### RMG workers

FROM PAGE 1

short-, medium- and longterm work plans to ensure fire and building safety and workers' security. It had suggested the Chief Inspector of Factory and Establishment, the Directorate of Fire Service and Civil Defence and the Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (Rajuk) supervised the implementation of the plans.

The taskforce also wanted Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) and Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA) to oversee the execution of the plans by factory authorities.

But in the face of the taskforce's inactivity, a meeting of SCF on Thursday decided to hand over the charge of making the committee functional to the labour and employment ministry.

"We have come to know that the taskforce has remained inactive for about two years," said Abdus Salam, a member (finance and admin) of fire service on Wednesday. He, however, could not say anything about the taskforce's work plan.

The Daily Star has obtained a copy of the work plan. According to that, many of the recommendations under the short-term plans are still to be implemented, let alone those under the medium- and long-term For instance, the short-

term action plan suggested that factory management do the evacuation drill every month and keep a record of it and that the factories use back-up batteries for the lights on the staircases, including the emergency Most factories are yet to

comply with these primary suggestions. Asked about his role in

implementing the taskforce's work plan, Chief Inspector of Factory and Establishment (CIFE) Md Habibul Islam said, "I have no idea about the plans."

He, however, said CIFE had representative in the inspection team for fire safety which was led by the fire service department.

## CPB, BSD

FROM PAGE 20

CPB President Mujahidul Islam Selim and BSD Convener Khalekuzzaman spoke at the event.

Their other demands are: arresting and punishing those responsible for the November 24 fire at Tazreen Fashions; ensuring security at workplaces including garments as per law; securing proper wage for workers and right to conduct trade unions; and reducing the prices of electricity, transport cost, house rent and daily necessities, and cancelling the decision to raise fuel price upon IMF prescription.

Selim said the anti liberation Jamaat-e-Islami observed a countrywide hartal on December 4 demanding release of its top leaders now facing trial for their alleged involvement in crimes against humanity, and this time, the proliberation forces would observe hartal for their immediate trial.

He urged all proliberation parties and the people to make the shutdown a success.

## 2 killed

FROM PAGE 20

flame was originated from the heat oven of the factory situated beside Dhaka-Pabna highway, around 3:00am and spread out rapidly around the market.

"The shops at the market are congested. So the fire spread quickly and gutted 16 shops," Md Shafiqul Islam, station officer of Bera fire station told The Daily Star.

The victims were sleeping in the factory and so they could not manage to escape immediately, Shafiqul said adding that four units from Pabna and Bera fire stations rushed to the spot immediately and could douse it in an

Pabna Md Mostafizur Rahman and Superintendent of Pabna police Jahangir Hossain Matobbar visited the spot.

# Govt, opposition

FROM PAGE 1

Minister and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina in the chair, entrusted party stalwarts Amir Hossain Amu and Tofail Ahmed to chalk out elaborate programmes and to coordinate them.

These programmes are supposed to counter the opposition alliance's programmes demanding restoration of the caretaker government system. On November 28, Leader

of the Opposition and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia had announced a series of programmes, including the countrywide road blockade tomorrow and demonstrations in all cities, districts and upazilas on December 23 and December 26. Meanwhile, the

Communist Party of Bangladesh and Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal yesterday called for a countrywide daylong hartal on December 18 to press home their demands.

Their demands include a ban on communal politics and fast trials of war crimi- frontation has intensified as

Awami League Advisory Council member Amir Hossain Amu told The Daily Star, "We will be on the streets with our own political programmes until March next year."

party would be on the streets were.

to make people aware of the "destructive activities" of the BNP-led opposition, which "attacks people and law enforcers".

Party insiders, however, claimed that the 14-party alliance's programmes are aimed at resisting Jamaat-Shibir on the street. However, Awami League

lawmaker Saber Hossain

Chowdhury said the 14 party's street programmes were aimed at warming up people for the next parliamentary polls. He said the Awami League would not get into

confrontations under any circumstances as it has nothing to gain from it. BNP Standing Committee Member Lt Gen (retd) Mahbubur Rahman said, "I

is obvious that the country's politics is heading towards confrontation with rigid stances of the ruling and opposition parties." He said dialogue is a must

between the two rival parties to avoid possible clash. "The possibility of con-

we do not know how the next election would be held ... whether the polls would be free and fair ... whether both parties would sacrifice something to reach a consensus, added the former army chief.

