Sealed city turns

police following commands of government top shots attacked their peaceful programme without any provocation. The police, on the other hand, said they went on action only when opposition workers broke the barricades violating the ban and pelted them with brickbats.

The 14-party opposition line-up announced to stage the two-hour sit-in from 11:00am to press home caretaker government system, the Election Commission and electoral laws, and to protest the Kansat killings, power crisis and price spiral of essential commodities. The opposition camp will also

observe a dawn-to-dusk countrywide hartal today to protest the deaths of at least 17 villagers in police atrocities at Kansat in

SECURITY PREPARATIONS On the eve of the opposition programme, the police on Tuesday night went on a blanket-arrest drive

The lockups in the city police stations were reportedly sardinepacked with opposition activists and apolitical arrestees yesterday, sources said. On Monday, Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) termed the opposition

programme a "security threat" to the PMO and announced the imposition of section 144, which bans every kind of gathering, in a vast area around the PMO for 24 hours from The roads the police sealed off

from early morning yesterday include Shahbag Řoundabouť-Farmgate-Mohakhali Flyover, Moghbazar-Bangla Motors-Hatirpool, Shvamoli-Asad Gate-Panthapath, Dhanmondi Road 27 and Russell Square, and Rokeya

Sarani-Bijoy Sarani.
CLASHES AT BANGLA MOTORS Bangla Motors crossroads and the surrounding area including Eskaton Road, Maymensingh Link Road, Paribagh and Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue turned into a battlefield as an AL procession tried to breach a police barricade at about 11:50am.

AL Presidium Member Motia Chowdhury led the break-through attack on the barricade. In retaliation, riot police fired teargas shells and rubber bullets at the opposition men. Police and pickets also pelted each other with brickbats, and chased and counter-chased for about an hour.

The demonstrators burnt some 15 to 20 tyres and two rickshaws in this area reportedly to minimise the affects of teargas. They also set fire to a microbus of Channel S, a private satellite TV channel.

The clash left Saber Hossain Chowdhury and Asaduzzaman Nur injured, among others.

Police arrested about 20 opposition men in this area AL leader HBM Igbal alleged

some ruling BNP cadres threw at least 10 crude bombs on them near Eskaton Road

Police exercised maximum tolerance, DMP Deputy Commissioner (South) Mazharul Hoque told The Daily Star after the skirmishing. "We dispersed the opposition workers only when they broke the police barricade and hurled brickbats on us, violating the

On the other hand. Saber claimed, "Police baton-charged us indiscriminately, and lobbed teargas shells and fired gunshots on our leaders and workers, when we were trying to make them understand that this is a peaceful sit-in programme.'

ers led by 14-pary leaders started to gather near Russell Square, at Sobhanbagh and in Dhanmondi Road 27 in small processions since

CLASHES IN DHANMONDI

They held a rally near Rapa Plaza in Mirpur Road. The clashes started after police

had lobbed teargas shells at the rally and dispersed the crowd at around 12:20pm. The opposition demonstrators counter-attacked by throwing brick-

bats at police from the lanes and bylanes in the area from Russell Square to Dhanmondi Road 27 They damaged a truck of Dhaka City Corporation and a jeep of a

donor agency, as well as broke windowpanes of nearby markets. Police lobbed more than 100

teargas shells to disperse the demonstrators during the hour-long scuffle. There was no report of any

Before the clash, the demonstrators gave chase to the flag-carrying of Chief Whip Khandoker Delwar Hossain, who was passing

HOUSE OF BNP MP VANDALISED

During the clash in Dhanmondi, a group of angry opposition men broke into the house of BNP lawmaker Harun Ur Rashid Khan Monno, a former minister without portfolio, in Dhanmondi Road 27.

They broke the doors of his office and drawing room, and the windshields of two cars, creating panic among the inmates. At that point three police constables quarding the house fired four shots from inside the house and drove the mob away from the house. No body was

MOHAKHALI, PMOAREAS

Police put up barricades on Mohakhali fly-over, at Mohakhali Gulshan crossroads, Nabisco crossroads. They also had diverted many buses at Kuril crossroads on Airport Road to Badda since early morning forcing thousands of people to walk to reach their destinations.

