

# Dhaka 0 D

anniversary of Shaheed Janani

Jahanara Imam. Venue: WVA

auditorium, Dhanmondi. Time: 4.00pm

The inaugural ceremony of the training

course on oceanography, organised by

National Oceanographic and Maritime

Institute, will be held with DU Vice

Chancellor Dr SMA Faiz as chief guest.

Venue: SPARRSO auditorium,

Society for International Studies (BSIS)

A general meeting of the International

Studies Association of Bangladesh

(ISAB) will be held. Venue: Office of the

chairperson of Department of

International Relations, Dhaka

Academy Film Society will screen a film

titled 'Talk to her'. Venue: 21/C, Jigatola.

DHAKA

TOMORROW

University. Time: 4.00pm.

Film show

Time: 6.30pm

Film show

Training course

Agargaon. Time: 5.00pm.

### Conference

On the occasion of World Press Freedom Day, a daylong conference of mass media will be held with renowned awyer Dr Kamal Hossain as chief guest. Venue: LGED Bhaban, Agargaon. Time: 9.30am.

### Consultation

Society for Environment and Human Development organises a consultation to prepare for a national seminar on forest and plantation. Venue: WVA **BSIS** meeting auditorium, Dhanmondi, Time: 9.00am, A general meeting of the Bangladesh

### **Coin exhibition**

will be held. Venue: Office of the Numismatic Society of Bangladesh chairperson of Department of organises a seminar on numismatics International Relations, Dhaka and a daylong exhibition of ancient and University. Time: 3.00pm. modern coins. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 9.00am. **ISAB** meeting

## **BCDJC discussion**

Bangladesh Centre for Development, Journalism and Communication (BCDJC) organises a discussion marking the World Press Freedom Day. Venue: CIRDAP seminar room Topkhana Road. Time: 10.00am.

### Seminar

Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) organises a seminar on 'Safe Water and Sanitation: Emerging Challenges in Bangladesh' with LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan as chief guest. Venue: DAM auditorium, Dhanmondi. Time: 10.00am.

### Symposium

Academy Film Society will screen a film The inaugural session of a 2-day titled 'Twister'. Venue: 21/C, Jigatola. symposium on 'Bangladesh Science Time: 6.30pm and Technology Vision 2021', organised by Bangladesh Academy of Science, will be held with Science, Information and Communication Technology Minster Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan as chief guest. Venue: Pharmacy Department

auditorium of Dhaka University. Time:

### Chhayanaut programme

Dhanmondi. Time: 11.00am. Chhayanaut organises a programme to pay homage to poet Jasim Uddin on the occasion of his birth centenary Bangladesh Power Development Board celebration. Venue: Shoukat Osman auditorium of Central Public Library, Shahbagh. Time: 7.00pm.

### Discussion

with State Minister for Power Iqbal Hossain Mahmud as chief guest. Ekatturer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Venue: BRAC Centre INN, Mohakhali. Committee organises a discussion on the occasion of the 75th birth Time: 9.30am

# Journalist abducted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

President of Sitakunda Press Club and correspondent of Bengali daily the Ittefaq, Atahar Sidique Choudhury Khosru, was repodrtedly abducted by criminals on Wednesday night.

# s said, the journalist

## Another executive of ITCL arrested

Corruption

UNB, Tangail

Another executive of Islamic Trade and Commerce Limited (ITCL) was arrested from the capital's Dhanmondi area in the early hours of Thursday. Anwar Hossain, director of

ITCL whose operations were declared illegal by the Bangladesh Bank, was given a five-day remand when produced before a magistrate's court at Tangail yesterday

Six officials and employees of ITCL, including its Managing Director and General Manager, were arrested on July 15, 2002 from Tangail

Several cases of corruption and embezzlement of money have also been filed against the officials and employees of ITCL.

### Five murders FROM PAGE 12

opened a hail of bullets on Khorshed Alam, 25, killing him on the spot.

