Convicts term it 'politically

in the presence of arrested and bailed accused

In an instant reaction, relatives and lawyers of the convicts rejected the judgement terming it an injustice. They said they would challenge the verdict in the higher court.

Relatives, friends and supporters of the acquitted, who were waiting impatiently outside the court building, shouted in joy and chanted slogans to welcome the

"I've got justice lastly," said a jovial KM Obaidur Rahman. "I was falsely implicated in the case and sent to jail for damaging my political image. But they are defeated

"I was put into jail for three years but now I am free. I will file case against all the people responsible for it," the ruling BNP lawmaker vowed.

He said he would talk to his counsels soon to decide on filing a case against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, former home minister Mohammad Nasim and investigation officer in the case Abdul Kahar Akand.

Nurul Islam Manzoor, another acquitted of the case, said, "The truth always prevails and I am

government," said Mohammad

Nasim, son of M Mansur Ali, He was

talking to reporters at his

previous Awami League (AL) gov-

ernment initiated the belated trial.

But now justice has receded into a

distant dream following the incum-

coalition replaced four public prose-

cutors appointed by the AL govern-

ment with those loyal to them in a bid

to set them free. "They even

replaced the judge," Nasim said,

adding, the verdict has proved that

this government is beneficiary of the

Samad Azad, Syed Ashraful Islam

(son of Syed Nazrul Islam),

Tazuddin Ahmed's daughter (Simin

Hossain Rimi) and I appeared as

prosecution witnesses, but most of

the perpetrators have been acquit-

ished since they were self-declared

killers of Bangabandhu and four

the four-party government came to

power, I was in deep doubt about

justice. This verdict has been given

national leaders." he said

"They should have been pun-

Syed Ashraful said, "Ever since

"Our senior leaders Abdus

jail killings.

He said the BNP-Jamaat-led

bent government's meddling.'

"We were hopeful when the

Dhanmondi residence.

Slain leaders

happy that the truth has won finally in this case.

"I would be happier if all were acquitted.

Expressing his gratitude to almighty Allah for his acquittal. former minister Shah Moazzem said, "I am happy to get justice."

"I had to suffer in iail for four long years as I fell victim to political ingeance." he said.

Major (retd) Khajruzzaman also heaved a sigh of relief at his acquittal and said, "I was in the jail for five years without justice...."By the grace of God I am free now "

Taheruddin Thakur claimed he had fallen a victim to political vengeance. "The case has ruined my family and damaged my social

While the acquitted blamed politics for their implication in the case, Lt Col Syed Faruk Rahman who was awarded life imprisonment in the case said, "It has nothing to do with law and justice, it's

As the judge passed the verdict, Col Sultan Shahriar Rashid Khan shouted in protest, "How can I be awarded life imprisonment while others are freed for the statements of the same witnesses?"

merely a political issue.

"I have been awarded punishment although the charge against

3 to die, 12 awarded

Former president Khondakar

Mushtaque Ahmed who is accused

of masterminding the assassinations

and former secretary Mahbubul Alam

Chashi were dropped from the

charge-sheet, as they died during the

investigation. Charge-sheeted

accused Major (retd) Aziz Pasha

Bangabandhu Murder Case were

to beginning the delivery of judge-

At the beginning, he pointed out

the faults of the IO in investigating the

case saying, "He (IO) blackened the

and any map of Bangabhaban where

the conspiracy was alleged to have

where Shah Moazzem, Obaidur and

Manzoor had allegedly been

engaged in a conspiracy for the

killings and he also suppressed the

information of the three leaders'

