# Constituency writ

challenge for us to complete all procedures accurately in the run up to the election," a top election official told The Daily Star yesterday,

ment of the schedule will be delayed the commission will face more challenges in finishing its remaining tasks on time, like scrutinising applications for candidacy in accordance with the new electoral law to spot corruptionists, and loan and bill defaulters.

"We are now in a critical state." Huda said before leaving the commission secretariat in his car yesterday afternoon, looking very discontent as he came out of his office through a different path than he

The EC officials said it will take a long time to settle the redemarcation dispute if the court hears the petitions separately, and suggested that the court could hear only a few petitions to reach a judgment since all

Sakhawat Hussain told The Daily Star vesterday, "It's not wise to comment now, as the matter is sub-judice."

He however reiterated the commission's resolve to hold the general election on December 18, even if the announcement of the detailed schedule is delayed.

The commission has two types of constituency wise voter lists ready, one based on the old delimitation of the constituencies and the other based on the latest redemarcation, so it could go ahead with the election, no matter what the court verdict is.

Meanwhile, the EC so far decided to register 13 parties, which are Awami League (AL), BNP, the Workers Party of Bangladesh, the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), Shammyabadi Dal, Jatiya Party (Ershad), Jatiya Party (Monju), Bikalpadhara Bangladesh, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (Inu), National Awami Party (NAP), Gonotantri

Party, Krishak Sramik Janata League (KSJL), and Liberal Democratic Party

(LDP) On Saturday the EC will hold a public hearing on the objections lodged against possible registration of Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami.

Decision about registering two other parties -- Islami Oikya Jote (IOJ) and JSD (Rab) -- is in the pipeline, the commission sources said.

The sources also said about 15 more parties will probably get registrations, while the rest of the applicants will be denied registration as those failed to meet the required criteria set by the amended Representation of the People Order

A total of 107 parties, including 22 based on religions, applied for registration with the EC, a mandatory prerequisite for contesting in the upcoming poll under the new electoral law.

On July 10 this year, the EC published a gazette notification redemarcating the parliamentary constituencies.

On August 7, former BNP lawmaker Abdul Mannan filed a writ petition with the HC challenging the EC's move, followed by 10 more similar petitions filed by different

The court on the same day stayed the effectiveness of the EC gazette notification for three months, which is scheduled to expire on November

It also issued a ruling on the government and the EC to show cause in two weeks as to why the gazette notification should not be declared unconstitutional and illegal.

The entire Supreme Court (SC) went on vacation on August 31 and returned on October 12.

The EC had scrambled to get the matter resolved before the SC went on vacation, but failed, because the counsels of the petitioners were unwilling to let the matter get adjudicated by a vacation bench of the

Jasas, also helped Harris accumulate Tk 41.03 lakh beyond known sources of income by using own bank

He also kept in his name Harris' shares worth Tk 21 lakh and bought shares worth Tk 21.03 lakh from National Tea Company following order from Harris, who kept the shares in his possession and took the profit.

Investigation sources say they tried to keep Harris pleased to get nomination and give him money as

The Tac chairman said though the extension adds further pressure on their shoulder, they would work during holidays for the sake of the country to complete their task by

"We are identifying the problems in administration, legal loopholes, and procedural mistakes following information extracted from the graftaccused heard so far. We'll make our final report incorporating recommendations regarding the findings, said former comptroller and auditor general Asif Ali, one of the three

Justice Habibur said Tac, which has already added about Tk 10.93 crore returned by 107 graft-accused to the national exchequer, while over

He explained that the governmembers and the 45 staffs attached respective departments.

another member of the commission, said they are still working with corruption in BTCL, former BTTB, and found that the committee formed by the government also had problems.

He said the investigators in the government probe bodies were selected from lower ranks so that they could not do anything against top-level officials.

## 11 criminals held

Ramzan, was arrested at Chanchra Roypara in the town.

In Benapole, the law enforcers arrested seven criminals with four firearms and three bullets.

The arrestees are Yusuf Ali, Jahangir Hossain, Alamgir Hossain, Akkas Ali, Alauddin, Ayub Ali and

The officer-in-charge of Benapole Police Station said they launched a drive with the help of Sharsha police and arrested the criminals along with the firearms

"They were wanted in a number of criminal cases," he said.

