NEWS

Democrats have votes to pass health package

Says lawmaker as US House set for voting on Obama's health plan

government health

programmes and subsidies for

millions to buy private insur-

ance, the bill would add 32

million Americans to the ranks

of those covered for a total of

It would come a century

As Obama spoke, thou-

sands of protestors outside the

Capitol chanted "Kill The Bill"

and waved signs branding the

president and his proposal

"socialist" and lawmakers

"corrupt", cheered on by the

With passions heating up

ahead of the Sunday after-

noon, Democratic

Representative Emmanuel

Cleaver was spat upon, while

gay Congressman Barney

Frank and black

Representative John Lewis

were subjected to verba

abuse, said House Democratic

He denounced the inci-

To lawmakers worried that

the broadly unpopular pro-

posal could carry a political

price in November mid-term

elections, Obama said sup-

porting the legislation was a

"I know there is a tough

"And I am actually confi-

dent, I've talked to some of

you individually, that it will

end up being the smart thing

to do politically because

good politics," he added.

believe that good policy is

his political capital on the

Obama has staked much of

Asked whether they had

managed to corral the 216

members needed to pass the

bill, Hoyer told reporters:

"Clearly we believe we have

a series of House votes on

Sunday: First on the "rule" to

govern the debate, then a

package of "fixes" to the

Senate's version of the bill,

lutely clear that we're modify-

ing the Senate bill,

Democratic Representative

Chris Van Hollen, a close ally of

programme. But the amount is

not enough to meet the growing

demand of people in my ward,

organising secretary of ward No.

6 Awami League Tulshi Kumar

Das said he has so far taken

delivery of 29 metric tons of rice

for open market sale. "I have

sold at least 80 percent of 29

metric tons of rice at the price

fixed by the government.

Remaining quantity would be

This correspondent found

Many of them alleged that

However, Tulshi denied the

sale begins at 8:30 am and closes

allegation saying that he sells

the entire quantity of rice every-

day. "But the supply fails to meet

the growing demand as I get

only 1000 kgs of rice for sale in

and Rajuk saying it is their

corruption and lack of coordi-

nation and foresight for which

Dhaka is ranked among the

place in the capital, but people

are not getting its benefits,"

Rahmat Ali said, adding, devel-

opment is rather hampering

anyone from who they can seek

remedy for their sufferings.

There are DCC, Rajuk and Wasa.

But people are fed up with their

on filthy water carried by The

Daily Star on March 6 and 21

and asked Wasa to resolve the

The committee cited reports

services," he observed.

problems immediately.

"The city dwellers don't have

daily life of the city dwellers.

"Development is taking

worst liveable cities.

the open market," he said.

FROM PAGE 1

after an hour everyday.

sold soon," he added.

Talking to The Daily Star,

Democratic House Speaker

"We want to make it abso-

and then the Senate bill itself.

Democrats set the stage for

the votes.

Majority Leader Steny Hoyer.

dents as "hateful."

correct thing to do.

vote," the president said.

Republican minority.

after president Theodore

Roosevelt called for a national

approach to US healthcare.

95 percent of Americans.

AFP, Washington

Democrats in the House of Representatives have garnered the 216 votes necessary to pass President Barack Obama's historic health overhaul, a top party leader in Congress said yesterday.

Representative John Larson, chairman of the House Democratic Caucus, told ABC television's "This Week" programme: "We have the votes. We are going to make history today."

The Democratic lawmaker hailed the vote as being on par with landmark social legislation promoted by US leaders of past eras.

"President (Franklin) Roosevelt passed Social Security, (President) Lyndon Johnson passed Medicare and today, Barack Obama will pass health care reform," Larson

He made his remarks as the House prepared to vote later in the day on Obama's plan, to provide health insurance coverage to the overwhelming majority of Americans after a year of tough debate.

Obama's quest for nealthcare reform comes to a head on yesterday when the House of Representatives votes on legislation to extend health insurance to virtually all Americans.

The vote on Capitol Hill comes after a year of tough debate, months of setbacks, bitter partisanship, and legislative logjams -- and a dramatic week of chasing votes spearheaded by Obama him-

The president led Democrats in a triumphant, fist-pumping rally on Saturday and confidently predicted Congress would rise to a century-old challenge and

pass his healthcare overhaul. "It is in your hands, it is time to pass healthcare reform for America, and I am confident that you are going to do it tomorrow," he told his allies.

