Electronic media

BDR, BSF agree

of firearms and explosives into Bangladesh and that some Indian

entities propagating anti

The BDR DG aired concern over

firing on and killing of Bangladeshi

nationals by the BSF and Indian

civilians, to which Sharma said BSI

troops have "displayed a high

degree of restraint during the last

eight months as a result of which

the number of killings has gone

edly by BSF and Indian nationals.

Sharma denied "any advertent violation" by the BSF personnel and said protests by the BDR in this

regard had been found to be "in-

expressed serious concern over illegal migration from Bangladesh saying "this has continued

unabated causing serious socio-

economic problems in India". He

urged the BDR DG to take effective

steps to check this "illegal flow into India."

Sadar upazila and Badhan, a 22-

day-old daughter of Mofizul Islam

of Assassuni under Sadar upazila, died of pneumonia at local hospi-

According to met office fore-cast, in most places of Rajshahi,

Barisal, Khulna and Dhaka divi-

sions mercury dipped below 10

degrees Celsius yesterday and the

temperature may fall one or two

degrees Celsius further during the

the cold wave would continue over

Rajshahi, Ishwardi, Jessore and

Chuadanga during the next 24 hours. Mild to moderate cold spell

might also cross over Barisal,

Comilla and Dhaka as well as all

parts of Rajshahi and Khulna

20 killed, 30 hurt

village Nazmaula of Sreepur upazila

under Gazipur district overturned

after one of its front wheels got punc-

tured, leaving 17 dead on the spot

admitted to Kumudini Hospital and

Tangail Sadar Hospital. Three suc-

cumbed to their injuries there at

Enayetpur in Sirajganj by the bus to

attend annual Urs of the peer at his

The victims were going to

Fourteen of the dead are Bhanu

egum, 65, Hazrat Ali, 40, Jewel, 22,

inhaz, 32, Taizuddin, 40, Russel, 15,

Minhaz Ali, 20, Sajal, 15, Omar Ali, 20,

Saiful Islam, 20, Mustaque Ali, 28,

Asraful Alim, 20, Rashid, 18 and

Omar Ali, 27. Identity of six others

Rajshahi adds: Three people were killed and 20 others injured when a

student bus of Rajshahi University

rammed into a passenger bus in front of Rajshahi Television Bhaban in the

It requires that POWs be given proper food and freedom, be free to exercise their religion and receive monthly pay depending on rank.

Air Force Maj. Michael Shavers, a Pentagon spokesman, said Saddam was being given all the rights due him

"The bottom line is that Saddam Hussein was the leader of the old regime's military forces, and there-fore he was a member of the military,

and he was captured. That makes him an enemy prisoner of war,

Assam, Mizoram, Tripura or any-

The press release went on to allege that the BDR director general told reporters after a joint

meeting of the BDR and Indian Border Security Force (BSF) that

the UPDF has camps in India.

Our Staff correspondent from

The injured bus passengers were

Met office yesterday forecast

Cold claims

FROM PAGE 1

tals yesterday.

FROM PAGE 1

about 4:00pm.

mazar (shrine).

could not be known.

city yesterday morning.

FROM PAGE 12

under the treaty.

UPDF

FROM PAGE 12

where in India.

US declares

and 33 others injured.

The BSF director general

rrect," said the release

About border violation alleg-

down significantly"

on information that may be shared on activities of anti-national elements of either country and not to allow use of their respective territories against the interest of the other," said an official release containing the Joint Record of Discussions between the border guards of the two countries issued here Friday evening.

Sharma and Chowdhury were jointly briefing the press after signing the Joint Record of Discussions at the end of the fourday border talks at the BSF headquarters here.

"We shall get them in case they exist," Sharma said, adding, "the BDR chief requested us to get these fellows." Sharma also said be Sharma also said he received from the BDR chief a list of 39 camps and 91 terrorists and insurgents, and criminals operating from camps in India.

At the BDR-BSF Directors General-level talks in Dhaka last year, Bangladesh gave a list of 29 camps in Tripura, Mizoram and Assam from where the Priti Group of Shanti Bahini has been carrying out insurgent and terrorist activities against Bangladesh, said General Chowdhury.

