Regional dialogue asks govt

Bazlul Karim Bahar were the special guests at the dialogue chaired by Dr Moshiur Rahman.

Mahfuz Anam, editor of The Daily Star. addressed the dialogue on behal

Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed and Prof Mahmuda Islam, members of Nagorik Committee 2006, formed for preparing a vision paper for Bangladesh in 2021,

A large number of local elite including political leaders, development workers, lawyers, teachers, cultural activists, social workers, journalists and students participated in the dialogue that continued for about seven hours at Bogra Parjatan Motel audito-

After independence, corruption grabbed the society due to lack of patriotism among the people, Shvamol Bhattacharva said, adding that people cast vote for the symbol

The government changed the true spirit of the constitution through vari-

The members of the civil society keep smooth the journey of people said Bazlul Karim Bahar. A peculiar darkness that has grasped the country is to be removed, he said.

Moshiur Rahman, a prominent social worker in the area, suggested formation of a citizens' commission for ensuring accountability and monitor-

Emphasising the need for concrete suggestions instead of abstracts

Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed said after the fall of autocratic military rule a democratic autocracy imposed on the country as all power centred on the

Demanding separation of judiciary from the executive, Prof Sayeed said the whole nation will support the civil society movement for pushing the state towards a justice-based adminis-

He expressed optimism about the future of the Bangalee nation that has achieved independence 'for the first time in its history'.

Prof Mahmuda Islam of Dhaka University said a black money holder can never be a competent candidate.

She urged the people for creating pressure on the government for bringing equality between man and

in the next general election. She demanded direct election in the seats reserved for women.

The main objective of the dialogue is to create a platform to express

opinion of the citizens other than those on the political stage, Mahfuz Anam said, adding that the citizens should have the right to express political opinion without any hindrance

He expressed the hope that the politicians would see the recommendations of the civil society with respect and try to accept those.

Political parties should have organised such regional dialogues but none of them took the initiative, he said.

President of Bogra district Awami League (AL) Alhai Momtaz Uddin categorically told the dialogue that his party would not participate in the next general elections unless its demands electoral reforms are met.

He alleged, "Politics have been corrupted by people who came from the cantonment.

The AL leader also criticised the government for having Ershad, the once autocrat, acquitted of corruption He claimed Ziaur Rahman himself

never claimed he proclaimed the independence of the country. But those who oppose the independence created a debate on the proclamation of independence in their own interest, Momtaz added.

Rezaul Karim Tansen, president of Bogra district Jatiya Samjtantrik Dal (JSD), demanded prohibition of politics based on religion. "No reforms no elections," he said adding that bringing reforms in the electoral system is necessary to avoid conflict.

The country never faced a crisis like this after its independence. observed advocate Fazlul Bari, president of Bogra district Gono Forum. People are also doubtful whether the next general elections would be held at

AL General Secretary of Bogra Mujibur Rahman Mojnu said people should not vote for those who keep themselves isolated from the people He said some sort of benefit would come if awareness were created among the people through this kind of

President of Bogra Lawyers Association Mir Igbal Hossain blamed black money for destroying social values. He proposed that the account of income and expenditure of all close relatives of an election candidate should be published before the elec-

He said there should be a judicial mechanism to control the rise of black money. According to him, the elections would not be free or fair when black money is present.

Executive Director of Thangamara Mohila Sabuj Shangha (TMSS) Hosne Ara Begum opposed the criticism of Non-Government Organisations (NGO) saying the NGOs are helping people increase production and reduce the pressure on the government.

"Still people get pleasure criticising the NGO's," she pointed out. She claimed the people who were rejected by the government services or

deprived of other financial opportunities formed most of the NGO's.

Khandaker Golam Kader, a prominent playwright, observed that all development policies were formulated targeting only 15 percent of the population. "Rest 85 percent who live in the villages remain deprived," he added.

He urged the policymakers to take initiative and do something for the vast majority of the population.

