Govt firm to take more steps against pollution STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Minister for Fisheries and Livestock Sadeque Hossain Khoka has urged people of all walks of life to join government efforts to build an 'environmentally safe' Bangladesh. "Let us work together for a safe environment for all and particularly

for the new generation," he said. The minister was speaking as chief guest at the inaugural session of 9th biennial general meeting of the Forum of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh (FEJB) at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

The BNP government has already taken up massive programmes to protect the environment from various forms of disastrous pollution, Khoka said. The programmes began on the New Year's Day with an effective ban on production, marketing and use of polythene shopping bags in the capital. These had posed major environmental and SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

2 shot as JCD, **BCL clash** at Sylhet UNB, Sylhet

Two students were shot as the activists of Chhatra Dal and Chhatra League clashed in Pathantula area of the town on Thursday night.

Witnesses said the clash erupted at about 9 pm when the JCD supporters launched attack on a BCL activists of Ragib Rabeya Medical College in the area. Later, the activists of JCD ran-

sacked the college The clash spread in the entire Pathantula and tea garden areas creating panic among the residents.



Bangladesh Jatiya Mohila Ainjibi Samity (National Women's Lawyers Council) staged a demonstration in the city vesterday to realise rights of women workers at their work places

ASM NURUNNABI

The burgeoning shops of various categories in the city is a notable feature of metropolitan life. Here there is no zoning for commercial areas as distinct from residential areas. While in the cities and towns of developed countries, it is not easy to find a shopping centre close to residential areas, the picture is quite different in Dhaka city on account of the absence of zoning of specific areas for specific urban activities.

Every day new shops are cropping up along lanes, by-lanes, streets and boulevards in the metropolis. Here one will find a shop not far from one's drawing room. From frequent newspaper advertisements, one gets the impression that quite a good number of highrise shopping complexes are going to set a trend of commercialisation of the fast growing metropolis. Some of the high-rise complexes even in prime residential localities of the city shopping malls on the floors below, most of which have airconditioning, lift and even escalator facilities The proliferation of shops in the

city is such a staggering phenomenon that its nearly nine million residents are virtually choked by them. The once quiet residential areas are not spared from the rampant commercialisation. A large part of the Dhanmondi residential area has already been transformed into a commercial hub. The same is the case with Gulistan, Banani and Uttara areas, although they are developing gradually. The most galling feature of the trend is that the big shopping complexes, combined with the numerous existing shops at the important city points, contribute to the horrendous traffic jams almost throughout the day.

in the city

One may wonder whether the fast growing shops at every conceivable city space carry any indication that the purchasing power of the city dwellers has marked a significant rise. Economists, however, tend to hold the view that the mushroom growth of shops has nothing to do with the strength of the country's economy. Citing economic indicators, they say the growth in manufacturing sector has not been a definite pointer and that the purchasing power of the people has not improved to any substantial degree. The question still remains how the viability of the big shops, particu-

DOWN TO EARTH

Rapid growth of shops

can be explained. Are they running at a loss in most cases, or are there invisible mechanisms for utilisation of black money that may have been invested in such big enterprises True, the manufacturers of indige nous products are benefiting from the increasing number of sales outlets. But there is the sombre picture that under the policy of free economy, sometimes unnecessary imports come into the market Smuggling adds to the woes of the economy. Since a wide range of consumer goods are imported into SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

larly the big shopping complexes,

No significant improvement in law & order since Oct

June.

1996 to June 2001.

SHAIKH NAZRUL ISLAM

Despite the BNP-led four-party alliance government's efforts to improve law and order in the country, the situation has not improved much in the first three months of its tenure due to failure of the law enforcers in many fields. The government which took over

in October last prepared a list of 23 most wanted terrorists' on December 23 and ordered police to bring them to book. It also announced awards for arrest of the terrorists, but none of them could be arrested till yesterday. The number of killings in the country from October to December

last year was 934 while it was 1012 AL and the BNP-led four-party from July to September and 934 alliance.

