World Aids Day

Serological Surveillance found presence of four per cent HIV infection among the IDUs in Dhaka.

According to the National AIDS Committee and surveillance team members and experts, the rate is quite alarming as it remains one per cent less than the highest five per cent HIV epidemic index.

The rate of HIV/AIDS remains less than one per cent among the other vulnerable groups -- truckers, migrant workers, gay, hijras (hermaphrodites), professional blood donors, heroin smokers and, hotel, brothel and street based commercial sey workers

High prevalence of HIV/AIDS in neighbouring India and move-ment of population, less use of condom and presence of sexually

Biggest arms haul FROM PAGE 1

after army explosives experts examined them.

A high police official said the arms might have been smuggled in to be shipped abroad again. The criminals had opened one packet to check the cache.

Commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Ashraful Huda said those who brought in the arms and ammunition definitely had a plot to destabilise the country. "They are a well-organised and financially well-off group," he added.

himself as Abdul Aziz of Faridganj in Chandpur and said he came to his uncle's house at Uttara a few days ago.

The injured criminal identified

"We will quiz him after he comes round," said Golam Rasul.

Police arrested Matin, owner of the shop, yesterday noon. A high police official said he disclosed the names of some people who frequented the shop.

Police were learnt to have raided some houses in the city in

 $search \, of \, the \, gang \, members.$ Home Minister Altaf Hossain Choudhury, the DMP commissioner and other high police officials visited the spot and the injured policemen.

Three separate cases were filed with Badda Police Station.

2 Japan diplomats

to "non-combat zones" and must take part only in reconstruction and humanitarian work.

Japan's plans to send troops were put on hold earlier this month after a suicide attack on an Italian base in the southern Iraqi town of Nassiriya killed 19 Italians and nine Iraqis in the deadliest attack so far on multinational forces in Iraq.

After the bombing, Japan sent a fact-finding team to southern Iraq, where the Japanese would be based. Defense Minister Shigeru Ishiba said the mission had reported that the area was relatively stable.

In Tokyo, Japanese Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi said there would be no change to Japan's plans to dispatch troops to support the reconstruction of Iraq. The deaths were the first of Japanese in Iraq since the US-led

Spokesmen for Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar also affirmed that the attack wouldn't cause Spain to end its presence in

PSC closes ears

the walls of Madhu's canteen at Dhaka University yesterday eve-

As many as 47,000 examinees,

vying for about 4,500 cadre service posts, sit for the BCS written exams, being held in Dhaka, Chittagong, Raishahi and Khulna at home and in London abroad simultaneously. The PSC cancelled the 24th BCS

preliminary test held on February 28 over allegations of question leaks and held the test again on August 8 amid further allegations of leaks. Although many examinees second test, the PSC did not give in to them.

Opposition Awami League (AL) Joint Secretary Obaidul Kader in a statement yesterday condemned alleged question leaks as instrumental to politicising every sector and demanded punishment to the

Leaders of AL's student chapter, Bangladesh Chhatra League, also expressed deep concern over the allegations. transmitted diseases (STD) in the country are the major risk factors for HIV in Bangladesh, say experts.

With the theme "Live and Let Live" the country will observe the World AIDS Day in a befitting manner as elsewhere in the world.

To observe the day, the government and different other organisations have taken programmes

LIFE, a non-government organisation, United Nations Information Centre and Children Voice have launched a month long signature campaign to increase awareness of HIV/AIDS across the

Bangladesh Parliament Members Group will hold a discus-sion and organise a cultural function today to generate awareness about AIDS.

Welfare Association of Repatriated Bangladeshi Employees will hold a discussion screen documentaries on

CARE Bangladesh will organise symbolic stand-in at four over-idges in the city and participate in the national rally today.

Bangladesh Manobadhikar Sangbadik Forum will hold a discussion meeting on HIV/ AIDS tomor-

TUs in EPZs FROM PAGE 1

"We are still discussing the issue," Aman told reporters after the meeting, also attended by representatives of foreign, commerce and industries ministries and Bepza (Bangladesh Export ocessing Zones Authority).

He said the committee would try to fashion an even-handed ategy so that neither side is

The recommendations will be presented at the next meeting of the Bepza board of governors to be held with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia in the chair.

