PRSP draft finalised

Peacekeepers laid

peacekeepers and consoled them.

After the bodies were flown to their villages, top army officials of the nearby cantonments received

Namaj-e-janaza for the deceased were also held in their areas where relatives of the soldiers, officials of local administration and people of the area attended to pray for the eternal peace of the martyrs and paid rich tributes.

Army task force buried their slain fellows in their family graveyards with military honour presenting gun salutes when bugles played the last

The nation observed national mourning day yesterday to pay respect to the martyrs.

The national flag was kept halfmast in all government, semigovernment and autonomous establishments as well as private buildings and Bangladesh missions abroad.

The government has announced offering special prayers for the slain heroes in mosques across the country on March 4.

Our Bogra correspondent adds: Captain Ashraf Khan Tuhin and private Zahirul Islam were buried with military honour in their villages.

General Officer Commanding (GOC) of Bogra cantonment Major General Monjurul Alam received the body of Ashraf Khan when it was flown to the deceased's village home at Birkedar in Kahalu upazila at around 11:00am.

Family members, high civil and military officials and hundreds of local people attended his namaj-ejanaja held at Birkedar Government Primary School ground.

After his burial in the family gravevard, GOC Moniurul Alam. Bogra deputy Commissioner Rafiqul Mohamed and local Awami League placed wreaths on his

The body of private Zahirul Islam was buried with military honour in his family graveyard at Masimpur village in Shibgani upazila.

Family members, high military officials and hundreds of villagers were present in the namaj-e-janaja

Our Gaibandha correspondent reports: Thousands of people thronged the village Neem Daser Vita in Palashbari upazila to pay their last respect to corporal Ataur Rahman Sarker.

Brigadier General Anwar Ibne Noor of 26 Infantry Division in Bogra Commandant received the body after it was flown there in an army helicopter at 12:30pm.

Near and dead ones, relatives and officials of local administration attended the burial ceremony

marked by 11 gun salutes. Our Barisal correspondent reports: The body of sergeant Sirajul Islam was taken to his village home in Mehendiganj upazila at 11:00am in a helicopter and Commander of Jessore Cantonment Lieutenant General A Mubin received the body.

After his namai-e-ianaza on Chandpur High School premises he was buried at the family graveyard. Relatives, officials of local administration and thousands of people attended the janaza.

Earlier, army personnel accorded a guard of honour and presented three gun salutes.

UNB adds: GOC of Comilla Cantonment Brigadier General Manjurul Kader received the body of private M Bellal Hossain when it was flown to his Ostadron village in Senbag upazila at 10:40am.

Family members, officials of district administration and high army officials and thousands of local people paid their tributes to Bellal.

Later, the body was taken to his family graveyard where an army taskforce buried him with military honour presenting 42 gun-salutes when bugle played the last post.

Brigadier General Manjurul Kader, members of district administration and political parties placed wreaths in a show of respect.

Moudud

FROM PAGE 12 have been reflected in the report.

'The full report is not in my hand. hope they have included the government efforts in upholding human

rights of our people," Moudud said. Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan said the human rights situation should be seen from perspectives of respective countries. "I don't agree with the report," Khan told electronic

edia yesterday evening. The report on Bangladesh chap ter observed that "poor human rights record worsened in Bangladesh and the government continued to commit merous abuses."

Opposition

AL has had a string of meetings with its front organisations in the run-up to the Paltan rally. AL activists from Dhaka and adjoining districts are expected to join the rally.

AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil a statement yesterday urged people to join today's programme.

Meanwhile, the government has taken tight security measures to avert untoward incidents. A large number of police would be deployed

Govt pressure holds

implemented.'

in different parts of the city.

Nations Development Programme (UNDP) jointly organised the seminar on 'Promotion of better understanding and collaboration amongst the parliamentary committees and ministries of the government.'

Some 20 parliamentary committee chairmen, all from the ruling BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami, snoke a the seminar. They strongly criticised the ministers for their indifference to the parliamentary bodies.

