Pakistan 'lost' Laden trail

Pakistani forces had their best chance of capturing Osama bin Laden last year, but they lost the trail, President Pervez Musharraf has told the BBC.

Musharraf said the intelligence services had their strongest indication about the al-Qaeda leader's whereabouts eight to 10 months

He said the "dragnet had closed" along the border with Afghanistan, but bin Laden fled.

Bin Laden last appeared on video just before the US election in November.

He appeared in good health in the video, in which he threatened fresh attacks on the US, whoever was elected, but it was not clear when it was recorded.

Bin Laden and his deputy. Avman al-Zawahri, are widely believed to have been hiding in the mountains along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border since USbacked forces toppled Afghanistan's Taleban regime in late

Pakistan has been a staunch ally of the US since 11 September 2001, although Pakistani officials have criticised the US for not putting more resources into capturing Bin Laden.

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice is due to visit Pakistan later this week.

President Musharraf told the BBC his forces got their clearest trace of Bin Laden after the Pakistani army launched an offensive in the tribal region last year.

"There was a time when the dragnet had closed and we thought we knew roughly the area where he possibly could be. That was, I think some time back, not very long.. maybe about eight to 10 months

back," he said. "But after that, this is such a game, this intelligence, that they escape. They can move and then you lose contact."

Bin Laden's group is blamed for thousands of deaths in the 11 September 2001 attacks on the US and other attacks around the world.

The Pakistani army has faced its strongest resistance in its operations against al-Qaeda in the restive border regions of North and South

President Musharraf said he was sure Pakistan's most wanted militant. Abdullah Mehsud, was killed in North Waziristan several days ago.

The death has yet to be confirmed, he said, adding that the militant's death would reduce resistance to the army's presence.

Mehsud - whose real name is Noor Alam - is a Pashtun, the same ethnic group as the Taleban. In December, Pakistani authori-

ties offered a five million rupee (\$84,000; £44,000) reward for help in the arrest of Mehsud

The one-legged Mehsud, a former prisoner at the US military base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, was accused of masterminding the kidnap of two Chinese engineers

British 'cannibal' admits to eating friend's brain after frying

AFP, London

A convicted killer with serious psychiatric problems and a confessed penchant for cannibalism was given two life sentences yesterday for killing two people, including an old friend whose brain he cooked up in a frying pan and ate.

The judge sentencing Peter Bryan at London's Old Bailey court said his conviction would leave no possibility of early release.

The 35-year-old, characterized by expert witnesses as a paranoid schizophrenic, has already served seven vears in a high-security psychiatric hospital for beating to death a 20-year-old store assistant with a hammer in 1993. He was released in 2001

In February 2004, while living in a community mental health facility in east London, Bryan went to visit a friend, Brian Cherry, 43, at home in nearby Walthamstow.

hare heard the home and alerted police, who discovered Bryan had killed his friend and was cooking the dismembered body and brains in a frying

Prosecutor Aftab Jafferjee said Bryan had inflicted more than 24 blows to Cherry's head, chopped him up with the aid of kitchen knives

Giles Forrester told Bryan he had

gotten a "thrill and a feeling of power when vou ate flesh" "The violence on each occasion

was extreme and unpredictable accompanied by bizarre and sexua overtones... The seriousness of the offenses is exceptionally high, even having regard to your illness," he Bryan also admitted to man-

slaughter also in relation to Richard Loudwell, a 59-year-old also interned at the Broadmoor psychiatric hospital where Bryan was sent after Cherry's killing. A week after he arrived, in April

2004, he smashed Loudwell's head on the dining room floor, and tried to strangle him with a cord. The man died from the injuries suffered during the attack two months later. According to the prosecutor

Bryan later explained that he had been thinking of attacking Loudwell for a few days. "He had wanted to eat him, but he did not have time," Jafferjee said.

"He said Richard Loudwell was the oldest and weakest in the ward and that he was the lowest on the food chain." the lawver said.

He also said that Bryan attacked prison staff, saying he wanted to eat someone's nose.

