Polls must be held on time

In her 25-minute speech, Khaleda launched a blistering attack on the AL, labelling it as an "anti-democratic" and "anti-people" party. She also defended President lajuddin Ahmed's assumption of the office of chief adviser, his decision to deploy the army, activities of the caretaker government and Election Commission (EC), particularly the latter's updating of the voter list.

The grand rally was organised by and resist the election under the

activists of the BNP and its allies gathered at Paltan Maidan in a bid to show the alliance's political strength.

The alliance's activists and supvenue. Security was beefed up in and

around the venue and police restricted traffic on the roads to the Paltar ground, which caused a huge traffic jam in most parts of the city. Leaders of the four-party alliance

countered the demands of its archrival political alliance and reiterated their demand for holding the election on January 22 as per the current schedule.

Khaleda said the next election is important for protecting the country as well as the constitution. She asked her alliance's leaders and workers to make all-out preparations for the election

"We will have to protect the country. the constitution and democracy...We will have to keep continuing the process of development tha began during the four-party alliance government's tenure." she said.

Khaleda invited the AL-led alliance to contest the election to prove its popularity. "Take part in the election if you have enough confidence in the people. We will accept the people's

"But the 14-party alliance is afraid

does not have the people's support," she said, adding, "They are now conspiring to foil the election."

In defence of lajuddin's assuming the office of chief adviser Khaleda said, "The president was forced to assume the responsibilities of the chief adviser because of Awami League's non-cooperation in appointing a chief adviser. Justice KM Hasan could not take the charge because of Awami League's anarchy.

The president assumed the office of chief adviser to save the country and the constitution. He thought of all the alternatives before deciding to head the caretaker government, Khaleda said.

"But soon after formation of the caretaker government, the Awami League started raising demands one after another. The caretaker government also implemented their demands." she said.

"In line with their demands, the caretaker government reshuffled the administration extensively," the BNP chairperson said, adding, "In 2001, however, the caretaker government did not bring such massive changes in the administration and the Election Commission and we participated in the election under the administration and Election Commission designed by the Awami League."

Defending the president's order for deployment of the armed forces. Khaleda said the armed forces have to discharge their responsibilities if the government deploys them to save

The politics of Awami League is not for peace and safety. It is for creataodfathers." Khaleda said, adding That is the reason why the president

decided to deploy the army. On the activities of the ÉC, the BNP chairperson said it has updated the voter list in line with the High Court

"The Election Commission started preparing a fresh voter list but the Awami League went to the court to stop the initiative in order to keep the fake voters in the list prepared during its tenure," Khaleda said, referring to the European Union's findings that the electoral roll prepared in 2000 contained 1.3 crore excess voters.

On the 14-party alliance's demand voter ID cards, Khaleda alleged that the BNP had initiated a project for voter ID cards but the AL government

provide the voters with ID cards

raising demands one after another He said the people are waiting for the election and it is the responsibility of the caretaker government to resist any one trying to create obstacles to the election.

mats to "respect the people's sentiment not the lobbying by political

He criticised the advisers to the caretaker government, saying a few advisers in their initiative to resolve crisis "created unexpected situations that inspired the Awami League to take a hard-line attitude about meeting their demands".

Bangladesh Jatiya Party (BJP) Chairman Naziur Rahman Manjur urged the caretaker government to save the country by holding election within its stipulated 90-day tenure.

Terming the caretaker government's package proposal a wrong decision, Naziur said this caretaker government will be held guilty in the history if it fails to hold the election in scheduled time.

Ershad's joining the AL-led alliance, BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said, "The two parties [AL and JP] have discarded their ideologies only to go to power." Bhuiyan said, "The Awami League

said that the High Court verdict against Ershad is not fair, but Ershad was jailed during the Awami League rule álso.

He said the AL and its allies will be responsible if the country's demo-On the AL allegation that the

caretaker government has wasted 45 days, Jamaat Secretary General Ali Ahsan Mujahid said the time was lost as the caretaker government had to be involved in the "ill politics" of the Awami League.
BNP Standing Committee mem-

bers Saifur Rahman, Mosharraf Hossain and KM Obaidur Rahman. slami Oikya Jote faction Chairman Fazlul Haque Aminee, BJP leaders Shamim Al Mamun and Habibullah Belali also spoke at the rally, among

island will be devastated because most of the rivers on the island originate

here,"he said.