Maradona faced competition for

the job from Carlos Bianchi, the

former coach of Boca Juniors,

whom he led to four national league

titles, San Lorenzo coach Miguel

Angel Russo and Sergio Batista who

took the Under-23 squad to

with the man-of-the-match and

man-of-the-series awards with five

wickets in the match and an overall

innings at 169-9 and New Zealand,

knowing that a series sweep was all

but over, batted more than an hour

and a half in the final session for 79-

1 before the match finished in

the two-Test series 1-0 thanks to the

close three-wicket victory in the first

match in Chittagong and had lifted

the three-match one-day series 2-1,

it was certainly a satisfying series for

hard but also created a situation of

winning both the Test and one-day

fearless Mashrafe, tipped as future

all-rounder of Bangladesh, struck

seven boundaries and two sixes in a

match-saving partnership with

Shakib. The pair took the score to

122 before Shakib, who had a bril-

liant all-round show in the first Test

with a seven-wicket haul and 71

runs, became Vettori's fifth victim

after lunch, handing the New

Zealand skipper his 17th five-

tried to sweep a good length ball

from Vettori only to be adjudged leg

Africa for a full series starting next

month while New Zealand, who

were expected to leave the city last

night, will be up against their trans-

Tasman rivals Australia in Australia

It was learnt that both the

umpires reported to the match

referee about spinner Abdur

also in November.

Razzak's action.

The left-hander fell when he

Bangladesh now head to South

wickethaul in Test cricket.

before.

They not only have fought very

Back in the final day's play, a

the Tigers even in defeat.

Although Vettori's men clinched

Bangladesh declared their first

Olympic gold in Beijing in August.

Tame draw

FROM PAGE 16

19 in the series.

fading light.

# Maradona

FROM PAGE 16 president Julio Grondona.

The 48-year-old -- who almost single-handedly led Argentina to the 1986 World Cup trophy -- won a rule upon Aziz, the Election crucial support last week in his bid Commission (EC) and the governto become the next Argentina ment to explain why Aziz's holding coach when the man charged with the office of CEC alongside being a finding Alfio Basile's successor threw his weight behind the World Cup winning skipper.

"I'd like Maradona to be the next coach," said Noray Nakis, the president of the Argentina Football Association (AFA) selection commission. resignation, he went on leave from Basile resigned a fortnight ago November 22. Prior that, he had after a World Cup qualifying defeat repeatedly told the media that he

did not find any reason to quit his responsibility.

election officers. But the present EC dropped 85 of the 303 as they could not qualify in a test arranged by the commission. Political parties except BNP and its allies rejected the 2006 voter list and demanded resignation of Aziz,

were working in favour of the BNPled alliance. Finally, Aziz agreed to resign as the caretaker government led by Fakhruddin Ahmed created pres-

#### sure on him to implement its plan to reconstitute the EC to make it acceptable to all.

contest in the election from any

He made the arguments before the HC bench of Justice Mir Hasmat Ali and Justice Shamim Hasnain during the hearing of the writ petitions filed in this connection.

ing until today.

However, Abdur Razzaq, counsel for petitioner Arifur Rahman Sohel, told the court that his client in the writ petition challenged the gazette notification issued by the

EC, not any law or rules of the EC. Giving a number of references, he said there was no impediment to challenging the gazette notification since it was not a law of the EC and it was not issued as per Article 124 of the constitution.

Islam told the court that the commission issued the gazette as per Article 124. According to Article 125, EC's action taken under Article 124 cannot be challenged in court, so the writ petitions challenging mentary board will sit and pick one the gazette notification cannot continue, he added.

## Tac extends

FROM PAGE 1

hurt), 324 (causing hurt), 109 (abetment), 34 (criminal liability), 120(B) (criminal conspiracy) and 302 (murder) of the Penal Code. Bomb blast charges were framed against them under sections 3, 4 and 6 of the Explosive Substances The court charged Pintu also

FROM PAGE 1

with approving the plan of the

grenade attack prepared by

Hannan and his accomplices. The

former BNP lawmaker was also

charged with assisting the Huji

men with finances and administra-

tive help and abetting them for

Pintu, Hannan and 12 others,

who are now in jail custody,

pleaded not guilty and demanded

justice after the charges were read

out to them. Eight accused have

Hannan's brother Mohibullah alias

Mafizur Rahman alias Ovi, Sharif

Shahidul Islam alias Bipul,

Maulana Abu Sayeed alias Dr Abu

Zafar, Abul Kalam Azad alias

Bulbul, Jahangir Alam, Maulana

Abu Taher, Shahadatullah Jewel,

Hossain Ahmed Tamim, Mufti

Moinuddin Sheikh alias Abu

Zandal alias Masum Billah, Arif

Hasan Sumon, Rafiqul Islam Sabuj

The eight absconding accused

are Pintu's brothers Maulana

Tajuddin and Maulana Liton,

Anisul Mursalin and his brother

Mahibul Muttakin, Iqbal, Maulana

Abu Bakar alias Selim Howlader,

Jahangir Alam Badar and Khalilur

and Mohammad Ujjal alias Ratan.