In interviews with psychiatrists read out in court, Bryan said eating body parts was part of a voodoo ritual he carried out to transform the power of his victims to himself -- a eling he dubbed the "quickening".

He believed human flesh was part of the "natural food chain" and described wanting to drink human blood as it was "full of protein" Jafferjee said.

Psychiatrists told the judge Bryan suffered from paranoid schizophrenia and a personality disorder, and was capable of appearing calm while still capable of

Defense counsel David Etherington charged the state with insufficient care of Bryan, saying: "This defendant is the victim of a terrible illness and regrettably, we

must submit, he is also the victim of

a state unable to control it."

Govt ditches demand

party' and came down on it heavily for what he said was using the media to destroy the country's

Newspapers are a major player in a democracy, he noted, adding, "Awami League leaders are now using the negative headlines of the newspapers as a weapon to destroy the country's image.

Saifur urged newspapers to make constructive criticism of the government and to avoid anything that might harm the greater interest of the nation, saying, "It'll be of no benefit to destroy the image of the country, rather will mean loss for us

BNP Secretary General and LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said AL has to come to parliament to bring changes in the existing provisions of the non-party caretaker govern-

"Holding roundtables outside parliament on the issue will not bring any positive result to this end, as parliament is the right place to bring any amendments to the existing

caretaker government system," Bhuiyan told the Jatiya Sangsad The law minister's criticism of the opposition demand was more pointed. Barrister Moudud Ahmed said, "Caretaker government is a settled issue and one of the basics of the constitution." and blamed the opposition for trying to unsettle the case and creating unrest in the

Moudud said if the opposition has any practical suggestions within the framework of the constitution to make elections free and fair and clean and protect it from the influence of black money, it can present them in parliament.

During the discussion yesterday, Communications Minister Nazmul Huda presented a new formula for making elections fair, and free of influence of black money.

He proposed to introduce a fourpage passport come citizenship certificate for every one aged 18 and above and to confine election campaign to seven days, which he said will reduce expenditure and influence of black money."

Huda described two pages of the passport to bear the person's curriculum vitae. Of the rest two pages one will carry information relating to the person's travels abroad and the last about his voting activities.

The minister, also a barrister, said the presiding officers of the elections the persons will have participated in will sign on the page on voting. "It'll prove if the person has voted or not: consequently, it'll reduce the tendency of ballotrigging and fake vote-casting," he maintained

Home secy's contract ends today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is still undecided about appointing a new secretary for the Ministry of Home Affairs while the contract of the incumbent secretary expires today.

However, Prime Minister's Office sources said the appointment of a new home secretary may be made

Highly placed sources said the government has decided not to further extend the contract of Home Secretary Muhammad Omar Farooq as he was given contract for three consecutive terms.

They said that the government is considering names of three to four secretaries for appointment as secretary of the home ministry. Among them are Secretary of the Planning Division Akhter Hossain Khan and Secretary of the Ministry of Communications Shafigul Islam.

Shafiqul Islam is currently serv-

Pakistan to free of 589 Indian prisoners

REUTERS, Islamabad

Pakistan issued release orders yesterday for 589 Indian prisoners as a gesture of goodwill towards New Delhi, an official statement

President Pervez Musharraf told Amarinder Singh, the visiting chief minister of Puniab, that Pakistan had initiated the process to release ndian civilians and fishermen in Pakistan whose nationality has been confirmed.

"India has so far confirmed the national status of 529 fishermen and 60 civilian prisoners detained in Pakistan," a Pakistani Foreign Ministry statement said.

"The Ministry of Interior has today issued the release order concerning these prisoners and they would be handed over to the Indian authorities shortly," it said.

Pakistan and India frequently arrest illegal entrants, including fishermen who trespass in each other's waters, but have agreed prisoner releases as goodwill gestures after relaunching a peace process last year.

News of the release orders comes as New Delhi prepares to host Musharraf for a cricket series between the two countries, which have fought three wars since independence in 1947 and went to the brink of a fourth in 2002.

