Dhaka sits with S'pore

the visit of Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong to Bangladesh on

session of the Standing Committee of Saarc Foreign Secretaries slated for August 17-18 and then will sit in annual consultation with Pakistan on August

DHAKA-SINGAPORE

the Bangladesh-Singapore consulta-tion, "when we will try to impress them about the quality of our products and to pursue them to buy more goods, fresh vegetables and fruits from Bangladesh," Hemayetuddin told the

press yesterday.

In 2004-05 Singapore imported fresh vegetables and fruits to the tune of \$10 million. The foreign secretary said, Singapore usually buy these products from its neighbours. We cannot compete because of the high air fair, which

He said Bangladesh will focus on exporting skilled and semi-skilled manpower, signing of trade agreement and seeking more Singaporean investment, particularly relocation of their sunset industries, in the talks, "We will discuss the export of manpower intensively and pursue them to recruit more

Bangladesh port officials by Singapore Port Training Authority and visa liberalisation for Bangladeshis.

CONSULTATION In Islamabad Hemayetuddin will first attend the 31st session of the Standing Committee of Saarc Foreign Secretaries to review the progress of various Saarc activities since the 12th

Saarc Summit held in Islamabad in

DHAKA-ISLAMABAD

January last year.

Hemayet said the finance and planning ministers of the Saarc countries would meet possibly in Colombo in mid-October to discuss establishment of a South Asian Development Fund (SADF), Saarc Infrastructure , Saarc Poverty Alleviation Fund and South Asian Economic Union.

Besides, he said, the Saarc commerce ministers would meet in October in Islamabad to give a final shape to the Safta

Hemayetuddin next will attend the Bangladesh-Pakistan foreign secrelevel annual consultation on August 19-20 to review the entire range of bilateral issues, particularly trade and economic co-operation.

He said the two sides in their talks will put special emphasis on increased people-to-people contact for further strengthening the existing excellent

At the consultation with Pakistan Foreign Secretary Riaz Mohammad Khan, he said, Bangladesh which has been pursuing duty-free access of 102

Siraiul Islam in the last election by a

main opposition Awami League.

The supporters of ruling BNP in

the area have become jubilant while

those of Siraj depressed over the

Wednesday's decision of BNP

chairperson. Sirajul's decision of

withdrawal without consulting

anyone from the locality has

"We are happy as we know

already that our candidate is going

enraged his supporters.

Prior to the official talks. Prime

Minister Khaleda Zia will pay a courtesy call on Chinese President Hu at the Great Hall. Bangladesh will reaffirm its stance

of always sticking to the "One-China" Policy, officials said. During the visit, the PM will address

a high-profile business seminar and meet top business leaders and executives on August 19. She will also meet Chairman of the Chinese National Congress U

Bangguo.

the industries. Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan Energy Ministry Advisor and Chairman of Board of Investment Mahmudur Rahman, senior officials and a busi-

She will return home on August 21.

Manmohan

FROM PAGE 1

He was intervening in a discussion on the Nanavati Commission report on

Admitting that the past cannot be undone, he urged: "But we have the

In a statement similar to his remarks made in the Lok Sabha a day ago. Manmohan Singh reached out to wounded members of his community not only by assuring justice but stating that the probe could not end here.

"There is no evidence against the top leadership of the country but the Sikh youth have been poisoned by (the allegations)."

If there were any reports of adverse conduct, he continued, the govern ment would reopen the case. He referred to union minister Jagdish Tytler's resignation on Wednesday, after the prime minister's statement in

the Lok Sabha. "One of our valued colleagues has already tendered his resignation. Anybody who has been named in the report because of adverse conduct,

we will reopen and re-examine the cases," the prime minister said. He said the government would do everything possible to ameliorate the

that the government stands committed

a tougher law to check food adulteration, Babar said the Pure Food to ensure that justice is done.' Ordinance is being fortified under an initiative of the LGRD ministry towards that end.

On punitive actions against the government employees concerned for failure to ensure food quality, he said. "Steps will be taken against them under the same law. We'll not make any compromise no matter whether he is a government

employee or a trader MEDIÁ ROLE HAILED

The state minister thanked the media for their continuous support to the hygiene drive, mentioning that he had ordered mobile courts to swing into action prompted by a report of The Daily Star on adulteration of manages.

