AL wants

the candidates will add up to those of their parties, says the EC's revised proposals on polls expenditure.

The proposed limit is not rational and so should be changed, the AL observed. "There should be no check on election expenditure of the political parties," said Tofail.

In its proposals, the party asked for the ceiling of donations from individuals and organisations to be raised to Tk 10 lakh and Tk 50 lakh.

According to the EC proposals, an individual can donate a maximum of Tk 5 lakh to a registered political party in a year while the amount for an organisation would be no more

thanTk25lakh. The AL suggested that the EC organise projection or publicity meetings giving candidates opportunity to outline their credentials and seek vote for them or their parties.

Besides, the commission should paste election posters for the contenders in designated areas, it said adding that this all would help free the polls from influence of black

AL Presidium Member Amir Hossain Amu said if their proposals are implemented a candidate would be able to keep their spending limited to Tk 5 lakh, otherwise they might have to count way beyond Tk 15 lakh, the expenses check proposed by the EC.

In reply to the proposals for the EC to take on the electioneering responsibility for the contestants, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) ATM Shamsul Huda said it would be a colossal task requiring a huge manpower that the commission does not have. "We can't execute the idea this time. We are however planning some projection meetings on Bangladesh Television for all party candidates."

About the proposal for state funding, he did not make any com-

During the talks, the AL delegation led by acting president Zillur Rahman sought a date for the election, which it says, would clear the doubt in public mind about the longstalled ninth parliamentary polls. The party said they agree on most

of the EC's proposals for electoral reforms, but have reservations about The AL leaders said they do not

subscribe to the commission's views that political parties should not have overseas chapters.

They said the organisations that worked against the Liberation War

Hannan also said that Zandal had

Although Pintu is a lower tier

attended a meeting at Pintu's

Dhanmondi residence where the

central leader of BNP, he was none-

theless considered very influential

for his good relations with Hawa

Bhaban -- also known as the "'alter-

native powerhouse" during the

immediate past elected govern-

Criminal Investigation

Department (CID) that is tasked with

the investigation of the attack

arrested Pintu on January 18 on

information that the attack was

denied his involvement in the attack.

during an encounter with law

Pintu, during remand, however

Ahsanullah Kajol was later killed

Contradicting Hannan's state-

ment, Zandal during quizzing

denied collecting the grenades from

Tajuddin (now abroad in hiding),

said an investigator wishing ano-

meeting at Pintu's residence and

claimed that Mufti Hannan himself

collected the grenades and distrib-

uted those among the ones who

participated in the attack on an

that Zandal was the acting leader of

The grisly attack on the AL rally

Huji after Hannan was arrested.

Zandal also denied attending the

planned in his residence.

enforcers in India.

plan of the attackwas devised.

FROM PAGE 1

ment's regime.

Abdus Salam Pintu.

and patronise militancy must not be allowed to register with the commis-

The party suggested that the EC should not allow election observers in the polling booths. In response, the poll chief said they are preparing some guidelines for the election

It also asked the EC to drop its proposal seeking to disqualify the utility service bill defaulters from contesting the parliamentary elections, saying the matter is too complicated.

for requirement of "competent authorities' approval" to hold rallies during electioneering, the AL said the provision is unnecessary and should be dropped.

repealing the current Representation of People Order (RPO) 1972, the EC should bring necessary amend-

The same day two other political parties---Jatiya Party (Ershad) and Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB)--participated in the talks with

Jatiya Party requested the commission to disqualify for registration the parties with brackets attached to their names.

The CPB in their proposals suggested that the EC set the expendi ture ceiling for a candidate at Tk 3

lakh will encourage the use of black money in the polls," the CPB leaders

They also called for the commis sion not to allow anti-liberation forces to register as political party.

Besides, the CPB proposed introduction of proportional representation system in parliament and increasing the number of women's reserved seats with a provision of direct election.

