Toxic milk

FROM PAGE 1

Plasma Plus also carried out tests on samples of some of the branded powdered milk and found the toxic element in only Yashili 1.

But confusions arose as the BSTI itself could not rely on any of the laboratory tests.

Plasma Plus in a press release said vesterday that the BSTI provided it with four coded samples of powdered milk without their brand names for tests to detect melamine. It claimed that it never gave test reports on any particular brand.

Chairperson Prof Tajmeri SA Islam blamed the BSTI for creating confusions. "There would not have been any confusion if the BSTI had talked with all the laboratories, set a testing method and finally crosschecked the results, "she said.

The BSTI itself is confused about which result to rely on, she added.

The levels of melamine found in these eight imported brands of powdered milk are much higher than the tolerable level, according to the DU chemistry department tests.

BSTI scientists said presence of up to 0.001mg of melamine per gram milk consumed would be considered safe for children. For adults, this would be 0.0025mg per gram milk.

About doubts over the results of the tests conducted by the DU chemistry department, Dr Tajmeri said. "We do not care if anybody rejects the results or has doubts about them. We are sure that our process, method and testing instruments are hundred percent cor-

She said the manufacturers of these samples of powdered milk use melamine to enhance protein level in their products but melamine is a toxic chemical and cannot be digested after a certain level.

Dr Nahar said, "We took a long time for the tests and we checked and rechecked our results before confirming them."

At a press conference at the chemistry department auditorium vesterday, she said they used the High Performance Liquid Chromatography (HPLC) method, of emergency. terming it a high quality method, and the GC-MS machine.

"We would not have disclosed the results without being hundred percent sure as both babies and businessmen who trade powdered milk are equally important," she

China to help

FROM PAGE 16

slapped on Pakistan after it detonated its first nuclear charges in 1998 in response to similar tests by India.

The sanctions were eased after Musharraf agreed to help Washington hunt down al-Qaeda terrorists responsible for the government--on April 13, June 11 Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in the United States.

But the revelation in 2004 that the architect of Islamabad's nuclear program, Abdul Qadeer Khan, had passed nuclear secrets to Iran, Libya and North Korea set back Pakistan's hopes of becoming a trusted member of the world's exclusive nuclear club.

The US-India deal allows American businesses to sell nuclear fuel, technology and reactors to India in exchange for safeguards and UN inspections of India's civilian but not military nuclear plants.

Boucher told reporters earlier this month that the pact with India was "unique" and that a similar agreement with Pakistan was "just not on the table."

He said Washington would help Pakistan where chronic power shortages are contributing to a gathering economic crisis develop its huge coal reserves, expand hydroelectric power generation and build wind farms on its Arabian Sea coast.

Pakistan, the Islamic world's only known nuclear weapons state, began operating its first nuclear power station with Canadian assistance near the southern port city of Karachi in 1972.

Subrata Bain

"We have shown our sincerity by sending back seven Bangladeshi miscreants, but the Bangladesh authorities have not yet handed over 10 Indian separatists to Indian authorities."

The Indian government this time wants to sign a bilateral accord with Bangladesh government regarding the handover of Subrata Bain, said

The two neighbouring countries do not have any extradition treaty between them. So, such exchanges take place informally, often through

On holding national election under the state of emergency in Bangladesh, the Indian envoy said, "Emergency is no obstacle to holding an acceptable election."

He however suggested further relaxing the emergency rules.

He dismissed allegations that foreigners are interfering in the internal affairs of Bangladesh.

On duty-free trade facilities, Pinak Ranjan said Bangladesh's commodities, barring those on negative list, have access to the Indian market, which resulted in growth of Bangladesh's exports.

Dr Mahabubul Hasan, nutrition specialist and former deputy director of Dhaka Shishu Hospital, told The Daily Star that melamine cannot pass through the kidneys and long time consumption of melamine can damage the kidneys

"It will be difficult for mothers to change the food habits of their babies who have become used to powdered milk. Even then babies younger than six months should not be given powdered milk. They could DU chemistry department be fed with raw milk. Babies older than six months should be given khichuri, eggs, noodles and other soft fooditems," he said.

