The Daily Star

Striking teachers

FROM PAGE 16

August 5 as part of their month long agitation programme

The leaders of NFTE will however sit for dialogue with government at 9:00pm today responding to the government's invitation.

NFTE Chief Coordinator and Convenor Quazi Faruque said Deputy Information Minister Abdus Salam Pintu asked him to ioin the dialogue over telephone.

"At an emergency meeting, we decided we would sit with the government. It will not affect our agitation programmes including the road and waterways blockade," he said adding that their district committees have taken effective measures to enforce the blockade

The government has started dialogue with agitating teachers' organisations since Sunday but failed to reach any understanding regarding their main demand of cent per cent basic salary from the government coffers.

Four representatives of the government headed by Education Minister Osman Farruk sat for dialogues at the Prime Minister's Office yesterday with the leaders of Bangladesh Shikkhak Karmachari Oikya Parishad led by MA Awal Siddiauee.

Dialogue with Shikkhak Karmachari Oikva Jote (SKOJ), led by Prof Shariful Islam, and Bangladesh Shikkhak Karmachari Samannay Parishad, led by Ashraful Islam, were also held on Sunday. The education minister said he would submit a recommendation report to the prime minister after discussing with all the factions of teachers on strike.

Sources in the education ministry said they are sitting with different

Hasina questions FROM PAGE 16

Ershad's party will be of no benefit as people will not vote for them (BNP-led coalition) in the coming election for their largescale corruption, misrule and price hike of essentials," Hasina said. She urged the people to give a befitting lesson to the BNP-Jamaat candidates in the next election.

Referring to the prime minister's consistent claim that the country is witnessing a development spree, the immediate past prime minister asked if her (PM) claim is sound, then why is

she 'conspiring' to hold an election under a 'blue print'? The AL president expressed her surprise that the PM is now sending her son Tarique Rahman (BNP senior joint secretary general) to her husband's killer Ershad's house to win his

support. How did he feel when he was received at the residence of Ershad? she posed a question. Referring to recent remarks of the PM that people would again vote for the BNP-led alliance, Hasina asked, "If vou are confident about winning the

next election, why are you so desperate to take Ershad in the alliance?" Hasina once again called for foiling "the BNP-Jamaat election engineerina" to protect their right to vote. In this context she said. "If you (people) need to take sticks in your hands, you will have to take those only to protect your votina right."

teachers' organisations separately as each platform has different agendas. They however said the teachers' platforms had demanded a dialogue where representatives of all factions would be present.

Shikkhak Karmachari Oikya Jote, led by Shariful Islam, will hold a grand sit-in at Central Shaheed Minar on August 6 protesting the government's delay in meeting their demands in the name of dialogues. They claimed no permanent solution to their problems has come out from the dialogue.

Students confine teachers, ask them to call

off strike

RU CORRESPONDENT

Hundreds of students of Rajshahi University School and College, administered by Rajshahi University (RU) authorities, yesterday confined all their teachers and staff for six hours in the teachers' lounge demanding withdrawal of the ongoing teachers' strike and resumption of classes and examinations.

Teachers of RU school and college have been on indefinite strike since July 22 demanding inclusion of their job in the revenue budget of the government. The agitating students also protested Raishahi University

Proctor Enamul Haque's misconduct toward them and demanded his punishment. A number of students of the

school went to meet the Vicechancellor of RU Prof Altaf Hossain on Sunday at his office demanding resumption of classes of the school and were forcefully pushed out of the VC's office by the university proctor after being scolded, sources said.

Rowdy students locked up the main gate of the school yesterday morning, besieged the school office, confined the teachers and chanted slogans against the proctor.

RU student adviser Jahid Hasar Milky tried in vain to persuade the students to free the teachers. The students released the teach-

ers at around 3.00pm after the advisor assured the students that he would see to the matter of the proctor's punishment.

The students said, their academic future was in shambles and they were facing irreparable losses due to the teacher's strike.

school vowed to continue the strike until their demands are met. They said, the university author-

ity have held up their promotion and deprived them of the revenue sector wage scale for several years.

