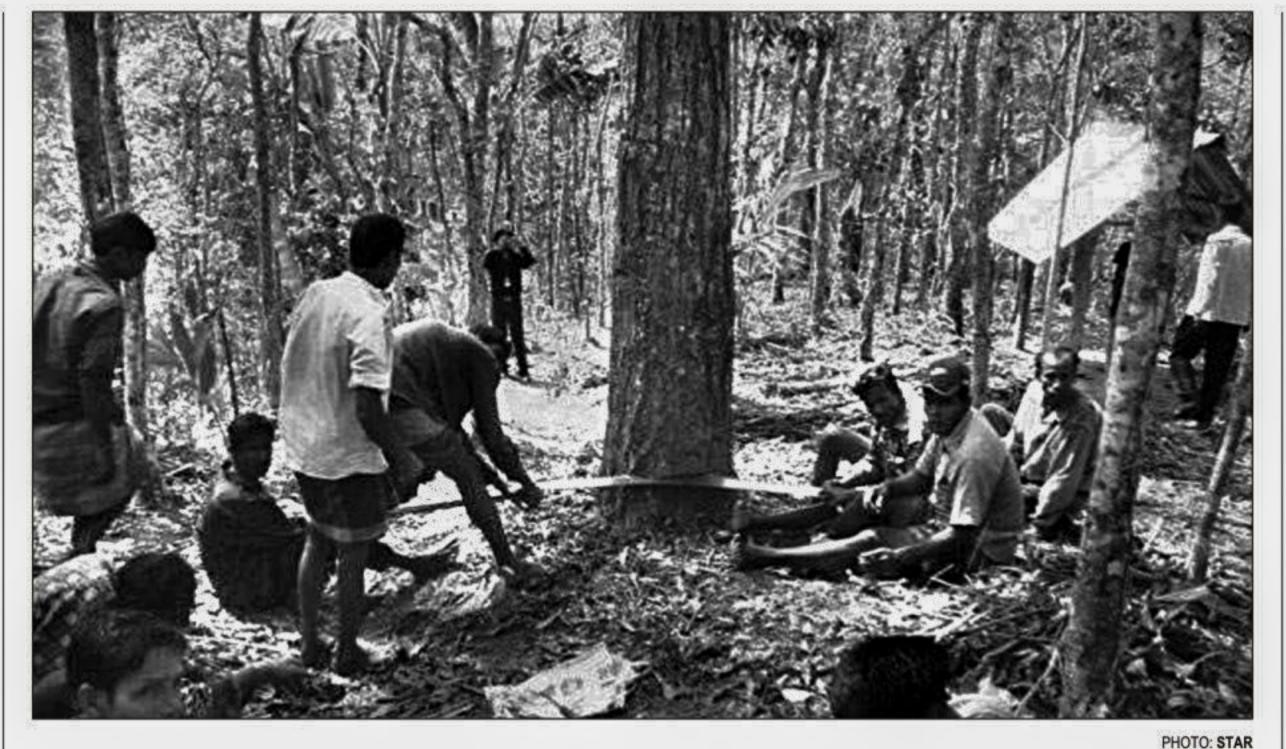
"He is a leading person of our community, but unfortunately he talked more like a political leader," said Abdul Quddus Rana, general secretary of Cox's Bazar Journalists Union.

20 injured

FROM PAGE 16 started, local people opposed

it. This enraged Santals and they attacked the locals with bows and arrows," he claimed.

Later, Additional District Chowdhury and Prof Muktar Ahmed of Chittagong Magistrate Ruhul Amin Khan University and Prof Inamul and Mithapukur Upazila Haque of Chittagong Islamic Parshad Chairman Zakir University also spoke at the Hossain visited the spot and meeting conducted by Golam asked both the sides to maintain Akbar Khandaker, BNP central status quo concerning the land.



Loggers yesterday saw a tree at Nahar Tea Garden where indiscriminate felling of trees continues.

Pro-VC resigns

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Professor Anisul Haque, provice chancellor (academic) of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, has stepped down from his position citing personal reason.