Fresh dialogue FROM PAGE 1

stage I am sure we will get answers." He said the issues must be resolved through dialogue.

"Every step needs to be taken on

time so that the poll schedule remains as it is." Hossain Zillur requested BNP not to link the registration issue

with the next round of dialogue. AL acting General Secretary Sved Ashraful Islam said one of the advisers of the interim government telephoned AL acting President Zillur Rahman Friday night about further talks on unresolved issues.

Zillur Rahman informed the adviser about their likelihood of sitting together this week.

Talking to journalists at his NAM flat in the capital yesterday, Ashraf said they would hold another round of talks with the caretaker government this week to reach a consensus about issues including the withdrawal of the state of emergency, unconditional release of AL President Sheikh Hasina and postponement of upazila polls.

The AL reiterated that it would ratify all steps of the incumbent government if voted to power. Earlier, AL President Sheikh Hasina also made similar statements.

"Most probably we will sit with the government Monday but the time will be declared on Sunday [today]," Ashraf said.

AL is scheduled to hold protest rallies across the country today to press home its six-point demand including unconditional release of Hasina and withdrawal of the state

"Issues including withdrawal of the state of emergency and the false and fabricated cases against Sheikh Hasina and demarcation of the parliamentary constituencies will come up for discussion with the government among other issues," Ashraf said. He said a number of provisions in the revised Representation of the People Order

(RPO) will also be discussed. "During the talks we will urge the government to create a congenial atmosphere so that all political parties can take part in the December 18 elections without any reservations," Ashraf said.

The AL has already had three formal talks with the caretaker and July 3 this year--and three other talks with the Election

Responding to a query, Ashraf said he believes that the muchtalked-about "minus two" theory would not be implemented.

About ratifying the caretaker government's steps, Ashraf said, The next elected government will ratify all the activities of the caretaker government. It is a normal practice. Even we earlier declared that if the Awami League is voted to power, it will endorse the caretaker government's activities."

On AL's election preparation, he said the party would start formal election campaigns under the leadership of Hasina after her

He said the AL is confidant that the government would hold the parliamentary elections on December 18.

6 Shakib wickets

FROM PAGE 1 Taylor (12) with a slider, but the television replays suggested the 24year-old batsman inside-edged the ball on to his front pad. Minutes before the tea interval, Shakib had Aaron Redmond (19) plumb in front as the New Zealanders were reduced to 52 for four.

Mohammad Ashraful rotated his bowlers well after tea and when he brought on Nayeem Islam, the offspinner immediately rewarded his captain by removing Daniel Flynn (19) in his first over. Shakib continued his spell from the other end and saw off Brendon McCullum to a rash shot that ended up at mid-on to Razzak and then the ODI man-ofthe-series Jacob Oram who flicked the ball straight at an intelligently placed short mid-wicket where

and pouched easily. Even after the six-wicket haul and an impending lead, one was let down by Bangladesh's poor approach with the bat. Mehrab Hossain misread and chipped an Iain O'Brien slower ball straight to Redmond, who took his first catch of the tour, at short cover. The left-hander displayed anguish as he fell short of a century by 17 runs, falling for 83 off 179 balls with 11 boundaries. His overnight partner Mushfigur Rahim (79) was

Mashrafe Bin Mortaza leaned back

caught at short fine-leg off Vettori, who ended with five wickets. Three wickets -- Nayeem, Mushfigur and Mashrafe -- fell with the score on 229 and it was all over just six overs later when Shakib (5) tried to break free and holed out to

mid-on to the bowling of Patel. Apart from the captain's five-for, O'Brien took three while Patel ended with two wickets.

But the day definitely belonged to the Tigers who fought back manfully. The third day, today, seems to hold the key to the match and the team who can put the remaining sessions to good use, would again smile back to the dressing room.

Re-demarcation

FROM PAGE 1

The HC bench of justices Mir Hasmat Ali and Shamim Hasnain on October 13 fixed today for hearing the writ petition that challenged the legality of the EC's gazette notification finalising fresh demarcation of the constituencies.

EC's counsel Dr Shahdeen Malik yesterday told The Daily Star that it might take two or three days to complete the hearing on the writ petition against the redemarcation of the constituencies.

