IOJ reveals list

FROM PAGE 1 included in the list that the IOI claimed to have prepared from documentary evidence and

accounts of 651 witnesses. 10] in a press conference at its organise an international confer-Motijheel office unveiled the names of the war criminals claiming that all the necessary evidence are in their possession and the witnesses are available.

The IOI leaders urged the government to form an inquiry commission comprising justices, sector commanders of the Liberation War, lawyers, educators and political scientists to investigate the crimes committed by the war criminals.

The chairman of the IOJ faction said they were ready to handover all documents, statements and

evidence before the commission. The 15 war criminals on the IOI's list are Matiur Rahman Nizami, the then supreme commander of Al-Badr and the present chief of Jamaat-e-Islami, Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojahid, the then deputy chief of Al-Badr and present secretary general of Jamaat-edeputy chief of Al-Badr in charge of Chittagong region and presently central leader of Jamaat and country director of Rabita Al-Alam Al-Islami, Bangladesh, late Mohammad Younus, the then Al-Badr commander and leader of Jamaat and a director general of Islami Bank, Bangladesh, Muhammad Kamaruzzaman, then Jamalpur branch commander of Al-Badr, Ashraf Hossain, then commander of Mymensingh branch Al-Badr and currently a businessman, ASM Ruhul Quddus, IOI. then deputy chief of Dhaka Al-Badr, Sardar Abdus Salam, chief of Dhaka Al-Badr and currently a central leader of Jamaat, Abdul Hai

Faruki, commander of Rajshahi

doing business living in Dubai, Abu

Naser Muhammad Abu Zaher,

commander of Chittagong Al-Badr

and chairman of Islami Bank,

currently secretary to food and

Abdur Razzak, commander of

The IOI within a few days will reveal another list of 30 organisers under whose leadership the mass killings were conducted.

On July 26, the IOJ will also ence in Dhaka to mobilise public

"We have collected accounts of 651 such witnesses who were affected by the war criminals and they [the witnesses] will appear before court and give their depositions after identifying the

The OIJ faction chief strongly said he would give up politics if his claims about the war criminals of

The IOJ chief urged the Election Commission to bar the war criminals from taking part in the elec-

Misbahur also urged the gov-Islami, Mir Kasem Ali, the then ernment to hold the election soon and free the detained chiefs of BNP

> Meanwhile, Ayub Miah, the food secretary, in his reaction told The Daily Star last night that he was surprised to hear that his name has been included in the list. "I was 16 during the liberation war," said

"They can ask any freedom fighter about me in my area in Patuakhali," he said adding that he would take necessary legal steps regarding the allegation made by

heinous crimes to establish a jus-

district Al-Badr and currently tice-based society.

worse than doing corruption. We hope this caretaker government and currently one of the member of will start the trial process of the war board of directors of Ibn Sina Trust criminals," he said.

Chowdhury Mohiuddin, deputy ment fails to start the process of chief of Al-Badr operations and bringing the war criminals to juscurrently doing business in tice by the given time, the forum London, Ayub Miah, commander will announce a fresh programme of Barisal district Al-Badr and from a rally on March 26.

Chief Coordinator of the forum

A good number of freedom

from Huji, he opted to side with him

currently a Jamaat leader.

The elite crime busters made the seizure at Simulia village of Debhata upazila following up leads obtained from Huji leader Mufti Moin Uddin alias Abu Jandal alias Masum Billah.

up Nazrul Islam Ghorami, a suspected operative of Harkatul Jihad al Islami (Huji).

"The arrests will provide important leads in investigation of August 21 grenade attacks," the Rab DG said. Huji operations commander Mufti Hannan earlier told investigators that his close aide Moin Uddin alias Abu Jandal led the August 21 grenade attack, said a top Rab official requesting not to be named.

Hannan also said some of the grenades were still in Jandal's possession.

Additional Director General of Rab Col Gulzaruddin Ahmed said they arrested Abu Jandal, 29, at the guesthouse of Memberbari Jam-e Masjid at Banirchala of Joydevpur on February 14.

