Suu Kyi to protest innocence at trial

AFP, Yangon

Myanmar pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi will protest her innocence when she goes on trial starting Monday, her party said as the ruling military junta freed her personal doctor from detention.

The 63-year-old met her lawyer on Saturday at the notorious prison where she has been held since last week on charges of violating house arrest by sheltering an American man who swam across a lake to her residence.

The Nobel Peace Prize winner faces up to five years in jail if convicted on the charges, which would keep her behind bars during controversial elections planned by Myanmar's generals for next year.

A spokesman for her National League for Democracy party said she had discussed the case when lawyer Kyi Win visited Insein prison near Yangon. The trial is expected to take place inside the jail.

"They discussed the charges and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said that she didn't commit any crimes and she is ready to talk about it in court," the spokesman, Nyan Win, told AFP Sunday. Daw is a term of respect in Burmese language.

"She asked him to tell friends and colleagues that she is in good health," he said.

for the party who applied to represent her at the trial, said on Saturday that he had been disbarred by the authorities a day earlier.

Myanmar has faced global pressure to free Aung San Suu Kyi and drop the charges, which were filed less than two weeks before the latest period of her detention was due to expire.

She has spent 13 of the last 19 years under house arrest.

However the regime on Saturday released her doctor, Tin Myo Win, nearly two weeks after he was held while trying to get access to her following the incident with US national John

"He was released from detention (Saturday night). According to him his health situation is good," one of Tin Myo Win's family members told AFP asking not to be identified. It was not clear if Tin Myo

Aung San Suu Kyi. She was placed on an intravenous drip at her house on May 8 because she could not eat, had low blood

The doctor's release came days after the US government demanded that Myanmar should grant him "immediate" access to see Aung San Suu Kyi

The Washington-based US Campaign for Burma meanwhile released what it said was the police report which led to the charges against her, in which it accuses Aung San Suu Kyi of offering Yettaw food and drink when he stayed at her

her house for her to read, it said.

Yettaw also faces trial on

The Philippines on Sunday added to the chorus of condemnation, saying it was "outraged" by Aung San Suu Kyi's treat-

"The Philippine government is deeply troubled and outraged over the filing of trumped-up charges against Aung San Suu-Kvi and her transfer to Insein prison," Foreign Secretary

It joined Indonesia, Thailand Aung Thein, another lawyer and Singapore among Myanmar's regional neighbours in speaking out, but there has been no official statement from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), of which Myanmar is a member.

> Asean has long been criticised for failing to press Myanmar to take stronger steps in contrast to the tough sanctions on the country, which have been imposed by Western

Myanmar has been ruled by the military since 1962 and the generals refused to let Aung San Suu Kyi take office after her party won a landslide victory in the country's last elections in

The junta has promised polls in 2010, but they will be held under a constitution brought in last year that enshrines a role for the military in any government. Critics say the elections are

thousands of innocent lives,

according to the United

Nations, and the government

has faced international con-

demnation for its conduct of

announcement, Sri Lanka's

officials said all civilians held

hostage by the Tigers had

fighters were boxed into a

patch of jungle measuring

say they held back on their

final assault to avoid civilian

deaths, though thousands are

still thought to have been

killed in months of heavy

announced in Jordan on

Saturday that his forces had

finally defeated the rebels, was

greeted by supporters waving

flags and setting off firecrack-

"My government, with the

Rajapakse, who

fighting.

about 24 hectares (60 acres).

It added the surviving rebel

Sri Lankan military leaders

Shortly before the LTTE's

the war in recent months.

escaped the war zone.

Tigers to put down

"We are celebrating a victory against terrorism," said Sujeewa Anthonis, a 32-yearold street hawker.

In what could mark the end of Asia's longest running civil war -- one that left more than 70,000 dead in pitched battles, suicide attacks, bomb strikes and assassinations -- the rebels appeared to finally admit defeat.

choice -- to remove the last weak excuse of the enemy for killing our people. We have decided to silence our guns. Our only regrets are for the lives lost and that we could not

Velupillai Prabhakaran, the Tigers' founder and leader, had been reported to be with his fighters as they made their last stand, though the defence ministry said it had no news of his whereabouts -- or whether he was still alive.

Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) controlled nearly a third of the island nation and operated an effectively autonomous Tamil state with courts, schools and a civil service.