About a thousand activists of the 14-party alliance held a peaceful rally at the eastern side of Mohakhali rail crossing. Opposition leaders Tofail Ahmed, Kazi Zafrullah MP, Rashed Khan Menon, Hasanul Hag Inu, Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim Advocate Sahara Khatun, and AKM Rahmat Ullah addressed the meet-

After the end of the rally at about 12:45pm, a few opposition men threw brickbats at police, who drove them away by charging baton.
The law enforcers did not

remove the barricade on the fly-over During scheduled time of the sit-

programme, the road in front of the PMO was literally deserted.

Except a pair of policemen, no other law enforcer was seen deployed there, although thousands were guarding the barricades set far away from the PMO.

SC Bar protests

FROM PAGE 16 the constitutional process and exist ing laws, since the common people

are not involved in the enactment of the law." he added. The cabinet Monday approved the contempt of court law providing six months' imprisonment or a fine of Tk 5.000 or both as the maximum penalty for contempt of court. Under the existing law of 1926, the highest penalty for this act is six months' mprisonment or a fine of Tk 2000 or

of court act has been developed on the light of some particular judgments in the countries where common laws are practised. "This law should have been enacted carefully incorporating the

Barrister Amir said the contempt

constitutional and fundamental rights of the people for freedom of expres-

In a major report 12 years ago, Human Rights Watch said up to 3,000 organs, mainly kidneys and corneas, were being taken from executed prisoners every year, with government officials reportedly enjoying priority for operations. Last month Beijing announced it

would ban the growing trade in human organs, amid domestic pressure to regulate the chaotic industry and reports that Japanese and Malaysians had died from botched transplants. Its health ministry issued regula-

tions to ao into effect on July 1 banning the purchase and sale of organs, while also introducing a set of medical standards for trans-In a phone interview with AFP,

Stephen Wigmore, chairman of the British Transplantation Society's ethics committee, said the group decided to take a stand in light of the number of Britons enquiring about transplants in China.

"Increasingly, patients from the UK are looking towards China as a source of potential organs for transplants," he said. "We wanted to make both the

medical profession and patients aware in the UK that there are some moral and ethnical dilemmas which may not be evident" from websites which offer to help arrange transplants in China. One such website.

www.en.zoukiishoku.com. offers

kidney transplants for 62,000 dollars (50,000 euros) and heart transplants for up to 160,000 dollars. It does not say where the organs come from. Wigmore recalled that, typically, a liver must be transplanted within

kidnev in 24 to 36 hours. "It almost sounds as though the timing of an execution is at the convenience of the timing of a transplant," he said.

12 hours of a donor's death, and a

Jamaat men

are among the injured who were admitted to Shyamnagar Upazila Hospital and private clinics, said Ashwini Munda, a leader of the community.

Tarak Munda and Kamruzzaman submitted separate FIRs (first information report). Sub-Inspector Nuruzzaman of Shyamnagar Police

McClellan

But now, the job of deputy chief of staff for policy is being given to Joel

The move signals a broad effort to rearrange and reinvigorate Bush's staff by new chief of staff Joshua Bolten, Bolten moved into his position last week: Kaplan was his No. 2 person at the Office of

Management and Budget. At least for the time being, the promotion of Kaplan would leave Bush with three deputy chiefs of staff: Rove, Kaplan and Joe Hagin, who oversees administrative matters, intelligence and other national security issues.

Appearing with Bush on the South Lawn, McClellan, who has parried especially fiercely with reporters on Iraq and on intelligence issues, told Bush: "I have given it my all sir and I have given you my all sir. and I will continue to do so as we transition to a new press secretary." Bush said McClellan had "a

challenging assignment. "I thought he handled his assignment with class, integrity," the

president said. "It's going to be hard to replace Scott, but nevertheless he made the decision and I accepted it. One of these days, he and I are going to be rocking in chairs in Texas and talking about the good old days." McClellan is expected to remain

n his job until a successor is named. Among those under consideration are Tony Snow, a former White House speechwriter under the first President Bush, former Pentagon spokeswoman Victoria Clarke and Dan Senor, a former coalition spokesman after the invasion of Iraq, according to Republican

McClellan was named press secretary in June 2003.

Road crashes Ansar personnel in the capital to FROM PAGE 1

condition deteriorated.