He said during interrogation, Jandal told Rab members that Nazrul Islam Ghorami might have some grenades hidden somewhere at Shimulia,

Rab officials said Nazrul told them that Jandal had handed him the grenades. He said he does not know anything beyond that, but interrogators believe he is keeping back information.

Gulzar said they had been on the hunt for Jandal for about a year and recently they spotted him at Dhaka Polytechnic Institute. He fled the institute during the clashes between firearms. Shibir and Chhatra League last week

and took shelter at a madrasa at Faidabad in Uttara. "From there, he moved to

Joydevpur where we finally nabbed him," Col Gulzar told The Daily Star. Asked whether the militants might go on the offensive, a Rab

official said, "Possibility of that is little since the militants are on the run." He said they would hardly get a key. chance to regroup as law enforcers and intelligence agencies are working relentlessly to capture them and army personnel fanned out across

the country. At the press conference, the Rab filed. DG said they handed over the arrestees to Debhata Police Station yesterday.

He said Rab is assisting the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), tasked with probing the August 21 blasts, in all possible ways.

IANDAL Sources said Jandal had been a close associate of Mufti Hannan since 1998. When Hannan was expelled

support against the war criminals.

"We have collected necessary documents, papers and evidence in support of the crime they had committed during the liberation war," said Misbahur Rahman Chowdhury, chairman of IOJ.

accused," he added.

Jamaat were proven false.

and Awami League.

War criminals

FROM PAGE 16

"Committing war crimes is

AK Khandkar said if the govern-

Lt Gen (retd) Harun-ur Rashid said, disaster management ministry, "The pro-liberation forces will Sylhet town Al-Badr and currently never move an inch from their an advocate at the Bangladesh demand for trial of the war crimi-Supreme Court, Chowdhury Farid nals

Maj Gen (retd) CR Dutta, Lt Gen Uddin Ahmed, commander of Sylhet district Al-Badr and cur-(retd) Mir Shawkat Ali, Maj Gen rently a leader of Jamaat, and (retd) KM Shafiullah were, among Muhammad Shamsul Huq, comothers, present at the meeting. mander of Dhaka city Al-Badr and

fighters also attended the function.

and became an influential member

of the Hannan-led Huji. He had led

While a student of Jame Ul Ulum

Huji after Hannan's arrest in 2005.

Satkhira grenades

FROM PAGE 1 attack," Director General (DG) of Rab Hassan Mahmood Khandkar told a press briefing at Rab headquarters in Uttara.

Madrasa at Mirpur-14, he caught the attention of Huji leaders. He quickly rose to the rank of a young leader for his organisation skills and capacity to motivate oth-During the raid, they also picked ers, Rab sources said. He was assigned to preach jihad to new

> recruits. Rab officials quoting Hannan's statements said the Huji boss and other leaders gave Jandal the responsibility to coordinate the August 21

He was the one who collected grenades for the attack from Mohammadpur house of Moulana Tajuddin:

NAZRUL Locals said Nazrul, who had to sell his land to run the family a few years back, moved to the capital in 2005

and soon made a fortune through means still unknown to his neigh-A few months ago, he and his

family returned to their village home and bought two shoe shops in local markets. Rab sources said he was mainly a

smuggler. They however could not say whether he got involved with

Locals suspect he was involved in arms smuggling. He might have met Mufti Hannan when the militant kingpin visited Satkhira in 2002 or 2003 and since then he maintained a link with Huji.

Our Satkhira correspondent adds: Nazrul migrated to Bangladesh from India in 1952. He was arrested in 1973-74 for possession of illegal

Locals said he would often disappear from the area to return after

15/20 days. His son Hafizur Rahman told journalists that their family was never involved in politics, but they always cast votes for Jamaat-e-

Islami. Meanwhile, police yesterday found Nazrul's house under lock and

Tk 91 lakh seized

FROM PAGE 16 Station yesterday and a case was

Police said the smuggling bid was unearthed when customs officials searched Rahat's luggage following detection of the currencies during scanning.