Alam, son of Salauddin Ahmed of Nakhalpara in the city, took seven bullets in different parts of his Police sent the body to DMCH for autopsy.

The motive for the killing could not be known immediately In another incident, a chicken

As the shopkeeper turned down their offer, the youths beat him up indiscriminately, sending him into

Locals rushed him to the

Comfort Hospital on the Green Road, where doctors pronounced

trader was beaten to death by unknown miscreants at Khanthalbagan on Thursday night. Witnesses said a group of youths went to the shop of Noor Islam at Kanthalbagan Bazar, bought a hen but wanted to pay for

him dead on arrival

Tremor

### Roundtable

Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs (BILIA) organises a roundtable on 'Oil and Security in the 21st century: Impact on Bangladesh' with State Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources AKM Mosharraf Hossain as chief guest. Venue: BILIA auditorium,

# Workshop

in cooperation with Institute of Water

Modeling organises a workshop on

'Optimisation of Kaptai Dam Release'

Rafique sings

wickets on the first day. He added

two to his tally yesterday by remov-

ing number nine Allan Dawson(10)

and then finished off the South

African innings by bowling Paul

during Bangladesh's inaugural

Test against India in November

2000, bowled 37.2 overs in the

South African innings. He was

playing a rare Test after regularly

Rafique, who took three for 117

FROM PAGE 12

Adams (nine).

### FROM PAGE 1

it later.

a coma.

west of the country in 1999, killing some 20,000 people. Flimsy building was blamed for the high death toll on that occasion.

The government and rescue services, including the military, faced severe criticism then over their slow and ineffectual reaction to the disaster. Since then rescue operations have been revised but not put to any serious test.

Meanwhile, Turkish police fired in the air on yesterday to scatter an angry crowd demanding more help from authorities after an earthquake that killed more than 100 people, including about 40 children in a boarding school.

Working through the night, rescue workers dug into the floodlit wreckage of the school dormitory to try to reach scores more children still buried since the quake on Thursday morning.

শোষনের বিরুদ্রে কর্মচারী ঐক্যপ্ন PHOTO: STAR Members of the Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad lead a procession of workers and employees in Dhaka on May Day (Thursday) with calls for an end to injustice and exploitation of labour. PM for political consensus of the country without any discrimpresident of Bangladesh ination in wages or benefits. "Na-Employers' Federation Iftekharul tional progress is not possible Alam spoke on behalf of the

keeping the womenfolk, who constitute nearly half of the population, out of the development

process. The day was observed across the country as elsewhere in the world with a renewed pledge to establish believes that a disciplined and workers' rights.

> socio-cultural and labour organisations brought out processions and held discussions in the city marking the day

Labour and Employment Ministry took out a colourful procession led by State Minister for Labour and Employment Lutfor Rahman Khan. The participants carried placards, banners and

attracting large-scale local and foreign investment through the rights of workers. increasing production and creat-Bangladesh Federal Union of ing a congenial investment envi-Journalists (BFUJ) and Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) jointly She also called upon the trade organised a discussion meeting at unions to take up worker welfare

programmes in line with the coun-The prime minister also underscored the responsibility of the labour leaders in incorporating the women workforce in development

Dialogue

FROM PAGE 12

# 'Free country from pernicious politics'

### STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Eminent lawyer Dr. Kamal Hossain has said that efforts should be made to free the country from pernicious politics.

He was addressing as chief sentatives of civil society, organ-ised by Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) at Chittagong Press Club yesterday afternoon.

Giving a grim picture of the current political situation, Dr. Kamal said, "There is no honest politics in the country now. It is fake politics, it is politics for makingmoney

"We want to shun the dirty politics which has no place for moral values," he added. "Those who came to power taking oath to protect the constitutional rights of the people are themselves violating the law."

