Hasina doubtful about fairness of next polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leader of the Opposition in Parliamen and Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed her doubts about fairness of the next general election.

She said her fears are based on the fact that the government is politicising all sectors including the judiciary and

The coalition government is tormenting opposition activists in violation of human rights, she told a 14member delegation of the South Asia Human Rights (SAHR) led by its Chairman and former Indian prime minister I K Guiral.

Guiral met with the AL chief at the Dhanmondi office of the party.

AL leader Kazi Zafrullah briefed the reporters following the meeting. He said hourlong meeting dwelled mainly on human rights violation in

"The human rights delegation was surprised at the recent debate about the appointment of justices in the High Court", Kazi Zafrullah said.

Hasina presented briefed the delegation on 'repression' on opposition activists by the ruling parties immediately after the general election.

Former chairman of Pakistan Human Rights Commission Asma Jahangir, Kuldip Nayar from India, human rights activists S Balakrishna from Sri Lanka, D Pandey from Nepal, and Sigma Huda and Hamida Hossain from Bangladesh were with the delega tion, among others

The delegates also asked the opposition leader about her party position on the recent anti-crime drive and the subsequent indemnity act

The opposition leader told the delegation the prime minister and some ministers of her cabinet indemnified their crime of killing through the act, she alleged.

The human right delegation said civil society of the region could play a vital role in upholding human rights.

Uttara rifle loot 8 remanded for quizzing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eight people, arrested in connection tion from police Saturday night at Uttara, were taken on a three-day remand for questioning.

The arrestees are Jahangir Hossain Basir Gazi, Mohammad Sohagh, Abul Khair Sumon, Mohammad Aman, Sajrul Alam, Shahidul Islam and Mozammel Haq.

They were arrested from a place close to the place of looting. Police said that the arrestees are all robbers and might be involved with the looting.

Unknown criminals took away three rifles and 60 rounds of ammunitions after drugging three police constables on night patrol at the Awal Avenue in Uttara on the night.

Shopkeepers found the intoxicated policemen in front of a row of shops on the eastern side of the Awal Avenue at about 6:00am Saturday.

Indian foreign secy due today

Indian Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal arrives here today on a three-day visit to Bangladesh during which he will hold talks with his Bangladesh counterpart Shamsher Mobin Chowdhury on April 29, official sources said.

The last foreign secretary-level meeting between the two countries was held in New Delhi in December,

The talks between the two nextdoor neighbours are expected to cover every single bilateral issues including trade, border, communications, Dhaka-Calcutta bus service and inland water protocol.

The entire gamut of bilateral relations and issues relating to regional cooperation and recent important international developments are likely to figure prominently

Bangladesh attaches particular importance to its relations with all its South Asian neighbours, specially India, said an earlier release of the

It has been a consistent policy of the government of Bangladesh to SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

Protest against admin cadre appointment

Govt college teachers give May 15 deadline

Government college teachers yesterday asked the government to withdraw 140 administrative cadre officials from different offices under the education ministry by May 15 or face a massive

The college teachers plan to go for a three-day countrywide work abstention on May 19, 20 and 21 to protest the move to change the rules for appointment and organogram of the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) education cadre.

They will also abstain from taking classes on May 4 and 5 in the capital to press home the demands, said I.K Selim Ullah Khandoker, secretary general of the BCS General Education Association, while announcing the

More than a thousand teachers from across the country attended the rally organised at the Shikkha Bhaban

Selim said the government is doing injustice to the college teachers by depriving them of due position and financial benefits. "The government did not pay attention to education cadre, the craftsmen for building an educated nation," he said.

