JCD leader Idul gets death Benapole port

FROM PAGE 1 on 11 others in two separate cases

Judge Mohammad Firoz Alam of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-3 convicted Idul, Ariful Islam Shimul and Mamunur Rashid Mamun for killing decoration trader Rabiullah Khokon

in Gopibagh on April 23, 1999.

Idul was present in the court during the delivery of the judgement, but his accomplices were tried in

The court acquitted two accused -Amir Hossain alias Tota and Jabed alias Jaba -- as the charges brought

against them were not proved. The convicts can appeal to the High Court (HC) against the verdict in 30 days from the day of receipt of the judgement copy. Punishment of the fugitives will be effective from the day of their arrest or surrender, the judge

Idul and his men killed the trader over a previous enmity when the victim was returning home after saying Juma prayers at about 12:45pm.

The victim's father Chand Miah, wife Parvin Akhter and daughters -- Sony and Anamika -- at the court expressed satisfaction over the verdict.

Idul used to run a gang with the support allegedly of a leader of Dhaka University unit JCD, student wing of ruling BNP. The gang gunned down two policemen and hurt a few others during a robbery at a currency exchange shop in Motijheel on June 20 last year.

Police arrested bullet-hit Idul and seized from him Tk 20,000, a sophisticated CZ pistol, two magazines and 30 bullets the same day

He is accused of over 14 charges including four murders.

In another case, Judge Shahed Noor Uddin of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-1 sentenced a woman and three others to death for killing her The convicts are Lutfunnahar

Baby, her fiancé Mamun Patwary alias Mamun, Mozammel Hag and Kuddus, Except for Kuddus, the convicts were tried in absentia

After developing an illicit affair. Baby and Mamun hired two goons to kill her husband Mizan.

They killed him in Kafrul, cut his body into three pieces and dumped those in front of a house Shewrapara on November 14, 2003.

Police arrested Baby and Mamun, who gave confessional statements before a magistrate. But they became fugitives after obtaining bail from the HC. RAJSHAHI

Our staff correspondent from Rajshahi adds: Rajshahi divisional Speedy Trial Tribunal sentenced seven cadres of outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) to death in the Bachchu murder case of Kushtia

Tribunal Judge AFM Aminul Islam

The case was shifted to Rajshahi from the tribunal in Khulna following anonymous death threats to the

judge concerned. The convicts are Niaz Murshid Pannu, Kabil, Hoor Babu, Shafikul

slam, Rabiul Islam, Shahjahan and

while the others have jumped bail. Nurul Islam Bachchu, a business man, was shot and slaughtered on October 2, 2001 when he was returning home.

Rashid, filed a case accusing 16 PBCP cadres of killing Bachchu to take revenge on his writing against drug peddling and crimes.

Arrest

FROM PAGE 1 She wrote Reza a cheque for the sum to be withdrawn from the First Security Bank Limited, Reza said The complainant added that he

He served a legal notice on Bidisha on July 9 and she received it the next day. But she neither showed any respect to the notice nor made any moves to repay the

Bidisha was arrested on June 4 after Ershad filed a theft case against her. Ershad filed another case for marriage forgery, while police filed two other cases.

withdrawal of money from her account through blank cheques bearing her signature.

FROM PAGE 1

better with ensured development."

that people will once again vote the BNP to power in the next general elections for the development and welfare programmes.

party is hatching conspiracy in the name of reforming the caretaker government system," she said.

"People now do not believe in street politics." Khaleda said, menparliamentary democracy and made the parliament the focal point

Criticising Awami League's propaganda at home and abroad against communal harmony in Bangladesh, the prime minister asserted that religious harmony prevailed in Bangladesh with people of all faiths enjoying their festivals

"This party (Awami League) is spreading propaganda but is unable to draw the attention of the foreign

League's joining election under the autocratic government although all the parties in the movement had taken the stand not to go for election under the autocratic government.

Vincent described as a city that was "increasingly coming under the control of Shi'ite religious groups, from the relatively mainstream ... to

cleric Mogtada al-Sadr.'

network, said in an Internet statement on Wednesday that it had killed eight US marines and captured a ninth in western Iraq.

Ansar al-Sunna said in the Internet posting that it had killed some of the marines by "slitting their throats." while others were shot. The statement could not be verified.