Dr. Kamal called for forging greater unity among people to fight against all wrong doings and injus-

Presided over by Advocate Shubash Chandra Lala, the meeting was addressed among others by Advocate Sultana Kamal, executive director of Law and Arbitration Centre, Abu Sufian, president of Chittagong Press Club, Mujibur Rahman, general secretary of Chittagong Bar Council and Advocate Rana Dasgupta.

# **Predators list**

FROM PAGE 1

China.

figures in the list.

says the report.

Compaoré, economic adviser and

brother of the president of Burkina

The list also includes Than Shwe, head of Myanmar govern-ment, and Hu Jintao, president of

The Paris-based organisation

rated the parliament leader of Colombia, Carlos Castano, and

Colombian guerrilla leaders,

Manuel Marulanda and Nicolas

Rodríguez Bautista. Long serving

Cuban President Fidel Castro also

The RSF termed that democracy

is the loser each time governments

stand in the way of the right to

inform and be informed, a right

AFP adds: Freedom of the press

hit new lows in 2002, the watchdog

group said in the report, with the

number of journalists assaulted or

"Press freedom is not guaran-

teed in more than half of the

world's countries, so we must

While the number of journalists killed went down from 31 in 2001 to

continue to be vigilant in 2003,'

threatened doubling since 2001.

that it is their duty to uphold.

Faso, have also been enlisted.

ised crime figures or agents of powerful interests the victims angered"

Asia proved to be the most dangerous continent for journalists -- with 11 killed there in 2002 -and the most repressive, with the highest number of reporters attacked, threatened, arrested, imprisoned and censored.

The situation in Africa revealed some rays of hope, with Benin, Botswana, Cape Verde, Mali, Mauritius and South Africa lauded for being particularly respectful of the rights of journalists.

The RSF added some new names to the list, which includes 42 heads of state, ministers, armed guerrilla groups and security orces accused of targeting report-

New faces in the "who's who of press enemies include Nepal's King Gyanendra, Liberian President Charles Taylor, Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong and Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev.

In a statement, the RSF called early figures for 2003 "worrying". Since the start of the US-led war in Iraq on March 20, more than a

and 20 others injured when a bus

overturned on the Dhaka-

Chittagong highway early yester-

day as its driver fainted and lost

Police said the driver Saifuddin,

42, of the Dhaka-bound 'Saudia

chair coach' was among those who

died in the accident near Borotakia

"The driver fainted hearing a blast of thunder nearby and the

coach crashed on the road," said a

The three other dead are pas-

Three of the injured were

ey were admitted to Chittagong

eportedly in critical condition.

Medical College Hospital and the

local health complex.

sengers Shahabuddin, 52, Golam

Bazar in Mirersarai upazila.

control of the vehicle.

dozen journalists have been killed. 25 in 2002, the number of reporters detained went up by 40 per cent and twice as many were physically attacked or threatened than in 4 killed, 20 hurt 2001, the group says. Over the course of the year, "at

in Ctg bus least 1,420 journalists were beaten, abducted, charged by the police, mishap harassed or threatened with being killed," the organisation notes. The RSF also alleges that at least

UNB, Chittagong half "were murdered by regime henchmen, armed groups, organ-Four people were killed on the spot

# BNP leader

FROM PAGE 12 at Holy Family Hospital yesterday.

When the driver opened a window, the assailants beat him up and snatched his gold chain.

"They soon smashed a window shield and beat me up indiscriminately," the BNP leader said. The miscreants also robbed his mobile phone

spot report. Salam said his political rivals might be behind the attack, but could not give motive for it. Kibria, 48, and an unidentified His condition is improving after

he was operated upon at the hospital soon after the incident.

Doctors said Salam's condition was very critical on Thursday night when he bled profusely

Tejgaon police last night said A case was filed with Mirersarai they were not aware of the incident and no case was filed. police station.

man.

# **Indo-Pak ties**

### FROM PAGE 1

State Richard Armitage.

spots, including Kashmir.

and India as "a new beginning.

