Shamsur Rahman

'60s of the last century.

spent his entire life here.

own tradition.

Rahman was the most active in this

Actually, the new capital city of

Dhaka gave birth to Rahman, and he is

the poet of Dhaka in a true sense.

Probably, he is the only successful

poet in modern Bangla literature who

was born and brought up in Dhaka and

much. He wrote memories of his

childhood in a book titled "Smritir

Shahar (the reminiscent city), which is

considered as a classic document of

career, he also wrote five novels, a

number of short stories, many patriotic

In his over-half-a-century literary

The poet was deeply rooted in his

He successfully reflected the

colloquial language of Dhaka in his

works, especially in the poetry. His

poem "Ei Matowala Rait" (this drunken

night) is full of idioms and dialect of the

Dhakaites. Rahman prominently used

Old Dhaka's dialect, which is a mix-up

resemblance also widely figure in his

Old Dhaka, his use of those foreign

words never seems irrational. Rather,

Rahman's use of Urdu and Persian

words adds an extra favour and a new

taste in Bangla poetry. Through this,

he virtually enriched Bangla language.

could not refrain himself from the

political development of the then East

Pakistan leading ultimately to the

emergence of Bangladesh. Although

he was never active in politics, he

composed a number of political

poems, which were particularly

devoted to the country's struggle for

One of his most popular poems in

this group is "Asader Shirt" (Asad's

shirt) where the poet gives an emo-

tional description of the death of a

young demonstrator, who was brutally

killed in police firing at a protest rally

der, like flaming clouds at sun-

set/Asad's shirt flutters/In the gusty

wind, in the limitless blue./To the

brother's spotless shirt/His sister had

sown/With the fine gold and thread/Of

her heart's desire/Button which shone

like stars/How often had his ageing

mother/With such tender care/Hung

that shirt out to dry/In her sunny court-

poem translated by Syed Najmuddin

Hashim helped spread the anger

quickly among the people against the

Pakistani autocratic regime. Rahman

was always vocal against the tyranni-

cal rule and suppression of the people

After the independence of

Bangladesh, Rahman emerged as the

most powerful poet of the country,

reflecting the true spirit of independ-

ence and the Liberation War. He

successfully used the terms and

poems which got immense popularity

among the mass people and were

Rahman composed a number of

Śwadhinata Tumi" (To

As he writes in the poem: "Inde-

are/Like waving of long curling hair of

Kazi Nazrul/Great man, vibrating with

during the struggle against the auto-

cratic rule of HM Ershad. He even took

the risk of losing the editorship of the

government-owned Dainik Banlga

and joined the protest rally against

Pithhe Cholechhe Swadesh" (the

country riding a peculiar camel) is

about the misrule and political stagna-

tion prevailing in the country during the

Ershad let off

known as a corrupt person, and the

people gave this verdict much

lawmaker Suraniit Sengupta said.

"The alliance government has

misused state power in the delivery

of the judgement for political gains."

ian, said the government played a

partisan role in this regard, which

President Hasanul Haque Inu said

the government itself is corrupt. So,

it has failed to prove the allegation

Mohammad Qamaruzzaman, joint

secretary general of the Jamaat,

said it is not proper to comment on a

court judgement. He however said

the judgement 'looks odd' in the

scope to criticise the government for

"The opposition would have

will destroy the judiciary, he said.

Suranjit, a veteran parliamentar-

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD)

AL Presidium Member and

("Before the Journey" is translated

He is already

His famous poem "Odbhut Uter

Rahman was also very active

the joy and happiness of creation...

words related to independence.

highly acclaimed by the critics.

pendence and freedom.

Ershad regime

Ershad regime.

by Kaiser Haq.)

FROM PAGE 1

corrupt person.

against Ershad.

JAMAAT REACTION

present political context.

by the West Pakistani rulers.

These lines excerpted from the

"Like bunches of blood-red olean-

against the despotic army rule.

freedom and independence.

As a poet and a citizen of Dhaka he

Urban themes, symbols, signs and

As he was born and brought up in

of Urdu, Persian and Bangla words.

Rahman also loved Dhaka very

group and relentless in composing

Dr Igbal Ahmed Chowdhury, assistant professor of BSMMUH, formally declared the country's top poet dead at about 6:45pm. The poet died as his blood pressure fell to the lowest level, he told newsmen at the hospital.