"Let's get this done." The proposed overhaul, a compromise between rival House and Senate versions of the bill passed in late 2009, would bring the United States closer than ever to guaranteeing health care coverage to all

of its citizens. Using a blend of expanded Nancy Pelosi, told reporters.

OMS dealership sold the entire quantity of rice l FROM PAGE 16 appointment of dealers. have lifted under the OMS Contacted, Khulna City

he said.

president of city Awami League AL) Talukder Abdul Khalegue said he was not aware of the matter nor he was concerned with the function of appointing OMS dealers. Talking to The Daily Star on condition of anonymity, two out

Corporation (KCC) Mayor and

of six genuine dealers alleged that they were not allowed at the first stage to submit document by a group of ruling party men for seeking dealership of OMS rice programme.

Sources in the office of over a hundred of men and regional controller of food said women sharply reacting in front 31 dealers were appointed from of a grocery shop at Diana after 181 applicants to sell rice at Tk failing to buy OMS rice from 22 per kg in the open market. Tulshi at ward No. 6. Tulshi is Each of the dealers is entitled to using the shop of a person for lift two metric tons of rice in a selling rice, as he has no shop of day for selling at fair price through 31 outlets.

The Khulna regional controller of food further said that there are 31 persons from Khulna district administration and KCC to supervise and monitor if rice lifted by dealers are being sold fully or not. More outlets are required to meet the growing need of people, he

The politically-appointed dealers include president of ward No. 17 unit of AL Md Nurul Islam, Jubo League leader Shahidul Islam Liton of the same ward, general secretary of ward No. 21 of AL Selim Hossain, ex-president of ward No. 26 of AL SM Sirajul Islam and AL general secretary of ward No. 14 Mridha Belayet

Hossain. According to official record, dealers have lifted 775 metric tons of rice from CSD godown between February 8 and March 10 while 660 metric tons have so

far been sold. President of ward No. 17 Awami League Md Nurul Islam who is appointed a dealer claimed that he is a genuine rice trader although he has no shop of his own. "I purchase rice and paddy from different mills and sell it to different markets of the district at wholesale rate. I have

Indian police recover explosives from plane

AFP, Thiruvananthapuram

Police in India's southern tourist resort state of Kerala said vesterday they had recovered explosives from an air-

The explosives, made in India, were discovered as airport personnel were offloading luggage from a Kingfisher Airlines flight that had arrived at Kerala's main Thiruvananthapuram airport from Bangalore.

"The explosive was found wrapped in a newspaper,' senior Kerala police officer P Chandrashekar told AFP.

It was not immediately whether the police were dealing a completed bomb or some other form of munitions.

"We are investigating the nature of the explosive and how it got into the aircraft," the officer said, adding that the passengers and crew were Security at Indian airports

and on airliners has been high since a December 1999 hijack of state-run Indian Airlines plane, en route to New Delhi from Nepal, by Islamic mili-The hijackers forced the

pilot to fly the plane to Taliban stronghold Kandahar in southern Afghanistan and freed the 167 passengers and crew only after New Delhi agreed to release four Islamic

In January, the federal civil aviation ministry ordered a further increase of airport security after Western intelligence agencies warned India of a possible hijack attempt by groups aligned to al-Qaeda or by Pakistan-based militant

BTRC

FROM PAGE 1 with the help of Rapid Action Battalion members around 11:30pm. They broke into the locked switch room of People's Tel and switched off its operations.

BTRC Chairman Zia Ahmed told The Daily Star that they also conducted a raid on the Baridhara residence of People'sTel Chairman Nurun Nabi but none was found there.

He said on average People'sTel had 24 lakh minutes' call duration a day last week but during the drive they found only 2 lakh minutes record for yesterday, which proves the operator's involvement in the illegal VoIP busi-

People'sTel has 1.40 lakh subscribers.

Delwar

FROM PAGE 1

Gulshan office along with his daughter, officials at the office

He later attended a meeting of the BNP parliamentary board, which is the party's standing commettee, to finalise nomination for the Bhola-3 by-poll scheduled for April 24

Khaleda chaired the meeting. BNP high-up had already decided to nominate Maj (retd) Hafizuddin Ahmed as the party candidate. Hafiz was elected from the constituency several times but failed to win in the last general election.

