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**MRANGS GROUP** 

## **Ashura**

VOL. IX NO.93 REGD. NO. DA 781

today The holy Ashura, the 10th of

served in the country today with due solemnity, reports Imam Hussein, the grandson of Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (SM), and 71 of his relatives and

day in 680 AD at Karbala, some 110 km south off Baghdad. Since then, Muslims across the world observe the 10th of

followers were killed on this

Muharram with due religious fervour. The day is a public holiday.

President Shahabuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina gave separate messages on the occasion.

Bangladesh Television and Betar will broadcast special programmes highlighting sig-nificance of the day while newspapers will publish special articles. See Page 12 Col 3

### Cabinet strengthens privatisation agenda

By Nurul Kabir and Monjur Mahmud

The Cabinet yesterday approved the government's privatisation policy, designed to facilitate handing-over of the state-owned enterprises (SOEs) to the workers and employees on a priority basis.

The policy has also created scope for punishing those violating terms of agreements after taking over the divested SOEs. "If someone fails to fulfil conditions, the government would take back the enterprise concerned," Commerce and Industries Minister Tofail Ahmed told The Daily Star.

"The government would very soon enact laws in line with the

The privatisation policy was approved at the weekly · Cabinet meeting held with the Prime Minister in the chair. ...

According to the new policy. a 15-member Privatisation Commission (PC), will come into being. The chairman and two members will be full-time. Other members of the Commission will include six MPs, five ex-officio members, a representative from a professional group to be nominated by the government.

The five ex-officio members are the industries secretary, commerce secretary, finance secretary, SEC chairman and FBCCI president.

The Commission will identify and prepare statements on the SOEs, scrutinise tenders and take necessary measures to hand-over the industrial units concerned. It will also estimate the assets and liabilities of the SOEs to be privatised.

The Commission will conduct necessary studies to implement privatisation policy of the government. If there is any barrier to privatisation, the

Commission will take legal measures to remove them.

The Commission will decide on privatising an SOE, in case a second bidding for the unit does not attract buyers. But if the price of a unit, with long-term loans, is over Tk 25 crore, the Commission will require government approval before making a final decision about it.

### Holiday

The offices of The Hally Star will remain closed today on the occasion of Holy Ashura. Therefore, there will be no issue of the newspaper tomor-

### Inside Today

#### Talking Good Governance

Column: Lest We Forget... by Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad Page 4

Focus

Assets into liabilities: Devaluing Bangladesh's political prospects Page 5

### Prayer Timings

April 27		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-30	4-35
Zohr	12-45	1-20
Asr	4-45	4-55
Maghrib	6-30	6-33
Esha	7-30	7-35
Source: Is	slamic Fe	oundation

#### INTERNET: http://www.dailystarnews.com

BAISAKH 14, 1406 BS

DHAKA TUESDAY APRIL 27, 1999

MUHARRAM 10, 1420 HIJRI

16 PAGES: PRICE TAKA 6.00

Sher-e-Bangla's

37th anniversary

of death today

of Sher-e-Bangla A K Fazlul

Huq will be observed today, re-

taken elaborate programmes to

will place wreaths at the mazar

of Sher-e-Bangla at 8 am and Awami Jubo League at 8.15 am.

ports UNB.

observe the day.

The 37th death anniversary

Different political and socio-cultural organisations have

Bangladesh Awami League

President Shahabuddin

Barisal divisional youth as-

sociation will hold a discussion meeting on the life and activi-

ties of Sher-e-Bangla at the VIP lounge of Jatiya Press Club at 5

See Page 12 Col 6

BNP's letters

to foreign

missions

Mannan Bhuiyan wrote letters

to the foreign missions in

Dhaka informing them of the

Oppositon plan for widespread

anti-government movement for

"undemocratic and obdurate at-

"Under these circumstances

... I am afraid the opposition is

left with no alternative other

than to start with a widespread

and intensified movement

against the government," he

diplomats who met with BNP

Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia on March 25 at Hotel Shera-

The letters were sent to

"I hope you and your gov-

ernment will be able to see rea-

son behind such actions and

view the situation with under-

standing and compassion,

Bhuiyan said in his letter on

Bombs exploded

near PMO

By Staff Correspondent

youths exploded bombs from a

microbus when it stopped be-

fore policemen posted at the

gate of the Prime Minister's Of-

fice at Tejgaon yesterday after-

The youths managed to flee.

