offence.

lawfulauthority.

tional provisions.

constitution.

side the courtroom.

The sanction was given without

sanction in this case was given without

to protect, preserve and defend the

constitution and when the rights of a

those rights by applying the constitu-

curtailed by means of the emergency

power act, but the EPR curtailed the

sections 497 and 498 of the CrPC can-

not be barred as these provisions

constitution. Section 7 of the EPR also

contradicts the exiting law and the

the courtroom was full of lawyers,

senior leaders of Awami League (AL)

and journalists. AL activists and enthu-

siasts also crowded the corridor out-

After receiving the judgment

lished the supremacy of law, the consti-

Another counsel of Hasina said, "As

the case filed by Azam has been

quashed, it would not run anymore.

The barge-mount graft case against

Hasina should also be considered

cancelled for the same reason and

on January 30 with taking deposition of

the plaintiff. Hasina expressed no-

confidence in the trial court and

moved to transfer the case to another

court. On Tuesday, the trial was

case began at a special court just three

days after the trial of the extortion case

had begun. Today was fixed for the

hearing on charge-framing in the case.

GOVT APPEAL AGAINST

Attorney General Fida M Kamal

and Additional Attorney General

Salahuddin Ahmed rushed to the

Chamber Judge's Court to file the

appeal with the SC, seeking stay on the

judgment. But Judge MA Matin had

already left the court after his day's

ber of Judge Matin who fixed today for

government move without informing

them. But the attorney general's office

claimed that the advocate-on-record

of Hasina's writ petition was present

that they will appeal finally on receipt of

a copy of the HC judgment. The extor-

tion case quashed by the court was not

petition of Hasina the HC granted her

bail in the case. The HCalso ordered the

government not to bring the trial under

government challenging the HC order,

filed another petition and the HC

stayed proceedings of Azam's case

until disposal of the rule over bringing

the case under the EPR. But the SC

stayed the HC order following a peti-

Meanwhile, a considerable num-

ber of cases brought under the EPR

government and political parties,

The adviser told the US envoy

that the government wants to make

the dialogue a fruitful one, unlike

the previous ones that did not fetch

much result. They discussed exist-

ing situation in the country, the

Debashish Roy, Geeta Pasi con-

veyed the willingness of the US to

assist Bangladesh in different

development activities in the CHT,

especially in coffee cultivation and

He told the reporters that the

Mentioning an upcoming visit

The US envoy also met Dr M

He also called upon the caretaker

government to lift the state of

emergency immediately to create

Samity General Secretary Golam

by former attorney general Abdur

Rezzak Khan, BNP acting Office

Secretary Rizvi Ahmed, lawyers

Lutfe Alam, Sanaullah Mia and

Masud Ahmed Talukder.

The meeting was chaired by

It was attended, among others,

an election-friendly atmosphere.

Delwar

FROM PAGE 16

Mostafa Khan.

During her meeting with

tion by the government.

have been stayed by HC.

US wants

sources added.

Following a petition filed by the

Later in January this year, Hasina

Earlier last year, following a writ

in the prayer of the petition, he added.

Salahuddin Ahmed told the press

bench of the Appellate Division.

during the move.

the SC stayed it.

Later, the two moved to the cham-

The trial of the barge-mount graft

The trial of the extortion case began

tution and fundamental rights."

Sheikh Hasina must be freed."

adjourned until February 11.

IUDGMENT

During the delivery of the judgment

rights of the SC, the court added.

The power of the SC could not be

It said the power of granting bail in

The court said the judges take oath

FROM PAGE 1

Attorney General Fida M Kamal and Additional Attorney General Salahuddin Ahmed moved with the petition in the Chamber Judge's Court, seekingstayonit.

The judge, however, refrained from passing any order and forwarded the matter for hearing in the full bench of the SC today.

On June 13 last year, Managing Director of Eastcoast Trading Pvt Ltd Azam J Chowdhury charged detained Hasina and her cousin and former minister Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim with extorting Tk 2.99 crore from him in exchange for awarding the contract of setting up the Siddhirganj Power Plant in Narayangani

On July 24, Gulshan police indicted Hasina along with her sister Sheikh Rehana and cousin Sheikh Selim.

