Reforms possible

introduction of 'no votes' in cases where a voter might have objections to a particular candidate, and of a provision for 'dual votes' allowing voters to vote for more than one person with serial numbers of preferences for avoiding by-

They suggested decentralisation of administrative power and strengthening of local administrations as the power is very much concentrated in the capital now.

Speaking as a special guest Selina Hayat fvy called upon the people nor to vote for black money holders and thugs. She also urged prospective candidates not to buy

often become hostages to bureaucrats. Although the bureaucrats run the administration, they are hardly ever blamed for corruption,

She called upon the people to create resistance against black moneyholders, thugs and plunderers. Ivy also urged the people to be united against anti-liberation

Towner Alam Khondoker said the people should raise the slogan that they will not elect corrupt people. The media can play a vital

Fazlul Haque criticised the EC for rejecting the European Commission offer of providing transparent ballot boxes, without considering its importance.

He also said the vision paper should be prepared in phases otherwise it will not be effective.

Afzal Hossain said we want a terror free society and a black money free parliament.

He urged political leaders to speak out in party meetings about the deliberations of the regional dialogues. He said the intruders in politics are the main culprits as real politicians work for the country and want development. He said the dialogues have been successful and loped that such initiatives will;

Prof Anisuzzaman said, "We want to see an effective parliament and progress in the country." He pointed out that a section of the people became rich suddenly through politics while many peo-

the political parties' pledges have been implemented," he said adding that it requires accountability of the government.

Urging the politicians not to nominate black money holders in the election, Anisuzzaman further said, "We should also see whether the candidates played any negative

He said the discrepancies between men and women, poor and rich should be minimised. He asked citizens to exercise their rights and to create pressure on politicians for implementing their

the basis of wealth or influence.

He said foreign diplomats often get involved in the country's domestic affairs, which is regrettable. He stressed the need for competent citizens as well as compe-

be successful without removing corruption and terrorism from the society, he said adding that the political situation in the country is deteriorating day by day. "Now politics is a mix of democracy,

thuggery and corruption." Editor of the Prothom Alo Motiur Rahman expressed doubts that the next election might not be the two major political fronts cul-

of the people on politicians is increasing. He urged politicians to fulfil the pledges and commitments they made to the people. He hoped for a balanced country. He

said the people want to see the politicians beside them. Rahman pointed out that political parties forget their commit-

festos after going to power. Debapriya Bhattacharya

pointed out that the civil society initiative for competent candidates

Saber flown

Saber and described the attack on

AL Joint General Secretary Syed Ashraful Islam, city AL General Secretary Mofazzel Hossain Chowdhury Maya, among others, wenttoo see Saber.

their election manifestos. He said civil society leaders will sit soon with leaders of major political parties and place the recommendations before them. Dedicated and competent trends in the political parties have been strengthened by the dialogues, he

that came out of the dialogues in

He categorically said civil society members have no intention to be candidates in the next election but they want to strengthen the democratic process in the country. Another objective of the dialogues is to restore respect for politicians in the public mind, he pointed out.

Advocate khokon Shaha, general secretary of Narayanganj city Awami league, demanded electoral reforms before the next election. He pointed out that politics has been under the control of a few officials of the army since the 1975

He also demanded separation of the judiciary from the executive branch of the government and an independent anti corruption commission. President of Narayanganj City

Awami League Anwar Hossain, Montoo Ghos of the Communist Party of Bangladesh, Office Secretary of District BNP Zannatul Ferdous, Delwar Hossain Chunnu of Gono Forum, Shafiuddin Ahmed of Workers Party, Advocate Mahbubur Rahman Ismail of BSD. President of Narayanganj City NAP Nurul Kabir, Convener of Narayanganj City Bikalpa Dhara ATM Kamal, former MP Golam Murshid Faruqi, President of Narayanganj Press Club Ruman Reza, Tofazzel Hossain, Abdul Hai, Rafiur Rabbi, Dulal Shaha, Shukur Mahmud, Ahsanul Karim Chowdhury, Mahmuda Mala, Golam Mostafa, Advocate Awlad Hossian, Komol Kanti Shaha, Khondoker Anwar Hossain, Chandan Shil, Halim Azad, Sheikh Haider Ali, MK Mannan, Jahanara Akhter, Khodeza Khanom Nasreen, Ranu Khondoker, Advocate Sadia Afroz, Rashida Akhter, Al Amin, Alauddin Chowdhury, Anis Ahmed, Mobarak Hossain Rana, Rekha Chowdhury, Munir Chowdhury, Kawsar Uddin Ahmed, ASM Shafiqui Islam, Reazur Rahman, Solaiman Chowdhury, Monwarul Henric, Ishuq Talukder, Aranal Hossain Alauddin Chowdhury, and Advocate Marina Begum also took