EC MIGHT MONITOR POLLS EXPENDITURES

In the light of the political parties demands, the EC might introduce a system to monitor election expenditure of the candidates and political parties, observed CEC Huda.

the polls," he told the CPB delega-

Earlier on the opening day of the second-round talks Sunday, Workers Party too demanded monitoring of spending by candidates and parties.

Oscar 2008

FROM PAGE 16 pre-Oscars favorite.

The evening's acting awards were dominated by European talent, with France's Marion Cotillard winning best actress for "La Vie En Rose" and Ireland's Daniel Day-Lewis winning best actor for "There Will be Blood.

The supporting actor and actress awards went to Spain's Javier Bardem for his performance as a psychopathic hitman in "No Country for Old Men" and Britain's Tilda Swinton, who played a scheming corporate legal chief in "Michael Clayton.'

In other highlights, Austria's "The Counterfeiters" won the best foreign film award for its true story of a group of Jewish prisoners recruited by the Nazis to mount one of the largest counterfeiting operations in history.

However Paul Thomas Anderson's "There Will Be Blood" which had been nominated in eight categories, finished with only two awards, for cinematography and Day-Lewis.

The second best performing film in terms of Oscars was action movie "The Bourne Ultimatum", which snaffled three prizes in the technical categories.

Oscar host Jon Stewart had opened the show with a joke about the crop of "Oscar-nominated psychopathic killer movies" in his monologue.

Babar

FROM PAGE 1

Sanbeer allegedly hit Sabbir in the head with an empty bottle leaving him dead. Another Bashundhara Director

Shamsuddin Ahmed, and Sanbeer's close aide Khairul Hasan Uzzal were also indicted in the murder case.

Both Sanbeer and Uzzal went into hiding after the incident. Sources said the case was trans-

ferred to CID from the Detective Branch (DB) for investigation on June 12, 2007 soon after Babar had received the bribe from the Bashundhara chairman.

During an earlier interrogation Babar admitted to taking the bribe of Tk 20 crore from the Bashundhara chairman in exchange for not implicating Sanbeer in the murder case.

Titas staff

FROM PAGE 1

Shibpur village in Matlab, Chandpur, Mohammad Jahangir Alam, 36, of Bashidpur in Laxmipur, and Mohammad Anisur Rahman, 33, of Chahra village under Kotwali police station in Jessore.

Shawon and Jahangir are traders by profession and Anisur is a driver. The Taskforce members seized Tk 200,000 and various equipment used for metre tampering from their possession.

Talking to The Daily Star, all the arrestees admitted to being involved in illegal activities and corruption. They also promised not to do such acts in future.

Sadequr Rahman submitted his wealth statement to the Taskforce mentioning two flats in Mirpur, piece of land in Demra and some cash money.

But the Taskforce officials said they have traced more of his illgotten property.

Shawon said they had been carrying out the illegal job for several years in connivance with some Titas staffs and owners of various industries and companies. The sources say the Taskforce

has launched a massive drive against metre tampering and identified several groups are

involved have a very strong syndicate and various employees and officials of the Titas Gas are related court on Sunday and were interroto this illegal process. gated at the TFI cell yesterday.

every industrial and commercial zones, and these syndicates deal with the unscrupulous owners of various industries for dodging the real price of gas they use."

millionaires.

Jamuna bridge

could become 20-25 years, if neces sary steps are not taken immedi-

investigations think faulty maps, faulty construction, plying of overloaded vehicles and plying of trains could be the reasons behind the bridge's present condition.

However, an official of the Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge authority said they are not satisfied with the results of investigations made so far.

trains are the main cause for the cracks and suggested closing the bridge to trains. It found cracks in 62 out of 1,262 segment joints of the bridge. The government, however, only reduced speed limit of trains on the bridge to 20kmph. They are even thinking about reducing the number of trains using the bridge.

The authorities also say the present caretaker of the bridge Marga Net One has not been taking proper care of the bridge, apart from collecting toll. They claimed it providing only Tk 96 per chicken as does not tighten the nuts and bolts of expansion joints at regular inter-He would suffer a loss of around | vals, a job the previous caretaker Jomac did very well.

