Education quality

"We need to have a consensus first whether we want to have a corrup a modern and scientific education system," Bhuiyan said.

CPD Executive Director Dr. Debapriya Bhattacharya, who coordinated the dialogue, called upon the civil society to work as a pressure group to bargain with the government on different educa-

"Education sector could get rid of the vicious circle of politics if the civil society remained vigilant against it," he observed.

Supporting the demand for higher salary for teachers, he said, Without giving due recognition and social security to teachers, we can't expect better education. Trained teachers are the driving force of human resource.'

Dr. Kaniz Siddique of North South University, Dhaka, mentioned that there was a World Bank-aided programme under secondary education reforms to harmonise teachers' salaries in the public and private schools.

Moazzem Hossain said the standard of education is being affected as students passed the primary level with 'only 17 competencies out a total of 50'. This also creates problem in secondary and

higher education, he added. Secondary education lacks proper_academic supervision, he said. "The existing monitoring is administrative rather than aca-

He pointed out that the country does not have a 'fully-fledged education policy' even 32 years after independence.

Prof Khandaker Khaliluu Rahman said to draw highly talfession, teachers should be given higher salaries and other benefits. 'We got a total of eight education policies, but none of those were properly implemented.

Prof. Mohammad Masum of economics department at the Jahangirnagar University presented a progress report on the CPD task force on education sector. Although there has been a ment for primary education, the

Bagerhat case

Bhattachariya, elder brother of slain Tapan, lodged two FIRs for

The case was recorded under relevant sections of Women and Child Repression Prevention Act and also under Sections 302, 395, 397, 412 and 216 of CrPC

Morshed

countries would kindle a ray of hope to the countries of South Asia," he observed.

The foreign minister hoped that both India and Pakistan would be able to resolve their problems through discussion and would remain engaged in negotiations till the problems are solved.

Khan said resolution of the Indo-Pakistan conflict would remove the obstacles that frequently impeded the holding of SAARC summit and create an environment of economic cooperation among the member states.

In reply to a question about the possible visit of US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage to South Asia, Khan said as far as he knows, the US minister would be travelling to India and Pakistan.

On the necessity of a new world order after the US-led war on Iraq, Khan said, "it's too early to comstandard remained very poor, he

He mentioned that only one per cent students were able to 'achieve the 50 competencies' in five years of primary education. There is session jam even at primary educational institutions and five-year courses take more than six years to complete, he said.

Prof. Masum criticised the government's 'cash for education programme' for primary level, nvolving Tk 623 crore in five years. This would not bring a positive impact on education as students of condary level are usually lured by labour market.

There are 6.3 million child labourers in the country. "So the government should think about cash for education programme for secondary level students," he observed.

Advocate Firoz Ahmed said there should be a unified curriculum for both public and private universities for at least five years.

Some speakers proposed a teacher exchange programme between reputed schools and the

The other speakers included Shahidul Islam of the Teachers-Employees United Council, Sheikh Didarul Alam, Dr. Gazi Mizanur Rahman, Dr. MMA Hasem annatul Ferdous Rekha, Kaz Wahiduzzaman, Ahad Ali, Dr. GC Ghosh, Dr. Shibendra Shekhar Shikder and Rizia Parveen.

Empower women

FROM PAGE 1

Zakia Akhtar, the unction was addressed, among others, by Associate Professor of North South University Dr Kanij Siddiqui, Professor of Women Studies at Dhaka University Sania Nishat Amin, chairperson of Women Chamber of Business and Industries Selina Ahmed, Advocate Taslima Khatoon Chanda, local Ward Commissioner Ruma Khatoon, former ward commissioner Rosy Rahman and Field Officer of Rupantar Rizia Parveen.

The speakers said violence-free fair polls must be ensured for women voters and womens demands should be incorporated in the election manifestoes of political parties.

"Those who do not show respect to women should not be given nomination," they

They said women should be involved in all political decisionmaking and treated at a par with their male counterparts in law

They demanded trial of rape cases in camera and equal rights of women to public and private jobs.

