Children's protein

FROM PAGE 1 their menu; people of the country will face severe protein deficiency, said Fatema Parvin, director of the Institute of Public Health Nutrition (IPHN).

Eshaque Ali, secretary in charge of Bangladesh National Nutrition Council under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, said poultry and eggs are first-class sources of protein.

He said the body can absorb 100 percent of the protein in eggs and milk while 70, 80, and 75 percent of protein from beef, mutton and fish

can be absorbed. "As milk became pricey, eggs were the best source of protein in the country. Furthermore, the yolk of an egg contains Vitamin A, D, cholesterol and fat. There are 20 amino acids in eggs and 10 of these are important for children and eight are important for adults," said Prof Shah Keramat Ali of Institute of Nutrition and Food Science of Dhaka University.

Even though pulses, beans and peas contain large amount of vegetable protein, the 20 amino acids cannot be obtained from one of them. It is possible to prepare a food item with peas, beans, rice and oil and only with their combination all the amino acids could be obtained, he said.

People should not panic over bird flu as the avian influenza germ and its H5N1 variant cannot survive over 70 degrees Celsius temperature, experts said adding that if eggs are washed with detergent powder or sodium-bicarbonate, it is safe and people can have them after properly boiling them.

If the people who process chicken for cooking properly wash their hands with soap in every stage of the cooking, they do not need to be afraid of infections; experts said adding that it is time to overcome the bird flu fear as the H5N1 strain cannot survive in cooked food.

"Consumption of poultry and eggs in our family has almost halved even though we heard that there is nothing to be afraid of," Rumana Afroz, a housewife, said. She said she does not dare to buy chickens and eggs after watching and reading the media coverage of poultry culling.

"Rather, I am trying to buy more fish and fruits as supplement to the family's diet. But I am facing problems as my children still want eggs and chicken. They do not like fish at all," said Rumana who lives in Hawaii on Tuesday. Mirpur in the capital.

The daily requirement of protein for a child is two grams per kilogram (kg) of body weight. For adults, it is one gram per kg of body weight, nutritionists said. They said half the people of the country get 11 percent protein from all the food they consume in a day. However, one-third gets 17 percent

Law secretary

FROM PAGE 16

On July 5 last year, the writ petition challenging the appointment of Awal as acting law secretary was filed by District and Sessions Judge Aftab Uddin Ahmed.

The HC on July 8 last year issued rule on the government asking it to show cause why the appointment would not be declared illegal.

The court also mentioned in its judgment for investigating the issue of Supreme Court (SC) registrar's sending the letter to the law ministry for appointing Awal.

The government appointed Awal as acting law secretary on June 28 last year after consultation with the Supreme Court.

In its judgment, the HC bench said though the law ministry sought opinion from the SC regarding his appointment as current charge for the post of acting law secretary, the letter given by the registrar of SC recommended his appointment as acting law secretary.

The court requested the chief justice initiate an investigation into the matter as the letter contains inconsistency.

The court in its judgment mentioned that Awal could not be appointed as acting secretary in the ministry in accordance with promotion rules 2002 for the promotion of deputy-secretary, jointsecretary, additional secretary and

The verdict also mentioned that Awal had been an additional secretary of the legislative drafting wing

Article 94 of the constitution of SC incorporates all the judges of HC and SC, said the HC judgment mentioning that though the law ministry requested for the SC's opinion regarding the issue, this HC bench did not know anything

about the matter. As a result the opinion regarding the appointment of Awal was not of the SC, but an individual opinion of the chief justice, the court mentioned in its order.

Barrister Azmalul Hossain and advocate Kamrul Islam Siddique moved for the petitioner while

barrister M Amir-Ul Islam for Awal. Kazi Awal, a law graduate of Dhaka University, joined the government service as assistant judge in 1981 through Bangladesh Civil Service (Judicial). He served as district judge in different districts and joined the legislative drafting wing of the ministry as joint secretary in 2000. He was promoted to the post of additional secretary in 2003.

protein from their total daily consumption of food.

According to the 2005 annual report of the Nutrition Surveillance Project of IPHN, 56 percent of children aged between 12 and 23 months residing in urban slums are underweight.

"I think people are unnecessarily panicked. We are providing the patients with chicken and eggs as we did earlier. If you boil it properly, there is no risk of catching the disease," said Director of Bangladesh Shishu Hospital Md Salim Shakur, also a professor at Bangladesh Institute of Child Health.