On July 16, the home ministry had directed to bring the case under the EPR, but investigation officer of the case Obaidul Haque submitted the charge sheet without including relevant sections of the emergency rules.

While pronouncing the judgment vesterday, the court said no law could be formulated that goes against the constitutional provisions regarding Haque said, "The judgment has estab- ripped through the area. fundamental rights.

According to the provisions in articles 31-35 of the constitution, none of the rights of a citizen, including the right for bail, can be curtailed by promulgating any act during the state of

The court in its observation said the Emergency Power Ordinance also does not say that any rule could be formulated in contradiction with the constitution.

The ordinance gave the government the authority to formulate rules but not to formulate any that goes beyond the ordinance itself, the court added.

The court also mentioned that the a ordinance was not empowered to formulate any rule that can cover incidents that took place before the declaration of the state of emergency. The ordinance thus does not permit bringing any offence committed before January 11, 2007--the day the state of emergency was declared-underthe EPR.

The court also said when there is any conflict between the Emergency Power Ordinance, which is a law, and the EPR, rules formulated under the ordinance, the law will prevail.

Sections 19(Gha) and 10(2) in the EPR have restricted the power or right of the court, including the SC, to grant bail, which contradicts with the provision for bail ensured in sections 497 and 498 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC). The court said these sections even entrust the court with the power to grant bail in case of nonbailable offences.

The emergency rules that have restricted the court's authority to grant bail also contradicted articles 31-33 and 35 of the constitution.

The court said when such procedural law restricts the citizens' rights it would be inconsistent with the constitutional provisions as much as it has restricted the rights.

The rights and provisions provided by articles 27-35 of the constitution have not been restricted even during the existence of the state of emergency, the court said.

If any law or provision inconsistent with these constitutional articles is formulated, it will become void, the courtsaid, adding that the court has the authority to cancel such laws and such void laws cannot be applied in any othercourt

Laws contradicting citizens' rights cannot be formulated by any ordinance and the provisions made in the EPR with the power of awarding punishment stand beyond the power the Emergency Power Ordinance, the

court said. It said these provisions of awarding punishment contradict the country's existing laws and the constitution. THESANCTION

The court said the extortion case filed by businessman Azam J Chowdhury was approved by the authorities con-

cerned to be brought under the EPR. "We called for documents regard ing the sanction and observed that it was given on consideration of the

status of the accused," the court said. forestation, Debashish told report-But the existing provision in the law ers following the meeting. regarding the sanction states that Roy, also the Chakma king, public importance of the offence must pointed out that a vast terrain, be considered for such sanction and suitable for coffee cultivation, lies there is no provision for considering barren in the CHT despite having its economic prospect, whereas

the status of the accused, the court Indonesia and Thailand that have added. similar environment grow coffee in While considering public importheir hilly regions. tance of an offence, the authorities

must take the objective behind proenvoy stressed the need for holding mulgating the Emergency Power parliamentary polls according to Ordinanceinto account, the court said. the roadmap and protecting Importance must be given to issues

human rights. like protecting the state's security and economy and maintaining law and of a delegation from Bangladesh to order on the basis of the gravity of an the Philippines for establishing offence, it added. communication between ethnic The sanction cannot be given minorities of the two countries,

considering an individual although the Debashish expressed interest for a similar visit to the US. dignity of the accused in this extortion case has increased the gravity of the Tamim, special assistant to chief offence, the court said. adviser on energy ministry affairs, at his office in the ministry and

The court said the sanction was given considering the status of the discussed bilateral issues, said Dr accused rather than the gravity of the Tamim.

Clarification

FROM PAGE 16

take.

The Daily Star report said headed by former inspector general of police and caretaker government Adviser SM Shahjahan, representatives from the Chief Adviser's Office, Ministry of Home, Ministry of Law, Dr Kamal Hossain and Associates and the police formulated the draft and submitted it to the Police Headquarters.

We regret the inadvertent mis-

Three people were killed in a trailer park in Muhlenberg County, and four others died in Allen County, Rogers told AFP.

considering the overall aspects. So, the earlyWednesday.

citizen are riddled with question, it is the judges' responsibility to protect woman told CNN. "I just got up and I thought it was a fire. We got up and there's no house left."

