Attack on journalist condemned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different socio-cultural and political organisations have condemned the attack on journalist Probir Sikdar.

In separate statements yesterday. the leaders of the organisations held the anti-liberation forces responsible for the attack and demanded immediate arrest of the culprits.

Minister for Environment and Forest Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury in a statement yesterday condemned and general secretary Motaher the attack on Probir. She blamed the anti-liberation forces for the attack and demanded immediate arrest of those involved.

Ekatturer Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee in a statement said the anti-liberation forces are attacking those who are writing against them. The Committee demanded punish-

Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) and Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUI) vesterday pro-

demned the attack on the Faridpur correspondent of Dainik Janakantha and demanded immediate arrest of the culprits.

Sounding a note of caution go for tougher programmes if such immediately.

Dhaka Reporters Unity has expressed deep concern over the attack on journalists in Chittagong

DRU president M Anwarul Huq Hossain Masum in a statement yesterday strongly condemned the attacks and demanded exemplary punishment to the culprits.

Ain O Salish Kendra condemned

Bishwa Bangla Bhasha Parishad in a statement said "We are deeply shocked at the attempt on the life of journalist Probir Sikder.

tested attacks on journalists in of Bangladesh Chhatra League Bahadur Bepari and Ajoy Kar Khokan in a joint statement also condemned the attack on journalist Pobir Sikder and demanded trial of those involved.

Objective investigation

frustrated to see heinous and inhuman acts of crime go on unabated... "It becomes evident from newspaper reports that people from all walks of life except leading politicians are being killed."

The eminent lawyer asked the

He urged all the cultural organi-

"We're not vet clear about the nature of bombs being used. Investigation into such incident has to be made professionally and in an objective manner," Rahman said.

Vice-chairman of the Supreme Court Bar Council Barrister Amirul Islam said such bomb incidents should be looked at in the context of

He termed the opposition demand for judicial inquiry in the incident "a cheap political slogan"

against the government and political parties, the BFUJ and DUJ leaders said journalist community will attacks on newsmen are not stopped

and Faridpur.

the attack on Probir Sikder and demanded immediate arrests of the

President and general secretary

He said such a demand designed to simplify the process of trial had

On lengthy trial of terrorists, the

noted jurist said pressure should be

mounted on the Chief Justice, the

Inspector General of Police and the

Home Secretary so that investiga-

of bombing were done quickly.

tion and trial in the major incidents

Academy Dr. Rafigul Islam said

bomb attacks on the Bangla New

Year celebration was aimed at turn-

ing the Pahela Baishakh into an

occasion of mourning. "The attack-

ers wanted to destroy the Bangalee

culture," he said adding that besides

protests private security should be

taking place unchecked and blamed

the government agencies for lacking

professionalism in dealing with

Bazlur Rahman, editor of the

The elderly journalist criticised

Prominent cultural activist

the court for granting bails to the

accused whenever big lawyers stood

ensured at such programmes.

such incidents.

Director General of Bangla

involved with politics.

raised doubts if it was motivated to hide the real culprits. Barrister Islam blamed the political parties for politicking with the Ramna blast and other such incidents and accused the state-run intelligence agencies of getting

tance from the lawvers' community. squad of the police be formed to ensure security at big public gather-

Professor Anisuzzaman said nothing effective had so far been done to punish the people responsible for the bombing of bombing that were taking place one after another. Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) Latifur Rahman questioned if the investigation into the Ramna blasting would be a repetition of what had happened to

The noted business leader wondered why the police allowed massive gathering at the spot of the blast and why they did not cordon off the

Ramendu Majumdar demanded area for proper investigation. that the parliament be summoned immediately to pass law for trial of the culprits of the Ramna bombing at a special tribunal. To resist such incident, he pro-

posed arrangement of more programmes to highlight the essence of Bangalee culture. Journalist Santosh Gupta said

the existing political culture must be changed to help stop recurrence of such incidents.

