Hundreds of teachers, students

Earlier, former Ruta President

Rajshahi University (RU) unit of

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL)

also took out a procession and held a

meeting on the central library pre-

mises and demanded arrest and

punishment of killers of the two RU

BCL leaders warned of tougher agitation against the BNP-Jamaat government if Prof Taher's alleged

killer Shibir leader Salehi is not

On Friday evening, Rajshahi

Professionals Coordinating Council brought out a big procession in the

city demanding immediate arrest of

Salehi and speedy trial for the killings

Shaheb Bazar zero point with Council Convenor and former RU

vice chancellor Prof Saidur Rahman

Over 50 hurt as

Over 50 people were injured when

villages locked in a bloody clash

Police fired shotgun shots and

over trifles matter in sadar upazila

teargas shells to disengage the

villagers clash

in Habigani

UNB, Habiganj

vesterday

They also held a meeting at

arrested and punished.

of two RU teachers.

Khan in the chair

METROPOLITAN/NEWS

AL demands UN-supervised probe into militancy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League (AL) yesterday demanded a UN-supervised international probe into militancy and bomb blasts and killings across the country during the BNP-Jamaat-led alliance rule, and said the present government cannot carry out impartial investigation into these incidents since it 'patronised' the militants.

The main opposition party also demanded immediate government steps to involve the UN in probing all militant activities including the 17 August serial blasts last year and killing of judges and lawyers. Besides, Interpol should be invited for a neutral probe.

"We demand international probe as we cannot expect impartial investigation and trial under this government which itself is the patron of militants." AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil told at a press Dhanmondi office in the capital.

'Godfathers and patrons of militants can be tracked down and their trial ensured only if an international investigation under the guidance of the United Nations is conducted." said Jalil, also coordinator of the 14-party opposition line-up.

He demanded immediate interrogation of ruling alliance leaders Matiur Rahman Nizami, Aminul Hague, Lutfozzaman Babar, Tarique Rahman, Alamgir Kabir, Ruhul Quddus Talukder Dulu, Rajshahi City Corporation Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu, Nadim Mostafa, MP, and others as, he said. their names have come to light as patrons of militants.

Jalil also demanded expulsion of those ministers from the cabinet. who 'sheltered' the militants.

Bangladesh is now treated as a terrorist country due to the alliance government's misrule and rise of militancy. And for this, the government under pressure from the international bodies arrested the militant kingpins but it is hiding other godfathers of militants, the AL general secretary said.

He accused the ruling alliance of harbouring militants to destroy the

He reiterated that the arrest of Abdur Rahman and Bangla Bhai is a 'drama' aimed to divert peoples' attention from the ongoing anti government movement, and power. fuel and fertiliser crises

AL leaders Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Abdur Razzak, Tofail Ahmed, Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, Motia Chowdhury, Obaidul Quader, Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin were present at the press conference.



Sewerage water remains stagnant for months on a road at East Rampura in the city due to lack of proper drainage system, but the authorities have turned a blind eye to the suffering of the local residents and passers-by.

JMB MILITANCY

Lord Avebury for transparent probe to find patrons, funders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Lord Avebury, a member of the British House of Lords, expects Bandladesh government to carry out a transparent investigation to unearth the political masters behind JMB and their funding sources.

In a press statement issued on Friday he hoped, "The government would also carry out a transparent investigation into those who provided refuge and shelter to JMB and their links to political parties and other agencies which have been widely claimed."

"We also hope the terrorists who murdered Shah AMS Kibria, and those who attempted to murder the leader of the opposition and the British high commissioner will be caught and tried," the

statement said He welcomed the arrest of militant organisation Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) chief Abdur Rahman and his military commander Siddiqul Islam alias Bangla Bhai. He congratulated the Bangladesh government and the security forces for their efforts in combating the militants in the country who are responsible for a number of bomb-

Tk 62.61 lakh received for AMCH in Feb

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Ahsania Mission received Tk 62.61 lakh as cash donations benevolent individuals and organisations in February raising the total fund to Tk 25 crore for establishing Ahsania Mission Cancer Hospital (AMCH).

An amount of Tk 1,13,520 was collected from the donation boxes at Zia International Airport in the same month for the hospital.

