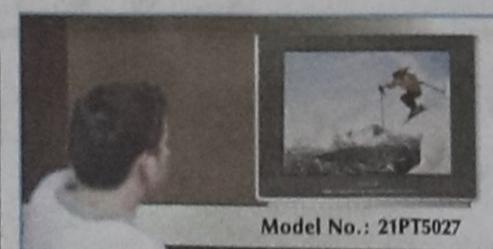


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#### Foreign adviser updates envoys on govt actions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury met the foreign envoys yesterday to brief them about the government's actions over the past year and outlined challenges the government may face this year.

Even though most envoys remained tight-lipped about the briefing, the British and US envoys said they believe the government is on the right track to meet its deadline of holding elections by the end of this year.

"I am hopeful, confident and certain that elections will be held by the end of 2008," US Charge d'Affaires Geeta Pasi told reporters after the meeting held at the foreign ministry. This is the fourth such meeting between the foreign adviser and all envoys since the caretaker government took charge on January 12, 2007.

British High Commissioner SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

AL asks govt

not to redraw

constituencies

It could hamper polls

roadmap, says Zillur

President, Zillur Rahman yesterday

not to redraw the parliamentary

constituencies as it could hamper

the announced electoral roadmap.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

the fore unexpectedly.

Scotland Yard

AFP, Karachi

assassination.

body involved.

met the Scotland Yard team in

Karachi and I gave them some

evidence." Zardari told reporters at

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

LAW, ORDER IN 2007

# Crime rate falls, probes make little headway

SHARIFUL ISLAM

The overall law and order marked an improvement in 2007 except some stray incident as the country went through the state of emergency from the beginning of the

However, killings of Supreme Court lawyer advocate Sayma Khanum, two Rab members in Savar, a National Security Intelligence (NSI) official and a North South University (NSU) teacher in the city were some of the incidents that created sensation.

The rise of the dope gangs popularly known as "ogyan party" and "molom party" had also created tension among the people. But the law enforcement agencies

launched a crackdown on them and apparently rounded off their activities by arresting the ring-

The law enforcement agencies also made breakthroughs in some bomb and grenade blast cases. But their failure was evident in several sensational cases including the biggest ever arms and ammo haul in Chittagong and seizure of huge ammunition and explosives in

Workers' unrests in several readymade garments and jute industries and violence at different educational institutions also marked the period. The outburst of violence in educational institutions led the government to slap a curfew in all divisional headquar-

ters to contain law and order.

The number of major criminal incidents showed a downtrend due to the state of emergency, which was declared on January 11 Though the number of cases filed in 2007 increased, police believe it happened as people felt free to make complaints. Around 1.31 lakh cases were filed nationwide in 2006 and about 1.57 lakh in 2007

Police high-ups believe absence of political interference in home affairs, stop of politicisation in police department, neutral working environment, and providing due promotion also contributed to

improved law and order. Execution of six top leaders of outlawed Islamist outfit Jama'atul

**SEE PAGE 2 COL 5** 

#### Kazi Zafarullah freed on bail

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League Presidium Member Kazi Zafarullah was released from the Dhaka Central Jail yesterday afternoon following the court granted him bail.

DIG (Prisons) Major Shamsul Haider Siddiqui told the news agency that Zafarullah was released from the jail at about

The joint forces arrested Zafarullah, a former MP from Faridpur, from in front of his Gulshan residence on April 18. He was prosecuted in three cases, including one on extortion charges.

Zafarullah was re-arrested under the Emergency Power Rules from the jail gate when freed on bail on December 11.

Barrister Shafique Ahmed, counsel for Zafrullah, said the court has granted him bail in all the three cases.



Demonstrating garment workers use an electric pole to blockade a street in Mirpur Section-14 in the capital yester-

#### Necessity of emergency lessened

Says law adviser

UNB, Dhaka

Newly appointed Law Adviser Hassan Ariff yesterday said the necessity for the state of emergency has lessened and that the regime would not be needed at all it normalcy prevails in the country.

"The state of emergency was essential following the incidents preceding 1/11...Now its necessity is diminishing. We'll have to see whether normal condition prevails. If it does, emergency is not SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

#### HC asks govt not to remand Tarique

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday directed the government not to take former premier Khaleda Zia's son Tarique Rahman on police remand and quiz him instead at jail gate if it is necessary for investiga-

The HC gave the decision after hearing Tarique's petition against placing him on a one-day remand Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Ehsanul Haque had ordered on January 9 in a Tk 1.32 crore extortion case.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

## India for nuclear energy cooperation with China

AFP, Beijing

With a controversial nuclear deal with the United States now in limbo, India held out the possibility yesterday of civilian nuclear cooperation with China.

Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, on the last day of a visit to China, said the world's two most populous nations -- who have a decades-long history of mistrust -- should work together to develop their nuclear energy programmes.

"India seeks international cooperation in the field of civilian nuclear energy, including with China," Singh said, noting such cooperation could help the two countries meet their skyrocketing energy needs.

"The rapid growth of India and China will lead to expanding demand for energy. We have no choice but to widen our options for energy availability and develop viable strategies for energy security," he said in a speech at the Chinese Academy of Social

He did not go into further

Singh's visit, the first here by an Indian premier in five years, comes as the two rising Asian giants try to

strengthen ties and put their his-

tory of animosity behind them. The prime minister made an

appeal to what he called "the Asian way -- avoiding confrontation and building trust, confidence and consensus". India has already agreed a deal

for the United States to provide nuclear fuel and technology, but that has been on hold -- in part because of opposition within Singh's own administration. China has expressed reserva-

tions over the deal, citing concerns about the proliferation of nuclear materials.

