## The Daily Star

# India walk away

FROM PAGE 16 Dhoni opted to field.

Bangladesh lost half their batting within 24 overs with

the score yet to reach three

Imrul Kayes was the first to fall as he slashed at a wider delivery from Sudeep Tyagi, after hitting two boundaries in the previous over. Mohammad Ashraful tried an expansive drive off Shanthakumaran Sreesanth that hit his boot and into the

stumps. Tamim Iqbal's sedate knock of 17 came to an end when he came down the pitch against Nehra but holed out to a well-taken catch by Tyagi at mid-off. Unfortunate was the way Rokibul Hasan went, had backed up a bit too much to return when Yuvraj Singh cleverly caught him short off his crease. The softest dismissal was that of Mushfigur Rahim's, as he chipped one to Suresh Raina at cover off the bowling of part-time spinner Yuvraj. Much needed consolidation came in the form of

Shakib and Mahmudullah. Mahmudullah, the most consistent of the Bangladesh patters in the tournament, kept his touch and calm to keep the scoreboard ticking. Both the batsmen started pretty slowly and picked up the odd boundaries when opportunity came. As they entered the last 15 overs, both started to let loose. Shakib was playing outrageous shots, playing the pull shots with utmost ease. His massive slog-six against Ravindra Jadeja was probably the shot

### DMCH

FROM PAGE 16 Salma that she had travelled

from a distant part of the country and had nowhere to stay that evening. Salma, who had been

admitted to DMCH with financial assistance from Brac, said, "I gave her a place to stay beside me but I could not sleep that night. "Eventually I fell asleep

around 8:00am and when woke up I could not find my

"The woman and her bag had disappeared too."

"When I asked the patient beside me what happened, she said that the woman told her she was my sister-in-law

and that she was taking the Salma lodged a complaint with the DMCH authorities

and DMCH police camp, who informed Shahbagh police station yesterday evening. The woman and baby not

been found by the time this report was filed at 7:30pm yesterday.

DMCH sources said that the last time a baby was stolen from the hospital was seven years ago and that security had been tightened after a past string of

Four female security guards were on duty in the ward when this incident took

Officer-in-Charge of Shahbagh Police Station Rezaul Karim told The Daily Star that a ward master of the DMCH informed the police verbally and would lodge a case at night.

of the innings. After 45 overs Bangladesh stood at 200 for five when the batting powerplay was taken. And the second ball of the powerplay undid Shakib. His enterprising knock came to an end on 85 as he tried to scoop a slower delivery from Ashish Nehra, having succeeded in his effort in the previous over, this time he holed out to a simple catch to Dhoni much to the disappointment of the crowd. Mahmudullah took over the mantle from his skipper and produced ample fireworks in the last five overs with Naeem

Islam to take the score to the

respectability of 247 for 6 in 50

overs. Mahmudullah ended

on 64 not out while Naeem

was unbeaten on 22 off just 14

deliveries.

While the top order batting collapsed for the first time, bowlers turned in their best effort of the competition. Shafiul Islam didn't make some impression and finished his quota with figures of 1 for 63. Syed Rasel was not that expensive. Most importantly the spinners found some rhythm for the first time, as they found it easier to grip the ball with less dew around. Naeem was the most effective as he took two wickets while the skipper took one. But those efforts were not enough against a very strong Indian batting line up. Bangladesh fielding ran ragged towards the end as they dropped three chances in two overs to make the Indian chase look all the more easy. Kohli, bagging in those two chances, picked up his second hundred of the tournament. He remained not out on 102 facing 95 balls as India reached 249 for 4 in 43 overs.

### SSC exams

FROM PAGE 1

will sit for this year's exams in 1,992 exam centres under ten education boards including the Technical Education Board and Madrasa Board, said ministry sources.

Of the examinees, 2,72,183 are under Dhaka Board, 1,02,323 under Comilla Board, 68,339 under Chittagong Board, 41,169 under Sylhet Board, 1,34,687 under Rajshahi Board, 1,18,225 under Dinajpur Board, 1,24,116 under Jessore Board, 55,575 under Barisal Board, 74,720 under Technical Board and 2,11,527 under Madrasa Board.

#### All highways **FROM PAGE 16**

purchase to implement the

project for upgrading Dhaka-Mymensingh highway to fourlane under public private partnership (PPP). "The amount of money we

got from the World Bank is not sufficient to do the task. So, we want to implement the project under PPP," he said.

