**BEFRIENDING RUSSIA**

The importance of bolstering ties with Russia for Bangladesh

PAGE 13

KNOWING MANAGEMENT

Jamal Khan emphasises knowledge of management for quality administration

PAGE 15

DAMAGE CONTROL

Hillary Clinton makes a surprise visit to Pakistan

PAGE 6

Power for 12 lakh new subscribers

PDB resumes giving connections after 2 years; new lines within this year

MD FAZLUR RAHMAN

Nearly 12 lakh residential buildings and industrial units will get power connections this year, as the government has resumed providing electricity connections after a pause of more than two years, said Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) officials.

"We have started providing connections to new buildings and factories, thanks to the improvement in power situation," said a BPDB official.

cial, wishing anonymity.

The BPDB will provide new electricity connections in phases. About four lakh applicants, who have already subscribed for power connections, will be brought under the national electricity network in the first phase. The rest will get the facility gradually, said the official.

The users, however, must get solar energy systems installed to enjoy the facility.

Residential buildings using up to 2 kilowatt of electricity a day will have

to meet five percent of their power consumption from renewable energy sources. It is seven percent for commercial buildings and factories consuming 50 kilowatt of electricity and 10 percent for users of power above 50 kilowatt.

Garment factories must have solar solutions installed to meet five percent of their power consumption, said the official.

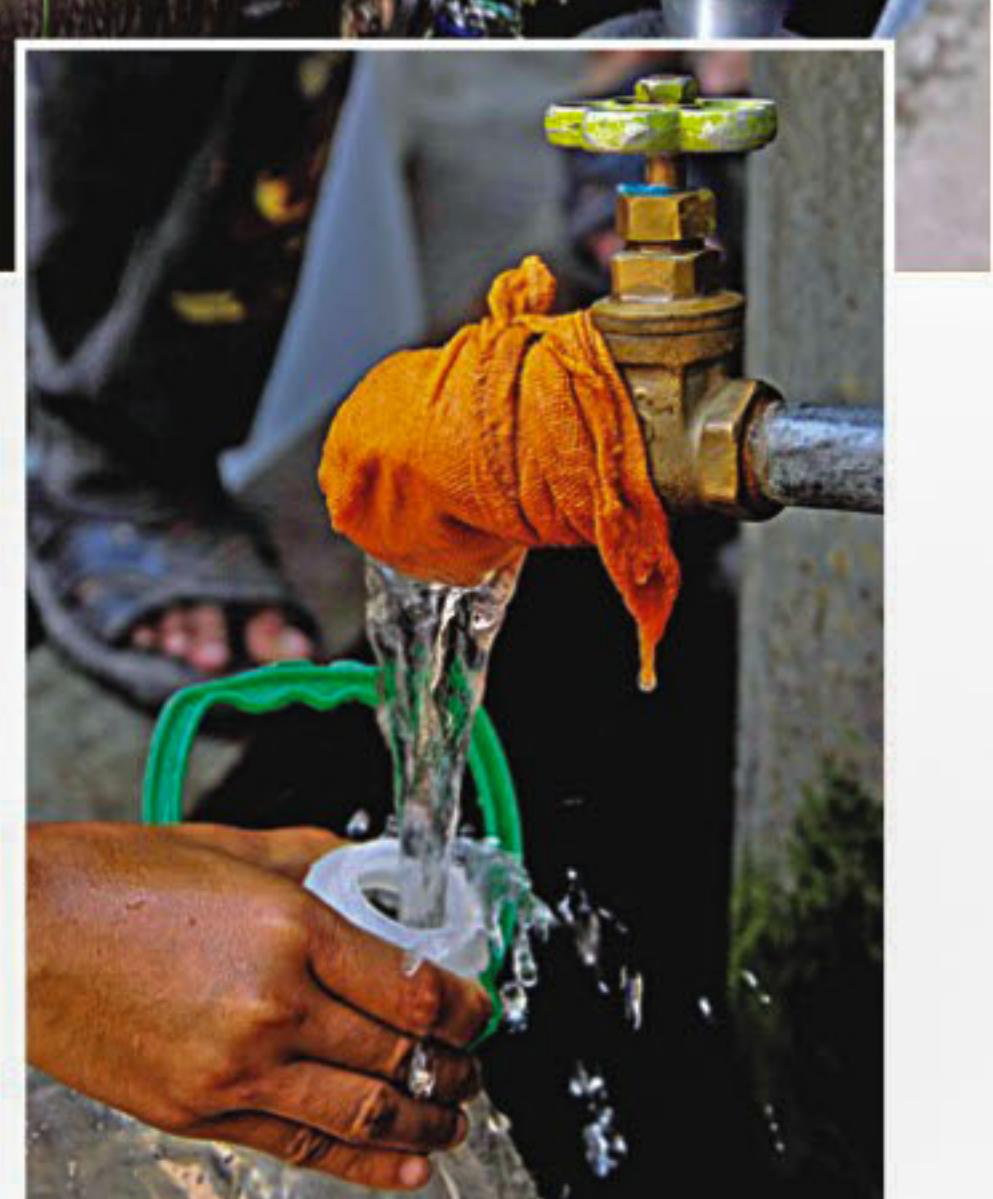
The government stopped giving new connections to households and

