Chickens, eggs

"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

its patients once or twice a week,

chicken and eggs to the patients

due to bird flu. We are not taking

any risk," Brig Gen (retd) John

Gomes PSC, general manager of

Square Hospital, said adding that

the diet for their patients now

includes various types of fish,

beef or mutton if they ask, he

complaints from our patients.

They are rather happy," Gomes

Giasuddin, general manager

(Media) for Apollo Hospital in

Dhaka said the hospital is provid-

ing alternative protein diet to its

whether they want to have

chicken and eggs, alternative

protein foods, like fish, are also

they can get it fully boiled, he

immediate medical check-up. But

Hasina refused to undergo treatment

in the country fearing there could be

Hasina for nearly three hours yester-

day but no pathological tests, includ-

ing those for liver and kidneys, ECG,

X-ray and a blood lipid profile, were

done as she was not prepared for the

out yesterday as she was not notified

to come with empty stomach," AL

Abdullah told The Daily Star.

chief's personal physician Dr ABM

Some of the tests have to be car-

Talking to The Daily Star, Deputy

ried out before taking any meal, but

Hasina had already had her break-

Inspector General (Prisons) Major

Shamsul Haider Siddiqui said, "It is

our mistake that we forgot to notify

for her glasses. They also brought

hospital at any time next week for

carrying out the tests, sources said.

Hasina is likely to be taken to the

The medical board comprising Dr

Syed Modasser Ali, Dr MH Millat, Dr

ABM Abdullah, Dr Mirza Nazim

Uddin, Dr Monwar Hossain, Dr ABM

Sarwari Alam, Dr Touhiduzzaman,

Dr Shah Alam, Dr Shahin Mahmud

and Dr Suraiya Bulbul prescribed

medicines for blood pressure, allergy

The medical board also recom-

mended for sending Hasina abroad-

-to USA--for the treatment of her ears

since the treatment is not possible in

reporters that as per the jail code no

prisoner could be sent abroad for

arrange all kinds of treatments,

except that for her ears, and the

medical tests at Square Hospital.

treatment under any circumstance.

The DIG Prisons, however, told

Dr Millat said it is possible to

Asked why the AL chief was not

hospitalised, the DIG Prisons said

the doctors did not them to do so. He

added that Hasina would be taken to

hospital soon for carrying out all

willing to get admitted to hospital

dition of Hasina's health was slightly

better than other days, but her blood

pressure was high and fluctuating

since morning. She also had swelling

advised the former premier not to

During the check-up the doctors

and said she was feeling well.

Dr Abdullah said Hasina was not

The doctors said the overall con-

pathological tests.

allergic dermatitis.

and other minor ailments.

her [Hasina] to go empty stomach for

A thorough check-up was carried

"No pathological test was carried

The medical team checked

If anyone wants to eat chicken,

"It's the choice of the patients

The patients are also given

"We haven't received any

soups and vegetables.

patients.

Hasina

FROM PAGE 1

"foul play"

fast, he said.

the check-up.

Shakur said.

The hospital gives chicken to

"We have stopped giving

FROM PAGE 20

consumption, if chicken and eggs are cooked at higher than 70 degrees Celsius temperature.

High temperature kills the disease," he added. deadly H5N1 virus and make the meat safe for human consumption, they added.

"It is absolutely safe to eat if you cook it above 70 degrees Celsius," Brig Gen Dr Md Abdus Shahid Khan, director of DMCH, said adding, "In fact, we are preparing it at over 100 degrees Celsius to ensure safety of the patients."

Prof Mohammad Tahir, vice chancellor of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, also echoed his view. "Besides, we do not have any established case of transmission of the virus to human beings so far. It's okay if

we boil it properly," he added. However, lack of awareness has led many private clinics to take out the protein item from their menus. The fears grew as the disease hit the poultry industry of the country with thousands of poultry culled across the country

in recent times. Growing concerns among consumers have already halved the consumption, putting the whole industry in grave peril as thousands of people have already become jobless and farms closed.