The seized currencies include Saudi riyal, pound sterling and Singapore dollar.

Rahat was scheduled to take a Singapore Airlines flight.

Bird flu

FROM PAGE 1 the government Friday night issued orders for culling all the poultry of the

farm. Set up on 9-acre land, the farm is run with machines "without any human involvement", Omega chairman Alifsaid.

Livestock officials started culling fowls at the farm yesterday evening after digging a 45×25×8 cubic feet pit on the farmland for dumping the

"We can say the whole culling would take three days," Dhaka District Livestock Officer (DLO) Shaikh Saidur Rahman told The Daily Star from the spot, adding that 200 employees are working.

nature, all the fowls in five sheds have to be culled and the eggs destroyed, hesaid. Alif Ahmed put the number of eggs at over 4 lakh as he said that they

Since the infection is of grave

did not collect eggs over the last three After finishing the culling at the farm, the officials will start culling fowls at households within 1 kilo-

metre area of the farm. Asked, DLO Saidur Rahman confirmed that it is going to be the biggest culling in the country so far. In Dhaka, the previous highest number of fowls culled was 8,500 in Savar,

headded. Bird flu virus has never been detected in the farm since its inception in 2004.

Asked to estimate the loss caused due to the infection and subsequent culling, the Omega chairman failed to give any specific figure. "You see, we had to spend Tk 35 crore on this project. We have a bank loan of Tk 15

Saying that it will be impossible for them to restart the business without compensation, he said, "Firstly, I would request for an interest waiver till we can resume busi-

It would take about two years to resume business in full swing, he added.

Our Jhenidah correspondent said livestock officials on Friday culled 938 fowls including native ducks, hens and pigeons and destroyed 522 eggs in Moheshpur upazila.

Of them, 854 fowls and 400 eggs were destroyed at the farm of Joarder Rahim while the rest at the households within 1 kilometre of his farm. Officials at the bird flu control room said 58 fowls of Mamunur

Rashid in Shibpur upazila of

Narsingdi were culled on Friday after 2,442 fowls died of bird flu there. Another 1,100 fowls died at Ma Poultry Farm in Raipur upazila. According to the control room, livestock officials culled 67 fowls of Sobhan Bepari and 720 others chickens, ducks and pigeons of his seven

neighbours in Nadra village of Damurhuda in Shariatpur on Friday. Meantime, 8,512 fowls were culled the same day at Jasim Poultry Farm in Gazipur Sadar.

Pro-Saitur faction

intend to form a national unity gov-Ferdaus Ahmed Quarishi, president of PDP, and Maj (retd) Abdul Mannan of Bikalpadhara

Bangaldesh, however told The Daily

election, following which they also

Star last night that they had not been in any such meeting. "We don't want to go back to the days of an imperial prime minister's rule, neither do we want any elected autocracy," the meeting sources quoted a senior political leader as saying. The leader also said democ-

racy failed in the country in the last 15 years due to such kinds of misrule. Few other leaders of some other political parties including Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh had also got

invitations to the meeting. Most of the invited parties which declined to join the meeting said they did not join it because of the possible presence of Jamaat in it, since they do not want to sit with any anti-

liberation force. However, it could not be ascertained till last night if any Jamaat leader was present in the two and a half hours long meeting which began

at 9:00pm. When contacted by The Daily Star after repeated tries on Friday night, Pankaj Bhattacharya also denied

attending the meeting. But a political leader claiming to be a participant in the meeting, told The Daily Star yesterday that the leaders who denied being present in the meeting had actually been there and discussed the possibility of forming a grand alliance that might be able to form a government based on a national consensus after winning the upcoming election as an alliance.

According to the meeting sources, some 'reformist' Awami League leaders had also been invited who declined to join, although they assured the organisers that they will join the initiative later.

A political leader who had been present in the meeting told The Daily Star yesterday, "We agreed to form a new political alliance to uphold the spiritof1/11."

"It will be a new alliance for bringing a consensus in politics," he said adding, they will form a government based on a national consensus if they win the upcoming election as an alliance.

