AL's yes to nearly all

Ashraf demanded immediate

withdrawal the state of emergency

before announcing the election

schedule. He said holding of national

election as well as casting of votes

ernment strictly implement the

existing laws to ensure that all black-

money holders, criminals and armed

goons are barred effectively from the

should not be blamed in case the

polls are hindered by BNP's non-

cooperation, the AL leader con-

demned the way BNP and some

hope that all the political parties

amend the AL constitution to get

registered with EC, Ashraf said there

is no need to hold the council since

EC has agreed to accept the changes

in the party constitution with

approval from the central working

decision about the grand alliance will

be taken after Sheikh Hasina returns

home. Awami League will take part in

the election under the banner of

August 20 decided that buses 15

years or more old would not be given

route permit in Dhaka and

Chittagong. It had asked bus owners

to withdraw the old buses from

Dhaka and Chittagong and replace

them with CNG-run 52-seater buses.

Transport Authority (BRTA) officials

launched the drives against the old

vehicles as per the decision of the

DMTC. The BRTA also stopped

renewing route permits of old buses

Ahmed yesterday said they held back

the drives considering the Eid rush.

He said the drives would resume

said the measures of the BRTA would

continue regardless of DMP's deci-

sion to stop the drive. He said the

BRTA was not informed about the

route permits of old buses after being

asked by the communications min-

istry to do so. The traffic department

of the DMP was also asked to carry

Commissioner Jasim Uddin told The

Daily Star, "We announced a

reward... If a traffic sergeant catches

an old vehicle, he will be rewarded Tk

the old vehicles on September 18 and

19 and picked up 28 buses and mini-

buses," the joint commissioner said,

adding, "Soon after the drives were

launched, the owners stopped run-

ning their vehicles. We saw hundreds

of city dwellers in trouble.

Considering public suffering, we

decided to hold back the drives

When asked, the joint commis-

sioner said they have no accurate

number of old buses and minibuses.

He, however, advised contacting the

Chairman Sunil said, "Around 15-20

percent of the total buses plying the

given route permits outside the

city buses are unfit but many of those

are running with fitness certificates

from BRTA by bribing a section of

corrupt officials. Most of these vehi-

cles are in appalling condition. A

number of them lack tail lights,

headlights, indicator lights and most

of them bear marks of accidents but

the police say that these have fitness

Hossain's residence to discuss

their strategies with regard to the

amended RPO, particularly the

According to the EC announce-

BNP standing committee mem-

ber Chowdhury Tanbir Ahmed

Siddiky yesterday told The Daily

Star, "It is utterly illogical to expect

the parties to hold councils under

the state of emergency and bring

changes to their constitutions to

fulfil the registration criteria."

such short notice."

ment, October 15 is the closing

date for submitting registration

city streets are older than 15 years."

capital and Chittagong.

certificates from BRTA.

registration rules.

applications.

BNP says no to all

Talking to The Daily Star, BRTA

He said the old buses would be

Sources said a large number of

during Ramadan."

"We carried out the drives against

1,000.

out drives against the old vehicles.

The DMTC decided not to renew

BRTA Chairman Sunil Kanti Bose

DMP Commissioner Naim

in Dhaka and Chittagong.

after Eid-ul-Fitr vacation.

The DMP and Bangladesh Road

ship of Sheikh Hasina."

FROM PAGE 16

Unfit buses

Replying to a query, he said, "The

Asked about the news that EC

He also suggested that the gov-

"We have some difference of opinions on some provisions in RPO but we fully agree other provisions,' Ashrafadded.

During the recent talks with EC, could not be held under emergency. AL demanded cancellation of some of the newly framed criteria for registration, which imposed restrictions on parties' having front organisations of professionals, and overseas units terming the criterion unconstitutional.

The AL also wants the national election to be held under the newly framed electoral law and rules in a bid to make the upcoming polls free and fair and ensure participation of honest and competent candidates.

