Indo-Pak tension

Both agression and pacification at work

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

As the Indo-Pak border tension grows daily, so does the flurry of diplomatic activities to reduce it Indian External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh has been getting telephone calls almost daily from his counterparts in the West, including US Secretary of State Colin Powell and British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw.

Powell spoke to Singh on Thursday evening and followed it up by another call yesterday morning. Besides, American Ambassador to India Robert Blackwill met Singh vesterday and reiterated the US call for de-escalation of tension to enable the mission against terrorism in Afghanistan to reach its logical conclusion with the capture of Osama bin Laden "dead or alive." Powell is understood to have conveyed to Singh that US has its own compulsions and that it requires Pakistan support in completing the task of hunting down bin Laden and destroving his Al Qaeda network The American Secretary of State also contended that military tension between India and Pakistan could affect the search for bin Laden because it may force Islamabad to withdraw its troops deployed on Afghanistan border.

Singh, according to highlyplaced sources here, told Powell that while India is appreciative of American viewpoint, the fact is that Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf is not doing enough to act against the terrorist outfits Lashkare-Taiba and Jaish-e-Muhammed for their involvement in the attack on Indian Parliament.

There is quiet satisfaction in official circles here that US has put Lashkar and Jaish on its list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations and that Bush administration and Britain

1991, the BAC has been placed

the PMO's approval for any investi-

gation, covert or otherwise, and

filing of graft cases against VIPs

(very important persons). But, there

was no rule or regulations, which

compelled the BAC to get the FIRs

of before," commented a BAC

official. "This is illegal. The anti-

corruption bureau takes the respon-

sibility of filing the FIRs. The PMO

This move has placed the BAC in

Under the new system, a five-

colleagues in false cases like the

it is the right of the MPs to decide. "It

is not the question of going to the

House responding to anyone's call."

who headed the caretaker govern-

ment, he said, "It is he who deliber-

ately destroyed the concept of the

the conspiracy of Chief Advisor of

the caretaker government, Chief

Election Commissioner and the

President, added the Awami

was not the defeat of the party. It

was the defeat of the spirit of

The defeat of AL was the result of

About joining Parliament he said

About Justice Latifur Rahman

Agartala conspiracy case.

caretaker government."

approves the basic case anyway."

"This is something never heard

cleared by the PMO.

handle the situation.

have virtually accepted India's evidence about the involvement of these groups in the attack on Indian

There is also happiness here that India's description of its diplomatic sanctions against Pakistan as being "minimal" has been appreciated in the Western capitals, the sources

However, India and US continue to differ on their assessment of Musharraf's sincerity in reigning in the terrorist groups. Although President George W Bush yesterday praised the Pakistan President for his moving against the terrorists and hoped India would take note of it, New Delhi is clearly not impressed by the steps taken so far by Islamabad.

as much faith in Musharraf as the US does. Only vesterday, Jaswant Singh termed as "a joke" Pakistan police's claim about arrest of Jaish chief Maulana Masood Azhar while apparently his brother was actually taken into custody. There is little expectation in government circles here that Musharraf regime will take meaningful action against the terrorist groups operating from Pakistan Indian Home Minister I K Advani articulated this view once again yesterday when he said there is not much hope that even international pressure would goad Musharraf to effectively move against the terrorist groups.

Meanwhile, India is likely to hold fire for the time being after having announced two rounds of diplomatic sanctions against Pakistan including scaling down of the diplomatic missions of the two countries and ban of Indian airspace to Pakistani flights, in order to wait and watch if Musharraf does act against the

Textile and RMG sectors

The inter-ministerial meeting with representatives of the sectors was planned when the leaders of the BGMEA and the BTMA met Prime Minister Khaleda Zia with opposing demands. The prime minister formed the inter-ministerial committee and suggested that a comprehensive plan be worked out for the sectors.

The tussle between the two powerful industrial lobbies led to the deferment of the implementation of the EU's SAARC cumulation benefit during the tenure of the immediate past government although the government applied to the EU for the facility.

