Pro-AL panel

Bar Council

election

tion held here on Friday

sweeps Bogra

Awami League-supported panel

wept the district bar council elec-

According to unofficial results

published Friday midnight, the AL-

backed panel clinched 20 posts out

of 22. BNP and Jamaat supported

panel got two posts of general

AKM Shamsul Abedin, bagged 284

votes while his nearest rival Delwar

Hossain got 186 votes; and general

secretary Abdul Matin received 226

votes and his nearest contestant Nazrul Islam got 204 votes.

The ruling BNP-backed panel was defeated for the first time in

recent years in the district bar elec-

As many as 478 voters out of 507

The newly elected president.

NEWS

5 loss-making SoEs shut, thousands jobless

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The famous Rajshahi Silk, a natural product of the country, will now be a part of history with closure of Rajshahi Silk Factories and Thakurgaon Silk Factories yester-

The two loss-making stateowned mills along with three others have been closed down as per a government decision, making some 35,000 people unemployed.

The three others are North Bengal Paper Mill in Pakshey, Sylhet Pulp and Paper Mill and Khulna Newspaper Mill, the biggest in the country after Adamjee Jute

Rajshahi Correspondent Our reported that

premises of the two silk factories were teeming with law enforcers, workers, their families and visitors from the city since morning vesterday. Many of the workers were in tears, going around their workplaces for the last time and packing up to leave.

The authorities of Bangladesh Sericulture Board (BSB) vesterday paid nine months' arrears of the 364 stuff of Raishahi Silk Fcatories (RSF) and Thakurgaon Silk factories (TSF).

With the closure of the 42-yearold RSF and 35-year-old TSF, some 10,000 families involved in cultivating mulberry trees that host cocoons also became jobless.

The two mills, burdened with some Tk 23 crore losses, were closed down due to sheer mismanagement, wrong planning and unruly trade union activities as BSB failed to implement government decisions to run those smoothly, officials alleged.

A Tk 8 crore BMRE (balancing, modernising, rehabilitation and expansion) programme was not properly implemented, they

The mills need over Tk 8.22 crore to pay outstanding bills of their stuff But BSB was given only 4.15 crore to pay nine month's arrears.

BSB Chairman Dr Sawdagar Mahfuzar Rahman told The Daily Star correspondent Anwar Ali that the rest 50 per cent of their arrears will be paid after audit.

All 72 officials and employees of BSB will get their salaries and allowances as soon as possible as per the gratuity commission, he

Some of the officials told our correspondent said they submitted a joint application for transfer of their jobs under government's revenue budget. If necessary, they will go to court, they said. They said BSB has not been abolished.

The Rajshahi Silk Factory, set up 1959 with 471 staff and an annual production capacity of 4,61,700 metres silk fabric, was handed over to BSB, when it (BSB) came into being in 1978.

A non-government organisation named Rangpur-Dinajpur Rural Services (RDRS) established the Thakurgaon Silk Factory in 1967 to rehabilitate women affected during the Liberation War and generate income through silk production.

Initially, the factory with 111 staff had one lakh metres silk production capacity a year. It was also handed over to BSB

The BSB was supposed to promote cultivation of mulberry trees, silkworms and cocoons. But in 1996, BSB stopped the reeling section at the mills to get rid of losses. At this, growers lost interest in silkworm and cocoon cultivation.

The North Bengal Paper Mill (NBPM), burdened with some Tk 509 crore losses and loans never earned profit since its inception.

Established in 1967 on 134 acres of land on the bank of Padma at Baghail in Pakshey, the paper mill went into production on July 25.

It had 916 workers and employees, but it helped over 10,000 people survive, Abdur Rob, a CBA

The managements of the RSF, TSF and NBPM issued separate notices yesterday declaring shutdown of the mills due to "serious

"The NBPM was never a profitable concern. It was incurring an average yearly loss of Tk 23 crore since its inception", said a top official

The accumulated loss of the mill stands at over Tk 269 crore while its liabilities are over Tk 340 crore.

UNB said the shutdown of the 44-year-old Khulna Newspaper Mill (KNM) was marked by handover of its charge to Ansar members by the mills' security guards at 2:30 pm amid a sombre secnario.

As the curtain dropped, many of the officials, employees, workers and their children were in tears, hugging each other.

Four months' salary of some 14,00 staff remained unpaid.

The mill authorities said their one month's salary will be paid today and the rest after "settlement of an audit objection within a month".