The injured, including a woman were admitted to Gazipur Sadar Hospital. Seven of them, were later shifted to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH) as their

The bodies were sent to Gazipur Sadar Hospital morque for autopsy. Our Staff Correspondent adds: A mother and her four-vear-old girl child were killed in a road accident at Dhaka-Chittagong Highway yester-

day triggering protest in the area. A speeding bus ran over them at Shanir Akhra temple at Jatrabari when they were crossing the road.

Protest spread across the area ust after the accident as mob had blocked the Highway for an hour and broke glasses of seven buses. Shyampur Police Station

arrested the bus driver Kabir Hossain and seized the bus. Quoting the bus driver, police

sources said, when he was taking turn to Jatrabari to Donia College road the woman along with her baby

was injured and died. The bodies were sent to Mitford Hospital morgue. Nobody came to identify the bodies till filing this report last evening.

BTTB declining

the decision on the cable expansion is being finalised

present bandwidth allocation in the submarine cable is good enough. The cable system will give the country a data transfer capacity of be 68 times the present capacity. This capacity is considered as adequate for the next 10 years while the cable has a life of 15 years. Bangladesh is not in a position to spend any additional money for this project, he added. Besides, only three of the 16

consortium members -- Bharti, Singtel and VSNL-- are involved with the expansion. Except Saudi Telecom, the others are also not considering the proposal for expansion, the BTTB official said.

But another BTTB official termed these arguments a whitewash. "It is true that for Bangladesh's own use, it has more capacity than it needs. But by participating in the upgrade. said.

The BTTB will bear a minimum operating cost of \$13.69 million per vear for the cable system. The expansion could have eased its burden through additional revenue. the official added.

Industry insiders pointed out that for an investment of only \$4.4 million, the return is so enormous that an European telecommunications company had offered the BTTB the fund as loan, saving that BTTB should go for it as it can have return on this investment almost instantly. But the BTTB had declined

"Firstly, the per MIU km cost of BTTB will drastically fall if it participates in the expansion," said one industry insider.

local purpose, it can sell or lease out the expanded kilometres to international communication companies. It is a hot deal. Bharti, Singtel and VSNL are expanding the cable for small amounts of money to lower their business cost and eat up any international cable business prospect for Bangladesh.

He went on, "Besides, in this consortium of 16 members, only Bangladesh does not have any other cable system connecting the information superhighway. All others have more than one cable system. So, if others decline this expansion offer, it does not justify Bangladesh's refusal."

It is the same kind of stubbornness of Bangladesh that deprived it of getting connected with another submarine cable almost free of cost in the early nineties, another industry insider mentioned. The cost of expansion would be

low because the basic cable system is already in place. Consequently, Singtel, Bharti and VSNL, which now have 8.60.438 MIU Km each. will increase their capacity to 1,391,718 MIU Km each. The current cable system was

commissioned in October 2005, where Bangladesh's capital investment was \$ 35 million paid to the Cable Consortium. In addition. Landing Station in Cox's Bazar Cost \$4.8 million, other capital cost and interest expenses were \$5.2 million and some other cost amounted to \$2 million, raising the total cost to \$47 million.

Soon after the main trunk line was commissioned, Bharti, Singtel and VSNL forwarded a resolution to the consortium proposing an expansion of the cable system. As per rules adopted by the consortium, if members wish to upgrade the system, they can do so as long as others do not have to make any fresh investment and others are given some additional capacity without extra cost.

As per rules of the consortium. the BTTB was also offered to participate in the upgrade. But the BTTB made an internal report saying it need not participate because it has more capacity than it can use.

The BTTB's non-participation is practically serving the purposes of Singtel, Bharti and VSNL who, by not having much stakeholders in the expansion, will have monopoly in the cable market in which smaller consortium members like the BTTB will have no power to sell their capacity in the open market, said an

EC ill-equipped

elections freely and fairly in future," the former CEC had told journalists before making a courtesy call

with the president Referring to the proposals both the election commissioners said there are no moves of the EC to

"The EC does not have adequate time to complete all the preparatory tasks including the voter list before the next parliamentary election," Munsef Ali said. He however coniessed some important tasks nave been delayed due to rift within the He suggested increasing the

election expenditure ceiling from Tk.5 lakh. "The existing expenditure ceiling is not realistic and it should be increased," he said. Mohammad Ali said increasing

the expenditure ceiling would not solve the problem. "Usage of black money in the election must be stopped," he said.