BSF kills 1 **OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kurigram**

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) gunned down a Bangladeshi youth on Raumari border yesterday morning The victim was identified as

Saiful Islam, 22, son of Abdus Salam of Bamner Char under Raumari upazila. According to BDR and local

sources, the Indian border guards of Cochnipara camp opened fire on saifur while he was working on a cropland near border piller no 1064 at around 9:30am. BDR Company Commander at

Raumari Abdul Jalil confirmed the incident. BDR sent a letter to its Indian counterpart demanding return of the body.

ADB report

FROM PAGE 16 borrowing increases every year. On the price spiral of essentials, the ADB country director said she has noticed a huge margin between the import price and retail price of essential products like sugar.

Hua Du said some people have indicated this might be happening due to syndication. But it needs in-depth investigation to come to a conclusion about the allegation of syndicated price hike of essentials. she said.

The ADB report said the government provided Tk 7,340 crore subsidy on energy products in FY06, which is 1.8 per cent of the GDP.

It claimed that the government provided Tk 4,672 crore subsidy on diesel prices and Tk 958 crore on kerosene.

The government policy of subsidising natural gas, power and petroleum products has exacerbated the financial condition of Bangladesh Oil, Gas and Mineral Resources Corporation, Power Development Board and Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation as well as the Nationalised Commercial Banks, the ADB economic update said.

It however said Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) made a profit of Tk 8.43 per litre of octane after the price hike in June. On the other hand, the BPC incurred loss of Tk 16.88 per litre of diesel and Tk 15.93 per litre of kerosene. Diesel ad kerosene constitute about 75 per cent of the consumption of petroleum products in the country.

Tongi power plant FROM PAGE 1

connivance with an unscrupulous Meanwhile, teachers of the section of PDB officials, is killing time and running the plant on makeshift arrangements.

Sources said State Minister for Power Anwarul Kabir Talukder has meanwhile asked the PDB to form an investigation committee to find the nexus of officials responsible for making the government accept the Tongi plant

Sayedee's JS membership FROM PAGE 1

People's Order 1972, setting the first ever example of unseating a lawmaker by the HC in an election dispute case. Sayedee filed a petition with the

Appellate Division of the Supreme Court on September 15, 2003 to grant him permission to appeal against the HC judgement. said The vacation bench of the

NEWS

Appellate Division on September 17, 2003 stayed the HC judgement until October 22 of the same year and asked Sayedee to submit a regular petition by that time.

Sources at the Supreme Court's registrar's office said the regular petition filed by Sayedee remains pending still. Officials at the registrar's office could not confirm whether any hearing had been held for disposal of the petition. "No progress after the filing of the petition. We can only say, it is still pending," a senior official told The Daily Star vesterday.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, Jamaat lawmaker Sayedee however said he does not know whether any hearing was held on the petition or not.

"I know, the Appellate Division has stayed the judgement until the next parliamentary election," Saydee, also chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on the Ministry of Religious Affairs, claimed adding, "There is no new complexity about it."

About the effectiveness of the HC judgement, Justice Ghulam Rabbani, former judge of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, said since the respondent to the leave petition filed by Delwar Hossain Sayedee is now dead, the proceedings of the leave petition has 'abated'. "And the order that

Ershad warns

FROM PAGE 1

decision he should take regarding electoral alliance. They believe Jamaat will not be a factor in the national election if JP

"It's quite natural that he [Ershad] would like to continue political activities with honour and he would not want to be in jail again and which is why he is thinking over siding with the ruling coalition," Ibrahim Khan, organising secretary of Jatiya Sramik Party, Chandpur told The Daily Star.

in fact a threat to the country."

Referring to the speeches of will be banned if Awami League comes to power again. So, they should rather think about their future."

President Sheikh Hasina, he said,

said,"Begum Zia knows very well

that I did not kill her husband. She

also knows that I am not ungrateful.

It was Zia who had appointed me the

utilise the support we lent to them

after the election in 1996." he said

adding that AL has divided his party

in return for his support for them to

3 pvt hospitals

bers of paramilitary BDR and 20

They found that all the three

hospitals were using expired medi-

cine and testing substances while

conditions inside the labs were

insanitary. The court realised Tk

20,000 each from Bangladesh

Medical College Hospital and

Central Hospital and Tk 10,000 from

regain power after 21 years.

"Awami League had failed to

frigate.'

claimed.

army chief."

observed.

FROM PAGE 16

during the raids.