A man was found dead in a truck and three other people died in a collapsed office building in the Memphis area, the Commercial Appeal newspaper said.

A tornado with wind speeds estimated at 150 miles (240 kilomecontradict the existing laws and the ters) per hour destroyed two dormitories at Union University in Jackson,

Search dogs searched for students in the rubble but no one was killed at the scene, CNN said.

above a natural gas pumping station northeast of Nashville. The cause of the fire was not immediately known Hasina's counsel barrister Rafiqul although it broke out after a tornado

"We do not know at this time what caused it, and we are attempting to get close enough to get some information. These flames are shooting 400, 500 feet (120, 150 meters) in the air," Tennessee Emergency Management spokesman Donnie Smith was quoted as saying by the eFlux online newspaper.

The pumping station operates on a 4,200-mile (6,760-kilometer) pipe line that moves gas through four southern states. Its owner, Columbia

Hundreds of thousands of people in the area were left without power due to the storms.

Arkansas and Tennessee were among states holding nominating votes Tuesday for November's presi-

Democratic contender Hillary Clinton, celebrating victory in both states, told a crowd: "We want to keep the people of Arkansas and Tennessee in our prayers. They've suffered horrible tornadoes tonight.

the hearing of the matter in the full Hasina's counsel protested the quickly and rapidly to make sure that they get all the help that they need."

Several polling stations in Tennessee and Arkansas had to be closed as the storm approached, reports said.

increased the amount of compensation for culled chicken, and Tk 1.27 crore has so far been distribfarm owners.

ety, Tk 90 instead of Tk 70 for a broiler chicken aged over 12 weeks and Tk 20 instead of Tk 15 for

corporations and municipalities to

during the winter but it gradually disappears during the summer.

ens or eggs if they are full boiled.

He said those who will cut or cook chickens will have to wash hands with soap or detergent which destroys the virus.

Our staff correspondent from Chittagong reports: A poultry farmer allegedly dumped around 6,000 dead chickens at a canal and a pond near his farm at Kuwaish Burischar over the last three days.

Locals discovered the mess after the odour of dead animals spread all around the locality. The dead chickens had been tied up in sacks and then dumped in the canal and pond. Dead crows were also found

Ali, owner of Aziza Poultry Farm confessed that he had dumped He however denied any knowledge of the remaining chickens found in the water.

said he had sent a team to the spot to investigate the matter and arrange for all the dead birds to be buried properly. He also said that action would be taken against the poultry owner

if he were found to have secretly dumped the infected chickens instead of taking proper steps to bury the dead carcasses of the

Over 13,000 chickens have died of bird flu infection while another 3,000 infected chickens were culled

in the last three days in the district. around 3,000 fowls at the Karnaphuli Poultry and Hatchery at city's Bakalia area on Tuesday night soon after the infection was confirmed through relevant tests.

Top graft suspects

FROM PAGE 1 currently being tried, while over 40 others are currently being investigated, following which those were also supposed to go on trial.

Since the army backed caretaker government had launched a crackdown on corruption suspects, the Anti-corruption Commission (ACC), the National Board of Revenue (NBR), and individuals filed the cases against top politicians, businessmen, and former bureaucrats accusing them of graft.

The accusations include amassing of wealth through illegal means, extortion, tax dodging, and concealing of information in wealth statements submitted to the ACC. Following yesterday's HC verdict,

all such cases have become illegal, said eminent jurists.

Before the verdict, Law Adviser Hassan Ariff who is also a former attorney general, said the judgment on the writ petition filed by Hasina in connection with the extortion case against her would determine the fate of other such cases under EPR.

The verdict throws into uncertainty the caretaker government's plan for making it impossible for 'corrupt' political bigwigs, detained or convicted under EPR, to contest in parliamentary and local government

According to a provision of EPR, any person, convicted of corruption by a trial court, will be disqualified from contesting in any election until adjudication of the person's appeal against the verdict.

But, if detained and fugitive political leaders are tried under general laws instead of EPR, then even convicted persons will be able to contest in polls until the Supreme Court (SC) upholds the convictions by the trial courts, which is usually a very lengthy process.

