Two outlaws killed in 'shootouts' in Rajshahi, Kushtia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two underground operatives were killed during "shootouts" between the law enforcers and their cohorts in Kushtia and Rajshahi early yes-The outlaws were identified as

Nobin Hossain, 30, a regional leader of Gono Mukti Fouj (GMF), and 'Murgi' Masud alias Akash, a cadre of Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP-Red Flag).

Nabin was killed at Alampur village in Sadar upazilla of Kushtia while Masud at Pabnapara under Taherpur Municipality of Bagmara Upazilla, Rajshahi.

Our Kushtia correspondent reported that a police team, acting on a tip-off, cordoned off the bank of a pond at Alampur village where the GMF cadres were holding a meeting at around 4:30am.

Sensing the presence of the police team, the GMF cadres opened fire, forcing the law enforcers to retaliate.

Police said Nabin received bullets during the gunfight that continued for an hour, while his accomplices managed to escape unhurt.

Nabin, son of Aftabuddin Biswas of Alampur village, was wanted in three murder cases filed with Kushtia Sadar Police Station. Police recovered a shutter gun and

four bullets from the spot.

Members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested Masud on Wednesday and handed him over to the police on Thursday night, according to our staff correspondent from Rajshahi. On his confessional statement,

police along with Masud set out for Pabnapara to arrest his accomplices and recover the hidden firearms at around 3:00am. When they reached the area,

Masud's cohorts opened fire on the policemen, prompting them to

Police said Masud was shot during a 25-minute-long gunfight while his accomplices managed to flee. They took Masud to the local health complex where the doctors declared him dead.

Son of Nur Muhammad of Ramrama village of Bagmara upazila, Masud was convicted in Mostafa Khamaru and Mamtaz Khamaru murder cases and awarded life term in absentia, police said.

Shahabuddin Khalifa, officerin-charge (0C) of Bagmara Police Station, said Masud was also wanted in 12 cases including four for murder.

Police recovered a pistol, two knives, two machetes and some drugs from the spot.

people may know about them.

He also said 14-party alliance

was formed on the basis of a 23-

point charter. "No partner can

violate the 23-point charter. If any

partner doesn't believe in the

charter or violates it, that party will

be ejected from the alliance," he

Standing Committee Member

Tanbir Ahmed Siddiky with The

Daily Star published yesterday, Dr

Kamal said, "I support Tanbir's

proposal for publishing white

Ershad getting bail in four cases,

and said, "Scrapping of four cases

against Ershad was not in line with

being an ally of 14-party in the

grand electoral alliance, Dr Kamal

said, "14-party shouldn't have

alliance with any party that doesn't

subscribe to the 23-point charter. A

controversial political party

shouldn't be allowed to have an

its Acting General Secretary

Advocate Subrata Chowdhury were

preparations for the UN chief's

visit was held at the sub-committee

Chairman Faruk Ahmed

Chowdhury's Dhanmondi resi-

moon's visit is already in Dhaka.

The team members led by Hitoki

Den were with Dessallien to meet

tion is a must for a peaceful transi-

tion of power. The UN wants the

election to be held on schedule and

allowed to conduct normal polls

She said the parties should be

Asked about the difference of

views over issues like withdrawal of

the state of emergency, she said

both sides should seek innovative

she said the UN is confident that

the general election would be held

in time with participation of all

AL body told the UN team that the

polls must be held as scheduled.

They said they will not take part in

it if AL President Sheikh Hasina is

not released unconditionally to

participate in the upcoming parlia-

mentary election under the leader-

ship of Hasina," Faruk Chowdhury,

also a member of the AL advisory

He said the current political

"We explained our position, and

said the state of emergency will for

sure get in the way of a free and fair

conduct of the election. So, with-

drawal of emergency is a must,

Abul Maal Abdul Muhith, HT

Imam, Mahmud Ali, Momtaz

Hossain were present at the meet-

The UN team is scheduled to

Members of the sub-committee

said the former diplomat.

meet BNP leaders today.

situation and election, among

other issues, came up for discus-

council, told The Daily Star.

"We told them that we want to

At the meeting, members of the

Replying to another question,

solutions in this regard.

contest the election.

in a manner free and fair.