"We think the electoral laws and rules reforms are very necessary to prevent goons and black money holders from contesting the upcoming elections again," Ashraf said, adding. "We want nomination to be given based on recommendation of the grassroots level and an election free from all influence of black money and mussel power."

The party's highest policymaking body sat at AL acting president Zillur Rahman's Gulshan residence to review the chief adviser's speech. The meeting with Zillur in the chair formally welcomed the speech for announcing the national election date first.

Addressing the press conference, Ashraf said the AL-led grand alliance had forged movement to carry out necessary reforms in electoral laws and for that the January 22 "conspiratorial" election could not be held.

"The 1/11 is the outcome of the Awami League-led grand alliance's movement and electoral reforms are the outcome of the 1/11; so we can not allow these reforms go ruin for a party.

The BNP and its alliance partners during its talks with EC on Saturday demanded that the new electoral laws and rules be scrapped or suspended till the national election is

The AL leader said those who [BNP] want the election be held under the 2001 electoral rules do not want a free and fair election in the country. They want to arrange a farcical election again with collaboration. The BNP wants the goons and black money holders take part in the upcoming polls again, he added. Saying that there is no lack of DMP decision.

honest and competent candidates in AL, he said his party would nominate only honest, eligible and acceptable candidates for the parliamentary AL presidium members Syeda

1. Sajeda Chowdhury Amir Hossain --Amu, Abdur Razzak, Tofail Ahmed and Motia Chowdhury attended the meeting with Zillur in the chair. The chief adviser has assured the

nation by saying that his government's attempts were to hand over power to an elected government through holding a free, fair and credible election by December. We thank the chief adviser, the Election Commission and the council of advisers," Ashraf said hoping that the government and EC would concentrate their best efforts on presenting the nation with national elections acceptable to all. He expressed the hope that voter

list in each electoral area would be finalised ahead of announcement of election schedule. The AL thanked the government and EC for preparingadependablevoterlist. He also praised them for

announcing upazila elections date after the national elections. He however said there are some practical and technical problems with holding upazila elections just five days after the national polls. It would be very tough to handle

administrative preparations and law and order, he said, adding it would not also be possible for the government to hold the local body election in a free and fair manner.

The AL spokesman said his party would discuss the matter with the government.

They will continue to press the EC

to hold the December 18 national

election under the previous laws,

government had a number of

additions to the RPO 1972 through

providing for no-vote option and

mandatory registration on meeting

conditions like severing ties with

front organisations and overseas

chapters appear to be the most

Commissioner (CEC) ATM

Shamsul Huda yesterday reiterated

that registration is a must for par-

ticipation in the parliamentary

Talking to reporters, he however

"Registration is mandatory. But

said they are working to make the

we are thinking about some alter-

plans, he said the EC will announce

its next course of action today. It

The same day secretaries gen-

(IOJ) and Bangladesher Jatiya Party

Meanwhile, Chief Election

The military-backed caretaker

Of the latest provisions, the ones

added the sources.

contenuous.

procedure easier.

political parties.

natives."

an ordinance last month.

Govt asks

a fixed amount of Zakat from their respective areas.

The information was given at a press briefing at the secretariat vesterday afternoon.

Islamic Foundation Mohammad Fazlur Rahman.

initiative to broadcast programs on television to encourage people to offer Zakat and let them know about the significance of it.

other parties behaved with EC at the He also informed that Tk 6.09 dialogue. He however expressed the crore has been spent from the Zakat fund so far, under which 5.43 including BNP would take part in the lakh poor people have already been benefited. About holding party council to

Mufti Mohammad Nuruddin, acting khatib of Baitul Mukarram National Mosque, was also present at the press briefing.

The projects financed by Zakat fund include a children hospital in Tongi, sewing training program, student scholarship, widow rehabilitation, poverty alleviation program, financial assistance, and relief material distribution. The government Zakat board is

consisted of 13 members.

grand alliance and under the leader-

China for the time being.

Atomic Energy Commission, health directorate and health and commerce ministries attended the meeting, presided over by Commerce Secretary Feroz Ahmed.

