

# TV channels

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nel," mentioned an entrepreneur attempting to launch one.

ITV, a concern of Bengali Newspaper the Daily Inqilab, which was earlier scheduled to launch on the Eid-ul Azha has not yet started transmission.

"We are on the right track but yet to fix a date for official launching," said AMM Bahauddin, Chairman of ITV and Editor of the Daily Inqilab.

There is a vacuum in the country's satellite television industry following the closure of popular ETV, which was closed last year by a court verdict.

ETV has submitted an application to the Ministry of Information for a

## Hazari relieved of Feni AL secy post

**UNB, Feni**

Joynal Hazari has been relieved of the post of general secretary of Feni district Awami League.

Party high command has instructed joint secretary Abdur Rahman to carry out the duty of district unit general secretary, party sources said.

Hazari remained absconding since August 16, 2001 when police and army conducted a joint raid on his house and recovered some firearms and ammunition.

Police said there are 18 cases against the AL leader with Feni, Dagonbhuiyan and Sonagazi police stations.

## Stalemate in SUST continues

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet**

The agitating group and its rivals continued their programme at the Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST) yesterday.

The VC, Pro-VC and some other officials could not enter their offices yesterday due to the 'sit-in' by the liaison committee in front of the administrative building.

The liaison committee comprises teachers, officers and employees has been agitating for the VC's resignation since March 9.

On the other hand, SUST Raksha Parishad, which is opposing the Liaison Committee's move held a meeting urging the teachers and student to join classes from April 6.

The VC and some other officials accompanied by a magistrate and police went to the administrative building at about 9 am. But they were prevented from entering the offices by the liaison committee.

Meanwhile, the student under the banner of 'common students' observed a 3-hour sit-in from 10 am to 1 pm in front of the central Shaheed Minar yesterday demanding immediate resumption of classes.

## Saddam

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"Victory is within our reach... we have used only one third of our army or even less while the criminals have used up all of the forces they brought to commit aggression against Iraq," said the message.

In another message read out on Iraqi state television late on Tuesday by Information Minister Mohammed Saeed al-Sahaf, Saddam told his people that jihad or holy war was a religious duty and he urged them to fight invading troops.

Saddam has been shown several times with various top aides. On Monday, state television showed a brief clip of the 65-year-old leader at a table with his two sons.

In the new message, Saddam was quoted urging Iraqi forces in the southern city of Nassiriya to resist US-led forces, saying their fighting spirit set an example for all Iraqis to follow.

## Dhaka refutes

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Bangladesh as "a voice of moderation among developing countries, in Islamic world and in South Asia".

The spokesperson, however, said the report mentioned the government measures taken for independence of judiciary and relevant legal reforms to improve the human rights situation. The US report also referred to the replacement of Public Safety Act that lacked provision for bail with the Speedy Trial Act, which ensures quicker disposal of cases as well as bail.

Nonetheless, the spokesperson said that the report failed to provide a comprehensive grasp of developments, which have taken place in Bangladesh in the year 2002.

The report also appears inadequate in terms of up to date information on disposal of cases and the remedial measures taken. The report is also not reflective of the fact that judicial inquiry has been initiated into many reported incidents of death in custody and other alleged atrocities committed by the law enforcing agencies.

The spokesperson added that the overall track record of human rights situation in Bangladesh is commendable. Bangladesh has often been cited as a model of communal harmony in the region and beyond.

The government of Bangladesh is committed to uphold and protect the rights of the people guaranteed by the Constitution without any discrimination, the spokesperson noted.

## Goods worth Tk 50 lakh seized at ZIA

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Customs Intelligence and Investigation Authority at Zia International Airport (ZIA) seized medicine, cigarette and clothes worth about Tk 50 lakh yesterday.

A team of customs headed by inspector Ashok Kumer Baruya seized three unclaimed suitcases lying on the conveyer belt. The consignment landed at the airport by an Emirates airliner at about 8:13 a.m. on the day.