He said these groups, instead of surrendering in 1998, have been continuing insurgency and terrorism against Bangladesh. Besides two more extremist groups -- the Banga Sena led by Kalidas Baidya and Bir Banga Sena headed by Chittaranjan Sutar -- were carrying out terrorist and secessionist activities against Bangladesh from bases in West Bengal, he added.

The BSF director general refuted the charges that Bangladeshi criminals are residing in India and involved in smuggling

Police

FROM PAGE 12

On her arrival at the parade ground, the prime minister was received by Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury, State Minister for Home Lutfozzaman Babar and Inspector General of Police Shahudul Huq.

She reviewed the parade and took salute from the cops attired in new uniform of deep blue trousers and grey shirts for the district police, light olive shirts for the metropolitan police and khaki blue-olive combat print for the armed battalions.

The prime minister, referring to their new uniform, said it is part of the modernisation process of the force to give it a new look.

She hoped that the old image of police would be transformed into a new image of a friendly and propeople force.

Reminding her election commitment to curb crime, which she said had spread its fangs during the past Awami League rule, has now been made.

Ramos tells

FROM PAGE 12

bilateral relations are deep-rooted. and recalled that the Philippines was among the countries that recognised Bangladesh soon after its independ-

He lauded Bangladesh's role in brokering a peace deal with Filipino separatists through the OIC (Organisation of Islamic Conference).

"Bangladesh has been helping continuously in the new peace process in Philippines," he said adding, "Bangladesh and Philippines are well known for contributing peacekeepers under the UN umbrella".

Focusing on bilateral trade, he said the current trade volume is insignificant and that trade relations between the two countries needed to be much strengthened.

Ramos also stressed increased hilateral relationship in different sectors including information tech nology, communication, agriculture, fisheries and food processing.

He said both countries could contribute to the global economy with a unique Asian perspective.

Talking about Philippines' poverty alleviation efforts, the ex-Filipino president said his country had borrowed agricultural technology from China and replicated the micro-credit programme of

Bangladesh's Grameen Bank.

'the threat' properly.

group, sources said.

plant site.

Taking a swipe at the wordings

The chairman also criticised the

of the letter, committee member Ilias Ali said: "He undermined the

chairman and members of the

letter and said he did not make any

derogatory remarks against

Jamuna Group after visiting its

and Mineral Resources to set up a

central meter at the Jamuna Group

plant site to ensure proper utilisa-

"I asked the Ministry of Energy

committee by his language.

Jamuna asks JS body ager and deputy general manager of Titas Gas Transmission and Members of the committee from a scheduled meeting in the same day Distribution Company Ltd. were reacted sharply to what they termed was 'indecent-worded with him when he visited the site,

letter' and extended unreserved mills. support to their chairman to face "I don't care about any threat. I'm determined to set up a central The members discussed the meter at Jamuna Group to ensure proper gas utilisation," Shahidul letter and asked the chairman to take a strong stand against the

but did not enter Jamuna Group

The committee decided to discuss the letter in detail at its next

Yesterday's meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban also discussed the Westmont Power Plant at Baghabari, observing that the company could not complete the project, aimed at generating 130 megawatts of power, in time.

Despite the failure, the company is trying to sign a new contract with the government for providing another 140 MWs of power, the committee chairman observed.

tion of gas as the company lacks the system largely used by other com-The committee asked the minis try to submit all documents to it He dismissed Babul's claim that and suggested the ministry not to he visited different mills of the enter into any contract with the group with his men, saying only the company until the Baghabari plant managing director, general manissue was resolved.

'Faults' detected in 50 maritime vessels' design

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Naval Architect Organisation (NAO), an organisation for scrutinising maritime vessels' design, yester-dayraised allegation of faulty designs in 50 passenger launches made by a local ship construction company.

In a letter to the parliamentary standing committee on the Shipping Ministry, the NAO lodged complaint against structural plans of the vessels made by a Bashundhara Group company.

The committee yesterday reviewed the objections and decided to call NAO representative at its next meeting for further clarification, Golam Mohammad Siraj, chairman of the committee, told The Daily Star

"As the 'faulty' vessels are operatng on different river routes, we decided to probe the allegations," he

The committee also discussed on the probe report on the capsize of MV Nasreen-1 on July 8 last year, he

The vessel's flawed design, overloading of passengers and inefficiency of the crew caused it to sink in the Meghna river near Chandpur, Siraj quoted the report as saying.