The judge said it could not be

proved that Moazzem, Obaidur,

Manzoor and Taheruddin were

involved in the conspiracy (of the

confessional statement implicating

Shah Moazzem, Obaidur and

Manzoor, there was no corroboration

of witnesses in support of it, the judge

crime Khairuzzaman had committed

by performing his duty as in-charge

of tanks at Bangabhaban during the

activities of the accused at the

acted on his whims during the inves-

were in Bangabhaban during the

incident, kept contact with Dhaka

Central Jail over phone and assisted

prevent the killers, rather assisted

them," the judge said, adding the IO

did not produce them to trial and kept

clear statement against any of the

accused, he said. The witness no 11

gave false statement against

prove beyond doubt the conspiracy

in Bangabhaban that had led to the

gruesome killings in jail," said the

In the first information report (FIR)

filed with Lalbagh Police Station on

November 4. 1975. Kazi Abdul

Awal, deputy inspector general

(prisons), accused Captain

Moslemuddin and four army officers

blocked the investigation and trial

for about 21 years until officers of

on August 18, 1996 following scrap-

ping of the black law during the

Akand, assistant superintendent of

CID, arrested Syed Faruk Rahman,

Sultan Shahriar Rashid and

The court framed charges

against Obaidur and 20 others on

Golam Rasul, Sheikh Rezwan Ali,

AK Rov. Ahmed Jamil Mostafa.

Molla Mostafa Kamal and Motiur

September 7, the verdict was

deferred due to illness of the judge

until September 21. But it was

deferred again as the court held

hearing of two fresh petitions sub-

mitted for Taheruddin and granted

one that asked for deposition of key

witness and second investigation

officer Saifuddin Ahmed eight days

not appear in the court on

September 29 due to severe illness.

A three-member commission

But 84-year-old Saifuddin could

Scheduled to be pronounced on

Investigation Officer Abdul Kahar

The Indemnity Ordinance

of the November 3 killings.

Awami League regime.

sional statement.

on April 12, 2001

Rahman.

statement in the court.

"The prosecution has failed to

Some witnesses did not give any

them away for a mysterious reason.

"The iail guards did not try to

The IO did not made it clear what

"He did not investigate into the

"Although he was a government

Although Taheruddin made a

participation in the Liberation War,

"The IO did not mention the place

taken place.

the judge said.

assassinations).

observed.

jail killing, he said.

Bangabhaban."

the main killers.

Manzoor.

BACKGROUND

image of the police administration."

Eleven convicts in the

died last year.

among the 21 accused.

DELIVERY OF VERDICT

iam-packed courtroom amid beefed up security, Judge Mohammad Motiur Rahman came down heavily on the investigation officer (IO), saying all the killers could not be punished due to the "farcical investi-

The verdict came about 29 years after the brutal assassination of four national leaders, who led the government in exile of Bangladesh during the Liberation War.

The infamous Indemnity Ordinance blocked the investigation and trial of the killings for about 21 years until the law was scrapped during 1996-2001 Awami League regime. The trial was delayed for repeated interventions by governments and judicial tangles

The verdict was deferred twice last month.

Syed Nazrul Islam, acting president of Bangladesh government in exile, Tajuddin Ahmed, prime minister, M Mansur Ali, finance minister, and AHM Qamaruzzaman, minister of home affairs, relief and rehabilitation, were killed inside Dhaka Central Jail on November 3, 1975.

The killing seen as a desperate bid of power usurpers came 79 days after the assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and most of his family on August 15, 1975.

Three of the 12 awarded life term in jail -- Lt Col (dismissed) Syed Faruk Rahman, Lt Col (retd) Sultan Shahriar Rashid Khan and Maj (retd) Bazlul Huda -- were sentenced to death in Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman murder case. They are in Dhaka Central Jail now.

Relatives, friends and supporters of the five acquitted chanted slogans outside the court building to welcome the judgement while those of the punished burst into protest and said

they would challenge the verdict. Shahriar and his family members shouted inside the courtroom in an instant outburst of protest after pronouncement of the verdict, terming it an injustice while Faruk said. "It is nothing to do with law and justice it's merely a political issue."

The prosecution, however, was silent about the judgement. Public Prosecutor Abdullah Mahmood Hassan was prompt to blame the IO, Abdul Kahar Akand, and said the verdict might be stronger had he (IO) done his work properly.

