ment has been sincere in combating HIV/AIDS from the very beginning

and a National Aids policy is now in

happiness seeing that the seminar

aims to strengthen the role of policy and lawmakers in the fight against

"I can assure you that our govern-ment will give the highest impor-

tance to the recommendations of

this seminar," she told the function

She also took the opportunity to

congratulate the formation of the

Bangladesh Parliament Members

Support Group on HIV/AIDS and

Human Trafficking and hoped that

this would be a forum of parlia-

mentarians from all major political

parties represented in national

initiative creates a platform for

lawmakers, civil society members,

HIV-positive people and develop-

ment partners to act together for a

common cause," she said express-ing optimism that this forum

would contribute significantly

towards combating HIV/Aids in

tional help for HIV/AIDS is increas-

ing but it will not provide all the

elements needed to strengthen

reproductive health networks nor

external assistance can supply the

have a unique role in preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS in the sub-

She said the parliamentarians

all-important political will.

interference

in nat'l polls

allowed: Saifur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman

has said foreign interference in the

"There is no need of advice from

national polls will not be allowed

EU troika team as our Election

Commission and other agencies

are competent enough to hold free

organised by Sylhet district and city

units of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal,

student wing of the ruling party, at

Pointing at the main opposition

minister said, a party had been

He said wide bodied aircraft

State Minister for Labour and

hindering the ongoing process of

would start landing in Sylhet directly from London and other

Manpower Aman Ullah Aman,

Jatiya Sangsad Whip Fazlul Haque

Aspia, Privatisation Commission

Chairman Enam Ahmed

Chowdhury and Sylhet City BNP

President Ariful Haque Chowdhury

Saifur was addressing a rally

and fair election," he added.

the city point yesterday.

development.

places in February.

also addressed the rally.

RU okays

process of

teachers

employees.

RU CORRESPONDENT

finalise the appointment.

recruiting 50

The Rajshahi University (RU) author-

ities at a meeting last night decided to

okay the process of recruiting 50

teachers for 29 departments amid serious protest by 546 'controversial'

Sources said the selection board

Earlier on January 21, the 'con-

troversial' employees carried out

sporadic attacks on teachers and

officials and ransacked the offices

of the vice-chancellor and pro-

vice-chancellor protesting the

appointments before confirming their jobs.

They threatened to resist all fresh

move for appointing the teachers.

would meet on January 29 and 30 to

Awami League, the finance

Foreign

won't be

Dr Nafis Sadik said interna-

"This pioneering, voluntary

amid claps from the audience.

The Prime Minister expressed her

Collective, coordinated efforts Salma Sobhan fellows

a must to fight HIV/AIDS PM tells second sub-regional parliamentary seminar

Describing HIV/AIDS as a global development crisis, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday urged all to come up with collective and coordinated efforts at local, national, regional and international levels to get over the health menace.

Khaleda, also current chairperson of Saarc, made the call while she was inaugurating the Second Sub-regional Parliamentary Seminar on HIV/AIDS in South Asia organised by Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) at Hotel Sonargaon in the city.

"We must also learn from our mistakes and successes, and critically review our past experiences in order to move forward," she told the seminar attended by members of PGA from both home and abroad, diplomats and representative of international organi-

Some important steps at regional level have been taken to fight HIV/AIDS, she said adding that the South Asian leaders at the recently concluded 13th Saarc Summit in Dhaka welcomed the preparation of a collective Saarc strategy to prevent the spread of the disease in the region.

The South Asian leaders also ratified the Saarc convention on trafficking of women and children which, while protecting women and children, will help prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS. The leaders also approved the Saarc Development Goals (SDGs), one of which is to contain HIV/AIDS, she added.

Quoting UN-Aids that some 8.2 million people were living with HIV/AIDS at the end of 2004, she said a number of countries in Asia have shown either nation-wid-

Call to resist imperialism

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Criticising the visit of Christina Rocca, assistant secretary for South Asian Affairs of US State Department, the speakers at a seminar yesterday called for stronger agitation to resist imperialism

Pointing to 'Anti-terrorist Cooperation Agreement' that the two countries are going to sign, they said it would undermine the sovereignty of Bangladesh.

The seminar on 'Antiimperialism movement: International solidarity' was organised by Samaj Anushilon Kendra (Centre for Society Practice) at the Teachers Students Centre of Dhaka

Speaking as special guest, Prof Anu Mohammad said how the United States would help Bangladesh in combating terrorism when the USA itself is the most powerful terrorist country in the

Comrade Haider Akbar Khan Rono of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal said 99 percent people of Bangladesh are anti-American, and they should be united to protect the sovereignty of the country.

