FROM PAGE 16

A total of 3,500 tonnes of rice was imported through Benapole port while 3,000 tonnes more will be imported today, reported our Benapole correspondent.

issued gate passes for 180 riceladen trucks yesterday.

Meanwhile, 50 trucks carrying rice had left Benapole port, customs officials said.

Rice import began on Tuesday after a three-week suspension rice at prices below \$650 a tonne

Indian central commerce ministry issued a notification on Monday clarifying that rice can be exported to Bangladesh at \$505 per tonne from India, provided its export bills were signed before today March 6.

Benapole Customs Assistant Commissioner Abdul Aziz said the customs officials of both India and Bangladesh held a meeting on Tuesday to make decisions about allowing import and export of essentials through the port yester-

Satkhira reported at least 258 trucks carrying 3, 196 tonnes of rice entered Bangladesh through

Bhomra land port Customs

fighters did not show up at the party hosted by President Iajuddin Ahmed and his wife Anwara Begum.

The sector commanders and freedom fighters had earlier announced that they would not attend any state programme having anti-liberation elements including leaders of Jamaat, the party that had opposed the Liberation War and worked as an auxiliary force of the occupying

to detained Chairperson Khaleda Zia also opted out of the reception, claiming they were not invited properly".

The AL working committee had also decided that no one from the -party would attend the Bangabhaban reception if Jamaat leaders and war criminals are invited there.

Talking to The Daily Star last night, deputy chief of the Liberation Forces and Sector Commanders Forum President AK Khandker said they boycotted the event as anti-liberation forces were invited there.

Muhammad Kamaruzzaman, assistant secretary general of Jamaat, told The Daily Star that

Mojahid and Nur Muhammad. attendant of Nizami, admitted that they did not attend the president's reception at Bangabhaban. Mojahid, however, refused to make any comment in this regard.

Superintendent Fazlul Haque Mondal said the rest of the imported rice is expected to enter Bangladesh through the port within four days.

Our correspondent from Chapainawabganj reported around 2,400 tonnes of rice were imported yesterday and 1,500 riceladen trucks have been waiting at Mohodipur land port in India to enter Bangladesh.

Our correspondent in Dinajpur reported at least 800 tonnes of rice was imported through Hili land port yesterday. But Indian customs officials barred the rest of the trucks from entering Bangladesh without showing any specific

Exporters, however, hoped that the import of rice would resume

Hili customs officials said more 900 rice-laden trucks are waiting on the Indian side to enter Bangladesh.

An exporter said the shipment dates of many consignments had already expired.

However, Indian Customs Superintendent Pandey said the Our correspondent from consignments would be allowed temple to worship him. for export if shipment dates are rescheduled.

Duta poll

FROM PAGE 1 Vice-chancellor Prof SMA Faiz, if he was aware of the incident," Prof Anwar told journalists.

He said Duta requested the election commissioner to inform the police commissioner once again about the new date and time of the poll to the association's executive committee.

President of Duta Prof Sadrul Amin said Prof Dalem Chandra received a letter from the additional deputy police commissioner yesterday afternoon asking him to reschedule the polling date, as the police had yet to give permission to the Duta executive committee for the holding of the election.

"In the letter the police commissioner mentioned that a specific date for the polling had not been mentioned in the letter sent by Duta to the police commissioner seeking permission to hold the election, so they requested us to defer the election for a minimum of two weeks so that they can give the permission", Prof Amin told the news briefing.

Earlier on January 9, Duta sent a letter to the police commissioner asking him to give permission to hold the election to its' executive committee, Prof Anwar said.

The association also sent another letter to the police commissioner on January 21 asking him to expedite the permission to hold the election, but the police commissioner did not respond.

Prof Anwar also said Duta will hold its general meeting today. He said it is mandatory to hold the election to Duta executive committee by December 31 of each year according

to the constitution of the association. The date of election to the Duta executive committee was changed

thrice before due to internal feuds. Social Science Faculty Dean Prof Harun-or-Rashid who is also a member of the Duta executive committee. said no government had interfered in the affairs of Duta till yesterday since the independence of the country.

12th century temple

terracotta tiles that once decorated the body of the temple have

terracotta tiles and other valuable things from the temple situated only 200 yards away from Bholahat police station.