The EU's regional cumulation is a facility for a regional grouping where any country can avail itself of duty benefits by exporting products made from raw materials of other countries of the group providing that the country's value addition is greater than that of others. For example, if Bangladesh exports any finished product to the EU with components from India (34 per cent) and Pakistan (30 per cent), it is eligible to receive Generalised System of Preference (GSP) facility on the value added 36 per cent.

When asked whether the country should opt for the SAARC cumulation, Executive Director of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya, who has also been invited to today's meeting, said, "Either way, we have to address our structural problems and improve the efficiency of ports,

Police excess

rights can desist police from abus-

Project Co-ordinator of Odhikar

Dr. Saira Rahman Khan said

despite continued violation of

human rights during police remand,

successive governments did not do

anything to check it. "Police impli-

cate innocent people in false to

Presided over by Prof. Tasmima

The Odhikar in its report made

power. These are setting up of an

independent body to receive com-

plaints against police, creation of a

separate department in police to

probe abuse of power, appropriate

punishment for the offenders and

compensation for persons victim-

Chittagong killings

sion of road communication until

FROM PAGE 12

realise money"

ised by police.

ing their power, he said.

"The fundamental point is that the garment and textile sectors have tried to be competitive through price related adjustments such as cash incentives, income tax rebate. interest rate remission or in some cases, downward adjustment of the exchange rate. While these measures may give a short-term respite, in the final analysis we have to look into productivity, management efficiency and technological capacity for sustainable competitiveness," Dr Bhattacharya added.

Against the backdrop of falling exports, the commerce ministry in October decided to include five apparel items in the list of SAARC cumulation benefit with the condition for 51 per cent local value addition. But the BTMA opposed the The BTMA feels that the SAARC

cumulation would not give any major boost to the garment industry. rather it would cripple the spinning and weaving industries and reduce foreign exchange earnings reten-On the other hand, the BGMEA feels that the SAARC cumulation

benefit for the RMG sector would

bring an additional US\$500 million

annually with half of it as value

"The country's RMG sector is going through the worst-ever crisis with falling exports. So, we should go for utilising all sorts of trade benefits that are available," said

BGMEA President Kutubuddin

However, BTMA Chairman A Matin Chowdhury said, "It is very difficult to add 51 per cent value to imported fabrics. The SAARC cumulation is not going to take us forward. Rather, it will make us more dependable on imported fabrics."

But Kutubuddin argues that there is no point in developing the textile sector if the RMG fails. "Who will use fabrics if the RMG sector cannot sustain the global crisis?" he quips.

On the other hand. A Matir Chowdhury said the RMG exporters should come forward to investing in backward linkage industry to face the challenge of quota-free world after 2004. There is also differences of

opinion between the two trade associations over the quantity of local fabrics being used in RMG Both the associations have prepared papers in support of their arguments to be placed at the meeting, according to sources.

The BGMEA will also press for setting up three bonded warehouses -- two in Dhaka and one in Chittagong -- where imported fabrics would be stored and the RMG makers would use the cloth whenever necessary with the idea to reduce lead-time

However, the BTMA opposes the idea, saying this would lead to pilferage to the detriment of the local

Air pollution

Programme, said the two pollutants they measured were carbon monoxide and ozone -- produced by the city's well-known traffic iams

"The greater a woman's exposure to one of these two pollutants in the critical second month of pregnancy, the greater the chance that her child would have one of these serious cardiac birth defects," Ritz

"More research needs to be done, but these results present the first compelling evidence that air pollution may play a role in causing some birth defects.'

Ritz's team compared air pollution monitoring data from the Environmental Protection Agency with information from the California Birth Defects Monitoring Programme -- a statewide database on birth defects.

They looked at 9,000 babies born from 1987 to 1993. Pregnant women who were exposed to the highest levels of ozone and carbon monoxide because their homes were close to busy freeways were three times as likely to have a child with certain heart defects as women breathing the cleanest air.

The defects they found were specific -- conotruncal heart defects, pulmonary artery/valve defects and aortic artery/valve defects, which can require openheart surgery to save the baby. No other birth defects were linked with

Yangtze

FROM PAGE 12 Xinhua reported.