ADAB

will become merely subsidiaries of the government," he said.

The recommendations are part of a well-planned 'blue print' of the government to grab the NGO sector, the statement said adding that the recommendations are $one\text{-}eyed \, and \, ill\text{-}motivated.$ Minister for LGRD and Co-

operatives Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, also chairman of the cabinet committee on NGOs, on April 24 submitted the committee's final recommendations to the prime minister suggesting ban on all sorts of "political activities" by the NGO.

Dr Faruque claimed that ADAB is the only legal apex body of the NGOs having representation of 1,500 grassroots-level development organisations. But the cabi net recommendations were not formulated in consultation with

a million troops by both sides to their common border, where they

teetered on the brink of war until

from peace," Ranjha said.

"Both the countries will benefit

Another report adds: a key anti-

India Islamic guerilla organisation

yesterday welcomed peace ges-

tures by India but warned peace

would remain elusive unless the

dispute over Kashmir was resolved.

Salahuddin, supreme commander

of Kashmir's dominant Hizbul

Mujahedin group said in response

to India's restoration Friday of

diplomatic and air links with its

nuclear rival Pakistan, 17 months

after they were cut. But he warned:

"Peace will remain a distant dream

if it is not resolved for good in

accordance with the aspirations of

peace not only in South Asia, but

global peace faces a potential

threat from it as well," the Pakistan-based guerilla leaders

Kashmir issue that has kept the two

neighbours on the warpath ever

India could contribute to peace

was by resolving the Kashmir

Islamabad and the Kashmiri lead-

turn out to be the basis of a nuclear

holocaust in the region," he

leaders will not avoid the bitter

realities and read the writing on the

"Otherwise, a little flare could

Salahuddin said the only way

"in consultation with

"We hope that Indian

since their (1947) freedom.

"The Kashmir issue can destroy

"It's only the unresolved

the Kashmiris.

"We can see a ray of hope," Syed

Pakistan opens door

there could be a meaningful engagement at the highest level," spokesman Navtej Sarna said. Government sources here said the reply "could neither be seen as a rejection or an acceptance" of Jamali's invitation.

Meanwhile, a dozen Pakistani parliamentarians will travel to India next week for unofficial meetings with their counterparts to discuss peace and democracy, peace activists said yesterday.

"The objective of the politicians' visit to India is to promote people-to-people contact in an unofficial setting," Hamid Khan, coordinator of the Pakistan-India People's Forum for Peace and Democracy, told AFP.

The forum, established in 1994 to work for peace between hostile neighbours, has arranged the week-long visit from May 8, Khan

The forum is a nongovernment, non-profit voluntary association with representatives from both South Asian countries.

The Pakistani delegation will be headed by ruling party senator and

former law minister Khalid Ranjha. "The purpose of our visit is certainly peace," Ranjha told AFP.

"It is in the interests of both India and Pakistan that they spend less on defence and more on poverty reduction and population control," he said

The MPs' visit comes amid dramatic peace overtures between the nuclear rivals, who have been locked in a dangerous stand-off for

The attack on Indian parliament triggered the mobilisation of

Microbus owner Shimul held in Khulna

Police murder

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Police yesterday arrested Faizul Huq Shimul, 40, owner of the microbus used by PBCP activists to kill two policemen and loot their arms at Fakirhat bazar on the night of April 27.

Khulna thana police raided Darogapara area in the morning and nabbed Shimul. He was taken on a three-day remand.

Police also picked up a leader of JCD Fakirhat upazila unit for questioning in connection with police

Listed criminal Amjad held in Khulna

BSS, Khulna

Police arrested listed criminal S M Amjad Hossain alias 'Kala' Amjad, 30, son of Deen Mohammad from Anjuman Road under Daulatpur police station in the city yesterday.

Sources said police conducted a raid and nabbed the criminal at about 3pm. A leader of Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP), Amjad was wanted in nine cases ncluding a murder.