Munsef Ali suggested introducing a tougher provision to prevent the habitual loan defaulters from contesting in the parliamentary elections About the political party registra-

tion system with the EC, introduced before the last parliamentary elections. Munsef Ali said the system should be made mandatory. Mohammad Ali said they felt

embarrassed at the end of their tenure due to the reported irregularities in the EC secretariat. But the secretariat has not protested against the news published in different notional dailies about financial irregularities and the shady activities regarding the preparation of the voter list. Munsef Ali said the EC should

have initiated steps for introducing electronic voting system and voter identity cards in phases.

LAST WORKING DAY IN OFFICE

Munsef Ali and Mohammad Ali, who opposed the preparation of the controversial fresh voter list decided unilaterally by CEC MA Aziz, failed in there attempts to make a courtesy call to the president and the CEC on their last day at the office. Munsef Ali did manage to get an

appointment with President lajuddin

City cringes

the sit-in programme. "I came to this bank two hours back but could not get out as police barred me getting out on road," said a man at Bangla The law enforcers even did not

allow people to cross the roads adjoining the Bangla Motor crossing during the programme. Hundreds were seen walking idly in front of Eastern Plaza in scorching sun at

cancelled the appointment and the officials at the Bangabhaban informed the election commissioner that the time would be given to him Mohammad Ali also sent a letter to the Bangabhaban expressing his

Mohammad Ali said the president could not give time to them. "The president may be busy with

Questions have been raised whether the president avoided the courtesy call with the two election commissioners as they have been strongly opposing the preparation of the fresh voter list, which the government had favoured. Munsef Ali however brushed aside the ques-

the CEC over telephone. They called the CEC to inform him that they want to meet him but the CEC did not pick up the receiver.

a meeting at his office with the two other election commissioners Justice Mahfuzur Rahman and SM Zakaria who had been supporting the CEC since they joined in last January

The EC secretariat did not arrange any formal farewell to Munsef Ali and Mohammad Ali who have been on the sidelines for the last seven months due to their opposition to prepare the fresh voter

Munsef Ali however wrote a letter to the EC secretary thanking all the officials at the secretariat for their

walked Mohammad Ali to his car and embraced him while Munsef left the EC premises at 4:00pm.

Jamaat leader

Majid had hosted several JMB regional meetings in his home and in his bookstall at Dinajpur station road in the past. Bakul was an active August 17 bombing in Dinajpur.

Majid is also the president of the editorial board of the Weekly Ajker Journalists Association (BSJA) Dinaipur, which is published locally. Chittagong chapter jointly organised the rally at CPC auditorium He was taken to Rab's temporary

office at Shapla Square in Rangpur and interrogated. Rab had arrested Majid once earlier from a Rokon conference in Dinajpur last October in suspicion of

Outage

FROM PAGE 1

trend in the past few years with the GDP (gross domestic product) growing at about six per cent, the industry growing up at eight per cent and export growing at over 19 per-

The chamber said interest rate in Bangladesh higher compared to its neighbours. "Our interest rates are in 12 percent to 15 percent against six to seven percent in India, five percent in Pakistan and two point seven per cent in Sri Lanka". "Our export credit is also much

higher around seven to ten percent which is more than twice the rate prevailing in India and Pakistan," said an MCCI statement on the talks. The government must immedi-

ately put a limit on borrowing from the banking sector, other wise, liquidity crisis in the nationalised banks as well as over all availability of credit for industry and other sector will pose a serious threat, the delegation said. It observed that the increase in

government borrowing from the banking sector is a threat to industrial and other sectors as the borrowing already increased by 23.6 percent compared to that during the corresponding period last year. The net borrowing from the banking sector reached Tk 2,460 crore till April 13 this year against Tk 1,997 crore last

The MCC urged the government to continue the tax holiday, saying that the industrialisation programme would be jeopardised if it is with-

Expressing concern over the worsening power supply, the chamber body said the situation has become precarious particularly in the industrial areas around Dhaka city. The energy ministry should take comprehensive measures to increase power generation instead of

only resorting to load-shedding. Load-shedding without prior information must be avoided. It causes immense loss of man hour

and loss of production, it said. According to the MCCI, the major factors which contributed to price increase are budget deficits, supply shocks, production losses, decline in productivity, frequent increase in the prices of fuel, oil, power and gas, devaluation of currency and toll

