Rescue bids for storm-hit ship

A cruise liner with 732 people on board - most of them Spanish - has been crippled by a severe storm in the western Mediterranean.

A French-led rescue operation is under way to reach the stricken Voyager, now about 100km (60 miles) from Menorca.

injuries and the ship has lost all engine power, a spokesman for its owner, V Ships of Monaco, told the

BBC News website. It was sailing from Sardinia, on a

voyage from Tunis to Barcelona. The spokesman said the crew were battling to restore engine power and a liquefied gas tanker,

the windows of the bridge and damaging electronics is thought to have caused the power cut.

said it was taking on water and was in "terrible condition," UK

They received the message just after 0900 GMT on Monday via the The French coastguards told the

BBC that the ship was not on fire

and not in danger of sinking. Two tugs - one Spanish and one French - are travelling to the stricken

vessel and hoping to tow it into a French port, they said. The V Ships spokesman said they would be there within 14 hours

Several aircraft have also been sent to the scene. Most of the passengers are

Spanish and the ship is chartered to the Barcelona cruise firm Iberojet, the V Ships spokesman said. "When she does get some

engine power back, the crew will turn the vessel into the weather. It is pretty rough out there, so I'm sure it isn't particularly comfortable. Any vessel will be being knocked around a lot." the spokesman said.

The ship, registered in the Bahamas and owned by Horizon Navigation, was built in 2000

Valentine's Day party

22. Amit. 20. and Shahnewai. 22 -were admitted to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH).

Most of them were injured in a stampede as the panic-stricken crowd ran for cover after the bombs went off within a minute, DMCH sources said.

the police, deployed in the area, found three unexploded bombs at the spot. Police experts defused the bombs "We heard a big bang when we

were enjoying a friendly debate on the occasion of Valentine's Day," said Zakir Hossain, a witness

said they rushed towards the central library when the first bomb exploded there. Then came another three blasts at the TSC.

some 50 yards away from the spot during the blasts.

Police failed to arrest any-one in

Street show-off ends rally, a procession of BNP men from

attack and to press the demand for resignation of the government. Educational institutions, shopping

AL lawmaker Shah AMS Kibria and

four others in the January 27 grenade

presence of staff. Rickshaws plied but most private

vehicles remained off the road. Train and air services were however normal

Golap Shah Mazar in Gulistan.

leaning allies -- 11-party alliance, Jatiya Samjtantril Dal (JSD) and National Awami Party (NAP)-- were success

microphones not to gather on the city streets and searched passers-by and rickshaw passengers. Hartal supporters staged demon-

strations in front the AL's central office on Bangabandhu Avenue and at Russell Square, Paltan intersection and in old part of the city.

As on the previous hartal days police barricaded the roads around the AL office throughout the day putting up barbed wire fences to prevent party activists and hartal supporters from gathering there.

Anti-hartal activists backed by the BNP brought out processions at Mirpur Road, Panthapath, Gabtoli and Bangla Bazar in Old Dhaka.

A group of youths brought out a procession boarding several chanted slogans for Jubo Dal, youth

people were injured in a series of clashes between supporters and AL lawmakers brought out a opponents of the hartal in Borolekha paraded Mirpur road before joining a

activists. rally at Russell Square. A large number of security personnel including plainclothes police kept vigil on

Police fired blank shots to bring

the situation under control Security was stepped up to avoid

Enact new

FROM PAGE 1 this they should be punished, the

notice said. Babu demanded enactment of a

new law to try 'these traitors for the sake of establishing rule of law in the country'

Terming the demand 'timely and practical', Law Minister Moudud Ahmed urged all to refrain from making speeches which tarnish the country's image.

He, however, said, "Making such comments is punishable under the existing laws and for this it is not necessary to enact new law.

Feb 23 UNB, Dhaka

BNP rallies

against AL

'conspiracy'

The ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) will hold protest rallies at ward and union levels across the country on Feb 23 against Awami League's "conspiracy to destabilise the situation"

"It's part of a series of programmes to protest hartal, errorism, anarchy and vandalism being carried out by the main opposition party to create an unstable situation," the ruling party said, announcing the programme yester-

BNP Secretary General and LRGD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuivan in a statement yesterday asked the locallevel party leaders and workers to make the programme a success.

