Nizami, Mojahid

Dhaka court on December 17 last year for killing two FFs during the Liberation War. The case was later treated as a regular one with Keraniganj police.

Metropolitan Magistrate occupation forces started killing Mohammad Emran Hossain Chowdhury recorded the complainant's statement and directed the officer-in-charge (OC) of Pallabi Police Station to register the murder case as a first information report (FIR).

investigate the case and submit report to it.

Amir showed 15 people, including himself and the victims' parents and relatives as witnesses in the case.

Other accused are assistant secretary generals of Jamaat Mohammad Abdul Quader Molla and Muhammad Kamaruzzaman, Jamaat central leader and former Islami Chhatra Sangha president Sardar Abdul Salam and activist Khawza Ashim (dead), and Akhter 'Gunda', Newaz and Doma (non-Bangalees who later fled to Pakistan)

The complainant said 60-70 other unidentified non-Bangalees took part in the massacre.

The case was filed under sections aid. 143 (unlawful assembly), 448 (housetrespass), 302 (murder), 34 (criminal liability), 326 (grievous hurt), 307 (torching) of Bangladesh Penal Code.

Amir, an FF of Sector-2, said he received training at Lailapur army

camp in Assam of India and later joined the Liberation War to free the country from Pakistani occupation.

The complaint said Quader Molla formed a Razakar team consisting of 70 to 80 non-Bangalees to help save In the case filed yesterday, the integrity of Pakistan, and the hundreds and thousands of people in the country.

After fazr prayers on April 24, 1971, Pakistani forces and a gang of 100 to 150 led by Quader surrounded Alapdigram in Mirpur, raided the village with firearms and killed 344 The court also asked the OC to people. Of them, 64 were locals including 21 of Amir's relatives. The others were farm workers from different districts.

Amir said in his complaint the killers then dumped the bodies in three mass graves. The authorities are yet to locate the mass graves but he has done so.

On December 18, 1971, a team of 100 to 150 FFs led by thana unit commander Jahiruddin Babar and assistant thana unit commander Mominul Haq surrounded some 'camps' in Mirpur and Mohammadpur areas. Nizami, Mojaheed, Quader, and others then started firing that left freedom fighter Abdus Sattar dead, the complaint

Amir said he was wounded in the fight and is still physically impaired. Advocates Abu Mohammad (attempted murder) and 436 Abdur Razzak, Shafiul Basar Bhandari and Ashraf Ul Haq appeared on behalf of the complain-

Prof Anwar

The outspoken DU teacher said the activists of Chhatra Shibir, the student wing of Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh, will have to be identified to protect the university from

destruction. . "Identify those students who are involved in politics with Shibir. They have been derailed. We all will have to be united to bring them back to the path of light from darkness," he said.

Prof Anwar, also the dean of Biological Sciences' Faculty, was addressing a "reception and solidarity" rally at the foot of Aparajeya Bangla at noon.

Students against Repression", a platform of the DU students, arranged the rally, marking the release of the DU students and

Two other released teachers, Prof Sadrul Amin, president of Dhaka University Teachers' Association (Duta), Prof Harun-or-Rashid, dean of Social Sciences Faculty, and Prof Samad, Prof MM Akash and the released DU students addressed the rally.

The teachers declared that their seven-day programme of wearing black badges and hoisting black flag atop the Arts Building have been withdrawn.

campus. "The case no 51 has been students told the rally.

withdrawn yet. Our five students were released on bail. If the case is not withdrawn, Duta with support of the students will be forced to announce fresh programmes.'

Prof Anwar, also the Duta general secretary, said all progressive student organisations on the campus must activate their umbrella platform "Paribesh Parishad" to resist the "anti-state" activities of Chhatra Shibir.

We should work together to

make the Shibir men understand that they are living in darkness. I urge the Shibir men to come back to the path of light," he said. Anwar said another movement

needs to be waged against the war criminals to compel the state machinery to bring the war criminals to justice. "The killers and rapists of 1971

Liberation War must be put on trial. They cannot go unpunished. We'll have to start another movement to ensure trial of the war criminals,'

The released students said the government has promised them to withdraw all the cases, but case no 51 is yet to be withdrawn.