Ahmad warned that logging and palm oil plantation activities risk destroying the biodiversity in the area but acknowledged that the three Southeast Asian countries have committed to protect it.

> "We were alarmed by some efforts to expand large-scale palm oil plantations in the area but Jakarta stopped it. There are also logging activities but we want to work with them to ensure sustainable development," he said.

Ahmad said the upland area was not suitable for palm oil and was working with timber companies to ensure the environment was not

"Oil palm plantations and logging are current primary threats to the

Large areas of forest are being cleared for commercial uses, includng rubber, oil palm and pulp production, the WWF said.

Áhmad said Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei have agreed to protect the area and would ink a formal agreement early next year to ensure sustainable development of the

"There is political will by them to protect the 'Heart of Borneo' forest area." he said.

"Losing the 'Heart of Borneo would be an unacceptable tragedy not only for Borneo, but for all Asia and the planet," the WWF said.

Yunus returns home

12 injured FROM PAGE 16

Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) leaders brought the situation under control around 2:30pm. JCD and Shibir, however, blamed each other for the clash.

Immediately after the battle CMC authorities in an academic council meeting decided to close the college until January 4.

They, however, withdrew their decision when BMA and National Doctors Forum (NDF) leaders in a meeting assured the CMC authorities of reaching an understanding between the feuding JCD and

Ward commissioner

FROM PAGE 1 died due to inhumane torture in Rab custody. Rab officials denied the

Rab arrested Zahid during a raid in Badhpara-Charmilpara area of the town at 11:00am on Monday. The aw enforcers later at their camp.

After his arrest, over a thousand people demonstrated in the town demanding immediate release of the ex-ward commissioner. They also submitted a memorandum to the deputy commissioner in this regard. RAB said Zahid was handed over

to Kushtia Sadar police in the evening. Police later produced him before a court, which sent him to jail.
Police said Zahid was an

accused in seven cases including three for murder. A court had also sentenced him to 10 years' imprisonment in one of the cases. Meanwhile, Kushtia district administration has formed a one-

member committee to investigate the incident "Necessary steps will be taken

after submission of the probe report," Deputy Commissioner Talukder Shamsur Rahman told journalists

US, UK, Canada

FROM PAGE 1
British High Commissioner Anwar Choudhury expressed concern over the latest pre-election political developments.

In his reaction to the news agency, the envoy said: "The Election Commission and the caretaker government must carry the confidence of all in order to secure full participation and deliver a credible election."

"The situation is critical." the envoy said. adding that it requires the political parties to make significant compronises in order to find a way forward. "Without timely and substantial progress, we fear unwelcome consequences for Bangladesh's democ-

When asked, a spokesman for the US embassy here said issues relating to the elections are fundamentally political and therefore require political solutions that put the burden primarily on political parties to reach an agreement on any remaining obstacles to participation in a fair election.

Canadian High Commissioner Barbara Richardson also urged the caretaker government and all political parties to find a way to resolve the current problems to ensure participation of all parties in the general election where people could choose their

The envoy said Bangladeshis expect their leaders to use the courage and imagination that define this country to find a way to ensure that all political parties participate in a free and fair election and that the people have the right to cast their votes for whom

That is the independent democracy that Bangladesh has fought hard

the world what its people can do. 'I hope good sense will prevail among "We should try our best to bring all." he said. Yunus described the moment of receiving the Nobel peace prize as the most memorable moment

> Later, Yunus came to Grameen Bank head office in Mirpur escorted by a convoy of around fifty trucks full of people. Grameen Bank members also celebrated the home coming of the peace prize and the laureate through singing patriotic songs and performing dances at the head office after the

Bank delegation also visited Britain receptions in honour of Yunus and his delegation.

the first time hosted a banquet in honour of a Nobel peace laureate.

In France, President Jacques Chirac hosted a reception for Yunus in is de l'Elysée and di micro credit programme of Grameen Bank with him, the nobel laureate told

Cherry Blair, wife of British Prime Minister Tony Blair, also received the delegation in their weekend cottage,

in a concert organised in honour of Yunus in Oslo during the visit. Nrittanchal, a cultural troupe which accompanied Yunus during the trip, staged cultural shows in the countries they visited reflecting Bangladesh culture. Shibly Mohammad and Shamim Ara Nipa led the troupe.