Police later rounded up 10

youths from Tejgaon and Bijoy

Sarani in connection with this

the youths had hired the mi-

crobus from Chashara in

Tejgaon police said two of

All eight then started to-

rid of them. When he saw police

A group of unidentified

titude of the ruling party." re-

ports UNB.

April 19.

noon.

incident .

BNP secretary general Abdul

Ahmed and Prime Minister

Sheikh Hasina have issued separate messages on this occa-

# Thousands of computers go out of order

Muharram, commemorating Star Report the supreme Sacrifice of Hazrat Innumerable computers Imam Hussein (RA), will be obacross the country went out of order yesterday due to a widely circulated destructive computer virus that is programmed to affect computers operating on Windows 95 and 98 on April 26

> At least 3000 computers belonging to high profile organisations were affected, according to reports received by Bangladesh Computer Samity.

Besides, thousands of computers used by individuals were also affected severely, its chief Aftabul Islam said. There are at least 50,000 computers in use across the country, he said.

Data stored in most of these computers may be indirectly recovered, but none of these computers will be functional without erasing all the data by "reformatting" the Hard Drive. Computer Samity General Secretary Ahmed Hasan said

About 80 computers of Youngone, a Korean company here. and many computers belonging to Islamic Bank, Beximco Pharma, Dell Computers, Dolphin Computers, City Cell and even the US Embassy were reported to be affected by this virus that destroys the "hard disk partition".

### Virus epidemic hits country

Some network computers of Dhaka Stock Exchange were also affected. Leading Internet service provider. Proshika Computers, has also become a

victim. Panicked by the sudden virus epidemic, computer users were crowding computer service providers in the city yesterday. The service providers gave a general suggestion to keep computers shut till midnight last

Kagoj earlier said the virus, named CIH 1.2, was to hit on April 26 to mark the 13th anniversary of the Chernobyl dis-

The CIH virus, originating from Taiwan in middle of 1998. spread rapidly through the internet and software pirates. "It spread across the world in seven days," Ahmed Hasan said. "It affects the EXE files of software based on Windows 95 and 98 and goes almost unno-A report in the daily Bhorer ticed till it is intended to hit."

Many latest anti-virus programmes like Norton Anti Virus or NAVC, Norton's Kill ClH, W9x, etc. could prevent the disaster if computer users were cautious about the virus attack. These 'virus guards' are available free in the Internet. Interested users can obtain one such 'guard' from the SYMANTEC

Web Site. This virus however does not affect Windows Version 3 or DOS Programmes as it only affects Windows 95. Therefore, the virus had to be removed from "boot disk" or DOS by running certain anti-virus programmes.

The CIH virus gradually destroys Hard Disk "partition" or the Hard Disk information part, and then affects the BIOSthe built-in operation language which helps Windows 95/98 communicate with computer hardware. "Whoever created it, is definitely a misguided genius," commented Ahmed Hasan.

According to Tanvir Ehsanul Haque of Spectrum Computers, CÎH virus has been a menace in the city for the last six months. He said, CIH has several versions and when these affect computers silently. See Page 12 Col 3

# Terrorists in Chuadanga slaughter 7

From Our Correspondent

CHUADANGA, Apr 26: Seven persons were slaughtered at Bishnupur village under Damurhuda thana in the district Sunday night by terrorists of outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party.

The victims are Atiar Rahman, 50, Mohiruddin, 40, Inamul Hoque, 30, Akalay, 46, Abdul Hannan, 32, Moslem, 38, and Fazlur Rahman, 45.

