EU agrees to cut by half figure of people lacking water access

REZAUL KARIM, from Bali,

The European Union (EU) environment ministers have endorsed the development of a 'new partnership' to reduce by 50 per cent the number of people lacking access to clean water and proper sanitation in parts of Africa and in Central Asia by

The 15-member EU which already spends nearly 1.5 billion euros a year on water projects, mostly in Africa, sees the World Summit on Sustainable Development as an opportunity to enter into 'partnership' with governments. NGOs and the private sector. This partnership would aim at pulling together widely disparate and uncoordinated programmes and turn those into a 'coherent and unified platform' to tackle water

At present, there are over one billion people who lack access to fresh water and two billion do not have proper sanitation facilities. EU officials said here on Wednesday.

While there is an internationally agreed upon target for improving access to clean water by 2015, there is no such target now for improving sanitation.

Even if the present negotiations on the 'outcome document' for the Summit does not provide a target for sanitation, the EU will still work for meeting the 2015 target, the officials

Palle Lindgaard-Jorgensen of the Danish Environmental Protection Agency said the EU was

fully committed to the target on sanitation. " Our efforts have to be driven by targets. We are setting it

provides a significant boost to effort to push the water issue up on the list of political priorities.

Meanwhile, United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan has dentified water as one of the five main areas where the Johannesburg Summit should

"We see water is not on the agenda of political leaders," said

Friedrich Barth, an EU water specialist, Building roads, he said, is seen as necessary, but the role of water in economic development, in health, and in promoting peace and security is overlooked.

"This initiative seeks to push the water issue up on the political

Johannesburg," he said. "You have to realise, if you don't make progress on water, you don't make progress on sustainable develop-

help implement the document presently under consideration at the Bali PrepCom and which will be adopted in Johannesburg from August 26 to September 4

he held in Bali at the ministerial level between the EU and African and the former Soviet Union republics next week. It is envisioned that heads of state will jointly launch the initiative

Dhaka refutes

to acknowledge that the general election in Bangladesh in October was a fair, impartial and exceptionally transparent one. The election was monitored by international

The "biased reference" in the report that the elections were rigged, as alleged by only gives a "one-sided and wholly unacceptable picture of what Awami League,

there was a concerted and widescale attack against the Hindus is

far from the truth, the handout said. In most of the cases, the attacks were made by anti-social elements and both Hindus and Muslims were the victims. Such incidents of violence subsided following government's tough action, the handout

Bangladesh is proud of the remarkable communal harmony in the country, which the people maintained even when communal disturbances ravaged some of the neighbouring countries. It is difficult to accept the suggestion in the Amnesty report that large-scale

'This statement has no foundavations in this regard," the official release added.

In the Amnesty report a reference has also been made about the arrest of Shahriar Kabir. "Incriminating evidence was found confirming that during his stay in Kolkata after the general election, he was engaged in activities which had the potential to adversely impact on communal harmony in

Bangladesh," the handout said.

Border trade

FROM PAGE 12 not cooperating during security

"India's border with Bangladesh is on high alert in the wake of the inspector general Rudrapal Singh.

outside the American Centre in Calcutta on January 22 killing four policemen dead and injuring 20

"Border guards have stepped up vigil to stop infiltration and curb trans-border crimes. Truck drivers often refuse to go through the checking, but we can not allow to cross the border unchecked. This is the main prob-

tors, immigration and customs officials and the state government were on to sort out the issue.

loaded with eggs, foodgrains and vegetable were stranded on Jessore Road that leads to Bangladesh through the Petrapole-Benapole border crossing.

said: "I am afraid that thousands of eggs, tonnes of foodgrains and vegetable will rot if the strike is not called off within a day or two."

East Indian state of West Bengal shares a 17,000-kilometre (10,540-

mile) long border with Bangaldesh. The Petrapole-Benapole point -one of the oldest business routes between the two countries -- is about 60 kilometres east of state capital Calcutta.