Sources said the meeting nominated Hafiz as the party

candidate in the by-poll. The Bhola-3 seat fell vacant when the Supreme Court on October 18 upheld the High Court verdict that declared illegal parliament membership of Maj (retd) Jasim Uddin, who was elected from the constituency on Awami

League nomination. Sources said a BNP delegation led by its standing committee member MK Anwar is scheduled to go to the Election Commission today to discuss the Bhola-3 by-poll.

'Indian' IP

FROM PAGE 1 an Indian IP address that belongs to Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited, one of the largest Internet service providers in India," said SM Akash, media manager of Access to Information (A2i)

team of the PMO, yesterday. Professional hackers however use various methods to hide their real IP address and location, he said.

The Bangladesh government will ask VSNL for details of the IP address and the hacker's location, said the media manager. Twenty district websites

operated by the PMO were hacked on Saturday.

The hackers claiming to be Indian threatened Bangladesh with a cyber war if any Pakistani terrorist enters India via Bangladesh. Home Secretary Abdus

Sobhan Sikder said they restored the websites on Saturday night.

Some Hindi letters and "JAI HIND!" were posted on the hacked websites.

Dhaka-Ctg highway

FROM PAGE 1

The official said they would scrap the contract with Nespak and appoint a new consultant soon as the Pakistani firm violated the agreement by not sending any representative to the site.

"We have been writing to Nespak to come and work since signing of the contract. They sent us a proposal to raise consultancy fee on the excuse of inflation and delay in finalising the project," Md Mafizul Islam, the project director, told The Daily Star on Thursday. He said there is no scope for

hiking the fee before expiry of the agreement according to which officials of consultancy firm must be available at the site to give instructions to construction firms after the signing of the contract.

"It is also their job to see whether the project is implemented properly," he added.

The government has been raising the fee by 5 percent every year in line with the contract, he said.

Responding to a letter from the project director, the Pakistani company assured might start at the end of the the Roads and Highways Department that it will send its people to work in the project in the first week of March.

"They are yet to come," said the project director.

He hinted that they would have no alternative but to cancel the agreement with the Pakistani firm for the absence of its representative at the site. "We can't waste time for

them. The construction work of the vital highway needs to be launched as quickly as possible," said Mafizul.

"The problem is according to the rules we can't do anything without the consultant's opinions," he added.

The Daily Star sent an email to the Pakistani company and is yet to receive any reply. Chinese company

Sinohydro Corporation and two local companies -- Reza Construction and Tahir Brothers Limited -- are to construct two more lanes measuring 215 kilometres in length in three years with the existing two-lane highway. Ten different construction segments are there in the project, major part of which will be done by Chinese com-Khan Md Aftabuddin of

Reza Construction Ltd said they were having difficulties in continuing their work in absence of representatives from the consultancy firm. "However, my firm is not

sitting idle. We are setting up offices and arranging accommodation for workers," he told The Daily Star. The project director said

Aftabuddin, however hoped that they would be able to begin construction work in

the main construction work

Earlier tender for the project was cancelled twice because of flaws in the pro-

a couple of months.

The highway, considered the main artery of the country's transport system, has become risky because of its narrowness and poor condi-

provision for land survey.

There was no progress in

implementing the CHT Peace

Accord during the rule of the

BNP-Jamaat alliance govern-

ment as they were against the

present Awami League gov-

ernment appointed retired

High Court judge Khademul

Islam Chowdhury as the chair-

man of the CHT Land

sion held two meetings in

Khagrachhari and Rangamati

in 2009. Khademul Islam

Chowdhury then said the

commission would ask the

government to complete the

As per the peace accord,

proper enquiries are to be

conducted to settle real own-

erships of land after rehabili-

tation of indigenous refugees

and displaced ethnic popula-

Commission, in addition to

settling land disputes, shall

have the sole authority to

cancel ownership of land and

against the judgment of the

commission, the accord

Bangladeshi

taxicab on October 19 and took

him with four other

Bangladeshis to a seaport in

Oman. They were then taken to

an Iranian town and confined to

a house there for 15 days, he

gang's demand for ransom, his

family sent Tk 90,000 to Osman

Haidar through SA Paribahan.

Pakistan and then to Karachi,

where they were held hostage at

rest of the ransom to Rob's

cousin Kamal through Pubali

Bank's Fakirapool Branch and

Mohammad Hossain of

Bismillah Trading through

Islami Bank's Jatrabari Branch.

Hossain, assistant commis-

sioner of Detective Branch of

Police, told The Daily Star that

the detectives arrested seven

people with links to the gang in

the last 10 days after Aminul's

wife Nilufar filed a case with

Motijheel Police Station against

six gang members on March 9.

