Gas blast kills 11 in north China

AFP, Beijing

A gas blast killed 11 people at a coal mine in northern China yesterday, state media reported, in the latest accident to hit the country's min-

ground, the spokesman said.

in coal mine accidents in

China, according to official

statistics -- a rate of more than

Labour rights groups say

much higher, partly due to

under-reporting of accidents

as mine bosses seek to limit

their economic losses and

Nepal sacks

implicated

in murder

Nepal's ruling Maoist party

announced on Sunday it was

removing a minister accused

of involvement in the mur-

Party leaders said parlia-

mentary protests against

and reforms minister

Prabhu Sah were distracting

from the peace process and

had made his position

"Despite a legal clean

chit, we have decided to

recall Prabhu Sah from the

government due to the con-

troversy that is ongoing at

the parliament," Maoist

chairman Pushpa Kamal

decision because the issue

was deviating our focus

from the fundamental

issues of the peace process

and constitution making

and was unnecessarily

Khaleda slates

The leader of the opposi-

tion said the project's fate is

She said Awami League

has given politics a bad

name by giving nominations

to businessmen and wealthy

Ziaur Rahman's remark that

he would make politics

difficult for the politicians,

Khaleda said, "He [Zia]

meant to stop drawing-

room politics and make sure

that politicians go to the

She said the present

government is misguiding

people, particularly the

youth, by using the media.

masses for their welfare."

Recalling BNP founder

now uncertain for sure.

wasting our time."

FROM PAGE 20

people.

capital last night.

"We have taken this

Dahal said in a statement.

der of a Hindu activist.

AFP, Kathmandu

untenable.

six workers per day.

avoid punishment.

minister

record.

2,000 cars were used in the ing industry. road march, she said, "Every A total of 21 miners were car's number plate would be working underground when examined to know from the blast struck at the Tianyu where so many expensive coal mine in Tongchuan City, vehicles were arranged," Shaanxi province, a spokes-Hasina said. man for the city government After the death of Ziaur was quoted as saying by the official Xinhua news agency.

Rahman, the premier said, Khaleda and her family used The bodies of 11 miners to live on various allowances were retrieved, while the 10 when they had told people the others were lifted safely above 'broken suitcase' story. "Now where is the broken suitcase, China's mining industry and how you can arrange has a notoriously poor safety 2,000 cars to stage such a road march?" In 2010, 2,433 people died

She alleged that all the cars have been bought from the money looted by BNP during its last tenure. "What can people get from the party that loots orphans' property?"

the actual death toll is likely seeing the long saga of corruption by the BNP chairperson's two sons. "One son's corruption was proved in the US Federal Court, while another's in Singapore. They earned the nation a bad repute and shame with such activities," the prime minister

> The prime minister said Khaleda's criticism of the last caretaker government is nothing but a falsehood.

secretariat sent the letter

moments after the constitu-

tional body decided to use the

army through reviewing

overall law and order in the

electoral areas. It asked for

four companies of army per-

sonnel. A company consists of

the meeting, Election

Commissioner Brig Gen (retd)

M Sakhawat Hossain said the

letter signed by Deputy

Secretary Mihir Sarwar

Morshed reads: "the commis-

sion has taken the decision for

army deployment so voters

can return home safely after

all necessary measures to

ensure free and fair polls. For

this, it opted for army deploy-

ment to aid the civil adminis-

The army personnel will

have the authority to take

action to prevent violation of

electoral code of conduct and

arrest anybody without war-

rants within the radius of 400

yards of polling stations on

election day. The electoral

laws on the local government

polls empower the army with

oral candidates--Awami

League leader Selina Hayat

Ivy and BNP-backed Taimur

Alam Khandaker--had been

demanding army deploy-

of army deployment, Ivy and

Taimur said it would help the

Satisfied over the decision

Two front-running may-

this authority.

The commission is taking

casting their votes".

tration, the letter said.

Talking to reporters after

90 to 110 soldiers.

"Chief adviser Fakhruddin was of her (Khaleda) choice. Fakhruddin was made the Bangladesh Bank governor by her government who later helped her two sons siphon off public money abroad," she

PM questions

for vote rigging, killings and

Hasina termed the opposi-

tion's road march a car rally.

"We all know that road march

means marching through

roads, not travelling by cars,"

Mentioning that some

other crimes.

she quipped.