"This is the result of the improvement of measuring techniques and different starting and ending points,'

The new data has to be examined by the State Bureau of Surveying and Mapping before it can become official national geo-

graphic data Liu, who headed the survey, said the satellite remote sensing technoloay used to remote sensing technology used to remeasure the river was

far more accurate than the previous measuring method that relied on topographic maps. Researchers measured the river in downstream and upstream directions three separate times using

nearly 40 images taken by a US The data was then calculated by computer.

FM urges

FROM PAGE 12

Regarding 25 categories of Bangladeshi items, he said the list was provided by Bangladesh side and needs to be agreed upon by Indian side as well.

Asked about the postponement of secretary-level trade talks scheduled for December 26 in Dhaka, the High Commissioner said the dates for the meeting could be set sometime in January 2002

On the question of purchase of gas from Bangladesh, he said India is looking for buying gas from different sources like Iran. Myanmar and Malaysia. "It would be nice if the gas could be bought from neighboring Bangladesh." He, however, said it is Bangladesh to take decision on export of excess gas.

Asked about meeting between Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and Bangladesh Prime Minister Khaleda Zia in Kathmandu, the envoy said the two leaders would meet on the sidelines of the

During the meeting Morshed Khan mentioned that Prime Minister Vajpayee was a widely respected leader and hoped that tensions between India and Pakistan would be defused and negotiations between the two countries resumed "in the interest of peace and security in the region."

The Bangladesh Foreign Minister also noted that tensions disrupt progress and development.

Khan also said he looked forward to meeting his Indian counterpart Jaswant Singh in Kathmandu during the forthcoming SAARC

Solu remanded

FROM PAGE 12 Hossain shot his son dead.

The Investigation Officer (IO) of the case submitted 'final report' of the case on December 25, 1999 as there was no witness and no evidence to support the allegation brought by Sajal's father against the

After take over of the new government, the home minister directed the authorities concerned to reinvestigate some murder cases

including Sajal murder case. Following the directive, the Saial murder case was revived on

Rafiq, a peon of Baitul Aman Housing Society in the city's Mohammadpur area, was shot dead

by a gang of assailants on November 5 this year.

Haji Abul Kashem, owner of the Society, filed a murder case with Mohammadpur thana the same accusing some unidentified people.

Police sources said. Solu was involved in Yunus. Babul. 'Geda' Babul and ward commissioner Shahbuddin murder cases.

Cops 'buy' freedom

FROM PAGE 1 rounds of bullets during the gun-

One of the groups ambushed 18 policemen who were sent there after the gunfight erupted, and locked them up in a local hotel from 11pm to 2am. The armed JCD group even held out against an additional police force who were sent there to rescue the detained policemen.

According to local people and

police, these two groups have been

fighting each other over drug trade and dominance in the area for a long time. As a consequence of this feud. three persons -- a JCD leader, an alleged terrorist and a rickshawpuller -- were recently killed in the area this month. At around 11pm Friday night, a

fresh fight broke out between the two JCD groups, one led by Farid and the other by Ata. Upon hearing the gunshots, The

Daily Star called up the Tejgaon thana at 12 midnight where the duty officer said, "Nothing much is happening. Gunfight is an everyday affair around here.' Later an inquiry into the incident

revealed that a team of 18 policemen led by ASI Hanif and ASI Ishaq had been sent to the area as the gunfight flared up. The police team had taken shelter inside a hotel to avoid getting caught in the crossfire. At one point, one of the two

groups that had taken position around the hotel locked it up in order to avoid interference by the police.

Later, police reinforcements headed by SI Tarigul were sent to the area but in the face of heavy exchange of gunfire between the two feuding groups, all the police could do was fire blank shots.

Failing to rescue the detained policemen from inside the hotel, let alone gain control of the situation, the SI called up the Tejgaon thana

high officials rushed to the spot and began to negotiate with the leader of one of the factions that held the policemen hostage. As the negotiations were going on, the other feuding group launched an attack

on the negotiation meeting. Finally at around 2am, the 18 policemen were released from the clutches of the gunslingers.