Abducted journalist yet to be traced

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Sitakunda Press Club president and correspondent of Bengali daily the Ittefag could not be traced even 72 hours after his abduction on Wednesday evening. Atahar Siddiq Chowdhury

(Khosru) was reportedly kid-napped while he was going to a relative's house at Maderbari from the city's Dewanhut area at around

Khosru's family members and local journalists blamed criminals led by Sitakunda upazila BNP general secretary Nurul Islam for the abduction. Journalists of Sitakunda in

journalists of Sitakunda in memorandum to the deputy inspector general (DIG) and superintendent of police (SP) of the district yesterday alleged that Nurul Islam masterminded the abduction. They demanded immediate rescue of Nurul and arrest diate rescue of Nurul and arrest and punishment of the persons involved in the kidnap.

Bush vows

FROM PAGE 12

helping terrorists or pursuing weapons of mass destruction, Bush said the United States would not stand idly by in the face of serious danger from the spread of nuclear, biological and chemical arms.

"Our government has taken unprecedented measures to defend our homeland, and more importantly, we will continue to hunt the enemy down before he can strike," Bush said.

The President also paid tribute to allies who offered military help in the war on Iraq, singling out Australia, whose prime minister, John Howard, is a guest at Bush's 1,600-acre (547 hectare) ranch near Crawford this weekend.

The two leaders flew together from California, where Bush declared an end to major combat operations in Iraq from the deck of homebound US aircraft carrier, to central Taxas aboard Air Force One on Friday evening.

Howard is the last of a trio of stalwart war supporters to win coveted invitations to "Prairie Chapel Ranch" for a social evening, a tour, talks and a Saturday news conference. Prime Ministers Tony Blair of Britain and Iose Maria Aznar of Spain already have visited. Sutrapur double murder case

Defence lawyers begin arguments

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The defence lawyers yesterday started arguments in the sensational Sutrapur double murder

After hearing argument on behalf of Sajit Hasan Sujan, brother of the prime accused Rahid Hasan Suman, for about two and a half-hours, Judge Shahed Noor Uddin of the speedy Trial Tribunal-1, Dhaka, adjourned the hearing till 10:30 am tóday.

The lawyers made submissions on important statements of seven prosecution witnesses in support of acquittal of charges of the

Earlier, the prosecution lawyers completed their arguments on behalf of the state and sought punishment to the accused. In the case filed with Sutrapur police station, it has been alleged

that Mohsin and Saem of Sharat Kumar Das Lane under Sutrapu police station were picked up from their houses by a gang allegedly led by Rahid Hasan Suman on September 15, 2000.

The gang took the two to Gandaria Rifle Club and tortured them for Tk 50,000 ransom.

Later, the gang killed the youths, slashed their bodies into 12 pieces and dumped those into a manhole. Police recovered the pieces from the manhole the following

Mohammad Amin Miah, father of Mohsin, one of the two victims, filed a murder case accusing 14 people including Rahid Hasan Suman.

The Detective Branch (DB) of police submitted a chargesheet against Suman and 33 others on May 19, last year.

Another defeat

FROM PAGE 12

The visitors won the first Test last week in Chittagong by an innings and 60 runs.

Resuming on 4-0 the home team narrowly avoided its lowest score before crashing to 102 all out

Replying to South Africa's 330, Mahmud's men left everybody guessing what would happen like predicting the day's weather. The rain never fell as promised

but Bangladesh maintained their amazing inconsistency with the bat. There was steady procession of wickets once the resistance of the overnight pair of Mehrab Hossain and Javed Omar was broken in the ninth over. Skipper Khaled Mahmud was

the top scorer with an unbeaten 20 in an innings marked by a schoolboy display of batting coupled with some questionable umpiring.

