NEWS

he said.

the BNP-Jamaat government killed

Jalil said Ahsanullah Master

became the target of the govern-

ment for his popularity and organi-

sational capability. In support of his

contention, he said police had

mercilessly beaten him during a

peaceful hartal in February ignor-

criminals belonging to the ruling

party had been issuing death

threats to Ahsanullah Master and

Tongi Municipal Chairman

Ajmatullah and both of them had

registered GD with the local police

was killed at the instruction from

the top quarters of the government

which later issued a misleading

press note to protect the real

He said after the heinous mur-

ders of Advocate Manzurul Imam in

Khulna, ex-MP Momtajuddin in

Lalpur. Natore, bomb attacks in

Mymensingh and the biggest arms

haul in Chittagong, the government

tried to shift the blame onto Awami

But with the passage of time, it

has been proved that influential

people and different circles of the

government and a special 'Bhaban'

were behind these dastardly inci-

Meanwhile, the left leaning 11-

party yesterday condemned the

press note and demanded imme-

diate investigation into the killing

eague as part of a conspiracy.

Jalil said Ahsanullah Master

Moreover, for the last few days

. ing his identity as an MP.

station, he said.

killers.

dents

culprits to book.

of Ahasanullah Master

popular leader Ahsanullah Master

Students, Fury rages in Dhaka transport

mon people, they placed wreaths at

the coffin. Jatiya Party Chairman and

former president HM Ershad, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) President Hasanul Huq Inu and Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim took part in the janaza. The AL leaders and workers broke down in tears when the slain leader's body was being taken to Gazipur after the janaza.

There were also news of damage of vehicles by unidentified groups of people around the city including Jatrabari and Mohakhali areas reportedly to protest the AL MP's killina.

BODY HANDED

Earlier, DMCH authorities handed the body of Ahsanullah Master to his eldest son Jabid Hassan Russel at around 10.30am. Over 1,000 workers of AL and its front organisations including AL central leaders Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin and Akhtaruzzaman and the slain MP's relatives were present.

The autopsy on the body was complete at 10:15am and morque sources said three bullets pierced through his body. Schoolboy Ratan's brother Nur Mohammad Sujan received his body Friday evenina

ROAD, RAIL LINKS **THRU' GAZIPUR** STILL SNAPPED

Road and rail communications through Gazipur remained snapped yesterday as rampaging protesters in Tongi and adjoining areas stopped vehicles on Dhaka-Mymensingh road and barred railway engineers from mending uprooted rail line to protest Friday's killing of Awami League (AL) lawmaker Ahsanullah Master.

The AL has called hartal in Gazipur for tomorrow to protest the savage incident at a meeting being held beside his house at Noagaon in

Tongi. Police, meanwhile, arrested about 400 people till last night for their alleged involvement in vandalising vehicles and offices of the ruling BNP and its front organisations since Friday.

Thousands of people blurred the political divide to join the slain lawmaker's namaz-e-janaza at Paltan Maidan, Joydevpur and Tongi Biswa Ijtema Maidan before he was buried at their family graveyard at Hyderabad in Tongi.

The victim's family said at 8:30 last night that they were preparing to file a case with Tongi Police Station for the murder.

Defying a virtual curfew, hundreds of protesters blocked different points of the roads from Gazipur Chourasta (intersection) to Tongi Bridge in the morning. They burnt tyres to block traffic and set fire to a BRTC double-decker, a passenger bus and a cargo container, which were vandalised Friday, at Board Bazar. Fire-fighters put out the flames at 11:00am, but the protest-

killings," he added. CASE TO

BE FILED As rumours ran high that the government has filed a case against 5,000 protesters, Government Railway Police (GRP) said at 8:30pm that a process was on to file a case with GRP for uprooting rail line and setting fire to trains at Tongi

MOTIVE FOR THE KILLING

Some unknown people planted a time bomb in Ahsanullah's room at Noagaon MA Majid High School in 2002. After a student stumbled into a thin cable, army experts retried the bomb and defused it," said Rashidul Haq, a cousin of the slain lawmaker.

'We think the same people attacked our office one and a half months back." said Mohammed Bablu, general secretary of ward No. 3 (Tongi) unit of Jubo League who took a bullet in his left leg on Fridav

Many locals told The Daily Star that BNP activists laid a siege to Tongi municipal office on May 4 and demanded removal of Ahsanullah Master and municipal chairman Azmatullah Khan for 'irregularities'.

