Dhaka University's soil, water and

environment department said the

country's soil is fast degrading

because of too much use of chemi-

cal ingredients and irrigated

He warned that the conse-

quences of cultivating imported

hybrid seeds may be very bad

because of farmers' dependency

and unexpected collapse in the

imported seed supply system. He

suggested producing local high-

yielding varieties for sustainability.

AAMS Arefin Siddiqui, National

Agribusiness Foundation of

Bangladesh Chairman Dr MA

Nasir, Bangladesh Institute of

Nuclear Agriculture Scientist Niaz

Pasha, Ittefaq Executive Editor

Syed Tosharaf Ali, agriculturist

Nazrul Islam spoke at the seminar

chaired by DKI Central President

Zahiruddin Mobu and moderated

by Secretary General Sarkar

Padak-2008 to Dr MA Nasir, agri-

culturists Sadrul Amin, M Najmul

Haq and Joynal Hossain, and agri-

culture extension office,

Zahiruddin Mobu and entrepre-

neur Kaniz Fatema for their contri-

Govt yet to act

Star they were waiting for the HO

order on the test of melamine in

She added now that the court

delivered its order, the health

ministry has initiated action

Ordinance-1984, violators of the

law will be fined Tk 5,000 and serve

three years in prison or both.

According to the Breast Feeding

Meanwhile, another Chinese

fullcream milk brand 'COAST' was

imported and marketed by Lalmai

Food Products Ltd without BSTI

reported the company neither

secured safety clearance from BSTI

nor mentioned the product's

country of origin on the packet,

flouting the Bangladesh Standards

of Weights and Measures

logo on the packet giving the prod-

uct an appearance that it has the

clearance of the standards agency

and started early September mar-

keting 16 tonnes of powdered milk

The BSTI, however, did not take

any legal action until now against

the company for violating the law.

As per the Bangladesh Standards of

Weights and Measures Ordinance

2007, violators can be fined Tk

15,000 to Tk 1 lakh and sentenced

matter and found accuracy of The

Lalmai, BSTI Director General

Azmal Hossain said the company's

godown in Comilla has already

been sealed and they would soon

ties is nothing but sheer negligence

towards protection of public inter-

ests, commented Consumers'

Association of Bangladesh (CAB)

Programme Officer Emdad

authorised body to look after

everything about infant and baby

formula, could easily take legal

actions against the violators under

the Breast Feeding Ordinance-

1984. Similarly, BSTI also should

rise to protect consumers and their

"We hope the authorities will

have acted immediately, he said.

The IPHN, which is the

Such slow pace of the authori-

serve it a show-cause notice.

The BSTI also investigated the

Asked about action against

But the company printed BSTI

The Daily Star on October 25

against the companies.

approval

Ordinance, 2007.

imported from China.

Daily Star report.

Hossain.

powdered milk to take legal action.

bution to agriculture.

DKI also conferred DKI Krishi

Mohammad Abul Kalam Azad.

Dhaka University Professor

underground water.

European debut for '\$100 laptop'

the OLPC group has only sold about

interest in using the XO but few have

signed up to buy them in the num-

bers expected by the OLPC organi-

sation. Most recently the Caldas

The XO has also faced competi-

tion from Intel's Classmate laptop.

Human ancestors

that females had large, wide pelvises

in order to deliver large-brained

meant our ancestor became inde-

pendent far more quickly than

Science magazine, conflicts with

earlier ideas that suggest they had a

tall, thin body shape adapted for

the first human-like creature to

move out of Africa to colonise the

The now extinct hominid species

The near-complete 1.4 million-

may also have been the first to

year-old female pelvis was found

near Gona in northern Ethiopia. As

it was pieced together, the archaeol-

ogists were struck by the unusual

Homo erectus is thought to be

modern human infants.

Being born with a larger brain

The new finding, published in

born big brained

Many nations have expressed an

600,000 of the machines.

65,000 XO machines.

its school children.

BBC, Online

control fire.

width of the pelvis.

