Musharraf's exit

democratic path, the facts cannot be

lost on neither the people of Pakistan

nor their well-wishers in the Saarc

countries that Mr. Zardari's reputa-

tion leave a lot of us nervous as to his

commitment to democracy. How

can we forget that the Presidency of

Pakistan's most popular party, the

Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP), was

bequeath to a minor son, as if it was

personal property like a land or a

house to be inherited through a will.

And in line with Nawabs and

Zamindars of the past, a Regent has

also been willed, to look after the

'throne' till the minor son is ready to

take over fully. So the father, reviled as

one of the most corrupt men in the

country, is to run the party till then.

The leaders and the workers who

worked for years risking their lives

against the military rule of Musharraf

had no say as to who the party's

leader will be. The message is clear,

lest anybody has any doubt, that

Pakistan Peoples' Party is the per-

sonal property of the Bhutto family to

be given away as an inheritance. Now

that really sounds like the party to

If we are to blame the military

dictators for the destruction of

democracy in Pakistan, the politi-

cians need to share a significant part

of the blame. And here lies some

crucial lessons for us in Bangladesh.

If the colonels who assassinated

Bangabandhu, and Gen Ziaur

Rahman and Gen Ershad are guilty of

bringing the military into politics in

Bangladesh, our politicians are also

guilty of failing to consolidate, insti-

tutionalise and deepen the roots of

democracy in the country. Sheikh

Mujib did not have to introduce

BKSAL. Sheikh Hasina did not have

to damage the economy through

hartals and weaken the parliament

through years of boycott. Khaleda Zia

did not have to set up her son to

'inherit' the throne and the other one

to gobble up business of others. She

needn't have set up the most corrupt

regime ever by an elected govern-

ment. As the leader of two-thirds

majority in the parliament she did

not need the likes of Harris, Falu,

Babar, and hordes of others like

them. She did not have to make her

sister a minister and allow her two

brothers to interfere in the army and

ences (our tradition of democratic

movement is stronger, people are far

more aware of their rights, we have

better social indicators, and our

military today is far different from

that of Pakistan and they are far more

respectful of democracy and need for

elected government than Pakistan

army ever was), just as Pakistan looks

forward to democracy, so do we. Just

as in Pakistan where the two old

parties, the PPP and the Muslim

League, are set to resume their roles

in politics, in Bangladesh, our two

major parties, the Awami League and

the BNP, are set to regain their domi-

nance in our politics following the

elections later this year. The question

here is, just as in Pakistan, will our

politicians rise to the occasion and

play their patriotic and nation-

building role so that the likelihood of

military dictatorship is forever ban-

as they work to be only the third

nation since World War II -- after the

to end the Olympics on top of the

major contributor with Zou Kai

winning the men's high bar and Li

Xiaopeng taking the men's parallel

on offer, the most since the Soviet

It gave China nine of the 14 gold

Zou won his second individual

Li added a Beijing gold to the one

gold of the Games ahead of Jonathon

Horton of the United States and

he scored at the Sydney Games in

2000, beating South Korea's You

Won-chai and Anton Fokin of

Uzbekistan to snare his fourth career

the men's trampoline competition.

On top of that, Lu Chunlong won

Off the diving boards, He Chong

clinched the men's 3m springboard

title, giving six-out-of-six golds,

equalling their best ever tally in

Athens four years ago, as they aim for

But it didn't all end as planned.

women's cycling sprint but ended

with bronze, which nevertheless was

emotional apology for pulling out of

the Olympics with an "unbearable"

ended when he hobbled off the track

on Monday with what transpired to

be along-term problem with his right

were so many people supporting me,

I told myself I had to run, but I just

couldn't do it," Liu said in interviews

Sun Haiping collapse in tears at a

post-race press conference, domi-

Liu's fate, which saw his coach

And in a Games noted for the

breakthroughs made by China, a

Chinese pair made the women's

beach volleyball final for the first

formidable opponents in American

defending champions Kerri Walsh

and Misty May-Treanor.

Wang Jie and Tian Jia will face

with the state-run press.

China's first ever medal in the sport.