Among others, journalists Haroon Habib, Baby Moudud, cultural activist Mahmud Selim, Engineer Golam Rabbani, Hena Das and Golam Quddus also spoke at the discussion, moderated by Dr. Sarwar Ali of Chhayanaut.

PM to address 3 public rallies in Khulna, Bagerhat today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is

expected to address three public meetings in Khulna and Bagerhat districts today.

According to official source, the prime minister will address a public meeting at Pather bazar of Digholia upazila of Khulna district.

She will address the second public meeting at Mongla after inaugurating a newly constructed tourist motel there.

In the afternoon, the prime minister will address, the last public meeting of the day after laying foundation stone of a bridge over Bishna river and inaugurating Daudkhali bridge in Rampal upazila of Bagerhat district, officials sources

Probir improving FROM PAGE 1

the capital.

Our Staff Correspondent in Dhaka adds: Probir Sikder is now fighting for life at the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD).

"Although Probir is now conscious, he is not out of danger. His condition is gradually improving, said the on-duty doctor at the Intensive Care Unit of NICVD.

According to the doctors and sources in the Pangu Hospital, Probir suffered multiple fractures in his right thigh due to bullet injuries and two main veins (blood vessels) also ruptured beyond repair. He also suffered serious bullet injuries in his left arm.

Doctors said Probir's femur bone in the thigh broke into six pieces, which was partially fixed at the Pangu hospital in a major operation Friday night from 10 to 11:30

After he slipped into consciousness, the doctors at NICVD performed a bypass grafting which involved reconnecting his veins taken from other parts of his

Businessmen

FROM PAGE 12

It is necessary for the government to take steps to create an atmosphere conducive to economic and business activities, he said.

President of the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) Latifur Rahman, President of the Foreign Investors' Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) Wali Bhuiyan, President of the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) Benajir Ahmed and President of the Agro-Processing Industries Association Major General (retd.) Amjad Khan Chowdhury and other chamber and trade association leaders were present on the occa-

In the middle of the press conference, a group of about 25 people including some FBCCI staff members led by a section of the Shop-owners' Association came to the venue with a white-flag procession in protest against har-

At the instruction of the FBCCI president, visibly perturbed by the incident, they called off the proces-

Quoting a recent Asian Development Bank (ADB) report, Haroon said the country's export growth declined by 5.5 percentage points during the last two months due to hartals and other political agitation. "If this situation persists, the export growth will decline fur-

Regarding their move to meet the President, Prime Minister and opposition leaders to discuss their problems arising out of political crisis and other issues. Haroon said they have already sought appointments and are waiting for their response.

Delhi protests 'mutilation'

FROM PAGE 1 border," he said amid speculation that Delhi may or was likely to have

sought an apology. sought an apology from Bangladesh," Mohammad said and declined to offer details of his meet-

ing with Iyer. Media reports had suggested that Vajpayee would speak to his Bangladeshi counterpart Sheikh Hasina on the subject.

"Reports that prime minister will

be speaking to his Bangladesh counterpart are not correct," the official said.

view of the mutilation of bodies of 15 BSF soldiers killed in border skirmishes, a PMO spokesman Vajpayee spoke yesterday morn-

ing to Home Minister L K Advani who is away in Ahmedabad and also to BSF Director General Gurbachan lagat in Shillong, the spokesman

BSS adds: A spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry said protest was also lodged about destruc-"I am not aware if India has tion of property of Indian villagers even after the two governments had agreed through diplomatic channel to restore status quo ante and defuse

> He said the government of Bangladesh was asked to return immediately the two injured BSF men undergoing treatment at a hospital in Dhaka.

The spokesman said it was emphasized that such unfortunate incidents were not in keeping with Earlier, Vajpayee took a serious friendly relations between the two friendly countries and those must be prevented.

> talks with her Bangladesh counterpart Syed Moazzem Ali by phone, he

> High Commissioner in Dhaka Manilal Tripathi met Bangladesh

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad and was assured that all aspects of these unfortunate incidents would

beinvestigated. Replying to a question, he said security personnel should be treated with dignity at any situation.

