30 injured

By Staff Correspondent

jured when police used batons

to disperse two groups of

demonstrators who took to the

street defying a government

ban, to protest arrival of Indian

Prime Minister Narasimha Rao

to attend the seventh SAARC

people including Babri Mosque

Action Committee leader

by the Babri Mosque Action

Committee at the South Gate

of Baitul Mukarram National

Mosque after Jumma prayers,

but foiled when plain clothe

police picked up its leader

Shaikul Hadis Maulana Azizul

Hug and batoncharged some

leaders started the meeting

outside the main gate and reit-

erated their plan to seize the

airport on Saturday during

should come to Bangladesh af-

ter rebuilding the demolished

Babri Mosque and for an hon-

ourable solution to water shar-

came after Asar prayers when

supporters of Islami Sha-

shantantra Andolon took to the

street on similar demands

defying the ban on meetings

and processions because of the

of the group climbed over the

high boundary wall of Baitul

Mukarram Mosque and mar-

ched towards the Press Club

processionists when they rea-

ched Purana Paltan Square and

jured in the police action, one

of them was treated at the

Dhaka Medical College

phone Ramna Thana sources

told The Daily Star last night

that 12 to 14 people including

Maulana Azizul Hug were in

their custody but did not say

whether they were formally ar-

the case," one officer on duty

Hasina

From Page 1 Col 5

"Above all, there must be

goodwill, understanding and

trust among the countries if

we are to move from the pe-

ripheral to the core areas of

The opposition leader said

rapid changes are taking place

in the international trade and

world economy and we cannot

afford to lose any time in

strengthening SAARC in order

to face the challenges of our

over the recent events in this

region, Hasina said by preach-

ing hatred and intolerance the

religious extremists have been

eroding not only the internal

cohesion and tranquility of the

member countries but also the

She hoped that the SAARC

leaders will address to the root

cause of these current difficul

ties. SAARC will succeed only if

there is mutual trust and

goodwill among the member

the nations of this region these

divisive communal forces must

be restrained, she observed.

In the long term interest of

foundation of the regional co-

Expressing her concern

economic cooperation."

"Senior officials are dealing

When contacted over tele-

At least 25 people were in-

detained at least 10 of them.

Police batoncharged the

breaking a police barricade.

Several hundred supporters

The second police action

They demanded that Rao

The committee's junior

The first rally was planned

Maulana Azizul Hug.

1,000 supporters.

Rao's arrival.

ing issue.

SAARC summit.

Hospital.

region

time.

operation.

countries.