Shakur said the hospital still provides chicken to its patients once or twice a week. But guardians can go for other protein substitutes such as fish, beef and mutton if they want to avoid chicken.

Dairy products, cereals, beans and peanuts can also be alternatives, he added.

According to the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Diseases Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR,B) Annual Report 2006, nearly onethird of children in the developing world are either underweight or stunted. More than 30 percent of people in the developing world suffer from micronutrient deficiencies.

Severe malnutrition contributes to more than 15 percent of all deaths among children under five in the developing world. If the malnutrition in childhood is severe, the risk of death goes as high as 40 percent, it said.

Hillary fights to stem Obama wave in Wisconsin

AFP, Washington

White House Democratic hopefu Hillary Clinton fought to stave off a wave of momentum for rival Barack Obama before a primary contest in Wisconsin that will hinge on a large working class

Obama, on a roll after eight consecutive victories in the nomination race, hopes to extend his winning streak in the Midwestern state as well as in caucuses in

Polls showed a tight race in Wisconsin with the Illinois senator enjoying a narrow five-point lead over the former first lady, according to a new survey by Research 2000, US media reported.

The poll was conducted Wednesday and Thursday and showed 11 percent of voters remained undecided.

The candidates faced freezing temperatures as they tried to woo working class voters in Wisconsin, which has 74 delegates at stake and has played a historic role in past nomination races.

Bad weather on Sunday forced both candidates to cancel some events while Obama reportedly paid a visit to North Carolina to meet John Edwards out of the view of reporters. Edwards, a former rival in the White House race, has yet to offer an endorsement for either contender.

Senator Clinton, who has tended to do well among bluecollar workers elsewhere, has spent less time in Wisconsin and has instead pinned her hopes on delegate-rich Ohio and Texas on March 4 to stop Obama's surge and turn the race in her favor.

As the Democratic candidates sought to rally the mostly white, working class electorate in Wisconsin, campaign officials and advocates argued over the role of 'superdelegates" in selecting the party's presidential nominee.

killed

readymade garments, lost his control over the steering and slammed into the mosque compound, killing two people on the spot and injuring two others criti-

Those died on the spot are Haj Mia Hossain, 80, and Haji Sultan

Of the injured, Abdur Rahim, 14, died at Sadar Hospital while Dudhu Mia, 55, on the way to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH).

FROM PAGE 16 complete probe into the grenade attacks on the AL rally on August 21. CID officials also visited the

Sources said the investigators interrogated the then senior jail super Harunur Rashid, now posted at Rajshahi jail, at the CID office in the capital.

spot where the grenade was recov-

The grenade of Arges brand was recovered near a drain between cell no 26 and 90.

Jail guard Sohel Mondol, who was on duty at cell No 90, went into hiding after the incident. Later, he was arrested in connection with another case. Sohel is behind bars

Govt close

FROM PAGE 1 be unlike commissions in other parts of the world that seek to reconcile ethnic and racial divisions.

While speaking to BBC Bangla Service radio, head of the expert committee to form the commission Anisul Haq said in the draft politicians would also be allowed to seek rehabilitation.

The government had previously said the commission would only apply for corrupt businessmen.

"Anyone charged with corruption can approach the commission to confess their crimes or the commission can call them if they wish," Anisul said.

Anisul said if the corruption suspects make a confessional statement to the commission and return the wealth they collected through unfair means, some of their citizen rights might be taken away instead of them getting jail sentences.

The new draft may also extend the five-year ban on seeking public office for those who have just finished their jail sentence.

"Our constitution states that someone receives a two-year jail term for criminal misconduct, then they cannot run in elections or be a public representative," said Anisul, adding the draft would include something similar but the term may be extended.

18 killed

FROM PAGE 16

recovered after the encounter, inspector general of police R.K Vi told AFP. Another 10 insurgents were

killed after they fled the area, police

sources said. The violence in Chhattisgarh broke out as security forces clashed with Maoist guerrillas for a third day in neighbouring Orissa state where the rebels killed 13 police and a civilian during the weekend.