"We have been released on bail in the case no 51. But the government had promised us to withdraw the case. We urge it (govt) as well as Prof Samad said they have Army Chief General Moeen U decided to withdraw the Ahmed to take steps for immediate programmes as all the students withdrawal of the case," Rafigul and teachers have returned to their Islam Sujon, one of the released

Cops asked to move

where sufficient space is lacking for their preservation.

The government formed a committee headed by Lily Biswas, the then joint commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), in May last year to solve the problems. However, the committee could not make headway in this regard.

Earlier, the committee asked the police stations for information about the seized cars and recommended the DMP to preserve those at a safe place. But the DMP failed to provide required space. Inspector General of Police

(IGP) Nur Mohammad told The Daily Star: "Police have nothing to do as the matter depends entirely on the court verdicts. Therefore, until disposal of the cases, we cannot do anything."

solve the issue, the IGP said: "There is nothing to say yet. Moreover, we are in trouble over maintenance of the vehicles."

Lily Biswas, who is now the superintendent of police in Rangpur, said over phone: "We had made some recommendations over maintenance of the vehicles. But we couldn't decide about their fate as it was a sub-judicial matter."

Shyampur Police Station alone is keeping 11 such vehicles. The officer-in-charge (OC) said: "It's too difficult for us to maintain the cars kept at Ramna police station, Kazi due to lack of sufficient space."

station. If any gets damaged or lost, the police would be held responsi-

cases say they are trying to complete their job as soon as possible.

including two bullet-proof MP Sheikh Helal and Tajuddin at Mercedes Benzes of detained former Awami League chief Sheikh three cars of ntv chairman Hasina are kept in Dhanmondi police custody.

The owners of other cars are Cantonment police station. BNP leader and former communications minister Nazmul Huda, came forward to take care of the former premier Khaleda Zia's vehicles, but withdrew from the parliamentary affairs adviser task thanks to the uncertainty over Salauddin Quader Chowdhury, getting those back, say sources in Khaleda's political secretary Haris different police stations. Chowdhury, Swechhasebok League General Secretary Pankaj task with a view to escaping the Devnath, and former lawmaker eyes of the ACC and law enforcers.

from Jamalpur Rezaul Karim Hira. Demra police have 12 vehicles in their custody. The owners include former BNP lawmaker Salauddin Ahmad, Shyampur UP chairman Lutfor Rahman, and Ward-88 commissioner Haji Abdur

Gulshan police are keeping eight vehicles. The owners are former state minister for communications Salauddin Ahmed, former state minister for youth and sports Fazlur Rahman Patal, Channel 1 managing director Giasuddin Al Mamun, former AL lawmaker AKM Mostofa Kamal alias Lotus Kamal, and Juba League General Secretary Mirza Azam.

Tejgaon Industrial Area police are keeping nine vehicles. The owners are former state minister Salauddin Ahmed, Partex Group chairman and former BNP law-On the committee formed to maker MA Hashem, former BNP MP Joinal Abedin alias VP Joinal, Orion Group Chairman Obaidul Karim and magnate Mokhlesur

> Seven vehicles are in Tejgaon police custody. The owners are ntv managing director Enayetur Rahman Bappi, Orion Group chairman Obaidul Karim, former state minister and AL leader Abul

The vehicles of AL Joint Secretary Obaidul Quader and former MP Abdul Karim are being Manjurul Alam at Badda police "The cars are kept outside the station, Chittagong businessman Shoeb Akhter Nizam at Sutrapur police station, another car of Haris Chowdhury at Paltan police sta-The investigations officers of the tion, three cars of former state minister Patal and ward commissioner Chowdhury Alal at Khilgaon Sources say at least 10 vehicles police station, three cars of former Mohammadpur police station, and Mosaddeq Ali Falu and Channel 1 MD Giasuddin Al Mamun at

Relatives of the owners initially

Many others also avoided the

City shivers

Commuters had trouble finding vehicles as CNG-run threewheelers and rickshaws on the roads were few in number. Most of the malls and kitchen markets had a bad day as very few ventured to go shopping.