"During this drive, we've seen how strong a role the media can play to encourage a good work. Despite their [businessmen's] movement, we've succeeded in carrying on with the drive thanks to the encouragement and support lent by the media," he said. US VISIT

On the outcome of his US visit. Babar said the US government has promised to provide a range of equipment and facilities for the police, Rapid Action Battalion and Coastguard.

"I requested for helicopters, forensic laboratory, vehicles and a lot many other things and they assured me to provide those," he

Babar said he requested the US government to relax the rules and visa processing for Banaladeshi students and businessmen. "I repeatedly pointed out that no Bangladeshi citizen has so far been found a terrorist in any foreign country," he recalled, adding, "I also told them that Bangladesh is a partner of the US War on Terror and will not permit any terrorist group operate in its territory.

products to Pakistan will push the matter again. He said Pakistan has already given duty-free access of raw iute and tea and "we are now trying to push ceramics, pharmaceuticals,

other products. Bangladesh now enjoy duty-free access of 10,000 tons of tea to Pakistani market Dhaka wants to increase this volume and other exports as it suffered a \$149.44 million trade gap with Pakistan in 2003-

might be sought for setting composite textile mills in Bangladesh.

Trade, energy

Khaleda's visit to China within four months of Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao's Dhaka visit itself gives the message of "closeness, understanding and cooperation" between the two countries, he said.

The economic relations between the two countries are growing, and both sides have "deepening" cultural and educational relations as well as and "expanding" science and technology relations, the foreign secretary said.

On the first day of her visit on August 17. Khaleda Zia will be given a colourful reception at the Great Hall in Beijing marking the 30th anniversary of Bangladesh-China diplomatic relations. Chinese People's Association of Foreign Countries will

host the grand reception.

On August 18, Khaleda Zia and Wen Jiabao will hold talks covering the entire range of bilateral relations a

margin of over six thousand votes. The seat fell vacant when Siraj joined ruling BNP, deserting the

> From Beijing, the Bangladesh prime minister will go to Guilin and Guangzu provinces to visit some industrial sites there and exchange views with the governors and chiefs of

> ness delegation will accompany Prime Minister Khaleda Zia during her China

and tides in a nation's history.

the riots and the government's action taken report (ATR) that had evoked widespread criticism for virtually letting Congress leaders off the hook.

willpower to write a better future and ensure such incidents are not Since joining BNP, Sirajul faced

"The search must go on," he said.

problems of the widows of 1984. ambit of law to take action against police officers named in the Nanavati . Commission. You have my assurance

IO ignores court

on Tuesday that was based on the case filed by local Jubo Dal leader Al-Mamun with the Khilgaon Police Station against eight local AL and its front organisation leaders under the Speedy Trial (Law and Order Disruption) Act on May 22.

case after Amir died on May 25.

assistant information and research secretary of Jubo League (South) of Dhaka city, Nuruzzaman Jèwel, joint secretary of Jubo League of Khilgaon Shakawat Hossain Shawkat, office secretary of AL Khilgaon unit, Anisur Rahman, orgainising secretary of Sabujbagh unit of Chhatra League, Shahadat Hossain Sadu, president of Chhatra League's ward no 24 unit, Kamal Hossain, convenor of Khilgaon unit of Chhatra League and joint convenors Akhteruzzaman Rassel and Abu Saved.

Of them, Sadu and Anis are now in the custody while the others are on

In the charge sheet, the IO did not mention the statement of the case filed by Aklima Akhtar Babita, wife of the slain autorickshaw driver with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka.

In the case Babita alleged that the CNG-run autorickshaw owner Anwar Mollah alias Mohammad Anu Miah killed her husband Amir in a preplanned way as he had enmity with the

Amir, while undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College and Hospital, narrated the incident to his wife and mother before he died on May

25, she said. gave a statement to the IO where she did not mention any of the accused AL, Chhatra League and Jubo League leaders and activists.

Chevron Texaco says Free nation

expected to come online from 2007. Bibiyana is estimated to have a reserve of 2.6 trillion cubic feet (tcf) of gas while Unocal believes it has a potential of having up to 5.5 tcf.

