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Director Danny Boyle, left, and child actors of Slumdog Millionaire hold the Oscar at the 81st Academy Awards yesterday. Right, winner of Best Original Song and Best Original Score AR Rahman.

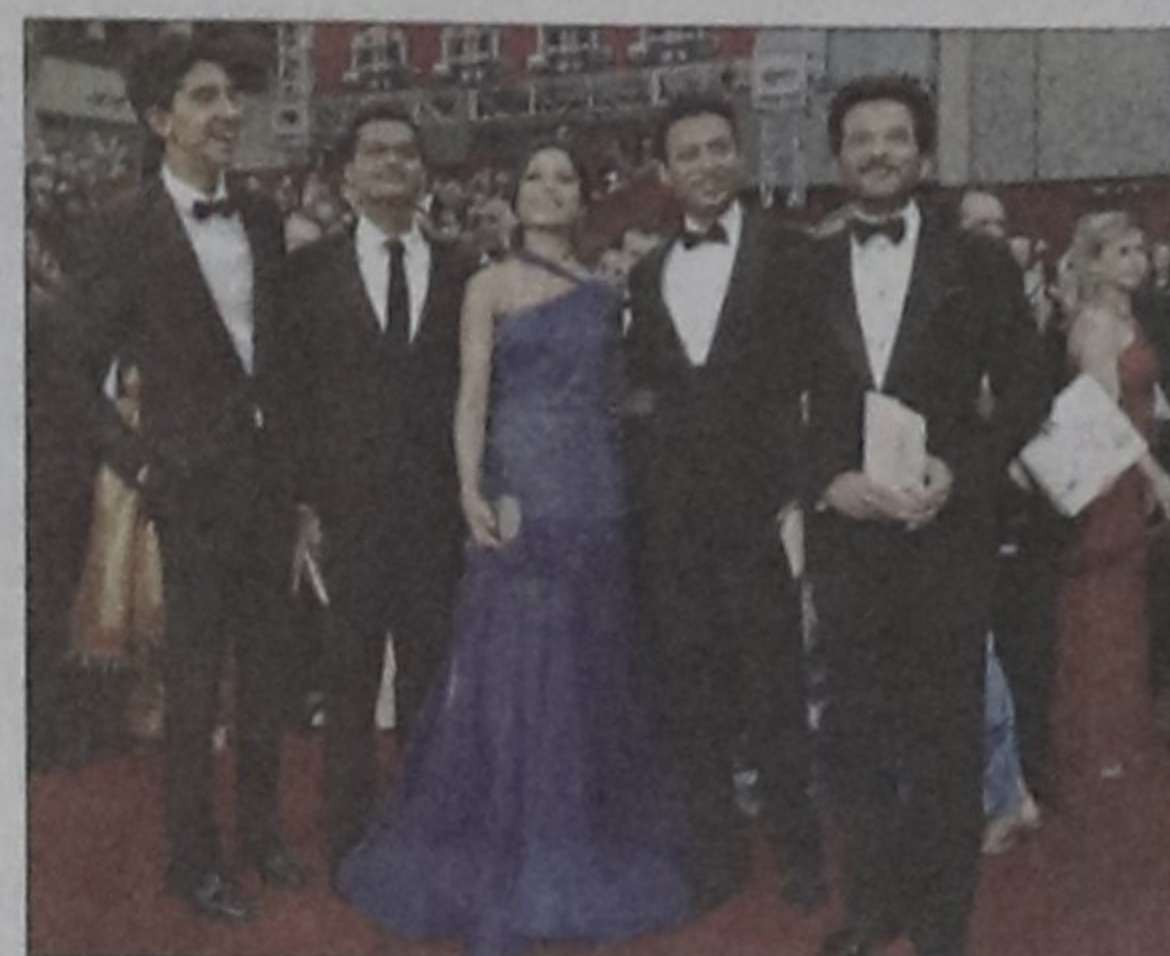


Oscar glory for 'Slumdog'
Clinches 8 awards, AR Rahman bags two

AGENCIES, Hollywood

Rags-to-riches drama "Slumdog Millionaire" swept the board at the 81st Academy Awards here Sunday, winning eight Oscars including best picture on a night of high-voltage Hollywood glamour. The feel-good film about a

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Dev Patel, Madhur Mittal, Freida Pinto, Irrfan Khan, Anil Kapoor arrive at the Academy Awards yesterday. Children cover each other with colours as they celebrate the success of Slumdog Millionaire in a school for urchins in Kolkata.