An advanced team for Ban Ki

some seats in the election."

About Ershad's Jatiya Party

He also raised questions about

papers on Hawa Bhaban."

the constitution."

also present.

FROM PAGE 1

the AL body.

UN chief

Referring to an interview of BNP

Mini Kissinger

Hassan Ariff as 'an associate of the mini Kissinger', and urged the law adviser not to run with the commerce adviser to politicians for secret meetings'

"It is not their duty. Why Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed and four other advisers are continuing to have dialogues with corrupt politicians?" he questioned while addressing the media in his residence in the capital.

The Gono Forum chief demanded a judicial committee for investigating the incident of granting bail to 206 detainees including many political leaders in 100 minutes. "The law adviser should investi-

gate the issue of granting bail to 206 persons in a day. It's not possible through legal procedures. An investigation should be launched in the interest of the people and the judiciary." Dr Kamal said.

He also urged the caretaker government not to defer the election being threatened by some corrupt politicians' who are saying their parties will not participate in the election unless their top leaders

release from detention are made "A congenial atmosphere for the next election and unconditional release of corrupt politicians can't go hand in hand. We don't want an

election ignoring our constitution, he quipped. The caretaker government

should not be cowered by the threats of political parties, Dr Kamal added.

He urged the government to make public the details of corruption cases against politicians, so the Mohiuddin Chy

FROM PAGE 1 life-support ventilation, sources

Tumpa, a 3rd year student of

English at Premier University in Chittagong, had been receiving treatment for non-Hodgkin Lymphoma since the first week of June this year.

Mohiuddin received the news of his daughter's death while board ing a Bangkok-bound flight of Thai Airways along with his wife Hasina Mohiuddin and son barrister Mohibul Hasan Noupel at the Chittagong airport. He told the journalists on

Thursday that the government order allowed him to travel to Bangkok and Singapore but did not permit him to perform hajj.

The CCC mayor said he did not harm anybody and has always tried to work for people.

"I used to talk about the Chittagong port for its improvement. I have always wanted to work for Chittagong and its people who had been victims to deprivation and harassment," Mohiuddin told The Daily Star at his Chashma Hill residence in the city's Sholoshahar area on Thursday afternoon.

Replying to a query, the mayor said he was yet to receive any reply following his appeal to the LGRD ministry for an explanation about the restriction on his working as the CCC mayor.

"I want to leave behind a centrebased system that would allow the leaders to carry on party activities smoothly," he said.

When asked to name some leaders who might be given the responsibility to lead the party in the port city in his absence, Mohiuddin referred to Dr Afserul Amin, advocate Ibrahim Hossain Babul, AL city unit General Secretary Enamul Haq Danu and Khorshed Alam Sujan.

Earlier, Mohiuddin held a meeting with CCC councillors and officials.

He asked them to strengthen the corporation's existing income generation projects to overcome ing. the revenue shortfall, which reportedly stood at Tk 30 crore.

Top French bank

FROM PAGE 16 Caisse d'Epargne is a fixture on the French high street and as a mutual bank is popular with small-scale savers. It has 27 million private account holders.

It is merging with its smaller rival Banque Populaire, with which it owns an investment subsidiary, Natixis, that has seen its stock battered during the current global financial crisis. The merged company will prob-

ably be France's second biggest retail bank after Credit Agricole. The firm said the losses were

suffered by the group's central capital fund and were discovered during normal internal oversight procedures. According to a company source, the bank's traders had not respected

rules limiting how much they could invest in stock derivatives, despite having been specifically warned about the danger presented by "market conditions" Last week saw European stock

exchanges plunge in their most dramatic crash since the Great Depression of the 1930s and billions of euros were wiped off the values of stocks around the world. France's Finance Minister

Christine Lagarde has been informed of the bank's loss, her spokesman said, adding that it does not call into question the solidity of the establishment in Nevertheless, the Caisse

d'Epargne's expensive error came at a critical time for European banking, when governments haunted by the threat of a run on the bank by nervous savers have been battling to shore up confidence.

It will also revive memories of the disaster earlier this year at another French bank, Societe Generale, which lost 4.9 billion euros to a series of bad investments by alleged "rogue trader" Jerome Kerviel.