Lab Aid on the spot.

was anything but hygienic.

were unhygienic in its lab.

of Tk 1 for the same reason

10.000.

stayed the High Court judgement has also 'abated'. A formal order is not necessary to be passed in this regard by the Appellate Division, Justice Rabbani told The Daily Star vesterday.

"Any person specially a voter of that constituency can file a writ petition with the High Court," he

bership of the parliament.

Commission (EC).

90 davs.

punishment.

The HC directed the authorities

seat vacant and hold by-polls within

According to the election laws, a

person, guilty of corrupt practice, is

punishable with rigorous imprison-

ment for a term, which may extend

to seven years and shall not be less

than two years, and also with fines.

The HC in its judgement however

did not mention anything about the

Typhoid spreads

ProfAKM Rafique Uddin said.

teemed with bacteria," he added.

said.

germs.

Halder also filed another case

Referring to the election laws that say an election petition shall 'abate' on the death of a sole petitioner or of the sole survivor of several petitioners. Justice TH Khan, counsel of Savedee who moved for him in the Appellate Division, said, "So, the original dispute has 'abated'.

"The High Court judgement has to send its order to the EC by a no effectiveness as the original special messenger for necessary dispute has 'abated'," Justice Khan action. On receipt of the order, the told The Daily Star yesterday. Justice Rabbani however contra-EC was supposed to announce the

dicted Justice Khan and said, "It is a fallacy to say that the judgement has 'abated' without an order passed by the High Court."

According to law, a judgement order or decree passed cannot 'abate'. "Only a proceeding 'abates' if, while it is pending, one of the parties or both the parties die. A judgement passed by any competent court cannot 'abate', it can only be set aside by a higher court." said Justice Rabbani.

About the effectiveness of the with an election tribunal against HC judgement, Justice Naimuddin Jamaat leader Sayedee charging Ahmed, also a former election commissioner, said the stay order has made the judgement inoperative. "The High Court judgement will lose its significance as soon as the ment. tenure of the current parliament expires," he told The Daily Star. He Appellate Division of the Supreme said these kinds of cases should be given urgent priority for disposal. Court after the tenure of the seventh After the 2001 election, Halder parliament elapsed.

a few selfish leaders have left the

one political party had they not left

the party, the JP chairman said

about the post of president, we

should be cautious about seat

achieve our goal in the next election

and the JP leaders and workers

must obey the decisions of the party

chairman," Syed Master, president

Kazi Zafar Ahmed, Kazi Firoj

Rashid, Moshiur Rahman Ranga

Among others, Raushan Ershad,

Debidwar upazila JP, said.

were present at the meeting.

"We should work together to

JP would have been the number

party, he added.

sharing as well."

joins hands with the ruling BNP.

adding, "But it's no problem for us anymore and we will be able to be in power even with the present condition of the party." "If I could move freely during the last election, we would have won at least 64 seats." he claimed. Col (retired) Tofazzal Hossain leader of Comilla-5, said, "Not only

Mustafizur Rahman, joint secretary of Comilla (North) JP, said,"Jamaat has no position anywhere in Comilla and I think they are

Jamaat leaders, JP Chairman Ershad said, "The party [Jamaat]

On the recent comments by AL

filed the petition with the HC on FROM PAGE 1 But Israeli Defense Minister Amir November 14 -- 44 days after the Peretz made clear that Israel would polls -- against the chief election

not agree to an immediate cease-fire commissioner (CEC), Savedee and and in fact planned to expand military nine others with a plea to declare operations in Lebanon. "It's forbidden to agree to an himself as the elected representa-

tive by cancelling his rival's memimmediate cease-fire," Peretz told parliament as several Arab legislators heckled him and demanded an The court in its judgement found immediate halt to the offensive. Sayedee guilty on several counts of "Israel will expand and strengthen its concealing the sources of his elecactivities against the Hezbollah." tion fund, spending of more money

State Department spokesman Adam Ereli had noted in a statement than Tk 5 lakh ceiling set by the late Sunday that, in connection with election laws, and failure to send an the halt in bombing, "Israel, of course, affidavit along with his poll has reserved the right to take action expenses to the Election against targets preparing attack against it."