Those who live in the open air and cannot afford warm clothing suffered the most.

Meanwhile, people elsewhere especially in the north continued to contract cold diseases. Four people including a woman and child died in Tangail in last two days, report our correspondents.

The chilly weather hampered farming as many day labourers could not go to work outdoors. The highest average temperatures fluctuated between 16 and 20 degrees Celsius in most places.

Our Dinajpur correspondent adds: Cold snap kept plaguing the four northern districts--Dinajpur, Thakurgaon, Panchagarh and Joypurhat--yesterday.

At least 300 people, mostly children were admitted to different hospitals for diseases like pneumonia, diarrhoea and viral infections,

according to the hospital sources. In Joypurhat, around 30 hectares of potatoes have been damaged in Blight disease that affects the crop usually in cool and moist environment, said Department of Agriculture

Extension (DAE) officials. Our Sirajganj correspondent adds: Seedbeds and plants have started to turn yellowy for cold biting in the district.

Outbreaks of cold diseases continued to spread pushing further up the number of patients at hospitals and

Our Tangail correspondent reports: Of the four who died Wednesday and Thursday, Hasmat Ali, 75, and Kalu Miah, 70, were from Chhitkibari Maijal village of Nagarpur upazila, and Rahela Khatun, 58, and Khaleque, 5, from Char Afzalpur o Kalihati upazila

Some 120 children down with cold diarrhoea and pneumonia have been under treatment at Tangail General Hospital for the last couple of days, said hospital sources.

Our Pabna correspondent adds the Met office yesterday recorded 10 millimetres of rainfall.

"The temperature is going down as the sun has yet to break through. The situation would remain the same for the next two or three days," said Matiar Rahman, a weather official in Ishwardi

Life and trade in the district were severely hampered due to rain and frigid temperatures. Day labourers especially the rickshaw pullers had difficulty continuing their jobs.

BSS reports: The gap between the highest and the lowest temperatures came down to only four degrees Celsius yesterday. According to reports from the char areas in Brahmaputra and Ganges basins, cold weather has made life miserable in the villages of Rangpur, Kurigram, Nilphamari, Gaibandha, Lalmonirhat, Jamalpur, Bogra, and Sirajganj districts.

Titas pipeline

Witnesses said gas started to spew out with massive force after the vessel loaded with sand damaged

the pipeline at around 8:30am. "Soon after the propeller of the vessel hit the pipeline with a bang, a huge swirl was created in the river and we thought our boat was sinking," said Badsha Mian, sailor of the

cargo vessel. The colossal force of gas coming out through the damaged portion of the pipeline hit the 1.33-lakh KV live electric wires running above the river, causing sparks and the sparks resulted in the gas fire, said a Titas

Gas engineer. "The gas was discharging with such enormous force that the blaze reached as high as 80 to 120 feet," said a worker of a nearby brickfield. The flames of the gas fire were visible a few kilometres away while thousands of people from nearby villages gathered at the scene.

Eight of the electric wires caught fire and fell in the river, said witnesses. The firemen reached the spot at around 9:30am, but could not do much as the source of the fire was underneath the water.

Three divers from the fire service were later called in to help Titas Gas repair the pipeline.

"We will repair the hole on the pipeline through plumbing and we expect it to be finished by today," said engineer Aminur Rahman, director operations of Titas Gas.

Farmers

FROM PAGE 1

this regard, the Ministry of Agriculture sources said. A committee led by Thana Nirbahi Officer (TNO) will distribute the money among the farmers according to their

Started from mid-January, the Boro season will continue until mid-

This year the government has set the target for cultivating Boro rice on 45 lakh hectares of land. Of the crop yield, 12,50,000 metric ton would be

In this season, the government will need 8.38 lakh metric tons of diesel in total to meet the irrigation demands across the country. However, at the moment, the country has only 2.88 lakh metric tons, which can meet the demands of next 40 days.