Maniruzzaman

FROM PAGE 1 where they can reach agreement on

issues of national importance. The 'Minus-2' formula was framed as the government failed to understand the political culture of the country, Maniruzzaman noted. The two leaders represent two dominant political theories -- Bangladeshi nationalism and Bangalee nationalism--and have become integral part of the political culture.

Demanding complete withdrawal of the state Of emergency, he said (state of) emergency and free elections do not go together as emergency rules curtail key ingredients of an election-- freedom of movement, speech, procession and assembly. "If needed, the president can impose state of emergency locally for a temporaryperiod," he observed.

The Election Commission delayed initiating the process of political parties' registration, he said. What alliance with 14-party just to win have been accomplished in two years, including preparation of voter list, Gono Forum Presidium could be done in one year if things Member Pankaj Bhattacharya and

were started in earnest earlier. Without taking political parties into confidence, the government attempted to impose reforms on them and wrongly tried to teach them political lessons, he remarked.

In politics, it is unrealistic to expect totally clean candidates, and some unclean candidates will also come out victorious in parliamentary polls, he said. "The practice of nominating cadres and businessmen, and buying votes will reduce to some extent because there is a realisation among the policymakers."

Steps for security lists of suspected criminals who they

Talking to journalists later, think might attempt to attack elec-Dessallien, also UNDP resident toral candidates or might attempt to representative, said participation create instability before the election. of all political parties in the elec-Inspector General of Police (IGP)

Nur Mohammad told The Daily Star "We have asked all units to keep their eyes on possible candidates and gather intelligence on possibilities of attacks on them. The units have been asked to ensure their security." The IGP also said all law enforce-

activities to have a free and credible ment units have also been directed to election on December 18. But this hunt suspected and listed criminals has to be settled through talks who are likely to attempt to create between the parties and the govinstability "Our target is to bring known

dreaded criminals and their accomplices to book and to keep other criminals on the run," the IGP said adding, "It's one of our precaution ary measures, so no untoward incident may happen before and during the election.

Another police high official said, "It's quite impossible to keep eyes on all candidates and to provide special security for all of them. Therefore the units have been asked to identify candidates who are more susceptible to threats and attacks."

"Those who will get threats or become otherwise susceptible to attacks, intelligence personnel and in the long term as the fallout of it, police will follow their movements to ensure their security", he added.

The sources said before the election, all units of police will be directed to carry out anti-crime drives.

Ancient figures

FROM PAGE 16 Sura Masjid was built using stones between 1450 and 1500 AD, during the reign of Sultan Alauddin

Hussain Shah, he added.

Archaeologist Md Badrul Alam conjectures that such stones were used in Hindu or Buddhist constructions in the area during the Gupta period. Same type of stones had also been

used for constructing Sura Masjid. Assistant Custodian of the Mahasthan Museum Md

Mahabub-Ul-Alam said the engraved stone believed to be of Gupta era represents Hindu architecture of that period.

Good for some

worker's 4.18 percent to Tk 3,821 and a private healthcare worker's 4.11 percent to Tk3,867. Females' situation is even

worse. Their monthly real income has dropped by 0.30 percent to 16.50 percent. Cement, wooden furniture and cotton textile workers are the top losers here. A female cement worker's monthly earning dropped 16.50 percent to Tk 4,325, a wooden furniture sector worker's 4.74 percent to Tk 2,648 and a cotton textile sector worker's 4.30 percent to Tk 3,180. Female workers' gross income also dropped. A look at the real figures will

reveal the discrimination against women workers. The average gross income of a male food and beverage sector worker was Tk 3,310. But a female worker got only Tk 1,833. In shrimp processing sector, a male worker earned Tk 3,484 but a female got Tk 2,633. Not only this. Males even made

advancement in some sectors. His

monthly real income has

increased 1.16 percent in gar-

ment, 0.94 percent ion railway and

and 0.99 percent in real estate But a female garment worker's average real income decreased 0.96 percent. Female sewers and embroiders experienced a major shock as their incomes dropped by 3.09 percent. Interestingly, female pattern makers and cutters earned

1.98 percent more.

The Daily Star talked to Dr Zaid Bakth about why male garment workers' income rose. He reasoned that the knitwear sector witnessed fabulous growth where most are skilled males. They naturally got more pays.

