NEWS

US used cluster bombs, killed civilians in Yemen: AI

the victims were actually

women and children indicates

that the attack was in fact

grossly irresponsible, particu-

larly given the likely use of

cluster munitions," Luther

obtained showed damaged

remains of the BGM-109D

Tomahawk land-attack cruise

launched from a warship or

submarine, is designed to

carry a payload of 166 cluster

sub-munitions (bomblets)

which each explode into over

200 sharp steel fragments that

can cause injuries up to 150

metres (about 500 feet) away,"

inside the bomblet also

spreads fragments of burning

zirconium designed to set fire

to nearby flammable objects,'

The Yemen parliamentary

committee had said when it

visited the site that "all the

homes and their contents were

burnt and all that was left were

information about the attack

from the Pentagon, but had

obtained the photographs

from its own sources, but had

not released them earlier in

order to ascertain their

authenticity and give the

United States time to

The United States and

Yemen have not yet signed the

Convention on Cluster

Munitions, a treaty designed

to comprehensively ban such

weapons which is due to enter

Noab demands

would consider slashing

import duties if the price of

newsprint increases in the

international market, it men-

ernment to continue the

quota policy that restricts

newsprint import of a news-

paper based on its number of

in the tragic fire in Old Dhaka.

They prayed for the salvation

of the departed souls and

expressed sympathy to the

members of the bereaved

said they handed over a few

Nimtoli area were in shock

and grief. Those who survived

or escaped the blaze now face

family members, home and

all belongings. Neighbours,

relatives and Army personnel

ers and Dhaka City

Corporation. Locals now pass

time mourning and narrating

the horrors they have been

Police and military per-

They lost most of their

The neighbourhoods in

bodies to relatives.

another ordeal.

through.

Alam chaired the meeting.

Noab president Mahbubul

At the meeting, Noab

Noab also urged the gov-

into force on 1 August, 2010.

not yet received a response.

AI said it had requested

Amnesty said it had

traces of furniture," AI said.

"An incendiary material

an AI statement said.

"This type of missile,

missile.

it said.

respond.

FROM PAGE 16

subscribers.

families.

AI said photographs it had

AFP, London

A US cruise missile carrying cluster bombs was behind a December attack in Yemen that killed 55 people, most of them civilians, Amnesty International (AI) said yester-

The London-based rights group released photographs that it said showed the remains of a US-made Tomahawk missile and unexploded cluster bombs that were apparently used in the December 17, 2009 attack on the rural community of Al-Maajala in Yemen's southern Abyan province.

"Amnesty International is gravely concerned by evidence that cluster munitions appear to have been used in Yemen," said Mike Lewis, the group's arms control researcher.

"Cluster munitions have ndiscriminate effects and unexploded bomblets threaten lives and livelihoods for years afterwards," he said.

"A military strike of this kind against alleged militants without an attempt to detain them is at the very least unlawful," said Philip Luther, deputy director of AI's Middle East and North Africa Programme.

Yemen's defence ministry had claimed responsibility for the attack without mentioning a US role, saying between 24 and 30 militants had been killed at an alleged Al-Qaeda training camp. But a local official said 49

civilians, among them 23 children and 17 women, were killed "indiscriminately."

AI said that a Yemeni parliamentary committee reported in February that in addition to 14 alleged Al-Qaeda militants, 41 local residents, including 14 women and 21 children, were killed in the attack.

"The fact that so many of

Jamaat supports FROM PAGE 16 Referring to the reason for

backing the hartal, Mojaheed

said it was called to bring an end to people's sufferings. He claimed it's a way to protest in a democratic system

and mount pressure on the expressed concern over the government to resolve people's closure of daily Amar Desh saying that the decision has problems. "It will be a people's hartal,"

tarnished the image of the present government. Noab leaders urged the

Jamaat leaders Muhammad government to allow the daily Kamaruzzaman, Delwar Hossain Saidee, ATM Azharul to continue to its publication. Islam, and Rafigul Islam Khan, The leaders also expressed deep shock at the loss of lives among others, were present at

the press briefing. On Saturday night, Jamaat leaders led by party chief Matiur Rahman Nizami met the BNP chairperson and agreed to forge a movement jointly against the govern-

Mahmudur shown held in criminal case COURT CORRESPONDENT

Detained Mahmudur Rahman, acting editor of the recently closed daily Amar Desh, was shown arrested vesterday in a criminal case.

