S Asian HR body worried about **Nepal crisis**

rights activists

before.

itself

thought in Nepal.

observed.

is quite clear that the step by the

insurgency much less likely than

there is no doubt in anyone's mind

that the situation the King has

mentioned in justification of his

arbitrary fiat was a product of

diverse factors, prominent among

them being the role of the palace

aggravate frustrations already

present in the country as evident in

the unanimous opposition to the

King's decrees by all schools of

the whole of South Asia and will,

among other things embolden

forces of authoritarianism and

intolerance in the region, they

withdrawal of February 1 measures,

restoration of democratic order, and

the grant of permission to human

rights defenders to freely monitor

SAHR demanded immediate

The prevailing situation can only

The SAHR leaders observed that

UNB, Dhaka

South Asians for Human Rights (SAHR) expressed deep concern over the situation in Nepal and demanded immediate withdrawal of their welfare measures announced by the King on February 1 and restoration of constitutional rule in the Kingdom. their anxieties to the outside world. It

The chain of events since Feb 1 in the Himalayan state, as the government was dismissed by King Gyanendra, a state of emergency imposed, basic rights suspended and hundreds arrested, can only be condemned in the strongest terms, said the regional organisation in a statement.

Chairperson of SAHR IK Gujral and Co-Chairperson Asma Jahangir and bureau members from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka issued the statement vesterday. It was released in Dhaka by the SAHR-Bangladesh Chapter. The SAHR leaders condemned

reversal of the movement towards democracy in the Kingdom, and the return to absolute rule.

The denial of basic freedoms, such as the right to information, the right to assemble to demand their rights and the right to privacy cannot be countenanced on any pretext. The fate of the many hundreds

arbitrarily arrested after the putsch is a further cause for concern, they said, pointing out that those held include members of the ousted government, political workers and

FROM PAGE 1

stance.

BB warns banks

7 to die for killing trader COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced seven people to death for killing Zakir Hossain, a transport trader of Jurain in Shyampur, five years back. Judge Mohammad Abu Hanif of

Speedy Trial Tribunal-3 pronounced the verdict at 1:00pm in the jampacked courtroom. The convicts are Anwar Hossain

The stringent curbs on the press Abu Bakker, Bipul, Shiru, Babul, mean that it has been impossible to Gobinda and Titu. Of them. Anwar discover details about the places and Gobinda were present in the where the detainees are held, or court during the delivery of the judgement while the rest were tried Most of the people have been left n absentia without any means to even convey Earlier. Anwar was awarded

death sentence for killing Monju Hossain alias Shimul, brother of palace has made an end to the Zakir Hossain The tribunal acquitted two other

accused Dilu and Jamal as the charges brought against them were not proved. Another accused Wachiuddin died during the trial of the case.

On November 9, 1999, a group of local hoodlums led by Anwar Hossain and Abu Bakker took Zakir Hossain from their West Jurain residence at Shyampur in the name of discussion over an urgent matter and shot him dead, the plaintiff said in the case filed with Shyampur Police Station.

They killed Zakir as he did not The fallout of the outrageous bay tolls to them, he added. action taken by the King will inevitably affect the rights of the people of

The investigation officer pressed charges against ten people includng Anwar and Bakker, dropping the names of six others on May 30, 2001

Abdur Rahim and his brother Nohammad Selim, who were present in the court, burst into tears and expressed satisfaction after hearing the verdict.

Special Public Prosecutor Nurul Iman Babul and advocates Abdur Rashid, Sonia Parveen and Mahbubur Rahman appeared for the state while advocates AFM Abdul Wadud and Najibullah Hiru defended the accused.

ACC in the doldrums

lawyers.

crisis

theACC

press

When asked about his comment

This is a constitutional issue. I am

on this issue, Justice Sultan said, "I

have no comment. Ask the senior

not a constitution expert. Therefore it's

not wise for me to comment on this

matter. But I can say if there is a consti-

tutional crisis, the solution is men-

tioned in the constitution itself," said

A source said the matter has

already been discussed at the

policymakers' level and they sought

opinions of senior lawyers and retired

judges to resolve this constitutional

Meanwhile, the ACC once again

Previously a director had asked the

restricted the access of journalists to

public relations officer not to talk to the

press without prior permission. This

time the ACC chairman himself issued

a letter on Saturday saying that without

the permission of the chairman no

information should be given to the

He wrote that journalists separately

To resolve this matter, the chair-

a week. The chairman himself or the

commissioners will talk to the press at

man why he issued such a letter, he

out, "I will talk to the chairman on this

matter. I believe in press freedom and

therefore I believe that in the interest of

the ACC's transparency, it cannot

When reporters asked the chair-

But Maniruzzaman Miah pointed

2pm every Sunday.

declined to comment.

push the media away.