Females are less skilled and lack bargaining capacity.

Among the day labourers, real incomes of rickshawpullers and shoe shiners marked a slight rise. The daily real wage of a rickshawpuller was Tk 144 during January-March 2007, which increased to Tk 145 during April-June. A shoe shiner's daily real wage increased to Tk 126 from Tk

A BBS high official explained that these two groups could adjusted their wages keeping with essentials' price hike.

But daily real earnings of male day workers in general have slumped by 2.99 percent. Agriculture sector workers received 1.19 percent higher income but non-farm sector workers' reduced by 5.92 percent. Gross income of agriculture sector workers also increased 5.57 per-Dr Uttam Kumar Deb, head of

research, the Centre for Policy Dialogue, said April-June is the Boro rice cultivation season and sp the workers could bargain higher

Diversify products

FROM PAGE 1

them profitable. The experts said forming a jute

board would help. Diversified jute products like agrotextile and geotextile have a huge potential for Bangladesh. India and many European countries have already started using such

"Diversified products add value from 30 to 300 percent. Research and new markets are needed to tap the potential," said Dr ABM Abdullah, executive director at the Jute Diversification Promotion Centre (JDPC).

He however said at present diversified products do not consume even five percent of the total jute produced.

bleaching and dying the traditional products, not developing new items for new applications...we need to develop new products and create markets for them." About 40 percent of the jute grown in the country is exported

"In Bangladesh we are just

raw, which is not profitable at all. Existing mills could use all raw jute and earn much more foreign currency if run efficiently. Major thrust areas for valueadded diversified jute products include jute handlooms and handicrafts, non-woven and industrial

applications, jute rigid packaging,

decorative products and jute geotextile. "The intention to move towards diversified products made wholly or partially from jute fibres has important consequences for the industry," Sudripta Roy, Secretary General at the International Jute Study Group (IJSG), said.

The real future of jute, however, lies in technical textiles, be it

geotextile or agrotextile, he said, adding: "One area for product development attracting attention is the use of jute fibre to reinforce plastic mouldings...small quantities of more or less processed jute fibres are now being used in these applications.

The potential seems to be considerable and in ten years' time these applications could provide a market between one lakh to two lakh tonnes of jute fibre, he added. "The potential for jute is enormous for its versatile use and

how the country is awakening to it?" said Khondaker Golam Moazzem, a research fellow at the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), said. Terming inefficient management in the public sector a major problem, he said, "I've found that some private mills with half the

biodegradability. The question is

the public sector." "The government should consider running the BJMC mills through private management. The government will own the mills, but the management will be private," he

machinery produce twice as much

The BJMC mills are also burdened with redundant workers, said Golam Moazzem, who recently conducted a study on the jute sector that recommended formation of a jute board to look after the industry. Machinery-repair costs at BJMC mills are way higher than at the

private-sector mills, he said. His study recommended providing the jute mills with cash incentives equivalent to 15 percent of their export earnings, as part of

writing off the huge debts. The incentive now stands at 7.5

Donors won't cut aid FROM PAGE 16 "They (the affected countries)

on the government budget in Bangladesh.

It will result in affecting the ongoing poverty alleviation, social safety net, health and education

programmes, he added. Replying to a question, Saleuddin said the central bank would give a careful consideration to the foreign exchange rate as taka remained stable for quite a long

Local manufacturers and exporters already expressed concern over the possibility of losing competitiveness to other countries, as their respective currencies depreciated against the dollar due to the

"We'll have to look at the import costs as well," said the governor, adding that the impact of foreign exchange rate on inflation deserves a deep consideration. "We don't want to 'disturb' the exchange rate at this moment."

He, however, admitted that the country's exports would be affected but said, "There is a silver lining that we export low-end products." About the global financial tur-

moil, he said the impact would not hit "our financial sector due to different contexts" which he did not elaborate. However, the country's financial sector has no significant link with the international financial sector. The governor said the global

financial crisis generated for leaving regulations completely on the market while investment banks and insurance companies have been given freedom overly. "They'll now understand the impact of leaving regulation on the market." Asked whether the Bangladesh Bank would go for tightening further the country's financial sector

taking lessons from the global

financial crisis and protected finan-

cial sector at home, the governor

gave an oblique reference just to

avoid a straight answer.

followed the core risk and Basel-II requirements theoretically, not practically. But, we tried to follow the principles in practice," he said, adding that one cannot do anything with numbers. "You have to have some judg-

ments, you cannot do everything mechanically," he said.