Talking to The Daily Star, Dr Md Muniruzzaman Bhuiyan, president of Bangladesh Private Clinic and Diagnostic Owners' Association, admitted that some of the clinics and hospitals have stopped providing eggs and

chicken to the patients. He, however, hoped that the clinics would put the items back on the menu soon after some

awareness campaigns. "People's awareness level has increased. If it is washed and boiled properly, the risk of avian influenza disappears," he said adding "We are fully aware of it now and those clinics and hospitals that had suspended the supply earlier should start providing

the diet soon." Director of Bangladesh Shishu Hospital Md Salim Shakur, also a professor at Bangladesh Institute of Child Health, observed that the people are unnecessarily fright-

Bangladesh FROM PAGE 20

look to the talented but inconsistent batsmen to fire.

There were some signs of encouragement during the drawn three-day warmup game against the visitors, with opener Zunaed Siddiqui caressing a century on the second day and some strong performances from Shakib Al Hasan, Shahriar Nafees and Aftab Ahmed

Tamim Iqbal's recovery from a thumb injury is unlikely to be considered safe enough and it would be Nafees who would partner Zunaed at the top of the Bangladesh innings.

Former national captain and the country, the country's highest scorer in Test cricket Habibul Bashar would add a major feather in his cap as he is all set to become the first player to play his 50th Test match for Bangladesh.

In the visitors' camp, skipper Graeme Smith will equal the South African captaincy record held by the late Hansie Cronje when he leads his team in the Mirpur Test for the 53rd time.

Smith was 22 when he took over from Shaun Pollock and became South Africa's youngest captain, leading his team against Bangladesh in Chittagong in March

TEAMS

Bangladesh: Mohammad Ashraful (captain), Tamim Iqbal, Zunaed Siddiqui, Habibul Bashar, Shakib Al Hasan, Aftab Ahmed, Mushfigur Rahim, Mashrafe Mortaza, Abdur Razzak, Mohammad Rafique, Shahadat Hossain.

referred to Qunfuda's passports

department, which is to refer them

to the Labour Office, the Saudi daily

reports, the number arrests of

Bangladeshi nationals by Saudi

police has gone up, and various

restrictions have been imposed on

permits for part time jobs along-

the local media that the Saudi

government has stopped issuing

visas to Bangladeshi workers. The

Saudi Arabian embassy in Dhaka

Meanwhile the Foreign and

Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas

Ahmed Chowdhury is to visit Saudi

Arabia shortly to discuss labour

issues with his counterpart.

Employment Adviser Dr Iftekhar

has however refuted such reports.

There have also been reports in

According to various news

FROM PAGE 20

side regular jobs.

said.

worry about anything. Hasina, who kept on talking to her doctors on different issues including her health, South Africa: Graeme Smith repeatedly told them that she had (captain), Ashwell Prince, Hashim never received any bribe from any-Amla, Johan Botha, Mark Boucher, one and that the charges brought AB De Villiers, JP Duminy, Neil against her are false and politically McKenzie, Robin Peterson, Jacques motivated. Kallis, Morne Morkel, Andre Nel,

Talking to The Daily Star, one of Makhaya Ntini, Dale Stevn. the doctors said the AL chief told them that she has been charged with Umpires: Steve Bucknor (WI) false accusations in a bid to assail her and Aleem Dar (Pak). politically and exclude her from the Bangladeshi

next parliamentary polls. Hasina was taken to Square Hospital at about 10:15am amid tight security. The DIG Prisons accompa-The scrap materials were seized and the arrested expatriates

nied her in a car. Hasina was brought backtojail at 12:50pm. Hasina's personal physicians

were also called to accompany her. Tight security measures had been taken in and around Square Hospital since Wednesday night to avoid any untoward incident. Huge contingent of police, Rapid Action Battalion personnel and plainclothes intelligence personnel cordoned off the them regarding visa renewals and entirehospital.

Law enforcers were also deployed on the roofs of buildings adjacent to the hospital. Security was also beefed up at different intersections in Panthapath area.

Around 100 party leaders, including Motia Chowdhury, Syed Ashraful Islam, Dr Hasan Mahmud, Shahara Khatun, Dr Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin and the visiting Canadian lawyer William Sloan, and AL workers gathered in front of the hospital to see the

partychief. Motia gave three books to the jail authority for Hasina.

Ethnic kids

FROM PAGE 20 "Indigenous children should teach

in first phase of primary education in their own language and gradually should be turned into Bangla medium. This will help to reduce dropout rate among the indigenous children," said renowned educationist Prof Serajul Islam Choudhury.

