

meeting...I will not attend the

meeting though due to illness." He

is one of the most senior BNP lead-

ers, but most committee members

do not know him. Interestingly, he

asked this correspondence when

The last NEC meeting held in

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

1993 formed a committee of 87

officials and 84 members. A few

the meeting will take place.



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DHAKA MONDAY AUGUST 14, 2006

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met to give its verdict on the UN

ceasefire resolution, thousands of

Israeli troops pressed on with a

bloody ground offensive to rout

Hezbollah from a large swathe of

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BDR, BSF agree to pull out troops along Zakiganj border

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and Indian Border Security Force (BSF) yesterday decided to withdraw within 5:00pm today the troops they had deployed along the border during the recent firefight at Zakiganjin Sylhet.

BDR officials said the decision came at a flag meeting held at SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Two gunned down by BSF

STAR REPORT

The Border Security Force (BSF) of India gunned down two Bangladeshi nationals in the last two days in bordering areas of Dinajpur and Thakurgaon. In Dinajpur, BSF of Mallikpur

under 116 BSF battalion shot at least three bullets at one Wahab Ali in Bangladesh territory near main pillar 319 and sub-pillar 3/4 at Kamdevpur village under Biral SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Poet Shamsur Rahman's condition

turns critical STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Poet Shamsur Rahman lapsed into a very critical condition yesterday

As his heart was having trouble functioning, he was put on a ventilator at around 3:00pm, said the doctors at Bangabandhu Sheikh SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

BNP insiders confused

over party positions

Executive body to hold meeting after 13yrs on Aug 26; some members are not aware of it

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN

Many members of the ruling BNP's National Executive Committee (NEC) have no idea about their colleagues, even the total number of NEC members, while many party leaders and workers also do

A few NEC members are still confused about their position in the committee since the party chairperson has often made letter from the party about the changes in the committee over the last 12 years through press releases instead of holding any conference.

The NEC is going to hold its meeting on August 26 after about 13 years of the last meeting and a few NEC members expressed their surprise, saying they do not know anything about it.

NEC Vice-President Emran Ali Sarkar said, "I have not yet got any

Dhaka protests Indian HC's statement

BORDER FIRING

against BDR UNB, Dhaka

Dhaka yesterday protested the Indian High Commission's statement accusing Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) of 'opening unprovoked fire' on Border Security Force (BSF) on Zakiganj border a few days back.

A foreign ministry spokesman termed the statement false, fabricated and unsubstantiated. "We are utterly surprised that

the press release of the Indian High Commission has not only distorted the facts on the ground but has also SEE PAGE 15 COL 3 land in southern Lebanon.

31 Israeli soldiers, 11 Lebanese civilians killed as fighting rages

Israel wreaks havoc on

Annan said Lebanese Prime Israel carried out waves of deadly Minister Fuad Siniora and Israeli bombing raids on Lebanon yester-Prime Minister Ehud Olmert had day, flattening homes, bridges and agreed that a cessation of hostilisetting petrol stations ablaze even ties will enter into force at 0500 after UN chief Kofi Annan said a GMT on Monday, following a UN Security Council resolution ceasefire in the devastating monthold war would take effect today. adopted unanimously on Friday And as the Israeli government after protracted diplomatic wran-

eve of UN truce

"Preferably, the fighting should stop now to respect the spirit and intent of the Council decision, the object of which was to save civilian

lives, to spare the pain and suffering that the civilians on both sides are living through," Annan said.

The Lebanese government on Saturday approved the Resolution 1701 -- albeit with reservations -while Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah said his Shia Muslim movement would abide by an agreed ceasefire but also vowed to continue fighting as long as Israeli troops remained on Lebanese soil.

The worst cross-border conflict in a quarter century has killed more

New survey shows fast poverty reduction

Experts doubt accuracy

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

A draft report of Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) yesterday claimed poverty reduction in the country by 1.9 percentage point a year in the last five years, which has been questioned by economists.

The Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) prepared the survey report and placed it at a high level meeting between the planning ministry officials and representatives of donor agencies in Dhaka. The report shows decline of poverty from 49.8 percent in 2000 to 40 percent in 2005.

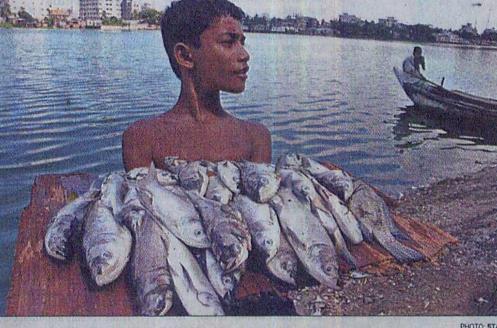
Research Director of the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) Dr

Zaid Bakht expressed reservation about the figure of yearly poverty reduction as stated in the report.

"We witnessed poverty reduction of one percentage point a year from 1991 to 2000 against an average GDP growth of five percent," he said adding, "But the latest survey shows that the poverty reduction rate almost doubled whereas the GDP growth did not increase significantly in the last five years."

Besides, population growth did not reduce in the last five years, in such a situation the survey report raises questions, he said.

High officials of the planning ministry yesterday described the government's success in poverty reduction to representatives of the SEE PAGE 15 COL 3



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A street urchin takes away the fish that died in Gulshan Lake in the capital yesterday. A huge number of fish died in the lake yesterday apparently from water pollution.

EC berates some poll observers

Accuses them of not following policy, guideline

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Commission (EC) Secretariat yesterday slammed some of the election observers for not following properly the policy and guidelines on polls observation.

"There are some organisations who engage school and college students to observe elections. Some of them don't even submit observation reports to the Election Commission. Sometimes they issue statements that could unbalance the situation during the election time," Abdur Rashid Sarkar,

the EC secretary, told reporters He, however, did not name any

of the election observers' bodies. "It's my observations in general,"

In accordance with the policy and guidelines formulated by the EC for election observers no one can be appointed an observer unless they are eligible for contesting an election and their age will be minimum 25 years.

About the alliance of 35 nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) launching a platform

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3



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