He feared for democracy He claimed that the 14- if things went on as they

# Batting woes

FROM PAGE 1

through poor batting in the second session as West Indies pacers struck while the iron was hot to level the series 2-2 by winning the fourth game of the five-ODI series by 75 runs yesterday. Now, today's fifth match, which starts at the same venue at 2:30 pm, has turned into the final.

Darren Sammy led his side from the front with a fantastic all-round show to snatch the momentum from Mushfigur's men, who failed to carry on their Khulna form in Dhaka. The Caribbean skipper first rescued his side from a batting debacle as his unbeaten 60 runs gave the visitors a respectable total of 211 and then his mediumpace bowling ripped

through the Bangladesh toporder to set a platform for his side to clinch a massive win. Chasing the 212-run target Bangladesh, reeling at 5-13, were in danger of falling to their lowest score in ODIs by beating their 58 all out against the same opponents during the 2011 World Cup at the same venue. Mahmudullah Riyad however joined his captain to avoid the blushes, associating 74 runs for the sixth wicket. Mahmudullah hit a second consecutive half-century as the elegant right-hander remained not out on 56, but his effort

made hardly any impact on the match. Instead Bangladesh, who were bundled out for 136 runs in 34.1 overs, have to look at what problems have suddenly infected their batting after showing real character in the first two games in Khulna. There has long been a trend of losing wickets like ninepins following one dismissal; Khulna saw a

refreshing change in that

regard but it seems as if they

have lost that rhythm in

their batting again. And another concern that reared its head yesterday was their fielding. A team can't hope to win a match if they drop five catches, which is what they did in the crucial encounter. In the end everybody must blame poor batting for the defeat but it is hard to accept the fact that Shohag Gazi dropped an easy chance from match hero Sammy on the boundary off Mashrafe Bin Mortaza when the batsman was on 30.

Marlon Samuels survived twice -- first, courtesy of Naeem Islam who grassed a chance at slip off Mashrafe, and then Elias Sunny failed to clutch a return catch, an act the left-arm spinner repeated against Kieran Pollard. Sunny, after having only himself to

Earlier, dangerman

blame in the first two instances, was again unlucky when Mushfiqur Deputy Commissioner of | dropped Darren Bravo off his bowling.

Earlier, at one stage the 200-run mark was a distant reality for the visitors after Mashrafe once again got rid of

Chris Gayle early to open the floodgates for the spinners, who got fine turn from the pitch to trouble the batsmen as West Indies lost half their wickets for 79 runs. The visitors were then reduced to 155 for eight, but Sammy took away the momentum from the Tigers, smashing five fours and two sixes during his 62-ball knock.

Bangladesh played with one pacer for the first time since 2009, when they played against Zimbabwe at home and their plan clicked bril liantly till the late surge from Sammy, who played a gem on a track where every other delivery was turning square and the hosts had enough ammo to exploit it.

But still, after the first innings nobody thought that the total was going to be enough for the West Indies to save the series, but ironically it was the visiting pacers who took charge on a spinners' pitch in the second innings to turn the tables on the hosts.

### Plan to import

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Prime Minister's Adviser Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury State Minister for Energy Power and Minera Resources M Enamul Haque and recently appointed ERD Secretary and former power division secretary M Abul Kalam Azad also spoke on the occasion.

Muhith said there was revolutionary development in electricity generation over nearly the last four years "We have at least been able to come out from the situation when people had to suffer from electricity crisis ... we even don't want to see the economic growth gets hurt due to electricity crisis."

He said the government concentrated on various alternative sources of electricity generation like renewable energy, solar energy and coal-based power generation.

He also reminded all to remain frugal in consuming electricity as the "cost of electricity generation is on the rise globally".

The PM's adviser claimed that average price of electricity was still low in the country compared to the neighbouring countries. "The average electricity price is below Tk 6 whereas it is about Tk 7 in Paschimbanga."

He said the electricity generation in the country had been doubled under the present government. Enamul Haque said the

government had been putting in its efforts to improve the electricity generation in the country through various projects. "We've energy deficiency, but our efforts are on," he said.

Azad said under the present government, there had been a lot of development in power generation and cutting system loss.

## Robert Blake

FROM PAGE 20

He will meet Bangladeshi officials, civil society leaders, and private sector representatives, said a media note of the US state department.

Blake will attend the four-day South Asia Women's Entrepreneurship Symposium. The US Department of State will host the event in support of the New Silk Road vision for enhancing regional economic integration and advancing economic growth, peace, and stability, by empowering women through entrepreneurship and trade. The symposium will

address the challenges and opportunities faced by women-owned small and medium enterprises and create cross-border linkages between women entrepreneurs and leaders throughout South Asia. Melanne S Verveer, US

ambassador at large for Global Women's Issues, will also visit Bangladesh to speak at the symposium. Blake will record an

episode of the television programme Conversation with Bangladesh." He is scheduled to leave

Dhaka for Bhutan on December 11.