At least 20 rebels and three security forces have died so far in retaliatory attacks in Orissa. Police also recovered 115 rifles,

one carbine and a truck full of ammunition which the rebels had looted from police posts during their weekend attack, Orissa's director general of police Gopal Chandra Nanda said. At least 600 troops, backed by

army helicopters are engaged in the gunbattle in Orissa's remote jungles, around 250 kilometres (150 miles) from Bhubaneswar. Orissa is one of India's poorest

states and part of an eastern swathe of the country where the Maoists, who say they are fighting for the rights of neglected tribal people and landless farmers, appear to be gaining ground. The insurgency grew out of a

peasant uprising in 1967 and has hit half of India's 29 states.

Hasina verdict

FROM PAGE 1 Within an hour of delivery of the HC verdict, the government filed a provisional leave petition with the SC seeking a stay. After a hearing on February 12, the apex court asked the government to file a regular application by February 19.

Businessman Azam Chowdhury filed the case last year against the now detained former prime minister and her cousin Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim.

Meanwhile, hearing on charge framing in the Tk 3 crore graft case against Hasina and seven others is scheduled to be held today at 2:30pm in a special court set up on the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban premises.

Firoz Alam, judge of Special Court-1, on February 13 deferred the hearing as the detained AL chief failed to appear before the court due to illness.

He is expected to rule tomorrow on Wednesday's petition seeking bail for Hasina in the case filed for alleged graft in awarding work to set up a barge-mount power plant.

Finance adviser

FROM PAGE 1

tion allegations against some businessmen who are members of Better Business Forum and also on the ACC list.

The adviser was talking to the newly elected committee of Economic Reporters Forum (ERF) who met him at his office.

The ACC prepares list on the basis of information it collects from different sources while the National Board of Revenue (NBR) also searches for information about individuals if they dodge taxes, Mirza Aziz said.

He also said no investment proposal linked to use of coal will be considered until the coal policy is finalised.

Price hike of rice, edible oil and fuel in the global market has a serious impact on the national economy. Fixed-income people are under tremendous pressure in this situation, the adviser mentioned.

The issue of dearness allowance for public servants will be considered in the next budget, he said. The government's budget, like people's family budgets, is also under pressure. Mrrza Aziz noted that adjust-

ment of administered prices with those in the international market has become difficult forcing the government to give more subsidies. This has created additional pressure on the budget. ERF President Nazmul Ahsan in

a written statement at the meeting proposed formation of a contingent committee comprising people from both public and private sec-He will also be grilled, sources | tors to prepare a roadmap for checking price hike.

40 injured

NEWS

FROM PAGE 16 tried to get inside BFDC compound. During the three hours long

clashes, police also fired teargas shells while the fans pelted the law enforcers with brickbats. Vehicular traffic on the busy

road stretching from Hotel Sonargaon to Tongi Diversion Road remained stopped from 9:00am to 1:00pm. The rowdy mob damaged eight vehicles on Tongi Diversion Road during the melee.

Earlier, several thousand people also swarmed on the Central Shaheed Minar premises in the morning as the body was supposed to be taken there after the janaza at BFDC. Such a huge gathering prompted police to seal all roads leading to the place.

Witnesses said Manna's body was taken to the hub of the Bangla film industry at about 10:30am by an ambulance.

At the sight of the ambulance, thousands of fans in an emotional outburst began pushing and shoving to get inside the BFDC to pay the star their last respect. Many of the admirers climbed

up trees around the BFDC confines to catch a glimpse of the actor.

After the namaj-e-janaza, police escorted the ambulance carrying

the coffin out of the capital for burial in his village home at Elenga in Tangail.

Veteran actor Razzak, FDC Managing Director ANM Badrul Amin, film directors Kazi Hayat Chashi Nazrul Islam, Nasiruddin Dilu, actors Riaz, Zahid Hassan and Afzal Hossain attended the janaza, among others.

Manna suffered a heart attack and died at United Hospital in Gulshan on Sunday. MANNA LAID TO REST

Manna was buried beside his father's grave at Elenga under Kalihati upazila in Tangail yester day afternoon. Earlier, a namaj-e-janaza was

held at the Central Eidgaon in Tangail town at 3:30pm. Thousands of admires and others gathered to pay tribute to

the actor there. His body was then taken to his village home where he was buried

held at Elenga High School ground. Born in 1964 in Tangail, Manna acted in around 300 movies during his career.

