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## 14 NEWSMEN KILLED IN SW IN 10 YEARS 23 editors concerned over govt indifference

**STAR REPORT**

The editors of 23 national dailies for the first time yesterday issued a joint statement expressing deep concerns "at the killing of and attack on journalists in Khulna and the country's southwestern region."

"We are extremely concerned about the fact that journalists are dying at regular intervals, yet the government and the administration remain indifferent and unconcerned. So far not a single incident has either been properly investigated or the culprits punished. We think this fact alone may have emboldened the culprits and given them a sense of impunity to act against journalists," said the editors under the banner of the newly formed Forum to Protect Journalists (FPJ).

They announced to hold simultaneous protest rallies in all press clubs across the country at 11:00am next Saturday. The rally in Dhaka will be organised on the Jatiya Press Club premises.

"We call upon all journalists and every body concerned with the profession of journalism to make our rally a success," they urged.

The announcement comes two days into the death of daily Sangram Khulna Burea Chief Shaikh Belaluddin last Friday from injuries in a bomb attack on February 5, that also injured three other Khulna-based journalists.

The editors signing the statement are ABM Musa of Jugantor, Enayattullah Khan of New Age, M Atiqullah Khan Masud of Janakantha, Rahat Khan of Ittefaq, Rezauddin Ahmed of News Today, Mahbubul

Alam of The Independent, Mahfuz Anam of The Daily Star, Kazi Shahed Ahmed of Ajker Kagaj, AMM Bahauddin of Inqilab, Bazlur Rahman of Sangbad, Alamgir Mohiuddin of Nayadiganto, Amanullah Kabir of Amar Desh, Moazzem Hossain of The Financial Express, Motiur Rahman Chowdhury of Manabzamin, Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury of The Bangladesh Observer, Asafuddin of Bangladesh Today, Golam Tahaboob of The New Nation, Kazi Siraj Uddin Ahmed of Dinkal, Abul Asad of Sangram, Gas Kamal Chowdhury of Khabarpatro, M Zakaria Khan of Banglabazar Patrika and Shyamal Dutta of Bhorer Kagaj.

The statement reads: "We are deeply concerned over the killing of and attack on journalists in Khulna

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Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina puts her signature yesterday on the 'mass signature campaign' banner initiated by Asma Kibria, wife of slain SAMS Kibria, to demand punishment of the perpetrators of all grenade attacks.

PHOTO: STAR

## 711 rifle bullets found on Bhairab riverbank

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna**

Police yesterday seized 711 bullets of Chinese rifles from the Bhairab riverbank at Skid Ghat under the sadar thana.

Police sources said a boy found the abandoned bullets at 9:00am. Belal, 12, son of handling worker Rafiqul Islam of an adjoining slum,

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## Business bodies sit Feb 24 in a bid to end political crisis

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

All the country's business bodies will sit together on February 24 in an effort to resolve the country's existing political crisis.

The decision was taken at a

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

## EU worried over 'crossfire' deaths

**Esko calls them extra-judicial killings**

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Head of Delegation of the European Commission in Bangladesh Ambassador Esko Kentschynskij yesterday expressed deep concerns over the recent 'crossfire' deaths during operations of the elite anti-terror Rapid Action Battalion (Rab).

Speaking at a press conference on future development policy of the EU at the delegation office in the capital, Kentschynskij termed the deaths as extra-judicial killing and said the government should look into the incidents of over 200 people being killed in alleged 'crossfire'.

Responding to a question, he said those killed in 'crossfire' were denied their right to justice and their human rights, as they had not been tried. Such activities are contrary to

## VOLATILE MONEY MARKET BB warns banks for irresponsible fund management

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

The central bank yesterday warned a section of commercial banks of punitive measures including reducing their scope of business for 'irresponsible' fund management resulting in a destabilised money market.

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## FBI terms of reference under review

**UNB, Dhaka**

Dhaka and Washington are still considering the details of a written terms of reference for FBI agents to investigate the January 27 grenade attack in Habiganj.

An spokesman for the US Embassy

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## Ruling, opposition parties face off

**Over 10,000 law-enforcers to man streets as 36-hr hartal begins today**

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

The government will form a massive security blanket in the capital during today's hartal with the ruling and opposition parties ready to face each other in the street.

More than 10,000 law-enforcers drawn from the police, paramilitary Bangladesh Rifles, Armed Police Battalion and Ansar will be deployed at different strategic points in the city to stave off any untoward incident.

The four-party ruling alliance has taken the fresh bout of 36-hour countrywide hartal as a challenge, aiming to defuse the antigovernment movement spearheaded by the main opposition Awami League (AL) and its left allies.

The latest heat generated in the country's politics when the opposi-

## Spring brings festive mood to Dhaka

**UNB, Dhaka**

Singing and dancing and screening of films featuring Bangla culture gave the sprawling grounds in and around Dhaka University a festive look yesterday amid a twin-celebration of spring and Saraswati Puja.

The hilarious human mood matched with nature that also put forth a fresh look with trees coming

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## ACC in the doldrums

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Chairman of the three-month old Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Justice Sultan Hossain Khan, who initially vowed to launch a 'jihad' against corruption, yesterday admitted that 'nothing of the commission made any progress.'

Justice Sultan, speaking to journalists at his office, however

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## Stop destroying democratic air

**PM asks opposition**

**UNB, Dhaka**

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday urged all concerned, particularly opposition political parties, to refrain from 'destroying the democratic environment and trampling human rights in the name of movement and demonstrations.'

She made the call when a delegation of the Council for National Agenda (CNA), led by its chairman Justice Mohammad Abdur Rouf, called on the prime minister with a plea for banning hartal to stem the current spell of unrest.

The prime minister urged members of the intelligentsia to play a positive role in creating awareness among people about the vice of violence and hartal.

The CNA, which groups retired judges, bureaucrats, academics and journalists, demanded halting

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