### India rejects US call to stop 'Prithvi' test

NEW DELHI, Feb 4: Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee today rejected US calls to stop testing india's indigenous Prithvi missile and said its deployment would depend on the situation at the time, reports Reuter.

"There is no question of abandoning the Prithvi programme." Mukherjee said in an interview with the news agency Press Trust of India

He said deployment of the medium-range missile which India successfully test-fired on January 27 would depend on whether any threat was perceived "and the situation prevailing at that point of

The test was followed by an increase in tension on India's border with Pakistan. islamabad regards the Prithvi missile as having been developed specifically to be fired at Pakistan.

Mukherjee dismissed comments from the US State Department that it had been a mistake to test-fire the missile and the move would fuel instability in the sub-con-

"We do not consider it a mistake," he told PTI. "We

have no intention of destabilising in any way the situation

Mukherjee said Pakistan was on a "buying spree" of military equipment including mirage jet fighters, submarines and missiles.

had happened in the last four decades, India cannot compromise its security requirements," he said. India and Pakistan have fought three wars since independence from Britain in 1947.

an imminent threat of a new conflict, Mukherjee said: "Let us hope it will not be there." He said nothing has been

heard from Pakistan since India welcomed Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's statement last month suggesting the two countries hold a summit.

"We are ready for the talks at any level, be it political or official, at any time", he said. "I hope there may be a possibility in the near future.'

# group of youths when it was

Our Pabna Correspondent adds: About 2,000 laminated identity cards were burnt to ashes when the office of the voters' identity card contractors near the district Judge's residence was set on fire at around noon yesterday. According to witnesses

and police, a group of youths suddenly entered Sah Ali Printing Press, the ID card contractors, poured petrol all over the place and ignited it with a burning stick.

in the arson attack. A case has been filed with the Pabna rested.

Our Natore Correspondent the district Election Commission office at 8 am yesterday. An official received minor burn injury in the ar-

telephone lines and fax serdamage could not be ascerthis report at around mid-

Our Sirajganj Correspondent adds: The opposition parties have called a dawn to dusk hartal at Sirajganj town on February 11, protesting the "election campaign" o Prime Minister (PM) Begum Khaleda Zia.

Party. Jamaat-e-Islami and other parties had called the hartal as the PM, a candidate from Sirajganj-2 (Sadar Constituency), is scheduled to start her election campaign on the day.

A tense situation was prevailing in the town. The district BNP and its front organisations yesterday announced the formation of special squads to ensure a smooth

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and pro BNP Jattyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) brought out separate processions in the town yesterday.

A chase and counter-chase took place as the two rival groups clashed on the local Suhrawardy Sarak. No casualties were reported.

In another incident, election posters of a Freedom Party candidate from Sirajganj-5 were set ablaze by unidentified youths near Jamtail railway station under Kamarkhand thana.

Microphones and rickshaws used for election campaign of Barrister Korban Ali, an Islami Shashontantra Andolon candidate, were damaged yesterday by opposition activists near Kaijhuri under

Shahjadpur thana. Another candidate, Abdul Mannan of Khelafat Andolon. could not address a scheduled public meeting at

Chowhali thana yesterday due to opposition resistance. Our Sherpur Correspondent adds: BNP supporters

called a dawn-to-dusk hartal in the town today protesting the beating up of a BNP candidate in the town yesterday. The BNP candidate from Sherpur Sadar-1, Md Nazrul

Islam, was beaten up by a group of opposition supporters when he came to the town for election campaign at about 12:30 pm yesterday. Nazrul Islam fell to the ground as the youths beat

A tense situation is prevailing in the town as the BNP supporters, many of them armed, brought out protest marches as a sequel to the incident. A number of shops were damaged by protesters. Police has been deployed in the town. BSS reports: An auto-rick-

shaw was set ablaze by a

prevailing in the region."

"In this context and what

Asked whether there was

Mukherjee declined to say whether India would sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) but pointed out that its position has been made known in the negotiations in Geneva.

being used for election cam-

paign for the BNP nominee

from Netrokona-2 at

position activists, also caused

injury to the five occupants of

the auto-rickshaw who were

One of the injured was

using a microphone at the

admitted to the Sadar hospi-

tal in a critical condition.