The case was filed against him on charge of obstructing policemen from discharging their duties and attempting to snatch the accused from the law enforcers on June 2. Metropolitan Magistrate

SK Tofael Hasan granted the petition filed by Sub-Inspector Mohammad Mokhlesur Rahman for showing Mahmudur Rahman arrested in the case.

The case was filed with Kotwali Police Station against 100 to 150 unknown supporters of Mahmudur Rahman, including JCD leader Hafizur Rahman Kabir of Tejgaon unit and several vested quarter lawyers on June 2.

Mokhlesur, the investigation officer of the case, also prayed for a seven-day remand to interrogate Mahmudur Rahman for holding a meeting with government officials at Uttara.

The court will hear the petition today in his presence. The hearing on a five-day

remand prayer in another case filed against Mahmudur Rahman and five others for obstructing policemen to discharge their jobs will also be held today in his presence.

Shajahan Miah, assistant sub-inspector of Tejgaon Police Station, filed the case against the leaders and the activists on charges of their attempts to snatch Mahmudur Rahman from the police while he was being produced before a court the same day.

Police arrested Mahmudur Rahman on June 2 from his Amar Desh office at Karwan Bazar after its former publisher Hasmat Ali Hasu filed a cheating case against him with Tejgaon Shilpanchal Police Station. Later, police forwarded

him before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka with a five-day remand prayer.

But the court, rejecting the remand prayer, directed police to interrogate the accused at jail gate within three days. The court also granted bail to the accused in connection with the cheating

Transformers

FROM PAGE 16 result from the transformer blast, but also witnesses told

He also said HRPB is also planning whether it will go for any legal move to shift the chemical shops from the Old Dhaka to another place.

WC uniting

FROM PAGE 16

Africa, while soccer is followed fervently by the black major-

Zuma said the enthusiasm for the June 11-July 11 tournament reminded him of that

"Building up to the tournament we have seen something that we have never seen before," he said, referring to thousands of people wearing shirts of the national side Bafana Bafana and flying flags

from their cars and at homes. A survey of 1,000 South Africans, conducted for soccer governing body FIFA and released on Saturday, showed that 92 percent are proud of the country hosting the tournament, and 86 percent

believe it will be a success. FIFA President Sepp Blatter said the World Cup would leave a legacy for the whole continent, which was still being sidelined by richer nations, through football development and education projects.

Both Blatter and Zuma said they hoped Mandela would attend the opening ceremony and first match on Friday. Mandela turns 92 next month and is increasingly frail.

His office will not confirm he will attend and some observers say he is not well enough to be at Johannesburg's Soccer City stadium for the match between South Africa and Mexico.

"Firstly, I think we all know former president Mandela has aged and for any aged person the manner in which you carry yourself has changed," Zuma said, when asked if the Nobel

Peace Prize winner would be there. "That is a decision for President Mandela to make ... if he is there it will be a bonus for this tournament. Indeed, we wish he will be there."

Israel rejects int'l probe into flotilla raid

AFP, Washington

Israel will not participate in any international investigation of its raid on a ship other governments. seeking to break a blockade on the Gaza Strip, Israel's ambassador to Washington said.

"We are rejecting the idea of an international commission," Michael Oren told "Fox News Sunday."