50 injured in B'baria

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B' baria

At least 50 people were injured in a clash over land dispute in Sarail upazila of the district According to sources, the clash

between the villagers of Sayedtula and Hadistula ensued in the morning when both sides tried to take control of the land. The clash started at 10:00am and lasted for three hours, leaving 50 people

On information, Sarail police went to the spot, fired blank shots and dispersed the clashing

The injured were given first aid at Brahmanbaria Sadar Hospital, Sarail Upazila Health Complex and privet clinics.

No case was filed until filing of this report as of 7:45pm.

7 killed

FROM PAGE 16

Uttara around 11:00am on Friday. Police said Igbal died on the spot and the injured were admitted

In another incident, three-yearold Arafat was killed when he was hit by a train at Rasulbagh in Tejgaon around 4:30pm Friday, He was playing with other children. He lived in a shanty next to the railway

Garments worker Abdul Karim was killed and 10 others suffered injuries when a speeding bus they were travelling on rammed a parked truck at Mouchak in iddhirganj on Dhaka-Chittagong highway around 10:30am on

The injured were admitted to different local hospitals and clinics.

Bangladeshi

FROM PAGE 16 working on the cropland near border pillar no 2024.

BDR strongly protested the incident and asked its Indian counterpart to hand over Haroon.

Biman pilot

FROM PAGE 16 accident. The aircraft skidded some 12 feet off the runway and one of its wings caught fire.

The mishap gave rise to allega-tions of inefficiency against the pilot and his being under the spell of alcoholic drinks while on duty.

Two inquiry committees -- one by the Civil Aviation Authorities and another by Biman -- were of the voters and they have been satisfied with the EC's clarification, formed to ascertain the cause of

Alliance, AL to lock horns over

Before declaring a series of agita-

tion programmes at the upcoming rally, Hasina is keen to ask the government in parliament about the fate of the proposals," a senior AL leader, who had talked with the AL president about the issue recently, told The Daily Star. Some senior lawmakers of the

AL vesterday discussed what would be the party's tactics in parliament this time. They also met the party chieflast night.

"We'll be busy with a daylong hartal today and join the session tomorrow. Obviously, we'll raise the issue of reforms," Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdul Hamid told The Daily Star last

"The parliamentary party will soon sit to devise the party's strategy regarding the current session, Hamid also the former speaker, If the ruling and opposition

parties fail to reach a consensus on the reforms during the tenure of the current parliament, it will have to be left for the next caretaker

But the way things have been turning out in the politics lately

by Jatiyatabadi Olama Dal in front of

the grave. Family members of the

prime minister, including her eldest

son and BNP Senior Joint Secretary

General Tarique Rahman attended

Main opposition Awami League

Acting General Secretary

(AL) also held a doa and milad mehfil

Obaidul Kader, Joint General Secretary Abdul Mannan,

Organising Secretary Mukul Bose and other leaders were present.

and religious organisations held

Qurankhwani, milad and discus-

Bangladesh Betar and private TV

channels aired special programmes,

highlighting the significance of the

Not a single political party, includ-

ing the Awami League (AL), BNP. Jamaat-e-Isiami or Jatiya Party, is

sincere about realising the rights of

the hill tracts people, the press release signed by the UPDF central

committee leader Samir Chakma

shown discriminatory and com-

munal attitudes to the hill tracts

people, it further said, adding that

those who were elected from the

constituencies earlier did not take

The incumbents of the three

constituencies are -- BNP's Wadud

Bhuiyan and Moni Swapan Dewan

in Khagrachhari and Rangamati

and Awami League's (AL) Bir

Kheesa bagged 34,000 votes from

Khagrachhari and 10,000 from

Rangamati constituency in the

Padma bridge

FROM PAGE 1 also asked the local administration

to quicken the land acquisition

process while the detailed design of

Cooperation Agency conducted a

feasibility study on the project in

2005 and recommended the

Maowa-Jajira point as suitable for

The proposed Padma bridge, a long time demand of the people of

the south-western region of the

country, would greatly reduce the

time in road communication

between southern districts and capital Dhaka.