Rahman's blood pressure had been deteriorating since 3:00pm and the doctors could not bring it back despite administering heavy doses of medicine, he said.

The doctors removed the close relatives of the poet from the intensive care unit (ICU) and told poet Abu Bakar Siddique about Rahman's

Shamsur Rahman was admitted to hospital on August 6 with serious

illness and kept at the ICU. He left behind wife, a son, three daughters, two brothers and four sisters. His only son Faiaz Rahman works at a private firm and daughters Fousia Rahman and Sheba Rahman

"We could not realise what a great gift poet Shamsur Rahman was for the country as well as Bangla language," said Abu Bakar Siddique.

Poet Shamsur Rahman has earned a permanent place in Bangla poetry and will be remembered forever, said poet Samudra Gupta. general secretary of Jatiya Kabita

Meanwhile, a few litterateurs and relatives of poet Rahman were critical of the government for dillydallying in sending him abroad for better treatment. They termed the government's assurance of sending him abroad "only a political stunt".

As the death news of the country's premier poet spread, a large number of people, including poets and writers, university teachers, cultural and social activists, political leaders, admirers and relatives, gathered at the BSMMUH to pay the last tribute to their

The body of Shamsur Rahman was taken out of the ICU on a stretcher amid heavy crowd of journalists, camera crew from electronic media, relatives and visitors. The body of Rahman was then taken to his house at Shvamoli.

His first namaz-e-janaza was held at the SOS Shishu Palli Jame Mosque at 10:30pm. His body was kept at the Birdem mortuary.

The poet's body will be kept at the Central Shaheed Minar from 10:30am

to 12:30pm for people to pay tribute. The second namaz-e-janaza will be held at the Dhaka University central

mosque after the Juma prayers today. Later, the poet will be laid to rest at the Banani graveyard beside his mother's grave.

A condolence meeting on poet Shamsur Rahman will be held at the Shaheed Minar on August 22.

Awami League (AL) leaders Nuhaul-Alam Lenin, Abdul Mannan Khan, Yafes Osman, Dr Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin and Asim Kumar Ukil placed floral wreaths at the dead body of poet Rahman last night on behalf of Leader of the Opposition and AL President Sheikh Hasina, said a press

AL leaders Tofail Ahmed, Amir Hossain Amu and Asaduzzaman Noor went to the poet's Shyamoli residence to see the poet for the last time. **PROFILE**

Shamsur Rahman was born on October 23, 1929 at Mahuttuli in Dhaka. He was the fourth among thirteen children of late Mokhlesur Rahman Chowdhury. Rahman studied at Pogos School from where he passed his matriculation in 1945. He passed the intermediate from Dhaka

Rahman started writing poetry after graduating from Dhaka College at the age of 18.

He studied English literature at Dhaka University (DU) and passed the BA in 1953. He also received his MA securing the second place in second class.

Rahman had a long career as a iournalist and was the editor of the now defunct Dainik Bangla and weekly Bichitra.

Shamsur Rahman started composing poetry at a time when most people, particularly the Bangalee Muslims, were not aware of the development of modern poetry. He started on the ground prepared by the poets of the 1930s and developed and added new features to Bangla poetry.

He popularised modern Bangla poetry among the general mass by successfully expressing their emotion about the country, its people and their

language A prolific writer. Rahman authored nearly 100 books, of which more than sixty are collections of poems.

Rahman won numerous awards including the Bangla Academy Award in 1969, Ekushey Padak in 1977 and the Swadhinata Award in 1991.

RAHMAN AND **BANGLA POETRY**

With the geographical division of the Bangla province in 1947, the Bangla literature also got divided. One group was dominated by writers based in Kolkata, capital of West Bengal, and another by those in Dhaka, the new capital city of the then East Pakistan.

The Dhaka-based Bangla poetry was also divided mainly in two groups. Ahsan Habib and Abul Hossain led the progressive group who were deeply influenced by the West and Bangalee poets of the 1930s. The other group led by Farrukh Ahmed and Syed Ali Ahsan was termed pro-Pakistan

Later Shamsur Rahman, Al Mahmud and Shaheed Quadri emerged as the most influential poets

SA Games

FROM PAGE 1
Games -- dubbed as the Olympics of South Asia -- open at the Sugathadasa in the progressive front during the '50s-Stadium.