Moeen U Ahmed was also made the army chief bypassing nine major generals by the BNP government, Hasina said. "And president Iajuddin Ahmed did not face her wrath as he became the Yes Uddin for her (Khaleda)."

Hasina said the opposition chief and her party men are now very unhappy as the people are living in peace and happiness. "People's happiness brings unhappiness for the BNP chairperson and her partyleaders."

She said Khaleda often scolds Fakhruddin and Moeen U Ahmed as she could not rig the last general election using 1.23 lakh fake votes and she could not enjoy the money and property she had looted during her last regime. The prime minister said

Hasina said people feel shy while the BNP government did not add even a single megawatt of power during its last five-year tenure, the present government has so for added several thousands megawatts to the national

Hasina also declared that the government would turn Gazipur into a city corporation considering its importance and that it would be linked with Dhaka through an elevated expressway.

Election Commission hold

the polls in a free, fair and

demand for changes in the

top posts of local police and

the administration to ensure a

Ivy, however, reiterated her

peaceful manner.

fair election.

Army to be deployed

Accused snatched from cops

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

Miscreants attacked police and snatched a handcuffed accused in Sirajdikhan upazila of Munshiganj yesterday.

Four policemen were injured in the incident. They are undergoing treatment at a private clinic in Keraniganj; two of them are said to be in critical condition.

The accused, Afiluddin, 42, had been fugitive since an arrest warrant was issued against him on charges of abduction and attempt to murder around 10 days back, said Mahedi Hasan, officer-in-charge of Sirajdikhan Police Station.

Police arrested him at a place near Tulshikhali Bazar in Chitracourt area yesterday morning. Shortly afterwards, as they were taking him to the police station, they came under an attack.

Besides taking away Afiluddin, the attackers looted a rifle and a shotgun from the cops. Later, the weapons were recovered from a roadside bush.

In the afternoon, two suspects--Mostafa, 25, and Hassan, 20--were detained over the attack.

Md Shafiqul Islam, the district superintendent of police, confirmed the incident.

India wants

FROM PAGE 20

Wasim Akram Malik, who is studying in a medical college in Sylhet, were involved in the blast that killed 15 people and left nearly 80 injured.

This is for the first time that the suspected involvement of Shibir in terror activities in India has come to light, the officials were quoted by Indian Express newspaper today as saying.

Wasim, a resident of India's Jammu and Kashmir, was arrested by NIA on October 7 and during interrogation, he reportedly said that two Bangladeshi nationals had participated in the attack, the

detectives said. Officials claimed to have identified the Shibir members and are now seeking diplomatic help in tracing them. The duo is reported to have travelled with Wasim to India on August 27, first visiting Jammu and then Delhi. A team from NIA is already camping in Bangladesh.

Meanwhile, NIA claims they found the laptop which Wasim used while studying in Bangladesh. They suspect he had used the laptop to send communications to his brother Junaid, who is absconding, and Aamir Abbas Dev, another youth from Jammu and Kashmir, who has since been arrested.

The laptop has been sent to forensic test and NIA is trying to retrieve some files purportedly deleted by Wasim.

Meanwhile, a Delhi court on Friday recorded the statement of Aamir before a magistrate in connection with the blast.

Govt moves to resolve crisis matter the same day he sends project.

city

FROM PAGE 1

minister, would write to the WB integrity vice president in Washington.

In the letter, Mashiur would convey the government's response to the WB's corruption allegations involving the project, the minister explained. Under a new arrange-

ment, the WB and the government jointly appoint an integrity adviser to any big project financed by the bank. The adviser is responsible for looking into any irregularities related to the project. As a World Bank gover-

nor, Muhith will also dispatch a letter to the WB president touching upon all aspects of the Padma bridge issue. The finance minister said

he will brief reporters and issue a statement on the

The court took the case

into cognizance and ordered

the Anti-Corruption

Commission to submit a

report after investigating the

The plaintiff stated that

he owns a shop and a ware-

FROM PAGE 20

Sessions Judge.

4 Ctg cops sued

the letter to the WB president.

Both the letters have been prepared following discussions with the prime minis-

ter, Muhith said. Asked about a possible solution to the snags in the WB's financing for the project, he said, "I think it can be

"I have been saying all along that it is a temporary problem and it will be resolved very soon." Asked whether the com-

resolved."

munications minister would be removed, Muhith said, "I will not comment on

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Dipu Moni told journalists at her ministry that the government would provide donors with all necessary information regarding the Padma bridge

She hoped that there would not be any problem.