an updated voter list with a stag-

gering number of 9.30 crore voters

while there are allegations of leav-

updated voter list is 17 lakh higher

than that in the draft of the fresh

voter list that the High Court later

high number of voters (9.13 crore)

in the draft voter list had triggered

fresh voter list ignoring the High

Court directives, Aziz had earlier

claimed that the preparation of the

fresh electoral rolls aimed at

The Secretary to the EC

Secretariat, Abdur Rashid Sarkar,

however, told reporters that the

NDI delegation is not actually

The EC informed the NDI dele-

gation about the rise in the number

excluding the false voters.

worried.

The number of voters in the

The incorporation of unusually

NDI raises

ing out many eligible ones.

FROM PAGE 1

The Japan International

the project is yet to be completed.

UPDF candidate Proshit Bikash

Bahadurfrom Bandarban.

2001 general elections.

These parties have repeatedly

Bangladesh Television (BTV),

sions on the occasion.

UPDF

of the region.

Besides, different socio-cultural

at its Bangabandhu Avenue office.

FROM PAGE 1

does not augur well for an amicable test at the police atrocities on its resolution of the conflict over the reform agenda during the tenure of the present government.

LGRD and Co-operatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan has already declared that the issue of reforms has got to be settled outside the Jatiya Sangsad (JS) first.

"After discussion by the proposed committee, it might be placed in parliament, if need be," Bhuiyan, also BNP secretary general, told reporters on August 21, the day the president summoned the IS session

Law Justice and Parliamentary

Affairs Minister Moudud Ahmed

too has said on a number of occa-

sions over the last few days that

there is no possibility of piloting a bill to amend the constitution. But the constitution must be amended if they [government] are to meet the opposition's demands for reforms, particularly the one that calls for the defence to be placed under the caretaker govern-

When the IS will be in session this afternoon, the opposition alliance will be in the street to observe the daylong hartal in pro-

ment instead of the president.

activists trying to lay siege to the EC Secretariat on September 6.

Besides, the opposition pre pares to lay siege to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) on September 12 amid Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) ban on rallies and demonstrations in and around the PMO.

The session will be a short one due to the Ramadan. Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar, however, told the media on Friday that if both the ruling and opposition parties want, the session could be run during that time as well.

The Business Advisory Committee will meet today to allocate duration and business of

If the AL joins the session, the current parliament will witness the main opposition taking part in the concluding session for the first time in last 15 years.

It however had missed the presence of the main opposition at the opening session. AL joined parliament on June 24, 2002 while the IS began dealing with its business on October 28, 2001.

Shab-e-Barat She also attended a milad organised

Based on 4-point principles of national unity, participation of people in running the country, decentralisation of power and peo-ple's welfare-oriented economics, the alliance declared an 8-point reform proposal in the national

ing a bicameral parliament, qualitative change in the caretaker government and strengthening the election commission, holding elections in district and upazila parishads, separation of judiciary, establishing industrial zones at upazila level, people-oriented agriculture, labour and land policy and forming a government of national unity in next 10 years for a state system based on the spirit of liberation war.

national unity in the next 10 years overcoming all the limitations of past and present, when the politics of confrontation will disappear and a renaissance will take place," Kader

Asked if the front will join any of the existing alliances for the election, he replied in the negative. UPR Coordinator ASM Abdur Rob, how-

opposition combine 'incomplete and aimed at going to power,' he said that it is not clear what has been said there for changing the fates of the Asked if the Juktafront will go for the next polls amid the boycott of 14-

when the time comes." Mancha and Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB) at a KSJL public meeting at Makrai in Tangail a few days back, saying that the meeting

People want to be free of deprivation by the rich in the country where 95 percent resources are locked in the hands of only 2,200 people, he said, adding that monarchy is being established here when it is discarded elsewhere in the globe. "We want honest politics... we want to establish it through unity among us," he

JSD General Secretary Abdul Malek Ratan read out the declara-tion at the press conference while KSJI. General Secretary Advocate Fazlur Rahman, UPR Member Secretary Abdul Baten Chowdhury, JSD Acting President Professor Mohammad Shafiq, Bangaldesh Labour Party Chairman Sekandar Ali Moni and Secretary General Akter Hossain were present.

2 killed

cohorts opened fire on the team forcing them to retaliate. Mustafizur was bullet-hit when he tried to escape custody. He died on the spot.

