president Ziaur Rahman, founder

the dialogue, it's just that the

release of Khaleda Zia is a must for

down on political leaders and

activists, he said it was an effort to

destroy the image of political

There is no atmosphere to

speak freely and party leaders

even do not have any political

rights, he said urging the govern-

ment to create the necessary

environment to hold the elections

Taking part in the discussion,

BNP chairperson's adviser Brig

Gen (retd) Hannan Shah urged

party leaders not to do anything

which is not approved by the party

Mohammad Selim presided over

Juba Dal acting President Mia

Juba Dal acting General

Secretary Abdus Salam Azad and

leaders of BNP's front organisa-

Australia withdraws

The 500-strong Australian troop

contingent deployed in Iraq with-

drew from their bases in the south

of the country yesterday, a local

The soldiers left following a flag-

lowering ceremony at the Imam Ali

airbase, west of the city of

Nasiriyah, the capital of Dhi Qar

province, governor Aziz Kadoum

today from Dhi Qar and Muthanna

provinces," Alwan said. Australian

troops had not taken part in direct

combat operations and instead

Minister Kevin Rudd had promised

to withdraw all 500 combat troops

from southern Iraq by the middle of

Iraq and that death in April was

judged the result of an "irresponsi-

bly self-inflicted" gunshot wound,

according to an inquest held in

about 400 Australians were headed

home while the balance will

remain in Iraq where they could be

deployed in a security detachment

pullout in February, Australia said

it would still have about 1,000

military personnel in and around

Iraq, including a 110-strong secu-

It will also have personnel for

Australia has also offered per-

Hercules and Orion aircraft based

outside Iraq as well as a warship in

manent residence status to hun-

dreds of Iraqi employees who

preparing to travel to Iraq and

neighbouring nations to process

applications from Iraqi employees

Immigration officials were

worked with Australian troops.

rity detachment in Baghdad.

When it announced its troop

Iraqi security officials said

Australia lost just one soldier in

The new Australian Prime

trained local security forces.

"The Australian soldiers left

tions also spoke at the meeting.

troops from Iraq

AFP, Nasiriyah, Iraq

official said.

Alwan said.

Australia.

a meaningful dialogue."

leaders.

neutrally.

constitution.

the meeting.

He said, "BNP did not boycott

Condemning the recent crack-

Aug 21 attack

Sripur in Magura in the 24 hours preceding 3:30pm vesterday, Rab Additional Director General (ADG) Col Gulzar Uddin Ahmed told a news briefing yesterday.

The Rab ADG also said five other persons with suspected links to banned Islamist militant organisation Harkatul Jihad al Islami (HuJi) were also arrested during a raid on Kurshi village under Baliakandi in Rajbari, who were handed over to police stations concerned.

A joint team of Rab intelligence wing. Rab-6 and Rab-8 also seized some papers, other documents, and two books on jihad.

The arrestees, who were paraded at the news briefing at Rab Headquarters in the capital, told reporters that they took part in the August 21 attack to kill former premier also AL chief Sheikh Hasina, who is also currently in detention on charges of corruption and abuse of power,

"Before the attack, Mufti Hannan at a meeting in his Merul Badda home in Dhaka convinced us that Sheikh Hasina is causing harm to Islam, so she should be killed, and I agreed to throw the grenades," Sabuj told reporters.

He said he joined Huli in 2002, on an invitation from a detained HuJi leader also a suspect in the August 21 attack case Moulana Abdur Rouf, while he was a student in a qoumi madrasa in Baliakandi.

He said 12 attackers divided in three groups carried out the attack. "We were four in a group led by detained HuJi leader Moin Uddin alias Abu Jandal," he said adding that two other members of his group were Towfiq and Mostafa. He said he heard that the two are now in Saudi Arabia. Towfiq left the country during Ramdan in 2004

and Mostafa fled about a year ago. He said after a briefing, Hannan gave six grenades to each group and asked them to throw those at the AL rally from different sides. He however did not identify the other grenade throwers.