The takeover was completed yesterday when majority of the Unocal shareholders voted in favour of the merger, says a press release. The merger also scotched a Chinese company's effort to outbid Chevron and buy Unocal.

"This merger provides current and long-term investment value, and Unocal is an excellent strategic fit with Chevron's assets and corporate culture," said David J O'Reilly, Chevron's chairman and chief executive officer.

The combined company will produce around 2.8 million barrels of oil-equivalent a day.

Unocal's key areas of operations are in the Asia-Pacific and Caspian regions, and the US Gulf of Mexico. In Asia-Pacific, the combined company will generate more than 20 percent of its equivalent daily crude oil and gas production and act as the leading resource holder there.

Unocal started playing a major role in Bangladesh's gas sector from

1996 by taking blocks 12, 13 and 14 in partnership with US oil company Occidental, In 1999, it acquired the entire operation of these blocks.

It is now producing gas from the Moulavibazar Gas Field, which bears the legacy of the Magurchhara blowout. The explosion resulted from negligent operation of Occidental in 1997. The compensation for the loss and damage Bangladesh suffered due to the blowout has yet to be resolved.

Bangladesh in 1997 to take part in the second round block bidding Despite the high profile of the company, the government was at first reluctant to award it any block. But three years later, it had signed a production sharing contract (PSC) with the company, making Tullow, an Irish company, its partner for

had left Bangladesh after selling out its concerns to Canadian minor company Niko. The Canadian company was found technically and financially disqualified in the second round block bidding.

Oil holds near record

cents at \$64.50 at 1110 GMT after hitting a record-high \$65.30 in earlier trade. London Brent was down 22 cents at \$63.77 after touching \$64.57. Even with US crude averaging

above \$53 a barrel for the year to date, in real terms prices are still below the \$80 a barrel average of 1980, after the Iranian revolution. The United States economy is

proving resilient and gasoline

demand is powering ahead. "The recent evidence is that the US economy is not merely clinging on in the face of higher energy

prices, it is in fact moving forward fairly vigorously," said Barclays Capital in a report. As oil producers like Norway and Russia fail to live up to expectations. consumers are increasingly reliant on the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries to fill the gap. But here too there are

Protests

local correspondent of Ittefaq and president of Baufal Press Club, presided over the meeting.

Journalists of Baufal and

Patuakhali Press Club said they would stop publishing news of Shahidul Alam Talukdar, lawmaker of Baufal, and local BNP until they apologise.

They also demanded immediate removal of Nur Muhammad, officer in charge of Baufal Police Station for his partisan role and refusal to accept a case from the journalists. The journalists warned of tougher

programmes if their demands are not met within seven days. Local newsmen again went into hiding following threats by BNP cadres

after the team from Patuakhali Press Club had left Baufal Returning from Baufal the Patuakhali Press Club team held a protest meeting at Patuakhali Press

Club condemning the attack.

concerns over future supplies

Oil prices have risen in nine of the past 11 sessions as the market has been edgy over possible disruptions to exports from Saudi Arabia and Iran, OPEC's two-largest oil

Security

The source said 17 Maoist organisations of South Asia are likely to attend the CCOMPOSA conference which is to be held in the country later this year.

Purbo Banglar Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist), PBCP M-L Red Flag (Lal Potaka), PBCP M-L People's War (Janajuddha), PBCP M-L Sarbohara and Biplobi Communist Party are the five local organisations that are likely to attend the conference.

Maoist operatives selected Bangladesh for CCOMPOSA conference with plans to increase Maoist support in the country for their goal of establishing a Maoist country, 'Dandkaranya Desam'. 'Dandkaranya Desam', a Maoist

El Dorado in South Asia, stretches from Nepal-Bhutan and covers North Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa, South Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu. Washington based web newspa-

per South Asia Tribune reported last July that the combined strength of Indian and Nepali Maoists were increasing and they had already raised 16.000 Combatants, 32,000 armed forces, 70,000 followers and 600,000 patrons. Sources said the local under-

ground groups recently developed relations with leftists in India particularly the Naxalites of West Bengal.

Army men in jail

Talking to The Daily Star, many jail officials expressed their apprehension that the government will gradually fill all the seven DIG (Prisons) posts with army officers although it has primarily decided to make one such appointment.

