Upazila, JS polls

But that did not happen as the commission now seeks to discuss the issues with BNP before reaching any decisions. The change of plan follows the latest developments on the political front.

In the last two days, the polls chief met the CA twice--first on Saturday and then yesterday.

Talking about the meeting that took place yesterday afternoon, Election Commissioner Brig Gen (retd) M Sakhawat Hussain said they mainly discussed the upazila and parliamentary elections.

"We'll inform the government about our decisions on his [CA] return," Sakhawat told The Daily

He said the EC is weighing up two options--organising polls to some upazilas in October or to a large number of those after the general election as demanded by most of the political parties.

At vesterday's meeting, the EC told advisers that any local government polls after October will hamper the preparation for allimportant ninth parliamentary election, meeting sources said.

With the national election planned for the third week of December approaching fast, the possibility of upazila polls being held first seems quite slim, said an EC Secretariat official requesting not be named

CEC Huda yesterday said the EC wants to work out something acceptable all round. Asked if the parliamentary polls

Muggers

carrying five ACI staff to Standard Charted Bank Gulshan branch. The staffs were going to the bank to deposit Tk 52 lakh, pay orders and cheques from ACI head office in Tejgaon industrial area. The money was in three cartons, ACI sources

One of the bikes stopped the minivan by stopping in front of it while robbers on the other two bikes smashed the windows of the vehicle with hockey sticks. They also fired a shot inside the minivan.

They fired two more shots at ACI Assistant Manager Biplob Kumar Chakraborti, 37, and escaped with the money, pay orders and cheques. Biplob was rushed to United Hospital in the city with two bullet injuries in his abdomen and hand.

"When locals chased the muggers, they spread money on the street in a bid to stop the people chasing them. They fled through Gulshan Niketan," ACI officials said.

The officials managed to collect Tk 6 lakh which the robbers had of spread on the street.

Officers of Tejgaon Industrial Area Police Station confirmed the mugging incident but refused to provide any details. They claimed none was arrested and no money was recov-

US hurricane

FROM PAGE 1 President of Huston Bangladesh Association (HBA) Afzal Ahmed said the level of devastation was so high that it was not instantly possible to estimate the loss caused by the catastrophic storm.

He said Huston is home to about 10,000 Bangladeshi expatriates who had been taken to safe places. Most of them live in Clear Lake, Friends Wood, Katy and Sugar Land

in Huston. The hurricane-affected people are still staying at shelters and houses of their friends and relatives at safe places as curfew was still in

force in the storm-hit areas. Afzal Ahmed said it could not be possible for them to know the whereabouts of Ike-affected Bangladeshi expatriates. He said

would be held first, he said, "You'll know very soon."

Meanwhile, sources in the EC said the commission is working to sit with BNP in a couple of days. It might contact the party today. The BNP-led four-party alliance

will meet tomorrow to discuss schedule and agenda for talks with the EC, according to party sources. Before leaving his office for CA's, Huda said the EC will decide on the

registration of parties, and upazila and parliamentary elections after the dialogue with BNP. "We're waiting for communica-

tions from BNP," he told reporters at the EC Secretariat. Earlier in the day, he met a dele-

gation of some non-government organisations, and a group of journalists at the EC Secretariat's conference room.

The commission is ready to sit for dialogue with BNP anytime, he said replying to a query.

It will strive to have opinions of all political parties before making any decision on the elections, he continued. "It's necessary to listen to all. I've had a lot of flak for not having their (BNP's) views."

He maintained that the parties skipping registration with the EC will not be allowed to contest the upcoming general election.

Engineer blamed for LA rail crash

AP, Los Angeles

In a surprisingly swift assessment, the operators of the commuter train involved in the head-on crash that killed at least 25 people blamed its engineer for the horrific accident.

However, a National Transportation Safety Board member cautioned that it was too early to establish the cause of Friday's accident. Others, too, questioned the timing of the operator's move to affix culpability.

Rescuers were still carefully picking apart the twisted wreckage Saturday when Metrolink announced 19 hours after the crash that its preliminary investigation determined the engineer failed to heed a red signal light, leading to the collision with a Union Pacific freight train.

The Metrolink engineer was among the dead, the NTSB said. His name has not been released. A total of 135 people were injured.