The leaders at the rally demanded earned leave for teachers, provision of 5,000 posts, confirmation of 3,000 temporary posts, and selection grade for 2,000 lecturers

They also demanded appointment of education cadre officials to all vacant posts in the education ministry,

Back to basics...When the world did not go techy, pinhole photography ruled the roost. In observance of the World

Probe body formed, leave

"We are investigating why 20 rifles

and 600 bullets were sanctioned for

guarding a closed industry while no

arms were given to secure Khulna

Hardboard Mill which was laid off last

March," said a senior officer of the

Khalishpur thana Kazi Farhad Hossain

has been made investigating officer (IO)

of this case recorded under Sections

448/380/409 and 434 CrPC (Criminal

far in the investigation to the looting,

which was surprisingly turned into a

the help of ansars, and not looted. So, a

theft case was recorded, he said.

Little progress has been achieved so

The OC said the arms were stolen with

Officer in charge (OC) of the

Khulna Metropolitan Police.

Procedure Code)

Pinhole Day, a photographer trying his hands in the outdated art at the National Press Club premises yesterday.

Khulna rifle looting now a theft case

of ansars cancelled

warrant of precedence and cancellation of leave or lien on teachers' higher education in the name of scarcity of teachers.

Teacher leaders denounced the appointment of 140 administrative cadre officials to different posts under the education ministry replacing overnight education cadre officials. "It was a humiliating and disgrace-

ful incident for the country's teachers' community," he added.

Presided over by Prof. Mohammad Kofil Uddin, the rally, among others, was addressed by Nasrin Begum, Masuma Rabbani Khan, Mohammad Khalequzzaman, Dr. Mir Mahfujul Hoque, Dr. A.K.M Asaduzzaman SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

The Khulna district jail meanwhile

has been put on high alert at the instruc-

tion of the Ministry of Home Affairs and

police headquarters. Dhaka as outlaws

of Purba Banglar Cummunist Party

asked to shift outlaws behind bars

including the PBCP leader of south-

western zone Mahmud Hasan Shimul to

different jails immediately so that none

of them can plan an escape on their way

Jessore district meanwhile sought

government protection against outlaws.

Information Minister Tariqul Islam in

Jessore on Saturday, expressing their grave

concern over growing murders by outlaws.

They submitted a memorandum to

The Upazila Parishad (UP) chairmen of

Authorities concerned have been

(PBCP) are very active now

to courts during hearing.

1,051 pushed in by India since Jan 23

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Border Security Force (BSF) of India has pushed 1,051 Banglaspeaking Indians into Bangladesh since January 23 this year, Odhikar, a human rights organisation, said in a repor

Though the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) together with the locals have been successful in preventing several BSF push in attempts, the BSF is boosting up its strength at the border by creating a sense of panic among locals. So far there has been cases of intrusion, firing and kidnapping, the report said.

The BSF began this year's push in attempts through the border areas of Jessore, Jhenidah and Meherpur on January 23. Later, they also made attempts through the northern dis-

Later, they opted for a new tactic of pushing in people during the SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

SARS fears Beijing shuts theatres, dance halls

REUTERS, Beijing

Beijing has ordered the closure of theatres, dance halls and other entertainment venues to try to contain the SARS virus that killed 48 people and infected nearly 1,000 people in the Chinese capital, state media said

Beijing police and cultural officials ssued the order on Saturday, saying it applied to dance halls, internet cafes, video game arcades and other entertainment business, the Beijing Youth Daily said "It is very hard to make the ventila-

tion, disinfection, and other conditions in entertainment outlets in Beijing meet the demands needed to prevent SARS," the newspaper quoted a city cultural official as saying. Last week, Beijing closed primary

and middle schools to try to halt the spread of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome, a potentially deadly flu-like virus believed to have originated in the southern Chinese province of Guagdong late last year.

Beijing also stopped marriage registrations in a bid to curb large-scale weddings in yet another measure to boost its defenses against SARS.

The decision, which took immediate effect after its announcement on Saturday, is meant to prevent large gatherings that could allow Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome to spread even further, the Beijing Star Daily said

Meanwhile Taiwan said yesterday it would bar visitors from SARS hot spots China, Hong Kong, Singapore and Canada as the island reported its first known SARS death and alarm about the virus spread around the world.