President of Bogra Chamber of Commerce and Industry Alhaj Fazlur Rahman Paiker urged people to stop hartals in the country. He said because of hartals foreigners do not want to invest in our country. He also criticised the tendency of people to become a legislator without having any grassroots-level experience in politics. "Those who want to become MPs should do politics at local level for at least two years," he said.

Former MP Quamrunnahar Putul said no election could be held in a free and fair manner under Chief Election Commissioner MAAziz.

Mahmuda Hakim said the major political parties should hold dialogues to resolve the serious political crisis existing in the country. She said dialoque is the only way to reach a consensus and get rid of the deadlock.

NGO worker Mir Abdur Razzag observed that political criminals were controlling politics in Bangladesh

Advocate Shakil Ahmed, chairman Holy Family Foundation, Abul Kalam Azad, principal of Taslim Uddin Tarafdar College, Aminul Haque, ward commissioner of Bogra, Aminul Farid, Abdul Hannan of JANIPOP, Abul Kawsar, Rafiqul Islam, ABM Ziaul Hague Babla, Darin Pervez, Ismail Hossain Makob, advocate Shakhawat Hossain, Mahfuz Siddique Liton, Samir Roy, Enamul Haque Ranju, Towfique Hasan Moina, Sadigur Rahman Sujan, Abdur Razzaq Raju, Liakat Ali, Belal Uddin Ahmed, Pintu Areng, Abu Taher Shamim, Azizar Rahman Tai, Altaf Hossain, Ahmedul Haque, Helal Uddin, Rafiqul Haque Khan, Goutam Kumar Das, Rafigul Islam Lal. Hasan Ali Sheikh. Rezaul Karim Monto, Zobaer Hasan Liton, Alok Talukder, Zahedur Rahman, Mostafa Alam Nannu, Mahmudul Haque Chowdhury, Abdur Rouf, Daizy Ahmed, Quamruzzaman Kaiol, Abdur Rashid, Khaled Bin Jalal, Advocate Amjad Hossain and Mohammad Shamsul Abedin also participated in

Slaughter of cops

FROM PAGE 1 conference on crime with senior policemen at Naogaon Police Line.

He ordered setting up of a police camp at Chowbaria village from today He also directed policemen to curb the activities of both the factions of PBCP - Janajuddha (Peaple's War) and Lal

Potaka (Red Flag).
Policemen and local people said the attack could have been in retaliation for continued killing of outlaws in police and Rapid Action Battalion

Some other sources apprehended that the attack could have been linked to local BNP-Jamaat feuds.

Local Hindu-Buddha-Christian Oikya Parishad President Ranjit Kumar Sarkar told the IGP that the murder of BNP leader Nazer Ali might have left a clue to the motive for

He said among the five victims of Friday's attack, only Nazer, organising secretary of Manda upazila Jubo Dal was shot from a point blank range and he was the principal witness in the former upazila BNP vice president Mansur Mridha murder case

Following judicial statements of some arrested outlaws, charges were oressed against 24 persons belonging to BNP, Jamaat and the outlawed PBCP after Mansur had been murdered on March 11, 2004, police sources said.

Four of the 24 accused were killed n 'crossfire' and among the rest of the 20. local BNP General Secretary Dr Ekramul Bari Tipu, his brothers-in -law Advocate Shawkat Illias Kabir and Harun. UP chairman Helal and his brother, and some activists and supporters of the ruling parties BNP and Jamaat were recently released on bail

POLICEACTION Raiding villages, police arrested five suspected outlaws following Friday's attack. Two cases accusing unnamed 30 outlaws were filed in connection with the attack, one for murder and arms looting, another for blasting

Panic gripped the villagers of Chowbaria and its surrounding vilages of Mazidpur, Hossainpur, Malsira, Zonaki and Madaripur and male members of most of the families were not found at their homes while The Daily Star correspondent visited the villages, 40 kilometres off Rajshahi

PBCP CLAIM

Claiming responsibility for Friday's attack. a PBCP source said, it was in retaliation for the continued 'killings and oppressions on PBCP activists by

armed forces and to protest against the cattle market leasing system'.