Sabuj said in the morning of the day of the attack, their group was given six grenades in Hannan's residence in Badda which was also his office.

"I was given two grenades which I hid in my pants and went to the rally venue on a bus," Sabuj said adding that they however were not trained in how to throw a grenade.

The detained HuJi members said Hannan just briefed them on how to remove the pin of a grenade and throw the deadly weapon at a

Sabuj told the reporters that he however could not throw any grenade as he was caught in the middle of the onrush of panicked people running around at the venue after several grenades had already exploded.

He also said he abandoned the grenades he had and left the place. He said none threw any grenade from any rooftop or from inside any building.

The other detained and confessed attacker Uzzal Hosain alias Ratan said he was lying at a nearby shrine after the attack, pretending to be a vagabond sleeping there. He also said after several grenades had already exploded he threw away the two he possessed and melted into the fleeing crowd.

Rab officials said with the arrests of Sabuj and Ratan, eight grenade throwers are now behind

They are Abu Jandal, Jahangir, Bulbul, Jewel (brother of a Narayangani based slain criminal David), Sabuj, Ratan, Khalil, and Arif Hasan Sumon.

Besides, Muttakin and Mursalin, two other suspects who are also brothers, are currently in a

jail in India after their arrest there. Three other suspected attackers already died or were killed. Ehsan Ullah Kajol was killed in an

Khaleda

FROM PAGE 1

with influencing the tender process, while the CPA officials were charged with helping Gatco win the deal ignoring the tender evaluation committee's report that described the firm as unfit.

But during investigation ACC found involvement of 11 others and pressed charges on May 13.

The case was transferred to the Special Court-3 set up on the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban premises on May

The anti-graft watchdog pressed charges on May 5 against Khaleda and 10 others for abuse of power and graft in awarding a gas exploration and extraction deal to

Canadian company Niko. According to the charge sheet, the accused in collaboration with each other struck an anti-state "joint venture agreement" with

crore to the state coffers.

Niko, causing a loss of Tk 13,777

Special Court-9 on May 20. The ACC filed the Barapukuria coal case against Khaleda and 15 others including 10 former ministers from BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami for graft in awarding the coalmine operation contract to a Chinese

company on February 26. The case is now at the last stage

of investigation. The accused are charged with causing a loss of over Tk 158.71 crore to the public exchequer by awarding the production, management and maintenance contract through abuse of power.

encounter in India, Masud of Ihenidah died of ailment, and Khalil of Mohammadpur in Magura died as a bomb went off while he was manufacturing it.

"The arrest of Sabuj and Ratan is the result of our two years' effort, which we started after Huji leader Mufti Abdul Hannan had divulged the names of the grenade throwers in his statement," Col Gulzar said yesterday.

He said they will hand over the arrestees to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), which is investigating the case filed in connection with the deadly grenade attack that left 24 AL leaders and workers killed and scores

He also said CID is trying to submit a flawless and credible charge sheet, which is why possibly the investigation officer is taking a bitlonger to submit it.

Meanwhile, a correspondent reported from Faridpur that Rab also arrested five other suspected Huli militants from Kurshi village, who are Moulana Mizanur Rahaman, 22, Moulana Kutubullah, 29, Md Motiar Rahaman, 25, Md Shahidul Islam, 23, and Farhad Hossain, 22.

Tipped off, personnel of Rab Intelligence Wing, Rab-6 and Rab-8 raided Mostafizur Rahaman's house in Kurshi village, under Baliakandi in Rajbari and arrested the five suspected close aides of Mufti Hannan.

Rab also seized 10 electric detonators, some other electric equipment, a register book, and a plastic bag from the house.