House ratifies CG expenditure

Opposition stages noisy protest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Jatiya Sangsad with an Awami League (AL) majority yesterday ratified two year's expenditure of the immediate past caretaker government, amid vehement protest of BNP-led opposition coalition lawmakers.

The House ratified through voice votes four relevant ordinances, which were placed as bills, giving a legal cover to the expenditure which was largely met by imposing and collecting taxes for the sake of 'keeping continuation of the constitutional process and the government'.

Two more bills are scheduled to be placed today for ratifying two finance ordinances promulgated in 2007 and 2008 by the caretaker government, to give a legal cover to imposition and realisation

of taxes by it in FY 2007-'08 and FY 2008-'09, sources in the parliament secretariat said.

The BNP-led opposition lawmakers placed resolutions for disapproving ratifications of the four ordinances.

Constitutional experts earlier attending a meeting of the parliament's special committee which had suggested that the House ratifies the ordinances related to financial matters, also recommended that the committee puts an observation saying, "We do not support it morally."

Finance Minister Abul Maal Abdul Muhith however did not make any such observation in the bills.

"I am compelled to place the budgets for approval to keep the continuation of the constitutional process and the government. I have no alternative, but to do

so," the finance minister said.

BNP-led opposition lawmakers said the immediate past caretaker government violated the constitution, and wasted public money. They demanded that the government first take actions against 'the violators of the constitution', and then place the ordinances for ratification.

In the wake of an extra ordinary situation, the president promulgated the ordinances to meet the expenditure of the two financial years, the finance minister defended himself. Similarly, the president also promulgated ordinances to meet the caretaker government's additional expenditure for the two financial years, he added.

Immediately after the finance minister placed the financial statements for FY

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JMB was ready to kill Khaleda

JMB man reveals in remand

A CORRESPONDENT, Comilla

Banned Islamist outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) "prepared to assassinate" former prime minister Khaleda Zia at an election rally in Chandina, Comilla, on December 23 last year.

Alleged JMB operative Masum Bin Abdul Hye, 32, admitted this yesterday during his five-day remand.

Chittagong Metropolitan Police arrested Masum on December 31 last year and he was shown arrested on February 22 in a case filed in connection with the attempted attack on Khaleda in Chandina. Debidwar police of Comilla placed him before a Comilla court seeking a 10-day remand.

Masum in his statement to Debidwar police claimed that he knew nothing about the JMB operation and he was brought to Chandina on December 22 to take part in an Islamic mehfil. He spent the night at the house of one Mostaque at Nabiabad of Debidwar upazila.

He claimed that during the night of December 22, JMB operatives Naim, 20, Abu Ansari, 22, Habib, 22, and Asad, 21, held a meeting where they planned to kill Khaleda saying the country was not being ruled by Sharia law.

He said on December 23, they gave him a bag full of grenades. Masum claimed that he planned to flee from the JMB men. He said he gave the bag to Naim at Chandina Bus Stand and secretly got on a bus heading for Chittagong.

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US envoy for compromise, not JS boycott

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

US Ambassador in Dhaka James F Moriarty yesterday expressed the hope that the ruling and the opposition parties would work together to make parliament effective as well as for the development of the country.

"I strongly believe parliament cannot serve the best interest of the people unless its members opt for a compromise over boycott," said the US envoy on the second day of the four-day orientation programme for the members of ninth parliament at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the capital.

Speaking on the occasion, British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Stephen Evans mentioned the role and responsibility of lawmakers both from treasury and opposition parties in the British

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Opposition blasts CG for misuse of public money

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP-led opposition lawmakers yesterday blasted the immediate past caretaker administration and asked the present government to bring it to justice for unconstitutional and undemocratic activities, and misuse of public money.

They also blamed the caretaker government for harassing politicians, making efforts to eliminate the two top leaders—Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia— from politics, and establishing rule of jungle in the country, and demanded exemplary punishment for those who comprised it.