Guo Shuang wanted a gold in the

Meanwhile, Liu Xiang made an

Liu and the nation's dream of gold

"I just feel so sorry. Because there

a clean sweep of all eight.

Fabian Hambuechen of Germany.

Their gymnasts have been a

United States and the Soviet Union -

ished from our realm of possibility?

Argentina

bars crown on Tuesday.

Union won 10 in 1988.

Olympic title.

FROM PAGE 16

medal table.

Not withstanding many differ-

in the national airlines, the Biman.

bring democracy to Pakistan.

FROM PAGE 1

however smart, efficient, modern, organised and well meaning (and they sometimes are) ultimately fail, and miserably so, to live up to the expectation of the people. Sometimes, if not rarely, they begin well. But ultimately it all ends in disaster as it also happened in Musharraf's case. In addition to curtailing freedom what military dictatorships end up doing is distorting institutions --administrative, financial and supervisory -- including their own. The most efficient of military ends up being corrupt and as such destroy themselves from within. And it all happens because they enjoy power and authority without being held accountable, which corrodes the discipline that is the life blood of a genuine military.

Pakistan should serve as the greatest example of how a country's stride into maturity was repeatedly thwarted by self-serving military charlatans. Each time a military dictator came, he promised to make Pakistan stronger and left it weaker and debilitated in every sense of the term. General Ayub Khan (1958-69) created the over-centralised, elitist and insensitive (of people's needs) bureaucracy that widened the richpoor gap. Fatally it created economic disparity between the two wings of the country and laid the economic foundation of its bifurcation. Gen Yahya (1969-1971) presided over the genocide of the Bangalees and created the ground for Pakistan's immediate destruction. Gen Ziaul Huq (1977-1988) ravaged whatever was left of the original spirit of Pakistan by unleashing the obscurantist forces that might yet ring the death knell of whatever is left. Finally, Gen Musharraf destroyed Pakistan's democratic recovery by staging a coup under the most indefensible of all circumstances -- that of saving his own job. In the name of "war on terror" he made Pakistan a backyard for Taliban and safe haven for al-Oaeda. Never has Pakistan been under such dark cloud of religious extremism as it is now. His selfishness and arrogance crossed all limits when he all but destroyed Pakistan's highest judiciary just to cling to

If there is a single factor that can be blamed for the gradual destruction of Pakistan it is the repeated military takeover of the state power.

Pakistan's sad story began with another general, Iskandar Mirza, who, back in mid-fifties manipulated himself into the presidency, and then colluded with Gen Ayub Khan to stage the coup, simply to prevent holding of the first-ever general election in Pakistan, scheduled for February 1958. If that election was held, Pakistan's history might well have been far happier.

While the generals in Pakistan were playing havoc with the country, what were the politicians doing? That is another lesson from Musharraf's departure that we need to think of today. Who opened the door for Maj Gen Iskandar Mirza to come to power? Who prevented the adoption of a constitution in Pakistan till 1956 (Pakistan was born in 1947)? Who planned with Gen Ayub to abrogate it in 1958, lest Awami League, led by Shaheed Suhrawardy, comes to power through the ballot? It can be said that two thoughts guided the politicians of Pakistan from 1947 to Ayub's coup. One was to prevent holding of the elections as long as possible and two, to deprive leaders of the eastern wing to have any share of power. (Suhrawardy's cabinet in 1957 was a honourable exception, which was brought down within 13

months of its taking office). After December 1971, with the civilian rule returning, elections held, and with the lesson of Bangladesh liberation fresh in the mind, people hoped that Pakistan would embark on its journey towards democracy. But Zulfigur Ali Bhutto turned into a tyrant. Under him the opposition was so oppressed that it ultimately took to streets, making the fatal opening for the muchhumiliated Gen Ziaul Huq (The supremely arrogant Bhutto used to call him "My monkey general") to

stage his coup. Both Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif were elected twice and twice they were forced out of power through civilian-military connivance but not without a widespread reputation of corruption. Benazir's husband, now Pakistan's kingmaker, Asif Ali Zardari, was widely known as

"Mr. Ten Percent" under Benazir's premiership. It was Nawaz Sharif's father known as "Abba Ji" who ruled the roost during Nawaz's tenure, not to mention Nawaz's brother Shahbaz Sharif (Chief Minister of Punjab) and his wide network of family members and cronies who joined in the loot. It was corruption, nepotism and cronyism that defeated both the twice-elected Pakistani leaders.