He also appreciated the freedom fighters of Iraq for fighting against imperialism on behalf of the oppressed people of the world.

Presided over by Prof Abu Said Khan, the seminar was also addressed by the leaders of Socialist Workers Party and Respect for Equality, Socialism, Peace, Environment, Community and Trade Unionism (RESPECT) of Britain Ana Livingstone, Kambiz Boomla and Maggie Falsha.

The RESPECT leaders expressed solidarity with the ongoing movement of the people of Bangladesh in

resisting imperialism. Moderated by Dr Bina Shikdar, general secretary of Samaj Anushilon Kendra, the seminar was also attended by different political

leaders and educationists.

Huda-led BJAF holds special meeting

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Communications Minister Nazmul Huda-led Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Forum (BJAF) held a special meeting on the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) premises to

strengthen its organisational activities. The meeting congratulated Huda for withdrawing his resigna-

tion from the post of BJAF president. Presided over by Advocate Luthfey Alam, the meeting was addressed by its acting secretary general Advocate Khorshed Alam, Advocate Abdul Wahab, Advocate Taimur Alam Khondker, Advocate Golam Mohammad Chowdhury Alal, Advocate Golam Kibria, Advocate Helaluddin Mollah, Advocate Zaman Akhter Bulbul. Barrister Badruddoza, Barrister Akbar Amin Babul and Advocate Fazilatunnesa.

epidemic or serious and localised

The Prime Minister said it is feared that Aids epicenter is gradually shifting from Africa to Asia and experiences also indicate that HIV/AIDS has no racial, class or religious bias. "No country can claim immunity from HIV epidemic.

Bangladesh has so far been fortunate to remain a lowprevalent country with regard to HIV/AIDS, Khaleda said.

Members of Parliament of 112 national parliaments belong to the PGA and its first seminar was held in Islamabad last year.

The two-day seminar was sponsored by Canadian CIDA, Norway government, UNAIDS, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), UNDP, United Nation development fund for women, UNFPA and WHO.

Health Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, PGA President Ross Robertson MP, member of PGA international council Zahiruddin Swapan and seminar coordinator and opposition chief whip vice-principal Abdus Shahid also addressed the inaugural ses-

Dr Nafis Sadik, special envoy of the UN Secretary General for HIV/AIDS in Asia and the Pacific delivered the keynote speech.

Khaleda said Bangladesh govern-

now feel helpless because of mili-tancy, terrorism and price hike of

government and strengthen democ-

acy through a free and fair election

after ousting the BNP-Jamaat regime, said the ALleader.

February 5 is geared towards raising

awareness about the conspiracy of

the alliance government to manipu-

AL leaders Motia Chowdhury, Abdul Mannan and Mahmudur

Rahman Manna, JSD leader Syed

Zafar Sazzad, Gono Forum leader

Ranesh Maitra, Workers Party Leader

Fazle Hossain Badsha, NAP leader

Ismail Hossain and 14-party's cen-

tral and district level leaders were

presentat the meeting, presided over by Bogra district AL President

late the next general election.

Jalil said the long march of

"We will establish a people's



Prime Minister Khaleda Zia speaks at the Second Sub-regional Parliamentary seminar on HIV/AIDS at Sonargaon Hotel in the city yesterday.

No election under

Jalil says at Bogra 14-party meet

present CEC

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Awami League General Secretary

Abdul Jalil yesterday reiterated that

the 14-party opposition combine would not allow any election to be

held under the present chief election

the people's voting rights by manip-

ulating the Election Commission, he

said at a meeting of the representa-

tives of 14-party from 11 districts at

Bogra Vocational Training Institute

ing to discuss the preparations for

February 5 long march towards

the movement to topple the alliance

government with a view to establish-

nga democratic government.

The 14-party convened the meet-

Jalil urged the people to continue

He said the people of the country

Pabna and Srimongal may continue.

the country, it said.

City/Town

Chittagong

Cox's Bazar

Rajshahi

Dhaka

The government is out to snatch

commissioner (CEC).

auditorium.

complete training

32 receive certificates STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The first batch of 32 Salma Sobhan fellows has successfully completed a one-year fellowship programme in journalism, a joint initiative undertaken by the Brac and

The fellows received certificates from eminent economist Prof Rehman Sobhan, chairperson of Pratichi Trust, at a ceremony at the Brac Centre auditorium in the city

Under the 'Salma Sobhan Fellowship in Journalism for Women', 200 grassroots women from different districts are to receive training in journalism over a period

The Brac and Pratichi Trust have jointly started the fellowship programme in January 2005 with the sistance of the daily Prothom Alo.