The organisers have taken all necessary preparations for a five-hour (5-10pm) long pageantry that will involve over 7,000 school students who will put on a display mirroring the land's culture and heritage. The security measures, however,

would be beefed up although the organisers do not fear any attack on

"We have tried to make this opening ceremony as colourful as possible. Arrangements to comfort the huge guests that are coming for the event may not be adequate but we have tried sincerely," said chairman of marketing and sponsorship of the organising committee Nalin Attygalle on the eve of the gala opening.

There are reasons to worry for the guests but we are confident that there would be no attack on the sports events. It has been happening for 20 years in Sri Lanka and we can't ignore t. But the LTTE has said they will never hurt sportsmen or sports events. We believe that because there have been no such attack

"We are proud to host this event. It is a chance for us to prove that Sri Lanka is not all about terrorism. We are living together and we hope that sports will bring peace and harmony in the island."he added.

More than 2,100 athletes will compete in 20 disciplines as Sri Lanka host their second regional Games after holding the fifth edition in 1991. Hosts Sri Lanka and India have the largest contingents with about 400

So far, the Games committee has issued 7.397 accreditations including athletes, officials, guests and media persons

Sri Lanka Telecom is the major sponsor for the one-billion-rupee (one crore dollars) Games. They will provide 300 million rupees while the government has put 600 million rupees behind the organisers.

Pry teachers

FROM PAGE 20 they decided to withdraw the strike in the greater interest of the students and the schools will resume from Saturday.

However, he said their organisation would hold rallies in districts on September 6 and a grand rally at the Central Shaheed Minar on September 20 if their one-point demand is not fulfilled by August 31.

The association Secretary General Hafizur Rahman said they will wear symbolic black badges while giving lessons in classes in protest at the government's neglect.

BCS results

including age, educational qualifications or selection of optional subjects, the press release added. The commission also reserves

the right to correct the published results if necessary. The PSC will later announce the

schedule and seat arrangements for the viva and will publish them in newspapers. Directives of the viva will be issued before September 9.

The applicants have been asked to ensure safekeeping of the admit cards of the written test.

Ershad

political grounds. All the previous governments placed obstruction to the administration of rule of law," he claimed

Independence) is one of his most Ershad, who was in jail for five popular poems, in which the poet tries years during the tenure of previous to reflect the heartfelt urge and BNP government, received bail in describes the true meaning of indeseveral cases due to an understanding with Awami League (AL) after it assumed power in 1996. The pendence, You are/Like un-decaying JP had helped AL in forming the poems and immortal songs of government then. Rabindranath/Independence, you

Ahead of the ensuing parliamentary election. Ershad led JP. the second largest opposition party in parliament, has drawn public attention as the ruling BNP made a desperate attempt to bring JP on board its coalition

In the face of opposition from a section of JP leaders unhappy about ioining the ruling alliance. Ershad repeatedly claimed that the ruling BNP assured him of withdrawing cases pending against him. He told the party leaders he does not want to be behind bars again.

Of the cases filed against Ershad, verdict of one case will be given on August 27 while the court will decide on August 24 whether charges will be framed against the JP chief in two other graft cases.

A temple

The area of the temple is 2,500 square feet with a veranda surrounding the big room. The dilapi-

rated pillars on four sides. The archeology department sources said there were terracotta tiles on the walls and pillars of the two-storey temple. A large number of these tiles with engravings of flowers has allegedly been stolen,

dated temple was built with deco-

said the officials. Local people constructed dwelling houses adjacent to the temple.

To protect the temple the government has also taken an initiative to acquire lands in the area, the RD

The main hall room of the temple is still standing but it is in shambles. There were nine spires on the temple, most of which were destroyed during the 1897 earthquake said the officials. Near the main temple there are some smaller temples, which are also in dilapidated conditions

No extension of time

FROM PAGE 20

deletion of names from the existing voter list which has 7.64 crore

In the capital, 15.73 lakh people have applied to be included in the list while 3.77 lakh applications were submitted to the field-level staffs for deletion of names.

According to the existing voter list, prepared in 2000, there are 28 lakh voters in the capital while the nullified fresh voter list witnessed a staggering 37 lakh voters.

