# World observes earth hour

### Westin known to be lone participant in Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Earth Hour was observed worldwide, turning off lights at 8:30pm for one hour yesterday, to send a powerful message to the global leaders about environmental awareness and caring for the planet.

On Earth Hour, hundreds of millions of people around the world came together to call for action on climate change.

World Wildlife Fund (WWF) organised the movement and since its inception three years ago, Earth Hour has captured the world's imagination and become a global phenomenon.

The Westin Dhaka joined the initiative by turning off its

lights at 8:30pm local time for 60 minutes, a statement said.

"The Westin Dhaka participated in this social event. It was a demonstration of what we can do about climate change,' said Atique Rahman, general manager of the Westin Dhaka.

"Earth Hour provides a global platform for millions of people to voice their concern about the devastating effects of climate change," said WWF Director General James Leape in a statement.

As the event launched, a record 125 countries and territories and over 4,000 cities, towns and municipalities had signed up to join the event.

only to weaken the opposition.

demean a certain quarter or

Ziaur Rahman's grave, where he

went to place wreaths with

newly elected Supreme Court

the government tries to repress

the opposition in the name of

however, said they will cooper-

ate with the government if it

Nazmul Huda has been made

BNP's vice-chairman and Mir

Mohammed Nasir Uddin a

member of the party's advisory

party's joint secretary general

Rizvi Ahmed on Thursday said

Khaleda Zia nominated the two

under the authority given to her

by the national council on

chairmen and a 33-member

Illegal billboards

Led by DCC Magistrate Khalil

Ahmed, a team of DCC offi-

cials was conducting the drive

with assistance from

Town Planner Sirajul Islam

said the city corporation

decided to launch the drive at

an emergency meeting follow-

ing the High Court directives

The High Court on March

On March 15, two people

were killed and eight injured at

Gulshan-1 as a poorly-built

hoarding collapsed on them

The first phase of the

dredging would be done from

Bornoberia to Pipili (11km)

before the rainy season sets in.

The second phase would start

Chairman Mostafizur

Rahman said with dredged

soil India has already started

constructing a 35-foot-wide

road-slash-embankment.

He feared floods in Sharsha

and adjacent areas during

the monsoon for this rea-

Barapukuria

year but the two companies

After the meeting the com-

pany at a press briefing said

that it would hike miners'

wages with effect from

Quamruzzaman, manag-

Meanwhile, law enforcers

Sources said BCMCL had to

As the talks over the pay

miners with the state minis-

ters of land and energy col-

lapsed Thursday night, the

miners blocked the rail and

road communication by

felling hundreds of trees on

count Tk10 crore in loss for the

108-hour-long strike.

removing trees from roads and

did not hike it last February.

FROM PAGE 16

rail tracks.

them.

Goga Union Parishad

form November.

during a storm.

Delhi

FROM PAGE 16

Contacted, DCC Chief

BNP now has 16 vice-

A statement signed by the

He said it would be suicidal if

Sircar, also former speaker,

Bar Association leaders.

trying the war criminals.

holds the trial properly.

HUDAMADEBNP

VICE-CHAIRMAN

council

December 8.

advisory council.

FROM PAGE 16

Dhanmondi police.

party," he added.

"The trial after 40 years is to

He was talking to reporters at

# Zia was first president

FROM PAGE 1 BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia attended the programme as

chiefguest, but did not speak. Party's Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain, who presided over the discus-

sion, said Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's March 7 speech was not a declaration of independ-"Even Awami League leaders AK Khandaker, Major (retd)

Rafigul Islam and Subid Ali Bhuiyan in their books say Zia declared independence," he The ruling AL is now creating

confusion over the issue only to divert people's attention from the anti-government movement, he said. Former law minister

Moudud Ahmed said there is no room for causing confusion that Zia was the proclaimer of independence.

Rafiqul Islam Mian said Zia led the Liberation War, and Bangladesh gained independence under his leadership.

Mirza Abbas said the country's sovereignty is safe only in the hands of BNP, as Bangladesh became independent following Zia's declaration.