Donors of the month are Alhaj Dr Abul Hossain (Tk 5 lakh), Dr Chowdhury Abdur Razzaque (Tk 5 lakh). Avesha Khan (Tk 5 thousand), Zeba Ali (Tk 5 lakh), Tayeba Begum (Tk 1200), Exim Bank (Tk 20 lakh), Manzoor Ahmed (Tk 5 lakh), Sayeda Rashida Osman (Tk 20 thousand), Sayeda Rubaida Taufeeq (Tk 20 thousand), Kazi Abdul Manna (Tk 500) and Janata Bank

(Tk 20 lakh). Construction work of 500-bed hospital that started in July last is progressing as per schedule.

ings across the country. The press statement said these matters would be on the agenda at a meeting with the Bangladesh High Commissioner to UK Sabi Uddin Ahmed on March 20. Avebury will chair the meeting on behalf of the Parliamentary Human Rights Group and as chair of International Bangladesh founda-

"It is hoped the high commissioner will talk about the measures being taken against terrorism and incitement of sectarian hatred, including the protection of religious minorities; the promotion good governance and the mechanisms for ensuring that there is a level playing field for the forthcoming elections," the state-

He said members of the group and foundation would be interested to know what is being done to prevent state resources being used to further the success of any

candidate or political party. Lord Avebury said, "On March 28, I am chairing a Parliamentary Human Rights Group meeting in the British Houses of Parliament to discuss the implementation of the 1997 Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) Peace Accord, land rights and the role of the military in the

can be helpful to Bangladesh in solvina these problems," he

BCL council on April 4

DU CORRESPONDENT

The much-awaited council of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), student wing of the main opposition Awami League (AL), will be held in the city on April 4.

Areunion centring the council will also be held at the historic Paltan Maidan on that day, a BCL press release said

gurate the council and reunion.

tral committee on April 3, 2004. Voting will take place on April 4 to

elect leaders for the next committee. Incumbent BCL President Liagat Sikder and General Secretary Nazrul Islam Babu directed all presidents and general secretaries of district units to take necessary

"We hope Britain and the EU

Leader of the Opposition and AL

President Sheikh Hasina will inau-

The council is going to be held after the expiry of the existing cen-

measurers in this regard.



Fall in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at a few places over Raishahi division and at one or two places over Dhaka, Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may fall slightly over the country, Met Office said. Highest temperature 36.4 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Chittagong and lowest 19.1 degree Celsius at Srimangal. The sun sets in the capital at 6:06pm today and rises at

6:10am tomorrow. Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some

ity/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	haka	26.4	22.5	65
hittagong	36.4	22.5	62	56
ajshahi	22.6	21.0	74	87
hulna	25.2	22.0	73	68
arisal	27.5	22.4	82	67
ylhet	29.6	20.5	67	61
ox's Bazar	35.0	23.1	79	59

Rahman, Bangla Bhai to appear before Bagerhat court tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) chief Abdur Rahman and Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB) chief Siddigul Islam alias Bangla Bhai will be produced along with two other militants before a Bagerhat court tomorrow.

They are charge-sheeted accused in a case filed for explosions at five spots in Bagerhat town during the countrywide bomb blasts on August 17 last year.

The two other militants shown arrested in this case are Hasan Ali Mollah and Hafez Mahmud.

Magistrate Mohammad Sabur Hossain had ordered these four to be produced before the court Bagerhat police submitted the charge sheet on November 11 last year accusing eleven people.

An official of Bagerhat district jail told The Daily Star that arrest warrants against Abdur Rahman and Bangla Bhai have been sent to Sylhet and Mymensingh jails. Arrest warrants against the other two were sent to Dhaka Central Jail, the official added.

Earlier, docket of the case was sent back to the Magistrate's court for reinvestigation since the case was weak to be tried in the Court of District and Sessions Judge. Security measures have been beefed up in Bagerhat district following the court order.

EVICTION FROM HOSTEL

Eden students' ultimatum

DU CORRESPONDENT

Agitating students of the Eden College vesterday issued a 24-hour ultimatum to the authorities to return the seats at Khodeza Khatun Hall (old hostel) to those who have been driven out allegedly by the JCD leaders.

The ultimatum came at a meeting between the students and the college authorities that sought 15 days' time to meet their demand. The authorities also said they have formed a committee to investigate the incident.

But the students, who have been demonstrating since March 8 in protest against eviction of more than 20 students from the hall, threatened to launch a tougher movement if their demand is not met by today. They also demanded punishment

to the JCD leaders involved in the incident. The JCD leaders are now distributing those seats among the newcomers in exchange of money,

They also demanded an apology from Principal Prof Feroza Begum for the comments she made on March 8 describing the agitating students as 'girls from the streets'.

The authorities held the meeting vesterday after the students encircled the principal and some other teachers at the college auditorium for about 10 minutes. Earlier, the students also brought out a procession and formed a human chain on the campus.

Prof Feroza Begum, also the wife of State Minister for Religious Affairs Mosharef Hossain Shahjahan, told reporters that the college authorities formed a probe committee led by Julekha Khatun, super of Khodeza Khatun Hall, on March 8 after they received a complaint from the students. But she could not mention the names or the number of the commit-

The college authorities said they had expelled JCD leader Afrin Jahan Sima on charge of her involvement in llegal seat allocation.