6 govt officials FROM PAGE 1 wealth voluntarily.

The ACC, however, did not send the name of former BNP state minister Maj (retd) Kamrul Islam, as the summery report of the investigation was not yet ready. Kamrul applied to the ACC on August 18 for making voluntary disclosure before Tac. The six persons faced Tac yester-

day were from Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (Rajuk) and Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (Desa). Meanwhile, the ACC has already

stopped the enquiry into the wealth statement submitted by Kamrul Islam as the commission is preparing to send his name to Tac. Kamrul submitted his wealth

statement worth over Tk 7 crore after ACC had served him with notice in November asking him to submit wealth statement.

City traffic chief DMP loint Aug 21 attack

> including Harkatul Jihad (Huji) chief Mufti Abdul Hannan and detained former deputy minister Abdus Salam Pintu. The cases were filed after 23

people had been killed and 200 others injured in grenade attacks on an AL rally in the city's Bangabandhu Avenue on August 21, 2004. AL President Sheikh Hasina narrowly escaped the attack

Hannan and his brother Mohibullah alias Mafizur Rahman alias Ovi along with 10 others are now in jail custody. They were produced before the court yester

Tajuddin and Maulana Liton, Anisul Mursalin, Mahibul Muttakin, Iqbal, Maulana Abu Bakar alias Selim Howlader, Jahangir Alam Badar and Khalilur Rahman have been absconding since the cases were filed.

Ovi, Abu Sayeed, Bulbul, Arif Hossain, Jahangir and Sabuj gave statements admitting to their involvement in the incident.

to the Dhaka Chief Metropolitan cution witnesses.

RPO of contention

· The EC is empowered to cancel candidature for violation of electoral laws and code of conduct.

fied for registration.

BNP's Joint Secretary General Nazrul Islam Khan said, "We have already told the Election Commission that it's not possible for us to meet the conditions at As per the electoral laws of 1982,

registration can be done after the election, he added. Meanwhile, a number of BNP

leaders said the party's opposition Declining to elaborate on the to almost every decision of the EC baffles them. They told The Daily Star they are

will also talk about registration and worried that wholesale disagreeoutcome of the dialogue with ment might hinder the efforts to restore democracy. "We shouldn't do anything that

eral of the four parties--BNP, might prolong the non-elected Jamaat-e-Islami, Islami Oikya Jote regime," said a former lawmaker. Some others believe BNP would (BJP)--will meet at BNP Secretary rather be the gainer if it can make General Khandaker Delwar the EC concede its demands.

FROM PAGE 1

The official said investigators believe

up to 600 kilos (1,300 pounds) of

explosives were packed into the

truck, which exploded in a giant

fireball at the security gate and tore

the kitchen, setting off a blaze that

swept through the 300-room hotel. A

security official said some victims

leapt to their deaths rather than be

scattered outside the hotel on

inside kept rescuers, who were wear-

ing masks and chemical protection

suits, from getting inside most of the

A senior security official said at

least 53 people were dead. The gov-

ernment put the confirmed toll at 53

Sunday, and it was not known how

Bodies pulled from the debris

The hotel was popular with politi-

The bombing is a serious chal-

lenge to new President Asif Ali

Zardari, who faces a desperate battle

against al-Qaeda and Taliban mili-

"We will rid the country of this

cancer," Zardari, who took office less

than two weeks ago, said in a mes-

sage to the nation after the attack. "I

cowards, Pakistanis are brave and

fearless people, they are not afraid of

by these cowards will not lower our

carry out such a massive bombing at

one of the most secure sites in the

capital, not far from parliament and

the prime minister's residence, is an

unmistakable sign of the militants'

Musharraf turned Pakistan into a

close ally of the United States after

and the government has waged a

food assistance needs of the country

to be 1.76 million tonnes, of which

35,000 tonnes are for vulnerable

households affected by Cyclone Sidr.