Cast votes judiciously

he assured the people

management.

long-term projects.

In this regard, the CA said, alloca-

tion in ADP has been increased for

taking short-and mid-term projects

like providing better fertilisers and

seeds, and ensuring a better irrigation

people from different districts, he said

the government would take effective

decisions on short-term schemes,

which are essentials to solve the prob-

ment has taken an initiative to launch

agreed with some of the speakers that

there has been some mismanagement

in fertiliser distribution and assured

thinking about open market sale of

fertiliser and also taking steps for its

committee, headed by an adviser, has

been formed to make recommenda-

tions for proper distribution and

At around 3:00pm, the chief adviser

went to Shombhuganj Bazar in Sadar

upazila to see for himself the present

the supply of agricultural commodities

positively, saying that adequate

amount of agricultural products,

including rice, potatoes and other

vegetables, are now available on the

also talked to some rice traders to know

been fixed at Tk 103.50 and palm oil

Vice-president of Bangladesh

Vegetable Oil Refiners Association

and City Group Chairman Fazlur

Rahman announced the mill-gate

rates while wholesalers

Association General Secretary Abul

the import prices of Soya bean and

the commerce adviser on March 9

nor, NBR chairman, BDR director

general and other senior officials of

different government agencies

Zillur said the government has

decided to impose a "lock-in'

strategy on the edible oil market to

traders and want to set a negotiated

price of edible oil," he said, adding

that international edible market is

that in neighbouring India per-kg

soya bean oil now sells at a price

equivalent to Bangladeshi Tk

tional market-monitoring commit-

tee will be formed, headed by him,

with members drawn from

Bangladesh Bank, NBR, BDR, and

representatives of importers and

effort to keep the prices of four food

items stable on priority basis," he

told the meeting. The items are rice,

"The government has made

wholesalers' associations.

pulses, edible oil and wheat.

He said a high-powered institu-

In this context, he mentioned

Commerce Adviser Hossain

"We have discussed with the

The City Group chairman said

The traders said they will sit with

Bangladesh Bank deputy gover-

Hashem set the retail prices.

palmoils are Tk 103 and Tk 96.

for a review of the prices.

were present at the meeting.

keep the prices stable.

so much volatile.

The head of caretaker government

and prices of daily necessities.

firsthandtheprices of rice.

Edible oil

FROM PAGE 16

at Tk 96.50 per kg.

He talked to the people regarding

Some of the people responded

that it would be overcome soon.

marketing and distribution.

management of fertiliser.

VISITSMARKET

market situation.

market.

Besides, the CA said, the govern

About fertiliser distribution, he

The CA said the government is

In this regard, he mentioned that a

Responding to demands of the

NEWS

FROM PAGE 1 The district administration organised the meeting conducted by Dhaka Divisional Commissioner Ikram

Ahmed. Home Adviser Maj Gen (retd) MA Matin, LGRD and Cooperatives Adviser M Anwarul Iqbal and representatives from different professions addressed the meeting.

Home Adviser MA Matin was assigned to gather information about problems and prospects of Kishoreganj and Netrakona districts while MAnwarul Iqbal of Jamalpurand Sherpurdistricts.

The CA in his introductory remarks said the government and the Election Commission are taking all necessary steps and preparations for holding free, fair transparent and credible elections both at the local and national levels. Referring to the EC's move to hold

local government polls, including elections to the city corporations, the CA said holding of elections to the city corporations will perhaps be the first polls under the present government. Appreciating the people for their

cooperation in preparing the voter list with photographs, he said, "An unprecedented response was received from the people to the ongoing voter listingwork.

He hoped that the voter listing would be completed very quickly.

Ouoting the Election Commission, the CA informed the meeting that inclusion of half of the total eligible voters in the list would be completed within this (February) month.

Referring to dialogue between the EC and political parties, he said, "On completion of the series of dialogues, everything about the electoral reforms will be made public." About local government system,

the CA said the government has decided in principle to strengthen the local government system and is working to that end to consolidate the foundation of democracy.