Israel's top ministers were to discuss expanding the army's ground operation at a meeting later Monday, while thousands of reserve soldiers trained for the possibility they will be sent into Lebanon to participate in the 20-day-long battle. The bombing of the Lebanese

village of Qana on Sunday led to demands around the world for an immediate cease-fire. Olmert told Rice over the week-

end that Israel would need 10-14 more days to finish its offensive, and Justice Minister Haim Ramon told Army Radio on Monday he did not believe the fighting was over yet.

"I'm convinced that we won't finish this war until it's clear that Hezbollah has no more abilities to attack Israel from south Lebanon. This is what we are striving for," Ramon said.

him with breaching the election The stunning bloodshed in Qana increased international pressure on code of conduct, and rigging of the Washington to back an immediate polls for the seventh parliament, end to the fighting and prompted Rice which preceded the current parliato cut short her Mideast mission to return home Monday. The case was dismissed by the

In a nationally televised speech before leaving Israel. Rice said she will seek international consensus for a cease-fire and a "lasting settle-Secretary-General Kofi Annan told ment" in the conflict between the council in unusually frank terms Lebanon and Israel through a UN that he was "deeply dismayed" his Security Council resolution this previous calls for a halt were ignored. week

"I am convinced that only by FROM PAGE 16 Department of Medicine of DMCH achieving both will the Lebanese people be able to control their "Proper medical treatment and country and their future, and the precautions can easily combat the people of Israel finally be able to live free of attack from terrorist disease that is mainly spread by groups in Lebanon," Rice said.

unhygienic water and stale food The army said that the tempo-FM Siddique, professor of medi-cine of DMCH, said among the virus rary cessation of aerial activity would allow the opening of corri-

affected patients currently seeking dors for Lebanese civilians who admission to different hospitals and want to leave south Lebanon for clinics, 10 per cent are diagnosed with the north and would maintain land, typhoid while about 80 per cent are sea and air corridors for humanitarfound suffering from normal viral fever. ian assistance. "It usually takes around seven to

But Hezbollah legislator Hassan ten days to be fully cured once the disease is identified," Prof Siddique Fadlallah had Israel's motives, telling Lebanese television it was just "an attempt to absorb international He advised people to boil water for indignation over the Qana massaat least half an hour to kill typhoid

cre By early afternoon Monday, roads from villages into the port city of Tyre and heading north along the coast were packed with thousands of refugees in pickup trucks and cars. With many of the main roads too shattered for use, cars drove on dirt side roads with white flags fluttering out windows or white sheets covering

Typhoid occurrence is more frethe roofs. meeting yesterday approved a quent during June to August although Lebanese Red Cross teams number of issues, including the escorted by UN observers went to the village of Srifa to dig up more than 50 Saarc budget for 2007, and these bodies believed still buried under rubble since Israeli strikes wiped out an entire neighborhood on July 19. The bodies have begun decomposing, the Red Cross said. The largest death toll from a single Israeli strike before Sunday was about a dozen, and the Qana attack. where at least 34 children and 12 women died, stunned Lebanese. Heightening the anger were memories of a 1996 Israeli artillery bom-

DHAKA TUESDAY AUGUST 1, 2006 Israeli resumes

> bardment that hit a U.N. base in Qana, killing more than 100 Lebanese who had taken refuge there from fighting. That attack sparked an international outcry that forced a halt to an Israeli offensive.

Hezbollah vowed on its Al-Manar television: "The massacre at Qana will not go unanswered." It hit northern Israel on Sunday with 157 rockets the highest one-day total during the offensive with one Israeli wounded moderately and 12 others hur slightly, medics said.

Thirty-three Israeli soldiers have died, and Hezbollah rocket attacks on northern Israel have killed 18 civilians. Israeli authorities said.

Israel apologized for the deaths and promised an investigation but said Hezbollah had fired more than 40 rockets from Qana before the airstrike, including several from near the building that was bombed. Foreign Ministry official Gideon Meir accused Hezbollah of "using their own civilian population as human

shields." More than 750,000 Lebanese have fled their homes in the fighting. But many thousands more are stil believed holed up in the south many of them too afraid to flee on

roads heavily hit by Israeli strikes The attack on Qana brought Lebanon's death toll to more than 510 and pushed American peace efforts to a crucial juncture as fury at the United States flared in Lebanon The Beirut government said it would no longer negotiate over a US peace package without an uncondi-

tional cease-fire At the United Nations, the Security Council approved a statement expressing "extreme shock and distress" at the bloodshed and calling for an end to violence, stopping short of a demand for an immediate ceasefire. In a jab at the United States,