The meeting sources also said the political leaders discussed a possible minimum programme for unity including freeing the country from corruption, criminality, and dynastic "We will amend the constitution

to make the parliament effective if our proposed alliance wins the election with the necessary majority," said a political leader who admitted to attending the meeting. He said they also emphasised the necessity for strengthening local government bodies for making democracy stronger and more effec-

According to the sources, the leaders will sit again soon in a follow up meeting with a greater number of them present.

Future of Musharraf

FROM PAGE 16 think it will be the mother of all

elections despite his tall claims of fairness? Musharraf cannot survive He is talking about all the if the PPP and Pakistan Muslim options. He does not want to take League of Nawaz Sharif get two- a decision about the future of thirds majority in the next national Musharraf without consulting assembly. Rigging was started long Nawaz Sharif. before the election campaign when which was headed by a prime minister who belonged to the pro-

months, but not a single complaint was addressed properly. Human Rights Watch has recently General of Pakistan Malik treason charges. Oayyum, admitting to a friend on telephone, says that yes the election will be rigged.

all the surveys have suggested differences with Musharraf about that opposition parties like the the murder case of Benazir PPP and the PML-N will get Bhutto. Musharraf claimed last majority in the elections. A big month that a tribal militant turnout of voters can destroy all leader, Baitullah Mahsud, is the rigging plans. A low turnout responsible for the killing of will definitely help the pro- Benazir Bhutto. PPP leader Asif Musharraf PML-Q and the MQM. Zardari is not ready to accept that Interestingly, Jamaat-e-Islami claim. He suspects some people chief Qazi Hussain Ahmad and within the establishment for the former cricket hero Imran Khan assassination of Benazir Bhutto. are urging the masses to boycott Pro-Musharraf PML-Q leaders the election. Indirectly they are used filthy language against the helping Musharraf. People also PPP in the election campaign. fear terrorism on the Election The PPP is against National Day. Some bombings can badly Security Council. Musharraf is affect the voter turnout. If there are bomb blasts on the Election beneficiary. The PPP and the PML-N are not going for a simple anytime. These parties have election on February 18; they are promised to their voters that they going for a big battle against the will curtail the "anti-democracy unannounced alliance of the state machinery and terrorists.

A recent meeting of PPP leader Asif Zardari with PML-N leader Musharraf to resign immediately Nawaz Sharif in Lahore was a after winning the election. What Muslim League. Both Zardari and Musharraf? Can the PPP and the Nawaz Sharif agreed to resist the PML-N exist together for five rigging together on February 18. years? It is the first time that the majority of top police officials and civil servants don't want to become part of the rigging plans. They think that when the Pakistan army command is staying away Trompolitics, why should the civif the state machinery in Punjab, ment the rigging plans of all the 60 judges, including for-Musharraf regime in full swing.

army uniform. He cannot use the removed. armed forces of Pakistan for his political objectives. The countrywide agitation after the assassination of Benazir Bhutto on December 27 in 2007 forced the army commanders to announce that they are not a party to national politics. A neutral role of the army and a sympathy wave for Benazir Bhutto's party have changed the whole political spectrum of Pakistan. I fear a lot of violence on Election Day and turmoil can force the army to step in again. People will not accept "rigged victory" for pro-Musharraf parties. I warn that the army should not play a political role at any cost. The people of Pakistan will not accept any new

general as their ruler. Now the question is what the future of Musharraf will be if the PPP and the PML-N get the majority. Both Asif Zardari and Nawaz Sharif have confirmed to me separately that they have decided to form coalition governments in Punjab and the centre. One close associate of Musharraf

Huda, Altaf Chy

FROM PAGE 16 political adviser to former prime minister Khaleda Zia; former state minister Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir and Sigma Huda, wife of Nazmul Huda -- is in process, said Deputy

Inspector General (DIG-Prisons) Maj Shamsul Haider Siddique. Of the three, Salauddin Ouader and Alamgir are in Kashimpur jail in Gazipur and Sigma in prison cell at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital in the

capital. Shamsul said court has already ordered filing cases against the three for violating the jail code.