He also assured that the government is giving attention to increasing financial solvency of the local government institutions and their institutional capacities.

Mentioning an assembly of the elected representatives of local government bodies in Dhaka, the CA said the allowance of chairmen and members will be raised. He said a decision has been taken to increase their allowance, which is a step towards empowering the local government system. He said price spiral on the interna-

tional market has caused the last year's price hike of essential commodities on the local market.

He said the government is giving priority to agriculture sector for boosting rice and food production. "As a result, the farmers will get fair prices of their produces while the market prices of the commodities will be stabilised,"

Lankan military

FROM PAGE 16 The rebels made no reference to ground attacks.

According to the defence ministry, 1,581 rebels have been killed so far this year. The military estimates the Tigers' strength at 5,000 com-

The military says 90 soldiers and police have also been killed in 2008. Casualty figures provided by both sides differ vastly and cannot be independently verified since the government bars journalists and human rights workers from frontline and rebel-held areas.

The Sri Lankan government last month officially pulled out of a truce with the Tamil guerrillas.

ECs vow

military backed caretaker govern-

ment to lift the state of emergency

immediately, and to release detained

AL President Sheikh Hasina and

In response to the AL acting

raised over holding of the parliamen-

tary poll by the end of December this

way to state power. So, the election

must be held and all of our activities

are for creating an atmosphere for

the election," CEC Huda told the AL

delegation during the bilateral talk

held at noon in the EC Secretariat

conference room in presence of

About the state of emergency, the

"We asked the caretaker govern-

environment for polls," the CEC said

referring to the EC's February 4

He also said the government will

"We don't know why the doubts

also have to lift the countrywide

meeting with the chief adviser.

"Election is the only legitimate

Moeen

FROM PAGE 1

Sudhir Sharma, quartermaster general, and Lt Gen N Mohanty director general Remount Veterinary Services, were also present at the ceremony.

The horse presentation ceremony was followed by a guard of honour to Gen Moeen by Indian Defence Forces. Moeen laid a wreath at Amar Jawan Jyoti at the India Gate. The stallions and mares will form

a strong breeding germ-plasm for production of quality horses for Bangladesh Army and promote multifarious equestrian activities. The two stallions and the four

broodmares have been bred and produced at Equine Breeding Studs of Remount Veterinary Corps of the Indian Army. These horses will be transported

to India-Bangladesh border by road and will be handed over to Bangladesh Army at Haridaspur-Benapole transit point. General Moeen, who is accompa-

nied by his wife, is also scheduled to visit Indian Military Academy in Dehradun today and other Army institutions including some nava set-upsin Goa.

He is expected to travel to Kolkata and meet West Bengal Chief Minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee on the last day of his visit before flying back

Meanwhile, leading newspaper Indian Express in a top editorial said the Indian army's gift of the six horses to Gen Moeen "is hopefully a symbol of South Block's commitment to new relationship with the security forces of Bangladesh". "The very fact that Moeen has

chosen to travel to India opens the door for a productive engagement between the security forces of the two countries... Moeen could be seen to represent an opportunity for structural change within Bangladesh and in Indo-Bangla relations," the editorial read. Press Trust of India (PTI) reported

that Gen Moeen also met Indian political leaders including External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee and State Minister for Defence MM Pallam Raju.

Although there was no official word on the meetings, sources said New Delhi took the opportunity to apprise Gen Moeen on its concerns over 'illegal civilian migration' from Bangladesh, according to the PTI Gen Moeen, during his six-day

stay in India, may also call on Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and visit the army's key establishments in Dehradun, Agra, and Kolkata.

Student strike

Aparajeyo Bangla on the university campus yesterday called the strike at all public universities from February 26 to 28.

However, all the examinations have been kept out of the purview of the strike, a statement of the General Students said yesterday The agitating students said they would call off the strike as soon a the government announces a revised quota system.

They also threatened to go for tougher movement if their demands are not met by February 28.