They hoisted black flags in Tongi to express no-confidence in the two leaders who were elected for two consecutive terms, some locals said and termed the hoisting of black flags as a prelude to the killing

Others alleged that those who failed to win against Ahsanullah in the parliamentary elections masterminded the killing to remove him from their way. "He made some enemies as he was vocal about putting an end to violence and drug-peddling here," Bablu noted. THOUSANDS ATTEND

TONGI JANAZA Thousands of people joined the namaz-e-janaza of Ahsanullah Master yesterday at the Tongi

Biswa litema ground and later brought out mourning processions demanding immediate arrest and punishment of the killers. A large number of people, other

than AL supporters, also came from the capital, Gazipur, Narsingdi and Narayanganj to join the janaza The lawmaker was buried at his

village home at Haidarabad in Gazipur Sadar Upazila in the evening Life in the entire Gazipur district,

including the industrial town of Tongi, virtually came to a standstill yesterday as plying of motorised vehicles on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway and adjacent roads remained suspended and shops, business houses and educational institutions remained closed. Attendance at government

offices was also thin. Police and paramilitary said. Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) person-

Power Development Board nel were deployed at all road (PDB), which supplies electricity to crossings and important places in the Desa, is currently carrying out a the area. People wore black badge plan of shedding about 200 MW of and hoisted black flag on their electricity due to less generation houses. and suspension of generation by a AL central leaders who joined private company. According to an official, the PDB is running short of about 110 MW, while another 90 MW has recently been added to it as two generation units at Baghabari Westmont plant recently tripped off. The PDB yesterday generated 3,227 MW of electricity against a Mohiuddin and Ali Ashraf. demand of 3,450 MW. Municipal polls FROM PAGE 1 Rajbari: Mohammad Ali Chowdhury, A L; S u j a Nagar: Kamal Biswas, BNP dissiin the janaza.

B'Chy launches

workers clash in FROM PAGE 1

Sylhet, 30 injured

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

pended for four hours and a half.

Protesting the killing of Rezaul

MC College, in an accident, about

100 students of Svlhet Government

College and MC College damaged

about 30 trucks in Islampur and

Armed students barricaded

Sylhet-Tamabil highway, beat up

shopkeepers and transport workers

near Islampur bazaar and set fire to

six transport workers including

Habib Ali, 52, and Hossain Ali, 35,

were admitted to MAG Osmani

Medical College Hospital with bullet

during the attack, transport workers

and local shopkeepers alleged.

Osmani Hospital where he died.

militant violence and Israel freeze

But the peace plan ground into

deadlock shortly after it was

adopted last year due to persistent

violence and non-compliance on

negotiations (for a state)," Qurie told

reporters in the West Bank city of

Power supply

areas suffered from the outage.

dent; Tungipara: Sk Ilías Hossain

Meanwhile, police yesterday

afternoon dispersed a Jatiya Sramik

League procession led by its

General Secretary Roy Romesh on

Bangabandhu Avenue when it was

parading Golap Shah Mazar area

AL front organisations also took

out separate processions and held

rallies in front of party office in

Addressing a rally of volunteers'

front of the AL, Sechchha Sebok

Jubo League brought out separate

processions supporting the shut-

down in the afternoon while police

The AL and its front organisa-

barricaded Bangabandhu Avenue.

Gazipur-2 constituency lawmaker.

tomorrow to protest the murder.

AL supporters bring out mourn-

support of the strike.

Ahsanullah was a part of it.

chanting in favour of today's hartal.

Palestinian

settlement construction.

state

both sides

vear's deadline.

Ramallah.

FROM PAGE 12

Siddhirganj.

FROM PAGE 12

Students also fired 20 bullets

Tilagarh areas at about 1:00pm.

sources said.

injuries, they added.

major Abdul Mannan as secretary general of the BDB. Retired brigadier general Gias Uddin seconded the proposal.

Chowdhury earlier filed a writ At least 30 people were injured yesterday in a series of clashes petition against the government for obstructing them from holding between college students and transport workers in Sylhet while meetings and refusing any meeting vehicular movement on Sylhetvenue to his former forum Bikolpo Tamabil highway remained sus-Dhara.