Some locals blame the local authorities for never having taken any steps to preserve this ancient

structure. Others make good use of the

Local use the Shiva temples walls to dry these cakes for fuel. Some others have encroached the

wall, clearing putting pressure on the structure of the 12th century building

Dr. Majharul Islam Toru, a local historian and associate professor at the Chapainawabganj Govt. College, affirms that the temple was built during the Sen era of 1156-1206 AD.

Devotees of Shiva built the

He claims that this Shiva Temple of Bholahat is one of the most beautiful Hindu temples in the northern part of the country.

Some locals complain that the

take immediate steps for the preservation of the 12th century tem-

Badrul Alam, field officer of the Archaeology Department of Rajshahi Division, has said that the preservation for the ancient Shiva Temple is not listed as a job for the department.

strong demand for its preservation, the archaeology department may be able to take steps to consider their demand, he said.

Gen Jacob

The former Indian army general paid rich tributes to the memories of the valiant freedom fighters as

Gen Jacob said, "I want to see a prosperous Bangladesh for which millions of people shed their blood and sacrificed their lives.

An 11-member team of former Indian army officers led by Lt Gen (Retd) JFR Jacob, who took part in the Bangladesh's War of Independence in 1971, arrived in Dhaka on Tuesday night at the invitation of the government on the occasion of the Independence and National Day.

7pc GDP growth

FROM PAGE 1

public debt pushes up interest rates and crowds out private investment, which is much needed to promote economic growth.

To address the debt issues, it called for vigorous pursuit of policies that promote growth, and strengthening of tax administration to overcome low revenues due to inefficient tax systems.

demand for public spending remains high, the Escap said, adding, "The challenge for governments is to contain wasteful public spending and orient it towards priority sectors. Public expenditure should promote pro-poor growth: basic services, such as education health, sanitation and housing

three key factors: supply-side constraints, political and market uncertainty and strong aggregate demand

High international prices for commodities added to inflation pressure not only in Bangladesh. but in other countries of the region including India, Pakistan, Nepal Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Afghanistan and "I believe the cheating-free Iran that hit mostly the poor, the survey said.

> reduced its economic vulnerability over time by reducing the share of agriculture systematically and moving to manufacturing-based exports, which tend to be less vulnerable.

> "The country has also found ways to quickly respond to frequent disasters such as cyclones and floods. Also, overseas remittances are playing an important role in cushioning economic shocks," it said.

Large remittances from workers abroad contributed to current account surpluses in Bangladesh in 2007, the survey said. Workers' remittances rose to nearly \$6 billion and in 2007 Bangladesh exceeded slightly its 2006 current account surplus of about 1 percent of GDP.

Independence Day

In the early 1990s, Shaheed Janani (mother of martyrs) Jahanara Imam took to the street with the demand and hundreds of thousands of people joined her. Unfortunately, the movement failed because of the negligence of the authorities concerned.

After this caretaker government assumed power last year, the demand was raised again with the initiation of different government drives against corruption and irregularities committed by highprofile graft suspects.

The arrest of two former premiers Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia sowed the seed of expectation in the minds of people that the government will also meet the long-standing demand.

The expectation gradually turned into a desire. At one stage, the sector commanders of the Liberation War and war heroes became united last year to press home the demand.

People thronged the war memorials and independence monuments, including the National Memorial at Savar, yesterday to place floral wreaths at the altars to pay homage to the martyrs and vowed to bring the war criminals to

The major two political parties of the country--BNP and Awami League (AL) -- also observed the day along with other political and cultural organisations. Different organisations of freedom fighters, war heroes, their family and relatives, teachers, students and people from all walks of life also thronged the war memorials to voice their demand and observe

A mixed feeling of happiness and sorrow gripped people as 31 gun salutes heralded the beginning of the Independence Day celebration at dawn.

Contingents of freedom fighters, Bangladesh Army, Navy and Air Force, Bangladesh Rifles, police, coastguards, ansar-VDP, different law enforcement agencies, BNCC and horse riders joined the Independence Day parade at the National Parade Square starting from 10:00am.