The KNM was established on 103 acres of land in 1958 at a cost of Tk 74 crore and a share capital of Tk 16.86 crore. The government equity was Tk 20.02 crore. Its

annual production capacity was

A total of 635 people lost their jobs following shutdown of the 27year-old Sylhet Pulp and Paper mills. The staff did not get their salaries and allowances for the last four months, a UNB report said.

The country's lone pulp and paper mill incurred a total loss of Tk 150 crore since its inception.

ago reintroduced the flag protection

ordinance by cancelling the general

Cargo ships

FROM PAGE 12

waiver facility

granted anticipatory

Hasnat's sons

UNB, Dhaka

The High Court yesterday granted anticipatory bail to Ashik Abdullah and Mayeen Abdullah, sons of former chief whip Abul Hasnat Abdullah, for six months in connection with arms cases filed with Kotwali and Agailjhara police sta-

The bench comprising Justice Sved Amirul Islam and Justice Mirza Hossain Haider also issued rule upon the government to show cause why the petitioners should not be granted regular bail.

The order came upon petitions filed by Ashik and Mayeen, who appeared before the court and sought anticipatory bail.

Advocate Mahbube Alam appeared in the court for the

States and especially India. City

BNP President and Dhaka Mayor

Sadeque Hossain Khoka presided

They mentioned that reports of

two international newsmagazines

and the Indian foreign minister's

remarks alleging presence of reli-

gious extremists in Bangladesh

has launched a massive campaign

against Bangladesh with the motive

of destroying its image. And despite

being a former prime minister,

Hasina is supporting the Indian

move in an irresponsible way, they

They emphasised that people of

Bangladesh are religious minded

but they are not zealots and there is

no place for religious extremists in

India which has been patronising

religious fundamentalism for

decades and that there were hun-

dreds of incidents of religious vio-

Khoka urged top leaders of the

AL to convince Hasina that she

should refrain from making 'anti-

state' remarks abroad. "Her state-

"It's the ruling party and not the

opposition that has tarnished our

image by its misdeeds," the former

was well aware of the developments

in Bangladesh by virtue of the

The international community

Hasina was stunned by the

government's allegation that she

had sponsored the European

Parliament's resolution against

Bangladesh and Indian foreign

minister's statement in parliament.

"Am I so powerful that the

European Parliament, the Indian

Parliament and the US State

After failing to run the country,

she claimed, the government had

called out the army. "Now, it is trying

to shift its failure on to the Awami

Asked about her meetings with

Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee

and other Indian leaders, the oppo-

sition leader said she had talked

Department would act to my dic-

The leaders alleged that it is

The alliance leaders said India

followed the statements by Hasina.

over the rally.

added.

the country

lence in that country.

prime minister said.

media, she added.

League," she said.

Acid attack on housewife in Sylhet: One held

Hawkers have taken over the footbridge and sidewalks near the New Market in the city, causing extreme inconvenience to the pedestrians.

BSS, Sylhet

South Surma police on Friday night arrested a person for throwing acid on a housewife on Thursday.

The arrested person has been identified as Islam Uddin alias Kotaye Miah, son of Mosaddar Ali of village Islampur under Sadar upazila of Sylhet.

The victim, Shahana Begum wife of one Md Khasru Miah, was admitted to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital in a critical Police said, Mosaddar Ali and his

son threw acid on Shahana following a family feud on the day at village Mujraipara of Daudpur union under Sylhet Sadar upazila. The victim's husband was out of the house at the time of the incident.

Shahana's husband filed a case Friday with South Surma police according four people

Rally for Hasina's trial

PBCP leader Sumon held in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Monirul Islam alias Sumon, 32, ringleader of outlawed Purba Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) was arrested Friday afternoon

Officer-in-Charge (OC) of

Phultala thana said there are six murder and several other criminal cases against Sumon who is the second-in-command of Phultala-Dumuria unit of PBCP He was directly involved in the

murder of Phultala UP Chairman Sarder Abul Kashem. Abul Kashem was gunned down in front of Phultala UNO in 1998 Police seized a mobile phone

from Sumon.

He was produced before a court here yesterday seeking remand. The court placed him on a five-day

Abdul Matin said Hasina is still to

accept her party's crushing defeat in

the last polls and that is why she is

now conspiring to create instability

in the country and destroy its image

Bangladesh Jatiya Party leader

Saifur Rahman urged Prime

Minister Khaleda Zia to go for enact-

ment of such a law in the parlia-

ment's next session so that none

can make any statement against the

Azharul Islam said Sheikh Hasina is

opposing the current anti-crime

drive by the joint forces because

criminals patronised by the previous

AL government are now being

arrested and illegal arms are being

among others, BNP leaders Abdus

Salam and BM Bakir Hossain.

