Gunmen

seize 4 UN

workers in

Gunmen seized four UN

workers in southern Somalia

yesterday, a UN spokeswoman

said, the latest in a series of

attacks on aid workers in the

war-ravaged Horn of Africa

violence was reported during

the abduction in the north-

western Somali town of Wajid.

There had been no contact

"The United Nations and

the local authorities ... are

doing everything to secure the

unconditional release of the

with the kidnappers so far.

Dawn Blalock said no

Somalia

AP, Mogadishu

nation.

# Review petition to be filed on Sharif disqualification

XINHUA, AFP, Islamabad/ Gujranwala

A review petition will be filed on the disqualification case of former prime minister Nawaz Sharif and his brother following the government's decision to reinstate deposed Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry.

has directed the deputy attorney general to file a review petition in the Sharif brothers' eligibility case, Geo TV channel said.

banned Nawaz Sharif, also chief of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), and his brother Shahbaz Sharif from hold-turmoil. ing office.

Sharif from the office of chief minister of had agreed to call off a mass protest march

Pakistan's Punjab province.

Nawaz Sharif termed the verdict as 'unconstitutional', and decided to participate in the 'long march' aimed at restoring the judges sacked in November 2007 when then president Pervez Musharraf declared a state of emergency.

The lawyers and political activists Pakistan's Attorney General Latif Khosa kicked off their 'long march' March 12, and planned to reach capital Islamabad Monday to stage a massive sit-in.

But Pakistani Prime Minister Yousaf Last month, a Supreme Court verdict Raza Gilani early Monday morning announced the restoration of the deposed chief justice in a bid to defuse the political

Earlier Pakistan's main opposition The verdict also removed Shahbaz leader Nawaz Sharif on Monday said he

after the government decided to reinstate the deposed chief justice.

"We are now calling off this long march," he said from inside his SUV, showered with pink rose petals and stranded in a sea of jubilant supporters in the central city of Gujranwala.

He said the decision had been taken following discussions with lawyers and leaders of allied political parties, such as crickethero Imran Khan.

"Today the nation has received very happy news. We have said that we will restore the judges and the independent judiciary and by the grace of Allah we have achieved it," he said.

"Very soon we will play our role in implementing real democracy in this country," he added.



Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) supremo and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Mayawati (2R) smiles while posing with leaders of newly formed Third-Front in New Delhi on Sunday.

## Karat lashes out at UPA for 'nakedly pro-rich' policies

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE,

The United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government reporters. had adopted policies that were 'nakedly pro-rich", Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) general secretary Prakash Karat said in New Delhi yesterday.

secular government in the country," Karat said while releasing his party's manifesto for the elections.

"We place the UPA squarely

responsible for this unacceptable growing divide between a handful of rich people and vast masses of our people," he told

Referring to the public distribution system (PDS), he said the Manmohan Singh-led government had weakened it instead of strengthening it.

He said the government had "We want an alternative adopted an "attitude of hesitation and compromise" on communal issues and referred to attacks on minorities in Kandhamal in Orissa and in Karnataka.

## CPI-M does not rule out joining Third Front govt

Unlike in the past, CPI-M unstable like in the past.

tee will meet. We will see the

He was asked whether the Left parties would, as always, remain outside the government in such a scenario or would they join such an alternative. In the non-Congress governments so far, the CPI(M) had stayed away so also the RSP and Forward Bloc while the CPI had joined the United Front government headed HD Deve Gowda and I

# 11 killed in suicide attack on Afghan police HQ

## Nine foreign troops die in attacks

AP, AFP, Kandahar/ Kabul

A suicide bomber in a police uniform detonated explosives he was carrying inside a police headquarters in southern Afghanistan yesterday, killing 11 people and wounding 29 others, the Interior Ministry

surge in violence in Afghanistan over the weekend 'the 2001 US invasion. that led to the deaths of nine foreign troops, including four Americans.

The bomber Monday set off his explosives after slipping inside the main police building in Lashkar Gah, the capital of Helmand province, while the police were exercising, said Asadullah Sherzad, the provincial police chief.