It also said that its fighters had captured a ninth US marine "who was wounded in an ambush near Haditha."

The group vowed to publish more details on the killings and pictures of the "American prisoner"

string of attacks in Iraq, including murders of foreign hostages and Iragis accused of "collaborating" with US-led forces.

Meanwhile an American journalist has been found shot dead in Basra four days after he wrote an opinion piece in the New York Times criticizing the spread of Shia

found later that night, a US diplomat said. A nurse said he had been shot repeatedly in the chest.

Vincent's death appeared to mark the first targeted killing of a Western journalist in Iraq since the US-led invasion toppled Saddam

Other reporters have been killed after being swept up in the violence plaguing the country, but were apparently killed for being Westerners rather than because they were journalists.

"An investigation has been launched to determine who was

Basra for several weeks, had been shot three times in the chest.

His Iraqi translator, Nouriya Ita'is, was shot four times but survived. The nurse said she was in a serious

The New York Times opinion piece criticised the failure of British forces to clamp down on what

Shahiahan is now behind bars.

His journalist brother, Harun-ui

deposited the cheque on June 27 but it was dishonoured.

Meantime, Bidisha on July 23 filed a case against Ershad for

Don't vote

over the river Shitalakhya, said, "You have to evaluate under which government people have been

She expressed her confidence

"Realising this, the opposition

tioning that the BNP has ensured of development.

with due fervour and gaiety.

countries," she told her audience.

The BNP chairperson blamed the main opposition for not keeping their word time and again.

She also recalled Awami

Natwar Singh will also try to resolve the difficulties in the \$2.5 billion Myanmar-Bangladesh-India pipeline project during his visit. Dhaka is ready to sign the tri-nation pipeline agreement if New Delhi agrees to provide a transit facility through India to facilitate transmission of hydro-electricity from Nepal and Bhutan to Bangladesh, a corridor for

kingdoms, and take measures to reduce the \$2 billion trade imbalance between Bangladesh and India. bilateral matters and said she thinks it the bellicose followers of the rebel unreasonable to set the issues as conditions for the "commercial" pipeline project where India is ready to pay an

trade between the two Himalayan

expected transit fee of \$125 million. During foreign office consultations held in New Delhi on June 21-22 Bangladesh and India agreed to activate bilateral mechanisms to enhance cooperation in areas like security, border management, sharing of river waters and economic ties.

The consultations were held after a gap of two years, when relations between the two countries had suffered over issues like trade gap, water forces. The religious Shia-led govsharing, India's plan for river-linking, killings in border and barbed-wire Iraq has faced rising sectarian fencing, India's allegation of allowing violence since January elections rebels in its northeastern states to operate from Bangladesh and illegal

immigrants from Bangladesh. "It is a goodwill visit by the external affairs minister of India. We will exchange ideas on all existing issues in addition to discussing potential areas of cooperation," Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan told report-

Dhaka is committed to strong bilateral relations with India, he said, adding that Bangladesh and India must remain closely engaged and work together in a fast-changing world.

Natwar Singh's visit to Dhaka aims at assuring the Bangladeshi government of New Delhi's sincerity about improving bilateral ties, a high official of

Indian High Commission in Dhaka said Natwar Singh's visit will be followed by several ministerial visits from India, including those of Commerce Minister Kamal Nath and Water Resources Minister Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi, who will take part in a meeting of the Joint Rivers Commission (JRC) in Dhaka in October.

India

FROM PAGE 1 Monday, the bodies were kept at the Hashkhali Police Station The Indian people confined and beat them up suspecting them as robbers,

sources said.

The relatives of the victim were sent to the Hashkhali Police Station to trace out e their identity, the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) said.

The dead -- Abil Uddin khokon, 28, Bisharad Ali, 25, Mojibur, 32, and Ismail, 28 -- crossed the Benipur border point of Jibonnagar in Chuadanga to go their relatives' house in the Indian village at night to avoid passport complexities, said a source. Other sources said they were involved in smuggling.

Meanwhile, it is alleged that Indian

police of Hashkhal station reached the spot in time but did not take steps to save the victims from mob. The victims' family sources said they came to know of the incident when some

relatives of the victims who live in the Gazna area of West Bengal sent a message through a cell phone after entifying the dead persons.