Field officials however suggested the total number of voters in the capital would not exceed 30 lakh as they found a huge number of voters not present at the addresses mentioned in the existing voter list.

Questions were raised over the authenticity of the progress report given by the secretary as many field-level staffs in the capital alleged the thana election officers did not take the progress report from

LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

Following repeated refusals from the leader of the opposition's home

in Dhanmondi to register her as a voter, the EC staffs finally have an appointment to register her and members of the household.

Din Mohammad, temporarily appointed for updating the voter list in Dhanmondi area, told The Daily Star that he had contacted the officials of the residence and they asked him to pay a visit there today.

"I hope I will be able to list Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina as a voter." he added

Sheikh Hasina, also the Awami League president, was registered in 2000 when she was the prime minister and lived at Ganabhaban at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar. She now lives in Dhanmondi.

Meanwhile, the EC officials in Chittagong say they have completed 90 percent of the listupdating work. They however gave the same information seven days

Only three days before the time limit expires, many voters in the port city still wait for their names to be put on the list, sources said.

Govt's bank borrowing

and it will affect the overall monetary situation, said another high official. Finance Minister M Saifur

Rahman recently visited Washington to convince the donors to release the money immediately, the official said, adding that following Saifur's request, the donors agreed to send a mission to Bangladesh again in September although they did not make any commitment to release the money.

On his return from Washington Saifur had said the money would be released in time while other sources said there was no categorical commitment from the donors' side and the money release might be delayed

Meanwhile, the cabinet in its last meeting sent back a draft proposal for turning three nationalised commercial banks -- Sonali, Janata and Agrani -- into public limited companies, said a source.

"It's a wrong signal to the donors against the finance minister's strong commitment to top brass of the

World Bank and IMF to bring reforms in the public sector institutions," the source said.

Since the end of the last fiscal the government has been witnessing huge increase in development expenditures in some sectors ahead of the next elections

Planning ministry sources said implementation of some visible development projects like construction of roads, bridges and culverts has increased in recent days and these are aimed for the next elec-

Several ministries are now busy signing contracts for development projects for which funds have already been released, sources said, adding that it has led to increase in bank deposits of different autonomous and semiautonomous bodies of the govern-

It rose to Tk 10,793 crore at the

14-party demands

17, 2005 including the JMB supremo Shaikh Abdur Rahman and Siddigur Rahman Bangla Bhai.

The government has been procrastinating in the trial process because they are patrons of the militants, claimed the opposition combine speakers.

The opposition combine also reiterated that no election would be allowed to hold in the country before reforms in the systems of caretaker government and the Election Commission (EC) are carried out.

The AL-led 14-party opposition combine observed Anti Terrorism Day yesterday protesting serial blasts in 63 districts on August 17, 2005, which left two killed and more than 200 injured. The opposition combine held rallies and brought out anti terrorism procession in all 63

In the capital, the opposition combine held a rally at Bangabandhu Avenue and brought out a procession that ended at the Central Shaheed

Addressing the rally, AL Presidium Member Amir Hossain Amu said the anti liberation war forces who could not accept the country's independence and sovereignty have been conspiring to destroy the country by making way for the foreign forces to come in. Militancy will not be restrained until the patrons are identified and brought to book. Amu

Abdur Razzak said the religious fanatics are being financed by foreign forces only to destroy Islam and democracy in the country. Tofail Ahmed said it has already

been proved that the alliance government has close relationships with the militant ringleaders Shaikh Abdur Rahman and Bangla Bhai because the government has been facilitating the convicts with death sentence by housing them in an air-conditioned

Abdul Jalil, coordinator of the 14party combine and general secretary of AL, accused the prime minister and the .lamaat-e-Islami of the last year's countrywide serial blasts. He urged the countrymen to drive the antiliberation war forces out of the country politically.

Other leaders who spoke at the rally include Suranjit Sengupta, Motia Chowdhury, Nurul Islam, MA Gani, Syed Zafor Sazzad, Mainuddin Khan Badal, Mofizul Islam Kamal, Kazi Mostak Elen and Asit Baron Roy.

Militant network

City BNP President and Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka chaired the rally, addressed by top leaders of the party.

Speaking as chief guest, BNP Secretary General and LGRD Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuivan said. "A certain quarter tried to project Bangladesh as a fundamentalist and ineffective state. But it (Bangladesh) stands firmly as an effective and democratic state."

