



**Mamata cancels
Delhi visit, calls
emergency
meeting**

SAKYA SEN MITRA, Kolkata

In a sudden development, Trinamool Congress chief Mamata Banerjee, who was likely to be inducted in the Federal Cabinet, has cancelled her trip to New Delhi yesterday morning.

She summoned an emergency working committee meeting of the Party to decide "future course of action."

Trinamool is likely to show cause and then suspend party MP Sudip Bandopadhyay for his bid to obtain a post in the Union Cabinet.

The party would send a letter asking him to explain his role in the cabinet reshuffle.

Trinamool Chairperson Mamata Banerjee, meanwhile, faxed a letter to Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee stating that only the party's executive body had the power to nominate representatives to the cabinet.

Meanwhile, after a three-hour meeting of the working committee of the Trinamool Congress yesterday morning, the party's chairman Pankaj Banerjee said, "The question of inducting Trinamool MPs as ministers in to the National

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

**Train derailment
Dhaka-Ctg rail
link disrupted
for 12 hours**

UNB, Gazipur

A goods train derailed at Pubail station Friday night, disrupting rail communication on Dhaka-Chittagong route for about 12 hours.

Railway sources said nine bogies, including the engine of the Dhaka-bound train from Chittagong, went off the track at about 8.55pm while it was crossing the Pubail station ignoring the signal.

Two drivers of the train - Abul Hossain and Joinal Alqudri - were also injured in the accident. They were admitted to local hospital.

Train communication on the route was restored at 9am yesterday.

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
May 25		6-39 pm
May 26	5-12 am	
Prayer Timings		
May 25		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	4-15	4-45
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-45	6-49
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

Cap on credit NCBs worried over excess liquidity

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The nationalised commercial banks (NCBs) are worried over excess liquidity once their credit activities are limited in line with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) prescriptions.

The Bangladesh Bank (BB) has asked the NCBs to sign memorandum of understandings (MoUs) with it that would limit their lending growth to five per cent of their loans and advances in 2002.

The top executives of the four NCBs - Sonali Bank, Janata Bank, Agrani Bank and Rupali Bank - met with an IMF technical assistance team last week and said the

new rule would bulge their liability with deposits outstripping lending.

They said deposit grows at 10-12 per cent per annum and if credit growth is limited to five per cent it would create surplus fund. This would, in turn, increase losses of the banks.

The IMF representatives however did not pay heed to their concerns. They pointed out that even new loans are fast turning classified, which makes credit activities at the present rate self-defeating.

They advised the NCBs to invest their excess funds in the money market and other risk-free ventures.

The IMF team also met Bangladesh Bank and finance ministry officials to discuss progress on the MoUs with the NCBs, management contract of Agrani Bank and appointment of management support groups for Sonali and Janata.

The finance ministry has already decided that the top management of Agrani will be hired from the private sector. The current management will remain in Sonali and Janata, but local and international consultants will support them.

The management changes will complete by this year.

**3 criminals
caught after
firefight
with cops**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three criminals were arrested after a shootout with police at Mohammadpur on Friday evening.

A team of Mohammadpur police was checking vehicles at Riazia Sultana Road at 7:25pm and when they intercepted a CNG three-wheeler, three criminals riding it opened fire, police said.

The police shot back and two criminals Zahidul Haq Manik and Aminur Rahman Sohel were hit in the legs while the other, Tridib Ghosh, received minor injury.

Police caught them and recovered a .22 bore revolver and 22 round ammunition from Sohel and a .32 bore revolver from Manik.

The three were later admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

Cancer hospital sans drugs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Institute of Cancer Research and Hospital (NICRH) has run out of drugs for over one year and patients have to buy the medicines from outside at exorbitant prices to get chemotherapy.

Stock of common cancer drugs like Vincristin, 5-FU, Cisplatin, Endoxin, Holoxin given free to patients at the hospital ran out and fresh supplies are yet to reach.

Nasima of Choumohani, Noakhali, is being treated for cervix

cancer. She has been prescribed a combination of two drugs, but the poor housewife got none, which she was supposed to get free from the hospital.

Patients, mostly poor, cannot afford the drugs costing between Tk 400 and Tk 5,000 needed for each chemotherapy session.

Another patient said, "Each ampoule of drugs costs twice its original price in the open market."

The hospital authorities, facing immense pressure from patients,

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

**Sultana Panni killing
4 arrestees
remanded
again**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four persons arrested in connection with the murder of Sultana Khan Panni yesterday were again remanded for four days.

The Detective Branch (DB) took over the investigation on Wednesday but will interrogate the four today, as the arrestees were on a five-day police remand till yesterday.

Alauddin Munshi, Mohammad Mizan, Mohammad Rony and his wife Ruby were produced before

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7



PHOTO: STAR

The regional consultation meeting of the National Policy Review Forum 2003 at Barisal organised by the Centre for Policy Dialogue, The Daily Star and Prothom Alo was held yesterday.

**'Bar civil
servants'
direct entry
into politics'**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bureaucrats should not be allowed to enter politics before five years into the retirement.

Speakers at a regional consultation meeting on 'Democratic process: Election and Parliamentary System' observed this in Barisal yesterday. The dialogue was organised by the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), The Daily Star and the Prothom Alo.

Terming the politicians most corrupt, they also suggested the government and the civic society should act as a watchdog to prevent their corruption.

Firoz Alam of Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA) presented the keynote paper and Advocate Enayet Pir Khan, principal of Barisal Law College, attended it as

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

No WMDs in Iraq, Blix begins to believe Congress asks CIA to 'reevaluate' intelligence

THE GUARDIAN, Baghdad

The chief UN weapons inspector, Hans Blix, said on Friday that he suspected that Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction.

He added that "in this respect" the war might not have been justified.

"I am obviously very interested in the question of whether or not there were weapons of mass destruction - and I am beginning to suspect there possibly were none," he said in an interview with the Berlin newspaper *Der Tagesspiegel*.

Dr Blix, who retires next month, has previously condemned as "shaky" the evidence presented by

British and American intelligence before the war, and said that it was "conspicuous" that they had failed to make significant discoveries after the war.

But in Friday's interview, he went further. He said: "The main justification for the war was weapons of mass destruction, and it may turn out that in this respect the war was not justified."

He referred to Saddam Hussein's chief scientific adviser, Lieutenant General Amer al-Saadi, who surrendered last month and said in an interview: "Nothing else will come out after the end of the war."

"The fact that al-Saadi surrendered and said there were no weapons of mass destruction has led to

**Detectives' murder
4 arrestees
on fresh
remand**

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Four people, arrested in connection with the murder of two police detectives at a city hotel, were placed on a two-day fresh remand yesterday.

The Investigation Officer (IO) produced Saidur Rahman alias Bachchu, Belal Hossain, Habibur Rahman and Mosharrif Hossain Siddiqui before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM's) Court, Dhaka at 3.00 pm and sought a seven-day fresh remand. But the Magistrate Sirajul Haider granted them a two-day remand.

Detective Branch (DB) Inspector Nurul Alam Sikder and Sub-Inspector Alamgir Hossain were killed in a shootout at Hotel Sun Rise International at Malibagh Chowdhurypara on May 14. An alleged criminal, Shafayet Hossain Upol, was also killed in the shootout.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