But the government of President Mahinda Rajapakse launched a military offensive, whi 'drove the Tigers out of the east and then the north, before trapping the remaining guerrillas on the island's

coast. "They were actually defeated some time ago, but they have formally accepted defeat only now," military spokesman Brigadier Udaya

Nanayakkara told AFP. They fought for an Eelam (separate state) that they could never win. It was only a trapped. waste of lives. They have caused massive death and destruction over the years. Finally they themselves have working in the war zone,

realised that it is all over." able doubt whether the defeat would bring peace to the island, however, as the Tigers were thought likely to return Nations, the United States and to the guerrilla tactics they many other countries, Sri used to devastating effect in Lanka had been determined

the past. victory has come at the cost of rebels.

pressure and was dehydrated.

amid fears for her health.

house between May 3 and 5.

It says that the former army veteran made a prior visit in November 2008 when Yettaw, a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, left a copy of the Book of Mormon at

Monday.

Alberto Romulo said.

Win would be allowed to visit likely to be heavily rigged.

This battle has reached its bitter end," Selvarasa Pathmanathan, the Tigers' chief of international relations, said in a statement carried on the pro-rebel Tamilnet website.

"We remain with one last hold out for longer."

ers as he returned home earlier on Sunday. total commitment of our armed forces, has in an unprecedented humanitarian operation finally defeated the LTTE militarily," he told a Only two years ago, the

meeting of international leaders. The president has faced fierce criticism for civilian casualties caused by army shelling and for the detention in state-run camps of more than 100,000 Tamils who fled

the fighting. Thousands of noncombatants had been held hostage by the Tigers, though the exact number has been a matter of dispute between the United Nations and Sri Lankan officials.

The government previously maintained that less than 20,000 civilians were being held by the rebels as human shields, while the United Nations said there could have been 50,000 people

The International Committee of the Red Cross, the only neutral organisation described the situation as "an There was still consider- unimaginable humanitarian catastrophe."

Despite pleas for a ceasefire from the United to push on until it had secured The military's push for a clear victory against the while barrister Rafique-Ul

Act fast

and Shitalakhya from pollution and land grabbers, sources said.

"We asked the environment and industries ministries to take quick measures to protect the rivers and the environment," Mozammel Huq told reporters at the meeting room after the meeting.

He also said about 1,250 flats would be handed over to homeless people of Bhashantek in the city at a ceremony next month. They were evicted from the slum shanties.

"They [the homeless] will be given bank loans to buy those flats and gradually they will pay off the price in monthly rents," explained Mozammel.

The committee in the meeting asked the authorities concerned to recover 12 city canals, which are now under the clutches of vested quarters.

The committee chief also informed the press that the land ministry has taken a project on "digital mapping" under which digital maps of the entire country will be made and all information about land will be available on a website.

Mozammel Huq also said they have discussed bringing some changes to the vested property act.

CIB grapples

FROM PAGE 16

A total of 15 students have been selected for three months with monthly honorarium of Tk 10,000 each. Besides, 40 newly-appointed assistant directors have been assigned and 10 others selected from various departments for the task.

However, some quarters fear that outsourcing of the task might compromise the secrecy of the CIB.

But a BB high official said there is no scope for any lapse in CIB's secrecy as the hired employees use a code for checking the appeals from commercial banks.

Khaleda

FROM PAGE 1

On May 3, Khaleda Zia filed a writ petition with the HC challenging the legality of the government's first notice issued on April 20 asking her to leave the cantonment house

within 15 days, and among On May 7 the government issued a separate notice to Khaleda asking her to show cause within 15 days why she should not be directed to return the estate, including the cantonment house.

On May 10, Khaleda replied | reporters yesterday. to the government's show cause notice in which she asked the government to withdraw the notice within five days.

Barrister Mahabub Uddin Khokon, Khaleda's lawyer, yesterday told The Daily Star that the petitions filed by Khaleda Zia would be moved before the HC on Monday.

SC upholds stay order on Babar's bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court (SC) yesterday upheld its chamber judge's order that stayed the High Court (HC) order granting bail to former state minister for home Lutfuzzaman Babar in an arms case in which he was sentenced to 17 years'

imprisonment. The four-member full bench of the Appellate Division, headed by Chief Justice MM Ruhul Amin, passed the order upon a leaveto-appeal petition filed by the government against the HC

Disposing of the government petition, the apex court also said the appellant (Babar) may take steps for early disposal of his appeal pending with the HC against the trial court verdict.