He went on."We have proved that we are against militancy and we have taken steps to crush it.'

The LGRD minister regretted that the main opposition Awami League did not assist the government in its drive against militants. The BNP stalwart said his party has served the people for the last

five years of its rule and it will contin soue to do so, if re-elected. Health and Family Planning Minister and a top leader of the BNP Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain said "Countries like USA and UK could not arrest any militant kingpin but we

The BNP leaders urged their partymen to work with the people unitedly to win the next general

They called upon the people to foil all conspiracies by the opposition and cast their vote for the BNP The rally was held in front of the

BNP central office at Naya Paltan, instead of Muktangon, as a component of the ruling alliance-- Islami Oikya Jote -- occupied the venue for a rally

BNP Vice Chairman and Agriculture Minister M K Anwar said, "If necessary, the next election will be held without the participation of Awami League." Sadeque Hossain Khoka told the

rally, "We will ensure the victory of our party in the next election." Other speakers included

Housing and Works Minister Mirza Abbas, Goyeshwar Chandra Roy, Barkatullah Bulu and lawmakers Salauddin Ahmed and Nasir Uddin

US for Bangladesh

FROM PAGE 20

contributing country in UN peacekeeping missions with approximately 11,000 soldiers operating as Blue Helmet peacekeepers in 11 countries around the world.

Bangladesh has not yet worked under the Unifil. "We're in touch with US and UN on the question of Dhaka's participation in Unifil, Morshed said. The foreign minister said

Bangladesh never made any mistake in its foreign policy in the past and will not make any mistake in the

Politics of election boycott never succeed: Moudud

Bss, Dhaka

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Moudud Ahmed vesterday said politics of election boycott had never succeeded in the country as people were always in favour of democracy.

He called upon all to help create an environment for holding a fair election in the country to continue the pace of the democratic process and hoped that all political parties would participate in the next parliamentary

Moudud was speaking at a roundtable on "On-going democracy: industry, trade and commerce" at Jativa Press Club organised by Journalist Society for Human Rights and Welfare. Advocate M Shaiahan. managing director of Rupali Finance Abu Taher Majumder, Advocate Saidul Haque, journalist Sheikh Rakib Uddin and Abdullah Ferdous addressed it.

The election would be held as per the voter list prepared by the Election Commission, he said and urged all to keep confidence in people, who really decide the results of the elec-

The law minister said under the caretaker government system all the political parties have to participate in the elections from the same level. So, the question of getting favour does not arise at all, he added.

The President, the Chief Adviser, the Chief Election Commissioner and the Army Chief have nothing to do with the results of the general elections. If so, how come Awami League (AL) won in the 1996 and BNP in 2001, he questioned.

Moudud said it was the proposal of AL President Sheikh Hasina that the immediate past Chief Justice would be the Chief Adviser of the caretaker government.

Referring to the opposition's debate on the next Chief Adviser, Moudud said it is impossible to find out a person without political background. So, "We shall have to choose anyone from among them, this is reality", he added.

Voter list updating is a continuous process. Moudud said adding that in India there are many complaints about the voter list, but the elections were held in time

On the price hike of essentials, the law minister said if the purchasing capacity of people increases, the price hike is not a problem, as people have money to buy commodities.

11 'outlaws' killed

FROM PAGE 1

Haj', chairman of Raninagar Union Prishada and ruling BNP leader. He backs a criminal group locally known as 'Alhaj group'.

Officer-in-Charge of Sujanagar Police Station Rabiul Islam Khan and Sub-Inspector Abdur Razzak received mild injuries as the criminals hit them with rifle butts. Besides, injured police constables Shah Alam, Maruf and Sohrab were admitted to Sujanagar Health Complex, police said.

The operation is a part of the ongoing anti-outlaw drive in the southern and part of northern regions of the country. Superintendent of Police of Pabna Mirza Abdullahel Baki said.

Police picked up 50 outlaw suspects, he said, adding, "We are searching for more munitions that the criminals left in water while fleeing."

Meanwhile, relatives of the outlaws termed the incident a 'coldblooded murder'.

Slogans

FROM PAGE 1

was looking worried and upset. But as soon as the verdict was delivered he looked very enthusiastic

The procession brought out by the JP on the court premises defying the HC ban stunned the lawyers of Dhaka BarAssociation.