Zia FROM PAGE 1

offered fateha. Thousands of people including the BNP activists and supporters also visited the place and

Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar and Chief Whip Khandakar Delwar Hossain also visited Zia's graveyard. On behalf of Prime Minister

Khaleda Zia, now in New York, her political secretary Haris Chowdhury along with her principal secretary Dr Kamal Siddigui and military secretary Brig Gen Mohammad Ishtiaq placed wreaths at Zia's graveyard. A milad mahfil was held at the prime minister's office.

Central leaders of BNP including some ministers in separate groups visited different areas of the city where milad mahfil and destitute feeding programmes were arranged

Zia's recorded speeches were played at BNP offices and by party

Special prayers were also offered

The goal FROM PAGE

fans in a poll on FIFA's official Web

Maradona's unforgettable strike received 18,062 votes. England's Michael Owen, who scored a similar goal four years ago in France against Argentina, was second with 10.631.

Brazil's Pele took third with 9,880 votes for one his two goals in the World Cup final against Sweden in Stockholm.

Rounding out the top 10 was: Maradona against Belgium in 1986; Gheorghe Hagi of Romania against Colombia in 1994; Saeed Owairan of Saudi Arabia against Belgium in 1994; Roberto Baggio of Italy against Czechoslovakia in 1990 Carlos Alberto of Brazil against Italy 1970; Lothar Matthaeus of Germany against Yugoslavia in 1990; and Enzo Scifo of Belgium against Uruguay in 1990.

AL's proof

From Page 1 has already skipped first two sessions of the House and is still indeci-

sive about joining its third session. Sources in the AL said it is a 'mere coincidence' that the report is being released at this time. Preparation of it took longer time than previously thought, they mentioned.

and given full opportunity to defend The AL launched an organisation Centre for Research and The Amnesty report on status Information (CRI) -- in November last for preparing the report. A panel of researchers and analysts led by former finance minister and an AL candidate in the last elections AMA Muhit conducted the six-month

Sources said all political parties including the BNP and members of the civil society and the elite in the city would be invited to the report-

launching programme.
"What the AL would achieve from the findings of the study should not be the prime focus. Rather, how this could contribute to preserving the sanctity of polling process is the most critical point," said an AL

He went on, "Through this report, we want to establish the fact that a government formed without peoples' nandate cannot deliver good gover-

Seeking anonymity, the leader said, "We want to dispel the common wrong impression that Awami League lost the last polls. The actual situation was something different. Rigging in many forms, not necessarily on the voting day only, sealed the fate of AL."

Meanwhile, the AL intends to generate much public debates and discussions on the report when it is formally released

Mentioning the gazetted results of 1996 and 2001 general elections, the report made some analyses which, the party expects, would sufficiently reflect the 'wrongdoing' in the last election, sources said.

ADP

FROM PAGE 1 did this out of political vendetta," the

leading economist observed. Prof Mahmud and Prof Muzaffar

were speaking at a roundtable on "Budget: Issue of Accountability to People and Taxpayers," in the city yesterday, jointly organised by the Council for National Agenda (CNA), the Ittefaq and the New Nation.

While talking to The Daily Star. Zaid Bakht of Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) however said he would be 'cautiously critical of framing a big ADP' and stressed quality of public invest-"Expansionary fiscal policy is not

necessarily bad. It is much better than expansionary monetary policy. There are situations when governments consciously go for expansionary policy," he noted. But he cautioned that the govern-

ment has to bring down the losses of the state-owned enterprises (SOEs) to get relief from 'internal haemorrhage of the economy.' Bakht also said the growth

achieved in the last five years was due to expansionary policy of the Awami League government, but it failed to cut the losses of the SOEs. He also said that with a low

inflation rate and idle liquidity in the banking system, it would not be a wrong step for the government to go for bank borrowing to make the economy run. "But it has to be seen for which cause the government is borrowing and it has to ensure quality of public expenditure and constantly monitor it.

In this context, Bakht emphasised the necessity of setting up a public expenditure review

C'wealth parliamentary team annoyed with **HR** situation

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) delegation vesterday said it was "very disturbed" to learn about the situation in Bangladesh, marked by political persecution, violence and violation of human rights as complained by the opposition.