"Face the opposition party's destructive and anarchic acts peacefully and politically," he said.

Meanwhile, the BNP held protest rallies in the capital and elsewhere in the country yesterday, at the same time when the AL and its allies embarked on a 36-hour countrywide hartal as part of a series of protests. against the killing of former finance minister SAMS Kibria in Habiganj

Court extends Tai Mahal's nighttime viewing

AP, New Delhi

The Taj Mahal will be open for moonlight viewing for another year under a ruling yesterday by India's Supreme Court, which extended its order lifting a 21-year ban on nighttime visits to the 17th century monu-

The court made the decision to extend nighttime viewing until February 2006 after reviewing security reports for the Taj dating to October, when it suspended the ban, Press Trust of India news agency said

Moonlight viewing of the Taj was forbidden in 1984 due to fears it would be attacked by Sikh militants, who were then fighting the government for the independence of northern Punjab state. The Indian government crushed the insurgency in the early 1990s.

Since the court's October ruling, thousands of tourists have thronged the Taj without incident. Visitors are allowed on five nights each month. around the time of the full moon. though numbers are restricted to about 400 each night to prevent overcrowding.

Visitors must pass through metal detectors and undergo body searches, and can only view the Tai from a platform set up about 300 yards away.

Mogul Emperor Shah Jahan commissioned the Taj Mahal in memory of his wife. Mumtaz Mahal. who died from complications arising from the birth of their 14th child. The monument took more than 20,000 laborers and 22 years to complete, from 1632 to 1654.

Govt

FROM PAGE 1 firmly that the government would no

longer tolerate any anarchy in the name of hartal. "If calling a hartal is a democratic right, ignoring it is also people's democratic right.'

Urging the opposition parties to shun 'destructive politics' for the sake of economy and development, the state minister requested them to return to parliament and criticise any mistake of the government.

'Why innocent people and police are being killed in the name of hartal?" he asked the opposition leader. "Is it called democracy? What type of democracy does the opposition leader want?" he posed a

Dhaka softens

The Ministry of Commerce agreed to begin negotiations with the US on the issue during an inter-ministerial meeting in January 2003.

Since then, the two sides have neld several rounds of talks and also worked to prepare a draft of the agreement. Bangladesh has several times proposed additions to the draft and changes to some of its clauses and articles. The draft likely finalised during yesterday's meeting has 19 clauses and seven articles.

Ministry sources said Bandladesh would press the US government to consider a free trade agreement after signing the TIFA.

cover removal of non-tariff barriers, implementation of intellectual property rights, promotion of trade and private investment, improvement of worker's rights, and pursuing WTO talks on the basis of the Doha Development Agenda.

Bangladesh enjoys a favourable position in trade with the US. The US exported \$281 million worth of products to Bangladesh in 2003-2004, while it imported \$2.3 billion, making America's trade deficit around \$2 billion. The US is Bangladesh's largest investor, with total investment, mainly concentrated in the energy and power sector, topping \$1.4 billion.

BB starts probe

mentioned referring to its preliminary findings.

As it is mandatory to mention a bank account number and the branch while opening a BO account, there are possibilities that massive irregularities might have taken place in opening a huge number of bank accounts with the Premier Bank, which is an act of money laundering.

According to sources, the BB has a guideline -- 'know your customer' -- that clearly says what to do in opening the bank accounts. Non-compliance of the quideline is considered as violation of the Anti-money Laundering The BB inquiry team is focus-

ing on irregularity, if any, in opening a huge number of bank accounts, they said. The team will submit its prelim-

inary report within a couple of days. "The central bank would take action against Premier Bank if there is any irregularity in opening these bank accounts," said a source. The central bank will form more

teams to probe the first such scam

in the country. They will visit all the branches of the private bank in However, a branch manager of the Premier Bank said the chairman of the board of directors put

pressure on the managers of different branches to open a huge number of accounts. The managing director was also involved in it.

The branch managers can explain if they are asked," he added.