A senior lawyer on condition of anonymity told The Daily Star everybody must follow court orders. If anyone disobeys an order, he or she should be charged with contempt of court. Leaders and activists of JP violate the court order by chanting slogans in the courtroom and bringing out a procession on the court premises, he added.

The HC on August 1, following a petition filed on June 29, issued a contempt rule against 11 SC lawyers after they held demonstration and placed obstructions to SC judges and other lawyers entering the court on June 11.

They were ordered to explain why proceedings of contempt of court should not be brought against them for violating the HC suo moto rule.

SECURITY MEASURES Meanwhile, additional police forces

were deployed at different gates of the District and Sessions Judge's Court ahead of the judgment yesterday. In addition, Rapid Action Battalion

(Rab) and other law enforcement agencies were also deployed on the court premises to avoid any untoward incidents. Litigants and other commoners were checked with metal Thursday some 50 kilometres away detectors before they were let to enter the court premises

Hundreds of people from all walks of life thronged the court premises to hear the verdict of the case

Lebanese army

hours along the Blue Line," the UNdemarcated border between Lebanon and Israel, said General Charles Shikhani, commander of the Marjayun area where troops hoisted their flag just seven kilometres (four miles) from the border.

Israel said it had handed control of half the zones it was occupying to UN peacekeepers and that of the 30,000 troops who poured in to Lebanon at the height of the war, all reserve units have left.

A Lebanese army commander said troops were stationed in 30 villages, including several next to the Israeli border.

Countries ready to contribute to a strengthened UN Interim Force in Lebanon prepared to meet at the United Nations to thrash out the tricky details of the deployment but few countries have said they were prepared to sent troops. "We expect the arrival of the first

elements at the start of next week. light elements," said the force commander General Alain Pellegrini. "This Unifil will be very different

from the previous one. The old Unifil is dead. The new one will be stronger, enhanced with more people and new engagement rules."

The deployment by the Lebanese army, which stayed largely on the sidelines of the 34-day conflict between Israel and the Shia Muslim Hezbollah, was approved at a cabinet meeting Wednesday. It followed implementation of a

Resolution 1701 which aims to halt a conflict that killed 1,150 Lebanese, mostly civilians, and 160 Israelis, mostly soldiers. Prime Minister Fuad Siniora said the operation would stamp the gov-

ernment's authority on the region

south of the Litani where Hezbollah

ceasefire on Monday in line with UN

had held sway since Israel ended its last occupation six years ago. "There will be a single state... with the sole decision-making power, there will be no dual authority," he said. "There will be no off-limit

regions for the army." Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah has vowed to keep fighting until the last Israeli soldier leaves Lebanese soil and so far rejected any moves to rid it of its weapons. The United States, which has

given staunch backing to Israel

despite concern in some international quarters that its massive onslaught against Lebanon was excessive, cautioned that Hezbollah's disarmament would take "some time" and was a matter for the Lebanese government.

Israel has warned of the risk of further fighting if Hezbollah kept its weapons Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni said

have changed and that it will have to leave south Lebanon. Lebanon's pro-Syrian President Emile Lahoud, however, said it was "shameful" to ask Hezbollah to disarm considering it was "the only force in the Arab world that was able

the group "is under pressure and

knows that the rules of the game

to stand up to Israel" Some of the estimated 900,000 refugees who had fled the Israeli onslaught are continuing to stream back to cities and villages in the south, inching forward along hombed-out roads and bridges.

Aid agencies have warned that the mass influx could create further humanitarian problems in an area lacking basic supplies, and have called on Israel to end a punishing air and sea blockade that has virtually cut Lebanon off from the outside world. But a Lebanese Middle East Airlines plane landed in Beirut from

Amman carrying more than 140 passengers, and another was due, although it was not clear when the airport would be open fully.

In Israel, Defence Minister Amir Peretz has ordered an inquiry into the handling of the war, with political and military leaders under fire for failing to crush Hezbollah despite the army's

superior firepower. Israel launched the war after Hezbollah captured two soldiers on July 12, vowing to retrieve the captives and cripple the guerrilla group.