"It will be no wonder for me if I see one day an army havilder is brought to serve in my position," said a district jailer, seeking anonymity.

In the last 27 years only two officials of the jail administration were appointed to the post of IG (Prisons) but they got the opportunity to serve for a few months, much to the disap-pointment of qualified officers of the Prisons Directorate.

To their utter despair, the government started appointing army officers to the post of additional IG (Prisons) in 2003

"Qualified officials of our department has no reason to find their future bright as the government has decided to bring in army officers to the post of DIG," a former DIG (Prisons) told The Daily Star yesterday. He demanded a halt in this process. Government sources said an

army officer of major rank would be appointed as DIG (Prisons) soon and the appointment process is almost complete. The existing recruitment rules of the Prisons Directorate say the appointment of IG (Prisons) should be

made from the directorate. The rules further dictate the appointment to the top posts should be made by promoting the departmental officials on the basis of merit and seniority. If no-one is found suitable for promotion, one may be appointed on deputation. The government first appointed

on deputation from the army in 1977 transferring the then IG Prisons ATM Nuruzzaman to the Fire Brigade. Appointment of army officers as IG (Prisons) later continued, with a break in 1981 when the government reappointed ATM Nuruzzaman to the

Brigadier Abdul Haq, as IG (Prisons)

post for six months. In February 2001, the Awami League government appointed Liakat Ali Khan of the Directorate as IG (Prisons), but the coalition government made him officer on special duty (OSD) and replaced him with an army officer. Khan still remains OSD. When potential top post candi-

dates of the directorate were disap-

pointed, the government appointed

(Prisons) on February 2, 2003.

Col Siraiul Karim as additional IG

"Limiting the opportunity of promotion of qualified officials of the Prisons Directorate, the government is now going to appoint an army officer to one of the seven DIG (Prisons) posts," said an aggrieved jail official. "Although there are lot of officials

having qualifications for the top posts. the government continues to make appointment from the army," he said. 'The government has a plan to fill all the top posts of the jail administration with army men depriving the departmental officials of promotion for long," he added.

UK Muslims

FROM PAGE 1

Iraq, Bosnia, Somalia and Albania. The numbers of Muslims of Afro-Caribbean and European origins are also on the rise.

But as the Muslims of South Asian origin, coming from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, comprise the majority, the sermons including the Friday Jumma Khutbas are usually delivered in Arabic, Urdu or Bangla in the mosques run by the Asian communities. This practice bars the non-Arab and non-South Asian Muslims from understanding the speeches.

Besides, more than half of the UK Muslims is born here. They also prefer sermons in English, as in most cases these young people do not understand Arabic and are not fluent in their mother tongues.

Some respondents of the MORI polls also have suggested training Imams here instead of hiring the clergy from the Indian Sub-Continent, as is presently done. Many young Muslims said some of the Imams from the sub-continent

are out of touch with the modern world and the dynamics of life in Britain, unaware of the issues affecting the lives of British Muslims. There is also a fear that some of the extremist Muslim groups operating in the UK are run by such puritanical and intolerant non-British clergy-Sunnis and the Kurds to help arrive at a men. A large number of respondents

said local Imams, well conversant in

English and trained in the UK, would

counteract the influences of such

advocates for violence on the youn-

religion of peace and tolerance,

which it really is.

it to prevent the Awami League.

FROM PAGE 20

She said the Jamaat-e-Islami is deceiving the people in the name of Islam and patronising the extremist

militant groups. She urged the religious leaders to take a firm stance against it.

Hasina alleged that the alliance government was killing people without trial, which Islam does not approve. She urged the religious leaders to be vocal against it.

The Awami League chief said August was a month of mourning. She said the killers murdered Bangabandhu along with his family members on August 15, 1975. She lamented that the verdict in Bangabandhu murder case has not vet been executed.

After the meeting, prayers were offered for the departed souls of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the others, who were assassinated on August 15.

Muggers

FROM PAGE 1 thighs, and the criminals fled on a motorbike.

The locals and staff of the factory rushed Jabbar to Combined Military Hospital (CMH) in the city while Ibrahim was admitted to the local Central Hospital.