The meeting was the third in a series of discussions on the part of the SCF to talk political parties out of any alliance with war criminals ahead of the next parliamentary

elections. The SCF leaders told the meeting that they, along with other freedom fighters, would oppose the parties siding with the antiliberation forces and urge people

not to vote for them. Ruling out any alliance with war criminals, the CPB asked the SCF to set up a data bank on war criminals and anti-liberation war elements.

"We consider crimes against ·humanity as the most heinous of all crimes. The rule of law would not be established in the country until war criminals are brought to justice," CPB President Manzurul Ahsan Khan, who led a tenmember determin of his party.

"We also gave our word to the sector commanders that we'll try our level best to bring the war criminals to justice," he said.

The CPB president said though two well-known war criminals Motiur Rahman Nizami and Salauddin Quader Chowdhury -are behind bars now on corruption charges, the government is yet to try them for war crimes.

Maj Gen (retd) KM Shafiullah, Maj Gen (retd) CR Dutta, Maj Gen (retd) Amin Ahmed Chowdhury, Lt Col (retd) Abu Osman Chowdhury, Maj (retd) Rafiqul Islam, among other SCF leaders, were present at the meeting.

Hasina's bail

FROM PAGE 16 The defence said that they could not see necessary case documents or even consult with their client.

The detained chief of Awami League (AL) was taken to the court around 9:55am. Two others accused in the case -- former power secretary Dr Toufique-e-Elahi Chowdhury and former state minister for power Prof Rafiqul Islam -were also produced before the

The defence filed three petitions before court after it sat at 10:00am.

The defence lawyers made a strong plea for Hasina's bail as they said the allegation against Hasina was 'false', baseless' and 'politically motivated'.

They told the court that Sheikh Hasina had only approved a draft policy, which did not cause any loss to the government or the country.

The defence argued that there are no specific allegations against Sheikh Hasina in the First Information Report (FIR) and that the former premier is an elderly person who is also seriously ill and the ordinary law allows bail in such

a situation. They added that one of the charge-sheeted accused in the same case has been granted bail and similarly Hasina is also eligible for bail.

The prosecution strongly opposed Hasina's bail prayer.

They in turn argued that since the state of emergency is in place, there is no scope for bail petitions as per section 19Ga of the Emergency Power Rules (EPR), which revokes the right to seek bail The case was transferred to the by an accused facing graft charges under 5(2) of the Anti-Corruption

(Prevention) Act 1947. Advocates Syed Rezaur Rahman, Sahara Khatun, Abdul Mannan Khan and Quamrul Islam appeared for bail for Hasina while | the release of the two detained Chief Special Public Prosecutor Sharfuddin Khan Mukul and Syed Shameem Ahsan Habib stood for the Anti-Corruption Commission

Sabbir Hasan filed the Niko graft case with Tejgaon Police Station on December 9 last year.

FROM PAGE 1 however pronounced yesterday's verdict on Hasina's petition overturning its earlier rulings regarding

The court also simultaneously rejected eight other similar petitions in unrelated cases filed by defendants, former state minister Ruhul Quddus Talukder Dulu, and former lawmakers Mosaddak Ali Falu, and AHM Mostafa Kamal alias Lotus

Yesterday's HC judgment observed that the rule on completing the trial proceedings of any criminal case within 60 days after a court takes it into cognisance is rather directory than mandatory.

"As per section 6(A) of the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 1958, trial proceedings of any criminal case shall be completed within 60 days after a court takes it (case) into cognisance. But, there is no rule mentioned in the law, what will be the consequence of the case if its trail proceedings are not completed within this period," the HC verdict

Counsels for both sides of the cases said the HC verdict removes any bar on continuing the trials of the corruption cases against Sheikh Hasina and the other petitioners.

All the cases were filed by the Anticorruption Commission (ACC), which have been pending with the special judges' courts set up on the parliament building premises in the

Counsel for the writ petitioners Barrister Rafique-Ul Huq told journalists yesterday that following the HC verdict, trials of the cases against the petitioners including Hasina will now go on.