Abul Hossain said the government has already signed an agreement to upgrade Dhaka-Chittagong highway to a four-lane way.

In response to AL lawmaker Kamal Ahmed Majumder, the communications minister said deputy commissioners and police authorities had been asked to demolish illegal structures by the highways.

## BNP for trial

kidnappings.

make any remark about the role of former president lajuddin Ahmed who had declared the state of emergency on January 11, 2007.

"With the help of some foreign forces few ambitious army officials implemented the conspiracy. The GOC of the 9 division was the commander. In presence of the army chief, a signature was taken from the president at gunpoint on January 11, 2007," Delwar said adding that later it was aired on TV channels that the president had resigned from the post of the chief adviser to the caretaker government, and a new advisory council had taken oath. He claimed all of it was abso-

lutely unconstitutional. He said, "The army which is responsible for protecting our sovereignty became a part of the conspiracy, and it was unfortunate that the intelli-

gentsia was divided." BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is now sheltering the players of 1/11, and that proves they have been having connections since back then.

"The organisers of 1/11, and the prime minister who publicly announced that she would ratify all moves by the unconstitutional government, both should be brought to trial." Party Standing Committee

Member MK Anwar asked the army to try those of its officers who were involved in the 1/11 changeover. "Bring the derailed officers under trial, otherwise the people of the country will. None will be spared," he said.

Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury lambasted the role of Moeen U Ahmed during the emergency regime.

He also criticised the supporters of the military backed caretaker government, including some senior media

personalities among them. Khandaker Delwar presided over the meeting while party leaders Moudud Ahmed, Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, and Mirza Abbas took part in the discussion

Our Chittagong correspondent adds that rival groups of the party's Chittagong city unit held separate rallies yesterday as part of observing its 'black day'.

among others.

City Unit President Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury addressed a rally at Laldighi Maidan as chief guest with the unit's Senior Vice-president Dastagir Chowdhury in the chair. Another faction known as

loyal to Abdullah Al Noman arranged a meeting at the BNP city unit office at Nasiman Bhaban near Kazir Dewry at the same time with local Ward Councillor Shamsul Alam in the chair.

### Changes in CrPC

FROM PAGE 1

parliamentary affairs ministry for scrutiny. It was asked to submit report in two weeks.

The parliament earlier resumed sitting after a six-day recess without participation of the main opposition lawmakers.

The House held a discussion on a thanks-giving motion on the president's address. Chief Whip of Treasury

Bench Abdus Shahid placed the motion and Whip ASM Feroz seconded it. President Zillur Rahman on

January 4 addressed the inau-

gural sitting of the fourth The parliamentarians at the discussion urged the lawmakers of the main opposition BNP to return to the

House. They also appreciated the government's performance in the last one year. The lawmakers also mentioned various problems in their localities and urged the ministers concerned to address them.

Awami League lawmaker Kamal Ahmed Majumder pointed out the ongoing gas crisis in different parts of the capital and called upon the authorities concerned to take measures to solve it.

### 30 RMG units

FROM PAGE 1

days they had been requesting the authorities to introduce lunch and conveyance bills of Tk 500 and Tk 300 monthly for each worker. They also pressed for encashment of their casual leaves, but the authorities did not respond.

Rabeya Begum, an agitating worker, told reporters that the workers of the three factories reached their workplace around 7:30am and began demonstrating when the authorities denied fulfilling their demands.

The agitating workers switched off lights of the factories, shut the doors and took to the streets around 9:00am said Rabeya.

The workers staged demonstrations in the area, threw brickbats and stones at the law enforcers, who resorted charging truncheon to disperse the demonstrators, police said. Ashulia police said they

had brought the situation under control around 10:00am and removed the barricade from the road. Contacted Ashulia Police

Station OC Sirajul Islam told The Daily Star that the workers shut the doors of the factories and took to the streets while a discussion between their leaders and the factory authorities was being held over a pay hike. Admitting the incident

Envoy Group chairman Kutubuddin Ahmed said the garment workers had demonstrated pressing for encashment of their leaves, which they did not enjoy.

Kutubuddin however said they would start disbursing the encashment bills from February.

#### Hasina wants

FROM PAGE 1

used for terrorist activities against any country in the neighbourhood or around the

On counter-terrorism, the Bangladesh premier said, "I can give you this assurance that Bangladesh is committed to eliminating all forms of terrorism from within its territory".