Banks given 2 weeks

FROM PAGE 1

another meeting with top officials of the commercial banks tomorrow to discuss the matter.

on the banks respecting the climate of free market economy," he said adding, "But at the same time we are alert so that none can take any irrational opportunity."

Majumder, however, defended the current rates saying that running skilled staff on high pay. "It will be difficult for us to

interest on savings certificates and treasury bonds are slashed," Majumder said, talking to the reporters. "The governor has assured us

sion with all stakeholders," he said. According to a BB report placed in the meeting, the average interest spread of commercial banks in The commercial banks also take Bangladesh is 6.16 percentage points, whereas the average international spread ranges between 4

In the government-owned commercial banks the spread is 5.88 percentage points while 6.17

and 8.98 percentage points in private and foreign commercial

The BB list shows that BRAC Bank est rate on deposit is 6.51 percent and lending 19.98 percent. BRAC Bank is followed by Standard Chartered Bank with a spread of 11.60 percentage points. Its average interest rate on deposit is 3.31 percent and that on lending 14.91 percent.

The spread of the Islami Bank Bangladesh, an Islami Shariah bank, is 7.29 percentage points as its average interest on deposit is 6.86 percent and on lending 14.15

Pointing to the high charges by private and foreign commercial banks, the BB report observed a government-owned bank does not charge clients for account closure while private commercial banks charge from Tk 300 to Tk 500 and the foreign commercial banks from Tk300 to Tk1000.

negotiation commissions in case of opening the letter of credits for export purposes, it noted.

The BB proposed that the banks withdraw all charges relating to accounts operation and stop taking handling costs from the clients.

another wounded when they were

caught in a blast while on foot

patrol in the Kajaki area, the

number of international soldiers

killed in Afghanistan this year. Most

of them have been US nationals but

the toll also includes Canadian

which heads a separate force in

Afghanistan that focuses on

counterterrorism, have been call-

ing for more troops for the country

ahead of an expected surge in the

the lack any proper sewer system in

the area, the adviser urged the Wasa

authorities to prepare a plan for

Adviser Iqbal said in order to

setting up a sewage treatmen

protect the Turag River from pollu-

tion during Ijtema, the government

has already taken a Tk 10 crore

project for building a multi-storied

Dhaka Wasa now serves about 2

toilet facility on the Ijtema ground.

lakh customers. It earned Tk 271

crore in revenue in fiscal year 2006-

'07 and it earned another Tk 25

and turn Dhaka Wasa into a corrup-

tion-free, transparent and profit-

analyst of Dhaka Wasa, said the

Dhaka Wasa website,

www.dwasa.org.bd, contains con-

tact details of high officials of Dhaka

Wasa, tender information, forms

and guidelines for water and sewer-

age connection, customer billing

information, download and print

option for water and sewerage bill of

any specific month, option to lodge

a complaint and view the action

taken by Dhaka Wasa following a

able to lodge their complaints

directly to the top management of

Dhaka Wasa through this site,

Hossain said adding that after the

banks that collect Wasa bills are

will be able to pay their bills online.

man of Dhaka Wasa and Raihanul

Abdullah Harun Pasha, chair

Besides, customers will also be

particular complaint.

in 2006 put the number of SCC system of Dhaka Wasa, customers

able service provider.

He urged all to come forward

Jafrin Hossain, senior system

crore from other sectors, he said.

Dhaka Wasa

unrest in spring.

FROM PAGE 16

plant for these areas.

Isaf and the United States

British, Dutch and Italian troops.

The new casualty took to 16 the

Ministry of Defence said.

37 killed in fresh

FROM PAGE 16

Khalid said the target of Sunday's blast was an anti-Taliban militia commander, Abdul Hakim Jan, who was killed along with about 35

of his men, according to an aide. The commander had been warned that his life was under threat from the Taliban, the governor told hundreds of people packed into a mosque for a cere-

mony to mourn Jan. "We told him a week ago that a suicide bomber was looking for

him," he said. Afghan officials blamed the extremist Taliban for the attack. But a spokesman for the movement, Yousuf Ahmadi, rejected Taliban involvement, suggesting the motive was infighting among progovernment commanders.

Sunday's bombing was condemned by the United Nations and several Western countries which have a military presence in the warravaged country.

The UN Security Council underlined in a statement "the need to bring perpetrators, organisers, financiers and sponsors of this reprehensible act of terrorism to ustice.