For instance, Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad contested in the parliamentary election of 1996 filing an appeal against his conviction by a trial court during a BNP regime between 1991 and 1996.

Moreover, once trials begin under general laws, detained politicians will have to be allowed to seek bail, a defendants' right denied by EPR.

Yesterday's HC verdict created a setback for the ongoing prosecutions under EPR of the offences commit ted before the advent of EPR under Emergency Power Ordinance (EPO), both of which were promulgated in January of last year. If the Appellate Division of SC

upholds yesterday's HC verdict then trials of the cases will have to begin afresh under general laws, legal experts said. Talking to The Daily Star yester

day Justice Ghulam Rabbani, a former judge of the Appellate Division of SC, said trials of the pending cases under EPR will have to be started afresh including fresh indictments under general laws.

Asked what will be the fate of the cases in which verdicts were already delivered, Rabbani said it is difficult to say now what will happen to those. "The matter will be resolved through the appeal process," Rabbani said. Another eminent jurist,

Shahdeen Malik said the interpreta-

tion of law is that crimes committed

before the emergency cannot be tried under EPR. "And it follows that others who had been tried and convicted under EPR for offences committed before the emergency shall also get the benefit of the judgment. Their con-

victions under EPR are also likely to be thrown out," Malik observed. Many senior government officials including officials in the attorney general's (AG) office said the verdict is sure to give rise to a big crisis ahead of the parliamentary election, which will inevitably prompt the government to appeal the verdict at the

Appellate Division. The verdict came at a time when the caretaker government is under tremendous pressure to lift the state

FROM PAGE 16 crore. No one was arrested during this raid, said Rab officials.

On Tuesday, members of Rab 11, acting on secret information, raided two houses at Pallabi and Naya Paltan and seized around Tk 80 lakh worth of VoIP equipment that included telluler, high frequency antennas, chargers and channel ports.

The Rab 11 also arrested two individuals named Golam Rabbani and Rabiul Islam for their involvement in the illegal VoIP business.

AL to talk

the country including holding the next parliamentary elections, dialogue with the government and city corporation polls.

"We sat to discuss different issues including elections. But the main agenda of the meeting was to discuss about holding talks with the 14-party coalition on dialogue and election issues," AL presidium member Amir Hossain Amu told The Daily Star emerging from the

Another Presidium member Suranjit Sengupta said that they would sit with their coalition partners from February 11 to 13 to form a common attitude towards the

The meeting welcomed the High Court verdict that quashed the extortion charge against the detained AL chief Sheikh Hasina.

Presidium members Abdur Razzak and Tofail Ahmed and acting general secretary Syed Ashraful Islam were also present at the meeting chaired by Zillur

Shibir men

police personnel including Additional Superintendent of Police Asaduzzaman and SI Saidul Islam, and four pedestrians.

Police lobbed ten rounds of tear shells near Modern point to disperse the agitators.

The police later raided the dormitories of the college and arrested at least 60 students -- most of whom were activists of Islami

Chhatra Shibir. Five cases were filed against the agitators under Emergency Power

Expressing his resentment over the violence on the campus, Dr Rezaul Hoque, former principal of Rangpur Carmichael College, said, "The people of Rangpur want an autonomous and full-fledged university. They don't want Carmichael College to be upgraded to university."

Infant lands

FROM PAGE 16 Jailer Igbal Hossain said they have yet to get the court order. They kept the baby in the custody of two woman inmates, he added. "We're giving the baby powdered milk and the female inmates are also breastfeeding her."

Mubaraka was allowed to talk to others have been detained on two journalists at the jail yesterday afternoon. She gave satisfactory information regarding the baby's probable date of birth and age. She was however inconsistent in saying the birthplace.

Advocate Rehana Begum Ranu, president of Fight for Women's Rights, said safety of the baby has to be ensured first. Then a team might be sent to the woman's address to confirm her identity, she added.

"If she's the real mother, then an innocent woman is suffering in jail with her child."

Quake preparedness

FROM PAGE 16 houses, evacuation to safer places community shelters for general people and livestock and development of forecasting and warning system mitigating measures of surges with cyclones.