Maniruzzaman Miah.

NEWS

FROM PAGE 1

declined to explain why they could not make any progress or what the hurdles are

He reacted sharply when journalists asked him about specific progress in some areas. "Ask the Cabinet Division," replied the ACC chairman. Asked if the Cabinet Division itself

is a hurdle, he declined to comment. But he repeatedly said: "Nothing is happening in this commission." Previously the chairman had

repeatedly said the ACC's functioning was being hampered due to manpower crisis. Soon after the ACC was formed in November, he had tried to deploy the staff of the now-defunct Bureau of Anti-Corruption (Bac).

However, one of the ACC commissioners referring to the ACC Act argues that Bac staff cannot be considered as ACC's staff before screening them as per a rule that had not yet been framed. The Cabinet Division and the law ministry expressed the same views

On the other hand, the attorney general backed the chairman's opin-This issue created a serious rift

between the ACC and the Cabinet Division as some of the Bac staff are using ACC's designation and issuing official letters "After the launching of the commis-

seek interviews of the ACC commission some things needed to be done sioners very often, wasting their time first. But those were not done. Commissioner Prof Maniruzzaman and making them feel embarrassed. Miah said echoing the chairman. man decided to meet the press once in

He added: "The Bac was dissolved when the ACC was formed. At that time, it was the first task to screen all the Bac staff as per rule and recruit them under an organogram (of the commission). But that was not done."

A new controversy recently emerged over the legality of Sultan's appointment as the chairman. Press reports pointed out that as per the constitution, a person who has once served as the chief election commissioner (CEC) will not be eligible to serve any other position of the repub-

Spring brings festive

FROM PAGE 1

into new foliage and flowers and session in the House, a number of cuckoos cooing to hail the advent of ruling BNP lawmakers including spring

Yesterday was the first of Falgun on Bangla Calendar, the beginning of a two-month season of Basanta traditionally hailed by people in this area through festivity.

observed the Saraswati Puja as a religious festival mainly at Jagannath Hall of Dhaka University. Female students also organised religious and cultural programmes in their respective DU dorms.

The season of life has another minister said government had set a dimension -- it puts an end to shivers target to collect a total of two lakh tonnes of rice in the current Aman of winter and brings a great relief to season, but the target could not be the poor who are exposed to wintry chill achieved due to last year's floods

Eleventh Basanta Utsab-1411 was observed on the DU campus

With davbreak, Jativa Basanta Utsab Udiapan Parishad (national spring festival celebration committee) came up with a daylong cultural programme to celebrate the day at

Harassment on to stymie anti-govt lic. Sultan had served as the CEC in Members and staff of the ACC now agitation feel embarrassed at this controversy.

Says Hasina

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leader of the Opposition and Awami League (AL) chief Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the government is harassing her party's leaders and activists across the country in a bid to tame the ongoing antigovernment movement.

"In Dhaka alone, police arrested 3,000 leaders and activists since yesterday (Saturday) to foil the 36hour hartal," Hasina alleged.

She was expressing her solidarity with 'mass signature campaign initiated by Asma Kibria, wife of slain SAMS Kibria, demanding punishment of the perpetrators of all grenade attacks.

Hasina along with senior AL leaders put their signatures for the campaign at the party's Dhanmondi office yesterday afternoon. She reiterated her claim that the government was using law-enforcing

agencies including Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) to persecute the AL leaders and activists. "The BNP-led coalition government is preparing a list of our leaders

and activists with a view to kill them by the Rab in the name of crossfire,' she alleged. Violation of human rights under this government has become a regular phenomenon, she added.

711 rifle FROM PAGE 1

informed locals, who called in police.

Police with help of private and fire service divers seized the bullets and 37 chargers at high tide. Intelligence men used underground metal detector devices during the search continued until 3:00pm.