Taking the floor, the opposition legislators asked the treasury bench to move a censure motion condemning it (caretaker govt).

They strongly demanded

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BNP questions process of passing 2 bills

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The main opposition BNP yesterday questioned the passage of two bills without sending them to the respective parliamentary standing committee for scrutiny but the law minister rejected the allegation outright.

Taking the floor, BNP lawmaker MK Anwar alleged that the two bills on Election

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RMG workers vandalise factory, cars

Protest attack on fellow workers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Workers of a knitwear factory in the city's Tejgaon industrial area staged a violent protest yesterday after local criminals attacked their fellow workers.

The protesting workers of Sunshine Knitwear Ltd

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Prayer Timing

February 24

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-20	5-55
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-03	6-07
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation

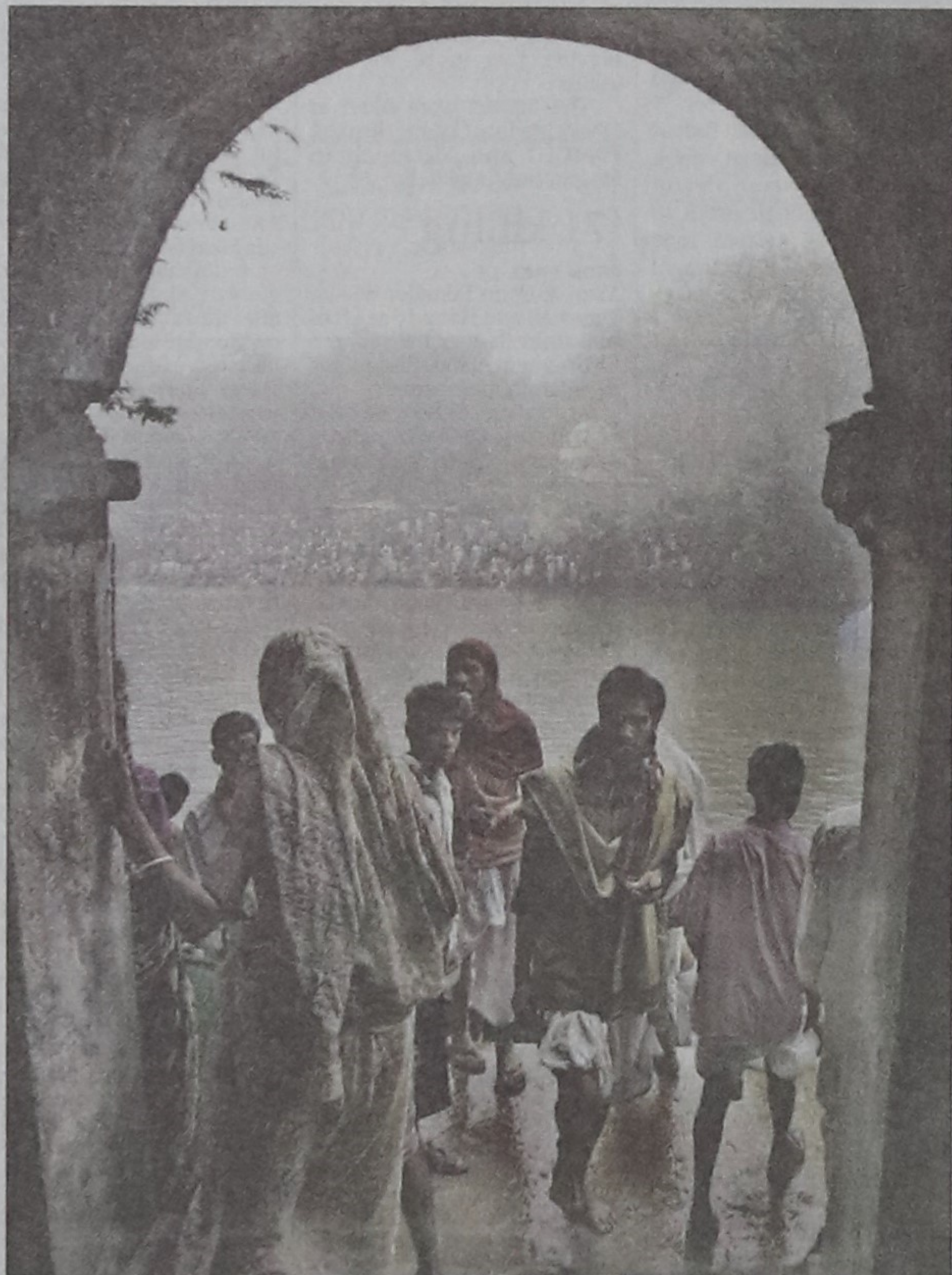
4 sued for '71 killing

A CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

A case was filed against four people here yesterday on charge of killing three freedom fighters during the country's Liberation War in 1971.

Abdul Hashem Sheikh, son of late freedom fighter Abdul Goni Sheikh of Kumlai village in Rampal upazila, lodged the case against Sheikh Shamsul

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Hindus from across the country bathe in the lake of Chnadrannath Temple at Sitakunda before they place their offerings at the temple on the occasion of Shiva Chaturdashi.

CONVICTION IN ABSENTIA BY LOWER COURT HC delivers split verdict on bail bid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A division bench of the High Court yesterday delivered split orders on whether people sentenced to imprisonment in absentia can directly come to the HC for bail without surrendering to the trial courts.

Presiding Judge of the bench Justice Syed AB

Mahmudul Huq directed 12 convicts including some politicians, who filed bail petitions with the HC, to surrender before the trial courts within eight weeks and asked the government not to harass or arrest them during the corresponding time.

However, Justice Moyeenul Islam

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Pakistan to arm village militias to fight terror

Govt to hand 30,000 rifles, form special police

AP, Islamabad

Authorities in a Pakistani border province plan to arm villagers with 30,000 rifles and set up an elite police unit to protect a region increasingly besieged by Taliban and al-Qaeda militants, an official said Sunday.

Stiffer action in the North West Frontier Province could help offset American concern that a peace deal being negotiated in the Swat valley, a Taliban stronghold in the province, could create a haven for Islamist insurgents only 160km from the Pakistani capital.