2 judicial bodies FROM PAGE 1

will probe into the cases filed on charges of murder, rape, arson and holding arms, was formed with Justice M Abdul Karim in the chair. Its two members are additional secretary of Home Ministry and additional secretary Khandaker Shahidul Islam, registrar, Cooperative Directorate.

The bomb explosion incidents include bombing at an Udichi cultural function in Jessore, planting of bombs at Kotalipara in Gopalganj, blasts at a CPB rally at Paltan Maidan, Chayanaut concert bombing at Ramna Batamul, explosions at Narayanganj Awami League office and Awami League rally in Bagerhat and Baniarchar Church.

Dozens of people have been killed and scores others injured in the bomb attacks in a chain of

The killings include murder of BNP leader Advocate Habibur Rahman Mondol in Dhaka, Awami League's Kalidas Boral in Bagerhat, BNP's Advocate Nurul Islam in Laxmipur and Sajal of Dhanmondi.

The task of investigation is part of the 100-day agenda of the new BNP-led coalition government.

"It is intended to unearth the mysteries behind the incidents and make it clear to the nation what actually had happened," one official told the news agency.

EPZ for Japan

executive chairman, Mahmudur Rahman, apprised her of the present situation of BOI and the working plan for December 2001 to

In the backdrop of present global scenario and a shattered economy inherited from the previous government, Khaleda Zia said it is imperative to rejuvenate and activate the economy

She instructed the authorities concerned to take effective steps to encourage foreign and domestic investors for economic uplift.

Appreciating the annual work plan of BOI, she recommended that it be speedily implemented to attract investors.

The BOI executive chairman has informed the prime minister that they have identified seven potential sectors as attracting investors from the countries like Japan. European Union. Middle East, South Korea, and the USA.

The sectors are textile, including RMG and backward linkage, elec-

industry, frozen food, leather and ceramic.

Khaleda suggested that importance be given to the potentiality of light engineering industry for investment.

The BOI has selected some 13 areas in its next one-vear nlan including restructuring of BOI, identification of the direct sources of investment, holding of trade fair and seminar at home and abroad to attract foreign investors, and necessary steps to attract local investors and develop sector-wise special industrial zones.

Mahmudur Rahman also informed her that actual statistics of yearly investment were not done during 1996 to 2001. Transparency is almost non-existent in some investment figures, he said.

Commerce Minister Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury, Principal Secretary to PM Dr Kamal Siddini and BOI member Habibur Rahman

Suicide: Cop arrested

harassed by local hoodlums. The SI was earlier suspended in the same

The home minister stayed at Simi's residence for an hour and talked to her parents. He assured

them of taking stern action against the culprits without any mercy. Simi, 21, daughter of Ali Emdad, committed suicide by taking poison on Sunday. She left a note holding four youths Khalil, Mofazzal, Ripon

and Doel -- and the police SI respon-

An Unnatural Death (UD) case was filed with the Khilgaon police station. According to family members

sible for her death.

and local people, the four young men of the area used to tease Simi. who once slapped Khalil for his behaviour. Khalil filed a general diary against Simi and SI Bashar came to her residence and intimidated the victim and her family

Later, some local people went to her house on Sunday afternoon and asked the girl to mend her lifestyle. Simi's parents also scolded her for putting them in a humiliating situa-Unable to bear with the disgrace,

Simi locked herself in her room and took poison. Fisheries and Livestock Minister

Sadek Hossain Khoka, State Minister for Home Lutfuzzaman Babar and Deputy Commissioner of Police (East) Noor Mohammad accompanied the home minister to the victim's residence. SI Bashar was arrested at about

2.00pm yesterday and kept at the Khilgaon police station custody. He will be produced before the court this evening.

Sub-Inspector Kazi Wazed Ali filed a case with the Khilgaon police station last night accusing a total of six people for the death of Simi.

Laden in Peshawar?

the Afghanistan-Pakistan border under the protection of a hardline

Islamic leader. Mohammad Habeel said bin Laden had crossed from the Tora

The spokesman for Pakistan military-led government, General Rashid Qureshi, said again yesterday that there was no reason to believe Osama bin Laden was in Pakistan, as reported by an Afghan

"These rumours have been going about for the last few weeks," General Qureshi said on BBC radio. But he added that "even the United States don't know where

Osama bin Laden is. They say he could be in Afghanistan, or elsewhere, in any other country". "If the Afghan government has some information as to his location.