Meanwhile, the jail authorities are not allowing their relatives to meet them. In reply to a question, he said

division of these prisoners in jail might be reviewed for this offence. Hasına case Identity of the other could not be FROM PAGE 16

also observe the human rights situation in Bangladesh. agency that Sloan would meet lawyers of the detained leader. He will leave for Canada on Feb 23.

the cases filed against detained

former prime minister Sheikh

Human rights lawyer Sloan will

is still in contact with the PPP February 18, but many observers leadership. He is trying to convince the PPP to forge a coalition with the PML-Q. The PPP is play-Why Musharraf will rig the ing a clever game. Zardari is not

pledging anything to Musharraf.

One PPP senator, Babar Awan, Musharraf announced a caretaker said on Saturday that the PPP will government in November last remove Musharraf after winning the election. Musharraf associates tried their level best to Musharraf Pakistan Muslim ensure that the PPP contradict that claim, but the PPP declined Close relatives of caretaker to do that. I have also learnt that a prime minister and information close friend of Musharraf is trying minister are contesting the elec- to convince the PML-N to provide tion from Sindh. The support a safe exit for Musharraf after the from the so-called caretakers for election. According to a senior the pro-Musharraf Muslim leader of the PML-N, Musharraf League is not a secret in Pakistan. will resign and plans to move Election Commission of Pakistan quietly outside Pakistan. When I received more than 1500 com- asked whether he will provide a plaints of rigging in last two safe exit for his enemy, Nawaz Sharif made it clear to me that he will not provide a safe exit for Musharraf. He is determined to released a tape in which Attorney try Musharraf in a court of law on

Why Musharraf cannot survive as president with a coalition of the PPP and the PML-N? There Despite these fears of rigging, are many reasons. The PPP have the father of NSC.

Both the PPP and the PML-N Day, then Musharraf will be the cannot accept a president who can dissolve the parliament constitutional powers of the president. It is expected that both the PPP and the PML-N will ask bombshell for the pro-Musharraf will happen after the downfall of

Surviving as a coalition will be a big challenge for the PPP and the PML-N. They may develop some differences over the restoration of 60 judges who refused to take oath under emergency last year. If these judges are restored, bureaucracy be getting involved they can re-open some old cases in politics? Many civil servants against Asif Zardari. If the PPP have applied for medical leave on could find a way to cooperate in election days. It is expected that the restoration of the deposed judges, then it will be a great rural Sindh and North West breakthrough. The majority of Frontier Province will not imple- Pakistanis want the restoration of mer chief justice Iftikhar The PML-Q will face problems Muhammad Chaudhry. In that in doing massive rigging because case all the judges appointed Musharraf is no more enjoying an after November 3 in 2007 will be

Media will also enjoy some more freedom. If the PPP and the PML-N are ready to tolerate an independent judiciary and free media, then the parliament will also be strengthened. Only a strong parliament will give stability to Pakistan. This parliament will decide the future strategy of war against terror in Pakistan. Asif Zardari and Nawaz Sharif are convinced that they must redefine their relationship with the USA. They must fight the war against terror for Pakistan, not for the US. 2008 could bring downfall not only for Musharraf but also for the policies of Bush in

Pakistan. Hamid Mir: Executive Editor, Geo TV. Pakistan E-mail: hamid.mir@geo.tv

The Daily Star

FROM PAGE 16 Kabari Sarwar were among the celebrities present.

The diplomatic corps was well represented with British High Commissioner Anwar Choudhury, Indian High Commissioner Pinak Ranjan Chakravarty, US Charge D'Affaires Geeta Pasi and many

others present on the occasion. Prothom Alo Editor Matiur Rahman, Shamokal Editor Abed Khan, Manabzamin Chief Editor Matiur Rahman Chowdhury and Bhorer Kagoj Editor Shyamal Dutta were among the media personali-

Besides, a large number of professionals, officials from UN missions and development agencies and NGO leaders attended the gala marking the daily's 17 years of journalism 'without fear and

FROM PAGE 16 about 1:45pm, killing three truck

favour'.

labourers on the spot and injuring five others. Two of the dead were identified as Rafiq, 23, of Bhola district, and Shaiful, 25, of Sherpur district.

known. On information, police rushed to the spot and sent the bodies to Dhaka Medical College morgue for

The injured -- Sohag and Sushanto, employees of the CNG Sheikh Hasina's assistant station, one taxi driver and two Hassan Mahmud told the news laborers of the truck--were admitted to a local hospital. Of them, Sushanto was released after first aid.