To meet this need, 500,000 tonnes

will be imported and 1.26 million

increased for Boro season. Wet paddy

price in 2008 is Tk 18-20 per kg com-

pared to Tk 10-12 last year, milled rice

prices vary from Tk 30-40 compared

arrangements and lack of working

capital which forces forward sales,

many farmers did not get the full

benefit of these price increases," the

estimated about 7.58 crore individu-

als in Bangladesh were below the

food consumption threshold of 2122

kilocalories per person a day. Within

this group, an estimated 3.96 crore

people fell below the more severe

poverty line food consumption

threshold of 1805 kilocalories per

prices have been rising since early

2007, but rose more rapidly between

late 2007 and the first four months of

2008. Prices have decreased some-

what since their peak in April 2008,

but still remain at relatively high

evading Tax worth Tk 85 lakh on its

NBR Additional Assistant Tax

Commissioner AKM Shahadat

Hossain filed the case with the

Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court

against Dr Alamgir for committing

After the hearing, Judge

Mohammad Azizul Haque recorded

the statement of the complainant,

took the charges into cognisance and

fixed September 24 for next hearing

The court also asked the jail

In his order, the judge said the

authorities to produce the accused

charges brought against the accused

were primarily found to be true and

the charges were taken into cogni-

In his complaint, the plaintiff

mentioned that Dr Alamgir had

concealed information about his

wealth worth Tk 2,12,58,602 from the

NBR department and evaded Tk

5,344,671 in income tax from 2002 to

of cases, was arrested on February 4

submitted the charge sheet to the

Dhaka Chief Metropolitan

Magistrate's Court in the case filed

against Obaidul and Saidul for irreg-

ularities in importing a car and

(IO) of the case, showed 23 people as

issuing arrest warrant against

Obaidul Karim and the order to

attach his properties. Earlier, Saidul

Haque was granted bail by the High

In the charge sheet, the IO men-

tioned that the charges brought

against the two were primarily

proved and they should be brought

with Tejgaon Police Station against

Obaidul Karim and Saidul Haque on

August 9 last year for committing the

He appealed to the court for

CASEAGAINSTOBAIDUL

evading Taxon its purchase.

prosecution witnesses.

before it on the scheduled date.

levels," the report observes.

MK Alamgir

CASEAGAINSTALAMGIR

"Rice and other food commodity

Prior to the 2007-08 shocks, an

"But due to sharecropping

Producer prices of rice have

tonnes purchased locally.

toTk15-16perkglastyear.

FAO-WFP report observes.

person per day.

purchase.

the offences.

of the case.

sance for trial.

last year.

Court.

under trial.

offences.

the September 11 attacks in 2001,

Boro output

FROM PAGE 16

Zardari's predecessor Pervez

But analysts say the ability to

come and save Pakistan."

death," he said.

resolve," he said.

appeal to all democratic forces to

"We will not be deterred by these

"I promise you that such actions

cians, foreigners and the Pakistani

many people might still be unac-

were burnt beyond recognition.

burntalive on the upper floors.

destroyed building.

counted for.

this year.

The blast ignited gas cylinders in

an enormous crater in the ground.

"We did not send letters to wellto-do people earlier. This is the first time we have taken an initiative like this. The government would not have to launch any poverty alleviation programs had people offered Zakat to the government fund," said Director General (DG) of the

The government has also taken

2 companies Lu, Sun Care and Yashili brands of

Officials from the Customs, BSTI,

charge framing against 22 people

Of the accused, Pintu, Mufti

Another accused Shahadat

Ullah Jewel, who was earlier granted bail by the High Court, was also present in the court yesterday. Pintu's brothers Maulana

Of the arrestees, Hannan, Bipul

Criminal Investigation

Department (CID) Assistant Superintendent Fazlul Kabir, also the investigation officer (IO) of the cases, submitted the charge-sheets Magistrate's Court on June 11 this year, showing 412 people as prose-

FROM PAGE 1

Parties with no parliamentary seats won since independence and with less than five percent votes secured in constituencies concerned will be disquali-