"It was always seen that when the government withdrew the monetary policy support to industry, its growth slowed down," the business body pointed out. The prime minister gave a patient

hearing to the business leaders and

assured them of doing everything to

collection on supply routes.

facilitate trade and economic activities in the country, meeting sources Khalda Zia said the present government is business friendly, and stressed continuity of it for uninterrupted development of the country. She also said her government implemented one after another its

election pledges, including improve-

ment of law and order, combating

terrorism and improving people's

socio-economic condition. The delegation included MCCI Vice President A K M Rafigul Islam. Secretary General C K Hyder and executive members M Shamsul Alam, Imtiyaz Hossain, Nurul Islam, Mahbub Zamil, Obaidur Rhaman Khan, Syed Nasim Manjur and Feroz

Journalists

FROM PAGE 1

compensation to the injured journalists and judicial investigation into the incident were met.

Chaired by SSKOP Co-convenor Fazle Imam, the meeting was addressed, among others, by President of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) labal Sobhan Chowdhury, Member-Secretary of SSKOP Ruhul Amin Gazi, joint-member secretaries Motiur Rahman Talukder and Manjurul Ahsan Bulbul, members Abul Hashem, Khairul Islam, Altaf Mahmud. Elahi Newaz Khan. Omar Faruk and Sardar Farid.

Leaders of Photoiournalists Association, Sports Journalists Association and Dhaka Reporters' Unity were present at the meeting.

The SSKOP leaders urged the government to meet their demands by April 22. Otherwise, they threatened to announce a tough programme from the rally

sports and information ministries to take joint initiatives to resolve the crises immediately. Our staff correspondent from Chittagong reported that the jour-

nalist here yesterday observed a

three-hour token strike from

They also requested the home.

11:00am protesting Sunday's police action. They also announced a fresh programme at a rally. Chittagong Union of Journalists (CUJ) Chittagong Metropolitan Union of Journalists (CMUJ), Chittagong Press Club (CPC), Chittagong Photo Journalists Association (CPJA) and Bangladesh Sports

The programme includes token hunger strike by photojournalists on Chittagong Press Club premise at 11:00am today, view exchange meetings with all the five agitating organisations of Chittagong journalists tomorrow, human chain, protest rally and work abstention from 11:00am to 2:00pm on April 22, and three-hour hunger strike at Chittagong Press Club on April 24.

Developing countries

Pakistan and Sri Lanka and to 30 percent in Bhutan, Bangladesh,

In the second phase, from January 2008 to December 31, 2009, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka are supposed to reduce their tariffs within zero to five percent for products from those member countries. which are among the least developed countries (LDCs).

Earlier, the member states agreed that the first round of tariff reduction will take place in July 2006. The CoE meeting also decided

that all LDCs have to reduce their import tariffs to 30 percent within the next two years. Meeting sources said as an LDC, Bangladesh might benefit by increasing its export volume to

Safta's developing countries.

Bangladesh has no obligation to

reduce its tariff line because it is already below 30 percent. "As per the Safta agreement developing countries have to reduce their tariff lines within the next three years. But there was no specific date n the agreement, so we reached a consensus on by what date the developing and LDC countries will reduce their tariff lines," AKM Fazlur Rahman, deputy secretary to the commerce ministry of Bangladesh,

He however did not say whether there were specific dates fixed for the second and the third years' tariff reduction schedule for the developng countries. Yesterdays CoE meeting dis-

said after the meeting.

cussed the rules of procedure for Safta CoE, rules of procedure for SMC. trade liberalisation programme and procedures for notifying WTO (World Trade Organisation) about Safta. The meeting also reviewed the list of sensitive products. Fazlur said only tariff reduction is not enough for full implementation

of Safta, all member countries have

to remove their non-tariff and para-

the member countries will examine CoE's recommendations and the sub-committee will meet in October for dispute settlements. The recommendations of the CoE meeting will be placed at the Safta Ministerial Council (SMC)

Safta agreement implementation.