"It (the murders) is our work. We carried it out in a pre-planned manner and without any loss. Especially we avenged the crossfire death of Master Da (PBCP adviser-in-chief Quamrul Islam Master)," he said adding without details, "We will continue our opera-

Replying to a question, the source said, Rab and police are similar as they both bear arms against PBCP. **THE VICTIMS**

Janaza of the slain policemen were held at Naogaon Police Line. Their bodies were also sent to their homes.

The slain policemen are Assistant Sub Inspector Abu Taivab Feroz of Ataikula in Pabna. Constables Babul Hossain of Shahiadpur in Pabna. Faridul Islam of Kaiipur in Siraigani. and Askan Ali of Madhaimuri under Bagmara in Raishahi.

THE MURDER & WITNESSES

Chowbaria, a popular market for cattle trading was leased to several BNP leaders headed by Manda Upazila Jubo Dal President Mahbub Alam

At the end of the market day on Friday, there were still a several thousand people at the market on three bighas of land.

'Suddenly, somebody opened fire nside the administrative office of the market and blasted bombs outside. tried to escape through the window, but fainted a few seconds later", said Samiul, an injured rishaw-van puller who was admitted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

Another injured at RMCH Abdur Rahim Uddin, who is also the president of Bhasu union unit of BNP and one of the lease holders of the market. corroborated Samiul's statement.

A tea-shop owner at the market said the attackers in groups laid the policemen down on the ground and slaughtered them as soon as the first bomb had been blasted. "I heard a total of six blasts as I was running to save my life."

Five security guards of the market. Kazem Ali, Abdur Rahim, Yasin Ali, Dhirendra Nath and Amullyo Kumar said they saw from far away the attackers leaving the scene walking slowly and chanting slogans in favour of PBCP minutes away from sunset.

Young leaders ask BNP

Young leaders demanded expulsion of rebellious leaders including Oli Ahmed and Ashraf Hossain. At one stage of their speeches Ashraf Hossain left the venue. Some delegates said the party high ups should take proper actions to resolve the internal feud, according to meeting sources.

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia who is also the prime minister of the country, presided over the meeting. At least selected 50 leaders addressed the meeting while about 380 leaders attended it

Khaleda Zia in her inaugural peech said there is no al to electing a BNP government of patriotic nationalist forces in the next general election as the next poll is very important for the country as well as for peace and stability in the

Later in a closed door session of the meeting, Ruhul Quddus Talukder Dulu, also deputy minister for land and a close aide to Tarique Rahman said, "BNP means Zia Family. He or she should be expelled from the party who will speak against this family," according to the sources.

The party's young leaders and lawmakers Abul Khair Bhuiyna, Shahiduddin Chowdhury Anny, Fazlul Huq Milon and Ilias Ali supported Dulu and demanded expulsion of Col (retd) Oli Ahmad and the party's Joint Secretary General Ashraf Hossain.

"The party will not be harmed if the high command expels Oli and Ashraf, "Abul Khair Bhuiyan MP also president of Laxmipur district BNF said adding, "If the party does not expel them then we will resist them. who are involved in a conspiracy against BNP and Zia family.

The leaders also asked the party high ups to control the internal feud as they said it could be harmful for the party in the next election.

"Those who are violating party discipline, the party should take actions against them," Salauddin Ahmed MP told reporters after the

Maniurul Ahsan Munshi MP from Comilla--4 constituency said. "The party high ups should resolve the

internal feud before the election." Giasuddin Quader Chowdhury however told the party leadership that disciplinary actions should be taken against the rebel leaders but the actions should be taken in such a way that those do not have negative influence on the election strat-

"On the JP issue few leaders support the move and few others oppose it," Abdul Hye, president of Munshiganj district BNP, told report-Meanhwhile, few leaders urged

Khaleda to take actions against the leaders who are involved in corruption. "We can't face the people because some of the leaders are involved in corruption," Abdur Rashid Khan, organisational secretary of Barisal district BNP said adding that the government should take actions against the corrupt leaders after proper investigation.