The court convicted and ordered to hang Resalder (retd) Muslemuddin,

Dafadar (dismissed) Marfat Ali Shah and Dafadar (dismissed) Abdul Hashem Mridha, all on the run, until death as the charge against them was proved beyond doubt."

mprisonment and fined Tk 10,000 each. In default, they will have to serve another six-month rigorous imprisonment.

verdict in seven days.

mprisonment are Lt Col (dismissed) Syed Faruk Rahman, Lt Col (retd) Sultan Shahriar Rashid Khan, Maj (retd) Bazlul Huda. Lt Col (dismissed) Khondaker Abdur Rashid, Lt Col (relieved) Shariful Haq Dalim, Lt Col (retd) SHMB Noor Chowdhury, Mai (Retd) AKM Mohiuddin Ahmed Lt Col (retd) AM Rashed Chowdhury Major (relieved) Ahmed Shariful Hossain, Capt (retd) Abdul Majed, Captain (relieved) Nazmul Hossain for abetting the murderers.

As Faruk Rahman, Shahriai Rashid and Bazlul Huda are in iail. their imprisonment in this case will be counted from the day they have been

The jail term of 12 absconding convicts will begin from the day of their arrest or surrender.

Obaidur and Manzoor, state ministers of the government of Khandakar Mushtague Ahmed during the jail killing, and Khairuzzaman were acquitted as their involvement in the conspiracy of the assassinations could not be proved. Khairuzzaman. who was an army major during the assassination, later joined foreign

formed members of the police, Armed Police Battalion (APBn) and paramilitary Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) guarded the court building. high-rises in the court area Chawkbazar, Bakshibazar and Chankharpool crossings and roads in and out of Dhaka Central Jail where the Metropolitan Sessions

The security men allowed the vehicles of only the accused and their relatives, law enforcers and journalists and let other people go into the court area after metal detector checks. They also closed all shops close to the court. An archway

entrance of the court ARRIVAL OF ACCUSED

Whistles filled the area and security personnel lined up from the main entrance of Dhaka Central Jail to the court entrance as a police prison-van carrying Faruk, Shahriar and Huda

They had chats inside the courtroom with their relatives and had foods.

Taheruddin Thakur along with his wife appeared in a CNG-run threewheeler at 9:41am, followed by ailing Shah Moazzem in a land cruiser jeep. Nurul Islam Manzoor came at 10:04am in a black jeep and Khairuzzaman five minutes later in a

white microbus. until 10:30am when the verdict was scheduled to begin. In the meantime the judge had come and the defence and prosecution sides, journalists, accused and their relatives were waiting for delivery of the judgement.

Accompanied by his daughter, Obaidur arrived at 10:38am, 20 minutes after the judge had sat in his chamber.

As the accused arrived with their relatives, the security men rushed to escort them to the courtroom.

Long-drawn FROM PAGE 12 confirmed by the High Court.

The other convicted can appeal against the judgment in 30 days. A fugitive convict can appeal to

the High Court only after his surrender to the court.

simultaneously It may need more than a year to prepare the paper book of the case

Judge Motiur Rahman who took seat in the courtroom at 10:50am read out the FIR (first information report) prior already a backlog of death references in the death reference bench

> that had already waited for several years to be heard.

Earlier in 1998,a Dhaka court passed the judgment in The IO did not investigate many Bangabandhu Murder Case and the important aspects, failed to prove many things including the conspiracy behind the assassinations and presented faulty documents, said the He (IO) violated the Code of Criminal Procedure during deposition of some witnesses, did not submit the original copy of the FIR

The four national leaders were (CID) was tasked with the investigation on November 21, 1975.

stalled for years and was reopened on August 18, 1996. On October 15, 1998, charges were pressed against

Indo-Pak

Talks on trade issues are set for December 9-10, also in the Indian capital. A confidence building measures meeting in the sphere of conventional sources will be held in Islamabad on December 15-16.