Sadeque Hossain Khoka said Zia not only declare independence but also took charge of the Bangladesh government.

"He is the proclaimer of independence and the country's first president," added the

DCC mayor. Shamsher Mobin Chowdhury said Zia in his declaration introduced himself

as provincial head of the state. He claimed he had read Zia's declaration several times, but

in this regard. could not preserve the docu-22 directed DCC to start immement, as he had been arrested diate removal of all unauthorby the Pakistani army. ised hoardings in the capital.

Meanwhile, BNP standing committee member Jamiruddin Sircar yesterday said the government has started the process of war crimes trial

### Wasa

FROM PAGE 1

After the installation of the Board Executive Engineer pre-treatment unit, which Motaher Hossain and would take a year, the resi-Executive Engineer (mechanidents of the city will get relief cal) Abdul Hye would superfrom the smelly supply water, vise the dredging work. said Liyakat.

According to the contract, Denmark will provide a loan worth around Tk 750 crore as a support for construction of the Syedabad Water Treatment Plant phase-2.

The phase-1 and Chandnighat water treatment plant supply about 22 crore and 4 crore litres of water against Wasa's total supply of about 190 crore litres a day. The rest come from 545 deep tubewells. The existing demand is over 220

crore litres a day. It will take around Tk 3,000 to 3,500 crore to construct the Keraniganj treatment plant with a capacity of 45 crore

litres a day, Liyakat said. "We started a feasibility

study with a cost of Tk 2 crore three months ago and it is expected to be completed in seven months," he said.

February this year in line with The water for this treatthe 2008 agreement. ment plant will be brought in from Boidher Bazar of the ing director of BCMCL, said

Padma, he said. that the miners yesterday A proposal has already joined their works. restored communications by

been sent to the LGRD and cooperatives ministry and the government is now seeking foreign fund for the pro-

A feasibility study for the Khilkhet water treatment plant, with a capacity of 50 crore litres a day, will be done hike demand of the agitating soon under a Tk 1,465-crore

project. He said the plant will be constructed with an estimated cost of Tk 2,500 crore and water from the Meghna will be brought in for treat-

ment.

### Experts to talk climate impacts in South Asia

Bss, Dhaka

A two-day international experts roundtable on the implications of climate change in South Asia begins in Dhaka city today.

Climate change experts and scientists from Norway, Germany, Britain, India, Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Bangladesh will attend the event.

The impacts of climate change are part of the daily reality for South Asia. Higher temperatures, more extreme weather patterns, melting glaciers, water scarcity and rising sea levels are now a common feature, a release said yesterday.

The roundtable is envisaged as the first step of a process to assess where the gaps in knowledge, understanding and institutional responses tie. Taking this process further could include research and dialogue through a series of workshops, seminars and networking.

This international expert roundtable is aimed to generate a critical discussion on the inter-linkages between climate change and conflict in South Asia. It will explore the implications of current and future climate impacts on security in South Asia.

The roundtable will also launch international Alert's latest report 'Climate Change, Conflict and Fragility'.

Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies, in collaboration with International Alert (UK), the Regional Centre for Strategic Studies (Sri Lanka) and the Peace Building and Development Institute in Sri Lanka, is organising the roundtable.

#### **UP** chairmen to agitate if demands not met

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chairmen and vice-chairmen of upazila parishads threatened tough movements if their demands are not met immedi-

As part of their programmes, they will form a human chain on March 30 in front of the National Press Club to press their 10point demand and march towards the Prime Minister's Office to submit a memoran-

Leaders of Bangladesh Upazila Chairman and Vicechairman Oikya Parishad yesterday said this at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity.