Police detained at least 15

At least 30 people were in-

The Midnight File

Husband, son in Yangon

to visit Suu Kyi

Myanmar dissident Aung San Suu Kyi have arrived in Yangon

to visit the Nobel Peace Prize winner, a news report said to-

day. Her husband, British Academic Michael Aris, and their

son Kim, 14, arrived in Yangon on Thursday, the report in the

Daily Mirror newspaper quoted the state-run Myanmar news

Four US jets fired on

over Iraq

anti-aircraft Friday in the northern no-fly zone in Iraq, and

dropped bombs on the sites, the US government said. A

Clinton administration official, speaking only on condition of

anonymity, said the incident, involving some F-16 fighter jets,

happened "north of the 32nd parallel," which marks the no-

WASHINGTON, Apr 9: Four US jets were fired on by Iraqi

YANGON, Apr 9: The husband and youngest son of detained

DOWN TO EARTH

Paucity of Children's Park in City

By AS M Nurunnabi

eating atmosphere. In both urban and rural areas, there is need for chil-The situation in the new part of the city is a little betdren's outdoor games for their physical and mental developter. This is mainly due, among other things, to the existence ment. In the rural areas, such of the Osmant Uddyan, Ramna need is easily met by wide Park, Suhrawardy Uddyan, open spaces which are more or less available. In an urban Sishu Park and the vast open area, particularly in a metropospaces in the Sher-e-Bangla Nagar area. Most of these open lis, such open spaces are hard spaces are hardly considered to come by. With the rapid fit for the children's recregrowth of the city, this paucity ational use. The Ramna Park is on the increase. At present and the Suhrawardy Uddyan we have in the city a handful of parks and limited open areas which were previously favourite haunts of fresh air seekers in isolated pockets. Their have lately lost much of their number, however, is grossly charm because of growing inadequate, compared to the needs of the children populapresence of anti-social eletion. In any modern city, proments. The Sishu Park is an vision of adequate open spaces attractive place for children. and parks is made to serve as Lately its attraction has greatly lungs of the city. The Dhaka eroded on account of presence of elders and non-function of city, however, lacks such prosome of its mechanical recreational facilities. In the Sher-e-In this respect, the old part Bangla Nagar area, the wide of the city suffers the most. Here the paucity of open open spaces are tempting, but

they are also not free from the spaces is acute. There is only a presence of dubious elements. handful of parks, namely, the Because of the absence of Armanitola Maidan, the Basufficient open spaces in most hadur Shah Park and the areas, particularly in the old Sirajuddoula Park. Here, howcity, children are often seen ever, encroachment in one playing in the open streets. form or other always goes on. Particularly in the Armanitola This entails hazards, but chil-Maidan, loading of long-disdren, being what they are, tance trucks, motor repair hardly listen to the counsel of shops and piling of building caution. In many of the schoomaterials on its periphery prels, there is no playground Children of these schools natusent an eyesore. In the Bahadur Shah and Sirajuddoula rally take to playing in whatever space is available nearby, Park, where some concrete benches shelter beggars and however limited it may be. vagrants for long hours, there In the metropolis we are is no proper environment for now desperately short of open spaces where our children can children to play games. Even a spend free time playing games. simple stroll at these places Some people think that in the with children is avoided beexisting state of things, there cause of presence of anti- so-

3 unresolved issues

he added.

cial elements. The Buckland

Bund along river Buriganga

could have been a redeeming

feature, but here the jostling

crowds of hawkers, rickshaws

and pedestrians create a suffo-

From page 1 col 7

discussion during their after-

noon retreat on the rivercraft

meeting of the SAARC Council

of Ministers referred back all

unresolved issues on the draft

declaration to the Standing

Secretaries of member na

tions, Rahman said, the Stan-

ding Committee met Friday

morning. The Council of

Ministers could not meet on

the day, as scheduled, due to

there has been substantial

progress at the meeting ex-

cept on one or two points

which would be submitted be-

fore the heads of state and

government to be discussed

during their retreat," Foreign

tial Trade Arrangement

(SAPTA), he added, continues

to be a sticking point, while

there is also disagreement on

how to project poverty

alleviation on the draft

declaration and on the date of

Rahman pointed out, is on

procedural stipulations for the

implementation of the ar-

rangement among the seven

members of the South Asian

Association for Regional

drafting of the paragraph of

the trade arrangement relates

to the question whether the

member countries would sign

the broad-based umbrella ac-

cord on SAPTA along with a

schedule for negotiating tariff

concessions on a product by

product basis or to sign them

sions, which remains to be

prepared, would require sepa-

verty alleviation in the draft

declaration, the Foreign Sec-

difference is how to project it.

paragraph on poverty allevia-

tion as substantive elements

have been agreed upon," he

noted, adding "the difference

is on how to present it and

whether it should be given

He said that India has al-

However, Rahman noted

ready offered to host the next

SAARC summit at the Council

that as the 7th summit is being

held in April, the problem is

when to hold the next summit.

As the SAARC Charter calls for

of Ministers meeting.

retary said, the only point of

"There is no dispute on the

The schedule of conces-

On the paragraph on po-

separately, Rahman added.

rate negotiations.

prominence."

The tangle that obstructed

Cooperation (SAARC).

The differences on SAPTA,

The South Asian Preferen-

Secretary Rahman said.

the next summit.

"I am happy to say that

other preoccupations.

Comprising of the Foreign

Earlier, on Thursday a

Ostrich.

Committee.

may be limited scope for im-

provement even if the town

planners many try for it. The

old areas in Dhaka are in

greater need for open spaces.

