### ROUTE PLAN FOR GOING TO CENTRAL SHAHEED MINAR AND AZIMPUR GRAVEYARD DURING EKUSHEY FEBRUARY 2008 OBSERVANCE VC Bhaban Gate **Graveyard North Gate** TSC Island Nilkhet Police Home Economics Outpost Intersection College gate **Fuller Road** Intersection Doel Martyrs' Graveyard Eden College Shaheed **Graveyard South Gate** Bakshibazar Chankharpoo Directions for movement of motorcade and people going to pay tribute to Shaheed Minar and graveyard This mark indicates only exit. No-one can use it to go to Shaheed Minar. Closed street

towards Jagannath Hall by crossing the

intersections of Palashi and Fuller

from Chankharpul intersection near

Dhaka Medical College Hospita

(DMCH) will need to cross

Bakshibazar intersection and go

towards Palashi intersection, turn right

on the intersection and go towards

Jagannath Hall by crossing the Fuller

and the Shaheed Minar from TSC,

Fuller Road from VC's residence

towards Jagannath Hall and the road

Chankharpul will remain closed.

towards Doyel Chattar from

vehicles on the DU campus and some

other adjoining roads from 9:00pm

today till 2:00pm tomorrow, February

remain suspended on the roads sur-

rounding the Shaheed Minar between

10:00am today and 2:00pm tomorrow.

convinced that a trail is being held in

a transparent way and openly; and

when the accused person is some-

be held in public.

transparent.

one like Sheikh Hasina, the trial must

international level as the process in

Besides, vehicular movement will

The roads leading toward DMCH

Roadintersection.

People going to the Shaheed Minar

Road.

## Amar Ekushey

and bomb squad, dog squad and special medical teams will also be deployed in the area for enhanced

Rab will set up 24 closed-circuit cameras in and around the premises of Azimpur graveyard and the Shaheed Minar while their uniformed and plainclothesmembers will be on alert. Prof SMA Faiz, vice chancellor (VC)

of Dhaka University (DU), sought all out cooperation from students, teachers, officials and employees of DU and people from all walks of life so that due fervour and vigour of the day can be maintained.

Meanwhile, the Dhaka University Central Coordination Committee for Observing Amar Ekushey 2008 released a special layout of the area with one-way entry and exit directions for the movement of human traffic.

After placing wreaths at the alter of To go to the Azimpur graveyard the Shaheed Minar, people have to exit from the High Court, people have been through the roads leading toward urged to go towards Doyel Chattar, turn Doyel Chattar and Chankharpul right towards TSC, turn left towards VC's residence, and go all the way intersections. Dhaka Metropolitan Police will crossing the intersections of Nilkhet restrict movement of all modes of Police Box and New Market.

After offering prayers at the graves of the martyrs, people wishing to go to the Shaheed Minar have to leave through the south gate of the graveyard, go all the way towards Jagannath Hall by crossing the intersections of · Eden College, Palashi and Fuller Road.

Those who want to go only to the

The court deferred the hearing as

detained former power and energy

secretary Toufiq-e-Elahi

Chowdhury, one of the accused, was

not brought to the court. The former

secretary was shown arrested in

another case after he posted bail in

the barge-mount power plant case

judge to secure court order to pro-

duce Toufiq before the court during

The prosecution appealed to the

The court earlier deferred charge-

framing hearing three times. The first

deferment followed a time petition

from the defence and second time

the prosecution sought time. The

court delayed the hearing for the

third time as Hasina could not be

produced before the court due to her

illness. A pale looking Hasina was

counsels filed a petition for bail.

Judge Firoz Alam of the Special

Court-1 set yesterday for the court

decision after the defence submitted

High Court judgment which

scrapped the extortion case of busi-

nessman Azam J Chowdhury against

the Awami League chief and declared

bringing it within the ambit of the

Reading out part of the HC judg-

ment, Hasina's counsel Barrister

Shafique said the barge-mount

power plant case cannot go on and

the former prime minister should get

bail as the case is similar to the extor-

however, said the power plant case

can also be tried under the Criminal

Procedure Code (CrPC), Penal Code

and Anti-Corruption Commission

Canada chapter William Sloan

termed the trial of the barge-mount

graft case against Hasina "not a

public trial" after he was barred from

as there is no law that bars a visitor

from observing a public trial, refusal

to allow Sloan enter the court will

Expressing disappointment,

William Sloan said to make a trial

transparent, it is important to hold it

visited many countries to watch

called a public trial," he added.

tarnish the image of the country.