Sources said most of the leaders in the meeting expressed their support for the recent move to include JP in the ruling alliance and said Khaleda may take the decision if she thinks it will be helpful for the party to win the next election. 'Prime Minister Khaleda Zia will take the final decision on it." Nasir Uddin Ahmed Pintu MP said while other young leaders supported him.

Some leaders demanded urgent curbing of price hike of essentials. "We know that prices of oil and sugar increased in the international market but the people do not want to understand it. They only want the prices to be controlled, so the government should take actions regarding the matter if the party is to win the next election." said a BNP

"The law and order situation has lost its image due to 'crossfire' by RAB." a leader said in the meeting He also criticised Jamaat's activities across the country.

Earlier in the day, Idris Ali, president of Kurigram district BNP told reporters that Jativa Party lawmakers lost their popularity due to their anti-people activities.

"The next election is very important not only for BNP but also for the country and the nation, for the present and the future, and for peace and stability in this region. There is no alternative to getting patriotic nationalist forces elected to the government in the next election," Khaleda said in her opening speech.

BNP standing committee members, party chairperson's advisory council members, national executive committee members. MPs and presidents and general secretaries of BNP front organisations attended

Hasına sıts

the opposition.

FROM PAGE 16 neld at the same venue.

The AL allies in the combine had long been asking it to arrange a meeting with Hasina, also leader of

"We will discuss everything about future politics at the meeting," said Rashed Khan Menon, president of Workers Party of Bangladesh, a component of the opposition line-up.

Asked about seat-sharing, he said the issue might come up at the meeting but the main topic will be antigovernment agitation. Dilip Barua, another 14-patrty

leader, however said future politics of the opposition combine, agitation programmes, seat-sharing, government-opposition dialogue on reform proposals will be discussed at the meeting with Hasina.

The meeting with party leaders will discuss, other than the next movement strategies, organisational matters in the context of the next the Shibir activities and measures to election and possible solution to longstanding intra-party feuds at the grassroots level. AL Joint General Secretary

Obaidul Quader said the meeting aims at intensifying the ongoing movement and dearing up party activities ahead of the next election. Asked about the meeting Hasina's political secretary Saber

Hossain Chowdhury, also organising secretary of the AL, said they will sit with the party chief today to discuss the next course of anti-government Party sources said Hasina will sit

with union level leaders of the party next month.

State office used

FROM PAGE 16 As various programmes and events like meetings with grassroots level leaders are held at Jamuna, the prime minister's evening office, the BNP central office at Nayapaltan

remains unused for most of the time Meanwhile, Lake Road, an important road between Sangsad Bhaban and Prodhanmontri Bhaban at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, was off limits to vehicles and pedestrians to ensure security for those taking part in the meeting between NEC and grassroots level leaders.

The police did not allow any

pedestrians or vehicles on the otherwise busy road since 12 at noon, much to the sufferings of the city dwellers. Prime Minister Khaleda Zia

presided over the daylong meeting attended by over 350 leaders and workers. The PM entered the venue at

around 11:00am and the road was open for public and vehicles till 12 at noon. Everything was normal then. There was no traffic iam as the Prodhanmontri Bhaban ground offered enough space for car park-

But all of a sudden police closed off the road, leading to huge traffic snarl-ups on the adjoining roads.

Vehicles remained stuck for hours at most parts of the Mirpur Road, Asad Gate, Bijoy Sarani, and

"I need to go to Mohakhali. It is alwavs easier if I use the Lake Road. It will take more than an hour now. whereas usually it takes no more than half an hour from Mohammadpur," said a private company official waiting in a jam.

Dhaka, Delhi

FROM PAGE 1 cross-border terrorism on the third day of the four-day 7th homesecretary-level meeting.

The 18-member Bangladesh delegation led by Home Secretary Sarfarraj Hossain and 16-member Indian team led by his Indian counterpart VK Duggal finalised agreed summary of the meeting yesterday afternoon at State Guesthouse Meghna.