A senior officer of Khulna police said the bullets are live and foreignmade. Belal was rewarded Tk 2,000 for the information, he added.

Different intelligence agencies have started thorough investigation to hunt down custodian of the bullets

Business bodies FROM PAGE 1

meeting yesterday of the Federation of Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industries (FBCCI) with its president Abdul Awal Mintoo chairing

The FBCCI meeting expressed its concern over the country's existing confrontational politics and discussed the negative impact in business activities caused by the hartals

They apprehended that the country might experience a volatile political situation due to head to head programs called by the gov ernment and the opposition.

The meeting also pointed out that the existing confrontational politics should be ended for the sake

Ruling, opposition

FROM PAGE 1

ent districts.

them.

told The Daily Star.

makers during hartal.

theALalleged.

From page 12

money laundering.

the central bank.

with BB executives.

tor's control

SEC team

rallies or procession.

for prompt action against the demon-

strators and foil any attempt to hold

Usually 5,000 to 7,000 law-

enforcers are deployed in the capital

during hartal but the ministry has

decided to strengthen the force by

bringing additional forces from differ-

tackle any unwanted incident in the

city," Mizanur Rahman, commissioner

of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP)

some markets open under police

protection during the shutdown. The

DMP commissioner said if anybody

appeals for police help to open their

shops or to run vehicles, they will help

Speaking in the Jatiya Sangsad

vesterday, Law Minister Moudud

Ahmed asked the home ministry to

The AL alleged that police have

started a crackdown on the opposition

men. During the last three days more

than 3,000 leaders and activists of the

AL and its front organisations were

arrested in the capital and elsewhere,

AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil

said police were arresting their leaders

address to open around 15,000

accounts. Only a few addresses

were mentioned to open the rest,

findings and after consulting with

Meantime Premier Bank

Managing Director Kazi Abdul

around 10.000 BO accounts.

apply existing laws against the trouble-

The government will try to keep

"We have taken every measures to

DHAKA MONDAY FEBRUARY 14, 2005

and activists from different parts of the country without any warrant. He demanded immediate and unconditional release of the arrestees.

Amid the heightened tension, most passenger buses went off the streets in the capital by yesterday afternoon fearing pre-hartal violence.

A large number of people were seen waiting at different bus stoppages for hours and jostling each other to get into the buses in operation. Meanwhile, three people were

njured when two unidentified youths set fire to a Bangladesh Bank staff bus at Arambagh in the city yesterday noon.

The youths poured petrol on the bus and ran away setting it on fire at around 2:30pm when Jahangir, the driver of the bus. Selim, helper, and Azibar, uncle of the driver, were sleeping inside the vehicle

The three were rushed to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital with burn injuries. Azibar was admitted to the hospital while the two others were

released after first aid. Our staff correspondent from Rajshahi reports: Nearly 700 policemen were sent to Dhaka from 16 districts of Rajshahi division yesterday. They will be deployed in the capital during the 36-hour hartal.

A UNB report says today's hartal has been withdrawn in Shariatpur and Bandarban.

Shariatour district AL withdrew hartal in Sadar upazila to show respect to Yakub Ali Howlader. local pourasava chairman and freedom fighter, who died on Saturday.

Yakub, 55, who was also district BNP president, died of brain haemor-As it is mandatory to mention a rhage in Dhaka.

bank account number and the branch in opening a BO account, the Bandarban district AL withdrew SEC inquiry committee will verify oday's hartal to facilitate the holding of whether Premier Bank opened false religious function. International bank accounts too, which is an act of Krishna Bhabnamrita Sangha has organised the congregation of The SEC decided to suspend the Acharyas, who will seek divine bless-PO on the basis of its preliminary ings for world peace.

Shias sweep

FROM PAGE 12

country's new basic law will be Mazid yesterday did not attend the monthly meeting (Bankers' Meet) of submitted to a referendum on the chief executive officers of banks October 15 before polls for a new constitutionally-elected government are held on December 15. In the latest major attack to rock

Hailing the SEC decision, Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) CEO Salahuddin Ahmed Khan yesterday the troubled country, a car bomb went off near a hospital in the town said the timely decision has proved of Musayyib on Saturday, killing 17 that the market is under the regulapeople and wounding 16.