The EC on October 14 took back from the HC bench of justices Syed Mahmud Hossain and Quamrul Islam Siddiqui its petition for vacating the court order that stayed the re-demarcation of parliamentary constituencies as the writ petition was pending with an HC bench of justices Mir Hasmat Ali and Shamim Hasnain.

"If more time is required for disposing the writ petition, the commission will move its petition to another High Court bench for vacating the High Court order that stayed the EC's re-demarcation of parliamentary constituencies," he

Former BNP state minister Abdul Mannan filed the writ petition on August 6 challenging legality of the EC's gazette notification finalising fresh demarcation of the constituencies.

The next day, the HC bench of justices Khademul Islam Chowdhury and Mashuque Hosain Ahmed stayed operation of the notification for three months, and directed the government and the EC to explain within two weeks why the notification should not be declared unconstitutional and

Another HC bench of justices Sheikh Rezowan Ali and Md Rais Uddin deferred until today the hearing on the writ petitions filed by Hasina for quashing the proceedings of Niko and bargemounted power plant corruption cases against her.

The HC on July 7 stayed for two months the proceedings of the cases filed by the Anti-corruption Commission (ACC) against Hasina.

The HC also issued separate rulings asking the ACC and the government to explain why the proceedings against Hasina should not be quashed.

Following an application on August 27, the HC extended for three months the stay orders and fixed October 14 for hearing of the rulings.

Sources said counsels for Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojahid might move petition on his behalf before an HC bench today for his bail in the Barapukuria coalmine corruption case.

FROM PAGE 1

year to stop the ninth parliamentary polls then scheduled for January 22.

Coming out of the two hours long discussions that began at 9:00am, UN Resident Coordinator in Dhaka Renata Lok Dessallien said they hope the political parties including Awami League (AL) and

BNP will participate in the election. The meeting was held preparatory to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's visit to Bangladesh early November to observe situation in the lead-up to the December 18

election. Members of the UN advanced mission led by Hitoki Den, head of the UN team on political affairs for South Asia, Asia and the Pacific region, accompanied Dessallien at

the talks. "We told them that the foreign diplomats should not make any comments that go against our national interests and violate the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations," Delwar told reporters

after the meet. "They must not try to dictate how our election should be con-

ducted," he added. At the meeting, the UN delegation enquired about BNP's stance on registration with the Election Commission (EC) and the prospect of December 18 polls being held under the state of emergency.

"We said BNP is always an election-oriented organisation and it wants to contest the upcoming polls as well," Delwar continued. "We also told them we want to

get registered with the Election Commission, but all barriers in this regard will have to be removed." The BNP leaders told Dessallien

that they would not participate in

any election with the state of emergency in force. The UN resident coordinator told reporters they have a good grasp of the situation ahead of Ban

Ki-moon's visit. "We certainly want all political parties to participate in the election," she said.

She observed that particularly participation of the two major parties -- AL and BNP -- is crucial. Dessallien said the next govern-

ment will have to contend with a number of problems including food price hike and the fallout from global economic meltdown. She said she hopes the opposi-

tion parties will play a useful role in parliament. BNP senior leaders RA Gani, Tanbir Ahmed Siddiky, Shamsul Islam, MK Anwar and Nazrul Islam Khan were present at the meeting.

Asian women

NEWS

these women and their families. By empowering women to become leaders in the society, AUW is creating an important force for positive change in the

These women, once out of the university, will contribute to the community.

Bangladesh has been able to offer such a window of opportunity in the region. So far many students had to leave the country and go to other countries to get first grade education.

own women a chance to get world class education, the nation will also offer such a grand opportunity to its neighbours.

One said she felt it was a great opportunity for her to be in this university, which brings together students from different countries and cultures in Asia and creates an environment where all will learn from each other in ways different

communities are often left uneducated and are unaware of how they can serve both personal and community development with their superior education.