Normal time use of the facilities as educational institutions and other community development and income generating activities may play a very important role in socio economic development, he noted.

Emphasising accurate warning system, Prof Jamilur Reza said the tsunami alert issued on September 12 in 2007 led to large-scale evacuation and millions of people were taken to shelters.

This incorrect warning had some negative impacts during Cyclone Sidr when some people were reluctant to move to shelters, he added.

"A system for public education and dissemination of the warning to enable the people at risk to quickly move to the cyclone shelters needs to

Dr Stefan Frowein, ambassador and head of Delegation of the European Commission to Bangladesh, said high-rise construction is booming in the major cities of Bangladesh. But quality of buildings is often low and existing regulations on standards are hardly enforced.

"It's horrifying to imagine the magnitude of damage and loss in human life a serious earthquake could trigger here."

Earthquake and Tsunami/Storm Surge Preparedness Component supported by European Commission is preparing seismic hazard and vulnerability map for Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet. It is also and developing tsunami and storm surge inundation and vulnerability maps for coastal infrastructures and industries that are sources of livelihood.

"Based on scientific work detailed contingency plan will be developed for earthquake, tsunami and tidal surge prone areas," said CDMP National Advocacy Expert SM

Rector also spoke at the ceremony chaired by Disaster Management point and stood at 7.52 percent in Bureau Director General KH Masud Siddiqui.

VoIP equipment | Saudi won't stop

FROM PAGE 16

Al-Obaid Al Namla yesterday. The envoy said Saudi Arabia has been issuing work visas to Bangladeshis regularly, and there has not been any change yet.

At least 5,600 work visas were issued in the past four days, Namla said. Any one who commits offences will however be tried as per Saudi laws irrespective of their countries of origin. These are routine actions, he told the media after the meeting with the adviser at the foreign ministry. Thanking the ambassador for

dispelling the rumours concern-

ing visas, Iftekhar said

Bangladesh greatly values the friendship and cooperation with Saudi Arabia. Hatab told Saudi Gazette that the kingdom is trying to maintain recruitment process for foreigners to keep the workforce balanced. "In

particular nationalities will slow down when the workforce from that country reaches a certain quota," he said.

Quoting Bangladesh embassy statistics, he said approximately 1.5 million Bangladeshis are working in the kingdom. "Perhaps this will be the maximum number of foreigners for any nationality recruited to Saudi Arabia in the future," Hatab said.

Meanwhile, reports received in Dhaka quoted Haroon-ur Rashid, labour counsellor at Bangladesh embassy in Riyadh, as saying Saudi recruitment of foreign workers jumped by around 35 percent last year. Of them, Bangladeshis made up the largest group getting 24 percent of the work visas issued in

the year. Rashid said there was some anti-Bangladeshi propaganda including distribution of video fact, issuance of work visas to clips by some quarters.

Italian parliament

FROM PAGE 16

tiny centrist party after just 20 months in power, much of the political class as well as the electorate called for an overhaul of the voting system before any new elections

Prodi, who co-signed the decree to dissolve parliament on Wednesday, was to convene his cabinet at 1:00 pm (1200 GMT) to set dates for the polls, which Italian media say will be held April 13 and 14.

That will be just over two years after Prodi defeated Berlusconi in the closest election in modern Italian history

New elections became inevitable after the failure of attempts to form an interim government to correct a voting system that is blamed for the country's political instability by giving too much clout to tiny parties.

Berlusconi and his allies on the right have been clamouring for snap elections since voter surveys began favouring them by double-digit The 71-year-old billionaire media

tycoon from Milan will face a new rival in the form of popular Rome Mayor Walter Veltroni, the new 52year-old flagbearer of the left. The new face-off makes a change from the three previous duels

between the flamboyant Berlusconi and his professorial arch-rival Prodi, both of them now former prime ministers twice over. With 68-year-old Prodi's political

star on the wane, the centre-left has

been grooming Veltroni, who served

succeed him.

However, the Rome mayor insists he is running only as the leader of the Democratic Party (DP), the left's largest formation, and not the even-

tual head of a coalition. The go-it-alone stance has the far left furning and looking for a viable "new form of alliance," in the words of Italian Communist Party leader Oliviero Diliberto, quoted in the daily La Repubblica.