Gujarat. Khan said Pakistan has proposed

a meeting of foreign secretaries of the two countries in the third or last week of December to wrap up the second phase of the dialogue pro-

officer, the IO was a supporter of a political party." he said, adding the IO foreign secretaries along with The judge said it was proved that Peace and Security, he said. Pakistan hope that the step-by-Faruk, Rashid and Shahriar, who

step dialogue process will lead to a resolution of Kashmir dispute in line with the aspiration of Kashmiri

Some killers

papers and documents from the army headquarters," he said.

Information on all the people

fourth IO of the case who started his investigation into the case in 1996 and submitted the charge sheet in

"The IO did not mention the supplementary charge sheet during his

The verdict might be tougher had the IO not acted on his whims, he commented.

Obaidur Rahman told journalists after his acquittal that he would soon file a defamation case against the

attorney," he said, adding, "I suffered three years in jail for nothing. My name was intentionally added into the charge sheet in 1998."

It was an

violation of the constitution and recurrence of such violations will make the rulers lose their right to govern," said a joint statement of the two political groups.

The systematic destruction of rule of law by subordinating the police and administration to the ruling party's arbitrary and unlawful directives cannot be allowed, it added.

The statement further said the people cannot accept gross failure of the government to discharge its basic duty of protecting their life and property and to render the administration and police helpless in the face of unruly elements who were reported to be members of the student and youth wings of the

There is no doubt that the attackers belonged to the BNP. The Oikya Mancha and the BDB also filed a first information report (FIR) with Rangpur Kotwali thana accusing 12 local Jubo Dal and Chhatra Dal leaders of the attack on their dia-

The programme started from Dinajpur and the process will con-

Rab won't raid

FROM PAGE 12 Humayun Mahmud Chowdhury

"I talked with Rab officials who agreed not to raid the markets any more without consulting the chamber leaders," said the CCCI presi-

Rab Commander of Chittagong Kazi Emdadul Huq said they postponed raiding the city markets following requests from the leaders

Amir Humayun, meanwhile, termed the Rab raid 'sabotage' against Rab. "I think some quarters are out to use Rab against business community. Rab was not supposed to go for sudden raids at Khatungonj," said Amir Humayun, adding that such move can not help bring down the prices in the market.

Some of the traders, however, still don't feel free to import rice, onion, and other essentials fearing further action by Rab. Ctg Rab on Monday launched

raids on different onion wholesale

shops at different markets in Khatungonj, Chaktai and Asadgoni as part of anti price-hike drive when the dealers were forced to sell onion at Tk15 a kg. Rab also raided Reazuddin Bazar in the heart of the city on Tuesday. Yesterday's meeting of the home

ministry also observed that despite a ban on ageing passenger buses. they are still plying the city roads, tampering with registration and engine numbers.

"A section of Bangladesh Road and Transport Authority (BRTA) officials are carrying on these illegal activities for bribe," a participant told

He said unscrupulous BRTA officials are also responsible for giving fake registration numbers to 12,000 CNG-run autorickshaws now on the streets without valid documents. The government has allowed only 13,000 CNGrun auto-rickshaws in the city.

The meeting has decided to

launch block raids in the city from today to cut crimes during the Durga Puja and Ramadan. It also decided to deploy around 650 policemen in the city markets. Besides, 45 mobile police teams each comprising 10 members will be on patrol.

Chaired by State Minister for Home Lutfozzaman Babar, the meeting discussed fixed bus, rail and launch fares during Eid vacation, law and order, activities of police detectives and mobile courts and measures to stop extor

Babar suspects a rise in illegal dealings of forged currencies during Ramadan and directed

police to check such activities. The home secretary, inspector general of police, directors general DG) of paramilitary Bangladesh Rifles, Ansar and Rab, commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police and other top ministry and police officials, among others,

Franklin

FROM PAGE 12

sent back Scott Styris for two. The big-hitting all-rounder was dismissed in a bizarre fashion. Styris pushed the ball onto Rajin's knees and the Bangladesh vice-captain, fielding at short-leg, palmed an easy catch on the rebound.

Manzarul, who ended with 2-54,

The tourists' innings was halved with 133 runs on board when Rafique captured the wickets of Astle, caught at slip and Sinclair

Sinclair's patient 219-minute essay was studded with eight hits across the park. Rafique is now one wicket away from 50 Test wickets.

vesterday from London.