"Many investors kept their money idle to apply for the Premier India halts Bank IPO. After the SEC decision, they have changed their minds. It FROM PAGE 12 certainly made a positive impact on by The Associated Press.

the market." Khan observed. Meanwhile, some 800 Nepalese The DSE General Index yesterliving in India demonstrated in New day gained 35.83 points to close at Delhi, shouting slogans such as. 1.797.95 points. The All Share Price "Hang dictator Gvanendra: long live Index of the only other bourse of the democracy." The rally was held to country, Chittagong Stock mark the 10th anniversary of the Exchange, also gained 56.71 points restoration of democracy in Nepal. to close at 3,289.09 points In a statement, the protesters urged Indian political parties and citizens

Asma Kibria

Reza told the journalists that they

had been informed that on Sunday

demonstrations were held at vari-

ous parts of the world, including the

US. UK. Australia. Canada and

Kuwait, to protest the killing of Kibria

and demand trial of the perpetra-

He urged the Habiganj inhabit-

ants to chalk out long term and

effective programmes to press the

government since the family mem-

Law, Justice and Parliamentary

Affairs Minister barrister Moudud

Ahmed who attended the meeting

told the BDNews that the education

system under the Madrasa Board

would be brought to the mainstream

of the national education by keeping

its tradition unchanged for ensuring

Education Board will be shifted to

the National University for making

the country's education system up-

to-date. The students of Kamil and

Fazil study the syllabuses of Degree

Barrister Moudud also said

concerned laws might be amended

Sources said a seven member-

committee was earlier formed in

order to make the Islami University

Act 1980 and Madrasa Education

The committee led by

Mohammad Ali, vice-chancellor of

Northern University, submitted its

report with some recommendations

Industries Minister Matiur

Rahman Nizami and Water

Resources Minister Hafizuddin

Ahmed (BB), among others, were

"The curriculum of Madrasa

equal for Madrasa students.

and Masters levels.

to implement the decision.

Ordinance 1978 up to date.

to the aovernment.

present

tors

the chair.

FROM PAGE 12 On Friday, Nepalese politicians to continue till 6:00pm as part of the who have fled to India urgeo silent protests against the murder of Washington and New Delhi to end Kibria and four others on January military aid needed to fight the 27. New programmes will be Himalayan kingdom's Maoist insurannounced on Feb 19 or 20, she told aents the reporters. They said India has provided Kibria's son, Reza Kibria, said arms worth 4 billion rupees (US\$93 that he hopes the US Federal million) to Nepal over the past three Bureau of Investigation would years, allowing the king to increase investigate the Habiganj blasts to his control of the army. unearth clues to his father's killer.

for indefinite time. It needs to follow the monetary policy," he noted. Central bank officials at the Huda said

events in Nepal.

profiteering by certain commercial banks, who ask as high as 40 to 60 percent interest for call money. They sources said. said charging such high interes

According to central bank statiscalls the standard and efficiency of their fund management into ques-However, the meeting admitted cent, capital machinery 67 percent, that a slight rise in call money rates was expected under the circum-The market has become volatile

due to the inefficiency of a section of banks in asset and liability management, observed Bankers Association President and National Bank Managing Director M Aminuzzaman. But he expressed the hope that the situation would

return to normal soon. The yesterday's meeting also discussed inter-bank forex dealing, classified loans and interest rates.

There is a crisis in the local forex market due to higher import cost. excessive import of capital machinery and tendency to hold on to excessive foreign currency, central bank officials pointed out. They advised the bankers to adopt deferred payment system in case of letters of credit (LCs) to reduce the pressure on foreign currency.

payments in the last six months meeting severely censured the

nor termed the increases "healthy and good for growth," meeting

tics, import bill payment against rice and wheat increased by 107 perpetroleum products 50 percent and scrap vessels 524 percent in the last half-year, compared to the figures in the corresponding six months of the

previous fiscal year **CLASSIFIED LOAN**

the end of calendar year 2004, average of 2 percent.

