Reserved seats for women in JS condemned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

government organisations and Different women organisations yesterday protested the restitution of the reserved seats for women in parliament for what they said was tion to those since 2001, the statebeing not consonant with demands of the gender across the country. ment said.

Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association (BNWLA) yesterday urged the government to repeal the newly enacted provision in the constitution and arrange direct election to the reserved seats for women.

The association said distribution of reserved women seats among the political parties in proportion to their parliamentary seats primarily appears to be democratic. But becoming a legislator without direct mandate of the constituents is not in line with the ethics of democracy, it added.

The provision of reserved seats lapsed in April 2001 was not also renewed in time, a statement of

COURT CORRESPONDENT

in a graft case.

Asian Surveyors Ltd.

them politically and

concocted.

FROM PAGE 12

The Special Court for Dhaka

Division yesterday granted bail to

Foreign Minister and former chair-

man of Arab Bangladesh (AB) Bank

Ltd M Morshed Khan and two others

issued the bail order upon a bond of

Chowdhury, former managing

director of AB Bank Ltd and M Faizur

Rahman, managing director of

lawyer Barrister AKM Fokrul Islam

appeared before the court at

the court that the case was filed

during the tenure of the Awami

League government for harassing

them were false, fabricated and

granted bail by the High Court.

framing against the accused.

the charges brought against

The accused were earlier

After hearing both sides, the

court passed the order and fixed

May 29 for hearing on charge-

Three other accused Harun

Bangla Bhai

3:45pm and praved for bail.

The accused along with their

The lawyer for the accused told

Tk 20,000 with two guarantors.

Judge Rezaul Karim Khan

The two others are Abdur Rahim

BNWLAalleged. Different civil society, non-

alleged.

Morshed Khan gets

bail in graft case

in direct election

All major political parties in their

election pledge promised to ensure

women representation in parlia-

ment, but the nation has observed

with frustration that the government

has reneged on its pledge, it

yesterday in a statement con-

Bangladesh Mahila Samilty

Development Organisation of

the Rural Poor (DORP), an NGO,

demanded increase in the number

of reserved seats for women to 100

Mamun, executive director of Asian

Surveyors Ltd and Giasuddin Al

Mamun, now on bail, were also

Police Station, it was alleged that

the persons received about Tk 3.5

crore in loan from the principal

branch of the AB Bank showing

"forged documents" for the mort-

The loan was sanctioned for the

gaged property through "abuse of

power and mutual understanding".

Shilpa Rin Sangstha, the FIR said.

veying the land or examining the

documents, recommended sanc-

(Bac) filed the case accusing M

Morshed Khan and eight others on

October 19, 1996. The investigation

officer pressed charges against

Morshed Khan and five others on

December 13, 2000 showing 14

Bhai said he was staying in

people as prosecution witnesses.

The Bureau of Anti-Corruption

tioning the loan, the FIR added.

In the case filed with Motijheel

present in the court

also inflated.

and a direct election to those

UNB, Dhaka Nurul Islam Babul, a business

tycoon, was granted bail for four weeks on health ground by the High Court yesterday in an attempted rape case. A housewife filed the case with

Babul gets

4-week bail

Badda police on March 20, the day he was arrested in connection with the killing of a dredger worker.

The interim order came while women activists have been admitting an appeal for hearing demanding a rise in the number of against refusal of bail by the lower the reserved seats and direct eleccourt.

Granting bail, a bench comprisng Justice Nozrul Islam Chowdhury and Justice Farid Ahmed also asked the accused to surrender before the trial court for seeking bail after the expiry of the interim order. Babul, also owner of Bengali

daily Jugantor, submitted doctor's prescription that he has been suffering from cardiac complications and needs to be treated abroad.

demned the 14th amendment of the Barrister Rafique-ul Huq and constitution. The Samity said the Barrister Rokanuddin Mahmud amendment does not reflect appeared for Babul who faces a women's true demand of taking part number of other criminal cases

SLICED WOMAN BODY

Sister identifies victim three

days later

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed four people, arrested in connection with the Thursday's retrieval in Mohammadpur of a woman's body Ferdoushi, proprietor of M/s Marshal Services Ltd, Abdullah Al in nine pieces, on remand.