"The inhuman treatment meted out to dead BSF personnel is unacceptable," he told a questioner. PTI adds: The CPI-M yesterday

demanded a credible explanation immediately from the Vajpayee government on the situation along the northeastern borders. Expressing concern over it, the

party politburo in a statement said the "barbaric killing" of 15 BSF personnel on the Bangladesh side, when both countries have close and Foreign Secretary Ms Iyer had friendly ties, has shocked the coun-

It said the Vajpayee government must immediately provide a credi-The spokesman said the Indian ble explanation as to how such a situation came into being on the northeastern borders.

Demarcate city lakes

FROM PAGE 12

stream, and constructing walkways and shades around the periphery of the lakes.

Expressing concern over the gradual transformation of residential areas into commercial complexes, the students called for creating awareness among the neighborhoods to prevent the lakes from going into the hands of the illegal occupants.

They called upon the authorities concerned to introduce a good sewerage disposal scheme to ensure that the lakes and other water bodies are free of pollution.

Mahfuz Anam said that the city's water bodies are no longer an issue issue of survival. He said lakes of the city are absolutely in a dangerous state due to negligence by the

authorities.

Initiating the discussion, Head of the Architecture Department of BUET Prof. Shahidul Amin said the lakes of the capital are now problem-ridden due to ignorance by the authorities concerned.

"Many of the city's water bodies have already disappeared while the rest is going to disappear soon." Prof. Nizamuddin said that the

city lakes are in real danger due to frequent encroachment and pollution, creating an adverse impact on the city's environment.

He suggested that opinion be sought from the experts and the Editor of The Daily Star neighbourhoods before implementing any development project in the lake areas. "A policy which will ensure ecological protection of the lakes should be taken immedi-

the Dhanmondi Lake Development Project, said a good management policy could ensure a peaceful life in the neighbourhoods. Admitting poor condition of the

Sthapati Brindo Ltd., consultant for

city lakes, Dhaka WASA Chief Engineer Kazi Mohammad Shish said, "If we want to solve the problem we will have to tag it with all other problems of the city."

He said a well-planned policy involving all sectors concerned should be taken up to give the lakes a new lease of life, which are considered as the city's lungs.

Prof. Badruzzaman, Prof. Golam Rahman and Lainunnahar Rekha of BUET, Azizul Haq and Kazi Golam Hafiz of Rajuk, Gouri Sangkar Ray of Khulna University, Dr Abdus Sattar Sved of UNICEF and Abdul Mohahim of Urban Development Architect Iqbal Habib of Vitti also spoke on the occasion.

Shadhin remanded again

mosque in the city's Matuail area now locked in a row over the arrest of by the Detective Branch and later placed on a five-day remand. Police produced him before the CMM's Court vesterday after completion of

the remand. days' remand 'to verify some information given by Shadhin.'

Out of Shadhin's four roommates, Jashim Uddin, 25, was killed in the Batamul blast while another identified as Rafigul Islam in the incident. Rafiqul is now

wearing a turban and long robe, who had been desperately trying to pull a number of dead bodies after the blast, sources said.

and the City Special Branch (SB) are dent about their involvement.

two persons on Thursday by SB, sources said. DB has been given the official

responsibility to investigate the Ramna incident which left nine DB vesterday sought another five people killed and about 20 others injured. All agencies including the SB are supposed to cooperate with the DB personnel in the investigation, said a official concerned. But soon after SB arrested Motiur Rahman, a cousin of Jashim, and Mahabub, 26, was seriously injured JCD activist Yasin on Thursday, DB refused to accept the action undergoing treatment at the Dhaka following which SB produced them before the CMM's Court Friday Meanwhile, DB has so far failed showing them arrest under Section to identify or trace the bearded man 54 of the CrPC. SB also sought a seven-day remand for both of them and the court granted five days'

A number of DB officials said that Till yesterday, DB failed to come the two arrested by the SB were not up with any major breakthrough in involved in the Ramna incident the incident. But sources said DB while SB officials were found confi-

Senior police officials feared that this 'misunderstanding' between the two departments of police might hamper the investigation.