Maksuda

him [Khokon]," Abbas told The Daily

patient," he said.

Asked if Khokon was hurt in the shooting, Abbas said, "I have also heard something like that, but I don't know what really happened.'

either at his house or office or contact him on his cellphone. Abbas said: "Don't ask me

anything about him. I don't have any make any comment about him."

No general diary or case has yet Abbas said he had not informed

looking after Maksuda. "Being busy with the patient, I did not think anything of that. I think the law will move on its own course," he said. central bank. The Daily Star has learnt that

Khokon was treated for bullet wounds at a hospital in Shajahanpur. A physician, who did

SC stays collection

Barrister Omar Sadat assisted Azmalul in moving for Abu Safa who filed an appeal this year

Disposing of a writ petition filed by three lawyers, the HC on May 24, 2005 ordered the EC to gather personal details like academic qualification, profession, source of income, criminal records and some other information about the aspirants to parliament and publish those to help voters choose their representatives properly.

The ruling had been welcomed by the cross-section of people including the EC as it required the commission to bring out the specifics like a candidate's criminal records, involvement in corruption and owning black money and so on, if they had any

Surprisingly, the apex court yesterday gave its decision without hearing any submission from the three petitioners.

Even more remarkable was that no sooner the SC order was pronounced than the FC implemented it, according to an EC press

In line with the HC order, the EC had provided a three-page form for the candidates to give eight types of personal information. But this form is now of no use.

Previously, the same EC had delayed implementation of the HC directives on the voter list for several weeks on the grounds that it did not receive the copy of the

Abu Safa hailing from Swandip filed a petition against the 2005 HC verdict on July 3 the same year at the Supreme Court chamber judge's court. But he could not take out any stay from the SC and instead was asked to file a regular

The regular one he filed on July 10 this year was granted but he did not get any stay order in this case as well.

"The appeal was pending for hearing at a regular bench of the Supreme Court," noted KM Zabir. along with university employees one of the three petitioners. "But they have taken this to the vacation bench to obtain an ad-interim order. This cannot be acceptable," he added.

"Holding this sort of hearing without even informing us is quite mysterious." observed Zabir after the stay order yesterday.

who issued the stay order yesterday, had headed the one-member judicial probe committee on the August 21 grenade attack on an Awami League Rally in 2004. The report he came up with was found to be vaque.

He had been appointed to the Appellate Division from the HC division a few months before the four-party alliance handed over power to the caretaker govern-

"This move will discourage the honest candidates while encourage the criminals, corrupt people, militants and all kinds of bad ele-

leading to sporadic clashes between

the two sides.

District BCL President Biplob Bishwas denounced the role of police during the clashes.

Instead of rein in the illegal activities of the Shibir men, police attacked the innocent leaders and activists of BCL and JCS. he

Contacted, Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Kotwali Police Station Żahidul denied the allegations accusing the BCL and JCS men of attacking the police.

sels for the petitioners, making reference to the SC stav. The petitioners said they knew

Zead-Al Malum, one of the coun-

nothing about Abu Safa.

Omar Sadat said Safa passed only class eight and still he wants to participate in election. But he is afraid if his educational qualification is published, he might face a kind of discrimination, he added.

When the HC gave the verdict in May 2005, the EC did not file any appeal against it. The commission was already gathering information about the candidates. But the HC verdict brought the EC under compulsion to make public the candidates' information so that the people can pick out right people to represent them.

Zabir yesterday said, "Abu Safa filed a civil petition for a leave to appeal against the High Court order on July 3, 2005. But as is practised, he [the petitioner] did not nform or gave us a copy of the petition. On July 10, 2006, he again filed a regular appeal and this time too he did not inform us. We came to know about this move in November when we saw the appeal in the cause-list pending for regular hearing."

'Then on December 10, 2006, we appointed Syed Mahbubur Rahman as an advocate on-record for the case, and completed other procedures so that when the hearing takes place, we can contest it. Zabir pointed out.

"We were ready to participate in the hearing. The court went on vacation from last Friday. Meantime, we did not see Safa taking any move for an urgent hearing. So, we found no reason for this case to take place in the vacation bench. Had it followed the order of the cause-list, its hearing would not have taken place in the next six months."