BDR-BSF border confce on

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Five-day long Director General (DG) level meeting between the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and the Border Security Force (BSF) started at the BDR headquarters in the city yesterday.

The delegates of the meeting discussed the issues of killing Bangladeshis by the BSF, push in Bangla-speaking Indians into Bangladeshi territories, illegal structure within the 150 yards of the zero line, women and children trafficking, and other biennial issues.

The ties between the two countries got worse because of some sensitive issues such as illegal migrants and weeklong face-off over 213 victims of Indian push-in along the border with Cooch Behar district of West Bengal early this year. Tensions over these matters ran so

high that it required the minister level meeting to bring the situation under

DG of BDR Major General Mohammad Jahangir Alam Chowdhury and DG of BSF Ajai Raj Sharma represented their countries. BDR Sector Commander, directors of foreign and home affairs, the representatives from the Bangladesh land and record survey, and India and Bangladesh Joint River commissioner were also present at the meeting.



Nationalised Commercial Bank employees yesterday protest the recent move to reform the state-owned banks. which includes privatising Rupali Bank and giving management of Agrani to private hand.

Entrepreneurs favour tax holiday, economists not

Economists at a discussion called for progressive reduction in tax holiday, but entrepreneurs urged to maintain it to compensate for high capital cost and poor electricity supply, port operation and law and order situation.

Gradual move from 'tax holiday' to accelerated depreciation allowance' should be one of the priorities for further fiscal consolidation, said Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya, executive director of the Center for Policy Dialogue. The discussion on 'Stimulating

Growth National Budget 2003-2004 was held at Sheraton Hotel yesterday under the auspices of Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI). Eminent economist Dr Wahiduddin Mahmud chaired the discussion.

investment, strengthening of the balance of payment and further fiscal consolidation should be the priorities for budget FY04.

These three essentially relate to the objective of adding a fillip to growth, he He noted that fiscal consolidation

progressed during FY03 and issues including enhancing revenue generation, streamlining revenue expenditures, improving quality of annual development programme and keeping up sustainable fiscal deficit should be

Another priority for the next budget should be addressing issues like high interest rate, creeping inflation that has risen to around six per cent, rising wage rate and incentive package for textiles and utility charges, he added.

Speaking at the discussion, FBCCI

deteriorating law and order, poor electricity supply and port operations were pushing the costs of business up.

"If it is not possible to improve law

and order, power supply and port operations, tax holiday should be continued to compensate these things,

Besides, a section of people engaged in tax collection is eating up a major portion of government's revenue

Syed Manzur Elahi said one of the main reasons for poor investment was $make \, large \, projects \, viable \, with \, high \, cost$ of fund which is around 14 to 16 per

"If local entrepreneurs are not encouraged to invest, foreigners **SEE PAGE 11 COL 1**

Saddam in the hearts of Tikrit people

Plan to celebrate his birthday today

On the eve of Saddam Hussein's 66th birthday, US soldiers armed with spray cans blackened out a freshly painted sign declaring: "Happy Birthday, my leader Saddam Hussein." Two boys on bicycles raced away

from the troops in the village of Awja, where Saddam was raised, saying they were wasting their time. "It will be written up again," said 12year-old Mutaz Sabah. Saddam's rule is over, his pal-

aces have been looted and he may even be dead, but some people are determined to celebrate his birthday today in and around his home



Baghdad.

"If we don't celebrate in the streets, we will celebrate in our

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

Tk 12 lakh robbed from office staff at Hatkhola Sonali Bank at Badamtali Ghat in old

Robbers looted Tk 12 lakh from the employees of a private company at Hatkhola in Sutrapur yesterday morn-

The incident occured when the

office at Hatkhola, five armed miscreants stopped the car at gunpoint while they were going to deposit Tk 15 lakh to

The miscreants dragged the employ

ees out of the car and drove away

The car was found at nearby Mitali School lane. The police searched the car and found Tk 3 lakh. Police seized the car for further investigation.