According to official counts, 110 bodies were recovered from the sunken vessel while another 199 passengers were missing.

Bangladesh Inland Water Fransport Authority (BIWTA) earlier prepared a report on the sunken aunch. But the shipping ministry later formed another committee to probe the accident.

Habib Bank staff FROM PAGE 1

agitating staff today.

Till yesterday, the bank's business was significantly affected by the staff inactivity, insiders said.

The termination letter offered three months' salary to the officers and four months' salary to the employees. In addition, officers were also offered Tk one lakh and employees Tk 30,000 in lump

However, terming the decision of dismissal unjust, the bank staff refused the offer.

Abdul Hye told reporters yester day that the decision to downsize the workforce was made in accordance with the bank's reform measures globally. He added that ermination benefits had been offered to the axed staff as per the bank's service rules.

Habib Bank has been operating in Bangladesh since 1976. Private entrepreneurs in Pakistan took over it in December 2003, the bank's local officials said.

6 more cities

FROM PAGE 12 announced yesterday

The state-owned fixed phone nonopoly earlier introduced the reduced call rate for its subscribers in the capital on December 30 last

NWD (Nationwide dialing) subscribers of the seven cities will get the special rate by dialing access code 012. They can also get through by dialing the old access code 00, but the reduced rate will not apply in that case.

A plan to introduce the same reduced rate for Australia, UK and Malaysia is also underway, a senior BTTB official said, adding, however, that charge for calls to mobile phones in Australia and UK will be Γk 18 per minute.

Sources said the entire country will be brought in phases under the reduced rate scheme but areas where most expatriates come from will get priority

Also, the BTTB plans to add more overseas destinations under the scheme.

A salute to a rebel got married back in 1933, shared

people's greetings and respect throughout the day.

Binod said he is writing a book on the history of anti-colonial revolution, adding, "I want to score more anniversaries to carry on some unfinished work for human-

"We are through a crisis, as violation of human rights has overshadowed the entire country," he said, hoping that 'better days' would come up soon.

Botanical Garden

FROM PAGE 1

erected business establishment on it, a committee member told the meeting held at the Jatiya Sangsad (JS)

Environment and Forests Minister Shajahan Siraj and Secretary Sabih Uddin Ahmed expressed surprise at the allegation and the committee decided to visit the garden, Hafiz Uddin Ahmed, one of its members, said.

Hafiz, a lawmaker of the opposition Jatiya Party, also blasted the ministry for the January 3 killing of Piren Slan, a Garo of Modhupur in Tangail.

Defending the action, the minister said the Garos were trying to obstruct development work. Hafiz suggested setting up of the eco-park in Sylhet instead of Modhupur, as the Garo community was protesting it.

The meeting, with Nazim Uddin Alam in the chair, reportedly discussed about some corruption and rregularities at the Department of

The committee also decided to visit the area beside the National Park at Gazipur where a private university is seeking land allotment to set up its campus.

Hasina gives govt a month

Maidan and its adjacent areas.

The demands include an end to violence unleashed by the ruling alliance loyalists and also to corruption, nepotism and politicisation.

Spelling out the list of demands, the ÅL chief also called for a dawn-to-dusk hartal on February 12 if the BNP-led coalition government fails to meet those demands.

Hasina also announced a month-long agitation programme in favour of the 15-point demands. The party will exchange opinions with different professional groups from January 11 to 16.

On January 18, the AL will stage demonstrations across the country rallies and processions at districts from January 21 to 23, and at thanas from January 27 to 29. From February 7 to 9, the party will conduct mass contact programmes across the country and hold demonstrations on February 11.