"The DP took off with trumpets blaring saying it was going alone to the polls," said Fabio Mussi, head of a DP splinter movement.

"If the road has opened for Berlusconi, let's at least not pave it for him," Mussi said. Green party leader Alfonso

divided, Berlusconi wins, and the DP will be to blame." The far left will hold a series of "programme primaries" later this

Italy's political crisis came to a head on Monday as Speaker Marini threw in the towel on forming an

interim government. Berlusconi, who heads the largest party on the right, Forza Italia, had refused to support Marini's efforts, insisting that only early elections

could end the political crisis. The opposition leader has reemerged as the uncontested head of the centre-right which only three months ago was ravaged by infight-

party front-runner for the nomina-

Huckabee snatched victories in five

southern states, while Romney won

seven states, but failed to capture his

top target California as he tried to

ignite a conservative backlash

camp would have "frank discus-

sions" about the future on

Wednesday, NBC reported.

headquarters in Arkansas.

Carolina primary.

and Arizona.

and Missouri.

the main alternative to McCain.

A campaign aide said the Romney

Huckabee put himself forward as

"Over the past few days a lot of

people have been trying to say that

this is a two-man race -- well, you

know what? It is, and we're in it!"

Huckabee said at his campaign

clash after pocketing wins in New

Hampshire and Nevada, while

Obama took the leadoff Iowa cau-

cuses and thumped her in the South

Tuesday: California, Arkansas,

Oklahoma, Tennessee,

Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York

Obama racked up Georgia,

Illinois, Delaware, Alabama, North

Dakota, Utah, Connecticut, Kansas,

Minnesota, Colorado, Idaho, Alaska

Illinois, Connecticut, New Jersey,

Delaware, New York, Oklahoma,

Massachusetts, Utah, North Dakota,

Minnesota, Colorado, Montana and

Alaska, while Huckabee scored in

Arkansas, West Virginia, Tennessee,

BBC Bangla Service reported yester-

Directorate of Food led the

Bangladesh delegation in the meet-

ing while chief secretary and com-

missioner of the food ministry of

sentatives of both the countries

would inform their governments of

the summary of the meeting's out-

If the governments approve the

decision, Bangladesh will import five

lakh tonnes of rice from India in the

next three months, the import begin-

ing, four lakh tonnes of rice will be

imported in the first two months,

As per the decision of the meet-

ning in the last week of February.

The meeting decided that repre-

West Bengal led the Indian side.

come for approval.

The director general of the

Dhaka, Delhi

Alabama and Georgia.

Arizona, California and Missouri.

McCain celebrated wins in

Romney picked up

States won by Clinton on Super

Hillary Clinton went into the

Ordained Baptist pastor

tion," McCain said.

against his rival.

Obama, Hillary

Senator Obama won more states, 13, including his own patch of Illinois Missouri, and Georgia by a landslide New Mexico was still too close to call

The rivals geared up for a grinding war of attrition in subsequent conproportional basis who will eventuparty convention.

A Real Clear Politics running count had Clinton on 829 delegates more than a third of the 2,025 she

according to the tally. Republicans need 1,191 to capture their nomina-For Hillary Clinton, the win in Massachusetts was especially sweet, after its heavyweight Democratic

publicity blitz. "I look forward to continuing our campaign and our debate -- about how to leave this country better off for the next generation, because that is the work of my life," Hillary Clinton

Her top strategist, Mark Penn added: "the race will drag on for weeks longer; this is not going to be decided any time in the near future.'

Obama however laid claim to the momentum in the knife-edge Democratic race. "Our time has come. Our move-

America," he told his rally in Chicago. "What began as a whisper has now swelled to a chorus that cannot be deterred."

a "strong position to win the Democratic nomination," and eyed contests next week in Maryland Virginia and Washington DC. Exit polls found that Hillary Clinton's army of Hispanic and older

block Obama's momentum, which recent opinion surveys suggested had threatened to overwhelm her in some ofher key targets. She won votes of white women nationally by 20 points, 58 to 38

media outlets, and Hispanic voters

women voters had helped her to

nationwide went for her 61 percent

82 percent, the polls showed. trying to take a stranglehold on the

with two lakh tonnes each month. The remaining one lakh tonne will be

The three-member Bangladesh went to Kolkata on February 3.

team led by Molla Waheeduzzaman

HC scraps Hasina case 45 killed

More than 50 tornadoes touched down as a series of thunderstorms rare for the winter season rolled through the region late Tuesday and

"It took the whole house," a

Tennessee, injuring 86.