Led by CPA Chairman and Tanzanian National Assembly Speaker Pius Msekwa, the team of parliamentarians made the remarks after their meeting with Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina at her parliament office in the afternoon.

"She did raise a number of points with us ... My colleagues and myself were very disturbed to hear the comments about that. We have not heard about that situation before we came here. It is very important to be apprised of the situation here," CPA Secretary General Denis Marshall told reporters after the talks with

During the 45-minute meeting, some pressing issues like represhuman rights, opposition's joining parliament as well as holding of the planned annual conference of the CPA in September next vear in Dhaka came up for discussion. Referring to the October 1 polls

sion on the opposition, violence,

the Awami League president pointed out how the election results were "rigged and manipulated" denying the people the actual outcome of the voting. After the election, she alleged,

killing and rape in a massive repressive action against her party members, the minorities and common people as they are believed to have voted for her party. Narrating the story of a gang-

"BNP-Jamaat criminals" resorted to

raped seven-year-old girl, Hasina said many girls after being raped had to commit suicide to avert social When the delegates wanted to

know her position on joining parliament, she said, "The government is pursuing a dual policy -- inviting us to join parliament on one hand and

executing a blueprint to eliminate the Awami League on the other."

win in the 1996 elections, her party did not go for any political revenue on the opposition.

wondered what her party could do in parliament in such a 'horrible situation'. "They have got a two-thirds ment," she said.

against military dictators for democracy, voting right and installation of a non-party caretaker government for free and fair elections in the country.

way the present parliament is running, she said that no standing committee had yet been formed and as many as 17 bills so far been passed by parliament without scrutiny by standing committees and suggestions of the opposition

Soul goes out to Seoul

Beckenbauer of Germany were among past international football legends who took to the stage to wish success to World Cup teams.

"Today you cannot go anywhere in this country without seeing the World Cup," said former German player and coach Beckenbauer. You just cannot hide. After months of slow ticket sales

and anguished watching of the South Korean team's preparations. the Asian nation seems to have finally taken the World Cup to heart. At Buddhist temples, prayers

were said for the safety and success of the 31-day tournament, with some priests also adding a word to hope that the national team reaches the second round. "I prayed for all the players and all the people who have come here,

said Park Mi-Ae, a worshipper at the Jogye temple, the biggest in Seoul. "I am not a football fan but this is an important time for Korea and nothing must go wrong.' Rival presidential candidates Lee Hoi-Chang of the Grand

National Party and Roh Moo-hyun of the ruling Millennium Democratic Party also said they would pray for the World Cup. President Kim Dae-Jung said he wanted it to be a tournament of peace. But giant television screens have

been put at in the centres of every major city so matches can be shown with tens of thousands expected to watch South Korea's three first round games

"I have no tickets for the matches but I want to see these games and taste the once-in-a-lifetime atmosphere," said teenager Chung Sung-Jin at the World Cup concert.

The Red Devil shirt worn by the Red Devils national team supporters and the bleached hair chosen by many of the national players have become a fashion item. Every television programme and advertisement now features the World

"Korea must reach the second round, it is a matter of national honour," said an excited Chung.

With national expectations growing, the home team's Dutch coach Guus Hiddink released a special statement for fans saying simply: "Don't worry we can make it to the last 16.1

According to some estimates guoted by organisers, up to two billion people, about one third of the global population, will watch the opening match on television.

Organisers are advising spectators to leave their homes for stadiums five hours before the start of

PBCP leader held in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Police arrested Kanok Shaha, 30, one of the ringleaders of south Khulna-based unit of Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) early yesterday morning.

Police said Kanok Shaha is prime accused in five murder cases recorded with Dakop, Batiaghata and Paikgacha thanas of Khulna

He was arrested from a fishing trawler at south Kaminibashia

A team of senior police officials are interrogating the leader of the outlawed party. Muddling in polls

FROM PAGE 12

participation in elections. The tenure of over 4,500 union parishads expires in December this year, while the holding of the upazila polls is being delayed by a debate over the authority of deciding the timing of the crucial polls.

essentials such as their ticket. identification and some money. Security will be intense with all

bags searched and long list of items that are banned from stadiums. Even plastic bottles can only be carried in with the tops taken off.