During the training, the trainees have written nearly 1,000 articles in the Prothom Alo and other local and national dailies. They also sent reports from various districts on current happenings and condi-

Speaking at the certificate award ceremony, Prof Rehman Sobhan said a very few women have taken up journalism in the

How the world appears through women's eyes would be reflected in their writing, he hoped.

Fazle Hasan Abed, founder and chairperson of Brac, said the memory of Barrister Salma Sobhan would remain alive in the writing of

tor of Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK), called on the fellows to write news about social injustice, women empowerment and other womenrelated issues brushing aside personal animosities. Matiur Rahman, editor of the

Sultana Kamal, executive direc-

Prothom Alo, called on the fellows to continue their writing for the welfare of women and grassroots

He also urged them to establish themselves in any media on their

Md Golam Samdani Fakir, director of Brac Training Division,



Obituary

Abdur Razzaque, a prominent teacher and educationist, passed away at a city hospital on January 21 at the age of 94, says a press

During his long and illustrious career, Razzaque left his mark on the establishment and development of educational institutions

one daughter and a host of wellwishers to mourn his death.

Death anniversary

of Shamsunnahar Begum, mother of late Sheikh Faezullah, a retired divisional engineer of BTTB, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at her village home at Gokulnagar Purbapara Shaheb Bari under Raipura Upazila.

A seminar titled 'Status of the globally threatened Spoon-billed Sandpipe will be held to present the findings of a survey on the bird. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 10.30am.

Forum of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh organises a conference on 'Water, climate change and environment' with LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan as chief guest. Venue: Cirdap auditorium, Topkhana Road. Time: 9.30ami.

A meeting of the Vested (Enemy) Property Act Resistance Movement will be held. Venue: 31/F, Topkhana Road. Time: 4.30pm.

Engineers Bangladesh, Ramna.



Assistant Secretary for South Asian Affairs of the US State Department Christina Rocca held a meeting with Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan at the foreign ministry in the city yesterday.

Get united for free, fair polls Business leaders urge political parties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The business leaders vesterday called on the political parties to get united in order to hold the national election in a free and fair manner.

"For the sake of national interest and prosperity, the political parties should resolve all disagreements among themselves over national issues through discussion," said FBCCI President Mir Nasir

The call came at a view exchange meeting between the Jatiya Party leaders and the business leaders at the conference room of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI)

Speaking at the meeting, Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad said that the Awami League's current agitation has cast a shadow over the upcoming national elections.

He said there has been a debate over the issue of caretaker government and electoral reforms, but no

way can be found out to settle the

This year has special significance as the tenure of the present government ends this year and a new government will be elected as well, said the IP chief.

"But there has not been a consensus between the two major political parties, even on a smaller issue. They do not want to maintain any social relation. They even do not bother with the existing problems and people's suffering. Their main goal is to capture power," he Jatiya Party presidium members

Kazi Zafar Ahmed, Kazi Feroz Rashid and MA Hannan and Secretary General ABM Ruhul Amin Howlader also attended the FBCCI President Mir Nasir said

the country has no dearth of resources and opportunities for its economic development, but there is a lack of political will, proper planning, tolerance and political

"We can create a trade- and

investment-friendly environment through tolerance and consensus between the ruling and the opposition parties," he added.

JP Chairman Ershad said the economy is suffering mainly due to bureaucratic complexity, lack of good governance, corruption, unavailability of capital, high interest rates and unfriendlyinvestment environment.

He also placed a 17-point rec ommendation to accelerate the industrialisation process in the

The recommendations include an end to political conflict, reduction of VAT, setting up of an export processing zone in northern region, modernisation of sea ports, relocating the Kamlapur Railway Station and depot outside Dhaka, introducing e-governance and ensuring good governance.

FBCCI directors MA Rouf Chowdhury, MA Awal, Aftab-Ul Islam, Abul Kashem Haider, Abu Motaleb and Khurshid Ali also spoke at the function:

Bangladesh model for Muslim world

female condoms and adolescent awareness building."