The British Ministry of Defence announced meanwhile Monday that one of its soldiers was killed Sunday in a separate explosion in the southern province of Helmand, which sees some of the worst violence of the Taliban-led insurgency. The soldier was killed and

Voter lists

FROM PAGE 16

numbers of male and female voters in Khulna city are 203,713 and 194,297 respectively. The district election office will

accept applications from the voters until March 5 for making any necessary changes. Mujibur said the final voter list would be published on March 24 after the three committees formed

to check the applications submit

their final reports by March 20. The number of voters in Sylhet city stands at 254,450 now against 182,000 in the first city corporation elections held in 2003, reports our Sylhet correspondent. However, the voter list prepared integrated with the online billing

voters at 255,710.

The authorities asked the voters to submit their applications by March 5 if they want to add something or make any correction, said a high-up of the election office.

Our Tangail Correspondent adds:

at 5:15pm. Another namaj-e-janaja was

"We are not imposing anything

BAB Chairman Nazrul Islam

private commercial banks requires higher expenses as they need reduce the lending rates unless the

that the central bank will set the interest rate spread after discus-

and 5 percentage points.

has the highest spread rate at 13.47 percentage points. Its average inter-

from the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) had arrested Joj Mia who said top criminals Joy and Subrata Bain orchestrated the grenade attacks.

Later, it was found that some of the CID officials influenced by the then government forced Joj Miah to give the statement. The newly appointed investigation officers also revealed that

> Harkat ul Jihad al Islami (Huji) was behind the grenade attack. Acting on the confessional statement of Huji leader Hannan, held in October 1, 2005, Rab members arrested another Huji leader Zandal and recovered 41 grenades

If Zandal is brought to Dhaka for interrogation, important informa tion can be extracted from him, the IGP said. The law enforcers violate human rights in many countries

due to lack of knowledge about it, he said adding that the police are trying hard to regain its image. Dr Purna Sen, chief of the human rights unit of the Commonwealth Secretariat, and

police personnel from South Africa were present at the function. A total of 30 police officials will attend the training programme

sponsored by the Commonwealth.

Delwar kicks

in Satkhira.

FROM PAGE 16 standing committee active in party politics which, they said, will inspire grassroots level leaders and

activists. In response to this, Delwar said We are working under tremendous pressure but I can assure you that good day will come soon."

Referring to the reported call from Khaleda for unity in the party, Delwar said she made the call so that the party can face the present crises. "She [Khaleda] sent the message not to bring back persons who betrayed the party," he said. The view exchange meeting was

also attended by, among others, acting Office Secretary of the party Ruhul Kabir Rizvi, former lawmaker Sohrab Uddin, former student leaders Habib un Nabi Sohel and Forhad Azad, Kurigram district BNP leaders Tahminul Haque, Mostafizur Rahman and Abdul Khaleque, presidents and secretaries of nine upazila units and leaders of district units of the party's front organisations. Earlier, leaders of Jatiyatabadi

Secretary Humayun Islam Khan met Delwar at his flat in the afternoon on the occasion of its 27th founding anniversary. At the meeting, Delwar urged the party men to remain united at any cost. Party Joint Secretary General Nazrul Islam Khan, Rizvi

Ahmed and Sohrab Uddin were

Tanti Dal including its General

Abedin, managing director of Tanti Dal leaders also sent a bou-Dhaka Wasa, also spoke at the quet to the detained party chairper son through jail authorities.

also present.