The NTSB, which is leading the investigation, played down a local television station report that the engineer had exchanged a brief text message with a teenager shortly before the crash. KCBS said the teen was among a group of rail fans who befriended the engineer and asked him questions about his

WB to provide

government has allocated over | Ibrahim filed all the cases. \$600 million in additional funds for these food-based safety net programmes, including \$300 million for the new 100-Day Employment Guarantee scheme.

The government has also raised the strategic public food reserve from 1 million metric tons to 1.5 million tonnes, at an additional

cost of roughly US\$ 200 million. The credit is scheduled to be discussed for approval on October

10, this year. The credit will reach maturity in 40 years, including a 10-year grace period and carries a service charge of 0.75 percent, the release added.

Finance Division Secretary Dr Mohammad Tareque led the government side while Vinaya Swaroop, the banks' lead economist at its Dhaka office, headed the IDA delegation.

Delays, graft

Power Project in 12 years, which means the average tenure of each project director was just 10 months. Three project directors held their posts for one month

"Such frequent changes of project directors in a nationally important project worth over Tk 1,300 crore had a serious impact on its management and implementa-

tion," the report said. The IMED during its investigation found the 210MW power plant

In the Power Distribution percent power distribution lines were installed in Chapainawabganj

and Jhenidah. "We can assume that the situation is the same in other parts of the country. As a result, the future of the project has become uncertain. The electric poles, wires and other goods are getting damaged. The

Public money has been spent again facing loss because of cases

filed by the contractor companies. Even though the Power Distribution Project (third-phase) was limited to areas of Dhaka Electricity Supply Authority and the areas where there is no electric lines of Rural Electrification Board, IMED during its visits found that power distribution lines were installed in areas where there are inadequate number of clients. It was done so because of political

The bench issued separate rules

FROM PAGE 1

four weeks why the initiation and continuation of the case proceedings against Amir Khasru should not be declared illegal.

accused of helping arrange the sale of 18 abandoned government houses at much lower prices at a fake auction and award containermanagement work at inland container depots in Dhaka and Chittagong to unqualified firm Gatco through corruption.

orders as the HC had earlier granted bail to the main accused in the two cases and stayed case proceedings against them, his counsel barrister Ruhul Quddus Kajal said.

Amir Khasru filed the writ petitions shortly after coming back home yesterday in the morning. He had been outside the country since August 14 last year.

He told reporters on the court premises that he did not come back earlier because there was no rule of law in the country.

Terming the two cases false, he said. "If I came back earlier, more such cases would have been filed

The ACC filed the fake-auction case with Motijheel Police Station on March 29 last year. Former housing minister Mirza Abbas, exprime minister Khaleda Zia's political secretary Harris Chowdhury, three retired secretaries and high officials from the Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha were also accused in the case.

The Gatco case was filed on September 2 last year. Apart from Amir Khasru, BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Motiur Rahman Nizami and 20 others were sued for causing a loss of over Tk 1,000 crore to the state exchequer through the Gatco

Advocate Khondker Mahbub Uddin Ahmed argued for the peti-

Fazlul's son

FROM PAGE 16

Tac along with their names. Meanwhile, the ACC yesterday filed four separate cases against

Afzal Hossain, Tariqul Rahman Prince, and his employee Abdul Malek on different charges. Of the four cases two were filed

with Ramna police station while one with Dhanmondi and the other with cantonment police station. ACC assistant director Mohammad

cases filed with Ramna police station on charge of concealing information and amassing wealth over Tk 1.40 crore beyond his known sources of income.

The other case with the same police station accused Abdul Malek -- an employee of Fazlul Huq foundation of amassing Tk 46.99 lakh beyond his known sources of

return for transfer of the government employees with the help of his father.

ment police station Prince was accused of amassing Tk 38.50 lakh beyond his known source of

September 11 to be filed. The ACC has so far sent lists of over 50 corruption suspects to Tac for making voluntary disclosure following their applications.

post, they can, but Khaleda Zia would be elected," Tanbir said, adding that a few intellectuals and political observers have misunderstood the party standing commit-

tee decision.

"She [Khaleda] will lead the party like Mahathir Muhammad of Malaysia and Nelson Mandela of South Africa," he said. "We took the decision so that Khaleda Zia cannot be excluded from the party as planned by a certain quarter."

member Khandaker Mahbubuddin Ahmad, however, countered Tanbir and said the party did not take any decision to appoint Khaleda as the chairperson for life.