Hasina's counsel yesterday said

CANADIAN LAWYER BARRED

entering the special court.

man open court.

The chief prosecution lawyer,

tion charges that the HC threwout.

Emergency Power Rules illegal.

But the court mothballed its

Earlier on February 13, Hasina's

brought to the court yesterday.

and secured release order.

the charge-framing hearing.

FROM PAGE 16

Charge framing

FROM PAGE 16

Shaheed Minar from the New Marke intersection, have to go towards Home Economics College, turn left on Eden College intersection and go all the way

constitution.

The sub-committee also procouncil.

The sub-committee also advocated bringing transparency to the party fund.

"We want to ensure general members' participation in decision making process," GM Quader, convener of the sub-committee

"All political parties are now operating without any specific political ideology as all the power remains in the hands of only three to four people, who only serve their own interests," GM Quader commented while explaining the reaconstitution.

the party fund and sources of its earnings, JP presidium member Ziauddin Ahmed Bablu told The Daily Star, "All transactions of the party will be disclosed on the website of the party," adding that the initiative will ensure account-

About curtailing absolute power of the party chairman, he said, "We want to bring a balance of power in He said questions will rise in | the party and modify the power of

which the trial is being held is not momentum in last June after now expelled secretary general of uni-Meanwhile, police on duty at the fied BNP, Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban claimed had disclosed a set of party reform Sloan requires special permission to proposals including one proposing enter the court since he arrived in removal of Khaleda Zia from the Bangladesh with a tourist visa. post of the chairperson.

Hasina's personal assistant Hasan Mahmud said, "William arrived in Bangladesh as a visitor taking permission from international jurist association and since he is a jurist, he can go for a court visit."

"Refusal to allow him enter the court has proved our fear true that a camera-trial is being held against Hasina," he said.

"William should not be barred as the constitution ensures public trial for an accused. If he was permitted, the government's image would have shined. Moreover, William has not come here as a lawyer for Hasina," said barrister Shafique Ahmed, Hasina's counsel.

the certified copy of the February 6 Shafique said Sloan is here to observe whether the trial is being conducted in accordance with the constitution and whether human rights are being violated. He said it is a question of transparency.

William Sloan arrived in Dhaka early February 18 on a weeklong visit

## Gen Mustafiz

FROM PAGE 16

following any rules and regula

The court said the allegation that Mustafiz obtained the rank by influencing the government has not been proved, adding that he was promoted to the post following approval of the authorities con-President of US Jurist Association cerned.

> rank on the day he retired from service in December 2000, during the Awami League regime.

On October 10 in 2004, the BNP-Jamaat alliance government cancelled his promotion on the recommendation of the parliamentary standing committee on defence ministry.

The cancellation order said the organogram of Bangladesh Army does not provide for the post of general and that the promotion was.

"I am very disappointed. I have given violating the rules of the army. Mustafiz challenged the governdifferent trials and I was allowed each ment order on November 6 in 2004 time except for today and once following which the HC bench of during the trial against Pinochet in Justice MA Matin and Justice AFM Chile," Sloan said. "Nasty things Abdur Rahman issued a ruling on happen in the dark, and it cannot be the government to explain why its action should not be declared ille-Sloan said the public must be

## JP set to curb

regarding any obscure or unexplained matter in the party consti-

In the current party constitution, the chairman was given absolute power of interpreting the

posed to form new organisational units based on the country's parliamentary constituencies, the committees of which will elect an executive committee through a party

told The Daily Star.

sons for curbing absolute power of the party chairman in the new draft

"Through amending the consti tution we want to protect the inter est of general members as well as of the people," GM Quader, who is also a presidium member of the party, said.

About bringing transparency to ability and transparency.

the chairman.

The issue of party reform got

AL presidium members Abdur Razzak, Tofail Ahmed, and Suranjit Sengupta also disclosed separate reform proposals which included a proposal for curtailing absolute power of their party chief.