For this reason, the government is going to import adequate diesel, the officials said at the press conference. Power Secretary Fouzul Kabir Khan said that during the peak Boro season, shops and markets would be asked to close down by 8:00pm so that the farmers can utilise the electricity for irrigation. At present, there are 11,55,436

diesel-run and 1,70,921 electricityrun pumps across the country. About the fertiliser situation, Agriculture Secretary MA Aziz said that there is nothing to worry, as

there is enough stock of fertiliser. He also mentioned that the government has already appointed 14,000 dealers across the country for distributing fertiliser.

CA says talks soon

FROM PAGE 1

Press Secretary Syed Fahim Munaim also spoke at the function. The CA, who arrived here to attend the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum at Davos, said efforts are underway to advance the election ahead of December

He spelt out his government's main aims to hold free and fair election and establish effective democratic process through various

Referring to his address to the nation on January 12, the CA said restrictions on indoor politics outside Dhaka would be lifted.

He said the Election Commission's dialogue with political parties is at the final stage and the commission is likely to announce its final reforms of the electoral rules and regulations shortly to ensure free and fair elections.

The CA mentioned the reforms of the Election Commission, Anti-Corruption Commission and separation of the judiciary from the executive control. The government will make the Election Commission truly independent, if necessary by making laws, he said.

Replying to a question, the head of the caretaker government said current anti-corruption drive would continue as the ACC is being strengthened as an independent institution so efficient and neutral people could run it with the support of the people in future.

He dismissed the notion that the anti-corruption drive is being conducted with partiality. "There is no scope for being biased," the CA said, adding that those who have been made accused through investigations are being put on trial.

He, however, admitted the institutional and time constraints that may cause it to appear that all corrupt people are not being tried. He said the ACC will carry on investigations against all corruption suspects and bring them to justice in future. About incorporating expatriate

Bangladeshis in the voter list, he said the Election Commission had already visited the United Kingdom and talked to the expatriate Bangladeshis. The commission is thinking deeply about it, but it may not be possible to accomplish the task overnight by a stroke of pen.

Asked about the reasons of resignation of four advisers at a time, the CA said the advisers resigned on their own after a year and the government accepted their resignations and appointed new ones. He said people will judge their performance or failures, if any.

Rejoinder

FROM PAGE 20

pened three to four years ago. Both the doctors and nurses of the hospital provided the patients with proper treatment and total care in each of the cases. A patient's death at a hospital is not unnatural.

A conspiracy against the hospital by a vested quarter was behind the press conference, it added. Our Reply:

The reporter contacted the hospital authorities repeatedly over telephone for their comment over the Imran Chowdhury, general man-

ager, Marketing, talked to the reporter on behalf of the authorities as the other administrative officials were not available on Wednesday evening. His comments were published accordingly. The hospital's reception desk

informed the correspondent that a board meeting was going on in this regard. After that the general manager, Marketing, talked to The Daily

When the reporter sought his support for contacting other administrative officials for comments, he said his statement was enough and saying "Can't you rely on my state-

quits over About holding trial of war crimifunding row nals, he said it is the demand of the AFP, London

time but it needs time. The trial could not take place in last 36 years, but trial of such crimes is not time-bound and

it could take place in future. He said any aggrieved person can file case against a war criminal, but it may not be possible for the incum bent caretaker government to start it

because of the time constraint. Asked about the foreign diplomats' frequent comments on internal affairs of Bangladesh, Fakhruddin said: "We're trying so they refrain from doing that. Perhaps, they perceive that it is

unwarranted to make comments." About agriculture subsidy and food production, he said since the acres of land are dwindling, the government is trying to increase the agriculture production through research work.

He said the government is trying to ensure adequate supply of seed, fertiliser and irrigation in time before the Boro cultivation. This time around, the government has set the target of procuring 28 lakh tonnes of urea and distribute those among the

farmers from 12,000 points. The CA said although the rise in rice price has put people in difficulty, but the poor farmers in rural areas are benefited out of it.