Of the 131 people killed during from April to June. A total of 3153 incidents of the tenure of the caretaker government. 69 were leaders and activists repression on women and children of AL and 29 of BNP and its front took place during October-December period of the same year organisations. More than 600 as against 3886 from July to political clashes took place during September and 3325 from April to the period, leaving several hundred

people injured In the first 25 days of October, Of those 68 killed during the last 75 days of Awami League govern-266 people were killed and 213 cases of violation of women were ment, 42 were leaders and activists recorded with police, Home Minister of Awami League and 17 of BNP and Altaf Hossain Chowdhury told its fronts. parliament. He also said 18,563 During the tenure of the care-

people were killed during the period taker government, the highest number of 13 killings took place in A total of 165 people were killed Bagerhat. Political clashes during in political violence during the first the period left 11 people killed in three months of the present govern-Dhaka, eight in Feni, seven in ment. The number of political kill-Sylhet, five each in Fatikchhari, Kushtia, Khulna and Bhola and ings during the 75 days of the caretaker government was 131 and 68 in three each in Noakhali, Sirajganj, the previous 75 days (last days) of Chittagong

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

ttina mura

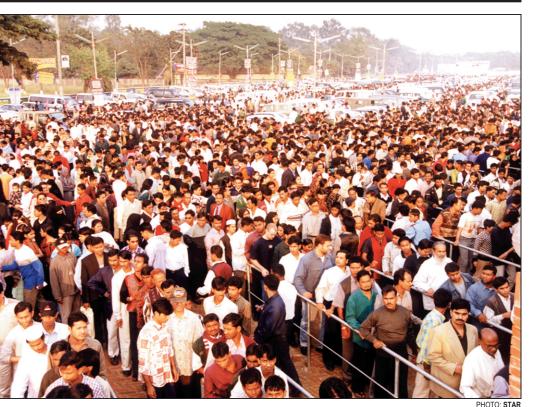


Awami League by each other. "Publication of white papers by BNP and Awami League have exposed the corruption committed by the two parties. Bangladesh has been identified as the number one corrupt country in the world due to the plundering of wealth by them in the last 30 years," said Rashed Khan Menon at a party meeting in

UNB, Dhaka

Narayanganj yesterday "The country's interest is not safe at the hands of these corrupts. Although BNP opposed the 'unequal production sharing agreement' signed by Awami League for gas export, the ruling party has now become anxious to export gas, the party president alleged.

Menon observed that BNP-led coalition government could give the people nothing but price hike of essentials during its 100-day programme. He said a list of terrorists was made but they were not arrested rather identified terrorists were now coming out of jails and



Visitors stand in long queues to buy tickets for entry to Dhaka International Trade Fair (DITF) at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar in the city yesterday. The month-long fair will continue till February 12.

Delhi working with UAE on raid on US office: Advani

raising heads in 10 dists again

QUAZI AMANULLAH, Khulna

Awami League government.

Most of them were killed in firing

during clashes between activists of

Members of the outlawed PBCP (Purbo Banglar Communist Party) and BCP (Biplobi Communist Party) have intensified their activities in all 10 districts of the southwestern zone of the country.

Outlawed partymen

According to sources in the intelligence branches of police and other departments of the government, law and order in the area has deteriorated alarmingly with murders and extortion on the rise.

People of different sections of the society however blame the corrupt practices of police and lawyers as contributing to the 'freedom and immunity' enjoyed by the outlaws in several districts such as Khulna, Bagerhat, Satkhira, Jessore, Magura, Jhenaidah, Kushtia and Chuadanga.

A high official of the Khulna Range Office of the DIG blamed the loop-holes in the laws as the outlaws often obtain bail 'very easily'.

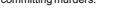
"We catch the outlaws and send them to court where they obtain bail and simply walk away," said the disgruntled official.