According to the Election Commission's electoral roadmap, political parties will get three months from March to May to bring necessary amendments to their constitutions and to form new committees by holding party councils to get registered as parliamentary parties by June with, the commission.

### Bird flu scare

FROM PAGE 1

when these are cooked or boiled properly -- as recommended by the government, he said.

For the last one month, Nadira Sultana Nadi, who works at an overseas education consultancy firm, did not place any chicken or egg on her family's dining table. "We are eating fish and beef

quite frequently now instead of chicken or egg. None of family members want to eat chicken now," she said. Kamrul, a Hilsha retailer at

Karwan Bazar, said the demand for fish has increased since early this month and the trend still continues. "The sales volume is Mustafiz was promoted to the higher overlast month," he said

On an average, the price of a single Hilsha rose by about Tk 25, Kamrul said. Emdad Hossain, a seller of

imported Ruhi fish that is consumed widely, said the price of Ruhi has also gone up. "The wholesalers have raised the prices. That's why we are

charging higher prices," he added. Abu Siddique, a butcher at Karwan Bazar, said on an average. he now sells around Tk 10,000 worth of mutton per day -- compared with Tk 7,000 a day earlier.

"My sales have gone up due to the higher demands resulted from the outbreak of bird flu. But the wholesalers are the ones cashing in on the rising demands by charging higher prices," he added.

## Private airlines

FROM PAGE 1

the procedures to collect two Boeing-747 aircraft to operate flights on international routes," said Wahidur Rahman Rana, chief financial officer of Anmole Albab Airlines.

Retired employees of Biman also formed a body last year to float a new private airline.

Non-resident Bangladeshis contribution to the industry is significant as they, mostly from the UK and the US, have launched two of the four private airlines.

These airlines are operating flights with 10 different aircraft. GMG has seven aircraft in its fleet with two Dash-8, three Boeing MD-80, one Boeing 737 and one Boeing 747.

United Airways has one Dash-8-

100, Best Air one Boeing 737, and Aviana Airways has one Dash-8-100. The private airlines are also planning to add more aircraft to their fleet so that flights can be expanded to international destinations.

United Airways has already purchased another Dash-8-100 and signed a letter of intent with a Singapore-based company to lease an Airbus A300-310. The airline is also negotiating to lease a Boeing 747-300.

Best Air is going to add another Boeing 737 to its fleet by March this

The new private airlines are operating domestic flights on Dhaka to Chittagong, Cox's Bazar, Sylhet

and Jessore routes so far. Besides, GMG is operating international flights on Dhaka to Kolkata, Delhi, Kathmandu, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur and Dubai routes.

The other private airlines are also planning to launch international

"It'll be very difficult to survive by operating only on domestic routes; it's very much essential to go for international routes," said Tasbir of United Airways, founded by nonresident Bangladeshis mostly from the UK.

He also said they are now waiting for the government nod to operate international flights on Dhaka-Dubai-London, Dhaka-Kuala Lumpur, Dhaka-Dubai, Chittagong-Dubai, Dhaka-Kolkata, and Dhaka-Kathmanduroutes.

Like United, Best Air is also planning to launch international flights. "We'll start our international flights on Dhaka-Bangkok route in March this year and on Dhaka to Kuala Lumpur, Kolkata, Chennai and Dubai routes within next six months," said Mohsin Rana, acting manager (marketing and sales). The private operators said seat

utilisation of their aircraft ranges from 30 percent to 60 percent.

The ever-growing demand for air transport on international routes

prompted them to go for international flights, they added.

Around 40 lakh passengers fly from Zia International Airport (ZIA) to different foreign destinations every year, while about 1.8-2.4 lakh more aspiring passengers cannot go to the Middle East due mainly to seat crisis, observed Wahidur Rahman of

Referring to a study, he said the possibility of getting a ticket to a European or American destination just before a week is only one to two

The possibility stands at 20 percent if the passenger tries one month before the journey, he added. "So, there is a huge scope for Bangladeshi private carriers to operate here and it will be no problem if another two to three private airlines join the indus-

Biman Bangladesh Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer MA Momen welcomed the new private airlines to the country's aviation industry. He said this will create competition among the local private airlines and make them provide standard services.