At the banquet, Hasina stressed better connectivity in South Asia as it would "open a new era of economic activities, benefiting all countries" in the region. Her discussion on the subject was "extremely fruitful,"

she added. "Commendable progress was made on long-pending issues, particularly on land boundary," Hasina said.

She invited Manmohan Singh to visit Bangladesh at the earliest to "consolidate mutual gains"

Hasina said the relation between Bangladesh and India have its root in the liberation war of Bangladesh in 1971 "under the leadership of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and with support of late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, her government and the people of India".

"The blood of over 18,000 valiant Indians mingled with that of millions of our own ", she said in the banquet speech.

She said the spontaneous visit by Indian Foreign Minister SM Krishna to Dhaka in February last year indicated the level of importance India attached to her relation with Bangladesh and "the quality of our relation".

Hasina's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad later at a press briefing told reporters that the visiting Prime Minister told Indian leaders that democracy in the two countries would help keep terrorism at bay.

He said Indian leaders had appreciated the struggle and leadership of Hasina for restoring democracy in Bangladesh.

# Bangladesh to seek

All these irregularities

eventually led to a ban by

Malaysia on manpower hiring

from Bangladesh in March last

year, though it cited global

Tripoli to visit every work site

before attesting the job

approvals of any company, so

that no extra worker is hired,"

If needed, the government

Ghulam Mustafa, president

would deploy more welfare

of Bangladesh Association of

International Recruiting

Agencies and a delegation

member said, "We must ensure

only the required number of

workers with adequate skills go

there. If we can do it, most of

of the parliamentary standing

committee on finance minis-

try, Awami League leader HBM

Iqbal and BAIRA general secre-

tary Mofizur Rahman are also

transit rights to India, the

distance between Kolkata and

Agartala will be shortened by

ling from Kolkata and Agartala

have to take a circuitous route

of 1600km through north

eastern part of West Bengal

which is often prone to land-

slides in the hilly areas, the

been enthusiastic about

Akhaura-Agartala line appar-

ently because it will bring up

the issue of transit rights,

which is a politically sensitive

amenable to the idea of move-

ment of goods and not passen-

gers on Kolkata-Dhaka-

Akhaura-Agartala route, the

However, India would be

matter in Bangladesh.

sources added.

ists on its own.

Bangladesh has not so far

At present, people travel-

accompanying the minister.

India

FROM PAGE 1

about 550km.

sources said.

KAHM Mustafa, chairman

our problems will be solved."

"We want our mission in

recession as the reason.

Khorshed Alam said.

officers there, he said.

NEWS

**FROM PAGE 16** 

Sources said the visit is important because the malpractices could be checked then through strengthening diplomatic relations and disciplining the recruitment process.

Mosharraf Hossain said the migration cost to go to Libya is over Tk 2 lakh. "If our workers pay that high cost, they cannot serve better, because then they will be trying to do extra jobs."

"This is a matter of mutual interest, because they need better services and Bangladesh has the human resources. So, things should be dealt accordingly," he told The Daily Star. Khorshed Alam

Chowdhury, director general of Bureau of Manpower **Employment and Training and** also a member of the delegation said they had reports that some Bangladeshi workers went to Libya illegally. These contributed to the troublesome situation for Bangladeshi workers, he noted.

"As Libya is a prospective market, we don't want to lose it as has been the case with Malaysia and want to intervene at the earliest possible time,"

The main problem in Malaysia was surplus workers hired by the brokers. But once they arrived, they were not provided jobs or were forced to work without pay or very small pays or on confined for months.

### Duty-free

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FROM PAGE 16

serious problem."

assumed power in Bangladesh while a Congress-led government is also in power in India. Mukherjee hoped that

cooperation between the two countries would be strengthened further. The Indian finance minis-

ter said he conveyed to Hasina India's appreciation of her role in restoring democracy in Bangladesh.

acknowledged a Yemen-based

affiliate of Osama bin Laden's

network has become "a more

long-standing scourge of

extremism was thrown into the

spotlight after the al-Qaeda

branch claimed responsibility

for a narrowly-averted

Christmas Day bombing

positions in Yemen, including

cruise missile attacks, were

reportedly led by the United

States, which has vowed to

aid to Sanaa. London and

Washington have already

announced plans to fund a

counter-extremism police in

rebels and eight Yemeni soldiers

were killed in fierce fighting in

the north of the country, a

military source told AFP yester-

the (northern) city of Saada on

Sunday. Seventeen Huthis

(rebels) and eight Yemeni sol-

diers were killed," the source

as Zaidis, said in a statement

The Shia rebels, also known

"The army is undertaking to

destroy the city" of Saada, the

statement said. "It is using

bulldozers to destroy houses,

mosques and historical build-

Yemeni defence ministry,

while that Yemeni forces had

seized control of rebel hideouts

in Saada's Old City - a strong-

hold of the rebels also known as

were able to gain control of a

Monday's report said.

operations.

eration with Yemen.