"It does sound heavy but after the September 11 attacks we can take no chances." said a spokesman for the Korean World Cup Organising Committee (KOWOC).

The World Cup fever is everywhere. When the noon lunch bell rings at the Duksoo elementary school in downtown Seoul, the boys dash into the dusty yard for a ragged game of soccer. They may be short of talent but

especially for the World Cup, which begins here Friday. When I watch a game, I always dream of becoming a professional soccer player," said Kim Woo-ram,

they have heaps of enthusiasm,

Like many South Koreans, he is hoping the national team will make it through to the second round. Given the nation's poor international record, including going win-

less in five previous World Cup tournaments, advancing from the first phase would be a victory in But it is not just soccer that is generating a thrill in this city of 12

million people. million people, is basking in world attention. This is the country's chance to shine, a chance to show the world they've weathered the economic uncertainty of 1997-98 and now they're back, a can-do,

resilient nation. "The Korean people are joining forces to make this World Cup a milestone on their road toward becoming a great and prosperous nation," President Kim Dae-jung

said Thursday.

The capital Seoul is bubbling again, as in 1988 when the Olympic Games exposed the country's development after its emergence from decades of military dictator-

In downtown Seoul. it's hard to find anyone opposed to the World

Lim Bu-soo, 59, said in the city center: "We're proud and honoured to host the World Cup. It's a global world now but probably a lot of people far away didn't even know we existed."

Image is all. And, in a land where dog food can have a different mean ing from elsewhere, the authorities have asked restaurants to be discreet about serving canine dishes.

Seoul has put on its best clothes: the streets are clean, sidewalks have been repaired, street beggars are moved on, flower beds have sprouted in plazas, and traffic restrictions aim to ease the city's notorious congestion.

It's hard to get away from the World Cup. Subway stations are plastered with posters of Luis Figo, Zinedine Zidane. Ronaldo and other international stars; paper lanterns designed as soccer balls are strung along the city's eight-lane avenues laser images of soccer action light up ancient palaces at night: thousands gather in the streets to watch games on giant television screens strapped to skyscrapers.

Numerous art festivals, such as drum concerts and folk dancing held in the warm evenings, showcase a culture thousands of years old. Many performances are staged on the banks of the broad Han River, which cuts through the city.

Foreign visitors are being pampered by the South Koreans, a reserved and courteous people. At restaurants where no English

is spoken, waiters tirelessly track down other customers, or even customers at nearby eateries, who can translate the menu for foreigners. These good samaritans are quickly found

The city council has created an The duty officer of the Ramna interpreting service for taxis. The driver can call a local number to reach a translator, passing the regard till last night.

She said after Awami League's

Pointing to the reality, Hasina

majority and 73 ministers, they can do whatever they want by parlia-Referring to her commitment to parliamentary democracy, Hasina apprised them of her struggle

Expressing concern over the

phone to his customer, who gives the instructions. The interpreter

then relays them back to the driver. Sometimes, though, even that can't help. After a driver phoned the service for the second time in five minutes with the same question, the translator told one reporter: "You've probably realised by now that your driver's not too sharp.'

The authorities also have issued a list of "Talk Tips" to taxi drivers.

And in one business district office block, a computer screen in elevators offers useful phrases locals can use when conversing with foreigners.

Some of the phrases don't seem too useful, though. One runs: Son: Mom. I don't want to clean

my room Mom: Stop bitching and go and clean it.