The attack killed nine police and two civilians and wounded 29 others, mostly police, the Interior Ministry said in a statement.

The attack is most likely the work of Taliban militants, who regularly use suicide bombers in their attacks against Afghan and foreign forces in the coun-

The lightly armed police force has suffered greatly in Taliban attacks, with more than 800 officers killed in 2008 are likely to surge as some

the centre of the Taliban insurgency. The US is sending thousands of new troops to the south this year to try to reverse Taliban gains. The Islamic militants have made a violent comeback the last The bombing followed a three years following an apparent initial defeat after

> and three Afghan civilians were killed in a bloody weekend of attacks in Afghanistan linked to a Taliban-led insurgency, officials said.

the weekend killed three British troops, while a roadside bomb in the east Sunday killed four US troops. A French soldier was also killed in a clash on Saturday, making the weekend one of the deadliest two-day periods for international troops in weeks.

Three other ISAF soldiers died in Afghanistan on Saturday. One was French, another British and the nationality of the third has not been released.

The spike in violence is an early indication that roadside bombs and other ambushes

17,000 US forces arrive in Southern Afghanistan is Afghanistan this year to bolster the record 38,000 Americans already in the country.

In other violence Monday, a suicide attacker in the western province of Farah shot and killed a policeman outside a government building, then entered the building and detonated a suicide bomb, Nine international soldiers wounding two civilians, said Rauf Ahmadi, a police spokesman in western Afghanistan.

The Taliban, who were in government between 1996 and 2001, have carried out a Attacks in Helmand over wave of similar attacks across the besieged country with other radical factions and criminals also behind a tide of violence. The US military said mean-

> Sunday about 60 kilometres (40 miles) west of Kandahar city. Three others were

while that soldiers killed five

militants in an operation early

detained, it said in a state-Isaf has swollen to reach

nearly 62,000 soldiers from 42 countries, according to its website. The separate US-led coalition is believed to include around 13,000 troops.

# staff," she said in a statement.

PHOTO: AFP

The US Space Shuttle Discovery lifts off Sunday at Kennedy Space Centre in Florida.

### Discovery nears space station after delayed launch

AP, Cape Canaveral

Seven astronauts raced to the international space station aboard the space shuttle Monday after a successful launch that was delayed five times and caused the mission to be shortened by a day.

The delays forced a spacewalk to be axed, but mission managers said they would still be able to complete 80 to 90 percent of the tasks they had planned. The cancelled spacewalk chores will be tackled by the space station crew after Discovery leaves.

FROM PAGE 1

The premier and the senior

The cabinet earlier asked the ministry to submit a complete report on militant activities including the August 17 serial bomb blasts across the country with findings about the mastermind behind the blasts, their sources of finance and ammunition, people involved in it and the reason for the intelligence agencies'

Some ministers who attended the meeting told The Daily Star that the prime minister was unhappy about the report as the home ministry failed to incorporate the information in it.

Terming the report 'incomplete', Hasina directed the ministry to come up with an

"The home ministry submitted the report based on information before 31 December, 2008. Although many incidents including the BDR mutiny happened in the country after the election, it

had no information about those," said a minister wishing not to be named. Meanwhile, the home

ment secretariat since 1972. BNP lawmakers were not present in the House when the militants and their outfits. "We have directed the

Referring to the opposition Speaker said he thought his proposal on formation of the

The BNP lawmakers, who staged the walkout in protest against 'indecent remarks' about late president Ziaur Rahman, however returned to the House after the unsched-

Intelligence The home minister said the

two-hour-long meeting.

ministers at the meeting expressed dissatisfaction over a home ministry report on militant outfits.

failure to prevent it.

in-depthreport.

ministry directed deputy commissioners, superintends of police and intelligence agencies to hunt down militants and prepare a list of

deputy commissioners, superintends of police to find out the militants and take actions against them," said Home Secretary Abdus Sobhan Sikder after holding a meeting with the ministry officials.

The cabinet approved the proposed amendment to the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission Act 2003 and renamed the national award on agriculture the Bangabandhu National Agriculture Award.

leader Marwan Barghuti (L) during a protest yesterday at the Red Cross offices in Gaza City calling for the release of Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli jails.