The outcome will be officially disclosed through a press conference after the two sides sign the agreed summary today.

Both the countries agreed to send fact-finding teams of the Bangladesh-India Joint Boundary Working Group to enclaves and territories held under adverse possession in a month that will report to their respective governments. The Bangladesh side also

strongly denied India's allegations that insurgents from India's northeastern states and Islamist terrorists have been allowed to operate in Bangladesh, according to meeting In addition, Bangladesh officials

claimed that Bangladeshi fugitives nave been hiding in India. State Minister for Home Affairs

Lutfozzaman Babar said last week that some top criminals, involved in the grenade attack on Awami League rally on August 21, 2004 are hiding in India.

Jubok activities

however, are not happy with the BB's 'dallied' and 'soft' actions against Jubok despite the fact that previous investigations found its activities illegal.

"The central bank is hesitant about taking stern action against Jubok because they (Jubok) have strong backing," one senior official of a private bank told The Daily Star.

Hasan Azizul

FROM PAGE 16

Different political, cultural and social bodies in Rajshahi condemned the Shibir threat on Hasan and on Muhammad Zafar Igbal of Shahialal University of Science and Technology, Sylhet.

Several hundred teachers, students, cultural activists, students' organisation leaders and journalists of RU and Rajshahi city took part in a procession which was brought out to protest the threat. The procession paraded the streets of RU campus.

Progressive Teachers Society of RU will bring out a procession today and hold meeting on the campus. They said the fundamentalist

forces have made a 'blueprint' to suppress the secular movement and kill democratic intellectuals. progressive politicians and the litterateurs one by one. They demanded immediate arrest and exemplary punishment of

ensure security of the teachers. They also blamed RU authorities for patronising Shibir. Sammilito Sangskritik Jote. Bangladesh Chhatra League, Bangabandhu Parishad Sangskritik Jote, RU Theatre and Onirban

Drama Group also staged similar

protest rallies. Shibir activists of RU threatened Hasan for his speech on secularism. They labelled the eminent litterateur as 'an atheist and enemy of Islam' and declared him persona non grata on the campus. They also burned

Freed in 3 cases

FROM PAGE 1 parliamentary election. The JP chief, however, has not yet declared any date for his joining.

Ershad leaves Dhaka tomorrow for Saudi Arabia on a weeklong visit. PLOT-ALLOTMENT CASE Mohammad Sajjad Hossain, ar official of the now-defunct Bureau of Anti-Corruption, filed the case against Ershad with the Motijheel

Police Station on April 22, 1991. The investigation officer (IO) of the case pressed charges against Ershad and Rahamat Ullah on December 9 the same year.

According to the prosecution, the then president Ershad directed authorities concerned to allot plots in Gulshan, Banani, Baridhara and Uttara residential areas to 49 persons during 1988-1990, violating the government and Rajuk provisions. The court has so far recorded

statements of only four prosecution witnesses although the trial began on April 23, 1998. The court could not complete arguments of the case as the prose-

cution and the defence had sought

time on different excuses since

GOLD SMUGGLING CASE On August 13, the same court

Rudiger, Chalmar Chaker, Ashraf and Taher were convicted and sent to prison on different terms on May 14, 1992.

adjourned the hearing of the gold

smuggling case against Ershad until

August 27 following a time petition

team of customs officials held four

persons including two foreign

nationals from Zia International

Airport (ZIA) on July 17, 1990 when

they were attempting to smuggle

3.000 tola gold worth around Tk 2.5

against the four--Bernhard Rudiger

of Germany, David Anthony

Chalmar Chaker of England, the

then manager of ZIA Major (retd)

Ashraf Uddin Sekender and security

guard of ZIA Abu Taher--with the

During the investigation, the IO

found evidence for Ershad's

involvement in the smuggling and

his name was included in the charge

Cantonment PS the same day.

A smuggling case was filed

According to the prosecution, a

from the prosecution.

crore into Bangladesh.