BBC, Online

organisation is planning to sell the devices via online store Amazon's European outlets from 17

The machines will be sold under the Give One, Get One scheme that the OLPC organisation has already

Under that scheme, buyers get one machine for themselves and the other is donated to a school child in

The plan to put the distinctive green and white XO laptops on sale in 27 European nations was revealed by OLPC founder Nicholas Negroponte in a speech to the World of Health IT Conference in A new Homo erectus fossil suggests Copenhagen.

When it goes on sale the XO laptop is expected to cost £268 (313

programme was first run in the US in November and December 2007. The OLPC organisation claims it sold almost 190,000 machines via the scheme.

Despite the success of the scheme, it drew criticism because the OLPC group had trouble delivering machines to those who had ordered one. In a bid to resolve these issues, it signed up with Amazon in

September 2008. The original idea for the OLPC was to create a small, powerful laptop for school children that would sell in the millions yet cost

The final version of the machine ended up costing about \$188 and

FROM PAGE 1 the upcoming parliamentary election because of internal conflicts and organisational disputes, recently suggested that the government defer the election because the hajj pilgrims would miss it.

Sources said a negotiation process is going on among the authorities concerned, a group of BNP leaders, a group of "reformists" and the leaders of a BNP ally to make the December 18 election a

region of Colombia signed up to buy Meanwhile, many political leaders said they are confused by the recent activities of a few foreign In September, Venezuela ordered diplomats who they think may play one million Classmate laptops for

Most diplomats held meetings with the Awami League and BNP chiefs in the last two weeks. Some of them even openly supported holding of the election under the state of emergency, which all political parties have been demanding

country on November 15 with over 200-kilometre wind speed per hour. In the aftermath, thousands of people became homeless and millions of trees in the Sundarbans were uprooted.

The devastation was so massive that initially it was feared death toll would definitely cross 10,000. But later the government account of death toll was around 4,000 with more than 800 missing, mostly

Different national and interna-

564,000 houses were completely destroyed

The UN Central Emergency Response Fund has disbursed \$14.7 million as part of a broader

Still, the majority of the Sidr victims could not rebuild their houses in many areas.

Panna Farazi of Bogi village in Bagerhat said several hundreds of Sidr-hit families have yet to get help from the aid agencies to rebuild their houses, reports our Khulna correspondent.

The survivors who lost their homes were made victims of discrimination in relief and rehabilitation benefits as most of them did not get any house-building material, alleges schoolteacher Asgar Ali

Sharankhola UNO Kazi Zahirul Islam said different aid agencies had been appealed to provide financial assistance to those Sidr

from Khorsheda Begum, their

Indrajit had filed a general diary about his missing mother. Jatrabari police yesterday filed a murder case and arrested Khorsheda. But she refused her involvement with the incident.

Salimullah Medical College Morgue found several marks of injury.

courts have validated actions

laws, and it undermines the legal

AL nomination

Party and a few other parties, who would be part of an AL-led new grand alliance, will contest the polls separately should the BNP shy away from the elections.

The Jatiya Party primarily announced 102 nominations yesterday.

The AL is sorting out the candi dates mostly from about one thousand names recommended by grass-roots party committees from the 300 constituencies.

The amended Representation of the People Order requires political

The party's parliamentary board (ALPB) has so far finalised candidates in four divisions only. It was working to ink in nominations for Dhaka and Barisal divisions until late last night.

that the ALPB has already included a good number of names on its nomination list ignoring recommendations from the grassroots.

Sources said AL's organising secretaries Mahmudur Rahman Manna and Sultan Mohammad Mansura Ahmed and central leader Prof Abu Sayeed were not given party ticket until yesterday though they were recommended by local ALleaders.

have reservations about handing party ticket to some other leaders. One ALPB member however said all important leaders will eventually get nominations.

a vital role in delaying the election.

to be lifted without further delay.

children.

tional organisations came forward to take care of the cyclone-hit

recovery activities.