Meanwhile, Fair BCS Movement, a platform of students, will hold a press conference at Dhaka University Journalists Association (DUJA) at 12:00 noon today demanding cancellation of 55 percent non-merit quota.

Students of public universities including DU have been staging demonstrations for the last one month demanding revision of the quota system.

Only 45 percent of the civil servants are selected on merit. Of the rest of the posts for both cadre and non-cadre service, 30 percent are preserved for freedom fighters and their offspring, 10 percent for women, 10 percent for the inhabitants of certain districts and five percent for indigenous people.

Rejoinder

FROM PAGE 1 rejoinder.

OUR REPLY

The Daily Star report was based on the EC's report on first round of electoral reform talks with political parties held in between September and November last year.

Jamaat joined the talks on October 25 and opposed some of the EC's crucial proposals aimed at ensuring transparency in collec tion and spending of political parties' election funds. For instance, on election

expenses of parties, the EC proposal said all of them should properly maintain accounts of their collection of funds and expenditures for polls purposes. It also proposed that they should submit reports to it on their election funds and expenditures.

The EC's other proposals say that all sorts of documents relating to polls expenditures of political parties and candidates will be posted on its website so that people can easily get the information. But Jamaat opposed the EC's

talk with Jatiya Party (Ershad), proposals, reveals the EC's report. where a delegation of the latter said The EC report, also sent to they want the parliamentary elecpolitical parties for the second round of electoral reform talks, is now also available on the EC's website. Anyone can visit the website [www.ecs.gov.bd] to check the authenticity of our report which was written on the basis of political parties' views on the proposed articles 54, 55 and 56 of the draft representation of people ordinance 2008.

state of emergency, rather our con-In the rejoinder, Jamaat claimed that it had suggested to the EC to make the conditions easy. But in the EC's report it was found that Jamaat vehemently opposed its proposals, terming those unacceptable. So, we stand by our report.

Move to break

FROM PAGE 1

Sharif denied and said he is not supporting Aitzaz Ahsan for prime ministership. Aitzaz himself supported the name of Makhdoom Amin Faheem as the next prime minste. Conspirators were not discouraged on the missing of their fire.

Aitzaz Ahsan announced a rally on March 9th for the restoration of judges few days ago. Enemies of PPP-PMLN coalition once again activated their links and tried to use the March 9th rally not only against the SCBA president but also against the coming coalition.

They planted some disinformation in the PPP ranks that Aitzaz Ahsan is actually trying to blackmail PPP by using the "right wing" agenda of PMLN. Some other collaborators of the establishment claimed in front of Asif Ali Zardari that Aitzaz Ahsan is trying to project himself as the next president of Pakistan with the help of Nawaz Sharif. PPP co-chairperson never gave any reaction on these claims. He quietly checked it with Nawaz Sharif, and his new political partner outrightly rejected that disinformation. Meanwhile, Nawaz Sharif con-

tacted Aitzaz Ahsan over the telephone from Murree and discussed his March 9th announcement, Aitzaz assured him that he has no intension to put undue pressure on the new parliament for restoration of the judges and he can readjust the date accordingly. Nawaz Sharif assured him that he is also committed to restoration of the judges but wants to let the new parliament have 10--15 days for addressing this issue.

Aitzaz Ahsan has also complained that some newspapers are trying to twist his statements. He never gave any warning or deadline

DU teachers

FROM PAGE 1

Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Golam Rabbani sentenced the teachers to two years' rigorous imprisonment each for violating Emergency Power Rules (EPR) in August last year over the violence on the campus. The three were released from

the prison the same day after President Iajuddin Ahmed pardoned them. The court acquitted Prof Neem

Chandra Bhowmik and 15 students, as charges brought against them were not proved.

to PPP and PML-N for restoration of the judges.