President of Pakistan certainly come out of the vicious

Govt advancing

"People's cooperation is neces-

sary to eliminate the corrup-

tion...people have to nurture such

an attitude that they won't commit

and tolerate corruption," he told

At the meeting, Fakhruddin

reminisced about his childhood

days at his native village

He said following construction

of Mukterpur bridge, which he

inaugurated earlier in the day, a

long-cherished dream of the

inhabitants of Munshiganj was

fulfilled. In this context, he nar-

the Dhaleswari River by ferry,

Referring to production of

good-quality potatoes in

Munshiganj, which constitutes

about 35 percent of total potato

production in the country, the

head of the caretaker government

urged his compatriots to produce

toes and assured the producers of

the locals, the CA said he will talk to

the authorities concerned for

giving two-kilometre new connec-

He further said steps have been

taken to upgrade Munshiganj

Sadar Modern Hospital from 100-

bed to 200-bed one involving a cost

of Tk 12.50 crore. Instruction has

been given to the authorities con-

cerned to immediately accomplish

Regarding other demands, he

Representatives from different

professions, including potato

farmers, fishermen, teachers,

journalists, traders, and cold-

storage traders, union parishad

chairmen and Munshiganj

pourasava chairman and UNO also

spoke at the exchange-of-opinion

meeting conducted by Munshiganj

were thrown at an Awami League

rally at Bangabandhu Avenue in

2004 where AL president and for-

mer premier Sheikh Hasina was

coalition, the investigation officials

During the rule of BNP-Jamaat

Punishment

DCMd Moniruddin.

FROM PAGE 1

present.

said those demands will be actively

considered by the government.

the task.

tion for gas supply to Tongibari.

Responding to the demands of

maximum amount of good pota-

all necessary supports.

Nagorkandi in this upazila.

FROM PAGE 1

his audience.

wasting time.

cycle gradually.

FROM PAGE 1 was close to the past turnouts. More than a dozen people sacrificed their lives for democracy on

Election Day. In the evening on February 18 it was clear that Pakistan People's Party, PML of Nawaz Sharif and ANP swept in three provinces and PML-Q performed well in Baluchistan.

Musharrafis no more in a position to change the victory of the opposition into defeat. Army will not help him for rigging. People are ready to resist. Pro-Musharraf PML-Q has vanished in at least two provinces. Sindh and North West Frontier Province rejected PML-Qoutright. PPP and PML-N created cracks

rated his experiences in crossing for PML-Q in Punjab which was a political fort of pro-Musharraf forces. PPP and PML-N have already decided to cooperate with each other against Musharraf. Now the most trusted friend of the USA in Pakistan have no other choice than to leave his office.

February 18 is the beginning for the

end of Musharraf Raj in Pakistan.

The credit of this victory goes to the

great sacrifice of Benazir Bhutto on December 27. PPP got votes out of a big sympathy wave. Nawaz Sharif did well because of a very offensive and organised election campaign. He emerged as the champion of independent judiciary and free media. Musharraf was rejected by masses mainly due to his bad strategy in

war against terror. He killed more Pakistanis in this war than the Indians killed in the wars of 1965 and 1971. He is heading towards a

very bad and painful end. Now the question is that who will be the next President of Pakistan. PPP and PML-Q can agree on a new prime minister but it would be great challenge to agree on a new President. Some diplomats in Islamabad were stunned few days ago when Kalsoom Nawaz Sharif announced that Dr AQ Khan

will be their presidential candidate. It will not be acceptable to the USA and the whole west. PML-N sources said that party has not formally nominated Dr AQ Khan as their candidate for presidency.

Wife of Nawaz Sharif, Begum Kalsoom expressed her personal views few days ago about the detained scientist. PPP and PML-N have to face many challenges in coming days. Asif Ali Zardari and Nawaz Sharif will meet each other soon and they will try to resolve all issues, including the names of new prime minister and president.

It is expected that if PML-N will support the prime minister of PPP then PPP will support the President of PML-N. There are no doubts that both the parties will restore the real parliamentary democracy in Pakistan. President will have no power to dissolve the national

Padma Bridge

FROM PAGE 16

The CA said Padma river training work for the construction of the bridge will cover some parts of Munshiganj, reducing the intensity of flood due to erosion by the river as well as sufferings and miseries of the people of this region.

The 1.52-km-long sixth Bangladesh-China Friendship Bridge (Muktarpur Bridge) was constructed at a cost of Tk 208.35 crore of which Tk 129.20 crore came from the Chinese government as grant and interest-free loan, while the rest, amounting to Tk 79.15 crore, was provided by the Bangladesh government. The construction work on the

bridge begun on July 2005 and completed on January 2008, six months ahead of the schedule. The 10-metre wide bridge has two lanes. The CA said opening of the bridge will give a momentum to socioeconomic activities of the

district and help improve the stan-

dard of living and socioeconomic

conditions of the people through generating employment. "Vegetables, potatoes, fruits and various agri-produces can be easily supplied from Munshiganj to Dhaka, and the supply cost of various goods, which are sold here, will also come down," he said, adding that it will also cast a posi-

tive impact on the market prices of agricultural items in the country. Recalling China's immense contribution towards infrastructural development of Bangladesh and appreciating

Chinese government for their

financial and technical coopera-

tion in constructing the Sixth

Friendship Bridge, Fakhruddin said the new bridge will be considered as a milestone in the historical and friendly relations between the two countries. Communications Adviser Maj

Gen (retd) Golam Kader, Chinese Ambassador in Dhaka Zheng Qingdian, Communications Secretary Mahbubur Rahman and Executive Director of Bangladesh Bridge Authority Khan M Ibrahim Hossain also spoke at the function held near the south end of the new bridge.