SB interrogated Motiur and Yasin at the SB office in the city vesterday afternoon after bringing them from Demra and Hajaribagh thana custody respectively.

Meanwhile, a body of the nine blast victims still remained unclaimed at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue.

Opposition FROM PAGE 12

They also urged people to make the 72-hour hartal beginning tomorrow City unit of All Party Action Committee will bring out torch

processions from 11 points of the

city today to make the 72-hour hartal a success, said a press release. Prior to the procession, a rally will be held in front of the BNP central office with Sadek Hossain

Khoka MP in the chair.

Nagorik Andolan vows to foil

FROM PAGE 12

Chowdhury, A T M Badrul Islam, Mohammad Harun, Ms Shafina Lohani, Anwara Begum, Advocate Ali Azam Bhuiyan, Sushanta Kumar Majumder, Prof Lokman Hamid and Wahiduzzaman also spoke.

The convention unanimously elected Prof Kabir Chowdhury and Dr Qazi Faruque Ahmed as president and secretary general respectively of CCM for a two-year term. It also approved various divisional, district, metropolitan and upazila Speaking on the occasion Prof

Kabir Chowdhury said that the fundamentalist forces were out to destroy the country. In such a situation the members of the civil society have special role to play. candidates who have no faith in the

spirit of the War of Independence or

through muscle power and black money," Prof Choudhury said. Dr Qazi Faruque Ahmed said in

the past, members of the civil society and professionals played commendable roles in various national movements and brought victory for the people. Unfortunately, in the absence of any organised platform and continuation of the struggle, the "accumulated victory" could not consolidate which frustrated the

Faruque said, initiatives have been taken to unite the members of the render an integrated service at the critical moment of the nation. He chise. also underlined the role of the civil "We must not vote for those society at the present moment as well as its role to play in future.

In the afternoon session, the

who want to win the election convention adopted an action programme to attain various objectives of the CCM. The convention decided to hold rallies and meetings at district and upazila levels till July this year, form human chain at local and national levels and conduct a signature campaign in support of various demands of the CCM.

The convention also decided to launch advocacy drive so that fundamentalists, fatwabaz, corrupt elements, terrorists and antiliberation forces could not get nomi-Considering such situation Dr nations from any political parties in the next general election. It also took resolutions to conduct voters' civil society under a platform to education programme to create awareness about their right of fran-

The convention also decided to resist issueless hartals which bring miseries to the people and destroy national economy.

Enemies of Islam celebrate the day

linked with the life of Bangalees in many ways and this day is being celebrated for centuries. Condemning the bomb explo-

sion at the Ramna Batabul, he said the government is giving protection to the culprits and hiding its failure by promptly blaming pro-Islamic parties for this.

All the leaders strongly denied involvement of pro-Islamic parties They also express their own views in bomb explosions at the Udichi function in Jessore, CPB's public and culture. They say observance of meeting at Paltan Maidan and at Ramna Batmul on the Pahela The government blames us to etc. are anti-Islamic, which is not Baishakh. Islam never permits violence, killing of innocent people

They demanded exemplary

Kalidas Murder Case

Mobile phone seized from Bablu: AL, BNP leaders worried

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Police recovered a mobile phone from the possession of Bublu Mollah, the main accused in AL leader Kalidas Boral Murder Case.

The mobile phone contains

numbers of 108 people including senior Awami League and BNP leaders of the Bagerhat district, police said. Bablu has disclosed names of those who talked to him frequently

over mobile phone regarding execution of the conspiracy to kill Kalidas Boral. Bablu is yet to say anything about illegal arms used to kill Boral. But he has given some information about

the conspiracy of the murder and the masterminds. Bablu Molla, PBCP cadre, was interrogated by a team of police

ment in several murders and terrorist activities in favour of the ruling

party after 1996 general elections. Police quoting him said some leaders of AL and BNP of Bagerhat helped form a separate strong group of armed cadres and set up an arms

His cadres started their mission by committing a dacoity in Chitalmari branch of Sonali Bank in 1997. He used to maintain liaison with outlawed organisations and the two major political parties, Bagerhat district police said.