adding, "The government has failed Total classified loan stood at Tk to achieve its target as the market 18,726 crore at end-2004, Tk 1,593 prices of rice and paddy are higher crore less than Tk 20,319 crore at than the government's procurement end-2003 price Dr Ahmed expressed satisfac-He said there is about 6.15.077 tion over the banks' performance in tonnes of food grains in government dealing with classified loans and stocks at present. urged them to continue the trend. BNP lawmaker Nasir Uddin At end-2004, the amount of total Ahmed Pintu asked Commerce classified loans with nationalised Minister Altaf Hossain Choudhury commercial banks came down by whether the government will take Tk 713 crore to Tk 9,955 crore from any punitive action against those Tk 10,668 crore at end-2003, and who are responsible for sudden that with the private commercial price hike of essentials banks decreased by Tk 667 crore.

tion and resentment at government's

inaction evidenced so far. We demand

expeditious trial and punishment of the

guilty in cases like that of Shamsur

Rahman, Saiful Alam Mukul, etc

where investigation has been com-

sense of impunity to those who attack

and kill journalists. We have noticed

with deep regret that government

remains silent when groups or parties

in public rallies threaten the media and

declare to attack them or force their

closure. Under these circumstances

the country's free media feel more and

more under seize and the circum-

stances of their professional work

anymore. Time has come for a united

action to protect the lives and profes-

sional freedom of journalists. We cal

upon all editors, journalists, publish-

ers, and all those involved in the

newspaper industry to join hands to

resist the killing, attack, threat and

harassment being faced by journal-

ists. Through our movement we want

to create pressure on the government

for proper investigation and punish-

ment of the killers of journalists. To

direct our united movement we have

already decided to form a 'Forum to

Protect Journalists'. We have also

decided to hold simultaneous joint

mass rallies in all the Press Clubs

throughout Bangladesh at 11:00am on

Saturday, February 19, 2005. The

Dhaka rally will be held at the Jatiya

Press Club. We call upon all journalists

and everybody concerned with the

profession of journalism, to make our

rally a grand success.'

We cannot accept this situation

under severe strain.

Open sale increased by 23 percent while the FROM PAGE 12 export-earning rose by 15 percent, However, the central bank gover-Manjur Quader and Nurul Kabin

Shahin questioned the minister about reasons for price hike of rice even in the peak season. The minister said last year's devastating floods led to the short-

fall of Aman production which is responsible for high prices of rice. He said government has no plan to distribute rice through vulnerable group feeding (VGF) cards. Replying to another question, the

The net classified loan with the banks remained below 10 percent at

compared to the figure at the end of previous year. Over the year loan interest rates decreased by an

Chowdhury Bonna, Shimul Mustafa, Sharmeen Sathi Myna, Vaskar Bandapadhay and Kazi Arif. This year, participation in the

Basanta Utsab seemed to be lower than that of previous years. Sharmin Akhter Lata, a third-year student of philosophy, said: "Maybe many

didn't appear today for their security Students and teachers also concern due to recent spate of bomb attacks on jatra shows and other programmes. Poet Shamsur Rahman, playactors Asaduzzaman Noor. Ali

But, "deferred payments often increase the cost of LCs," the chief executive of a private bank told The Daily Star separately.

There has been a pressure on foreign currency supply, as import

23 editors concerned

pleted

FROM PAGE 1

and in the country's southwestern region. Over the last decade 14 journalists were murdered due to law and order situation and while performing their professional duties. In Khulna alone in the last one year three journalists were killed. One year ago, on January 15 journalist Manik Shaha was killed by a bomb blast not too far away from the Press Club. About five months later Press Club President Humavun Kabir Balu was killed in front of his house in the same method. In the atest of such gruesome incidents on February 5 journalist Shaikh Belaluddin died six days after being injured in a bomb blast on the premises of Khulna Press Club that injured several others. We condemn this killing and demand punishment of the killers. We also express our deep condolence to the bereaved family of the murdered journalist.

"We observe with deep regret that after every incident of killing and bomb blast the perpetrators are able to escape. This has led to a natural sense of anxiety and insecurity not only among journalists but also in the society at large. Given these incidents it would not be surprising if Khulna journalists are forced to think of quitting journalism. If that happens then i would not only be a severe blow to journalism as a profession but a threat to freedom of press and the right to free speech.

"We are extremely concerned a the fact that journalists are dying at regular intervals vet 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. If this trend of events is not halted by determined government action, we are likely to enter a dark future from where it would be difficult to return. We want to see proof of government's sincerity in this regard. We express our deep frustra-

The commerce minister said aovernment does not control the market in the open market econ-

"We have collected only three

tonnes of paddy so far," he said,

and incessant rain.