Anisul, also chairman of neuromedicine department of BSMMU, submitted his resignation letter to the authority on March 16, and it was accepted on March 18, BSMMU Vice-Chancellor Prof Pran Gopal Dutta confirmed yesterday. He resigned only four days

before completing his oneyear tenure as the pro-VC.

Pran Gopal Dutta informed reporters that Anisul had quit only for personal and family Anisul told The Daily Star

that there is no other reason behind his resignation.

"As my family members stay abroad, I have to leave the country very often and thus my family life has been disrupted and my academic activities as well, since I took the administrative responsibility," he said. However, on condition of

anonymity, a number of teachers and physicians said Anisul had quit following a dispute with the VC over admission of party students in the residency programme. But Anisul declined the comment and said, "The train-

ing programme include doctors from all groups irrespective of their political beliefs, and we all are happy with the Source said a list of names

had already been sent to the health ministry for the newly vacated pro-VC post. The names include Prof

Iqbal Arsanal, secretary general of Swadhinata Chikitsha Parishad and dean of basic science faculty, Sharfuddin Ahmed, chairman o Department Ophthalmology, Prof Sajal Kanti Banerjee of cardiology department, Prof Atiqul Haque of medicine department, Prof Ruhul Amin of microbiology department and Prof Kanak Kanti Barua of neurosurgery department.

No to symbolic

FROM PAGE 16

"The trial of war criminals doesn't mean trying thou sands of people. It will be symbolic in the sense that only those who played leading roles in the 1971 massacre will be tried," he said in an attempt to clarify the government's

On the SCF's stance regarding the government's strategy, its Vice Chairman Maj Gen (retd) KM Shafiullah said, "There is no scope for a 'symbolic trial'. All who committed war crimes must be brought to justice in accordance with the War Crimes Tribunal Act 1973".

Lt Gen (retd) M Harun-Ar-Rashid, general secretary of SCF and also former army chief, mentioned of BNP Lawmaker Salahudin Qadei Chowdhury as an alleged war criminal.

Planning Minister and SCF Chairman Air Vice-Marshal (retd) AK Khandaker said all the preparations for the special war crimes tribunal were at the final stage and the trial would start very soon.

The SCF declared that they would be holding different programmes across the country to mark the Black Night of March 25 and the Independence Day on March 26. In Dhaka the programmes will be held at Suhrawardi Udyan from 10:00pm on March 25.

The SCF urged all to switch off the lights for a minute at exactly 11:59 pm to 12:00am to commemorate those who died on the night of March 25, 1971.

SCF's Vice-Chairman Maj Gen (retd) CR Dutta, its Organising Secretary Harun Habib, among others, were present at the press briefing.

Lotus Temple straints but our work Mandirvita, King requires more research and

Devakhadga had donated excavation." land to four Viharas and Viharikas in the area.

"If we take the plaque into account, Dhupirtek might be one of these four sites," said Mostafizur Rahman.

The temple also indicates different phases of ancient settlement in the region dating back to 450 BC.

In 2001, examination of charcoal samples confirmed the existence of human habitation and industry in Wari-Bateshwar around 450 BC. Archaeologists think the civilisation lasted for 500 vears.

The archaeology team had excavated a small portion of the temple last year. The recent excavation has unearthed the perfectly square brick-built structure.

The excavators' claim of the structure to be a Buddhist Lotus Temple was confirmed when they found an eight-petal lotus made of dressed red bricks embedded on an altar. In Buddhism, the lotus--

padma--is a very important symbol of many aspects of the path to enlightenment-complete purification of the body, speech and mind, and the blossoming of wholesome deeds in liberation.

The Buddha is often depicted as sitting on a fully blossomed lotus. The red lotus signifies the

original nature and purity of the heart. Remnants of seven more

brick-built lotuses were also found during the excavation.

circumambulation path (pradakshinpatha) was also found around the temple.

The lotus embedded brick-built altar is above the southern wall of the temple, which was used as the main temple at an earlier time, showing that the altar was built later.

