Biman's hiked

the increased fare, which was hiked in the name of fuel surcharge, so that it can compete with other airlines that charge less than Biman.

However, there will be no reduction in fares on four short regional routes--Kolkata, New Delhi, Karachi and Kathmandu--as the fuel surcharge on those routes was less thanTk712, officials said.

They said the decision to slash ticket prices was made following a series of meetings of the pricing committee and it will take to effect globally from tomorrow.

"We earlier increased the fuel surcharge to be consistent with the actual fuel cost. But now we have revised the decision due to its adverse effect," Biman Managing Director Zakiul Islam told The Daily Star yesterday. Asked how much loss

Biman incurred in the couple of weeks following the raise, the Biman chief said they are yet to make an assessment.

Another top Biman official seeking anonymity said February and March is lean season for flying and this may also be the cause of fewer numper of passengers.

Biman officials said after the price hike Biman suffered the most on Saudi Arabian routes, which was profitable before the fare hike. Biman used to fly to Riyadh, Zeddah and Dammam with capacity load, 344 passengers, but after the price hike the number of passengers came down to as low as 80.

The one-way fare for the three destinations in Saudi Arabia had increased the most raising the fare to Tk 28,825 from Tk 21,885. However, in the revised decision the fare has been cut by approximately Tk Sources said flights to Kuala

Lumpur and Bangkok usually had 300 and 200 passengers but after the price hike the numbers were almost halved.

"Usually Biman operates from Riyadh with full passenger load. But, after the increase in the fare Biman was flying with 50 percent of its seat vacant," Habibh Ullah Miazee, deputy manager (finance) at Biman's Riyadh office, told The Daily Star over the telephone. He said earlier they used to

have trouble meeting the demand and hoped that after the price revision comes into effect, they will again get plenty of passengers.

Talking to different travel agencies, it was learnt that despite the decision to cut 60 percent of the increased fare, Biman's fares on different routes are still higher than some competitor airlines.

Asked why passengers

It all starts

FROM PAGE 1

Bangladesh and Canada.

The match, scheduled to start today at 2:30pm local time, bears a special significance for both sides. For Bangladesh it is a chance to lay the ghost from seven years back to rest. The Tigers were shockingly beaten on February 11, 2003 in South Africa by their North American counterparts in their only meeting so far. For the Canadians though, the match is an opportunity to learn, to improve, and if possible surprise again.

In front of the stadium's icket collection booth, thousands of cricket fans cheered as they got hold of their prized possession.

Thousands were cheering in the capital too, in front of the Banani branch of the City Bank, after they too managed to exchange their vouchers for tickets for the World Cup matches. But it was not all smiles. A few thousand fans who had been queuing up from dawn, were left exasperated as the slow pace of progress saw them leave empty

handed for the day. The World Cup hype was further heightened later at night as the perennial dark horses and well-supported Pakistan landed at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport. The unpredictable Pakistanis, led by all-rounder Shahid Afridi touched down at around 8:10 pm and made

their way straight to the Sheraton hotel. On the back of a Test and ODI series victory over New Zealand, the Pakistanis will be hoping they have put the match-fixing controversy behind and concentrate on their preparation for the World Cup which will start with the warm-up match against Bangladesh at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium on February 15.

would fly Biman, a top Biman official seeking anonymity said apart from the fare cut, they are giving lucrative discounts on

Sources in the travel agencies said after the fare hike, a Dhaka-Riyadh-Dhaka Biman ticket costs about Tk 44,620, on Saudia Tk 20,850, on GMG Tk 33,902, on Emirates Tk 28,629, on Jet Airways Tk 35,230, on Gulf Air Tk 35,514, on Etihad Tk 28,058 and Kuwait Airways chargesTk24,187.

profitable routes to guest work-

ers travelling in groups.

"The unjustified decision of increasing fare will cause a huge loss to Biman and it would have to bear the consequences for quite a long time," Wahidul Alam, aviation analyst and editor of Bangladesh Monitor, a travel magazine, had said.

Criticising the decision to increase the prices in the first place, he said Biman authorities raised the fare, without thinking its consequences, to recover around Tk 80 crore loss it incurred last fiscal year. The authorities should have taken efficient cost management strategies rather than increasing the fare, he observed.

Khaleda's

FROM PAGE 20

ment after the World Cup and the chairperson will go on a countrywide tour to mobilise public support, he added.