"This sudden unilateral hearing and the stay order indeed raises many questions," Zabir added.

Meanwhile, the EC in a press release said the returning officers no longer need to compile eight types of personal information on candidates, as there was a stay

Besides the information about their educational background, profession, source of income, the candidates were required to report to the EC also about the amount of loans they had taken out from banks and financial institutions (personally, jointly or by dependent of the candidate or by the company where the candidate is the chairman or director).

They had also been obliged to nform the EC whether they had been a member of parliament before and the role they played individually and collectively in fulfilling commitment to the people.

Police SI stabbed

police station that a body was lying

at Road 116, the duty officer said Police rushed to the spot and found the body of Mizanur Rahman in a pool of blood in front of House

The body was taken to Shahabuddin Medical Hospital for autopsy.

68 tonnes

FROM PAGE 16

The warehouses, which were built for storing jute only, were found infested with rats, cockroaches and other insects, sources said.

The court found evidence that

the wheat and sugar were being supplied to different markets of the port city and their weights were being manipulated. The court sealed off the warehouses.

Gaza truce

Fatah security man. The violence has continued

despite a ceasefire agreed between the two rivals late Sunday but efforts to contain the crisis were gathering pace

Haniya is to deliver an address in which aides said he would appeal for calm, while the head of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu is set to meet both Abbas and Haniva. "(Haniya) will not encourage

a return to calm and for an end to the crisis," his political advisor Ahmad Haniya's government has been boycotted by Israel and the West since

t took office in March after a shock election win over Abbas's longdominant Fatah, plunging the Palestinian territories into their worst inancial crisis Gaza has been rocked by street

violence and tit-for-tat attacks since Abbas called Saturday for new elections in a bid to end months of political deadlock following the collapse of alks on forming a national unity gov-

on Monday described the situation as "grave internal crisis"

"Any bullet shot anywhere is a loss for the Palestinian people and is not in our interest.'

Blair appealed to the international community to back the moderate president, who is grappling with one of the most dangerous crises in the Palestinian territories in decades. Standing alongside Abbas at a Ramallah news conference, Blair

called for an initiative to support the

AFP that the initiative would be worked out in coordination with the United States and be unveiled by US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice during her expected visit to the region early next year.

Israel, renounce violence and agree to past peace deals. But he did not set a date and elec-

tion officials said they would need 110

and settlers from the Gaza Strip in 2005 but maintains control over its borders -- said Abbas should be supported. There is no doubt that we have to

support the moderates favourable to negotiations among the Palestinians . and that everything should be done to reinforce Mahmud Abbas," Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said after talks

of contesting the election because it "Now it will take three years to Advisers' last ditch

FROM PAGE 1 solve the crisis. We will sit again

If the Election Commission (EC) does not extend the time for filing nominations, the two major alliances will be at loggerheads tomorrow as BNP-led four-party alliance is preparing for filing nominations while AL-led grand alliance is ready to resist the move by enforcing a country wide

dawn to dusk hartal Sources said the time limit for filing nomination papers might be extended by a few more days to persuade AL-led alliance to participate in the election under the current schedule

Acting Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Justice Mahfuzur Rahman however yesterday said the EC does not have any nominations at the moment. But sensing a possible extension of the deadline, BNP-led alliance

yesterday refrained from disclosing its list of candidates. "We think the time limit for filing nominations will be extended by a few more days. So, we will disclose the list after the extension," a BNP leader told The Daily Star yesterday.
On the other hand, AL-led 14party coalition, Jatiya Party (Ershad),

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), and

some other small parties of the grand

alliance announced on Monday that

they will boycott and resist any election under the current schedule. Following the announcement of AL-led grand alliance's appearance. a meeting of the council of advisers on Monday night assigned the four advisers to renegotiate the proposals with the leaders of the two major

The advisers at Monday's meeting observed that the situation would not have been complicated had the original package proposal been implemented on time. Responding to the advisers, the president said, "What can I do if the political parties can't reach a consensus on implementation of the proposal," according

to sources. "The situation has become complex with the passing of two weeks since the original package proposal was finalised. Now. Awami Leagueled coalition is not willing to consider the new offer," an adviser, who is involved with the negotiations, told

The Daily Star yesterday. Both the caretaker government and the EC however are preparing for holding the election within the stipulated 90 days, sources said. The acting CEC yesterday cate-

gorically said they hope the election will be held under the current schedule with participation of all major political parties Talking to The Daily Star yesterday an adviser said, "They are still considering holding of the election within the stipulated 90 days. But the situation is so complex that a fair

election with participation of all major

political parties might not be possi-

Consulting with the two major political alliances, the council of advisers on December 4 finalised a package proposal which included recasting of the EC by sending the two controversial election commissioners on leave, appointing new election commissioners, transferring some high level secretaries, rescheduling the election and correcting the updated voter list.

