

## Chief minister of riot-torn Gujarat quits

AFP, Panaji (India)

The chief minister of India's Gujarat state, Narendra Modi, offered to resign yesterday following intense criticism of his handling of sectarian riots that claimed more than 800 lives.

Modi's offer came during a crucial leadership meeting of the ruling Hindu nationalist BJP party, which is seeking to arrest a slump in its fortunes following a series of electoral setbacks and the political fallout of the Gujarat riots.

Party president Jana Krishnamurthy said Modi had tendered his resignation to the BJP national executive, which would discuss the issue later in the day.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

## Transit for duty-free access of items not acceptable: Saifur



### 'Ban on sugar, yarn import to remain if Delhi sticks to demand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday said Bangladesh will never accept any Indian proposal for inclusion of transit or transshipment issue in trade negotiation.

"I was told that if we do not consider transit or transshipment, India is not going to allow free access to Bangladeshi products. I said we will never accept such proposal," he said.

The finance minister was speaking at a function marking the 20th founding anniversary of AB Bank, held at Sheraton hotel in the city last night.

Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan, AB Bank Chairman Faisal M Khan and its Managing Director CM Koyes Sami also spoke on the occasion.

"India has made more than billion dollar trade gap with us due to its aggressive national attitude. No major power in the world treats its neighbour as India has done with us," the finance minister said.

Saifur said India should open its market for all Bangladeshi products except arms, and unless it allows free access, restriction on yarn and sugar

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7



PHOTO: STAR

Processions, rallies and door-to-door campaigns are now a common sight in Dhaka, Khulna and Rajshahi cities as electioneering for the April 25 City Corporation polls gains momentum. The picture was taken from the city's Lalbagh area yesterday.

## Maoists kill 102 in Nepal

AFP, Kathmandu

Over 100 people have been killed, including 84 policemen, in two attacks yesterday on police posts by Maoist rebels in southwestern Nepal, security sources said.

The policemen were killed when thousands of Maoists raided their posts at Satbaria and Lamahi areas in Dang district late Thursday night in fighting that continued into the early morning. The attacks claimed at least 102 lives.

Armed with bombs and guns, Maoist rebels carried out almost simultaneous attacks on four towns in western Nepal, according to AP.

The attacks Thursday night targeted the federal interior security

minister's house, a police station, a bus, two banks and an electricity station in two towns where all the casualties occurred.

The rebels also fought a gunbattle with army troops in two other towns, but were repulsed without casualties.

It was one of the bloodiest nights in the rebels' six-year-old campaign to replace Nepal's constitutional monarchy with a communist state. More than 3,000 people have been killed in the insurgency.

The attacks took place in Dang district, about 300 kilometers west of the capital, Katmandu, the junior internal security minister, Devendra Raj Kadel, said.

The rebels, who belong to a

banned group calling itself the Nepal Communist Party (Maoist), usually don't issue statements after attacks and do not operate offices in the country. The government has branded them terrorists.

The fiercest attack took place on the house of Interior Security Minister Khum Bahadur Khadka in Satbariya, which was being guarded by at least 120 personnel of the newly formed Armed Police Force. It was established last year to quell the insurgency and its members were trained in armed combat like the military.

Officials said the rebels hurled bombs at the minister's house and opened fire at the guards at about

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

## AL meets today to set agitation programmes

REAZ AHMAD

The Awami League Central Working Committee (ALCWC) sits for a 'crucial' meeting today to decide agitation programmes against the new anti-terrorism law and action against "betrayers" in the last general election.

Party Chief Sheikh Hasina will chair the meeting, scheduled to begin at the party central office at 3 pm, party sources said.

Today's meeting of AL policymakers will be the first since passage of the Law and Order

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

## Army to guard strategic points in three cities from April 22

NAZRUL ISLAM

Members of the armed forces would be deployed three days ahead of the April 25 election of three city corporations to help maintain law and order.

"Deployment of armed forces in aid of the civil administration will begin on April 22 and most probably they will be placed at strategic points in the three cities for five days," a senior election official said yesterday.

Some 10 companies of armed forces personnel would be deployed in the capital. Besides, 'adequate

### City corporation election

number' of forces would be mobilised in the two other cities Khulna and Rajshahi.

This will be the first such deployment in addition to the normal security measures by police, paramilitary BDR and armed police battalion for any local government election in the country. Earlier, troops were mobilised only for national elections to ensure peaceful voting.

Meanwhile, there is a threat to

law and order in the capital as a large number of alleged criminals and notorious persons vying for posts of ward commissioner have become desperate to overpower their rivals by using musclemen.

Despite a joint drive by police and BDR to nab the 'most wanted' criminals, incidents of violence and killing centring the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) election are taking place, creating apprehension among the city dwellers about peaceful polling.

According to available statistics, a total of 278 alleged criminals are

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

## One killed, 50 hurt in AJM gunfight

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

An overnight gunfight between two factions of workers at the Adamjee Jute Mills left at least one person killed and 50 others injured, eight of them with bullets, yesterday.

Either damaged or looted were at least 100 houses and shops in Dhaka Baju Colony and New Colony areas.

The ruling BNP-backed factions -- one led by CBA President Ruhul Amin Sardar who has recently joined the party and the other by Abul Khair Khwaja -- traded hundreds of gunshots and exploded over 50 crackers during the clash that lasted till morning.

Abdur Rahim 25, son of Abdur Shah Alam of the Dhaka Baju Colony, was found dead at the colony

at 6.00am. Both groups claimed that Rahim was their supporter. A loom worker, Rahim, from Gouripur village of Sudharam thana, Noakhali, was a resident of the room No. 42 at the line No. 12.

Eight bullet-injured are Alamgir, 20, Manik, 20, Mamun, 22, Morshed Alam, 20, Shafiqul Alam, 30, Md. Ilias, 18, Rokon, 18 and Jamal, 23. They were admitted to different hospitals in Narayanganj and in the capital.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

### Announcement

See the rules and coupon of The Daily Star Rangs Toshiba World Cup Quiz, Round 1 on Page 10.