The trial against Ershad did not start due to a stay order from the

Israel wants troops

FROM PAGE 16 touch with other Muslim countries to encourage them to participate, particularly Turkey, which has diplomatic relations with Israel

"If Turkey decides to send a contingent, we would welcome that," said sraeli Foreign Ministry spokesman Mark Regev.

Jordan and Egypt also are among Muslim countries that have diplomatic relations with Israel The international force is to reinforce the Lebanese army, which is

moving 15,000 soldiers of its own into

the south. They are the first assertion of central authority in the region along the Israeli border in decades. But 13 days after Israel and Hezbollah agreed to a ceasefire. questions remained about how to enforce the vague truce and prevent the area from exploding again. It was

would meet Israel's demand to prevent Hezbollah from rearming. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan stressed Friday it was not the peacekeepers' task to strip the querrillas of their weapons, saying that was an

unclear how the

issue for Lebanon's government and 'cannot be done by force." "The troops are not going there to disarm Hezbollah. Let's be clear about that."he said.

Regev reiterated Israel would not lift its air and sea embargo of Lebanon until peacekeepers take positions along the Syrian border to block arms shipments to Hezbollah from its two main supporters, Iran and Syria.

But Annan said peacekeepers would deploy on the Syrian border only at Lebanon's request, which Beirut has yet to make. Such a move would aggravate tensions with Syria, which views the deployment of international troops along the border as a

hostile act. "The resolution does not require the deployment of UN troops to the border," Annan said at a news conference after a three-hour meeting with

the 25 EU ministers Friday. Regev, however, argued that sending troops to Syrian border is key to enforcing an international arms embargo against Hezbollah imposed

access in and out of Lebanon the

minute those international and

Lebanese forces are enforcing the

under the cease-fire resolution. "The cease-fire calls for an international arms embargo against Hezbollah," Regev said. "So Israel will be willing to allow for unfettered

arms embargo.' The issue is unlikely to prevent the Israeli government, which is under domestic pressure to pull out of Lebanon quickly, from withdrawing its soldiers. However, Israel could use airstrikes on border crossings, roads and bridges to prevent arms smuggling if Lebanese troops and the UN force did not stop shipments them-

The bulk of the new troops came from Italy and France. Other countries committed smaller units. Belgium volunteered 400 soldiers, including critical land-mine removal units Germany and Denmark offered naval forces, and the Finnish foreign minister spoke of sending 250 soldiers, if his

parliament approved. About 150 French army engineers landed Friday at Naqoura in southern Lebanon, joining 250 of their countrymen already among 2,200 peacekeepers in the country, and Italy's leader reportedly said late Friday that his nation's troops could leave for

Lebanon as early as Tuesday. The promised 6,900 European soldiers did not include naval units, air support or peacekeepers already on

the ground. Annan said the cease-fire was holding with few infractions but urged the EU to move swiftly to get its soldiers to region. He said he hoped the expanded force could start deploying in "days, not weeks." He had earlier set

a target date of Sept. 2. "Europe is providing the backbone of the force," Annan said. "We can now

begin to put together a credible force Finnish Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioia, whose country holds the EU's rotating presidency, said the entire UN force should be in place

within two to three months. The United States has ruled out committing troops, but is expected to provide logistics support. As a rule Washington does not participate in peacekeeping missions unless it is

commanding the force. France, which now commands the small Unifil force that has been in southern Lebanon since 1978, will lead the expanded force until February, when it will hand over com-

mand to Italy.

Iran defies UN

running a reactor Reactors fuelled by enriched uranium use regular or "light" water as a "moderator" in the chain reaction that produces energy. Reactors using "heavy water" contain a heavier hydrogen particle, which allows the reactor to run on natural uranium mined by Iran, foregoing the enrich-

ment progress. But the spent fuel from a heavy water reactor can be reprocessed to extract plutonium for use in a bomb.