Upon separate writ petitions, the HC earlier issued rulings ordering the government, ACC, and the judges concerned to explain why the continuation of trial proceedings of the cases against the petitioners should not be declared illegal. The court recently started hearing the replies.

After hearing arguments and submissions of both sides, the court delivered the verdict yesterday.

Home ministry

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chaos in the garment industry. "The government wants to clearly state this arrest drive is not politically motivated or an attempt to politically undermine and harass anyone," a ministry press

release said. "Only those who have specific complaints against them are being arrested," the release added.

"In the last 24 hours, special drives by the police and other lawenforcement agencies have arrested 584 people, who are using arms or are criminals with specific allegations tying them to a number of crimes," the ministry said.

The ministry also added that the drives has been taken to combat the law and order situation that may otherwise trigger panic among the people.

The ministry said the police were directed to launch a countrywide drive to combat these crimes

on May 28. The military is helping the

police in this drive. UNB adds: The United States has sought clarification from the caretaker government on the reasons behind the arrests of political party leaders over the past

several days. "We understand that many people, including political party leaders, have been arrested over the past several days. We are seeking clarification from the government regarding the reasons behind these arrests," a spokesman for the US Embassy in Dhaka told UNB

yesterday. The spokesman said the US has consistently stated that any individual arrested and charged with a crime should be treated fairly and accorded the full range of legal and constitutional rights that meet international standards of trans-

parency and due process. Govt trying hard

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"Now it is their duty to join the dialogue," Quader told reporters at Bangladesh Secretariat.

Trying to explain that the government is not the opponent of political parties, he said, "We would not contest the upcoming [parliamentary] elections."

The elections will be fair and the future would be better if an understanding between political parties could be reached, "which we want", said Quader, also the adviser for housing and public

works. He said the government is in constant contact with the two

political parties. Asked about what the next government move is since the two major parties said they would not join the dialogue without their freed chiefs to lead their delegations, Quader said, "The government will use all available means to persuade them."

He, however, declined to make any comment when asked if the government's initiatives included former premiers, Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia. Commerce Adviser Hossain

Zillur Rahman, also involved in coordinating the dialogue process, The ACC Deputy Director MM | said the demand for the expremiers' release is being seriously considered to make the ongoing dialogues a success.

Hasina's graft case 1,637 held as crackdown

FROM PAGE 1 Superintendent of Police Obaidur Rahman Khan said all the eight arrestees are accused of different

charges. Dal Sports Secretary Monir Miji, former UP chairman of Kochua Sadarpur Delwar Hossain Patwary, AL leader Saddam Hossain, BNP leaders Zahir Hossain, Azad Hossain Sarkar, Mubarak Ali, Nure-Alam and Wasim.

Our correspondent from said. Sirajganj reports: Rab arrested two persons including a Jubo Dal leader in separate drives in Sirajganj.

general secretary of district Jubo Dal and Russel, a listed criminal.

Sources said a team of Rab-12 raided the areas near Amlapara graveyard in the town yesterday noon and arrested Abu Sayeed. They held Russel from his house during a raid in several areas at Sandarpara village yesterday morn-

They were arrested on several charges including extortion,

sources said. Rajshahi reports: the joint forces and Jamaat activist Habibur yesterday held two Awami League leaders at Puthia upazila in the

They are former vice-president of Bangladesh Chhatra League Ahsanul Haque Masud and sports secretary of Puthia Jubo League Amirul Islam.

Sources said Ahsanul was terday accused in seven cases on different charges including murder and extortion while five cases were filed against Amirul on charges of extortion and other criminal offences.

However, the detainees were not shown arrested in the cases filed against them. They were held

under the Emergency Power Rules. Meanwhile, Puthia Awami The arrestees are district Juba League general secretary Golam Faruk strongly condemned the arrest of the party leaders.