He said the private sector must be strengthened and made dynamic so unemployment problem could be tackled. The government is trying to generate employment through ADP programme. Besides, the poor and unemployed are being supported through various programmes like Food for Work and VGF.

Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury said the government is anxious about the welfare of Bangladeshi expatriates and has already signed agreements with number of countries to protect their

interest. He said all deputy commissioners have been instructed to deploy magistrate in each district to look after Bangladeshi expatriates or NRBs when they will be staying in Bangladesh.

DU teachers

teachers and students. Speaking at the rally, the freed teachers and students urged the government to withdraw all the cases filed following the August violence, including the one filed against seven DU students in connection with torching an army car. They also demanded release of all detainees of other educational institutions across

the country. Prof Anwar Hossain urged the government to try the war criminals asitisa demand of the people.

He also asked the government to lift the state of emergency an declare a date for the stalled 9th parliamentary elections as soon as possible

Prof Sadrul Amin and Prof Harunor-Rashid also spoke at the rally. The rally demanded release of Imtiaz Bijon, an HSC student of

Western Institute of Business and Technology, who was arrested on August 31 by police in connection with the August violence. Bijon's mother Sanjida Alam, his teachers and friends, who were present at the rally, said Bijon had no

connection with the August violence. They alleged that Dhanmondi police tortured him in detention. Meanwhile, Nirjatan Protirodhi Shikkharthi, another platform of students led by Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, yesterday urged the government to lift the state of emergency from February 21, the Language Martyrs'

tions out of the purview of the state of emergency from today. At a press conference at Madhu's Canteen on the campus, its leaders urged the government to withdraw the case against seven DU students and allow activities of different stu-

dents' unions in universities.

Day, and keep all educational institu-

ACC looks

the ACC headquarters yesterday. He said a non-submission case might be filed against Sajeda and the commission is looking into the legal aspects in this regard.

He said they decided not to accept Sajeda's wealth statement as her signature on the statement did not have any dateline. "My lawyer asked me to sign and

I signed. I do not know anything

more," said Sajeda in an instant reaction to the ACC decision. "My lawyer went to the commission three to four times to submit the statement and each time the commission refused to accept mentioning problems, except the dateline issue, in the papers. They could have told me that the signature does not have any dateline and

added. "If they intend to punish me no matter what... there is nothing I can do," she said.

it required the dateline," she

Earlier, the High Court declared the ACC notice asking Sajeda to submit her wealth statement illegal after she filed a petition. The ACC moved to the Supreme Court and Sajeda was directed to submit her wealth statement while the matter is being resolved.

The ACC had served notices against 11 people from the fourth list of 35 graft suspects published on October 4. Sajeda was among the 11. The ACC yesterday also

accumulating wealth worth Tk 1.87

The five men murdered on August 25, 2006 are sub inspector Firoz, constables Askan Ali, Farid approved filing of a case against Uddin, Babul and Chowbaria Hat Habibur Rahman Khan, tempolease-holder Nazer Ali. rarily suspended chief hydrogra-The robbers also looted a pistol, pher of Chittagong Port Authority, a shotgun, a Chinese rifle, a 3.3 rifle and his wife Roksana Khan for and ammunition from those

policemen.

crore beyond their known sources of income and concealing Tk 1.05 crore of wealth in their statement.

The commission also approved filing of first information report against Capt Habibur Rahman, and his wife Kohinoor Sultana in con nection with amassing Tk 89.41 lakh of wealth beyond their known sources of income and concealing information about their wealth worth Tk 1.25 crore.

The ACC also approved pressing charge against motor vehicles inspector of BRTA Kazi Mahbubur Rahman and three others in connection with taking money in exchange for giving driving licences and registration of vehicles.

10 PBCP outlaws

FROM PAGE 20 Shafikul, Abdul Karim, and Raghunath provided confessional judicial statements.