The 12 accused in jail are

been absconding.

killing and injuring the victims.

have learned that Thakur always demanded.

January 2.

was initiated with a budget of around Tk 50 lakh, is also cost-effective, as it Tk 12 crore is likely to be deposited.

ment pays salary only to the three to the commission are paid by their

# Govt blamed

DU chemistry department found excessive melamine in all the eight brands of powdered milk--Dano, Red Cow, Diploma, Nido fortified instant, Anlene, Yashili 1, Yashili 2 and Sweet Baby 2. Confusions arose when Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution that of Plasma Plus found the toxic element only in Yashili 1.

years and that the machines have press conference and explained should also have done the same, she the BSTI tests.

Dr SK Roy, senior scientist of International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR,B), said, "I have conducted research at the Dhaka University chemistry department laboratory which is very sophisticated. The government could have accepted the test results [of DU chemistry department] without any confu-

BSTI even verified the batches and tories.

the country's economy.

taminated.

Fatema Parveen Chowdhury,

"The government decided to

demarcation of parliamentary within a short time.

"Everyone has the right appeal in higher courts once he or she is convicted by a lower or special court," Nazrul said.

"We have noting to say if a higher court upholds the verdict of a lower or special court," he added. The BNP joint secretary general,

held a meeting with leaders and activists of party units in Jamalpur, Sherpur, Netrokona, Tangail and other areas.

#### Aug 21 case vexed at cases, Hannan, Bipul, Ovi, Abu govt role Sayeed, Bulbul, Arif Hossain, Jahangir and Sabuj gave statements under section 164 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC)

grenade attack. Special Public Prosecutor Firoz Kamrul Hassan and advocates Syed Rezaur Rahman, M Sajwar Hossain and Saharar Khatun appeared for the state during yesterday's hearing. THECASE

confessing their involvement in the

The police filed the two cases with Motijheel Police Station a day after the grenade attack.

On June 5 last year, Badar Aziz Uddin of Cox's Bazar filed another case with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka, charging former premier Khaleda Zia her son Tarique Rahman, Jamaate-Islami Ameer Motiur Rahman Nizami and 25 others with murder. However, the investigation

officer of the case, Criminal Investigation Department Assistant Superintendent Fazlul Kabir, did not find any links of them to the incident.

On June 11 this year, the investigation officer of the two cases submitted the charge sheets, accusing the 22 persons in each

The charge sheets contain 42 pages each while the case dockets have more than 3,000 pages. A total of 408 persons, including Hasina and other top AL leaders, have been made prosecution witnesses in the cases. Besides, 69 types of evidence

including Hasina's sports utility vehicle, the truck used as the makeshift podium at the rally, grenade splinters and blood stained clothes During the investigation of the were submitted.

international journals," Prof Nahar said at a discussion organised by the daily Ittefaq at the Jatiya Press Club.

(BSTI) said tests at its laboratory and

Prof Nahar said she has been working in the laboratory for 22 been installed recently. They held a their test methods and the BSTI added, questioning the standards of

"We had no part in collecting the samples of the eight brands. The BSTI collected them for us," she

Dr Abdun Noor Tushar asked why the BSTI and Plasma Plus laboratories tested just four brands. He said he has serious doubts if the country origins of the samples tested in the three different labora-

"BSTI is the sole authority to verify standards but now it appears that BSTI itself does not believe in itself," said Dr Tushar, adding that such inefficiency is a disgrace to the government, Dhaka University and

He also said names of brands should not be made public until and unless those are proved to be con-

director of Institute of Public Health and Nutrition, said it is not correct that the government rejected the test results of DU chemistry depart-

send the samples for further tests at two laboratories at home and one abroad for reconfirmation," she

### Barring convicts FROM PAGE 1

polls, and will participate in it if it is held in a free and fair manner.