There is a project for shifting

a summit at least once a year,

"The heads of state and

government are now going to

discuss on how to adjust to

this," Rahman pointed out,

adding that fixing of the date

for the next summit would be

governed by "pragmatic fac-

said that no specific proposal

has been table yet to amend

the SAARC Charter but added

that the issue of holding the

summit every two years may be

noted that although it was

Bhutan's turn to host the next

summit, Thimpu declined be-

cause of inadequate facilities

and other practical difficulties.

tion, he said that there was a

consensus on the main ele-

ments relating to setting up of

the South Asian Development

as all member nations are sig-

natories to the Anti-Terrorism

Convention the factor now is

signing enabling clauses to

bring about legislations in the

200 shops gutted

in Sherpur:

10 injured

people were injured and about

200 shops were gutted as a

devastating fire raged through

Jhenigati Bazar in Jhenaigati

thana tonight (Friday), wit-

were admitted to Jhenigati

Hospital with serious burn in-

Of the injured, five people

Shopowners said the blaze

that originated from a diesel

shop at about 8 pm burned to

ashes goods worth about one

Gen Joshi new

Indian army

chief

Bipin Chandra Joshi, a highly-

decorated officer, as the chief

of its million-plus army today,

the western command, takes

over as chief of army staff on

July 1 after the retirement of

incumbent Sunith Rodrigues,

the Defence Ministry an-

term of three years as army

chief, a Defence Ministry

Joshi, 57, will serve a full

Joshi, who presently heads

NEW DELHI, Apr 9: India

Lieutenant General

nesses said, reports UNB.

juries.

crore taka.

reports AFP.

nounced.

SHERPUR, Apr 9: Ten

respective countries.

When asked, he noted that

Replying to another ques-

The Foreign Secretary also

discussed by the leaders.

Replying to a question, he

the Dhaka Centra' Jail to a more spacious area near Kashimpur in Gazipur district. When that project is implemented, quite a big area in the heart of old Dhaka will be available. It is for the town planners to consider whether, instead of utilising the area for any commercial or residential complex, which will further add to the existing congestion, the area could be used for a properly laid-out public park with ancillary facilities. This may largely compensate for the loss suffered by the old part of the city in the matter of open

City Corporation maintains small parks for children. Most of these parks are now in a deplorable state. The equipment for the children's games, such as swings, see-saws which were initially installed are no longer in use. These places are now filled with weeds and litters and are now haunts of undesirable elements. It behoves the City Corporation not only to maintain properly the existing parks in the wards but also to find out open spaces for children's parks in such wards which lack them.

In some of the wards, the

What is more important immediately, according to some people, is to ensure adoption of appropriate measures to keep the existing open spaces free from encroachments and also to remain vigilant that the atmosphere in these areas is not vi tiated through the presence of anti- social elements. This can be possible if the law-enforcing agencies, the City Corporation and the RAJUK remain alert and active in their respective spheres. We owe this to our children.

"We want a very successful summit in Dhaka," he said adding, on this occasion the leaders of the South Asian countries will also have the opportunity to have dialogue with each other on bilateral is-

The Prime Minister said it was late President Ziaur Rahman who laid the foundation of SAARC

here to initiate the second cycle of the summits," he said. Foreign Minister ASM

Mostafizur Rahman greeted him at the airport. Present at the airport were

Dhaka, and the high commissioners of the two countries.

Tonmoy remanded for five days

By Staff Correspondent

Fazlur Rahman Tonmoy alleged killer of Humayun Zahir, a top businessman was taken on five-day remand by the Detective Branch for interrogation yesterday.

Zahir was shot dead by two gunmen in the premises of his Dhanmondi residence Thursday morning. Immediately after the murder Tonmoy was arrested with a revolver loaded with three rounds of bullets.

Tonmoy was produced before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court yesterday and the Magistrate granted five-day police remand for questioning him in connection with the murder.

It was suspected that Zahir was murdered as a consequence of a feud among the directors of United Commercial Bank Limited and Janata

Insurance Company Limited. Detective Branch of police began interrogating Tonmoy in connection with the murder. An Assistant Commissioner of police was entrusted with the investigation. Police declined to make any comment for the interest of their investigation.

was buried at Banani graveyard after namaj-e-Janazas held at Lions Foundation at Agargaon yesterday morning and at the Baitul Mokarrom Mosque after Juma prayer.