Jamaat leader Rafigul Islam, IOJ

leaders Abdur Rab Yusufi and Abul

Kashem and BJP leader Taibur

Rahman. Later, a procession was

brought out. It paraded different city

roads and chanted slogans against

The rally was also addressed by,

Jamaat-e-Islami leader ATM

country both at home or abroad.

Ruffled banks during the period and its new loans

number of exchange houses and are still being done on them.

The governor said he has been petting the same reply for the last one year.

although it was not the central bank's task, still it will develop the platform for online banking and he assigned Deputy Governor

Sitting with the Sonali Bank at noon, the governor did not find any solace either. In the last nine months, Sonali's defaulted loans increased by Tk 565 crore.

It also could not meet its operating profit target. The bank could

borrowers who do not default. He also inquired about the incen-

tive scheme for defaulted loan recovery. The bank officials said the result of the scheme is not very encouraging and then the governor asked them if the case is so then why they are continuing with the

informed that Rs 1 crore has been frontier and Rs 50,000 for the

The official admitted that deployment of BSF personnel on the Assam-Bhutan border would cause a manpower crisis, but said the problem would be solved after forces were relocated from ions now stationed in Manipur Bangladesh border in Assam and Meghalava.

The Union home ministry had announced that the BSF would be relieved of the additional responsibility of internal security by December 15.

of battalions that would be deployed along the Assam-Bhutan border. saving it would be finalised after a survey of the area.

deployed the last time our services were requisitioned for the Assam-Bhutan border," he said

The BSF official said 99 training camps for militants, some of them set up by outfits of the Northeast, had been traced in Bangladesh. He claimed that the force had even

Mitra did not specify the number

BK Dey Sawian, inspector-

neral of the BSF's Shillong sec tor, said over a dozen such routes were in the Meghalaya sector of the international border. "Some of these areas are frequented by militants and categorised as traditional routes. These include Phanda, Dhambakapol and

and Umkian-Rattacherra in the Jaintia Hills," he said. The inspector-general of the BSF's Tripura, Cachar and Mizoram sectors, MC Parmar, painted a grim picture of the situation. He told newspersons in Agartala that the presence of al-Qaida activists and militants of the Northeast in

Purakasia in the West Garo Hills

Bangladesh was an "open secret". Parmar said the BSF had "enough evidence" to back the allegations against Bangladesh. Deputy Prime Minister LK Advani was the first senior political leader to charge the neighbouring country with allowing anti-India activity on

Bangladesh Rifles recently agreed to pursue a "policy of give and take" with the BSF and provide information about insurgent activity, "if any", on its territory.

FROM PAGE 12

desirable in a democratic set-up, the troops have so far been called

Hossain Chowdhury echoed a similar view. "The government can deploy anyone to maintain law and order and question should not arise about it. Rather what happens after the deployment can be

Former inspector general of police (IGP) ASM Shahjahan highlighted the poor condition of the police department. "How can vou expect good service from a department that does not have the

He called for immediate

have different training regimes and it is the responsibility of the police, not the army, to root out crime. However, the police administra-

tion is corrupt and cannot possibly live up to its task.

Journalist Ataus Samad regret-

ted that none of the political parties has expelled its leaders and activists arrested by the army. "It should

be done as a follow-up to the army

drive. If they are not expelled, they

will be back again.' Lawyer Shahdin Malik said most of those arrested by the army so far would be released eventually because there is no case

against most. Among others, Professor Syed Anwar Hossain, Director of Mass

Signature Campaign Rasheda K Chowdhury, writer and journalist Moinul Hossain, Director of Ain O Salish Kendro Sultana Kamal and Dr Muhammad Zafar Igbal also spoke on the occasion

AK-47, SLR seized Nasir, charge-sheeted accused in

The joint forces of the army, paramilitary Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and police raided a hideout of 'Nazem Bahini'-- one of the factions of the infamous 'Tayeb Bahini'-- at Lelang union. They seized one Indian SLR, one Chinese 303 riffle, three Pakistani single-barrel guns and two locally made shotguns. They also hauled up three persons, Nurunnabi, Mazhar and Shahjahan, said to be gangsters of the Nazem

The troops raided hideouts of the 'Shamim Bahini' and 'Doulat Bahini' also sub-groups of the Tayeb Bahini -- at Dharmapur in Fatikchhari upazila early vesterday morning. They recovered two guns. However, the gangsters fled the

hideout. The troops conducted another raid in Payeenndong on the same night and recovered an AK-47 riffle.