AUW provides a critical pathway to leadership development, economic progress, and social and political equality, said another student

The university programmes promise to educate promising young women from diverse cultural, religious, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds from across South and South East Asia with particular emphasis on the inclusion of women from poor,

Nepalese student Dipa Awali says she was not aware of how Muslims observe Ramadan until she came to study here. Here she also joined Eid and Durga Puja festivities in groups with other students and gained invaluable experience.

fabulous. We enjoyed ourselves so sky," One Endear said.

sculptures of Lalon Shah and the

Swadhinata statue on Dhaka

discussion meeting titled

'Bangabandhu -Bangladesh and

the Present Political Perspective'

organised by Narsingdi District AL

at its Eid-reunion at the Public

December 18, and in an atmo-

sphere conducive to holding it in a

emergency is withdrawn and party

chief Sheikh Hasina is released

alliance wasn't getting registered

with the EC because they know

they would face a similar fate in the

national poll as they faced during

the city corporation and

AL, the programme was also

addressed by former AL lawmakers

Nurul Majid Humayun, Meher

Afroz Chumki and other local

AL presidium member Matia

forces, they said a certain quarter

has been using religion for political

DU teachers and students under

the banner of 'General Teachers and

Students' held a rally at the foot of

Aparajeyo Bangla at around

students brought out a procession

with a banner "We are angry at the

removal of the sculptures" and

marched various streets on the

Meanwhile, leaders and activists

of various left-leaning student

organisations formed a human

chain around 12:00noon stretching

from Shahbagh intersection to

Teacher-Student Centre (TSC)

intersection protesting the removal

After the rally, emeritus professor

of DU Dr Serajul Islam Choudhury

said a section of the present govern-

ment might have supported those

who staged violent protests

demanding removal of the sculp-

tures. Otherwise, it would not be

possible for them to do so under the

give a statement about the removal

itself had taken the initiative to erect

those in front of Zia International

banner of Lalan Bhaskarjya

Protisthapan Mancha at a press

conference at Madhu's Canteen

The students of the faculty of fine

arts organised street painting in

front of the faculty in the evening

demanded immediate reinstalla-

University students under the

The present government should

state of emergency, he said.

of the sculptures.

Airport, he said.

tion of the sculptures.

protesting the incident.

Later, around 500 teachers and

11:00am protesting the incident.

Organised of Narsingdi District

He demanded that the state of

Tofail said that the BNP-Jamaat

"The polls must be held on

Library auditorium in the city.

free and fair manner," he said.

unconditionally.

Pourashaba polls.

RUSSEL'S BIRTHDAY

Protests

FROM PAGE 16

purposes.

The AL leader was speaking at a

FROM PAGE 16

University campus.

much and also learnt so many things we were not aware of

before," she said. Dipa -- pointing out that the university aims at preparing leaders said, "I think one cannot be a leader unless they learn about

other cultures." Academic activity of the university, situated in Chittagong, has begun in April this year with 130 students from six Asian countries-- India, Pakistan, Cambodia,

Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. Reputed academics from across the globe have already joinined the university and are developing an international standard curriculum to prepare Asian women as leaders.

The university begins its undergraduate programmes in July next year. In the beginning it will enroll 500 students annually. The university has decided to reserve half of the seats for students who are the first in their families to ever go to a university. "We spend time together, have

different activities and discuss issues relating to different countries. We have clubs for public speaking, community development, and we also go to villages to teach English," a Cambodian student said.

"We not only improve our own English but also teach people in the villages. So when we return to our countries, we can teach others too," Jyoti Shrestha, another Nepalese student at AUW, said.

Students from different cultures learn to respect each other's values and cultures by living and studying together. This make them more tolerant of each other, Jyoti said.

Anushka Yaddenige, a student from Sri Lanka, said the university would play a great role in empowering women as most women in Asia are deprived of opportunities. "We who are studying here, feel privileged. We must help others who are not able to find such facilities," she remarked.

"AUW is a university that will "Joining these festivals was just help us spread our wings in the

An Asian dream

FROM PAGE 16

East, with particular emphasis on inclusion of women from poor, rural and refugee populations.

The AUW's commitment to be open to students from different backgrounds is significant, the caretaker government chief said. "The result is not just fairness of opportunity but also the ability to harness new talents in the service of our communities."