Meanwhile Akhtaruzzaman Chowdhury MP, Commerce and Industry Secretary of Bangladesh Awami League in a statement last night denied his involvement in the murder of Humayun Zahir.

Chowdhury said that the news involving him in the murder published in a section of the press was fabricated and

Implicating his name in the constructive initiatives for promoting welfare of the people of the region.

Police picking up a demonstrator into a jeep after foiling a really jointly organised by Babri Masjid Action Committee and Islami Shasantantra Andolon near the south gate of Baitul Mukarram Mosque yesterday - Star photo 150 foreign journalists Azizul Huq held Demonstrators to cover 7th summit batoncharged:

Star Report

Some 150 foreign journalists, including those from the six South Asian nations, join their Bangladeshi colleagues today (Saturday) to cover the Seventh SAARC Summit in Dhaka.

Officials said that 95 mediamen from India, Pakistan Nepal, Shri Lanka, Bhutan and the Maldives have been assigned to cover the two-day

Most of them had reached Dhaka Friday evening while the others are expected this morning, they said.

Besides, 19 journalists representing different western newspapers, news agencies, televisions and radios have converged in the capital on the occasion.

The largest team of 42 journalists from both print and broadcasting media are expected from India, Press Information Department officials said Friday.

Twelve of them will accompany the Indian Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao who arrives in Dhaka from Bangkok this morning, they said.

A total of 20 journalists have arrived from Pakistan, 16 from Shri Lanka, 12 from Nepal and three each from Bhutan and the Maldives. Japanese NHK TV, the

Yumiuri Shimbun, the Mainichi Daily newspaper have sent their representatives to cover the Dhaka summit. The British Broadcasting

Corporation (BBC) has sent three of its journalists including Mark Tully to Dhaka. The Voice of America (VOA)

has assigned its Delhi-based correspondent Francies leinlier. The Mexican TV has sent a

three-man team to cover the SAARC summit

Tom Wagner, the South Asia Bureau chief of the Associated Press (AP) news agency, has joined his two colleagues in

Sudip Chakravorty of the India Today weekly, K T R Menon of The Times of India,

Second cycle

From Page 1 Col 5 Rahman dreamt the regional

forum but did not live to see it launched, will formally open the summit at 10 am at the International Conference Centre, specially spruced up for the region's most important gathering.

With flags of the seven member nations fluttering outside, the International Conference Centre is ready to welcome the summiteers. The summit's concluding session where the leaders will adopt the Dhaka Declaration will also take place at the centre.

King Jigme Singe Wangchuk of Bhutan, President Ranasinghe Premadasa of Shri Lanka, President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom of the Maldives, Prime Minister Mian Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan, Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala of Nepal are already in Dhaka for the summit. Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao of India will arrive this morning from a visit to Thailand hours before the summit is due to

The day's programmes begin at 9 in the morning. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will receive the six leaders at the International Conference Centre (ICC) at Teigaon.

The SAARC leaders will be given separate guard of honour at the ICC, the venue for inaugural and concluding sessions.

Inauguration ceremony of the summit begins at 10 am and the leaders will later plant saplings in the ICC premises.

The leaders will start a three-hour river cruise on the and SAARC will continue with 'Ostrich' at 2-15 pm and have their lunch on board. In case of bad weather alternative arrangements will be made in

the city. Prime Minister Begum

Sharif to solve repatriation problems Stranded Pakistanis General

Repatriation Committee (SPGRC) yesterday urged the Pakistani Prime Minister Miah Muhammad Newaz Sharif to solve the staggering repatriation problem, reports UNB.

SPGRC urges

By zone, reports AP.

agency as saying, reports AFP.

Addressing a press conference at the National Press Club, chief patron of SPGRC M Nasim Khan sought an inter view with the Pakistani Prime Minister and appealed to him to have a patient hearing of their plight and grievances.