The ICEF report styled "Many Languages, Once Voice" based on research shows 95 percent parents from indigenous communities prefer their children's education in Bangla medium so that they can cope with outside situation and lead a better life.

Besides, 65 percent parents opined education for their children in their own languages side by side

with Bangla. The government has taken several measures under Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP-II) to check dropout at primary level across the country.

However, CHT areas have yet to come under the PEDP-II activities. National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) Chairman Prof Dr M Masir Uddin said they have no plan to publish indigenous textbooks now.

"We'll make curriculum and publish primary textbooks according to the direction of the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE), "he told The Daily Star.

Some non-government organisations in CHT are now working to write textbooks in indigenous

language but at a very limited scale. "We have made three types indigenous textbooks -- Marma, Chakma and Tripura -- for primary level. But we are working only in limited areas in three CHT districts. The government should take initiatives to publish indigenous textbooks which will help reduce the dropout rate at primary level," said James Gomes, Chittagong regional director of Caritas, one of the NGOs, which published indigenous textbooks.

Angshahla Marma, headmaster of Daksepara Village Education Centre in Balipara, Thanchi, said students don't leave school anymore after introducing indigenous textbooks.

He suggested educated indigenous people be recruited as teachers as Bangla-speaking teachers cannot clearly understand the out for the treatment of her eyes and feelings of indigenous children.

doctors prescribed modified power Bangladesh Adibashi [indigenous people) Forum has long been demanding introduction of education in indigenous languages, especially at primary level. But no governments have ever paid any

"Primary education for indigenous children should be in our mother language. We have been demanding it for long. Without it you can't expect to reduce dropout rate in CHT," said Sanjeeb Drong, general secretary of the Forum.

Loan default

FROM PAGE 1

four-party alliance have turned bad. This is also the reason why the bulk of the loans defaulted last year was with the state-owned banks."

Of the government-run banks increase in defaulted loans was Tk 977 crore in Sonali Bank, Tk 220 crore in Janata Bank, Tk 397 crore in Agrani Bank and Tk 694 crore in Rupali Bank.

Officials of Janata Bank said at least six business houses have become defaulter because of anticorruption drives. Similar were the views of Sonali Bank officials. Rupali Bank officials said their

overall activities including loan recovery were very slow because of lingering privatisation process. Up to December 31, 2007, 40

percent of their outstanding loans were defaulted, compared to 23 percent in the previous year.

According to the central bank, the increase in defaulted loans was Tk 556 crore in the private commercial banks and Tk 111 crore in the foreign commercial

However, the amount of loans shirked in the specialised banks decreased by Tk 428 crore.

Out of Tk 1,71,044 crore in outstanding bank loans, the volume of classified loans was Tk 22,624 crore or 13.23 percent on December 31, 2007, compared to Tk 20,098 crore or 13.15 percent on December 31, 2006, the sources

Classified loans in state-owned banks stood at Tk 13,791 crore or 29.27 percent of outstanding loans on December 31, 2007, which had been Tk 11,503 crore or 22.94 percent on December 31, 2006.

Defaulted loans in private commercial banks added up to Tk 4,921 crore or 5.01 percent of outstanding loans in December 2007, which had been Tk 4,365 crore or 5.45 percent in December 2006.

Classified loans in specialised banks stood at Tk 3,716 crore or 28.58 percent of outstanding loans in December '07, compared to Tk 4,144 crore or 33.68 percent in December 2006.

The size of defaulted loans in foreign commercial banks was Tk 194 crore or 1.43 percent of outstanding loans in December last year against Tk 83 crore or 0.81 toral reform talks between the EC try if the army is engaged in elecpercent in December 2006.

Ekushey observed

FROM PAGE 1

The day has since been observed as the Language Martyrs Day. Unesco declared it International Mother Language Day in November 1999.

People outside the capital and Bangladesh missions abroad also paid homage to the martyrs placing flowers after midnight at Shaheed Minars. The Central Shaheed Minar and

its surrounding areas received a facelift on the occasion. Streets and their central reservations were decorated with festoons inscribed with Bangla letters and the national

Poetry recitation started long before people started paying homage to the martyrs and continued till 2:00am. After a four-hour break it continued for five more hours.