The SEC on Saturday suspended a Tk 55 crore public floating of Premier Bank after around 25,000 'fake' BO accounts were found in a preliminary investigation by the capital market watch-

750mw load

FROM PAGE 12 means by mid-week, the gas shortage and pressure drop will be more

In addition to PDB coordinated power generation, industrial belts around Dhaka use their own gasfired power generation to avoid load shedding. They consume a huge amount of gas to generate no less than 1000 mw power, PDB sources

The gas supply is expected to go up next March due to an influx of 70 mmcfd of new gas from Unocal's Moulavibazar gas field. However Petrobangla sources said the gas crisis will linger throughout the year due to a lack of appropriate pipelines to transmit the additional gas.

GMG to fly month, which may pave the way for

as designated carrier of Bangladesh replacing Biman, which prefers not to operate flights to the island

GMG is also waiting for the outcome of consultative committee meeting likely to be held early next month between Bangladesh and Nepal on revision of air services agreement. The airline will fly to the capital of the Himalavan kingdom as soon as the regulatory process is complete. Starting domestic operations in

1998, GMG launched flights on

Chittagong-Kolkata route on

September 8 and Dhaka-Kolkata route on December 31 last year becoming the country's first private carrier to have overseas connec-The airline is also trying to fly to more overseas destinations as its international flights have started wooing passengers. "We have

overcome the initial hurdles of "We are also waiting for consultative committee meeting between

launching international operations. Now it is time for expansion," Managing Director of the airline Shahab Sattar told The Daily Star

civil aviation regulators of

Bangladesh and India, likely next

flights to more Indian cities," he said. If the meeting is held next month and GMG receives the nod, it will

operate daily flights from Dhaka to Kolkata beyond the March 31 tourism promotion offer. If not, the airline will seek extension of the offer until the meeting is held. GMG will then expand operations to New Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai. Civil Aviation Authority of

Bangladesh's consultative committee meetings with regional counterparts got delayed. Under the existing air services

agreement between Bangladesh and India, airlines of the two countries can operate up to 30 flights a week. As India is signing open sky deals with neighbouring countries, Bangladesh may become a beneficiary of the liberal policy if the government wants to reciprocate on the Against this backdrop, GMG

Airlines plans to add a 120-seater jet aircraft to its two-aircraft fleet of Dash series planes. "When we will be able to start flights to Colombo. Kathmandu and New Delhi, procurement of a jet aircraft will be economically viable. A jet aircraft must fly 200 hours a month to become viable." Sattar said.

2 robbers killed

FROM PAGE 1

belonging to Alauddin Bahini on Sunday noon, officials said.

When the team reached the them from different sides.

As coastquards and forest guards returned fire, Shahabuddin, 55, and Ayub Ali, 35, died on the

coastquards and six forest quards were also injured during the three hour-long armed clashes. Besides, four coastguards were

abducted and three rifles of the Coast Guard were snatched away by the armed dacoits.

After the news reached the police supers of Bhola and Laxmipur, additional police force from Ramgati Police Station under Laxmipur district and nearby Char Gaiaria police camp of Tazumuddin Police Station under Bhola district rushed to the spot to rescue the

coastguards and foresters.

large number of their local associates attacked Char Gajaria police

abducted four and other hostages. They took two dead bodies, seven bullet-hit people and Lt

Nazmul with injuries on the head to Ramgati Police Station Guard were also recovered.

ted to a local hospital under police

filed a case with Ramgati Police Station yesterday. Meanwhile, local people brought

out processions at Teliar Char protesting the 'excesses' of law enforcers and demanding punishment of them

ing along the border areas of the two districts, sources said.

Donors meet

put stress on governance and human rights issues and the pressure should be a concerted one on the government to improve these indicators. The meeting will reach a common understanding and means to impact on the government's actions.

tant as this year the Bangladesh Development Forum (BDF) meeting will not be held since the government feels that such annual exercises are not fruitful as very little can be done from one year to another. But sources in the government said the government did not want this year's BDF meet to avoid a host of embarrassing questions on governance and human rights. Head of Delegation of the

Bangladesh Ambassador Esko Kentrschynskyj on Sunday expressed his concern at the deaths in 'crossfire' which he termed 'extrajudicial killings'. Most western missions are also critical of the socalled 'crossfire' as they find this going against human rights.