FROM PAGE 16 former neighbour.

in its verdict.

on the polls. Their party will opt to participate in the long-stalled election as soon as the government meets their seven-point demand including withdrawal of the state of

Talking to reporters at his Nam flat yesterday afternoon, Delwar said BNP has all preparations to go to the polls. Now it is the responsibility of the government and the Election Commission (EC) to clear the way for his party's participa-

Earlier in the day, the education adviser said the caretaker administration is optimistic that it would be able to resolve the current political crisis through discussions with political parties. He said he hopes the parties would make their deci-

city hotel after a seminar organised by Soviet Alumni Association in Bangladesh

Zillur said, "Now that the two leaders have agreed to sit, we are ready to take a formal initiative."

ALBRIEFING Speaking to newsmen after a meeting between the AL president and Iranian Ambassador Hassan Farazandeh, Hasan Mahmud restated that the proposed talks must be broadcast live.

BNP has already said there is no need for the discussions to be televised.

The AL chief's aide said, "BNP and Jamaat were behind the August 21 grenade attack. They killed 21,000 of our men during their rule between 2001 and 2006. And this is why our leaders and workers do not approve of any talks between our president and Khaleda Zia."

Hasina and Iranian envoy, he said current political situation and the national election, among others, came up for discussions.

Farazandeh told reporters that he hopes the elections would be held on schedule and in a free and fair manner.

Prof Muzaffer

FROM PAGE 16 in the marketing process of agricul-

"To increase agricultural production, the farmers must get due price of their products. But unfortunately it's the wholesale businesses and middlemen who buy products at low cost and sell at much higher prices, depriving the farmers," said the economist.

credit and therefore have no alternative to cooperatives to get running capital, Prof Ahmad said, adding once marginal farmers get some land and are provided with credit, production will automatically go up.

concentrate on our indigenous knowledge instead of importing fertilisers from other countries. Through waste management we can produce huge natural fertilisers similar to urea and potassium," he added.

Expressing his concern that most of the country's rivers have already dried up, Ahmad said saving the rivers and other water bodies is a matter of utmost importance for irrigation, instead of ecological threats.

suggested modernising agriculture on the basis of locally developed crop varieties and natural fertilisers to ensure sustainable agricultural development instead of depending on imported hybrid varieties and chemical fertilisers.

Institute Principal Scientific Officer Dr Anisur Rahman said an important part of agriculture is cultivating crops according to the nature of soil.

If farmers can scientifically identify the nature and capacity of soil, they can accordingly cultivate and get the best yield, he said, adding authorities must concentrate on educating the farmers on crop management.

Prof Dr SM Imamul Haq of

Indian probe

FROM PAGE 16 moon at 8:34pm (1504 GMT), 25 minutes after it was ejected from an unmanned spacecraft orbitting the moon, a spokesman said.

entrepreneurs to invest in Bangladesh.

Nepalese Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal, during his meeting with the CA, said his country wants to share its surplus hydroelectric power with the

sharing the experience of Bangladesh's success in the garments sector. He requested to raise the number of scholarships to Nepalese students to study in

Bangladesh. Agreeing to his proposals, the CA assured him of considering raising the number of scholarships.

port to expand bilateral trade between the two countries. Dahal appreciated the performance of the caretaker govern-

ment under the leadership of Fakhruddin.

In his address to the nation on May 12, Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed announced that the stalled ninth parliamentary election December.

want to become national traitors by reneging on the commitment of holding the stalled ninth parliamentary election by the year-end.

electoral roadmap. This is a do or die situation...the election must be held within the timeframe stipulated in the roadmap," CEC Huda told an Awami League delegation.

doubts whether the stalled parliamentary election would be held as per the announced schedule. The BNP-led four-party coali-

tion is now pressing hard to defer the polls by two to three months while the Awami League-led alliance wants the polls to be held on schedule.

FROM PAGE 1

chhana in unhygienic conditions. However, former chief election Authorities last week collected eight samples of milk in Santhia and Faridpur upazila for lab test

Sub-jails

FROM PAGE 16

of the republic where representatives of the people discuss and determine the future of the nation. Judicial or executive offices cannot be established in the parliament areas," he said.

He thinks it was wrong on the part of the government to set up the sub-jails and special courts on the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban premises.

"It's the people's desire that the courts and the sub-jails be immediately relocated from the parliament complex," former SCBA secretary and law secretary for the BNP advocate Zainul Abedin said.