None could be arrested in

from Sylhet reports: At least

10 persons were injured

when supporters of a BNP

nominee came under attack

Moulvibazar district Satur-

day. Of the injured, four had

Kulaura thana under

The Kulaura thana unit of

Meanwhile, the election

A group of people attacked

Our Staff Correspondent

The youths, said to be op-

Nikhilnath here.

this connection.

# Anti-polls violence

From Page 1

union at Ullapara yesterday morning, UNB adds.

Cameras and furniture of

the office were also damaged Sadar thana. None was ar-

been admitted into the thana reported that a group of health complex. unidentified people set ablaze Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal brought out a silent procession to protest the 'planned attack' on the peaceful campaign of BNP nominee MM

Some valuable documents Shahin at Bhukshimuil. A were gutted in the fire while case has been registered. vices were disrupted. Fire campaign office of a candidate was burnt at the thana brigade later brought the fire headquarters of Jagannathpur under control. The extent of under Sunamgani district tained until the writing of

the campaign office of Saidur Rahman Rupa, a nominee of Jatiya Nagorik Sanghati, at about 8 am today. They also set it on fire. Police and neighbours brought the fire under control. A case has been lodged. Saidur Rahman

blamed the opposition activists for the incident. Awami League, Jatiya BSS reports from Narayanganj: Ten persons were injured, one of them seriously, in a scuffle during an election campaign for BNP candidate and industrialist Mohammad Ali at Adamjee

Jute Mills premises last evening. According to police. Mohammad Ali's Pajero Jeep came under cocktail attack by anti-election activists who hurled the explosives at the election campaign of the PM. vehicle causing its damage in Pro Awami League the rear side.

The incident took place as soon as Mohammad Ali came out of the office of Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal within the mill premises, over one hundred crackers were blasted. Sidderganj police said.

#### 50 injured in Sylhet clash

From Staff Correspondent SYLHET, Feb 4: About fifty persons were injured in a clash between two rival groups at Kaligani bazar of Jakiganj thana this afternoon.

Of the injured, five were admitted to the Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hos-

The clash took place over taking possession of the land of some shops which were

gutted in a fire Thursday . Both the groups used lethal weapons.

#### 8000 missing Bosnians are dead'

BRATUNAC, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Feb 4: Several thousand Bosnian Muslims missing since rebels Serbs overran the UN-designated enclave of Srebrenica last July are dead, UN rapporteur for human rights Elisabeth Rehn said here today, reports

Rehn said she had been informed by a Serb official in the region, Mireslav Deronic, that the Muslims, numbered at between 3,000 and 8,000 according to different estimates, had been "killed in battle" and were "buried around (the Srebrenica region)."

#### **Editor: Mahfuz Anam**

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People sleep out of doors following a massive earthquake in southwestern China's Yunan province Saturday. This photo was taken from video footage by Chinese televi-- AFP/UNB photo sion.

#### killed, 15 hurt as rivals clash. in Natore

From Our Correspondent NATORE, Feb 4: At least one person was killed and about 15 others were injured. 10 of them seriously, during a clash between two rival

district on Saturday morning. A dispute over potato cultivation was the cause of

Groups at Halsa village of the

sadar thana under Natore

the clash. The deceased was identified as Rajab Ali. 22. He died on the spot. Of the injured, three were admitted to Rajshahi Medical College hospital and ten to Natore sadar hospital. Three persons were arrested.

#### One 'tortured' to death by police in Natore

From Our Correspondent NATORE, Feb 4: One Habiluddin, 21, was allegedly tortured to death by the police in village Guerillabari of Lalpur thana of the district last night.

Habiluddin, accused of burglary, was arrested by a police patrol at 2.30 am from the village. According to the villagers, the six-member patrol including three Assistant Sub-Inspectors, tortured Habiluddin on the spot dur-

ing which he died. The villagers held the six policemen who denied the charges of torture. They were later released after the TNO and the OC of the thana intervened.

However, the Superintendent of Police of Natore district Aminul Islam, who visited the spot later told this correspondent that Habiluddin apparently died of heart

#### 15 hurt as BNP factions clash in Pabna

PABNA, Feb 4: At least 15 people were injured, three seriously, in a clash between two rival groups in the town today, reports UNB.