## AL slams

road blockade, the AL leaders

FROM PAGE 1

said the BNP leader wanted to hold people hostage. They also censured

Fakhrul for his warning that the government would have to take the responsibility for any untoward situation that might arise from obstructions created by the authorities or ruling party men. According to the ruling

party leaders, there is no

reason for obstructing any programmes of the opposi-"The question of challenging the opposition [by the police] arises only when they resort to violence," former AL organising secretary and

Chowdhury told The Daily Terming BNP's blockade programme a recipe for chaos, he said it is the moral obligation of police to save the victims when opposition men set buses afire, damage public

lawmaker Saber Hossain

property and attack people. "This cannot be cited as obstruction," added Saber, urging Fakhrul to observe their programme peacefully.

Addressing a discussion at Suhrawardy Udyan in the capital, senior AL leader and former home minister Mohammad Nasim asked the BNP leader not to command or intimidate people to make their road blockade a success. He also urged the leaders and activists of AL-led grand alliance to resist any destructive activities by the BNP-Jamaat alliance.

Meanwhile, the BNP yesterday threatened of fresh agitation programmes if the government obstructs their road blockade slated for

Sunday, reports UNB. "We will observe our blockade programme peacefully and take our movement to its peak through it. We ask the government not to create hindrance to our programme... fresh action programmes will be announced forthwith if we are obstructed," said Moudud Ahmed, a standing committee member of the main

a labour rights group. opposition party. be shut down, but who will The former law minister do that?" she said. "Any issued the warning while good government inspector addressing a discussion at the who wants to act tough National Press Club on the against such rogue factories necessity of caretaker government. Bangladesh Youth would be removed from Forum, a pro-opposition office. Who will take that platform, arranged the risk?"

itself," he added.

next general election.

programme. Fire officials did chal-Moudud said the opposilenge the factory, though tion would continue their they appeared reluctant to movement until the governgo too far. ment bows out.

When the factory's fire "No leader and activist of safety certification expired Please don't ask me anythe 18-party alliance will June 30, Dhaka's fire return home until the moveauthorities refused to renew ment succeeds. But if the it, a fire official told the AP, government pushes us speaking on condition of towards violence, it will be anonymity because he was inviting great danger for not authorized to speak to the media.

On November 28, BNP A factory must be certi-Chairperson Khaleda Zia fied to operate, but the declared the road blockade department usually gives programme from a public factory owners some time rally of the BNP-led 18-party alliance to press home their to upgrade conditions. If they fail to do so, the departvarious demands, mainly restoration of the caretaker ment can file a court case to government to oversee the get it closed down. But it rarely does, and did not in

# Tk 550cr Destiny

FROM PAGE 1

on Wednesday, requesting anonymity. The court order came on

November 27 in connection with two cases against 22 officials of the company on charges of laundering Tk 3,285 crore. ACC lawyer Mosharraf

Hossain Kajol said, "The

confiscation took effect immediately after the court order." The anti-graft body filed the cases in July. Subsequently, Rafiqul Amin, group president Lt Gen (retd) Harun-Ar-

Rashid and Destiny 2000

Chairman Mohammad

Hossain were arrested.

Harun, a former army chief,

secured bail from the High

Court, but Rafigul and

Hossain are still behind bars.

A wrangle between the

activists and police led to a

chase and counter chase in

the area. Jamaat-Shibir

supporters threw brickbats

at police, prompting the law

enforcers to charge batons,

fire four rounds of tear shells

activists--Hafez Hafizur

Rahman, Mustak Ahmed

and Sirajul Islam--from the

spot, reports our correspon-

A case would be filed

against the activists on

charge of attacking the law

enforcers, said N M

Murshid, acting superin-

tendent of police of the

constable was stabbed

allegedly by Jamaat-Shibir

activists while an assistant

commissioner of police

came under attack by locals

during his attempt to nab

the activists at Dharampur

The injured policemen

Assistant

are constable Shariful Islam

of Motihar Police Station,

Commissioner (AC) Abul

Hasnat of Rajshahi

RMP Commissioner SM

Development Authority

could have fined Tazreen

Fashions Ltd or even

pushed for the demolition

of illegally built portions of

the building, said an agency

official, who spoke to The

Associated Press on condi-

tion of anonymity because

he was not authorised to talk

to the media. But it chose to

do nothing, rather than

confront one of

Bangladesh's most powerful

weaknesses. We could not

do that," he said. "Not only

Tazreen. There are hun-

dreds more buildings.

a-year garment industry

goes virtually unchallenged

by the government, said

Kalpona Akter, executive

director of the Bangladesh

Center for Worker Solidarity,

"These factories should

Bangladesh's \$20 billion-

"I must say we have our

industries, he said.