NEWS ANALYSIS

The restoration of top judges

will give Pakistan desperately

needed rule of law and marks up

into public pressure and

and end a repressive crack-

Gilani, in a dawn address to

down on activists.

Nawaz Sharif, analysts said.

AFP, Islamabad

A Palestinian girl holds a picture of a relative and of jailed Fatah

PTI, New Delhi

yesterday did not rule out its participation in any Third Front government after the Lok Sabha polls. CPI-M General Secretary Prakash Karat also said that steps would be taken to ensure that such non-Congress, non-BJP alternatives do not remain

He, however, did not elaborate "Hopefully, if a situation develops, our central commit-

situation, take stock of it and decide the question," Karat told reporters releasing the party manifesto here.

KGujral.

## MPs demand FROM PAGE 16

receiving funds from the Finance Division," Sahara

In reply to a query, she said the AL-led government is examining whether the recruitment of 1,475 subinspectors and 32,499 constables during the past BNP-led alliance government was made on the basis of qualification.

Responding to another query, Sahara in a scripted answer said installing 155 closed-circuit cameras in Dhaka metropolis will be completed by June to check crime and track criminals.

She said 14 closed-circuit cameras have already been installed in five places to modernise DMP control

In efforts to ensure security of people living in the coastal

belt, the home minister said a process is underway to provide helicopters and maritime surveillance aircraft for the Coast Guard. Replying to a query, Sahara

said the government is taking various measures to improve traffic system in all metropoli-Besides, the government is considering purchasing patrol cars with computers, installing CCTV at important turns

on the road, devices to detect drunk drivers, metal detectors, signal torchlight and increasing the number of force in traffic division, Sahara

in scripted questions also wanted to know the government's move to withdraw cases filed during the past BNP government "to harass opponents politically".

recommendations reviewing merits of the cases. In reply to a query, the minister said the government is considering giving monthly allowance to the families of those who were killed in the

government has already

formed committees at each

district headed by the district

magistrates to come up with

August 21, 2004 grenade attack on an AL rally on Bangabandhu Avenue. **DEATH IN CROSSFIRE** The home minister in a scripted answer said as many as 373 'criminals' were killed

in "crossfire" during opera-A number of AL lawmakers tions to arrest criminals and recover arms from 2001 to She said one Rab member was killed and 175 were

injured in the gunfight during

the operations.

### Musharraf would resume office from March 21. The decision came after a said. series of meetings he and army chief General Ashfaq Kayani held with President Asif Ali Zardari to avert bloodshed and

instability in the frontline US ally in the "war on terror".

Main opposition leader

Sharif, a former prime minister who galvanised opponents of Zardari and led thousands two years after their dismissal of protesters in a march out of Lahore, hailed the announcement and promptly called off a a victory for opposition leader mass protest. The government's

Sharif savours victory

Hours before a planned climbdown was widely seen as march by lawyers and opposi- a product of Western pressure tion parties was due to on Zardari to defuse the standdescend on Islamabad, the off with Sharif, and Gilani's government Monday caved orders to release hundreds of people in detention as a vicagreed to reinstate the judges tory for rights. "I think it's a huge victory

for civil society, lawyers and Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Nawaz Sharif," defence and political analyst Talat Masood the nation, announced that all said. "It came too late but it judges including chief justice came before (the protesters Iftikhar Chaudhry sacked by reached) Islamabad" and former military ruler Pervez averted expected clashes.

"Sharif took a firm stand, his stature has gone up," he bigleader, he said.

pendent judiciary will be there to strengthen the rule of law."

"It will also help counter radicalism and extremism:" US officials were seen as

instrumental in trying to encourage Zardari and Sharif to end their standoff.

Masood said Americans played a "very positive" role. "They have understood that Sharif's party is an important political force in Pakistan and there is no need to have any confrontation. Their role was very constructive."

Jaffer Ahmed, director of the Pakistan Study Centre at Karachi University, described the agreement as a major step forward for the country, but slammed Zardari for miscalculating at every stage.