Witnesses said the supporters of pourashava Chairman Sheikh Shaidullah Bachchu and JCD leader Anisul Haque Babu locked in the clash at 12 in the noon when two processions of the rival groups confronted at Kacharipara area.

The poura Chairman is a supporter of dissident BNP leader Azizur Rahman Arzu who is contesting as an independent from Pabna-5 (Sadar) constituency in the coming election while the JCD leader is a supporter of BNP candidate Rafiqul Islam

Bakul. A case was filed with Sadar police in this connection.

## Chinese quake toll rises to 240

BEIJING, Feb 4: The deadliest earthquake to hit China in eight years has killed above 240 people, injured 14,000 and left hundreds of thousands of homeless huddled in freezing weather and jolted by aftershocks, officials said today. report agencies.

The Red Cross Society of China appealed for international aid, saying it had informed the International Red Cross and sent five medical teams and 900,000 yuan (dellar 108,000) worth of food, clothes, medicines and quilts to victims. More than 2,000 People's

Liberation Army troops were helping to dig out survivors in remote mountain villages The quake hit at 7:14 pm (11 h 14 gmt) Saturday, with

its epicentre between Lijiang and Zhongdian countries in the northwest of the mountainous province, near its frontier with Tibet. The population is made up mainly of Tibetan and naxi minorities. Eighteen aftershocks, most of magnitude 4, shook

the area on Sunday, said a provincial official, who gave his name as Mr. Xia. The heaviest casualties were in the county's remote

two dozen villages, county of-

They said the toll of deaths and injuries was incomplete because communications were poor and authorities had not yet reached some of the stricken villages to assess the extent of the damage.

Vice Premier Wu Bangguo lead a delegation of officials to the disaster area yesterday to lead the rescue work by medical teams and about 2,000 soldiers and local militiamen, Xinhua said.

Rescuers searched for victims throughout the night. said Wang Ze. a provincial government spokesman. The evening television news showed a rescue worker carrying a quake victim on his back and medics attending to other victims lying on the ground on stretchers in the

About 330,000 people live in the stricken area, the television report said.

"There are a lot of old buildings in the old part of town and there's a lot of damage there," said Don Lytton, an American who lives in Kunming and was visiting Li-

The damage to the town's modern buildings appeared much less severe, he said.

# Sonargaon incident

From Page 1

Twenty eight employees of the hotel, including some office-bearers of the employees union, were arrested on Wednesday last following filing of a case by the hotel's general manager.

"This is an isolated incident. This will not strain the good bilateral relations be-Japan and Bangladesh," said Mosharafullah, also joint secretary of the ministry of civil aviation and tourism. He was made MD of

the hotel recently. He said both the meetings decided to find out the cause of incident and try for an amicable settlement. "The (Japanese) Ambassador has assured his full cooperation

in this regard". Dwelling on the alleged irregularities done by the hotel management, he said, "It was detected that many purchases were made irregularly." Purchase of 1500 pieces of wrist watch for Taka 9.45 lac and printing of the 1996 diary for Taka 7 lac may be mentioned," he said.

Asked if there is any relationship between the alleged irregularities and the State Ministers' taking over as chairman of the hotel, the MD said, "the minister after his takeover had ordered the owning company to improve the financial performance of the hotel and make arrangement to recover in the next five years the accumulated

loss amounting to Taka 57 crore." After the takeover. gross operating profit increased by 10 per cent in comparison to previous months. The state minister was

made chairman of the HIL by the prime minister on July 13. 1995 Asked whether the HIL could check the account books of the hotel under the

management agreement, an aide of the MD said, "Yes we However, the MD admitted that the agreement he

had signed with the employ-

ees union after Tuesday's in-

cident was a violation of the agreement with the Tokyo Hotels International which runs the hotel under the business name of Pan Pacific Hotel According to him, the services of Ahsan Khan, who has been working as Executive House Keeper for about seven years with "full credit, was terminated without

showing any reason." "All employees of the hotel were shocked to hear the news of Ahsan's termination" and that led to the incident.

"Various actions and decisions of the present management of the hotel favouring a group of employees, hostile treatment towards the leaders of the employees union and allowing extra privileges to some of the executives made the situation volatile," he added.