"Corruption in large-scale public

projects is a daunting obstacle to

sustainable development, and

TI in a press release. "Exceptions to

open competitive bidding must be

kept to a minimum and explained

CPI. Countries with a score higher

than 9, with very low levels of per-

ceived corruption, are predomi-

nantly the rich countries. "But the

poorest countries, most of which are

at the bottom half of the index, are in

the greatest need of support in

fighting corruption," said Elgen.

Most corrupt

into account anti-graft measures. Law Minister M Moudud Ahmed

however rejected the TI assessment and said: "We do not accept the criteria for such an index. There are other countries in the world. which are much more corrupt than Bangladesh.' Health Minister Khandakar

Star last night that the government does not agree with such a ranking as it is not based on 'correct informa-"They blow up small discrepan-

cies in big projects. They also do not go to the bottom of media reports to judge whether the allegations are true," said Mosharraf

"Comparison with other countries is not realistic because of differences in social perceptions and definitions." he said. "Some people define fundamentalism or human rights differently from us.

corrupt country in the world, closely followed by New Zealand, Denmark and Iceland. Nigeria, Myanmar and Chad are hot on the heels of Bangladesh and Haiti as countries to have the most corrupt public officials and politicians TI Bangladesh (TIB) Treasurer

and separation of judiciary are required to reduce corruption.

country as the 'most corrupt' is perhaps incorrect as it is a matter of "Inter-country comparisons also

have to be done very carefully as the data reliability for each country differs from case to case 'he added "Corruption robs countries of

This year's CPI draws on 18 surveys provided to the TI between 2002 and 2004, conducted by 12

independent institutions. The index includes only those countries that feature in at least three surveys. As a result, many countries, including some which could be among the most corrupt, are missing because there are simply not enough survey data available, explained the TI press release.

Top lawyers term

Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court yesterday in the historic jail killing case sentenced three retired non-commissioned army officers to death and 12 retired senior military officers to life imprisonment. The court acquitted five accused of murder of four national leaders in Dhaka Central

The three, who were awarded death sentence, are fugitives. Of the 12,who got life sentence, the same punishment they received in the Bangabandhu Murder Case, three are behind bars while the rest are on the Of the acquitted, four are out on

bail now while the other one has recently been promoted to the rank of additional secretary.

of the judgment in detail tomorrow Thursday), and then I will elaborate on my reaction to it," he added. Dr M Zahir, another esteemed

lawyer, said: "It's a strange coincidence that the judgment seems to have maintained the status quo regarding the accused.

He, however, said he heard that there was no direct evidence linking Shah Moazzem Hossain and Nurul Islam Manzur to the Jail Killings, and the judge might acquit them on the grounds of insufficient evidence

And now, if the state feels, it may appeal against the judgment, he

Referring to the long delay in the trial, Zahir said it was a sheer indifference to the honour of the departed souls of the four leaders and painful experience for the family members. Still, at last a step has been taken forward through yesterday's judgnent, he said.

Terming the judgement politically manoeuvred, Advocate Anisul Hague, former special public prosecutor of the case, said the verdict contradicts the evidence on record and it can not be acceptable.

"Section 302 of the Bangladesh Penal Code says capital punishment is the penalty for murder, but I am surprised that nine of the accused who have been sentenced to death in another criminal case (Bangabandhu Murder Case), were awarded life term imprisonment here," Anisul told The

government, wondered how they (the 12 who got life sentence) were sentenced to life instead of death sen-"Were there any mitigating circum-

stances that a person is awarded life imprisonment when the murder is proved?"

ing the status quo regarding the accused." Anisul added.