Judgement

FROM PAGE 16

Earlier, Dr Kamal Hossain, Barrister Rokanuddin Mahmud and Advocate Mahbube Alam finished their submission for the defendants -- editors, publishers and reporters of the Prothom Alo and the Bhorer Kagoj.

The Prothom Alo and the Bhorer Kagoi in their separate reports on October 30 last year said that Additional Judge Faisal Mahmud Faizee's LLB examination results were allegedly tampered with.

The judge's father Mohammad Faiz filed a contempt petition on November 8 against Prothom Alo Editor Matiur Rahman, Publisher Mahfuz Anam and reporters Ekramul Haque Bulbul and Masud Milad, and Bhorer Kagoj Editor Abed Khan, Publisher Saber Hossain Chowdhury and Reporter Shamaresh Baidya.

Saitur's wrong

was between Tk 5.76 and Tk 6.49 per sher (one-seventeenth less than

The price listing of the Consumers Association of Bangladesh (Cab) puts that price at Tk 18 on an average for February

Partha gets

FROM PAGE 1

Chowdhury granted the bail following a petition submitted on November 9 last year.

Blast (Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust) moved the bail petition and the HC on December 11. 2004. issued a rule on the government to explain why Partha would not be freed on bail.

Eminent lawyer Dr Kamal Hossain moved for Partha's bail vesterday. The court granted Partha bail till

disposal of the email threat case filed against him. In the other case, Partha was granted bail until police submit their

eport Nizamul Haq, barister Sara Hossain and barrister Tanjib-ul Alam assisted Dr Kamal.

Deputy Attorney General Abdur Rouf and Assistant Attorney General Alamgir Kabir moved for the state

Unknown people sent an email to The Daily Prothom Alo on August 23 last year, threatening to kill AL President Sheikh Hasina

Criminal Investigation Department (CID) arrested Partha from his Elephant Road house on August 26 last year and produced him before the court on August 30, a day after CID filed a case regarding the email threat.

Nephew admits killing

Aminul, nephew of Dr Afsanuzzaman of Nutrition Science Institute at Dhanmondi, made the statement to Metropolitan Magistrate Nani Gopal Biswas under Section 164 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC).

On that fatal day at noon, Nazneen, wife of Afsanuzzaman, saw Aminul and Parvin in a compromising situation. Angered, Nazneen scolded him for such immoral act and negligence to studies, and beat him up with a broom, he told the Aminul got carried away with an

impulse to avenge what he said was the insult and went to Nazneen's bedroom at around 8:00pm that night and butchered her with a boti (a kitchen machete). He then chopped Parvin to death with the boti to do away with the only

witness to his crime, he said. Afterwards, he changed his bloodstained clothes and left for Bogra taking Nazneen' cell-phone, some cash and valuables. From Bogra he moved to Faridour on March 11 and took a job as a farmhand in a village.

But his employer became suspicious of his whereabouts seeing him talk over the cellphone while working and informed the Detective Branch (DB) of police, who arrested him last Sunday.

BB assigns

FROM PAGE 16

letters said. This is why, the central bank said, it deputed the two observers there under the Bank Company Act.

The move also follows the findings of an investigation into the opening of 17,000 false accounts by Premier Bank apparently to manipulate its initial public offering.

Microcredit for tobacco

northern region, are used to produce tobacco, which should not be encouraged anymore.

The government has a plan to popularise the production of maize and potato as alternative crops to tobacco as farmers in the northern region are very much familiar with these two crops, the minister said.

He said the tobacco farmers had already showed their interest to refrain from farming tobacco, but it would take time to start the process.

"I have talked to a good number of tobacco producers over the government plan for producing maize and potato. They have assured me that they will stop the tobacco production if the government gives financial support to them," the minister said. He urged people to strengthen

the anti-tobacco campaign for maintaining a healthy environment. Mosharraf had piloted the Smoking and Tobacco Product Usage (Control) Bill-2005, which

aimed at discouraging smoking and sale of cigarettes and tobacco products in the country. The public places where smoking has been prohibited include educational institutions, government, semi-government and autonomous offices, libraries, lifts, hospitals, clinics, court buildings, airports, sea and river port buildings, railway

exhibition centres, theaters, children's parks and other places designated by the gazette notification. Rickshaws, uncovered boats and vans will remain out of the purview of the law, the minister said. The bill prohibits advertisement

of tobacco products in movie

stations and bus terminal buildings.

ferries, cinema halls, covered

houses, government and private TV channels, sale of videotapes containing tobacco products, publication of ads in books, magazines, leaflets, handbills, billboards and

Thirty-percent of the packets of all kinds of tobacco-related products must carry an anti-tobacco message with colorful and well-visible ads, according to clause 10 of the newly passed bill.