Coming to the DRU office straight from the High Court after Hasan Joy, a first year student of filing the writ petition, Chowdhury launched his new party at the impromptu press conference.

He said the BDB would particiadvisory committee and a parliapate in the by-elections for Dhakamentary board. 10 and Munshigani-1 constituencies, the seats vacated by Mannan there would be town committees and Mahi, who resigned from both the Jatiya Sangsad and the ruling constituency-based committees. BNP to join Bikolpo Dhara.

two trucks there. Later, transport Explaining the aims of his party workers ransacked 12 hostel rooms Chowdhury said faith in independof Sylhet Government College, ence and sovereignty and democracy at all levels formed the central At least 30 people were injured plank of his party. during the clashes. Of the injured,

Mujibur Rahman as the main He said his party was committed architect of Bangladesh's independto fighting terrorism, corruption and ence, but said the roles of the late poverty, the major problems facing president Ziaur Rahman and others Bangladesh About the quick launch of the

should not be undermined. party, Chowdhury said he declared The renowned physician-turnedon March 11 that he would float the politician said Bangladesh was party in two months from a public divided in the names of two or three meetina leaders and he would try to bridge

As skirmishes continued, vehicu-But failing to get permission for lar movement on the road remained the Paltan Maidan, Engineer's snapped for four hours and a half Institution and Muktangon, he said before police cleared it at 5:40pm. he decided to launch the party A speeding truck knocked down simultaneously with the filing of the Jov's motorcycle at around 1:00am writ petition. on Friday. He was admitted to MAG

Chowdhury regretted that even the National Press Club authorities did not give them any room for holding the press conference vesterdav

Paltan Maidan for May 25 when the Upon the writ petition, the Hiah Court issued a rule on the governfull committee would be announced.

Azad returns

FROM PAGE 12

Rejecting Bush's view, the real attackers will be identified," Palestinian President Yasser Arafat he said adding, "There're reasons to said the creation of a state by 2005 was "more than realistic", while suspect those who have close links Qurie called for stepped up peace to the fundamentalists."

negotiations with Israel to meet next "It's the fundamentalists who wanted to kill me. Neither the BNP "Losing time does not serve the nor the Awami League has anything peace process nor the stability of this region. Therefore we think 2005 against me." Azad categorically said. leaves adequate time for serious

"No-one but the killers and cadres are safe in this country. Our country should be rid of Razakars and fundamentalists if we want to save it.'

On trial of his attackers, he said, The government has failed to maintain law and order in the country. I don't expect they'll bring the culprits to trial.

It is easier to kill than slap someone in Bangladesh, as killers are not caught, he said. The killers are always associated with the ruling party here. He termed the killing of Ahsanullah Master, MP a dark episode of the nation.

On his treatment, he said he will go back to Bangkok in November ane receiving treatment for teeth here. Currently, his left eye vision is week following an eye operation. Asked by the reporters if he will seek government help for his treatment, Azad said, "If the government has an intention to help me then they'll do it without being asked."

showcaused ment to explain in a week why the BDB should not be allowed to hold rally at the Paltan Maidan. Illustrating his party's structure

committee of 300 members and a

There would be some special

steering committee of 15 members.

committees, including several

consultative committees on differ-

ent issues manned by specialists

from different professional groups

and members of civil society, an

In the lower rungs of the set-up,

district committees and electoral

On a question on the Liberation

He termed Bangabandhu Sheikh

War, he said there would be no room

for those who do not believe in the

Awami League lawmaker

Ahsanullah Master in a Tongi rally,

Chowdhury held the government

responsible for failing to even

protect the life of a people's repre-

The BDB president called a

public meeting of the new party at

spirit of the war in his party.

the divide.

sentative.

UNB, Dhaka

The High Court yesterday issued rule upon the National Sports Council (NSC) and others to show cause why they should not be directed to dispose of the Bikalpa Dhara application, preferably in a week, seeking permission for holding public meeting at Paltan maidan on May 25.