weapons and five hockey sticks. Shah Moazzmen Hossain, Taher The arrestees claimed ruling Uddin Thakur as the kingpins of the party leaders and Natore police historic jail killings and expressed employed them to resist outlaws in dismay over their acquittal. "Now Naldanga and the surrounding Obaidur Rahman's hope of being a areas. Police had provided them minister has much advanced." with the arms and weapons, they

son of Tajuddin Ahmed, said, "I was only five when my father was killed and had been waiting for 29 years for justice. But the judgement has plunged us all

on political considerations." He held KM Obaidur Rahman

into despair. Bursting into tears, the young lawmaker of the main opposition party said, "This BNP government

less elections of February 15, 1996 and posted other killers in foreign services. They did so, as they are perpetrators and beneficiaries of the

Expressing dissatisfaction over the verdict Khairuzzaman Liton son of AHM Quamruzzaman, said they will take the case to the High Court as justice was not reflected in

yesterday's verdict. The families of the four national leaders have meanwhile said they are going to hold a joint press conference shortly to express their dissatisfaction with the verdict.

Rab nabs

and arrested him, his son Biplab Hossain and three others -- Md Darzeel, Asaduzzaman Talukder

and Rafigul Islam. The Rab also seized one SBBL gun, one pipe gun, one shutter gun, four cartridges, 12 bombs, 11 sharp weapons and 12 posters of Purbo Banglar Communist Party (Lal

The Rab from another house in the village picked up Belal Hossain and Helal Pramanik with five sharp

Sources said the arrestees, commanders of Bangla Bhai in their areas, had taken part in different operations at the directive of their chief. They also tortured common people by forming Mujahidin Committee after Bangla Bhai went into hiding and were involved in extortion, repression of women and

made Col Faruk Rahman leader of

Dhanmolndi office.

due to the direct influence by the government. It is the worst example against the rule of law," AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil told reporters emerging from the meeting chaired by Leader of the Opposition and AL President Sheikh Hasina at the party's

expectation. This is a government directed verdict. Jalil said the 6:00am-2:00pm hartal will also be enforced as a mark of protest against spiralling prices of essentials, slide in law and order, and

"We believe it is not the judge's

judgement, which badly missed

reflection of the truth and people's

all grenade attacks during the coalition The AL plans street agitation in tandem with the legal move against the judgement, he added. The AL will stage demonstrations across the

country on October 24 and 28 The ALCWC also condemned the Tuesday's attack on a meeting of Badruddoza Chowdhury and Dr Kamal Hossain in Rangpur, blaming it on the government-backed cadres. "The government has been obstructing people from exercising their democratic rights, and the attack was in the latest of the government's anti-

democratic character," the meeting observed. The meeting also expressed concern over the frequent killings in the Rab (Rapid Action Battalion) custody, alleging that the elite force is also being used to oppress political

"We are for punishment for the criminals but through proper trail. Every citizen has the right to justice, said Jalil, quoting meeting discussion. "The meeting did not discuss the reform issues for the caretaker government system. We are working on it

and will place concrete proposals. Senior AL leaders Amir Hossain Amu, Tofael Ahmed, Suranjit Sengupta, Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim Obaidul Quader, Mukul Bose and Abdul Mannan were present at the

HASINA OFF TO US TODAY Sheikh Hasina leaves for the United States this morning to attend an international conference on "American Business Women and Entrepreneurs",

October 26 and 27. Hasina will also address a gathering of expatriate Bangladeshis in New

She is expected to return on

presidential ballot last month.

Ex-general FROM PAGE 12 the big popular mandate he won in Indonesia's historic democratic

He is expected to announce his cabinet on Wednesday evening. Outgoing leader Megawati Sukarnoputri, embittered over her crushing defeat at the hands of her former chief security minister, skipped the low-key swearing-in

Wearing a dark suit and a black Muslim cap, Yudhoyono promised in his brief oath to work hard and pledged just rule for the world's most populous Muslim nation. The leaders Australia, Malaysia, Singapore, runei and East Timor attended.