Talking to The News he said, "I am not a candidate for president, I have not talked to anyone in this regard, I have not spoken against PPP, PML-N or Asif Ali Zardari, and I think we all should move jointly in

one direction." Aitzaz Ahsan praised Asif Ali Zardari and said, "He is moving ahead very intelligently, he proved that he is a mature politician." It is learnt that Nawaz Sharif is consulting prominent jurist Fakharudin G Ibrahim for making some proposals for restoration of the judges. On the other side Asif Ali Zardari is also consulting independent legal experts like Asma Jahangir for the

same cause. It is expected that both Fakhro Bhai and Asma Jahangir will find out a road map, which will be acceptable to PPP, PMLN, lawyers and the whole nation. Both of them have played an active role in the recent lawyers' movement and they will not provide any excuse for someone to create misunderstandings among PPP-PML-N coalition,

15yrs without trial

using the name of Aitzaz Ahsan.

FROM PAGE 16 granted a three-month interim bail

to Allya. Advocate Ebadur Rahman Chaudhury, a former lawmaker of Moulvibazar, moved for Allya in court while Assistant Attorney General Yamin Neaz Khan moved for

Meanwhile, Superintendent of Moulvibazar District Jail Md Shahjahan said Allya will be released after the bail order is received. He hoped the bail order would reach the jail within a couple of days.

Ali Hussain Allya, 62, of a village in Chunarughat of Habiganj has been languishing in jail for long 15 years without conviction in a murder case while all his co-accused have been freed on bail. He was 47 when he was arrested on August 5, 1992 but failed to obtain bail since he is poor and could not afford legal assistance.

A story on Allya was published in The Daily Star on February 25 following which Md Alkama Siddique, deputy commissioner of Moulvibazar, constituted a fivemember committee to give legal assistance to Allya and Ebadur became Allya's lawyer.

Hasina verdict

into sight after crossing four gates, and people concerned including

Additional Attorney General (AAG) Salahuddin Ahmad made his arguments for obtaining a stay on the HC judgment that also declared illegal bringing the extortion case against Hasina filed by businessman Azam J Chowdhury under the

justice regarding corruption, and

the country year after year, and state of emergency has been declared to try people involved in corruption, he noted.

On the consequence of the HC judgment, Salahuddin said it would not be possible to bring corrupt people to justice if this judgment remains in effect. He argued that an offence com-

mitted before the state of emeris being held under the existing laws, and the only reason for bringing it under the EPR is to dispose it quickly, he added.

The AAG also said the govern- not public importance of the case.

ment approves bringing a case under the EPR considering public importance. There is a guideline in the law regarding this, and the extortion case against Hasina has been brought under the EPR considering its public importance.

He pointed out that there are anomalies between the HC rule issued following Hasina's writ petition and the HC judgment. Hasina's chief counsel barrister

Rafique-Ul Huq told the court that her writ petition was filed challenging the legality of applying the EPR in the extortion case against her. The state of emergency was

declared to ensure socio-economic and state security, he said. And there is no scope to bring any offence committed before the emergency under the EPR. The counsel said the government unnecessarily brought the

extortion case against Hasina under the EPR. Rafique argued that the constitution has empowered the president to declare state of emergency but he cannot promulgate any

such law that would not be passed

in parliament. He noted that judges take oath to uphold and defend the constitu-

Rafique said government approval of bringing the extortion case under the EPR was given considering the status of Hasina,

newspaper cited an anonymous

aide as saying that Musharraf was

readying such a strategy after

Musharraf's spokesman rejected

"The president has been elected

Biden's comments and said the

president was ready to work with

for a period of five years by the

assemblies of Pakistan, which have

been elected by the Pakistani people

and not by senators from the US," he

respond to anything that is said by

"So I don't think he needs to

The opposition's stance on

the new government.

arch-foe and former premier Nawaz Sharif said the sooner the president stepped down, the better. "Except for Nawaz Sharif it is

clear that no one else is talking about the president leaving, Musharraf's spokesman, Major General Rashid Qureshi, told Dawn News Television. Sharif's Pakistan Muslim

League-N formed a coalition with the Pakistan People's Party of slain ex-premier Benazir Bhutto last week, after their groupings ousted Musharraf's backers from government in the elections.