But the soldiers are still missing and Hezbollah was able to keep up a daily barrage of deadly rocket fire across northern Israel throughout the

UN Deputy Secretary General Mark Malloch Brown warned it was make or break time and called for foreign governments to pledge troops for the UN force, due to be led by France and expanded from 1,990

'İt's a very precarious, fragile situation, with a lot of trigger-happy people. It's very important to get the two sides prised apart." he told the

"We've got to, in the next days, generate at least 3.500 troops as a down payment on the larger force that we need in place in the coming The meeting at UN headquarters of potential troop contributors was

expected to clarify the rules of

engagement for the force when and if it comes under attack or what role it would play in disarming Hezbollah. Israeli army chief Dan Halutz had warned his forces could remain in the border region for months while the beefed-up international force deploys -- despite the area having been a deadly quagmire for Israeli

troops during the 22-year occupa-

Business

him, the statement said.

leaders

FROM PAGE 1 Rahman alleged that CPD at its press conference on August 8 had labelled him as a 'Razakar,' thereby tarnishing his reputation. But CPD refuted the claim and said such allegation was not made against

Mahmudur Rahman's contention that CPD's work in compiling data relating to investment was not in line with Bol's projections, the business leaders said. "It must be stated that anyone, including trade bodies of

Bangladesh, have the right to

compile data and information and

The situation arose out of

make analysis on any aspect of the country's activities, including its country," the statement said. "Differences of views and opinions can and will exist in a free, pluralistic and democratic society. Such differences can always be discussed and debated in a dignified manner. It may also be mentioned here that in all such analy-

country," the business leaders "But resorting to criminal proceedings, which has resulted in arrest warrants against such eminent citizens of the country, includ-

sis, our uppermost concern is ou

ing leaders of trade organisations is deplorable." "We fear that this kind of situation will only damage the country's image and investment climate. So, the business leaders appeal to the highest authority of the government to ensure that there is no recurrence of such episode in

98 Tamil Tigers killed

FROM PAGE 1 the Tigers," said Yapa. "We have recovered 98 Tiger bodies and destroyed three LTTE boats."

figures. But military officials who wished to remain unnamed said at least six soldiers were killed and 60 wounded in the intense battle. The defence ministry said before the latest assault that 250 rebels had been killed since the latest upsurge in

Yapa gave no soldier casualty

sources said some 150 troops had also been killed and 300 wounded. There was no immediate reaction from the guerrillas to the military claims but the rebels said their losses in the first two days since launching an

violence on Friday in Jaffna. Military

attempt to overrun military positions totalled only 22 dead. Both sides are regularly accused of exaggerating the losses of their oppo-

The Jaffna peninsula is cut off from the rest of Sri Lanka by Tiger-held The military is forced to resupply its

troops in the northern tip of the island by air and by sea from the port of Trincomalee, which was itself the scene of overnight fighting. "We had to move our base from Trincomalee. The area where we were staving came under heavy fire, our

accommodation was almost hit," said Thorfinnur Omarsson, spokesman for the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM). Trincomalee is home to one of six district offices run by the SLMM in northern and eastern Sri Lanka Omarsson said the monitors moved

(31 miles) away to try to continue their work in the area. President Mahinda Rajapakse told newspaper editors Wednesday the government was ready for talks with

the rebels but stressed soldiers would take defensive action if necessary. Palitha Kohona, a senior adviser to

Rajapakse and head of the peace

future," the statement concluded.

coordinating agency, told AFP Thursday the government was ready to negotiate "any time, any place". "What we are doing is just resisting LTTE attacks in areas which have

pursuant to the ceasefire agreement of 2002. The SLMM has said the February 2002 ceasefire, however, "exists only

on paper."

been under government control

Security forces remained on alert elsewhere, three days after a Pakistani diplomat escaped a deadly bomb attack in Colombo Schools were closed while govern-

ment and military installations were closely watched. There were fears the Tigers could stage retaliatory attacks after an air raid Monday, which the rebels said killed 61 school children in a rebel-

South Africa's cricket team, playing a tri-series here with Sri Lanka and India, also announced they were pulling out despite a guarantee of presidential-level security. The Sri Lankan team practised

controlled area in the north.

Thursday guarded by troops ahead of the first of three matches with India starting Friday. Both the rebels and the government have blamed each other for the upsurge in fighting which has claimed

more than 1.500 lives by official count and displaced 135,000 civilians since since December.

More than 60,000 people have died in three decades of Tiger insur-