Dipu Moni met the WB vice president for South Asia in Washington on October 13.

On September 21, the WB integrity vice presidency handed over a letter and a copy of its probe report on corruption to the finance minister. The documents raised allegations of corrupagainst tion Communications Minister Syed Abul Hossain and his business firm.

The WB has already suspended its fund of \$1.2 billion to the Padma bridge project. Two other major donors -the Asian Development Bank and Japan International Cooperation Agency -- have opted to "wait and see" until the government and the WB settle the issue.

French left votes for its presidential champion

AFP, Paris

Left-leaning French voters headed back to the polls yesterday to decide whether Francois Hollande or Martine Aubry should take on Nicolas Sarkozy in next year's presidential election.

Whichever of the pair wins the Socialist Party nomination will immediately become the frontrunner in the race, as polls show the centre-right incumbent trailing either in April and May's two-round contest.

The vote is also France's first US-style open primary -- any elector who says he or she supports the ideals of the left can vote -- and a big turnout could serve as a springboard for the cam-

the ship to make it gas free, said a worker of the yard preferring not to be named.

caused their deaths, said the worker who took them to the hospital.

Ship-Breaking Yard Sramik Kormochari Federation, accused the owner of the yard of not having the necessary safety measures in place.

Lokman Hossain, owner of the ship-breaking yard, informed police that some of his workers fell sick while working at the yard at about 6:30am, said Habibur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Sitakunda Police Station.

With yesterday's accident, the number of casualties from ship-breaking vard-related accidents rose to about 40, raising questions about the role of the departments concerned.

Ship-breaking yard own-

On March 5, 2009, the Supreme Court directed the government to ensure the safety of those working at

ship-breaking yards. The government has so far failed to comply with the directive, as it continues to

allow the yards to operate without ensuring workers' safety and also without obtaining environment clearance certificates.

Muggers kill FROM PAGE 20

the agency, said a gang of six on three motorbikes went to the company's Dholaipar office and opened fire on Didarul and Ohidul when they were getting on a car around 10:30am.

have been better if Mamata Rajeet Mitter also could

not provide any timeframe for the Teesta accord.

Ershad sees general index of Dhaka Stock Exchange plummeting by 181.31 points or 3.26 percent.

> Minister AMA Muhith had an emergency meeting with the Securities and Exchange Commission in the evening to devise ways of stabilising the market. The government will come

up with some positive measures today to restore the investors' dampened confidence in the shares market, a senior SEC official said after the meeting.

However, the protests and hunger strike, under the banner of Bangladesh Capital Market Investors Unity, were going on till filing of this report at 1:00am today.

BNP, JP LEADERS' SOLIDARITY Leaders of different political

parties, including the BNP and Jatiya Party, have expressed solidarity with the small investors who went on a hunger strike in front of the Dhaka Stock Exchange to protest the free fall in share

Investors begin fast-unto-death postpone the demonstration. They assured them that they would go to the highest authority of the government Meanwhile, Finance with their demand.

> "Please break your fast. I assure you that I will be informing the prime minister about your miseries," Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad told the protesters.

He came to the protest venue around 2:00pm as a group of investors, seated on the road and covering their heads with pieces of white cloth, were taking part in the hunger strike..

"Petty investors are going broke due to the massive fall in the stock market. It is not desirable," Ershad said, adding that everyone knew who were involved in market manipulation and they must be brought to book.

He also urged the government to withdraw the cases filed at different times against the small investors.

Expressing solidarity with the agitating investors, BNP standing committee member Abdul Moyeen Khan told them that his party was beside them. If the BNP came to power, he said, it would compensate the affected inves-

"We warned the government earlier. But it identified the investors as 'fatkabaz' [speculators], instead of showing them respect,' Moyeen told the protesters.

Sajjad Zahir Chandan, a leader of Communist Party of Bangladesh, Abdul Malek Ratan, general secretary of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (Rob), and Shahadat Hossain Selim, senior joint secretary general of LDP, also announced their parties' solidarity with the aggrieved investors.

Toxic gas

Abdus Salam, station officer of Postogola fire service, said he was suffocating as he entered the complex without wearing a mask.

Leaves on the trees around the factories got discoloured and were looking sick after the leak. Most of their branches were dying.

Meanwhile, locals staged angry demonstrations demanding the removal of the factory from the area.