Habibul Bashar, fresh after his back-to-back half centuries at Chittagong, fell victim to the 'crooked' finger of New Zealand umpire Billy Bowden. Bashar was adjudged leg before to Shaun Pollock after scoring a characteristically fluent 14 though TV replays showed the ball had struck the batsman outside the line. batsman outside the line. Then West Indian Steve Bucknor adjudged Akram Khan caught behind off a rising Makhaya

Ntini delivery. But again a reply showed there no contact between bat and ball. In the second innings Javed Omar became yet another victim of poor judgement when Bucknor directed him to the dressing room

after Pollock pulled off a controversial catch in the slips.

Minister Tony Blair about the UN

consensus in Washington that the

UN role should be restricted to

"what it does best" -- humanitarian

affairs, dealing with refugees and

internally displaced people, and

A draft UN resolution has been

There is complete agreement

At a press conference before

devised to frame the UN role in

in the government on how to pro-

The official said there was a

role in Iraq.

reconstruction.

Iraq, he said.

ceed," he said.

Javed stood his ground anticipating Bucknor might refer it to the third umpire to confirm whether the ball had been taken cleanly, but the veteran West Indian used his years of experience to end the plucky resistance of the right-

But apart from those three incidents, Bangladesh had themselves to be blamed for their down-

Bashar scored highest 33 in the second innings before he was out slashing at a delivery from left-arm spinner Robin Peterson. The debutant tweaker followed up his first innings 2-22 with 3-46 in the second innings. He also scored

a vital 61 on the second day. Akram Khan once again lost his battle against South Africa paceman Ntini, but before striking three consecutive fours including two well-executed pulls.

Mohammad Rafique, who claimed career-best 6-77, hit the only six of the match. The south-paw wacked 'chinaman' Paul Adams over long-on, but perished in the same over mistiming another attempted pull.

(SCOREBOARD ON PAGE 13)

College girl

men abducted the girl when she was on her going to college on April 22 morning and confined her in Khulna city and Chitalmari. The criminals raped her several times, burnt her body with burning

cigarettes and thrashed her against wall. Police took into custody two

hold a follow up meeting to gener-

ate forces from other countries for

its division May 7. Poland will hold

ber of countries that participate,

the fewer number of forces from

the United States will be neces-

stabilisation force would supple-

ment the US and British ground

forces now in Iraq, which would be

maintained at current levels as

About 132,000 US and 23,000

"And of course the larger num-

The senior official said the

Iraq stabilisation force

another meeting May 22.

sary," Rumsfeld said.

long as necessary.

British troops are in Iraq.

govt circular on KCC female commissioners UNB, Dhaka

HC partially stays

execution of

The High Court yesterday partially stayed operation of a government circular regarding responsibilities of female women ward commissioners of Khulna City Corporation (KCC).

The Court also issued rule upon the government to show cause why some points of the circular issued on September 23 last year by the joint secretary (Dev) of LGRD should not be declared to have been made without lawful author-

The order came upon a writ petition filed by 10 women commissioners elected from the reserved seats challenging the circular as discriminatory.

The petitioners pointed specially to guidelines number 5 and 6 under the circular that denied female ward commissioners the authority to issue patienglity. authority to issue nationality, character, birth and succession certificates and also to help in population census.

The petitioners are Shamima Sultana, Memory Sufia Rahman, Kanika Shaha, Seheli Sayed, Hasina Akram, Nahid Sultana, Ruma Khatun, Ameena Halim, Khuku Moni and Delwara Khandokar.

Abdul Matin Khasru appeared for the petitioners.

JRC meet FROM PAGE 12

riverbank from erosion during the dry season.

A team of Indian officials headed by the Additional Chief Engineer, Flood Control & Irrigation, Silchar-Assam region will hold talks with the Bangladesh side at the WDB Rest House at Zakiganj. Hassan Zobayer, Chief Engineer of the Water Development Board (WDB) Northeastern Region (Comilla-Sylhet zone), will lead the Bangladesh side.

The meeting will review progess of the joint survey done in the Indian river Borak, and the Surma and Kushiyara rivers in Bangladesh over the last three years.