On information, BDR contacted the Border Security Force who confirmed the

No consensus

FROM PAGE 16 at the 12th Saarc Summit in

Islamahad The South Asia Centre for Policy Studies (Saceps), a regional thinktank, in co-operation with the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), the premier think-tank of Bangladesh, organised the seminar on 'Promoting Regional Co-operation in South Issues for the Dhaka Saarc Summit' at Brac Centre Inn audito-

Adviser to Foreign Ministry Reaz Rahman, Saceps Chairman Professor Arjun K Sengupta, CPD Chair and Saceps Executive Director Professor Rehman Sobhan and CPD Executive Director Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya also spoke at the session.

The foreign minister said any process of regional economic integration needs to protect for the transitional period the smaller and the weaker member countries in line with the special and differentia of the World Trade Organisation. He said to proceed towards a

(SAEU) requires drawing up a road map detailing the successive steps, progressive deepening of integration towards a free trade area, a customs union and a common Morshed said in mapping out a

course of action for the future we have begin with an 'Agenda for the Third Decade of Saarc', which should include initiatives and actions to facilitate the progress towards materialising the vision of a SAEU.

entry into force by the agreed date of January 1, 2006," the minister said. He expressed the hope that the expert committee concerned will conclude parleys by mid-October. At the seminar, Reaz Rahman

said a key challenge facing the Saarc is predominance of politics over economy, and despite some achievements, doubts persist about the genuineness of the members "To achieve an effective economic integration of the South Asia,

we need strong political will and change the distrusting mindset," he The Saarc commitments have remained largely unimplemented

Reaz added. present Indian government is totally committed to improve its relationships with the regional countries.

particularly Bangladesh. On Reaz Rahman's remark that in the Saarc politics dominates over economy, he said it cannot stay for

Prof Rehman Sobhan mentioned that the stage for a regional energy co-operation is underway, adding the construction of the tripartite gas pipeline is going to be milestone in "We have to think how we car

remove the constraints and limitations on official co-operation among

the Saarc members. We can't afford the luxury of keeping distance from

each othér," he feİt. Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya said presently the intra-Saarc trade a year stands at less than five percent of the total trade of the region. "It's not at all satisfactory if we look at what are happening in the Southeast Asian and other regions. We must boost the regional trade," said the

US mission

FROM PAGE 16 and Liplal Marandi, who were stabbed to death in Faridpur on July

"Because of the circumstances surrounding their murder, we are concerned that Mr Roy and Mr Marandi may be victims of religious extremism," the press release said. "We understand that police have

arrested three persons in connection with this case, and we hope that the perpetrators of the murders will be brought to justice lawfully and promptly," it added. Religious freedom is a basic,

constitutionally-guaranteed right in Bangladesh and other democracies, the release said, adding, it is important the government and civil society work effectively to safequard this fundamental right.

'Media gag'

Mohammad Ali on Tuesday morning disclosed the proposed schedule for the election to women reserved seats in parliament before it was approved by the EC. The incident compelled the chief election commissioner (CEC) to convene an emergency meeting and rearrange the schedule

CEC MA Aziz described Mohammad Ali's disclosure as

Officials at Election Commissioner Mohammad Ali's office yesterday said there is a restriction from the higher authorities on the election commissioner against talking to journalists.

"We conveyed the instruction to [Mohammad Ali] and he directed us not to allow any journalist to him," an official told this correspondent. Officials at the office of the CEC,

nowever, brushed aside the issue of mposing such a restriction. Sources at the EC secretariat said they sent a file to Election Commissioner Mohammad Ali with a proposed schedule for election to women reserved seats on September 4. The election commis-

sioner approved the proposal and disclosed it to a private TV channel. The file was then sent to Election Commissioner M Munsef Ali for his consideration. He approved the schedule and sent the file to the

The EC later rearranged the schedule for polling on September 6 as Mohammad Ali disclosed the previous schedule.

Madrasas mushroom

Osman Farruk told parliament recently that the government is considering giving Fazil and Kamil degrees of madrasas the status equivalent to graduation and mas-

Asked, the minister ruled out any extra favour to madrasa education. "It is not true that the government is promoting madrasa education ignoring the mainstream education."

"Percentage does not always reflect the real situation." Farruk said. He, however, assured that he will examine whether the general educational institutions are not being given due importance.