He said no sustainable development could occur without half of the people (women) fully engaging in uplift activities of the nation. A university dedicated to the education and empowerment of women will not only change the landscape of higher education but also unleash the potential of half of the population.

Dr Yunus said, "The university is a melting pot for Asia and the world. It will be an example of an institution where students will not be confined in buildings, but will go to villages and learn from struggles of people. Such programmes should be part of curriculum."

The Grameen Bank founder and managing director hoped that young and bright women from across Asia will learn from each other at the AUW and help reduce gaps that cause conflicts.

Jack Meyer said women in the world, particularly in this part of the world, are deprived of due rights for various socio-cultural reasons. But it is good education that can turn them into leaders to shape the value system and bring revolutionary changes in their own societies, he added.

Hoon Eng Khoo said a practice in the region is that women in families take heavy burden but get less benefits.

Educated at the new international standard university, the women can surely take part in political leadership and cultural movements for changes, she

Stanford University, California, will send two post doctoral fellows to serve at the AUW, while Aalborg University Denmark, has entered an agreement to collaborate on establish ing a graduate programme in Information & Communication Technology at the AUW, according to a press release.

BNP, allies wait

of the two parties who then said they would register after holding talks with the caretaker govern-

They sat in separate talks with Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed on October 14 and later said they will meet with the government again before the deadline for registration expires on October

"We hope the government wil hold the second round of talks with us before October 20," BNF Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain yesterday told

reporters. "We hope our proposals as to registration will be accepted so the BNP can register," Delwar

Asked whether the BNP will apply for registration if the government does not hold talks with them before October 20, he said they will decide on it.

Sources in the BNP said some senior party leaders yesterday discussed the registration issue and were supposed to consult their party Chairperson Khaleda

Zia last night. The BNP constitution empowers the chairperson to bring amendments to it in an emergency.

Jamaat Assistant Secretary General Mohammad Kamaruzzaman told The Daily Star that they have almost completed the preparatory tasks for registra-

"We'll sit today to discuss the registration and dialogue issues,

he said. IOJ Secretary General Abdul Latif Nezami said they were making preparations for registration. "We'll submit applications

after the four-party alliance

reaches a decision," he told The Daily Star. Twenty-nine political parties applied to the EC for registration as of Thursday. The commission

tion forms. The EC will have to complete the registration work by October as it plans to announce the schedule for the December 18 parliamentary polls on November 1 or 2.

has so far given out 180 applica-

Mojahid

FROM PAGE 1

of Uttara Police Station, said, "We raided his house several times but did not find him there. We have been trying to trace him, and will arrest him wherever we find him." He however denied presence of Jamaat men at the place during the

raids. In reply to a question, he said, "It is not known to us whether he went to Sangram office."

and lawyers sharply reacted to Mojahid's presence at his party's, dialogue with the government on Tuesday while police reported to the trial court that he is a fugitive.

Madrasa students

FROM PAGE 16 "It was unimaginable what they did here today, such an incident never happened before in the history of the university. They should be arrested for the offence," Prof Faiz told reporters at a news briefing following the vandalism.

He said the attackers started ransacking his office in front of him, when he told them that the university authorities' decision is final and there is no chance of changing it now.

The attackers threatened him discuss yesterday's vandalism. saying they will not let the university run normally, if they cannot get admission, the VC added.

Prof Faiz however assured the irate madrasa graduates that the university authorities will discuss the matter in future considering their grievances, but the current decision is final for this year. The VC expressed his astonish-

the office and the DU campus without any resistance after the vandalism. "I immediately contacted the

police and that was the very first time I ever called them to take action, as it was too much," Prof Faiz added. When asked whether the attack-

ers were DU students or outsiders, Prof Faiz said, "They came to me as students -- I couldn't specifically identify anybody." But other DU sources said the attackers were from different madrasas of the city who were

accompanied by some DU students who had also studied in madrasas before getting admitted to the university. Some student leaders however alleged that the attackers were

brought in, supported and escorted by Islami Chhatra Shibir, student wing of Islamist political party Jamaat-e-Islami. Sources in the VC office said the attackers went to the office in the afternoon and submitted two memorandums to Prof Faiz under

the banners of Bangladesh

Madrasa Chhatra Andolon Parishad, and Madrasa Chhatra Odhikar Sangrakhan. "Stern actions will be taken according to the university rules if the vandals are identified as university students," Prof Faiz said adding that they will seek legal action to the full extent against the perpetrators, if they turn out to be

outsiders. The university syndicate last night formed a four-member committee headed by Treasurer Prof Sved Abul Kalam to investigate

the incident. The committee was asked to submit its report in seven days'

signed the memorandums be expelled if found to be DU stu-Replying to a question regarding whether the incident was the result of a conspiracy to close the university, Prof Faiz said, "I am