BNP needs big logistic support and security has to be ensured before the chairperson's visit, Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, senior joint secretary general of BNP told The Daily Star. Huge number of vehicles

is required for making the programmes successful and they were trying to manage those, he added.

Both the leaders, however, said none of these programmes has been abandoned. The National Standing Committee, the highest policy-making body of BNP, at a meeting on September 21 last year had decided that the party chief would address public meetings at some 21 district headquarters in November.

It also decided to organise long march, also in November, protesting Indian plan to build a dam at Tipaimukh.

But the chairperson herself directed the leaders to give full effort for elections to municipalities and parliamentary by-polls, sources in the party said.

BNP staged a series of protest programmes centring a number of issues like Khaleda's 'eviction' from cantonment house and protest against the government's plan to build an airport on Arial Beel in Munshiganj.

Fresh case

But both police inquest and a previous autopsy at Shariatpur had mentioned none of those.

The court also asked inspector general of police to take action against Sub-Inspector Aslm Uddin for submitting false inquest report and Inspector Mirza AK Azad for not recording the case properly.

OC Abul Khair said the earlier case filed by Hena's father Darbesh Kha on February 2 accusing the same 18 on murder charges, has already been transferred to Criminal Investigation Department and will continue separately.

In connection with the first case police arrested alleged rapist Mahbub Khan, his wife Shilpi Khan, Idris Sheikh, Joynal Meermalot, Ala Box Karati and Hafez Md Mofiz Talukder.

Darbesh complained to HC that taking chance of his illiteracy police filed the case completely ignoring the allegation of rape.

The named accused are Mahbub Khan, Shilpi Khan, Jahanara Begum, Morsheda Begum, Idris Sheikh, member of Chamta union parishad, Akkas Meermalot, Yeasin Meermalot, Dil Mohmmad Meermalot, Ala Box Karati, Joynal Meermalot, Latif Meermalot, Abdul Hai Meermalot, Hafez Md Mofiz Talukder, Saiful, Monimala, Robiul Khan, Hasan Meermalot and Jamal

Shikder. Sub-Inspector Kazi Kamal Hossain of the police station has been made investigation officer of the case.

AL rebels

FROM PAGE 1

residence, Gono Bhaban, at 4:00pm with Prime Minister and AL President Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

Seven organising secretaries, who are responsible for supervising the party affairs in the county's seven divisions, will submit reports in the meeting.

They have identified some reasons behind the party candidates' poor performance in the municipal polls and will explain those before the meeting, said party insiders. The reasons include rebel candidates, non-cooperation of lawmakers and lack of coordination between the party rank and file.

Besides, they will come up with an extensive analysis of the municipal elections and party-backed candidates' results, said AFM Bahauddin Nasim, one of the organising secretaries.

"We will tell the meeting what the results would have been had the party rank and file been united," said the AL

Issues like current political situation, state of grand alliance, price hike of essentials, recent stockmarket scam, AL's organisational matters, grassroots councils, union parishad elections, etc. will be discussed in the meeting, said AL leaders.

Mahabubul Alam Hanif AL joint general secretary told The Daily Star yesterday that following the discussion, the meeting will decide corrective measures. The prime minister will also give necessary guidelines about some organisational issues.

The AL leader said the party will start holding councils of the grassroots committees after the union parishad elections due in March-April.

Hospital

FROM PAGE 1

patients and provide them with chemotherapy, due to lack of proper equipment we cannot arrange radiother-

"For radiotherapy we have to refer patients to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital. We hope to establish a fully-fledged cancer ward by a year in a new building," said the deputy director.

Abul Hashem said "A 50bed cardiac surgery department has been established recently and will start working soon. We have a plan to set up a 20-bed burn unit by June this year."

Rab arrests

FROM PAGE 20

1:30am, said Commander Mohammad Sohail, director of Rab's Legal and Media

During the raid the law enforcers seized some jihadi books, paper cuttings of JMB-related news, documents, CDs, leaflets and Bangladeshi fake currencies worth Tk 25,000 from their possession, added the Rab official.

They also recovered some hand-written documents containing description on how to operate firearms, guard dens, work in disguise and what to say during police interrogation.

Responding to a query Sohail said they were not sure who had been leading the outfit after the arrest of its chief Maulana Saidur Rahman on May 24 last year. They, however, learnt a Sohel Mahfuz had taken over.