The chief adviser led the council

of advisers and his special assistants to place wreaths at the Central Shaheed Minar. The speaker and deputy speaker of parliament, Dhaka city mayor,

foreign diplomats, representatives of international organisations in Dhaka, Dhaka University vicechancellor and teachers, leaders Chancery Building yesterday. and workers of various political parties and socio-cultural organisations as well as thousands of people placed wreaths later.

The lone entrance to the Shaheed Minar was then opened for general people around

12:30am. State-run Bangladesh Television and Bangladesh Betar, and private TV channels aired special programmes. BTV telecast the wreath laying ceremony live from the Shaheed Minar Newspapers published supplements highlighting the significance of the day.

Shaheed Minar, many thronged the ongoing month-long Ekushey Book Fair at Bangla Academy. It was a public holiday and the

After paying their tribute at the

national flag alongside black flags flew at half-mast on government, autonomous and private buildings. Bangladesh Embassy in

Kathmandu in association with Dabur Nepal, a private organisation, organised a week-long painting exhibition at the embassy marking the day.

Bangladesh High Commission in Male organised a poetry reading programme and a discussion at

Meanwhile, expatriate Bangladeshis in the US paid homage to language martyrs across the country, reports News World.

Employment growth

FROM PAGE 1

But underemployment rate has increased from 16.6 percent in 2000 to 24.5 percent in 2006.

"These show that not enough employment was generated during the period," says Dr Rushidan Islam Rahman, research director of the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS). "This phenomenon has to be seen in the light of demographic factor and to some extent employment factors."

1980s saw baby-boomers with high population growth rate. These newborns entered the labour tor. market in early 2000 and so the employment rate also spiked, she explained.

But more complex is the employment factor. While the lation growth rate, employment rate dropped. Rushidan tries to find the answer in the sectoral employment statistics of the LFS.

port and communication' sectors and not so much in manufacturing. While the service sector that lacks medium enterprises performed badly, leading to less employment.

employment in manufacturing dropped because of stagnating readymade garment sector," said Rushidan. "But why that would be the case for male employment in construction sector which actually boomed during the period is a riddle.'

economy, it is expected that paid employment will grow faster than self-employment," she continues. But data on type of employment shows there has been little growth of paid employment."

The total paid employment (regular salaried jobs plus daily/ casual wage employment) also

resulted in slow growth of real wage

-- 3.5 percent in 2003-2004, 2 percent in 2004-2005 and 0.0 percent in 2005-2006, according to the Bangladesh Economic Review,

households is usually engaged in casual wage employment. Therefore, the above figures do not reveal an impressive experience of pro-poor labour market process, observes the BIDS research' direc-

There are other explanations for decline in casual and regular paid employment. Investment did not take place as much in wage labourbased enterprises and family enterprises grew more than the SMEs as evident in the large selfemployed female population mostly in household agriculture like poultry, livestock and crop processing, she continued.

With a countrywide average economic dependency ratio of 71 urban areas witnessed a ratio of 79.7 and the rural areas 68.4 in 2005-2006. Six years ago, this was large investment thrived, the manu- the reverse with 83.2 for rural popufacturing especially the small and lation and 78.3 for urban areas. One explanation for this may be that more people in the urban areas are pushing for higher education and so more are dependent on the income-earning family members. The reverse may be true for the

rural population. Under the current economic situation, Rushidan feels that with high food prices, real crops production will be higher in the coming crop seasons if the government can ensure adequate and timely input supplies. This will increase

declined from 16 million in 1999-2000 to 15 million in 2002-2003 to 15.2 million in 2005-2006. This has

In the demographic context, the

absolute population increased since 2000 despite a drop in popu-Most of the employment has taken place in 'trade' and 'trans-

"We can explain that female

"With the advancement of the

"Labour force from poorer

the demand for paid casual labour.

She also pins hope on investment supportive growth in power sector, communications and an environment which will convince entrepreneurs to accept lower profit rates in the short term.

EC proposal

or doing any other thing to influence polls results. In the existing parliamentary

election laws, the defence services army, navy and air force -- are exempted from trial for the offence of influencing election results. The laws now provide that the

returning officer (RO), assistant returning officer (ARO), presiding officer, assistant presiding officer, polling officer or any other officer, or clerk, performing election duty, or any member of police force can be tried for such offence.