"Confusion has arisen because of the way Tanbir Siddiky spoke," he told reporters at his office at the Supreme Court Bar Association building yesterday.

but no formal decision was made at the standing committee meeting. BNP Joint Secretary Nazrul Islam Khan echoed him.

"Whoever the chairperson is, Khaleda Zia will be in the leadership," Nazrul told reporters at the Nam flat of BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain. "She will remain our party leader like Ziaur Rahman who we consider as our prime leader," he added.

Sea border talks

FROM PAGE 1

while our neighbours might get to enjoy it all as they have made good progress in their demarcation jobs," an energy expert notes.

India and Myanmar need to finish the maritime demarcation with Bangladesh shortly as they are set to file their claim to the UN on June 29 and May 21 next year respectively.

Under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), Bangladesh also has to file its claim within July 27, 2011.

Bangladesh has yet to make any progress in making its papers with proper boundary survey due to lack of experience, skilled manpower and equipment. The government is planning to take help from the US, the UK and Australia to do it, sources in the foreign ministry

In 2004, the foreign ministry formed a committee with members from Petrobangla, Geological Survey of Bangladesh, the Navy, Spaarso, Inland Water Transport Authority and Surveyor of committee was to recommend how to mark the deep-sea territory fulfilling requirements of the UN and as per the law of the sea.

However, the committee became dysfunctional within a year, while its foreign ministry members were busy making foreign trips.

International law allows each country to have 200 nautical miles from its coast to the sea to enjoy rights. However, this is a tricky matter as the coasts of India and Bangladesh and Myanmar follow a curve, which implies overlapping of territory. As per the international prac-

tices, in such a case, the neighbours should inform each other and reach a mutual understanding before exploring such areas. BANGLADESH STANDPOINT

A source says Bangladesh will remain firm on getting equitable share in the Bay of Bengal waters. An official said Dhaka insisted on the determination of the staring point, which is crucial for registering with the UN a valid on common territories. The Bangladesh delegation will

emphasise demarcating maritime boundary, a joint inspection for the delimitation of maritime bound-

Earlier, foreign ministry officials held two rounds of talks in April and September with Myanmar and the discussions yielded 'good results' regarding common usage of the Naf river and estuary, official sources said.

But progress in resolving the sea boundary is still far to go as Myanmar is asking for ecodistance system in East to West boundary, while Bangladesh is asking to demarcate in equity basis North to South.

Another round of talks may take place with Myanmar in next November.

OIL AND GAS STAKES

Oil and gas exploration in the Bay is a very recent phenomenon Both India and Myanmar discovered gas in the Bay between 2005 and 2007.

While Myanmar's activities were limited and resulted in a discovery of 7 trillion cubic feet of gas in 2006, India's activities were intensive resulting in a discovery of Bangladesh. The purpose of this 100 tcfgas and two billion barrels of oil in place.

India has held off-shore block bids and has many oil companies working in the Bay.

The Indian press reports that two main basins in the Bay -Krishna-Godavari and Mahanadi - have shown a potential of nearly 18 billion barrels of oil equivalent gas in place. While official sources quote a figure of 100 tcf for gas reserves in the region, unofficial estimates peg the reserves at 200

In Bangladesh on May 7, seven oil and gas companies submitted their bids in 15 offshore blocks out of a total 28. The response was lukewarm as some international oil lobbies have reportedly campaigned against the Bangladesh

With some offers overlapping different blocks, six oil companies proposed to invest \$1.6 billion. Each of the blocks has exploration area of between 3,000 square kilometres (sqkm) to 7,000sqkm.

However, Bangladesh might ultimately sign a contract with only two companies.

By June, both India and Myanmar have raised objection

11ger camp

what they can ever expect to earn

while playing for Bangladesh. ICL is not recognised by the International Cricket Council (ICC) and players appearing in its tournaments are liable to be banned

from all ICC-affiliated cricket. Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) received the resignation letters yesterday from all six players, who are currently under the board's contract. They expressed concern at the abrupt decision and as the letters did not state reasons for their intention to retire, the BCB has instructed the players to appear in person on Tuesday afternoon at the board's Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium office for expla-

All-rounder Forhad and wicketkeeper Dhiman played in the disappointing Australia tour this month and although Dhiman was average, Forhad would have reasons to doubt his future among the Tigers.