"The Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban is meant for lawmakers and the buildings being used as sub-jails are for the Speaker and deputy Speakers. Since the next general election is near, the Sangsad Bhaban and the sub-jails should immediately be freed for parliament members and the Speaker and deputy Speakers," he said.

He said there is no legal bar to shifting the special courts and the sub-jails to elsewhere.

Enayetur Rahim, former SCBA secretary, says announcing some particular places of the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban complex as subjails and setting up special courts there after issuance of the emergency is unfortunate, unbecoming and condemnable.

"The image and dignity of the Jatiya Sangsad are not less than that of the Bangabhaban and th Supreme Court, he said, adding setting up courts and sub-jails at the parliament complex is a blow to the sanctity, image and dignity of parliament.

Judicial powers

have amassed wealth through illegal means is a judicial power "But the commission was no declared a judicial body [at the time of formation]. I think this is the main reason why the High Court has declared it illegal," he

Barrister Shafique Ahmed said the HC declared the Tac illegal because it was formed through an ordinance violating articles 35 and 112 of the constitution.

"Article 35(4) of the constitution states that no person shall be compelled to be a witness against himself and article 112 of the constitution says all authorities, executive and judicial, shall act in aid to the Supreme Court," he explained.

Terming the Tac a "fluid body of the government and the idea of its formation "utopian", advocate Khan Saifur Rahman said, "All criminals are liable to be convicted. But in this system thieves have been released in exchange for their illegal money without any

"There is no rule of such system in the law anywhere in the world," he said, adding that this is not at all a system in the eye of the law let alone a quasi-judiciary one.

Advocate Towfiq Newaz, counsel for the petitioners of the writ, told newsmen on November 13 that the Tac was formed as an extra-judicial system.

Attorney General Salauddin Ahmed said the government would file an appeal with the SC against the HC judgment and the Appellate Division would determine whether the commission can function after filing of the

The legal experts said the money taken by the Tac from people who earned the money through illegal means would be considered state property.

US missile

FROM PAGE 16 Another official put the toll at 13 and said 10 of the dead were for-

The officials cited reports from agents and informants in the area and the different tallies could not be reconciled immediately. All of the officials asked for anonymity because they are not authorised to speak to the media.

The US-led coalition in Afghanistan did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The spokesman for the US Embassy in the Pakistani capital, Islamabad, could not be reached. Washington has stepped up the strikes since March, when a civilian

General Pervez Musharraf, who turned Pakistan into a close US ally in the "war on terror." President Asif Ali Zardari warned the new US commander for Iraq and Afghanistan, General

government took over from

David Petraeus, last week that the attacks were "counterproductive" and could harm the battle for hearts and minds here. Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani and the country's military leadership also told the general

that the United States should

respect Pakistani sovereignty and

territorial integrity. Pakistan's army chief General Ashfaq Kayani is scheduled to undertake a three-day visit to Brussels from Tuesday for talks with senior Nato officials about US missile strikes on Pakistani soil near the Afghan border.

US and Nato officials say that the rugged tribal regions have become safe havens for militants linked to Taliban and al-Qaeda who fled the US action against the former Taliban regime in Afghanistan

Pakistan rejects accusations that it is not doing enough to tackle the extremist threat within its own

World leaders head

financial regulations. "We must recognize that government intervention is not a cure-all," Bush said. "Our aim should not be more government. It should be smarter government."

Bush put forward his own prescription, which includes bolstering accounting rules, reviewing anti-fraud provisions for trading in stocks and other securities, and improving regulatory coordination among countries. But he stopped short of the more far-reaching oversight and regulation that Europeans leaders want.

"We want to change the rules of the game in the financial world, said French President Nicolas Sarkozy said prior to the gathering.

The Europeans want to close loopholes that allow some financial institutions to evade regulation, and ensure supervision for all major financial players, including credit ratings agencies or funds carrying high amounts of debt.

"There is a need for urgency," said British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, who is seeking a new network of global regulators who would scrutinize the world's largest financial institutions.