Mohammadpur police produced Enamul Haq, Suman Khalashi, Akbar Hossain and Farug Ahmed before the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate with a seven-day remand prayer. However, the court granted five days' remand for each, sources said. days' said.

The victim's elder sister Selina Yasmin Poppy identified the slain teenage girl as Shamima Sultana Ria, 17, at 10:00pm on Sunday Police, however, are yet to night. confirm.

Poppy also claimed that her sister was an SSC (Secondary School Certificate) examinee of South Madipara in Kalkini, purchase of Jadz Distillery Limited, a disinvested unit of Bangladesh It was also alleged that the land Madaripur. mortgaged with the bank in 1994

Following her information, police held the quartet on charge of mur-dering the teenaged girl on the was already sold out to another person and the price of the land was same night The bank officials, without sur-

According Poppy, Ria came to her Mohammadpur house four months ago and started staying with

She went to Sumon, a resident of Madaripur and owner of a phone-fax shop near their house, to inquire him about her missing sister. Sumon, who had intimacy with the slain girl, gave her an address at Pallabi in Mirpur and told her that she could find Pia there she added find Ria there, she added.

Poppy told police that she failed to locate the address despite frantic efforts.

after police retrieved the nine-pieced body from two sacks.

minorities in Bangladesh are likely

to be high on the US agenda in the

Rocca arrives

FROM PAGE 1

discussion

itirm the victim's

However, morgue sources said Poppy went to Dhaka Medical College Hospital thrice --Friday night, Saturday morning and Sunday night -- with her relatives, but could only confirm the victim's

JUDGE ASSAULT CASE

Court rejects naraji petition

NEWS

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday rejected a naraji (no-confidence) petition filed by the driver of retired Supreme Court Justice Naimuddin Ahmed in a case filed for alleged assault on the Justice.

Metropolitan Magistrate Jahangir Alam of the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM) rejected the petition as court earlier accepted the final report, clearing the accused of the charge.

Mohammad Nurul Islam, driver of the Justice, filed the naraji petition against the final report submitted by investigation officer (IO) of the case Sub-Inspector Mir Mosharraf Hossain on January 28.

Advocate Abdur Rashid Badsha Mian, the petitioner's counsel, expressed anger at the rejection and told reporters that they would move the High Court.

allegedly manhandled Justice In the petition, Nurul Islam said Naimuddin during an altercation between them on the night of the IO, in connivance with and under November 8 at Paribagh Petrol the influence of the accused Dr Pump in presence of the driver and Anwarul Karim, secretly submitted the final report to the CMM's Court

Batting blues again

FROM PAGE 1 order failed yet again with four wickets falling for 21 runs inside the first 10 overs.

The Tigers never recovered from there and only two men went to reach double figures with opener Hannan Sarker making 36 off 55 balls and number seven Manjarul Islam remaining unbeaten on 33 from 43 deliveries

Fast bowler Fidel Edwards put Bangladesh on the backfoot with two wickets in an over. Mohammad Ashraful, sent in to open with Hannan was brilliantly caught by Dwayne Smith at point for a duck as he played an uppish square-drive off the second ball of the third over. In the last ball of that over, skipper Habibul Bashar (2) was taken down the leg by

Rajin Saleh then gave Chris Gayle catching practice in the slips ODI on May 19.

Hasina threatens

Hasina, also main opposition AL leaders.

She asked local people to identify the property of ruling coalition people in their locality, which she said was accumulated through corruption and plundering of public money. She drew attention to what she said was ill-gotten wealth of the BNP leadership and asked the public to take note of it.

The United Commercial Bank Ltd n left-arm paceman Ian Bradshaw's (UCBL) employee, who suffered first over and the hopelessly out of critical burns Saturday, is struggling form Alok Kapali fell to a similar for life at City Hospital in Panthapath dismissal like Bashar. Both made in the city.

which accepted it. The IO did not

record statements of the Justice and

other evewitnesses who were near

the court to save the accused, the

Engineering and Technology (Buet),

from his Shantinagar house on

charge of assaulting the retired

justice, who was also a former

the CMM's Court, Dhaka the follow-

ing day and granted bail upon a

Dr Karim was produced before

Police sources said Dr Karim

election commissioner.

bond of Tk 5,000.

court accepted the final report.