The BNP leader however said confusion in public mind over holding of the election in time will persist if writ petitions against the Election Commission's (EC) reconstituencies are not disposed of

who heads the party's Dhaka division organising team-B, earlier

Speakers at the discussion said the government has been negligent to consumer rights for long allowing dishonest traders to rule the market and putting food safety at stake.

"There are hardly any food items that are pure," said Ittefaq Editor Rahat Khan. He said the government tried to avoid its responsibilities by not clearly instructing people about the eight brands of powdered milk until the High Court gave its Borhan Ahmed of Consumers

Association of Bangladesh alleged that the commerce ministry recently made efforts to prevent passing of the Consumers Rights Nutritionists called upon all to

ment for better health of babies. To meet the, demand for milk, they suggested that the government take steps to encourage local dairy pro duction. Child specialist Dr MQK Talukder, Prof Moazzem Hossain of

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University and nutritionist SN Shampa also spoke at the discus-

strengthen the breastfeeding move-

### EC to hear

(CEC) and two commissioners. The EC secretariat issued letters to Jamaat and the objectors yester-

day requesting them to appear at the hearing. The commission officials said both the sides had been asked to come with necessary documents

and proofs to defend their posi-As per the registration rules, the EC cannot consider a party for registration without holding a

hearing if any objection is raised. Various organisations and individuals demanding trial of war criminals, on Monday raised formal objections to Jamaat's possible

registration as a political party. The objections came after the EC published a public notice on Sunday inviting objections to

Jamaat's possible registration. War Crimes Facts Finding Committee (WCFFC), Sector Commanders' Forum, Ekattorer Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee, Sammilito Sanskritik Jote and Bangabandhu Sanskritik Jote are the organisations that raised objec-

Forty-six professionals in a joint statement also made a number of complaints against Jamaat and urged the EC not to register it.

The objectors said Jamaat is still 'an illegal and unconstitutional party' that was involved in human rights violations including genocide during the liberation war and is yet to confess to its crimes. Nurul Islam Khan, head of the

get registered with the EC as they

either failed to fulfil the criteria of

the amended Representation of the

People Order (RPO) or their consti-

tutions contradicts the country's

constitution.

five-member technical committee scrutinising registration applications of political parties, said they also received an objection against Bangladesh Samyabadi Dal but the voting booth. objection was not credible. EC officials said they would

complete verification of the registration applications today but it would take another week to complete the entire registration prothe surface." But David Bositis of the Joint They said the bulk of the 22 Center for Political and Economic Islamic parties would not be able to

> "There's not some secret racist majority out there lying to pollsters," he said. At the same time, Obama will be getting "95 to 96 percent" of black votes, he said.

# Ctg mayor

Flies to Bangkok for treatment

UNB, Ctg

Chittagong City Corporation (CCC Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury yesterday said he will take a strong stand if the govern ment does not allow him to resume his duties as city mayor peacefully.

The CCC mayor, who has been suffering from diabetes and heart ailment, flew to Bangkok yesterday for treatment. He was not allowed to resume

his office after his release from jail

on bail. Mohiuddin also castigated the caretaker government for not allowing him to go to Saudi Arabia to perform Omrah. "I am observing the situation at present," the mayor told reporters

prior to his departure for the Thai Mohiuddin Chowdhury, also an Awami League leader, forecasts that his party will win all the parlia-

mentary seats in Chittagong if the national elections are held fairly. The mayor said he has already given instructions to the CCC officials to set up two complaint boxes in the office to receive com plaints about irregularities and corruption in the local- govern-

ment body. Mohiuddin was arrested at his Chashma Hill residence in the city on March 7, 2007 under an anti graft campaign by the military backed interim government. He was released on bail on October 8 from the prisons cell o Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) Hospital.

## Police show SQ Chy as fugitive

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The police in a report to a Dhaka court yesterday said they failed to arrest Salauddin Quader Chowdhury, parliamentary affairs adviser to former premier Khaleda Zia, in connection with a tax evasion case as he had gone into hiding.

Officer-in-charge (OC) of Dhanmondi Police Station Syed Mohsinul Hag told the court that they raided Salauddin's residence on Road no 12/A at Dhanmondi following an arrest warrant issued against him earlier. But they could not find Salauddin there as he went into hiding.

The court directed the authorities concerned to publish an advertisement in two national Bangla dailies asking Salauddin to appear before the court by November 4.