The suitcases, filled with medicines worth about Tk 42 lakh, were opened in the presence of representatives from different agencies.

In a separate incident, customs officials seized medicine, cigarette and clothes worth about Tk 8.5 lakh from a Biman passenger, Anwar Hossain, who flew in with the goods illegally.

The seized goods were stored at the customs warehouse and two separate cases were filed.

## Journalists in Kolkata protest Iraq war

**SAKYASEN MITTRA, Kolkata**

Journalists took out a procession in the city yesterday protesting the US-led war on Iraq.

After the procession, a resolution was taken to boycott all British and American products in the city.

Around 500 journalists took part in the protest march and condoled the deaths of the media persons who were killed while covering the war.

A number of eminent citizens also attended the rally.

Amongst them were the deputy speaker of the West Bengal Assembly, Kripasindhu Saha, the mayor of Kolkata, Subrata Mukherjee, state minister Mohammed Selim, former minister K Goswami, and sports personalities, Sailen Manna and Sambaran Bannerjee.

## Ties to grow

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under active consideration of the Japanese government.

According a message received here yesterday Morshed Khan and Governor of Japan Bank of International Cooperation Kiyosuke Sainozawa at a meeting earlier had discussed JBIC's assistance for Bangladesh's development projects.

Khan mentioned JBIC commitment towards development of regional economic activities assisting in the process of transport infrastructure development.

The governor said JBIC designated certain priorities in providing financial assistance to Bangladesh to address the country's greatest challenge of poverty alleviation.

The priorities are economic infrastructure development, agriculture and rural development and support to the poor.

The JBIC governor assured the Foreign Minister that his organisation would consider "all new areas of cooperation" with Bangladesh alongside continued support towards the ongoing activities.

The Foreign Minister had also a meeting with Chairman of Japan External Trade Organisation Osamu Watanabe and thanked JETRO for supporting capacity-building activities, especially those related to trade diversification and trade promotion.

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

# Blitz spells hospital horror

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soldiers and Fedayeen are ready by all means and are waiting to take on the invaders and "tear them apart".

Iraqi forces killed 19 soldiers and shot down three helicopters around the southern city of Basra on Tuesday, Defence Minister Hashim Ahmad said yesterday.

Ten bodies -- at least two of them Americans -- were found with prisoner of war Pfc. Jessica Lynch when she was rescued in a US commando raid on an Iraqi hospital, a military spokesman said.

Lynch, a 19-year-old Army supply clerk, was captured by the Iraqis on March 23 after her maintenance unit made a wrong turn and was ambushed in the Euphrates River city of Nassiriya.

**KARBALASECURED**  
Earlier, US forces yesterday claimed to have secured the central Iraqi city of Karbala and a strategically important Tigris river crossing in their push to Baghdad. The claim was however brushed aside by the Iraqi information minister.

Commanders of the US 3rd Infantry Division had expected a daylong battle to seize the perimeter of the city, which is 70 miles south of Baghdad, but the operation lasted three hours.

# Arab volunteers

**FROM PAGE 1**  
In Beirut on Monday thirty-six Arabs, mostly Lebanese and Palestinians aged between 19 and 25, mounted a bus after obtaining visas at the Iraqi embassy and headed to Iraq where they vowed to die as "martyrs".

One of them, Nureddin Abbud As-Seyyed, a 33-year-old Lebanese father of three, said "we will defend all Arab lands, from Baghdad to Al-Quds Jerusalem," when asked why he was going.

The embassy's press attache, Nuri Tamimi, said their decision to go was "a natural reaction of self-defense, because the battle for Iraq is the battle of all the Arabs."

However, on Tuesday Tamimi told AFP there were no other volunteers lined up to head to Iraq at the moment.

A senior Palestinian official in Lebanon said the same day that hundreds of Palestinian volunteers had left to Iraq "to fight on the sides of the Iraqi people against the American-British invaders."