"This is an important moment in

Indonesian history," Australian Prime

Minister John Howard told

Yudhoyono on behalf of the other leaders when they all met after the Yudhoyono is scheduled to make his first speech as leader at 3.00 p.m. (0400 EDT). He has already said he might have to introduce tougher laws to tackle terrorists linked to al-Qaeda who have been blamed for a spate of

bombings in recent years. The inauguration marked a major step forward in Indonesia's democratic transition following a turbulent six vears since former longtime strongman Suharto stepped down Yudhoyono is the country's fourth president since then. The landslide election victory of a

man popularly known by his initials has sparked hope among ordinary Indonesians and also foreign investors of better times after Megawati's stable but ineffectual rule.

me could not be proved." he said in disappointment. "This is an injustice," he shouted from the prison van as he was being taken back to

"Political leaders are acquitted. but army men are found guilty," Shahriar's wife Masu Ara Khana said inside the courtroom at the top of her voice. "It is political leaders who took the decision of the killings and the army personnel are victim-

pendence are punished and those who passed time in hotels in Kolkata during the Liberation War are freed," said Shahriar's brotherin-law Babul. Sohel Mallick, lawyer of Shahriar, said, "The verdict is full of

'Those who fought for inde-

ised," she alleged.

contradictions." He said the judgement proves that invisible hands were at play Bazlul Huda, another convict, avoided making any comment on the verdict but said. "I've been

nothing to say." This is a mockery of justice," Lizi Pasha, wife of Aziz Pasha and sister of Huda, told The Daily Star rejecting the judgement. "We know

made a third-class prisoner, I have

Abdul Maiid Munshi, counsel of Obaidur, Moazzem and Manzoor, expressed dissatisfaction at the investigation. "All the accused should have been acquitted as the conspiracy could not be proved." Public Prosecutor Abdullah

won't get justice in Bangladesh."

tigation officer neglect to perform Asked whether the state would appeal against the verdict, he said,

Mahmood Hassan said the verdict

could be tougher had not the inves-

Kumari

Kumari puja is held on Mahasthami or sometimes on Mahanabami. This year Kumari Puja is being celebrated on Mahasthami. Devotees will join Kumari Puja at

Ramakrishna Mission Templé at Meanwhile, Minister for Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan', Dhaka City Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka, State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfozzaman Babar yesterday visited Dhakeswari National Temple, Jagannath Hall puja mandap and Řamna Kali Madir and

exchanged greetings with Hindu devotees. Indian High Commissioner in Dhaka Veena Sikri visited Jagannath Hall puia mandap on

Verdict fully Rahman) innocent, it is natural that he would be acquitted," the law minister told the BBC. Regarding change of public prosecutors (PP) Moudud said after assuming power the BNP- led

and proceeded the case with the PPs appointed during Awami League (AL) rule. "After the death of special PP Sirajul Haque, other junior PPs were given termination naturally," the law

government did not change the PP

minister added. The government appointed PPs for the jail killing case as per suggestion of the deputy leader of opposition. Moudud said, adding that these PPs resigned at the last stage of the trial process. He also alleged that AL was

trying to reap political benefit hrough rejecting the verdict. "The government always wanted the real criminals to be punished and everybody should accept the

verdict." the law minister added. 'The government will scrutinise whether there is any weakness in the verdict and will decide regarding

appeal after review," Moudud said.

AL decides huge pressure from its lawmakers for returning to parliament. "The

MPs criticised party policymakers'

position on keeping the AL away

from parliament. They asked the

meeting to decide whether they

should join JS or resign from it," said

a senior AL leader.

"We have decided to join parliament to protest against misdeeds of the government," AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil told reporters after the meeting. The oust-government agitation on the street apart, the AL lawmakers would rally in the House against spiralling prices of essentials,

deteriorating law and order, gre-

nade attacks on leader of the oppo-

sition and 'government manoeuvred

verdict' in the Jail Killing Case. The AL deputies will also raise their voice against 'corruption' and 'misdeeds' of the BNP-Jamaat-led coalition government through participating in the session, Jalil The main opposition walked out

of the House on September 14 on

the Speaker's refusal to discuss the

August 21 grenade attack on the AL

rally postponing House businesses.