Meanwhile a huge blaze lit the sky

Gulf Transmission, planned to stop the gas flow and allow the fire to burn itself out, WTVF television of Nashville reported.

dential election.

"They are in our thoughts and in our prayers," said her Democratic rival Barack Obama. "We hope that our federal government will respond

uted among the affected poultry The affected owners will now get Tk 95 instead of the earlier rate of Tk 80 for a chicken, of local vari-

Samaddar said people have to be aware about the bird flu and they will have to ensure their own bio-security measures. He said instructions were given to city

ensure bio-security. He said the virus remains active

Prof Mahmudur Rahman, director at the Health Directorate, said there is no risk of eating chick-

Local authorities suspect the poultry have died from bird flu infection.

floating on the water bodies. When contacted, Mohammad 1500 dead chickens from his farm.

Chittagong Deputy Commissioner Ashraf Shamim

priority.

The local administration, culled

of emergency allowing resumption

9th parliamentary election before the year ends. In a bid to free the body politic from the vice-grip of corrupt politicos, the army backed caretaker government launched the biggest ever crackdown in the country's history on 'corrupt politicians' on February 4 of last year, detaining a large number of big names in politics

of political activities for creating an

atmosphere for holding the stalled

including two former prime ministers Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina. The trial of an extortion case against detained former prime minister also AL chief Sheikh Hasina was being held under EPR while a graft case filed against another detained former premier also BNP chief Khaleda Zia was also brought under the ambit of emergency rules.

Many former ministers and

lawmakers were also facing trials on charges of corruption under EPR. If they are now tried under general laws instead of EPR, they will be allowed to seek bail and will have the scope for contesting in the next parliamentary election, even if they are convicted, until the SC upholds the convictions by trial courts, the process of which is usually very

"There will be no point in holding the election if the corrupt politicians make a comeback in the polls. We did not join our posts to hold a business as usual parliamentary election Matters concerning arrested corruptionists needs to be resolved, Chief Election Commissioner ATM Shamsul Huda said on April 5 defending the Election Commission's (EC) 18-month timeframe for holding the stalled parliamentary polls.

CONVICTED, DETAINED HEAVIES

Former ministers of the immediate past BNP-led alliance government Nazmul Huda, Shajahan Siraj, state ministers Amanullah Aman, Ruhul Quddus Talukder Dulu, Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin, Ziaul Haque Zia, Salahuddin Ahmed, Iqbal Hasan Mahmud Tuku, former BNP lawmakers Naser Rahman, Nadeem Mostafa, Mizanur Rahman Minu, Rashiduzzaman Millat, Motiur Rahman Talukder, Nurul Islam Moni, another Salauddin Ahmed, Ali Asgar Lobi, Manjurul Ahsan Munshi, Shahidul Islam, Helaluzzaman Talukder Lalu, and former political secretary to prime minister Harris Chowdhury have already been convicted among others.

Former ministers and senior BNP leaders Khandaker Mosharat Hossain, Moudud Ahmed, Morshed Khan, Tariqul Islam, Altaf Hossain Chowhdury, Miraza Abbas, former parliamentary affairs adviser to prime minister Salauddin Quader Chowdhury, former state ministers Lutfozzaman Babar, former lawmak ers MA Hashem, Mosaddak Ali Falu Hafiz Ibrahim, Joynal Abedin Faruk Fazlul Haque Milon, Majibur Rahman Sarwar, Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu, BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Tarique Rahman, and his brother Arafat Rahman among charges of graft, and cases have been

filed against them under EPR. Former ministers of previous AL government Mohammad Nasim Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, former AL lawmakers Rafigul Anwar, Shamim Osman, Joynal Hazari, and AL lead ers Pankaj Debnath among others have already been convicted on charges of graft

AL senior leaders Abdul Jalil, Fazlul Karim Selim, Obaidul Quader, Engineer Mosharraf Hossain Habibur Rahman Mollah, Kamal Ahmed Majumder, ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury, Badruddin Ahmed Kamran, Salman F Rahman, and ANH Mostafa Kamal have been detained on charges of graft, while some other AL leaders are on the lam as they have also been indicted for

corruption. Dhaka Jail library

FROM PAGE 16 history, 300 of biography, 210 of short stories, 250 of poetry and drama, 90 of tourism, and 70 of Hindu religion.