That's the truth."

Metropolitan Police (RMP).

early yesterday.

a n d

In Rajshahi, a police

Police arrested three

and 20 rubber bullets.

dent in Barisal.

district.

Dhaka court ordered freezing 533 bank accounts of Destiny officials in response to a petition by the lakh in 2000.

Destiny has 37 companies, majority of which are on paper. However, the November

27 order would not affect operations of the lawful concerns of the group. The order is applicable in respect to the properties of Destiny Group, Destiny Tree Plantation, group Chairman and MD Rafigul, his wife and Destiny Cooperative and Destiny 2000 Chairman Mohammad Hossain. "We won't interfere in

legal entities," ACC Chairman Ghulam Rahman told this correspondent. The group began its

the operations of Destiny's

Earlier on October 2, a journey with Destiny 2000,

Moniruzzaman blamed

for launching the pre-

planned attacks on both

ists of Jamaat-Shibir for

their alleged involvement in

the incidents, reports our

staff correspondent in

officials said a gang of six to

seven people swooped on

Shariful while he was going

to join his duty as a guard at

Bangladesh Betar

Transmission Tower at

Ghosh said they dragged

Shariful to a roadside tree

and stabbed him indiscrim-

inately after knocking him

scream, other policemen

rushed to the spot and the

attackers fled through the

orchards of the Radio tower

legs, the constable was first

taken to Rajshahi Medical

College Hospital and later

shifted to National Institute

of Cardiovascular Diseases

in Dhaka for better treat-

"These factories should

be closed, but it is not an

easy task," the fire official

said. "We need to follow a

protracted legal battle.

Always there is pressure

because the owners are

influential. They can man-

to provide specifics about

what violations the depart-

because the case is very

sensitive and this is under

investigation," the official

The chairman of the

Capital Development

Authority, Nurul Huda, did

not return calls seeking

Hossain, said the govern-

ment granted him authori-

zation to construct a three-

story factory. Nonetheless,

he added five more floors

and was constructing a

ninth when the blaze broke

direct violation of a law that

requires advance written

approval of factory con-

struction and expansion.

The construction is in

When asked why he went

ahead with the expansion

anyway, he responded: "My

mental condition is not

good. I am under pressure.

Hossain is a former

accounts manager at a

garment factory who

and other prestigious posi-

tions. In one sign of the

industry's power, the gov-

ernment has dispatched a

special police force just to

maintain order in the facto-

factories of his own.

thing else."

out, he said late Thursday.

Tazreen's owner, Delwar

comment.

months before the fire.

ment had uncovered in the

"I can't explain more

The fire official declined

age everything."

Stabbed severely in the

Hearing Shariful's

down on the ground.

garden, he added.

ment.

Nayek Romesh Kumar

Binodpur around 2:00am.

Quoting Shariful, police

Police arrested 22 activ-

policemen.

Rajshahi.

a multilevel marketing company, in which Rafigul and 11 others invested Tk 12 It expanded rapidly after

it introduced in 2005 its cooperative wing, Destiny Multipurpose Cooperative Society, which worked like a cash cow.

The Cooperative's paidup capital increased to nearly Tk 300 crore in 2009-10 from Tk 5.53 crore a year ago. The figure jumped to nearly Tk 1,200 crore in 2010-11. Destiny Tree Plantation

project also generated a lot of cash for Rafiqul and other top officials. Mohammad Hossain

earlier confessed to a Dhaka court that Rafiqul and some other officials had embezzled Tk 1,100 crore from the tree plantation project. Jamaat attacks cops again

-- Sabuj and Rajib.

police said.

local affairs."

added.

incidents.

paper.

tions.

FROM PAGE 1

'thugs'."

activist, estimates that

more than half the nation's

more than 4,000 garment

factories have safety

arrangements only on

powerful, or backed by

powerful associations and

people," Kalpona said. She

added that many inspectors

are bribed to ignore viola-

Egypt plunges

was rebuffed by the

National Salvation Front

coalition ranged against

president of "dividing

'supporters of legiti-

macy'... and his oppo-

nents, whom he calls

decree as a brazen power

grab, and the draft consti-

tution as an attempt to

quash Egypt's secular

Islamic aspirations.