Mohammad Marufat

Aminul said following the

They were taken to Quetta in

He said his family paid the

FROM PAGE 1

Kabir's house.

No appeal can be made

hills so far occupied illegally.

It also says the CHT Land

long due land survey.

The reconstituted commis-

After taking office, the

Survey of hills land

accord

Commission.

was signed under the then

Awami League government on December 2, 1997. All attacks were made following disputes overland ownership.

On March 11 this year, the land ministry called a meeting to discuss the CHT land survey. But the PCJSS did not send any representative to the meeting.

"I sent a letter to the ministry, saying the same old thing again that the problem has to be resolved as per the CHT accord," Santu Larma said.

Expressing disappointment at the status of implementation of the peace accord, he said all governments intend to discuss the issue with the PCJSS but none implements it. "Government changes and the new government starts discussion again from the beginning," he said.

The PCJSS will not support any land survey if it is not done as per the CHT Peace Accord, he added.

An official of the land ministry meanwhile said the government is taking initiatives to hold discussions again

Ministry sources also said the land offices do not have proper record of the past partial surveys, which is a problem to conducting the

The CHT Regulation 1900, however, does not have any

Jamaat

FROM PAGE 1

by Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) while preaching Islam. Jamaat Secretary General Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed said Awami League is also a party to the media propaganda.

About the remarks of Rafiqul Islam, Mojaheed said, "It was an attempt to divert people's attention.

He was speaking as the chief guest at a rally against "propaganda and conspiracy against Jamaat" at the city unit office of Jamaat at Paltan in the city. "Some newspapers have

tried to implicate Jamaat in criminal activities several times by publishing false and fabricated news," he said adding: "Authorities of those newspapers cannot sleep in peace if Nizami and Mojaheed are not sent to jail." They are trying to make the

war crimes an issue, he said. "Journalists ask questions about war crimes issue even though the programme they are covering is not on war crimes," Mojaheed said blasting the journalists.

were ill motivated.

over the meeting.

would go to the High Court.

Mia, 28, Kamal, 25, Lipu, 22, "Involving Jamaat in war Shahin, 27, Abdul Mannan, 40, crimes is a blatant lie. False and Abul Kalam Azad complainants, witnesses will be employee of Bismillah Trading placed to blame Jamaat leaders. of Dhalpur in the capital's Some newspapers and televi-Jatrabari. sion channels are staging plays The DB official said some to blame Jamaat for war crimes," Mojaheed said.

gang members look out for easy preys in Dubai while others take Mojaheed also said the case the abductees to hideouts and filed against him and Nizami confine them. Their cohorts in Bangladesh realise ransom Jamaat's Assistant Secretary

from the victims' families. General ATM Azharul Islam said Quoting Aminul, Hossain if the lower court sentences Jamaat leaders to life, they Rafiqul Islam Khan presided

said at least 53 more Bangladeshis have been held hostage in the gang's hideout in Pakistan.

ILLEGAL BILLBOARD

HC directive on demolition today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court will pass an order today on a writ petition filed for demolishing unauthorised billboards in the capital.

Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB), an organisation for protecting human rights and the environment, filed the petition as public interest litigation seeking an order for demolition and removal of all unauthorised billboards hazardous to public life in the capital. After concluding the hear-

Manik and Justice Md Delwar Hossain yesterday fixed the date for order on it. Advocate Manzill Murshid on behalf of HRPB moved the petition, which sought the court's direction for compensation for two deaths caused

ing on the petition, the HC

bench of Justice AHM

Shamsuddin Chowdhury

by a hoarding collapse in Gulshan recently. The petition also sought the court's direction upon the law enforcement agencies to assist the authorities concerned for demolishing the

illegal billboards. It also prayed to the court to issue a notice upon Shahbagh police to explain why they did not assist the Dhaka City Corporation authorities in demolishing the illegal billboards on March 18.

Respondents in the petition include home secretary, inspector general of police, Dhaka metropolitan police commissioner, DCC mayor, officer-in-charge of Shahbagh Police Station. Two people were killed and

eight others injured when a

poorly-mounted hoarding collapsed on them in front of Gulshan Shopping Centre in the city during a storm on March 15. Earlier, the DCC move to dismantle billboards from rooftops got stalled, as Outdoor Advertising Owners'

Association filed a writ peti-

tion with the HC in the first week of August 2007. Following an eviction notice issued by Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakhha against such hazardous hoardings in September 2007, the advertising owners' association also filed a writ peti-

Outlaw killed in 'shootout'

tion with the HC.