National Board of Revenue (NBR) Deputy Tax Commissioner Ikhtiar Uddin Mohammad Mamun filed the case with the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court on October 26 against the former BNP lawmaker on charges of evading tax upon his income of Tk 3.08 crore from 2002 to 2008.

Besides, Salauddin repeatedly gave false information to the income tax department about his real income and expenditure, the complainant said.

The joint forces arrested Salauddin on February 4 last year on charges of anti-state activities, sabotage, corruption and endangering public safety.

Later, the Anti-corruption Commission (ACC) filed a case against him on June 13 last year on charge of concealing wealth information from the commission.

Salauddin was released after he

### all cases filed against him. Undecided voters

secured bail from the High Court in

FROM PAGE 16 toss-up states, where the race is

In Florida, Obama's edge over McCain is just 1.9 percent, 47.7 to 45.8 percent, according to RealClearPolitics. Whoever wins Florida reaps 27 of the 270 electoral college votes needed to win the White House.

the Electoral College which will ultimately pick the next president Obama is ahead in polls by a razor thin 0.3 percent. But unknown variables have been introduced in the electoral

In Indiana, with it 11 votes on

calculus this year, with Obama on an historic quest to become the first African American in the White The stated indecision of voters could be masking ambivalence

about Obama's race, according to a

theory called the Bradley Effect

after an African American who lost

a race for California governor in 1982 after leading in the polls. According to the Bradley Effect voters could tell pollsters they are undecided or even that they support Obama, so as not to appear racist, then cast a vote for the white candidate in the privacy of the

"There are an undetermined numbers of people in America who (will) vote against Obama because of his race," Gans said. "We don't know the size of the iceberg under

Studies, a Washington think tank, discounted the theory.

# Maldives president

FROM PAGE 16

of the Indian Ocean atoll nation after he collected 54.21 percent of the poll to 45.79 percent for incumbent leader Maumoon Abdul Gayoom.

"I don't think we should go for a witch hunt," Nasheed said at a joint press conference with Gayoom, whom he has accused of repeatedly torturing him in custody.

"That will not happen because it will not help democracy."

Nasheed, 41, said he wanted to move quickly to assure the international community that he would introduce more reforms, including media freedom, in the run-up to parliamentary elections due by February.

Conceding defeat after Tuesday's elections, Gayoom said he would give his "full support and cooperation" to Nasheed taking

"I don't like being beaten in sports. I don't like being beaten in politics. But it is a fact of life that sometimes you win, sometimes you lose. In that spirit, I accept this

## Prof Dilara

FROM PAGE 1 the parties must return to healthy democratic politics to regain public

their involvement in criminality over the years. Saying that the Election Commission did not play its due role during the city corporation and municipality elections, the Jahangirnagar University professor urged it to properly scrutinise candidacy seekers' information, to keep

confidence, which they lost due to

parliamentary race. Saying that not only the government but some donors were also pushing the minus 2 formula, she added that it is the prerogative of the people to minus anyone.

'questionable persons' out of the

Confrontational politics can be ended quickly if Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina seriously desire that, she noted adding that their recent speeches however indicate they might not keep acting like before

emergency during the election, she quipped, "If the government thinks the emergency is needed to keep away hooligans, would it be desirable to bring in the emergency every time we will have an election?"

Barapukuria case

FROM PAGE 1

Strongly opposing having the

should not be quashed. During the hearing of the appeal yesterday, barrister Rafique-ul Huq, counsel for Khaleda Zia, told the court that his client or any other member of her family did not take

any benefit from Barapukuria coal mine contract. There was no corruption in this contract and the case was filed on the basis of misinformation and with malafide intention, he said.

ACC's counsel Advocate MA Aziz

Khan said any petition for quashing

the proceedings against the accused

cannot proceed in the court under section 561(A) of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) until the trial court framed charges in that case. Giving some references of the Supreme Court judgments, barrister

Rafique-ul Huq replied that the petitions for quashing the case could proceed at any stage of the case. On October 16, upon a petition filed by Khaleda Zia, the HC stayed

ACC recently filed an appeal with the Supreme Court for vacating the HCorder. The ACC filed the case on February 26 this year, accusing Khaleda Zia and 15 others of causing a loss of Tk 159 crore to the state

for three months the proceedings of

the corruption case.