She also demanded closing down of the 'Hawa Bhaban', alternative power centre of the BNP, and termed it a centre of all corrupt practices. The AL president alleged that Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and her sons 'grabbed all businesses and amassed crores of taka through corruption and smuggled it abroad. She promised to realise all the money looted at an appropriate

The AL demands also include a halt to criminal activities and corruption, providing security to public life, a cut in cost of living, return of the public money accumu lated through corruption, expulsion of war criminals from the cabinet, lifting of 'false' cases against the opposition activists, restoration of democracy, human rights and the

Yesterday's rally was a major anti-government showdown of the opposition, who earlier predicted the government would quit by April. The rally coincided with the historic Homecoming Day" Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman from the jail in Pakistan after Bangladesh won independ-

The AL chief narrated how the alliance government crippled the economy, made parliament dysfunctional, politicised administration and patronised criminals and their godfathers and amassed wealthillegally. "The government has proved its

nability to govern the country in only two years' time... there is no security of public life and people don't want such failed rulers to continue anymore. "... Your time is running out, if

possible, step down right away," Hasina told her cheering workers and supporters who attended the rally from different parts of the city and the outskirts. The crowd carrying banners and festoons shouted anti-government slogans. The former prime minister accused her arch political rival of

harbouring criminals and indulging in nepotism, corruption and politicisation. She alleged that 36,000 people were killed in the last two years of

coalition rule while children, women, journalists and indigenous people were not even spared from "Days are not far away when

people will unseat the BNP-Jamaat-led coalition and the Awami League is ready to face any eventualities. She said her party showed maxi-

mum restraint under what she said was repressive rule of the alliance government. But people would not tolerate that anymore. "The hands that deal a blow to

Awami League leaders and workers would be smashed. People have confidence in the Awami League, do not play with fire," she warned in an oblique reference to the prime minister.

"The Awami League secured independence. We recently signed the CHT Peace Accord, and [Ganges] Water Sharing Treaty with India and brought peace and prosperity to the country... the country achieved food autarky during our

"You (prime minister) have taken away peace and security of people by releasing 70,000 criminals. You cannot even rescue a kidnapped leader and businessman of your party. How you will ensure people's security?" Hasina asked.

Hasina alleged that sporadic attacks were launched on her party workers in different places, including Patuakhali, Comilla and Nababganj, to thwart people from attending the rally.

AL's 15-point demand

Following is the synopsis of the 15point demands, declared yesterday by Awami League (AL) General Secretary Abdul Jalil at the public meeting in city's Paltan Maidan.

The declaration touched on deterioration of law and order, unabated corruption, price spiral of essentials, persecution of opposition political activists and minorities, absence of rule of law, violation of human rights, politicisation of administration and need for reform in the electoral process.

It said instead of governing the country properly the ruling alliance has established a reign of misrule indulged in corruption and turned the Hawa Bhaban into a centre of The declaration said the BNP-Jamaat led coalition government has

miserably failed to govern the country throughout the last two years. Awami League tried to speak for people in parliament, but there is no way to speak against the misdeeds of the government in the House, it said. At this critical juncture of the country, to save the destitute and to bring an end to BNP-Jamaat coali-

essential, the declaration men-Each clause of the 15-point demand also contains sub-clauses.

 Stop violence and ensure security of public life and property: People are living in great insecurity due to the violence sponsored by BNP-Jamaat led alliance and deteriorating law and order.

Curb lawlessness, reactivate 70,000 cases withdrawn by the government through administrative

Stop killing, rape, extortion, encroachment, robbing, snatching, political killing, abduction, arson and repression on minorities. Bring the BNP-Jamaat-backed

abduction to justice. Stop activities of the outlaws and government sponsored religious

criminals involved in businessmen

Ensure neutral role of law enforc-Stop political crimes and tyranny of the godfathers.

2. Halt corruption, return peoole's property and disband Hawa Investigate each and every case of

corruption, intervention and embezzlement committed by the Hawa Bhaban. Eliminate corruption from every sector of the administration and stop unabated corruption by Khaleda Zia, ner family members and the ruling

Bring to justice any individual indulging in financial irregularities.

Form independent anticorruption commission, free from political intervention.

3. Reduce cost of living: Check spiralling prices of essentials and stop increasing prices of fuel, gas, water and power, and

reduce transport fare. Increase wages of all employees including government and nongovernment teachers, administration, police and armed forces per-

4. Protect democracy, human rights, and freedom of speech and ensure rule of law:

Make parliament functional.

Form independent human rights commission free of government intervention, and appoint ombuds-

Implement the steps taken by the past Awami League government to separate the judiciary from the

Protect all fundamental democratic rights including freedom of expression and organise rallies.