### Strike in Pakistan today to back Kashmiris

# Benazir urges Al-Faran to free westerners

ISLAMABAD, Feb 4: Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto today appealed to Kashmiri guerillas holding four westerners to unconditionally free the "innocent" tourists kidnapped more than six months ago, reports

Benazir made the appeal during a nationally-televised address a day before a government-sponsored countrywide general strike to demonstrate solidarity with Muslim separatist groups fighting against Indian rule in Kashmir. Rallies have been planned

by Pakistani ruling and opposition parties for tomorrow, which has been declared a public holiday throughout the country by the government. as on similar occasions in the The observance this year

rocket attack on a mosque on

the Pakistani side in Kashmir

closely follows a January 26

that left 20 people dead and rekindled mutual tensions. Islamabad has blamed the attack on Indian troops, but New Delhi has denied the accusation. "During this holy month of

Ramadan I call upon the kidnapers to unconditionally release the hostages and put an end to this incident which has harmed the cause of Kashmiris," she said. "They should release these

innocent tourists if they have any love for the Kashmiri people," she said. Britons Paul Wells, 23, and Keith Mangan, 33, and American Donald Hutchings, 42,

were kidnapped by the shadowy Al-Faran group on July 4 while trekking in the Himalayas in the Indian-administered southern two-thirds of Kashmir. German Drik Hasert was

seized on July 8, the same

day as Norwegian Hans-Chris-

the kidnappers in August.

tian Ostro, who was killed by

Muslim militants in exchange for the four hostages, but has not been in contact with the Indian authorities since November 26. She reiterated Pakistani suspicions about Al-Faran, saying "we do not know whether it is an Indian

Al-Faran has demanded

the release of 15 imprisoned

breakaway group of Kashmiri fighters." She vowed continued support for the Kashmiri "freedom struggle," but said Pakistan was ready for negotiations with India to resolve the Kashmir dispute.

"Every Pakistani man.

woman and child is with

counter-intelligence unit or a

their Kashmiri brethren and shall remain with them till our last breath," Benazir said. warning that the sub-continent would not achieve peace until the Kashmir issue is

solved.

#### 300 mw power plant MOU signed with US co

An American electricity generation company yesterday signed an accord with the authorities in Dhaka for setting up a 300-megawatt power plant in Bangladesh. reports UNB.

The power plant will involve an estimated investment of 310 million US dollars equivalent to Tk 1270

The memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was initialled by Mirza Tasadduk Hossain Beg. Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, and Ashraful Alam, President of Al and Associates Inc. who is also president of the America-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry, officials said.

This is the 11th MOU signed since power generation opened up for private participation.

#### Dacoits swoop on trawlers

From Staff Correspondent BARISAL, Feb 4: A group of 20 to 25 dacoits swooped on three fishing trawlers - FB Ruma, FB Anwar and FB Nurjahan - in the Bay of Bengal some 25 kilometres from Kuakata of Patuakhali last night. The dacoits looted fish, fishing nets, engine parts and about 7 lakh taka and beat the fishermen on board mercilessly.

According to the trawler owners Association of Patharghata, the dacoits looted all the goods at gun point

#### No plan to install fire extinguishers at Bangabazar

Star Report

The union leaders of the markets of Bangabazar are planning to reconstruct the shops gutted in the January 29 fire, without installing fire extinguishers. "Reconstruction of the

markets is our priority. The fire extinguishers are expensive and at this stage when the reconstruction is not yet over we cannot think about it," said joint Secretary of the Bangabazar Shop Owners Association Ruhul Amm, talking to The Daily Star about their future plans.

According to fire brigade officials, there should have been provision for dry powder extinguishers in the market that costs roughly Tk 2200 each. The markets, totally de-

stroyed in a fire in November last, was partially reconstructed without installing any fire fighting device and was reopened recently. Earlier, the union leaders

guishers would be installed Bangabazar, a cluster of four markets, is being reconstructed at a cost of about Tk six crore, association leaders

had promised that fire extin-

#### Traffic jam at Aricha continues

MANIKGANJ, Feb 4: Some 1,000 trucks loaded with various kinds of goods remained stranded at Aricha, Nagarbari and Daulatdia ghats for the last 24 hours till Sunday afternoon due to inadequate ferry services, reports

Transport workers said

more than 100 trucks are on

the queue with perishable goods like fruits and vegeta-"The traffic jam was caused by the post-hartal rush of vehicles to be plied through the Dhaka-Aricha

DGM of Aricha Sector of BI WTC while talking to UNB. He also said the transportation capacity of the ferries has been further shrunk with the sharp fall in water level in the river Jamuna.

highway," said Abdur Rashid,

#### Polls manifesto

From Page 1 on February 11. The BNP

chief is also contesting the forthcoming polls from Rajshahi-2 and Sirajganj-2 constituencies. The PM is yet to plan any visit to Bogra-7 from where she has already been elected unopposed.