The person or company, who will violate the clause, will be sentenced to three months of imprisonment or be fined at least Tk 1000.

Women's reserved

FROM PAGE 1

Women parliament members who are without any constituencies are not accountable to the citizens, he said during the hearing of three petitions filed challenging the amendment in the High Court bench comprising Justice MA Matin and Justice AFM Abdur Rahman.

The amendment seeks to defi the basic structure and doctrine of constitutional law. Dr Zahir said terming it a step derogatory to the preamble and fundamental principles of state policy.

He said the coalition government has deceived people as it had included women's direct election in its election pledge Different women organisations social and rights bodies and leaders

of opposition political parties filed three separate petitions last year challenging the new provision for women's reserved seats and its election process in parliament.

Barrister Tanjib-ul Alam assisted

HC grants govt

FROM PAGE 1 Ariff submitted a comparative study between the Supreme Court draft and the draft sent to the president.

"We do not want comparative studies of the draft rules. Show us what exactly you have finalised for the president's approval," the court told the attorney general.

"Let the government publish the rules. If the court finds it is not in line with its directive and in accordance with the constitution, the court has the option to add or delete any part of the rules." the AG replied.

The AG submitted that the government was working in phases towards separation of the judiciary a lengthy task, following the 12point guidelines given by the court five years ago.

He further said full implementation of the court orders also required amendment to the Code of Criminal Procedure.

"We are not convinced of your submission. We hope good sense

will prevail on the government." the

court observed and allowed one

month's time to implement its

The court also asked the AG to convey the court's attitude on separation of the judiciary to the govern-

I wo die

FROM PAGE 1

the Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH). Joinal passed away half an hour after the admis-

The condition of the two others was critical as they were unconscious till filing of the report at 8:30pm.

Meanwhile, 10-year-old Kamrul Islam Shuvo, a grade three student of an English medium school at Badda, was injured in a bomb blast at Middle Badda yesterday after-

Shuvo, son of Tajul Islam of 976 Post Office Lane, Middle Badda, while playing cricket in front of his house along with his mates, stepped on two cocktails abandoned near a bin in the lane causing the blast at around 4:30pm. He was injured in the thighs and stomach. said witnesses. He was rushed to

Health programme

delivery coverage from the existing 13 to at least 70 per cent. In fact, we are also equipping the SBAs with basic tools and kits for safe delivery in the rural settings."

Towards improving the child healthcare the ministry recently adopted new strategies under a new programme called the Integrated Management of Child Illness to increase coverage for tuberculosis, measles, vaccination and nutrition programme. In addition to these strategies,

the health ministry has allocated special funds for the training of manpower particularly the nurses and doctors.

Referring to the previous fiveyear health programme (HPSP) the health secretary said, "For training purposes we have increased the fund for the HNPSP at least by 50 per cent compared to that of the HPSP. Similarly, for research we have enhanced the allocation from 0.4 per cent to 2 per cent."

The World Bank has also

assured the visiting delegation of 'bonus' funds if performance of the ministry continues to improve.

Out of a total of \$2.9 billion for the next five-year HNPSP (up to 2010), the development partners have committed \$900 million while twothirds of the rest would be spent from the government's own exchequer and the rest from the World

Saudi prince FROM PAGE 1

Chowdhury attended the meeting, which lasted 20 minutes. Earlier on his arrival, the Saudi

Prince made a courtesy call on President. lajuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban. During the meeting, the president sought cooperation of the

Saudi government to further supplying 40 mmcfd gas. increase its investment in Petrobangla sources said Niko Bangladesh. He also urged the has withdrawn its threat as Saudi government to recruit more Petrobangla warned of 'stern action' against it in public interest Bangladeshi doctors, nurses, teachers, engineers, IT specialists Petrobangla however paid it about and other professionals. \$2 million following the threat.