General added. President Bush pledged on

Friday to bring Laden to justice, saying US forces are determined to capture him.

"He is not escaping us," Bush

said at his Texas ranch, adding that the world's most-hunted man no longer has a leadership role in Afghanistan.

months ago, was in control of a country. Now hes maybe in control of a cave," Bush said. "We're going to get him running and keep him running, and bring him to justice ... He's on the run, if he's running at

gence officers and US FBI agents are interrogating more than 200 suspected al-Qaida members across the country as they track Osama bin Laden and his fugitive associates, officials said yesterday.

Pakistan has provided access to the visiting FBI agents, a senior intelligence official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. "We are sharing with the FBI whatever is possible," the official, who participated in the interrogations, told The

Interior Ministry officials confirmed the report yesterday.

Extortionists

FROM PAGE 1

police.' League were controlling all the sources of illegal income when their party was in power. But with the change of government, BNP mastaans have taken control over these income sources, they said.

BNP musclemen took control of almost all the toll collection sources virtually without any protest from AL mastaans.

want to leave the control," said a "If any body wants to buy a pistol it is a matter of less than one hour. If he has money, he can manage it

within an hour", he said.

India certainly does not repose

PMO to scrutinise Hossain, the programme was also addressed by Dr. Abrar and journalist Naimul Islam Khan. DG will present four FIRs to the PMO today. Sources said they will four suggestions to check abuse of under the PMO. The BAC requires

> inspectors who have written the FIRs standby, just in case an explanation is required

government's election pledge to

an embarrassing situation. Sources The bureau is preparing to file 39 said throughout yesterday, the BAC more cases against Hasina, some officials were discussing how to

of her ex-cabinet members, Dhaka city Mayor Mohammad Hanif and a

The Shibir cadres murdered Ali Liberation War, democracy and secularism

terrorists belonging to the Awami League in Domkata village of Saherkhali union under Mirersorai

and Victory Day controversial. "It is necessary to bring about a drastic convenor of the Saherkhali union

Baishakh. Chaired by BCL president Bahadur Bepari, the meeting was addressed, among others, by former BCL presidents Abdul

secretary Ajoy Kar Khokan.

FROM PAGE 1 It also contradicts the BNP Chittagong-Rangamati-Khagrachhari Highway at the university gate No. 1, Charerkul and make BAC an independent body. Fateyabad, which led to the suspen-

> General Secretary of CU BCL asir Hyder Babul blame murder on the cadres of Islami Chhatra Shibir.

Murtaza in a premeditated way to mar the ongoing siege enforced by the BCL to press for its seven-point demands, he alleged. BSS adds: A local BNP leader was beaten to death allegedly by

thana in Chittagong yesterday The victim, identified as Solaiman alias Henju Miah, is

unit of BNP, police said. Local MP MA Jinnah condemned the incident and urged the lawenforcement agencies to take stern

Submarine cable

FROM PAGE 1

Due to delays and 'poor consulting services', the BTTB is still unsure of the project's final cost as admitted by its officials at a recent public discussion at BTTB headquarters. As a result, it is yet to ascertain the project's economics. In addition, the consultant is yet to come up with the plans for streamlining the BTTB network resources and designing a full-proof transmission backbone. Besides, the BTTB

is yet to plan the gateway exchange for the submarine cable network. The initial capacity of this singlepair cable would be 20 gigabits per second (Gbps). Theoretically, it would handle in excess of 300,000 simultaneous international phone calls. Currently, the BTTB manages 2,500 such calls through its satellite

The submarine cable would process nearly 15 million overseas calls when it reaches the final capacity of 960 Gbps. This cable would last for 25 years. Sources said if the BTTB's

than that of VSAT. only then the Internet service providers and corporate users would use this submarine cable. Further utilisa capacity is subject to liberalising the telecom policy. The BTTB enjoys

bandwidth prices become cheaper

the monopoly in overseas voice market. Applications were invited for a consultant of its submarine cable project in May this year. A consultant was appointed for a two-year term on October 14, 2001. But the consultant had been working for the BTTB's submarine cable project without any appointment since June. This has raised questions about the unofficial engagement of

the consultant for four months till The BTTB is also tight-lipped about the consultant's authority of 'informally administering' the bidding of the multi-million dollar pro-

Sources alleged that the consul-

tant lacks experience of supplying, installing, commissioning or operating any submarine cable network. However, the BTTB chairman

denied the allegation.