Indian relief

FROM PAGE 16

promised by Indian External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee during his tour of Sidr-affected areas in December.

The relief materials, worth Tk 3 crore, consist of 1,010 metric tonnes of rice, 50 tonnes of wheat, 750 blankets, 10,000 sarees and 6,000 mosquito nets. "We share the same sky and air

and speak the same language, that

is why we feel and cry for Bangladeshis and rush to their side every time they need help,' Chakrabarty said at a large handover programme at Benapole on the Indo-Bangla border yesterday. A cultural programme was hosted by Jessore Deputy Commissioner Abuwal Hossain at the border area and attended by

Sangeet exponent Sumitra Mitra actor Biswajit Maitra and folk singer Amar Pal. Hundreds of school students lined the streets to welcome the 60member delegation led by Chakrabarty, who spoke as the chief guest at the cultural

renowned Bengali writer Sunil

programme. "Our links have never really been severed since the partition, said Chakrabarty adding that Bengalis from West Bengal always empathise with the Bengalis on this side of the border.

Hasina's treatment

FROM PAGE 16 high blood pressure and eye and

hearing problems. Zillur said Awami League will bear the expenses of Hasina's treatment abroad. He said it is not correct that a prisoner cannot be sent abroad for medical treatment. He said JSD leader ASM Abdur Rab, while in jail, was sent abroad for treatment.

Responding to the law adviser's remarks that the elections could be possible under the state of emergency, Zillur said when the chief adviser, the chief election commissioner and the chief of the army staff committed time and gain that the emergency would be lifted before the elections, the law adviser's comments were disappointing.

AL presidium member Tofail Ahmed told the reporters that the party presidium would meet on February 22 and the working committee on February 24 to discuss their stands on the second round of dialogue with the Election Commission (EC). He said it must be taken care of that the EC's move for delimitation

impede the elections according to the roadmap. Presidium members Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Amir Hossain Amu, Tofail Ahmed, Motia Chowdhury, Kazi Zafrullah and Syed Ashraful Islam attended the

of the constituencies does not

CA's first meet

FROM PAGE 16 last six months. It's widely

expected that he will reveal important guidelines in the matter. Sources say that there is possibility of discussions on possible reshuffle at top and field-level administration, which is needed to hold the upcoming parliamentary

Fakhruddin Ahmed will also launch a website of the establishment ministry before the meeting.

Establishment Secretary Md Abdus Salam Khan told The Daily Star yesterday that people will be able to access government information through the website. Besides all notifications of appointments, postings, promo-

officials, all government gazette notifications -- including those on different laws -- will be posted on the website. Abdus Salam added that the

tions and transfer of government

objective of creating the website is ensuring free flow of information. All 10 advisers and senior bureaucrats will attend the meeting to be held at the Cabinet Room at the Secretariat on Wednesday

On different occasions,

Fakhruddin has repeatedly said

that his government is committed

to bringing transparency in the administration and has asked public officials to work to this end. In his first meeting with the secretaries of different ministries after assuming office in January 2007, the CA called on the civil

servants to restore the image of the

bureaucracy as soon as possible. Dr Yunus

morning.

FROM PAGE 16 The FT said that the bank had already lent 50,000 dollars (34,000 euros) in the last month to groups of immigrant women in the New York borough of Queens. It plans to offer 176 million dollars of loans within New York City over the next five years and then expand across the United States.

of...the subprime crisis and that highlights the issue that the financial system is not perfect," said Yunus, who shared the Nobel Peace Prize with Grameen Bank in 2006, in comments quoted by the paper.

