'Chittagong Mass

Killing Day' today

SHAHIDUL ISLAM, Chittagong

Today is Chittagong Mass Killing

people were killed and over 200

injured in the city when police and

BDR opened indiscriminate fire on a

peaceful procession led by Sheikh

Hasan to dislodge autocratic

of, nine years after its filing.
Awami League chief Sheikh
Hasina, then heading an alliance of

15 opposition parties, was leading a

mammoth procession towards the

Laldighi Maidan for a scheduled

a day-long hartal in the port city, was

part of the alliance's week-long

countrywide movement programme

Maidan and in other areas of the

city.
Flying in here in a Biman from Dhaka, Sheikh Hasina and other 15-

party leaders was leading a huge

procession towards the Laldighi

reached near Kotwali thana area at

opened fire and charged batons on

the procession in front of Muslim

High School and Bangladesh Bank

Bhavan adjacent to Chittagong

Police and BDR halted it as it

Without provocation, police

from January 24 to January 30.

The public meeting, preceded by

public meeting on the day.

But the case is yet to be disposed

Ershad from power.

On this day in 1988, at least 24

Mercury drops to new low

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Temperature dropped to a new low

Mercury slid to 3.4 degrees Celsius from Wednesday's 4.3 in Rajshahi, the coldest place so far in

Although the capital witnessed several hours of sunshine yesterday, mercury went down to 8.1 from 8.3.

The cold wave is like to continue for 24 hours more, said a

Mild to thick fog may cover the northern parts of the country and moderate to severe cold waves may hit Rajshahi, Khulna and Dhaka

Zia International Airport sources said only two flights landed two hours behind schedule.

Housewife

FROM PAGE 12

A case was filed with the Sabujbag Police Station the same

Police admitted the lady to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) yesterday morning. Sabujbag police said they raided

some houses in Madartek area for the alleged rapists, but could not

Bomb blast kills one in Bagerhat

UNB, Bagerhat

A youth was killed in a bomb explosion in Fakirhat upazila on Wednesday night The dead was identified as Yusuf

Ali, 32, son of Arif Mia of Hospital Road in Khulna city. Police rescued bomb injured

Yusuf from Nayapara area of Bagerhat town and took him to Khulna Medical College Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries soon after admission.

Police suspected that Yusuf was injured in explosion while making

Businessman beaten to death by extortionists in N'ganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

A businessman was beaten to death by extortionists in Gainagar area under Narayanganj police station vesterday.

Sources said a gang of extortionists attacked Abdul Jalil, 40, in the area at around 2 pm as he had earlier refused to give in to their

The gang beat Jalil mercilessly and left the scene, leaving him

Locals rushed the victim to Narayangani General Hospita where the doctors declared him

Victim's brother Abdul Kadir filed a case with Narayanganj police station accusing four local criminals

RAT FROM PAGE 1

formed as well as plainclothes policemen in the team, the DMP commissioner pointed out. Asked if the public could directly

approach the RAT for help, he said people would, as usual, need to lodge complaints with the police who will then decide whether the situation demands intervention by the RAT

Without specifying the extent of jurisdiction of the special police force, the commissioner said the RAT could respond to any contingencies within the entire DMP area. The 133-member RAT includes a

deputy commissioner, an additional deputy commissioner, 11 assistant commissioners, eight inspectors, eight sub-inspectors, 12 sergeants, two head constables, 22 naiks and 68 constables. The members of the team were sent on a weeklong vacation after completing the special training course on January 16.

Members of the special security outfit will carry an automatic gun and have been provided with highspeed police vehicles.

Asked whether the RAT will be covered by any ordinance, the commissioner said he is yet to be informed about anything to that effect.

Another source said the RAT will basically carry out operations like arresting criminals and then hand them over to police stations where further investigation will take place. The RAT will be divided into smaller teams and each will cover areas under the jurisdiction of two or three

The RAT head office and barracks have been set up in the city's Mohammadpur area.