Besides, the library contains 1,132

English books, of which 500 are

fiction, 105 of history, 400 miscella-

neous, 210 of science, and 127 of Urduliterature. During a visit, a number of rare and famous books were found in a very sorry state. Among the books are "War Crime in Vietnam" by Bertrand Russell, "Everyman's Encyclopaedia", Vol-9, by Master Christopher Henry Decca, "An Actors' Story" by Bras Williams, "Current Economic Problems of India" by JC Coyajec Kt, "Modern Short Stories" collected by John Bachman, "The Right Honourable Gentleman" by WE Norris, "Empires of the Sky" by Anthony Sampson, "Fine Things" by Danielle Steel, "Bestseller Author of Death Wish" by Brian Garfield, "Major Weir" by KL Mostogomes, "The Rover" by Joseph Conrad, "The Golden Age" by Kenneth Grahame, "Pakistan Cut to Size" by Dr Man Kekar, "Sociology of Bengal Politics and Other Essays" by

Authentic Story of the 14-day Indo-The insiders inform that although a variety of books were purchased in the past only religious books now get

Abu Zafar Shamsuddin and "The

There are 27 foreign prisoners in the central jail who may like to read recent English books, the sources According to the library rules, a

prisoner can draw any books for

seven days. If he fails to return the book within the deadline or loses or destroys it, he would not be issued any book in future. Inspector General of Prisons December.

Brigadier General Zakir Hassan tells The Daily Star: "We collect only Islamic books for the library. Besides, different organisations also often donate some books." "We allow the VIP prisoners to

But the books must be non-political and not provocative. We allow the books to enter the jail after thorough checking," headds. Admitting the poor state of the books and dilapidated condition of the library, he further says: "The

condition of all the jail buildings are

collect books from their own sources.

worst. Any of them might collapse On library facilities for women prisoners, he says: "Very recently, we have launched a library system for them in the central jail with around 60 books. But the women here have never shown any interest so far."

Urban food

FROM PAGE 1 According to BBS data, overall inflation rate in rural areas increased by 0.44 percentage point and reached 11.63 percent in December last year. Inflation rate in urban areas increased by 0.18 percentage point and reached 11.74 percent.

food items in urban areas increased by 0.27 percentage point and reached 15.77 percent while in rural areas it increased by 0.78 percentage point reaching 13.91 Inflation rate on non-food items in urban areas rose by 0.16

percentage point and reached 6.62

percent, and in rural areas it

decreased by 0.03 percentage

In December, inflation rate on

Morshed. UNDP Country Director Manoj Basnyat, DFID Acting Country Representative Sarah Sanyahumbi, CDMP Chief Technical Adviser Ian

Pecoraro Scanio warned, for his part: "If the centre-left goes forward

month in several cities, according to Franco Giordano of the Refoundation Communist party.

as his culture minister in the 1990s, to

FROM PAGE 16 battlegrounds Connecticut and

tests over the next two months, over delegates doled out by states on a ally anoint the nominee at August's

needs to capture the nomination Obama was close behind with 750. On the Republican side, McCain stood at 560 delegates, Romney had 226 and Huckabee was on 154,

senators Edward Kennedy and John Kerry backed Obama, sparking a

told a "victory" rally in New York.

ment is real. And change is coming to

Obama's campaign manager David Plouffe said the senator was in

percent, according to the polls for US

Obama had the advantage among African Americans by a huge McCain, 71, went into the night

Republican nomination, and won nine states, including California, New York, Illinois, Connecticut, Delaware and New Jersey. "We should now get used to the

imported in the third month. The meeting also decided that the rice would be imported through rail, road and river ways.

idea that we are now the Republican