While we rejoice at Pakistan's renewed opportunity to take to the

43 killed

FROM PAGE 16

security forces engaged in fierce

nated China's state-run media with the China Daily, among others, One of the soldiers killed in the ambush was Lieutenant-Colonel praising his sportsmanship in the Rahmouni Mohammed, 47, the face of defeat. "Liu Xiang was our hero. he still papers said.

On Thursday, the military commander in the region, Abdelkader Yamani, was also caught up in an

ambush in the same area. The Islamist militants, chased by security forces in Kabylia, were trying to regroup in the nearby Skikda region, the newspapers

Fake visas

FROM PAGE 16 take advantage of this process and they are cheating the jobseekers by producing fake visas, said an immigration official.

Asked to comment on the matter, Didarul Haque, managing director of Heaven Overseas, that processed documents of six of the deported workers, said they only helped the workers get emigration clearance from BMET and that they were not involved in securing or buying visas for the workers.

Most other countries have websites where the authenticity of their visas can be verified, but no such facility is available for the visas issued by the UAE, he said.

"The government should take up the issue immediately with the UAE authorities. Otherwise, workers will continue to suffer and the travel agents that arrange the air tickets for the workers will also be affected, since they have to pay the cost of for the return ticket of the deported workers," Didarul Haque said.

Preferring anonymity, another recruiting agent said workers could also wind up being deported if the employers or their representatives in Dubai refuse to accept the workers without the "payment" for the visas, which sells for a good amount of

money Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas **Employment Secretary Abdul Matin** Chowdhury, however, believes that there are criminals in Bangladesh who prepare the fake visas and that they have links with the recruiting

"We shall take action against the recruiting agencies that had processed the documents for the deported workers," he said.

Asked whether the government should be held responsible for not raising the issue of the photocopy visa to the UAE authorities and not establishing a system to check the authenticity of the UAE visas, the secretary said, "We've asked our mission in Dubai to discuss the issue with the authorities. They also tried, but they don't have sufficient access to the UAE authorities."

Chowdhury, however, said Bangladesh signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with UAE and a joint committee formed under the MoU will soon discuss the issue in the UAE. There are also initiatives at diplomatic levels, he added.

Asked what will happen to the deported workers, DG of BMET Abdul Malek said, "We will write to the 13 agencies involved to arrange jobs for the deported workers."

DU deans polls

FROM PAGE 16

environmental sciences and engineering and technology faculties. The Awami League-backed blue

panel got the social science and fine arts faculties. The four-hour voting began at 9:00am at Teacher-Student Centre

(TSC) cafeteria, with Treasurer Prof.

Syed Abul Kalam Azad as the election commissioner. He said about 98 percent teachers from nine faculties cast their votes, adding that the new deans could join their offices from tomorrow if they

Earlier, Prof Borhan Uddin Khan was elected as law faculty dean uncontested.

The white panel's incumbent arts-faculty dean Prof Sadrul Amin was re-elected. He bagged 116 votes while blue panel's Prof Fakhrul Alam

got 107. ProfTajmery SA Islam secured the science faculty. She got 67 votes while rival Prof Muhibur Rahman got 47

Prof Md Abdur Rashid won the pharmacy faculty, securing 30 votes

while Prof Farida Begum scrambled Prof Abul Bashar was elected as

biology-faculty dean, getting 82 votes against his rival Prof Anwar Hossain's 61.

Prof Abbas Ali Khan got 65 votes for the business studies faculty while

Prof Mizanur Rahman got 53. Prof Shahnaz Haq Hussain got the earth and environmental sciences faculty, securing 14 votes against her white panellist rival Prof Qamrul

Hasan's seven and blue panellist Prof

Hossain Mansur's 12. Prof Shahida Rafique won the engineering and technology faculty. She bagged 37 votes while rival Prof Neem Chandra Bhowmik got 19.