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

A regional leader of outlawed Gono Mukti Fouz was killed in a 'shootout' between his cohorts and law enforcers at Gobinpur village in Kumarkhali upazila of Kushtia early yesterday.

The dead was identified as Abdul Khaleq alias Jhoru, 35, son of Ali Hossain of Chapra in Kumarkhali.

A joint team of Kumarkhali police and Detective Branch, acting on a tip-off, raided a banana orchard at about 2:25am where Khaleq and his men were holding a secret meeting.

Sensing presence of the police, the gang opened fire on lawenforcers prompting them to fire back that triggered a gunbattle.

At one stage, the cohorts of Khaleq managed to flee the scene. Later, police found the bullet-hit body of Khaleq lying on the ground. Police recovered one light

gun, six bullets and a sharp weapon from the spot. Officer-In-Charge of

Kumrakhali Police Station Atiar Rahman said eight general diaries have been lodged with the police station accusing Khaleq o extortion in last one year.

Khaleq was also wanted in seven cases, including three for murder, police said.

4 power plants

FROM PAGE 16

The arrestees are Rob's mother Mariam Begum, Yousuf As per the policy, PDB had asked Energypac to pick two projects and leave the other two for the second lowest bidders. Then the second lowest bidders were asked to match the price of Energypac, which they refused. As a result, these projects have once again gone back to Energypac.

The PDB conducted the tender for the 10 power projects without taking prior approval of the Executive rivers. Committee on National They also claimed that Economic Council (Ecnec) to their jetties have been legally save time. The Ecnec earlier set up on obtaining lease from Bangladesh Inland Water this month approved all these Transport Authority. 10 projects.

Potato boom

FROM PAGE 16

"Growers, who have failed to gets slots in cold storages and do not have their own storage mechanisms, are counting losses of Tk 100 a maund as potato is now selling at around Tk 350 a maund while its minimum production cost is about Tk 450 a maund," said Jainal Abedin, a potato grower of Sonarong in Tongibari upazila of Munshiganj.

Reached over phone yesterday morning, Jainal said a potato glut compounded with space constraints and high rent of cold storages compelled many growers in the district to sell their produce at low prices and stock the surplus in the Officials in Munshiganj said,

over 40,000 growers in the potato-rich alluvial floodplains of this district produced nearly 1.2 million tonnes in more than 36,000 hectares of land. But 63 operational cold storages out of 71 in the district can hardly accommodate 0.37 million tonnes.

Jainal complained of cold storage owners' taking advantage of this situation and charging unusually high rent for preservation of potato for sale in future. He said the storages used to charge Tk 170 a sack (containing two maunds) last year but hiked it to Tk 220-260 this year.

Farmers in greater Rangpur-Dinajpur region, who produced over three million tonnes of potato this season, said they are also at the mercy of cold storage owners. In recent weeks, several people were injured in brawls over getting slots in cold storages and their high rent. Asked about this, the BCSA

chairman however defended the rent hike. He said they are sympathetic to the potato growers. "But if I've to run my

Govt asked FROM PAGE 16

that the government took the action against RanksTel without showing any reason.

The BTRC on March 19 shut down all operations of RanksTel for its alleged involvement in illegal VoIP (voice over Internet protocol) business and detained three of its senior officials.

Barrister Rafique-ul Huq and advocate Anisul Huq appeared for the petitioner.

Nızamı

FROM PAGE 1

Meanwhile, a Lalmonirhat court vesterday issued a summons on Nizami and three of his party leaders to appear before it on May 25 in a case filed on similar charge.

Syed Rejaul Haque Chandpuri, secretary general of Bangladesh Tarikat Federation, filed the case with a metropolitan magistrate's court in Dhaka against five Jamaat leaders.

After hearing the case, Metropolitan Magistrate Abdullah-Al Mamun yesterday fixed Tuesday for passing an order on the case.