"Action is needed now before

many more children, women and

men become casualties of a conflict

over which they have no control," he

Saarc Council

its 14th summit likely to be held in

of Ministers at its meeting will also

consider the formal applications of

South Korea, USA and EU for

Besides, the council will review

implementation of various propos-

als made at the 13th summit in

Dhaka. The proposals include

establishment of South Asian

University and sponsoring South

Saarc ministerial meetings so far

held since the last summit in Dhaka.

prising the foreign secretaries in a

It will also review the reports of

The Standing Committee com-

becoming the Saarc observers.

Official sources said the Council

said

FROM PAGE 1

2007 in India

Asian Car Rally.

She blasted the BNP-Jamaat coalition government for "making the country number one in corruption". She also accused the government of repression on journalists and oppression on women and children.

Hasina asked her party's grassroots leaders to stay by the people and work together to ensure the party's victory in the coming election.

HC rule on ACC FROM PAGE 16

legality of the appointment of 52 ACC employees as deputy assistant director.

The ACC appointed them on July 19 after the government set an organisational structure unilaterally for the ACC in June

The petitioners argued the ACC appointed the 52 employees as deputy assistant deputy director without following any appointment

They also argued that there were more inspectors in the Bac but the 52 have been absorbed in the ACC by following pick-and-choose method.

Barrister Rokanuddin Mahmud moved for the petitioners and senior advocate TH Khan moved for the ACC.

Bashar

FROM PAGE 16 tigercricket.com

He also informed that the Bangladesh captain would undergo total wrist immobilisation during his recovery period.

The injury of Bashar served a blow in Bangladesh's quest for their first away series win in the best-offive game that is currently tied at 1-

It is the second time the leading batsman suffered an injury blow since he took over from Khaled Mahmud in January 2004. Bashar had earlier missed two ICC Champions Trophy games in England in 2004 and two Tests at home against New Zealand due to a broken thumb.

The board is, however, yet to take a decision on whether Bashar would stay back in Zimbabwe or return home immediately.

RMG workers

that a garments worker was confined there.

The workers who were at work since morning stopped their work to ioin the agitation when some of their leaders informed them that a Sramik Kormachari Oikya Parishad (Skop) called strike was in force

The workers said they would join work today.

Govt signs

FROM PAGE 1 other senior officials were present.

field under a joint venture with the owned Petrobangla

production at the gas field in feet (bcf) of gas.

price of gas, the Feni field operator has been supplying gas to the government without the cover of any agreement considering the heavy domestic demand.

fixing the price.

the price at \$1.75 per unit.

deal

60 lakh FROM PAGE 1

will not take so much time to complete the task if the staff do the job sincerelv.'

Our Rangpur correspondent reports: Amid slow pace of the task of voter list update in the district, people are in doubt about their registration as voters in the remaining time for the task. Our Barisal correspondent adds: 54,000 people have

of applications for deletion is very few

along with its glitches. There is already a PDB probe committee report on irregularities

FROM PAGE 16

Niko has developed Feni gas

Bapex, a subsidiary of the state-The Canadian company started

November 2004 and has so far produced about 15.5 billion cubic But due to a discord over the

At one stage, responding to a request from Niko, the government paid \$ 4.0 million to the Canadian operator on an interim basis without

From the very beginning of production at the Feni field. Niko was insisting on a price of \$2.75 per mcf and then proposed \$2.35. But the government remained firm to fix

Niko finally accepted the government offer and signed the initial

applied for registering names as voters till date while the number

at the plant that have been shelved without any explicit reasons. The committee held Harbin responsible for not supplying

GBC as per contract and recommended that action be taken against it for violation of contractual obligations.

"On the basis of this investigation, the PDB board in June last vear had asked Harbin to replace faulty and inappropriate machin-

ery. But nothing has been done as yet, and it seems the government is reluctant to punish the corrupt elements directly responsible for the plant's plight," one source pointed out.

Harbin is the only company to have signed a power deal under the four-party alliance government. After it signed the Tongi deal in 2002 using political influence of the 'alternative centre of power' and sidekicks, the company last year received the contract for Fenchuganj 90 MW power plant with 10 per cent down payment and is now in the process of signing the contract for Chandpur 150 MW power project. Harbin was awarded both the contracts bending rules and regulations. The company is also set to get the contract for 240 MW

Siddhirganj power project, to be financed by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), ignoring the opinion of the project's consultant.