Death sentence

FROM PAGE 16 "We see Saudi Arabia as one of our

closest friends and ally and I am sure if there are any issues, they can be amicably resolved," he told the The death sentences were awarded following a clash last year between the Bangladeshi workers

and a group of men who allegedly

were stealing electric wire in a factory in Riyadh. The confrontation led to the death of an Egyptian national. According to the relatives of the workers, a total of 14 Bangladeshi expatriates were accused in the case. Three were sentenced to 12 years' rigorous imprisonment,

while two fled home and one remains on the run. Six of the expatriate labourers who have been awarded death sentences are Mamun, 25, Shafiqul, 23, Masud, 25 -- all from Tangail, Faruk, 28, from Comilla, Matiar, 28, from Faridpur and Sumon from Kishoreganj. The names of the other two could not

Pakistanis brave

be known.

The government banned exit polls. Musharraf faces possible impeachment if the vote brings in a parliament packed with his foes, and even if he heads off that threat

he would find his power further

curtailed if the opposition wins a

The former general is viewed by the United States as its key ally in the fight against al-Qaeda and Taliban militants based in Pakistan's tribal areas on the border with Afghanistan. Opinion polls have tipped

Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan People's

Party (PPP) to win, followed by the

party of former prime minister

Nawaz Sharif, with the pro-

Musharraf Pakistan Muslim League-Q (PML-Q) trailing in third "I am not afraid of bomb blasts... am far less courageous than Benazir Bhutto but I would be ready to die to achieve her missupporter of the slain politician,

told AFP in the southern city of Karachi. But opposition leaders have alleged a campaign of "massive rigging" in favour of Musharraf's allies, who could also find support from their feudal connections in

rural Pakistan. Benazir Bhutto's widower, Asif Ali Zardari, predicted that the PPP would win.

"Victory is our destiny and we

he cast his vote in the southern city of Nawabshah. Sharif said, as he voted in the eastern city of Lahore, that the PML-Q "is committing rigging, and

they are attacking our candidates

will change the system," he said as

and supporters. A candidate from Sharif's party who was standing in provincial elections that were also being held Monday was among five people shot dead late Sunday in Lahore. Another Sharif supporter was killed

on Monday.

Security officials said a total of assassination.

14 people died over the two days. At least eight bombs exploded in Pakistan's insurgency-hit north-

west and southwest but caused no

casualties, officials said. A rocket

also hit a polling station in the south of the country. Nine of the deaths came on election day itself while five died in a shooting on the eve of polling in the country's political hub Lahore, the capital of populous Punjab

On Monday, six people died in

shootings in Punjab between rival

party supporters, officials said. Two

others died in the southern prov-

province, they said.

ince of Sindh and one death was reported in the northwestern region of Karak. A security official said about 100

people were injured in election

violence on polling day. Opposition parties say a low turnout caused by fears of violence would make vote fraud even easier but many Pakistanis said they were sion," Sakina Bibi, a 60-year-old determined to cast their ballots

> "I am scared because of all the bombings but I am sure Allah will protect me and all the people voting today," Saima Zahoor, a housewife clad in an all-covering burka, told AFP in the northwestern city of Peshawar. Campaigning ended grimly on

Saturday when a suicide car

bomber ploughed into a meeting of

Benazir Bhutto's supporters in the

northwestern tribal town of

Parachinar, killing 47 people and wounding more than 100 others. More than 90 people died in bombings during the week leading up to the vote.

The attacks highlighted the Pakistani military's ongoing struggles in the tribal belt, which has been branded by US officials as a "safe haven" for al-Qaeda mili-Musharraf and the US Central

Intelligence Agency have accused a top al-Qaeda militant based in the region of masterminding Bhutto's

secretary. of the law ministry.