"Men of the armed forces

"There was fierce fighting in

Meanwhile, seventeen Shia

the country.

said.

Zaidis.

Recent strikes on al-Qaeda

aboard a US-bound airliner.

The impoverished country's

No plan to send Central Asia, welcomed Yemen's desire to tackle extrem-

> "We would always want a host nation to deal with a problem itself. We want to help. We're providing assistance," he told CNN after returning from a trip to Yemen during which he held talks with President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

Petraeus said Washington planned to more than double its economic aid to Yemen this year to 150 million dollars or more. up from 70 million last year. But US officials have insisted the total aid amount has not yet boost its economic and military been determined. Though the figure pales in

comparison to the billions of dollars Washington has poured into Afghanistan, the general stressed other allies were providing aid, including Saudi Arabia, which has reportedly allocated two billion dollars and the United Arab Emirates which pledged 650 million dollars to Sanaa.

Washington has urged Yemen to crack down on al-Qaeda but Sanaa already faces a litany of challenges, including a Shia rebellion in the north, a movement for autonomy in the south, an economic crisis aggravated by dwindling oil reserves and a water shortage.

posted Monday on their website that clashes were still And President Saleh said, in underway in Saada where they remarks broadcast Sunday, that claimed the army was using he is open to dialogue with bulldozers to "destroy" propmilitants.

"If al-Qaeda lay down their arms, renounce violence and terrorism and return to wisdom, we are prepared to deal with them," Saleh told Abu Dhabi TV.

Obama said the message his administration sends to Muslim A report in a website of the communities around the world was "extraordinarily imporwww.26sep.net, said mean-"We can't return to sort of a

> garrison-state notion that we're just going to hunker down and this is only an issue of firepower and boots on the ground," he added. A thinly stretched US mili-

number of hideouts in which tary has deployed large troop partisans of terrorism and contingents in Iraq and sabotage were barricaded," Afghanistan. The number of US troops in

Mullen, the Chairman of the Afghanistan -- where Obama Joint Chiefs of Staff, acknowlhas vowed to focus his war edged in a CNN interview that against al-Qaeda militants who have also sought refuge in the United States was providing "some support" to Yemen's neighbouring Pakistan -- is set efforts to strike al-Qaeda milito triple under his watch from tants, but insisted Sanaa led the 2008 levels, reaching some 100,000 later this year. Somalia is also the focus of Yemen has been hostile to

any suggestion of US military US counterterrorism efforts, intervention, but analysts fear where an embattled transibin Laden's ancestral hometional government faces relentland cannot tackle the militants less attacks from extremist on its own and US officials have Shebab militants and their said they are seeking to boost Hezbal-Islamallies. The central government

military and intelligence coopasserts little control over the General David Petraeus, the country located along key shipping routes to oil fields in head of US Central Command, which oversees a region encomthe Middle East, with pirates passing the Middle East, the now swarming the Gulf of Aden Gulf, the Horn of Africa and and the Indian Ocean.

#### CID wants

**FROM PAGE 16** 

grenade attack cases, submitted a petition seeking permission to interrogate OC Rafiqul about the attacks on an Awami League rally on Bangabandhu Avenue.

The court will pass order today on the petition.

Suspended OC Rafiqul, also an accused in the killing of college student Kamrul Islam Momin, was sent to jail after he surrendered and sought bail in the case on October 16, 2005. In the petition, Akond said

Rafiqul needs to be quizzed as he was the OC of Motijheel Police Station when the deadly attack took place on Bangabandhu Avenue on August 21, 2004. On August 3 last year, a Dhaka court ordered the

inspector general of police to reinvestigate the cases and submit reports in two months after identifying the persons who had procured and supplied the grenades used in the attack. Twenty-three AL leaders and

workers were killed and over 300 maimed in the incident. AL President Sheikh Hasina narrowly escaped the attack.