Reading out a written statement, Convener of the parishad Abdul Mazid said leaders of the organisation have been trying to draw the government's attention to their problems for a long time through different

programmes. "But the government is yet to address our demands. Thus we have no alternative to tougher programmes, and the government will be responsible for any untoward incidents in the

future," he added. Addressing the press conference, Mazid, also chairman of Saturia upazila parishad in Manikganj, blamed the bureaucrats for making upazila parishads inactive intention-

Their demands include formation of a strong local government commission by enacting a law and a provision of separate budgets for upazila parishads, balanced distribution of funds for different tiers of local government under specific guidelines, establishment of upazila parishad as an autonomous body by amending laws, immediate reformation of zila parishads, formulation of a mother law" for all tiers of local government, and withdrawal o the circulars issued by different ministries in contravention of the constitution and Upazila

Parishad Act 2009. Organisation member secretary Mohammad Hossain Fuku, joint conveners Anwru Haque Bablu, Fatema Monir Ataur Rahman were present a

the press conference. Earlier on March 15, they formed a human chain in every district of the country placing their demands.

#### War tribunal

FROM PAGE 1

no need for foreign lawyers and judges because the judges assigned to the tribunal are already of international standard, he added.

"No country is opposing the trial of war criminals except that the Pakistan High Commission in Dhaka made

some confusing statements,' he said. The minister also said the media could help the trial by

providing facts and documents regarding war crimes.

# Youth stabs

FROM PAGE 1

at the knifepoint he gathered together all the inmates -- the couple, Barsha's elder sister domestic helps -in the bedroom.



stairs.

main gate.

first floor.

escaped, Beli said.

College and Hospital.

NEWS

Ali told them that his armed gang members had confined the security of the building on the ground floor and some had taken position on the roof. He threatened with life if anyone played any trick.

Around 2:00am, Ali said he needed Tk 20 lakh and one of the two cars of Aminur to prove himself wealthy and marry Ishika. Aminur, who is an export

and import trader, signed a cheque for Tk 50,000 and assured of mediating for the marriage. Beli said, Ali keeping a safe

distance took meal along with the inmates around 2:30am and requested all to go to bed. He even begged pardon for his behaviour. Ali took all mobile phone

Barsha to the sitting room, Beli Around 4:40am, Beli found Barsha lying unconscious with stab injury to her head while Ali

sets of the inmates and led

stabbed Rokhsana and Aminur. As Barsha got back to consciousness, she cried out and along with her mother managed to go down stairs.

came out of the room and

Beli said, Ali then went out to

of Representatives' support for

Bangladesh's return to democ-

important partner of the United

States. Even as it faces chal-

lenges with serious poverty,

threats from climate change

and extremism, the

Bangladeshi people have

shown remarkable resilience,

creativity and principle,'

Crowley said at the US House of

the House to congratulate

Bangladesh on achieving

democracy, he said, "This is

exactly the kind of country the

United States ought to work

with and do more to support,

not because the situation on the

ground is perfect, but because

by working together we have

clearly created a better path

community will more quickly

wake up to the positive changes

Bangladesh has made," Crowley

by the US House of

Representatives by a vote of 380

"If we were supplied gas as per

our requirement, we could have

generated up to 4,700 MW to

4,800 MW power," says a top

supply crisis, we cannot operate

the gas-fired power plants of

between 500 and 1,000 MW

execute its plan of installing four

diesel-fired rental power plants

totalling 250 MW capacity by

late March has multiplied the

these plants late last year,

online by late March.

was a mess.

do their best.

contract.

aimed to bring these plants

backfired thanks to PDB's lack

of emphasis on finding quality

bidders and more emphasis on

taking penalty from power plant

bidders, who would fail to

deliver their rental plants in

In reality, the tender process

The power board can now

expect to bring online only two

diesel-based rental plants

totalling 150 MW. But that

would not happen before June-

July, even if the selected bidders

"Getting financial penalty

instead of power is really not an

afford to see failure of bidders

this time," comments an official

referring to past failure of two

rental companies to complete

several power projects as per

power plants of 150 MW capac-

ity which would come into

operation in November-

diverting 1,000 MW power to

rural areas to ensure irrigation

for Boro cultivation between

from first week of April and last

The irrigation would peak

till May. During this period, ries.

11:00pm and 5:00am every day.

Meanwhile, PDB is already

December this year.

There will be two more rental

But the bidding actually

When PDB floated tender for

Besides, PDB's failure to

"Unfortunately, due to gas

The resolution was passed

Gas runs low

added.