Stop repression and harassment of journalists. Halt politicisation in the state-run media including the BTV and reopen Ekushey Television

Stop violence on religious minorities and indigenous people, and ensure their security. Stop using

religion with political motives. Implement Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) peace accord.

5. Stop politicisation: the governnent has made the administration dysfunctional through politicisation and dynastic rule. Sports sector has also not been spared. Ensure neutrality and good

vernance by halting politicisation in the administration. Reinstate employees who lost their jobs due to political vendetta of the ruling par-

Stop the culture of changing names of establishments and insti-

6. Reduce prices of agricultural inputs, ensure just price of crops including jute. The alliance government has turned the food selfsufficiency into food deficiency. Establish agro-based industries to accelerate rural economy.

7. Implement the verdict of the Bangabandhu Murder Case and conduct fair trial of the Jail Killing 8. Stop political killings and

persecution of political opponents, withdraw false cases and release the opposition leaders and workers from jail and halt political misuse of the SpeedyTrialAct. 9. Create fresh employment opportunities for youths, stop retrenchment of workers and shut-

closed down industries. Guarantee an investment-friendly environ-10. Protect rights of women and security of children:

ting down of industries, reopen the

children, bring woman and child repressors to justice. Ensure women empowerment at every sector.

Stop violence against women and

11. Ensure appropriate utilisation f national resources for the interest country and its people. Ensure national energy security and refrain from conspiring to export natural

12. Abolish Gram Sarker system:

Activate the local government according to the constitution and reinstate upazila system. 13. Govern the country in the spirit and values of the Liberation

War and stop distortion of the history of the Liberation War. 14. Recover lost image of the country: Resist ill efforts of domestic and international anti-

independence forces 15. Bring reform to the electoral process and ensure its fairness. Determine scope of power,

ensure accountability and neutrality of the caretaker government. Ensure transparency in the Election Commission.

ing officers, security of voters and the d) Make sure 'black money and muscle power' do not influence

Ensure neutral role of the return-

40 AL men FROM PAGE 1

with bullet wounds. Jubo Dal activists also attacked their rivals with weapons, leaving

Another 25 pro-AL supporters were also injured in attacks at Chashara, Śhimrail crossing, Panchabati, Shibu Market and Fatulla when they gathered there to start for the AL's grand rally,

Secretariat should have some

She also hoped that Bangladesh

At present, 4,274 troops from

army, navy and air force of Bangladesh are deployed in nine of

the 14 ongoing UN peacekeeping

Guehenno conveyed to Khaleda

the highest UN tributes for the

courage and contribution of the 15

Bangladeshi army personnel,

killed in a recent plane crash in

from reporters regarding the con-

troversy over deployment of coali-

tion forces in Iraq and Afghanistan

the UN official said that the UN's

present role is focused on develop-

He defended the deployment of

coalition forces in Iraq, saying that

there should be some external

forces to bring about a situation that ensures "stopping of the killing of civilians".

EPI employees

FROM PAGE 12

ment and humanitarian aspects.

Answering a volley of questions

would have more representation in

senior and command positions in

the peacekeeping missions.

missions around the world.

west African nation of Benin.

senior officials from Bangladesh.

Ban on books Peacekeepers

and non-discrimination on ground of religion, freedom of speech, thought and conscience as enshrined in the constitution," he

violent protest. "Having full trust in and respect for the country's law, we, as peace-loving citizens, will do everything within the limits of law." The government imposed the ban on Thursday in view of what it said was objectionable materials in Ahmadiyya publications that "hurt

Tareq made it clear the

Ahmadiyyas will not resort to any

majority Muslims of Bangladesh". The ban is viewed as the first step towards declaring Ahmadiyyas non-Muslim. It was imposed after religious bigots represented mainly by Islami Oikya Jote, a constituent of the ruling coalition, launched a campaign with Hifazate Khatme Nabuwat Andolon (HKNA) to force the government declare Ahmadiyyas non-Muslim.

or might hurt the sentiments of the

Brushing aside any plan for street agitation to press the government to withdraw the ban, Tareq said, "We came under attacks at different times since the independence but never opted for any violent protest. He went on, "Our Caliph Mirza