Following the fresh probe, detained former state minister for home Lutfozzaman Babar, BNP leader Ariful Islam Arif, Islamic Democratic Party leader Moulana Sheikh Abdus Salam and pro-Pakistani militant group Hizbul Mujahideen

They were also remanded for several times.

leader Abdul Majid Butt were

earlier shown arrested.

Of them, Moulana Salam and Majid Butt had earlier given confessional statements before magistrates on separate dates.

The previous IO had pressed charges against 22 people including BNP leader and former deputy minister Abdus Salam Pintu and Harkatul Jihad chief Mufti Abdul Hannan.

#### Criminals FROM PAGE 16

the doctors declared him

Officer-in-charge Asaduzzaman of Keraniganj police station said a gang of four to five in a microbus stopped Osman, shot at his chest, snatched the money and left the scene.

Jewel said the incident might have taken place over a land dispute with his cousins.

## 6pc ADP cut

FROM PAGE 16

allocated fund is not spent fully against the projects under ADP, it will be done by June 2010. Centre for Policy Dialogue

(CPD) yesterday released a report on the State of the Bangladesh Economy in FY 2009-10. CPD in its report on ADP utilisation said, "In recent

times, launching of a project itself has become a challenge along with the challenge of maintaining the timeline of implementation. The government is expected to make a mid-term revision of ADP allocation in this month which is a welcome decision."

"It is hoped that this exercise is considered as not only the monetary utilisation of the projects but it will also put the aspects of quality of ADP utilisation under scrutiny," it

#### Robber killed

robbers started shooting at them, resulting in a gunfight.

After a 15-minute long gunfight, the criminals fled the scene leaving bullet-hit Khalil and Abul Hossain, the CNGrun auto-rickshaw driver, on the spot, said Additional Superintendent of Police (Hathazari) Babul Akter.

The injured were taken to Hathazari upazila health complex and later shifted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital where Khalil succumbed to his injuries around 4:00am, said ASP Babul. His body was sent to CMCH morgue for autopsy. Meanwhile, police recov-

ered six local firearms, 33 cartridges, a grill cutter and some equipment they use in robbery from the autorickshaws. Two cases were filed with the Hathazari Police Station in this connection. Police said Khalil was king-

pin of recent robberies in the upazilas and was wanted in over 15 cases with robberies at Rauzan, Rangunia, Hathazari, Patiya, Boalkhali and city's Chandgaon police stations. Khalil was also involved in

the killing of Wasa office assistant Siddique Ahmed after a robbery at Boalkhali on December 14 last year. Terming Chittagong a

robbery-prone area, SP Morshed said a total of 72 incidents of robbery took place in 2009 while 49 incidents in 2008. A total of 388 robbers were arrested and of them, 266 robbers gave confessional statements under section 164 in 2009. He claimed they nabbed most of the ringleaders of robbers and the incidents of robbery have been fever now.

# Six foreign troops killed in Afghan fighting

AP, Kabul

Six Nato service members, including three Americans, were killed Monday in Afghanistan, making it the deadliest day for the international force in more than two months.

The violence underscored

warnings that casualties will increase as more foreign troops stream into the country and step up the fighting against the Taliban. The Americans died in a firefight with militants during

an "operational patrol" in southern Afghanistan, US military spokesman Col Wayne Shanks said. He declined to provide on the exact location of the clash or their branch of service pending notification of family members. The deaths raised to at least

10 the number of US service members killed in Afghanistan so far this year, according to an Associated Press tally. The French officer was killed during a joint patrol with

Afghan troops in Alasay, a valley largely under insurgent control that Nato is trying to reclaim. Another French service member was seriously wounded in the attack some 80km northeast of Kabul. There were eight French troops in the patrol, said spokesman Col Jacky Fouquereau. Nato said another service

member was killed in the clash but did not release the nationality. It said a sixth service member was killed by a roadside bomb in the south.

French President Nicolas Sarkozy, whose country has lost 37 troops in Afghanistan since 2001, condemned what he called "blind violence" and expressed his determination to keep his country's forces in the country.