Put back Baul

FROM PAGE 16

Samannay Parishad to drum up support for a movement against war criminals, criminals, black money holders and communal forces, at the Central Shaheed Minar last evening Eminent educationist Prof

Serajul Islam Choudhury said the attack on Lalon's sculpture is an attack on the creativity of the nation. "The communal forces, the people who use religion for their politics and business, are trying to

distract people from their struggle for economic freedom by doing such things," said Prof Choudhury. "This conspiracy against the country and its culture is going on as we could not punish the war criminals," he said urging the people to unite and resist the con-

Liberation War. Sammilito Sangskritik Jote General Secretary Golam Kuddus said the attack and threats of fundamentalist forces are part of a conspiracy to destroy Bengali culture. He urged the government to start

upcoming elections.

spiracy and realise the dream of the

the trial of the war criminals based on the list of 11,000 war criminals government steps against the counwho were arrested under the collabtry and Islam during the emergency orators act. of the last 21 months, "he said. Kuddus also urged political parties not to nominate war criminals and black money owners in the

Ganosangeet Samannay Parishad President and eminent singer Fakir Alamgir presided over IABC leaders Abdul Latif the discussion. The discussion was Nezami, Shafiq Uddin, and Abul followed by a cultural programme. Kashem were also present.

Shop owner murdered in Keraniganj

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unidentified assailants gunned down a shop owner near his house at Kaliganj under South Keraniganj Police Station last night.

Police said Mohammad Sohel, 28, owner of Sohel Electronics Shop in the area, came under attack while he was returning home from nearby Char Kutub at around 8:10pm. Witnesses said a gang of crimi-

nals shot Sohel in the head and left the scene. Locals rushed him to Sumona Clinic at Patuatuli in Old Dhaka where the doctors declared him dead.

Police later took the body to Mitford Hospital for autopsy. Family sources said Sohel might

have been killed by some drug peddlers as he recently protested sale of drugs in the area.

2 crushed under wheels of train

UNB, Khulna

Two people were crushed under the wheels of a train while gossiping on a rail track at Khalishpur early yesterday.

The dead were identified as Faruk, 25, and Belal, 28. They hailed from Khalishpur.

Railway police said the two were run over by a Khulna-bound mail train from Parbatipur at around 2:00am.

They recovered the bodies and

sent them to Khulna Medical

College Hospital for autopsy.

'Huji had plan to snatch Mufti Hannan from

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

custody'

Four arrested activists of outlawed Harkat-ul-Jihad (Huji) told police during interrogation on Thursday night that they had a plan to forcibly free their leader Mufti Abdul Hannan from custody. AC (Khalishpur zone) Rabiul

as saying that they had a plan to snatch Mufti Hannan from custody by launching bomb and armed attacks simultaneously, They also told police that that they came to Khulna on instructions of Shabuj, the second-in-

command of Harkat-ul-Jihad, now

Islam of KMP quoted the arrestees

Members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested Huji men Mizanur Rahman Tushar, Omar Faruque, Mujahidul Islam and Yusuf Al Helal at Khalishpur on Tuesday. They were shown arrested under section 54 of CrPc and taken on a five-day police remand on

Thursday. AC Rabiul said the arrestees are vet to give information about their strongholds in Khulna, number of other Huji men working across the country, sources of their fund and types of firearms they are possess-

Amını

FROM PAGE 16

military personnel martyred in the liberation war, he said the country's defence forces 'worship' fire, against which his organisation had spoken before 'as the practice is anti-Islamic

He threatened to wage a greater movement against the government 'if it fails to immediately put a stop to the activities that are going on against the country and Islam'.

"The movement will not be deterred by any emergency, martial law, jail or harassment," he said adding, they cannot remain silent 'if anti-Islamic activities continue in the name of the state of emergency'.

ues are being constructed all over the country, and demanded that the government puts a stop to the move. "We respect laws and we can't beak the emergency powers rule, but we also can't tolerate the anti-Islamic activities anymore," he said.