"We will try to hold the meeting as soon as possible after finalising as soon as possible after finalising the report of the inter-ministerial committee, as a threat of cancelling the generalised system of preference (GSP) by the US is looming on us," a high official of Bepzasaid.

The US is threatening to cancel GSP in January next year, if Bangladesh fails to withdraw the estriction on trade unionism in

By contrast, foreign investors in the EPZs have long been threaten-ing to withdraw their investment if trade unionism is allowed in the zones. Foreign investment in the EPZs is estimated at around \$600

The Bepza board will take the final decision on whether or not to withdraw the restriction and allow trade unionism in the EPZs.

Bangladesh has two main EPZs employing over 1.30 lakh workers and four new EPZs have recently

Strike forces FROM PAGE 1

the last 33 days, meeting sources

The meeting noted that the overall law and order during Ramadan and Eid holidays this year was better than the previous

"We discussed the successes and failures of the mobile courts and the strike forces," the minister told newsmen after the meeting, adding that the Sadarghat scenario has improved considerably after introduction of mobile courts.

In reply to a question, he said similar initiatives have already been taken in the six divisional headquarters.

To a question on fatalities from the recent arson attacks across the country, the minister said the government is trying hard to stop such incidents from happening again and that exemplary punishment would be meted out to the perpetrators whoever they might

The meeting decided to gradually scale down the number of mobile courts and strike forces. Currently, there are 10 mobile courts and 10 strike forces operating in the city.

The home minister thanked all agencies and organisations involved in the month-long drive in and around the city. He hoped that they would continue their efforts in the coming days.

Home Secretary Muhammad Omar Farooq, Inspector General of Police Shahudul Haque, Director General of BDR Jahangir Alam and other officials from the home ministry and the police department were present.

3,625 women

Bangladesh Mahila Parisad, marking the eve of International Fortnight Protesting Violence against Women from November 25 to December 10 and World Human Rights Day on December 10.

Mahila Parisad compiled the figures of oppression from news items published in 10 national dailies including The Daily Star.

"Original figure is much higher than this, as many cases of oppression didn't come up in the dailies," said Masuda Rehana Rosi, who read out the report.

Speakers at the conference observed that women in Bangladesh live in an unequal society and violence against them is widespread indoors and out-

"Suicide tendency among young girls has increased alarmingly following harassment by the eve-teasers. But young girls should

face the challenge and the culprits by protesting," said Ayesha Khanam, general secretary of Mahila Parisad.

The Parishad will hold a series of programmes organising human chain, open discussion and exchange of opinions.

"Women victims do not get justice and many offenders go free under government protection that encourages violence against women," said Hena Das, president of Mahial Parisad, who chaired the conference.

Bangladesh Mahila Parisad -- a leading platform for women -- will observe the fortnight protest, which has been observed worldwide every year since 1994 after the women conference held at Vienna

Vice-presidents of the Parishad Bela Nabi and Chitra Bhattacharya, Rekha Chowdhury and Nasimun Ara Minu were present.

Tributes paid to **Ahmedul Kabir**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a condolence meeting yesterday paid rich tributes to Ahmedul Kabir, a pioneering media personality and chief editor of the Sangbad, who fostered secularism and humanism.

They said Kabir, also the presi-

dent of Gonotantri Party, always spoke in favour of common people throughout his life. Organised by the staff of the Sangbad at its office in the afternoon, the meeting was presided

over by the Editor of the daily Bazlur Rahman. He said Ahmedul Kabir was a man of principle and never com-

promised with anything wrong. On his contribution to the independence of the country, Rahman said Ahmedul Kabir had to endure a lot of harassment during the Pakistani rule, but he never bowed down to any pressure

or threat. Veteran journalist Santosh Gupta said the biggest success of Ahmedul Kabir as an editor of the Sangbad was that he was able to express the opinion of the common people through his newspaper.

Altamash Kabir, son of Ahmedul Kabir and executive director of the Sangbad, said his father always spoke of democracy, secularism and the common people.

Conducted by Kashem Humayun, managing editor of the Sangbad, the meeting was also addressed by NAP President Muzaffar Ahmed, journalist K G Mustafa, Justice Kazi Ebadul Haq, journalist A B M Musa, Justice K M Sobhan, Gonotantry Party leaders Aziza Idris and Saiful Islam and Ahmedul Kabir's son Ardashir Kabir and daughter Nihad Kabir.