They said the committees are not functioning properly as most of the ministers, secretaries and other high officials are reluctant to join parliamentary committee meetings and to provide the committees with necessary documents.

The committee chiefs demanded amendment to the Rules of Procedure to ensure that ministries are obliged to implement committees' recommendations and be accountable to the committees for not carrying out the recommenda-

Syed Manzur Hossain, chairman of the standing committee on communications ministry, said his committee came under pressure from the government high-ups when it began to probe irregularities and corruption of the ministry.

"Even a number of senior ministers have met the prime minister and demanded changes in the provision of forming the standing committees," he said. "The ministers are in favour of heading the committees

instead of the non-ministers." The previous Awami League government amended the Rules of Procedure for a non-ministers to head the standing committee

instead of a minister.

Salahuddin Ahmed, chairman of the standing committee on liberation war affairs ministry, said his committee also made suggestions to the ministry to stop corruption involving crores of take in the ministry, but not a single suggestion was implemented.

Shahjahan Chowdhury, chief of the parliamentary body on housing and public works ministry, said the sub-committees of different bodies cannot to submit their reports timely due to non-cooperation of ministry officials. "Ministry officials do not provide necessary information to the committees as required," he alleged.

Mosharraf Hossain, chairman of the standing committee on Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) affairs ministry, said the ministry does not co-operate the committee when it asks for any information or any

document. About the non-implementation of the committee recommendations, Let Gen (retd) Mahbubur Rahman chairman of the standing committee on defence ministry, said, "Not a single recommendation of any committee has been implemented

"Even though the committees

take decisions and make recom-

mendations in presence of minis-

ters, the recommendations are not

Mahbub termed the parliamentary committees 'good-for-nothing' and said. "We do not feel that the committees are above the ministries

Turning to the ongoing quorum crisis in the parliament session, the BNP lawmaker said: "It is reality that our parliament is not functioning

"The standing committees also suffer from the same problem. The opposition member of my committee has joined only one meeting so far," he pointed out.

Jamaat lawmaker Delwar Hossain Sayedee, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee of religious affairs ministry, said his committee had identified irregularities in the Hajj missions during the last couple of years. "We made recommendations to check the corruption and mismanagement. but the ministry did not take any action," he alleged.

Jamaat lawmaker and Chairman of the Government Assurance Committee Abdus Sobhan said he was compelled to adjourn a number of committee meetings as no official from the ministries concerned were present.

"It seems that they are not obliged to attend the standing committee meetings," he said seeking a fresh guideline specifying the relations between the ministries and the parliamentary standing

Chairman of Public Undertaking Committee Abdul Aleem said they send letters to the ministers at least 15 days before any meeting. But the ministers decline to attend showing various reasons including 'state

"Isn't joining a standing committee meeting his or her duty?" he asked. "If there is no effectiveness of the standing committees, then why should we waste public money by arranging meetings?'

Chairman of the Standing Committee on the Ministry of Textiles and Jute, MA Matin suggested amendment to the constitution by making it mandatory that ministries are bound to carry out the committees' recommendations within 90 days.

"If the ministry fails, the secretary has to explain reasons for not implementing the recommendations in 90 days," he added.

The seminar was also addressed committee chiefs including Harun-al-Rashid, Shahidul Islam, Nurul Islam Moni, Mosharraf Hossain Mongu, Abdul Mannan Talukder, Akbar Ali, MA Matin, Nazir Hossain and Mozaher Hossain.

| Hasina barred

However, about a hundred civilians including Awami League (AL) leader Tofail Ahmed and Krishak Sramik Janata League chief Kader Siddiqi MP joined the namaj-e-janaza of the peacekeepers at the stadium.

On Monday, the AL had sent a letter to the Army Headquarters requesting for arrangements to facilitate the opposition leader to pay her respect to the UN peacekeepers killed in a militia ambush in Congo on

As the Army Headquarters did not respond, AL leader Col (retd) Faruk Khan contacted Major General Reza Noor, principal staff officer of the Armed Forces Division, late Monday to have the army authorities' reply.