Bashar, who was dropped after the first Test against South Africa earlier this year, has played 50 Test matches and 111 one-day internationals and captained Bangladesh between 2003 and 2007. Aftab, the dashing Chittagong batsman, got injured before the Kitply Cup in June and has not played for the Tigers since. Mosharraf, the leftarm spinner, has only a couple of one-dayers under his belt and expressed anxiety over his future.

Left-handed opener Nafees, who shot to fame after making a Test century against Australia in 2006, opted out of the recent tour of Australia citing educational commitments and maintains that he would be concentrating on his studies for another year.

According to reports, as many as 14 players, most of them former and current national players, have been approached by ICL officials, who plan to form a new team called "Dhaka Warriors".

Alok Kapali Nazimuddin, retired left-arm spinner Mohammad Rafique, Tapash Baisya and Manjurul Islam, and Golam Mabud and Mahbubul Karim, currently touring Sri Lanka with the GP-BCB National Cricket Academy team, are the names linked with the proposed ICL team.

When contacted by a leading

Hasina

FROM PAGE 1 Commission.

He, however, would not comment on the BNP standing committee's decision to appoint Khaleda as party chief for life. "It's not time we commented on

this," he said. Communications Adviser Maj Gen (retd) Ghulam Quader and Law Adviser AF Hassan Ariff were present at the time.

cricket website, ICL executive member Kiran More said that no formal agreement had been reached. "We are currently in the state of

ised yet," said the former Indian He however refused to name the players with whom the ICL was in

"I can say only about myself that I have got the proposal from the ICL and am talking with them," he

Some of these players are

matches across four venues in

filled up about two years ago resulting in waterlogging even after

He said it takes two to three days to recede the water after a heavy shower which is also a reason of

Apart from the embankment road, many other roads of Islambagh are also in a miserable state. Of these roads, condition of Posta to Alirghat through

drain it was not repaired. It is very tough not only to carry

goods but also to walk on the road he added. Commissioner of Ward-65 Md

Shahidul Islam said the embankment road got damaged quickly as a huge number of buses run on it Besides, waterlogging is another great problem, he added. "I sent a letter to the Water Development Board two months

ago to repair the road but they made no response yet." "The road from Posta Eidgah to Alirghat is also in a very bad condition and I face huge public criti-

Corruption (Bac) filed the other case with Tejgaon Police Station on cism for it," he said. December 11, 2001, accusing Hasina and four others of causing Tk power.

Eidgahmath and evaluation of the "If everything remains okay, we December 11, 2001, including will be able to start the work soon," another accused and showing 40 prosecution witnesses.

> against Hasina in the bargemounted power plant corruption case. The trial of Niko corruption case filed against Hasina and nine others is going on at the second special court.

Khaleda, Hasina

FROMPAGE 1 "An elected government to repre-

good for democracy.

sent all in January, which is better

for democracy," he said. Welcoming the release of BNP chief Khaleda Zia and Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina, he said they hope the major political parties including the two leaders will work together, which would be

He was talking to local journal ists during his visit to Kumudini Hospital in Mirzapur upazila of Tangail yesterday.

USAID Mission Director Denise Rollins, Director of Kumudini Welfare Trust Protibha Mutsuddi and Managing Director of Kumudini Complex Rajib Prasad Saha were also there.

During his visit, the ambassador

inaugurated a USAID-supported medical ward in Kumudini Hospital. The ward provides treatment and rehabilitation facilities to women with obstetric fistula. The ambassador was highly

impressed with the quality of service provided at the hospital. He also praised Kumudini's leadership in providing opportunities to girls in education, training and employment through Bharateswari Homes School Kumudini Nursing School and College, the Women's Medical College and the hospital.

James Moriarty later watched a performance by students of Bharateswari Homes.

Asian workers

FROM PAGE 1

the employer will deduct only 10 Jordanian Dollars (JD) a month, instead of 25 JD for meals, accommodation and health care of each worker.

The Asian workers including 300 Bangladeshis, 500 Sri Lankans, 200 Indians and 100 Nepalese went on strike on August 31, which continued till September 9. A few agitating workers were injured as the Jordanian police charged baton on them during the strike.