Earlier, a one minute silence was observed at the beginning of the meeting to pay homage to the

Couple killed in Kushtia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Unidentified assailants killed a couple at Phulpara village under Mirpur upazila early hours of yesterday.

Police said Iunus Ali, 36, and his vife Farida Khatun, 30, were returning home from a folk song show at Mona Fakir's house at the same village at around 2:00am when the killers picked them up at gunpoint.

They were found dead near Kursha canal in the morning. Police recovered their bodies and sent them to Kushtia General Hospital for autopsy.

Police said a previous feud might have been the reason behind thekilling

A case was filed with Mirpur Police Station.

machines in eight out of 10 DCC zones once a week. These machines are 20 times stronger than the ordinary ones," said Dr Azizul Huq, chief health officer of the DCC.

The DCC has also formed 12member rapid action team for each of the DCC zones to receive complaints regarding the disease, Dr Huqadded.

PM hopeful

Khaleda said a favourable investment climate exists in the country and called for more Japanese investment here.

Sakurai said Japan-Bangladesh relations are excellent and that the two nations could be a model of cooperation and friendship in Asia by further strengthening and expanding their bilateral relations.

The JBPL president expressed his eagerness to find out more about the ongoing development process and recalled his visit here in October last year on the occasion of 30 years of Japan-Bangladesh diplomatic relations.

He felt the need for formation of a Bangladesh-Japan parliamentary committee so that lawmakers of the two countries could identify areas of cooperation and work accordingly for welfare of the two peoples. Sakurai said the prime minis-

ter's planned visit to his country next year will be an opportunity for Japan to demonstrate its goodwill for the people and government of Bangladesh

Khaleda Zia said the people of Bangladesh consider Sakurai to be their close friend for his contribution to Japan-Bangladesh relations as the leader of the JBPL. She requested Sakurai to convey her personal greetings to the emperor and the prime minister of Japan.

Discussing WTO (World Trade Organisation)-related issues, Sakurai said farmers must be given their due share in development to ensure their welfare.

The prime minister told the apanese leader about her government's various development programmes for farmers, agriculture and agro-based industry in the

FDI figure mismatch

has not been doubly counted under other heads.

"For a fuller picture, one needs to know the stock situation of the FDI which is not available in the survey. More importantly, the Bol survey includes loan, so we should know the outside outstanding private debt which will have an implication on the foreign exchange reserve."

The economist believes this kind of survey should be carried out by an independent regulator like Bangladesh Bank, not by an interest party like the BoI, for better credibility. "At the end of the day, we should

not be complacent about \$400 million FDI as Vietnam has an average FDI flow of \$1.4 billion a year," he added. Commenting on the BoI's survey, a top official of Bangladesh

Bank said the BoI estimate

includes reinvestment. "If a foreign company does not repatriate its profit and makes reinvestment, the BoI should have a record and the company concerned should issue shares against such investment.

However, he said the problem could be resolved if the BoI sits with the central bank.

Speaking at the press briefing outgoing President of Foreign Investors' Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Ficci) Wali Bhuiyan also feels Bangladesh Bank and the BoI should sit together to keep a tab on the actual FDI flow in the country and remove the differences between the figures of two government agencies.

"Foreign investors face uneven competition here, they do not have a level playing field," Bhuiyan said. The FDI flow may double if there is no political uncertainty and law and order and overall infrastructure are improved, he felt.

of Commerce and Industry in Bangladesh Aftabul Islam said US investment in Bangladesh showed a negative trend due to the government's delay in making decisions. "US investors are frustrated here. The Washington-based US-

President of American Chamber

Bangladesh, is now almost non-Explaining the survey findings,

BBC, which represents 34 US

companies having investments in

the BoI executive chairman said about 75 percent of the FDI came to the manufacturing sector, while service sectors, more prominently telecommunications, drew about

He said the FDI inflow sharply declined in energy and gas sectors, which commanded foreign investment in the years before. According to the survey, of the

total FDI during January-June this vear, \$81.699 million was invested in the export processing zones (EPZs) and the rest \$205.968 million outside the EPZs under BoI registration. Of the total FDI, \$168,655 or

58.63 percent was invested as

equity capital, \$97.893 million or

34.03 percent as reinvestment and

\$21.119 million or 7.34 percent as intra-company borrowing. The highest growth was in reinvestment with a 275.5 percent increase followed by equity with 49

France topped the list of FDI source with \$43.60 million investment outside the EPZs, followed by the United Kingdom with \$33.42 million, Malaysia \$24.77 million, the Netherlands \$21.73 million. Hong Kong \$19.86 million, Norway \$14.86 million and South Korea \$12.64 million.