He, however, said his ministry is going take a number of steps to check price spiralling and protect consumers' rights.

"The process to enact the Consumers Rights Protection Act is underway," he added.

Habiganj attack

FROM PAGE 1 "Not only in the southwestern of DIG of Police (Sylhet Range) region but in other parts of the country AKM Mahfuzul Haque, and officials also journalists are being killed. Last from CID. Rapid Action Battalion year Dipankar, a journalist from Bogra, and Kamal, a journalist from (Rab), National Security Khagrachhari, were brutally mur-Intelligence (NSI), and Directorate dered. And as is the case elsewhere, General of Forces Intelligence nothing has been done to punish the (DGFI). It was asked to report within perpetrators. All such failures of the 15 davs. administration have given rise to a

Meanwhile, a source said the committee would get an extension. The probe body and investigation officers of the two cases filed with the Habiganj Sadar Police Station so far have quizzed about a hundred people. Besides, the Joint Interrogation Cell in Dhaka continues to interrogate five suspects. Though police had picked up a number of people on suspicion of having links to the grisly crime, to

date, no one was arrested in any of the two cases. On expiry of a remand. Habigani

district BNP Vice-President Abdul Quaiyum was brought to Habiganj vesterday. He would be produced before the court today and police may seek fresh remand, said an official

The seven-day remand of Lashkarpur Union BNP President Jamir Ali and Zia Smriti Parishad's Union Vice-President Jainal Abedin ended on 11 February. They were remanded for another week on Sunday. The JIC began quizzing Lashkarpur Union Awami League Secretary Zahedur Rahman in Dhaka on Saturday last.

Meanwhile, 26 people who were iniured in the blast on January 27 are still taking treatment at the Habiganj Sadar Hospital.

Bakul Tala on Institute of Fine Arts compound.

The slogan of the festival was Eso Mili Praner Utsabe. It started off with plaving sitar by Samir Das -perfectly in tune with the serene. breezy spring morning.

Both males and females, draped in colourful dresses, came out on the campus from the DU halls and elsewhere to enjoy the spring pageantry. Women wore green-andyellow saris and decorated themselves with vellowish flowers.

The organisers and participants of the ceremony also brought out a rally -- Basanta Shovajatra -- from the fine arts institute compound at 11:00am

Leading luminaries of music, recitation, dance and other cultural areas performed at the ceremony. Among them were Mita Haque, Shahin Samad, Rejwana

Stop destroying

FROM PAGE 1

Masum Ahmad Chowdhury, journalist Sadek Khan, Prof Mahbubullah, Prof M Anwar Hossain and poet Ishraf Hossain.

"We do not want to curtail anybody's democratic and human rights---we want the continuity and strengthening of democratic process and development of the country. We are working to that end," Khaleda told them.

But she lamented that a certain quarter in the name of politics was trying to create instability. She mentioned that five police had been killed while many injured and maimed and a lot of property damaged in the last few days.

The prime minister said such activities are in violation of human rights. The government is providing assistance, as far as possible, to the family members of victims though their losses are irreparable.

She said the hartal-callers know it well that a government cannot be toppled through hartal. But it can hamper development and investment, make people panicky and destroy peaceful environment.

"Those who create such situation cannot be people's friends," she

> The CNA body drew PM's attention and expressed concern over counteraction of the opposition for

highlighting the puja continue today.

The Hindus, mainly in southern India, believe Mother Saraswati is the goddess of vidya (knowledge). Traditionally, the Hindus worship to please her so that she blesses them with vidva.

Meantime, Dhaka University Film Society (DUFS) screened Bangla films at the TSC auditorium for the second day of its nine-day programme.

Zaker. Ramendu Maiumder and

many other celebrities were

expected to join the revellers in the

At Jagannath Hall, almost every

department put up stalls and built

images of Mother Saraswati and

worshiped her. Students and teach-

ers irrespective of all religious faiths

took part in their religious and cul-

Various cultural programmes

afternoon

tural programmes.