With expansion of business and tourism, people's movement is increasing day by day and they are now looking for faster transport like airplanes. That's why the demand for air transport is also increasing," said Habibur Rahman, managing director of Aviana Airways.

"If foreign carriers can do busi ness in Bangladesh, why can't we? he asked.

### Yunus

FROM PAGE 16

provide micro-finance institutions with a complete range of financing facilities in the form of credits guarantees and equity capital along with a platform for advisory services, information exchanges and technical assistance.

"This is the first time that a large global banking group has partnered with the Grameen group for an initiative of this scope," says the release.

Grameen Trust, a sister organi sation of Grameen Bank, has already stepped in to initiate or support micro-finance initiatives in 38 countries.

"While thousands of MFIs exist worldwide, many are restricted in their development by inadequate resources and equity capital, or because they lack the experience and training. The joint initiative by Credit Agricole and Grameen Trust intends to offer a response to these needs," it says.

FROM PAGE 16

Rahman and held at his Gulshan residence in the capital

The AL leader said that neither they nor the people want BNP to be left out from the dialogue with the EC, but the nation cannot wait for an indefinite period of

Both parties also urged the government to hold dialogue with the political parties immediately for what they said was to clear the confusion among people over holding the next polls. "There is still confusion in

people's minds over the next election. The government will have to remove it through initiating dialogue right away," Tofail

The AL leader urged all to be united to stop militancy in the country.

Briefing the newsmen, JSD President Hasanul Haque Inu said, "We want to put an end to the disbelief over holding the elections through the dialogue."

He said all the secular and proliberation war political parties should have to be united and create a "political roadmap" to ensure a free and fair election.

Responding to a query whether his party is involved with the move to form a government of national consensus before the polls, Inu said that such a government could be formed after the election based on the 14-party' 23-point common programme.

Asked whether he is involved with the process of forming alliance with parties out of 14-party combine, he replied that his party did not sit with others except for Jatiya Party (Ershad), Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh and Liberal Democratic Party, which were under the umbrella of AL-led grand electoral alliance.

At yesterday's meeting, both parties decided to take a common stand at the dialogues with the government and the EC based on the 14-party alliance's 31-point charter of electoral reform proposals.

AL leaders Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Amir Hossain Amu, Motia Chowdhury, Kaz Zafrullah, Syed Ashraful Islam and Abdul Mannan Khan and ISD leaders Mainuddin Khan Badal Syed Zafar Sazzad, Shirin Akhtar and Sharif Nurul Ambia were present at the meeting among others.

# EC to allow parties

FROM PAGE 1

So, none of the political parties which contested that election submitted their expenditure reports to the EC, and it took no action against them.

The EC yesterday started sending its modified proposals concerning polls expenditures to political parties with the invitations to them for second round of electoral reform talks from February 24, sources in the EC Secretariat said. The proposals say the funds of a

political party contesting parliamentary election shall be deposited and maintained in any scheduled bank.

Any such party will have to submit its report on election expenditures to the EC within 90 days after the election. The report must show the opening and closing balance of the bank account and the amount of money the party received as donations within the time frame.

its election expenditure report within the timeframe, the Election Commission can extend it by 30 days for submission of report. If the party again fails to do so, the commission can extend it by another 15 days with a fine of Tk 10,000," says the EC proposal. "Registration of the political party will be cancelled if it finally fails to submit the report."

In its earlier proposals in April last year, the EC said political parties would have to submit reports on election expenditures in 30 days after Most of the political parties par-

ticipating in the first round of electoral reform talks in between September and November last year agreed on the EC proposal for submission of polls expenditure reports But they urged the EC to extend the time frame for submission of the reports. One or two of the parties also urged it to increase the ceiling of election expenditures.

Considering the views of the parties, the EC has now come up with the revised proposals. According to the EC's proposals

Of the inured, three are Rab perfor electoral reforms, political parties intending to contest parliamentary election must be registered with it by meeting a set of criteria and will have "If a political party fails to submit to maintain financial transparency torun party activities. The EC however has yet to decide

> tures. Sources in the EC hinted that the ceiling of a candidate's expenditure might also be raised from Tk 5 lakh

about candidates' polls expendi-

Yahoo bid

isn't raising

Microsoft

AP, Seattle

Microsoft is not privately haggling with Yahoo over the software maker's rejected \$31-per-share buyout offer for the slumping Internet pioneer, Bill Gates said in an interview.