The OC said, the murder was ings of the case under the Emergency orchestrated under the direction of Power Rules. influential cattle trader Azim stood for the government while Uddin following rivalry over leasing of the Chowbaria Hat and Barrister Rafique-ul Huq spoke for extortion. Azim Uddin hired the Hasina. A disappointed Rafique-ul PBCP killers for Tk 10 lakh for the Huq termed the court order "unpreccrime. Meanwhile, Advocate Golam More than 10 of the accused in

the case were staff of Rajshahi Kibria, one of the special counsels for based NGO Centre for Action the Anti-Corruption Commission, Research Barind (CARB), run by Dr told UNB yesterday afternoon that Asaduzzaman, brother of ex-BNP the apex court's order has been minister barrister Aminul Hag. communicated to Dhaka They held a meeting at the CARB Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court. "The date for resuming the trial office before the operation, the IO said in his charge sheet. will be fixed after receiving the certified copy of the Supreme Court

order," he said.

Azam J Chowdhury, managing director of East Coast Trading Pvt Ltd. filed the case. Hasina's younger sister Sheikh

Rehana, who lives in London, and their cousin Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim are also accused in the case.

40 militants British minister

FROM PAGE 20

A British minister announced his

resignation yesterday over a funding

row clouding the governing Labour

Party, in a new blow to embattled

Peter Hain, who has resisted growing

pressure over recent weeks, said he

wanted to clear his name over the

funding row, which has added to a

His announcement came minutes

after the electoral commission

referred a probe into alleged funding

irregularities in the contest for

Labour's deputy leadership to the

sion decision today, I will be resigning

to clear my name and I will be making

a statement shortly," said Hain, for-

said: "The prime minister has

minister to resign from Brown's

government since he succeeded Tony

Blair as British prime minister last

sion from parliament if complaints

are upheld that he failed to declare

euros, 202,000 dollars) to the electoral

The main opposition Conservative

Party says he broke parliamentary

rules, which require donations to be

registered. But Hain, who is also the

Welsh secretary, has blamed "poor

administration" rather than a cover-

confirmed it was taking over the

today received a formal referral from

the Electoral Commission in connec-

tion with potential offences under the

Political Parties and Referendums Act

2000 regarding donations received," it

case to isolate her from her people.

It has been proved once again from his

Clarifying his position Azam

Zillur said Sheikh Fazlul Karim

Chowdhury yesterday said he did not

Selim has already told the special

court that he made the confessional

statement implicating Sheikh Hasina

JP for forming

IP leaders said an elected 'bad

government is better than an

unelected government as the

elected one is accountable to the

They called upon the govern-

ment to begin dialogue with the

political parties to bridge the gap

between the government and the

proposals, the JP leaders urged the

government to complete the voter

They also urged the caretaker

list and hold national elections as

government to identify the war

criminals and try them. "It has been

proved in the last one year period of

the caretaker government that an

elected 'bad government' is better

than an unelected government," the

several good things but the country's

economy also suffered at that time,

"Caretaker government has done

Shahidul said only 16 percent of

the Annual Development

Programme (ADP) was achieved in

last one year while the prices of

essentials have gone beyond the

over power to an elected government

others, by JP Presidium member

Shah Rafiqul Bari Chowdhury, Azam

Khan, Habibur Rahman Habi,

Mafizul Haq Babu, Ameena Bari

Additional Secretary General Sadeq

Siddique, Vice-chairman Abu Syed

Khan, Sheikh Joynal Abedin, Jatiya

Chhatra Samaj President Nazrul

The High Court gave the order within

two hours after the trial court, Dhaka

Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court,

adjourned the commencement of

apex court has overruled High

trial proceedings on different

grounds since the initiation of the

trial court can now resume proceed-

Court's stay on the operation of the

This is the fourth time that the

trial for three days.

Hasina's trial

He urged the government to hand

Presided over by Abdur Rahim,

reach of people of low income.

as soon as possible.

JP secretary general said.

he said.