Police sources said depending on the RAT's performance, another such team might be formed soon to assist the first team.

The Rapid Action Team has been formed to continue the anti-crime Operation Clean Heart after the recent withdrawal of the army, which was called out last October to tackle the growing incidences of crime across the country

Biman flight

Biman flight BG 668 that was scheduled to depart for Dhaka at 5:30pm was forced to wait until 8:00pm so that the minister, who was attending the launching ceremony of Surja LPG Plant near Mongla, could catch

Sources said Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman took the Biman flight BG 661 to Jessore at 12:30pm Wednesday as his originally scheduled 11:00am flight along with most other flights had been delayed due

The delay caused the minister's programmes in Jessore to be rescheduled so that the flight can leave for Dhaka on time.

A Biman source however said that Biman flight BG 668 was scheduled to reach Jessore at 4:30pm and return to Dhaka at 5:30pm. But the flight was delayed and reached Jessore at 6:15pm and as such the return flight was also delayed.

Nonetheless, the two-and-a-half hour delay was "a little more than normal", said the source.

He however said inefficient handling of passenger boarding by ground officials under the directorate of customer service usually cause such delav.

Khaleda tells Sylhet 4-party leaders to back mayoral candidate M A Hug

UNB, Dhaka

A 12-member delegation of the fourparty alliance of Sylhet city and district units called on BNP Chairperson and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia here yesterday.

The delegation members, led by BNP district president MA Huq, apprised the BNP chief of the political and organisational activities of the alliance in Sylhet. Khaleda Zia asked the leaders

and workers to increase mass contact and intensify other organisational activities. She also urged the leaders and

workers of the alliance to work unitedly for strengthening the alliance by extending support to mayoral candidate MAHuq. Finance and Planning Minister M

Saifur Rahman and LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan were present.

The delegation members included Ariful Huq Chowdhury, Advocate Nurul Huda. Abul Kaher Shamim, Badruzzaman Selim, Elahi Raja Chowdhury and Nasim Hossain of BNP, Dr Shafigur Rahman and Maulana Habibur Rahman of Jamaat-e-Islami, Maulana Habibur Rahman of Islami Oikya Jote, Advocate Abdul Hye Qayyum of Jatiya Party (Naziur) and Dr Shahriar Ahmed Chowdhury of Svlhet BMA.

UP chairman candidate murdered in Sirajganj

BSS, Sirajganj

A Union Parishad chairman candidate was murdered by unidentified miscreants at Alamnagar under Shahjadpur upazila Wednesday

The victim was identified as Anwar Sadat Sohel, 32, president of BNP Habibullah Nagar unit.

According to police, the miscreants swooped on Sohel while he was returning home after election campaign. They beat Sohel mercilessly and stabbed in the chest. He

Superintendent of police, Sirajganj, visited the spot and a case was filed in this connection.

Milk plants

Earlier, the industries minister held a review meeting with the BSTI officials yesterday. Industries Secretary AFM Sarwar Kamal, BSTI Director General Ahmed Mahmudur Reza Chowdhury and other officials were present at the meeting.

BSTI officials informed the minister that it issued show-cause notices to four condensed milk companies for violating the certification mark (CM) standards.

But two of them did not respond and the replies of other two were not 'satisfactory'. The BSTI cancelled the CM licences of the companies according to its ordinance

The companies will now have to stop production and withdraw their products from the market, or face legal actions. BSTI officials said.

Anwar asked the BSTI to inform the consumers about the 'substan-

He also instructed the officials to check that the contents of soft drinks and other consumer items in the market match the ingredients on

The minister also asked them to set standards of any new product hitting the market.

AL, CPB talk unity on common issues

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League and Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) yesterday held talks for about four hours as part of AL's dialogue with likeminded and progressive parties to forge unity on common issues.

Leaders of the two parties shared views on a wide range of issues and expressed deep concern at the current socio-economic and political situation in the country.