Our Lalmonirhat correspondent reports that Chief Judicial Magistrate of the district Abu Mansur Mohammad Ziaul Haque yesterday issued the summons on four Jamaat leaders after district Awami League General Secretary Motiar

Rahman filed the case. The three other accused are Delwar Hossain Sayedee, Rafiqul Islam Khan and Shafiqul

Ministry

FROM PAGE 16 Dhirendra Devnath Shambhu

and Saidul Haque echoed Proj Ashraf. "There are embargoes on

MPs. They can't talk on many

Saidul said the annual development programme "was not implemented properly because of the bureau

issues," said Dhirendra.

crats' inefficiency". Shawkat Ali however said bureaucrats prepare and implement the budget, because that is their job.

ously we do our jobs," the deputy speaker told the MPs. "Bureaucrats work on the

"The question is how seri-

political decision of the government," he added.

HC rejects FROM PAGE 16

The deputy commissioner of

Narayanganj on February 9 issued a notice asking the five companies to remove their jetties by February 20 in line with the HC directives. The five companies filed six

petitions with the HC on different dates of this month seeking the stay order.

They stated in the applications that the HC judgment should be amended, since it earlier directed the government to remove all the legal and illegal structures from the

cold storage using diesel for up to 14 hours a day out of 24 hours due to power outage, how do I manage without hiking the

Jasim demanded 20 percent rebate in power tariff for cold storages and appreciated a recent banking sector move of lowering rate of interest for cold storage owners to 10 percent from 12 percent.

Rise in cold storage rent compelled growers to seek redress from the authorities, and the Munshiganj district administration convened at least four meetings in last one month to make the storage owners agree to lowering the rent but to no avail.

The owners skipped the last two of the four meetings.

The BCSA chairman admitted this but remained firm on his position. "If we've to accept rent dictated by the DC (deputy commissioner), we can't do business.... Cold storage owners will then go bankrupt," he

responsible for further worsening the situation by allowing potato import from India late last year. But the government justified allowing import saying it was

done to offset the high local

He also held the government

price at that time. Following a potato glut in fiscal 2007-08 with an output of 9.2 million tonnes, its production in 2008-09 dropped to 6.7 million tonnes, pushing up its

"Government allowed import despite our pleas not to do so. Later, import was stopped but by that time 14,000 tonnes had already been imported," said Jasim.

Japan MPs

from 7:00pm yesterday with the premier at her office. Japanese

said.

ambassador to Bangladesh Tamotsu Shinotsuka and 3 others were with them. They mainly discussed

issues relating to CHT peace accord and urged her to bring back peace in CHT, sources said The peace message by Nobel

laureate Mairead says, "After more than 30 years of violent conflict and deep suffering, the Jumma people have a right and deep desire for justice and peace. I hope therefore that you and your Government and all parties to the conflict will increase and sustain your important efforts to move to the fulfillment of the 1997 Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord. Peace in the Chittagong Hill Tracts will give hope not only to the people of Chittagong, and Bangladesh,

but also to people around the world, that peace is possible". The signatories include 62 members of the Japanese parliament, four members of parliament and legislative assemblies of Australia, a member of constituent assembly of Australia, a member of constituent assembly of Nepal and civil

society representatives of Bangladesh. The initiative was jointly taken by Jumma Net, a Japanese NGO working in solidarity with Jumma people of CHT Bangladesh, the CHT Jumma Peoples Network of the Asia Pacific (Australia), the Indigenous Jumma People's Network USA, and the Organising Committee Chittagong Hill Tracts

55 organisations worldwide. HSC exams

Campaign (Holland) with other

measures to root it out totally.

"Stern action will be taken against officials, employees or teachers -- whoever it may be -if they are found to be helping anyone to use unfair means," he

from April 1, the examinees must set clocks forward on March 31 midnight to avoid problems in reaching the exam centres on time. Exams will start at 10:00am and 2:00pm.

The minister said since the

daylight saving time takes effect

He said the government has taken all necessary steps to hold the examinations in a copy-free and peaceful atmosphere.

Nahid asked examination officials to take great care to ensure the secrecy of the questions as well as the security of the centres.

He urged everyone, includ-

ing local government represen-

going to sit the examinations at

1,129 centres under eight gen-

tatives, not to enter the exam centres unless it is strictly nec-This year, 587,540 students from 3,241 institutions are

There will be 74,413 students from 2,638 institutions under the Madrasa Education Board sitting the exams, and 70,504 students from 1,302 institutions sitting the exams under the Technical Education Board.

eral education boards.

The meeting was chaired by Prof Fahima Khatun, chairman of the Dhaka Education Board, and attended by Khondaker Rakibur Rahman, Joint Secretary of the Education Ministry, the board centre secretary and the exam con-

troller.