Europeans also are advocating an early warning system that would watch for financial bubbles like the one that enveloped the U.S. housing market. The housing bubble eventually burst and created the mess the world leaders are now trying to clean up. They also want a pledge for concrete changes in just 100 days.

Critics blame lax oversight and failures by regulators in the United States and elsewhere to detect problems as one of the prime reasons behind the financial crisis.

The crisis, which erupted in the United States around August of last year as mortgage investments soured with the housing market's collapse, quickly spread to other countries. Banks and other financial companies suffered huge losses and foreclosures skyrocketed. Troubles then snowballed to other areas crimping, auto and student loans and locking up lending for many consumers and businesses worldwide.

All the fallout has pushed the global economy to the brink of recession. Unemployment in the United States bolted to 6.5 percent in October, a 14-year high.

Still, Bush put up a stout defense of capitalism. "It is true that this crisis

included failures, by lenders and borrowers, by financial firms, by governments and independent regulators," Bush said. "But the crisis was not a failure of the free market system. And the answer is not to try to reinvent that system.

administration trade official and

now an international business

expert at the Center for Strategic

and International Studies, said

embarking on a massive regulatory our report.

poor-quality training and educa-Steven Schrage, a former Bush

revamp at this time when economic and financial conditions are so fragile would be like "in the middle of a five-alarm fire calling together the fire chiefs and trying to restructure the fire department."

With Europe, as well as parts of Asia and North America, suffering, leaders of the G20 developed and emerging countries travel to Washington to try to find ways to ensure the crisis, started by a U.S. housing market crash, is not repeated.

But agreement among the G20, which represents 85 percent of the world's economy and two-thirds of its population, is unlikely over whether more regulation of markets can protect consumers, savers and companies from the fall-out.

Washington says there should be no return to greater state control of financial markets. Much of Europe says without more regulation, a repeat of the last year's turmoil is inevitable.

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown called for more coordinated measures to spur economic growth, a policy area where there may be more consensus. "By acting now we can stimulate

growth in all our economies. The cost of inaction will be far greater than the cost of any action," he told reporters in New York late on Thursday. European Commission President Jose Manual Barroso said

he hoped to draw more emerging economies into global financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, saying Europeans were ready to lower their representation to make more room for countries such as China. "There is an openness to accommodate an increased role of

the emerging economies," the International Herald Tribune quoted Barroso as saying. Some in the West say they hope that countries with large reserves, notably in the Gulf, will help fund

the IMF, which has offered loans to

economies laboring under heavy Rejoinder

FROM PAGE 1 Eastern University in another rejoinder said it does not provide any BEd or MEd degrees and the university has never applied to the University Grants Commission (UGC) for such programmes.

OUR REPLY The Daily Star report was based on an investigation of the education ministry and a survey report of Teacher Quality Improvement project which mentioned that the two private universities along with 93 other institutions provided

The NUB itself admitted in its rejoinder that it provided BEd and MEd degrees till 2007. We stand by

Obama eyes Hillary

after Obama named several former aides to President Bill Clinton to

help run his transition effort. The two Democratic officials who spoke Thursday did so on the condition of anonymity to avoid angering Obama and his staff. Hillary Clinton spokesman Philippe Reines referred questions to the Obama transition team,

which said it had no comment. Other people frequently mentioned for the State Department job are Sen Chuck Hagel, R-Nebraska, Sen John Kerry, D-Massachusetts, and New Mexico's Democratic governor, Bill Richardson.

Meanwhile, the Washington rumour mill has gone into overdrive this week with speculation that Defence Secretary Robert Gates could be asked to stay in his job by president-elect Barack

While some see Gates's experience in dealing with conflicts in both Iraq and Afghanistan as an advantage to a fledgling administration, others believe such a move would ultimately betray the incoming Democratic president's message of change and his promise to end the war in Iraq.

So far the Obama transition team has remained tight-lipped and no announcements are expected any time soon as the president-elect huddles in Chicago with his top advisers preparing for his January 20 inauguration.

Gates, who is conveniently

abroad on a foreign visit, is also playing his cards close to his chest. Asked during a trip to Estonia on Wednesday if he had had any discussions with Obama's team, he smiled mischievously and said: "I have nothing new to say on the subject."