The rule came upon a writ filed by Major (retd) Abdul Mannan, secretary general of the newly floated political party, Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh, challenging the recent denial of permission to hold public meetings at Paltan maidan and Mohanagar Natyamancha and

A division bench comprising Justice M Abdul Matin and Justice Shamim Hasnain also issued rule upon the NSC to explain why the recent denial of permission to hold public meetings at Paltan maidan and Mohanagar Natayamancha should not be declared to have done without lawful authority.

two weeks. Dr Kamal Hossain, counsel for

the petitioner, submitted that Bikalpa Dhara was denied holding public meetings in the city in gross violation of fundamental rights.

submitted that the writ was not maintainable as the application seeking permission for holding public meting was made only yesterday morning, which is under consideration.

Jalil junks govt claim FROM PAGE 12 injuries during a massive shootout

Friday noon at a conference of the local unit of Awami Shechhashebak League on the premises of a school at Tongi while the new committee of the unit was being announced.

He was taken to Mohakhali Chest Diseases Hospital and then shifted to Combined Military Hospital (CMH) where the doctors declared him dead, it said, adding a bullet-injured juvenile also died at a hospital.

On primary information, it is assumed that a group of aggrieved activists who have not been accommodated in the new committee have staged this incident, the ministry said.

Following the incident, it said, the leaders of the Awami League and its front organisations resorted to massive violence with a heinous motive to divert the incident caused by their internal conflict to another course.

As the law enforcers rushed to the spot to bring the situation under control, unruly Al men swooped on them, leaving another youth injured with bullets, the press note added.

In a press statement, Jalil said when the entire nation is stunned at the dastardly killing of a member of parliament, the government, instead of constituting a judicial inquiry, has indulged in falsehood.

"It is beyond imagination of the Urging the government to find people that a government that out the real killers of Ahsanullah claims to be a so-called champion Master, Jalil warned that the govof democracy can issue such a ernment would have to bear the press note," he said. responsibility if it failed to bring the Jalil observed that such unprec-

edented falsehood on the part of the government not only surprised and startled the nation but also made the people angry.

As part of blueprint to eliminate popular leaders of Awami League,

She left behind three sons and Killing of AL MP four daughters. Her eldest son MR

FROM PAGE 12 dawn-to-dusk hartal called by the Awami League in protest against the killina

The Jatiya Sramik League requested all to make the countrywide hartal a success.

The organisations that protested the killing are Bangladesh The prime minister also said the Chamber of Industries, NGOs in Bangladesh enjoy ade-Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, quate operational freedom in Dhaka Ainjibi Samity, Sramik carrying out their development Karmachari Oikya Parishad, activities. "We are committed to Sammilita Ainjibi Samannay maintaining an enabling environ-Parishad, Jatiya Samajtantrik ment for them, so that they can be Sramik Jote, Bangladesh effective development partners." Effective utilisation of external Manabadhikar Bastabayan resources remains a major area of Sanghsta, Bangladesh Shisu Adhikar Forum, Bangladesh this government's initiatives, Institute of Labour Studies, "We still have a long way to go. A Jatiyatabadi Peshajibi Parishad, large section of our population still Bangladesh Free Trade Union lives under the poverty line. Against Congress, Jatiya Garments this backdrop, we need continued Sramik Karmachari League, support of our development part-

Some 75 teachers of Jahangirnagar University condemned the killing of Ahsanullah Master and demanded exemplary

punishment to the killers. The government has failed to ensure safety of the people, they said in a statement.

The signatories to the statement included Prof. Suvash Chandra Das and Prof. Afsar Ahmad

Our Mymensingh correspondent adds: The district unit of Awami League held a Gayebana ianaza for the slain lawmaker at the Railway Station Krishnachura Square in the afternoon.

AL leaders Saber Hossain Chowdhury, Asaduzzaman Noor MP, and Dewan Arefin Tutul attended the janaza. Our CU correspondent reports:

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) of Chittagong University unit staged a demonstration on the campus yesterday protesting the killing of Ahsanullah Master. The government has pushed the country towards anarchy through the killing of the AL lawmaker, the BCL leaders said at a

However, Desa shed most of the

50 MW power in areas on the suburbs including Postogola and Subscribers in Dhaka have to face a one-hour load shedding in every eight-hour cycle, the officials

Earlier, ZIA security personnel

initially prevented journalists from going to the VIP lounge on Azad's arrival, saying they had no permission from the high-ups. They also asked Azad to leave

requested to attend the ZIÁ for safety as quickly as possible. Family members, Dhaka University Teachers Association Curbing graft (Duta) President AAMS Arefin FROM PAGE 1 Siddique and General Secretary collaboration and cooperation.' Akhteruzzaman, DU Proctor AK

Firoz Ahmed, and Osman Gani, owner of Agami Prakashani, went to receive Azad. Demanding arrest and punish-

ment of the real culprits, the Duta president said the government is still to take any measure to nab the culprits. He asked the government to bear Azad's future medical expenses.