"Israel is a democracy. Israel has the ability and the right to investigate itself, not to be investigated by any international board," he added. The Israeli diplomat said

his government was talking to President Barack Obama's administration about "the way in which our inquiry will take place," but had no intention of accedpendent inquiry into the May 31 raid, which left nine people dead. The operation, in which

Israeli naval commandos boarded a ship seeking to deliver aid to the Hamasruled Gaza Strip, provoked global outrage, straining Israel's relationship with Turkey. Eight of those killed in

the raid were Turkish citizens and the ninth was a joint US-Turkish citizen, prompting a furious response from Turkey's government, which recalled its ambassador to Ankara. The United States offered

its condolences to the families of those killed, and has said it is looking into the

circumstances of the American citizen's death, but refrained from the strong criticism issued by

Oren said the incident had not strained Israel's relations with the Obama administration. "I'll say personally

throughout this entire episode, days of work with the administration, I never heard one word of criticism, not one rancorous comment at all," he said. The raid drew renewed

attention to Israel's block-

ade of the Gaza Strip, which it says is necessary to prevent Hamas from obtaining material that can be used to make weapons. The United Nations and

Washington have called the humanitarian situation in ing to demands by a number the Gaza Strip intolerable, of governments for a inde- but Oren said there was no better alternative to the blockade.

FROM PAGE 1

Old Dhaka on Thursday night. At least 118 people includ-

ing Runa's mother, two aunts, four cousins and a nephew died in the blaze. Jamil also lost his mother, brother, a nephew, two aunts and five other relatives.

Runa's father had died several years back. Runa and her elder sister

Ratna escaped the fire as they had gone to a beauty parlour about half-an-hour before the incident. Their brother Faisal also escaped unharmed as he was on the road waiting for guests.

Never-ending About the conditions of the

FROM PAGE 1

blaze when they were selling fruits at a shop around 20 yards away from the source of the

"I heard the last scream of my son -- Abbu," said Mamun and broke down in tears. He jumped inside the shop when the flames reached there, but Boishakh who was at the entrance of the shop could not come inside immediately and was burned alive.

Like Mamun, a number of injured victims at the burn unit are passing restless nights as the memories of that night haunt them in their sleep. And when they are awake, they are tormented by the burns.

"In my dreams, I see that my body is burning," said another injured Nazrul Islam, a trader of waste materials in Nimtoli, who could not sleep properly

for a single night. "I wake up from my sleep having nightmares and then my heart starts beating fast," he said. "The pain of burns is killing me physically and the flames in nightmares men-

Nazrul received injuries in

his chest, back and legs. Sarfuddin Shuvo, another injured who lost his three-yearold daughter in the blaze, cannot sleep properly as well. He wakes up four to five times from his sleep every night.

"Each time he wakes up, he starts crying for his daughter," said Saberin Akhter, Shuvo's younger sister.

Bobita Barmon, who came to her uncle's Nimtoli residence to learn computer operation, is suffering from sleep disorder too.

Shaheen Islam said these were normal reaction patterns as the victims had undergone horrible experiences that night. "They [victims] need social and other support to recover from the situation," Prof

survivors, psychologist Prof

Shaheen said, adding, the victims will overcome the condition through the process. She said it would be claimed as disorder if the victims continuously see nightmares over

three months. Head of the Burn Unit Di Shahidul Bari said the victims will have to tolerate pain and see such nightmare for a few

more days. "We are giving them painkillers in low dose as we fear that complication may arise from a stronger dose," he added.

Nat'l budget

FROM PAGE 16 The rate of implementation of

ADP increased slightly compared to the same period in the previous year. But there is considerable scope for performing better, the minister

Muhith said the performance of two ministries or divisions with a higher allocation is reviewed in every meeting of the Executive Committee of National Economic Council. Besides, a taskforce has been formed to monitor the implementation of the budget by 10 major ministries.

He hoped that the measures would help increase the ability of ministries and divisions to implement the ADP.

The president paid rich

tributes to the memories of

Father of the Nation

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur

Rahman, the greatest Bengali

of all times and an exponent of

the historic six-point demand.

was for ensuring people's

voting rights, introducing

taxation system later trans-

formed into public demand,'

After announcement of six-

point demand, Zillur Rahman

arrested Bangabandhu and

tortured him inhumanly,

despite that he did not retreat.

including the martyrs of his-

he said.