In his parliamentary address

yesterday, Vajpayee repeated the comments he made in Kashmir

that India wanted peace with its

"We are committed to the

improvement of relations with

Pakistan and are willing to grasp

He added his customary rider,

"We have repeatedly expressed

the need to create a conducive

atmosphere for a sustained dia-

logue which necessarily requires

an end to cross-border terrorism

and the dismantling of its infra-

Diplomatic ties and air links

between India and Pakistan were

snapped following an attack on

India's parliament in December

2001 by gunmen New Delhi claims

last June after acknowledging a

reduction in infiltration of Islamic

militants into Kashmir, but this

measure has remained in abevance

because Pakistan made no recipro-

tional mediation to resolve the

Vajpayee yesterday rejected

India lifted the overflight ban

were sponsored by Islamabad.

every opportunity for doing so.'

Kashmir dispute.

month.

neighbours.

however.

structure.

mutual basis.

there who want to mediate. Why do dramatic announcement. He did not clarify whether Jamali, too, had agreed to upgrade Pakistan's diplomatic mission here

they want to do this? It is not clear. Pakistan is a bilateral issue. Therefore there is no need for third party mediation.

but officials said the status of Kashmir is divided between embassies are changed always on a India and Pakistan and claimed in full by both. The announcement follows Vajpayee also said his talks with Vajpayee's offer of a "hand of his Pakistan counterpart touched friendship" to Pakistan on April 18 other subjects as well. during a tour of Kashmir, which "We discussed ways of carrying prompted Jamali' phone call on forward our bilateral relations. In Monday, and ahead of a visit to this regard I emphasized the South Asia next week by troubleimportance of economic cooperashooting US Deputy Secretary of tion, cultural exchanges, people to people contacts and civil aviation The Indian media was yesterday links. awash with speculation that fol-"These would create an envilowing its successes in Iraq, ronment in which difficult issues in Washington was now turning its our bilateral relations can be attrention to other global trouble addressed. Prime Minister Iamali suggested resumption of sporting Indian officials have denied the links between the two countries. US is behind the latest push and We agreed that, as a beginning, the State Department yesterday these measures could be consid-ered," Vajpayee said amid moved to quash a report that Washington had set a deadline for applause in the lower house. India and Pakistan to resolve the "We were consistently saying that we want talks, but it was India While Pakistan did not immedithat was showing rigidity," state-run Associated Press of Pakistan ately react to Vajpayee's statement vesterday, reports in Islamabad (APP) quoted Musharraf telling earlier in the day said President London-based Urdu-language Pervez Musharraf had hailed fresh television channel ARY. peace overtures between Pakistan

Jote, Bangladesh Jatiya Party, Jatiya Samajtantrik Sramik Jote, Bangladesh Trade Union Sangha Jatiya Bidyut Sramik League, Jatiya Garments Sramik Federation Bangladesh Textile and Garments Workers League and Bangladesh Ganopurto Karmachari Union also

Political parties and various

festoons and chanted slogans for

Speakers at the meeting called

### Narsingdi district. Party chief HM Ershad was present at the meeting as the chief guest. Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), Jatiya Party (Monju), Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parisad, Bangladesh Jatiya Sramik

organised similar programmes. Bangladesh Television and Bangladesh Betar aired special

programmes while national dailies published special supplements on the occasion.

SARS: Quarantine hospital set the Jatiya Press Club. up at ZIA

upon the government to implement the 7-point demand announced by Ŝangbadik Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parisad.

# Jatiya Party arranged a discussion meeting at the UNC Jute Mills Adarsha School playground in

abducted while he was going to a relative's house at Maderbari from Dewanhut area in the city at around 10.00pm.

Whereabouts of the abducted journalist could not be learnt till yesterday evening, neither did anybody contact the family members of the victim.