In the EPZs, Hong Kong stays ahead with \$20.25 million investment followed by the US with \$19.33 million, South Korea \$17.92 million, Germany \$5.98 million, Japan \$4.64 million and the UK \$4.45 million. Norway accounted for about 19

percent of the total FDI last year followed by the US with 17 percent, Singapore 14 percent, Hong Kong and Malaysia 9 percent each. Lararge Surma Cement Ltd. (France), Sheba Telecom Pvt. Ltd.

(Malaysia), Shell BD Exploration and Development BV (the Netherlands), Orchid Garments Ltd. (Hong Kong) and GrameenPhone (Norway) were top five FDI sources outside the EPZs during January-June this year.

Qualitex Industries (BD) Ltd. (US), Bangladesh Hats and Bags Manufacturing Ltd. (Hong Kong), Crowntex Mills (BD) Ltd. (US) Actor Sporting Ltd. (Hong Kong) and Redpoint Jackets Ltd .(Germany) were top five FDI source in the EPZs during the same period.

Indian overflights

held in New Delhi on Monday, he

The president expressed the hope that a recent thaw between India and Pakistan would culminate in the resolution of all disputes between the two countries, the news agency said.

However, he stressed that Pakistan tied peace to "honour, dignity and sovereign equality.

The first round of talks between aviation officials and experts from Pakistan and India held in August in the Pakistani garrison city of Rawalpindi ended n an impasse.

The Rawalpindi session broke

down when India reportedly refused Pakistan's demand for guarantees against unilateral overflight bans. The two countries severed air links after the December 2001

attack on India's parliament, blamed by New Delhi on Pakistan-backed Kashmir separatists. The nuclear-armed neighbours started a process of nor-malisation after Indian Prime

Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee

offered a symbolic hand of

friendship to Pakistan in April. Vajpayee in a recent statement also announced he would meet with Pakistani Prime Minister Zafarullah Jamali during a summit of the seven-nation South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) here in

Leaders from India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, the Maldives and Bhutan are scheduled to attend the January 4-6 summit in Islamabad.

Pakistani foreign office

spokesman Masood Khan wel-

comed Vajpavee's statement saying "It is good news and talks between the two countries should start. He described as a "major development" this week's agreement between India and Pakistan to observe a ceasefire along the

heavily militarised Line of

Control (LoC) dividing the disputed Kashmir state between the The ceasefire, which came into effect on Tuesday midnight has created a "positive atmo-sphere" which should be further

strengthened, Khan said.

and India should start composite and result-oriented talks so that various issues, including the core issue of Kashmir, could be set-The divided state of Kashmir, which is claimed in full by India

"This is first step and Pakistan

and Pakistan in full, has been the cause of two of their three wars. A Muslim insurgency in the Indian zone of the Himalavan region has claimed some 40,000 live since 1989, though separatists put the toll at between 80,000

Khaleda expresses

FROM PAGE 12

The prime minister said the past year witnessed rapid deterioration of the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories in the face of continued violation of fundamental human rights by the Israeli occupation force. The peace pro-cess has also been stalled despite occasional glimmers of hope, she added.

Referring to walls being built by Israel, Khaleda Zia said construc-tion of the so-called 'security walls' seriously undermines interna-tional efforts for peaceful resolu-tion of the conflict. She urged the international

community to act together with renewed vigour and greater resolve to ensure a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. "Bangladesh remains convinced that comprehensive peace in the Middle East can only be guaranteed through the full and unconditional implemen-tation of all relevant UN resolutions," she said.

She added that Bangladesh remains committed to all efforts aimed at achieving genuine peace

The prime minister paid tribute to the memories of the men, women and children in the occu-pied Palestinian territories who died for the cause of peace, justice and independence of their coun-

"We believe their supreme sacrifice will not go in vain and one day in the not-too-distant a future, an independent Palestine will take its rightful place among the comity

Reshuffle

the same school ground.