Jordanian intelligence officer also were killed by a suicide bomber on December 30. The year has gotten off to a

particularly bloody start for the

Americans and one British service member were killed in a single day. Officials said earlier Monday that bombs killed another American service member and two Afghan road

construction workers in sepa-

rate attacks Sunday in south-

ern Afghanistan. The southern half of the country, the Taliban heartland, has frequently been hit by attacks as the US military builds up its presence in the area. Most of the 30,000 additional American troops that President Barack Obama has ordered to Afghanistan will be

In his speech, he warmly

praised his Bangladesh coun-

terpart, saying her life is an

inspiration to those who cher-

ish freedom and independ-

courage and conviction and

your unwavering belief in the

principles you uphold, for

which you have personally

tions with Bangladesh were the

"highest priority" for his coun-

try, he said there was very little

that divided the two nations

democratic and cultural tradi-

tions and led the way in South

Asia in important areas of

vibrant and equal democracies

that share common values and

common goals," he continued.

extend to every aspect of

human life, be it social, eco-

nomic, cultural, intellectual or

to be a full and equal partner in

the realisation of your vision of

social change and economic

future with Bangladesh. The

time has come to chart a new

path. We are ready to pursue a

bold vision for our relations,

based on mutual respect and

"Our two peoples want

development for Bangladesh.

He said, "India stands ready

"India seeks to build a new

"We meet today as two

"The links between us

human development.

Bangladesh has strong

and much that united them.

Assuring Hasina that rela-

sacrificed so much.'

He said, "We admire your

# Dhaka, Delhi

titled Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, Transfer of Sentenced Persons and Combating International Terrorism, Organised Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking.

allow those convicted of criminal offences to serve their try if they want.

opportunity. If similar agreement

persons, said officials. The agreement on combating international terrorism,

organised crime and drug

trafficking is the bilateral

under Saarc. It says if terrorist activities are perpetrated in and against India and Bangladesh, the two countries can exchange intelligence and general informa-

Development Board will buy electricity from India at a price parties, said official sources.

Under this, the Power

birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore.

## Faruque's men

Pallabi Police Station OC

were inside and drive them On information, police rushed to the spot but could not enter the building as the

are trying to drive away the trespassers.

might return to the office. Last year, the governing

in Lok Sabha Sushma Swaraj.

The previous deadliest day for foreign forces was October 27 when eight US troops were killed. Seven CIA agents and a

Nato-led force; last week, four

deployed there.

#### ter hosted a banquet in honour of Hasina.

The agreements inked are

The one on transfer of convicted persons would

sentences in their own coun-Anyone condemned to death however will not get this

existed with a third country, Bangladesh and India will provide transit facility for extradition of sentenced

implementation of a protocol

The MoU on power was signed for import and export of electricity to the tune of over 900 million units per annum, depending on availability, need and price.

to be agreed upon by the two The neighbours also signed an MoU on cultural exchange under which they would

This apart, Hasina and Singh discussed issues relating to the 6.1-km undermarcated stretch of the 4,096-km border, "enclaves" and "adverse possessions' (pockets in each country where nationals of the other one are residing).

MANMOHAN'S SPEECH Later, the Indian prime minis-

# the building during the attack.

Iqbal Hossain said a group of people entered the Proshika Bhaban in the early hours of today, beat the people who

group kept closed the main gate. "I don't know actually which group they belong to,' Iqbal Hossain said adding we

Tension arose at Proshika Bhaban in Mirpur on Sunday as police were deployed in the morning to help Qazi Faruque enter the building. Proshika staff locked the main entrance of the head office after they had known that Faruque

body of Proshika removed Qazi Faruque and appointed Abdul Wadud as its chairman.

achieve these common goals for ourselves and for all the people of South Asia." Manmohan hoped Hasina's visit would "open a new chapter in India-Bangladesh rela-

cooperation. "We have agreed on the importance of showing sensitivity to each other's concerns. We have agreed to cooperate in meeting the common challenges of climate change, and assuring food, water and energy security to our peo-

The Indian prime minister observed that the countries are fortunate to have produced some of the finest writers, scholars and artists. "The works of Rabindranath Tagore and Kazi Nazrul Islam have inspired generations of people. This is a unique asset which binds our people, and which we must preserve."

Referring to Hasina's visit,

he said India was delighted that the first state visit of the new year was by a "valued friend and close neighbour". Earlier in the day, the Bangladeshi prime minister who began her official visit

President Pratibha Devisingh Patil, Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee, External Affairs Minister SM Krishna, United Progressive Alliance Chairperson Sonia Gandhi and Leader of the Opposition

here Sunday, met Indian

#### peace, security and prosperity. We should move forward to jointly celebrate the 150th "We have finalised several initiatives to build a true partnership of friendship and

mutual benefit.

political.