"Hundreds of fighters from the popular army, created in 1997, have already been sent to Iraq through bordering countries," said Munir Magdah, head of the armed wing of the mainstream Fatah faction in south Lebanon.

In a rare media confirmation of the reports, Qatar's Al-Jazeera satellite television on Sunday showed a group of Syrians who had arrived in the northern city of Mosul to join the resistance.

The Palestinian radical movement Islamic Jihad said the same day it had sent a first batch of suicide bombers to

## American blacks

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in later life such as in mechanics, computers or in the administrative field.

"There aren't a lot of corporations looking to hire people who fire rifles for a living," commented Segal.

A qualification was what Shoshana Johnson, the first woman US prisoner in Iraq, was looking for. The 30-year-old single mother of a two-year-old daughter joined the army because she wanted to become a chef.

Johnson was among a group from the 507th Maintenance Company, based at Fort Bliss in Texas, that got lost and captured in southern Iraq three days into the war. Her family in Fort Lee, Virginia had never even imagined her going to war.

"This was not something we thought was going to happen to her at all," said Nikki Johnson, one of Shoshana's younger sisters and also a captain in the US Army.

## Checkpoints

**FROM PAGE 1**  
"There is an increased vigilance because of the tactics we have seen used," he said. "We know it is not a benign environment, it is a very threatening environment. While we regret the loss of civilian lives, they remain unavoidable."

US military officials said the shootings on Monday would be investigated, but indicated that the soldiers would probably not be blamed. "The blood of this incident is on the hands of this regime, which is now showing a very firm tendency to use civilians as combatants," said Captain Frank Thorp, a central command spokesman.

British commanders have emphasised a different approach. Soldiers patrolling four towns in the south have switched to wearing berets instead of armoured helmets.

Commanders have been given a budget to employ Arabic interpreters to improve relations with the Iraqis.

"We have got to be very careful we don't win the battles and lose the war and we have to be sensitive," a senior British military source said. "We don't want to build up any resentment in the country."

Baghdad to fight the US and British invading forces.

A group of Yemeni volunteers in Iraq vowed yesterday to launch suicide attacks against invading US and British troops.

Waving assault rifles and chanting Islam's rallying cry of "Allahu Akbar", 35 Yemenis in military uniform marched to the Palestine Hotel in central Baghdad where foreign journalists are staying.

"I am a martyrdom attacker from Yemen. I came here to liberate Iraq from the invading forces of imperialist America and Britain," Sharkad Qasim Ali, 17, told reporters. "I ask all honest Arabs to come and join us to defend Iraq against these invaders."

"We came here to stand with our Iraqi brothers against the enemies of Islam and to defend our believer leader Saddam," another Yemeni volunteer said in English. "What is (US President George W) Bush? He is nothing but a criminal."

Anti-American sentiment has been running high in Yemen, a poor Arab state seen in the West as a haven for Islamic militants.

Meanwhile, the Iraqi embassy in Berlin said "some volunteers" -- Egyptians, Lebanese, Moroccans and Palestinians -- had obtained visas to fight in Iraq, and that some Iraqis had returned home for that purpose.

Similarly in Algeria, the embassy said lots of volunteers were coming forward. Some 15 enthusiastic young would-be volunteers gathered outside the embassy in Algiers Monday, but complained they could not afford to pay their way to Iraq.

## Frenzied cops

**FROM PAGE 1**  
The injured young man and Kabir were confined inside the police box till 11:00 p.m.

Policemen from the Tejgaon Police Station went there and took them to the police station from where they were allowed to leave later.

Several people present on the spot during the incident decried the unruly behaviour of the law enforcers and alleged that they themselves were involved in criminal activities.

"It's difficult to come on the Sangsad Bhaban premises as criminals activities are thriving here," said Motahar, a local.