The blue panel's Prof Harun-or-Rashid was elected as dean of the social science faculty, securing 100 votes. His rival Prof Ferdous Hossain scrambled 53 votes.

Prof Rafiqun Nabi got the newly established fine arts faculty. He got 14 votes while rival white panellists Prof Abdus Sattar and Prof Mahmudul Haqgot 13 and 11 votes respectively.

Thai Airways FROM PAGE 1

International Airport at 12:10pm," an airport high official told The Daily

"Emergency workers evacuated the passengers from the plane," he said, adding, "The plane left ZIA at

2:30pm after changing its burst tyre." The same thing happened at Shah Amanat International Airport while a Biman DC10-30 was landing around 12:30pm.

"One of the tyres of the aircraft burst and three others were damaged," a Biman high official said. The flight from Abudhabi was

destined for Dhaka via Chittagong. "All the passengers of the aircraft were evacuated safely," the official added.

Biman Bangladesh Airlines yesterday sent spare wheels and engineers to Chittagong.

On July 3, passengers and crew of another Biman DC10-30 escaped unhurt when six of its tyres exploded whilelanding at ZIA.

Graft trial in tangle

courts.

enacted while lifting the emer-

gency state. This law will have

some "saving clauses" to keep

valid some of EPR provisions

including the one barring convicts

trial with other courts across the

country in parallel with the special

with mostly graft cases filed by

ACC and National Board of

Revenue (NBR) and a few bribery

are now pending with different

courts of the country till June 15.

Of them, 87 are pending in Dhaka.

Chowdhury, political secretary of

ex-premier Khaleda Zia, received

highest 59 years' jail by a

Metropolitan Sessions Judge's

Harris, who is absconding, was

also awarded three-year impris-

onment in each of two separate

cases, one filed for graft and

another for possessing foreign

In the special courts, business-

Most other convicts received

Of the high-profile graft

suspects, three have already been

found guilty in six graft cases, so

far highest in number. They are

Rabeya Haider, wife of former BNP

minister Shahjahan Siraj, their son

Rajib Siraj and businessman

Atiqullah Khan Masud who

received 43, 45 and 48 years' jail

At least 76 ex-lawmakers

including ex-premiers Sheikh

Hasina and Khaleda Zia have been

Of the others, 43 are from BNI

27 from the AL, three from Jamaat

e-Islami, and one each from Islami

Oikya Jote and Jatiya Party

BNP and 11 from the AL have

already been convicted. Many of

the convicts and accused served

Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir from

the AL, Mir Nasir Uddin from BNP

and Ali Ahsan Mohammad

Mojaheed from Jamaat have also

police, government departments

and aggrieved individuals also

filed cases against at least 28 BNP

and four Jamaat ex-lawmakers on

different criminals charges

including misappropriating relief

materials, extortion, violation of

EPR, illegal possession of firearms

cases will be filed against more

former MPs, while complaints

against them are now under

anti-corruption drive and the

army-led task forces started func-

tioning, the people, who were

aggrieved, started filing cases

against former ministers and

cases filed by ACC, NBR and some

other government departments

are now being monitored by the

government, other criminal cases

filed by different persons are not

getting proper government atten-

Although some major graft

lawmakers on different charges.

After the government launched

Government sources say graft

and liquor and land grabbing.

Former technocrat ministers

as ministers in the last 15 years.

Sixteen former lawmakers from

man Obaidul Karim was awarded

highest jail term -- lifetime, mean

ing 30 years -- in a single graft case.

currency illegally.

13-year imprisonment.

respectively.

(Monju)

been convicted.

sued on graft charges.

Court in Dhaka in a single case.

A total of 168 cases filed by ACC

Of all the graft convicts, Harris

Many graft cases are now under

The special courts are dealing

from contesting elections.

cases filed by police.

FROM PAGE 1

have been acquitted out of 149, but all main accused have been

handed down punishment. According to the Emergency Power Rules (EPR), a higher court must adjudicate any appeal against a lower court verdict in a corruption case within 90 days of filing of the appeal.