The team of archaeologists is now working to determine how long the temple survived in each phase and why it was destroyed and rebuilt.

"We want to preserve the temple as we find it, using the same materials used for its construction, showing the phases of change the temple underwent," said deputy team leader Mizanur Rahman. "Unfortunately, we are under financial conl'eesta sees

FROM PAGE 16 In this regard, Bangladesh

proposed that Bangladesh, India and Nepal jointly build reservoirs at suitable locations in Nepal. It proposed to consider the Saptakosi dam for instance. The Indian side agreed to a tripartite discussion among the three coun-

The JRC meeting also discussed supply of drinking water and minor lift irrigation schemes on the river Feni, implementation of Ganges Waters Treaty 1996, bank protection and embankment repair works along border rivers, cooperation in flood forecasting and warning, dredging of Ichhamati and India's proposed Tipaimukh Dam and river inter-linking project, UNB adds. On the Tipaimukh Dam

Project, India reiterated that it would not take any unilateral decision on its proposed river inter-linking project that might affect Bangladesh. The Bangladesh side

expressed happiness over India sharing data on flood from a number of stations, which helped in forecasting flood. Bangladesh requested to transmit more data from further upstream stations in India on a continuous basis.

As a goodwill gesture, the Indian side agreed to provide flood data of Sahibganj site, situated 78 km upstream of Farakka barrage, on a continuous basis. This would enable Bangladesh get the advance warning and forecast 16 hours earlier, reports our correspondent in New Delhi.

During his stay in New Delhi, Ramesh Sen also called on Indian Premier Manmohan Singh and had meetings with Indian Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee and External Affairs Minister SM Krishna.

Adviser to the PM Mashiur Rahman, Bangladesh High Commissioner to India Tariq A Karim, Mostafa Faruque Mohammed MP and Secretary to the Water Resources Ministry Sheikh M Wahid-uz-Zaman were in the Bangladesh delegation, among others.

not only about 30 to 40 years

old they are also leaky. So,

water might be contaminated

when it comes into contact

Apart from this, illega

water connections cause

leakage and damage to supply

lines exposing them to con-

Sayedabad plant will have a

pre-treatment plant under the

phase-2 project by March

next, which will help reduce

the level of contamination, he

Tender process is on for

phase -1 of a Tk 1,400 crore

project funded by the Asian

Development Bank to rehabil-

Dhaka Wasa covers an area

with sewer lines.

tamination, he said.

Wasa stink

that is from March to May."

Water supplied in many

areas comes from Sayedabad Treatment Plant which treats water from the Shitalakkhya. But the river water is so polluted that it is impossible for the plant to free it from stench and industrial effluents during dry season, he said.

The water crisis goes from bad to worse during the dry season in the absence of rain-Usually the demand for

water in the capital is 2.20 added. crore litres and the supply is 2 crore litres. The demand goes up to

2.30 crore litres during the dry season while the supply goes down to 1.90 crore litres. Sayedabad, Chandighat

and Godnail treatment plants together meet only 13 percent of the demand and 87 percent is extracted from underground. Water may get contami-

nated during transmission, said the Wasa managing director.

The distribution lines are

pleted by 2013.

Dhaka.

digging roads under the pro-

ject scheduled to be com-

of 350 square kilometres, down the hackers." including Narayanganj. A total of 3,500 km of Wasa water supply lines in the city will be rehabilitated without

Srimangal FROM PAGE 16

protest the cutting of the trees.

The imperilled speakers said about 500 Khasia people of 70 families of Kalin Punjee would be evicted due to felling of 4,000 trees of the garden. As the garden authorities

plan to deploy elephants to transport the chopped trees, the indigenous community expressed fear that their betel leaf plantation would be destroyed due to elephant movements. Manager of the tea garden

Pijush Kanti Bhattacharya, however, said the garden authority would spare 450 trees from current tree-felling drive considering habitation of the indigenous people.