SC bar denied FROM PAGE 16

office yesterday contacted SCBA leaders over telephone and informed them that the SCBA letter, resolution and recommendations had been submitted to the presi-

dent. SCBA Secretary AM Amin Uddin yesterday admitted yesterday's legal action will be taken. communication with the Bangabhaban.

Signed by SCBA President barrister Amir-UI Islam and Secretary AM Amin Uddin, the letter to the president was attached with the resolution and recommendations of July 22 roundtable discussion on the existing political situation, preparation of a proper voter list and reforms in the caretaker government system and Election Commission

"She has called me a thief what I'm not and have never been. I never Moudud tried to take the Gonobhaban when I was in power and everybody knows FROM PAGE 1 about the million dollar corruption in

highlighting the government's legal the purchase of MiG-29s and a aid services to the financially disadvantaged. "I was not involved in corruption The minister informed that the

and neither did I kill anyone," he government has provided legal aid o 32,480 people in criminal cases Replying to Hasina's remark that 11,484 people in civil cases and 800 Ershad is the killer of former presipeople for jail appeals since early dent Ziaur Rahman, he

2002 till June 30, 2006. The government has been providing legal assistance in 61 districts with financial help from Canadian International

DevelopmentAgency (CIDA). "Mainly those who have been wrongly confined in jails and cannot afford any lawyer for them are the recipients of this legal aid," said Barrister Shajahan Omor, state

minister of the ministry, who was "I will do whatever it takes to also present at the programme. assume power and organise my Destitute women of the society party. The countrymen believe that

and freedom fighters with earnings JP will return to power under its present leadership," Ershad less than Tk 6,000 per month are also eligible for the aid, he added. Both the AL and BNP have split

The government has been up several times but JP has not, only organising awareness campaigns to inform the people eligible for the legal aid services.

73 more back FROM PAGE 1

policemen accompanied the court Tk 3250 and the expatriates' welfare ministry Tk 500 to each of the returnees who were gathered in Syria from different parts of Lebanon. Seventy-eight other

Bangladeshis will return home today, said Nahreen Farjana, Project Director of IOM.

Buet closed The court came across at least 15 life-saving medicines with dates FROM PAGE 1

expired at the Central Hospital probe committee soon and the where the pathological laboratory responsible will be punished," the VC said at a news briefing at the Besides fining, the court warned Council Building of BUET last evethat if the hospital is found to have nina used expired medicines in future,

Asked when BUET will reopen, he said, "We will reopen in the Bangladesh Medical College shortest time possible when the Hospital too was found using situation will be under control."

expired medicines while conditions A huge contingent of police remains deployed on the campus to avert further untoward incidents. According to the court, the Lab

Meanwhile, Samajtantrik Aid Hospital has long been using Chhatra Front, a left leaning student expired reagents and unclean organisation, demanded that the surgical tables and so it was fined Tk authorities reopen the campus and announce a fresh schedule for the Earlier, another mobile court had exams immediately. slapped on the hospital a token fine

Bacterium Salmonella Typhie. which is the main carrier of typhoid, is multiplied and spread into the bloodstream of the infected person through food or water. The body reacts with fever and other symptoms like headache, vomiting, skin rash once the bacteria are inside.

It may require further diagnosis to

"Normal fever may take turn

spot the typhoid germs in the initial stage as it often remains undetected in

towards typhoid, as sometimes it

cannot be detected at the primary

stage," said a physician of the Children's Ward of DMCH.

the first blood test, experts said.

it may spread in other times too.

Typhoid is usually transmitted from human to human through food or drinking water, and it is mainly hygiene and sanitary conditions that determine its spread.

14-party FROM PAGE 16

tive proposal -- general secretary level meetings -- to discuss the proposed electoral reforms.

The senior leaders of the opposition combine said it is the responsibility of the government, not the opposition tion's, to give proposals in this regard. "If they really do give proposals, we are ready to sit with them to discuss the electoral reforms." another senior leader said.