Police officials are in a fix what to do and how to deal with mobile phone numbers of top political leaders of the district recovered

A BNP leader is reportedly trying to secure Bablu's bail from the court officials. He confessed his involve- at any cost, police said yesterday.

Bangladesh on back foot

FROM PAGE 1

take a firm grip on the match, scoring 457 in reply to the tourists' 257 in the first innings. Bangladesh were on 91 for two at stumps.

Sub-standard ground fielding and catching let down a brilliant bowling effort from Monjurul. The left-arm pacer from Khulna came close to a hattrick when he dismissed Zimbabwe captain Heath Streak and Andy Blignaut with successive balls in his second spell on the day. It was also the best blowing figures of a Bangladeshi in Test cricket, bettering Naimur Rahman's six for 123 against India in the inaugural Test last November.

Bangladesh will however remember the third day of their first away Test for all the wrong reasons. They were reduced to ten men when wicketkeeper Khaled Masood was unable to take the field after fracturing his right ankle during their warm-up before the start of The home side, taking full advan-

tage of as many as five dropped catches including two on the third day, piled on runs to take a lead of 200 before being all out one-and-ahalf hours after the lunch break. Bangladesh started disastrously

losing opener Mehrab Hossain for a duck in the first over when the right-Heath Streak on to his stumps. One-down Bashar and Javed added 55 runs for the second wicket and when they appeared set for a bigger partnership the former

departed for 24, playing a rash shot once again. His dismissal was a replay of his first innings, where he slashed outside the off-stump and was caught at point. But there was more cause for concern for coach Trevor Chappell,

whose effort to improve the fielding failed for the second successive day. Skipper Naimur Rahman and Akram Khan dropped two vital catches in the slips as Zimbabwe,

resuming on 287 for five, went on to

add 170 runs. Grant Flower, dropped on 24 by Centre.

Monjurul on the second day, ham-

mered 68. He struck nine fours in his

more than four-hour vigil at the

crease. Streak also had his share of luck for his highest Test score of 67 that included seven firm hits to the fence. The home skipper, while on 39, was let off by Sharif. It was Streak's fifth half-century, and his previous best was 54 against New Zealand last

Grant and Heath put on a record sixth wicket stand of 120 runs on this ground, eclipsing the previous best of 107 by Sri Lanka opener Atapattu and De Saram in 1999-2000 season.

Akram floored Nkala on one, and the fast bowler celebrated his new lease of life with a personal Test best of 47. He struck seven boundaries. (Scorecards and more stories on

Prof Sayed Ahmed Khan dead

Page 13)

BSS, Dhaka Prof Sayed Ahmed Khan of Dhaka University died of heart attack at his Fullar Road residence in the city last

evening. He was 63. He left behind his wife, two sons and a host of relatives and admirers hander dragged the fifth ball of to mourn his death, a DU press

> release said. His namaj-e-janaza will be held at the University Central Mosque

> after Zohr prayers today. Vice-Chancellor of the university, Prof A K Azad Chowdhury, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Prof Mohammad Shadat Ali, Treasurer Prof Abul Hashem rushed to the residence of the deceased immediately after

> hearing the sad news. Prof Khan completed his Bachelor and Masters degree from the Sociology Department of the university in 1960 and 1961 respectively and joined the same department in 1973 as assistant professor. He also attained LLB degree from the university in 1967. He was the director of Nazmul Karim Study

Environment Day

FROM PAGE 1 5 "independently and in a big way",

meeting sources said. It also decided to carry out all environmental programmes independently without having any link with the MOEF.

The World Environment Day had

so long been observed jointly by

MOEF and NGOs to highlight environmental degradation and create public awareness in this regard. The meeting was attended by representatives of ADAB, IUCN,

FEJB, BIDS, BUP, CARITAS, Gano Chetana, Prism, CAMPE, Unnanayan Sammonoy, Waste Concern and BELA. It was followed by another meeting of the Coalition of Environmental NGOs (CEN), chaired by Dr

Atiq Rahman of Bangladesh Centre

for Development Studies.