Talking about the capital city, he

blamed past Awami League (AL)

The IOJ chairman also said stat-

regime for 'its efforts to turn the city of mosque into a city of statues'. "The present government is also trying to turn the Muslim nation into a country of statues," he alleged.

He, however, denied allegations that they had protested against sculptures of bauls [folk singers] in front of Zia International Airport and forced the authorities to pull them down. He also demanded that Dr Taj

Hashmi, a teacher of an American

college, be declared 'anti-Islam', and

be expelled from Bangladesh for his

writings in a Bangla daily. Amini accused the caretaker government of failing to hold the election on time and to hand over power to an elected government. He said the caretaker government

enjoyed enormous public support when it assumed office but its position is now questionable. "There are serious concerns among the people due to some

Calling Ross an "evil person," he He also demanded scrapping of added: "We cannot forgive him. He the Women Development Policy owes an apology to the family 2008, and stopping of an alleged which he has not tendered. He is move 'to hand over control of the not a reformed person. country's primary education to "There cannot be any other motive than racism. If somebody

> else was in my brother's place at that time -- a black person -- he might have killed him," he said.

FROM PAGE 16

funding, he said.

rumours about its stability, with savers clashing with police as they tried to withdraw their funds.

Asian economies, which faced

Unlike bankruptcy and other problems afflicting the banking system in Europe and the United where there was a lot of condi-States, Asian banks were genertionality," he said. "We see polially "well capitalized and pretty cies in many countries as basiliquid" with relatively limited cally right and not needing any reliance on foreign wholesale

a major financial crisis in 1997-98, now enjoy relatively high growth rates and have plentiful foreign exchange reserves with low fiscal deficits and debt levels, making them well placed to weather the current global financial turmoil, he said.

Asked what was his greatest fear for Asia during the current global turmoil, Burton said that it was the prospect of a "confidence crisis.

"These financial crises have a

way of moving very fast and you have a sudden shift in confidence and funding starts to become more difficult that feeds on the confidence," he said. "Asia's well placed but when confidence is shaking globally,

you have to be on the alert

because very unpredictable

things can happen and suddenly

even though economic funda-

mentals may be solid." "It's just the risk that sort of thing can get out of control."

The current global financial maelstrom has already sparked capital outflows from equity and bond markets in Asia, causing downward pressure on exchange rates and US dollar funding, Burton said.

It is also beginning to dampen economic growth rates amid declining exports to Europe and the United States. On whether Asia will plunge

into a recession, Burton replied:

"You are going to see a substantial

slowdown in Asian growth." He said that China and India would remain growth powerhouses despite the turmoil, while Japan would remain a source of stability for the global financial system with its restructured

banking sector. Burton also said that the IMF would not hesitate to bail out Asian economies if they needed it -- unlike the financial crisis a decade ago when the Fund

imposed many conditions on its

ACC sues former BNP lawmaker, 8 others

UNB, Natore

The Anti Corruption Commission (ACC) has filed a case against former BNP lawmaker Mozammel Huq and eight others for embezzlement of a school fund.

Deputy Director of ACC Abdul

Karim filed the case with

Gurudaspur Police Station on

Thursday night. The other accused are Mofizuddin Bhuiyan and Obaidul Qader, former deputy director and assistant director of the Education Department, Tariqul Islam, former principal of Kachhikata School and College, school teachers Shafiul Azam, Mizanur Rahman and Shammi Akhter and office assistants Monowara Begum and Selina

The complainant alleged that the accused embezzled Tk 3.17 lakh from the school fund between May 2, 2003 and April 9, 2006.

Briton jailed

racist and adding that his convic-

tion was a "great loss" to his family

But prosecutors, reporting that

a Nazi swastika had been found in a

notebook belonging to the then-

cadet, alleged that he had singled

out Shamsuddin as one of the few

Asians on Orkney, off Scotland's

northern coast. Referring to evi-

dence heard during the trial, the

judge told Ross: "It is never accept-

able to say a gun should be put to

the head of blacks and they should

be shot ... Even in 1994 such a

Watch sniper -- was convicted by

majority verdict in June after a six-

Glasgow. Sentencing him Friday,

the judge said he must spend at

Shamsuddin's brother Abul

"At last the killer has been

Shafuddin welcomed the sentenc-

brought to justice -- it's a big con-

solation for us," he told the BBC.