SEE PAGE 19 COL 5



Water crisis is causing immense suffering to people in some parts of the capital with the onset of summer. Top, Locals queue up to collect water at a Water and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) pump house close to a transformer at Shantibagh in the capital. Residents allege they are getting water either insufficient in quantity or smelling stinky in their households. However, what they get from the pump house is not satisfactory either as excessive iron has been noticed in its tap water. Right, A piece of cloth is used to filter out iron from water. The photos were taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN



EC wants firm grip on poll officials

Seeks power to punish govt officials for misconduct, failure to perform

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The Election Commission wants the power to punish civil servants engaged in poll duties for misconduct and incompetence.

The EC has drafted proposals for changes to the Representation of the People Order to get this authority, sources said.

It believes if the changes are brought to the electoral laws, it will empower the EC to effectively control the electoral officials during parliamentary elections.

The EC, a constitutional body, appoints and engages a large number of government officials in election duties. They are considered officials working on deputation under the EC.

Their efficiency and neutrality in poll duties largely determine the fate of a free and fair election and also the image of the EC. But the existing laws do not allow the EC to take punitive actions against civil

SEE PAGE 19 COL 7



WAR CRIMES
Mladic fit for trial
AGENCIES

A judge ruled yesterday that Bosnian Serb general Ratko Mladic, the alleged mastermind of the Srebrenica massacre and