With the slogan Sound Film, Sound Audience, DUFS is to project 28 famous Bangla films at the function, inaugurated Saturday by DU Vice-chancellor SMA Faiz

All these cultural carnivals added to the fervour of ongoing month-long book fair on Bangla Academy premises in commemoration of the language martyrs.

today, the day of pre-announced

political programme of ruling BNP and its allies. The PM said that her political adversaries had done such things in

the past as well and the BNP and alliance given concession time and again. She urged the opposition to

refrain from such practice.

League, and its leftwing allies have called a marathon 36-hour hartal from today in a series of such strikes in protest against the killing of AL leader Shah AMS Kibria in an attack in Habiganj.

Shah AMS Kibria, the prime minister said demanding trial of the killing is natural, but "no conscious persons people in the name of seeking trial".

has improved much following sincere effort and tough and effective steps of the government, she said. "Attempt to create instability through letting loose anarchy cannot be tolerated."

Stating with determination that the killers of Kibria must be caught and punished, she mentioned allout efforts of the government to find the clue and the culprits.

of the country's economy.

On February 24, leaders of the business bodies will take a decision about their initiative to address through discussion the country's political troubles.

The FBCCI meeting also urged the political parties to resolve their differences of opinion through dialogue

FBI terms

FROM PAGE 1 told the news agency yesterday "the details of a written terms of reference document are still being considered by both sides."

Replying to a query, he said: "Once there is an agreement on a written terms of reference document it will be forwarded to Washington for final action."

bers of the former finance minister Asked about further visit by any still dare not go there due to lack of FBI agent to Dhaka, he said that at security this point there is no scheduled trip by FBI or any other US law enforce-Curriculum ment personnel regarding the investigation the January 27 attack FROM PAGE 12 or any other act of political terrorism chairman LGRD and Cooperatives in Bangladesh. minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan in

\$60m IDB loan FROM PAGE 12

The amount will be used for the installation of approximately 1,260 kms of undersea submarine fibre

optic cable between Cox's Bazar and a point in the backbone SEA-ME-WE-4 submarine cable in the Bay of Bengal/Indian Ocean.

A portion of the amount will also be used for installation of fibre optic link along the road between Cox's Bazar landing station and Chittagong and procurement of equipment for extending the submarine cable to the national network. Two reputed foreign telephone companies-Alcatel from France and Fujitsu from Japan-were given the contract to install the submarine cable

Before the signing ceremony, the finance minister called on the IDB President Dr Ahmed Mohamed Ali and discussed various matters of mutual interests including future financial assistance of the bank to Bangladesh.

Saifur thanked the IDB management for its financial support to Bangladesh and raising the financial limit of a project from 7 million ID to 14 million ID in a board meeting of the bank in Tehran last year.

Without foreign aid, the Nepalese army, with a strength of 78,000 soldiers, would not be able to win against the rebels who now number nearly 300,000, the politicians said.

to express solidarity with the demo-

cratic struggle in Nepal.

After the takeover, the king said the dismissal of the government was necessary to crush the growing insurgency. The Maoists now control much of Nepal's countryside.

The rebels, who are inspired by the late Chinese revolutionary leader Mao Zedong, want to overthrow the monarchy and establish a socialist state. The conflict has claimed at least 10,500 lives.

Shibir cadre FROM PAGE 12

Shibir cadres at different places of Chittagong possess a huge number of firearms. Besides, he confessed to having a few arms hidden at South Mirerkhil in Hathazari.

A Rab team took him to South Mirerkhil at around 4.30am yester day. But his gang already lying in wait there opened fire on Rab men to snatch him. Rab men returned fire, and at one stage, Munna got shot. He was rushed to the Hathazari Health Complex, where doctors declared him dead.

Rab men recovered a number of firearms from Munna's village hideout. The arms included five guns, 49 rounds of ammunition and eight cartridges.

Sources said Munna was accused in five cases including one for triple murder. He and his men were involved in the double murder of Awami League leader Faruk Mahmud Siddique and businessman Solaiman Chowdhury in 2003.

Munna was reportedly secondin-command of the gang of notorious Gittu Nasir, who had been sentenced to death in the sensational principal Gopal Krishna Muhuri murder case.

He had been absconding since the murder of Shibir cadre Chhota Saiful, his brother and sister last vear

Referring to the sad killing of

would accept killing of innocent Mentioning that law and order

Main opposition party, Awami