He also requested Sarif, who is now in the capital to attend the 7th SAARC summit. to visit the nearest camp of Stranded Pakistanis to see their appalling condition.

He urged the Pakistani government to implement the Pakistan- Bangladesh joint declaration of August 12, 1992 for immediate repatriation of 3,000 families of stranded Pakistanis.

At a glance

From Page 1 Col 6 other summits were extended over either two or three-days.

The two-day seventh summit was originally scheduled in December but postponed twice as Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao failed to attend the summit because of communal disturbance India.

The seven-nation South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) faced a heavy jolt in 1989 when Colombo declined to host any summit with Indian troops present in the country and ultimately the summit could not be held that year.

Under a deal between Rajiv Gandhi and former Shri Lankan President R J Jayawardene Indian troops had been deployed to combat continued insurgency of the Tamil guerillas.

However, Bhutan did not host any summit so far because of its domestic problem and the cycle completed with the seventh summit in Dhaka where the regional grouping was launched in 1985.

The summits at a glance: 1st Summit Dhaka, Bangladesh, December 7-8, 1985

2nd Summit, Bangalore, India, November 16-17, 1986 3rd Summit, Kathmandu, Nepal, November 2-4, 1987

4th Summit, Islamabad, Pakistan, December 29-31, 1988 5th Summit, Male, the Maldives, November 21-23,

6th Summit, Colombo, Shri Lanka, December 21, 1991

2 Shantibahinimen killed in battle with BDR men

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Apr 9: Two Shantibahinimen were killed this morning in a gunbattle with BDR personnel at Kaptai under Rangamati district, official sources said.

The dead included an area commander of Shantibahini Lieutenant Padma Babu and another Bada Babu, sources added.

The gunbattle that lasted for half an hour, began at 10 am today when a group of armed Shantibahinimen ambushed and fired upon a BDR patrol at Barodom area of Kaptai under Rangamati dis-

The members of BDR retali-

ated forcing the rebels to flee into deep forest leaving behind the bodies of two of their com-Later BDR recovered the

two bodies along with two

Officials said Shantibahinimen had made the attack in violation of truce which they already agreed to extend upto May 31 for continuing the peace talks with the Parliamentary Committee of the government.

Koirala From Page 1 Col 4

Two tiny tots presented bouquets to the Nepalese Prime Minister and his daughter Sujata Koirala.

Nepalese Ambassador to Bangladesh Lok Bahadur Shrestha and Bangladesh Ambassador to Nepal Syed Muhammad Hossain were pre-

Airport formalities over, the Nepalese Prime Minister drove in a ceremonial motorcade to Hotel Sheraton where he will be staying during the summit.

Talking to newsmen at the airport, Koirala wished success of the summit. He said that SAARC is a forum for discus-

sion and it will take time to mature. Responding to a question.

he said, "At the end of the cold war foreign policies of the nations should focus on the economic sector and development. I think the SAARC can do that to eradicate poverty," he added.

In his brief statement to the press, Kotrala expressed great satisfaction over his visit to Bangladesh. He said it is a sentimental visit for him. He recalled the days when he visited Bangladesh as a schoolboy and later during Bangladesh's War of Liberation.

Summit of hope

them can be resolved by time alone, without conscious efforts on the part of responsible governments to tackle them with vigour, in a spirit of ac-

We welcome the fact that the SAARC leaders will take up frame of mind.

Here, the most immediate - almost a formidable - problem facing Bangladesh lies in getting water from the Ganges through an equitable arrangement with India. Without such an arrangement, parts of the country will face a drought, the failure of crops and probably a famine.

problem may be, the answer was offered by none other than Prime Minister Narasimha Rao to Begum Zia during their meeting in New Delhi last year. It is simply this: India will not let Bangladesh face hardship due to a serious shortage of water flowing through the

It is this commitment from the Indian leader that must be revived, notwithstanding the fatlure of the official level talks recently held here. Augmentation of water for

India, Bangladesh and Nepal should be part of the region's long-range planning. The sharing of the available water to help this country face the threat of drought is of immediate concern.