"We sent them a letter and said | ing dense essays about mostly interwe think that's a fair offer. There's nothing that's gone on other than us stating that we think it's a fair offer," the Microsoft chairman said Monday. "They should take a hard look at it."

Microsoft Corp. made an unso licited offer to buy Yahoo Inc. just over two weeks ago. At the time, the deal was valued at \$44.6 billion, but since then, Microsoft's share price has tumbled 12.8 percent, pushing the value of the cash-and-stock offer closer to \$41 billion.

Yahoo spurned the offer and said it "substantially undervalues" the company's assets. The Web portal business was said to be in talks late last week with News Corp. about a complex deal to oush its market value toward \$50 billion. Yahoo also was reportedl discussing an advertising partner ship with Google Inc.

### Hasina case verdict FROM PAGE 1

High Court verdict, the government filed a provisional leave petition with the Supreme Court seeking a stay order. After a hearing on February 12, the apex court did not stay the High Court judgment and asked the government to file a petition seeking permission to appeal against the High Court judgment by February 19 (yester

During the hearing on the mat ter yesterday morning, one of Hasina's counsels barrister Shafique Ahmed prayed to adjourn the hearing till February 24 as the senior counsel for Hasina is abroad

Meanwhile, the state counsel Attorney General Fida M Kamal told court that he would be preoccupied on February 24 with some personal issues. Following their submission, the court scheduled February 25 for hearing on government's leave application.

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

of the case. Hasina agrees

later accused Hasina's sister

Sheikh Rehana in the charge sheet

FROM PAGE 1 things are alright, we will finalise everything tomorrow (today) after discussions with higher authori-

He said he heard about her wishes regarding treatment from the television news. It would be better if she chooses BSMMU, he added.

Queried, Maj Haider said they would probably take her to a hospital today or tomorrow. Meanwhile, rumours were rife

that she could be taken to hospital anytime last night. Sources in the jail administration told The Daily Star that tight security measurers would be in

place on her way to hospital and

also during her stay there. A huge contingent of police and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) personnel would be deployed to ensure security of the AL chief who might be taken to hospital in the wee hours to avoid the press, added

the sources. Hasina has been suffering from high blood pressure and allergy, and has problems in her eyes, ears

and kidneys. Earlier on Thursday, the jail authorities agreed to send her to any hospital she picks, but she kept refusing to have medical checkups, except for her eyes, fearing

Sheikh Fazle Noor Tapash, one of her counsels, told The Daily Star that her personal choice would be Square Hospital. "She has already conveyed her

decision to the jail authorities and now it's all up to them," he added. Hasina also told her counsels that she would not have check-ups

under any doctor other than her personal ones. Talking to The Daily Star, Dr Abdullah said she should have tests on liver and kidneys, ECG, chest x-

ray and a blood lipid profile. Saying that her overall condition was better yesterday, he said the AL chief is having severe problem hearing since both her aids have been damaged. She needs to go to the US as the treatment she needs for ear ailment is not possible here, he observed.

## Rab official

FROM PAGE 16 Badrul Alam, 32, assistant subinspector (ASI) of Rab-1, and pedestrian Nurul Islam, 62.

sonnel and the other is a pedestrian whose identity could not be known. The injured were hospitalised. Of them; the condition of Rab Nayek Abul Bashar was stated to be critical.

Witnesses said a Jamalpurbound passenger bus of Utsab Paribahan hit the pick-up van from behind near Ashulia Police Station at at around 8:30pm. The Rab vehicle was carrying a patrol team. The pick up van overturned and

## Fidel Castro quits

positioning his 76-year-old brother

FROM PAGE 16

July 31, 2006, when he announced

that he had undergone intestinal

not been seen in public, appearing

only sporadically in official photo-

graphs and videotapes and publish-

national themes as his younger

A new National Assembly was

elected in January, and will meet for

the first time Sunday to pick the

governing Council of State, including

has held for decades. There had been

wide speculation about whether he

Year's Day 1959 and reshaped Cuba

into a communist state 90 miles from

US shores. The fiery guerrilla leader

survived assassination attempts, a

CIA-backed invasion and a missile

crisis that brought the world to the

brink of nuclear war. Ten US admin-

istrations tried to topple him, most

famously in the disastrous Bay of Pigs

remained communist long after the

breakup of the Soviet Union and the

collapse of communism across

the world's longest ruling head of

brother's designated successor. The

longtime defence minister had been

in his brother's rebel movements

since 1953 and spent decades as No.

