

### Cops on watch at Rehana's house

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ten policemen were posted at the house the control of which was taken over by police yesterday from Sheikh Rehana, daughter of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

They said that they were guarding the house round-the-clock as per the directives of higher authorities.

Dhanmondi police on Monday took control of the house arresting eight employees of Rehana on charge of occupying the house. The move followed a complaint lodged by a sub-assistant engineer of the housing ministry.

The arrested persons were produced before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court yesterday. The court rejected their bail prayer and sent them to Dhaka Central Jail.

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A hooded Iraqi Prisoner of War (PoW) comforts his four-year-old son at the 101st Airborne Division's regrouping centre near Najaf (left). The military did not want to separate the two. A US Marine from the 2nd Battalion/8th Regiment forces the door of a house at the aluminum complex factory in the southern Iraqi city of Nassiriyah yesterday.



PHOTO: AFP

## Arab states to press for emergency UN session on Iraq

REUTERS, United Nations

After falling short in the Security Council, Arab envoys decided on Monday to seek an emergency session of the 191-nation UN General Assembly to revive their campaign for an immediate end to the war in Iraq.

"The point of the request is to save the lives of Iraqi civilians," one Arab diplomat said.

"We will ask for a cease-fire and a return to peaceful disarmament in Iraq," said the envoy, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Unlike the 15-nation Security Council, whose resolutions can be binding under international law, the

General Assembly can make only political statements expressing the sense of the international community.

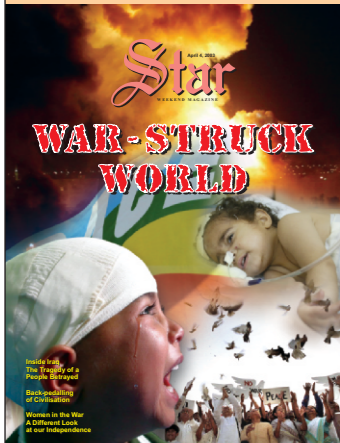
But an assembly resolution critical of the US-led war would nonetheless be highly embarrassing to both Washington and London.

"We don't think a General Assembly meeting is necessary," a US official said. "This type of session is only going to divide UN members. What we need right now is to deal with the situation of the Iraqi people on the ground."

Malaysian Ambassador Rastam Mohd Isa, who heads the group of nonaligned countries at the United Nations, plans to request the special session, in a letter to Portuguese UN

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THIS WEEK ON Star WEEKEND MAGAZINE



As the world watches in horror, the missiles keep hitting designated targets and ordinary Iraqi civilians go through the worst nightmare of their lives. SWM explores the reactions of Bangladeshis to the war, its possible economic side effects and the double standards surrounding the crisis.

## ZIA wakes up to fatal flu threat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Zia International Airport (ZIA) authorities yesterday took urgent measures to prevent transmission of the deadly Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) disease into the country.

SARS shows symptoms similar to pneumonia. Till writing of this report, no case was reported though there are direct flights to Dhaka from Singapore, Hong Kong and Thailand where the disease is spreading.

The health directorate has also strengthened its medical team at the airport with experts and additional manpower.

Director of ZIA Wing Com-mander Md Nasir Uddin Khan issued instruction to all airlines authorities to contact airport control room if any passenger on board shows symptoms of SARS.

"We are concerned about the situation in other countries and have taken all possible measures to prevent transmission of the disease," Khan told The Daily Star.

"Any suspected passenger will be sent straight to the Infectious Disease Hospital in Mahakhali. We have five doctors and 12 nurses for round the clock duty and an ambulance at the airport. Before release, any suspected passenger must obtain a certificate from the airport doctor."

If any patient is found, the aircraft will be parked in an isolated bay and fumigated before it is made ready for next flight.

Director General of Health Services Prof Mizanur Rahman said, "We have taken all precautions to check its transmission and to treat any patient. We have doctors standby for deployment at the airport, if more is needed."

One suspected SARS patient, who was a pilot of an airliner, was taken to a private hospital in the city last week for a brief period. The doctor concerned refused to give details about symptoms of his disease and his identity but other doctors who were in the intensive care unit said the patient had all the symptoms of SARS. He was flown to

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## 'Truly remarkable achievement'

ROBERT FISK, THE INDEPENDENT, UK

So it's a "truly remarkable achievement", is it? General Tommy Franks says so.

Everything is going "according to plan", according to the British.

So it's an achievement that the British still have not "liberated" Basra.

It is "according to plan" that the Iraqis should be able to launch a scud missile from the Fao peninsula - supposedly under "British control" for more than a week.

It is an achievement - truly remarkable of course - that the Americans should lose an Apache helicopter to the gun of an Iraqi peasant farmer, should spend four days trying to cross the river bridges at Nassariya and are then confronted by their first suicide bomber at Najaf.

One half of the entire Anglo-American force - still called "the coalition" by journalists who like to pretend it includes 35 armies rather than two and a bit (the "bit" being the Australian Special Forces) - is now guarding and running the supply line through the

desert. And Baghdad is bombed but not besieged.

The military "plan" is so secret, according to General Franks, that very few people have seen it all or understand it.

But his "plan" he says, is "highly flexible"; it would have to be, to sustain the chaos of the past 12 days and of course, we hold the moral high ground.

The Americans bomb a passenger bus close to the Syrian border and don't even apologise.

An Iraqi soldier kills himself attacking US marines in his car and it is an act of "terrorism".

And now Secretary of State Colin Powell announces - to the "American - Israeli" Public Affairs Committee, the largest Israeli lobby group in the United States who of course support this God forsaken and illegal war - that Syria and Iran are "supporting terror groups" and will have to "face the consequences."