"He (Reza Noor) told me that Tuesday's programme at the Army Stadium is nothing but a military ceremony and the leader of the opposition's joining the ceremony is not possible." Faruk Khan told The Daily Star yesterday.

"I asked whether the countrymen have no right to pay tribute to the national heroes who sacrificed their lives for world peace, Reza Noor replied that the armed forces acted as per government instructions," said the AL leader.

Faruk Khan, a retired army officer turned politician, however joined the namai-e-ianaza at Army Stadium and placed wreaths on the coffins of the peacekeepers on behalf of the opposition leader Saber Hossain Chowdhury,

political secretary to the AL chief, said the main opposition totally agreed with the government decision to observe Tuesday as national mourning day, but barring people from oining the ceremony has damaged the spirit of the day.
"The leader of the opposition was

keen to visit the bodies and show respect to the peacekeepers, but she was not allowed by the government, Saber told The Daily Star.

He accused the government of instructing the Army Headquarters to bar Hasina from attending the Army Stadium ceremony.

Public Relations (ISPR) could not be contacted for their comments on the

AL hails

FROM PAGE 12

The situation is simply unacceptable and the fact that the government itself is complicit in such violation is cause for great concern. The report once again testifies to the fact that there is no rule of law in the country and all indicators point to a negation of democracy," Chowdhury said.

He described the governmen response to the report as predictable. He said it only vindicated what they had been saying about the state of affairs in the country.

The 2004 report released by the US State Department portrayed a grim picture of Bangladesh saying the country's "poor human rights record worsened, and the government continued to commit numerous abuses.'

Rights defenders

groups linked to armed criminal gangs, or linked to political parties of the ruling coalition or the opposition or mercenary gangs not affiliated to

These violations include arrest and torture and harassment through filing case after case on the ground of unsubstantiated criminal accusations," it said. "Dr Qazi Faruk Ahmed of Proshika, one of the leading NGOs in Bangladesh, was implicated in 18 criminal casés."

Successive governments have routinely ignored HR abuses by their own supporters or people in alliance with them. At the same time a poorly trained and apparently corrupt police force and a severely overloaded judicial system deprives victims of HR violations, or those defending them of access to justice,

the Al report said. The Amnesty International urges the government to bring to an end a cycle of cumulative disregard for human rights in general and for abuses against human rights

Al calls upon the government to make a commitment to protect HR defenders by establishing an independent commission of inquiry and prompting investigations. It also urges to set up an HR Commission and the office of Ombudsman, implementation of the Supreme Court directive to separate the judiciary.

Rab nabs Ctg

FROM PAGE 12

the underworld here Sources said although officially accused in only six cases with different police stations, 'Gittu' was involved in most of the gruesome and sensational killings in the port city during the last seven/eight years.

An Islami Chhatra Shibir cadre, Nasir was wanted in a case for killing eight people by brushfire on July 12, 2000 at Bahaddarhat, in which six Bangladesh Chhatra League activists, a microbus and an auto-rickshaw driver were killed. He is also an accused in the

killing of Awami League leader and Panchlaish Ward Commissioner Liaqat Ali Khan on June 2, 1999. 'Gittu' and three more Shibir cadres were awarded death sentence for the gruesome murder of Nazirhat College Principal Gopal Krishna Muhuri in Jamal Khan on

November 16, 2001. Among the other victims, 'Gittu' and his gang killed KEPZ Managing Director Golam Rabbani at Muradour on April 11. 2004 and Shibir cadre Chhota Saiful, his brother Alamgir and sister Monwara Begum at Baluchhara near Chittagong Cantonment on June 30.2004.