"You know what you must do to raise the curtain of silence and denial. You must advocate for universal condom provision through health and commercial outlets,"

said Dr Nafis, one of the highest ranking women in the UN system. the United Nations' history to lead its major voluntarily-funded programme, asserted that if Bangladesh could do well with its HIV/AIDS prevention activities, there would be no fund constraints to support the country in its AIDS

programmes. The UN secretary general's Special Adviser put emphasis on focusing on the AIDS issues from the highest level of leadership as she was citing the examples of Thailand and Cambodia. These two southeast Asian nations were able face the challenge of HIV epidemic because of active highest"Cambodian prime minister speaks out on HIV/AIDS at every occasion, while in Thailand, moves on

AIDS prevention came directly from the prime minister's office," Dr Nafis said adding, "Use of condom in commercial sexis a law in Thailand." Despite a low prevalence of AIDS in Bangladesh, Dr Nafis is for taking extra cautions as there are many sex workers of Bangladesh with high incidences of

HIVin India and Myanmar. "Bangladesh Ministry of Health Affairs, however, is quite concerned about increase in HIV positive cases

among intravenous drug users (IDUs), "sheadded. According to Dr Nafis, drug use is associated with casual and commercial sex, which further spreads infec-tion. "In central Bangladesh, comprising mainly of Dhaka city, overall HIV

prevalence among IDUs has increased

from 1.4 % to 4.9 % between 2001 and

2005 with one small pocket showing

Dr Nafis emphasises the fact that in terms of infection rate, South Asia at present stands where southern Africa stood a decade ago. "All the conditions are in place for a general outbreak in South Asia in the next decade. Dr Nafis, herself a South Asian

national from Pakistan, specially stressed the need for protecting young girls who are vulnerable to

"In India, for example, more than 90 percent of HIV-positive women are married and monogamous. Many of these married women are young,

some of them very young." Lauding the parliamentarians' role in Bangladesh, irrespective of party affiliations, in addressing the issues of HIV/AIDS, Dr Nafis also pinned high hope on Bangladesh's faring well in achieving some of the crucial MDG (millennium development goals)

targets like women education and reduction in child and maternal

Kibria's death anniversary today

On the eve of Kibria's first death anniversary, the slain leader's family, the leader of the opposition, civil society members and different organisations asked the government to bring the real culprits to

They held rallies, processions tigation in the murder case.

As part of today's programmes, the Kibria family, the AL and its front organisations and different sociocultural bodies will place wreaths at Kibria's grave in Banani at 8:00am. A milad mehfil will be held after Asr prayer at the slain leader's Dhanmondi residence Malancha.

The AL tomorrow organises a discussion at the auditorium of Institute of Engineers, Bangladesh to be addressed by party chief and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh

Meanwhile, the family of Kibria yesterday slammed the government for its failure to bring the killers to justice even after one year.

"I don't believe anymore that I'll get justice under the current government. One year has passed and still the masterminds of my husband's killing are kept out of trial," Asma Kibria said.

She was addressing a rally organised as part of the family's continuous movement titled "Blue for Peace" in front of Malancha in the

The government has conducted a "fully biased" investigation aiming to cover those, who gave the direction to kill Kibria, she said, adding, "The government has even awarded the police officer, who conducted such incomplete investigation."

This government is not supposed to come to power again if a free and fair election is held as it has failed to bring the culprits of any

bomb and grenade attacks to trial.

Asma also demanded a probe into the assassination by the United

"The United Nations should come forward to investigate the killing of Kibria like it did after the assassination of Lebanon's former prime minister Rafik Hariri," she

She announced to continue with the peaceful protest programmes regularly until the real killers of Kibria are arrested.

The UN has a moral responsibility to carry out an investigation as he served under the UN with the status of under-secretary-general and played an important role for world peace, Sharifa Mosabbir, Kibria's sister, said.

Kibria's son Reza Kibria, two other sisters Safia Rahman and Fouzia Shahed, Reza Kibria's wife Rina Sultana Kibria and many intellectuals and commoners in blue dress spontaneously attended

Besides, a photo exhibition on the life of Kibria was arranged in front of Malancha marking the first death anniversary.

Prof Zillur Rahman Siddiqui said Kibria was the victim of Talebani mode of terrorism and the government assisted in such acts of terror-

Delivering a memorial speech on "Martyred Kibria: Terrorism --Bangladesh Context", he said Kibria was the initiator of scholarly politics, a conscious politician, critic and intellectual. The nation will never forget his contributions and will pay tribute to the wise man.

Bangladesh Foundation for Development Research (BFDR) organised the memorial discussion at city's IDEB auditorium.