The United States, bent on ensur-

ing neither brother is in power, built a

detailed plan in 2005 for American

assistance to ensure a democratic

transition on the island of 11.2 mil-

lion people after Fidel Castro's death.

But Cuban officials insisted there

would be no transition, saying the

island's socialist political and eco-

ability to provide a high level of

health care and education for citi-

zens while remaining fully inde-

pendent of the United States. His

detractors called him a dictator

whose totalitarian government

systematically denied individual

freedoms and civil liberties such as

country to recognise Castro after his

guerrilla movement drove out then-

President Fulgencio Batista in 1959.

But the two countries soon clashed

over Castro's increasingly radical

erty and businesses and invited

his revolution to be socialist. A day

later, he defeated the CIA-backed

Cuba's economy and the CIA plotted

to kill Castro. Undaunted, the Cuban

president supplied troops and sup-

port to revolutionaries in Africa and

peak on Oct. 22, 1962, when

President Kennedy announced there

were Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba.

After a tense week of diplomacy,

Soviet Premier Nikita S. Krushchev

the early 1990s, Castro eventually

made peace with many governments

that once shunned him. Pope John

Paul II visited the island in January

With the end of the Cold War in

Hostility over Cuba reached its

Bay of Pigs invasion.

atin America.

pulled out the weapons.

On April 16, 1961, Castro declared

The United States squeezed

path. Castro seized American prop-

The United States was the first

speech, movement and assembly.

Castro's supporters admired his

nomic systems would outlive Castro.

2 in Cuba's power structure.

Monarchs excepted, Castro was

Raul Castro had long been his

His ironclad rule ensured Cuba

invasion of 1961.

Eastern Europe.

Castro rose to power on New

brother has consolidated his rule.

the presidency that Fidel Castro

would continue in that role.

Since then, the elder Castro has

The loss of Soviet aid plunged Raul for permanent succession to the Cuba into financial crisis, but the presidency. Fidel Castro temporarily economy slowly recovered in the late ceded his powers to his brother on 1990s with a tourism boom.

Castro later reasserted control over the economy, stifling the limited free enterprise tolerated during more difficult times.

Fidel Castro Ruz was born in eastern Cuba, where his Spanish immigrant father ran a prosperous plantation. His official birthday is Aug. 13, 1926, although some say he was born a year later.

He attended Roman Catholic schools and the University of Havana, where he received law and social science degrees.

Castro launched his revolutionary battle as a young man, organizing an unsuccessful July 26, 1953 attack on a military barracks in the eastern city of Santiago.

Later freed under a pardon, Castro went to Mexico and organised a rebel army that returned to Cuba and rallied support in the Sierra Maestra mountains. His rebels took power when Batista was forced to

Entering Havana triumphantly, Castro declared: "Power does not interest me, and I will not take it."

### Poultry farm FROM PAGE 16

director of the project, said. The sources working with the project and Department of Livestock services said that usually after a culling, a local district committee comprising district commissioner, police super, district livestock officer, veterinary surgeon, district accounts officer and district agriculture officer sends them a

"The letter mentions the number of chickens, eggs or game birds," Dr Ebrahim said adding that it also states the age and type of the chickens as the rate of compensation differs according to these.