They are seeking further allies to get them the two-thirds majority in parliament with which they could theoretically impeach the presi-

him because the people have given their mandate," Sharif said after meeting a hardline Islamist party leader.

to Pakistan in late 2007. In Washington, Joe Biden, one of three US senators who observed the

elections, discussed Musharraf's Asked on ABC television if he thought it would be good for

Musharraf is still unclear, with Sharif calling almost daily for him to step down but the PPP avoiding outright calls for him to resign or saying directly whether it will press for his impeachment.

these people in their capacity."

Musharraf stayed on, then judges sacked by him under emergency rule in November should be restored so they can decide the legality of Musharraf's re-election as president in October last year.

other top leaders of the party. the capital as soon as possible and The acting AL chief, who spoke at the opening of yesterday's talks, also Lt Col ATM Hasan Ahmed told suggested the caretaker government The Daily Star: "Those who are to begin its national dialogues with

Awami League (AL) rally on August 21, 2004, the source said adding Bird flu

leaders and activists killed and scores injured. The investigators believe that Zandal is concealing crucial infor-

mation in his attempt to mislead

the investigators.

on Bangabandhu Avenue left 24 AL

To make sure Zandal does not make false statements, he might be interrogated in front of Hannan in jail, if necessary, said the source. Apart from quizzing Zandal about the August 21 grenade attack case, the investigators are also

interrogating him about several

consignments of grenades said to have been sent by him to Satkhira, the investigator added. On February 15, the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) recovered 41 grenades from a bordering village of Satkhira and arrested Huji mili-

tant Nazrul Islam Ghorami in this

Power plant

connection.

FROM PAGE 16 arrested in another case after he was granted bail in the bargemount power plant case and secured release order.

The court earlier deferred the

hearing on charge-framing three times. The first deferment followed a time petition from the defence and the 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 illness. Special Court-1 Judge Firoz Alam set February 19 for the court decision after Hasina's counsels filed a

petition for bail on February 13.

sent to Satkhira by Huji.

MORE GRENADES IN HUII POSSESSION Investigators are now looking for more consignments of grenades

Tamim earlier told the investigators that Zandal had sent several consignments of grenades to Satkhira. The investigators interrogating

the consignments of grenades. Huji militant Nazrul who was placed on a 10-day remand by a Satkhira court on Sunday admitted that he had received only one

consignment of 41 grenades from

Zandal. In their attempt to locate more grenades, the investigators are now interrogating Bulbul and Tamim and verifying their statements with that of Zandal

interrogate him in front of the other three detained Huji militants -Zandal, Bulbul and Tamim. Bulbul and Tamim were placed

confirmed at a farm. from Star Poultry Farm on Friday and sent those to Dhaka for test where the presence of deadly bird

flu virus was detected.

square kilometre adjoining area with the help of law enforcers and upazila administration. were culled in the early hours yesterday at a farm at Kishoreganj sadar upazila following the detec-

So far, a total of 37,020 fowls had been culled in the district after the deadly disease broke out, the DLO sources said.

District Livestock Officer Nurul Shahnewaj Dilruba Khanam were chickens at Aqua Culture Agrobased Fishery and Poultry Farm at the Beruail village.

laying stage, the government is compensation. Tk50,000 due to this, he added.

while each chicken cost him over

Tk 350 to rear it to the present egg-

About the commission's proposal

It suggested that instead of

ments to it.

lakh, instead of current Tk5 lakh. "The proposed ceiling of Tk 15

"We will consider if magistrates can be assigned to do the job during

Zandal contradicts

Detained Huji militants Moulana Abul Kalam Azad alias Bulbul and Hossain Ahmed alias

Zandal have so far been unsuccessful in finding any leads regarding

The investigators said they would bring Nazrul at the Task Force for Interrogation (TFI) cell in

on a three-day remand by a Dhaka

FROM PAGE 16 presence of avian influenza was District Livestock Officer Deb Narayan Roy said they collected samples of some dead chickens

culling in Magura village and the Meanwhile, at least 16,020 fowls tion of avian influenza virus, reports our Kishoreganj corre-

Eight teams from the District

Livestock Office conducted the

spondent quoting the District Livestock Office (DLO) sources.