Meanwhile, the main stream opposition had announced a dawn-to-dusk hartal in Sirajganj to resist the PM's planned tour there on January 11. Housing and Public Works

Minister Rafiqui Islam, Mia, who attended yesterday's meeting with the PM, told The Daily Star that the party's manifesto was now almost ready for announcement'. He. however, added that the announcement would be made shortly. Asked on the PM's cam-

paign tour, Rafiq, also a member of the BNP standing committee, said she would go to selected areas only. The minister also denied press reports on the PM's scheduled visits to Chittagong and Rajshahi where the opposition parties had already planned to resist the visits. "She did not have any such plan as reported by the press." he said.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister is likely to address an election rally in the city before the polls.

# The Midnight File

Kabariti Jordan's new PM

AMMAN, Feb 4: Foreign Minister Abdel Karim Kabariti was appointed today to replace Zeid Ibn naker as Jordan's Prime Minister and tasked with forming a new government, the royal palace announced, reports AFP.

### FBCCI chief for devaluation of taka

FBCCI president Salman F Rahman yesterday strongly advocated devaluation of the taka following the downward currency adjustments by the neighbours to remain competitive in the world market. reports UNB.

"India has recently adjusted its currency to Rs 37 from Rs 32 a dollar, but our currency remained at nearly the same level for long. How can we compete with them?" he told a gathering in the evening.

Addressing an iftar party in the auditorium of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Rahman said the macrostability started sliding because of a staggering political impasse and the economy was signalling another spell or stagnation.

#### Charles to spend \$ 10m for Diana

LONDON, Feb 4: Prince Charles has agreed to spend as much as seven million pounds (10.5 million dollars) for town and country homes as part of a divorce settlement with his estranged wife Princess Diana, The Mail Today newspaper reported, says Reuter.

It said Charles, heir to the British throne, had agreed to personally bear the cost of a six million pound (9 million dollars) house in London and a one million pound (1.5 million dollars) country retreat for Diana.

It quoted a "royal source" as saying Diana, who currently resides in London's Kensington Palace, had driven a hard bargain in negotiations over a divorce setllement. Charles and Diana sepa-

rated in 1992 and newspa-

pers have reported in recent

weeks that Charles's mother.

Queen Elizabeth, has ordered them to divorce. Diana said in a controver sial television interview last autumn that she would not seek a divorce but would leave the matter up to Charles. Both Charles and Diana have admitted committing adultery during their

#### troubled marriage. 4 get life term From Page 1

ment for one year more. The case in brief is that the victim, Nuruzzaman Dulal, a BA examinee was on his way back to the college hostel on the night of May 23. 1993. When he reached near the hostel gate, the accused persons attacked him with sharp weapons. He succumbed to his injuries at the Sylhet Medical College Hos-

The convicted persons are. Delwar Hossain Dilu. Apil Uddin, Shah Mustakim Ali Sagar, all absconding and Abdul Momin.

### DU gunfight

From Page 1

teargas shells only after the

fight was over. At one stage the BCL activists left for Salimullah Hall area in the face of heavy counter-fire, from towards the Surja Sen Hall area. Later, the JCD activists returned to the venue of BCL's rally and burnt a banner and damaged the microphones.

Witnesses said, angry JCD

activists assaulted a number

of photo-journalists when they were taking photographs of the burnt and damaged articles. During the gunfight, general students ran pell mell in panic and some of them, including a number of female students, got hurt while

student who fainted was rushed to the hospital. The JCD activists later held a rally at the Aparajeo Bangla. They blamed the BCL for the incident.