The court after a hearing rejected

complainant said.

iust one. Smith was the star for the West ndies as he fielded stunningly that followed a decisive run-a-ball 62 not out after the home side were put in. After taking Ashraful's catch, the 21year-old ran all the way from back-

Hannan. The free-stroking right-hander

first fifty in ODIs while Bangladesh paceman Tapash Baisya returned with the best bowling figures of 5-1-16-4 for a Bangladeshi in limitedovers matches.

Both teams left for Grenada on Monday where they play the final

protecting the killers." she said and

demanded withdrawal of the cases filed against antigovernment demonstrators during the spontaneous protests following the assassina-

> She once again dismissed the promptly issued government press note which hinted that the lawmaker's assassination was the outcome of an internal feud in the Awami League and said the prime minister in her capacity as the home minister will have to take responsibility for the killing.

Hasina asked why the prime

Depression over Bay

UNB, Dhaka

The depression over northwest Bay and adjoining central Bay moved slightly northwestwards at 6:00pm yesterday.

It was centred about 480-km southwest of Chittagong port, 425km southwest of Cox's Bazaar port and 375-km south southwest of the place of occurrence. The IO also Mongla port. contrived to submit minor charges to

It is likely to intensify further and move in a north northwesterly direction, Met office said in a special bulletin

the petition on the grounds that it Maximum sustained wind speed was filed three months after the within 44-km of the depression centre is about 40 kph rising to Police on November 11 last year 50kph in gust or squalls. Sea will arrested Dr Anwarul Karim, a former remain moderate teacher of Bangladesh University of

Under its influence, squally weather is likely to affect the ports. Maritime ports of Chittagong Cox's Bazar and Mongla have been advised to keep hoisted local cautionary signal number three.

All fishing boats and trawlers over the north Bay have been advised to take shelter immediately, the bulletin added.

Burnt UCBL worker hangs by a thread STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shaila Chowdhury Irani, 30, who

suffered burns in 90 percent her

body when a UCBL driver threw

petrol and set fire on her, has the

sources said.

refused, burnt her.

least possibility of survival, hospital

eight-year-old son, was returning to

her ground-floor office after offering

prayers when driver Ranjit Barua,

who fell in love with her and was

Ranjit committed suicide under a

speeding train at Khilgaon Rail

Crossing in Motijheel the same day.

US finds shell

with 'sarin'

REUTERS, Baghdad

forwar

agent in Irag

A small amount of the nerve agent

sarin was found in a shell that

exploded in Iraq, the U.S. army said

yesterday in the first announcement

of discovery of any of the weapons

on which Washington made its case

told a news conference the sub-

stance had been found in an artillery

shell inside a bag discovered by a

U.S. convoy a few days ago. The

round had exploded, causing a

Brigadier General Mark Kimmitt

Irani, married and mother of an

Stock crashes

Gandhi faced her first crisis yesterday, before even taking power, when pivotal leftists refused to formally join her government and markets crashed on fears over economic policy.

The ousted Hindu nationalists and their allies said they would boycott the swearing-in of Italianborn Gandhi as prime minister to 'express people's sentiments".

Outgoing prime minister Atal open saying that if all the left parties Behari Vajpayee would, however, favoured joining the government, it attend the ceremony in "keeping would also do so. with the tradition," said Venkaiah Naidu, president of the Hindu because the leftists compete nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party directly with Congress in their state

(BJP) Shares on the Bombay bourse plunged as much as 17.5 percent -the worst fall in its 129 years Trading was halted twice, for a total of three hours, before the index closed 11 percent down, extending big losses last week. The rupee and bonds also fell

swearing-in ceremony to express the people's sentiment," Naidu said. The crash, including a big drop Friday, has wiped tens of billions of stepped up a campaign against dollars off the value of listed compa-Gandhi's foreign roots saying only nies. Hundreds of brokers and small Indians should occupy the highest investors protested outside the elected office. bourse on the day Gandhi was due to visit the president to claim power.

sworn tomorrow.