"The six-point demand

Historic 7th June

FROM PAGE 16

and Narayanganj during a hartal called for the release of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and other leaders detained for launching the sixpoint movement against the then barbaric ruling clique.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman launched his historic six-point political and economic separate currency system, programme in Lahore in 1966, aiming to attain greater autonomy of the then East Pakistan.

President Zillur Rahman and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday gave separate messages on the eve of the

President Zillur Rahman, in his message, said the historic six-point demand is a milestone in country's long strug-

gle for independence. The six-point contained reasons and inevitability of the independence of

Bangladesh, he added.

pendence of the Bengalis.

toric 7th June.

The premier, in her message, said it is an unforgettable day in the struggle for inde-

loss of lives in the incidents. As many as 117 people were She paid rich tribute to the burnt alive in Nimtali on June memories of all martyrs, 3 night, and 25 others died at

Minister AFM Ruhul Haque said a process is underway to appoint 13,500 community health care providers to community clinics across the country. He also informed parliament, as many as 1,745 people have been found HIV positive as of December 2009. Of them, 619 turned into AIDS patients and 204 died.

Govt to buy

vessel with

equipment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

water purifying

The government has taken

steps to procure a vessel with

equipment to purify water of

Buriganga River, the shipping

minister told parliament

queries, Shipping Minister

Shajahan Khan blamed indus-

tries for polluting river by

He said the task of extract-

The shipping minister also

He said six new ships will

Meanwhile, replying to

ing waste from the riverbed is

said the government would

consider setting up a central

be purchased for Bangladesh

lawmakers' queries, Health

dumping liquid waste.

dredging department.

Shipping Corporation.

Replying to lawmakers'

yesterday.

going on.

BNP-led opposition lawmakers did not showed up yesterday. They joined the inaugural

sitting of the current budget session on Wednesday, but walked out on the same day in protest against shutdown of the daily Amar Desh and arrest of its acting editor Mahmudur Rahman.

The speaker at 7:44pm yesterday adjourned the sitting of parliament till 7:00pm today.

Another JMB **FROM PAGE 16**

Rakib Hossain Russell alias Hafez Mahmood of Jamalpur, Alamgir Hossain Rana, Salahuddin alias Salehin of Mymensingh and Khaled Saifullah.

Shahed got introduced with two other executed JMB leaders Ataur Rahman Sunny and Khaled Saifullah while he was studying at Mohammadia Arabia Madrasa at Jatrabari in the city.

The two introduced him with Abdur Rahman and in no time Shahed became a trusted member of JMB.

Son of Hafizar Rahman of Pakulla village of Sonatola upazila in Bogra, 40-year-old Shahed has a cloth shop, Classic Fashion, at New Market in the town.

DB officials said they also collected Shahed's several photographs that show that he is an expert in martial art.

Shahed's arrest came after a couple of weeks into the arrest of JMB supremo Moulana Saidur Rahman with his wife and three other JMB leaders from Dhaka and Narayanganj.

JS adopts FROM PAGE 1

Nimtoli fire and Begunbari building collapse in the city.

Food and Disaster Management Minister Abdur Razzak in a statement told the House that the government would take measures to rehabilitate the victims of the blaze.

The minister said a preliminary list shows that about 73 families were affected by the deadly conflagration, and the approximate losses amounted to around Tk 2.09 crore.

He also said efforts are still on to assess the actual loss.

The minister informed the House about the tragic incident in details and the government's various measures taken already to mitigate the victim's sufferings.

He said a coordination cell comprised of officials of the departments concerned is working to reinstate water, power and gas supply to the The minister said an inter-

ministerial meeting was held yesterday at the food and disaster management ministry to discuss the aftermath of the tragic incident in Nimtali area in Old Dhaka. Cabinet secretary, princi-

overseas trade and regional ple secretary to the prime minister, secretaries of different ministries and senior officials of the departments attended the meeting. He, however, did not said the Pakistani rulers

inform the House about the outcome of the meeting.

building collapse.