Gang stab 3, rob city nouse

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A gang of robbers stabbed three people while looting the house of a Jubo League leader in Dhaka early yesterday. The robbers attacked

Uttarkhan Union Jubo League

General Secretary Suruzzaman, his father Momin Uddin and his brother's wife with machetes. The injured were rushed to local clinics. According to police, a gang of 10 to 12 masked robbers

armed with sharp weapons stormed the house and looted 15 tolas of gold, two mobile phones and Tk 2.50 lakh. Suruzzaman filed a case in this connection with Uttarkhan Police Station

yesterday. Investigation officer of the case Sub-inspector Hazrat Ali suspects the robbers to be local criminals since they wore masks during the rob-

Home Minister Sahara Khatun visited the victim's house and directed police to arrest the robbers as early as possible.

PMO-run

FROM PAGE 1

"Earlier such incidents took place but the hackers were detected. Now we are also hopeful of tracing the hackers, he told The Daily Star last night. After the sites were hacked

they flashed some Hindi letters and "JAI HIND!". The text on the hacked sites

reads, "Secure border between INDIA and BANGLADESH If any terrorist send by Pakistan came via Bangladesh route then I will be danger to YOU Cyber War will be started this is demo We don't want more 26/11 in India. GOVERMENT LOOK AT IT ELSE CYBER WAR WILL STARTWE ROOTED AND ----- YOUR ISP! " "EMIL INDIAN HACKER HackeD Your System [sic].'

Who will be next," reads a message on one of the hacked sites. The message also reads, "If you need help contact me: emilindianhacker@hotmail.co In instant reactions, Yeafesh

Osman, state minister for

science and ICT, told The Daily

"Mission is now complete.

Star that the related body has started working to get the sites backup. He said the hackers broke into the system--apparently to

get "secret information". itate the run-down water Lt Col Ziaul Ahsan, director distribution network of intelligence wing of the Rapid Action Battalion, said, "We have been informed of the matter and are working to track

> The government recently launched websites for 64 districts in a move to achieve Digital Bangladesh by 2021. Access To Information (A2I) project of Prime Minister's Office maintains the websites.

RMG factory

FROM PAGE 16

Executive director of Matrix Sweater Limited Tariq Chowdhury said the factory authorities would also bear the expenses of treatment of those injured.

Injured workers, factory authorities and police said the workers were coming to the factory a little before 8:00 am when a fluorescent light exploded on the fifth floor with a bang due to faulty electric line. A cloud of smoke also engulfed the

Factory workers were panicked as the fireman on the 6th floor set off the fire alarm, they added. Tariq Chowdhury said

about 4,000 workers from eight floors of the factory dashed down the stairs together creating a chaotic situation. Of the injured Rahima

Begum, 32, Shaema Khatun, 40, Jahanara Begum, 28, Helena, 22, Rejina, 21, Hasu, 21, Minara Begum, 20, Sujina Begum, 18, Nazma, 35, Amena, 20, Morjina, 20, Sadia, 35, Majeda, 40, Tara Banu, 35, Selina, 23, Chaina, 27, Zakia, 20, Chaina Begum, 22, Aktera Begum, 22 were admitted to Sultan General Hospital at Board Bazar.

32, were admitted to Bangladesh Medical College Hospital in the capital. Tariq Chowdhury said all five staircases were open

Hasina, 35, and Jobeda,

during the stampede. Joydevpur Police Station Officer-in-charge Abdur Rashid said some miscreants tried to loot the factory during the incident. Police arrested a youth from the spot.

Kamal Uddin Talukdar, deputy commissioner (DC) of Gazipur, said the officials concerned of the DC office visited the spot immediately after the incident.

Meanwhile, in another incident, agitating workers of a sweater factory put up a blockade on the Tongi Diversion Road of Dhaka-Mymensingh highway yesterday from 10:00 am to

US, others

FROM PAGE 16

Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) by Bangladesh organised by Odhikar, a human rights organisation, at the Spectra Convention Centre in the city's Gulshan.

He said Pakistan is campaigning against the move to try the war criminals.

The government has been collecting documents and evidence from different countries including the USA for holding the trial, he

While talking to The Daily

Star at another programme, the minister said, "A congressional leader of the USA during my recent visit to the country assured me of their help in holding the trial of war criminals".