The police said the victims drew the money from the Malibagh branch of the National Credit and Commerce Bank Limited at about 12:45pm.

They hired a yellow taxicab from Malibagh for Dakkhin Khan, but got off near the airport roundabout due to traffic jam. They later hired a rickshaw to the factory and when they got down at the entrance to the factory, the criminals attacked them from behind.

The police could neither arrest anyone nor recover the money until 8:30pm last night.

Assistant Commissioner of Uttara Zone of Dhaka Metropolitan Police Ehsanullah vesterday told The Daily Star that a patrol team of police went to the garment factory an hour before the incident took place to inquire if everything was going right.

Factory owner Khasru Chowdhury told the police that they had no problem. Ehsan said, "We always request people and even send letters to different banks to take police help while

transacting big amounts of money, but very few people respond to us." He said such incident will not happen if police help is taken.

Tk 146cr

FROM PAGE 1 with over 7.48 crore voters on the list. "The actual amount will be settled in consultation with the finance ministry, EC Secretary SM Zakaria told The Daily

The EC Secretariat however has not

yet finalised the schedule of preparing the electoral rolls. Only a work order to print five crore forms for collecting information about eligible voters has been given to the government printing "The schedule will be prepared after

Secretariat official said. The task of recruiting enumerators supervisors and registration assistants however will start soon. The recruited officials will be provided with training for the preparation of electoral rolls, the

receiving the fund," a senior EC

BDNEWS adds: The EC's proposed budget for preparing a fresh voter list was bounced back by the finance ministry on the grounds of not maintain ing proper procedures.

The EC yesterday morning sent the Tk 146.29 crore budget to the finance ministry with the signature of Deputy

secretary Mihir Sarwar Morshed with out any summary of the file. The finance ministry, after examining the file, sent it back to the EC saying that EC secretary's sign is a must for

seeking such a huge fund. The ministry also asked the commission to include a summary in the file of the proposed budget

Warne breaks

FROM PAGE 20 first ball in Test cricket against England, he bowled Mike Gatting with a viciously turning leg-break that pitched outside the batsman's pads and clipped the top

Warne, who returned figures of 10 for 162, became the first bowler to take 100 Test wickets in a single foreign country.

Before this match, Warne had taken

In the second Test at Edgbaston

16 wickets in the first two Tests of the series at an average of 15.31 with a hest of six for 46 in the second innings

Rebels kill

FROM PAGE 20

west Iraq.

forces in Iraq with about 50 soldiers killed across the war-torn country. Four died and six were wounded when insurgents ambushed their patrol vehicles near the northern oil town of Baiji, the military said, adding that rebels set off a mine and opened

fire with guns.

The attack was claimed by Al-

Qaeda's frontman in Iraq, Abu Musab

al-Zargawi, according to an unverified Internet statement. A fifth soldier was killed by a suicide car bomber in the capital, while a sixth died by small arms fire during combat operations near Habbaniyah in north-

Meanwhile, top Iraqi leaders met in groups to work out their differences over the constitution. Jaafari expressed hope that the constitution would be ready by August 15.

"The constitution must be done according to the timetable, just like the way elections and the government

were formed "he said Groups of Shias, Sunnis and Kurds met separately in Baghdad to debate the unresolved issues dogging the final draft constitution as rebels continued their attacks, killing three people. "A series of meetings were being held on Thursday by the Shias, the

decision," Mahmud Othman, a member of the constitution panel told AFP. A top US military official meanwhile ruled out early withdrawal of US forces from Iraq, saying the Iraqi military was still unable to cope with the insurgency ger people by promoting Islam as a

5,050 graft cases

cases after the defendants' petition for stay order.

ACC Chairman Justice Sultan Hossain Khan on May 7 sent a letter to the law ministry through the cabinet division to inquire about the commission's responsibility in conducting the cases.

But the government reply failed to give the ACC a guideline to resolve the problem fast, said a

The law ministry later sent a letter to the cabinet division on June 26, suggesting that the commission's prosecution unit would be able to deal with the cases.

A month later, the cabinet division wrote to the ACC saying, "After complete organogram of the commission is finalised and approved by the government, the commission's prosecution unit can be formed. Following the formal formation of the prosecution unit, cases can be conducted through the unit."