The opposition sees the

Factory owners "are very

Rajib's mother Shahar

Banu and aunt Motijan

Begum were injured as

police charged baton on

them. They were undergo-

ing treatment at RMCH.

Later AC Hasnat along Jamaat and Shibir activists with a police team went to asked to submit its report Binodpur around 4:00am to within seven days.

nab the suspected attackers two BCL leaders to jail after As the police members producing them before a raided their house, its local court. The two have female members swooped been shown arrested under on Hasnat with sharp weap-Sabuj and Rajib fled through the bamboo fence mentioned Abu Bakar.

### of their house when policemen were busy in the tussle

hosts: "This meal prepared by you, just like that in the QNCC [conference centre], is not that delicious, but at least it offers us something to eat."

RMP Commissioner Moniruzzaman said "It is undoubtedly the work o Jamaat-Shibir activists as expected to do. the injured police members The Qataris also came had no involvement in any

forward their own plans for cutting emissions and provid-"The attempts on their lives were similar to the ing money for poor countries. It had been hoped that as recent attacks on police by hosts they might consider Jamaat-Shibir men," he using a small slice of their oil wealth to satisfy developing Sanaul Haque, officer-in-

Qatar, the world's third Station, said two cases were biggest exporter of natural filed in connection with the gas, is also the world's biggest per capita emitter of carbon -50 tonnes a year, compared to Tazreen's fire certification 17 for the US and 1.4 for India. The country makes the majority of its \$170 billion annual income from oil

> If these talks break down work on that crucial treaty will be disrupted, which could spell serious trouble as the deadline for negotiations is already tight. Countries must sign an agreement in 2015 for it to come into force

But the conference is unlikely to be able to rescue The Front accused the Egyptians between his

The other business was to gain an agreement on developed countries providing financing for poor nations to help them combat climate change and to sort out some technical issues left over

underpinnings in favour of At least four of Morsi's advisers have quit over the crisis, and the Cairo stock

Egypt's top Islamic body on Thursday also called on Morsi to suspend the decree.

The United States and European Union have called for dialogue to resolve the crisis. US President Barack

started his own company, Obama expressed "deep Tuba Textiles Mills Ltd, in concern" in a call to Morsi 2004 and now has a dozen on Thursday, the White Other factory owners House said. hold parliamentary posts UN human rights chief

be very concerned."

Navi Pillay yesterday criticised the draft constitution and "the way the process has been short-circuited," saying "people are right to

**FROM PAGE 20** Incensed at the detention, both the BCL factions brought out processions on

BCL men

the campus. Around 12:30am yesterday, the demonstration turned violent. Reaching the campus around 1:45am, police asked

the BCL men to stop damaging the institution's properties, but to no avail. The law enforcers then

fired rubber bullets to disperse the protesters. Later police raided the

two dormitories of the polytechnic and recovered sharp weapons and two bullets. They also arrested 15 BCL men from the campus, said Abu Bakar Siddique, additional police super of Patuakhali. The polytechnic authorities at an emergency meet-

ing yesterday morning formed a five-member committee to probe the incident, Mohammad Jahirul Islam, acting principal of the PPI, told The Daily Star. The committee has been

Police vesterday sent the

Section 54 of the Criminal Procedure Code. A case will be filed in this connection, Doha climate **FROM PAGE 20** 

#### with their family members, the Chinese delegate told the

One delegate accused the Qataris of going home early on Thursday instead of working through the night on the draft texts, which hosts are

under fire for not putting country demands for funds. charge of Motihar Police

Kalpona Akter, the rights

At stake is the future of the Kyoto protocol, the main targets of which expire this year. More importantly, this conference was meant to clear the way for a new climate agreement that for the first time would bind both developed and developing countries to carbon cuts.

in 2020.

the Kyoto protocol unless the other items of business are also resolved.

from previous meetings.

All these looked likely to be achieved in the final days of the talks, and still may be - if the hosts can pull the talks out of the quagmire today.

#### Laos ratifies market has taken a heavy WTO membership AFP, Bangkok

Laos has ratified its mem-

bership of the World Trade Organization, state media said yesterday, the latest step in the small Southeast Asian nation's 15-year effort to join the global body. The Laotian parliament

on Thursday formally gave

Times.

its approval, paving the way for the country's entrance to the 157-member organisation in early 2013, according to a report in the government mouthpiece Vientiane