'Gittu' was also the alleged mastermind behind the looting of Tk 56 lakh of a textile industry at Kalurghat on April 1, 2004, sources

Suo moto halts case

respondents to reply in two weeks why the case will not be quashed. The nine respondents are the home secretary, inspector general of police, Chittagong deputy commissioner, Chittagong chief metropolitan magistrate, plaintiff Samir Uddin, officer-in-charge (OC) of Chittagong Kotwali Police Station, Subinspector (SI) Jahid of the police station, investigation officer (IO) of

the case and jailer of Chittagong Central Jail. The bench also directed four of them to appear in person in the court on March 8 to explain why punitive actions would not be taken against them. The four to appear are the Kotwali Police Station OC, SI Jahid the IO and complainant Samir Uddin.

The suo moto was issued after Barrister Rabia Bhuiyan, Barrister Abdullah Al Mamun and Sheikh Akhtarul Islam had brought the case filed against four minor children to the attention of the court.

Rabia also submitted a written petition for the children, demanding the case to be quashed and the respondents punished. Samir filed the case on February 6

against 11 members of the neighbouring family of Chittaranian Nath. 52. including a dead person and four children - seven month-old Bijoy Nath, 11-month-old Hridoy Nath, 18-month-old Dhananjay Nath alias Durjoy Nath and two-year-old The plaintiff accused Chittaranjan

and his family of ransacking and

looting his house following a dispute

over land on Gopal Singha Lane at Nandan Kanan in the port city. Kotwali police arrested Sagar and his mother Minoti and sent them to iail immediately after the case had heen filed with Kotwali Police Station. They were release on bail on

Parents produced the four children before the Court of Metropolitan Magistrate, Chittagong last Monday

SUSPENSION OF COPS

Our staff correspondent in Chittagong reports: The four police personnel suspended vesterday for negligence in duty in connection with the criminal case accusing a dead and four kids were IO SI Zahidul Islam, Record Officer SI Shahjahan GRO Abu Hanif Sheikh and Court S Abdul Matin.

The higher authorities of Chittagong Metropolitan Police took the decision on a directive of the ministry concerned, sources said. The incident of accusing children

in a criminal case triggered a wide

range of criticism and resentment in

the port city yesterday with demands raised for measures to stop repetition of such anomalies. A number of rights and legal aid organisations alleged the children act is being not properly followed in the judicial system, particularly during preparation and filing of first nformation reports (FIRs) and

charge sheets by police

The organisation leaders demanded

that registration of the ages of both

the plaintiffs and the accusees in the

FIRs be made obligatory. They also ďemanded stern actions against the persons responsible for framing the case whose bail petition was heard last Monday.

Leaders of Chittagong district unit Bangladesh Society for Enforcement of Human Rights (BSEHR), Save the Children, UK, and Community Development Centre (Codec) in a joint pressstatement last evening expressed deep concern at the incident of charging children, terming it a 'non-

Experts critical

the National Health Policy but it has virtually become a policy for pharma-

ceutical industries. The new policy appears to concentrate more on exploitation of drug export ootential then on the common man's

access to drugs, they said. Pointing to drug registration procedure, one expert said. "It is fairly easy to get drugs registered in Bangladesh

unlike in developed countries. A leading microbiologist said, "Bangladesh already has over 900 drugs of 15,000 brands registered, which are sufficient to meet almost all health needs of the country. Now only the new drugs with clear therapeutic superiority over the existing ones should be registered and those should also be affordable.

At least 20 to 30 new drugs on an

average get approval at every meeting of the Drug Control Committee that usually meets every three months, some experts pointed out. "Safety and efficacy of every new drug, imported or locally manufactured, should be properly studied before registering it. Genetic and

variations must be taken note of in

conducting the study," said a senior teacher at pharmacy department of Dhaka University. Strongly suggesting review of the current list of essential drugs that include 117 drugs, Dr Md Sayedur Rahman assistant professor of pharmacology at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, said, "Most commonly used drugs like Ranitidine, Diclofenac and Ciprofloxacine are not on the list of essential drugs, prices of which are

Experts blamed composition of the regulatory committee for a number of shortcomings of the drug policy. "The committee includes representatives of the owners of drug manufacturing giants, which is unthinkable in any developed countries," one expert said.