"President Zardari lost a good opportunity to take ownership of the lawyers movement. Nawaz Sharif captured it and emerged as a

"Sharif's right-wing party "For the first time in has become popular and the Pakistan's history, an inde- secular Pakistan People's Party is weakened. It is alienated by the civil society, because of Zardari's wrong policies and wrong advisers,

# Archaeologists claim discovery of Cleopatra's

ANI, London

A team of archaeologists and forensic experts has claimed to have found the skeleton of Cleopatra's younger sister, who was murdered more than 2,000 years ago on the orders of the Egyptian queen.

younger sister

According to a report in The Times, the remains of Princess Arsinoe, put to death in 41 BC on the orders of Cleopatra and her Roman lover Mark Antony to eliminate her as a rival, are the first relics of the Ptolemaic

dynasty to be identified. The breakthrough, by an Austrian team, has provided pointers to Cleopatra's true

ethnicity. Scholars have long debated whether she was Greek or Macedonian like her ancestor the original Ptolemy, a Macedonian general who was made ruler of Egypt by Alexander the Great, or whether she was North African.

## IRA plotting to kill Princes William, Harry

PTI, London

The security cover for Britain's Princes William and Harry has been stepped up over fears that IRA terrorists are plotting to assassinate the royals, a news report said today.

Scotland Yard fears the Princes, who are officers in the British Army, are prize targets for Irish Republican Army (IRA). The number of close pro-

tection officers guarding the

two royals on each shift has been increased, Britain's Sunday Express reported today. The threat level has been upgraded following the murders of two soldiers and a police officer in Northern Ireland.

# Graft at JS Secretariat

committees then," Hamid said mentioning an instance

"The staffs have been paid salary since their appointment and I am also bound to pay them now," he added. The treasury bench law-

makers were demanding for a

couple of days formation of a

FROM PAGE 16

of anomalies.

parliamentary body to probe the alleged corruption occurred at the secretariat last seven years. The main opposition was however opposing the demand saying the treasury bench lawmakers brought the

allegations to undermine the

image of Jamiruddin Sircar,

who is contesting the by-polls from Bogra-6 constituency. The demand for forming the parliamentary body came again yesterday during an unscheduled discussion. Participating in the discussion, the treasury bench lawmakers reiterated their

demand. You [Speaker] should announce formation of the committee today to uphold the dignity of the chair. There is no scope to delay," an AL lawmaker said adding he had earlier also raised the same

despite being its guardian,' "We cannot let the Shajahan said. speaker's chair be polluted. Talking floor, BNP law-The nation does not support

the delay in forming the committee," the AL lawmaker said. Workers Party lawmaker and chief of the parliamentary standing committee on education ministry Rashed Khan Menon described how he is facing difficulties in running

the committee for lack of

logistic support. "Parliament is now in disarray. We are not getting secretarial support to run the committee. There is disarray in everywhere; from the canteen to every section," Menon said, voicing his demand to form the committee to probe the alleged charges.

when parliament did not exist during the two-year caretaker rule. "Now the lawmakers are not getting their due facilities," he added. Another AL lawmaker Shajahan Khan also raised

allegation against the imme-

AL lawmaker Fazle Rabbi

Chowdhury said crores of taka

has been misappropriated

diate past speaker. Jamiruddin Sircar destroyed the dignity of the House through corruption uled discussion was over.

maker Abul Khair Bhuiyan demanded that the parliamentary body investigate the alleged corruption in

Parliament Secretariat since

Speaker Abdul Hamid accepted the opposition lawmaker's proposal and said he would ask the comptroller and auditor general to audit the expenditures of parlia-

Speaker announced to form the committee as the opposition lawmakers walked out prior to the end of the unscheduled discussion. lawmakers' absent, the

committee was accepted unanimously.

# Presidential candidate of the Farabundo Marti for the Liberation National Front (FMLN) Mauricio Funes speaks in San Salvador on Sunday. Funes, candidate of a party of leftist former rebels, declared himself the winner of El Salvador's closely-contested presidential election, signalling an end to 20 years of right-wing rule.