Some anti-liberation forces in different countries are campaigning against the trial, but they will not succeed, as the trial will be held conforming to the international standard. In the yesterday's meeting,

he said prosecutors and investigators will be appointed and a tribunal will be formed for the trial before March 26, the Independence Day of the country. The trial will be held under the International Crimes (Tribunals) Act 1973. People will be brought

ment in war crimes including genocide during the 1971 Liberation War is found in the investigation, the law minister said. Even people having strong allegations against them can

under the trial if their involve-

the rules of the act, he men-The government has taken initiatives to ratify the Rome Statute 1998 to hold trials of genocide, acts of aggression

in the future in Bangladesh

be arrested for the trial as per

with the ICC's assistance. The cabinet will decide on ratification of the statute, which Bangladesh had signed in 1999.

Odhikar president CR Abrar presided over the function. MP Hasanul Huq Inu, former foreign secretary Muhammad Zamir, and Switzerland ambassador to Bangladesh Urs Herren, among others, were present at the meeting.

10:10 am to realise their 12point demand.

Quamrul Islam, owner of the Focus Fashions Limited, an export oriented sweater factory in the city's Tejgaon Industrial area, said he decided to close the factory for some days to avoid any

major untoward incident. "I tried to negotiate with the workers' representatives to resolve the issue," he added.

"I pay their wages by the 5th of every month and the factory has not defaulted on workers' monthly wages," he

The main demand of the workers is to increase the piece rate in sweater production, which is very difficult in the middle of the production process as the price is negotiated with the international buyers a lot earlier, he said.

SC bucks up **FROM PAGE 16**

Even Chief Justice

Mohammad Fazlul Karim himself has recently started visiting lower courts to monitor performance of judges, he According to the SC directives, the judges of the lower

courts have to properly follow

the provisions of civil rules and orders regarding their attending and leaving the courts, sitting at the ejlashes and leaving them, and in running offices and courts. All the district judges, metropolitan sessions judges chief judicial magistrates, chief metropolitan magis-

trates will receive reports of

their subordinate judges

weekly activities. The district judges have to take permission from the SC registrar before leaving their stations.

The authorities will keep

the court buildings, their

premises, bathrooms and corridors neat and clean, and ensure fulltime water supply in the court buildings. The staffs have to keep the files and records of cases in order by classifying those on

the racks of the offices or

record rooms along with their

identification slips. The officers and staffs cannot leave the office or the work place without taking permission from their superior authorities, and they have to ensure their timely signing

to the directives. Sources said the SC authorities have started monitoring performance of lower court judges in order to speed up the rate of disposal of the cases.

in and signing out, according

Koirala

FROM PAGE 16

Kathmandu, Gokarna Poudel told AFP. "The former prime minister died at 12.10 this afternoon. His relatives were with him

his daughter's home in

Poudel. The veteran leader staked his political career on making peace with the Maoist rebels who waged a decade-long

when he passed away," said

insurgency against the state. The peace deal signed in 2006 ended a conflict that had killed at least 16,000 people, with thousands more still unaccounted for.

people had gathered at his daughter's home to pay their respects to the four-time prime minister, a member of a political dynasty credited with helping to bring democracy to Nepal.

nation through some of its biggest upheavals including its most notorious upset when 10 members of the royal family were shot dead by the crown prince in a drunken rampage. He was seen as a stabilising

force in a country that has seen 18 governments in the last 20 years -- although like many politicians in Nepal he faced frequent allegations of corrup-

April 2006 when he sided with Maoist rebels to force former king Gyanendra to relinquish dictatorial powers. Political change ensued at a

landmark elections in 2008, abolishing the 240-year-old Hindu monarchy and transforming the impoverished

state at the national stadium from Sunday, with his funeral to be held later in the day at the Pashupatinath Hindu temple in Kathmandu, Poudel said.

His lasting legacy began in breakneck pace, with the former rebel Maoists winning

country into a secular republic. Koirala's body will lie in

Witnesses said thousands of Koirala led the Himalayan