"So what's the 'plan'? Are we going to forget Baghdad for a few

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## Dhaka against war, FM tells Japanese press

BSS, Dhaka

Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan has said in Tokyo Bangladesh opposes war in resolving the Iraq issue and believes negotiation, not war, is the key to resolution of any international conflict.

Japan, like Bangladesh, knows the sufferings that wars bring upon everyone, he told Jijji Press and Kyodo News, Monday evening, according to a message received in Dhaka yesterday.

Morshed is in Tokyo on a four-day official visit at the invitation of Japanese Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi.

On Japan-Bangladesh bilateral

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### Announcement

Due to technical difficulties our present website www.dailystarnews.com is temporarily inactive. Our valued readers are requested to visit our new address www.thedailystar.net. We regret the inconvenience.



PHOTO: AFP

Bangladeshi Foreign Minister Morshed Khan (L) shakes hands with his Japanese counterpart, Yoriko Kawaguchi, at the Likura Guesthouse in Tokyo yesterday.

## Cleansing drive underway in Biman, CAAB

RAFIQ HASAN

The government has launched a cleansing drive in Biman Bangladesh Airlines and Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) to rout corruption and mismanagement and make the lone state-owned airlines economically viable.

As part of the effort, the civil aviation ministry issued separate letters to Biman and CAA yesterday, asking their authorities to prepare lists of officials and employees who have served for more than 25 years.

The ministry asked them to come up with the lists within the next 15 days, sources said.

The main objective of preparing the lists is to find out 'most corrupt' officials and employees, said a high official. The guilty would be given forced retirement or golden handshake, he added.

"The step is part of a government initiative to streamline Biman and CAA and improve the service," said a high official.

The government move followed

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	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
April 2		6-14 pm
April 3	5-49 am	

Prayer Timings		
April 2		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-00	5-30
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-15
Maghrib	6-20	6-27
Esha	7-35	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation



PHOTO: STAR

From left: Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal activists holding a placard terming US president Bush and British Prime Minister Blair as terrorists; people giving vent to their anger by hitting the effigies of Bush and Blair with shoes at Muktangan; and Royals Welfare Organisation form a human chain protesting war on Iraq in the city yesterday.

### Robber held after shootout with gang in Demra

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested an injured robber after a shootout with a gang at Sanarpar in Demra area yesterday.

The robber -- Mohammad Ratan -- who was shot in the left leg was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) and later shifted to Pangu hospital.

Sub-inspector Nurul Bashar Chowdhury and Ansar Mohammad Shajahan were also injured in the shootout. They were treated at the DMCH.

The gang entered the residence of one Tofazzal Hossain at Kodaldaha village at about 3:45am and looted valuables.

As soon as they left, inmates cried for help. This drew local people who chased the gang. A police team and an Ansar team, who were on patrol

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## Hasina, CPA chief agree on more effective House

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Opposition leader Sheikh Hasina and Chairman of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Robert Speller yesterday agreed that the Jatiya Sangsad should be made more effective for greater national interests.

Speller called on Hasina yesterday at her residence in the city. He also met the Speaker, senior ministers and lawmakers of ruling and opposition parties.

Spellers' visit precedes the next CPA conference in Bangladesh from October 4 to 12 this year.

During the meeting, Hasina requested the CPA chairman to ensure

equal representation of lawmakers of opposition and ruling parties in the conference, meeting sources. Speller agreed to this.

They discussed issues ranging from transparency in electoral system to poverty alleviation and human rights situation that matter in good governance, the AL chief's Political Secretary Saber Hossain Chowdhury told newsmen after the meeting.

Speller was requested to work on electoral reforms in Bangladesh to ensure transparency in future elections. He showed interest to work together.

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### 9th PW gives deposition

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Mohammad Mahbubur Rahman, ninth prosecution witness in the Shazneen rape case and a friend of the victim's father, gave his deposition before the court yesterday.

Kazi Rahamat Ullah, Judge of the Second Special Tribunal for Prevention of Women and Children Repression, Dhaka recorded the deposition for about an hour.

He was then cross-examined by the lawyers of the principal accused Shahidul Islam alias Shahid.

After the cross-examination for about an hour, the court adjourned the hearing till tomorrow.

In his deposition, Mahbubur Rahman told the court that he was abroad on April 23, 1998. The follow

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## Samannay Parishad sweeps SC Bar polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The opposition-backed Samannay Parishad panel has won the majority seats in the Supreme Court Bar Association election.

Barrister Rokonuddin Mahmud and Advocate Mahbub Ali were elected president and secretary respectively and the Samannay Parishad bagged 10 out of 14 posts of office bearers. The remaining positions including that of a vice president and treasurer were secured by the pro-government Oikya Parishad panel.

A total of 2,214 members of the electorate voted in the two-day election of the Bar Association held on March 30 and 31.

The other elected office bearers are:

vice presidents-- Subroto Chowdhury and AK Mujibur Rahman, treasurer ASM Ramzan Khan and assistant secretaries-- Mohammad Ullah Kislul and Sheikh Mohammad Morshed.

Of the seven executive members, the Oikya Parishad won two. They are Lucky Begum and Gazi Md. Mohsin. Rest of the members -- Eti Hossain Swapna, Mohammad Nuruzzaman Khan Hiru, Md Abdul Hai, Giasuddin Ahmed and Nizamul Haq Nizam -- were elected from the Samannay Parishad.

The results of the election were announced yesterday at the annual general meeting of the Bar Association.

The new president of the Bar Association said, while addressing the meeting, that the independence of the judiciary must be ensured for establishing the rule of law.