Parties are required to give nominations on the basis of recommendations made by local level party committees in every constituency. Political parties must have

their own constitution. Political parties must incorporate provisions in their

constitutions to get elected members in all their committees. Political parties must incorporate provisions in their

constitutions to get 33 per-

cent women leaders in all committees by 2012. All major political parties will have to amend their constitutions to fulfil the criteria laid down for registration.

al-Qaeda blamed

volatile northwest. That campaign has drawn the ire of many in Pakistan, the world's only nuclear-armed Islamic nation, and critics say elements of the army and intelligence services are supporting the militants.

crackdown on militants in Pakistan's

Barisal serial blasts

FROM PAGE 16 serial bomb blasts at 12 places in

Barisal city on August 17, 2005. Pieces of human flesh were still Assistant sub-inspector Anwar Sunday morning. The intense heat Hossain of Barisal Kotwali Police Station filed the 7th case for blast-Bottala police checkpoint and a hesaid. city mosque on August 17, 2005.

Sub-inspector Matiar Rahman submitted the charge sheet against 14 people on December 25, 2005.

With this judgment, the trial proceedings of eight out the 12 cases have been completed.

Only in one case seven people were sentenced to life imprisonment by the same court on July 30, Advocate Kazi Munir Hussein,

special prosecutor-in-charge of the tribunal, said the accused in such tants whose campaign of violence cases get acquitted due to flaws in has killed 1,300 people in Pakistan investigation.

Hizbut-Tahrir men FROM PAGE 1

Hizb ut-Tahrir Coordinator and Dhaka University teacher Syed Golam Mowla and Ahmed Jamal Iqbal, teacher of South East University and a senior member of the Islamist group, were arrested along with eight others on September 18 in Rajshahi. However, police did not lodge

any case against them, as of filing of this report last night, as they reportedly did not receive the go-ahead from government high-ups.

Officials of Rajshahi Metropolitan Police (RMP) said they are yet to get any signal from the government high-ups about bringing sedition charge against the They said the arrestees were

engaged in anti-state activities and provoking people against the country and the government through leaflets which called for toppling the government and establishing Khelafat in the country. They said they are investigating

whether there is a link between Hizb ut-Tahiri and the JMB threat made on Saturday. Ramjan Ali, officer-in-charge of

Boalia Police Station, told The Daily Star, "The investigation is on. We will submit remand prayers against the arrestees when the investigation Meanwhile, Dhaka Metropolitan

Police (DMP) Commissioner Naim Ahmed yesterday said even though Hizb ut-Tahrir threatened the government and gave a 48-hour ultimatum, they are yet to see any activity in this connection. During a press conference held

at Rajarbagh Police Lines

Auditorium, the DMP

Commissioner said, "We are seriously observing their activities." On Thursday, Hizb ut-Tahrir leaders in a meeting at the city's

Engineers Institute demanded immediate release of the 10 leaders.

Hasina FROM PAGE 16

The government on July 16 last year

put the case under the emergency power rules (EPR), and a magistrate's court on July 29 the same year ordered that Hasina be shown arrested in the case. Following a writ petition on

August 7 last year, the HC granted bail to Hasina in this case, and asked the government to explain why bringing the case under the EPR should not be declared illegal. Later, the Supreme Court upon

a petition filed by the government stayed the HC order till disposal of the rule.

Sajeda's son FROM PAGE 1 hiding information about his wealth

Since he is absconding, the sentence will come into effect the day he surrenders or is arrested.

ACC Assistant Director Khairul Huda filed the case with Ramna Police Station against Shahdab and his wife Shahnaz Khan on February 19 this year for accumulating wealth worth Tk 1.24 crore beyond their known sources of income and concealing information about assets worth Tk95.38 lakh.

The name of Shahnaz was dropped from the charge sheet as charges brought against her were not TAHMILUR

Judge Amar Kumar Roy of the Special Dr Alamgir, accused in a number Court-2, on the same premises, awarded Tahmilur Rahman eight years' imprisonment for amassing wealth illegally and hiding informa-ACC Deputy Director Abdul Karim tion in his wealth statement submitted to the ACC.