The education minister, who is not happy with the existing quality of madrasa graduates, said, "It needs modernisation. I feel the madrasa students should learn the same core subjects that the general educational institutions teach up to the higher secondary level."

About the government move to give the Fazil and Kamil degrees equal status of graduation and master's degree of the general education, the minister said, "It is under process.

"We are not upgrading the Fazil and Kamil degrees, rather we will recommend what is needed to make the degrees equivalent to graduation and master's degree," he said.

Opposing the government move, Prof Muttaki said: "Educational institutions are for creating human resources, but the madrasas have failed to do it." "Contribution of madrasa gradu-

usually become imams at mosques and a few of them receive general education from universities and colleges," he said.

The researcher said madrasa education seems to be a sensitive issue for all governments who always face a dilemma in taking any drastic step to modernise the madrasa education system or merge it with the mainstream education.

higher secondary level) were set up. raising the total to 19.370. On the other hand, a total of 1,618 new madrasas were established during the period. The number of madrasas across the country is now

general education has grown by 25,882 pushing the total to 2,36,813, while that in madrasas has increased 18,167, taking the total to 1.28.084.

89,28,227 with an increase of 7,10,531 in the last four years. On the other hand, the number of madrasa students rose by 3,30,899 during the period to stand at 35,97,453. During 1996-2000, the number of

schools and colleges rose to

increase of 1,022 institutions. The number of teachers in the general education during the AL regime grew by 30,911 pushing the total to 1,98,521, while in madrasas,

10.967, taking the total to 98,089, The number of students in general educational institutions rose by 19,54,316 to stand at 77,97,163 while in madrasas the number of students increased to 29.59.867 with an addition of 10.84.950 during 1996-2000.

Wealth info

self-assessed income tax returns and pay accordingly. The government later will refund them the tax

In case of buying apartments or houses with black money, the tax has been raised from Tk 150 to Tk 200 per square feet for a floor space up to 200 square feet and from Tk

The NBR circular has elaborated the cause of the crash after what appeared to be an uneventful landing. Some passengers said it appeared the jet had been struck by lightning, but a instruments. They will now get the chance to whiten that money by came in to land in a heavy storm. paying 7.5 percent tax.

included in the income statement of

Conflict

FROM PAGE 16 action suspended Barrister Huda and BNP Law Secretary Joynul Abedin's membership in Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Forum after Huda announced to dissolve the SC units of the Forum and Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Oikya Parishad. Both the groups termed each other's

action as 'illegal and out of jurisdiction.' "They have no right to suspend our membership because the positions they used to hold in the committee (Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Forum) is no more valid as the committee has expired,

Communications Minister Huda told The Daily Star last night. "We will soon form a new convening committee of the Forum Full committees of lawyers will be formed across the country in three months," he said. Huda and Advocate Joynul lead one

faction while former BNP law minister

TH Khan and Post and Telecommunication Minister Barrister Aminul Haque the other. Huda and Joynul announced to dissolve the two committees at a press conference under the banner of Oikva Parishad at the Supreme Court Bar building at around 1:00pm.

lawyers convened by the Forum tomorrow in Dhaka. Law Minister Moudud Ahmed is scheduled to attend the rally as chief guest. Later, Forum President TH Khan, Secretary General Aminul Haque and other top leaders at a press conference

They opposed a grand rally of

suspension of Huda and Jovnul's membership in the Forum and said they will hold tomorrow's rally at any cost. The suspension is the first step of their expulsion [from the Forum], TH Khan told reporters Both Huda and Joynul are members of the Forum's

at the same venue announced the

standing committee.
At the press conference, Huda asked the Forum to refrain from holding tomorrow's rally, saying it would legiti mise the opposition-backed lawyers activities.