The troops raided the hideout following the confession of one Jalal, reportedly second-incommand of the Nazem Bahini, who was held in Friday morning. A total of 170 bullets were also recovered during the swoops.

Sources said with yesterday's 44 firearms including three AK-47 riffles, one M-16 rifle and one SLR were recovered from

Army officials concerned believe more illegal weapons are out there in the hilly, forest clad upazila of Fatikchhari. Meanwhile, the army arrested six

more people including the alleged arms peddler Gias Hazarika and National Democratic Party at Quaish Burishchar in the port city on Friday. Four firearms were also recovered during the raid. Hazarika was returning home from a mosque

Sources said Hazarika told the law enforcers that Islami Chhatra

Employee assaulted No activities at ctg airport for an hour

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

All activities of the Shah Amanat International Airport here remained suspended for an hour yesterday afternoon following an assault on a civil aviation employee by security forces

Sources said the trouble erupted when Saidul Haq, an employee of the civil aviation telephone exchange of the airport, was intercepted by security quards as he was leaving office at around 5:00pm before the end of his shift due to illness. Following an argument over the matter, the guards reportedly beat up Saidul Haq.

As the news of the assault reached the airport staff, over a hundred agitated officials and employees stopped work and rushed to the security office to protest the incident. But they were stopped by security personnel who pointed guns at them, creating a

continued interrogating him till last Hazarika was arrested early last year in connection with the

on July 12, 2000. Acting on the information he provided, police had recovered two AK-47 riffles and one foreign-made pistol along with bullets from his hideout at that time. He was released on bail around a

Sources said the army has information that having been set free on bail. Hazarika procured several other sophisticated weap-

ons worth 1 k 11 lakh. Our Pabna correspondent reported that the joint forces arrested two people and seized a gun in Pabna town. The arrestees

are Ismail Sheikh and Rabbani. In Jhenidah, Bangladesh Rifles personnel arrested two people and seized 440 cylinders of liquefied petroleum (LP) gas being transorted by a truck at Mandartala area in Mohespur upazila. The cylinders were being smuggled out to India,

sources said. Our Feni correspondent reports the army arrested two criminals from a graveyard at West Devpur village of Chhagalnaiya in the district.

The army hauled up 85 people including 15 listed criminals, across the country in 24 hours ending at 00am yesterday. They also seized 25 firearms including five revolvers, seven pistols, one AK-47 rifle, 11 shotguns and 184 bullets.

As many as 7,615 people including 1,777 listed criminals have so far been hauled up across the country since the start of the 'Operation Clean Heart' on October 17. A total of 1,298 firearms along with 27,249 bullets have also been seized during the time. Meanwhile. Police headquarters in a press release said they have arrested 1,498 people across the country in 24 hours ending at 6:00am yesterday. The Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) also said they arrested 248 people including 35 wanted criminals during the same period yester-

Bappi's parents FROM PAGE 1

Becharam Dewri area were closed as the owners went to the court to hear the judgment. They also carried banners and chanted slogans demanding capital punishment for the culprits.

Khaleda

FROM PAGE 1

blessings for peace and prosperity of Bangladesh and the wellbeing of

Khaleda Zia also offered her sha and Tarabi prayers at the lasjidul Haram.

State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin, Prime Minister's politi cal secretary Mosaddek Ali and Bangladesh Ambassador to Saudi Arabia SK Sharjil Hassan accompa-

Bahodderhut Eight Murder Case "Such a situation may create a have AK-47 assault riffles. The army big problem for garments export and also hit trade in general unless an

amendment for container cargo was made immediately," he said. Meanwhile. Convenor of the Chittagong Feeder Trade Local Working Committee SK Ghosh at a press conference at the local press club yesterday expressed grave

> concern at the cancellation of the general waiver. Ghosh blamed a vested quarter for creating such a deadlock in the

shipping business.

Trade talks

minute development takes place," a top official at the commerce ministry

According to sources, the meeting will focus on the revision of the bilateral trade agreement signed in 1980 and renewed every three years till October 2001. Now, Dhaka wants a revision of the agreement as it feels it has become obsolete. However, the bilateral trade agreement was renewed twice in last one

Dhaka will table its longstanding demands for free-market access and removal of non-tariff and paratariff barriers against the backdrop of a yawning trade gap of over \$1 billion against Dhaka. On the other hand. Delhi would insist on lifting the ban Dhaka imposed on import of yarn and sugar through its land

Besides, Delhi may raise its demand for transshipment and transit and also the use of the Chittagong port. However, in the last trade talks in Dhaka, Delhi had agreed to keep these issues out of the trade meeting and to raise those at the joint economic council meet-

Bappi's killers

FROM PAGE 1 The judge took his seat at 12:20pm and read out the verdict for one and

a half hours in the quiet courtroom. Earlier, students of Bappi's school and the Byabsayee Bahumukhi Samabaya Samity Limited brought out separate processions demanding capital punish-

ment to the culprits. The defence counsels - Barrister Kazi Shahadat Hossain, MA Kamrul Hasan Khan Aslam, Oliar Rahman Khan, Nurul Islam Milon and Habibur Rahman - declined to comment on the judgement. But they said they would take the verdict to the High Court Division. Additional public prosecutor (PP) Khorshed Alam however said he was happy with the verdict.