PDB official.

misery.

capacity," he adds.

"I hope the international

Sponsoring the resolution in

"Bangladesh has become an

FROM PAGE 16

Representatives.

Govt urged

catch them but wrongly he went

to the upstairs. After a few min-

utes of search, he went down-

the second floor from inside.

The domestic helps locked

Security guard Jasim of the

house told The Daily Star that

Barsha and her mother with

stab injuries rushed to him at

the ground floor around

5:00am. Within seconds Ali

came down and rushed to the

On hearing Ali's footstep

Ali made attempt to break

A few minutes later, Jasim

Officer-in-Charge AKM

with the help of others took the

injured to Dhaka Medical

Shaheen Mandol of Kalabagan

Police Station said the foolish-

ness of the inmates led to the

horrific incidents as they

allowed Ali after his begging

He added Ali might have "a

"I rise in strong support of

House Resolution 1215, a mea-

sure to honour Bangladesh's

return to democracy. I would

like to thank Chairman Berman

and Ranking Member Ros-

Lehtinen for their support of

this resolution. I would also like

to thank the gentleman from

California, Congressman

Royce, for leading this effort

with me, along with other

members of the House Caucus

The resolution also urged

the Bangladesh government to

ensure the rights of religious

and ethnic minorities, includ-

ing Hindus and the Ahmadiya

ing progress" to join the

Millennium Challenge

Corporation, a US aid

programme that has granted

billions of dollars to nations

deemed as respecting political

Crowley noted that a year

and a half ago, the US Congress

passed a resolution out of fear

that Bangladesh was "creeping

toward authoritarianism" after

the military took charge in 2006

irrigation would demand 1,500

upcoming level of load.

shedding at night would

now is lack of gas supply," the

estimated at 2,400 million cubic

feet per day (mmcfd) against a

supply of around 1,900 mmcfd.

The country never experienced

such a wide gap of gas demand

supply situation. We don't see

any respite. There are several

projects under Petrobangla's

gas field companies to increase

gas production. But these pro-

jects have remained stalled for

the last six months," the official

Petrobangla to speed up these

Gas Field Company or Sylhet

Gas Field Company could

increase production from their

fields by now if they had taken

additional drilling programme

Now they are processing

The country's lone explora-

tion company Bangladesh

recently been strengthened to

carry out some significant work,

It has several projects on

On Wednesday, the power

With 500 mmcfd supply

shortfall already in hand, it is

unlikely to substantially

increase gas supply without affecting other major gas con-

sumers like the fertiliser facto-

ministry instructed

Petrobangla to increase gas

supply to the power plants.

has a busy schedule.

some international tenders for

projects," he observes.

in time.

the job.

results.

"We don't see any urgency ir

Companies like Bangladesh

"It's a disaster with gas

and supply scenario before.

So, it is feared that the

"The biggest problem right

Gas demand is presently

and economic freedom.

and cancelled elections.

MW power.

increase further.

PDB official says.

It said Bangladesh is "mak-

community.

on Bangladesh," Crowley said.

bit of mental disorder" but after

his arrest the motive would be

pardon to stay in the house.

revealed.

open the gate but failed. He then

went to the rooftop, climbed

Barsha and her mother along

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

in Gulshan

Two carjackers stole a private car in the city's Gulshan area on Friday. Police could not recover

Two hijack car

the silver colour car as of last night.

The owner of the car is an NBR high official. His wife and World Bank's sanitation expert Rokeya Ahmed filed a case with the Gulshan Police Station in this connection. Investigation officer of the

case SM Tuhin said they had

suspected car driver Jamal first, but after primary interrogation he was cleared of the suspicion. Jamal was waiting in front of the LabAid Hospital in Gulshan-2 after dropping Rokeya'two children at the

hospital when the two crimi-

with Jasim took shelter on the nals hijacked the car holding a machete at him, police said quoting Jamal. The officer-in-charge of Gulshan Police Station said down by sewerage pipe and they are conducting opera-

tions to recover the car.

Local sources said incidents of carjacking are frequently taking place in Gulshan area and the vehicles are not recovered most of the time.