Representatives of 51 NGOs includ-

ing BRAC, Proshika, RDS, Swanirvar

Bangladesh and Nijera Kori partici-It also endorsed the decision to

chalked out, which include a day long seminar, open discussion, debate, rally and children's art competition and a fair on environ-

observe the World Environment Day

in a grand way, independent of the

A two day programme was

A programme committee was formed with representatives of ADAB, CEN, BRAC, FEJB, CARITAS and BELA. The meetings were attended by, among others, Dr Asaduzzaman,

Shamsul Huda, Quamurul Islam Chouhdury, Dr Ahsanuddin, Ms Ira Rahman, Anwara Begum, Maqsood Sinha. Tapan Das, Ms Rizwana Hasan and Sharif Shahabuddin.

PM: Armed forces

FROM PAGE 12

raising ceremony of Bangladesh Infantry Regimental Centre (BIRC)

The prime minister also asked the members of the armed forces to perform their duties with utmost sincerity. She hoped that they would further brighten their image through professional skill and effi-

acquire highest professional efficiency through honesty, sincerity, dutifulness and discipline." Hasina

"We have kept the armed forces free from politics and established the chain of command," she said.

the importance of the armed the army.

formed the country's second infantry regiment after the East Bengal

East Bengal Regiment was the country's first infantry regiment. which played a heroic role in the War

of Independence, she recalled. "We've fulfilled another commitment to the army by establishing the Bangladesh Infantry Regimental Hasina praised the members of the armed forces for their role in UN

peacekeeping missions and at times of natural disasters. She said the government has been leading the country taking the

armed forces along with the people to ensure development in all sectors." For this, we've built up a modern and well-trained army. Army Chief Lieutenant General Harun Ar Rashid, Navy Chief

Rear Admiral A Taher. Air Force Chief Air Vice-Marshal Jamal Uddin and Commandant of the newly-established Regimental Centre Brigadier General Mohammad Mahbub Haider Khan

Major pro-Islamic political parties

celebrate Pahela Baishakh through elaborate programmes. Some of them however said a section of so-called progressive people are trying to add alien culture

ing "out thousand years' tradition" part of Bangalee culture, they said.

movement do not bring out 'torch procession' because they compare the 'torch' with agni puja (worshipping fire), which is part of Hindu A senior leader of Jamaat-e-

The pro-Islamic parties now

involved in the anti-government

and tradition. Bangla calendar is is trying to portray Muslims, their similar to Islamic calendar, countries and organisations as Moreover, Bangla calendar was terrorists, Kamaruzzaman said. introduced by Muslims."

comment against celebration of there are zealots and reactionary Pahela Baishakh and other days and forces among people of every relioccasions which are part of gion, but their number is insignifi-Bangalee culture and tradition. But cant in Bangladesh compared to Jamaat and Islamic scholars always that that in India. condemn and protest nakedness in the name of culture.

ernment, without any inquiry, instantly blames Jamaat and other pro-Islamic parties for any bomb explosion or other incident of violence, which is not correct.

fundamentalism in Bangladesh and

that AL is fighting alone against this.

They (AL government) have joined-

Another senior leader of Jamaat Acting secretary general of said the so-called religious forces Jamaat Muhammad also want to turn Bangladesh into a Kamaruzzaman said his party never Talibani state, which according to raised any objection or made any him, is a "foolish dream". He said

A top leader of IOI said some illiterate so-called religious leaders He said the Awami League gov- and reactionary quarters misinter-

He said his party has not given "fatwa" (religious edict) on any issue except the first day of April. 'April integral part of our culture, heritage hands with the Western world which Fool, is not part of Bangalee culture.

and killed Muslims in Spain, he said. Joint Secretary General of Islami Sashantantra Andolon ABM Enayetuddin said Pahela Baishakh is

and provocation.

punishment of those involved in the bomb explosions.

because on this day they befooled at the Rajshahi Cantonment.