Chinese company through abuse of The ACC pressed charges against

exchequer by awarding a contract for

operating Barapukuria coalmine to a

the accused on October 5. The former premier is accused in four cases -- Gatco, Niko, Barapukuria coalmine and Zia

Orphanage Trust corruption cases. The HC granted her bail in all the four cases and stayed the proceedings against her in Gatco and Niko and Barapukuria coalmine cases.

#### Pakistan quake FROM PAGE 1 Hospitals in the nearby town of Kawas and Quetta were flooded

One patient in Quetta Civil

Hospital, Raz Mohammed, said he

with the dead and injured.

was awoken by the sound of his children crying before he felt a jolt. "I rushed toward them but the roof of my own room collapsed and the main iron support hit me," he said. "That thing broke my back

and I am in severe pain but thank

God my children and relatives are

The quake struck two hours before dawn and had a magnitude of 6.4, the U.S. Geological Survey reported. It was a shallow 10 miles below the surface and was centered about 400 miles southwest of the capital, Islamabad.

Pakistan is prone to violent seismic upheavals. Wednesday's quake was the deadliest since a magnitude-7.6 quake devastated Kashmir and northern Pakistan in October 2005, killing about 80,000 people and leaving hundreds of thousands homeless.

Officials said the area hit on Wednesday was much less densely populated. Baluchistan is home to a long-

running separatist movement, but is not considered a major battleground in the fight against Taliban insurgents that plague other border regions.

# verdict of the people," he said.

The Maldives, a liberal Sunni Muslim nation of 1,192 coral islands and some 300,000 people, has never held multi-party elections before.

Gayoom, 71, ruled the tourist paradise islands unchallenged since 1978 and over a period of six years repeatedly jailed Nasheed, a former Amnesty International

"prisoner of conscience". Until a few years ago, anyone declaring an intention to seek high office would be banished to an uninhabited island.

Thousands of Nasheed supporters drove around Male and embraced each other at a beachfront promenade where young people had camped for days to drum up support for his campaign. "This is spontaneous joy," said

one, Aishath Aniya. Fathimath Niusha, a 27-yearold school teacher, said she was thrilled with the change of leader-

"I want to see how it will be under a new president," Niusha said. "All my life, it had been under Gayoom." Gayoom had failed to win an

outright victory in the first round of voting three weeks ago, prompting a run-off against charismatic

## Falu's detention

before his release from prison on

He recently secured bail from the High Court in all graft cases filed against him. However, the Supreme Court stayed the bail order until Monday. Police sources said the home

ministry issued the detention order

following a general diary filed by a Special Superintendent of the Special Branch (SB) of police. Deputy Inspector General of Prisons (DIG-Prisons) Maj Shamsul Haider Siddique told The Daily Star last night that they

received the detention order in the evening. He said the detention order referred to a SB report that said if Falu is released from jail, law and

order situation might deteriorate.

After receiving the order, jail authorities informed Falu, now in Kashimpur jail in Gaziur, about it. Joint forces arrested Falu, also former political secretary to expremier Khaleda Zia, at his city

### residence on corruption charges on February 5 last year.

Ministries asked

FROM PAGE 16

meeting.

obstacles and inform the authorities concerned in this regard. The meeting at the RRC office came four days after a report was published in The Daily Star on nonimplementation of the RRC recom-

mendations because of red tape in government offices. The meeting observed that a little persuasion at the ministries concerned can expedite the implementation to a great extent, Apurba Kumar Biswas, RRC chief executive officer, told The Daily Star after the

Kamaluddin Ahmed, executive chairman of Board of Investment and member secretary of the RRC, chaired the meeting also participated by secretary to the chief adviser's office Kazi Aminul Islam, Civil Aviation and Tourism Secretary Syed M Jobair, and RRC members National Board of Revenue Chairman Abdul Majid and Law Secretary Kazi Habibul

"No one is against the recommendations but bureaucratic tangles are delaying their implementation," Apurba Kumar Biswas said, quoting the meeting discus-

The 17-member RRC was formed on October 30 last year with a one-year tenure to overhaul outdated administrative rules and regulations with specific focus on removing bottlenecks for investment, commerce and trade. On October 21, the commission's tenure was extended for two years.

Of RRC's 38 recommendations, only 10 have been implemented fully while a few others partly.