Parading tanks, machineguns, air-to-air missiles, antitank missiles, antisubmarine torpedo and the fly-past by Bell helicopters,

saying that such movements would

not be successful at this point of

time under the state of emergency,

as they have neither enough

organisational strength nor prepa-

ration to go for movements to get

ments any time with our maximum

organisational capacity," said

Debiganj upazila AL General

Secretary Mohammad Gias Uddin

take to the street in the coming

days to press home the demand for

an end to the prevailing crises

release of Hasina from the street

after mobilising people of all walks

Top party leaders will sit with

metropolitan, district and upazila

level leaders to get their views on

the matter after the AL central

committee sits on March 29 to

make some important decisions in

Suranjit Sengupta said time and

"We are united over the issue of

situation would tell them what to

the release of our party chief and

this regard, the party insiders said.

The party would demand the

including price hike of essentials.

of life over these issues.

The AL, however, has a plan to

"We are ready to go for move-

the party president released.

FROM PAGE 1

Chowdhury.

No AL movement

accompanied by the chiefs of the three defence forces took the salute

who fought in the Liberation War, led by JFR Jacob were present at the parade. They paid homage to mar-

nating different buildings and city points in the evening to save electricity. A few naval ships were on display from 2:00pm to 5:30pm at

and Barisal. supplements while electronic media broadcast programmes highlighting the significance of the

religious worship centres across the country for eternal peace of the martyrs and divine blessings for the country's prosperity.

FFs vow

FROM PAGE 1 present at the ceremony.

Muktijoddha Palli Society Proshika and other socio-cultural organisations also placed wreaths at Shikha Chironton at the time.

president of Muktijoddha Ainjibi Parishad conducted the oath taking ceremony.

includes Muktijoddha Sanghati Parishad, Muktijoddha Somonnoy Parishad, Muktijoddha Nou-Commando Association Muktijoddha Sangram Parishad Mohila Muktijoddha Sangshad, Muktijoddha Ainjibi Parishad, Muktijoddha Smriti Rokkha Parishad and Bangladesh Muktijoddha Foundation.

They also vowed to build a better and prosperous Bangladesh.

following information obtained

from Paritosh. Maj Mohammad Aminul Huq of Rab-1 told The Daily Star that Paritosh and John are the smugglers and Alok and Salauddin the transporters who physically handle the gold form one place to another.

"Both Paritosh and Salauddin are members of one of the biggest smugglingrings in the country," he said

"The smugglers smuggle the gold into the country from India and sell them to different gold traders in old Dhaka", he said, "The cash recovered from those arrested is proceeds from the sale of that gold." Maj Amin said the arrested were

being kept in Rab-1 custody for further interrogation. Earlier on March 5, Rab-10 members seized 660 tolas of gold from five gold shops and arrested eight gold traders from the city's

Tantibazar and Shankhanribazar

for having no legal papers to claim the gold in their possession. After the incident, the bullion traders went on strike for five days to protest the Rab drive. They withdrew their strike at assurances from the Dhaka Deputy Commissioner A A M Nasihul

Of the smugglers arrested, Paritosh Chakraborti, 51, hails from Golam Mostofa Road of Madanmohan Para of Jhenidah town. He is resident in a flat at Gausia Dynasty at Circuit House Road under Ramna police station.

Kamal of no further harassment.

The other arreste Fariquzzaman alias John, 40, hails from Poradah under Mirpur police station in Kushtia district. He is a resident of Eastern Tower at New

The transporters arrested are Alok Chakraborti, 31, of Bejpara in Jessore town and driver Mohammad Salauddin alias Dalim, 22, of Chowrhasi village in Kushtia district.

No supply

FROM PAGE 16

thing is that I have to buy even a syringe and cannula from outside,' he said, showing a March 12 pre-A nurse, however, claimed that

they provide the patients with free medicines according to the requirement. "But if we don't have supplies, how could we give medicines free of cost?" she said. On average, 150 to 200 people

come everyday to the hospital's outpatient department for treatment while 40 people receive inpatient care. Everyday around 150 people also come to the hospital with dog

bites as the IDH is supposed to supply them with anti-rabies vaccines (ARVs), manufactured by the Institute of Public Health (IPH) at a subsidised rate. But they never get the vaccines.

Rather they are handed in a ticket and then routed to the public health institute, which is a kilometre away. This correspondent talked to one Khaleda Begum who came

from Chandpur to get free ARVs for her seven-year-old son. "The Chandpur district hospital authorities told me that ARVs are

available free of cost only at the Infectious Diseases Hospital at Mohakhali. So I've come here enduring much trouble on the way, she said, adding that one such vaccine costs Tk 2,000 at pharmacies, which she cannot afford. When asked to comment on

this, Dr Aziz Ahmed Khan of the hospital said that they asked the IPH to stop sending the vaccines to them as hospital employees started selling the vaccines to the patients.