National Professor and BFDR President Kabir Chowdhury unveiled a book on Kibria titled 'Kibriar Arthonity' (Economics of Kibria), an analytical book written by Dr Mohammad Hannan and

published by Anupam Prakashani. Former chief justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman unveiled another book titled "Nirontor Prerona" edited by Monaem Sarkar and

published by the BFDR.

He said, "It's our failure that we could not provide Kibria with necessary treatment when he was wounded and let him die, though he had the efficiency of receiving the best treatment anywhere in the

Dr Anisuzzaman, Prof Muntasir Mamun, Prof Shamsul Huda Harun, AAMS Arefin Siddiqui of Dhaka University, Dr Wahiduddin Mahmud, Atiur Rahman, Rezaul Haque Khondokar, Prof Salahuddin, Advocate Sultana

Kamal, among others, were present. In a statement yesterday, Sheikh Hasina strongly condemned the government for its failure to try the killers of Kibria.

Hasina alleged the grisly grenade attack that killed Kibria and four others was part of a conspiracy to kill the popular AL leaders and activists after the BNP-Jamaat-led

coalition came to power RED FLAG DEMONSTRATIONS Sylhet Division Development Action Council yesterday staged a

red flag demonstration in the city demanding trial of the killers of Prior to taking out a procession with red flags, speakers at a brief rally at the Shaheed Minar said the

defeated forces of the Liberation War are killing progressive leaders one after another as part of a blueprint. Advocate Abed Reja, president of council, presided over the rally.

Meanwhile, hundreds of people took part in another 'Blue for Peace' programme organised by Bangabandhu Bayashko Punarbason Kendra (a rehabilitation centre for old people) on Topkhana Road in the capital demanding fair trial in Kibria killing

Equipment dearth makes claim difficult A senior officer of the ministry

Dry weather likely on Friday

Weather is likely to remain dry over the country in the next 12 hours

Light to moderate fog may also occur over the country during late night till morning, Met Office said, predicting that mild cold

wave sweeping over Khulna division and the regions of Rajshahi,

Night temperature is expected to remain nearly unchanged over

Highest temperature 29.5 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday

The sun sets in the capital at 5:41pm today and rises at 6:42am

14.2 14.2

10.0

11.7

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

Temperature

at Sylhet and lowest 8.4 degree Celsius at Chuadanga.

Max

26.3

28.3

24.8

authority over maritime boundary was also informed that some major tasks are still incomplete.

The meeting was told that Dhaka ratified the UN Convention on Law of the Sea in 2001. The law was first signed on 10 December 1982. In accordance with the convention, Bangladesh will have to submit all documents pertaining to its claim over the maritime boundary by 10 years after the ratification.

Seven government bodies have already been assigned to make the technical assessment. A highpowered cell headed by the foreign ministry is working as the co-ordinator of the task. It will also draw up guidelines to this end.

Officials at the foreign ministry told the parliamentary body that Dhaka would submit the UN its maritime claim by 2011.

told the meeting that inadequate equipment has been delaying the survey in the deep-sea areas. Echoing the view, naval officials said they do not have a modern ship needed to launch the survey to make a technical assessment. Members of the parliamentary

Humidityin

percentage

80

66 57

Morning Evening

62

66 57

body suggested the ministries take measures to submit the claim very carefully. They also stressed the importance of strengthening the role of Bangladesh Navy to ensure the country's sovereignty throughout the maritime boundary.

"As we don't want to lose even a little portion of our water territory, we have to act with utmost caution. the committee chairman said. Mahbubur Rahman, also a former chief of the army staff, said

the country will have to be prepared before staking the claims. "We may

even need to bargain with the neighbouring countries over the claim," the committee chairman According to UN Convention on

the Law of the Sea, the sovereignty of a coastal state extends beyond its land territory and internal waters. This sovereignty extends to the air space over the territorial sea as well as to its bed and subsoil. But it is exercised subject to the UN Convention and other rules of international law. Besides, it says that in the exclu-

sive economic zone, the coastal

state has sovereign rights for the purpose of exploring and exploitng, conserving and managing the natural resources of the waters, and with regard to other activities for the economic exploitation and exploration of the zone.

across the country. He left behind his wife, one son,

Today is the 26th death anniversary

DHAKA

Seminar

Conference

The annual general meeting of the 18th Bangladesh Civil Service forum will be held. Venue: Institute of

and human chains yesterday in protest against "incomplete" inves-