FROM PAGE 12

and 100,000.

crimes and backing of two influential UP chairmen and BNP leaders.

All the suspects, including the four, went into hiding after the massacre and several raids on their hideouts proved futile.

"We believe we could make a breakthrough if any one of the four suspects were arrested," a police officer said. The terrorists opened fire on police and critically injured SI Hedayetul Islam. The victim died Different political groups and organisations continued visiting the carnage site.

The BNP-led four-party alliance called for a rally at Kalipur Ezharul Haq High School ground today. with Bera police accusing 17 persons the following day. After investigation, Bera police pressed Food Minister Abdullah Al-Noman, State Minister for Environment and Forest and local charges against 14 on May 9, 2001. legislator Jafrul Islam Chowdhury

and other alliance leaders will address the rally, party sources Leader of the Opposition and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina will visit the scene tomor-row and address a public rally at

Petrobangla FROM PAGE 12 objections," Shahidul Islam, chairman of the committee, told The Daily Star yesterday.

The committee asked the energy ministry to take stern actions against gas pilferage and misuse.

The parliamentary body also formed a sub-committee headed by Sarder Shakhawat Hossain Bakul to find out the reasons as well as the guilty of such activities and asked it to submit its report in a month.

The committee also asked the ministry to take steps to ensure exploration of more gas to meet domestic demands after 2015, when the existing reserve will begin to dry "We will have to face a gas crisis after 2020 if we cannot explore more by the time. In view of the present reserve, we asked the

ministry and Petrobangla to take steps for more exploration," Shahidul said. Officials of Petrobangla told the meeting that they could not start gas exploration in offshore deep waters of the Bay of Bengal, as the region was not determined as an economic zone. India has explored

Petrobangla earlier told the parliamentary body that it needed Tk 12,000 crore to take necessary steps to meet domestic gas demands until 2025.

gas from deep waters off shore.

Explaining why internal resources are not commonly used for gas development, KM Mosharraf Hossain, state minister for energy, told the meeting that red tape often caused unusual

Shahidul presided over the meeting attended by committee members and officials at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

Arms cache

FROM PAGE 1

his visit to the DC's office, "Exemplary punishment will be awarded to the culprits, whoever they are."

However, the home minister told The Daily Star that he would disclose the identity of the people involved in the transportation of the arms and explosives and their whereabouts once the investigation is over.

"We are now working to trace the culprits, their aim and route of the arms," he said.

Hygiene way

The picture was just as gloomy in the village of Notun Askarpara in Sitakunda, where only 14 of the 98 families had hygienic latrines at the start of the programme in May

Notun Askarpara reached the

target of 100 percent sanitation this August in line with the NGO-

modelled community-based On the delay in implementation, Jahanara Begum, a member of the Askarpara village committee, says, "Our neighbouring Dakkhin Askarpara had initiated the programme two years ago and we were encouraged by such an inter-

esting initiative. It took us some time to make all villagers aware." Although there are no data on the improvement in health of the villagers, diarrhoea has visibly decreased among the people. Abdul Gaffar, whose younger sister died of diarrhoea at 5, says, "Now I'm happy to know that no-one will have the same pain of losing the

loved ones to diarrhoea. Over 20 NGOs at home and many others abroad are replicating the model of ensuring total sanita-

tion at the grassroots level. The Village Education Resource Centre is also spearheading awareness campaigns in Rajshahi, Bhola,

Chapainawabganj and Naogaon. World Bank Country Director Christina Wallich after a visit to the sites in Teknaf and Sitakunda said "The World Bank finds these efforts most encouraging and hopes that they will be replicated internation-

UP chairman

FROM PAGE 1 since the murder are Akkas Ali alias Sayeed, Nuru Mondal, Moimuddin alias Rab, Abdul Gafur, Mostofa alias Mosta, Moslem Mollah alias Ilias, Ayen Uddin alias Jabbar, Abdus Samad alias Akkel and Ashu

alias Tuheen.