"At one stage we lost all hope that

least 25 years behind bars.

his killer would be found."

week trial at the High Court in

Ross -- who became a Black

remark was a racist comment."

FROM PAGE 16

shocked diners.

and country.

heard how a masked Ross burst into the Mumutaz restaurant on the evening of June 2, 1994 and shot dead the 26-year-old waiter at Azam, released on bail the previous point blank range in front of

Defence lawyer Donald Findlay said Ross continued to maintain his innocence, saying he was not a on schedule. He said, "We will have to watch

> The senior most AL leader asked why Jamaat Secretary General Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojahid has not been detained despite a war-

The veteran AL leader said the government must carry on its efforts to hold the parliamentary election on December 18. It should not bother much if a

on "illogical grounds". Amu observed that international assistance might start flowing in once an elected government

"We have told officials at the European Union not to take seriously election boycott on flimsy excuses," he said adding that seeking to delay the polls under the pretext of preparing for registration is not acceptable.

gency and deferral of upazila polls are logical.

versation with AL President Sheikh Hasina, who is now abroad, Amu said the former prime minister has asked them to get rid of all misunderstandings and work in unison towards the election.

return home in the second week of November.

IMF:Bank guarantees

"We have a mechanism to provide financing very quickly and we stand ready to do that and in large amounts and with light conditionality," he said. "It would be a very different situation from the old Asia crisis

significant adjustment." MILITARY DRIVE

Lanka seeks to avoid spat with India

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's government said yesterday it would send a delegation to India to defuse mounting tensions over the escalating war against Tamil Tiger rebels.

Sri Lanka's minority Tamils share close cultural and religious links with the 55 million Tamils in the nearby South Indian state of Tamil Nadu. Colombo's military drive has prompted New Delhi to voice "grave concern" over the conflict. "We are hoping to send a team of MPs to India to educate them on

Minister Yapa Abeywardena said in a statement over national radio, signalling that Sri Lanka was attempting to defuse pressure from He also insisted the government was trying to avoid civilian casualties in its all-out assault in the north

of the island, where the separatist

the latest situation," Media

Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) maintain a mini-state. "We know the difference between the Tamil civilians and the Tiger terrorists," he said, rejecting complaints from politicians in Tamil Nadu that Tamil civilians were being targeted.

Lanka pulls 60 food items off

shelves

MELAMINE SCARE

AFP, Colombo Sri Lanka yesterday banned the sale of 60 local and imported food items, fearing they may be tainted

range of imported biscuits, chocolates, cakes, savoury snacks, frozen deserts, milk and yoghurt off the shelves, according to notices published in newspapers here. Products made by Cadbury,

Dutch Lady, M&M and Mars origi-

nating mainly in manufacturing

plants in Asia were among those

identified by the health ministry as On Thursday, Sri Lanka's largest biscuit maker, Ceylon Biscuits Ltd, pulled its Munchee Lemon Puff biscuits out of stores after the Swiss

of melamine. Ceylon Biscuits said it did not use milk products from China, but sourced milk ingredients from Australia, Holland and Canada.

Melamine, a poisonous sub-

stance used in making plastic, has

canton of Geneva reported traces

been found added to Chinese milk, forcing dairy products and some confectionery off the shelves in many countries. Four Chinese children are known to have died and at least

53,000 have fallen ill after consum-

ing milk contaminated with mela-

Voter turnout

Zillur Rahman yesterday observed

that plotting is on to foil the December 18 polls. He directed his party men to be on alert. He said this when Awami Jubo League General Secretary Mirza

day, went to meet him at his Gulshan residence. The AL acting chief said the government must hold the election

out for attempts to bring the anti-Liberation War forces to power."

rant for his arrest. TALKWITHAMU

party threatens to boycott the polls takes over after a free and fair elec-

He however said the demands

for withdrawal of the state of emer-

Mentioning a telephone con-

He said the AL chief might

with melamine. The health ministry ordered a