A number of residents left the area while shops and educational institutions near the firm were closed.

house on around seven kathas of land at

matter.

Supariwalapara of Pathantuli and has been importing and selling motor parts for the last 38 years. Nurul Amin, a local trader, recently attempted to

evict him from his property

claiming that he owns the shop, Bazal alleged. Bazal's lawyer Rezaul Karim quoting the case statement said his client has filed a general dairy with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) Court

On September 18, OC Rafigul and the two other

on September 14 in this

case statement. As he refused to pay, police instantly sent him to jail filing a false case against him with the same police

saying that they need to

examine his documents but

they demanded Tk 15 lakh

bribe, claimed Bazal in his

station, added Bazal. Bazal got bail from court the following day and alleged that the OC took Tk 11 lakh as bribe from Nurul

On September 27, a team of police led by the two SI's looted goods worth Tk crore from his shop and warehouse and evicted him from his land, said Bazal. When contacted, OC

Rafiqul Islam termed the allegations false and baseless. He said SI Osman was the investigation officer of the case. Meanwhile, another case

was filed against a subinspector of Chandgaon SI's took Bazal to Double Police Station yesterday in

the case with the Court of

Tk 50,000 from a trader.

Mooring Police Station connection with snatching

Osman Gani Manik, a trader of Bahaddarhat, filed Chittagong Metropolitan Sessions Judge. In his case statement

Osman claimed that SI Abu Kalam Azad of Chandgaon Police Station called him at a hotel in Bahaddarhat to settle a family feud between Osman and his wife over his wife's affair. As he reached the hotel, SI Abul Kalam arrested him and took him to the police station where the SI took the money and a mobile phone from him on September 09, 2011. Osman claimed that the SI also realised Tk 20,000 bribe from his brother Arit Mahiuddin for releasing

As he asked for his money back, after getting bail from the court, SI Abul Kalam threatened to kill him on October 2, Osman claimed.

Transit fees to be fixed

FROM PAGE 1

connection.

"BNP has also moved away from its earlier position," he said. "Now the question remains about the fees and benefits of giving transit."

Muhith mentioned that said the government core committee has already identified routes for transit The government, however, will decide which routes are to be allowed and which routes have scope for transportation of more goods.

Transit goods are being carried through Ashuganj on an experimental basis, he said.

Bangladesh has yet to provide formal road transit facilities to India, even though river transit has long been in operation between the two neighbours.

In recent weeks, Indian ships have used Ashugani river port for transhipment of goods and equipment to Tripura.

The transhipment of Indian goods was a trial, the government said respond-

already providing limited transit to New Delhi before a formal agreement is signed. Muhith also said yester-

day the government is considering an Indian request for limited use of Chittagong and Mongla sea ports to carry goods mainly to its northeastern states through Bangladesh territory. Bangladesh has excess

capacity in the two ports, and it can consider allowing India to use these ports, he The finance minister

further said he has told India to provide Bangladesh the figures on how much goods they want to transport using the two ports, and then Dhaka can consider providing the facilities.

Rajeet Mitter told journalists New Delhi has requested Dhaka for permission to use Chittagong and Mongla ports for transit. If the facilities are given, the people and businessmen of both the countries will be ing to concern that Dhaka is benefited.

Muhith also spoke about India's failure to sign a deal with Bangladesh on sharing the Teesta water during Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's recent visit to Dhaka.

Bangladesh refused to sign any deal on providing road transit to India since the Teesta deal was not signed because of lastminute opposition from Paschimbanga Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. Muhith said he can't give

any deadline for the signing of the Teesta deal. Prime Minister Sheikh

Hasina will soon visit Angorpota enclave, and two or three Indian ministers will also be there. Teesta agreement will also come up for discussion during the visit, the finance minister said.

He, however, said it would would come to Angorpota. But unfortunately she will not be there, he added.

Food before bio-fuel

Referring to a poster of a hungry child with an eagle flying over its head, Matia said scientists are doing research on bio-fuel production when children go withoutfood.

Matia's comments came

after International Food Policy Research Institute last week said the United States and the European Union are subsidising bio-fuel production and farmers are switching to the cultivation of biofuel crops like maize. It said this dramatic increase in probio-fuel policies poses a major challenge. A rally and a fair on food

were also held yesterday at the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council to raise awareness about keeping food prices at tolerable level.

Food and Disaster Management Minister Muhammad Abdur Razzaque and Fishery and Livestock Minister Abdul Latif Biswas prices. also spoke at the seminar.