On assurance from the council of advisers for implementation of the package proposal, AL-led 14-party moved towards the election shun-

Zakaria on leave. Irked by the non-implementation the full package deal, 14-party threatened to stage an indefinite sit-in around Bangabhaban prompting the president to deploy the armed forces

unilaterally in an effort to tackle the coalition's agitation. Four erstwhile advisers --- Di Akbar Ali Khan, Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury, CM Shafi Sami, and

ally including on the issue of the plovment of armed forces. The president however consented to reinitiating the move last week to resolve the political deadlock

Iraq on brink of complete disintegration

: Think tank

Iraq faces "complete disintegration into failed state chaos" a respected think-tank warned yesterday, urging the United States to adopt a radical

change of strategy to end the crisis.

violence in Iraq has hit record levels and two weeks after a bipartisan US panel branded the situation "grave and deteriorating." Attacks in Iraq on US-led forces, local security personnel and civilians have surged 22 percent to record

quarterly report on Iraq published on Monday. The report also noted a rise in civilian casualties and said this was directly linked to the rise of sectarian death squads, which were helped by

levels, the Pentagon said in its latest

panel would not be enough to stem the bloodshed. In particular, the Crisis Group

rity forces cannot be treated as vileged allies to be bolstered; they are simply one among many parties

the government as a 'government of national unity' that is 'broadly representative of the Iraqi people': it is nothing of the sort," it said.

360 new species discovered in Borneo since 1994: WWF

AFP, Jakarta

A new species of insect, animal or plant is discovered every month in Borneo, conservation group WWF said yester day as it warned that logging and plantations threatened the fragile

"Heart of Borneo" ecosystem.
"Between 1994 and 2004, at least 361 new species have been discovered in Borneo," WWF Indonesia director Mubariq Ahmad told AFP.

"In the past 10 years, there is discovery of new species every month. We had found 260 new insects, 50 plants, seven frogs, snakes, six lizards. 30 fresh water fish, five crabs, two snakes and a toad," ne added. Recent exotic discoveries include poisonous "sticky frogs," "forest walk-

tances out of water and the transparent "glass catfish". Large animals have also yielded surprises, with the Borneo orang-utan found to be a distinct species to its Sumatran cousin and the island's pygmy elephants recently reclassified

as a separate sub-species.

ng catfish" able to travel short dis-

The discoveries of the new species in the area proves that Borneo, one of the world's last remaining rain forests among the most important biodiversity areas in the world," he said. WWF International launched its 'Heart of Borneo" program two years ago, covering a 22 million hectare rain forest shared by Indonesia, Malaysia

and the oil-rich kingdom of Brunei. Ahmad, who has visited the area numerous times, said its forests were a major source of water for Borneo describing them as the island's "water

peace prize home.

arrival of the delegation. After receiving the peace prize in Norway, Yunus and the Grameen Sweden, Denmark, and France. Top eaders of those countries hosted

The king and queen of Norway for

the journalists.

World famous singers participated

FROM PAGE 16

He said that due to Maksuda's critical condition he was not able to get more information. "How can I quiz such a critical

Since the incident, it has not been possible to trace Khokon

contact with him, and I don't want to Motijheel police said neither Mirza Abbas, nor anyone from his family informed them about the shooting or anyone being wounded.

However a source in the hospital later confirmed that Khokon has been shifted from the room to avoid

against the HC order.

The officials spotted the suitcase in the baggage area after customs superintendent Ashok Barua received secret information about a large cache of foreign

nations in the suitcase with passenger name Khan/Md Farid, SQ-381545 inscribed on the luggage tag. A security sticker of the civil aviation authority of Bangladesh was also labelled on it.