Azad was hacked by three youths in front of Bangla Academy when he was returning to his campus house from the Amar Ekushev Book Fair at around 9:30pm on February 27. He was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital

over Bikalpa Dhaka rally application the former president said it would have a national council comprising 1,500 to 2,000 members, a national

NSC

restriction on using loudspeakers.

The rule is made returnable in

Referring to Friday's killing of

Obituary

consultant.

Opposing, Deputy Attorney General Adilur Rahman Khan

Rashidunnesa (Anni), wife of late

Mohammad Golam Ahmed (Kanu

Mia) of Malotinagar, Bogra town

died of heart attack in Dhaka

Islam is a well-known energy

Her kulkhwani will be held

Tuesday after the Asr prayers at

Nasrin Villa, 22/1 Sonargaon Road.

Well-wishers and relatives are

morning yesterday. She was 92.

ers set fire to them agai

As some passenger buses and a staff bus of a garment factory tried to ply the road, the protesters chased those away to Gazipur intersection Some protesters at Board Bazar looted the carrier of a dairy milk factory.

Long-route and local passenger buses from northern districts dropped passengers at the intersection, prompting hundreds of stranded passengers to walk on both sides of the road to Dhaka and Gazipur intersection with their belongings.

Only rickshaws plied the road apart from buses and vans carrying police and paramilitary Bangladesh Rifles. The rickshaw-pullers made the most of the opportunity, charging fares much higher than usual.

Some women were sitting with their boxes and bundles at a filling station near Gazipur intersection. "We boarded a bus from Mymensingh and paid double the fare to go to Mohakhali, but the bus staff dropped us here. They said they would not go further, nor did they give us the change," said Amena Begum, who was heading for her daughter's house at Tejgaon. ENGINES STONED.

SETAFIRE

Protesters stoned and forced an emergency railway engine carrying spares to turn its back after railway officials attempted to replace railway tracks that a mob had removed on Friday at Dhirasram Railway Station in between Tongi and Jovdevpur. Agitated people also assaulted the engine driver. Some protesters, meanwhile, set fire to a rail engine in between Tongi and Dhirasram Railway Station. Railway officials could not say when rail links with the northern part will restore

WHOLESALE ARREST

Since the eruption of violence on friday afternoon following Ahsanullah's death, police raided different parts of Gazipur and arrested around 400 people. A top police official said on condition of anonymity that the arrests were made to stop organised violence by the protesters.

But Duty Officer at Tongi Police Station Sub-inspector Mustafizur Rahman told The Daily Star on telephone that they arrested 40 people for damaging vehicles. "But we've not arrested anyone for the

the janaza included acting President of the party Abdus Samad Azad, General Secretary Abdul Jalil, Deputy Leader of the Opposition in parliament Abdul Hamid, Amir Hossain Amu, Obaidul Kader, Mostafa Jalal

President of the newly floated political party, Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh, and former president AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury, his son Mahi B Chowdhury and general secretary of the party Major (retd) Abdul Mannan also took part

RULING COALITION BLAMED

Speaking on the occasion, AL central leaders blamed the ruling coalition for the killing of the opposition lawmaker. He was killed following directives from the 'government high-ups' because he was very popular in the area, they said. They also vowed to intensify the

ongoing anti-government movement to expedite its fall.

onslaught on democracy, independence and sovereignty of the country.

was killed because of his resolute stand against the present government. He hoped people would avenge his killing by unseating the government.

People including women and children started gathering at the lawmaker's house from early morning to have a last glimpse of the leader and to express their shock and sympathise with the bereaved family members. Local people said Ahsanullah

lived a very simple life and stayed at a rented house in Tongi til recently. Of late he built a small house near Noagaon MA Mazid Mian School, where he was a teacher all his life, but he was yet to shift his family to that house.

alleged that police conducted raids following the killing and picked up dozens of people, mainly Chhatra League and Juba League leaders and workers.