After the survey began, the JRC held a meeting in Dhaka in August of 2000, followed by a field trip by its standing committee to the Svlhet-Assam border areas, Based on some earlier work and reports the meeting agreed to dredge the Surma to increase its navigability and take immediate flood protect tion measures in the Borak valley to check the severe erosion of the Kushiyara riverbanks during the dry season. Accordingly, hydrographic and topographic surveys of the Indian and Bangladesh rivers were completed.

The three division have not

No Arab country has offered

"The Arabs want to play a role --

been designated yet, but the

boundaries will not be drawn along

religious and ethnic lines, the

troops for the stabilisation force.

they want to play a significant role

But they all want to be careful

about longstanding ethnic and religious divisions," the official

Poland, Italy, Spain, the Ukraine,

Denmark, the Netherlands, and

Bulgaria have offered troops for the

The Philippines, Oatar,

force. Albania already has an infan-

Australia and South Korea offered

try company in Iraq.

aid but not troops.

The United States, Britain,

Raise voice

In his paper titled "Threat and Intimidation on Independent Press in Bangladesh", Saleem highlighted a grim picture of press freedom and torture on the jour-

He said newspapers, journalists and columnists ascertained that traditional secularism has been the target since the coalition government came to power. "The worst experiences were for those newspapers that exposed the identity of the war criminals and covered the civil society's demand for their

Saleem said the government's acute paranoia contributed to the intensity of violence against journalists. "Political partisans and gangs having links with the ruling BNP were responsible for most of the attacks on journalists during 2002 and early part of this year," he

At the end of 2002, Saleem said, a number of journalists, two of them foreign, were arrested linking them to 'international conspiracy. The government exploited patriotic sentiment of the people to convince them that the foreign ournalists were trying to destabilise the state by exposing the rise of the Islamic fanaticism.

He also referred to the arrest of and harassment on columnist Shahriar Kabir, Prof. Muntasir Mamun and reporter of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha Enamul Haque Chowdhury who were charged with sedition. Saleem said the pro-secular and

independent press is facing the wrath of the pro-right and pro-Islamist coalition government led by the BNP. "The repressive measures were spontaneous when the ournalists exposed the bad gover-Afsan Chowdhury's paper on Press Freedom in a Post-

broadcasting World" was mainly based on Iraq war, its national and global coverage, the credibility of the coverage and its impact on global media and politics. He criticised both the national and international media for insistently becoming partisan over the

coverage of the Iraq war. "This may

make us feel emotionally better

due to the involved role of media

but at the end, I feel that media will

be the worse casualty.

"If CNN angers us and BBC disappoints and enrages, we must also accept that our own media became a party to a particular

position," Afsan said. He added that the international media was as much partisan as any nationalist media -- the language, positioning, story-making all pointed to taking one side.

He said the media in Bangladesh was not fair and not into neutral reporting. Both print and electronic media highlighted the public position rather than factual and neutral reporting since Bangladeshi people was pro-Iraqi.

"This position did keep the media popular and well selling, but the treatment, language and commentaries, not to speak of providing space to the US-UK alliance, wasn't there," he commented.

Most of the discussants criticised the two mainstream political parties for their role over press. Γhey sing one song in two ways. The party in opposition suggests journalists to write boldly and truthfully. The same party however changes voice and asks for restriction in writing when in power.

Justice Rabbani said freedom of press is needed only for the sake of nonest reporting.

All the speakers criticised the BBC and CNN, the two largest international electronic TV channels, for partial and misleading reporting on the war on Iraq, and thus losing credibility. Prof. Moniruzzaman Mia,

ournalist Ataus Samad, Harun Habib, Abdul Quyyum, Shawkat Mahmud, Amir Khoshru, Forest and Environment Minister Shahjahan Siraj, Shipping Minister Akbar Hossain, politicians ASM Abdur Rab, Anwar Hossain Monju MP, Suranjeet Sen Gupta, MP, Abdul Kader Siddiqui, MP, Sardar Amjad Hossain, Hasanul Haq Inu, Mahmudur Rahman Manna, Haider Akbar Khan Rano, Fazlur Rahman, Editor of Bangladesh Observer Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, Editor of Holiday Enavetullah Khan and Prof. Shawkat Ara Hossain addressed

Child visitors FROM PAGE 12

goes to the staff.