Mentioning their five-point

political parties.

early as possible.

under duress in police custody.

file any case against Sheikh Hasina.

Zillur

FROM PAGE 1

(Chowdhury's) remarks."

London's Metropolitan Police

'We can confirm that the Met has

Hain faces the prospect of suspen-

Brown's Downing Street office

Kenya-born Hain, 57, is the first

merly a Northern Ireland minister.

accepted Peter Hain's resignation."

"In view of the electoral commis-

Works and Pensions Secretary

Prime Minister Gordon Brown.

string of woes for Brown.

police.

"It is not known whether he was taking part in the fighting or present in those areas," Abbas told AFP.

"We have recovered a few bodies and there will be investigations about their origin," Abbas added, saying it was not clear if any of the bodies were those of foreign fighters.

The latest casualty figures could not be independently verified as the rugged area where fighting is occurring is out of bounds for journalists.

But hundreds of families had fled the area and there was a severe shortage of food and other essential supplies, residents told AFP by telephone.

Mehsud tribesmen have refused to seek shelter in a refugee camp set up by authorities in the nearby town of Jandola and had asked family in other districts to accommodate them, local tribesman Alam Khan

"The Mehsuds are angry that the military is bombing innocent people and that is why they have refused to take any help," Khan said.

The instability in the nucleararmed nation ahead of crucial elections on February 18 has caused concern among Islamabad's intermore than 100,000 pounds (137,000 national allies, especially in Washington.

Pakistan has been wracked by

75,000 MT

FROM PAGE 20

The import is part of the caretaker government's move to import 5 lakh tonnes of rice from the neighbouring country.

The Advisory Committee on Public Purchase, equivalent to Cabinet Purchase Committee, also gave the go-ahead to a number of other purchase proposals at a Following the meeting, Finance

Adviser Mirza Azizul Islam said the rice would be imported to meet the domestic demand. He, however, ruled out any possible food crisis in the near

future, claiming that the country

has a larger stock of food than last year's. "I'm not aware of any situation where there might be any shortage in running the VGF (vulnerable group feeding) and other food-

reporters. 50,000 MT of rice will be imported at US\$ 397 per tonne while the rate for the rest 25,000 MT was fixed at US\$ 403 per tonne.

The purchase committee

rejected another proposal for 10,000 MT rice import from Thailand as the bidder offered a much higher price, US\$ 447 per

Apart from the rice procurement, the committee approved five other proposals on different issues. According to a proposal placed by the finance ministry, Bangladesh Bank will procure 180 million pieces of metal coins of two-taka denomination at a cost of

Tk 30.25 crore. Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC) will import 15,000 metric tons of rock phos-

phate at a cost of Tk 30 crore. The purchase committee also gave the nod to a proposal of the LGRD ministry to procure 4,000 metres portable steel-bridge materials under a project financed by DFID of the UK.

and public works ministry for

Also, a proposal of the housing

earth-filling work at Uttara Residential Model Town Project at a cost of Tk 53.63 crore got approval. The committee approved a food ministry proposal to procure 1.12 crore pieces of jute bags from the

54 crore. Tony Blair

reporters after a meeting with Chief the meeting was addressed, among Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed at Congress Centre on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum meet-

> Blair said Bangladesh would be badly affected due to change in climate. "So, it is very important that we take it into account in details and help Bangladesh adapt with the adverse impact of the climate change," he said.

On trade issue, Blair, who is the

co-chair of the World Economic

Forum meeting, said Bangladesh

has got a very strong case for access to the EU and American markets. Bangladesh is a very poor country but people want to do their best to make a change and stand on their own feet. They need access to

wealthy countries and markets," he

Asked about Bangladesh's role in the Middle East peace process, Blair, who is a special representa-Following yesterday's order, the tive to UN, USA, Russia and EU, said Bangladesh might have a role in helping the peace process in the Middle East. He said, "Bangladesh Attorney General Fida M Kamal | is predominantly a Muslim country and very responsible country. think this country shows how people can live together from different backgrounds, which is

> During the meeting, the chief adviser raised Bangladesh's concerns about climate change and duty-free access to developed markets.

very important.

meeting.