FROM PAGE 12

Naidu said the decision to stage Leftist parties, which hold more the unprecedented boycott was than 60 of the new parliament's 545 taken at a meeting in Vajpayee's residence seats, decided not to formally join Naidu, however, ruled out sug-Gandhi's Congress party and its gestions that the BJP-led coalition allies in the coalition expected to be

DHAKA TUESDAY MAY 18, 2004

outside.

Gandhi falls.

BOYCOTT

earlier said it was not joining the

government but kept the issue open

pledged they would support a

Congress-led government from the

government. We will extend outside

support," CPI National Secretary

Atul Kumar Anjaan told AFP.

Both parties have already

"As of now we are not joining the

The party, however, left the issue

The move was expected

strongholds. But they also bitterly

oppose the return to power of the

ousted Hindu nationalists, which

would be the inevitable result if

'We will be abstaining from the

A hardline section of the BJP has

for the CPM and other leftists.

would also boycott a Congress-led "Not join the government," senior government Communist Party of India-Marxist "There is no question of boycott-(CPM) leader Somnath Chatterjee ing this government and we will fight told reporters when asked what the it out both inside and outside parliament. We will play the role of a

party's decision was. constructive opposition." he said Leaders of the dominant Marxist warning that the BJP would not bury party, with 43 MPs in the newlyelected parliament, took the deci-Gandhi's origin as an issue. sion at the end of three days of "We are not going to leave this ssue. We are going to keep this

hectic parleys in the capital. The Communist Party of India alive. (CPI), which has 10 members elect,

Current governance

worth 570 million pounds against British exports to Bangladesh worth 56 million pounds.

stand around one billion pounds, making for supply of 25 percent of electricity consumed in Bangladesh

(Reuters/AFP)

Denying that a large number Bangladeshi applicants are refused visa, he said some 23,010 visa were issued for travel to the UK in 2003 against 38,000 applications.

that things will get better." "What attracted me most to Bangladesh is the potential I see in the country, the potential I see in its people and the potential I see in enhancing our bilateral relationship, ne said.

state of poverty, human rights and

law and order in Bangladesh, the

high commissioner said, "I feel very

much like you, frustration, hope and

Bangladesh by British companies in

energy, information technology,

"You can stand proud for some achievements made over the past 33 years," he said, adding, "We do not think it is far-fetched to think that the land of the Bengal Tiger can also one 1970 day be the land of the tiger economy. He hoped greater investment in

Women kick off FROM PAGE 12

power and environment sectors. He

nowever cautioned that Bangladesh needs to be better prepared to face post-MFA challenges.

He mentioned the British govern on vote, the BNP officials said ment offered to assist Bangladesh to Aspirants rushed to the official improve governance, trade, and law residences of BNP Secretary and order. General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, "We want to give more" in addition other standing committee members to the 100 million pounds in developand ministers to 'seek their blessment assistance the UK provides ing', they said. each year, the envoy said. "But "They are coming up with their perhaps the best way for Bangladesh resumes, paper clippings and to prosper and lift its way out of povphotographs of their political activierty is through trade and foreign ties and the repression they were direct investment. On trade and investment, he said subjected to under the Awami the UK is the third largest export market for Bangladesh with exports League government," a frontline BNP leader said.

Asked if his being Bangladeshi-born conflicted with his job as British envoy, he said, "No, absolutely there is no conflict ... I am a British of Bangladeshi heritage representing British interests here.

Investments by British companies About his personal feelings on the

and 15 percent of gas

The British High Commission has opened separate visa application centres in Dhaka and Sylhet to make visa issuance easier

Anwar Choudhury, 44, left Bangladesh as a child, studied engineering in Britain and served in the Royal Air Force and the defence ministry. He visited Bangladesh thrice since leaving for London in

of the reserved seats began on Sunday night, hours after the pas-

sage of the amendment bill in divi-

president, reiterated her claim of BNP leadership's link to the AL lawmaker's assassination which was part of a blueprint to erase her party from the political landscape by systematically killing its prospective

wicketkeeper Ridley Jacobs.

ward point to extra cover to take

had earlier rode his luck to hit his

oin went to Pabna Bagm with a large number of activists in microbuses and trucks under the cover of dark, as the police apparently snapped their links with the aroup, believed to be an outgrowth of the Jama'atul Mujahedin Bangladesh with a militant past.