Although the ACC Act savs that lawyers appointed or employed by the commission on temporary basis will be able to run the cases until the prosecution unit is formed, the government did not make anv instruction in this regard.

On receiving the letter, ACC Secretary Ataur Rahman wrote a letter to the cabinet division saying that the responsibility of conducting the on-trial cases will not be on the commission but on the government as conducting these cases has been associated with the completion of the commission's organogram and formation of its prosecuting unit.

Expressing worry that absence of the prosecution witnesses during the hearing and other complications are delaying the trial, the secretary

gain "undue advantage" for this. An ACC source said the government's legal opinion will only linger the crisis rather than resolve the stagnation of the on-trial cases for

apprehends that the accused might

over nine months. According to the ACC Act, the government is responsible for the ACC organogram and budget. As the government took no steps, the three-member ACC itself initiated the process of forming the draft organogram of over 1000 staff and sent it to the establishment ministry

in April for government approval. But the ministry sent the draft back to the commission saying it is incomplete and suggested incorporation of

the staff's job description in it. Although the ACC was not willing to take any assistance of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) from the very beginning, while working on the draft, it finally decided in July to take the ADB help upon the government's desire.

Govt won't

London.

to 2001.

nab her.

Giersing.

Ambassador in Sweden Sabihuddin Ahmed, who is also on contract after his retirement as secretary of the Ministry of Environment and Forest, as the next high commissioner in

In a separate letter on Wednesday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs asked Bangladesh Ambassador in Italy Anwarul Bar Chowdhury to return to Dhaka by October handing over the charge.

The government is yet to announce the name of the next

ambassador in Rome. Foreign ministry officials hinted that one of its directors general is likely to be appointed in Rome soon.

Since then she had been in

"The priority for these children

now is that they be rehabilitated and

integrated into the family, their local

communities and Bangladesh

society. Their safety and well-being

is our focus now," said Unicef

Resident Representative Marten

ians are "fake mothers" while some

others are relatives, Lutfozzaman

Babar said, "We will try our best to

Admitting that some of the guard-

constant fear that the police might

Back home

"I was regularly put on a camel in the race where 60 to 150 camels would run. I had to whip the camel so that I can go first. If failed to be first, second or third, my employer would beat me up," said Abdul Samad, 13, of Noakhali whom his maternal uncle and aunt took to the UAE eight years back.

and speedy camel, but I had to suffer for that," Samad, slender and thin boy told The Daily Star at the Samad's uncle and aunt Nurunnabi and Ratna Nobi, who took him to the UAE, had promised his parents in Noakhali that the boy

"I could not cope with the strong

every day. Samad said he was entitled to get a package of 500 dirham (Tk 8,500) a month, but he never received it. He even does not know if his uncle sent his parents at home

any money.

Meanwhile, interviews with a number of guardians revealed that many of them were not mothers of the children. Some of the guardians selves were victims of traffickers

mostly nephews. Rokeya Begum, 35, of Sylhet went to the Emirates six years back with two of his nephews Al Amin, 8, and Sayeed, 7, paying one lakh taka

They took others' children to the

UAE saying they were relatives,

problem if I take the children with me, and the airport authorities also permitted me to go," she said. Rokeya, who worked as a maid servant since her arrival there in 1999, had her work permit valid up

"I was said that I would have no

identify the parents and rehabilitate in their homes. The social welfare ministry will rehabilitate the children whose would live well and go to school parents are not identified, he told

reporters at the ZIA.

the shelter home of BNWLA in the capital for an interim period, he This is the first batch of returned camel jockeys after the UAE signed an agreement in May this year with

Unicef to ban the use of children

The children will be at Proshanti,

under 16 and weighing less than 45 kg (100 pounds) as camel iockevs. More than 150 camel lockevs are to return to Bangladesh in several phases BNWLA alone repatriated some

150 children either while being

trafficked or from the UAE or Saudi

Arabia in the last 12 years, said the organisation officials. The UAE government will give \$1000 to Bangladesh government for each of the children. A cell comprising the representatives from Unicef, IOM, NGOs and government will monitor the use of the money for rehabilitation of the

children, advocate Salma Ali of

Mobile court faces

to the brokers.

she need not check the shop.