Although supposed to work fulltime one, the consultant is also engaged in additional employment with verbal approval of the BTTB chairman, who refused to comment Sources alleged that the consultant persuaded a bidder to change

its local agent to 'ensure' the subma-

rine cable deal. The consultant took the bidder to a local conglomerate after holding the pre-bid meeting or September 12, 2001. The bidder complained to the RTTR about such 'unwarranted interference' by the consultant. But the authorities took no measure against such attempted malprac-

tice. The BTTB chairman refused to comment on this issue, too. The consultant has however admitted to this reporter that the BTTB's project director for the submarine cable project 'persuaded' him to motivate the bidder to change its local agent.

Meanwhile, the BTTB may be charged for 'pirating' the Request for Proposal (RFP) document of Singapore Telecom (SingTel). Instead of preparing its own document for BSCN, the BTTB 'unlawfully copied' the RFP of a similar project of SingTel. The BTTB's chairman also refused to comment Sources now apprehend that

raising the unpleasant questions pertaining to the 'unofficial involvement' of the consultant. SingTel may also wage a legal battle against the BTTB for violating Article 4 (confidentiality and proprietary information) of the MoU signed by both parties on July 19, 2001. This MoU on various issues including a submarine cable project

such sensitive issues may torpedo

the submarine cable project as any

aggrieved party may delay it by

action against the killers. Vajpayee asks Indians

country would never initiate a war. "Pakistan stands for peace, we do not want war," he told guests at the dinner. "We will never initiate a war

Muzzaffarabad yesterday. The Indian army fired across the Line of Control on Friday night and into this morning, forcing Pakistan villagers in border areas to flee their

AP savs India began preparations to camouflage the Taj Mahal out of fear of Pakistani airstrikes and 12 Indian soldiers were killed laying mines to deter tanks as war fears escalated yesterday between the two nuclear rivals

and army officials said. Indian and Pakistani soldiers, deployed 100 metres away from each other at many positions, traded gunfire in the region's Hiranagar, Samba and Pallanwala sectors, they said

land mines they were laying along the border exploded, army sources in the state said Saturday. On Tuesday, two soldiers and a civilian Bhuttowalla area, the sources said.

senior army official said yesterday. "The movement is taking place from different bases of the Eastern Command headquarters in the state of West Bengal to the western front," the official said.

long-distance trains from today (Saturday) to transport heavy artillery, field guns and army person nel to Raiasthan. Puniab and Jammu." Divisional Railway Manager of Eastern Railway Calcutta, Dulal Chandra Mitra told

Meanwhile factories making ammunitions and guns had been told to step up production.

An official at the defence factory board headquarters in Kolkata said the production lines at the Cossipore Gun and Shell Factory and Ichhapur Rifle Factory near the city had been activated.

border areas with China in Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh. Meanwhile US president Bush praised Musharraf for "the arrest of 50 extremists or terrorists" and said he hoped India would acknowledge

The identity of the reported 50 militants was not clear. Pakistani military spokesman Major General Rashid Qureshi said

Friday that about 20 Jaish members

JCD activist

enmity with Awami League and Chhatra League activists in the area. A gang of five swooped on Islam when he came out of his house on Friday night. They chopped him to Sufia Boum, mother of the victim

involvement in the murder. They were taken on remand yesterday. accused in the FIR.

had been arrested for possessing November 27.

filed a case yesterday accusing one person of the murder Police arrested Jonaet Hossain

Laden is living in the mountains on

Bora region of eastern Afghanistan into Pakistan about a week ago.

official the day before.

they must share it with us", the

"I mean, this is a guy who, three

Meanwhile, Pakistani intelli-

Associated Press.