Strongly condemning the

attacks, the syndicate recom-

mended that the two students who

surprised -- such a motive might have been behind it." He said the DU authorities will not let that happen, adding, "We will resist such attempts all

together.' He called on all related to the university to cooperate with the DU authorities, so no more unexpected incident occurs on the

Prof Faiz confirmed that sales rate was the highest since the three and submission of admission forms will continue today accordmonths to March, 2000.

ing to the authorities' decision.

He said the DU authorities have urged police to provide necessary security during sales of admission forms at banks on the campus.

DU officers' association, class IV employees' union, and DU teachers association (Duta) in separate news releases condemned the incident and demanded exemplary punishment for the perpetrators.

Duta executive committee is scheduled to meet this morning to

Officer-in-charge at Shahbagh Police Station told The Daily Star that DU security officer Kamrul Hassan filed a case against 150-160 unidentified people last night.

UK plans tougher restrictions on immigration

AFP, London

Britain will impose tougher restrictions on immigration as the global financial crisis lifts unemployment to the highest rate in nearly a decade, the country's new immigration minister said yesterday.

"If people are being made unem-

ployed, the question of immigration becomes extremely thorny," Phil Woolas told The Times newspaper. "It's been too easy to get into

this country in the past and it's going to get harder," he added in an interview. In a dramatic change of policy, the Labour government intends

placing a limit on immigration,

according to the daily.

"There has to be a balance between the number of people coming in and the number of people leaving," said Woolas. The minister said his govern-

ment would not allow Britain's population to grow to 70 million Britain's population grew by about 3.4 percent to almost 61 million people between 2001 and 2007 fuelled by expansion of the European Union, according to

latest figures from the Office for National Statistics. Reacting to the comments made by Woolas, the opposition Conservative Party's spokesman on immigration, Dominic Grieve, said: "We have been calling for immigration, limits for years now but the government have repeat-

edly poured scorn on this. "But tough talk is simply not enough; they must now explain how they intend to deliver. Will they implement our plans for an annual limit on non-EU immigration, transitional controls on future EU immigration, and establish a dedicated UK border force to secure our

borders?" Britain's unemployment rate jumped to an eight-year high of 5.7 percent in the three months to August, official data showed on Wednesday.

Under the International Labour

Organisation measure of unem-

ployment, the rate had stood at 5.2 percent for the three months to The 5.7-percent unemployment

Iraqis stage

FROM PAGE 16 pact as tens of thousands of his followers rallied in Baghdad against

the deal. The mass public show of opposition came as US and Iraqi leaders face a Dec. 31 deadline to reach agreement on the deal, which would replace an expiring UN mandate authorizing the US-led forces in Iraq.

Al-Sadr's message was addressed to Iraqi lawmakers and read by his aide Sheik Abdul-Hadi al-Mohammadawi before a huge crowd of mostly young men waving Iraqi and green Shia flags and chanting slogans including "no, no to the agreement" and "yes to Iraq.""The Iraqi government has abandoned its duty before God and its people and referred the agreement to you knowing that ratifying it will stigmatise Iraq and its government for years to

come," he said. Al-Sadr, who is living in Iran, also cast doubt on the Iraqi government's argument that the security pact is a step toward ending the US presence in Iraq. The deal would require US forces to leave by Dec. 31, 2011 unless Iraq asked some of them to stay.

"If they tell you that the agreement ends the presence of the occupation, let me tell you that the occupier will retain its bases. And whoever tells you that it gives us sovereignty is a liar," al-Sadr said. "I am confident that you brothers in parliament will champion the will of the people over that of the occupier ... Do not betray

the people. The demonstrators marched from the main Shia district of Sadr City to the more central Mustansiriyah Square in eastern Baghdad.