"The cases were filed against them during the period of BNP-led coalition government to serve political interests. They were granted bail in all the cases," he Our Rangpur correspondent

said: joint forces arrested district BNP joint secretary Masud Khan They are Sirajganj Abu Sayeed, from his Jummapara residence on Saturday night. Police said a case was filed

> of the Emergency Power Rules and he was handed over to police after the arrest. He had also been accused in a number of cases on different

charges including extortion and

against Masud under section 16(2)

possessing illegal arms. Our Chapainawabganj correspondent reports: joint forces in separate drives arrested AL activist Our staff correspondent in Abdul Malek of Bholahat upazila Rahman Hobi of Gomostapur early yesterday. They were handed over

> Our staff correspondent from Khulna adds: six people including Khulna city AL leader Birendra Nath Ghose were arrested by joint forces on Saturday night and yes-

> The other arrestees are Al leader Bulu Biswas, Jubo League leader Rafiqul Islam, Jatiya Party leader Moniruzzaman Elu, Zahidur Rahman and Imran Khan,

Khaleda hits out at govt

to police.

FROM PAGE 1

to these," she said. Trade and business has slowed down and the country is losing foreign investments and labour markets abroad, she said. The caretaker government in its 16-month rule has pushed back the country by 30 years, sheadded.

In her over 15-minute speech, the BNP chairperson said the government assumed power for three months to hold a free and fair election, but it is busy harassing political leaders and other workers instead.

Terming the cases filed against her false, baseless, concocted and malicious to destroy the nationalist forces, she said: "Iwant justice. I want trial under the existing laws not under the Emergency Power Rules." "Apart from me, cases were filed

against my family members to harass

them. We didn't commit any wrong but are being implicated on corruption charges... the people will give its ment. answer," she said. Khaleda went on to say: "I have been in custody for nine months and also had waged movement for nine

years for restoring democracy in the country...Iwon't tolerate anymore.' The former premier demanded "open trial" in the case instead of what she called was "camera trial" She alleged her counsels are not

allowed to meet her for consultation. "I seek justice from the court." She also alleged the cases have been filed in a bid to implement the

minus-two formula. "Give up the plus-minus formula. Think about how to hold free and fair elections. The 1/11 has been done to

split political parties." On the separation of the judiciary, she told the court her government had introduced the separation of the judiciary bill in parliament. Khaleda however did not mention the reality that her government sought time on more than 10 occasions in an apparent effort to delay implementation of the separation of judiciary. The judiciary was finally separated from November last year by this caretaker government. During the rule of the BNP-led government, the image of judiciary was also tainted with a series of controversial appointment

and promotion of judges. She said although the judiciary has become independent, the "judges have no independence as they are doing what they have been

asked to do". "So where is the independence of

the judiciary?" she questioned. On the anti-corruption drive, the former premier said it is aimed at arresting key political party leaders, but those who actually committed corruption are sitting on the lap of

the government. As the judge told her the trial proceedings are taking place in the special court considering her security and asked her to give case-related speeches, she asked the court who year. will ensure the country's security when this has been done for their

She also said the government cannot stop the movement of the people though a huge crackdown was conducted yesterday.

Khaleda said the country cannot be run by "agents" who are like parasites. "The government is trying to forces."

election unitedly. The judge set June 8 for charge could not yet scrutinise the FIR and Abdul Matin and Janab Ali.

charge sheet in the case.