BDR opposes

India's setting up of pump houses and pumping out water from the

common rivers of the two countries. Terming such activities a 'breach' of the border treaty, the BDR urged the Indian side to stop this.

Firing on and killing of innocent and unarmed Bangladeshi people by the BSF and Indian nationals also came up at the meeting. The other issues raised by the

BDR included BSF camps on the border, security, obstruction to development work on the Bangladesh side by the BSF, and smuggling of arms and ammunition and drugs. Deputy Director General of BDR Brigadier General SM Golam

Rabbani leads the eight-member

BDR team at the talks being held at BSF Salbagan Headquarters. IG of BSF for Assam. Meghalava. Monipur and Nagaland Shri SC Srivastava is leading the 14member Indian team. The BDR raised the issues at the

meeting that began at 9:00am and continued till 4:00pm. The BSF is likely to come up with its points today, said a top BDR official.

"The BSF started erecting barbed wire fences in 1980 but we never resisted it as they were constructing it in their territory. This time we are resisting it because they are doing this within 150 yards of the no man's land," said the official, wishing not to be named. Ramgarh

BDNEWS reports: BSF yesterday continued its reinforcement and was piling up huge quantity of construction materials to erect barbed wire fences opposite Ramgarh border in Khagrachhari. BDR and local sources said BSF

deployed a large number of its

personnel and amassed heavy

weapons at Pancharampara,

Kashibari, Adharmanik, Tabalchhari and Taindong border points. Both the sides declared a red alert on the borders for the last 20

People of the area continued to flee their houses as BDR-BSF exchanged fire 15 times during this period. Our staff correspondent in

Khulna adds: Fresh deployment of

BSF personnel equipped with heavy

arms at all the camps opposite

Benapole and other border points in Jessore and Jhenidah has created panic among people of the areas. A dawn-todusk curfew has been mposed on the Indian side, indicate ing border tension is mounting

BSF men boarding river vessels are also intruding into Bangladesh

reports received here said.

Fun fire

Army Camp, targeted his colleague out of fun and suddenly pressed the trigger, injuring Delwar.

Other army personnel of the

camp rescued Delwar Hossain hearing the sound of fire. A reliable source said on condition of anonymity, the SMG actually belonged to Sergeant Abdul Mannan. Investigation is going on

regarding how the firearm of a

senior officer went to a junior per-

Flats to get FROM PAGE 16

January 2003 to March 2005. Per ton prices of 60 grade and 40 grade rod were Tk 22,000 and 20,000 in June 2003 but it soared up to Tk 41,000 and 38,000 by March 2005 and a bag of cement that sold at Tk191 in June 2003 now costs Tk

270. he said Rehab leaders called upon the National Board of Revenue, commerce and finance ministries and authorities concerned to intervene to keep the prices of building materi-

als at a reasonable level. The price of readymade flats needs to be reviewed every three

months, they said. Rehab Senior Vice-president MA Awal, General Secretary Mahmudul Hasan and Joint Secretary Tanvirul Haq Probal were present at the

press conference. Gas supply

the country. This also resulted in lower power generation in the gasfired power plants. Power load shedding hovers

around 600 mw to 900 mw on week-Meanwhile, Canadian Gas Field Niko Resources, which developed an abandoned gas field in Feni last year through a joint venture agree-

ment with Bapex, recently threat-

ened Petrobangla with stoppage of

gas supplies unless it is paid all

Niko got into the deal bypassing any competition and conventional practices of the government by using political lobbyists Consequently, it had no gas sales agreement with Petrobangla. In the face of supply shortfall, Petrobangla started taking Niko's gas a few months back without fixing any price or concluding a deal.

resterday that on her swing through South Asia Rice is expected to Niko now claims it has about \$5 signal US willingness to sell F-16s to million in outstanding arrears. It is both Pakistan and India.