The government decided to compensate the affected poultry farmers on an increased rate from February 6. According to the recent decision, the farmers will receive Tk 95 for

each backyard chicken aged more than 12 weeks, Tk 90 per layer chicken aged 12 weeks, Tk 60 for a grower aged between two weeks to 12 weeks, Tk 60 for each broiler more than two weeks, Tk 80 for per duck and goose more than 12 weeks, Tk 20 per chick and duckling, Tk 50 per quail and pigeon, Tk 200 per any kind of game bird and Tk3 an egg. Our Narayanganj correspondent

reports: A total of 7,150 chickens, 55 ducks and 19 pigeons were culled and 22,000 eggs were destroyed yesterday in Fatullah and Araihazar upazilas as avian influenza spread. District Livestock Officer Abu

Taher said that bird flu virus was first detected at the farms of George Mia of Nayapara in Araihazar and Mahfuzul Islam of Alitek in Fatullah. Later, all chickens of Mozammel Haq Jewel, Alamgir, Mokseda Akhter

their farms were within one kilometre radius of the infected farms. The poultry in three farms in Tangail, Narsingdi and Barisal will be culled today as the deadly bird

flu virus was detected there.

and their neighbours were culled as

# Pak opposition

FROM PAGE 1 coalition with other opposition groups after the electoral defeat of

Musharraf's supporters. "We will form a government of national consensus which will take along every democratic force," Asif Ali Zardari told a news conference. Sharif said he wanted to work with other opposition parties in parliament to "rid

Pakistan of dictatorship forever." Sharif, whom Musharraf ousted in a coup in 1999, told reporters in the eastern city of Lahore that he had already spoken to Bhutto's widower, Asif Ali Zardari, and would meet him Thursday in Islamabad for further

With votes counted in 258 constituencies, the PML-Q and its allies had taken a total of 58 seats. The party's chief and several key members lost their seats in Pakistan's national assembly.

Even if the PML-Q won all the remaining seats not yet counted, they would not be able to attain a majority in the parliament, which has 272 elected and 70 unelected seats. "This is the basic spirit of democ-

the elections were free and fair and everybody must accept the decision for the betterment of Pakistan.' US Senator John Kerry, in Pakistan as part of a team to observe

racy," Azeem told AFP. "We believe

the elections, said the vote "meets the basic threshold of credibility and legitimacy." The opposition had feared polls

State television said Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (PPP) had 87 seats, Sharif's faction of the Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) had 66 seats, with the PML-Q, smaller parties and independents taking the rest, according to preliminary unofficial results. The death of Benazir in a December 27 gun and suicide attack

would be rigged.

forced the election's delay until Monday. of Tuesday when early counting

"It means the forces of democracy and the rule of law have won," Talat Masood, a former general who is now a political and defence analyst, told

He said the election results also

show that the previous government's

support of the West and its "war on terror" have "been totally rejected by the people". Azeem earlier told AFP: "If the results are confirmed, we will play

the part of the opposition as effectively as we can. High-profile victims who lost their seats included party president Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain and almost all of Musharraf's former cabinet, including close presidential

ally Sheikh Rashid Full results were not expected until late Tuesday or early Wednesday.

Musharraf will become a powerless leader at best -- and could lose his job -- if the trends were confirmed, analysts said. Observers said Musharraf would likely try to woo Benazir's party and

split it from Sharif's, but said the president's need to fight for his own political survival would distract him from fighting terrorism. Musharrafhas been viewed by the United States as its bulwark in the fight against al-Qaeda and Taliban

militants based in Pakistan's tribal

areas on the border with Afghanistan. After casting his ballot, the embattled president -- who stepped down as army chief in November last year amid political turmoil and bloodshed sparked by his efforts to remain in power -- said he would

"The result will be the voice of the nation and whosoever wins we should accept it -- that includes myself," he told state television. The election commission put

accept the outcome.

turnout according to early results at -- along with other suicide bombings - overshadowed the campaign and about 45 percent -- higher than in the previous two elections. Preliminary results also showed a

Opposition supporters took to near total defeat for hardline Islamic the streets chanting the names of parties that under the previous Sharif and Benazir in the small hours administration ruled Pakistan's North West Frontier Province borshowed their parties sweeping the dering Afghanistan.

got damaged killing Badrul and Candidates might be allowed to Nurul on the spot and injuring four. spend money considering the num-Kamrul Islam, officer-in-charge In addition to this, if a political ber of voters in their respective con-(OC) of Ashulia Police Station, said party spends more than the amount stituencies, the sources said referring they seized the bus but its driver permitted, it will be fined Tk 10 lakh. to the EC's new plan in this regard. and helper fled the spot.