The EC in its revised proposals for electoral reforms included the definition of 'law enforcement agency' in the relevant provision, replacing the existing words 'any member of police force'.

"The words police force have been replaced by 'law enforcement agency' in its proposal," the EC

According to the existing and proposed laws for conducting parliamentary polls, the 'law enforcement agency' means any Police Force, Ansar Force, Battalion Ansar, Bangladesh Rifles, Coast Guard, and the Defence Services of Bangladesh.

The EC in its earlier proposal, made public on April 5 last year, did not include the definition of law enforcement agency, and kept the provision as it is in the present laws. But its revised proposals, which were sent to the political parties on

Tuesday for the second round of electoral reform talks from February 24, contains the definition of law enforcement agency. During the first round of elecand political parties in between tion duties with the authorities.

September and November last year, the Jatiya Party had suggested replacement of the words police force by law enforcement agency. Earlier, punishment for the

offence of tying to influence poll results was six months' imprisonment, or fine of up to Tk 5,00. But in an amendment to the provision before parliamentary election in 1991, punishment for the offence was increased to five years in jail from six months, and also with fine.

In a massive reform in electoral laws in 2001, the defence forces were provided with powers to make arrests, like the police, by including them in the definition of law enforcement agency. A member of the defence forces engaged in election duties can arrest anyone without warrant for violation of electoral laws and illegal activities.

enforcement agencies, the defence forces have been authorised to ensure enforcement of election laws and rules, and can compe candidates and their supporters to abide by the electoral code of conduct during polls campaign. The Awami League-led 14-party combine had long been strongly

Like the police and other law

opposing the provision enacted by the then caretaker government before the eighth parliamentary polls in 2001. But the AL and other components of the combine agreed on the provision during the first round of electoral reform talks with the EC In defence of shifting from its

earlier stance, the AL said they

agreed on the existing laws as they

believe it will be good for the coun-

War criminals

FROM PAGE 20

government's duty is to try them. He also urged the government to form a special tribunal to identify the war criminals and bring them to justice.

"It is a very good move. But initiatives to try the war criminals should be taken at the same time, said Sultana Kamal, former adviser to the caretaker government.

She said the EC's initiative would not be effective if the war criminals are not tried.

Welcoming the EC's initiative, ZA Khan, one of the advisers to the BNP chairperson, said the war criminals should be brought to

He said if the alleged persons are found guilty, they must be barred from taking part in the elections. Workers' Party President

Rashed Khan Menon said the EC's initiative can be regarded as a step forward towards barring the war criminals from contesting elec-

"Now it's the government's responsibility to identify the war criminals and bring them to justice," added Menon.

"The government might have a list of war criminals. If not, it can get the list from Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee," said the Workers' Party president adding that the government can start the process of trying the war criminals according to the list.

"The government can also form a commission to identify war criminals and then try them under the International Crimes (Tribunal) Act," Menon said.

President of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) Hasanul Haq Inu thanked the EC for taking the initiative and said one of the important organs of the state had made a move to bar the war criminals from contesting polls. Now, the other organs like the executive and the judiciary should take initiative to try them.

EC earlier proposed inclusion of similar provisions in the existing electoral laws for city corporations and municipalities to prevent the war criminals from contesting elections to local government bodies.

Biographies

FROM PAGE 20

Bangladesh National Commission for UNESCO jointly organised the seminar and open discussion where participants narrated contribution of language martyrs to Bengalias a mother tongue.

Prof Serajul Islam, president of Asiatic Society, said around 26 crore people speak Bangla around the globe today making it the sixth most spoken language in the Economist Dr Atiur Rahman | Bazar visited the spot.

said Bangla language is the people's language and is not an oppressed language. He said the government should now focus on ethnic languages of the country as many ethnic languages are gradually dying out. Prof SMA Faiz, vice chancellor

of Dhaka University, told the gathering that the concept of visiting professorship should be introduced in the universities of the country immediately so that foreign language experts can come to Bangladesh and carry out valuable researches on Bangla language

Dhaka University History Department Professor Dr Ahmed Kamal and language martyr Jabbar's wife Amena Khatun and son Nurul Islam Badal also addressed the seminar.

Education Additional Secretary AKM Abdul Awal Mazumder conducted the discussion.