"Pro-opposition lawyers are carrying out activities that go against the Supreme Court verdict [that bans lawyers' agitation on court premises], Huda said in a written statement. He added that such activities are tantamount to contempt of court. Dissolving the Forum and Oikya

Parishad units, he said the two units are

working as 'pocket committees.' "I don't believe in pocket committees," added. Barrister Ziaur Rahman Khan MP and advocate Saidur Rahman are serving as president and secretary of the Forum's SC unit while State Minister for Law Shahjahan Omar and advocate Golam Kibria are convenor and member secretary of the Oikya

Huda also announced convening

committees of the two units. Advocate M Shamsul Alam has been made convenor of the 164-member Forum committee while Shahjahan Omar convenor of 151-member Oikya Parishad committee. Identifying himself as the Forum's

Parishad unit.

central committee vice chairman and Oikya Parishad's central convenor, Huda said 175 lawyers have asked to dissolve the two units. Two hours after Huda's press conference, Forum leaders gathered

on the Supreme Court premises and held a closed door meeting at TH Khan's chamber. "Huda's unilateral statement that the August 5 grand rally will not be held goes against the discipline and consti-tution of the Forum. Their memberships [of the Forum] have been suspended

for their act," TH Khan told reporters. Asked about a law ministry letter that asked all government law officers of the country to attend the August 5 rally. Barrister Aminul expressed

ignorance about it On whether holding of the rally will be a violation of the High Court ban on agitation, Chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on law ministry Advocate Khondoker Mahbubuddir Ahmed MP said, "No. We will hold the rally on the Supreme Court Bar Association premises which is out of the

prohibition. Former Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali

was also present at the press confer-Sources said top Forum leaders decided to hold the August 5 rally at a meeting at the law minister's office on

July 26 The meeting, attended by both Huda and Joynul, also decided that the Forum president and secretary will from now on also act as president and secretary of the Oikya Parishad and there will be no separate president and secretary of the Parishad.

As the decision hampered their supremacy, Huda and his supporters made the move yesterday to dissolve both the SC units of the two associations, sources said.

All 309

FROM PAGE 16 Descending in blustery winds and thundery skies after a non-stop flight from Paris, the plane touched down as passengers applauded, but then there was a loud jolt and the aircraft ran 200

Within seconds, passengers dived down down emergency chutes and dashed for safety shortly before the wreckage was engulfed in enormous fireballs.
"As soon as the plane stopped, they

meters (660 feet) past the end of the

runway and plowed into the wooded

immediately opened the side of the plane where they couldn't see any flames, and then they told us to jump, said passenger Olivier Dubois. "And we all began jumping and running. We really scary. Very, very scary. French and Canadian accident investigators Wednesday were to seek

spokesman for Airbus said that for the moment this was only speculation. Passengers told how they saw lightning flashes around them as the jet

"I saw lightning," said one passenger, Roel Bramar. "Maybe the plane had already been hit by lightning. The reason I'm mentioning that is because under this provision will not be just as we landed, the lights turned off. And that's unusual. So I'm sure that the bad weather was responsible.

Another passenger, journalist Gilles Medioni, said that when the plane touched down "a lot of people clapped their hands, but it was a little premature. The pilot tried to put the brakes on, but he never made it. Then the plane began to lurch and bump. People began to scream and sense the plane was about

Food strike hurts

Parishad (BKBP), including restaurants owners, fast food shop owners, Sweetmeat shops and bakery items producers, observed the first day of their two day long strike programme terming the mobile court's activities as

harassment. But the government sources said they would continue the raidina.

"The government instructed us to improve the situation in the food sectors. So we are going to continue the drive," said one of the magistrates. requesting anonymity.

The government formed the mobile

courts on June 14, following a series of reports published in The Daily Star called 'Eating Dangerously', regarding the adulterated food items. The other newspapers also started a campaign against the food adulteration. In the first day of the two-day long

strike in the food sectors, most of the roadside restaurants and other fast food shops remained closed. "We also support the government's initiative to check the adulterated food.

But we oppose the system by which they are conducting the operation, said Khandakar Ruhul Amin, convenor of the BKBP. The supporters of the strike patrolled in the street by car so that no owners could open their food shops. Police arrested nine supporters of the

owners of a bakery and two restaurants from Shiddeshawari. According to the BKBP, nearly 10,000 shops and food factories remained closed to protest the activi-

strike as they beat up workers and

ties of the mobile courts. Today the BKBP supporters will stage a rally where they will announce their next programme.

along with other food traders, greeted the government's activities **MOBILE COURT** A mobile court led by magistrate Rokanuddoulla yesterday raided

Bangladesh Dokan Malik Samity

factories producing adulterated ice cream and chewing tobacco. The mobile court first raided the Echo ice-cream factory in Mir Hazir bagh of Demra, where it found the label of Igloo and Kulfi ice-cream and