One single barrel gun, a live cartridge and two used shells were recovered from the spot, Rab sources said. His accomplices however managed to escape.

The slain outlaw was accused in

five cases including three murder

Another PBCP-Janajuddha leader was killed during a shootout between was killed during a short during a specific police and his accomplices at went to the spot from police and his accomplices at went to the spot from specific police and two specific polices are specifically alternated. Three Sishave been closed. Pabna yesterday afternoon. Three policemen were also injured in the

The victim was identified as Akkas Kamar, 35. The injured are Sub-inspector Azizur Rahman and con-stables Firoz and Ruhul.

Police claimed they, following information, cordoned off and raided Sarderpara around 1:30pm to rrest criminals who were hiding there. They said the criminals opened fire on them as they asked them to surrender. Police said they were forced to return fire.

received bullets and died on the spot.

sharp weapons from the spot. Akkas was an accused in at least

eight cases including four murder

Hartal today

Selim injured.

The same day, a meeting of the 14-party opposition combine with Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina in the chair called today's 6:00am to 6:00pm shutdown.

the law enforcers go wild on the opposition leaders and workers during the hartal.

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) and National Awami Party (NAP) -- have done all-out preparations to make today's hartal a success while the government has assigned 7,000 law enforcers to different city points to maintain law and order during the HARTAL PREPARATIONS

today's shutdown and PMO siege programme on September 12 a complete success. AL's Acting

Akhter Hossain, among others, spoke at the meeting. Quader urged Even CEC MA Aziz on several all to make the hartal a success. occasions referred to the NDI's Meanwhile, the 14-party, Dhaka report to point to the existence of 'eight per cent fake voters' on the city AL. Awami Jubo League. Swechchhasebak League and Sarak voter list prepared in 2000, which served as the base for updating the Paribahan Sramik Sangathon yesterrecently published electoral rolls. In defence of preparing the

> Chowdhury's electoral constituency, protesting police attack on him. Addressing the rally, the 14-party leaders said they would retaliate if the police attack during the hartal

After parading different city streets, Awami Jubo League held a rally in front of Muktijoddha Club near Bangabandhu Avenue with its city (South) President Mohiuddin 'Ahmed Mohi in the chair. Jubo League Chairman Jahangir Kabir

Nanak, Saidur Rahman, Mamunur Rashid and Fazlul Haque Atik addressed the rally.

The leaders warned the government of launching vigorous move-ments if they torture the opposition

hand-bombs went off in the capital on the eve of today's hartal. Two people were also injured when hartal supporters hurled bombs at them at Siddikbazar area in the capital around 10:00pm, Dhaka Medical College Hospital sources said. Meanwhile, law enforcers

launched drives at different parts of the city last night to arrest trouble makers. They arrested a number of people on suspicion. Police said the

the capital in procession before marching towards the PMO at A meeting of the opposition combine with AL Presidium Member Amir Hossain Amu in the chair yesterday decided the spots

it does not accept electoral reforms within September 18. Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has been saving that elections would be held as per the constitutional process no matter who participates, Amu said, adding that as the prime minis ter knows people have rejected the

hold a single-party election. Meanwhile, the opposition camp will bring out processions, hold rallies, carry out mass contacts, distribute leaflets and mobilise

No decision

Democratic Institute (NDI) at a city hotel that his party would contest in all of the 300 constituencies if the main opposition Awami League does not take part in the upcoming

There were speculations that Ershad would join the BNP-led four-party coalition after returning home from Saudi Arabia. The speculations came to the fore after dropping of three corruption cases against him.

At the airport, the JP chairman directed his party leaders and workers to prepare to contest the next parliament elections without any alliance. He, however, said they may contest the next election under a political coalition.

During his meeting with the visiting NDI delegation at Hotel Radisson in the city, Ershad discussed overall political situation including much-talked reform proposals placed by the AL and its 13 allies centring the upcoming parliamentary elections, the JP chairman told journalists after the

Morshed

FROM PAGE 16 September 18. He will address the

session on behalf of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia. This UNGA session will deal

with issues concerning reform of the world body and its next secretary general," Morshed told journalists at the airport before his departure for Havana.

He said Dhaka is pressing for transparent and accountable decision-making process at the UN Security Council.

On the sidelines of the UNGA session. Morshed will attend the meetings of the foreign ministers of G77, Saarc, OIC, ACD and Bimstec in New York.