Still, the good will abounds. It has even brought warmer relations with Japan, the colonial ruler here from 1910-45 and the tournament's cohost with South Korea In a sign the long-standing

antagonism is receding, Japan's

Prince Takamado, a cousin of Emperor Akihito, is in Seoul -- the first time a member of Japan's royal family has made an official visit since the end of World War II. Even so, a kind of score settling with Japan on the soccer pitch would be sweet. For South Koreans

than their neighbour would ensure some glory for dour-faced Dutch coach Guss Hiddink. South Korea is in group D with Portugal, the United States and Poland. Its form has surged

advancing farther in the competition

recently. Snags with ticketing have brought some tension to the preparations. Due to late printing, hundreds of spectators will have to pick up their tickets at the stadium on the

day of the game. Typically, after the threat of disruptive strikes, earlier coolness toward the tournament among South Koreans, and damaging political feuds, the country will likely be fully ready only at the last minute.

BUET student drowns in DU pond

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A student of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) drowned while swimming in the Shahidullah Hall pond inside Dhaka University yesterday noon.

23, son of Anwarul Islam, was a third-year student of the Department of Chemical Engineering. He lived in the city's Jigatala area. Sources said Nurullah along with four friends went over to the

pond area at around noon yester-

day. Later, he and one of his friends

Mamunur Rashid alias Nurullah,

jumped into the pond to swim. But after a while, Nurullah suddenly began to sink while his friend managed to reach the bank. The victim's friends on the bank cried out for help as they watched him drown. Responding to their cry for help, students from the hall made a futile effort to rescue him. Later, firefighters went to the spot

pond. Nuruallah was declared dead at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

and recovered the body from the

The body was handed over to his family members. The autopsy was not carried out as per request from family members.

Police Station said none went to the police station to file any case in this

Pakistan bolsters

A Pakistani military spokesman, who declined to be named, said earlier the movement had already started, but he could not say how

many troops were being moved. In a quick response to the military's announcement. Indian army spokesman Colonel Sruti Kant said New Delhi was well aware of the movement of Pakistani troops to the

two countries' common border. "We are in full knowledge of the situation and Pakistani troop and tank mobilisation. We are in complete control of the situation." he said

Kant said India had information that the troops were being moved to areas flanking India's western border states of Rajasthan and Punjab, theatre of previous wars between the two nuclear-armed neighbours

Meanwhile, suspected Islamic querrillas stormed a police base in Kashmir, killing three policemen, and cross-border shelling killed at least 28 other people yesterday.

Militants raided the base in Doda overnight and remained holed up in its armoury at midday, a police spokesman said on condition of anonymity. It was unclear how many guerrillas were inside.

Police were being evacuated from the building, and officials were considering blowing up parts of its to try to flush out the militants, the official said.

When police officers went to retrieve the bodies of their two dead, the militants hurled grenades, wounding five officers, he said. Police had said earlier that three officers had been killed. The base is in a suspected

stronghold of Islamic rebels in a

mountainous area 180 kilometres

(110 miles) northeast of Jammu, the winter capital of Indian-controlled At least 14 people-three Indian army soldiers and 11 civilians were killed in overnight artillery shelling and mortar fire from the Pakistani side, said another Indian police

official, also speaking on condition of anonymity. About 20 people were also wounded from shrapnel and gunfire as small arms fire continued yesterday in the border areas of Punch

and Naushahra, the official said.

Meanwhile, Pakistan Television reported Thursday that 14 civilians were killed in Pakistan by Indian shelling overnight. That report could not immediately be confirmed.

On Wednesday, British Foreign

Secretary Jack Straw ended a

peace mission to South Asia, saving the risk of war was high but conflict was not inevitable. He said he had some details to share with his counterparts in the United States and Europe, which could contribute to a diplomatic

those were. U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage was due in the region on June 6 and 7 in another bid to avert a war.

solution, but declined to say what

media reports he was likely to be followed by U.S. Defence Secretary Donald Rums

According to Indian and U.S.