The investigation officer of the

case submitted the charge sheet

against Shipon and four others on

August 21. The court framed

charges against the accused on

September 21 and the trial began on September 25. The prosecution and the defence completed arguments on November 20. Twenty prosecution witnesses were cross-examined before the judgement was pronounced.

"If you (Hasina) need, hold rallies and public meetings all over Bangladesh and call more and more hartals, but don't make any statements against the country aborad,

lems for Bangladeshi students and

workers in foreign countries," Khoka

ments are creating serious prob- general elections.

he said. The city BNP chief noted that people of Bangladesh had got India as friend during the liberation war, but they would not accept Indian Referring to the current joint drive against the criminals, Khoka

been forced to deploy troops because Hasina and her previous government had patronised crimes and criminals and given arms licences to thousands of people against fake addresses. He mentioned that about 11.000

said the present government has

government had issued licences to party cadres and criminals. Housing and Public Works Minister Mirza Abbas said the people are very much aware of the activities of Sheikh Hasina and

licensed arms in the capital are still

untraced because the previous AL

would give her a befitting lesson in due time, as they gave in the last

Hasina dares govt about the trade imbalance between the two countries and killing of

Bangladeshis by the BSF in border

"I requested the Indian govern-

ment to allow duty-free access of 25 categories of Bangladeshi items to India as agreed during our rule," she The BSF had killed about 300 Bangladeshi nationals in last one

anything about it, she said. "It is something for the government to speak about. The government should not relate me with such things," she said responding to Indian claim about presence of al-Qaida activists in Bangladesh.

Commenting on the arrest of two

foreign journalists, Hasina observed

it was now recognised internation-

year, but the government failed to do

ally that iournalists were being tortured by the present government. Later, she addressed a gathering of AL activists who gathered outside the airport to welcome her back.

Before starting for Dhaka Sheikh Hasina told reporters in New Delhi Friday night that it was India that had alleged that the Pakistan High Commission in Dhaka had become a hub of ISI activities. "I am not doing anything which is against Bangladesh. I will give my

clarification when I return home,

Hasina said emerging from a 45-

minute meeting with Indian Deputy Prime Minister Lal Krishna Advani on Friday, our Delhi correspondent reported. Refuting Khan's charge, she pointed out that it was Advani who had mentioned al-Qaida activities in Bandladesh three weeks ago, much

minister made his statement in Lok Sabha three days back. UP polls

before the Indian external affairs

Last Thursday, the government reiterated its request, hinting that the EC might not get any help from the administration should it decide to go ahead with the UP election on its own schedule.

out eight times since independence, he said. Major General (retd) Mojnul

debated.'

minimum level of logistic support." reforms to the criminal justice system and the Police Act.

Former cabinet secretary Muiibul Hug said election does not make a government democratic. "It should establish rule of law and

cast their votes in the election. 2 Bangladeshis went to the border seeking return of the money taken by BSF personnel of Balain outpost at Kumargunja on the other side of the border. The money was borrowed by the BSF

vendor of Bagnapara frontier. Police collected the bodies of the

are becoming defaulted.

could not give any reply.

you run the bank this way?"

The governor wanted to know in

The governor then reported said,

At one stage, he reportedly said,

'You decide whether you want to run

the bank, else, you close it down."

which sectors defaulted loans are

increasing, but the bank officials

"You are running the bank and you

do not have any statistics? How will

FROM PAGE 1 Rupali was supposed to open a the bank's executives said works

About launching online banking, Rupali executives also gave a similar reply. An irritated governor then said

Mohammad Ali Rumi to get it done.

make only Tk 11 crore against a operating profit target of Tk 60 crore.

Sonali's deposits also decreased

The governor also accused Sonali of not giving loans to small

The Telegraph reports

in neighbouring Bangladesh. He

Tripura sector. Manipur. He said seven BSF battalwould be relocated to the Indo-

"Nine battalions had to be

Clean politics

uphold human rights." Although army deployment is not He said the army and the police