Earlier, at the beginning of the yesterday's sitting, the judges, he said. House passed the resolution The law minister also said expressing deep shock at the

the government will act as per the HC directives. Barrister Hassan MS Azim and advocates Mirza Al Begunbari on June 1 due to a Mahmood and Kamal Hossain

MPs to get offices

FROM PAGE 16

Earlier last year, offices for the MPs on the parliament building premises had been allocated.

Referring to a letter sent by the cabinet division, the secretary to the parliament secretariat yesterday informed the parliament secretariat commission's meeting of the matter, said meeting sources. At the meeting, Hasina,

however, rejected a proposal for purchasing six additional vehicles--one for the speaker, two for the deputy speaker's office, one each for deputy leader of the House and chief whip, and one for carrying VIPs. Hasina outright rejected

the proposal saying the above persons are already enjoying their due privileges. So, new vehicles are unnecessary for them, a source quoted the premier as say-She also rejected the proposal for allocation of

offices to the PM's advisers in the parliament building saying the advisers have offices outside the parlia-The cabinet earlier asked

the parliament secretariat to move for allocation of the new offices for MPs but it could not go for the move due to lack of administrative network in field level. Then

the cabinet asked the LGRD ministry to this effect.

The secretary of the parliament secretariat told the meeting about the progress of allocation of offices for MPs.

In April, the parliament amended the Members of Parliament (Remuneration and Allowances) Act with increasing office expenses for MPs to Tk 9,000 from Tk 6,000.

Amendment was also brought to the act with reintroduction of the system of importing duty-free vehicles with a new offer of Tk 40,000 per month for fuel, maintenance and driver.

The parliament secretariat commission at the yesterday's meeting also approved a budget of Tk 116.50 crore for the secretariat for the next financial year 2010-2011, which is much higher than the budget of current fiscal.

The meeting chaired by Speaker Abdul Hamid also discussed to enhance security of the parliament build-

Finance Minister AMA Muhith, Law Minster Shafique Ahmed, Chief Whip Abdus Shahid, among others, were also present at the meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

Filled-up, full of risk concern, say geologists.

Holocene.

FROM PAGE 1 the importance of soil tests

before constructing multistorey buildings. But unfortunately most of the building owners skip the tests to save money. Most areas in Motifheel,

Sayedabad, Kamalapur, Segunbagicha, Kakrail, Banani, Gulshan, Dhanmondi, Lalmatia, Khilkhet, Baridhara, Agargaon, Mirpur 1-3, 6, 10-12 sections and parts of Uttara and Uttarkhan are relatively safe for high-rises, as they are made of Madhupur clay. But, Asaduzzaman adds,

buildings in areas like Satarkul, Jatrabari, Meradia, parts of Badda, Mirpur Kalapani and Mirpur 14 are vulnerable, as most of these places were wetlands in the near past.

"In some cases, even if we wait for 10,000 years, the land won't be stable enough for high-rise buildings," he noted.

The vast stretch of lowlying land between Purbachal and Begunbari area, where over 100 developers are filling up wetlands and selling plots to people, is a matter of great

SC Judge **FROM PAGE 16**

The petitioner stated that the

existing process of selection lacks transparency and competitiveness since there is no specific guideline in this regard.

In such a situation, judges are being appointed through a very weak system, and a culture of nepotism has developed due to suggestions made by the executive, undoubtedly favouring persons with similar political ideologies and political connection with the ruling party, the petition said.

The Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) has been opposing political selection of persons for appointment as SC judges, it said. The petitioner mentioned

that the President on April 11 appointed 17 additional judges in the HC Division of the SC as per Article 98 of the Constitution after consultation with the chief justice. But in the face of protest from the SCBA, the chief justice administered oath to 15 of the appointees. The petition quoted an HC

observation in a verdict on August 7, 2008, as saying, "Appointment of judges of the Supreme Court is alleged to have been politicised in recent past, which has been severely questioned and criticised". Contacted yesterday, Law

Minister Shafique Ahmed said the government is now following the convention and SC guidelines in respect of appointment of judges of this court. The government selects

persons after consulting the chief justice, and the president then appointments them as

appeared for the petitioner.

unfortunate that even reputed developers are building large structures on shaky land formation like

Khurshid Alam said it is

"People should not build

any high-rise in those areas.