On another prayer, the court allowed the defence 40 minutes instead of one hour for legal consultation with Khaleda. Six lawyers including Khandaker Delwar Hossain went to another

room for the consultation. Earlier, Khaleda, former ministers Moudud Ahmed and AKM Mosharraf Hossain, former acting

energy secretary Shahidul Islam, One Group Managing Director Gias Uddin Al Mamun, International Travel Corporation Chairman Selim Bhuiyan and former Bapex secretary Shafiur Rahman were brought to the court on the parliament complex

amid tight security. The ACC on December 9 last year filed the case against Khaleda, Moudud, Mosharraf, Shahidul and Kashem with Tejgaon Police Station Six others were named as defendants after probes found their involve-

The ACC pressed charges against

Khaleda and 10 others in the case or May 5. The case was transferred to the Special Court on May 26. MOUDUD ON NIKO CASE Former law minister Moudud Ahmed yesterday questioned the veracity of the Niko graft case saying

he had never seen such a "farcical" compensation suit in his long career as a lawyer, reports UNB. "I've seen cases of profit, but not

the cases of such losses," he told the court. Standing in the dock, Moudud who is a co-accused in the Niko graft case, wondered how the public

exchequer suffered aloss of Tk 27,400 crore from a project of Tk 700 crore. Terming the case imaginary, he said people of the country are to give Tk 30,100 crore in compensation every month for increase in prices of rice and Tk 15,000 crore for electricity. If ever a compensation case needs to be filed, it should be laid against the incumbent government, he

Moudud said if the government considers Niko a bad company why the agreement with it has not yet

been scrapped. Describing the anti-corruption drive nothing but a farce, he said good people were arrested, but the

real corrupts were being sheltered. The former law minister demanded immediate lifting of the

state of emergency. About the jail condition, Moudud said he is deprived of basic rights in jail. "Where is the rule of law?" he

asked to know. Manzur Quader

FROM PAGE 16 905 pieces of CI sheets at Enayetpur cloth market and filed a case with the Enayetpur Police Station against Manzur Quader and five others on February 25 last

The five accused are Enayetpur upazila BNP president Liakot Ali, Jubo Dal president Ataur Rahman, Swechchasebak Dal president Abdul Khalek, Shramik Dal secretary Abdur Razzak and engineer Niaz Ali.

Later, the case was handed over to the ACC.

Deputy Director of ACC's Subcling to power backed by different Divisional Office in Pabna Abdul Gaffar, also the investigation offi-She said credible election will not cer of the case, found the involvebe held without participation of all ment of six other people in the parties and political leaders. She misappropriation of relief materiasked BNP leaders and supporters to als in a probe and included their remain united at any cost and called names in the charge sheet submitupon other parties to work for the ted to the Sirajganj Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court.

The six accused are BNP activframing hearing as the defence ists Abu Taleb, Rebeka Sultana, prayed for time on the plea that they Aleya Begum, Shahidul Islam,

Rajuk demolishes

FROM PAGE 16 semi-concrete structures includ-

ing 55 shops constructed on the Bagunbari canal.

He said all illegal structures on Hatirjheel and Begunbari canal will be demolished gradually.

The drive was conducted without giving any prior notice to the residents of the area.

"We did not get any prior notice about the drive... that is why we had no time at all to move our goods," said Abul Hossain who has four shops there. "It is our legal property and the

drive left me emptied," he claimed. Rajuk so far pulled down over 600 illegal structures in Hatirjheel-Begunbari area since March to implement the project. On February 7, the government

under the Tk 1,473.59 crore project started building a road along the The Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Dhaka Wasa), Armed

Forces Division alongside city

development agencies are implementing the project. The government and Japan Debt Cancellation Fund are jointly financing the project. The government has already allocated Tk 50 crore for the project in the current

fiscal year, an official of Rajuk said. Rajuk is to spend Tk 1,218.69 crore, LGED Tk 175 crore and Dhaka Wasa Tk 77.98 crore for their part in the project. Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology will spend Tk 1.92 for conducting a survey there.

3,000 appeals

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Meeting sources said the EC is for using fresh election materials in the parliamentary polls. The materials purchased earlier for the postponed ninth parliamentary elections, scheduled for January 22, 2007, would be used for local government elections, added the

Directed by the EC, its secretar iat is now making preparations to hold elections at four city corporations and seven municipalities in the third week of July.