Damurhuda thana police said the terrorists, numbering 40 to 50, entered the village at about 10 pm, kidnapped them to Bishnupur High School ground on gun point and slaughtered. The victims were reportedly

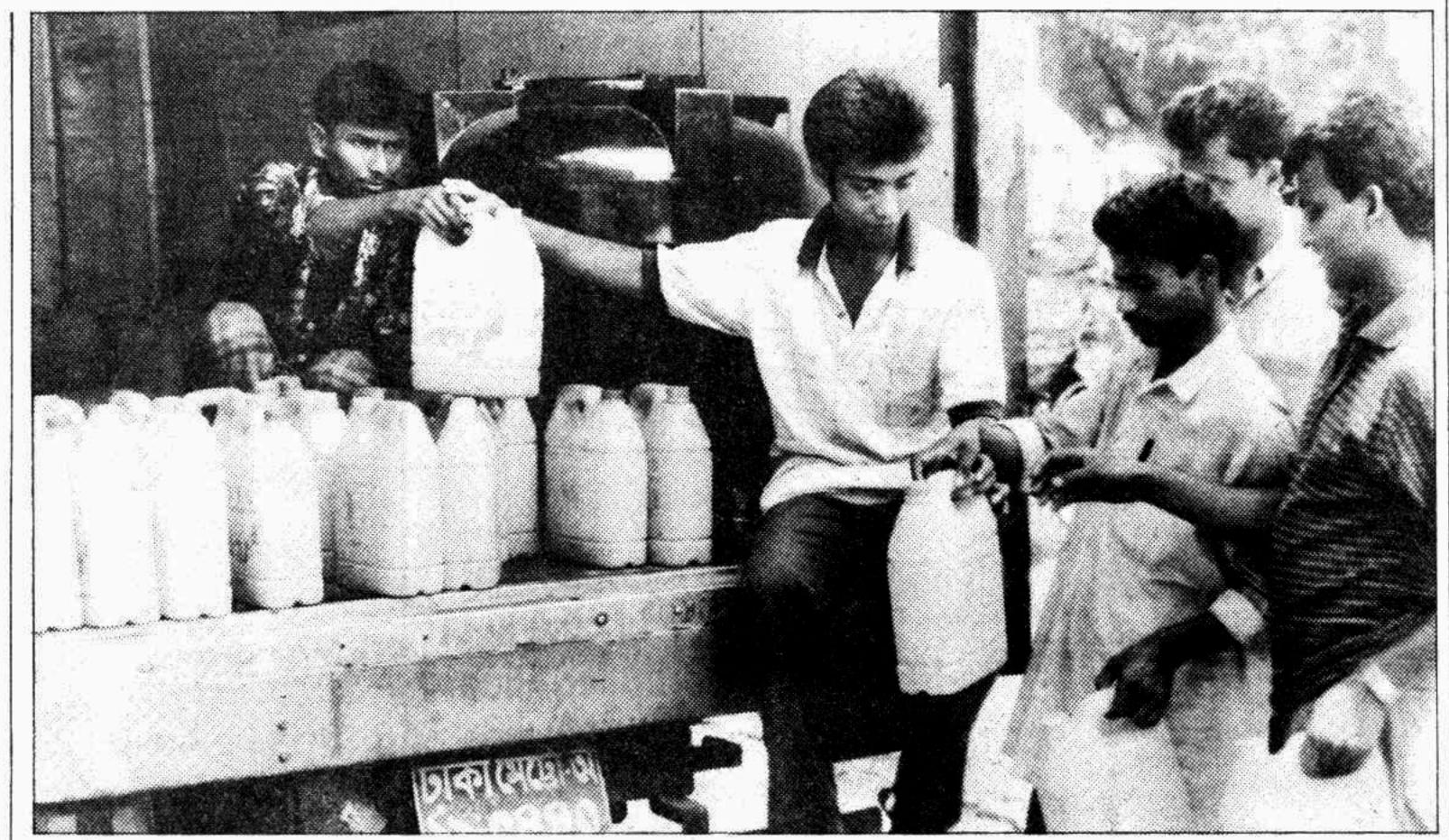
apolitical and "innocent people", Chairman of local Union Parishad Ali Hossain told The Daily Star today.

The incident terrified the villagers, some of whom have fled their homes, villagers said. The SP, Additional SP and ASPs of Chuadanga visited the spot today.

Before going to the spot, the SP told local newsmen that the killings were done by members of 'Sabuj group' of Purbo Banglar Communist Party.

Ali Hossain said Bishnupur village is a stronghold of the "Nantu group" which is rival to the Sabuj group of Purbo Banglar Communist Party.