Islam and Upazila Nirbahi Officer present during the culling of the owned by Khaled Saifullah Shohel Talking to The Daily Star, the distressed farm owner said that

parliamentary parties immediately to overcome the present political crisis in the country. "They have strong syndicates in chief's remarks, CEC Huda questioned why confusions are being

Earlier, the Taskforce discovered astonishing level of corruption by Titas staff and traced among them several hundred billionaires and

FROM PAGE 16 CEC reiterated that the election cannot be held amid the emergency The authorities following several ment to create an environment conducive to holding elections. Now it depends on the government whether it will lift or relax the state of emergency to create the proper

restrictions on indoor politics, so political parties may embark on their A recent investigation claimed reform activities. The AL acting chief asked the EC to properly follow the electoral roadmap. "If you can do so, our full cooperation will be with you," Zillur Earlier in the day, the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) sat in a dialogue with the EC, where its dele-

> are there, but those must be removed from the public mind, and the Election Commission must follow the electoral roadmap," CPB Secretary General Mujahidul Islam Selim said. While placing AL's electoral JPchiefsaid.

gation told the commission that the people have doubts about holding of the polls within the timeframe stipulated by the roadmap.

reform proposals, its Presidium Member Tofail Ahmed said, "Some times we become afraid observing the progress in implementing the electoral roadmap." He was referring to the delay in completing the dialogues between the parties and the He said the dialogues were sup-

be made into laws by this month according to the roadmap. "But we are still discussing the issues," Tofai He urged the EC to resolve the BNP issue that delayed the completion of the talks. "The solution to the

problem is in the EC's hands," he

posed to be completed by November

of last year and the proposals for

electoral reforms were supposed to

The CEC admitted to the AL delegation that the completion of the talks was delayed due to the nagging BNP issue. The EC on November 5 of last year invited M Saifur Rahman-led faction of BNP to the first round of electoral reform dialogue with it on November 22, prompting Khandaker Delwar Hossain-led faction, loyal to detained Chairperson Khaleda Zia, to chal-

lenge the commission's decision in

HC, resulting in the EC's failure to

The matter is still pending in the

the High Court (HC).

yet hold even the first round of talk with BNP. "Completion of electoral reforms will make us happy and boost our confidence as well," CEC Huda said adding, "Other components of the roadmap however are being implemented on schedule."

In the afternoon the EC sat for a

"We also want the state of emergency to be lifted. But simultaneously we don't want to see the election getting hampered, following withdrawal of the emergency rules," said Anisul Islam Mahmud, acting chief of Jatiya Party (JP), who led the delegation. "We are not concerned about the

tion according to the roadmap.

cern is a meaningful election. If the state of emergency is not lifted, then all restrictions imposed by emergency rules must be relaxed allowing fundamental rights," the acting

FROM PAGE 1

lawyers come to court with their identity cards hanging from their Earlier, when the hearing began,

Emergency Power Rules (EPR). In the jam-packed courtroom, the AAG said two major objectives of this government are to ensure

to hold elections. Corruption has taken place in

gency can be brought under emergency power rules. Trial of this case

Bhutto and Sharif's parties won the "I firmly believe if they (political parties) do not focus on old grudges -- and there's plenty in Pakistan -and give him a graceful way to move," then Musharraf would leave office, Biden added.

"Musharraf should quit as soon as possible. It would be better for

Musharraf ousted Sharif in a coup in 1999 and sent him into exile the following year. Sharif returned

options in a television interview. Musharraf to prepare an exit strategy to resign or retire to avoid being forced out by a hostile parliament,

Sharif said Monday that if

Musharraf rejects Biden said: "Probably" FROM PAGE 16 Britain's Sunday Telegraph