Upon a government petition, the chamber judge of the SC on May 10 stayed the HC order that granted Babar bail in the case.

The chamber judge also asked the government to file a leave-to-appeal petition with the SC against the HC order.

Earlier on May 5, the HC upon an appeal by Babar granted him bail for three months in the case. On March 5 this year, a

Dhaka court sent Babar to jail after he surrendered and sought bail. The HC earlier on March 4 directed him to surrender

before the trial court as per the

SC order. Additional Attorney General M Enayetur Rahim appeared for the government, Hug stood for Babar.

Political partners

FROM PAGE 1 arrested early Saturday at their residences in Dhaka. Chittagong CID took them to

the port city on that night. An attempt was made during the rule of BNP-Jamaat alliance government to save those involved in the case by submit-

ting a flawed charge sheet. State Minister Sohel Taj told reporters yesterday that those who had tried to divert the incident will also be brought to justice.

Our Chittagong office adds: The two former chiefs of NSI were taken to the court at 11:45am yesterday amid tight security.

Public Prosecutor (PP)

Kamal Uddin moved the remand petition on behalf of investigation officer (IO) of the case Muniruzzaman Chowdhury, senior ASP of CID, when the remand hearing began at around 3:15pm. Sahab Uddin in his confes-

sional statement said former NSI DG Brigadier General (retd) Abdur Rahim held several meetings with the UAEbased ARY group that is involved in firearms business, in Dhaka and Dubai.

According to Sahab Uddin's confessional statement, Rahim received a Mobile Monitoring System and also commitment from ARY group for help in setting up a private TV channel.

The then DGFI director (Counter-Intelligence Bureau) Rezzaqul Haider, who later succeeded Abdur Rahim as the NSI chief, also had close links with United Liberation Front of Assam (Ulfa) operational wing Chief Paresh Barua who used the name 'Ahmed' to hide his identity. Rezzaqul took Paresh

(Ahmed) to Combined Military Hospital (CMH) in Dhaka to meet Sahab Uddin, PP Kamal Uddin told the court quoting Sahab Uddin's confessional statement. The PP said the two former

NSI chiefs had not only refrained from protecting the country's interest but also acted against the country by helping in the arrangement of transport of the

BNP finalises

FROM PAGE 1

51-member convening committees for their own district units and those committees will hold district coungils within two months.

The convening committees will be assigned to form new committees at district-, upazilaand union-levels through the council," Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, member of the party's standing committee, told

On Saturday night, the standing committee finally approved the names of conveners and joint conveners of district convening committees of four divisions. The committee last night sat again to decide on the names of conveners and joint conveners of district convening committees in Dhaka and Chittagong divisions.

The standing committee meeting was going on with BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia presiding and a handful of names yet to be finalised when this report was filed around

10:00pm. "Today [Sunday] the district convening committees of the remaining two divisions--Dhaka and Chittagong--will be finalised," Mosharraf said, adding that the party is considering this year as "the year of reorganisation".

BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain, Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, Moudud Ahmed, RA Gani, Mahbubuddin Ahmad, Shamsul Islam and Mahbubur Rahman were present at the meeting.

Meanwhile, a group of leaders of Islami Oikya Jote (IOJ) led by its General Secretary Abdul Latif Nezami met Leader of the Opposition Khaleda Zia at her Gulshan office yesterday evening.

Later at a joint press briefing Nezami and BNP Office Secretary Rizvi Ahmed demanded release of Fazlul Haq Amini, chairman of a faction of IOJ. The two parties also condemned the arrest of Amini.

. They also urged leaders and worker to unite and forge a movement against "the government's repression".

Zia's mural

FROM PAGE 16 They also brought out a procession yesterday morning in Gazipur city protesting the

removal of the mural. University sources said the work on the mural began in 2000 as per the design of sculptor Abdur Razzaq and 80 percent work was completed before the political changeover.

BOU Ershad Bari replaced it with another one prescribed by sculptor Mrinal Haque causing a loss of Tk 11.56 lakh, they added. The authorities formed an investigation committee in January to probe the matter. As the committee found the allegation true the BOU

authorities decided to replace

the mural with that of its origi-

nal design, sources said.