They mentioned that Food and Drug Administration of the USA and Medicine Control Authority of the UK does not allow participation of drug manufacturers in the regulatory process. Only in cases of appeal, they can send their representative to argue on their behalf. Some of the experts however sought anonymity.

Nazmul Hassan, secretary general Bangladesh Association of Pharmaceutical Industries (BAPI) said, the new policy is a modification of 1982 Ordinance, and it encourages boosting drug production by local pharmaceutical companies. On the list of the essential drugs

the World Health Organisation prepare their own lists based on WHO Dr Jafrullah Chowdhury, who was nvolved in formulating the 1982 Drug Ordinance, said the new drug policy has not addressed vital issues like

Nazmul said, " Member countries of

cost-effectiveness of drugs. Prices of most of the non-essentia drugs in Bangladesh are quite high, said Jafrullah, who is Coordinator of Gonoshsthya Kendra.

The consumers' representative on the team that formulated the drug policy had quit it as his views were ignored, Jafrullah mentioned.

JMJB's threat letter

It also threatened with death foreigners visiting Rajshahi as well as iournalists, and vowed to launch its actions against the law enforcement

The letter could not be verified immediately, but a senior police official said that the matter might have been the work of a vested quarter. "Yet we are taking the matter seriously and have beefed up the city's security."

"Dr Galib, an envoy of Islam, and our other members held across the country, including at Gaibandha, Chapainawabganj, and Bogra, should be released by March 24," the letter continued.

"If our demand is not met, we will launch a militant drive in Rajshahi and elsewhere in the country. The government and Rajshahi DIG Noor Muhammad will be responsible for all the damages resulting from our activities." it read.

"We will hit first at those who bring

us forth. Murtad Sardar Amjad

Hossain of Jatiya Party, Murtad Fazle

Hossain Badsha and three other

Murtad Awami League leaders

"If any government agencies such as the police, cheetah, kobra, BDR, or Rab - hinders our actions, attacks will be launched on them

"Our words are not derived from any extremism; we have made our decision in very cool blood. We are also announcing that those who are foreigners and enemies of Islam in Rajshahi will also be killed at the proper time and opportunity."

"We are not any extortionists group. We have taken these decisions all over the country.

Addressing journalists, the letter said, "We have been compelled to take these actions to protect Islam and to establish the rule of Islam in Bangladesh. We hope you will not dishearten us.'

"You have written many words against us; many more you will write n the future. If you do not publish our press release, the divine order may follow you as it did many journalists in Khulna.

The letter ended with a slogan, 'Jagrata Muslim Janata, Bangladesh

with the elections round the corner

"The newspapers will be running big

headlines if donors raise their con-

cerns on governance issues. Issues

like deaths in crossfire, political

killings or fundamentalism would

definitely come up at the BDF meet-

ing. Keeping these in mind, the

government is trying to subdue the

scopes for the donors to speak up at

Another source expressed his

doubts on whether the next BDF

meeting will be held at all: "The next

government in October 2006. So.

to observe the suitability of the situa-

need time for implementation. This is

why it's wise to hold the meeting

every two years instead of annually.

an appropriate platform."

place."

Govt takes over helm

leading donors of the world including the Asian Development Bank (ADB), European Union (EU), Germany, Japan, USA and UK. In the recent BDF meetings

Bangladesh has been facing sharp

questions about poor governance, corruption, deteriorating law and order and political issues. "Especially the Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands and some other European donors are very concerned about governance issues and raise their voices at BDF meetings," said a source. "The govern-

replying to their queries on these These countries could raise these points because the WB has been setting the agenda of the BDF meetings in consultation with the donors. But, now, as the government takes charge, it can dominate the agenda setting meets. "It does not mean that the donors

ment does not feel comfortable

will be completely silent. But there is no doubt the government will dominate in setting the tone of the meetings," said a donor representative.

The donor source further said,

ing a set of decisions taken for routes and for ensuring the safety of the passengers." the minister said. responding to journalists yesterday at a press conference.

the disaster and termed it an act of According to government estithe country since Akbar took charge present government came to power.

missing after the disasters Of the total dead toll, 645 people

the safety in the river routes.