He was also fined Tk 1 lakh, in | work. default of which he would be in prison for another three months. The former Sonali Bank boss was handed down five years' imprison

Karim, the investigation officer ment for accumulating wealth beyond his known sources of income and three years' for hiding information about his wealth. As he is on the run, the sentence will come into effect when he surrendersor is arrested. His wife Shamima Begum was

also an accused in the case for aiding and abetting him in the illegal earning. But the High Court quashed corruption proceedings against her. ACC Assistant Director SM Manjur Ahmed filed the case against The commission filed the case them on March 27 this year with Ramna Police Station for amassing wealth worth over Tk 1.18 crore

DCC

FROM PAGE 16 He claims he had all the roads in Lalmatia repaired before his arrest in February 2007, but those roads have been damaged as land developers keep construction materials on the roads.

Chief Engineer of DCC Col Ashfaqul Islam said they did not give ward-based allocation in the last fiscal year according to the financial planning.

"Earlier, DCC used to do the repair on credit and make the payment in the next fiscal year. But since last year we have stopped this practice but had to pay the arrears ing bombs at a place between of Tk 56 crore of the earlier years,

> Ashfaqul said after paying off the arrears they could spend only Tk 7 crore to repair roads last fiscal

"We have already started the process of repairing roads and it will start in full suing in October. We have already collected a list of the most damaged roads, taken video footage of those and made initiatives to repair the roads based on priority," he said.

The DCC requires over Tk 1,000 crore to repair all the damaged roads in the city. But as the city corporation does not have that much fund, they would do the repair on priority basis gradually, he added.

Many roads got damaged due to waterlogging. To avert this problem, DCC is setting up drains, he said, adding they have also taken initiative to use cement concrete (CC) instead of bitumen during repair on the waterlogged roads. "We are also emphasising main-

that the roads do not get damaged within a short time," he said. According to the budget of the current fiscal year, DCC allocates Tk 170.4 crore for development and maintenance of roads, traffic infra-

taining quality during repairing so

structure, footpaths, footbridge or underpass, bus-truck terminals central reservation and electrification in the roads. The amount was Tk 163.5 crore

in the 2007-2008 fiscal year.

US hopes FROM PAGE 16

ensure conditions conducive to free, fair and credible elections.

"We share the hope of the people of Bangladesh that conditions in the country will allow the total repeal of the state of emergency at some point prior to the elections," a spokesman for the US Embassy in Dhaka said in a full-dress reaction to the chief adviser's address to the nation. "We look forward to seeing free,

fair and credible elections this December," the spokesperson said, adding, "We believe that local government elections are an important part of a democratic Bangladesh. The timing of these elections is a matter for the government of Bangladesh and its people to decide. The spokesman said the US

political parties, civil society and the media have important roles to play in ensuring free, fair and credible elections for the people of Bangladesh. Compromise is an integral part of a healthy democ-Meanwhile, the European Commission (EC) has also wel-

believes that the government,

comed the chief adviser's indications about holding of the parliamentary and upazila elections and the creation of favourable conditions for the successful holding of the polls. "The European Commission

encourages all stakeholders to work in a constructive spirit towards those elections," said the delegation of the EC to Bangladesh yesterday in an official reaction to the chief adviser's Saturday evening speech to the nation. The EC delegation said the EC

confirms that the Commissioner for External Relations Dr Ferrero-Waldner will decide in the near future on the redeployment of EU Election Observation Mission (EOM) based on the prevailing political and electoral situation.

Policy dialogue 'We should think of decentralisation

of administration from the central,' he observed. There are other problems with the

running of the committees, other than the funds, experts pointed out. For example, while the UPs have been laden with the task of birth registration across the country, their manpower has not been increased to accommodate this extra load of Gias Uddin Ahmed, a UP standing

committee member, said committee members are often not well educated and therefore public offices bear a negative attitude towards them. Expressing frustration over the

fact that democracy is not exercised and that the central government does not pay much attention towards the local government, Democracywatch Executive Director Taleya Rehman said, "It is sad that we cry for democracy when it is absent, but neglect it when we have it." Professor Zerina Rahman Khan

UP Chairman advocate Afzal Hossain of Ramgarh, Jessore and Danida representative Asaduzzaman also spoke at the dialogue moderated by Dr beyond their known sources of Salahuddin M Aminuzzaman of crowds of people gathered seeking Dhaka University.