Sources said Bangla Bhai holed up in Bagmara in Rajshahi or Naldanga in Natore, backed by relatives of a deputy minister and supporters of another BNP lawmaker. Villagers saw Bangla Bhai in Sikdari village in Bagmara on Saturday night.

Contacted by cellphone, Bangla quarter.

PM asks AL

FROM PAGE 1

'So return to the House and participate in development efforts in the interest of the country and its people," Khaleda, also the Leader of the House and chairperson of the ruling BNP, said in her valedictory speech to the close of the 11th session.

"My government would not allow anybody to create anarchy on the street and damage public property," she warned PRESS ROLE

The prime minister also came down heavily on newspapers, saying the press was failing to play a responsible role.

Questioning reports on relief operations in tornado-hit Netrakona and Monga-affected northern regions, she said: "The government provided a large amount of food. medicine and other supplies for the tornado-affected people, but the press reported that no food was given.

"They (journalists) do not visit the scenes, but write reports listening to unrelated people," the prime minister said, adding, "nobody should write whatever they like taking the opportunity of press freedom.

Citing a newspaper report that no food assistance reached the tornado-hit locality, Khaleda said "the gentleman of the newspaper" could have visited the affected area with "two chhatak (a scant amount) of rice in his pocket".

including the much-talked-about "Many newspapers are not 14th amendment to the constitution playing the right and responsible and anti-corruption commission bill role," she alleged. in the session.

Claiming that price spiral of essentials could only be found in newspapers, Khaleda said there was no large-scale price hike.

Referring to some market reports Ahsanullah Master, who was assasin newspapers dating back to 1998 and 2000 when the AL was in office, sinated in a Tongi rally on May 7.

identity on the third day. location. "I am safe here. But I am She identified Ria seeing her fingers and hair-band, three days not running organisational activi-

Sources close to the JMJB said Bangla Bhai also went to Dhaka, where the outfit is believed to have its headquarters, after he left Rajshahi.

A senior police official told The Daily Star, asking not to be named, that arresting the lynchpin or stopping his militant activities turned impossible for police, as he said the JMJB is sponsored by an influential

she said current level of prices were

initiatives in education health

communications, power, environ-

ment, telecommunications, poverty

reduction by the present govern-

ment, the premier said: "In the last

two and a half years, we have done

more than what the people

expected and we will do more in

responsible role of an opposition.

Taking a swipe at the AL, said the

In an oblique reference to the

Indian polls, she said the opposition

might take heart from the results,

but the people of Bangladesh were

different. "If you do not play your role

with responsibility, people will reject

on its no-hartal promise and said the

party was in the thick of calling

frequent shutdowns to hurt the

longest ever in the parliamentary

history of Bangladesh, began on

January 18 and spread over five

The parliament passed 14 bills

months with big recesses.

The Jatiya Sangsad session,

She accused the AL of reneging

vou." Khaleda said.

economy

Illustrating different development

not as high as then.

future."

Rocca is going to visit tomorrow he Ahmadiyya complex in Bakshibazar in the capital, the headquarters of the Ahmadiyya sect of Islam in Bangladesh.

Earlier in January, the government banned all publication and dissemination of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat. in the face of pressure from Islamic bigots.

Rocca's visit to the complex follows Congressman Joseph Crowley's continued criticism of the government's treatment of the Ahmadiyya issue. Crowley visited Bangladesh in January.

Rocca today will speak as the chief guest at a luncheon with American Chamber of Commerce in Bangladesh (AmCham) on the topic "US Policy in South Asia."

She is scheduled to leave on Thursday.

£40m robbery opposition party did not believe in democracy and failed to play the

FROM PAGE 12 shutters in a white van, according to police.