As the new government took

over then Vice Chancellor of

consignment of illegal arms and

ammunition. It's not a simple criminal

case; rather it should have been regarded as a sedition case, the PP said. The two needed to be ques-

tioned further after taking them on remand to find out whether any other component of the state machinery was involved in it. Opposing the remand

prayer, defence lawyer advo-

cate Nazim Uddin Chowdhury said Rezzagul Haider was one of the eight DGFI directors at the time of the arms haul and was not supposed to shoulder all the responsibilities alone. On behalf of former NSI chief Abdur Rahim, advocate Khorshed Alam Chowdhury said nothing could be proved against

obtained by force. Hearing both the sides, the court granted three day's remand for the two.

his client through Sahab Uddin's

confessional statement, which,

according to the lawyer, was

Extortion case FROM PAGE 16

decision to withdraw the case. Hasina along with the two other accused in the case--Hasina's sister Sheikh Rehana and their cousin Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim--were acquitted

as well. In his order, the judge said businessman Azam Chowdhury, managing director of East Coast Trading Ltd, submitted a petition before the head of the caretaker government on December 14 last year to withdraw his case. In his petition, he said he was compelled to file the case against Hasina and others and wishes no longer to continue with the case proceedings.

On January 28 this year, the government sent a letter to the MPP asking him to take initiatives to withdraw the case. The MPP could not take any steps as the proceedings of the case were stayed by a High Court (HC) order.

Hasina's lawyers appealed to the HC to vacate the stay order so that the case could be

withdrawn. The HC then vacated its

stay order. After hearing both the sides on the MPP's petition to withdraw the case, the court granted withdrawal of the case

yesterday. MPP Abdullah Abu also recommended withdrawal of 11 other cases filed against the prime minister as those cases were filed to "tarnish the image of the Awami League chief and her previous govern-

The cases include those filed by the last BNP-led government for alleged graft in the purchase of MiG 29s for the air force and a frigate for the navy, and in the construction of Bangabandhu Planetarium (now Bhashani Novo Theatre) and for "illegal entry" in Dhaka Cantonment area to visit writer author

Humayun Azad at the CMH. Azam had filed the case against Hasina and her cousin Sheikh Selim with Gulshan Police Station on June 13 2007, in connection with extorting Tk 2.99 crore from him in exchange for awarding a contract to set up a power

plant in Siddhirganj. JMB operation

FROM PAGE 16 organised in Dhaka, Gazipur,

Joypurhat, Comilla and Chittagong districts. They have also got some vital information about sev eral members of Majlish-e-Shura, highest policy-making

body of JMB, and their activi-

Saidur, who once was ameer of Habiganj district Jamaat-e-Islami, took charge of JMB after the execution of its top six leaders including Shaekh Abdur Rahman and Siddiqul Islam alias Bangla

Bhai in March 2007. Besides him, Rahman alias Zafar, Sohel Mahfuz, Bashar, Mehedi, Mustafiz alias 'Mostafiz Sir', Sayeem, Ejaj, Abir, Nazmul alias 'Bhagne Shahed' and Shahid alias Osman are in the top echelons of the outlawed group.

Saidur's another son AHM Shahim was JMB's IT expert, and has been behind bars since arrest in 2005.

Talking to The Daily Star, Director Intelligence of Rab Major Azim Ahmed said, "We're working to hunt down the militants including their top leaders. But you know how they are always in flight." Following up information

from Mizan, the elite crimebusters have already busted a bomb-making factory at East Monipur in Mirpur and recovered a huge cache of explosives, detonators and grenade's outer casings.

Musharraf may stage political comeback

PTI, Islamabad

Former Pakistan president Pervez Musharraf is not ruling out the possibility of running for office again, saying that the laws under which he stepped down would allow him to make a political comeback in six months. "We're not running for office in six months," he said.

"I'm on lecture circuits. I'm enjoying this professional activity of giving lectures, which I could never imagine, as a military man, that I'd be doing," the former military ruler told CNN. He said the laws under which he stepped down as President in August last year to avoid impeachment by the PPP-led government would allow him to run for office in six months.

Asked if the PML-Q, a party which Musharraf helped form, wanted him to run as its presidential candi date, he replied: "They haven't asked me yet. Let them ask me first and then I'll reply.