He will return home on October 2.

3 Naogaon

killed in crossfire. Immediately after the death of Sagor, hundreds of locals took to the street and barricaded the busy Rajshahi-Naogaon highway at Deluabari Friday morning for about 11 hours.

During the road blockade, they also demonstrated and held a meeting, protesting the death of

The agitators removed their Alam and Saleq Chowdhury, who

GM Quader

he does so, we would turn the

election committees into party committees. He said a number of IP leaders and MPs have the same opinion on forming a new party, adding that he would visit other districts of the country including Sylhet, Khulna, and Chittagong to form the elec-

tion committees. If IP formed alliance with RNP Jamaat, he and his like-minded IP leaders would leave IP and contest the election from a new political platform, he reiterated.

He said Ershad is too busy saving himself rather than the people from the oppression and misrule of the BNP-Jamaat government. He (Ershad) seems to be leaning towards the BNP-led alliance, he He said unlike Ershad, he works

for the people and not for himself. "Ershad is my elder brother, I will honour him as long as I live but I can differ with his political opinion," he added. People of greater Rangpur who

gave support to JP in the last three elections are now beginning to think from a new perspective, he When asked if his party would

form alliance with the Awami League-led 14-party opposition combine, Quader said it was too early to comment on that. He, however, observed that the

14-party's movement for reforms in the Election Commission (EC) and the caretaker government system was justified.

Nato troops

FROM PAGE 16
Taliban-linked violence is in the south, the heartland of the movement and where Isaf took command of 10,000 mainly British,

The Taliban have waged a growing campaign this year against foreign and Afghan troops. The militants' regime was toppled from power in late 2001 by a US-led invasion of Afghanistan.

Canadian and Dutch troops on July

The group claimed responsibility for a suicide blast in the capital Kabul Friday that killed two US soldiers and 14 Afghans. It was the deadliest suicide attack in the city for years. The militants also attacked a

border post in the eastern province of Khost late Friday. One Taliban body was left at the

site after an hour-long battle but blood-stained turbans and Afghan caps, called "pakols", littered the site, indicating the militants had suffered several casualties, a border police commander said. Three police were wounded in the battle, health officials said.

In the northeastern province of Nuristan, also on the border with Pakistan, 10 trucks supplying a US base were torched by men who appeared to belong to the Taliban, witnesses told AFP.

The Afghan drivers were also beaten up, they said.

EU-Iran start

sanctions if Tehran did not comply. A diplomat said the six world powers would be watching the arijani-Solana meeting to see if there was hope of moving towards

negotiations rather than sanctions

is not involved in the talks, diplo-

Italian prime ministers over the

past two days, "underlined Iran's readiness to resolve the nuclear

standoff in the framework of

is a peaceful effort to generate electricity.

with Mr. Larijani continue

Solana said Friday in Copenhagen

and EU officials told AFP.

been resolved months ago. The meeting will be at the fed-But we have to go into this eral chancellery building, Iranian Chancellor Wolfgang Schuessel

making every effort in order to succeed, "headded. There have been several recent

us to see if we can prepare the groundwork" for future talks, he

or discussions will be difficult, otherwise the matter would have

I'm sure that the conversations

unsuccessful attempts to arrange a meeting between Larijani and In Tehran, the Iranian news agency IRNA said Larijani had, in meetings with the Spanish and olana. A Vienna-based diplomat said this was "because they want to be sure there will be an (good)

outcome before they go into the meeting. "There's a very clear agenda," notably to facilitate the resumption

obtaining Iran's right to peaceful of talks, the diplomat said. nuclear technology."

Washington charges Iran with The diplomat said iranians would be explaining their 21-page response on August 22 to the incenhiding work to develop nuclear weapons but Iran says its program tives package.

"The response is not clear in all aspects. The Europeans are seeking some clarification and Iran is also interested in clearing things up,"

that no UN sanctions would be imposed on Iran "as long as meetings the diplomat said. Iran is seeking time guarantees Solana said it would become on getting benefits, such as lightclearer on Saturday whether it would be possible to begin negoti-ations between Tehran and the six water reactors, two experts on Iran, Abbas Maleki and Kevah Afrasiabi, had said in August.

A senior European diplomat, who saw the confidential Iranian response, said Iran had "not said no' to the offer but did say 'no' to suspending enrichment.