On the other hand, advocate Abdul Malek, president of Khulna District Bar Association put the blame on police. He said the court is left with no other choice except granting bail to the criminals because of the faulty reports submitted by police, particularly by investigation officers (IOs) of cases. Magistrates and judges and lawyers have nothing to do, Advocate Malek defended.

Meanwhile, of the 1905 outlaws arrested over the last one-and-a-half year from ten districts of the southwestern region, 1240 belonging to four outlawed parties are currently out on bail, police sources said.

Cadres of these four outlawed parties, PBCP, BCP, Gano Mukti Fouz and Sarbahara Party, have long been engaged in committing murders for money from different political parties, police intelligence sources said

> SEE PAGE 11 COL 1 attack.



Video camera provides 'vital clues'

REUTERS, New Delhi

India is working with the United Arab Emirates over a Dubai-based man suspected of masterminding an attack on police outside a US cultural centre in Kolkata, Home Minister Lal Krishna Advani said yesterday.

Advani suggested that either extradition or deportation could be options for the man Indian officials have named as Farhan, otherwise known as Aftab Malik and Aftab Ansari

Triple murder:

tently mentioned in the report head-

linked to 40 cases of graft.

lined

"Hasina, most ex-ministers

Two arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

in Tongi

Police in Kolkata where five policemen died in an attack outside the American Center on Tuesday, say he telephoned them to say he

planned the raid to avenge the death of an associate who died last year trying to escape police custody

Advani told a news conference the Indian government was pursuing the matter with the United Arab Emirates.

"It depends on what kind of request would be appropriate," he said. "Extradition is a process. Deportation is a matter in which the concerned government takes a decision," he said.

Meanwhile, Interpol has March 2000 and directed to estabinformed India's top investigatory lish a "covert terrorist network" in body, the Central Bureau of India Investigation, that it has issued a warrant for Farhan Malik's arrest

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

and extradition to India.

and vow more strikes.

Indian officials say Malik, who

allegedly has ties to Pakistani

intelligence and organised crime,

telephoned officials Kolkata after

the attack to claim responsibility

ble for arranging the kidnapping last

year of a Kolkata shoe mogul who

was released for a 37.5 million-

Indian officials say Malik was

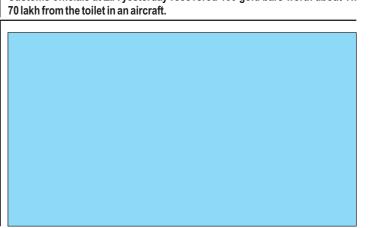
issued a Pakistani passport in

rupee (780,000 dollars) ransom.

India also holds Malik responsi-



Customs officials at ZIA yesterday recovered 100 gold bars worth about Tk





The number of GrameenPhone users has reached half a million in the country. This was disclosed by company's Managing Director Ola Ree (2nd from right) at a press conference in the city yesterday. Company's Director-Sales & Marketing Division Mehboob Chowdhury (2nd from left), Additional GM-Information Syed Yamin Bakht (extreme right) and DGM-Marketing Intekhab Mahmud (extreme left) are also in the picture. (Story on page 6)

Bomb attack by extortionists in Khulna: 2 hurt UNB, Khulna

Two members of a family were critically injured when extortionists hurled bombs on them at Dakkhindihi village in Fultala upazila here on Thursday night.

Police said the extortionists led by Akram stormed into the house of Rabindranath Das in the area and demanded toll of Tk 20.000. Hearing the hue and cry of the

family members, local people rushed to the spot and chased the extortionists. While fleeing the scene the hoodlums hurled bombs on the people leaving two injured.

The injured Sundari Sur, 45, wife of Deepak Kumar, Sur and her daughter Polly Sur, 17, were admitted to Fultala Upazila Health Complex.

Later, police arrested two people - Billal Gazi and Moinul Islam Mintu -- in connection with the bomb

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