The authorities however could not arrest the owner of the luggage as the flight SQ 435 already departed for Singapore by then.

edly desecrated a picture of Sheikh Mujib, the sources added. The BCL activists were upset at this news and yesterday morning they went to the vice chancel-

Enamul Haque, the proctor, and other officials of the university locked in a scuffle with the agitated BCI men and at one stage the proctor was physically assaulted, said RU VC Prof Altaf Hossain at a news conference in his office.

sacked the VC's office and windowpanes of the administrative building, campus sources said. The attack on the proctor, who is known to be a BNP lovalist. infuriated JCD activists and they

BCL men. The injured were identified as RU BCL president Ibrahim Hossain Moon, general secretary Ayeen Uddin, BCL leaders Rashidul Islam, Ahmed, Rubel, Turjo, Masud, Polash, Masud (2),

Mamun, Ujjal, Shamim, Emdad, Tuhin, Kabir, Nasir and Joy. JCD convener Nuruzzaman Likhon told journalists that they would resist the strike called by

security measures were taken to hold admission tests and to maintain law and order on the campus.

EC working

acting CEC said, "Constitution can be amended by parliament.

As there is no parliament now, it is a big problem. He declined to reply when

ers wanted to know whether it is possible to hold the election after expiry of the present tenure of the caretaker government if all political alliances reach a consensus on this On the possibility of changing the last date of submission of

"We are yet to think about it." Asked if the EC would take any initiative to bring the 14-party in the election process, he said, "It is the caretaker government which

"What I can do alone?" he asked and sought cooperation of all parties in holding the polls.

Banks asked

be considered defaulters.

FROM PAGE 16

ordered to be with the ROs during disposal

out house building loans are also to

All branch managers have been

But the political big shots defaulting on loans could easily have their cases in this regard stayed by the High Court and later contest the elections. In previous instances, only the independent candidates and those who belonged to small political parties had been disqualified from the polls, said sources.

practices, the BB has issued a circular last week. It has asked the banks to take strong measures to prevent the loan defaulters from exploiting the legal loopholes to stand for

Chamber Judge Joynul Abedin

ments to go to the polls." Advocate

100 hurt FROM PAGE 1

Tuesday. Hamas Prime Minister Ismail

Yussefsaid.

a coup.

Visiting British Prime Minister Tony

Palestinians and move toward a twostate solution for the Middle East conflict. A senior Palestinian official told

Abbas has said elections were the way to resolve the turf war with Hamas, boycotted internationally because of its failure to recognise

days to organise a ballot once Abbas issues an official decree. Israel -- which pulled out its troops

of parliament

the Dhaka city unit of the four-party alliance a day after a similar programme of the AL-led 14-party alliance that announced to boycott

current schedule. Tens of thousands of leaders and

porters started gathering at the venue since noon. They were carrying banners, placards and electoral symbols of their parties and were chanting slogans. Hundreds of buses carried a huge number of four-party workers from across the country to the

people's lives and properties.

ning the path of street agitations. But, President and Chief Adviser laiuddin Ahmed suddenly opposed the move send Election Commissioner

Advocate Sultana Kamal promptly resigned from the caretaker government because of their differences of opinion with the president regarding his way of taking decisions unilater-

and asked the new advisers to reneate with the two major alliances.

Violence in Iraq hits record levels: Pentagon report AFP, REUTERS, Baghdad

The stark analysis from the International Crisis Group came as a Pentagon report confirmed that

elements of Iraqi forces. The ICG's new report endorsed the Iraq Study Group's criticisms of White House strategy, but warned the recommendations of former secretary of state James Baker's

criticised the US insistence on supporting Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki's coalition government, and called instead for the international community to open talks with all Iraq's war-The Iraqi government and secu-

to the conflict," the ICG said. 'The (Baker) report characterises they choose. to achieve and to defend," she said.

Better, the ID cards will be provided after this election," she said. Speaking at the rally, Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Matiur Rahman Nizami

blasted the AL-led 14-party alliance for Nizami asked the foreign diplo-

On Jatiya Party (JP) Chairman HM

cratic process is destroyed.