Nazia Islam Tinni went missing from the DMCH on April 20 as she accompanied her parents who went there to see a relative.

Meanwhile, fear of baby lifting is haunting the crowded maternity section of the hospital for long. An organised gang allegedly operates there and lifts newborns whenever possible. The maternity section has patients four times its capacity.

Cabinet decisions

tries and divisions to get back to it with explanation if implementation of any decision slows down. The April 7 cabinet report mean-

drag heels on implementing deci-The cabinet has so far formed 30sub-committees, of which 10 permanent, to expedite implemen-

mance of most of the committees are far from expectation. The cabinet formed five committees in the first three months of this year, but none of the bodies could hold a single meeting to date. Most of the committees do not meet regularly and some have held

areas for development, but perfor-

A vital cabinet committee on law and order so far held 28 meetings, but since September 22, 2002 it had been staying away from meeting. The cabinet committee on fixation of pay scale so far held

Pakistan counterpart.

forward.

Pakistan.

India's peace initiative towards

Pakistan was acclaimed worldover,

with US, Britain, Russia and France

leading the comity of nations in

terming the move as "positive" and

"promising" towards finding a way

World leaders were quick to

tion on October 17, 2001. Another committee formed to encourage export and enhance trade both in domestic and international market held only two meetings in the last

leasing out of water bodies held only three meetings since its formation over 15 months back. The committee on poverty alleviation employment and coordination of micro-credit between public and private sectors held only one meetng in 13 months.

In contrast, a cabinet committee to examine four laws including the Bank Company Law finished its task in only three weeks. Similarly the taskforce formed to save Buriganga river particularly from encroachment has already completed its primary task and placed

its report. The Cabinet Division has been asked to place report on overall performance of the cabinet com-

Brace computer tech

rather business-centric when it be people-centric," he

based society by 2006. Putting the policy vision in question, he asked: "How would they be able to establish such a society by 2006 when the literacy rate took 32 years down the road of

independence to hit 50 per cent?"

He said the ICT sector was not

policy as well as in the govern-ment's Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper.

South Asian countries. He, however, said four mobile phone operators in the private sector took the number of their subscribers to over 10 lakh.

at 0.6 per cent, a long way off many

mobile communication. Khan said 90 per cent of mobile phone users had no access to mainstream fixed line Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB) connectivity because of the absence of interconnection.

operators have formed a mobileto-mobile intercom rather than cellular phone networks due to absence of interconnection," he

Khan said the problem would be

resolved soon with the implementation of a project. The BTTB has recently signed a deal with private mobile operators to provide more

kbps (kilobyte per second) without keeping the telephone lines busy. The network has brought Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Sylhet and Khulna closer. "Educational institutions can

ment should put more emphasis on ICT by doubling the opportunity for its study.

ensuring private sector participa-tion, train more IT teachers for spreading the education, standardise IT education by making it mandatory for winning ISO certifi-"To foster the growth of ICT sector, the government should

make IT education compulsory up to the degree level," he added. Chowdhury said the govern-

ment should be more careful for raising the standard of English as none can excel in IT without skills

He said Bangladesh had bright

services like call centres due to outsourcing by many developed He said Bangladeshis still use

prospects in different IT enabled

CPD Executive Director Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya, who co-ordinated the dialogue, said people should be given greater access to information to enable them to

plexities, he added. Prof AKM Azad of BIT, Khulna said there was no testing laboratory to determine standard of e-

submarine cable. "Otherwise, we would not be able to harvest desired benefit from the expensive submarine cable network," he added.