Musharraf, who resigned under intense political pressure, said he wished the PPPled government well and "would be the happiest person" if the country is able to deal with threats like growing political and martial strength of the Taliban. "But one is concerned about Pakistan, certainly," he said.

"If Pakistan is in trouble and if any Pakistani, myself included -- if you can see that we can do something for it well. My life is for Pakistan.'

Currencies

FROM PAGE 16

vehicle at the check post. Police seized the money searching the vehicle, police According to police, the seized currencies include

7,21,700 Saudi riyal, 1,22,950 UAE dirham, 1,450 Qatar riyal and Tk 8,00,000. Mintu told The Daily Star, "The name of the owner of the money and the car is Zaman, a

Motaleb Plaza at Hatirpool. "I do not know anything else about the money," he

mobile phone businessman of

Atiqul Islam, deputy commissioner of Ramna Zone, said they are investigating the matter.

Clash, blast kill 7 Afghan troops in south

AFP, Kabul A roadside bomb explosion and a battle with Taliban fighters killed six policemen and an army soldier in insurgency-hit southern Afghanistan on Sunday, authorities said.

The policemen were killed when Taliban-linked militants stormed their post in troubled Helmand province, the interior ministry said in a state-

"In an armed clash between the national police and armed terrorists, six police were martyred," it said, adding that the rebels fled after reinforcements were sent

to the area. Hours earlier, a roadside bomb detonated near a convoy of Afghan army soldiers in neighbouring Zabul province, killing one soldier and injuring three others, the defence

ministry said. 41 more BDR members remanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Criminal Investigation (CID) officials yesterday took 41 more BDR members on a fiveday remand in connection with the February 25-26 Pilkhana mutiny case. Senior ASP of CID, also

investigation officer of the case,

Abdul Kahar Akand said 41 BDR men were placed on the remand for interrogation while two more people confessed to their involvement in the mutiny. BDR habildar Dewan Elahi and civilian Mohammad Faisal confessed their involvement before the Metropolitan

Magistrate's Court, Dhaka in

the BDR carnage, raising the

number of people who have confessed to 70. So far, around 1,400 BDR jawans have been arrested in connection with Pilkhana carnage case filed with Ramna Police Station while 18 civilians among 500 were placed on remand in different periods.

Intense battles

FROM PAGE 16 area," the military said in a

statement. help of the local population, will not only clear, secure and hold the area, but will make sure that miscreantsterrorists are chased and killed to avert any possibility of their return."

Matta is about 25 kilometres northwest of Swat's main town Mingora, where gun-totting Taliban militants have been patrolling the streets in a bloody campaign to extend their control and enforce a harsh brand of Islamic law.

Kanju town is just two kilometres from Mingora's outskirts, signalling an imminent advance on Mingora itself, where thousands of civilians are believed to be cowering behind locked doors without food, water or medical care.

engagements are taking place at the outskirts of Mingora," the statement said.

they had relaxed a curfew ment forces and the Taliban and asked residents to leave in the northwest last year. Matta on Sunday morning.

1,000 militants" had been killed since the offensive began on April 26, although such tolls are impossible to verify and there is no data yet town Mingora on Saturday. on civilian casualties.

continue until the last militant is flushed out," Rehman Malik told a press conference. "The militants are on the run, they will be elimito 28, security officials said. nated at any cost."

had been killed in the last 24 hours alone. already reeling after the death toll from a devastating car bomb that hit the main town Peshawar on Saturday

rose to 12, including four

said that 25 Taliban fighters

Congress

FROM PAGE 16 He said securing majority for the government is not a big

Sources said a section of Congress Working Committee members was opposed to including RJD and Samajwadi Party in the new government as the vote share of Congress is the same as that of these two parties in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Congress should keep distance from these parties to

protect its interest, they said. Asked if there was any discussion about Rahul Gandhi becoming the prime minister, Dwivedi said, "You know Manmohan Singhji is going to be the prime minis-