Highway police FROM PAGE 16

were supposed to be established at the outposts, but the police personnel posted there don't know when they will get these vital facili-

The force has been entrusted

with patrolling on highways, con-

trolling traffic, enforcing traffic rules, ensuring order on highways, bus-tuck terminals, petrol pumps, toll plazas, bus stoppages and parking lots. Besides, their job is to remove

obstacles for movement of transports, ensure disciplines for road users and enforce traffic rules on them, ensure road safety, check offences on highways, submit prosecution under the Motor Vehicle Ordinance, 1984 and carry out other duties vested on them by the government.

As the rules have yet to be enacted, highway police cannot investigate cases filed in connection with robbery, snatching and recovery of illegal items. Though they are from the same

police force, a policeman of similar rank from the concerned police station investigates the cases, leaving the highway cops, who enforce the law on the highways, in the dark. Inspector General of Police Nur

Mohammad told The Daily Star the rules and regulations will be enacted soon, while the organogram is being examined by the establishment ministry. "Ihope fitness but are on the roads with those will be approved soon," he fitness certificates. Bangladesh said. Road Transport Authority (BRTA) Highway police chief DIG Dr M

> stage. It is awaiting approval at an inter-ministerial meeting to be held at the home ministry soon, he They are trying their best to

existing facilities, he added.

Dhaka-Kolkata train

FROM PAGE 1

launched between April 7 and May 21, says a PTI report published in Outlook India's online edition on Tuesday.

According to government sources, the chief secretary and Home Secretary AM Chakraborty told railway officials a few days ago that the schedules for the panchayet elections may be announced in the first week of April. The election code

BBC Bangla service said no government project can be launched after the code of conduct is fixed.

Railway Minister Lalu Prasad has already announced in the Indian parliament that the train service will run from April 14, the first day of Bangla New Year.

Sunday that his government is "aiming to start Dhaka-Kolkata passenger train service from Pahela Baishakh". Communications ministry officials of Bangladesh said they were also taking preparations to this end and the date would be announced

between the railway officials of the two countries expected to be signed during three-day bilateral talks in Dhaka from April one. from both Kolkata and Dhaka, the

possibility of relaunching the passenger train service had been hanging fire due to Dhaka's objections to

Rajuk contractor

head and he fell to the ground," Officer-in-Charge of Khilgaon Police Station Sheikh Mohammad

Sub-Inspector Abdus Salam, who was on patrol duty in the area, rushed Apollo to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where the doctors declared him dead.

the motorcycle on the road

Police later seized the motorbike.

Apollo's brother Anwarunnabi said works on their projects worth around Tk 30 crore are going on.

might have taken place over a business rivalry. No one was arrested in connec-

tion with the murder as of 8:00 pm.

men have been detained. Mortar rounds also hit a detention centre in central Basra and

injured 10, police said. Sadiq al-Rikabi, a chief adviser to al-Maliki, said gunmen who fail to turn over their weapons to police stations in Basra by Friday will be targeted for arrest. He added that they also must sign a pledge renouncing violence.

"Any gunman who does not do that within these three days will be an outlaw," he said.

Iraqi officials say at least 40 people were killed and 200 wounded in the largest city, 340 miles southeast of

their base at the airport outside Basra and were not involved in the ground fighting, although British planes were providing air surveillance, according to the British Ministry of Defence. It said Wednesday that the Iraqis had not asked the British to

British forces turned over respon-December but say they will assist the

Zakir Hassan told The Daily Star. He said the decision was taken Tuesday night and has been effective

from yesterday morning.

Nazmul Huda and Altaf Hossain are now staying in Narayanganj Jail, Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir in Kashimpur Jail and Sigma Huda in Dhaka Central Jail.

leader Abu Taher to Narsingdi Jail and former BNP MP and Partex Group Chairman MA Hashem to

Barguna Jail. According to jail sources, jail code.

affairs Lutfozzaman Babar, former Dhaka Club president Selim Bhuiyan and former Chittagong Port chairman Sahadat Hossain were sent back to jail from Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) where they had been admitted for treatment, for the same offence.