To address the problem, the government is planning to move to the Supreme Court with a request for constituting two separate benches in the HC to deal exclusively with the appeals against the verdict in special graft

Contacted by The Daily Star for confirmation of the government move, Anisul Hug, lawyer for Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), said he didn't have any specific information about it, adding "I have heard about that.

Expressing his disappointment, advocate Mosharaf Hossain Kajal, one of the prosecution lawyers in the special courts, said, "We all are proceeding with graft cases in the trial court with the spirit of quick disposal. But it appears that the same spirit is absent during dealing of the appeals.'

Surprisingly, in some cases, both the prosecution and the defence do not seem to be going for quick disposal of appeals, sources involved in the appeals

A number of lawyers, whose clients have already been convicted on graft charges, have admitted this as a "strategy"

"I don't want to move for quick disposal of the appeals as my client thinks he won't get justice during the caretaker government rule. He wants the hearing to begin after the elections when an elected government will be in power," a defence lawyer said.

Barrister Mahbubuddin Khokan, some of whose clients have also been convicted in graft cases, said, "Some convicts may choose this strategy. But I think the appeals against graft case verdicts are not coming in the serial for hearing due to long queue and backlog of cases."

A prosecution lawyer said it is the responsibility of the defence to move to quicken the appeal proceedings if they feel the necessity. So far, the HC has received

more than a dozen appeals. Though-half of the appeals were received over six months ago, hearing of any of them has yet to

Records say over 100 cases, including 25 which have been stayed by the HC, are now pending with the special courts. Some of the cases were returned to the Court of Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge, but a few of them were transferred to different special courts again.

The objective of the anticorruption drive has been hampered a bit due to the HC stay on many graft cases. Otherwise, the courts could have disposed many other cases by now, a prosecution

lawyer observed. While dealing with graft cases, the prosecution enjoys some procedural facilities due to the EPR. The EPR has the provision of imposing some restrictions on the convicts like barring convicts from contesting polls.

A law, to be styled as the 'emergency repeal act' or 'withdrawal of emergency act', is going to be

OMS

kilograms of rice a day and the OMS centres have been allocated 750-765 kilogrammes for each day, six days a week. There will be no OMS on Fridays.

Across the nation, there will be 7141 dealers taking part in OMS programme, with dealers in the six city corporations, Narayanganj, Narsingdi and Gazipur being allocated 765 kilograms, while dealers in other areas have been allocated 510 kilograms for the daily sales.

The Food Directorate in a press release said any complaints regarding OMS should be made to the office of the Head Controller of Dhaka Rationing or on tel no 9333938.

According to Trading Corporation Bangladesh figures, rice prices have fallen by 4.35 per cent over the past

Harris, family

FROM PAGE 1 warrants against Harris and ter others and also the order to attach their properties, as they have been

absconding since the filing of the

ACC Deputy Director Jibon Krishna Roy filed the case with Gulshan Police Station on October 7 last year.

Earlier, an anti-graft tribunal on May 21 last year sentenced Harris to three years' imprisonment for not submitting wealth statement to the commission. He was also awarded 59 years' rigorous imprisonment in another graft case.

Harris, also joint secretary general of BNP, has been on the run since the present caretaker govern ment took over last year.

RU students

FROM PAGE 16

Vehicular movement on Dhaka-Rajshahi highway was suspended till filing of the report at 12:10am due to barricades put up by the students.

The clashes started at around

8:30pm when a group of students attacked a ticket counter of Rajshahi Dhaka bus service for 'cheating' a fellow student. They set fire to the counter and two shops at Binodhpur Humayun Kabir, the student, said

he had taken a Dhaka-bound bus with a ticket for Tk 250. But at Natore, he was forced to get off as the bus staff gave his seat to another person.

Chase and counter-chase contin ued for hours as the police and RI authorities remained onlookers. Several students and locals were injured in stone-throwing between Apart from these graft cases, thetwo sides.

> The traders manhandled the RU proctor when he went to the scene at around 10:00pm.