But the students said the action is just eyewash as Sima has already completed her master's in philosophy last year.

Sima was not available for her comments. On March 8, she told The Daily Star that she was no involved in the incident.

The demonstrators will also stage a sit-in in front of administrative building at 10:30am today.

Death anniversary



Today is the fourth death anniversary of Advocaté M Abdur Rahim, a senior lawyer of the Supreme Court, says a

press release.

Relatives, friends, colleagues and well-wishers have been requested to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Dilruba Rahman Ruma



the departed soul.

Today is the first death anniversary of Dilruba Rahman Ruma, wife of renowned filmmaker Badal Rahman says a press

Qurankhwani and distribution of food among orphans have been arranged at her residence on the A doa mahfil will also be held at

the residence of her father MA Khair, a former lawmaker, at Dilu Road after Maghrib prayers. Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to attend the

doa mahfil and pray for salvation of



Bangladesh Rice Foundation (BRF) Chairman M Syeduzzaman speaks at a press conference at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. On his right is Ziaul Karim and on his left are Sadigul Islam Bhuiyan and Mazharul Haq.

PROPOSED NATIONAL RICE POLICY Make farming profitable

for farmers

Experts urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Experts yesterday urged the policy makers to ensure that farming remains remunerative to farmers and the benefits of subsidy reach

Presenting the proposed National Rice Policy at a press conference at the National Press Club in the city yesterday, Bangladesh Rice Foundation (BRF) Chairman M Syeduzzaman also called for regulating the use of land in the country to protect the fast depleting farmland.

Syeduzzaman, also a former finance minister, said the BRFprepared National Rice Policy had been forwarded to the ministries of finance, agriculture and food and disaster management, recommending policy interventions to keep farm production economically viable.

Official statistics show that the country is losing farmland at an alarmingly high rate of 80,000 hectares a year from a total of 14

Film festival

begins at JU

JU CORRESPONDENT

university campus today.

JU Vice-chancellor Prof

Khandaker Mustahidur Rahman will

inaugurate the festival as chief

quest at a colorful ceremony at the

Morshedul Islam, president of

Bangladesh Federation of Film

Societies (BFFS) and a prominent

filmmaker, will attend the function as

JSFS, will preside over the inaugu-

ral ceremony where Agami (Bangla-

desh) and The Return (Russia) will

A total of 20 films from 17 coun-

Three films will be screened daily

at the central auditorium at 3:30pm

5:30pm and 7:30pm from March 13

Shakha Proshakha (India), One

Sky Business Services Limited

(SBSL) has sponsored the

programme while Proshika Manobik

Unnayan Kendra will provide techni-

cal assistance for the festival titled

'SBSL 1st International Film Week-

Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest

(USA) and Baran (Iran) will be

Prof Ahmad Reza, president of

central auditorium at 5:30pm.

today

be screened

tries will be screened.

screened tomorrow.

million hectares. "As it (land) is a scarce and critical national resource, the use and management of rice land should be regulated through a combination of legal administrative measures and incentives keeping in view the greater national interests," says the proposed National Rice Policy. It said, "Non-agricultural or less

productive land should be earmarked in each mouza or village for building cluster houses, village markets, rural industries, brickfields and other non-agricultural purposes. Essential development projects should be allotted space only on non-agricultural or low productive land." M Syeduzzaman, who was

accompanied by other BRF Trustees including Prof Moazzem Hossain, Mazharul Haq, Sadiqul Islam Bhuivan and Prof Zeba Islam Seraj, expressed shock at very low level of public sector investment in agricultural research

Farm research expenditure

declined to less than 0.2 percent of the agricultural gross domestic product (GDP) in 2002-05 from about 0.3 percent in 1999-2002, the BRF report mentioned.

The BRF Chairman recommended allocating more resources to rice research. He emphasised that the farm subsidy benefits reach the farmers and efficiency be increased in applications of irrigation water, fertiliser and pesticides. BRF recommended domestic

production of farm machinery, better farm management practices, strengthening of researchextension links and changes in dietary habit lessening the pressure Per capita annual rice consump-

tion is surprisingly high in Police said a clash ensued Bangladesh that stands at 164 kg between Jolfu Mia of Purbo Katakhali whereas it is 148 kg in Indonesia, village and Kabir Mia of Paschim 103 kg in Thailand, 91 kg in Sri Katakhali on Friday afternoon when Lanka and only 73 kg in Malaysia, shows BRF statistics.

both of them wanted to buy the same fish from Sadhur bazar. The clash flared up yesterday involving the inhabitants of two villages at Telikhal at 11:00am as a

> sequel to the Friday's clash. "Hordes of villagers from Chanpur, Sadhur bazar, Godainagar, Joyrampur and Katl rushed there soon and attacked each other," witnesses said.