The West's main worry has been uranium enrichment. Iran on Tuesday responded to an incentives package presented by the five permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany aimed at getting Tehran to roll back its disputed nuclear pro-

gram. Iran said it would be open to negotiations but did not agree to the West's key demand for Tehran to halt uranium

enrichment as a precondition to talks. A Reuter report says, the Bush administration has indicated it is prepared to form an independent coalition to freeze Iranian assets and restrict trade if the UN Security Council fails to penalize Tehran for its nuclear enrichment programme, The Los

Angeles Times reported yesterday A Security Council resolution gives Iran until August 31 to stop uranium enrichment, which could provide fuel to produce electricity or possibly atomic weapons, or face penalties.

US Ambassador John Bolton said in an interview late this week that the United States planned to introduce a resolution imposing penalties such as a travel ban and asset freeze for key Iranian leaders soon after the August 31 deadline, the Times reported.

It said Bolton seemed optimistic

that Security Council members China and Russia, which have been reluctant to impose sanctions, would agree to it once they saw the text. "Everybody's been on board," the Times quoted him as saying.

But on Friday Russia rejected for now efforts to impose sanctions after Tehran agreed to continue talks, but refused to halt enrichment.

In case Russia and China do not accept the resolution. Washington is working a parallel diplomatic track outside the United Nations, Bolton

Analysts say the strategy reflects not only long-standing US frustration with the Security Council's inaction on Iran, but also the current weakness of Washington's position because of its controversial role in a series of conflicts in the Middle East, most recently in Lebanon, the Times said.

Under US terrorism laws, Washington could ramp up its own sanctions, including financial constraints on Tehran and interception of missile and nuclear materials en route to Iran. Bolton said, and the United States is encouraging other countries

"You don't need Security Council authority to impose sanctions, just as we have," he said. The United States has had broad restrictions on almost all trade with Iran since 1987. The Times said Bolton and US

Treasury officials refused to provide details on which countries might be interested in joining in sanctions, citing the "sensitivity" of the talks.

also spoke.

of the organisers.

instead of observing the candidate. ous amendments, he said.

In his presidential address. Dr

ideas, he said the citizens are the actual owner of the country but it is not felt before a general election comes

prime minister For the first time after independence, general people are openly speaking out against corruption and misrule he said

She also urged the political parties to nominate more women candidates

7 killed, 60 bullet-hit

motorised vehicles since morning for Witnesses said the protesters under the banner of National Committee to Protect Oil and Gas, a platform of different rights groups and leftist parties, marched towards the

after a huge rally at the Dhaka inter-They chanted slogans against the British company that is operating the

Asia Energy office around 4:30pm

Phulbari project. The police had put up a barricade near the bridge over the Chhoto Jamuna river about 1.5km off the Asia Energy office. This led to a scuffle between the leaders of the demonstra-

The police lobbed around 100

tors and the law enforcers.

the demonstrators trying to break the barricade. The protesters regrouped a little later and attacked the law enforcers from different directions. Admitting the death of two people

in the firing, district Superintendent of

Police (SP) Delwar Hossain Mia said,

rounds of teargas shells to disperse

"The police were forced to open fire after being attacked by the demonstrators equipped with lethal weapons." Deputy Commissioner Tahsinur Rahman said additional forces were deployed at Phulbari and other places.

As the news of killing spread, the

crowd damaged the information centre of Asia Energy at Phultali about 3.2km from the coalmine office. The fight was continuing at the time of filing this report at 8:00pm last night. Angry locals were also chanting slogans against local MP Mostafizur Rahman Fizar calling him an agent of the Asia Energy for supporting the

project. Earlier, addressing the rally the protesters said at least 4.70,000 locals including 50,000 indigenous people will have to be relocated if the Phulbari Coalmine Project is implemented. Extraction of coal through the open pit method will also affect half of the Phulbari town, they added. The speakers said according to the

coal for 30 years and export two-thirds of it. The foreign company will hold the ownership of the project during this period while Bangladesh will receive a royalty of only six per cent, they said. The proposed open pit system will cause more damage to the ecology than what the economy will get from