The workers went back to work on September 10 after signing of the agreement. As per the Jordanian law, labour

strike is illegal and a worker is fined 2 JD for each day's strike. However, under the tripartite agreement, the authorities will not slap any fine on the Asian workers, Golam Mohammad, Bangladeshi ambassador to Jordan, told The Daily Star over telephone yesterday. "We are now happy that an

amicable solution has been reached and the workers resumed their work," he said. The factory authorities also

paying them at a special rate for overtime on holidays, said the Bangladesh ambassador. The employers in the garment sector in Jordan prefer Bangladeshi workers for their efficiency. But the problem is that they often go on

strike to realise their demands, he

said, adding that all problems

accepted the workers' demand for

should be solved through discus-Jordan employs around 25,000 foreign workers mostly working in garment industries. The minimum monthly wage for garment workers is JD 110 (\$150).

Hasina seeks

FROM PAGE 1 Hasina is now abroad for treatment and barrister Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh filed the petitions on her behalf with the HC vacation bench comprised of justices Mirza Hussain Haider and Mamnoon

Rahman. Hasina's counsel barrister Shafique Ahmed yesterday said hearing on the petitions would be

held very soon. Hasina earlier got bail from the HC in the corruption case related to purchase of eight MiG-29 jet fighters and a special court set up on the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban premises framed charges against her and five others in the case on August 20.

Barrister Shafique said upon another writ petition the HC had already issued a rule upon the gov ernment asking it to explain why initiation and continuation of the extortion case filed by Azam Chowdhury should not be declared illegal.

On June 13 last year, Managing Director of East Coast Trading Ltd Azam J Chowdhury filed the case with Gulshan Police Station, accusing Hasina of extorting, along with others, Tk 3 crore from him for the installation work of a 210MW power plant at Siddhirganj. Hasina was arrested in this case on July 16 last year and indicted in the case on January 13.

The now-defunct Bureau of Anti-

700 crore loss to the state coffers by purchasing eight MiG-29 jet fighters when the Awami League was in The then Bac inspector Abdullah Al Zahid submitted the charge sheet of the case to the Dhaka Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court on

On May 18, charges were framed

Russian jet crash

FROM PAGE 16 Aeroflot confirmed there were no survivors and said the dead included nine people from Azerbaijan, five from Ukraine and one each from France, Germany, Italy, Latvia,

Switzerland, and Turkey. One passenger was also said to be American but US officials were reportedly checking that informa-

Among the victims was General Gennady Troshev, a former top commander of Russia's war in Chechnya and advisor to expresident Vladimir Putin, Interfax news agency reported, citing Russia's transportation ministry.

"As the plane was coming in for landing, it lost communication at the height of 1,100 meters (yards) and air controllers lost its blip," an Aeroflot statement said.

"The airplane was found within Perm's city limits completely destroyed and on fire," it added.

plane flying over their houses before exploding and sending burning wreckage flying. "The plane was flying over our building, falling, and it hit the ground about 200 meters (650 feet) away and

Witnesses described seeing the

broke up," a local resident, who only gave his name as Maxim, told AFP. "It blew up in the air, the pieces fell on the ground. The main part containing the passengers fell in a dacha (country house) area with gardens. It didn't hit the main residential area,"

headded.

Russia's Vesti-24 television channel showed smoking wreckage strewn across a wooded area and investigators combing through the dark with flashlights. An emergency situations ministry

people who bought a ticket for the illfated flight did not get on board. The wreckage was strewn over some four square kilometres (1.56

source quoted by RIA Novosti news

agency said it was possible three

square miles), officials said. The cause of the accident was not immediately clear, though a source quoted by RIA Novosti suggested that an engine failure could have sparked flames on board and led to the crash. Both black box flight recorders

were found in the wreckage, Interfax Thailand

after meeting the country's army

chief and other officials. Thousands of protesters have besieged the grounds of Government House in the capital since last month to try to force the resignation of then prime minister Samak Sundaravej and his cabinet.

Instead the Constitutional Court stripped Samak of his powers last week, ruling he had illegally accepted payments for hosting TV cooking

Samak ended his bid on Friday to return to power as prime minister after a revolt within the ruling party torpedoed his re-election in parlia-The ruling People Power Party (PPP) and its coalition partners now

plan to nominate a new candidate

ahead of a vote in parliament on

Wednesday by lawmakers for a prime minister. The PPP was holding meetings about the nomination with its five coalition parties on Sunday, said Sompong Amornviwat, deputy leader of the PPP and one of the

candidates for prime minister. Two other candidates are codeputy PPP leader Somchai Wongsawat and secretary-general

with two coalition partners, the Pan Dian and Pracharaj parties, Somchai told reporters they had agreed to support whoever PPP chose as can-"The parties said it is PPP's right to nominate the candidate for the prime minister position," he said.