India to supply

decision on it would be taken by April 30.

FROM PAGE 20

STC on its website said the supplier should deliver Indian paraboiled rice that conforms to quality norms of the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act. It should be packed in 50 kg PP woven bags, which can withstand moisture during shipment.

rice should be delivered at Chittagong port within three weeks from the date of confirmation of supply order. "These transactions should be treated as local sale, hence no

export incentives are applicable to

The company specified that the

these," STC said. The STC tender comes after the government permitted export of 50,000 tonnes of non-basmati rice to Bangladesh by West Bengal Essential Commodities Supply Corporation Ltd.

Despite the restriction on export of non-basmati rice, the government is giving exemptions from time to time for export of specific quantities of rice to different countries on humanitarian grounds.

Last year, the government had imposed a ban on non-basmati rice export to build a buffer stock and improve domestic supplies. Following complaints from

exporters, the ban was partially lifted by fixing the minimum culled and 2,862 eggs were export price of \$ 500 per tonne to destroyed at another farm within augment domestic supplies of the one-kilometre radius of Iqbal's common varieties. farm yesterday.

Zardari, Sharif

FROM PAGE 1

November 2007, adding: "We are not looking at pro-Musharraf [parties]."

Zardari's first meeting yesterday was with the leader of a small ethnic Pashtun secular grouping, the Awami National Party (ANP), which defeated hardline Islamic parties in the country's insurgency-hit northwest.

together for the interest of Pakistan, democracy and supremacy of democratic institutions, and rule of law in the country," Zardari said after the meeting.

"We have decided to work

The ANP became the third biggest opposition party after the polls.

ANP leader Asfandyar Wali Khan said he and Zardari had agreed "in principle to go together for supremacy of democracy" but said there were some issues which still needed to be resolved. Nawaz Sharif's party yesterday

in a by-election so that he can lead his party's bloc in the new parliament, AP reports from Islamabad. Monday's election. But several seats will become available

said he will seek a parliament seat

because some candidates ran in multiple constituencies and won more than one seat. The law requires those candidates to give up those extra seats, which must be filled in special

Raja Zafarul Haq, chairman of Sharif's party, made the announcement after a meeting of senior party leaders and members who won seats in Monday's vote.

The "party agreed on the name of Mian Nawaz Sharif as parliamentary leader and he will contest a by-election," Haq said. Sharif was disqualified by election officials from running in this

week's balloting due to a conviction on terrorism and hijacking charges stemming from the 1999 coup in which he was overthrown by Musharraf. Sharif earlier addressed hundreds of protesters and lawyers

outside deposed chief justice

Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry's

Islamabad home, where the judge

remains under house arrest. 14 killed

FROM PAGE 1 Thirteen bus passengers died in the bus. Only a few passengers could jump out of the bus through the windows, witnesses said.

Police recovered the bodies and sent the injured to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital. Deputy commissioner and

superintendent of police of Cox's Superintendent of Police of Cox's Bazar Banaj Kumar Majumdar said the 13 victims were

electrocuted. Meanwhile, shock gripped the officials and management of the garment factory as the news of their employees' death reached the factory. Managing Director Ishtiaque Ahmed and General Manager Bapan Das Gupta could

not find words to express their grief. "We are trying to find out the identity of the dead and injured and we will send the bodies to their homes. The management will do everything needed for the victims families," Bapan told journalists.

Bird flu

FROM PAGE 20 destroyed so far after the deadly disease hit the country.

The fowls culled in the last two days include free ranged chickens, poultry chickens, ducks and pigeons. In Srinagar of Munshiganj, 3,260

chickens were culled and 17,537

eggs were destroyed at Amzan poultry farm after avian influenza virus was detected there. A total of 1,680 chickens were culled and 7,500 eggs were destroyed at Rony poultry farm of Tara Mia in Palash upazila of Narsingdi. Later, 600 chickens of

Md Mostafa Kamal's farm were also

slaughtered as his farm was within

the one-kilometre radius of the infected farm. On Wednesday, 1,608 poultry chickens were culled at Rawshan poultry farm in Doublemooring of Chittagong following positive result of an avian influenza virus test. Besides, 59 free ranged chickens and 25 ducks were also slaugh-