31 killed in explosions

FROM PAGE 1 gathered in a square outside the Nurani mosque after Friday

calm as Muslims kept an overnight vigil on Shab-e-Barat, the Night of Blessing, when ancestors are remembered and prayers offered at their graves.

through train carriages in Mumbai killing 186 people. The incident was blamed on Islamic militants. Political leaders and police declined to speculate whether

Friday's blasts were a revenge

attack on the Muslim-majority town in western Maharashtra state. The president of the ruling Congress Party Sonia Gandhi and Home Minister Shivraj Patil visited the site of the blasts and the

wounded. Police said 95 remained in hospitals including 15 who were

Doctors said most of the injuries were from flying metal splinters packed into the bombs. All the victims had died from the blast and not the stampede, said Malegaon health chief Bharat

The state government Saturday revised the death toll downwards from 37, saying they had initially included six people who had died in unrelated incidents. Television pictures showed men

child, remained unidentified.

bodies as they battled to escape through a tunnel from the walled mosque compound. Bystanders hauled children to safety as survivors loaded bodies

into sheets and on to hand carts. Television networks showed emotional survivors demanding bombers be hanged whether

Hindu or Muslim"

who was responsible, "Certain articles have been found but there's nothing to suggest who it could be and the identity of the people is unknown," said Jain. In a statement, Indian Prime

on citizens to remain calm. Hospital staff were under pressure to finish post-mortems so families could bury the dead during Shab-e-Barat, two weeks ahead

ered quietly to bury their dead. Officers were stoned by an angry mob after the blasts but the town was quiet Saturday as community leaders urged people to

n Malegaon, some 240km north of Mumbai, in a swoop on a suspected Islamic militant cell. Malegoan used to be a wealthy

Some 11 people died in 2001 in clashes between police and dem onstrators protesting against US air-strikes on Afghanistan.

Earlier this week, Singh said intelligence agencies had warned The country has been hit by a series of bomb attacks in the last 12 months including on the holiest

and on New Delhi shopping mar-

Meanwhile verdicts are due next week for 123 defendants in a longrunning trial linked to 1993 bomb ings in Mumbai that killed 257 people. The attacks have been

lamed on the underworld and

Saddam had no link

that complying had been "the wrong thing to do," according to Levin. "Well, it was much more than that," Levin said. "It was a shocking

Leaders of both parties accused each other of seeking political gain on the eve of the fifth anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks.

"That is simply not true," Roberts added, "and I believe the American people are smart enough to recognise election-year politicking when

The report speaks for itself,

The administration "exploited the deep sense of insecurity among Americans in the immediate aftermath of the Sept. 11 attacks, leading a large majority of Americans to believe contrary to the intelligence assessments at the time that Iraq had a role in the 9/11 attacks," said Sen. Jay Rockefeller, D-West Virginias, the top Democrat on the

say how the administration officials involved should be called to account. imounted to criminal conduct,

Levin and Rockefeller declined to answer Rockefeller said later he did not believe Bush should be impeached over the matter. According to the report, postwar findings indicate that Saddam "was

distrustful of al-Qaeda and viewed regime." It quotes an FBI report from June 2004 in which former Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz said in an interview that "Saddam only expressed negative sentiments

Saddam himself is quoted in an FBI summary as acknowledging that the Iraqi government had met with bin Laden but denying that he had colluded with the al-Qaeda leader. Claiming that Iraq opposed only US policies, Saddam said that "if he wanted to cooperate with the ege-mies of the US, he would have allled

with North Korea or China," the report quotes the FBI document. The Democrats said that on Oct. 7, 2002, the day Bush gave a speech speaking of that link, the CJA had sent a declassified letter to the committee saying it would be an "ex-treme step" for Saddam to assist Islamist terrorists in attacking the

tee that subsequently issuing a statement that there was no inconspeech and the CIA viewpoint had been a mistake. They also charged Bush with

in July acknowledged to the commit-

Levin and Rockefeller said Teriet

continuing to cite faulty intelligence n his argument for war as recently as The report said that al-Zarqawi, the al-Qaeda leader killed by a US airstrike last June, was in Baghdad from May 2002 until late November 2002. But "postwar information indicates that Saddam Hussein attempted, unsuccessfully, to locate and capture al-Zarqawi and that the regime did not have a relationship with, harbour or turn a blind eye

toward Zarqawi." In June 2004, Bush also defended Vice President Dick Cheney's asser-tion that Saddam had "long-established ties" with al-Qaeda "Zarqawi is the best evidence of connection to al-Qaeda affiliates and al-Qaeda," the president said.