After a Sunday afternoon meeting

Surapong Suebwonglee.

would face an uphill task to resolve Thailand's political upheaval, with demonstrators still squatting outside Government House, declaring they will stay as long as the PPP remains in charge. "We don't accept those three. This

government has damaged the coun-

try too much," Chamlong Srimuang,

But any three of the candidates

one of the protest leaders, told reporters Sunday. The demonstrators, representing Thailand's traditional elite, claim that Samak and the three candidates to replace him are proxies for ousted premier and billionaire business

man Thaksin Shinawatra. The protest group, which calls itself the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD), also spearheaded protests against Thaksin in 2006, leading to the military coup that toppled him.

Thaksin now lives in exile in Britain to evade corruption charges, which he says are politically moti-

Police raid

FROM PAGE 1 Campus sources said around 300

the dorms.

policemen launched the raid around 11:45pm and the raid was continuing at the time of filing this report. DU Proctor Prof AK Firoz Ahmed

said, "As several untoward incidents took place on campus in recent times, the Provost Committee of DU took a position that if the police wanted to raid the dorms, they would allow them to do so.' Rezaul Karim, officer-in-charge (OC) of Shahbagh Police Station,

said they raided the dorms after the DU authorities decided to drive off non-students and criminals from

news agency reported, citing investi-

Aeroflot spokesman Lev Koshlyakov told journalists the plane had been given "a full technical inspection" early this year and was

judged to be in a "proper condition". The airline set up a crisis centre for relatives of victims at Moscow's

Sheremetyevo-1 airport and in Perm. It also pledged to pay compensation of up to two million rubles (some 80,000 dollars or 55,000 euros) for each victims.

President Dmitry Medvedev has been informed of the disaster and Russia's Transport Minister Igor Levitin was due to fly to the site to head a probe into what happened, officials said.

Plane wreckage on the tracks led to the closure of a stretch of the Trans-Siberian Railway between Perm and Yekaterinburg, police said.

The airplane had been leased by Aeroflot from a Dublin-based company Pinewatch Limited in July until March 2013, Aeroflot said.

US raids draw

al-Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden and his deputy, Ayman al-Zawahiri, are widely believed to be hiding in the mountainous region.

Pakistan has also accused Afghanistan-based troops of carry-

identities or where they had been captured "We have collected vital clues and

But his optimism stood in stark

contrast to India's record in solving other bombings that have hit the country in recent months. Police have made little headway in finding those behind a series of bombings in the western city of Jaipur in May that killed 61 people or

previously unknown group, who also claimed responsibility for Saturday's As in their previous attacks, the group sent a number of Indian media

that India was about to receive "the Message of Death." "In the name of Allah, Indian Mujahideen strikes back once more. ... Do whateveryou can. Stop us if you

can," the message said. After May and July attacks police carried out a series of raids but made

"It's a very cowardly act of violence," Mayor Arti Mehra told reporters near the scene of two of the explosions, in the M-Block market of the city's upscale Greater Kailash neigh-

places before and they have not succeeded and they will not succeed here. They will not scare us," Mehra

Home Minister Shivraj Patil said, "We will face this difficulty, we will find out who has done it. India, a largely Hindu country, has long battled Muslim militant violence in the disputed Himalayan

tied to the Kashmiri groups India also has frequently blamed Pakistan denies.

of Pakistan share the pain of the victims and bereaved families," President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani said in a

he said in a statement. The deadliest explosion was believed to be in Gaffar Market in the city's Karol Bagh neighbourhood, a warren of stores popular among wholesalers and bargain-hunters. It exploded on a street jammed with clothing shops and stores that sell

engines and gawking crowds. In the minutes after the blast, the scene was filled with blood and

heard the explosion.

way," he said. "They heard the bomb and they just started running."

they could call at 281-224-0361 for any assistance.

generates only 160MW. Project (third-phase), the monitoring division of the planning minis try found out that only 15 to 50

contractor companies failed to complete their job on time and are not getting their dues paid," the report said. but the people did not get the benefits, the IMED report said, adding that the government is

influence, it said. "This caused huge loss of public money because the project was not implemented based on costbenefit analysis," the report notes.