The meeting began at 4:45 pm at the Shuda Sadan residence of AL chief Sheikh Hasina. Taking a break from the meeting,

general secretaries of AL and CPB, Abdul Jalil and Mujahidul Islam Selim respectively, briefed newsmen on the talks. They said there was no set

agenda for the meeting. On the prospect of a joint movement programme, Jalil said, "United movement evolves a process." He evaded direct reply to a

question on the possibility of formation of an opposition alliance. "We're old friends and the friendship will go on. Despite difference of opinion on various issues, there is no harm in having dialogue.' Selim said both the parties

shared views on the current situation in the country.

Besides Sheikh Hasina and Jalil AL leaders Amir Hossain Amu and Abdur Razzak, CPB President Monjurul Ahsan Khan and party leaders Mujahidul Islam Selim, Morshed Khan, Dibalok Singha and Ruhin Hossain Prince attended the

UP polls

some "unseen agenda" behind withdrawal of troops only two weeks ahead of the polls

Criminals and armed hooligans, mostly belonging to the ruling political groups, who went into hiding during the anti-crime drive, are now coming back following army pullout, thev said.

"These elements have started raising their heads again and may vitiate the election atmosphere." said an official preferring anonymity.

Since his first statement at a law and order review meeting late last month seeking army deployment, CEC MA Sayed repeated his plea at least 10 times but government spokesmen rejected those on every The CFC had said, as per consti-

tutional provision, he can tell the government and it is bound to other hand, the government questioned whether the CEC can decide At an EC-moderated January 13-

18 meeting in the city, field level election officials also said that they apprehend intimidation during the UP polls as criminals were coming out of their hideouts and crowding

They suggested army deployment for security of voters and



Prime Minister Khaleda Zia presides over the 16th Board of Investment (BOI) meeting at her office yesterday.

Iraq's neighbours and Egypt met here yesterday in a bid to avert a US-led war in their region, as Baghdad warned Washington a conflict would cost it more bloodshed than the September 11 out-

The Istanbul meeting, ahead of a

crucial January 27 status report to

the Security Council from UN arms inspectors, was being held amid pessimism over the prospects for heading off war and reported disagreement over tactics. At the initiative of Turkey's Prime Minister Abdullah Gul, foreign ministers of the six countries were to

meet at 5:30pm (1530 GMT) following preparatory talks between lower-level officials that began in the "There is a very solid display of unity of purpose, and the purpose is to secure the best possible means to avoid a war (in Irag) and resolve

the conflict peacefully," said

Egyptian Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Mubarak. But amid the reported differences, the Turkish foreign ministry said it was not clear whether the one-day meeting would produce a final joint declaration from Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Turkey.

to AFP earlier said there were divisions on tactics between the moderate camp at the meeting and hardliners such as Iran and Syria.

The gathering aims to pressure Baghdad to intensify cooperation with UN inspectors, but has brought little hope that the volatile region would avoid a war with potentially damaging economic and political

Officials from the six countries conceded in advance that their initiative might prove fruitless.

illusions about the possibility of pushing back the specter of war over Iraq," an Arab official told AFP on condition of anonymity. A planned ioint declaration if

agreed, would call on Baghdad to

fully implement UN resolutions to

"In Istanbul we will have no

prove that it is genuinely committed to disarmament. It would also urge Washington to refrain from military options without UN approval and call on the Security Council to extend the mandate of

But a joint declaration might be left for a second meeting, a Turkish source said in reference to suggestions that foreign ministers or heads of state and government hold followup talks, which Syria has offered to

According to Turkish newspapers, Ankara has insisted that the Istanbul meeting should issue calls only on Baghdad, and not make demands of Washington. In Baghdad, President Saddam

Hussein's eldest son, Uday, issued

a chilling reminder to the United States of the September 11, 2001 terror attacks on New York and Washington that cost more than 3,000 lives. "September 11 will be like a walk in the park when compared to the blood they (US) will spill if they

pseudonym under which Uday Saddam Hussein is widely believed Uday said an assault on Iraq would be an "uncontrolled game," warning of the instability that would rage in the Middle East and the break-up of many countries with