He said the Nantu group is now under 'severe pressure' from law enforcers after the Home Minister's recent declaration, launching the combing operation. "They (Nantu group) are now scattered. Taking the advantage, the 'Sabuj group' has become active. They did the massacre to create panic in the See Page 12 Col 6



Selling water in jerry cans in Ramna and Fulbaria areas is becoming a good business.

- Photo : A K M Mohsin

### Lok Sabha dissolved, fresh polls by Oct

From Pallab Bhattacharya

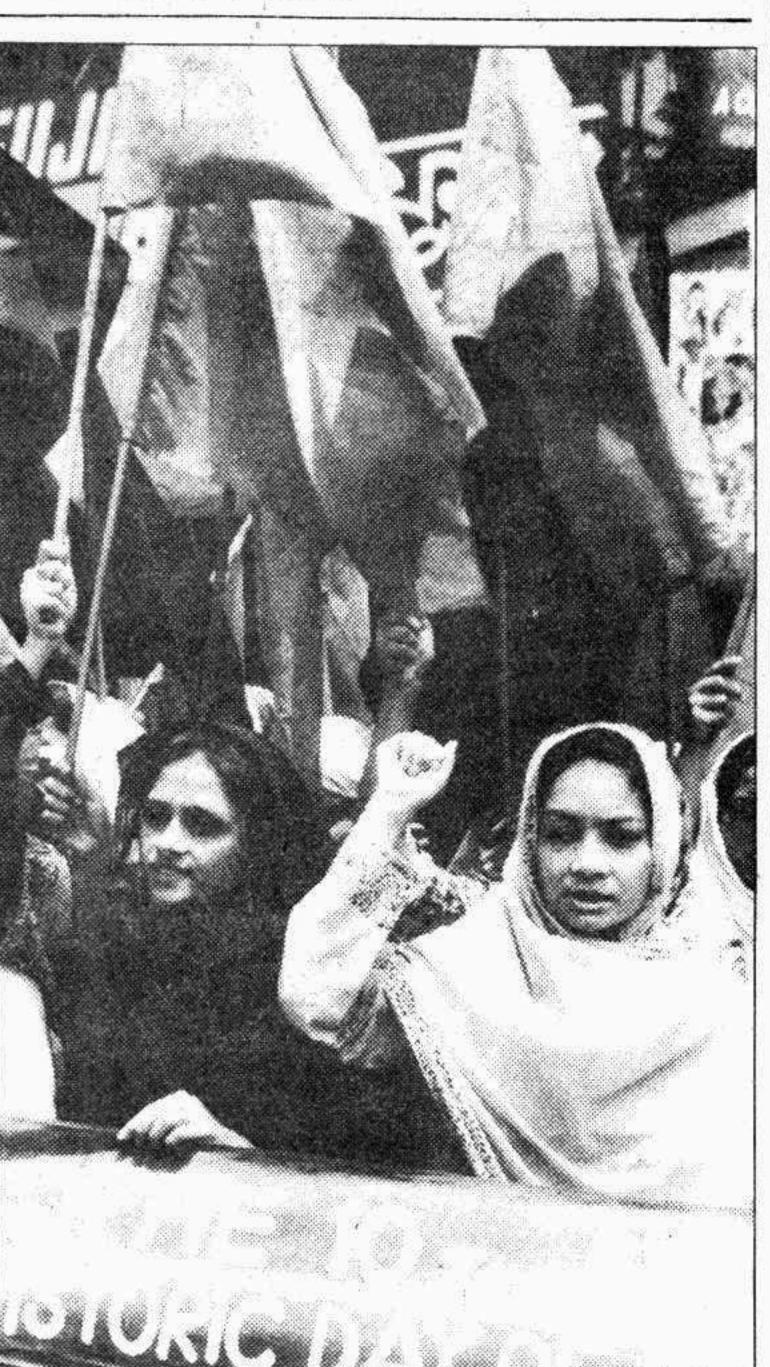
NEW DELHI, Apr 26: Indian President K R Narayanan today dissolved the Lok Sabha. paving the way for fresh general elections either in June or in September-October this year.