"Policemen shelter the muggers, sex-workers and their pimps," accused Ratan. It is one of the breathing spots in the city, but people fear to visit it for lack of security, he added.

Two separate cases were filed with Tejgaon police, but no action was taken till last night.

The victims and their family members met Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar to inform him of the police atrocity.

The speaker heard them patiently and asked the authorities concerned to submit a report within three days.

## Al-Jazeera

**FROM PAGE 1**  
The shelling of the Basra Sheraton mirrors a similar incident during the Afghan war, when al-Jazeera accused the US military of deliberately targeting its Kabul office, despite having told the Americans where its reporters were based.

In November 2001 al-Jazeera's base in the Afghan capital was destroyed by a US bomb that also damaged the nearby BBC office.

At the time the Pentagon denied it had deliberately targeted al-Jazeera, but said it could not explain why the Kabul office was hit.



PHOTO: STAR

Children, left, under the banner of Sammilita Bangladesh Mohila Samaj shout slogans during a demonstration against the US-led invasion of Iraq and Secretary General of the Bangladesh Medical Association Dr Zahid Hassan addresses an anti-war rally on Tophkana Road in Dhaka yesterday.

# Stop war, withdraw troops

## Protesters demand trial of Bush, Blair

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Scores of organisations joined the raging torrents of protest and condemnation of Anglo-American invasion of Iraq in Dhaka and elsewhere yesterday.

They staged rallies, held demonstration and brought out processions demanding an immediate end to war on Iraq.

Condemning the US aggression, leaders of the Dhaka University Teacher's Association demanded immediate withdrawal of Anglo-American coalition forces from Iraq.

They also demanded trial of U.S. President Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair as war criminals.

They alleged that the Western media, including BBC, CNN and VOA, were dishing out inappropriate news in favour of the imperialist Anglo-American alliance and demanded an immediate end to the propaganda campaign.

Bangladesh Hawkers Federation urged people to help Iraq against inhumanity and illegal US aggression. They sentenced Bush and Blair to death in a mock trial and burnt their effigies.

Demanding an immediate end to war on Iraq, the leaders of the Bangladesh Medical Association said that violating all United Nation conventions, the Anglo-American invaders killed many non-combatant civilians,

including women and children.

They also demanded trial of Bush and Blair as war criminals in the International Court of Justice.

Leaders of the Islami Oikkya Andolon urged the Muslim community to close ranks to fight the Anglo-American coalition forces.

Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal renewed the call for boycotting Anglo-American products. They expressed the hope that the valiant Iraqi fighters would humiliate invaders on their own land.

Bangladesh Awami Sangskritik Forum formed a human chain and staged a rally demanding immediate halt to the war. They also torched the effigies of Bush and Blair.

Ganosanghati Andolon organised a campaign, where artistes sang anti-war songs highlighting the messages of peace and humanity.

Demanding immediate halt to the Western aggression, leaders of Bangladesh Islami Chhatra Shibir said people of the world try Bush and Blair as war criminals for killing innocent Iraqi people.

They also urged people to stand by the Iraqis against the US-led aggression.

Platform against Imperialist US War on Iraq, Muktiyoddha Paribar Kalyan Sangsad, Bangladesh Udichi Shilpi Gosthi, Communist Party of Bangladesh, Kendrio Khelaghar Asar,

United Federation of Garment Tailors' Workers, Jatiya Committee of Bangladesh against Aggression and Plunder also demanded immediate halt to Anglo-American invasion.

A range of organisation will continue anti-war protests today.

Bangladesh Awami Jubo League will stage a demonstration at its central office at Bangabandhu Avenue.

Shachetan Jonata will organise a seminar on 'Boycott of US-UK Products' protesting against their massacre of Iraq at the National Press Club.

Ganotantrik Biplobi Jote, which will stage a street rally at Malibagh bus stand today, demanded closure of the US Embassy and UK High Commission in Bangladesh yesterday.