> Pakistan about two dozen jets while India could buy as many as 125. Sales of the fighter jets, it said would be a major policy shift for

2 senior bank staff

of Dhaka Metal Steel Works (Pvt.) Limited Shahidul Islam alias Nilu company officials Harun-or-Rashid

and Mohammad Firoz. Judge Rezaul Karim Khan of the Special Court for Dhaka Division pronounced the verdict.

Of the convicts, Sirajuddin, Humayun and Firoz were present in the court during the delivery of the judgement while Nilu and Harun were tried in absentia.

The punishment of the fugitives will be effective from the date of their arrest or surrender, the court said.

In the case filed with Gulshan Police Station, it was alleged that Shahidul, Harun and Firoz proposed to buy 200 tons of iron rods from Golam Kibria Chowdhurv. managing director of Mobarak Re-Rolling Mills Ltd. in August 1988. They made a contract to pay the money through letters of credit (LC) of the bank against a guarantee of Tk 30 lakh from the Sonali Bank Gulshan Local branch.

the three in connivance with the two bank officials committed the Golam Kibria filed a case against

When Kibria supplied the materi-

als and went to the bank on August 1

1988, he found the letters of credit to

be forged. Kibria came to learn that

Shahid and two others on August 5

the same year and the investigation officer pressed charges against the two bank officials and four others on June 26, 1993.

Special Public Prosecutor Fazlur Rahman Khan appeared for the state while advocates Ruhul Amin and Ashraf Uddin defended the

ensmen

accused in the case.

Meanwhile, different organisations and professional bodies yesterday condemned the Rab assault or Gorky and demanded punishment

of the responsible officers. Obaidul Quader, acting general secretary of Awami League, demanded the government mete out punishment to the Rab officials

responsible for the assault. In a statement, Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists President Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury and Secretary General Manjurul Ahsan Bulbul said the attitude of the aw enforcement agencies including Rab towards journalists is detrimen-

tal to free journalism. Among others, Odhikar, a human ights organisation, Dhaka Journalists Union, and Bangladesh Crime Reporters Association condemned the incident and demanded punishment of the culprits.

Washington and a final step toward

acceptance of both countries'

Islamabad in turn has said that

ny move by the United States to

sell Patriot anti-missile systems to

India would trigger a new arms race in the region, after a US defence

team made a presentation last

issue," said C. Raja Mohan, an

way to build defense cooperation.

while managing the consequences

of F-16 transfers to Pakistan," he

to India could also be on the agenda

after Washington, locked in a war of

words with Iran over its nuclear

program, reminded New Delhi of its

ninety percent of them become dry

during the lean period. Housewives

are even forced to travel miles for

migrant day labourers, who are

badly suffering as they are unable to

wash their clothes or take a bath for

days," said Lakhan, a former fisher-

rendered totally barren hundreds of

acres agricultural land and also

tem. Once famous for its variety of

local fishes, the Buriganga now has

from which polluted water pours into

the river Buriganga, chief among

them sewage waste from the tan-

neries at Raver Bazar. The govern-

ment now has a plan to relocate the

Hazaribagh tanneries to Savar with

the feeder rivers in the upstream

such as the Jamuna and the

Brahmaputra, remain cut off during

most of the year due to siltation in

"The river Buriganga becomes

almost stagnant as the water flow

from upstream is almost totally cut

Malaysia estimates there were

nearly a million illegal workers in the

country, mostly from Indonesia but

also from the Philippines, Myanmar,

About 382,000, mostly

Indonesians, took advantage of the

amnesty to depart without penalty

but an estimated 400,000 illega

he captured 13 wickets to bowl India

to a famous upset victory over

two changes to their side, with one

Pakistan are expected to make

Kolkata Test

Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka.

off in the lean period," he said.

A top BIWTA official said that all

There are at least 200 sources

Pollution in the river has also

"There are people, particularly

washing and collecting water.

Buriganga

man from Basila.

virtually no aquatic life

effluent treatment plants.

confluent areas.