Asked about the schedule for upazila parishad elections, Election Commissioner Sakhawat said the schedule would be announced as soon as it is final-

hold the upazila parishad elections, but it has yet to fix any timeframe for the elections. Asked whether the latest crack down on grassroots political leaders would create any obstacle to

The EC decided in principle to

holding the local government elections, Sakhawat declined to make any comment. MOVETOREGISTER

EXPATRIATE VOTERS In an effort to register eligible Bangladeshi voters living abroad, the EC finally made a draft proposal to amend the electoral rolls ordinance.

posal was supposed to be finalised at the EC's meeting yesterday. The EC is likely to discuss the proposal in today's meeting, they added. Upon finalising the proposal

EC sources said the daft pro-

the EC will send it to the law ministry. It might also call on the chief adviser to discuss the issue. As per the draft proposal, expatriate Bangladeshis with dual

citizenship would be eligible for enrolment as voters. Two election commissioners --Muhammed Sohul Hussain and Sakhawat Hussain -- in November last year visited the UK and told Bangladeshi citizens living there that they would take steps to register expatriate Bangladeshis as

tion earlier.

New C FROM PAGE 16 accordance with the law and the constitution, as expected by law-

yers and citizens of the country. "I hope that Justice MM Ruhul Amin, as a learned and experienced judge, will play an outstanding role in protecting the constitution, rule of law and human rights

at a crucial moment of the nation,

he said. While talking to journalists at his SCBA office, barrister Shafique also said that the SCBA did not felicitate the new chief justice as per a decision made by the associa-

At an urgent meeting on May 11,

the SCBA decided not to give fare-

well to the outgoing chief justice and not to felicitate the new chief justice. Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed, Speaker Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar and outgoing Chief Justice Md Ruhul Amin were present at the oath-taking cere-

mony that was conducted by

Cabinet Secretary Ali Imam Majumder. Advisers, special assistants to the chief adviser, the chief election commissioner, judges of the Supreme Court, chiefs of the three services, the attorney general, secretaries, vice-chancellors of different universities, former chief justices, editors of newspapers, eminent lawyers, journalists and senior military and civil officials were also present at the ceremony.

On May 25, the president appointed Justice MM Ruhul Amin, a judge of the Appellate Division of | Satkania Jamaat leaders and activthe Supreme Court, as chief justice.

Khaleda tells Delwar

FROM PAGE 1

suggestions to Delwar, also her lawyer, during a closed-door meting after she appeared before the special court yesterday. The meeting lasted about 20 minutes.

She asked him to keep the party united and prepare the party for a movement to restore democracy in the country.

Khaleda replaced BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan with Delwar just before she was arrested last September.

Earlier in the day, the special court granted Khaleda's lawyers 40 minutes for legal consultation after she appeared before the court, for the first time since her arrest, to stand trial in a corruption case.

Before the meeting between Khaleda and Delwar, five lawyers--Khandaker Delwar Hossain, Abdur Rezzaque Khan, Sanaullah Miah, Khorshed Alam and Masud Talukdar--went to another room for consultations with Khaleda

"I had a long discussion with the chairperson but I will not disclose the contents as well as her directives right now," said Delwar addressing a meeting organised by Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal in the city vesterday.

Her directives would be reflected through the party's activities and programmes, he said, adding that the chairperson said they have to forge a movement for a free and fair election and to overcome the current situation.

latest situation in the party and sought suggestion from her on a number of key issues like reorganising party committees and what to do with leaders of the other faction of BNP. Recently, Delwar reconstituted BNP Sylhet district committee and front organisations Jatiyatabadi

Tanti Dal and Jatiyatabadi

Muktijoddha Dal. He even

approved an expulsion order

against BNP US chapter vice-

Sources close to Delwar said he

briefed the chairperson about the

president Solaiman Bhuiyan and general secretary Zillur Rahman Following his directives, Barisal (north), Sunamganj Moulavibazar and Rajbari district committees decided to expel BNP pro-Saifur faction leaders Shah Abul Hossain, Mosharraf Hossain Mangu and Zahiruddin Swapan,