The Speedy Trial Tribunal of Rajshahi division in its verdict also fined the convicts Tk 5,000 each failing which they have to serve six more months in jail. Judge AFM Aminul Islam found all the convicts guilty under the penal code and read out a 35-page

Tipped-off, a police team led by the then officer-in-charge (OC) of Bera Police Station, Noor Alam, went to Bangalpara to arrest members of outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party on September 11,

judgement in a crowded court-

on the way to Pabna Sadar Hospital the same night. Terrorists Ratan, Shaheen and Jahangir were also killed during the fierce firefight. OC Noor Alam lodged a case

The tribunal examined 38 prosecution witnesses and completed the trial in 53 working days.

Special Public Prosecutor Ketab Uddin moved for the state, while advocates Abu Bakar and Zahir Uddin defended the accused.

BJP, Cong lock horns

the general mood of the voters before the next general elections up to a point but not a total guide to what will be the result of coming parliamentary polls,

Vajpayee and Sonia have whizzed across the four states leading the respective sides' electioneering which has often been marked by bitter war of words and trading of charges.

Both BJP and Congress used to the hilt the personal appeals of Vajpayee and Sonia respectively to woo the voters.

The Congress' strategy in the campaign has been to hit out at the

probity plank of BJP accusing the saffron party of 'shielding' corrupt leaders in high public places and charging with Vajpayee government of 'discriminating' in providing developmental assistance to The BJP, on the other hand, made development as its main poll plank focusing predominantly on the 'failure' of the Congress governments

in the four states, on the condition of roads, power situation, women's status, drought relief work and unemployment. For a change, the BJP did not make its pet ideological issue of 'Hindutva' a major issue in the campaign hoping that attention on developmental issues and anti-incumbency factor in

the Congress-ruled states would yield it rich electoral dividends. While the electioneering was feverish in Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh, it failed to generate much heat and dust in the national capital where the campaign

has been low key. In a bid to enliven the campaign in Delhi, several BJP candidates used the screen glamour to draw crowed to their public meetings by roping in film stars like Vinod Khanna, Shatrughan Sinha, Hema Malini, Amisha Patel, Suniel Shetty and leading TV actors including Aman Varma and Smriti Irani Malhotra.

Yesteryear actors like Jitendra, Rajesh Khanna and Sunil Dutt canvassed for Congress in some states.

While Vajpayee and Sonia were the star campaigners, the limelight in equal measure was also on state eaders of the four states -- chief ministers of Madhya Pradesh (Digvijay Singh), Delhi (Sheila Dixit), Rajasthan (Ashok Gehlot) and

information out of the country.

A project profile seeking a fund

of Tk 12 crore from Jews in Israel

was also seized from him. He sought the fund to publish three

dailies namely, Dainik Sonali Din,

Dainik Rupantar, Dainik

more information from him,"

The defence lawyers submitted

a bail petition and a plea for cancel-

lation of the remand prayer saying

graph of the Key Judgments to know

that as we said: 'We lacked specific

information on many key aspects of

Iraq's WMD programme," Cohen wrote in an article posted on the

But he insisted the estimate he

produced had "uncertainties" that

Judgments and throughout the

Moreover, specialists from three US government agencies -- the State

and Energy Departments and the

Air Force -- strongly disagreed with at least some of the findings,

according to the CIA analyst, who

denied that these expressions of

"All agencies were fully exposed

to these alternative views, and the

heads of those organizations

blessed the wording and placement

of their alternative views," Cohen

dissent had been suppressed.

were highlighted in the Key

CIA admits

agency's Web site.

main text."

stood by those judgments.

FROM PAGE 12

Paribartan.

police said.

Chhattisgarh (Ajit Jogi) and their BJP counterparts in Uma Bharati, Madanlal Khuarana, Vasundhara Raje and Dilip Singh Judeo.

The elections in Chhattisgarh, which has a 90-member assembly, have hogged the spotlight because it is the first since the state was created out of Madhya Pradesh territory three years ago. The electioneering in the state saw Congress trying to cash in on corruption issue after the controversy set off by the cash-on-camera episode showing senior BJP leader Dilip Singh Judeo who had to quit Vajpayee ministry following allegations of

oribery.

The BJP on the other hand sought to brazen out the controversy by alleging that Judeo was the victim of a sting operation' at the behest of Ajit Jogi and his son in league with owners of a local TV channel, a charge denied by Jogi. In Madhya Pradesh, where the

egislature is 230-strong, Digvijay Singh finds himself in an uphill battle to extend his ten-year rule. He had made the pollsters wrong by winning the previous assembly polls in 1998 and the question this time is: will the same be repeated this time?