The injured students include Sagar, Alif. Sayed, Jasim, Sazzad, Monowar, Prottoy Kumar, Aminul Islam, Sabuj and Liton. Riot police and Rapid Action

Battalion were keeping the area cordoned off as tension was running

Ex-BNP MP Anne

Moving the bail petition, defence lawyers told the court that their client had surrendered before the HC seeking anticipatory bail on August 14. The HC did not grant him bail but asked him to surrender before the Sessions Judge's Court within two weeks.

The HC also asked the law enforcing agencies not to arrest or harass the petitioner within this period as the Sessions Court might consider the bail petition.

Opposing the bail petition Additional Public Prosecutor Kabi Hussain told the court that the case was earlier brought under the Emergency Power Rules (EPR) and to entertain a petition for bail.

bail petition saying that he had no jurisdiction to entertain the bai

Shamsul Haque, senior manager of M/S Abdul Monem Ltd. filed the case against the former BNP lawmaker with Shahbagh Police Station on September 10 las year accusing him of extorting Tk 25 lakh from the company on May 7,2005.

In the case statement, the com plainant said the accused extorted the money from the company upon securing a work order for dredging for the company. Anne initially asked the company for Tk 50 lakh but later accepted Tk 25 After providing one tonne of rice | lakh from the complainant on May

> The investigation officer accused on February 29 and the

India.

in New Delhi in April this year, BDR provided its counterpart with a list of Bangladeshi criminals, who have taken shelter in India. BDR Director General Maj Gen

Shakil Ahmed will lead the 22 member Bangladesh side while his counterpart AK Mitra will lead the

· Officials of the home and land ministries and the Bangladesh-India Joint River Commission will also attend the conference.

412 juvenile

FROM PAGE 16 more serious criminal activities.

This concern was expressed yesterday at a meeting organised by the social welfare directorate on 'Transferring Detained Children from Prisons to Facilities under the Directorate of the Social Welfare'. The meeting was held at Divisional Commissioner's conference room.

The meeting was told that 67 of the detained juveniles had been transferred to the juvenile correctional facilities from various prisons over the past month.

Brig Gen (retd) MA Kamal, the chief adviser's special assistant for social welfare ministry, attended the meeting as the chief guest while Dewan Zakir Hossain, the social welfare secretary, was the special

Among others, Dr Col Mohammad Ashraful Islam Khan, additional inspector general of prisons (AIG-Prisons), high officials of social welfare ministry and departments concerned from districts in Dhaka Division were present at the meeting

Apart from failure to implement and update existing laws, lack of awareness and disregard for the rights of the juveniles have mainly contributed to the situation, the speakers pointed out.

Chief guest MA Kamal said, "The existing child laws are very old, but these are not even being imple-

mented properly." "The children are most likely to enter the crime world if they are made to stay inside the jails," whereas, "If they are transferred to juvenile development centres, they will have the opportunity for correction, motivation, skills training and healthcare," he added.

Secretary Dewan Zakir Hossain said the juveniles cannot be kept in jails as per the child laws.

Ignorant and negligent law enforcers are producing these delinquent children before the court and the court is usually sending them to

"The law enforcers, being well aware of the child rights laws, should

Rab rescues 25 people from traffickers

RU CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) rescued 25 people including five women and 14 children from a hotel in Rajshahi city as they were being trafficked to India yesterday.

Two persons - Abdus Sattar and Robiul Islam from Kalia in Narail were arrested from the hotel for the trafficking bid.

Sattar brought them to Rajshahi promising jobs in India, Rab officials said quoting some victims. Acting on a tip-off, a Rab team

raided Elegance residential hotel at Gonokpara and rescued them. Those rescued were handed over to Boalia Police Station and a

case was filed One of the victims told police that 10 of them belong to a joint family, and they had agreed to cross over to India in hope of earning enough to for a living.