"No, No to America," shouted one man, wearing a white Islamic robe as he sat in a wheelchair and clutched a poster of the Iraqi flag. "We prefer death to giving concessions.

Security was tight, with Iraqi security forces manning checkpoints on sidestreets and snipers on rooftops. Iraqi Humvees controlled all

the roads leading to the square. Giant Iraqi flags covered nearby buildings. One banner in English said "We refuse the existence of the US in

Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's government and the Bush administration have hammered out a draft agreement after months of bitter negotiations.

But the Iraqi parliament must

ratify the deal and Iraq's pre-eminent

cleric Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani has said any accord must have national consensus. Al-Maliki, a Shia, could be politically isolated if he tries to win parliament's backing in the face of wide-

spread opposition. Several Sunni and Shia clerics, who wield considerable influence in shaping public opinion, also spoke out during Friday prayer services against the draft, complaining that the Iraqi public knows little about the

obtained by The Associated Press specifies that US troops must leave Iraqi cities by the end of June and be gone by 2012. It gives Iraq limited authority over off-duty, off-base US soldiers who commit crimes. US Congressional approval is not

A copy of the draft accord

required for the pact to take effect, but the administration is trying to build maximum political support The march was called by al-Sadr

after he had to postpone a mass demonstration on April 9 to mark the fifth anniversary of the US capture of Baghdad. That march had been postponed after many of his followers complained they were not allowed to enter the capital amid fears of violence.

Also on Saturday, Bahrain's foreign minister arrived in Iraq's capital Saturday for a one-day visit aimed at improving bilateral relations between the countries, the latest high-level visit by a senior Arab

FROM PAGE 16

the envoy. pushback or deportation.

FROM PAGE 16

This is the first time that

Now, in addition to offering its

from traditional methods of learn-Women from underserved

rural, and refugee populations.

Tough agitation Chowdhury said that for the first

> She was addressing a discussion held on the Bangabandhu Museum premises in Dhanmondi to mark the 44th birth anniversary of

> SSC 2008 successfully and winners Matia said many children are

Ershad

[politicians] mindset. He said the political parties should not consider those convicted or accused of graft for nominations. The JP boss said his party would

not ally itself with BNP even if it fails

pollsonitsown. 60 seats from the AL-led grand alli-

alliance's sweeping to power in the upcoming election. Replying to a query, Ershad said he opposes the proposed dialogue

He said he expects to be the coun-

try's president again given the grand

Institutional graft FROM PAGE 16 The land ministry officials, ranging from assistant secretaries to the secretary, will participate in the meeting. ACC Chairman Lt Gen (retd) Hasan Mashhud

rampant. Following the meeting with the land ministry, meetings will be held with the health and communications ministries and Local Government Division under the LGRD ministry.

the government officials. The necessity of involving the senior officials is felt because they know how corruption takes place in their respective departments and which legal and structural weaknesses inspire or force one to indulge in corruption.

time, parents are not sending their children to school but sending them to earn their livelihood instead

Sheikh Russell, youngest son of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Sheikh Russell Jatiya Shishu Kishore Parishad organised the discussion and reception for meri-

of a painting competition. dying slowly because of starvation in the country at present. During the programme, two factions of Sheikh Russell Jatiya

torious students who passed the

Shishu-Kishore Parishad locked in clashes twice over slogans and seat sharing, leaving at least two people

FROM PAGE 1

to forge a grand electoral alliance with Awami League (AL). In that case, JP would contest the upcoming He said his party will seek at least

between AL President Sheikh Hasina and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia.

Chowdhury, commissioners Habibur Rahman and Abul Hasan Manjur Mannan will represent the Commission.

Initially, the ACC will hold such

meetings with four ministries,

where corruption is perceived to be

According to ACC senior offiof the sculptures as the government . cials, such meetings will be held with all the ministries and departments in phases. The ACC thinks that the cam-

paign for rooting out institutional

corruption will not be successful

without the direct participation of

Meantime, eminent citizens

ment at the fact that the vandals left