The following day the authorities

the proposal for fencing by India

land to check smuggling. The advisory council last month accepted India's proposal for con-

fencing on the zero lines. Under the proposed agreement, Dhaka will also construct a similar

Bangladesh The "Moitree Express" will run

once a week from both sides and is primarily learnt to have six coaches.

facilities at Gede station on the Indian side of the border. Bangladesh has set up the immigration centre in Darshana, Chuadanga for the time being and

will set up the centre near the international border after necessary budget is allocated.

Independence Day,

please leave the power, otherwise I do not know what would be the consequences," Brig Gen (retd) Hannan Shah, an adviser to the BNP chairperson, said pointing at the government

participating in any election under the present Election Commission. "The chief election commissioner will have to resign if necessary," he Demanding release of Khaleda

party leaders to be united to face any sort of crises. "The people will not allow anybody to betray the country at this bad time," said Gani, who presided over

the meeting. Gayeswar Chandra Ray accused ing party leaders before any trial.

Bangladesh emerged as an independent country to practise democ-Pointing at detained Awami League President Sheikh Hasina, he said, "We will also free you although a

few of your party leaders do not want your release.

among the political parties. Among others, party leaders Selima Rahman, MA Mannan, Mohammad Shahjahan, Habib Un Nabi Sohel, Shirin Sultana and Shafiul Bari Babu, and Jatiya Press Club President Shawkat Mahmud

addressed the meeting. visited the National Memorial at

Savar separately. RA Gani and Hannan Shah led the pro-Khaleda faction while Maj (retd) Hafiz Uddin and ZA Khan led the

Pak PM calls

FROM PAGE 16 "committed to maintaining longterm close ties with the USA.

with him and that they both stressed the need to fight Islamist extremism. Gilani met visiting Deputy US Secretary of State John Negroponte and Assistant Secretary of State Richard Boucher later Wednesday, a

day after they met Musharraf and

Sharif, his office said. Analysts said the US visit was designed to woo the new govern-

Islamic militancy. Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party and Sharif's grouping trounced Musharraf's allies in elections in February, a seismic shift in the country's politics nearly nine years after

Musharrafseized power in a coup. Pakistan has been a bulwark in the US-led fight against al-Qaeda and Taliban militants since the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States. More than 600 people have died in militant-related vio-

dering Afghanistan, which the US says is a safe haven for al-Qaeda, have collapsed with further bloodshed and caused alarm in Washington. The US has pledged 750 million

dollars over the next five years for development in the lawless and impoverished tribal regions. President George W Bush has

this year, the White House said Tuesday as a new government took power in Islamabad. dated Monday, Bush used his authority to exempt Pakistan from a law that restricts funding countries

where the legitimate head of state

was deposed by a military coup, as in Pakistan. approved every year since 2003, opens the way for the United States to provide about 300 million dollars this year to key "war on terror" ally

theWhite House said.

Benapole customs authorities

following a restriction on export of imposed by India on March 5.

day, a public holiday.

Bhomra port.

Nizami, Mojahid FROM PAGE 1 Leaders of Awami League (AL), Workers Party, Communist Party of Bangladesh, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, Liberal Democratic Party, Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh and the sector commanders and freedom

Pakistan army. Leaders of the BNP faction loyal

they skipped both the president's reception and the Independence Day parade as their ameer and secretary general were not invited to the Bangabhaban reception.

Thieves have stolen bricks,

temple's abandoned stage.

Local miscreants are taking advantage of the lack of vigilance by the local police or upazila administration over this archaeological site, he added.

They urge the government to

well as the Indian army personnel who sacrificed their lives during the Bangladesh's War of Liberation.

more if repayments of principal are included," it said. The survey said high domestic

Given the issue of poverty, the

should be a priority." On inflation, the report refers to

factors, Nasiruddin said.

tion with circulatory diseases. According to experts from the Department of Environment, faulty vehicles, especially dieselrun vehicles, brick kilns, dust from

kilns account for another 25-30 percent, AQMP Director Dr Mohammad Nasiruddin said.

ogy be introduced. Around 1,000 brick kilns are active around the city, AQMP project sources say. "Five hundred of them are very

sulphur," said Dr Nasiruddin. Though more and more CNGrun vehicles are hitting the road the air quality has not improved significantly due to the other existing year.

key central leaders. But the party should go for movements immedi-

ditionally.

released.

we can't go for movements right now as things are different under the state of emergency," a key AL leader told The Daily Star wishing anonymity.