More interestingly, the high

officials of the project or the chair-

man of Power Development Board

(PDB) never visited the project

areas to know about the status of its implementation, the report added. The third phase of the threeyear Power Distribution Project's cost was estimated to be Tk 184 crore but it took nine years to complete and Tk 160 crore was spent. Despite doing this over a long period of time, the allocated money could not be spent and the

work was done haphazardly."

only 298 transformers were installed. IMED could not trace the rest 102 transformers. Internal and external audits of projects found financial irregulari-

Under Greater Khulna Power

Distribution Project, a total of 400

power distribution transformers

were planned for installation but

ties of around Tk 1 crore. Tender process was abnormally delayed in the case of Tongi 80MW Gas Turbine Power Station project. The first tender was floated on July 10, 1999 but the agreement was signed with the contractor company after four and a half months. IMED and PDB jointly investi-

gated the project and sent recom-

mendations to the Anti-

Corruption Commission for

actions but so far no action has

been taken against officials con-

They found discrepancies in the accounts of the power project and failed to get satisfactory answers from the project authorities regarding the discrepancies.

on the government to explain in

the same period, following writ

Amir Khasru

The ex-BNP minister was

He secured the bail and the stay

against me.

and Power Development Board

The ACC will prepare summary reports about the Fazlul Huq family applicants for sending those to the

ACC accused Afzal in one of the

In the case filed with Dhanmondi police station Afzal is accused of laundering money. According to the case statement Afzal realized a total of Tk 10.61 crore through taking bribes in

In the case filed with canton-The ACC approved the cases on

Grateful' Khaleda FROM PAGE 1 "If anyone wishes to contest the

Another Standing Committee

He said Tanbir gave the proposal

discussion with a few Bangladeshi players but nothing has been finalwicketkeeper.

added. believed to have been offered as low as 30,000 dollars each. The new ICL season will begin on October 10, featuring 3

Islambagh road FROM PAGE 16 moderate rain. quick damage of the road.

> Eidgahmath is very poor, said Kalam, a shopkeeper in Islambagh. He said the road was dug three years ago to set up a storm sewer age drain. But after setting up the

He said he has taken all kinds of steps to do the work from his side. DCC Executive Engineer of Zone-3 Munshi Mohammad Abul Hasem said they have already floated tender to repair the road from Posta to Alirghat through

he said. WDB Executive Engineer of Division-2 Masud Ahmed told The Daily Star they have started to

tender is going on.

nently.

dump macadam into the potholes on temporary basis and are taking a plan to do the repair work perma-

Bhagat.

FROM PAGE 16

ing out a direct attack on its territory, a raid in the South Waziristan tribal zone that left 15 people dead. Delhi blasts

Media reports said 10 people had

been detained in the overnight raids.

people had been held. He gave no

Bhagat confirmed only that "several"

further details on the suspects' we hope to crack the case soon," said

the July blasts in the western state of Gujaratthat killed at least 45. Both of those attacks were claimed by the Indian Mujahideen, a

outlets an e-mail message just before the blasts Saturday evening warning

no arrests or filed charges. Nevertheless, Indian officials vowed they would not be not be cowed.

They want to break the spirit of Delhi. They have tried this in other

bourhood.

region of Kashmir, the country's only majority Muslim state. It was not clear if the Indian Mujahideen was

longtime archrival Pakistan for backing Islamic groups, a charge Late Saturday Pakistan condemned the attacks. "The people and the Government

"Pakistan condemns all terrorist acts perpetrated in any part of the world," the statement said US Ambassador David Mulford also condemned the attack "There is no justification for the vicious murder of innocent people. The US stands shoulder to shoulder with India in the fight against terror,"

cheap mobile phones. Two of the explosions occurred just 300 yards apart in Connaught Place, the city's central shopping district. The usually crowded streets quickly emptied of shoppers and filled with screaming police cars, fire

into taxis and rickshaws to get to hospitals. A sadhu, a Hindu holy man clad in orange robes, lay face down in the gutter a few feet away, apparently dead. Another man walked away from the scene, helped by other men, his face covered with blood. Raj Kumar, 30, a store clerk in the area, said he was nearby when he

chaos, as police officers raced to the

scene and passers-by helped victims

"Everyone was running every