Dozens

immigrants remain.

FROM PAGE 1

Australia in 2001.

FROM PAGE 16

A \$4 billion gas pipeline from Iran

independent South Asia expert.

"The arms sales is a bit of tricky

"India and the US have to find a

month in New Delhi

possession of nuclear weapons.

Rice kicks off Asia trip

by senior Indian foreign ministry officials when she arrived around 7:00 pm (1330 GMT).

meets Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Foreign Minister Natwar Singh before flying off to Islamabad in the evening. She said increased military spending by Beijing was a concern because it comes at a time when

there was growing tension between

She will have a full working day in

the Indian capital today when she

Rice also criticised Beijing for passing a new law Monday that gives its military the legal basis to attack Taiwan if the island moves towards independence. "Certainly, the military spending

is concerning because it is taking

place at a time when the cross-Strait

issue (with Taiwan) is not still

China and Taiwan.

resolved," Rice told reporters on her China's rubber-stamp parliament approved Monday a 12.6 percent increase in military spendng this year to 244.65 billion yuan

(29.5 billion dollars).

helpful in reducing cross strait tensions." she said. The legislation is expected to be raised during Rice's stay in China, which comes at the end of a tour that will also take her to Pakistan, Afghanistan, Japan and South

"The anti-secession law is not

The secretary of state is due to

address a joint news conference

with her Indian counterpart after their talks, Indian foreign ministry spokesman Navtej Sarna said in Delhi Tuesday Sarna said bilateral trade, economic and security relations, the situation in Nepal, Bangladesh and the India-Pakistan peace process, ongoing cooperation in Afghanistan,

issues expected to come up for discussion Asked if India would take up the issue of proposed sales of arms to Pakistan by the United States Sarna said the US was "well aware

He said India and the United

States had been in close touch and

of our concerns".

developments in Iraq and United

Nation reforms are some of the

recently "worked together in the UN on coordinating our approach on India and the United States were the first to pull their envoys out of Nepal after King Gyanendra sacked the Sher Bahadur Deuba government in February. India and Britain have suspended arm sales to Nepal while Washington has warned it will follow suit unless the king restores

with her counterpart Khurshid Kasuri and meet President Pervez Musharraf, Pakistani foreign office spokesman Jalil Abbas Jilani said. Speaking of her trip to Inia's neighbour, Rice said, "We fully expect President Musharraf to be

committed to a democractic path for

multiparty democracy in the

In Islamabad, Rice will hold talks

Himalayan outpost.

Pakistan.

Pakistan has been a staunch ally of US President George W. Bush since the September 11 attacks on New York and Washington. On Thursday, Rice will make a short trip to the Afghan capital Kabul and return the same day, leaving

Islamabad Friday after meeting

Kasuri, Jilani said. "Besides discussing bilateral relations, we would also be discussing the regional situation." he added However, he did not say if Rice

would make any announcement about Pakistan's request to buy more F-16 fighter jets from the US India strongly opposes the sale The Wall Street Journal reported

The paper, citing US government sources, said the US could sell

Hameed is expected to be brought in as a specialist batsman after Pakistan's top three contributed just

boosted by their Mohali fightback and also by their track record at Eden Gardens. "The boys have gained a lot of

to 26 for six on the opening day before they rallied win by 46 runs in an Asian Test championship match. They drew the four previous

of the top-order batsman from the Mohali Test likely to make way and left-arm seamer Rana Naved doubtful to play because of a shoulder Either Shahid Afridi or Yasir

68 runs in Mohali The axe is likely to fall on one of the two left-handed openers Salman Butt or Taufeeg Umar. Inzamam said Pakistan would be

confidence after Mohali," he said. They also know how we won the test here in 1999." In 1999, Pakistan were reduced

matches there.

and had already eaten some of the man's brain cooked in butter by the time police arrived. Bryan, who appeared in court in a black suit surrounded by four mental health workers and a court officer, admitted manslaughter on the grounds of diminished responsibility. Prosecutors dropped calls for a murder conviction on the weight of psychiatric evidence. Reading out the sentence, Judge