Singh, who was to meet President Hu Jintao later in the day, noted that the two nations had agreed to set a target of 60 billion dollars in bilateral trade in 2010, up from nearly 40 billion dollars last | COURT CORRESPONDENT

"We should harness our complementarities and synergies in the areas of trade and business,

"India's growing consumer market, skilled human resources, and software excellence together with China's own large market, its manufacturing prowess and cost competitiveness provide the platform for exponential growth in our economicties.

Singh and Chinese Premier Wen SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

#### IGP suggests raising fine for violating traffic rules

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The inspector general of police (IGP) yesterday suggested heavy financial penalties for violating traffic rules in a bid to prevent drivers from committing traffic offences repeatedly.

"At present the rule breakers are fined as low as Tk 50 and so, they don't bother committing the offences again. But if the fine is increased to Tk 1000, they [rule breakers] will think twice before SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

### Selim Bhuiyan admits dealing with Niko

Former Dhaka Club president Selim Bhuiyan, who is accused in Niko scam case, yesterday admitted that all the dealings between Bangladesh government and the Canadian energy company were

made through him, sources said. Meantime, the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday pressed charges against former Awami League lawmaker Sheikh Helaluddin and his wife Rupa Chowdhury in a case filed for handing in false wealth statements and

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

#### France to send all artefacts back to Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The French government would send back all the Bangladeshi artefacts that were flown to Paris for an exhibition at Guimet Museum last month, the newly appointed French ambassador yesterday said.

"The issue is being resolved," Ambassador Chrley Causeret told reporters after a meeting with Foreign Affairs Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury at the foreign ministry, adding that the artefacts would be returned "as soon as SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Prayer Timing		
January 16		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-30	6-05
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-36	5-40
Esha	7-00	7-30
Course: Islamic Foundation		



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## 4 killed in explosion targeting US vehicle in Beirut

Students of Dhaka University stage a play near Aparajeyo Bangla on campus yesterday, demanding release of the arrested university teachers and a student.

AP, Beirut

Awami League (AL) Acting An explosion targeting a US Embassy vehicle yesterday in urged the caretaker government northern Beirut killed four Lebanese and injured a local embassy employee, an American official said.

"Redrawing of parliamentary In Washington, State constituencies is a difficult task Department spokesman Sean and it's hardly possible before the McCormack said two embassy polls," he said adding that they employees -- including the driver -were surprised as the issue came to were in the vehicle damaged in the blast, which could be heard across He was addressing a the Lebanese capital and sent gray SEE PAGE 15 COL 8 smoke billowing near the

no US citizens or diplomats were in

Mediterranean coast. Benazir husband and the other staffer is fine, McCormack told reporters. He said gives evidence to

McCormack said four Lebanese were killed in the explosion.

A senior US official, who was not authorized to release the information and spoke condition of anonymity, said no Americans injured or killed.

The security official, speaking on condition of anonymity in line with military rules, told The Associated Press the explosion was in the predominantly Christian Dora-Karantina neighbourhood.

Television footage showed several damaged cars, including an SUV with tinted windows, similar The driver was slightly wounded to those used by US diplomats. Plainclothes security agents were seen removing an automatic rifle SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

#### Glowing tribute to Selim Al Deen

PHOTO: SYED ZAKIR HOSSAIN

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Renowned Indian actor, director and cultural critic Bengali theatre. "Selim needs to be con-

Rudraprasad said Selim

Rudraprasad Sengupta has paid glowing tributes to legendary drama icon Selim Al Deen saying he should be remembered with utmost reverence and sincerity for the sake of future of

doled, remembered and celebrated in continuous and concrete terms... He now belongs to history and eternity. But we need to do these with utmost reverence and sincerity for our own sake, for our future, for the sake of future of Bengali theatre," he said in an e-mail to theatre activist Nasir Uddin Yousuff following Selim's death.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

# Musharraf faces call to quit over violence

### 10 people killed in Karachi blast, 3 militants get life for plot to kill Pak president

AFP, AP, Karachi

Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf faced new calls for his resignation yesterday after a bomb killed 10 people in this teeming port city ahead of key February elections, sparking violent pro-

No one has claimed responsibility for the blast, which tore through a street market on Monday evening as Musharraf was visiting Karachi.

sow fear ahead of the February 18 of the latest of dozens of bombings polls, already delayed once by the assassination of opposition leader armed US ally over the past 12

Benazir Bhutto.

Zardari, was also in the city of 12 million people but there was no suggestion either man was tar-Angry residents took to the

streets Tuesday, burning tyres and forcing shops to close their doors, in protest at the government's failure to provide adequate secu-

Officials said it was intended to the ex-general to resign in the wake the country's image. There are that have rocked the nuclear-

months, claiming more than 800 Benazir's widower, Asif Ali lives.

"The rulers must admit their failure and quit," said Raja Zafar-ul Haq, chairman of former prime minister Nawaz Sharif's opposition party, the Pakistan Muslim League-N.

He said the government's weakness was encouraging militant violence.

"The bombings have destabi-Opposition officials called for lised the economy and tarnished people who are trying to destabilise the country but the government is SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Court completes

taking statement

A Dhaka court yesterday finished

recording the depositions of wit-

nesses in one of the two cases filed

of witnesses in

COURT CORRESPONDENT

DU VIOLENCE

one case



FROM LEFT... Police escort two detainees to a Chittagong court yesterday. Apparently after a waiting relative handed one of the arrestees some money, a policeman tries to take it from his pocket under the jumper. Seeing no way, the suspect throws the money back to his relative.

against four teachers and 15 students of Dhaka University (DU) in connection with violating Emergency Power Rules (EPR) on

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

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