The bank's entry into the US market is its first into a developed market.

"Now is a good time because

Suicide attack

FROM PAGE 1

"It is a very unfortunate incident. Maximum security measures are in place for the 17th and 18th (of February) and the campaign is going to end tonight," he added.

Thirty-seven people were killed and 93 wounded in the blast, interior ministry spokesman Brigadier Javed Cheema said, adding: "It was a vehicle-borne suicide attack."

Security officials earlier told AFP that the suicide bomber attacked a Pakistan People's Party meeting outside the office of local candidate Riaz Shah. Shah's family said he was safe. "A man with long hair drove a

car into the crowd and blew himself up. There were bodies and blood everywhere," witness Laiq Hussain told AFP. Parachinar is just across the Gangopadhyaya, Rabindra border from Tora Bora, an Afghan mountain range where US-led

> nered al-Qaeda chief Osama bin FROM PAGE 1 Laden in late 2001 before he managed to escape. In a separate incident in the nearby Bajaur tribal area militants ing production capacity at these

forces were believed to have cor-

blew up a polling station with a coalmines. timebomb, police said. Hyderabad meanwhile said they had arrested a suspected militant equipped with a suicide jacket and explosives who was planning an

attack during the polls. And in the southwestern city of , experts. Quetta police Saturday fired tear gas and used batons to disperse a rally by the All Parties Democratic Movement, a coalition of opposition parties boycotting the elec-

tions, police said. Saturday's attack on the PPP came as politicians launched a final push for votes before the midnight (1900 GMT) deadline after which all rallies are banned until after the landmark polls.

Benazir Bhutto's widower, Asif

Ali Zardari, met former premier

Nawaz Sharif in Lahore for new

talks on possible power-sharing after the vote if the opposition wins a majority, party officials said. Opposition groups have accused Musharraf's administration of rigging the polls to head off possible impeachment if a hostile

parliament is voted in. Party officials said police arrested more than 30 political activists, including 24 PPP workers, in a crackdown in North West Frontier Province on Saturday.

But Musharraf was quoted as

saying by the state-run Associated Press of Pakistan that he was "positive the polls would be fair". "Inshallah (God willing) we will have a stable, democratically elected government ... we will ensure a successful fight against terrorism and extremism and we

will ensure sustaining the economic growth of Pakistan. Some 81,000 army and paramilitary soldiers have fanned out across the country to maintain peace and security during the election, chief military spokesman

Major General Athar Abbas said.

senator in a Congressional team travelling to monitor the polls said late Friday that the United States

hamper the voting or disrupt peace

on election day.

In Washington, a senior US should "cut off aid to Pakistan, military aid" if the vote is not fair. Democratic Senator Joseph

tial Senate foreign relations committee, also forecast riots throughout Pakistan if the elections were found to be "patently rigged." A fresh row erupted over the fairness of the polls on Friday after

Biden, who is head of the influen-

vote will be "massively rigged. But Malik Qayyum, a close ally of Musharraf, denied making the

Imported coal

Barapukuria coal mine, the policy makers of the country are not putting the emphasis on increas-

The government should also

A high official at the commerce ministry said, "As a matter of fact, the government is in a precarious position in meeting the local demand of coal. The businesses should explore alternative import sources."

compelling the brick manufacturers burn trees at their kilns, he said adding that if it lifts the be harmed.

in the country is heavily dependent on India. Coal importers of the country made an attempt to import coal from Australia and Indonesia in

of Saleh Steel Industries Ltd, said, "We all are aware that the use of harmful coal is harming our environment." To save the environment, the government should subsidise the import of coal from

Qaiser Tareen, commander of they can procure better quality the paramilitary Punjab Rangers, coal from domestic coal mines said troops have been ordered to including the Barapukuria coal "shoot on sight" those who try to mine.

idea of unilateral independence for

Kosovo, expressed its "surprise" at

Putin's remarks to Moscow's

ambassador and called for an expla-

is blamed for the deaths of 819

people in Spain during almost four

decades of fighting for independ-

gave the final approval Saturday for

the deployment a 1,800-strong

policing and administration mis-

the province's ethnic Albanian

leadership is expected to declare

independence from Serbia, possibly

mission, which will take four

months to put in place, and is

designed to help build a police,

justice and customs system for

Kosovo free of political interference.

officers for patrols and who are

trained in crowd and riot control.