The same day, 863 chickens were culled and 2,220 eggs were destroyed at the farm of Md Ali in Natore. Fourteen pigeons and a duck were culled at the neighbouringhouse of Md Ali. Besides, 348 chickens were also

tered.

slaughtered and 820 eggs were destroyed at Kader poultry farm of Abdul Kader as his farm was within one kilometre radius of Md Ali's farm. In Gazipur, 2,048 chickens were

culled and 4,122 eggs were destroyed at Iqbal poultry farm of Md Iqbal Hossain, Later, 563 free ranged chickens, 90 ducks and 38 pigeons were culled at his neighbouring house. Besides, 2,929 chickens were mise.

"It is your duty to adhere to the law and not to abide by the orders of Pervez Musharraf who is illegal and unconstitutional," he told the demonstrators as hundreds of paramilitary troops and police

stood guard. Musharraf lawyers clashed with

police. calling for the restoration of Chaudhry, the deposed chief justice, in the southern city of Karachi. Thousands more demonstrated

could overturn Musharraf's controversial victory in a presidential election in October and oust him as president.

about 2,000 lawyers chanted "Go, Musharraf, go" and "Restore independence of judiciary" during a protest.

toral defeat. He has been backed for most of his time in office by the United States as a key ally against Sharif did not run for a seat in Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda The embattled leader, who

stepped down as army chief late last year, extended an offer of cooperation to his rivals on Wednesday, calling for a "harmonious coalition" after the polls.

abroad give Obama 11th straight win

AFP, Washington

White House hopeful Barack Obama has won his party's primary for Democrats living outside the United States, the Democrats Abroad organisation said yesterday.

Obama won 65.6 percent of the

164 countries and territories around the world, including Antarctica, compared to 32.7 percent for his rival Hillary Clinton. The global primary gives Obama his 11th victory over Clinton,

vote taken between February 5-12 in

although only seven delegates were at stake. Obama has won 2.5 international delegates so far with two going to the former first lady, Democrats Abroad said. The remaining 2.5 votes will be determined-at the Democrats

Abroad Global Convention in

Vancouver, Canada, on April 12-13.

"With the US image so badly damaged by the present Administration, American Democrats living overseas were eager to have their voices heard," said Christine Schon Marques, International Chair of Democrats Abroad in Geneva.

Democrats voted online for the first time in 164 countries, allowing a researcher at the US scientific mission at McMurdo Station, Antarctica, to cast her vote. "The online Democrats Abroad

Global Primary expanded the frontier of voting opportunities, and it works easily, even from the harshest continent on Earth," Lutchansky said in a statement released by Democrats Abroad.

Fire in city

FROM PAGE 20 hours to douse the fire. The firemen could not ascertain the cause of the fire immediately.

Witnesses said the fire origi-

nated at about 8:30pm. They said the fire gutted over 100 shanties of a slum beside Pragati Sarani in Merul. The fire also burnt down seven bamboo shops, 38 fish trading shops, 32 chambers of the fish traders, several grocery shops and a multipur-

Fish traders said at least Tk 20,00,000 was kept at their cham-Syed Abul Kashem, president of the firm, said he had kept Tk

pose business establishment.

2,00,000 in cash inside his shop and the fire destroyed everything. Nepal blockade

FROM PAGE 20 "We just want certain ideological commitments, so that we can have good participation and representation in the polls," said Rajendra Mahato, another UDMF leader, referring to compensation for anyone injured or killed in protests. the release of anyone arrested and an end to "excessive force on pro-

testers. The UDMF also wants a guarantee the government is ready to discuss its political demands.

The forthcoming elections are for an assembly that will rewrite Nepal's constitution, the climax of a peace deal between mainstream parties and former Maoist rebels that ended a decade of civil war. Parties from the south missed

Wednesday's deadline to register

candidates, but election officials said the government had instructed them to extend the deadline until February 24 --another sign of a possible compro-Nepal's elderly Prime Minister

Girija Prasad Koirala insisted the polls would be going ahead as planned.

DHAKA FRIDAY FEBRUARY 22, 2008

His comments came after anti-

Police fired tear gas at lawyers

elsewhere. If Chaudhry gets his job back he

In the eastern city of Lahore

Musharraf has rejected calls to quit in the wake of his allies' elec-

Democrats