Businesses ask parties

FROM PAGE 1

"There is logic to having discussions, but there are some specific pledges of the parties too. Those who forged alliance with fundamentalist anti-liberation forces, unity with them is not possible, and dialogues with them will also not be successful," said AL Presidium Member Tofail Ahmed.

consensus on national issues, but in the parliament.

BNP, civil society representatives, editors of newspapers and the electronic media, and entrepreneurs attended the event. The gathering was aimed at

creating congenial feelings among the leaders of the two parties ahead of the national election. AL Presidium Member Amir

Hossain Amu and BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain were seen sitting next to each other. After the iftar, AL and BNP lead-

ers were also seen shaking hands. December for bringing a lot of positive changes, to build a new

who can do that. Let's not miss the train," Annisul Huq said in his welcome address. The FBCCI chief demanded from the parties an effective and transparent parliament, continuing clear stand against

corruptionists, an accountable and neutral civil administration, and promises of shunning hartals and "This is high time for starting a politics of change for building a better Bangladesh," he said adding, "We want you to be visionaries

added. Barrister Rafiq -ul Huq, who recently took an initiative to bring AL President Sheikh Hasina and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia to a discussion table, said his mission seemed already partly successful as senior leaders of the two parties sat together yesterday.

"I sincerely expect the two top

and more tolerant than before," he

leaders will sit together for a discussion, as both already gave their consent," he said adding, "Today senior leaders of the two parties have reduced the gap by coming Talking to reporters about the

government proposed all-party

policy summit, Delwar said they

have no objection to sitting with

other parties to reach a national

consensus on crucial national But, AL's Tofail Ahmed opposed the policy summit, saying such a meeting ahead of the parliamentary poll is unrealistic.

4yr old boy dies

Police said Shashi attempted suicide after killing her child by feeding him an excessive amount of sedative during iftar in her bedroom, following a feud between her and her husband Samir Hossain of Gulshan-2.

Police added they recovered sedatives from the bedroom.

Sources said Shashi and Samir got married six years ago and the feud between them started two years back, as Samir was not allowing Shashi to go to her father's

Family members of Samir said Shashi and the child were sleeping in the bedroom since afternoon.

After Samir returned home, he tried to wake his wife and child knocking on the bedroom door, but failing to do so he opened the door with a duplicate key and found them unconscious. He rushed them to the hospital where the doctors declared Alif dead.

Sub-inspector Helal Uddin of Gulshan police said the incident was the result of a family feud. No case was filed till filing of this report late last night, police said.

> Occasionally, grief-stricken relatives would burst out in screams

take several months.

"The building is definitely sub-People were stepping on each other,"

Neon lights on the club's facade

Of those injured, 59 had been hospitalised, none seriously, state television said. Police, fire and government

and officers at the scene prevented witnesses from talking to journalists. Apparently fearing an outburst of

Guangdong province Communist Party Secretary Wang Yang ordered that victims' families be "appeased" and "social stability" maintained, the China News Service said. Wang also ordered authorities to

quickly find those responsible. At a local government office,

news of missing family members.

Mannan, and Dr Hasan Mahmud were present from AL while from BNP Lt Gen (retd) Mahbubur Rahman, RA Gani, MK Anwar, Nazrul Islam Khan, Selima He however said there can be a Rahman, Abdullah Al Noman, Brig Gen (retd) ASM Hannan Shah, Barkat Ullah Bulu, and Moazzem In addition to leaders of AL and Hossain Alal were present. AL Acting President Zillur

Amir Hossain Amu, Tofail

Ahmed, Motia Chowdhury, Saber

Hossain Chowdhury, Abul Mal

Abdul Muhith, Asaduzzaman Noor,

Dr Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin, Abdul

Rahman and Syed Ashraful Islam did not attend the event although they had accepted the invitation.