Masroor Ahmad has strongly instructed us to keep faith in Allah and not to violate the law of the Despite deployment of police, Ahmadiyya families at Nakhalpara in Tejgaon, who came under

repeated attempts by the HKNA to

drive them away, are passing their days in utter insecurity. They fear

further attacks as a two-day 'mahfil' organised by the HKNA is set to begin today near Nakhalpara "Although we were not attacked

since the ban was imposed, we apprehend attacks," Tareq said. Members from our 150 branches across the country are calling at our central office to know what to do if the HKNA men attack them, encouraged by the government Leaders of Ekatturer Ghatak

Dalal Nirmul Committee yesterday visited the central Ahmadiyya office at Bakshibazar in the capital and said they will make all efforts to ensure their freedom of religion. Prof Kabir Chowdhury, president of advisory parishad of the committee, said conscientious

people will protest violent attacks and torture in the name of Islam on a peace-loving and innocent sect like Ahmadiyyas Shahriar Kabir, acting president of the committee, assured the Ahmadiyya leaders of cooperation

extremists, fundamentalists and fanatics under political banner. Leaders of the 11-party combine yesterday demanded immediate withdrawal of the ban on Ahmadiyya publications.

in publishing a white paper on pre-planned torture on their men by

development budget. In a press release, the combine The employees include 130 engaged in the EPI, 70 in the Control of Diarrhoeal Diseases, 17 in school health programmes and 11 in child health programmes. Most of them are working at district level and the rest at the EPI and Child Health headquarters at Mohakhali in the canital. said the BNP-Jamaat coalition government is infringing on the rights of minority communities in a planned way. The government took the abhorrent decision not to protect Islam but to satisfy bigots in the four-party ruling alliance, it said.

cancellation of licences, investigation into violation of the law and punishment to the offenders under the criminal laws and fines of up to

The draft law provides for compulsory licensing, a system for scrutiny of applications, issuance of first time licence for five years, renewal of licences and fees for issuance and renewal of licences.

The draft law says the channels already on air -- ATN Bangla, Channel i and ntv -- will require fresh licences under the new law.

Under the draft, the government will invite applications from people interested in setting up radio and TV channels and a committee comprising a chairman nominated by the government and six members will issue the licence.

Of the members, Bangladesh Telecommunications Regulatory Commission, director generals of Bangladesh Betar and Bangladesh Television will nominate one each and the government two under technically skilled persons cate-

The body will consider the financial capability of applicants, location of the stations, skills of manpower and technical capacity.

It will also examine whether the applicants have anti-state or antipeople roles or attitudes. Foreign nationals, companies

not registered under Bangladesh Company Act, registered companies with less than Tk 1 crore in paid-up capital and people or companies defaulting on loans from government or private financial institutions will not be eligible to apply for the licences.

Broadcast of news, special programmes and advertisements by private channels will also be controlled by the act. Rerun of programmes of national importance, like speeches, news broadcast by state-owned BTV and Betar and government press releases must be aired by the channels for Violation of some articles of the

crime. For the first-time offence, offenders will be fined Tk 10 lakh and in default will have to serve a three-month jail term. Each offence after the first one will carry a fine of Tk 20 lakh and six months of jail in default. Failures to pay any outstanding amount for a broadcast licence, transfer of more than 50 percent

shares without permission and

proposed law will be considered as

violation of any term will result in cancellation and suspension of licence. Currently, Bangladesh has no law or policy to guide private radio and television channels and their

programmes The authorities use some acts including the Wireless Telegraphy Act, 1885, the Telegraph Act, 1933 and Bangladesh Telecommu-

nications Regulatory Commission (BTRC), 2001 to issue licences, allocate frequency and oversee technological aspects of radio and television channels.

There are two separate policies prepared in 1998 for radio and television channels in the private sector, but they do not allow government control of the media.

The government feels that continued setting up of the electronic media in the private sector and their indefinite operation under simple guidelines are not wise, officials said

It thinks that a complete policy in a legal form is required for the operation of radio and television channels in the private sector. Preparation of the guidelines became urgent as the information ministry continued to receive applications for private radio and

television channels, they added. Ministry sources said they received around 30 applications for satellite television channels.

They said they examined the laws framed by both India and Pakistan for the operation of private channels.

The information ministry prepared the draft taking opinions from the home, finance, law, commerce, cultural affairs, post and telecommunications and science and information technology ministries and relevant departments.