FROM PAGE 12 Habiganj grenade attack

Meanwhile, Kibria's family will formally launch a peaceful programme titled 'Shantir Pokkhe Nileema' tomorrow (blue for peace) demanding trial of perpetrators of all the grenade and bomb attacks in the

Law Minister Moudud Ahmed a the talk show 'What Islam says and what we do?' on satellite TV channel ATN Bangla at 12:50pm on Monday said, 'Kibria might have survived if the helicopter could be sent immediately' Asma Kibria told journalists at a press briefing at her Dhanmondi residence vesterday.

Outlaw

underground party and possessing firearms hidden at Char Milpara on

BDF meeting should be held around Following his leads, police went hour-long gunfight.

accomplices, however, fled. However. Finance Minister M Police said liiat was an accused Saifur Rahman on Monday explained in eight cases, five for murder, filed his reasons for going for biennial BDF meets: In the last meeting, we with Sadar and Islamic University made innumerable promises that

Police filed a case against and Gama for firing on police.

Asked if parliament has become ineffective, he said they would not According to the draft, the salary of teachers at all levels will be based on say this since the House is performperformance to ensure that they ing its primary functions enacting 30 provide quality education. laws in the last four sessions. "But In addition, the government will there are some other jobs to do to

ntroduce a common core curriculum make it more effective and meaningful," he added. for madrasa and general education. TIB Trustee M Hafizuddin Khan The government will also introand executive director Iftekhar duce performance-based distribu-Zaman were also present at the tion of Monthly Payment Orders (MPOs) to enlisted private secondpress conference while research

ary schools with an aim to reduce

government will adopt a uniform

family code and enforce the legal age

for marriage. It will amend the citizen-ship act, 1951 and the Bangladesh

Citizenship Order, 1972 to allow

women the right to transmit their

citizenship to their children and

The government will also intro-

duce and enforce anti-sexual

harassment laws or codes of con-

duct, implement the existing laws

and introduce workplace safety to

protect women from hazardous

It will remove all restrictions on

vomen workers for international

nigration. It will also distribute khas

(public or state-owned) land among

the female members of families

specially the widows, separated and

The government will attempt to

supply gas through pipeline or in

cylinders to rural households, incor-

porate women in the managing

committee of Palli Bidyut Samities

(rural electrification committees),

and introduce quota for women in

The government will include

vomen members of parliament in all

its standing committees and encour-

age women leaders to participate

In governance, the government

vill raise the existing rate of land

transfer tax to union parishads (UPs)

from 1 percent to 5 percent. It will also provide extra-ADP budgetary

government will ban plying of 15-

vear old vehicles and phase-out two-

stroke auto-rickshaws. It will recover

To conserve the environment, the

supports to well performing UPs.

road construction work.

more in the political process.

deserted women.

spouses.

To protect women's rights, the

corruption in the education sector.

report. Talking to newsmen, Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar however rejected the TIB report saying, "It is a guess work and not based on facts.

On quorum crisis, Sircar said

unless any member draws his

attention to it, he can run parliament

officer Abdul Alim presented the

JS failed

despite such crisis. To substantiate his contention, he read out the constitutional provisions. MAIN OPPOSITION CRITICISED Criticising excessive boycotts and walkouts from parliament, the TIB report said opposition members often used the speaker's decisions

sessions. They suggested that one day in every 15 days should be set aside to debate issues raised by opposition

not to let them speak as excuses to

absent themselves from House

QUORUM CRISIS

almost every day.

On quorum crisis in parliament, TIB came up with suggestions to enact laws to resolve this, if necessary besides other steps. It said that of the Tk 22.11 crore

spent to run the four sessions of the House last vear, more than Tk 5 crore was wasted due to quorum crises alone. The four sessions witnessed severe quorum (presence of at least

60 lawmakers in the House) crisis

JS BODIES Quoting the Rules of Procedure of the JS, the TIB report said that despite an obligation to sit at least once a month, most of the parliamentary standing committees did not sit regularly from January to

August 2004. During the period, only the committee on law ministry held 10 meetings, eight committees did not meet, while six others sat only once.