"But we can't ignore their

"Although grassroots level

leaders are putting pressure on us,

demand. We have to go for movements at one point of time in future," said another AL leader. Mohammad Jainal Abedin, president of Meherpur District AI Unit said, "We shall try our level best to implement the

hope that the government will Dharmapasha Upazila AL Unit in release her soon and send her Sunamganj.

Poisonous air

FROM PAGE 1 The PM 10 is usually present in smoke created through burning of woods and can penetrate deep into the cardiovascular system. The PM 2.5 generally arises from burning of fossil fuel and has a strong associa-

roads and construction sites and all. toxic fumes from industries are the main sources of PM 10 and PM 2.5. Faulty diesel-run vehicles contribute about 60 percent of the particulate matters, while brick

active to pollute air and most of those burn coal that contains huge

He suggests that faulty and unfit

diesel-run vehicles be phased or t

and environment friendly technol-

matters may cause bronchial and kidney diseases and even lung cancer. A significant number of city dwellers suffer from respiratory disease and asthma in winter every

4 smugglers FROM PAGE 16

of conduct will be fixed then.

Indian High Commissioner Pinak Ranjan Chakravarty said in Dhaka on

officially after a supplementary deal

Despite several trial runs of trains

"One of the gang shot Apollo in the Abu Jahid quoted a witness as

Locals said when the criminals were fleeing the area through an alley their motorbike went out of order. They then ran away leaving

Family sources said some criminals demanded money from Apollo a few days ago, but he refused to give them money. However, the officer-in-charge of Khilgaon Police Station suspects the murder

55 people killed said, adding a large number of gun-

fighting in Basra, Iraq's second-Baghdad. British troops have remained at

intervene. sibility for Basra to the Iraqis in late

Iraqis upon request. Division cancelled FROM PAGE 1 Inspector General (Prisons) Brig Gen

For the recent violation of the jail code, the jail authorities Tuesday sent Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury to Bogra Jail, Mossaddek Ali Falu to Panchagarh Jail, Salauddin Ahmed to Bandarban Jail, Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu to Lalmonirhat Jail, Jamaat

Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury has already been whisked between Kashimpur, Sylhet and Narayanganj jails for his repeated violation of the Former state minister for home

On Sunday, authorities found BNP's Senior Joint Secretary General Tarique Rahman, now admitted to the BSMMU, talking over the cell phone of a doctor.

decided that prisoners would be denied their right to meet visitors if they violate the jail code.

within 150 yards off the no man's

struction of the box-type barbed wire

structure near the border in

India has already set up the necessary infrastructure like customs and immigration facilities, passengers' waiting halls and other related

BNP men urged

FROM PAGE 16 auditorium to mark the

People do not want your rule. So,

He said they will re-consider

and her two sons, BNP Standing Committee member RA Gani urged

the authorities concerned for tortur-He said no election will be held under the state of emergency as

Criticising foreign diplomats, he said, "1/11 took place as an outcome of the conspiracy by a few foreign diplomats, not following conflicts

Earlier in the morning, both the factions of BNP placed floral wreaths and offered Fateha at the grave of late president Ziaur Rahman. They also

pro-Saifur faction of the party.

The White House said earlier that Bush told Gilani he was ready to work

ment and smooth relations between it and Musharraf, amid fears that instability in the nuclear-armed nation will hurt efforts to tackle

lence this year in Pakistan. Previous attempts at peace deals with militants in the tribal belt bor-

cleared the way for giving millions of dollars to Pakistan to fight terrorism In a memo to the secretary of state

The waiver, which Bush has Pakistan to boost its counterterrorism operations. US President on Tuesday told

Pakistan's new Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani he was ready to work with him as they both stressed the need to fight Islamist extremism.