Iraq," said an editorial in Babel

newspaper signed "Abu Sarhan", a

growing Islamist movements. The meeting in Istanbul comes a day after European allies France and Germany joined forces in a bid expressions of frustration from the United States US President George W Bush said the evidence was "incredibly

to block a war with Iraq, drawing

troubling and disturbing", while Secretary of State Colin Powell questioned whether France and Germany were serious about eliminating Iraq's alleged weapons of mass destruction

Despite the US criticism, Germany yesterday called for the inspectors to provide an additional report on Irag's arms programme after Monday's assessment.

Salman's mother laid to rest

Syeda Fatina Rahman, mother of ASF Rahman and Salman F Rahman, Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively of Beximco Group, who died here on Wednesday, was laid to rest vesterday evening at Azimpur graveyard, says a press release.

Earlier, her namaz-e-janaza was held at Gulshan Central Mosque after Asr prayers.

A large number of people attended the janaza. Among those present were the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Justice Mainur Reza Chowdhury, Education Minister Dr Osman Farruk Communications Minister Barrister Privatisation Commission, Enam Ahmed Chowdhury, former Education Minister ASHK Sadig MP. former State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury, Obaidur Rahman MP and former minister Sheikh Shahidul Islam.

A doa mahfil will be held for the departed soul tomorrow Saturday after Magrib prayers at the residence of her elder son ASF Rahman at NE (1) 2, Road No. 84, Gulshan-

To foil the hartal and the meeting the then autocrat government had Dhaka plans deployed hundreds of policemen and BDR in and around Laldighi

connection with the killings

FROM PAGE 1

Badrul

the developments in Iraq. However, Chowdhury said, "War

is not necessarily the best solution to the Iraq issue." The foreign secretary also said the UN inspection team should be

The 24 persons who died on the

spot and later at hospitals were

identified as Chhatra League lead-

ers Mohiuddin Shamim and

Athelburt Gomez; and Sajjad Hossain, Swapa Bishwas, Swapan

Chowdhury, DK Das, Samar Dutta,

Sabuj Hossain, Kamal Hossain

Shaĥadat Hossain, Pankaj

Boiddya, Gobinda Das, Bahar

Uddin, Aiit Sarker, Mohammad

Hasan, Chan Meah, Quddus,

Hasan, Palash, Abdul Mannan,

Kashem, GK Chowdhury,

Khetmajur Samity leader Ramesh

Boiddya and Chhatra Union leader

In 1993, an eyewitness, lawyer

Shahudul Huda, filed a case against

the then CMP Commissioner Mirza

Ragibul Huda and some others in

given unfettered access to all sites it wants to visit in Iraq so that it can come up with a credible report. The UN inspection team will

submit its report on January 27 to the UN Security Council. "We want action based on the decision of the UN Security Council," he added.

US asked not to

FROM PAGE 1

around 2.15pm.

court building

was interrogated by the immigration officials from 4:00pm to 1:30am before cancelling his visa without giving any reason. The US immigration officers at

the ports of entry enjoy immense discretionary powers and as such could be advised to be considerate, the ambassador said. This might ensure that Bangladeshi registrants who do not

have any criminal charges are not subjected to harassment, he "A man should not be penalised for overstaying his visa period," the ambassador said. "Those without adequate papers should also be

granted an extended amnesty if

they have no criminal records." During the meeting, the ambassador told the INS commissioner that the US administration often cited Bangladesh as a role model for moderate Muslim democracy. So Bangladesh should not be on the list of the countries requiring special

registration. He also said Bangladesh understand and share the US concern for

national security. The US decision to include Bangladesh in the list of countries

US envoy

FROM PAGE 1

President of CCCI Amir Humayun Mahmud Chowdhury in his address dwelt on the existing economic ties between the US and Bangladesh and vowed to uphold it.

court decision is being appealed

Bangladesh do not harbour terror-

But the CCCI president said

Senior Vice-president of the CCCI Ershad Ullah gave the vote of thanks.