Washington has urged both ble Rumsfeld visit.

the 'curse'. At a private hospital, a cleft-lip operation itself costs between Tk 15.000 and 20.000, and with medicine, operation theatre and other miscellaneous charges, the total cost runs to nearly Tk 30,000, sur-

geons told The Daily Star. "But at the DMCH, it costs only Tk 1500 per operation and I don't understand why thousands of people should suffer social isolation despite the small cost," said Dr Samanta Lal Sen, chief of the 50bed Burn Unit and Plastic Surgery

About two children in every born with an oral cleft, which is a split or separation in the baby's lip or palate. Cleft lip means that the two sides of the upper lip did not grow together properly while cleft palate is a split or opening in the roof of the

occur together or separately at birth. Also the opening may occur only on one side or on both sides of the lip or The defect handed down from

face difficulties particularly with female children when it comes to arranging matrimony. According to a survey by specialist doctors, about 2.83 lakh children

of simple and cheap remedy. Re-constructive surgery nor-

known paediatric plastic surgery available but doctors who conduct the re-constructive surgeries have good experience in doing the job.

Department of the hospital have introduced a special camp since January this year as part of a charity mission to identify and correct such

cal speciality, which aims to correct

Pakistan to stop infiltrations into Indian Kashmir.

Musharraf said on Monday there were no such infiltrations -- a statement taken by some as a promise to crack down on cross-border militant movement. India says it is still looking for action on the ground.

The mobilisation started after a December attack on India's parliament that New Delhi blamed on Pakistan-based militants, and tension soared again after the raid on the army camp on May 14.

Neither side wants another war They have fought three -- two over Kashmir -- since Britain partitioned its Indian empire into Islamic Pakistan and secular but mainly Hindu India in 1947. But with India poised to strike

back if there is one more big militant attack, and Pakistan saying it is ready to use nuclear weapons if it is pushed into a corner, they are both mired in a very high-stakes game of brinkmanship. Nobody is sure how big a militant attack it would take to prompt India

to retaliate, though it would have to be bigger than the overnight raid on the police camp that ended on Thursday. "It would have to be something that shakes the country, that provokes the country as a whole," said

tional affairs at Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University. "These kind of small things (the police camp raid) in a terroristinfested area...are very difficult to

In preparation for an eventual

prevent.'

Kalim Bahadur, professor of interna-

war. USA Today reported the U.S. government was drawing up contingency plans for the evacuation of more than 60,000 Americans from India and Pakistan. It said a U.S. government team was in India working on a plan to evacuate 1,100 U.S. servicemen

both countries. However, asked if a team from Washington was in India preparing an emergency evacuation plan, a U.S. embassy spokesman in New Delhi said: "No". "Every embassy in

from three bases in Pakistan and

more than 60,000 U.S. citizens in

the world has contingency plans for an evacuation," he added. Australia and New Zealand have already urged their citizens to leave

India and Pakistan. Last week Islamabad also said it would ask the United Nations to release a brigade of about 4,000 Pakistani soldiers serving with peacekeeping forces in Sierra Leone to bolster its defences at

reported on Wednesday U.S. Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld might also be dispatched to the region to try to head off a war. The White House referred guestions on the reports to the Pentagon.

U.S. networks ABC and NBC

information on a possible visit by Rumsfeld to South Asia. The U.S. embassy spokesman clined to comment about a possi-

restore a more normal appearance.

As a discipline, this field covers a

complex range of conditions," said

from the villages with enthusiastic

volunteers and local thana health

complex doctors also extending

help for the remarkable mission," he

response in terms of financial sup-

port. Spaandan-B, an organisation

of Bangladeshis living in California,

USA, has provided all-out financial

support for the first five camps which

benefited no less than fifty children

most of whom could otherwise not

Dhaka, another similar organisation

also extended financial help includ-

ing support for the last two camps

and payment for all the cost of

Nawabgani Thana Health Complex.

some 40 km from the capital where

about ten children were operated

on. Subsequent camps were held at

Dhamrai, Keraniganj and Dohar, all

Bengali year for initiating the camp

programme in order to bring inspira-

tion among the volunteer doctors,

nurses, technologists and others

involved in the team. It is a charity

mission and we have tremendous

enthusiasm and determination,'

said Professor Khalilur Rahman,

chief of Anesthesia department of

the hospital, who himself is a volun-

"We chose the first day of the

small towns around the capital.

The first camp was held at

British Women Association in

afford to pay for the operation.

surgeries at those camps.