Singh has been given a tough challenge by BJP and its firebrand leader Uma Bharati who quit /ajpayee government to spearhead the party's bid to unseat Congress from power in Madhya Pradesh. If BJP wins, she will be the state's first

woman chief minister. Rajasthan, which has a 200member assembly, may also witness woman power if BJP wins and Vasundhara Raje becomes the chief minister. She too had resigned from Vajpayee ministry to lead the party's effort to regain power in the desert state. But BJP is also afflicted by intense factionalism in the state and Raje's own elevation to the chief ministerial candidate was not liked by many senior party leaders in the state.

By contrast, Ashok Gehlot is relying solely on the report card of his government's performance in the last ive years after Congress returned to power defeating BJP. Delhi, where the legislature has 70

members, is the only place where BJP

is so badly placed in pre-poll surveys

which are forecasting an easy win for

ruling Congress which seems to have

blunted the anti-incumbency factor.

7-day remand

that Shoib was implicated in the sedation charge as part of a conspiracy to harass him. Shoib told the court that he was arrested by police at the behest of

the editor of The Inquilab, AMM

"I am a 30 percent share-holder of the ITV. Earlier, Bahauddin sold "As Shoib is engaged in spying and smuggling information out of out my share to Salman F Rahman at Tk 6 crore without my consent," the country and is involved in said Shoib who also claimed himtarnishing the image of the country self as the incumbent managing for a long time, he should be remanded for quizzing to extract director of the ITV.

He said when he demanded his share back the Daily Inquilab editor influenced police to arrest him in order to muzzle him. He also told the court that Bahauddin threatened him with death, as he demanded his share of the money He said a few days back he filed a general diary with Uttara Police Station in this connection.

1999 on charge of sending e-mail to the then prime minister Sheikh Hasina, her family members and some influential ministers threatening their lives. Charges were

Shoib was arrested in July 17

that editors of different newspapers took money from the Indian High Commission. A correspondent of Russian news agency Itar-Tass, Shoib was sacked from his job but soon joined now defunct ATV owned by Aziz Mohammad Bhai. During his stint

1999, he faxed a write-up to the

Daily Dinkal where he mentioned

passing information out of the Shoib was arrested at the Immigration department of the ZIA on Saturday morning minutes

the PCJSS agitation programmes Besides, army patrol will continue, Deputy Commissioner ofÊRangamati hill district Dr Jafor Ahmed Khan said while talking to The Daily Star.

established communication with PCJSSEand the leaders of the alliance, we have requested them not to create any trouble during the movement. We have urged both the groups to exercise utmost restraint," the DC said adding, "But we are ready to face every eventuality there.' Rupayan Dewan, vice president

resorts to repressive measures during our agitation programmes, situation in CHT may deteriorate."

the implementation of the treaty,

pressed against him on May 3 in The document still concluded 2000 and he was jailed for six that Iraq had chemical and biological weapons as well as missiles with Police said Shoib used to introranges in excess of the 150-km limit duce himself as an ultra Islamist imposed by the UN Security Council. And Cohen said that he He was engaged in defrauding people. He often took money from foreign visa seekers. When he was in the daily The New Nation in

there, he was arrested on charge of

country. before his departure to Bangkok by Biman flight BG-084.

CHT braces

"Moreover, we have already

ofÊPCJSS, said, "If the government

"We waited for the last six years forÊthe implementation ofÊthe peace accord, but it has not been materialised. So we have to go for movement in a democratic way and our agitation programmes have

Ushatan Talukder, political secretary of the PCJSS said, "We are really concerned over the delay in the implementation of the peace accord signed during the tenure of

public support," Rupayan added.

the previous government. We are now forced to go for movement as

we are left with no other recourse."

Meanwhile, the four-party alliance hills unit led by the chair-man of CHTDB, Abdul Wadud Bhuiyan MP, threatened to resist the agitation programmes of the PCJSS raising concern among the residents of CHT. Pradipan Khisa of United Peoples Democratic Front (UPDF)

UPDF has rejected the peace treaty. The hill people do not support the PCJSS movement. "If the government implements the treaty, it would hardly change the lot of the hill people. The only solution is full autonomy and not

of Khagrachhari unit said that the