Bank executive FROM PAGE 12

Family members received Jayanti's body from the DMCH morgue at around 12:30pm yesterday and buried her at Azimpur graveyard in the afternoon.

killing her daughter with a view to make it possible for him to get Afsana Mimi as his life partner. Lucille alleged that an 'extramarital relationship' between

been disturbing Azam and layanti's conjugal life. Denying the allegation, Afsana said she first came to know Azam, brother of actress Shampa Reza, when she went to open an account of her production house Krishnachura with the Banani

relationship, she claimed. mother and other relatives are involving me with the incident,"

Afsana told The Daily Star yesterday evening.

FROM PAGE 12

governance and business climate and, among other things, form an

nal position has improved more than expected."

progress and prepare to face the potential impacts of the phasing out of Multi-fibre Agreement quotas by year-end. He said, "The authorities intend to meet these challenges with determined policy implementation, especially on the structural front, and a strong effort to improve governance and the business climate."

Sugisaki said, "Critical policy measures envisaged are reforms in

tax administration and the nation-

alised commercial banks, imple-

mentation of the recently adopted

government procurement guide-lines, and establishment of an independent anti-corruption commission. "Reform of the power sector and further progress in downsizing the [number of] manufacturing SOEs [state-owned enterprises] also will be important for improving growth prospects. Budget support to lossmaking enterprises needs to be curtailed, and further efforts made to divest them as soon as possible in order to achieve the authorities medium-term targets in this area,

the IMF acting chairman noted.

Bagerhat district Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) Ali Reza Babu allegedly issued a death threat to Nikhil Kumar Bhadra, senior crime reporter of Dainik Purbanchal, during a milad (religious function) at Mongla Friday evening.

Bagerhat and punish its management for carrying an investigative report in its January 8 issue on the motive behind the murder of BNP leader and former Mongla municipal ward commissioner Talukder Abdul Halim.

or dump it elsewhere," Reza, the function's chief guest, was quoted by sources as saying. Presided over by another BNP leader Belayet Hossain, the milad was organised by Greater Barisal

six robbers over the share of Tk 34 lakh received from the sale of 300 maunds of rice and rice paddy looted on October 1 last year from a barge named MV Kafela, the Purbanchal report said. The murder investigation also found that Halim was killed by the

sources said quoting a police report. Reza's supporters brought out a procession after the milad, chantng obscene slogans against Bhadra and Purbanchal.

robbers for not paying them up their share of the loot proceeds,

receive a phone call from this Daily Star correspondent. He said angrily that he would teach Bhadra a lesson for "writing (unpleasant things) about a dead man," and that it would serve as a good exam-

Halim's murder was allegedly a sequel to his dispute with a gang of

stain around her neck, the physician added.

Following the killing on Friday night, Lucille filed a general diary (GD) with Gulshan Police Station, in which she accused Azam of

Azam and artiste Afsana Mimi had

they have maintained a formal "It is unfortunate that Jayanti's

Branch of Dhaka Bank. Since then

Azam and Jayanti were once colleagues working with American Express Bank. They were married on March 15, 2000 and had a two

and a half-year-old son, Turja.

Anti-poverty loan

the government now has to meet another three important IMF conditions. Those are revamping the bonded warehouse system and introducing bank guarantee procedure in it; undertaking an audit programme for the 1,000 large taxpayers' units of the NBR and continuation of the NCB reform programme.

While approving the second tranche, the IMF maintained that Bangladesh should improve its

independent anti-corruption IMF Executive Board Acting Chairman and Deputy Managing Director Shigemitsu Sugisaki observed, "Bangladesh's economic performance has strength-ened in the first year of implementation of the government's PRGFsupported economic programme. Economic growth has picked up, inflation is in check, and the exter-

He suggested Bangladesh should now aim to speed up the

Reporter receives

Reza also threatened to get Dainik Purbanchal banned in

"I know how to finish off the daily and liquidate Nikhil Bhadra. I shall throw his body in Passur river

memorate Halim, who was gunned down in December last year.

Reza, who belongs to a BNP action rival to BNP lawmaker MAH Selim, Bagerhat district president of BNP, was annoyed to

ple to others. Divisional Association to com-MAH Selim MP said BNP believes in the freedom of press. He said action would be taken against Reza for issuing death threat to the iournalist.