National Congress, an anti-Saddam

will continue and the outcome of 15 regional level dialogues will be placed before political leaders. He hoped that the political parties will incorporate the recommendations

She pointed out that politicians

role through providing information about the backgrounds of candidates and about cases of corruption by any of them, he Khondoker said the people hope that honest and competent candidates will be elected.

The civil society should come forward with more courage, and the concept that there is no final word in politics should be banished from the country, Haque

ple went bankrupt in the political "We want to see how much of

role during the liberation war."

Major General (retd) Moinul Hossain Cwdhury urged the people to judge competent candidates on the basis of character and not on

tent candidates. The democratic practice will not

held at all as the conflict between minated to the worst level. "There is hardly a congenial atmosphere in the political arena for holding As a result the lack of confidence

ments mentioned in party mani-

FROM PAGE 16 AL Acting General Secretary Obaidul Quader last night visited

him as an attempt on his life.

Kader Siddiqui, Rob

from the oppression of the then West Pakistan.

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) held a discussion meeting and milad mehfil at its central office in the BNP Secretary General and LGRD The proposals feature establish-Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Vice-President Shahjahan Siraj, Jubo Dal President Barkat Ullah Bulu and other party leaders attended the

"We shall establish an iron-hard

ever, said that it would be decided Terming the reform proposals of the Awami League (AL) led 14-party

party alliance and National Unity Front, he said, "We shall answer either in the affirmative or negative the alliance with Jatiya Oikya

was purely a routine one.

President Sheikh Hasina's Political Secretary Saber Hossain Chowdhury and City AL Joint General Secretary Hazi Mohammad

Hasina warned of retaliation if The AL and its allies -- 11-party,

The city 14-party opposition combine held a preparatory meeting at ISD's central office on Bangabandhu Avenue to make General Secretary Obaidul Quader city 14-party coordinator Mofazzel Hossain Chowdhury Maya, Hasanul Haque Inu, Syed Zafar Sazzad

day brought out separate processions and held rallies at different places in the city supporting the hartal. The city 14-party held a rally at Taltola in Khilgaon, Saber

Police sent his body to Pabna General Hospital morgue for autopsy.
Police recovered a locally made gun, a few bullets and a number of

The ISD also held a rally and brought out a procession in front of the GPO, JSD leaders Abul Hossain, awkat Raihan and Naimul Ahsan Jewel spoke. Police sources said at least five buses were torched and several

drives would continue throughout PMOSIEGE ON SEP 12 The opposition combine will gather at Bangla Motor crossing, Russel Square, Agargaon and Mohakhali in

and warned of going for one-point agitation to topple the government ruling alliance for their widespread

people in all the upazilas of every district adjacent to the capital from September 14 to 16 to mobilise a huge gathering at the grand rally on

world powers, and added that he

was "optimistic but not naive"

about the outcome of his meeting

'Saturday's meeting will enable

Political leaders appealed for Minister Manmohan Singh called

The attacks came two months after seven bombs, believed to have targeted Hindus, ripped of the fasting month of Ramadan. Extra police were drafted to guard the graveyard Saturday where small groups of men gath-

> stay calm. Four months ago, anti-terrorist police seized explosives and guns

> > textile town but a slump in the industry has caused high unem-It has a history of religious strife.

The attacks have been blamed

FROM PAGE 16 member Carl Levin, D-Michigan, told reporters Friday. Tenet also told the committee

not to act as a shill for any adminis tration or its policy.

Republicans said the document contained little new information about prewar intelligence or postwar findings on fraq's weapons and connection to terrorist groups.
Intelligence Committee
Chairman Pat Roberts, R-Kan., accused Democrats of trying to "use the committee ... insisting that they

they see it.

Still. Democrats were reluctant to

Asked whether the wrongdoing

Hindu city of Varanasi in March and boys trampling on bloodied

Police declined to be drawn on Islamic militants.

abdication of a CIA director's duty

were deliberately duped into sup porting the overthrow of Saddam fussein's regime."

The report concludes that postwar

findings do not support a 2002 intelligence community report that Iraq was reconstituting its nuclear programme possessed biological weapons or ever developed mobile facilities for producing biological warfare agents. A second part of the report finds that false information from the Iraqi

group led by then-exile Ahmed