From the civil society, CPD Chairman Prof Rehman Sobhan, Barrister Rafique-ul Huq, Abdullah Abu Sayeed, former advisers to caretaker governments Mahbubul Alam and CM Shafi Sami, economists Dr Atiur Rahman and Abu Ahmed, editors and senior journalists Ataus Samad, Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, Golam Sarwar, Motiur Rahman Chowdhury, Abed Khan, "Another chance is coming this Manjurul Ahsan Bulbul, Shaymol Dutta, Moazzem Hossain, and Naimul Islam Khan were present future for the nation. It's only you among others.

AL kicks off FROM PAGE 1

committees were formed a couple of years ago, we have to revive them," he

Chaired by Imam, also a former cabinet secretary, the meeting analysed different strategic and technical issues and discussed coordination between committees related to

He said establishing communication with thana-, upazila- and district-level leaders is important for election preparations. The AL leader said they also

discussed how they could train their

party leaders and workers to give them a clearer concept of the new electoral laws and code of conduct. Around 30 members of the committee including a number of retired government officials attended the

Talking to The Daily Star a committee member, however, said they were called in so that they could teach the candidates and the polling agents about the new electoral laws and code of conduct.

AL acting General Secretary Syed

meeting. The committee will sit

almost regularly.

party Presidium at acting President Zillur Rahman's Gulshan home, told reporters that they are 100 percent prepared to contest in the election. AL Presidium member Suranjit Sengupta said they will not face any

problems regarding preparations as

they had prepared ahead of the

Olmert resigns

in forming a national government with the composition she wants." Olmert said in remarks broadcast on television. "For my part I will help her with all mystrength." Olmert's office later said in a

newgovernment. Olmert has been battling corruption allegations for several months. and on July 30 he said he would step

right-wing Likud party to power.

Peres was due to travel to New

York this week to attend the UN

General Assembly, and it was unclear

whether he would be able to set the

legal process in motion before his departure by asking Livni to form a Olmert is meanwhile likely to stay on as interim premier until a new government is sworn in, which could

Stampede kills 43

FROM PAGE 16 escaped the Sichuan earthquake, but not lucky enough to escape this," Fu

nearby hospital searching for his wife's remains. standard. The doors are too small and everybody was rushing out.

said, while roaming the halls of a

Dozens of police officers had cordoned off the scene Sunday. had fallen down, while windows in adjacent buildings had been shat-

officials declined comment to AFP

public anger over the fire,

among the dead. A Hong Kong university student who was to meet friends at the club but arrived just after the fire started, was at the office seeking news of their

after being told their loved ones were

He described turbulent scenes during the tragedy. "It was very chaotic with fire brigades and ambulances flying past

building and there was smoke coming out," said the man, who declined to give his name. Deadly fires are common in China due to the routine flouting or ignorance of fire and safety mea-

The government said earlier this

year that 159,000 fires broke out in

me. Everybody was rushing out of the

injuring 863 others, and causing direct economic losses totalling 990 million yuan (145 million dollars). However, the toll could actually be higher as local officials in China are notorious for covering up deadly

The total did not include forest or grass fires or blazes in the country's deadly mines.

accidents to avoid punishment.

fire in the central city of Luoyang.

China in 2007, killing 1,418 people,

In 2000, 311 people died in a disco

Ashraful Islam, after a meeting of the

"I hope that Tzipi Livni will succeed

stalled January, 22, 2007 polls.

statement that he would meet President Shimon Peres at 7:30 pm (1630 GMT) to submit his resignation and formally initiate what could be a months-long process to form a

down once his party chose a new Once Olmert formally tenders his resignation Peres is expected to give Livni 42 days to form a government and avert snap general elections, which polls indicate would bring the

newgovernment.