This followed India's BJPled government's recommendation for fresh polls a day after frantic efforts by the mainstream opposition spearheaded by the Congress to cobble up an alternative floundered amidst

bitter acrimony. The cabinet of Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee adopted a resolution at its 90-minute meeting here this afternoon and advised the President to dissolve the Lower House of Parliament and hold elections as early as possible. "The president has, by a presidential order ... dissolved the 12th Lok Sabha today," a

communique from Narayanan's office said. It said the government's recommendation to disband parliament and hold elections as early as possible "converged with the president's own analysis of the situation." The cabinet meeting fol-

lowed a meeting between Narayanan and Vajpayee last night when the President sought the cabinet recommendation for dissolution of Lok Sabha as he found no political group enjoyed a viable majority to form an alternative government. See Page 12 Col 1



A procession was brought out in the city yesterday on the occasion of 'Holy Ashura'. — Star photo

### Water sells at Tk 5 a jerry can!

By Shehab Ahmed Private entrepreneurs are trying to cash in on the present crisis in water supply in the city, selling water in simple

buckets, jerry cans and bottles, branding those as mineral wa-But one company, operating from Maulvibazar area, has taken the lead. It is supplying water from a deep tube-well

the city limits. It has developed a network targeting shopkeepers and peo-ple mainly in the old part of the city, selling a five-litre jerry can for Tk 5.

across Buriganga river outside

"We are providing at least 10,000 litres daily to people in See Page 12 Col 8

#### Hartal observed in Jessore

JESSORE, Apr 26: A daylong hartal was observed peacefully in the district town today, reports UNB.

Offices, educational institutions and shops remained closed during the dawn-to-dusk hartal while all modes of transport did not ply on the

The district unit of BNP called the hartal protesting a murder case filed against former BNP minister Tariqul Is-

The former minister was accused of killing R M Saiful Alam Mukul, editor of Dainik Runner. The hartal was followed by a

protest rally at Daratana square, which was chaired by district BNP president Shahidul Islam Nayan. The meeting threatened to

launch greater movement in the

southwestern region unless the

Awami League MP Kader

Siddiqui yesterday hinted at a

new political organisation of

freedom fighters in the offing

for preserving their interests

risking even his exit from his

own party and parliament, re-

liament in the interest of the

freedom fighters. I'll not hesi-

tate to say 'Assalamu Alaikum'

to my party if it is disturbed by

my activities," he told a gather-

joined the exchange-of-views

meeting at Engineers Institu-

tion Auditorium. They ad-

At the call of Kader Siddiqui

400 freedom fighters

ing of freedom fighters.

"I'm ready to leave the par-

ports UNB.

charge sheet is withdrawn im-

mediately. The meeting also announced a hunger strike on Wednesday.

### Administrative corruption at SEC alleged

Star Report

Discontent among members of Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) officers and employees is brewing over alleged irregularities over recruitment and promotion, insiders said.

Allegations have it that rules are being flouted in hiring and firing of senior executives. causing serious resentment among the staff.

Many of the new recruits even at the level of executive director -- do not meet the minimum academic and other criteria, sources say.

At least two senior officers have come under fire for reasons not professional, they al-

Nepotism has become the

LAHORE, Apr 26: Police ar-

rested hundreds of radical

Sunni Muslims and the army

was deployed throughout Pak-

istan's largest Punjab province

today to prevent attacks on

Shi'ite Muslim mourners who

beat themselves, some with

chains, knives and shards of

killed as they slept early today

in a remote corner of Peshawar.

have been arrested in connec-

tion with the shooting, they

Muslims throughout Pakistan

will beat themselves as they

march through the streets today

and tomorrow to mourn the

death 1400 years ago of Imam Hussein, the grandson of Is-

dressed the meeting for three

hours while Kader Siddiqui

alone took about two hours

"The country is now passing through a critical time. People

in power are thinking that ev-

erything is okay that Pakista-

nis thought in 1971... You

should know you can oust

someone as you can bring

someone to power," said Sid-

spond to any of your calls."

See page 11

from 2:15 pm.

diqui.

Four Shi'ite Muslims were

Six men, all Sunni Muslims.

Tens of thousands of Shi'ite

glass, reports AP.

police said.

Kader Siddiqui hints at

new political party

order of the day, said several senior officials, speaking to The Daily Star on condition of anonymity.