"We produce the ice-cream just with flour, gur and spice," said Ali Akbar, a worker of the factory. The court sent him to one month of vigorous jail and fined him Tk one thousand. The courts also issued a

different unsafe chemicals.

summons against Bashir Miah, the owner of the factory. The court then raided a chewing tobacco factory, which used to produce fake 'Hakimpuri Zarda' a popular brand in the country. But the factory was closed, so the court broke down the lock and seized different chemicals Another mobile court led by ABM Abdul Fattah raided four bakeries, one

restaurant and a small cooking oil

factory, sending two bakery managers to jail for three months, and the chief executive officer of the oil factory to jail for one year. They also fined another bakery Tk 10,000, and another restaurant Tk 5,000. Workers at Moon Food Bakery fled from the mobile court. which later issued a summons against its owner. Abdul Kadir. Our Chittagong office adds: A mobile court here yesterday fined Tk 1,30,000 to four firms and sent a

onment for having unhygienic environ-

ment, selling stale food and mixing

magistrate Shafigur Rahman during

the daylong drive dumped about 10

maunds of stale sweetmeat from

Shaad Confectionary into Karnaphuli

water. He raided the main factory of

the city's prominent baker at Omar Ali

Market in Chaktai and found the

Chittagong City Corporation (CCC)

toxic colours with sweetmeat.

qualification was 15 rather than 18. there would only be a maximum of 71.5 million voters, the EU report Under the age of 15, there is an bakery manager to three-days' impris-

> 10 million inhabitants in those three years," Meadowcroft pointed out in "Thus, extrapolating the census

At 9:47am, time stops

is also there, looking straight at her

father Shafigul. How does he feel?

A few uneasy moments pass. Nobody talks. Then the father "I have just received a letter of condolence from Prime

cup. The TV buzzes on about extradition complexities of one terrorsuspect held in Rome. "Shahara was supposed to go that day." Shafigul says once he returns. He talks in short sentences. "It was Allah's wish. Everybody has

Yes, it has. For the Bangladeshis in London, Shahara's death saved

her Cooperative Bank where she worked as cashier at the Angel branch. She always took the Northern Line on the Underground, but on that fatal morning, that particular line was not running. So she had to take the double-decker. Her uncle was also supposed to trave that morning, but he did not wake up from sleep. And so Shahara walked alone into her death when that double-decker was ripped apart by a suicide homb

When the family came to know about the blasts and noticed the missed call from Shahara, they thought she is ok, otherwise why should she call? At 1:30pm, they called her on the mobile, Shahara's recorded voice said: "Sorry, I can't receive your mail at this moment. Please leave your message, I will call you back later.'

a week from that Thursday morning on Wednesday the Scotland Yard despair was confirmed.

Habibur Rahman, who confessed, realised Tk 55,000 and sent the manager to jail for three days.

The court then raided two branches of Cafe Zaman at New Market area and found the restaurant authorities preserve rotten food in dirty places for sale. The two hoteliers were fined Tk

35,000 for the crime. Magistrate Shafiqur fined Tk 25,000 to Ching Lung Chinese restaurant near Cafe Zaman for selling stale and unhealthy food to customers. He also penalised Tk 15,000 to Maloncha restaurant of the same locality for failing to show a BSTI license and

other legal documents. "We are getting surprised to dis-cover to our disbelief how some well known firms of the city could do such crimes, at the expense of common people's health risk," the magistrate

told The Daily Star. He said the on-going drive is achieving its result as well as raising consumer awareness. "The trend to dine at Chinese restaurants has

already come down." he added.

EC pays

FROM PAGE 16

After receiving the allegation on September 23, 2003 the EC discussed the matter on several occasions but could not find any way to resolve it. Nor did the EC respond to the European Union (EU) about the allegation, sources said.

"We have shelved the allegation as the list was prepared three years ago. We would have to revise the voter list if the Election Commission. wanted to probe the allegation " a senior official told The Daily Star, wishing anonymity.

Some officials at the EC secretariat also believe there was duplication. and triplication of a number of voters. which is why the number of increased voters has been questioned. They fear that the same might happen while preparing the voter list for the next parliamentary election unless the officials at the field levels are aware of such inclusion.