Bangladesh has joined a consortium of 12 countries with 14 operators to get connected with the cyberway at a cost of \$720 million.

is no SARS patient in Bangladesh and the government was going to form a national taskforce for the coordination of efforts of different ministries to keep the disease at

work to spread the fibre optic network," he said. Dr Rafiqul Islam stressed peole's greater access to information. He also underscored the need for coordination between educational institutions and industries to

Referring to youngsters' interest in Internet browsing, he said 90 per cent of them surf unwanted sites.

develop modern products.

young IT specialist.

G C Gosh and Dr Shibendra Shekhar Sikder, both from BIT Khulna; M A Quyyum, principal of Institute of Library, Arts, Commerce and Science; Feroja Begum, district information offi cer, Khulna; Provash Chandra Biswas of World Vision and Mohammad Arief Hossain also

Passengers FROM PAGE 1

meeting at the conference room at ZIA, directed all concerned to gear up passenger checking at every entry point like airports, land ports and launch and bus terminals, including those at Darshana, Benapole and Bhomra. The minister asserted that there

Straw conveyed his country's 'deep appreciation" for the "great statesmanship shown once again" by Vajpayee.

Ivanov, while welcoming Vajpavee's announcement, expressed support for all the steps taken to achieve political stability in the region.

come I consider the speech of the

Prime Minister of India this morn-

eact to the announcement on Friday by Vajpayee to resume diplomatic and air links with British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw and Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov called up their Simla Agreement."

Sinha to convey their appreciation of the move. "I congratulate leaders of both sides on these first steps -- that are just that, first steps on the way to finding a way forward," Secretary of State Colin Powell told a press conference in Tirana.

Indian counterpart Yashwant

"I am very pleased with developments in the sub-continent over the last several weeks.... All this is very, very promising at a time when people were beginning to wonder whether or not they were going back to the potential for conflict,

"I would like to say how wel-

French Foreign Ministry spokesman Bernard Valero said Parish sees "these recent developments as a positive change that is to be supported" and that his country encourages India and Pakistan to renew dialogue in the spirit of the

ing," Straw said.

Affairs Yoriko Kawaguchi said his government "Hopes this positive announcement will contribute to further promotion of the relations between India and Pakistan.

Japan's Minister for Foreign

Borrowing FROM PAGE 1

The government could do this because of excess liquidity in the

banks, which now hovers around Tk 7,000 to Tk 8,000 crore. On January 30, the excess liquidity was Tk 8,277 crore. This led to low call money rate at around 3-4 per cent. But because of the government's vigorous loan taking from commercial banks, the call money rate has increased to between 7 and 8

Raihan termed the vision of the ICT policy 'highly ambitious' as it wanted to establish a knowledge-

given due attention in the ICT Abu Syeed Khan, a taskforce member, said Bangladesh's tele-density in terms of fixed line stood

Focusing on interconnection, he said, "It is still a big hurdle to

"Bangladeshi mobile phone

leaving London, Rumsfeld said it All coalition forces in Iraq, was not yet known how many including the stabilisation force troops will be required in Iraq and would fall under the command of for how long. US General Tommy Franks, the But he said other planning official said.

connectivity. The BTTB has recently completed Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) that provides Internet access at a speed of 125

have their connection without installing own VSAT (very small aperture terminals) or subscribing expensive lease lines," Khan said. Anir Chowdhury, another task force member, said the govern-

Chowdhury said the government should patronise locally developed software through incentives, establish more IT parks

computer as a typewriter without understanding the flexibility, power and range of the machine. Chowdhury called for training

government officials for e-

alleviate poverty. Bangladesh still has opportunity to use ICT knowledge for complex land administration, which suffers multifarious com-

He demanded installation of a countrywide fibre optic network before hooking Bangladesh to the information superhighway via a

Former BTTB chairman Fazlur Rahman called for allowing the private sector to spread the fibre optic network. "The private sector

could use PDB's power line net-

"There should be a centralised gateway to Internet to block youngsters' access to unwanted contents," said Arief Hossin, a

while reveals its various committees rarely meet and invariably The cabinet committee to tation of various important decisions, resolve issues and identify

only one or two meetings since

mittees and progress of cabinet decisions in every six months.

Last in my life