The outfit runs with the donations of members and by selling fake notes, claimed the Rab official adding, presently they are not strong enough to run subversive activities, though they are trying to recruit members by motivating people.

Mohtasin is a brother of detained JMB chief's second wife Nurunnahar Himu.

Rab arrested Himu along with her younger brother Muktasim Billah Rubel's wife Asma Mimi in a drive on November 1, 2009 at Mayakanon of the city's Sabujbagh.

Key moments

FROM PAGE 1

say they are fed up with high levels of poverty, corruption and unemployment. Some protesters say they will not give up until President Mubarak steps down. 28 January: Unrest

spreads

The protests in Egypt continue and gather momentum. President Mubarak declares a curfew in Cairo, Alexandria and Suez and the army is deployed. The curfew is immediately and widely flouted, and there are further clashes between protesters and police amid growing reports of looting and lawlessness. After Friday prayers, tens

of thousands of people join protests in Cairo and other cities to press the demand that Mr Mubarak step down. The headquarters of the

governing NDP party is set ablaze, while protesters also besiege the state broadcaster and the foreign minis-

Late on Friday, President Mubarak sacks his cabinet. In a televised address, says he understands the protesters' grievances but defends the actions of the security forces. At least 26 people are reported to have died since the unrest began. President Barack Obama

calls Mr Mubarak after his speech, telling him he must give meaning to his pledges to provide better economic and democratic opportunities to the Egyptian people.

29 January: Suleiman appointed vice-president

President Mubarak names intelligence chief Omar Suleiman as his firstever vice-president and Aviation Minister Ahmed Shafiq is appointed prime minister. Clashes continue, with at

least 74 people reported dead in the last two days. 31 January: Army rules

out force The army gives heart to

the tens of thousands of protesters by saying it recognises the "legitimate rights of the people" and will not use force against them.

Vice-President Omar Suleiman says Mr Mubarak asked him to open dialogue with all political parties on constitutional reform.

1 February: 'March of a million'

Huge rallies take place in Cairo and other cities after protest leaders call for a march of a million".

Journalists in Tahrir Square, the focus of the protests, estimate that hundreds of thousands of people have shown up - men, women and children from a broad spectrum of Egyptian society.

In another televised address, Mr Mubarak announces he will step down after September's presidential elections. He pledges constitutional reform but says he should stay in office to ensure an orderly transfer of power to his successor. Protest leaders call on the president to step down by Friday 4 February at the latest.

2 February: Army calls for

protests to end The army urges demonstrators to return to their homes, saying their message

has been heard. Brutal clashes break out

Human

FROM PAGE 20 walking," said study coauthor William Kimbel of

Arizona State University. An arch in the foot would provide leverage to push off the ground at the start of a stride and then help absorb shock when the foot meets ground again, suggesting Lucy's feet were much like

Apes have flatter, more flexible feet with a big toe for grasping tree branches, attributes that do not appear in the A. afarensis. "Understanding that the

foot arches appeared very early in our evolution shows that the unique structure of our feet is fundamental to human locomotion," said coauthor Carol Ward of the University of Missouri. An older species,

Ardipithecus ramidus of Ethiopia, is the earliest kin of modern man of whom paleontologists have uncovered significant skeletal remains. It lived 4.4 million years ago but its more ape-like feet indicate it walked upright only some of the time.

between pro- and anti-Mubarak groups as supporters of the president make an organised attempt to enter Tahrir Square. Stones, metal bars and petrol bombs are pressed into service as run-

3 February: Cairo clashes continue

the square.

ning battles continue late

into the night on the edges of

Anti-government protesters clash with groups of government loyalists once again, 10 days since the mass protests began. 4 February: 'Day of

departure'

Huge crowds again occupy Tahrir Square in what protest leaders hopefully call "day of departure" for President Mubarak. The army increases its presence and Mubarak supporters keep their distance, making for a peaceful rally after the last two days of violence.

5 February: Ruling party resignations

The leadership of the governing NDP resigns en masse, including Gamal Mubarak, the son of the president. Until Mr Suleiman was appointed vice-president, it was widely believed Gamal was being groomed as his father's successor. 10 February: Mubarak

'may step down'

Ruling party officials and military leaders make statements suggesting that President Mubarak will step down.

2 more die

source at RMCH.