The meeting accused the BNP-led four-party coalition government of leading the country towards an election of 'conspiracy' by preparing and updating the voter roll with 'fake' identities

Reiterating their stance of no election before implementation of the proposed electoral reforms, the opposition combine urged the government to update the voter list after reforms in the Election Commission (EC) and after ousting the chief election commissioner (CEC) and two other 'politically' appointed commissioners

Briefing the newsmen after the meeting Jalil, also general secretary of AL, said the government has been dilly-dallying in accepting the reform proposals. Jalil accused the prime minister of giving contradictory statements over the reforms issue.

"She [prime minister] spoke about the implementation of the reforms proposals through discussions and. on the other hand she told public rallies that there were no need for reforms. Jalil said accusing the prime minister of misleading the people.

He said the prime minister turned the EC into her loyal organisation. Due to this no voter list updated by this EC would be acceptable.

Presided over by AL presidium member Abdur Razzak, the meeting was also attended by Tofail Ahmed. Suranieet Sengupta, Kazi Jafarullah, Rashed Khan Menon. Hasanul Haque Inu, Bimal Biswas, Dilip Barua, Syed Zafor Sazzad, Mainuddin Khan Badal, Pankaj Bhattacharya, Nurul Islam, Asit Baran Roy, and Zakir Hossain.

will be placed for final approval of the Council of Minister. The foreign secretaries reviewed the activities of different technical committees and working groups. They also discussed providing

guidelines for increasing activities in areas of cooperation among the member states in commerce finance. communications and energy sectors.

44 killed in fierce

FROM PAGE 16

mortar bomb exchanges with the Tigers. The ministry said "over 35" Figers were killed

The defence ministry said the offensive in the island's restive northeastern region of Trincomalee was aimed at ending the LTTE blockade of the Maavilaru waterway that had deprived thousands of farmers of

water. There was no immediate reaction from the Tigers to the casualty figures claimed by the military, but the guerrillas said they were resisting the military advance.

The LTTE also lodged a formal complaint with the Nordic truce monitors against the government, but made it clear they were not pulling out of the ceasefire agreement, a spokesman for the monitors said.

The Swedish-led Sri Lanka Lankan air force has dropped bombs Monitoring Mission (SLMM) said the in the Tamil homeland 13 times," the LTTE protested the military action. LTTE said Monday. "Thirty-three "They (the LTTE) have said that the

government is violating the ceasefire. but they have not made any decision to resign from the ceasefire agreement," spokesman Thorfinnur

Omarsson told AFP. dential elections last November Diplomats close to the peace process said the SLMM did not take LTTE has demanded that monitors seriously remarks by a regional Tiger leader asking them to declare that from European Union members truce was not holding and that the Finland, Denmark and Sweden leave fighting "tantamounted to a declaration the island after the EU added it to a list of war.' of "terrorist" organisations in May.

Neither the Tigers nor the government have made any official statement on pulling out of the February 2002 ceasefire even though it is barely holding and each side has accused the other of violations that have been escalating since December.

The truce brokered by Norway can be terminated either by the Tigers or Colombo with a written declaration aiving two weeks' notice. The pro-rebel Tamilnet.com website said the Tigers resisted the military advance Monday. "The Sri Lanka army began moving

ground troops from two bases towards Maavilaru sluice gate Monday morning...," the Tamilnet said. "The Sri Lanka army troops were defeated by the Tiaers."

Elsewhere, troops killed four Tigers

in a mortar bomb attack in the northern

peninsula of Jaffna, the defence

ministry said in a statement. It said

there were no casualties among

and Saturday killed at least 15 rebels

but the government maintained it was

not a return to full-scale war.

Air strikes between Wednesday

Security forces launched air strikes

against Tiger positions shortly after a

suicide assassination attempt against

army chief Sarath Fonseka on April 25.

people were killed, 47 people were

injured, and more than 7,000 people

The violence erupted after presi-

In a further threat to the truce, the

That would leave only Norwegian

Finland and Denmark announced

on Friday they would pull out by the

end of August. Sweden has yet to

Norway is to send special envoy

More than 60,000 people have

Jon Hansse-Bauer to Colombo next

month to try to salvage the ceasefire,

been killed in the three-decade-old

and Icelandic monitors.

announce its position

Tamil separatist conflict.

diplomats said.

"Since end of April 2006... the Sri

troops in Jaffna.

are displaced."