AL; Kushtia: Anwar Ali, AL; Dhanbari: Habibullah Fakir, BNP and Gobindaganj: Abul Kalam Azad, AL hartal FROM PAGE 1 points during the hartal hours.

Abdus Samad Azad said the

killing of Ahsanullah Master was an

Abdul Jalil said the lawmaker

LAST GLIMPSE

AL supporters and other locals several areas of the district

and then to the combined military hospital. The government sent him to Bangkok on March 22 for better treatment.

Before leaving for Bangkok, Azad first accused Saidee and fundamentalists of the attack on him.

ing stand-off in or outside parliament.

Friday blamed the murder of the

opposition lawmaker on a conflict

within the AL, a contention political

parties, apart from the AL, and socio-

political organisations dismissed as 'a

people's attention from the real killers

backed by the government as we

believe the government has involve-

ment will influence investigation into

the killing and the investigation will

issuing such a farcical press note on

the incident. "It is nothing but an

ment with it." Saber said.

"It's a partisan press note to shift

"Such judgement of the govern-

The government in a press note on

AL mulls hard line

farce'.

FROM PAGE 1 "It's (MP's killing) part of a government plan to kill Awami League's leaders and more Awami League leaders will be killed according to this plan. (But) we'll not sit by after voicing our protest for one or two days," Saber Hossain Chowdhury, an organising secretary of the AL, told The Daily Star yester-

day. "The situation is getting more complex with every passing day because of the government's hostile attitude toward the opposition. We will no more allow the government to get away," said Saber, also the political secretary to the AL president.

"It's a question of existence for us," said one senior leader, wishing to remain unnamed, referring to Friday's killing in Tongi. He added that they find the killings of their leaders too much to bear with

Deputy Leader of the Opposition in parliament Abdul Hamid Advocate said, "Situation is getting worse every day. The ruling BNP does not want to have a peaceful atmosphere in parliament and in the country... we are waiting for the parliamentary party meeting to discuss the issue "

League, AL presidium member Terming Friday's killing pre-Motia Chowdhury alleged the planned, General Secretary of government has been killing Workers Party of Bangladesh Bimal upcoming opposition leaders in a Biswas said, "The government cannot planned way and the killing of shrink from taking responsibility (for the killing) by any means as it has AL student wing Bangladesh involvement with criminals." Chhatra League and youth front

He underlined building 'a mass resistance' against political killings to put an end to this alarming trend. "Both the Awami League and left-leaning 11 parties should take a united stand against political killing," he said.

tions kept national and party flags at Political observers believe the half-mast at party offices across the latest political assassination has country and party leaders and further widened the gap between the activists wore black badges as part ruling coalition leader BNP and main of the three-day opposition opposition AL.

programme to mourn the killing of Both parties are now trying to lay the blame for the killing on each other and the latest bout of blame game ing processions across the country apparently has killed off any chance of hammering out a solution to the ongoour priority poverty reduction initiatives. The prime minister said during the last two and a half years, her government has taken a number of

measures to promote good governance and establish financial discipline and accountability.

to rationalise the size of government organisations and agencies, which include merger, liquidation, closure and partial closure of state-owned enterprises.

Mob beats 2 FROM PAGE 12

She said steps have been taken

Khaleda mentioned.

Police said a gang of six entered the house of Alauddin, accounts officer of the university and looted the valuables. As the gang was fleeing the scene, family members shouted for help prompting locals to track down Rafig and Masud. The other members of the gang however managed to escape

No case was filed till 8:15pm.

In another incident, a mob beat and injured two people on suspicion of torching a taxicab yesterday evening in Dhanmondi area, hospi tal sources said.

Police rescued Arafat. 35. an employee of a furniture shop at Green Road, and another unidentified man aged around 30 from the mob's wrath and sent them to the day said the government has lost the DMCH. moral right to remain in office after

"As I got down from my rickshaw seeing a taxicab set ablaze, I found myself ringed by some angry people, who straightaway started to beat me suspecting that I set fire to the cab." said Arafat

India readies

FROM PAGE 12 parliament that could scupper India's aggressive economic reform drive and strong economic growth.

Sonia's Gandhi's son, Rahul, a fifth-generation politician from India's prominent Nehru-Gandhi dynasty, was in pivotal northern Uttar Pradesh state at the weekend to shore up Congress support.