They then forced their way into a secure area containing a large quantity of precious metal and bank notes

But as the men tried to escape, officers who had been lying in wait fired special bullets- designed to deflate tyres with minimal damagento the van's wheels.

Two suspects then hijacked a white van, forcing the driver to smash through entrance gates and drive to Stanwell, Surrey, where the two men are thought to have switched vehicles, police say.

The gang is thought to have had nside information about the warehouse.

But officers are believed to have spent months gathering intelligence on the raid, and knew exactly when it was due to happen.

"In preventing this attack, we have foiled what would have been The AL attended the session on one of the biggest robberies ever May 12 breaking an 11-month committed in the UK. We believe boycott to unanimously adopt an that these men were part of an obituary reference on lawmaker organised criminal enterprise." said Detective Superintendent Barry Phillips.

Referring to the palatial house (Khoab) in Gazipur town of

Giasuddin Al Mamun, who is a friend of Tarique, she wondered how the ruling BNP-led coalition men could accumulate so much wealth in two and a half years when Ahsanullah, who was elected lawmaker twice and also was a upazila chairman. could not even own a small house. The former prime minister said nstead of arresting the accused in the murder case, the government

indiscriminately arrested AL leaders and workers and innocent people and framed them in cases under the Speedy Trial Act. "Police are searching the houses

of AL leaders and harassing their families and by doing so, they are

Saifur for e-voting

FROM PAGE 12

success of e-voting in Indian general election, Saifur said this at a function organised by Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB) marking the World Telecommunications Day at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel.

He, however, came down heavily upon the politicians for their refusal to accept the electoral outcomes.

"Our politicians maintain a culture that indulges raising indiscriminate allegations of rigging when defeated in the poll," said the minister in his speech as the chief guest.

Post and Telecommunications Minister M Aminul Hoque and Telecommunications Secretary Farug Ahmad Siddigi addressed the function as special quests.

Telecommunications minister in his speech said the government is committed to developing the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector.

"The country would have a tremendous boost in ICT when it would be connected with the global information super highway via submarine cable by July 2005, Hoque said

Telecommunications Secretary

BNP keeps

FROM PAGE 12

Senior BNP leaders are also in touch with top leaders and lawmakers of former president HM Ershadled Jatiya Party. "Most of the Jatiya Party lawmakers and leaders are with us and we are confident that the party is not going to join hands with AL," said a key cabinet minister, also wishing anonymity.

minister, who is also the leader of the House, did not see the slain said.

MP's body or console the bereaved family members. Cases would be lodged against

the prime minister, her son Tarique Rahman and Tarique's friend Mamun if any more of her party people are killed. She also said Tarique's cronies were involved in the political violence.

AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil and leaders Suranjit Sengupta, Motia Chowdhury, Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, Rahmat Ali, Obaidul Kader. Abdul Mannan, Abdus Shahid, Akhtaruzzaman. AKM Mozammel Haq, Azmat Ullah Khan and Tanzim

Ahmed Sohel also spoke

Faruq Ahmad Siddiqi said, "BTTB has provided Internet facilities to all district headquarters and has a plan

to expand those facilities to upazillas by the end of next year. He said BTTB will also make two lakh more telephone connections by the next year.

SM Munir Ahmed, general manager, Dhaka Telecommunication region (South) and AKM Habibur Rahman, divisional engineer, jointly presented a theme paper entitled ICTs: leading the way to sustainable development".

In the paper they depicted the wide disparity between the developed and developing countries in terms of telecommunication capacity. While the developed world is almost glutted with telecommunication facilities, a basic telephone connection eludes one and half a

million villages in the developing world, the speakers observed. The problem is not one of short-

age of resources but of distribution and the lack of global policy perspective, they pointed out.

Apology FROM PAGE 1

documents, we found that we erroneously named Savar Textiles in the report and that Savar Textiles has maintained excellent record with the Titas Gas authorities in paying their bills regularly.

We rearet this error and extend our apology to Savar textile for any damage to their reputation and image that our report may have caused.

small release of the substance, he

"The Iraq Survey Group has confirmed today that a 155 (mm) artillery round containing sarin nerve agent had been found. The round had been rigged as an IED (improvised explosive device) that was discovered by a U.S. force convoy," he said.