Bangladesh also offered to help resolve the Palestine issue. Blair assured that he would apprise the

concerned forum of Bangladesh's intention. Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, Bangladesh Permanent Representative to UN office in Geneva Ambassador

violence and suicide bombings since troops crushed an uprising at a hardline mosque in Islamabad last July, and the bloodshed has escalated since Benazir's killing on December

A suicide bombing late Wednesday, the fourth in Pakistan this year, killed one person at a checkpost on a highway that links the separate Khyber tribal agency with

Peshawar city, in the northwest. But President Pervez Musharraf used a European tour this week to dismiss fears that the country and its nuclear warheads could slip into al-Qaeda's hands, saying there was a "zero percent chance" of a takeover

Hillary

FROM PAGE 20

Arkansas governor Mike Huckabee (18 percent), former Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney (17 percent), and former New York mayor Rudi Giuliani (12 percent).

The margin of error for the poll's

But the numbers were grim for Giuliani, who was the national frontrunner in every earlier edition of

to call, leading into the high-stakes January 29 Florida primary with its rich prize of 57 winner-take-all delegates to the Republican National Convention in September.

Romney on 23 percent. Giuliani, who is staking his presidential campaign on Florida after all but ignoring the early nominating contests, trailed on just 15 percent,

Move on

FROM PAGE 1 Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf, Afghan President Hamid Karzai and Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Shilby were also on

present government is a constitutional government with "a major aim to hold free, fair and credible

democracy and political stability in The chief adviser, whose regime took office following a political crisis over the issue of general election, said as the election would be getting closer the state of emer-

Besides, the government Under another proposal, strengthened the localgovernment system, which is

separation of the judiciary from the

Suicide bomber kills Mosul police chief

A suicide bomber killed the chief of police of Iraq's main northern city of Mosul and two other officers yesterday as they visited the scene

The US military blamed al-Qaeda for the "cowardly" attack on Brigadier General Salah al-Juburi which it said had been carried out by a bomber disguised as a policeman as the police chief visited the wreckage of an apartment block in which 18 people were killed in

bombing in Mosul," the military "Two Iraqi police were killed in the blast, and one Iraqi army and

"Brigadier General Salah, the provincial director of police, was also killed in the blast. "The Iraqi army and coalition

wearing an Iraqi police uniform." attack on al-Qaeda which has made Iraq's third city a major base

for its operations.

another example of al-Qaeda in Iraq's complete disregard for human life and another attempt to take down the legitimate Iraqi security forces," it said. The attack came as Juburi was

Debapriya Bhattacharya and Chief through the rubble of Wednesday's Adviser's Press Secretary Syed bombing which levelled a three-Fahim Munaim were present at the storey apartment block and shattered some 15 adjoining houses.

by extremists.

Republican figures was plus or minus five percentage points, blurring the distinction between the top three Republicans.

The Republican race is too close

A poll of Florida voters Wednesday showed McCain with 25 percent heading into Tuesday's primary, and statistically tied with

alongside Huckabee, in the St Petersburg Times poll.

distribution programmes," he told Dispelling misperception against his government, he said the

> He said the caretaker government has decided to talk to political parties to have a unified vision of

> gency would be lifted allowing all political parties to take part in the

> important for sustaining democ-He said after assuming power, the government recast the Election Commission to prepare a credible voter list for fair polls. It also reformed the Anti-corruption Commission, Public Service Commission and accomplished

> He also told the meet that Bangladesh has already achieved several Millennium Development Goals, designated by the United Nations for the least developed

countries. state-owned Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) at a cost of Tk

AFP, Mosul, Iraq of an earlier blast, the US military

Wednesday's bombing. "A suicide bomber detonated a vest bomb at the site of yesterday's

one coalition force soldier was injured.

forces have determined that the suicide bomber was an imposter The US military blamed the

"This cowardly behaviour is yet

visiting emergency teams sifting