Cop station FROM PAGE 12 the last couple of months. For the last two weeks, several

on the police station.

fishermen. The local administration and the ruling party leaders assured them of necessary protection and

the donors coming down heavily on

SHERPUR COP KLLING Chargesheet pressed against 37

UNB, Sherpur

Police yesterday charged 37 people, including some local leaders of the Awami League (AL) and its front organisations, with the murder of a police constable during February 6 hartal in Nalitabari upazila.

Among those chargesheeted are President of the AL Nalitabari unit and Municipality Chairman Abdul Halim Ukil, General Secretary Moklesur Rahman Lebu, Joint Secretary Golam Faruk, Organing Secretary Asaduzzaman, Jubo League Secretary Ohidur Rahman, Nalitabari BCL President Jahangir Alam and Secretary Takijul Islam Tara. Police arrested ten people

Ohidur Rahman, and sent him to jail while 27 others had gone into hid-Sub Inspector of Nalitabari Police Station Md Rezaul Haq submitted the chargesheet, making

including Jubo League Secretary

18 people witnesses. Police constable Ashraf Siddique was beaten to death and three others were injured in an attack by pickets during the hartal at Jogania

Govt plans to reclaim lands from Bay offshore

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government plans a long-term project to reclaim a vast stretch of land from the Bay of Bengal offshore in the Bangladeshi territory. Under a project entitled Estuary

Development Project (EDP) a number of cross dams would be built along the coastal areas between Cox's Bazar and Patuakhali to retrieve the land. The government and the Netherlands embassy in Dhaka are

in the process of reaching an agree-

ment to implement the project,

Water Resources Minister Hafiz Uddin Khan told parliament yesterday while replying to a question of a ruling party lawmaker. The recently concluded Meghna Estuary Study Project (MESP) has identified 19 places in between different islands off the southwest

coast, for building the dams. EDP's technical assistance project pro-forma (TAPP) prepared in line with the MESP has already been approved, said the minister.

He informed parliament that the government now plans to prepare and implement designs of the dams. He also said the EDP would be implemented on the basis of the information gathered by MESP.

The water resources ministry has also designed a Project Concept (PC-2) for assessing the feasibility of reclaiming land from the offshore through engineering and biological interventions. The PC-2 awaits the go-ahead from the planning commission.

1.37 lakh posts remain vacant. minister tells JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 1,37,334 posts are lying vacant under different ministries, post and telecommunications . minister Aminul Huq told parliament

Hug said appointments to the vacant posts are underway according to government service rules The government already appointed 1,288 and 2,241 cadre

officials through Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) examinations 21st and 22nd. The Public Service Commission (PSC) published the results of 5,217 candidates of the 24th BCS exami-

He also said filling up of 2,655 vacant posts through 25th and 26th BCS examinations is in process.

The government has so far created 13,606 permanent posts under revenue budget in different ministries, he added

Asma worried

band.

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) team should take charge of the investigation as soon as possible before the bits of evidence are destroyed. She accused the government of trying to delay the arrival of the FBI. Asma Kibria urged all to partici-

pate in the mass signature campaign slated to continue till February 28. Besides, she called on everyone to extend support to the 'silent vigil programme' in front of Kibria's Dhanmondi residence on February The statement also said that

the masterminds behind the Habiganj blasts, which killed the former finance minister and four others, would be announced soon.

Nepal party men

FROM PAGE 12 Kathmandu for consultations,"

spokesman Herve Ladsous told

Earlier the Nepali king named two former royalist prime ministers as deputies of his ruling council, state radio said yesterday, in a move seen as further tightening his grip on power in the troubled Himalayan kinadom Radio Nepal said Tulsi Giri and

Kirti Nidhi Bista, who were both prime ministers in the 1960s and 1970s, during absolute monarchy, were named deputy chairmen of a council of ministers -- already packed with royalists -- headed by King Gyanendra.