His future has been a subject of intense speculation since a top Obama foreign policy adviser, Richard Danzig, said last month that Gates had been a good defence secretary and "would be a better one in an Obama administration.'

According to the Wall Street Journal on Tuesday, Obama is leaning towards keeping Gates in office for at least a year even though

Senate Majority leader Harry Reid has said he had no qualms about having Gates in the cabinet

"good transition there." "Why wouldn't we want to keep him? He's never been a registered Republican," Reid told CNN on

forward to retiring back to his home in Washington state once his term is over, and says he even has a calendar on his desk counting down the days to January 20.

sense of civic duty, if Obama asks him to. "He learned never to say never," said Pentagon spokesmen Geoff

Seen as an open, impartial official with an eye for detail, Gates has occupied the post since taking over from the controversial Donald Rumsfeld, who resigned following the Republican rout in the 2006

Gates shares Obama's belief that more troops need to be sent to Afghanistan to fight the war on terror, and has also called for the closure of the Guantanamo Bay US military camp in Cuba.

return home within 16 months, although he said any withdrawal would depend on conditions on the ground. Anti-war groups remain

staunchly opposed to prolonging Gates's term. "Any individual policymaker from the Bush administration is really not interesting to us at all. I

just don't trust the same old guard," said Gael Murphy, cofounder of the pacifist group CodePink. "We would like a fresh perspective, fresh faces, fresh thinking,

ence, who is a credible voice. "Obama's victory is seen by

foreign policy," she added.

Party meeting FROM PAGE 16

return 12 high-profile prisoners to jail as they had been overstaying there with fake excuses of sickness. They are former BNP lawmakers Hafiz Ibrahim, Manjurul Ahsan Munshi, Wadud Bhuiyan, Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu and former deputy minister Ruhul Kuddus Talukder Dulu, former secretary ANH Akhter, former chief conservator of forest Munshi Anwarul Islam, Janakantha Editor Atiqullah Khan Masud, Swechchhasebak League leader Pankaj Devnath, businessmen Giasuddin Al Mamun and Amin Huda.

Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu, who was taken to jail from BSMMU prison cells after he assaulted a deputy jailer, was shown arrested in the case the jail authorities filed in this connection.

As many as 244 cases were sent to the courts for trial. Of those, 122 have been tried and most of the rest remain stayed at different stages--some awaiting charge framing, some awaiting trial and some delivery of verdict.

statistics, all 10 special courts have only 33 cases pending. Some 89 cases have been stayed by the HC. ACC Public Prosecutor Syed Shamim Ahsan Habib last night told The Daily Star, "More than 80percent of the graft cases on trial have been stayed for the last four

to five months.

According to last month's

ruption drive has slowed down following the HC orders staying cases and declaring the Truth Commission illegal. We are however working to have the stays vacated and resume trials at the special courts." Sources said the government is

trying to find out why the volun-

tary disclosure ordinance has

He said, "It's true that the cor-

been ruled illegal and unconstitutional despite being drafted and examined by legal experts for months before promulgation. The HC in its order also declared that whatever Tac has done so far is illegal. This has made the government anxious about what would become of

those who have already confessed to their offences and disclosed illgotten wealth. Noted jurist Dr Shahdeen Malik told The Daily Star, "In the past

taken under laws declared illegal. He however criticised the voluntary disclosure ordinance. He said it is a double standard when identical offences are treated differently under different

system.

FROM PAGE 16

parties to follow the process.

However, there are allegations

AL sources said Hasina may

success.

Sidr havoc

FROM PAGE 1

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) estimated last December the number of injured were 40,000. They also estimated

\$143 million contributed by international donors towards relief and

of Uttar Southkhali.

victims waiting for rehabilitation. 3 killed

An autopsy of the body at Sir

Khaleda-Hasina FROM PAGE 1 Nothing to do with BNP's decision

sions in the public interest. He was talking to reporters at a

About the meeting between

mer CEC told The Daily Star. to be not reasonable," said the HC

election within 90 days since the dissolution of the previous parlia-Asked about the significance of the verdict, Sohul said, "Now it's a very important legal evidence. We cannot deviate from the electoral

The HC observed that the EC

has violated the constitution by not

holding the ninth parliamentary

roadmap. We have announced the

schedule for holding the polls on

December 18 as we want to abide

by the court order." Some legal experts said if the EC does not face any uncontrollable circumstance, the commission cannot renege on its commitment which has become a legal evidence following the court verdict.