To strengthen the committee system, the TIB recommended appointing 50 per cent heads of the parliamentary bodies from among the opposition lawmakers. It also suggested amending rules to ensure that the bodies sit twice a

KEY POINTS

The report said each word spoken in parliament costs Tk 100. Unscheduled discussions ate up 8.5 per cent of total session time, and of this, 76.3 per cent was on political The four sessions witnessed submission of 491 adjournment

motions but not any of those was discussed. Prime Minister's question-answer session, boycotted by the main opposition, was not held on 32 per cent of the scheduled days or questions were just tabled. Ninety percent questions were from treasury bench

iawmakers, the report said. Akbar refuses

FROM PAGE 12

"I shall not resign before implement-

The conference was called in the wake of the recent MV Mohara ferry disaster which left a total of 148 persons dead. The minister regretted god.

mates, a total of 1,378 persons have died in eight major ferry disasters in of the shipping ministry when the The unofficial death toll is, however, much higher since many of the bodies washed away and remained

died in a single disaster, of MV Nasreen1, in 2003.

In his statement, Akbar repeated several commitments that he has made over the last several years for improving

Asma Kibria

previous years across the country.

FROM PAGE 1

the outskirts of the town, police said.

April or May 2006. The government to the area to recover the firearms at will hand over power to the caretaker about 4:00am. On their arrival, GMF activists fired on them resulting in an there is a scope for the government While trying to escape from the police tion for holding the BDF meeting. If van Ijjat got caught in 'line of fire', the law the situation is hostile, it may not take

enforcers said. He died on the spot. His

police stations.

regional GMF leaders Mukul, Sahin

wetlands, rivers, canals from land-Unless the parliamentary body grabbers to ensure an efficient nitiates stern government action rainage network in cities against the grabbers, it will not be For import liberalisation, the possible to recover the grabbed land from powerful encroachers, he added.

political dispensation of a single country should not be a sufficient reason for postponing the summit, adding that the Saarc countries should keep exploring opportunities from the organisation.

Regarding India's role in

strengthening Saarc, he said, "As a arge country India has a vital role to play but the other countries should also extend the hand of cooperation. Prof. Sobhan went on to say that a Dhaka summit has the potential to

follow up on several vital decisions

adopted during the 12th Saarc summit held in Islamabad, including those in the areas of free trade, social charters and security. His remarks were echoed by the editor of The New Age, Enayetullah Khan, who said the postponement

mendous blow for the people of the South Asia. The editor added that the narrow designs of India and Pakistan should not alone determine the outcome of the summits. Islamabad summit was an acceleration of a relationship between two hostile countries - India and

of the 13th Saarc summit is a tre-

Also speaking at the seminar Prof. Ataur Rahman, of the politica science department in Dhaka University, said the 13th Saarc summit could be a turning point in

tion among Saarc countries is vital

"There are many possibilities in Saarc and we have to generate those through a building up of

Mohammed Zamir said the Saard countries should remove all inherent mistrust among themselves for moving forward, adding that Bangladesh has taken sufficient

Indonesians.

Meanwhile, no Bangladeshi was reported to be among the arrested in crackdown that the Malaysian government was having against hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants yesterday. Malaysian police as part of the nation-wide crackdown raided workplaces in the early hours of Tuesday and arrested at least 131 people, mostly

welfare and overseas employment told BDNEWS, " We have information that so far none from Bangladesh has been arrested. Most of the Bangladeshis who were illegally working there had already returned home.