The meeting was also addressed by CCCI Vice-president Monjurul Amin Chowdhury, Director Mahbub Ali, General Manager of James Finlay AQI Chowdhury, Editor of The Daily Azadi MA Malek and Editor of The Daily Purbokone Taslim Uddin Professor Abdul Hakim Sircar of

subject to "special registration" of its citizens has sent shock waves through the Bangladeshi community in the US, Hasan Ahmad said.

The INS Commissioner assured the ambassador of all cooperation from his office to lessen the problems associated with special registration requirements by nonmmigrant male citizens of Bangladesh in the USA.

Counsel to the Attorney General Paul Laad, Counsel to the INS Commissioner Robert Money Director of the Entry-Exit Programme and INS Community Relations Officer Anna Hinkel were present during the meeting.

Fuel fillers

government invited the leaders for fresh negotiations. The leaders met with the secretary and joint secretary of the ministry. Then at 1:00am Thursday, the talks ended and a memorandum was singed.

CNG-fillers

Earlier, the government received applications from 39 enterprises to set up filling stations on the land belonging to the Bangladesh Railway and the Roads and Highways Department on long-term

The government permitted seven companies to set up stations.

Meanwhile, an inter-ministerial committee started working on a report identifying the ways of handing land over to the enterprises. The report will be submitted in ten days. said sources.

Wednesday's meeting also decided to permit the Rupantarita Prakritik Gas Company Limited (RPGCL) to set up a CNG conversion plant and filling station on the

eastern side of the Osmani Udyan. The RPGCL will set up six filling

Chaotic grows cityscape

City-based individuals have

The way the capital has

bought most agricultural lands at

Keraniganj and segmented them

into hundreds of one-to-five-katha

expanded Keraniganj will soon

come under the DCC. However, if

the authorities do not intervene with

comprehensive planning, the city

would only have another stretch of

Maniknagar and North Mugda,

within a kilometre east of the

Motijheel commercial area, and

many other areas have become an

The communities there do not

have access to basic civic ameni-

ties. The areas have grown as part

of the city over the last 15 years

under the very nose of the authori-

litter the narrow streets. The air

smells foul. Construction of up to

eight-storey buildings is underway

along the narrow streets.

Construction materials occupy

whatever space there is on the

Miazan Road at Maniknagar

near the Biswa Road shrinks as it

winds into lanes and by-lanes, some

inside the quarter when it was

developed in 1985. These have now

become dumps for the residents to

Household and industrial wastes

concrete jungle.

'urban nightmare'.

Experts say the government should immediately intervene and detail a development plan for the fringe areas of the city before it is too late. A team of The Daily Star report-

ers has recently visited 30 different

areas in the peripheral and inner city Maniknagar, Mugda, Manda, Badda, Rampura, Basabo, Goran, Meradia, Peyarabagh, Mirbagh, Madhubagh, Khilkhet, Rayerbazar, Hazaribagh, Razabazar, Kanthalbagan, Shewrapara, Kafrul, Ibrahimpur, Pirerbagh, Paikpara, Kalyanpur, Kazipara, Monipur

history of unplanned urbanisation. Upper- and middle-class people have bought chunks of cheap land at low prices and developed them without any intervention from the city planners or regulatory authori-

Senpara, Section 1,2,10 and 11 of

Mirpur, Barobagh and North and

South Jatrabari all have the same

So unplanned the development has been that, in some cases, some plots have become inaccessible. Neither the Rajuk nor the Dhaka

City Corporation (DCC) nor the Ministry of Housing and Public Works has never bothered to step in and chalk out acceptable plans for these areas. These areas have now become a nightmare for the urban planners. Profit-making real estate pro-

for the private-sector individuals

who are turning the peripheral areas

into veritable concrete jungle.