Investigation officer of the case Abdus Sattar Khan said trafficker Abdus Sattar returned from Mumbai recently.

send the children to the Safe Homes or the Juvenile Development Centres," said the social welfare

secretary "After the arrest [of a juvenile], police should contact the social welfare directorate or the office of the deputy commissioner. If the charges are serious, the police should appeal

to the court for sending the accused to a correction centre," he added. AIG-Prisons Dr Col Mohammad Ashraful Islam Khan said the children confined in jails could be sexually abused by other inmates and they could pick up drug addiction

from the inmates as well. The court has the discretion to send the underaged criminals to juvenile development centres

directly, he added. Speaking over the phone, advo-

cate Elena Khan, executive director of Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights (BSEHR), told this correspondent that the police deliberately or negligibly in their case Forwarding Report submitted to the court often mention that the offender is an adult over the age of 21.

The court, in most cases, do not verify the police's claim about the offender's age and send the offender directly to jail custody, she said adding that this practice raises questions about the effectiveness of the legal system of the country.

10 French soldiers killed in clashes with Taliban

AFP, Kabul

Ten French Nato soldiers were killed in a Taliban ambush in Afghanistan, officials said vesterday, the deadliest incident for foreign troops in battle here since the US-led war was launched in 2001. The shock attack also left 21

French troops wounded, and prompted French President Nicolas Sarkozy to announce he would immediately head to the country, where the monthly death toll for foreign forces has topped war-torn News of the attack came as the

resurgent Taliban attempted a mass suicide attack on a US military base, in a defiant reminder that tens of thousands of international troops have not been able to keep the Islamic militants at bay. "Yesterday 10 of our soldiers ...

were killed in Afghanistan, 21 others were wounded during a joint reconnaissance mission with the Afghan national army," Sarkozy said in a statement issued in Paris Local de Loca

"In its struggle against terrorism, France has just been hit hard."

The ambush took place in the district of Sarobi, just 50km east of Kabul, the Afghan capital, which has been increasingly targeted by the Taliban insurgency.

Around 100 insurgents attacked a patrol containing French and Afghan troops, said Nato's International Security Assistance Force (Isaf), under which about 3,000 French

soldiers serve. The fighting began Monday and lasted into Tuesday, it said in a state-

"The initial patrol was reinforced with quick reaction forces, close air support and mobile medical teams. During the engagement a large number of insurgents were killed," Isafsaid.

First day of Musharraf

FROM PAGE 1 has not given up. He is sure that he will be in some office soon. He still hopes that a situation will be created in coming weeks when he will get a chance to play a political role. He wants to prove that he can play a role even without uniform.

Musharraf entered in Pakistan Military Academy in 1961 at the age of 18. He was commissioned in Pakistan Army in 1964. He became Army Chief in 1998 and seized power in 1999. He was the fourth military dictator of Pakistan and his main strength was always his uniform. He ruled Pakistan for nine years and took off his uniform in November 2007. After taking off uniform he was not able to survive for more than nine months. His first day without power started with courtesy calls from some old friends. He asked views from everyone about his resignation, future of Pakistan after his departure from office and especially about the next President of Pakistan. Most of his friends congratulated him on his 'safe exit from the office of President"

One friend who retired from Navy long ago reminded him that the first military President General Ayub Khan was forced to resign by Army Chief General Yahya Khan in 1969, second military President General Yahya Khan was forced to resign by General Gul Hassan in 1971, third military President General Zia was killed in a plane accident in 1988 but Musharraf was the only one who was given a guard of honour by Army after his departure from President House.

Musharraf was happy with his "safe exit" but he shared his disappointment about some "ungrateful" people who left him in the last days of his presidency. One of them was the sitting Chief Justice of Pakistan Abdul Hameed Dogar. He became Chief Justice on November 3, 2007 after the imposition of state of emergency by Musharraf. Dogar also validated the extra-constitutional acts of Musharraf after November Musharraf contacted Dogar through a very prominent lawyer in the first week of August 2008. He wanted a stay order from the Supreme Court against the impeachment motion

oust him. Dogar regretted and disap-

pointed Musharraf. One friend advised Musharraf not to stay in Pakistan for a while. He mentioned a suicide bombing on August 19 in Dera Ismail Khan City. A concerned friend told Musharraf that extremist elements will try to harm him in Pakistan and he must take extra precautionary measures. Musharrafreceived a lot of telephone

calls from his relatives and fans

mostly from Europe and America.