State minister for expatriates'

Some 450 civilian volunteers and 13 immigration officers carried out the first raid shortly after midnight on a construction site in Cheras, south of Kuala Lumpur, which netted 62

cover of darkness in an attempt to escape the dragnet but later surrendered to the officials, who were armed with batons while six officers also carried side arms The 62 Indonesians, including 27

the raid, told news agency AFP. "It is a successful operation. No one was injured. We will conduct

"Ops Tegas"

more raids," he said. The volunteers

protective tariff down to 20 percent. To encourage growth of the private

sector and small and medium enterprises, the government will set up a national commission with policymakers

and private sector experts. Besides, it will reform labour laws reventing politicisation of trade

The government will make unused public lands available for private investment as well as acquire lands and give them to private inves-

tors through the Board of Investment. It will set up a new agency for loan recovery and form a new investment

finance company. In communications sector the Dhaka-Chittagong highway will be upgraded to an express way.

Move to list

FROM PAGE 1

Grabbers occupy some 11,400 acres of forestland out of 63,815 acres in Gazipur district, and 600 acres out of 934 acres in the Savar thana under Dhaka district, said the report sent to the parliamentary standing committee on the land

ministry "The detailed list of encroachers will be sent to the parliamentary committee after receiving information from field levels," Chief Forest Conservator M Anwarul Islam said in the report. "We asked the field level officials

last month to prepare the list in detail

about the situation of land grabbing.

But we don't know how we will ac ahead," a senior DF official yesterday told The Daily Star wishing anonymity. It is still uncertain whether the DF will be able to take any action against the encroachers, the official

said, adding that the DF is held

hostage by the powerful grabbers. "When we initiate any step against the grabbers, they go the court seeking stay order. Having had a stay order, some powerful grabbers continue their development work on the grabbed land, another DF official said.

India has a vital

Saarc summit in the current year.

He said that economic coopera-

but political cooperation is neces-

measures in terms of security.

Pakistan - not for Saarc. Musleh Uddin Ahmed

recruiting new workers from Bangladesh

"If anyone is still there, it is his responsibility," the state minister

Indonesians, immigration officials Some of the illegal immigrants fled into surrounding forests under

from tsunami-hit Aceh province, were being held at Semenyih detention centre south of Kuala Lumpur. Mohamad Amirudin Mohamad Yusof, director of the 300,000strong civilian security force who led

The crackdown against illega

immigrants, mainly Indonesians,

marks the end of an amnesty, which

has twice been extended at

were nearly a million illegal workers

in the country, mostly from Indonesia but also from the

Philippines, Myanmar, Bangladesh,

Malaysia had estimated there

India and Sri Lanka. (UNB, BDNEWS, AFP) CJ, judges

Jakarta's request.

FROM PAGE 1 that the CJ would skip the programme, Rokanuddin, along with SCBA Secretary Bashii Ahmed, and Advocate Joynal Abedin, a leader of pro-government lawyers, rushed to the CJO. But the

CJ declined the bar president's

the judges to do so when some

judges were not invited respectfully?'

Rokanuddin quoted the CJ as say-

"How can I attend the party or ask

equest to join the party.

The SCBA president told the reporters that the association officials themselves took invitations to the judges as they did in the past. "I myself went to invite the Chief Justice." he said adding. "We might have made some mistakes as the programme was arranged in a very short time. But everybody should accept those with an open mind," he said adding, "For our executive

ed to send those by Monday night. Rokanuddin said he did not know He observed that the SCBA's

move against the appointment of 19 judges might have something to do with the absence. "We've even invited those 19 judges," he added.

members, time was too little to invite all the judges in person." Bashir, meanwhile, said they sent invitations to some judges in the morning yesterday after they had the rationale behind the decision of the CJ and many other judges.

are paid 80 ringgit (21 dollars) for each illegal worker caught in the nation-wide operation codenamed

He also expressed that it might not be possible to hold the 13th

terms of Safta and a social charter, adding that trade among Saarc countries would suffer due to the postponement of the Saarc summit.

effective diplomacy with other countries," Prof. Rahman observed.

Moderated by CSPS chairman Azizur Rahman, the seminar was also addressed by columnist Sadeq Khan and former ambassador

KL to take back