Nazir Hossain, Ebadhur Rahman Chowdhury, All Newaz Khawam and Nasirul Haque Sabu. A top leader of pro-Khaleda faction of BNP told The Daily Star last night that the chairperson had several times sent messages to Delwar asking him not to bring any changes to BNP front organi-

sations and BNP district committees. Addressing the Jubo Dal discussion meeting at Engineers Institution auditorium, Delwar said his party will not participate in any rigged elections and governments formed through rigged

polls do not last long. The meeting was organised to

mark the death anniversary of late

political parties cannot gather at

the gate of the special courts,

courts for more than two hours

The two leaders were in the

The road was re-opened for

Though Hasina appeared in the

This was also the first time the

two former prime ministers were

produced in the special courts the

Ex-Jamaat MP

Station, submitted the charge

Magistrate Abdullah Al Mamun.

Jamaat leader Shahjahan has been

mentioned as the prime accused in

are Satkania Jamaat Amir Dr Nurul

Hoque, Shibir activists Abu Musa

alias Gaalkata Musa, Moazzem

Nurul Alam, Abdul Mannan alias

Hoque, Abu Musa and Mohiuddin -

Rahim from Garangia area of

Sonakaya village in Satkania

upazila filed the extortion case with

ists for extortion of Tk3 lakh.

The other accused in the case

sheet to the court of Senior Judicial

vehicles after around 12.30pm, but

it took one hour more for the traffic

court several times before, Khaleda

was produced in the court for the

first time yesterday since her arrest

situation to become normal.

FROM PAGE 1

sources said.

from 10:00am.

in September 2007.

same day.

FROM PAGE 16

the charge sheet.

Ahmad and Nasir.

- are in jail now.

allowed to use the road.

of the military, the Australian government said last month. Khaleda, Hasina

Pak reforms

operation.

the Gulf.

Even the pedestrians were not FROM PAGE 16 During the Kargil conflict in early Apart from security concerns, 1999, then prime minister Sharif the law enforcement agencies claimed the army did not take blockaded the road so that the him into confidence about the supporters and activists of the

> army chief, has contested Sharif's claim, the PML-N chief has continued to insist that he was in the dark about the operation. Sharif recently said Musharraf should be tried in court for his role in the Kargil operation. AFP adds: Pakistan's election

commission yesterday cleared

Though President Pervez

Musharraf, who was then the

the way for former prime minister Nawaz Sharif and his younger brother, a former chief minister, to contest June 26 by-elections, officials said. The Sharif brothers were not allowed to take part in February 18 elections after the commission

cited criminal convictions dating

back to events surrounding a 1999 coup and pending criminal sub-inspector at Satkania Police charges. "All objections raised against the nomination papers of Nawaz Sharif and Shahbaz Sharif have been rejected and now they can

contest by-elections," a spokes-

man for the commission told AFP. Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League-N party has joined forces with slain former premier Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan Hossain, Mokhter, Musa, Nurul People's Party (PPP), which won Islam, Mohiuddin, Enamul Hoque, the most seats in the February Nezamuddin, Abu Syed, polls, in which President Pervez Mohammad Alam, Nazrul Islam, Musharraf's allies were trounced.

Balu Mannan, Shawkat Ali, are set to hold by-elections, · Shahedul Hoque Siddique, Abdul mostly after candidates' deaths Mannan, Rafique, Hamid, Nesar or because politicians gave up seats after winning in more than Three of the accused -- Dr Nurul one constituency. The ruling coalition is increas-

ing the pressure on Musharraf to On March 24, 2007, Abdur quit and they are mulling a constitution amendment package to clip the wings of US-backed president. Sharif, a two-time prime min-

A number of constituencies

Satkania Police Station against 39 ister, was ousted by Musharraf in a 1999 military coup.