GULSHAN MURDER

## Killers still at large

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An 'accomplice' of the two absconding accused in Wednesday's double murder at Gulshan in the capital was arrested yesterday.

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) tracked him down at Tongi in Gazipur.

Rab identified the arrestee as Delwar Hossain Dipu, a close friend of the accused on the run -- Rubel and Mithun Delwar is a private university student, and a resident of the city's Kuril area. Meanwhile, family members

of schoolgirl Iti, whose parents were shot dead by the accused, continued to get death threats from Rubel for filing case against them. Contacted, officials of Rab-1

said Delwar told them that Rubel, Mithun. two others and he had met on Tuesday night at Kalachandpur where the murders were committed. Rab however declined to give Officer-in-Charge of

Gulshan Police Station Kamal Uddin said Rab handed over the arrestee to them yesterday afternoon. Delwar's name is mentioned

in the first information report of the case as an accomplice of the two accused. He is being interrogated, said the OC. Rubel shot Iti's parents

Sadegur Rahman and Romana Nargis dead in their flat at Kalachandpur as they declined to marry their daughter off to

Iti's relative Eshaq Khan said Rubel is threatening over mobile phones that all her family members would be killed as they have filed case against him. " They (family members) are now staying at their village home in Laxmipur, and are feeling insecure there too," he said.

They have given police and Rab the numbers of mobile phones used for giving death threats, he added.

# Larger ADP

of the projects may be included in the current ADP while most would be carried over to the next year's.

The government also plans to increase public investment On a number of occasions, the finance minister has said they want to take the public investment beyond 20 percent from below 15 percent at present. M Hafizuddin Khan, for-

mer finance adviser of caretaker government, described the government's ADP planning for the next fiscal year as over-ambitious. "First, let the government

implement Tk 28,500 crore [revised ADP]. Only then it will be rational to go for an even grander development plans,' Talking to The Daily Star,

option. The PDB can no longer Petroleum Exploration Hafizuddin also said this gov-Company (Bapex), which has ernment seems to be pursuing a traditional approach--taking up a big ADP only to slash it short, and finally failing to implement even the revised study and drilling, but it would take some time to see the one. This is not pragmatic. "Our deficiency in different

added the former adviser.

sectors including infrastructure, energy and power calls

for a huge public expenditure. But implementation efficiency has to be increased." Ur Rashid was stabbed to As the government has been speaking of politics of

death by a gang of criminals near his rented house in the change, it should have formed city last Sunday afternoon. a high-powered committee to Police caught 3 suspects in identify the problem areas, connection with the murder.

# US offers legal argument for drone strikes

a minimum.

keeping civilian casualties to

drone war have triggered

popular anger and fed anti-

the targeted assassinations

but quietly cooperates with

the Americans, analysts say,

with Islamabad allowing the

use of an air base on Pakistani

soil -- a detail a US senator

US sentiment in Pakistan.

Civilian deaths from the

Pakistan publicly criticises

AFP, Washington

The US government for the first time has offered a legal justification of its drone strikes against al-Qaeda and Taliban militants, citing the right to "self-defence" under international law.

The CIA attacks by unmanned aircraft in Pakistan, Somalia and elsewhere have sharply increased under President Barack Obama's administration but have remained shrouded in secrecy, with some human rights groups charging the bombing raids amount to illegal assassina-

Broaching a subject that has been off-limits for official comment, State Department legal advisor Harold Koh laid out the legal argument for the strikes in a ACLU. speech late Thursday, referring to "targeting" of al-Qaeda and Taliban figures without mentioning Pakistan or where the raids are carried out.

The United States was in 'an armed conflict" with al-Qaeda, the Taliban and its affiliates as a result of the September 11 attacks, Koh said, "and may use force consistent with its inherent right to self-defence under international law."

"With respect to the subject of targeting, which has been much commented upon in the media and international legal circles, there are obviously limits to what I can say publicly," he told a conference of the American Society of International Law.