There are also massive financial irregularities, detected recently by auditors who have also highlighted much of the administrative malpractice. A formal compliant has

come recently from the junior employees, all of whom have written to the chairman to point to the large-scale violation of service or recruitment rules.

Forty-three of the 46 SEC employees signed the memorandum dated April 12. The rest three were on leave at that time. In one glaring example, according to the insiders, a deputy

lam's Prophet Mohammed

has sparked violence between

militant members of the rival

in the largest province of Pun-

jab, home to 60 per cent of Pak-

istan's 140 million people, has

provincial capital and home to

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif,

soldiers with dogs stopped pas-

senger buses looking for explo-

shotguns took positions on the

rooftops of homes and busi-

nesses along the procession

route, which was being cor-

lim militants were arrested

More than 300 Sunni Mus-

Police and soldiers with

Islamic sects in Pakistan.

called in the army.

The annual self-flagellation

But this year the government

In Lahore, the Punjab

director got two promotions to become executive director in only eight months. In the process, it has been alleged, some officers were superseded.

In another instance, the SEC called three applicants for interview against two positions of Deputy Director (MIS). Better candidates with much stronger academic background and experience were not short-listed to clear the way for the one who was later chosen. The person, the sources point out, happens to be a brother-in-law of the executive director for administration.

One source pointed out that the successful candidate had "simply an associate degree. See Page 12 Col 4

or Guardians of the Friends of

In the southern port city of

Karachi, where there were two

religiously motivated attacks

last weekend, police and

paramilitary troops were pa-

See Page 12 Col 8

#### Narayanganj to go to Ashulia. Hundreds arrested in Pakistan They had started from Narayanganj and then went to Kamarpara in Ashulia where six others joined them. fearing sectarian violence wards Dhaka. They went

straight to a slum at Banani. One of them went to the slum and came back with a ploy bag. throughout Punjab province in When the driver asked about the a police crackdown early ploy bag, they said that there Thursday morning, said offiwere sweets in it. But the driver was not convinced. Most of those arrested be-Being suspicious about the longed to the Sipah-e-Sahaba youths, the driver tried to get

the Prophet, a radical Sunni in'front of the Prime Minister's Muslim group blamed for office, he stopped the microbus and asked help from police. dozens of attacks on rival Sensing danger, the youths ex-The followers of the two ploded several bombs and fled sects differ over who was to lead the Muslim faithful following Police said a team was sent

the death of Islam's Prophet to Naryangani to trace out the Mohammed (SM). Shi'ite Musyouths who had hired the milims believed the grandson or crobus. Imam Hussein was the rightful

### BUET students go on rampage

By Staff Correspondent

A group of students of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology allegedly went on rampage at the teachers quarters on the campus last night.

The agitators were demanding withdrawal of expulsion order against a student of Civil Engineering Department.

In the face agitation, the teachers and their families got out of the quarters for safety and staying there till the writing of this report at 12:30 am. One of the teachers told The Daily Star over telephone that

they had called police but did

not respond. The university authorities expelled the student concerned for two years as he had adopted unfair means in a class test

about a month ago. The student appealed to the university's academic council to pardon him. The council then reduced the expulsion term to one year. Dissatisfied at the decision. the students went on rampage.

### BB lawyer tells court

### Beximco directors abused power to get unfair loans By M Shamsur Rahman

The Bangladesh Bank

Court bench that the Beximco directors had acted in breach of public confidence and abused official authority to obtain loan on relaxed terms and conditions. The lawyer argued that sec-

tion 17 of the Bank Companies He said the freedom fighters Act dealing with vacating ofhave to be united. "The new genfices were introduced in order to eration, the student community create an even playing field for and people are eagerly waiting every businessman in the to embrace you. They will recountry. Four Beximco directors -

Sohel F Rahman, Salman F

Rahman, M A Quashem and Igbal Ahmed — had been served lawyer yesterday told a High with notices after they had failed to re-pay bank loans.

cials.

Shi'ite Muslims.

Tania Amir, appearing for the central bank, pointed out that in the same country, borrowers, mostly poor women operating within the same legal framework, are paying back at a rate of 99 per cent under the micro-credit schemes.

challenging the notices.

Two were directors of AB Bank

and the two others were of IFIC.

The four later filed writ petition

See Page 12 Col 2