HC asks govt

and deputy commissioner (port)

A HC division bench issued the rule following a writ petition on a public interest litigation filed by

The petition said the law enforcers' attack on journalists in Chittagong was barbaric and added that the respondents should be

Fowzia Karim Firose moved for the

The role of the police should be to ensure protection of the people and they should not be used to serve the purpose of any vested

quarter, the petition noted. The April 16 incident shows the state has failed to ensure protection and security of its citizens as spelled

Curfew in Kathmandu

The rally in defiance of a ban on

tests," he charged.

tariff barriers also.

public meetings would mark the start of the third week of a general strike that has crippled Nepal. "We knew that it was going to be

violent," government spokesman

and minister of communication and

nformation Shrish Shamsher Rana said of the planned protest. "We have discovered a huge cache of explosives and the Maoists were planning to use human shields to create violence. They have been forcing people to join in the pro-

Maoist rebels who launched an insurgency 10 years ago demanding a people's republic have joined a loose alliance with oppsition parties against King Gyanendra.

However Nepali Congress party secretary Shobhakar Parajuli vowed the rally would take place. "The state has taken every step to repress our movement," he told

AFP. "On Thursday we will not

remain silent, we will defy the curfew

order and stage the demonstration as scheduled." The latest killings raised the death toll among protesters to 10 during a fortnight of general strikes and pro-democracy rallies. They came as Indian envoys arrived with a crisis message for the embattled

King Gyanendra. "Four demonstrators were killed and dozens of others were injured when soldiers and armed policemen opened fire indiscriminately in Chandragadhi this afternoon," Arjun Basnet, a human rights activist, told

Local iournalists at the scene

also said they saw at least four people killed on the spot during clashes at the town in far eastern

people tried to enter the town centre in defiance of a ban on public meetings, the witnesses said.

Indian special envoy Karan

Thursday in the capital -- and for a diplomatic showdown between mighty republican neighbour India and the absolute monarch in Nepal. However, a court did release the

since January, first under house arrest and then in a police cell. Wednesday, the 14th day of the strike, also saw thousands of people defy a protest ban to rally on the edge of Kathmandu chanting "Down

In Pokhara, a western tourist town, security forces detained at

"I wish for peace in Nepal and I am optimistic," special envoy Singh

Iran crisis deepens

international demands, he told French radio. Western powers accuse Iran of

trying to build an atomic bomb under

cover of a civilian nuclear power programme. Washington says that UN sanctions and even a military assault cannot be ruled out to force Tehran to halt uranium enrichment -- activity

partner in the civilian nuclear sphere and has always favoured a negotiated settlement under which the Islamic republic could retain a civilian capacity. China, another important economic player in Iran, also favours a softer approach.

time highs and gold values to within sight of a 25-year high. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov confirmed that talks Tuesday between the permanent five members of the UN Security Council --

Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States -- plus Germany had not made any ground. "There was no decision and no concluding document, but we were not aiming for that," Lavrov told journalists, stressing there was

ElBaradei, will not present a key report on Iran to the UN Security Council until the end of April.

However, Washington appears to be pushing more aggressively for an end game to the Iranian nuclear crisis, with President George W. Bush reviving the spectre of war Tuesday. "All options are on the table," he said.

This week Bush meets with

Chinese leader Hu Jintao in

Washington. He will also meet with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, prompting speculation on discussions over the potential use of Azeri territory for US military operations against neighbouring Iran. Straw played down the possibility of a US military operation,

explaining on BBC radio that Bush's stand merely reflected a "difference of use of words." But Alexei Malashenko, an analyst at the Moscow Carnegie think tank, said that Russia and China would eventually be dragged

into supporting the more hawkish

"I don't think there's a real division, just that Moscow wants to play the mediator and will keep on playing. Only, Iran won't give them what they want," he told AFP. "If there is no choice," Russia will back the United States, he said. "It will be

The influential Moscow newspaper Kommersant backed up this view, saying that the talks held in Moscow were "like a consultation with a doctor who knows the patient is going to die sooner or later."

this -- even sanctions.'

obliged to finish the business it has begun -- the reconstruction of the larger Middle East."

were arrested and over 200 including Al leaders Motia Chowdhury, Saber Hossain Chowdhury, Mohammad Nasim, Asaduzzamar Noor, Nurul Islam, Shirin Akther, Bahauddin Nasim, Pankaj Debnath,

mayhem, he said

FROM PAGE 16

blame to the opposition.