BCL also blamed JCD for

the incident and condemned

the attack on the photo-jour-

running for safety. A female

nalists in a rally held in front of the Dhaka University Snacks (DUS). Meanwhile, the Dhaka University Journalists' Association (DUJA) in a statement condemned the attack on the

photo-journalists during the incident. Ganotantrik Chhatra Oikya (GCO), a conglomeration of some left leaning student organisations, submitted a memorandum to the Vice-Chancellor of DU demanding immediate release of the students arrested during the raid in the Jagannath and Salimullah halls.

They also demanded judicial inquiry into the matter and exemplary punishment to those responsible for the incidents. The All Party Students

Parishad of Jagannath Hall in a meeting yesterday announced a protest programme against the police attack in the hall. The programme includes

gherao of the VC's office today at 11 00 am and wearing of black badges for three days from tomorrow

He said inflation neared double digit, foreign exchange reserve eroded to below the level of three months' import payment capacity and, both trade and fiscal deficits widened in recent months.

The recent government measures taken to tame the growing inflation by squeezing credit may result in a drop in growth of gross domestic product (GDP) this year, Rahman said.

The FBCCI chief also noticed increased spendings in public sector while the stateowned establishments continued to incur loss to the tune of Tk 2.500 crore a year, creating strains on exchequer.

Sensing a "very very seri-

ous situation" in future, he blamed the present political situation for the downslide in economy. The condition would not improve until a new government takes over through a credible election contested by all, he said. Rahman, who recently

floated a political pressure group called Samriddha Bangladesh Andolan, said the business community for long had been pressing for a suitable environment to tap the opportunities unfolded by the free market economy.

### Special launch service for Eid

From Page 1

The Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) has arranged special launch services during Eid holidays, reports BSS. These launches will be

operated before, during and

after the Eid holidays from

February 13 through February 23 on various routes. According to a BIWTA press release, special launch services will ply on the following routes:

Dhaka-Bhola, Dhaka-Barisal, Dhaka-Bandura, Dhaka-Barguna, Dhaka-Chandpur, Dhaka-Ichuli, Dhaka-Madaripur, Dhaka-Sureswar, Dhaka-Kalaya, Dhaka-Torkey, Dhaka-Borhanuddin, Narayanganj-Chandpur, Narayanganj-Munshinganj. Narayanganj-Taltala. Narayangant-Ramchandrapur. Narayanganj-Machuakhal. Narayanganj-Sureswar, Nayarayanganj-Torkey, Narayan-

#### ganj-Motlab-Bhanga. **Professionals**

From Page 1 ready to show about 25 per cent of votes cast on February

Hasina alleged that the government had threatened the union parishad and pourashava chairmen with dissolution of the local government bodies if they do not assist the government. "This interim government has no right to dictate an elected body and force them to work

in favour of them," she said. The Awami League chief requested the members of armed forces to go back to barracks, saying that the government was using them in the name of arms-recovery

not be good for them, the army is losing its popularity for helping this government, the opposition leader said asking the government to stop "the game started in the name of arms drive." Accusing the Home Minister of handing out arms to

the "terrorists" of BNP and

JCD, Hasina said the drive

"Consequence of this will

would be effective only if the law-enforcing agencies take that list for netting unauthorised arms. She urged the observer groups not to observe the polls, saying that there is no need of monitoring this elec-

tion in which no opposition

political is taking part.

College-University Teachers' Association President Prof M Qamruzzaman, Mohila Samity President Dr Neelima Ibrahim, Justice Debesh Bhattacharya, Bar Council Vice-President Advocate Shamsul Hug Chowdhury. Group Theatre Federation Chairman Nasiruddin Yusuf Bachchu. BMA leader Dr Shafiqur Rahman, play actor Khaled Khan, primary teachers' association leader Sufia Khatun, engineer Ibrahim Mia, swimmer Mosharraf Hossain, musician Samar Das. former president of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists Habibur Rahman Milon, DUTA president Prof Zahrul Huq. trade union leaders Shimul Biswas and Nurul Islam also spoke

#### Book fair From Page 1

ers gallery is also not seen According to the stall owners, this year's lacklustre

atmosphere at the Ekushey Book Fair is due to the "unhappy" incidents centring the opening and the events later They also said the 10 am

to 5 pm timing of the fair is another cause of less atten dance People come to the fair after 'iffar but we are to close at 5 pm