While it is possible, even necessary, to delink bilateral problems from regional cooperation, they cannot be placed in separate compartments in

This is where SAARC has much to learn from the success of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). Over the years, ASEAN members have developed a viable technique of sorting cut their bilateral problems, often privately during a summit, without letting them affect the momentum of re-

If ASEAN did not reach this stage in a matter of years,

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spokesman said.

ill motivated.

crime by the family of late Zahir was to tarnish his name and reputation, said Chowdhury in the statement.

Sharif From Page 1 Col 2

the conference.

"And we are happy to gather

Pakistan State Minister for Foreign Affairs Mohammad Siddiq Khan Kanju, already in

Meanwhile Humayun Zahir

The Awami League chief expressed the hope that despite these recent developments the SAARC leaders will not deviate from the policy of cooperation, friendship and good neighbourly relations. She said her party stands for strengthening regional cooperation and will support al

Khaleda Zia in the evening will host a banquet in honour of the heads of state and government at Hotel Sonargaon.

India and Pakistan have also set up their own media centre at the hotel. Wangchuk From Page 1 Col 5

Manash Ghosh of The State-

sman and Nitish Chakravorty.

the bureau chief of the Indian

Deccan Herald are due,

officials earlier told The Daily

Department (PID) has opened

a media centre at Sonargaon

Hotel, equipped with type

writers, telephones, telex and

fax machines.

The Press Information

arrival here for attending the seventh SAARC Summit here. Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman received the Bhutanese King at the tar-

mac of the VVIP Terminal. A tiny tot presented bouquets to the Bhutanese monarch.

Bhutan's Foreign Minister Dawa Tsering, who is already in the capital, the kingdom's Ambassador in Dhaka Karma Dorjee and senior officials of the foreign ministry were pre-

King Wangchuk expressed his optimism that the South Asian leaders during the summit would also be able to reach consensus on the proposal for South Asian Preferential Trade Arrangement (SAPTA). The people of the region would be largely benefited by SAPTA, he

The Bhutanese King hoped that the seventh SAARC summit under the leadership of host Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia would be a great

King Wangchuk said he was carrying the good wishes of the people of Bhutan for the

people of Bangladesh. Later, the king drove in a ceremonial motorcade to Sheraton Hotel where he will be staying.

Khaleda From Page 1 Col 5

Minister and the outgoing SAARC Chairman Shri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa during their talks discussed matters related to the seven nation regional forum and mutual issues.

Shri Lankan Foreign Minister Harold Herat accompanied the Shri Lankan President.

Nepalese Prime Minister Girija Prasad Kairala, Maldives President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom and Bhutanese King Jigme Singhe Wangchuk also discussed matters of mutual interest with the Bangladesh Prime Minister during their informal discussions.

Wife of the Maldives President Nasrina Gayoom accompanied President Gayoom while the daughter of Nepalese Premier, Sujata Kairala, accompanied her father.

Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, Foreign Secretary Reaz Rahman were among others present at the meet-

Gayoom

sented bouquet to the Maldives President and his wife Nasrina Gayoom Foreign Minister of

From Page 1 Col 3

Maldives Fathulla Jameel and the island's envoy to Dhaka, Ahmed Abdullah, were pre-Gayoom said the 7th sum-

mit of SAARC is very significant as the forum was born in Dhaka. The issues to be discussed at the summit are important

its efforts in promoting various fields of cooperation already identified, he added. President Gayoom and

members of his entourage drove in a ceremonial motor cade to Hotel Sheraton where the SAARC leaders will be staying during the summit.

From Page 1 Col 4

commodation.

these bilateral issues, on oneto-one basis, probably on the second day of the Summit. In our view, the deliberation on the first day or the agreement over the proposed Dhaka Declaration should generate the necessary goodwill among all concerned to approach the bilateral problems in the right

Formidable though the

Farakka.

nation-to-nation relationships.

gional cooperation.

there are no reasons why SAARC should despair over what some critics regard as its current failures. The capacity of the South Asian alliance to move forward is yet to be put on test. Herein lies the challenge facing the Summit in Dhaka - the Summit of Hope.