agreement the Asia Energy will extract

the coalmine." Prof Anu Muhammad of Jahangirnagar University told the rally. UNB adds: Immediately after the incident, Asia Energy Chief Executive Officer Gary Lye said in a statement, "It

is most unfortunate that unrepresentative outsiders have come to Phulbari to

Lye noted that the Asia Energy has been operating at the site for several years in accordance with a legally binding contract with the government of Bangladesh. He said the coal project is an open and transparent business that will

bring far-reaching benefits to both the local community and the people of Bangladesh. Meanwhile, leaders of different socio-political organisations yesterday condemned the police firing on the demonstrators and demanded proper investigation and immediate trial of the law enforcers involved. They also demanded compensation to the

victims' families and proper treatment of the injured. The Awami League-led 14-party opposition combine will stage countrywide demonstrations today to protest

the killings at Phulbari The 14-party also extended its support to the indefinite hartal called at Phulbari by the demonstrators. Rashed Khan Menon, president of Workers Party of Bangladesh and a

leader of the opposition combine, told The Daily Starlast night.

Nazrul FROM PAGE 16 grave of the poet on the Dhaka

Different socio-cultural and

University premises at dawn.

political organisations have chalked out programmes to observe the death anniversary of the rebel poet. Nazrul Institute has drawn up a four-day programme. State Minister for Women and Children Affairs

Alamgir Kabir will inaugurate the

programme at the auditorium of the

institute at 5:00pm today. Discussion and cultural programme will be held at Nazrul Institute today. Secretary of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs Abdul Qaivvum. Prof Mahbubullah. Abdur Razzak and Khilkhil Kazi will speak

at the discussion

mahfil at the university central mosque after Fajr Prayers today. Vice-Chancellor Prof SMA Faiz will place wreath at the grave of the poet at 7:00am.

Dhaka University (DU) has

arranged a qurankhwani and doa

Bangladesh Television (BTV), Bangladesh Betar and private TV channels will air special programme and newspapers will bring out special supplement on the life and works of the poet.

the discussion.

local hospital, he said.

Yamoussoukro for Abidian, 250 km away, sources in Bangladesh Army "They had just arrived the same

An inquiry is under way," Omar said. Nearly 3,000 Bangladeshi soldiers are working with the UN peacekeeping mission in Ivory Coast, sources in Bangladesh Army said, adding that around 10,000

yesterday expressed deep shock at the death of six Bangladeshi peacekeepers in Ivory Coast, reports

BSF shoots FROM PAGE 1 opened fire on the victims when they

After the incident, the BSF dragged the bodies into the Indian territory Confirming the incident, Lt Col

Hartal observed FROM PAGE 16 Jessore Municipality Chairman Quamruzzaman Chunnu, Kazi Shafiqul Islam Babul and Shahidul Bari Rabu addressed the rallies and

Thursday. He was sent to Dhaka on Friday evening for better treatment. None was arrested as no case was filed with Kotwali police station as of yesterday.

6 Bangladeshi local hospital, the ISPR director Immediately after the accident,

UN peacekeepers in three other trucks took the dead and injured to a A group of 80 Bangladeshi peacekeepers left the country on Friday and reached the former French colony the same day to join a UN peacekeeping mission. In four military trucks, they started from

day and they were travelling to where they had been posted in Abidian." reports Reuters quoting UN military spokesman Colonel Omar El Khadir. "We don't know what the cause of the accident was.

Bangladeshis are working in 12 UN missions worldwide Prime Minister Khaleda Zia

She conveyed deep sympathy for the members of the bereaved

were working on a cropland near a border pillar at around 6:30am, said Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and

protest letter to BSF demanding return of the bodies.

Rafique of BDR said they sent a

demanded exemplary punishment of the attackers. Tito, who joined AL recently, was stabbed at Puratan Kashba in the town at around 8:00pm on

Panic gripped the town following the attack on the AL leader as his followers vandalised some shops and vehicles