A blockade called by the Maoists guerrillas reduced traffic in and out of the capital to a trickle, officials said.
The rebels declared the block-

ade in protest at King Gyanendra's power grab on February 1 when he sacked the government, appointed a pro-royalist cabinet headed by himself and declared a state of emergency. The Maoists say the blockade,

which so far is being enforced by threats of violence rather than a physical show of force, will continue until Gvanendra reverses his actions that have been condemned at home and abroad. As the blockade which began at

the weekend continued, the government urged the Maoists to join mainstream politics and abandon their armed struggle to topple the monarchy which has left more than 11,000 dead since February 1996. In another development seven Nepali political parties appealed to

the world, especially India, to stop

military help to King Gyanendra,

who said he seized power to crush a

deadly nine-year Maoist uprising. "King Gyanendra has murdered democracy along with the constitution," they said in a joint statement at

a news conference.

"We will not allow the king to rule as an absolute monarch," they said. They added that "the absolutist ambitions of the king has rapidly eroded whatsoever justification there was for constitutional monarchy too." But the parties stopped short of calling for the overthrow of the monarchy, saying they were considering what sort of future democratic set-up they wanted.

The king is considered the incarnation of the Hindu god Vishnu in

poverty-stricken kingdom's woes said they had decided to bury their differences in the nation's interests. The parties include the Nepali Congress, Nepali Congress-Democratic and the Nepali

Communist Party-United Marxist

They said mainstream parties had held talks with the Maoists but had not decided whether to accept Maoist leader Prachanda's call to ioin forces to oppose the king's

under house arrest two weeks ago. "We want to show all the political

parties are united. We won't tolerate the autocratic regime of the king in

Congress Party. The representatives said they could not protest in Nepal under emergency rule but would use New Delhi as a base to lobby India

to oppose the king's actions. Leaders have been arrested and persecuted ... The military rule is getting more brutal by the hour,

backer of Nepal in its drive to crush the insurgency. New Delhi has supplied the ill-equipped Nepalese army with helicopters, guns and

suspension to military support to wrong signals" to the Maoists.

Maoist violence in Nepal could spill into Indian states where radical leftist groups are powerful.

Shankar Mukherjee, has been recalled for consultations and was due to brief Foreign Minister Natwar Singh later Monday

2 hurt as JCD

FROM PAGE 1

hour-long clash Police later took control of the hostel and arrested two workers of ICS, student front of the ruling

to attend holy Quran lessons at room no 118. "When he refused to attend the

session, they hit him on the head with an iron rod. And in such a way they teach Quran," Sweet quipped. ICS leaders claimed that the JCD

General students said that ICS leaders often put pressure on them

to attend ICS meetings and Quran

2 'muggers'

FROM PAGE 12 followed the gang for half an hour

Locals chased the four, caught three and beat them up mercilessly said duty officer of Keraniganj Police Station.

Police rushed injured two others to Dhaka Medical College and

Hospital where doctors declared one, aged around 25, dead and admitted the other named Mukhlesur Rahman, 35. Claiming himself to be innocent

that he went there to chase the

Car bomb kills

politically influential. He recently

destabilize (Lebanon)." Svrian Information Minister Mahdi Dakhl-Allah told Reuters by telephone. He later told Al Jazeera television: "This comes at a time of great international pressure on Lebanon

these pressures. dous criminal act." Lebanese President Emile Lahoud called an emergency cabinet meeting.

Rescue workers clawed at piles

of debris across the street from the

notel. Witnesses said at least five people had been buried there by the The blast could be heard even

Scores of firefighters doused the burning vehicles and bloodied survivors were taken away by ambulance. Hariri's body, with wounds and burns to the face, was taken to the American University Hospital where

sympathizers gathered and wept. Prime Minister Omar Karami visited the bomb scene, surrounded by security men. Columns of dark acrid smoke rose across a clear blue sky and sea.

gious and political factions all but Neighboring Syria became the ever more dominant player during the conflict, and its forces took much of the credit for bringing the war to a

calling for their withdrawal. In October a remote-controlled

Mohammad Jihad Ahmed Jibril, a Palestinian military leader, was killed by a bomb that ripped through his car in Beirut in May 2002. Earlier

that year, a bomb killed Elie Hobeika, a key figure in a massacre of Palestinian refugees in 1982. Hariri, 60, had held office for most of the past 12 years before quitting in October 2004 amid a

\$3.8 billion in 2003. Businessmen praised him for cutting through a paralyzed bureaucracy and rebuilding war-shattered Beirut. But hopes that economic renaissance would flower with a

obvious suspect.