Quoting FAO Director Food and Disaster General Dominique Burgeon, stable.

Muhammad Abdur Razzaque said once Bangladesh received 12-13 lakh tonnes of food aid from abroad but food aid has slumped to below 1 one lakh tonnes now. He said the government's

food stock increased to a

record level while food distri-

bution and market interven-

Management Minister

tion have also risen. The government distributed 12.5 lakh tonnes of grains through open market sales. This year's World Food Day was observed with the slogan: "Food prices--from crisis to stability" to shed light on the trend that is hurting the poor. In Bangladesh alone, 2.7 crore

(27 million) poor do not get enough food. At the seminar, former secretary Prof Zahurul Karim blamed fall in agriculture productivity due to under investment in research, population growth and surging fuel prices for the hike in food

the FAO representative in Bangladesh called for elimination of trade-distorting subsidy in agriculture by the richer countries. FAO also called for greater transparency in futures markets to enable governments and traders make informed decisions and avoid panic or

World Food Programme yesterday called for food assistance for humanitarian crisis. It said food assistance plays a vital role in support ing the recovery in the aftermath of disasters and building resilience that is necessary to ensure food security. It said food assistance can play a role in protecting the vulnerable communities that are affected by food price volatility.

irrational reactions.

Campaign for Right to Food and Social Security in a statement yesterday demanded effective market monitoring by the government to keep food prices

paign proper.

All the six entered a room of

Probably, a CO2 gas leak

Safar Ali, president of

"We have sent an officer to get details of the incident," the OC added.

ers have been conducting operations in their shipyards without adequate safeguards for years.

Amzad Hossain, manager of

The criminals snatched the briefcase containing the money and fled the scene, he said. The two were going to deposit the money in the bank.

Meanwhile, three people including a teenage boy were injured as criminals opened fire at a construction site at Gendaria in the city yesterday. Injured Md Jahid, 35,

caretaker of the underconstruction building, and Wasa employee Ali Azim, 38, were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital while Md Sohel, 14, was taken to a local clinic.

Condition of Jahid and Azim was stated to be criti-

A group of two extortionists entered the site at about 2:00pm and opened fire on the Jahid. Later, they shot Azim, who went to monitor the construction work. Sohel, the teenage boy, was hit in the leg by a stray bullet.

Iqbal Khan, owner of the

building, told The Daily Star that one Emon had been demanding Tk 10 lakh in extortion.

"He [Emon] even threatened to kill me if I don't give him the money," said Iqbal. Faruk Ahmed, officer-in-

charge of Gendaria Police Station, said the incident might have taken place over collecting extortion.

FROM PAGE 20 Engineers in the capital. He said his party will participate in the next parliamen-

grand alliance government assumed power and now we are ready," he said. He urged the party activists to keep up the field work at

the party and earn popularity. In response to the chants of hundreds of party activists in the council saying they wanted to see Ershad president again, he said, "I want to be the chief of the government instead of the president."

While speaking on the latest constitutional amendment, he said "Before the amendments, I warned the government that I would leave the alliance if secularism is established. We do not accept secularism.'

Moulana Anisul Haque, convenor of Jatiya Olama Party, chaired the programme, while JP presidium members Kazi Jafar Ahmed and ABM Ruhul Amin Hawlader were present, among others.

tary election on its own. "We have been preparing to contest unaided since the

grass roots level to reorganise

prices. Senior leaders of the parties also requested the protesters to break their fast and

The maiden polls to

candidacy despite Prime Minister and party chief

Sheikh Hasina's efforts to

persuade one of them to stand

Awami League-backed candidate Shamim Osman said he is also happy over the decision as his two rivals Ivy

and Taimur are satisfied by the decision of army deployment. Locals are also satisfied by the commission's move Rafiur Rabbi, a vice-president of Narayanganj Nagorik Committee, a body of citizens, said deployment of the army

The Election Commission had earlier decided to deploy around 4,500 members of Rapid Action Battalion, police, Ansar and the Coast

Shamsul Huda said closed circuit televisions (CCTV) will be set up in over 100 vulnera-

would encourage voters to cast their votes without any

On Saturday, Chief

ble polling centres. Narayangani City Corporation have already drawn huge public attention as neither Shamim Osman nor Selina Hayat Ivy--two mayoral aspirants from

Guard in the electoral areas.

Election Commissioner ATM

Awami League--withdrew