At least 29 people died from the disease in six northern districts-Rangpur, Kurigram Lalmonirhat, Nilphamari, Gaibandha and Dinajpur-since January 31.

Eighteen Nipah encephalitis infected people are now undergoing treatment at RMCH.

Stalker jailed

FROM PAGE 20

Mobile court sources said convict Shahinur Islam, 16 son of Md Aziz Mistri of Rahmatpur village in Debhata upazila used to stalk the 11-year-old girl of Sharafpur village, also a student of Sharafpur Primary School on her way to school.

The convict also tried to violate her while she was returning home from the school by a rickshaw van near at Sharafpur at about 4:00pm on Thursday.

Local people rescued the victim and caught the boy. The victim later lodged an allegation with Assassuni Police Station against the stalker and police arrested him.

Woman kills

FROM PAGE 20 Pabna General Hospital where doctors declared her dead.

Md Rawshan Ali, subinspector of Atghoria Police Station, quoting family members said "Shahid, a neighbour of Ayesha, used to stalk her. He often tried to force Ayesha to go into a relationship."

"Ayesha might have committed suicide to save herself from this shame," the SI

Police are trying to nab Shahid, he added.

Pakistan rejects US man's selfdefence claim

AFP, Lahore

rob him.

Pakistani police yesterday rejected the self-defence claim of a US official who shot dead two men in broad daylight, accusing him of cold-blooded murder as court extended his remand. In a move likely to further

inflame ties with Washington, which says the man has diplomatic immu-Gopalganj, Moulvibazar, nity and should be released immediately, a judge in the eastern city of Lahore ordered Raymond Davis be recovered. held in prison for 14 days. On January 27 he shot two

Pakistani men and after his stealing, they kept those in their dens, police said. arrest told police he acted in self-defence because he feared they were trying to

Of the arrestees, Akash was sentenced to 18 years imprisonment in an arms case this year.



Book fair sees holiday crowd

NAJMUL ALAM NOBIN

The Amar Ekushey Boi Mela venue wore a new look yesterday when children and youths of different ages overwhelmingly adorned their faces with different colours.

Students of different colleges and universities of the capital adorn the faces of booklovers with various colours especially on Friday, the weekly holiday, when the turn up of crowds peaks.

Usually people paint their faces and hands red-and-green--the colours of our national flag.

"We adorn the faces especially of children and youths to give them a bit of fun as they love it most," said Md Abu Bakar Siddique, a student of Dhaka College. "We do it on Friday as a large number of booklovers throng the fair on this day," he added. It continues on other days of the week.

But on holidays, students from different colleges and universities do it to give delight to the booklovers, he said. More than 30 people having brushes

and colours in their hands were roaming around the fair compound and asking people whether they would like to paint their faces. Usually, children were showing more interest in adorning their faces and hands.



A child's cheek gets painted at Amar Ekushey Boi Mela yesterday. Some of them coloured the faces and

hands of enthusiasts in exchange of a token money while others did it for free. Moni, a housewife, who also came to

the fair to paint people's faces, said the art of adorning people's face brings extra joy to the booklovers.

Dipu Moni **FROM PAGE 20**

reportedly in Canada now, said sources in the Prime Minister's Office.

Issues like development cooperation, trade and investment, regional security and immigration will also dominate the talks, foreign ministry officials told The Daily Star. "This is a very important

visit," said a senior official at the ministry wishing anonymity. Dipu is paying the visit at the invitation of her Canadian

counterpart Lawrence

Brad Wall, premier of Saskatchewan province of Canada, is scheduled come to

three-day official visit followingher return. Besides holding a meeting with Canadian Foreign

Minister Lawrence Cannon,

Dipu is expected to call on

Bangladesh on March 13 on a

Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper. The two countries maintain a good business relationship,

officials say. Of the South Asian countries, Bangladesh is the second largest exporter to Canada. Bangladesh is also the biggest Canadian agro-commodity buyer in the region, they add.

While Bangladesh exports readymade garments, textile accessories and seafood to Canada, it imports cereals, legumes, oilseeds, iron and steel from there.