. Ahead of the Working Committee meeting, top leaders of Congress met separately yesterday morning at the residence of PM Manmohan Singh and discussed the issue offorming the government. Singh is expected to be

elected leader of Congress

Parliamentary Party at its

meeting on Tuesday, paving

the way for his becoming the

PM for the second successive term, first since Jawaharlal Nehru. After that, Singh will meet President Pratibha Patil and

stake claim to form the new government. Tomorrow, he will preside over a meeting of the outgoing cabinet and complete the formality of resigning before

the Congress Parliamentary Party meeting the next day. Meanwhile, Trinamool chief Mamata Banerjee, whose party with 19 Lok Sabha seats from West Bengal is the second largest constituent of the UPA after Congress, said in Kolkata that she would not bargain for ministerial portfolios for her

"I hate bargaining", she

party men in the new govern-

Israeli nukes

Israel's alleged atomic arsenal poses "the real danger" in the Middle East and not Iran's nuclear programme, Arab League chief Amr Musa said yesterday.

"The real danger as far as

Economic Forum in Jordan. "We don't see Iran as the main issue. The vast majority of Arabs does not see Iran as

"However, we don't need another nuclear programme in the Middle East," the Arab

children and two women, a

police official said. The blast ripped through Security forces, with the a packed street, leaving severed body parts on the road near an ice cream shop

and an Internet cafe. Many of the tide of refugees fleeing the punishing offensive in swathes of the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) had taken refuge from the bombardment in Peshawar, the provincial

capital. Peshawar is the gateway to Pakistan's troubled tribal belt on the Afghan border, where the United States says Taliban and Al-Qaeda extremists have carved out safe havens to plot new attacks on the West.

The UN refugee agency said more than 1.1 million people have fled the fighting and registered with authorities since May 2, in a displacement that officials fear "At present intense fire is the worst here since partition with India in 1947.

They join another 500,000 people who fled bouts of A security official said fighting between govern-

"It is really the worst The interior minister situation in Swat, the worst I claimed that "more than have seen in my life. I have no words to explain it," said Salman Khan -- not his real name -- who arrived in Peshawar from Swat's main

Also Sunday, the death toll "The army offensive will from a suspected US missile strike in the northwest's semi-autonomous tribal region of North Waziristan near the Afghan border rose

The United States has put The military statement Pakistan at the heart of the fight against al-Qaeda, but Pakistan publicly opposes drone attacks, saying they The northwest was violate its territorial sovereignty and deepen resentment among the populace.

Australia

FROM PAGE 16

International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR, B). During the last four years, AusAID contributed Au\$48 million for development of education and over Au\$44 million for the health sector.

Population at the

programme of Brac thrived on its Au\$22 million aid. Unicef too backed up significantly the government's primary education programme (phase 2) by use of Aussie funding.

The huge education

The Australian contribution here aims to improve the quality of teacher training, promote inclusive education, and strengthen curriculum development, local level planning and training. Around 68,000 teachers and 4,500 instructors have

primary education. Nearly 10 lakh children, who dropped out of public education system, got non-formal primary education. Though Australia is involved in numerous devel-

opment programmes across

South Asia, the AusAID top

already been trained, leading

to a heightened quality in

brass rates highly those in Bangladesh. "Every single programme in Bangladesh achieved highquality performance," Lorelle Bakker told this correspondent at the AusAID headquarters in Canberra. "Story is so good in Bangladesh...what's being achieved is just world

class. Best stories are coming out from Bangladesh." Regular aid programmes apart, Australia provided over Au\$10 million to assist people affected by Cyclone Sidr, which devastated the southern coast of Bangladesh in

November 2007. The success story in Bangladesh is also inspiring AusAID to contemplate a switch from its current regionbased strategy to country-wise approach. At the same time, the economic slump prompts it to

keep a watch on how its aids

are being utilised. "In view of the recession, AusAID plans to set up a taskforce to monitor projects and find financial vulnerabilities," said Elaine AusAID brackets social safety net programmes as its next major target, said Ward. It has been working through Brac since 2002 to better the

through credit and savings services to 40,000 households. The programme seeks to enable the poor women to become small-scale entrepreneurs by investing in businesses such as poultry and livestock rearing, rice processing, fish farming and transport services.

livelihood in the northwest

region, providing income-

generating opportunities

pose 'real danger': Musa AFP, Shuneh

nuclear military programmes are concerned is posed by Israel and not Iran," Musa said during a panel discussion on the future of Middle East peacemaking at the World

the main issue. Why should we engage with Iran and with Israel?'

League chief said.