"This is the work of an intelli-

gence service, not a small group,'

said Rime Allaf, Middle East analyst at London's Royal Institute of International Affairs. "Whoever did it aimed at creating chaos in Lebanon and pointing the finger at Syria. I can't believe any

must be very worried.' Amr Moussa, head of the Arab

have no idea who did this. He lived in a dangerous country and they (the Lebanese government) should have taken control over that country Instead of this they surrendered to all kinds of terrorists.

BBC ONLINE

Several people suffered minor

the Gimi, was on the scene after receiving the distress call. A high wave smashing through

The distress call from the ship

The injured -- Ruby, 20, Dipa, 22, Jahirul Islam Jewel. 24. Rimu. 20. Tuhin. 22. Mahum. 23. Shaheen.

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and

"Three more blasts followed the first creating a heavy chaos and stam-Officials of Rab, deployed on the campus for security of the book fair,

The Rab team were on duty

killing of former finance minister and

centres and most private offices

Pickets blasted a number of handbombs at Chankharpool crossing and Fulbaria bus stoppage and near BNP leaders had earlier called to defy the hartal while AL and its left-

determined to make the shutdown a Police asked pedestrians over

microbuses and riding motorcycles near the Saarc fountain. The youths front of the BNP, and against hartal. procession from the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban area at around 11:40 am and

the procession. Police chased and dispersed women activists of the opposition when they gathered to bring out processions at Panthapath and Kalabagan in the morning. On Bangabandhu Avenue, some

AL leaders and members of Awami

Sangstritik Forum staged an unusual

demonstration, singing patriotic

songs. AL lawmaker Asaduzzaman Noor was among the participants. Earlier, police foiled an attempt to bring out a procession, led by Noor, in Muktangon area **OTHER PLACES**

Our staff correspondent in Sylhei reports: A procession led by Mayor and city AL chief Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran marched to Surma Market point and started holding a rally there

shortly after noon. As the mayor was addressing the

less about the bomb attack. Witnesses said the huge crowd enjoying the debate organised by Dhaka University Debating Society (DUDS) was dispersed with the blasts while the visitors at the Ekushey Book Fair became pan-

Abdur Rahim, general secretary

DUDS, said one of the bombs

went off at the corner of the debate

Assistant Commissioner (Patrol-

South) of DMP Mushfigur Rahman

told reporters that they were clue-

stage and two in the audience. But none was hurt seriously because the bombs did not contain splinters. Doctors at the DMCH did not find any splinter in the bodies of the injured while the police said the

bombs were made with phosphate

the DU campus. The police, Rab

and other intelligence agencies

Security has been beefed up on

were patrolling the area since the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), student wing of the ruling BNP, brought out a procession on the campus immediately after the explosions, blaming the opposition

parties for the incident.

Court Point proceeded towards the rally venue and some participants threw brickbats on the rally and chased the AL men. The AL men ran

into Surma Market and retaliated

throwing brickbats. Police present there remained inactive. Citv BNP held a rallv at Court Poin in the afternoon protesting the hartal. Our Tangail correspondent adds: At least 15 people including a journal ist and two constables were injured in

Two local leaders of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, one AL leader and a Chhatra League leader were among the injured.

Police baton-charged AL activists

Sariakandi upazila Al

Our correspondent of Bogra reports: About 30 BNP activists

office with sticks, damaged furniture

and set fire to papers. They also set

a clash between police and BNF

activists and AL workers at Mirzapur

in the district.

attacked

and picked two of them.

fire to the portraits of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina. Upazila AL leaders alleged that police remained silent spectators to the incident.

Our staff correspondent in

Loading and unloading of cargo at

Chittagong adds: Pro- hartal and

anti-hartal activists brought out

processions in the port city.

the port was normal. Our correspondent in Barisal reports: Anti-hartal activists chased and dispersed a pro-hartal procession in Alekanda Nuria School area The activists also moved around in the city on motorcycles.