Demanding unconditional release of Shahriar Kabir, he urged the intellectuals to expose the repressive acts of the government as it is trying to confuse them. AL presidium member Amir Hossain Amu said the defeat of Awami League in October 1 polls Mannan, Sultan Mohammad Mansur Ahmed MP and general

League leader.

Mastaans belonging to Awami

In some places, AL mastaans tried to retain their control over these businesses but failed and left. "Some murder incidents in different areas of the city took place as Awami League mastaans did not

"I was one of the partners of a cable operating firm -- Friends Cable. But with the change of government. BNP mastaans changed the name to Zia Cable and started collecting monthly payment from subscribers," said a leader AL's student front Chattra League at Mirpur BADC colony. "If our employees go for collecting money from

subscribers, BNP mastaans

threaten to kill them," he alleged. businessman, was a recent victim of

asked them to pay Tk 10 lakh at a time and Tk 20,000 per month, Asgar Ali told newsmen earlier.

his shop on November 19, Asgar Ali said. After fighting for 14 days, Ramzan died on December 3. The Commissioner's armed cadre also demanded toll from cable operators in the area. As they did not pay, the mastaans disconnected the

cable network and threatened to kill

them, the cable operators alleged.

Md Ramzan Ali, a 35-year-old

Ramzan and his brother Md Asgar Ali were running Bikrampur Mishtanno Bhandar, a sweetmeat shop, at Sukrabad on Mirpur Road. In mid-October, Abdul Latif, Ward Commissioner and President of Dhanmondi thana BNP, summoned the two brothers at his office and

As the two brothers could not give the money to the Commissioner, Elin and Monir, two associates of Latif. shot Ramzan at

As Latif is a "notorious man", traders in the area have no option but to manage him for the sake of security, local traders told this

also have to show the list of persons to be implicated and explain the charges to the PMO. If they fail to 'convince' the PMO officials, fresh decisions may be made.

BAC has decided to keep all the

The move leaves plenty of scope for manipulation of lists and charges, the sources said.

Resist state terrorism

Abdul Jalil said the present government would not last long. "People have started questioning its activities " Barrister Amirul Islam said a vested quarter was hatching conspiracy to make the Independence

change in our thoughts. New ideas must be inculcated in politics of Awami League," he said. Calling upon the people to remain alert, former BCL president Obaidul Qader said a conspiracy is

on to erase the significance of December 16, March 26 and Pahela

unless it is thrust ... upon us."

Meanwhile, Pakistan began evacuating residents of border villages in the disputed Kashmir region, amid gunfire exchanges and escalating fears of war with arch-fee India, witnesses and police said in

Pakistan-controlled section of Kashmir told Reuters. Pakistan also taken all Indian television channels off its airwaves. "The Pakistan government has banned showing Indian satellite channels as well as Star Channels on cables for their poisonous propaganda against Pakistan, the official

APP news agency said.

homes, a police official in the

After a brief lull, gunfire resumed across the border in the Jammu region of Jammu-Kashmir state overnight along the disputed Line of Control, the cease-fire line, police

In the northern Indian city of Agra, officials said they were pre-paring to wrap the Taj Mahal, the legendary 17th century marble mausoleum, in khaki cloth to protect it from a possible Pakistani air strike. In the desert state of Rajasthan, 12 soldiers were killed Friday when

died in similar blasts in the A report from Kolkata adds: India had re-deployed troops, tanks and heavy artillery from the east to its border with Pakistan in the west, a

The Eastern Command Headquarters had also requisitioned a number of trains to take artillery units and hardware from bases at Barackpore, Dum Dum Cantonment and from the northern part of West Bengal, he added. "The Eastern Railway has indefinitely cancelled its 20 scheduled

Kunchanjungga Express and Mughal Saraj Express, two popular

The cancelled trains included the

valid for two years.

between the two countries remains

A Brigadier of the Eastern Command Headquarters said that troops were being mobilised to the

"I'm pleased that President Musharraf is responding to the Indian request to round up those who would do harm to others and incarcerate them, which he did,

FROM PAGE 1

Mintoo and Hanif for their alleged Mintoo is the father of the