Officials say trade between

the two countries is now reach-

ing a new height with a 50 percent trade growth in 2009 compared to that of the previous Last year, the trade between

the two countries reached \$1.6 billion from \$1.4 billion in 2009. To further this growth, Canada Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce (CanCham) and Canadian High Commission in Dhaka are jointly organising the maiden Canadian trade exhibition on February 20 at

Bangabandhu International

Conference Centre in the capi-

Links between the two peoples are also expanding. The Bangladeshi community in Canada is estimated at over 100,000 and it continues to contribute to Canada's devel-

Canada is exploring avenues in supporting Bangladesh's efforts to counter terrorism to enhance domestic and regional security.

9 Car thieves

Gopalganj, Narsingdi and Sylhet districts. DB police arrested Sariful

FROM PAGE 20

Islam, an accused in a carlifting case, from Dhanmondi early yesterday and as per his information, they carried out the drives and caught the others, said police sources. Seven private cars from

Narsingdi, Badda, Bangshal, Ashulia and Demra and a microbus from Sylhet were The criminals used a master key to unlock the cars and after

Mubarak finally FROM PAGE 1 world's most populous and

not enough.

The tumult over Mubarak's refusal to resign had tested the loyalties of the armed forces, which had to choose whether to protect their supreme commander or ditch him. The sharpening confron-

tation had raised fear o uncontrolled violence in the most populous Arab nation, a key US ally in an oil-rich region where the chance of chaos spreading to other long stable but repressive states troubles the West. Washington has called

for a prompt democratic

transition to restore stabil-

ity in Egypt, a rare Arab state

no longer hostile to Israel, guardian of the Suez Cana linking Europe and Asia and a major force against militant Islam in the region. The army statement noted that Mubarak had handed powers to govern the country of 80 million people to his deputy the previous day -- perhaps

signaling that this should

satisfy demonstrators,

reformists and opposition figures. "This is not our demand," one protester said, after relaying the contents of the army statement to the crowd in Cairo's central Tahrir Square. "We have one demand, that Mubarak step down." He has said he will stay until

September elections. Muslim The Brotherhood, an Islamist opposition group, urged protesters to keep up mass nationwide street protests, describing Mubarak's concessions as a trick to stay in

power. REFORMS TOO LITTLE TOO LATE

Hundreds of thousands of protesters rallied across Egypt, including in the industrial city of Suez, earlier the scene of some of the fiercest violence in the crisis, and the second city of Alexandria, as well as in Tanta and other Nile Delta centers.

The army also said it "confirms the lifting of the state of emergency as soon as the current circumstances end", a pledge that would remove a law imposed after Mubarak became president following Anwar Sadat's assassination in 1981 and that protesters say has long been used to stifle dissent.

It further promised to guarantee free and fair elections and other concessions made by Mubarak to protesters that would have been unthinkable before January 25, when the revolt began.

But none of this was enough for many hundreds of thousands of mistrustful protesters who rallied in cities across the Arab

influential country on Friday, fed up with high unemployment, a corrupt elite and police repression.

Since the fall of Tunisia's long-time leader Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali, which triggered protests around the region, Egyptians have been demonstrating in huge numbers against rising prices, poverty, unemployment and their authori-

tarian regime. **EMERGENCY LAWS**

Middle East.

World powers had increasingly pressured Mubarak to organize an orderly transition of power since the protests erupted on January 28 setting off an earthquake that has shaken Egypt sending shock waves around the

Mubarak, 82, was thrust into office when Islamists gunned down his predecessor Anwar Sadat at a military parade in 1981.

The burly former air force commander has proved a far more durable leader than anyone imagined at the time, governing under emergency laws protesters say were used to crush dissent.

The president has long promoted peace abroad and more recently backed economic reforms at home led by his cabinet under Prime Minister Ahmed Nazif. But he always kept a tight lid on political opposi-

Mubarak resisted any significant political change even under pressure from the United States, which has poured billions of dollars of military and other aid into Egypt since it became the first Arab state to make peace with Israel, signing a treaty in 1979.



Born 4 May in Kafr El-Meselha Nile Delta Graduated from Air Force Academy

Test pilot and Air Force instructor, urther training in the Soviet Union ir Force chief of staff Air Force commander, excels during

repeated wars with Israel rising through ranks to become general Named vice president

down by Islamist militants

Re-elected president four times, each time serving six years in office

Elected president a week after his predecessor Anwar Sadat was gunned

Hundreds of thousands of Egyptians launch unprecedented nationwide protests calling for Mubarak to resign 11 February 2011

After weeks of protest, Mubarak resigns, hands power to army