# Khaleda urges

Khaleda demanded that the gov-

ernment lift the Emergency Power Rules immediately, defer the upazila polls and make the administration neutral by removing officials who are known for supporting a certain political party. She, however, did not mention the name of that party. "The present caretaker govern-

ment has no accountability to

people as they are not an elected

government," she said, adding, "As

a result crises have arisen in all sectors, including agriculture, food and economics. "It is now imperative to bring an elected government to save the country from this situation," she

Khaleda called on the people to resist through the election and movement the conspiracies to keep them in a sorry state.

BNP vice-presidents MK Anwar and Sarwari Rahman also addressed the meeting, said a party

press release.

requesting anonymity. He said the more the announce-

usually takes.

the petitions are the same. But, Election Commissioner M

Ex-CEC MA Aziz would hurt the party's image. "Aziz

is one of the persons who pushed

BNP to its present crisis," said a

member of the party's central

last year under pressure from the

military-backed caretaker govern-

ment. After 21 months of silence,

Aziz had to resign on January 21

executive committee.

he met the BNP chairperson on Tuesday at her cantonment residence apparently as a 'courtesy call'. Party sources said he expressed his interest in getting nomination from Barisal-1 constit-The former CEC's move has created a negative impact among BNP men in that constituency. Zahiruddin Swapan, former BNP

lawmaker from Barisal-1, says,

"The chairperson will not give

party ticket to any controversial person who will be a burden to the party instead of bringing its vic-Though a judge by profession, Aziz's role as the CEC clouded the country's politics, pushing the nation to a state of confrontation over the parliamentary election that eventually led to a change of

the caretaker government last year.

on May 23, 2005, during the BNP

led alliance government's tenure,

while retaining his post of a judge

Aziz assumed the office of CEC

of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court. He appeared to be loyal to Khaleda Zia although he was oath-bound to carry out his job neutrally. He had justified his biased actions as CEC saying, he attempted to perform his duties with 'sincerity and dedication'. "I have done my best to ensure the

holding of free, fair and impartial

elections in accordance with the

constitution," he said in a state-

ment released after his resignation.

Aziz fuelled widespread contro-

versies by preparing a fresh voter list ignoring a higher court directive. Awami League and its allies alleged that he planted fake voters in the list to favour the BNP-led

alliance in the January 22, 2007

The 2006 voter list prepared

election (stalled later).

gency rules in phases."

AL hopes emergency, he said so far as he knows the government has already made a decision on it. "The government will possibly lift the emer-

wants to go to polls accepting the re-demarcation of constituencies for constitutional obligations, but added that they have no objection if the old boundaries were retained. The AL leader said the government assured them old boundaries will be followed if the disputes

arising from their re-demarcation

is not settled in time or the Election

He said they will finalise seat-

sharing issue with alliance partners

Commission loses in the court.

He said the Awami League

after AL President Sheikh Hasina comes back home, adding that the most electable candidates of the alliance will get ticket. He said they will start the nomination process after a draft on it is approved by the central working committee of the party on

November 6. "We'll send the candidates" names to the areas concerned to take opinion from grass-roots leaders. After receiving names of five possible candidates, the parliaof them," he said.

under Aziz puts the total number of voters at 9.24 crore, whereas the latest voter list prepared by the army puts the total at 8.11 crore. This leaves a big question about a staggering number of 1.13 crore voters. The nation spent at least Tk

60 crore for preparing the voter list

and another Tk 15 crore for its

Earlier, on December 12 last year, (after the resignation of Aziz)

printing.

the High Court (HC) declared "illegal" the appointment of Justice Aziz as CEC, sealing the scope for government to allow any chosen person to concurrently hold two constitutional posts. The HC on June 18 in 2005, following a public interest litigation (PIL) writ petition, had issued

sitting Supreme Court judge 'should not be declared illegal'. Aziz resigned last year citing a major political alliance's lack of confidence in him and to avert further political unrest in the country. Earlier, when the AL and its allies continued demanding his

He had received strong support from the then ministers Moudud Ahmed and Nazmul Huda. Both of them appreciated his activities at that time. Even, they allegedly helped him ensure appointment of 303 leaders, workers and supporters of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal student wing of BNP, as upazila

saying that he and his associates

Re-demarcation He said aspirant candidates have no reason for confusion as they can

The bench adjourned the hear-

Earlier, EC's counsel Mahmudul

account and buying shares.

members of the commission.

Maj Gen (retd) Manzur Rashid

Charges were framed against them in absentia and their trial will be continued in their absence.