There is no way but to topple down the alliance government to get rid of its repression, torture and misrule, Razzak said. Fourteen-party leaders Tofail Ahmed, Obaidul Quader, Dilip Barua,

newly elected BCL President

Mahmud Hasan Ripon and General

Secretary Mahfuzul Haider Roton,

were injured during yesterday's

ment agents who set fire to a vehicle

of Channel S are trying to pass the

The AL leader said the govern-

Saifuddin Ahmed, Mofazzel Hossain Chowdhury Maya, Abdus Samad, Zafor Sazzad, Nurul Islam, among Dhaka to start

positive results through increasing

trade and commerce which encour-

ages the country to sign FTA with

other countries. Humayun said Pakistan expects the negotiations will end by July this year and the CoE will finalize a date for FTA signing. He said Pakistan has launched

negotiation to sign an FTA with Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore and China. The existing trade between the countries is heavily in favour of Pakistan as Bangladesh export products to Pakistan is worth \$ 63.12 million while import is worth

Opposition hartal

others, attended the meeting. Member Abdur Razzak, who Communist Party of Bangladesh chaired the meeting, said, adding also enforces a countrywide shutthat the government has deprived them of the democratic rights by down today demanding punishment to the perpetrators of Kansat killimposing ban on rallies and procesings, people responsible for attack on journalists in Chittagong, and Over 300 opposition workers protesting power, fertiliser, gas and

day essentials.

cles, drug stores, garbage carrying vehicles and other emergency vehicles will remain outside the purview of today's 6:00am to 6:00pm shutdown. The government will deploy around 7,000 police, BDR, Rab and

water crisis and price hike of every-

Ambulances, newspaper vehi-

maintain law and order.

Dhaka asks FROM PAGE 1 agreements for various technical assistance projects.

Foreign Minister Wu Daweei led the Chinese side at the talks. The meeting reviewed the progress in bilateral relations, especially connection with implementation of the decisions taken and agree-

ments signed last year.

oriented actions.

Foreign Secretary Hemayetuddin

leading the Bangladesh delega-

tion at the consultation. Vice

Both sides expressed satisfaction at the initiatives taken to operationalise the agreements in different sectors, including agricule, water resources and tourism. During the talks, the two countries discussed new areas of coop-

eration, agreed to deepen bilateral

cooperation and take result-

Foreign Secretary Hemayetuddin briefed his Chinese counterpart on the progress in formulating guidelines for observer status conferred on China and Japan in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc).

Britons warned

attending a meeting of the consortium members in New Delhi in which

A top BTTB official said the offer is being declined because the 10 gigabyte per second, which will

Bangladesh could have owned valuable capacity in international cable with large market value," he

"BTTB does not need to use it for

Ahmed on April 16 but the president

willingness to meet with the presistate affairs."

The two election commissioners also failed to meet CEC MA Aziz as they could not communicate with

The CEC, at that moment, was in

cooperation during his tenure. Munsef Ali, around 1:25pm

JMB member and carried out Rab arrested Majid from his bookstall last Sunday afternoon.

his involvement with August 17 bomb blasts. Rab sources said Majid was released on a guarantee from one Aftab Uddin Mollah

The CoE on the first day of its meeting had decided to form a subcommittee for non-tariff barrier Nepal and the Maldives.

dispute settlements, which was also discussed yesterday. About the sub-committee to settle non-tariff barrier disputes. Fazlur said the national boards of revenue and finance ministries of

meeting scheduled to be held today in Dhaka. SMC comprises commerce or trade ministers of the member states and it is the highest decision making body regarding

Chittagong and Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP). Salma Ali of Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association (BNWLA) on Tuesday. Advocate

made accountable for their actions.

out by the constitution, the petition

Jhapa district, close to the border with India. Firing began after thousands of

Singh arrived in Kathmandu with the scene set for more street battles on

leader of the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) and another veteran politician on Wednesday General secretary Madhav Kumar Nepal, a key figure in

Nepalese politics, had been held

with the monarchy," an AFP reporter

least 250 teachers among hundreds of protesters who defied curfew orders, a witness said.

told reporters at Kathmandu airport.

that Tehran says is aimed only at the civilian sector. However, Russia is Iran's main

The row and Iran's defiant stand have helped drive oil prices to all-

agreement on the need for Iran to stop enriching uranium. Lavrov said no immediate decisions were possible because the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Mohamed

British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw also sought to paper over diplomatic cracks, saying there was "an international community more united in its concern to ensure full compliance by the Iranians."

"The United States is simply

very painful and Russia utterly

opposes this, but they will support

Tuesday midnight.