The EU in a report sent to former

chief election commissioner MA

Syed said the figure of 74.7 million

registered voters was too high, given a population of 130 million. "I believe that the demographic profile of Bangladesh would suggest a lower figure," Michael Meadowcroft, the then EU consultant, said in the EU report examining the demographic profile of Bandladesh. The information states that 55 percent of Bangladeshis are over 15

vears of age. Thus, even if the age

average of 3.7 million males and females in each year. "Assuming slightly fewer than this in each of the years for the ages 15, 16 and 17, I would estimate that there is a total of

figures, the maximum number potential voters in Bangladesh is

61.51 million," the report claimed.

"What is the use of this? There is no proper justice in this country," says Shafiqul. "At best, they will get life-term. They will come out after 10-12 years. In this country, the prison is better than our homes. They have TV, they have library,

they have gyms, they have all the luxuries.' And he remembers his daughter's face. It had a few bruises, but not like that of a mutilated bomb victim, just a few red cuts. She seemed in a peaceful slumber. The body was wrapped in a plastic bag from below the head. That part must have received the blow and been badly battered. Police did not allow them to open it. So they had to give her the final bath above that plastic

with a soft cotton. And she went to rest in that plastic cover. Only days before, she had bought a sari to attend her uncle's wedding this month. That still remains packed in the cupboard; her uncle's wedding will be held on schedule.

Since his daughter's death,

Shafigul has not gone back to work.

he simply can't think of it: he also

cover. Only they could dab her face

works in the same bus company that runs the double-deckers in London. one of which became Shahara's mobile death. "My company asked me to take time," Shafiqul says. "Every day

they send me their condolences.' And about 200 bus drivers and officials lined up on two sides as Shahara's coffin was carried to her grave at Garden of Peace, the new

incident, Shahara today sleeps in the Garden with only a small nametag. But her mother cannot sleep. Even today, she calls her mobile number and listens to her voice

your message, I will call you back later." "See, my Shahara is still alive she talks," she would say.

saying: "Sorry, I can't receive your

mail at this moment. Please leave

Shahara is still alive for

Londoners, in a different way.

14 Marines killed

Of these, 20 died near Haditha, while one was killed near the town of Hit, 170 km west of Baghdad. Ansar al-Sunna, an extremist group linked with the al-Qaeda

Since Monday a total of 21 marines

have been killed in western Iraq's Al-

Ansar al-Sunna has claimed a

Islamist fundamentalism in the southern Iraqi city. Witnesses said Steven Vincent and a translator were kidnapped by gunmen shortly after leaving a hotel on Tuesday evening. His body was

Hussein in 2003.

behind this," said the US diplomat. A nurse in a Basra hospital said Vincent, a freelance investigative journalist and art critic from New York City who had been working in

said were hundreds of assassinations of mostly former members of Saddam's Baath party each month. Iraqi Arab Sunni leaders have accused the Iraqi government of sanctioning Shia hit squads that work alongside security and police

ernment denies the accusations.

The article also focused on the

Basra police force, quoting a police

lieutenant as saving a few officers

were perpetrating many of what he

empowered Shias for the first time and sidelined Arab Sunnis, who were dominant under Saddam and are now leading the insurgency. Sunni Muslim militants from across the Arab world have mounted suicide bombings that have killed hundreds of Shias. Al-Qaeda and other hardline groups

have kidnapped more than 150

foreigners. Many were freed and

on postwar Iraq and was research-

ing another one about the history of

Basra, where around 8,000 British

Vincent was the author of a book

some were shot or beheaded.

troops are based.

Open sale

Management Asadul Habib Dulu.

The government decided to issue 1,000 VGF cards for each union and 2,000 for each first class Pourashava, 1,500 for each second class pourashava and 1,000 for each third class pourashava. Ten kg of rice will be given

Besides, each family will be able to buy three to five kg of rice from the OMS shops. A total of 18,000 dealers in 64 districts will open the OMS Police will be deployed while

distributing VGF cards and at OMS

shops for controlling irregularities

and nepotism.

against each VGF card for a month

that will require the government

1.20 lakh metric tons of rice.

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and local monitoring committee led by magistrates will also visit the spots frequently for supervising the OMS and VGF programmes, sources

FROM PAGE 1 procession was also brought out at the

A third meeting of the customs authority and the leaders of the five port users' associations was also scheduled to be held at the Customs House yesterday afternoon, the

two meetings on Saturday and Sunday having yielded no results.