Khosru's elder brother Alamgir filed a General Diary (GD) with Double Mooring Police Station in this connection

Khosru was abducted once before on June 16, 2001 for his report on the activities of criminals in Sitakunda. He was rescued in a critical condition after long 14 days.

# Hasina

### FROM PAGE 12

ruption and plunder. Hasina said that during her fiveyear rule, the market was stable despite new budgets and even during festivals, but people under

the alliance rule were facing acute

economic hardship and insecurity. Expressing deep concern over the renewed spell of crime in the capital and elsewhere in the country, she said people's misery would continue as long as the BNP-Jamaat government remained in power.

The opposition leader called for removing the government through united movement for peace and development. "There is no alternative to movement to get rid of this repressive rule," she told the rally.

Presided over by Kurigram District AL president Major General (Rtd) AMSA Amin, the meeting was also addressed, among others, by AL leaders Matia Chowdhury, Abdul Jalil MP, Sheikh Helal MP, Sultan Mohammad Mansur, AFM Bahauddin Nasim and Zafar Ali.

Earlier, addressing the representatives of different professional groups, including teachers, lawvers, writers and journalists, at the local Circuit House, Hasina said the government had failed to eliminate her party despite atrocities.

Hasina also went to visit the Dharala Bridge and addressed a brief rally there.

On her way from Rangpur to Kurigram, she addressed wayside rallies at Kawnia, Chaorahat and Kanthalbari.

being dumped in favour of fellow left-armer Enamul Hoque. All-Rounder Shaun Pollock, resuming the day on 41 not out, was the first man to go when he was

trapped leg before by right arm quick Mashrafee-bin-Mortuza. Mohammad Ashraful them removed debutant Robin Peterson who had made a spirited 61, before Rafique saw of the tail.

Earlier, on Thursday, South Africa scored 264 for six after they won the toss and elected to bar first.

The tourists were in deep trouble after losing four wickets for only 63 runs. But a timely 107-run partnership between Jacques Rudolph and Mark Boucher turned the game around for the Proteas. Both cored 71.

Rafique was obviously the bowler of the day taking four of the six wickets for 59 runs while medium pacer Tapas Baishya, who gave Bangladesh an early breakthrough by removing South African captain Graeme Smith (15), and leg spinner Mohammad Ashraful took one wicket each.

## Steamer incident

#### FROM PAGE 12

the incident. A contingent of army led by Major Shariar, went to the steamer and beat the crew including Nur Mohammad, according to the complaint.

> Nazrul Islam had also lodged a complaint with the police on Tuesday (29 April), accusing the staff of the steamer.

# BDR, BSF

### FROM PAGE 12 tries and representatives of the

Bangladesh Land and Record Survey and the Joint Rivers Commission were also present. The BSF director general led a 17member delegation to the five-day

India carried out more than 57 push-in attempts in recent times, said sources. The relations between the two countries were strained because of some irritants like illegal migration.

Tension pitched high for a week over 213 victims of Indian push-in along the border with Cooch Behar early this year. A minister-level meeting was needed to defuse the near-explosive situation.

They paused only occasionally as a survivor was lifted on a stretcher or a body recovered. Parents kept vigil, swathed in blankets before fires at the site of

the catastrophe. Anger in the southeastern city of Bingol, set in a poor and mountainous region, bubbled to the surface in the morning when more than 1,000 people marched on the governor's office. Many in the

mainly Kurdish town, fearing aftershocks from the quake that shattered dozens of houses, had spent a chilly night in the open or in makeshift shelters of plastic sheet-

ng. Chanting "Resign, Resign!" and shaking their fists, a crowd gathered before the governor's office demanding tents and food.

# Tikrit FROM PAGE 12

us, but to occupy and take our wealth and kill us," said Mohammed Farhan, who is in charge of city security.

One of the US soldiers deployed

in Fallujah died Thursday, but not in hostilities. Army officials said the solider from the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment - whose name was not released - drowned when a tank plunged into a canal.