SEE PAGE 19 COL 5

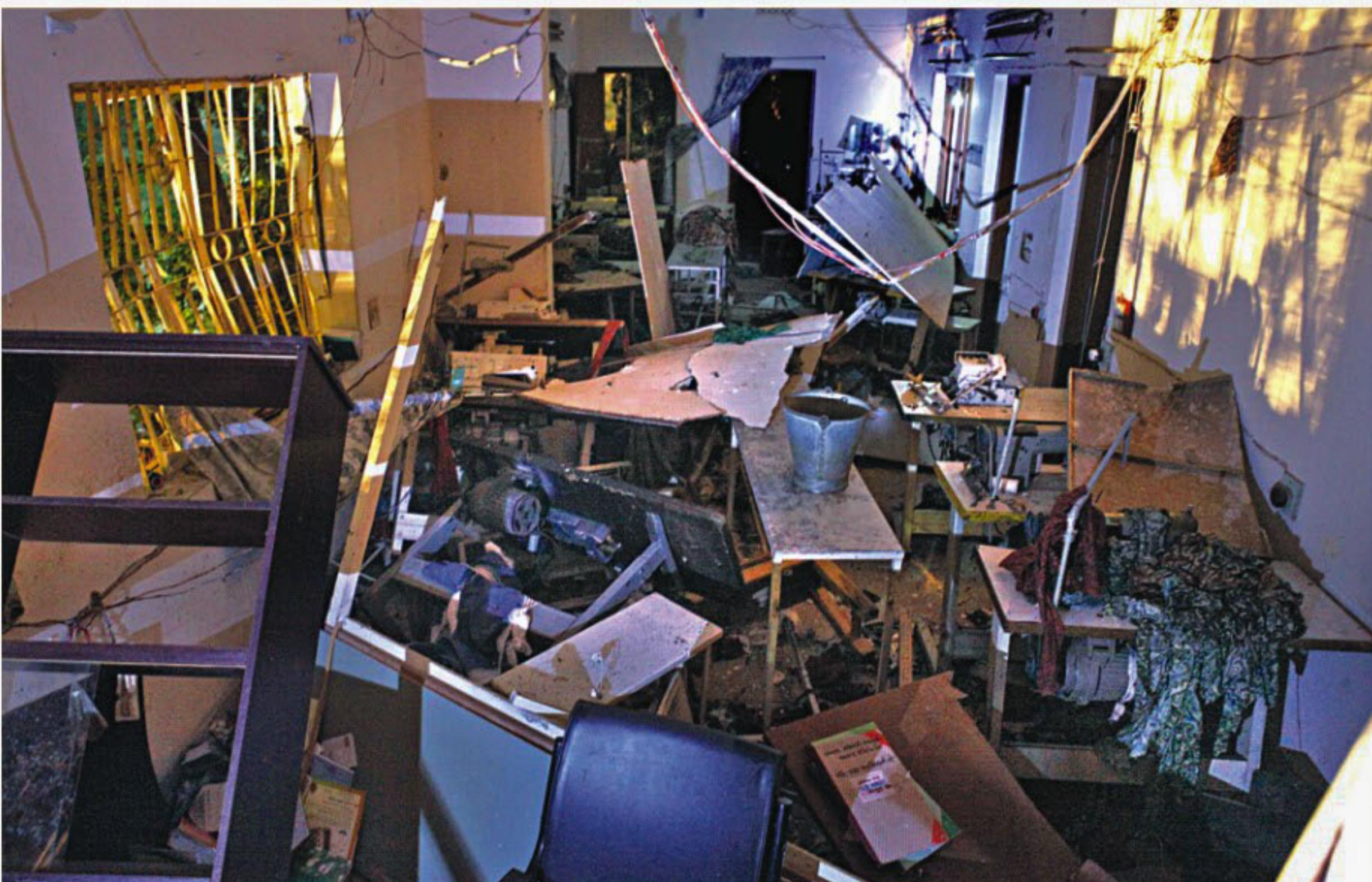


PHOTO: STAR

The pile of torn-apart furniture inside a room of the flat in Mirpur-2 after the mysterious explosion yesterday evening.

7 hurt in 'gas explosion' in building
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least seven people were injured in an explosion at the city's Mirpur yesterday evening.

Police suspect that the explosion occurred due to a gas leakage.

Of the seven, three people-- Atiqullah, 38, his nephew Forkan Ahmed, 23, and Kaiser Uddin, 41-- suffered 30 percent burns. They were admitted to the Burn and Plastic Surgery Unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Atiqullah said the explosion took place on the first floor of a

G8 leaders for united stance on Arab revolts

AFP, Deauville

G8 leaders sought yesterday to thrash out a common position on how to support Arab democratic revolts, brandishing a threat of action against Syria and demanding Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi go.

The demands were laid out in a draft declaration by leaders of the world's most industrialised democracies seen by AFP, which could yet be watered down, especially given Russia's strong Middle Eastern alliances.

The strongest language was reserved for Gaddafi, with even Russia apparently backing a demand for the strongman to quit,



even though Moscow claimed it had been asked to promote a negotiated settlement to the Libya conflict.

"We demand the immediate cessation of the use of force against civilians by the Libyan regime forces as well as the cessation of all incitement to hostility and violence against the civilian population," it said.

Gaddafi and the Libyan government have failed to fulfil their responsibility to protect the Libyan population and have lost all legitimacy. He has no future in a free, democratic Libya. He must go," it warned.

US President Barack Obama said after

SEE PAGE 19 COL 2

MORE ON PAGE 7

KIBRIA KILLING
Asma Kibria demands further probe
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Asma Kibria, widow of slain former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria, yesterday termed improper the Kibria murder case complainant's remark on the supplementary charge sheet and said the case should be probed further for the sake of the ruling party and the country.

Asma's reaction came a day after plaintiff Abdul Mazid Khan, an Awami League leader, told the media that he thinks

SEE PAGE 19 COL 4

SEE PAGE 19 COL 4

CONGRATULATIONS



International Container Shipping Association (ICSA) of Bangladesh welcomes and congratulates Mr. Sheikh Hafizur Rahman, Chairman of SHR Group representing SCI and MSC, on his assumption of the ICSA Chairmanship to lead a range of important initiatives geared to promoting shipping of International standard to bring the smoothness in transportation of Bangladesh Export and Import trades.



International Container Shipping Association

Blake meets Khaleda

Expresses concern over Grameen issue
UNB, Dhaka

US Assistant Secretary of State Robert Blake met BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia at her Hotel Marriot suite in Washington on Thursday.

During the meeting, Khaleda said people of Bangladesh believe that relation between Bangladesh and USA will be strengthened through direct interactions without interference of a third party.

Blake mentioned about Prof Muhammad Yunus issue and again expressed concern over his removal from Grameen Bank. He also apprehended possible impediment to micro-credit process following the government actions.

Khaleda said the judiciary in Bangladesh has

SEE PAGE 19 COL 7