They expressed their solidarity with

the ex-President and said that Nawaz

Sharif and Asif Ali Zardari will start

fighting with each other and Musharraf should stay inside in Pakistan just to watch the "tamasha". Musharraf told one of his friends on Tuesday: "You know some PML-Q leaders advised me to cancel the National Reconciliation Ordinance and reinstate the deposed judges before resignation. They were sure that deposed Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry will become a big problem for Zardari. I decided not to do that. I know Zardari will not reinstate Justice Iftikhar and Nawaz Sharif will fight him on this issue and even if Iftikhar will get reinstated he will not spare Zardari, let the enemies

fight with each other" One friend of Musharraf informed him that Zardari wants to replace him by a woman as the new President of Pakistan. Musharraf laughed at this information and said: "as long as Maulana Fazal ur Rehman is part of the ruling coalition, no woman could become President of Pakistan because the only religious party of this ruling coalition may quit

the government on this issue". In the afternoon Musharraf watched TV channels showing celebrations by the public on his departure. He smilingly commented: "all these TV wallahs will be taught great lessons by Zardari and Nawaz Sharif soon."

Muhammad Rafi in the evening. He listened to his favourite song "chal urr jaa rey panchi key aab yeh dais hoabegana". After enjoying musiche met a friend. "I am here. I will not run away. I am not a panchi who will fly away from Pakistan," he told the

Landslide zones

FROM PAGE 1 already filed with Khulshi Police Station against Abdullah Hasan Piko who developed the Hossain Colony slum on risky hillside at

Matijharna. He said in order to help conduct drives against illegal development of slums in risky areas, the government would take initiatives to include related sections and clauses of the environmental act in

mobile court laws. The commerce adviser said drives to relocate people living in risky hillside and valley houses continued under the initiatives taken after the June 11, 2007 tragic landside. But the relocated people returned to the same places indi cating that the relocation was not a sustainable solution so far as economic reality was concerned, he

observed. The commerce adviser also visited the relief camp set up at Lalkhan Bazar Government Primary School and the landslide spot at Matijharna.

Sources said the Hill Management Committee was formed to introduce a set of rules for proper management of hills following the rain-induced devastating landslide and inundation that left 127 people dead in the city on June 11, 2007. Under the vigilance of the com-

mittee, different authorities filed a

Hill Management Committee.

total of 261 cases under the envispondent in Bandarban reports. ronmental act and 250 families were relocated since June 11, 2007. Sources said the initiative to declare vulnerable areas as red zones and bringing them under afforestation was proposed by the

"The Hill Management

Committee and the Technical

following technical and sustainable protection plans," said Additional Deputy Commissioner (revenue) Zafar Alam, also member secretary of the Hill Management Committee. CDA Chairman Shah Muhammad Akhter Uddin, who is

heading the Technical Protection

Committee, said they are thinking

Protection Committee would hold

a meeting on December 25 to

decide on hill management issues

about building walkways and planting trees around the hills to prevent slums from sprouting Over 50,000 people are living in risky slums in the port city, said the chairman quoting a study the CDA

carried out last year. as instant food assistance to the affected families of Monday's landslide the district administration is now providing Tk 4.25 lakh as compensation to victims' fami-

Chittagong Metropolitan Police

(CMP) also provided Tk 50 thousand as financial assistance to the landslide affected people who were now staying at a relief camp. Meanwhile, a woman died and four others were injured in a raininduced mudslide at Baishari Rangajhiri of Naikhongchhari

upazila early yesterday, a corre-

The mudslide destroyed three

houses built on hillside. The dead was identified as Safura Khatun, 50. Just after the incident, the local

administration started evacuating people from the area and people living in houses on the slopes of different hills.

the trial court had no jurisdiction Judge Mohammad Azizul Haque of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court rejected the

petition.

pressed charges against the court framed charges against Anne on August 4.

BDR-BSF talks FROM PAGE 16 Bangladeshi criminals hiding in

In the previous conference held

Indian side at the conference.

announced by the ruling coalition to friend.

Musharraf enjoyed old songs of

clashes with the insurgents.