The charity mission got wide

"We got a tremendous response

Dr Samanta Lal Sen.

where a spokesman said he had no

Smile shines on lips

DMCH. thousand families in the country are

mouth. Both cleft lip and cleft palate may

generation to generation is very common particularly among the rural poor who commonly believe it to be a curse of God and parents

under age ten now live with the deformities despite the availability

mally takes a maximum of one hour. However, the bad news is that there are only seven plastic surgeons in the country qualified to do the job. Unfortunately, there are no

The Burn Unit of DMCH in association with the Anaesthesia

deformities in children. "The surgery involved is a medi-

volunteer doctor in the team said, "If we take such initiative round the vear. I believe we could repair thousands of such defects." A tremendous supporter of the

mission, Dr Lutfur Rahman, civil

surgeon of Dhaka district said,

"There should be more camps and

Dr Sarwarul Alam, another

we shall provide all possible help." The surgical and anaesthetic team included Dr Abdur Rashid, Dr Sanjida, Dr Subrato, Dr Paresh and

Dr Motalib

has otherwise been the case." It has never been denied that sporadic violence occurred in some districts immediately following the general election. But to suggest that

exodus of Hindus from Bangladesh took place after the election. tion whatsoever. The Amnesty may therefore wish to correct its obser-

The government was forced to

terrorist strike on American Centre in Calcutta," said BSF deputy Armed militants had opened fire

lem." Singh said. He said talks with truck opera-

Nurullah Bahar to explain why they nad called the "illegal strike." Meanwhile, thousands of trucks Joint Labour Director of Sumanta Roy, a truck operator.

> step taken by the CPA chairman for restoring discipline in the port. On the other hand, as the news of compromise with the port authority spread, the agitated workers

for ourselves. The move by the EU ministers

concentrate.

Barth said the initiative would

Discussions on the initiative will

take action against him after considering all aspects and consequences of his action and intentions. A case has been filed against

Shahriar Kabir according to law of

the land, he has been freed on bail

himself, the handout said.

and rights of women in Bangladesh as well as conditions in prisons also do not portray the objective reality. The government is committed to upholding the rights of women, improving their condition and pro-

tecting them from violence and

The authorities do not condone

torture and will not allow people to use torture to achieve any objective. Amnesty may also note that the government recently rescinded the Public Safety Act. The government is also trying to improve prison conditions but there are resource

constraints, the handout said

Objective

discrimination.

coverage FROM PAGE 12 using public funds. He suggested that a balanced broadcast policy be followed to establish an objective and impartial image of the BTV. Deputy Director General of the BTV (News) Faruq Alamgir, Editor of The Daily Star Mahfuz Anam,

Assistant Editor of the Sangbad

Muniruzzaman, Editor of the Jai Jai

Din Shafiq Rehman and Information

Officer of the American Centre Marina Yasmin, among others, spoke at the ceremony.
"The role of the media as a social watchdog is not above accountability and responsibility," said Mahfuz "Their role should be scruti-

nised by people and other organisa-

should focus on the social and eco-

the media watch is important for

nomic issues with more importance

Shafig Rehman said the media

Municuzzaman said the idea of

tions of the society," he suggested.

establishing the people's voice accurately and making the public demand focused before the ruling party and policymakers.

by the commission.

Ctg port see if it is ultra vires the labour laws, as claimed by the agitating workers. The CPA circular will remain in

force until submission of the report

Commodore Golam Rabbani, the

meeting was attended by high

officials and representatives of the

workers, including joint convenors

Presided over by CPA chairman

of the Oikya Parishad Mahfuzur Rahman and Nurullah Bahar, and labour leaders Shamsul Hag Shafi and Siraiul Islam. Director Administration of the Port told UNB that the authority earlier issued show cause notices on the Oikya Parishad joint

convenors Mahfuzur Rahman and

Chittagong Division said that 11 registered organisations of the 22 workers' organisations were yesterday served with notices to explain within three days why their registration would not be cancelled for ioining the illegal strike. The Port Users' Forum yester-

day expressed satisfaction at the

assaulted some of their leaders when they arrived at the CBA office after the meeting with the port