Meanwhile, the Federation of Bangladesh Clearing and Forwarding Agents' Association held a meeting on Tuesday with its President Abul Fazal Talukdar in the chair at its Eskaton

office in Dhaka. Attended by the leaders of C&F agents' associations from Benapole Chittagong and Mongla, the meeting discussed the ways of extending the strike to all the ports of the country.

Customs Commissioner Dr Rafiqul

Islam, who was made OSD (officer on

special duty) on July 13, 2005 on allegations of corruption. They could allegedly earn Tk 5 crore by bribing

Rafiqul Islam Tk 5 lakh, the traders

Commissioner Atiqur Rahman and

Joint Customs Commissioner Hossain

Ahmed took several measures to

increase the revenue earning, which

apparently opposed the interest of the

C&F Agents Association big guns, the

was enforced at the Benapole land

and regional issues of mutual interest.

including the Saarc summit in Dhaka

passing trade, investment, tourism

and other business activities as well as

cultural, educational and other matters

of mutual interest will also be dis-

On August 6, Singh will hold talks

with Bangladesh Foreign Minister M

Morshed Khan, which will be followed

by the two foreign ministers' address-

Minister M Saifur Rahman and LGRD

and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan also on that day.

On August 7, Natwar Singh will visit the Liberation War Museum, call on

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and

Indo-Bangladesh relations at the

concluding day of his tour, he will visit

persuade Bangladesh to support the

G4 resolution for expanding the UN

Japan, Brazil and Germany are seek-

ing permanent seats in the council.

He will also deliver a speech on

In the morning on August 8, the

During Singh's visit, India will

The G4 nations comprising India,

Opposition Leader Sheikh Hasina

Ramkrishna Mission in the city.

Security Council, sources said.

Singh is due to meet Finance

ng a joint press briefing.

BRAC Centre.

Other bilateral matters encom-

scheduled for November 12-13

port during the last seven months.

Security

FROM PAGE 1

A total of 32 days' work suspension

After his transfer Acting Customs

Some traders at Benapole alleged that the strike at the Benapole land port was enforced due to the monetary osses of some big shots in the Benapole C&F Agents' Association. These officials earned a huge amount of illegal money by depriving the government of revenue worth over Tk 300 crore during the tenure of

South Asian Economic Union

"We should ensure the Safta's

due to a lack of institutional and financial mechanisms for executing regional projects and programmes, Prof Arjun Sengupta said the

told The Daily Star that they have a list of about 15,000 Qawmi madrasas. Jabbar, however, said there are many such madrasas which are not enlisted with the board. Moreover, Education Minister

ter's degrees of general education.

ates at the national level is negligible despite some recent moves to update the course curricula of madrasas," he observed. "Most of the madrasa graduates

In the last four years, as many as 1,720 general educational institu-

tions (schools and colleges up to the

The number of teachers in the The number of students in

general educational institutions rose by 3,694 to reach 16,882 while that of madrasas reached 7.122 with an

the number of teachers increased by

250 to Tk 300 for over 200 square feet. a provision of the current budget for whitening black money. NBR sources said many professionals like lawyers, physicians and engineers evade paying income tax and keep the black money secret, depositing it in non-revealed bank accounts or investing in saving

the taxpavers, but will be added to their wealth statement. This measure is aimed at preventing taxpaver to show their regular income as black money, as the tax on the latter is much less than the former. Ironically, while the lowest rate of tax on taxable income is 10 percent, it is 2.5 percent more than the tax on

However, the money whitened

workers mixing colours in sweetmeat. He instantly arrested bakery manager

FROM PAGE 1 showing the mug shots of the suspected terrorists who made the July 7 attacks. Shahara's killer-suspect

speaks: Minister Khaleda Zia." Silence again. "Want to have some tea?" he asks and disappears behind the drawing room door. Sounds of a spoon stirring in the

to go sooner or later. She went sooner. But her death has some meanings."

them from any bad repute. That morning, she was going to

The family then called her bank and found out she had not reached there. Then they panicked. Exactly

finally confirmed that Shahara Islam is dead. A week of agony and BBC is again showing the face of the bombers, all of them are now in police dragnet. How does the father cemetery in London. Three weeks into that grisly