Sutrapur police said that they would interrogate the driver to know the whereabouts of the hoodlums. Police also arrested Swapon, an alleged criminal, with a cracker. Police suspected that he might have been involved in the

Manager Abdur Razzak filed a case at the Sutrapur Police Station

Student shot dead at IU

IU CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

An applicant for first year honours programme was shot dead and another student stabbed on the Islamic University (IU) campus on Saturday night. The victim has been identified as

Mohammed Hafiz, 21, from Hatia-Abdalpur village under the Islamic University Police Station. The clash ensued when Mahbub

Liton, unit secretary of one Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) faction, was stabbed in the evening allegedly by Mominur Rahman, unit president of a rival faction. To even up matters, Hafiz, belonging to the Momin faction, went to face

the 'enemies' at around 7:15pm. Chaos commenced and Hafiz managed to corner a student belonging to the Liton faction. In an effort to save himself, he shot Hafiz dead, sources said. Hafiz was rushed to the Kushtia General Hospital where the on-duty

body was sent to the hospital morgue Hafiz was allegedly an outsider iving in the IU halls under the shelter

doctor declared him dead. Later the

of cadres for long. This was the second time he was attempting admissions. IU police arrested one Mahmudul Sharif of Public Administration Department in connection with the

murder. A shutter gun with a bullet was recovered from his possession. An arms case was filed with the IU Police Station.

Tense situation prevails on the

campus with additional police deployed to avert further clashes

Sun Rises | Sun Sets

April 28			6-26 pm
April 29	5-26 am		
Prayer Timings			
Frayer Hillings			
April 28			
		Azan	Jamaa
Fajr		4-45	5-10
Zohr		12-45	1-15
Asr		5-00	5-15
Maghrib		6-31	6-37
Esha		8-00	8-30
Source: Islamic Foundation			

South Africa go one-up

district adjutant.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A three-member committee, headed by

Range Commander of ansars

Mohammad Nurul Karim, has been

formed to probe the looting of 20 rifles

and 600 bullets from Daulatpur Jute

The committee will submit its report

Besides, leave of 1,381 ansars in 190

by May 10 that is expected to ascertain

involvement of some of ansars in the

camps in Khulna Division has also been

cancelled until further orders. None of

the members would be allowed to go on

leave without the permission of the

director general of ansars, said the

HASAN MASOOD from Chittagong

It took exactly fifty-five minutes on Sunday morning for Bangladesh to surrender their last five wickets against South Africa in the first Test here at the MAAziz Stadium.

Resuming the penultimate day on 185 for five, and needing another 112 runs to avoid an innings defeat, Bangladesh lasted another 14.3 overs before being all out for 237.

The hosts scored 173 in their first innings and the visitors responded with a massive 470-2 declared. The Proteas ran away with an

innings and 60-run victory condemning Bangladesh to their twelfth innings defeat in 18 Tests since playing their inaugural Test against India in November 2000. It was also the Test newcomers' 17th defeat in the longer-The wickets began to tumble in the

8th over of the day when 19-year-old Ashraful drove left-arm medium pacer African captain Graeme



DESTROYERS-IN-CHIEF: South Africans Jacques Rudolph (L) and Paul Adams pose with their cheques after the end of the first Test in Chittagong vesterday. Man-of-the-match Rudolph, making debut, destroyed Bangladesh with an unbeaten double century while Adams did so by taking 10 wickets in the match. The latter was adjudged bowler of the match.

manager, Abdur Razzak, the store keeper, Mohammad Hossain, and the driver, Malek, of Miami International, a sister concern of Akij Group, were moving in a private car at about

Nearly 200 yards away from their

EDITOR: MAHFUZ ANAM-Published by the Editor from Transcraft Ltd., 229 Tejgaon Industrial Area, Dhaka-1205, 8124955, 8124966, Fax: 8125155, 8126154, GPO Box No: 3257, www.dailystarnews.com, E-mail: dseditor@gononet.com, dsreport@gononet.com, dsreport@gononet.com