Despite the hindrance, the magistrate went ahead and unearthed the unpleasant food items and conditions At one stage of the court, an unidentified man called her on cellphone and threatened with dire consequences. The caller advised her to be careful about the raid

She also sentenced managing partner Anwarul Kibria to three days in prison and marketing manager Dolar Chowdhury and employee Dolan Das to 15 days each. When contacted, Magistrate Sarwar Jahan admitted to have received the 'phone call', and said the shop employees had attempted to

obstruct her in the execution of duty

The magistrate levied the fine in

four cases under BSTI and CCC act

She said. "For the first time I have encountered such incident since started the raiding job in March." Besides, the mobile court fined Kamal Store, a well-known department store shop in the same locality Tk 35,800 for keeping expired baby food and cheating customers in weight. The shop is owned by Md Kamaluddin, leading businessman and proprietor of Meridian Chinese

Tuesday by another court. The magistrate also fined Candy Snacks Tk 13,000, Hotel Niribili and Cafe Alam Tk 10.000 each, and Hotel Zaman Tk 5.000 for stale food and insanitary conditions of kitchen.

restaurant, which too was fined on

In Dhaka, the mobile court of Magistrate ABM Abdul Fattah raided nine restaurants, sweet shops, and hotels in Maghbazar area and levied on the owners fines of Tk 1.59 lakh.

During the raid in the area, the magistrate fined Three Star Restaurant Tk 20.000. Shahin Hotel Tk 12,000, Janata Sweets Tk 20,000, Food Valley Tk 2,000, Titas Hotel Tk 20,000, Café de Raj Tk 20,000, Rose Garden Mini Chinese Restaurant Tk 30,000, Café de Taj Tk 25,000, and Rosh Sweets Tk 10.000.

"Most of the restaurants did not have hygienic conditions in the kitchen and inside the restaurant premises.

Some had stale food while some did not have expiry dates on the labels of the packet foods." the magistrate told

Fattah said that his court found

artificial toxic colours in dishes served

by Titas Hotel, Café de Taj, and Rose

The Daily Star.

Garden. "They add colour to the spices to make them [meat] look redder and more delicious," the magistrate said, quoting the cooks of the Meanwhile, another court led by Magistrate Rokonuddoullah raided two canteens at Bangabandhu Sheikh

those in total Tk 3000. "Both the canteens had stale food, unhygienic atmosphere and dishes, the magistrate told The Daily Star. Another mobile court, led by Magistrate Mizanur Rahman found

two fake bottled- water factories at

Karwan Bazar, and an ice cream

company reusing the unsold products

at Mohammadpur yesterday.

Mujib Medical University and fined

Water with tap water," the magistrate told The Daily Star, adding, "We seized all the materials and fined them Tk 10.000. In the same area, the court found

factory filling bottles labelled Breeze

"We found employees in one

another water-bottling factory without any label and sealed off the factory. The court also fined Dolphin Ice Cream Tk 30,000 for reusing the unsold ice creams and LA Food

Beverage Tk 20,000 for selling items

Meanwhile, Dhaka Ruti Biscuit and Confectionary Sramik Union [A labour union of bread, biscuit manufacturing and confectionery] protested the courts' fining and imprisoning the employees of the adulterated food

using other company's license.

The Union in press release yesterday welcomed the drive against the adulterated food and supported taking actions the dishonest businessmen and owners, but urged not to close the factories or shops rendering many neople unemployed

FROM PAGE 1 The two countries signed an Investment Guarantee Agreement and Dhaka also will seek technical co-operation in various sectors, scholardecided to hold vearly consultations ships for Bangladeshi students. cobetween their foreign ministries during operation in horticulture, training to leather goods and garments among

June 21-24 last year. From Singapore, Hemayetuddin will go to Islamabad to attend the 31st

CONSULTATION
All bilateral issues will be discussed in

we will request them to reduce."