"If the forest is destroyed, the whole

While talking to the journalists at Grameen Bank head office immediately after arrival with the peace prize he avoided questions about the country's politics. "Today I shall talk only about the peace prize and avoid discussion on politics. The Norwegian Nobel Committee

> Eight other members of the Grameen Bank board were also present at the prize giving ceremony in Oslo, capital of Norway. They along with Afrozi Yunus, wife of Dr Yunus, and other family members of the Nobel laureate also came back home vester-Yunus told the awaiting journalists that the world leaders he met during his week long visit wanted to know

about the political situation in Bangladesh. "I assured them that the

election will be held peacefully as the

people of Bangladesh are very con-

scious and they want to bring back

formally handed over the peace prize

for 2006 to Yunus and Greameen

Bank on December 10. Taslima

Begum, a board member of Grameen

Bank, received the peace prize on

behalf of the bank.

peace. He committed to spend the money that he received with the peace prize, for welfare of the people. He also reiterated his plan to eradicate poverty from the world. "The people are poor because they have been made poor artificially. Explaining his social business formula Dr Yunus said according to the new concept investors would not

expect profit from their investments

They would rather be happy if the

money is invested for welfare of the

mankind. He claimed that many

western companies already

responded positively to his new for-

Thousands of people including many dignitaries gathered at Zia International Airport vesterday morning to welcome and receive Dr Muhammad Yunus, who brought home the world's most prestigious A group of prominent citizens including Dr Shoeb Ahmed, an adviser to the caretaker government, Dr Wahiduddin Mahmud, a former

adviser to a previous caretaker gov-

ernment, Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya,

and Hossain Zillur Rahman received

Dr Yunus and his team on the tarmac

of the airport as they disembarked

from a Boeing 737 which had landed around 11:15 yesterday morning. A chartered plane of Hamburg International Airline flew the country's first Nobel laureate and his team back home directly from Paris. Yunus was garlanded heavily on the tarmac and he waved to the welcoming people who gathered there in his honour.

Dozens of journalists from various

electronic and print media had been

waiting in the VIP lounge of the airport

since morning where Dr Yunus smil-

ingly posed for photographs, after

aettina there. In the parking area of the airport several thousand people, mainly members of various Grameen organisations and Grameen Bank, had been waiting for him. As Dr Yunus reached the parking lot after completion of airport formalities, thousands burst into cheers and showered him with petals of flowers. Many young people wearing

Grameen made dresses danced on

the street expressing joy for Yunus

with the world's most prestigious prize

and through this Bangladesh showed

Addressing the enthusiastic crowd, unus said, "We have come home

winning the Nobel peace prize.

Yunus said,

more prestige for the nation," he said. He thanked the 70 lakh poor borrowers of Grameen Bank for bringing the

"As far I have heard, she was injured at a party she went to with

the police as he had been busy

the surgery, said Khokon suffered bullet wounds in his hand and named the room number where Khokon had been treated. Reporters found the named hospital room empty and there was no record of a patient by Khokon's name in the hospital register.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT Customs officials at Zia International Airport seized Saudi currencies worth over Tk 1.12 crore from a Singapore bound passenger's luggage on Monday

Tk 1cr Saudi

seized at ZIA

currencies

currencies was being smuggled out through flight SQ 435 The customs officials found 1,182 Saudi rials in 500 denomi-

JCD, BCL clash

FROM PAGE 16 at the Taposhi Rabeya Hall, alleg-

lor's (VC) office to demand punishment of the house tutor.

The BCL activists also ran-

loyal to BNP and Jamaat swooped on the BCL activists with hockey sticks and iron rods injuring the 35

The proctor said that adequate

FROM PAGE 1 Asked about holding the election after the stipulated 90 days by amending the constitution, the

asked about seeking time from the Supreme Court for holding the polls after 90 days. "It is a delicate question, I will not make any comment," he said. "Lets see what the political alliances say in this regard, Mahfuzur Rahman said as report-

nominations for the elections due to the Awami League-led 14-party combine's hartal programme tomorrow, the acting CEC said,

will have to take initiative in this regard."

scrutiny of the nomination papers with all pertinent papers at their Banking sources said in the 2001 election, some 300 candidates' nominations were cancelled because of similar steps taken by the

To prevent recurrence of those

FROM PAGE 16 mourners gathered for the funeral of

escalation but on the contrary will urge

But the Hamas-controlled government has denounced as tantamount to Abbas, who has been at logger heads with Hamas since it took power.

"I have called for early presidential and parliamentary elections so that the people can decide on the base of an acceptable programme to preserve their national interests... and put an end to the siege and crisis," he said.