In another incident Thursday, an Apache helicopter destroyed a truck after a US drone aircraft spotted four men loading ammunition onto the vehicle on the east side of the Tigris River. The four

Iraqis were killed, according to Col. Don Campbell of the 4th Infantry Division's 1st Brigade.

After the attack, 13 Iraqis came to the area and were seen loading ammunition onto other vehicles. Apaches fired on a building where the men took refuge, triggering secondary explosions that suggested ammunition was stored nside, Campbell said.

In Baghdad, elation turned to chaos when a large propane tank exploded while people fired guns in the air to celebrate the return of electricity to their neighborhood. US soldiers who arrived in tanks were confronted by an angry crowd complaining that the troops should have done more to help those injured by the explosion. Seven Iraqis were burnt to death in the incident.

# STAFF CORRESPONDENT

seized at ZIA

Tk 50 lakh goods

FROM PAGE 12

officials.

opment efforts.

labourers and employers at the

function, which was also attended

by ministers, diplomats, politi-

cians and senior government

The prime minister said she

Referring to the elimination of

economic boundaries in different

regions of the world and increasing

competition in global market, the

prime minister reminded that

Bangladesh was not aloof from this

"We have to concentrate on

process of globalisation.

ronment," she added.

try's labour laws.

dedicated workforce conscious of

their rights can materialise devel-

#### Customs seized gold, medicine, cigarette and cell phone sets worth over Tk 50 lakh at Zia International Airport yesterday.

Tipped off, a customs team followed a Biman employee coming out of a Biman flight from London via Dubai, about 14 hours after it landed at the ZIA. Sensing trouble, the employee fleld, leaving a packet under a boarding bridge.

Thirty-one gold bars weighing four kilograms and worth over Tk 25 lakh were recovered from the packet.

Medicine and cigarettes worth about Tk 13 lakh were recovered from the luggage of four passengers

Besides, more than 160 cell phone sets and other goods were found in three bags of a passenger, Golam Hossain.

Departmental cases were filed in connection with the incidents.

among the speakers.

The second session on information and communication technology will begin at 11:30 am. Dr Rafiqul Islam, head of Computer Science and Engineering department at Khulna University will preside and Prof. Nausher Ali,

director of Bangladesh Institute of Technology, Khulna, will be chief guest. The discussants would include research fellow of the CPD Dr Ananya Raihan.

Mayor of Khulna City Corporationm Shaikh Tayebur Rahman will attend as chief guest the third session on empowerment of women beginning at 2:00 pm. Begum Ferdausi Ali, Editor of Daily Tribune and Managing Editor of Dainik Purbanchal, will be in the chair and Dr Kanij Siddiqui of North --South University, Dhaka, will be among the speakers.

Executive Director of the CPD) Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya will deliver the inaugural speech at the first session.

### FROM PAGE 12

Huwaysh was listed as No. 16 and the 10 of hearts on the coalition's list of the 55 most-wanted figures from Saddam's regime and Maruf was No. 42 and the nine of diamonds.

Huwaysh was also a deputy prime minister and his ministry also served as Iraq's chief weapons acquisition agency.

Marouf was the only Kurd in the Baath hierarchy. He was appointed as one of Iraq's two vice presidents in 1975, but the position is seen largely as a gesture to the Kurdish minority and he had little real power.

Born into a prominent family in Kurd-dominated northern Iraq in 1924, Marouf joined the Baath Party in 1968 and has held several ministerial posts. He has also served as ambassador to Italy, Malta and Albania.

The statement came several hours after the US military in Baghdad said that a man said to be a close confidant of Saddam was under arrest Friday after being taken into custody in the Iraqi capital.

The announcement at the US Army's V Corps headquarters said Najaf. Mizban Khadr Hadi, a member of

charge of the party's Farmers' Saddam's Revolutionary Command Council and a top Baath Central Office. Hadi was reportedly extremely

close to Saddam and has been one controlled by the U.S. Army's 3rd of his advisers, especially on Shiite affairs, since the early 1980s He has been a minister without

that followed Iraq's defeat.