Department of Peace and Conflict Studies of Dhaka University will bring out a peace rally on the campus.

The Institute of Democratic Rights, a legal aid human rights organisation, will hold a token hunger strike at the Central Shaheed Minar.

Bangladesh Workers Party, Bangladesh Health Education Society, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Teachers' Association will also hold rallies, bring out procession and stage demonstration in protest against the mindless war.

ASM Abdur Rob will hold a rally on April 5 protesting the war.

# O', A' level tests

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considering the prevailing situation," an official of the Council told The Daily Star.

"We have taken this measure as a precaution to safeguard the security and wellbeing of our staff and all others concerned," said an earlier notice signed by Council Director Carl Reuter.

The Council will hold the IELTS examination scheduled on April 5 at University of Bengal (Meena House) near DOHS.

The official said, "We have received admit cards of the O' and A' level examinations and the examinations will begin from May 12 and continue till June 25."

Admit cards of the examinees registered through schools will be sent to their respective schools, while private candidates would receive admit cards by courier service.

"The Council will also notify the examinees over telephone if neces-

sary," he added.

Meanwhile, worried examinees and guardians could not communicate with the British Council yesterday as a sudden surge of telephone calls sent the auto answering machine out of order.

The British Council notice said the closure was temporary and it would reopen as soon as it is advised to do so by the British Council headquarters in the UK. The British Council expected that the disruption would be for "a very short period".

It advised the people who use the services of the British Council to make an enquiry by telephone -- 0171850067, 0171688532 and 0171568443, fax: 9 8 8 0 2 0 2 or e-mail on dhaka.enquiries@bd.britishcouncil.org.

The British Council staff would be available during normal working hours.

# Manpower export

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But an earlier report showed a 50 per cent growth in remittance earning during the year 2002 compared to 2001. The earning was 17,320 crore in 2002 against Tk 11,580 crore in 2001.

More than 50 per cent remittance came from Saudi Arabia followed by Kuwait and Qatar.

Meanwhile, a total of 1965 Bangladeshi workers came back home from Kuwait since the war broke out. Among them, only 74 persons took government help in reaching their destinations.

The sources said only a few people including some family members of the expatriates are coming back home due to war. Most of the returnees came for spending holidays and some people did not return to take the opportunity of an amnesty by the Kuwaiti government to those who were staying there without legal documents.

The government formed a task force headed by the minister and it is regularly monitoring the situation. The task force held a number of meetings and took all preparatory measures in case a massive repatriation is needed, according to sources.

According to the decision, the affected Bangladeshi workers would be gathered in Saudi Arabia and flown back home from there. The Hajj camp near Zia International airport was also kept ready for giving temporary shelter to the returnees after arrival.

The government will also bear the transport costs of the returnees in reaching their respective destinations. Special coupons are being distributed among them for travelling by bus, train, launch and steamers.

The International Organisation for Migrants (IOM), a UN body, agreed to provide chartered planes for repatriation of Bangladeshis.

Responding to the government's appeal, the IOM got prepared for repatriating at least 30,000 Bangladeshis from the Middle East.

Earlier, the government estimated that it might have been necessary to repatriate around two lakh people from the Middle East if the war spreads beyond Iraq.

Observing the latest developments, the government thinks that only the Bangladeshis living in Kuwait (1.60 lakh) may have to be repatriated in case of emergency.

## Trader shot in city

**BSS, Dhaka**

Muggers shot a confectionery trader and looted his money bag at Doyaganj in old part of the city yesterday.

Police said Sagor, 25, came under attack by a gang of unidentified miscreants in front of 'Shakti Aushadhalya' at Doyaganj at about 4 pm while he was going to his shop 'Bhai Bhai Confectionery' at Lal Mohan Shaha Street.

Sagor, son of Khoka Miah, resident of West Rampur, received bullet injuries in his chest and abdomen.

Local people rushed him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

No case was filed.