Judges, prosecutors and other legal

experts would be sent to offer train-

part of Serbia, the impoverished

province of two million people has

been administered by the United

Nations since a brief war in 1999.

The EU force will replace the UN

that the EU force could grow to more

than 2,000 people besides 1,000

other non-EU experts from the

Officials said earlier this week

mission now in Kosovo.

Although Kosovo is technically

ing and for administrative work.

The force will include 700 police

No EU nations objected to the

ence for the Basque region.

sion for Kosovo.

on Sunday.

The armed separatist group ETA

Meanwhile, the European Union

The decision comes just before

nation, said the ministry source.

Kosovo inches closer

homeland of all citizens."

FROM PAGE 16 against or neglected," he said in Albanian. "We guarantee equal rights and security. Kosovo is the

Serb leaders who reject independence said they had accepted a proposal from Belgrade to form their own parallel parliament in response to independence. More than 220,000 Serbs have

Albanian rebels. main EU powers and the United States, while Serbia's position is

strongly supported by Russia. The European Union is to start sending a 2,000-strong force of police and legal experts imminently to smoothen the transition to inde-

administration in Kosovo that began in 1999 after the Nato campaign against then Serbian leader But the impending split has "I want clearly to confirm: I will

European Union," said Tadic as he took his presidential oath Friday. Belgrade and Moscow have stated that any declaration of independence would be "null and void"

on Thursday. authorities summoned the Russian ambassador Friday after Putin likened the situation in Kosovo to Spain's Basque and Catalan regions, said a Spanish foreign ministry

source. "What's the use of encouraging separatism?" Putin told reporters in Moscow.

"People don't want to live in a Spain in the heart of single state. Well, let's support them then!" he added, a reference to the separatist movements in Spain northern Basque Country and eastern region of Catalonia.

Madrid, which is hostile to the

Human Rights Watch said it had obtained a recording of Pakistan's attorney-general predicting the

comment.

Police in the southern city of consider providing financial incentives in terms of duty cut or subsidy to the importers when they import environmentfriendly coal from countries other than India, added the

The government is caught in a dilemma -- if it enforces the

import restriction, there will be a

coal shortage in the country,

restriction permanently, the environment of the country will Maizuddin Ahmed, president of Bangladesh Brick Manufacturing Owners' Association, said the coal market

1995 when Indian coal producers reacted with a significant price cut, luring the importers to continue importing from India, he said adding, "None of the importers imported coal from other countries ever since." Anamul Hoq Iqbal, chairman

countries other than India. Brick manufacturers and steel re-rolling mill owners urged the government to take steps so that

In the divided northern city of Kosovska Mitrovica, however, local

Kosovo war in 1999 when Nato bombing ended a clampdown by Serb forces against separatist ethnic Kosovo's break is backed by the

fled the province since the end of the

pendence. Independence for Kosovo would close the chapter on United Nations

Slobodan Milosevic. stoked nationalist fervour in Serbia. never give up the fight for our Kosovo and, with all my strength, I will fight for Serbia to be in the

and a violation of international law-- a point they made at a closed-door meeting of the UN Security Council In Madrid meanwhile, the

United States and other countries. Dhaka slates

foreign ministry press release. "We fail to understand how hurting the sentiments of a billion Muslims can advance the cause of freedom of expression!" it said.

"It can only spur resentment that can be destabilising," the press release said, referring to the widespread protests that followed the first-time publication of the cartoons

FROM PAGE 1 newspapers, saying it could fuel resentment that may turn out to be destabilising.

"We deeply regret republication of the Danish cartoons. We condemn it," said a

by Danish newspapers in 2006.