"A detonation occurred before the IED be could be rendered inoperable," Kimmitt said, adding that two members of an explosives team had been treated for exposure to the substance.

Kimmitt said the round, designed to mix the sarin in flight, belonged to a class of ordnance that the ousted government of Saddam Hussein claimed to have destroyed before the 1991 Gulf war.

"It is a weapon that we believe was stocked from the ex-regime time, and it had been thought to be an ordinary artillery shell set up to explode like an ordinary IED... when it exploded it indicated that it actually had some sarin in it." he said.

IEDs are bombs usually planted at the side of the road to explode as coalition vehicles pass

Honduras jail fire kills over 100

A huge fire at a prison in northern Honduras has killed 102 inmates, all of them members of a violent street gang the government is trying to break up

Police spokesman Wilmer Torres yesterday said the early-morning fire at the prison in the northern city of San Pedro Sula followed an explosion that was apparently caused by a short circuit.

Most of the victims died from suffocation and another 27 were taken to the hospital with burns.

Morshed FROM PAGE 12

exact date and itinerary for the visit will be set after the new government in pictures published around the takes oath and a new foreign minisworld, were not sanctioned. ter takes office," said a foreign ministry official seeking not to be Washington from its allies, both named inside and outside Iraq, for a hand-

Iraq governing council

FROM PAGE 1

More than a dozen vehicles were destroyed, including minibuses from which doctors wearing masks and rubber gloves pulled burned bodies.

"There were a lot of cars and people on foot standing there, and then this massive explosion," said Raad Mukhlis, a security guard at a nearby residential compound. "I saw body parts and martyrs everywhere.

Responsibility for the last suicide car bomb at the US administration headquarters on May 6 was claimed by a group led by top al Qaeda figure Abu Musab al-Zargawi, suspected of beheading US hostage Nick Berg earlier this mont

gents, the scandal over the treat-

President Bush's re-election expec-

at the weekend that the abuses

resulted from a plan approved by

Defense Secretary Donald

Rumsfeld for tougher interrogation

Citing current and former US

ntelligence officials, it said tougher

questioning was part of a secret plan

giving advance approval to kill, cap-

Pressure is mounting on

ture or interrogate terrorist leaders.

tations in November elections.

methods to fight insurgents.

to haunt the occupiers.

forced to temporarily abandon a PRESSURE MOUNTING position on one of the main bridges While US-led forces battle insurin the city.

city of Nasiriyah.

Another five fighters were killed ment of Iraqi prisoners in Abu Ghraib jail near Baghdad continued and 32 injured during fighting Monday overnight with US troops in the holv city of Karbala.

over of real power when an interim

government is installed to steer the

The bombing came after at least

14 people were killed during fierce

fighting in several cities overnight

Monday between coalition troops

and fighters loyal to radical Shia

Nine Iraqis were killed and 14

others were injured during almost

six hours of clashes overnight

Monday between Sadr's militiamen

and Italian troops in the southern

injuries from earlier clashes in the

city when coalition troops were

An Italian soldier also died of his

country to elections in January.

Muslim cleric Moqtada Sadr.

The prisoner scandal has shat-Late Sunday three mortar rounds tered US credibility in Iraq and the struck the east Baghdad stronghold Arab world as well as dented of Sadr City where US forces are pitted against the cleric's private militia, the US military said. The New Yorker magazine said

And a local police chief was killed near the southern city of Amara where British troops clashed with Shia militiamen last week, after feuding with the governor, tribal sources said.

A US soldier was killed and two others injured in a gun battle in a city south of Baghdad, the military said n a statement yesterday.

The soldiers, from the 1st The Bush administration, which Armoured Division, were not insists the abuse was confined to a named. The statement did not number of low-level guards, derided specify the city where the clash the report by reporter Seymour happened Sunday Hersh. The Pentagon said abuses,

The latest death brings to 783 the number of US soldiers who have been killed or died in accidents since the start of the US-led invasion of Iraq in March last year.

REUTERS, Tegucigalpa, Honduras