hardly three feet in width. Those, too, are occupied by vendors. The only planned residential area in the locality, the Municipal Staff Quarter, features some fiveects such Purbachal, Jhilmil, Uttara storey buildings. third phase, Nikunja and DND aside, the Rajuk has no guidelines There were some open spaces throw garbage onto. There is no playground for children in the entire Professor Jamilur Reza

Choudhury, an expert on urbanisa-

tion and a professor of civil engineering, terms such a trend of urbanisation 'totally haphazard'. While proper plans, such as the DMDP, are available with the government, no one bothers to consult

Indiscriminate filling of lowlands around the city would have an adverse impact on environment, as drainage of floodwater would be impossible, he added, "The city is extremely earth-

them, he said.

great risk in constructing buildings on unconsolidated soil," Choudhury Many developers have already started constructing high-rise

buildings on filled-up sites around

quake-prone and there exists a

the city, he pointed out. Professor Nazrul Islam of Dhaka University also emphasised compliance with the DMDP in city develop-

The DMDP has clearly defined the development pattern of Dhaka and its peripheral areas, he said. "The DMDP clearly designates all areas of the city and suggests how they should be developed and authorities must respect and follow it while planning otherwise we cannot check urban slums."

and slow. The Rajuk does not have

proper infrastructure or manpower

lowlands. drafts in August and November "In Dhaka, urbanisation precedes planning because the planning procedure is extremely weak

and none of the agencies such as the Dhaka City Corporation knows what their role should be."

the Institute of Social Welfare at Dhaka University says unplanned urbanisation has structural and environmental impacts on a house and its inhabitants. An unplanned area deprives a

child of ingredients to grow into a healthy citizen, he said. Professor Sircar, who has worked on juvenile delinquencies,

points out that haphazard growth of

the city is surely breaking our social norms and values and giving rise to various crimes. The city has grown into a 'vertical slum' and 'urban silo' where people live without minimum amenities and where community relationship no

longer develops and juvenile delin-

quencies become frequent, he said.

Successive governments have failed to take any concrete measure to strengthen the regulatory bodies and make them accountable through proper planning and moni-After a hue and cry over filling up

of Ashuliya recently, the Ministry of Housing and Public Works asked the Rajuk to devise two separate policies and rules on construction of high-rise buildings and filling up of Rajuk experts handed over the

respectively to the sub-committee. convened by the Cabinet Secretary Dr Saadat Husain allege harassment of their diplo-Both proposals are now gathermats, but the incidents usually

Pakistan gets even

High-ranking Pakistani diplomat Mansoor Saeed Sheikh. First Secretary Mian Mohammad Esif and the two staffers were due to leave India tomorrow, an official in New Delhi said. Indian Foreign Ministry spokes-

sions a "simple act of retaliation" and branded the charges "entirely baseless and false. Diplomatic ties have been strained between the nuclear capable neighbours over the past fortnight since Pakistan formally complained to Indian authorities that all

its diplomats in New Delhi were

man Navtej Sarna called the expul-

being harassed by Indian authori-The complaint was lodged on January 7. On the weekend India went public with its own complaints, alleging that its acting high commissioner, charge d'affaires Sudhir Vyas had been stopped several times in his car on Saturday.

Pakistan said India had made up the complaint to cover up for its own harassment of Pakistani officials

India and Pakistan frequently involve low-level officials.

the number of staff numbers at the Indian mission to be reduced by four to 21

"There will be no replacements

now," as staff numbers were already ess than the sanctioned level Indian high commission spokesman Rahul Rasgotra told AFP. India cut down the level and size of its diplomatic representation in

Islamabad in December 2001 as

part of stringent measures against Pakistan following a deadly assault on its parliament. New Delhi blamed the attack on two anti-India Kashmiri militant groups it said were backed by Pakistan. Islamabad took reciprocal steps with its mission in New Delhi

Half the

centres FROM PAGE 12

order situation is much better than before.

"I heard some outlaws surfaced in the area, but we did not find any," the OC said.

The election is going to be held in 1,064 unions out of 1,097. The election to the rest will not be held

for various reasons.