The AL then boycotted rest of the

On Tuesday, the AL lawmakers oined for the first time the parliamentary standing committee meetings on different ministries after about a year of their formation.

They were also awarded life

The three can appeal against the Those who were awarded life

serving in jail. Taheruddin, Shah Moazzem,

BEEFED-UP SECURITY Over 2,500 undercover and uni-

Judge's Court was set up. metal detector was set up at the main

came out of jail gate at 9:25am.

Obaidur Rahman did not appear

formed to check whether he is fit for deposition submitted its report on October 9, saying Saifuddin is unfit for deposition. Accepting the report, the court dropped Saifuddin's name and set a date for judgement.

national consensus. tinue. Kamal said.

The High Court will hear the death reference and appeal (if filed)

comprising the judgment and all other documents pertaining to the Then it will be forwarded for hearing. But it still may need more time to be enlisted, as there is

of the High Court. The bench is now hearing cases

hearing on the death reference was completed in April 2001. In that case, a special bench was comprised to hear the death reference. But the leave to appeal against the confirmation of the judgment is pending because of shortage of

assassinated inside Dhaka Central Jail on November 3, 1975. The Criminal Investigation Department But the investigation had been

Pakistani and Indian officials will meet on December 14-15 in the southern port city of Karachi for a joint survey of boundary markers in the marshy stretch called Sir Creek off the western Indian state of

Kashmi, the cause of two of three wars between the two countries, will be discussed between the two

directly involved in the killings could not be found due to the severe flaws in his investigation, the judge Obaidur, Shah Moazzem and Abdul Kahar Akand was the

> "There was severe weakness in the investigation," Public Prosecutor Abdullah Mahmood Hassan told journalists, adding,

deposition." Meanwhile, BNP lawmaker KM

the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) opened a probe "I'm going to discuss it with my

Khairuzzaman on September 9, attack The IO also arrested Moazzem, Obaidur and Manzoor on FROM PAGE 1 September 29, 1996. Taheruddin, shown as an arrestee in the case on November 3, 1996, gave a confes-

October 12, 2000 and began its trial The trial was complete in 282 workdays with the deposition of the complainant Kazi Abdul Awal. Sixty four of 75 witnesses gave their Six judges who sat the case are

> Badruddoza said the superintendent of police of Rangpur pretended to be sick while the deputy commissioner went to a local upazila on the day just to avoid responsibility.

logue programme. Explaining the significance of the programme, Dr Kamal said it aimed to provide all citizens an opportunity make their voices heard for drawing up a Gonoishtehar (people's manifesto) on the basis of

Dr Kamal Hossain vesterday told The Daily Star that the judgment raises many a question. "First, I want to go through the text

duress allegedly on the part of the

is nothing but a document of maintain-

FROM PAGE 1 their potential," said TI Chairman Economic Forum were used to Peter Elgen at the Berlin-based determine Bangladesh's ranking in organisation's CPI 2004 simultathe CPI. The report does not take neous launch round the globe

results in a major loss of public funds needed for education healthcare and poverty alleviation both in developed and developing countries," observed Elgen. Mosharraf Hossain told The Daily "Tenders should include objective award criteria and public disclosure of the entire process," says the

> and recorded, since limited bidding and direct contracting are particularly prone to manipulation and corruption. Public contracting must be monitored by independent oversight agencies and civil soci-TI Vice Chair Rosa Ines Ospina

Robledo said: "Tough sanctions are needed against companies caught Finland was found to be the least bribing, including forfeit of the contract and blacklisting from future bidding. Sixty countries scored less that 3 out of 10, indicating rampant corruption. And 106 of the 146 countries scored less than 5, according to the

Prof. Muzaffer Ahmad told reporters at the Dhaka launch of the report that right to information for the media and sincere fulfilment of the government's commitments to appoint an independent ombudsman for the anti-corruption bureau

He also cautioned that labelling a nterpretation.

Daily Star. Anisul, who had resigned from the special public prosecutor post under

"To put it in a nutshell, the judgment

the opposition through the voterother crimes, they added. AL rejects judgement