"What I can say is that it is the considered view of this administration -- and it has certainly been my experience during my time as legal adviser -- that US targeting practices, including lethal operations conducted with the use of unmanned aerial vehicles, comply with all applicable law, including the laws of war.'

The CIA would not comment on the speech, posted on the State Department website, but told AFP: "The Agency's counterterrorism operations are conducted in strict accord with the law."

Rights activists and some legal experts charge the drone strikes in Pakistan and other countries, outside of a traditional battlefield, amount to extrajudicial executions that violate both international and US law.

Koh, a fierce critic of former president George W Bush's policies before he took his post, disagreed -- saying a US ban on government sanctioned assassinations did not apply.

Under US law, "the use of lawful weapons systems -consistent with the applicable laws of war -- for precision targeting of specific highlevel belligerent leaders when acting in self-defence or during an armed conflict is not unlawful, and hence does not constitute 'assassination," he said. He also argued that the US

government was not obliged to offer legal rights to the militant figures targeted in the strikes as the United States was at war and acting in self-defence.

Koh said the government was careful to limit attacks to only "legitimate" military objectives and to ensure attacks adhered to the principle of "proportionality,"

#### No work

**FROM PAGE 16** 

The decision came after a condolence meeting and conference of Sylhet chapter BCS (Education) Association. The association also

decided to contribute financial help to the victim's fam-Chairman of the

Association Professor Fahima Khatun, also Chairman of Dhaka Education Board, not add even a single megaattended the occasion, as chief guest while Secretary General Masum A Rabbani was a special guest. Principal of the college

Prof Nazrul Haque Chowdhury presided over the meeting. Later, they took out a

mourning procession in the Associate Professor Harun

accidentally let slip at a hearing last year. The American Civil Liberties Union, which recently filed a lawsuit demanding the government disclose its legal rationale, welcomed the justification.

"We're encouraged that Koh has articulated the legal rationale for the programme," said Jonathan Manes, a legal fellow at the

But he said he hoped the

administration would provide a more detailed account of its legal justification. The ACLU, under freedom of information laws, has asked the government to reveal when, where and

against whom drone strikes

can be authorised, as well as an estimate of how many civilians have been killed in the raids. At a congressional hearing on Tuesday, a law professor from American University urged the administration to argue its case for drone strikes publicly or else put

CIA officers at greater risk of

#### prosecution in foreign courts. 12 hurt as train hits human hauler

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 12 people were injured as a train hit a human hauler at Azampur Kitchen Market level crossing in the city's Dakkhin Khan area last night around

The injured were the passengers of the human hauler. Two of the injured were admitted to Care Point

Hospital in the area while the rest were given first aid. Injured Nurul Amin said all passengers in the human hauler narrowly escaped

death as they got off it before a

Kamalapur-bound train rammed into it. Sub-inspector Mezbaul Alam of Government Railway Police Station said one road gatekeeper was on duty when Parabat Express from Sylhet

hit the vehicle. He also said the driver and helper of the vehicle fled the scene soon after the accident.

## Disrupt trial

"However, we are not afraid of any plot by the defeated force. In the past also whenever we began the process of any propeople task, the evil force had created impediments. But, we could foil their plots and had been successful in completing

our tasks," Hasina said. She said after the liberation Bangabandhu had started his endeavour to bring about the economic emancipation of the people, but the defeated force killed him on August 15,

"After Bangabandhu's assassination, his killers and the war criminals were politically rehabilitated and even made Members of Parliament by their patrons. The nation now wants to erase such

"Inshallah, we will complete the trial of the war criminals and free the nation from the stigma," Hasina added.

vested quarters are out to divert the public mind by talking about power and gas crisis, prices of essentials, etc.

"But what they have done for the people when they were in state power? Why they did watt of electricity to the national grid, why they had increased price of rice from Tk 10 to Tk 45?" the she posed

Syed Ashraf urged the

people to remain alert about activities of the vested groups who in disguise of "friend" are out to misguide the people.

questions.

presided over the discussion while AL presidium members Sheikh Selim and Agriculture Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury addressed the

meeting.

# AL presidium member Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury

# stigma," she said. The PM reminded that the