A win in Uttar Pradesh -- which sends 80 MPs to the 543 elected seat parliament -- is crucial for any party or grouping harbouring hopes of forming the next government.

Monday's last voting round in the five-phased poll that began April 20 is key for both Congress and the BJP as 182 seats will be contested more than on any other voting day. Results will be known next Thursday.

Bishwa Bangalee Sammelon, ners to sustain and carry forward Muktijoddha Oikya Parishad and Bangladesh Muktijoddha Smriti Sangrakkhan Parishad.

The government has totally failed to run the country, they said and called on all to launch a tough agitation to unseat the government

Our JU correspondent reports: rally

British troops face

FROM PAGE 1

martyrdom.

raqi women being raped at British-run prisons in Iraq and called on supporters to launch jihad, or holy war, against British troops in this southern city.

He promised to give \$350 to anyone who captures a British soldier and \$150 for killing one. He also said any Iraqi who took a female soldier could keep her as a slave or gift to himself.

Meanwhile, Sadr pointed to Abu Ghraib in a sermon he delivered at Friday prayers in Kufa before thousands of worshippers. "What sort of freedom and democracy can we expect from you (Americans) when you take such joy in torturing Iragi prisoners?" al-Sadr said, his shoulders draped with a white coffin shroud symbolizing his readiness for

Sadr dismissed apologies from President Bush over the abuse at Abu Ghraib. "I tell this to Bush," Sadr said. "Your statements are not enough. They (the guards) must be punished in kind."

US officials have expressed fears that Iraqi outrage over widely published photos of Iraqis being stripped and humiliated by their guards at Abu Ghraib could fuel attacks on American or other coalition soldiers.

Secretary Donald Rumsfeld Friday remained under pressure yesterday, despite apologising for the Iraq prison abuse scandal amid warnings that the revelations could worsen.

Meanwhile, a US soldier photographed holding a naked prisoner on a leash at the Abu Ghraib prison has been charged with abusing detainees, military officials at the North Carolina base where she is stationed say. Private Lynndie England faced

four charges -- conspiring to maltreat prisoners, assaulting detainees on multiple occasions, committing acts "prejudicial to

good order and discipline." and committing an indecent act. officials at Fort Bragg said in a news release Meanwhile, political and tribal

leaders in western Iraq urged US governor Paul Bremer yesterday to free all detainees

The leaders from the Sunnidominated al-Anbar province, from where many detainees come, said the gesture needed to be large enough to offset the enormity of abuses which have shaken the upper reaches of the US administration.

Muralitharan FROM PAGE 12

mark of 519 set by West Indies fast bowler Courtney Walsh by capturing the wicket of Mluleki Nkala caught by Prasanna Jayawardene at silly mid-off for 24 with the final ball of his eighth over.

He also dismissed Alester Mareqwede next ball as Zimbabwe were all out for 102, with Nuwan Zovsa claiming 5-30, to concede an innings and 240 runs defeat.

Muralitharan, who turned 32 in March, had gone into the match with 513 wickets, needing seven more to surpass the record.

The Tamil drew level with Walsh when he bowled Douglas Hondo in the hosts' first innings on Thursday.

However, the Sri Lankan was playing in his 89th Test as opposed to 132 by Walsh.

Muralitharan and Walsh are followed in the all-time wicket-takers table by Australian leg-spin great Shane Warne on 517 with India's Kapil Dev in fourth on 434.

attempt to save real killers and to mislead people," the statement said. Ctg ammo haul FROM PAGE 12 The judge also ordered the government to keep one each from the 13

arms and ammunition as evidence.

said.

'handed over' arms until the case is disposed of. A total of 4,930 different types of

sophisticated arms, 27,020 hand grenades, 840 rockets, 300 accessories of rocket launcher, 2,000 grenade launching tubes, 6,392 magazines and 11.40.520 rounds of ammunition stuffed in 1.463 wooden boxes on 10 trucks were recovered in the largest ever arms haul on April 2 from the CUFL jetty.

categories in the seizure list of the

The government must produce the arms before the court whenever the latter asks for, the judgment

The government was also asked to provide every three months a detailed report on the use of the

only reflect the government's judgement." he added. Monjurul Ahsan Khan and Mujahidul Islam Selim, president and general secretary of Communist Party of Bangladesh, in a statement yester-