"You'll have to remain active to

The prime minister mentioned

forces in safeguarding country's sovereignty and security, and termed the Infantry a major part of She said the government has

were present.

He added, "We will give our report along with the reports of autopsies. Meanwhile Dr Anwar Hossain and Dr Abul Mansur who conducted autopsies of the 15 bodies of BSF men at the Mymensingh Medical College hospital told UNB that all

Asked whether the intruders were manhandled or beaten by villagers, the foreign secretary said,

ment to the culprits.

different parts of the country. The union leaders also con-

FROM PAGE 12 Barrister Ishtiaq Ahmed said he was

government not to deceive people by following the traditional way of investigation into the Ramna carnage. Make the probe report public at the earliest so that the incident does not get lost," he said asking to mobilise public opinion against such incident. Offering legal assishe suggested that a special bomb

similar incidents in the past.

Stressing the need for specialised and well-trained police force to deal with such incident, he proposed for bringing in experts from abroad, if necessary.

existing political situation.

has created panic on the Bangladesh According to reports from across the border, BSF is evacuating villagers to safer places, the message said. Indian High Commissioner in Dhaka Monilal Tripathy met Foreign

Minister Abdus Samad while

Bangladesh High Commissioner in

Delhi Mustafa Faruk Muhammad

held talks with the Indian External

ministry will investigate a complaint

Muazzem Ali said the foreign

Affairs Secretary.

by India that bodies of some of BSF personnel handed over on Friday were found mutilated. Replying to questions, he said some of the bodies of BSF personnel were recovered by BDR and some by local people. There was also the

matter of decomposition of bodies

He however expressed disgust

due to elapse of time, he said.

over the way one local newspaper printed the photo of a body of a BSF man being carried with bamboo poles in the border area. Pressed by newsman whether any time-frame has been fixed for the investigation, the foreign secretary said. "We should not commit a specific time-frame, as a proper probe will require time. The situation in the border is about to return to normalcy after 48 hours of skirmishes. All the local people are yet to return to their homes. The investigation will be done in line with the

concern expressed by the Indian

the soldiers were "killed by bullets" and "there was no sign of any torture or physical assault"

"Our experience indicates that intruders are beaten by villagers whenever they enter another's territory. It happened in the past but in this case it can not be said without

involved as it happens in such border skirmishes". were more bodies of BSF men, he said, "We will also look into that sides have decided that they will search their respective territories for missing bodies, arms and ammuni-

tion, and if recovered, those will be

The two injured BFS men cap-

tured during the skirmishes are

undergoing treatment in Dhaka and

returned to the other side.

minister

reports in some local newspapers that foreign ministry sought an explanation from the Director General of BDR. He said, "This is not correct. The foreign ministry has no jurisdiction over BDR, which is under the home ministry."

His attention was drawn to

The foreign minister said, "A country can always express its resentment. It is their position. We have not committed anything wrong. We will do our own investiga-

Move to defuse tension

Asked why BDR did not have full

control, he replied, "BDR dis-

charged its duties valiantly and

courageously. They were not adequate in number to deal with an adverse situation. Local people got About the Indian claim that there allegation. Border forces of both

authorities in a day or two if doctors permit, he said. Asked to comment on Indian Home Minister L KAdvani's remarks that BDR committed excesses, he said, "It is a comment by an honourable Indian minister. It is his personal opinion. As foreign secretary. it is not proper for me to comment on the remarks of an esteemed

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad was asked by BBC last night how he would react to India's "resentment"

may be handed over to Indian | tions which are inherent in Bangalee culture. People of all walks of life

> to Bangalee culture, which is harm-They claimed that Mongol Pradip (lighting of candle), bringing out of procession with dummies of animals, wearing mask and ulki (painting on the face) etc. were contrary to Islam. Ulki was never a

Islami seeking anonymity said, "The Pahela Baishakh celebration is an

on many things including politics Ekushey February, Pahela Baishakh show the western world that there is correct.