They can at best go for bamboo and wood-made duplexes," he continued. Asked how long the multistorey buildings in areas on Holocene might take to tilt or topple, he said it maybe tomorrow or after 10 years.

But there's no doubt that those buildings are prone to cave-ins. Queried what then the solution is, he said there's no alternative to decentralisation. The capital must not

have a population beyond its capacity. Professor Nazrul Islam, a noted urban expert said, every year Dhaka city is

expanding by four percent and its population is increasing at the same rate. Decentralisation will not

be enough; the government should discourage local migration as well, he added.

Risky, illegal

FROM PAGE 16 Disaster Management Coordination Committee

chaired by Razzaque at his ministry following the recent building tumbles in Begunbari and the inferno in Nimtoli. The minister told The Daily Star two taskforces--one led by the Ministry of Housing and

Public Works and the other by

the Ministry of Industries-have been formed to monitor and investigate the issues. "The taskforce led by public works ministry will monitor the high-rise buildings. If those are found to have been built without proper approval of the authorities concerned

legal action will be taken and illegal parts of the buildings will be demolished, Razzaque said. The taskforce led by industries ministry will identify the chemicals factories in Old Dhaka. Legal action will be

taken against the factories if

they are found to be illegal or

dealing the business with

potential risk to the public, he

added. Action will be taken on the basis of recommendations made by the taskforces.

The meeting also decided to set up water reservoirs in some open space in old parts of the city to ensure availability of water if fire breaks out.

cles will also be imported for the Department of Fire Service and Civil Defence so that firefighters can move fast in the areas through narrow lanes, especially in the old town, he noted. The meeting decided to

make it mandatory for the

Besides, more small vehi-

owners of community centres to have fire extinguishers, he Fire Service and Civil

Defence Director General Abu Nayeem Md Shahidullah said mobile courts would also launch drives against illegal chemicals stockpiling and risky buildings.

including 40 women and 22 children.

had identified 94 bodies

30 percent burns. Meanwhile, another vicim was identified as Habiba

of her nephew Jamil with Habiba and 11 others from Hossaini Dalan attended the function. Two of them escaped the blaze as they

the 25 patients suffered 20 to

Begum alias Mitu, 44, who

went to Nimtoli to attend a

function for the engagement

other guests. Firoze Reza identified his cousin Habiba by a necklace after the body remained unidentified at the DMCH morgue for three days. Her relatives earlier failed to identify the severely burnt

Besides, seven bodies remained unidentified at the DMCH and Sir Salimullah Medical College morgues as they were burnt beyond recognition. Those, searching for their

demanded that DNA tests must be conducted on the dead. Md Mohibul Haque, deputy commissioner of Dhaka, told The Daily Star that they were yet to decide on the

missing relatives, have

receive any report of missing persons. Abdul Mannan, officer-incharge of Bongshal Police Station, last night said they

He said they were yet to

provided them with foods. In Nimtoli, life was far from normal despite efforts were on the road waiting for by the utility service provid-

One more dies

sonnel along with the service providers were working to restore normalcy in the area. Gas supply was restored in the morning. Desa supplied electricity through alternative power lines while Wasa

Earlier in the afternoon, the three-member enquiry committee of the home ministry and CID explosives experts visited the spot. DMP Joint Commissioner

Humayun Kabir, who is a

distributed water from its

member of the probe body, told The Daily Star last night, they have not reached any conclusion what caused the But Mohammad Khurshid Hossain, DMP deputy com-

missioner for Lalbagh division, said, "It was an accident and the fire originated from an oil stove and later spread DC Mohibul Haque earlier to the chemical warehouse."