Village militias backed by the United States have been credited with reducing violence in Iraq. Washington is paying for a similar initiative in Afghanistan.

The United States is already spending millions of dollars to train and equip Pakistani forces in the rugged region near the Afghan border but there was no sign it was involved in the militia plan. A US Embassy spokesman could not be reached for comment. Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi said Saturday he will try to "remove the apprehensions of the world community" about the Swat deal when he meets US officials in Washington next week, state-run media reported.

But it was unclear if Sunday's announcement had the backing of national leaders or the powerful army or if handing out more guns in an already heavily armed society was wise.

Mahmood Shah, a former head of security

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Tigers call for truce, Lanka army says no

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's Tamil Tigers appealed yesterday for international action to halt a major offensive against their shrinking fiefdom, but the island's military rejected any talk of a truce.

With rebel forces cornered in the northeast of the island by a massive attack by government forces, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) urged foreign powers to step in and arrange an immediate truce.

The LTTE said the United Nations, United States, the European Union, Japan and one-time peace broker Norway had to pressure the Sri Lankan government into accepting a ceasefire "so the miseries of the Tamils... are brought to an end."

"We also wish to inform the international community that we are ready to discuss, cooperate, and work together in all their efforts to bring an immediate ceasefire and work towards a political settlement," the LTTE's political chief B. Nadesan said in a statement.

But the Sri Lankan military said it would accept nothing short of complete surrender and disarmament.

"Our position is that they must lay down arms and surrender," said military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara. "There is no shift in our position."

The government withdrew from a Norwegian-brokered truce at the start of last year, after accusing the Tigers of using a peace process only to re-arm and consolidate their de facto mini-state in the north of the island.

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Tk 35CR EMBEZZLEMENT 4 Jubok staff handed over to cops

A CORRESPONDENT, Chandpur

Chandpur municipal mayor Nasiruddin handed over four officials of Jubo Karmasangsthan Society (Jubok) to the Chandpur Model police station yesterday on charge of embezzling Tk 35 crore of its members.

Jubok members alleged that they had deposited their hard earned money over the years with the organization with a hope to getting a handsome amount but they were deceived.

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