On information, police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control by charging baton and firing rubber bullets and teargas

Seventeen seriously injured were rushed to the Sadar Hospital

KHULNA BOMB BLAST 2 Jubo League leaders arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Two Jubo League leaders and another person were arrested in connection with the bomb blast at Daulatpur in the city on Friday night.

The arrested were identified as Daulatpur thana Jubo League convener Mizanur Rahman Tarafdar, his brother-in-law Bellal Hossain and Khulna city Jubo League Joint Secretary Delwar Hossain.

injured during the explosion at Daulatpur. The bomb exploded when they were carrying it, said Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Daulatpur Police Station. Daulatpur Trade School outpost

Police said the arrestees were

Sergeant Ainul Huq lodged an FIR yesterday naming the three arrestees as accused. The accused are undergoing

treatment at Khulna Medical College Hospital (KMCH) prison

Belta's Teacher Training Event begins Mar 20 Bangladesh English Language

Teachers' Association (BELTA) will

organise a six-day teacher training programme from March 20 to 25 in collaboration with the internationa Forum, "Teachers Helping Teachers", says a press release. Nine international ESL special-

ists will conduct teaching methodology workshops simultaneously at two venues, BIAM and Presidency University in the city.

Interested teachers of English from schools, colleges/universities are requested to register by 15 March. Registration fees: Tk 500 BELTA members, Tk 700 Nonmembers. Limited seats at each venue. Further information could be obtained from Presidency University (8857617-8) or BIAM (9348395/202,/705,8317352).

6 killed in road crashes

force men, were killed and 26 others injured in separate road accidents in Tangail, Khulna and Gaibandha A week-long film festival, organised vesterday by Jahangirnagar Students Film Our Correspondent from Tangail Society (JSFS), begins on the

> of them critically, in a road accident at Karatipara in Tangail yesterday. The victims were identified as Mohammad Sahaful, 35, a sergeant of Bangladesh Air Force, died on the spot and Tuhin Haidar, 40, a lascar of Bangladesh Air Force succumbed to

reports: Two Air Force men were

killed and 17 others were injured, two

Bangladesh Economic Association President Dr Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad addresses a seminar on 'Haor

Management in the north-eastern part of Bangladesh' at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. On his right is

Bapa Executive Member Khandker Bazlul Haque and on his left are engineer M Inamul Haque and Bapa Joint

At least six people, including two air

Secretary Mihir Biswas. Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) and Nagorik Sanghati jointly organised the seminar.

General Hospital. Police said the accident took place when a Dhaka bound truck of Bangladesh Air Force from Bogra collided head-on with a Bogra bound passenger bus from Dhaka at Karatipara area under Sadar upazila.

his injuries on the way to Tangail

the Tangail General Hospital. Critically injured Shariful, 30, and Shahinul, 35, were sent to the Dhaka Combined Military Hospital.

Of the injured, 12 were admitted to

Tangail Sadar police recovered the bodies and sent them to morgue for autopsy. Staff Correspondent from Khulna says: Two people were killed and

two trucks collided head-on at Khajura under Rupsha upazila in Khulna early morning yesterday.

The dead were identified as Tajmahal Ali, 32, driver of the truck laden with shrimp and Sohel, 22,

the three injured, Shrimp trader Mosharraf Hossain and Mohammad Musa were rushed to the hospital in critical condition. Police recovered a cell phone and Tk 5,000 from the place of occurrence.

Our Correspondent from

Gaibandha adds: Two people, includ-

ing one woman, were killed and four

others injured seriously when a

helper of the truck laden with sand. Of

speeding truck hit a rickshaw van near Gobindaganj pourashava early nours of yesterday. Police said the rickshaw van skidded off the road and fell into a roadside ditch as the truck hit it carrying six passengers on Rangpur-

Bogra highway at Boalia Cross Road

near Gobindaganj Pourashava.

Jesmin Akhter, 22, died on the spot and van driver Tuku, 35, succumbed to her injuries Gobindaganj Health Complex. Meanwhile, a Gaibandha bound

cement-laden truck skidded off the road and fell into a roadside ditch after the driver lost his control over the wheel near Palli Biddut Samity office on Gaibandha-Palashbari road

three others severely injured when Two people were injured seriously in the accident. Police rushed the injured Ershadul, 50, and Sultan, 30, to Gaibandha Sadar Hospital. The truck driver, however, managed to escape