The present Dhaka- Singapore trade is insignificant, with the balance of trade in favour of Singapore,

Move on to arrange BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia on Wednesday picked Shah Mohammad Abu Zafar as the ruling alliance candidate to contest the Faridpur-1 by-election, cancelling

the nomination of Kazi Sirajul Islam.

ture by Sirajul, who was nominated

as the four-party alliance candidate on August 4, there is hardly any

With the withdrawal of candida-

powerful candidate left to compete the race. The main opposition Awami League has already announced to boycott the election to the constituency comprising three upazilas, Boalmari, Alfadanga and Madhykhali. Local observers say none of the

rest four contenders has the ability

to offer any competition. They do not

have the least base of support

among the people in the area. If the

election is held with this line-up,

except Zafar, none is likely to poll more than 5,000 votes, they "If the election is held at last, it would be exceedingly dull and flat, said Mirza Akhtaruzzaman, a local

Of the four contenders. Mufti

Sharafat Hossain was nominated by

a faction of Islami Oikya Jote and

Krishak Mohammad Sadek by

Krishak Sramik Mukti Andolon. The

rest two--Moulana Mujibur Rahman

and Nurul Abedinare independent The last date for withdrawing candidature was July 14. Locals said Sirajul's withdrawal

from the race leaves the field clear

for Zafar, who was defeated by Kazi

Hygiene drive to spread staff and logistic facilities to meet the demand Anyway, "It's a continuous pro-

cess," the state minister said, "and

we are committed to continue with

the drive putting in the highest

possible efforts.

HYGIENE DRIVE

ACTIVITY REPORT Since the June 14 launch of the hygiene drive in Dhaka, four mobile courts so far have awarded imprisonment of various duration to 107 people, brought charges against 2,556 and exacted Tk 49 lakh from

Magistrate of Dhaka Jalal Ahmed told yesterday's meeting.
As Jalal Ahmed regretted inadequate logistics, Babar assured him of addressing the constraint, meeting sources said. The meeting decided to set up

and put mobile courts in operation in

division, district and municipality

courts to include eviction of squat-

The meeting also directed the

levels soon across the country.

2,096 in fines, Chief Metropolitan

ting vendors from footpaths. stopping doctoring of weighing devices and adulteration of fuels into their scope of operation. Many of the city's Chinese restaurants serve spurious and unhygienic foods, taking advantage of their dim lighting, meeting partici-pants observed and suggested

making clear visibility at food joints a

In the meeting, Inspector General of Police Abdul Quayum

said there should by intensified watch during the upcoming month of Ramadan to ensure the quality of In response, State Minister Babar said as many as 35 mobile courts will be engaged in Ramadan. Referring to the hue and cry raised by the business community when the mobile courts take action against unscrupulous traders,

Babar ordered to increase the

number of police and BDR mem-

bers assisting the courts.

The courts find it difficult to take action against many adulterators due to the absence of a means to test the quality of perishable items like fish and milk quickly, the meeting noted. It asked Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI) to devise a means to do away with the limitation. The meeting emphasised the need for better co-ordination

agencies concerned, including the BSTI, public health department and **Dhaka City Corporation** Babar also warned the mobile

between the staffs of the various

to win the election," said Haider Ali Mollah, organising secretary of Madhukhali Upazila BNP. He said the internal feud within the party has been resolved and 95 percent of people now supports Shah Abu Zafar.

"There is no sign of electioneer-

ing in the area as the charm of the

election has already been lost with

the latest developments," observed

Mohammad Masudul Islam, acting

principal of a local women's college.

The election is bound to be onesided with major political parties opting out of it, he noted. Faridpur-1 constituency, which has always been an AL stronghold, is all set to go to ruling BNP for the

stiff resistance from Al leaders and

workers in Boalmari and Alfadanga

court members against any abuse

As imprisonment and fine are not

enough to contain food adulterators,

the home ministry has decided also

to employ other suitable measures

including filing cases under the

said, "If necessary, I'll go to any

On this point, the state minister

When asked whether the gov-

ernment is considering formulating

Special Power Act, if necessary,

length within the scope of law.'

HARSHER ACTIONS

first time since independence.

His motorcade came under attack last month while he was going to Faridpur for the first time after the

"We will also do all possible in the

League enforced hartal.
The IO submitted the charge sheet

The case was turned into a murder The charge-sheeted accused are Shakawat Hossain alias Awlad,

During the investigation, Babita

Chevron Texaco first came to

An unhappy Chevron Texaco