"If the Election Commission

willingly deviates from the elec-

toral roadmap under normal cir-

cumstances, it might be tanta-

mount to contempt of court," an

eminent jurist told The Daily Star wishing anonymity. They said the EC has no way to defer the polls on its own. If it wants to do so, it must consult with the Supreme Court.

commissioner (CEC) Justice Abdur Rouf did not agree with this view. "If the election is not held in December, the commission will Test results have not yet been not be responsible for it," the foravailable.

"We are totally committed to the

and stressed the importance of a

Sunday. Gates, 65, has made no bones about the fact that he is looking

But close colleagues said that he would not refuse to stay on, out of a

Congressional elections.

But he is opposed to setting a rigid timetable for the withdrawal of US forces from Iraq. Obama has said he wants most US troops to

somebody like (Senator Chuck) Hagel, who was strongly against the war, who has a military experi-

many as as mandate for change ... Not exactly conducive to keeping the same person in charge of the Pentagon who is overseeing the Bush administration's unpopular

The One Laptop Per Child (OLPC) November.

run in the US.

a developing nation.

euros) and should be available in 27 EU nations as well as Switzerland, Russia and Turkey. The Give One, Get One

less than \$100.

Anti-graft drive gotten wealth with the state exche-

quer to be exempted from prosecu-

National Coordination

Committee on Corruption and

Serious Crime (NCC) thought it up

Sources said the army-led

on realisation that it might not be possible to have all the graft suspects behind bars before the general election and ultimately the entire drive might go awry. Legal experts said the aim with which the Truth Commission was

formed could not be achieved, as

politicians and high-profile busi-

nessmen did not apply for volun-

Only low-tier government

officials and their wives, and small

tary disclosure.

businessmen have applied to Tac. The reason might be the provielection once they confess to corruption. As of Wednesday, 389 people

have applied for voluntary disclo-

sure. They include over 270 gov-

ernment officials and 30 business-

Of them, over 200 applied through ACC, 167 through NCC, 10 through courts and 20 on their So far, 259 people have admitted to possessing ill-gained assets worth around Tk 27.79 crore. Of

the amount, Tk 14.46 crore has

already been deposited with the

The commission, which began

public exchequer.

of graft.

hearing the petitions on September 1, has disposed of around 60 percent of the ACC-sent cases and almost all NCC-sent Meanwhile, ACC has around 30 cases in hand to forward to Tac.

The anti-graft body has been

sending cases in phases following

applications from those accused

moment the Committee has no

cases to send to Tac. In the event of

NCC sources said at the

new applications from graft suspects, it [NCC] would take decisions in line with Tac's legal status at the time of application. ACC officials said the commission has some cases to be sent to

Tac, but it did not yet decide what

decide on those can be known

after office opens Sunday," said

Shahjahan, director general of

special investigation and inquiry

"What the commission will

to do regarding those.

Earlier, the jail authorities requested BSMMU authorities to

4-party

tural products.

Farmers also have little access to

"At the same time, we have to

mechanised irrigation that poses Agriculturists at the seminar

Soil Research and Development

Kathmandu

neighbouring countries including Dahal showed keen interest in to three years' imprisonment.

He said Nepal could use Mongla

Depression All fishing boats and trawlers over north Bay and deep sea have been advised to remain close to the coast and proceed with caution until further notice. They are also advised not to venture into the

EC legally bound

rights," Malek observed.

would be held in the third week of On February 25 CEC Huda said the election commissioners do not

However, under the prevailing political situation there are still

3 milk centres

in late 2001.

borders.

other names have been thrown into the mix such as Danzig himself, or John Hamre, former assistant secretary for defence under then president Bill Clinton.