Hadi is No. 41 on the US coali tion's list of the 55 most-wanted

He was among Saddam's most trusted aides who were elevated by the Iraqi leader in March to command the country's four military regions in an attempt by the Iraqi leader to delegate command and strengthen the defence of his country against the American invasion that came later that

month Hadi was placed in charge of the area that included the Shiite Muslim holy cities of Karbala and

In May 2001, Hadi was put in

Health Ministry officials said Thursday.

isolation of suspected SARS

The government has set up a quar-

Airport compound for quick

antine hospital at Zia International

patients coming from abroad,

UNB, Dhaka

The 20-bed quarantine cell at the Cargo Village of ZIA will operate round the clock with 22 doctors, 28 nurses and eight pharmacists.

The government also selected pathological laboratories of BSMMU, Dhaka Combined Military Hospital and ICDDR at Mohakhali to carry out various tests related to SARS.

The strong measures to combat the deadly pneumonia-like disease came after SARS patients were identified in Kolkata in the closedoor neighbouring country.

Meanwhile, Health Minister Dr Khondokar Mosharraf Hossain has said the government will further strengthen surveillance and monitoring at air, land and seaport entry points.

"We are lucky but still in high risk zone as SARS cases have been identified in the neighbouring country," he told reporters at the airport on his return from Male.

porfolio since June 1982 and before

that was governor of Najaf. He was

decorated by Saddam for his ser-

vices during the 1991 Gulf War and

the month-long Shiite rebellion

V Corps headquarters, based

near Baghdad's airport, had no

Three Iraqi officials in custody

Party leader, was captured Thursday in the area of Baghdad Infantry Division.

The announcement also said Muhammad Mahdi al-Salih, the former minister of trade, had been arrested Thursday as well. But the US military in Washington had already reported his arrest on April 23. The US Central Command in Doha, Qatar, could not immediately reconcile the discrepancy and

it issued no statement on Hadi's reported arrest.

figures.

FROM PAGE 1

about three and a half years. But five other aircraft were grounded as those were damaged in a storm on April 22.

Biman's ATP

further details.

The damaged planes included three airbuses, a Boeing and a F-28. The Boeing has rejoined the

cal gesture. fleet after repair and the rest four are under repair. Pakistan's demand for interna-

Biman fleet comprises 17 aircraft including six DC-10s, four airbuses, three F-28s, two Boeing 737s and two ATPs.

dispute over Kashmir. "There are people here and

Pakistan had been urging comprehensive dialogue for three ears, Musharraf said.

Musharraf said he detected a new attitude from New Delhi "Now, it appears that some following Vajpayee's olive branch offer in Kashmir of dialogue last change has come from their side, he said.

> Vajpayee offered to sit down to talks with Pakistan during an April 17-18 tour of Kashmir, the disputed Muslim-majority Himalayan region at the core of 55 years of tensions between the South Asian giants.

Pakistan had called repeatedly for dialogue but India had always rejected talks until the cessation of alleged infiltration of anti-India Islamic rebels from Pakistan territory into Indian areas. New Delhi accuses Islamabad of backing the rebels, a charge denied by Islamabad.

Vajpayee later qualified his peace offer by repeating New Delhi's precondition of an end to infiltration. Jamali nevertheless seized on the offer and in his unprecedented call on Monday invited Vajpayee to Pakistan for talks and offered to travel to New Delhi himself.

"This is a very good sign. I think it is a new beginning after the Agra summit," Musharraf said, referring to the July 2001 summit in the Indian city, the last time the two sides formally met.

The Pakistani president said he detected "a growing realisation among the Indian leadership" that 'meaningful" dialogue was the only way to ease tensions on the nuclear-ready subcontinent.