SSC, Dakhil exams

enrolled for Class IX under his board, would not be taking the He said twelve percent of the Education Adviser Hossain Zillur SSC dropouts switched to Open University, eight percent chose technical education, eight percent were accused of forging registration, five percent dropped out altogether due to poverty and death, five percent went abroad,

seven percent failed to get pro-

moted to Class X, five percent

flunked the tests preparatory to the

SSC exams and four percent female

This year a total of 10,13,301

students got married.

press conference yesterday that

54.10 percent students, who

FROM PAGE 1

1,837 centres across the country. Of them, 7,47,545 students --3,83,770 male and 3,63,775 female will appear for the SSC exams under seven education boards, 1,83,381 will take Dakhil exams under the Madrasa Board and 82,375 will take the SSC vocational exams under the Technical dard of education in the country. Education Board.

Dhaka Board has the highest num-

ber of students taking the exams

2,08,646 students, Comilla Board

76,990, Jessore Board 1,06,139, Chittagong Board 55,088, Barisal Board 49,116 and Sylhet Board 31,808 students. Besides, 219 students will examinations under the Open appear for SSC exams at seven overseas centres under the Dhaka and Madrasa Board.

Dhaka Board Chairman Prof ever, said poverty might also be a Monirul Islam told the press conference that they formed several vigilance teams, inter-board inspecting teams and five instant of the students flunked the prepadriving teams to prevent students from resorting to unfair means in the examination halls.

Education Board.

Besides, Section 144 will be imposed in and around the examinations centres and every

examinee will be searched before

Rahman said the government has

taken all measures to ensure a

congenial environment for the

examinees and to prevent any

untoward incident during the

examination hours.

At a press briefing on March 25,

they enter the halls, he added.

"I want to firmly state that the environment will ensure examinations free from unfair means. Teachers and officials will be ready to take instant decision should any unexpected incident take place" he said while addressing at a press students will take the exams at briefing at his ministry.

He called on all the concerned --

teachers, guardians, law enforcers

and journalists -- to extend their

cooperation so that the students

could peacefully take the examina-

examinations will ensure the stan-

The students will also contribute to With 2,19,758 examinees, establishing a country free of corruption," he said. Asked if the price hike of essenthis year. Rajshahi Board has tial commodities has contributed to the reduction in number of SSC examinees on last year, Education Secretary Momtajul Islam on Tuesday said nowadays many students are appearing for the SSC

University, SSC (Vocational) Board

reason behind the drop, but added

that many are now interested in

going abroad while a good number

Last year the number of SSC

ratory exams.

examinees was 8,01,958.

The education secretary, how-

FROM PAGE 16

eroded. Others have been lost over

land on which the temple stands. They have built mud huts on the land of the archaeological site. One attaching house shares the temple

aesthetic value of the temple, not to mention its religious significance, has been seriously damaged by the use of its walls to dry cow dung

However if the locals raise a

It, however, said Bangladesh has

Cessna, Chinese F-7 jets and Russian MiG-29 supersonic warplanes exhibited the prowess of

Bangladesh military in safeguard ing the nation's independence and sovereignty.

President Iajuddin Ahmed at the parade. Former Indian army officials,

The day was a public holiday. The national flag was flown at government and private offices and buildings. This year the government dropped the programme of illumi-

Sadarghat in Dhaka, Narayanganj, Chittagong, Khulna, Mongla Port Newspapers published special

Special prayer was offered at all

Advocate Shamsul Alam Dudu

Muktijoddha Oikya Parishad

unhappy with the central committee's stance on the issue. Talking to The Daily Star, a number of AL district and upazila unit leaders said, the party has not been able to make any decision on the matter due to dispute among ately to get Hasina released uncon-

AL grassroots level leaders are

abroad for treatment," he added.

programmes the central leaders announce to get our party chief

Programmes should be

announced for the sake of the

country and its welfare, said Abdul

Hai, general secretary of

"Most of the industries and factories don't use smoke extraction device, which is another reason of air pollution, although the number of industries is comparatively less.'

In winter, the wind blows from

north and carries with it smoke

from northern region dense with

brick kilns, Dr Nasiruddin said.

"Higher chimneys do not help at

smoother traffic system to check

pollution.

Dr Nasiruddin also suggests a

"Average traffic speed in the city is only 12 kilometres per hour. But we need around 50 kilometres to maintain clean air," he said, adding, the more the vehicles stay in the roads the more they pollute air. The experts say many of the vehicles in the city do not have

should go for automation, said an Sadigur Rahman said enactment of official from AOMP. rules and regulations is at the final Experts say these particulate carry out their duties under the