Our correspondent in

Moulvibazar reports: At least 10

Both AL and BNP offices at Borolekha were attacked by the rival

According to the draft, TIFA will

remote Chairman Bazar in Teliar Char along the border of Bhola and Laxmipur districts, Abdur Rahman and his men suddenly attacked

spot. At least 50 people from both sides including Lt Abdus Shaid, Lt Nazmul and seven other

were able to bring the situation under control and rescued the

Sattar, Gafur and Zakir were admit-

Lt Abdus Shahid of Coast Guard

A very tense situation is prevail-

Many view the meeting as impor-

European Commission in In the last BDF meeting, governance became a critical issue with

the government for not taking a number of steps including setting up of an independent anticorruption commission and the separation of the judiciary. Although the government has set up the anticorruption

They brought out a procession at about 11:00 yesterday and marched UNO Nishchinta Kumar Poddar and upazila BNP leaders rushed to the spot and calmed the agitated

The deputy commissioner (DC) and the superintendent of police (SP) visited the spot in the after-

But meantime, the dacoits and a After an hour the law enforcers

Three looted rifles of the Coast Bullet-hit Md Faruk, Jasim,

watchdog, it is in a virtual dysfunctional state and the separation of the judiciary is still to be done.

thousand fishermen and boatmen have been waiting on the banks of the Meghna, failing to sail for fishing, as their appeal for safety reportedly went unheeded.

meeting their demands.

vesterday Replying to a guestion on behalf of the establishment ministry, Aminul

nations this month, the minister mentioned.

FROM PAGE 1 reveal the names of the masterminds behind the killing of my hus-The statement said the US

16,17,18 from 4pm to 6pm. fresh programmes to demand trial of

Representatives of the seven mainstream Nepal parties whose past feuding has aggravated the

The leading members sought refuge in neighbouring India after the king sacked the government imposed emergency rule and put many leaders including former

prime minister Girija Prasad Kojrala

run-up to the general election.

meters away.

Beirut was regularly rocked by

close

car bomb wounded opposition parliamentarian Marwan Hamadeh soon after he resigned as economy

the 21st century," said Shikhar Koirala, senior leader of the Nepali

Britain, China and the United States

they said. India, along with the United States and Britain, has been a key

other equipment. India has called the king's actions a setback to democracy. But government source said New Delhi may not publicly announce

Kathmandu as that "might send the New Delhi is concerned that

India's envoy to Nepal, Shiv

coalition partner Jamaat-e-Islami. Rajshahi city JCD President Abul Kalam Azad Sweet alleged that ICS workers had forced one JCD activist

workers launched the attack first while they (ICS activists) were in a

and shouted 'muggers' as the gang

reached a place called Atibazar.

One of the muggers died on the

Mukhlesur, however, told reporters

muggers and became a victim

joined calls by the opposition for Syrian troops to quit Lebanon in the "Syria regards this as an act of terrorism, a crime that seeks to

and Syria which aims to realize Israel's desires in the region, and this act cannot be separated from Syrian President Bashar al-Assad called the blast a "horren-

outside the city limits and shattered windows in buildings hundreds of

car bombs throughout the civil war, when fighting among ethnic, relitore Lebanon apart.

But Lebanese voices calling for Damascus to pull out its 14.000 troops have grown louder, backed by a UN Security Council resolution

minister in protest at the extension of Syrian-backed President Lahoud's term.

bitter rift with Lahoud. The Sunni Muslim Hariri spent some 20 years in Saudi Arabia, where construction deals made him a fortune that Forbes estimated at

Middle East peace process wilted with it instead. There was no claim of responsibility for the assassination and no

one in Syria could be naive enough to think that this would help them." She added: "The Israelis have been thought responsible for a number of assassinations in Lebanon, but why would they want to stir things up now? The Syrians

League, said: "I don't think there will

be any gain from his death... I

believe the moment is not a moment of pointing fingers." Vice Premier Shimon Peres of Israel, which occupied southern Lebanon for two decades, said: "I