Budget

crore each.

FROM PAGE 1 the primary and mass education ministry got an allocation of more than Tk 8,000

Earlier on Tuesday, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Finance Minister AMA Muhith gave concluding speeches on the budget, third by this ruling Awami League government.

In his concluding speech, the finance minister mentioned some specific plans to implement the budget. He said normally the ministries and departments themselves can spend threefourths of the allocation without the finance ministry's approval as soon as the budget is passed.

Muhith added it is noticed the ministries and departments do not depute the power to spend the fund to the executing agencies causing delay in implementing different projects. He said the government

next month will take a step so that the ministries and departments hand over the power of spending money to the executing agencies. In his concluding speech

Muhith also said the biggest challenge in the next fiscal year will be that of containing inflation.

He said the recent ncrease in inflation was due to hike in petroleum and food prices in the international market. Expressing doubt about how much inflation could be contained, the minister said the government would supply five daily necessities to the poor section of society at low cost to provide them some

As the BNP remained absent, their cut motion proposals were not placed in the House yesterday. Only a few proposals by independent lawmaker Fazlul Azim were placed.

The absence of the opposition made the process of passing the budget very

The finance bill on tax and tariff with some revisions including the provision for whitening money through investment in the stock market was passed on Tuesday.

Cops to get

raise manpower in the police force by 32,031 while 15,775 persons in different categories have already been appointed and 6,000 would be recruited soon, she

"The newly recruited police personnel are being given training at home and abroad and provided with necessary logistic support," the premier said.

Mentioning her government's commitment not to allow any sort of militancy and terrorism on the soil of Bangladesh, Hasina said the government has already banned country's five miliant outfits.

SAFE MIGRATION

Hasina, also leader of the House, mentioned that it is her government's top priority to ensure safe migration of workers as well as reduced immigration cost to expand manpower market abroad.

On realising outstanding salaries of Libya returnees, the premier said the government has been making efforts to realise those from the authorities concerned.

"Some of the companies have already agreed to pay the salaries of the workers,'

she told the House.

The government has already taken steps for human resource development and safe migration of the workers, the premier

In reply to another query, Hasina said "Massive programmes have been taken in the rural areas involving district and upazila administration and other local government bodies to motivate the youths intending to go

abroad with jobs." The programmes include registration of their names with the deputy commis-

sioner's (DC) office, she said. Hasina said a Tk 140 crore

fund has been created for training of workers, market research and expansion of labour market.

"If necessary the fund would be increased, and the government wants to do more to this end in partnership with the private sector," she added.

JS set to pass bill

FROM PAGE 1

The bill was placed in the House on Saturday and it was sent to the parliamentary body the same day to scrutinise and place its report within two weeks. The committee did it in four days.

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Shafique Ahmed is scheduled to propose passage of the bill with the opposition boycotting the House.

The passage will be easy and smooth as the Awami League-led government holds more than the required two-thirds majority in the 345-seat parliament. BNP and its ally Jamaat-e-Islami have been boycotting the House since the current session began on May 22. The passage will also

mean that the incumbent government will stay in power during the next parliamentary elections due in 2014. The BNP-led opposition fears that it will lead to rigging of the polls in favour of the incumbents.

Under the current system, an elected government at the end of its tenure hands over power to a non-partisan caretaker administration to supervise the polls.

Introduced in the constitution in 1996, the caretaker system has overseen the holding of three parliamentary polls, including the last one in 2008 that was swept by the AL-led grand alliance. All the three parliamentary elections were considered by and large free and fair by local and international observers.

Protesting the move to repeal the caretaker system, the BNP-led opposition has already staged three days of hartal. BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia is due to address a news conference today to announce more protests.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina insists that the repeal was necessary after the Supreme Court struck down the 13th amendment to the constitution as illegal.

It was Hasina who as the then-opposition leader spearheaded the campaign for installing a non-partisan caretaker government to oversee free and fair polls. The then ruling BNP vehemently opposed the idea until it bowed to the opposition pressure in 1996.

The move to amend the constitution has triggered much debate and raised fears about renewed political unrest at a time when the government aims at nearly seven percent GDP growth in the fiscal year beginning July

Another key change proposed in the bill deals with the timing of the elections.

According to the bill, elections will be held under the elected government within 90 days before parliament is dissolved Parliament will stay, but it can't hold any session during the 90-day election period.

Lawmakers-elect would not assume office until the five-year tenure of the outgoing parliament expires, according to the constitutional amendment bill.

The bill, however, has proposed no restrictions on the powers of the outgoing government during the 90day election period.

Defending its decision, Suranjit Sengupta, head of the parliamentary body, told The Daily Star the powers of the interim government should be set in consultation with the main opposition

Scrutinising the bill, the committee also proposed making it mandatory for the court to hear the Election Commission first before issuing any order in relation to a voting for which schedule has already been announced.

The committee, in consultation with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, also made a recommendation for omitting the provisions for national party -- popularly known as Baksal (Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League).

The provision made by the fourth amendment in 1975 introduced the presidential form of government and oneparty rule. Following the amendment, Baksal was formed by the then president by dissolving all other political parties.

These provisions were later deleted by the martial law proclamations and ratified by the fifth amendment act. The Supreme Court last year scrapped the fifth amendment, condoning some changes including the one for deletion of provisions

for one-party rule. But in response to a review petition recently, the apex court announced that the condonation will remain effective till December 31, 2012 and said parliament will decide the next course of action by this time.

"The parliamentary body on Tuesday decided to propose for dissolving the constitution's part VIA on national party to prevent its revival after expiry of the condonation period," a committee source told The Daily Star yesterday.

The AL Parliamentary Party (ALPP) sits this morning to discuss the procedure of passage of the bill.

Sheikh Hasina is likely to give directives to her party's MPs to effectively face possible political unrest following scrapping of the caretaker system, party sources said. The bill has also proposed

several other amendments that might have far-reaching political impact. These are highest penalties for illegal seizure of state power, no amendment to the constitution's preamble, fundamen tal structure and principles of state policy. It also proposes constitutional recognition of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as Father of the Nation and inclusion of his historic March 7 speech and his declaration of independence in the constitu-

Islam has been retained as the state religion, allowing followers of other faiths Hinduism, Buddhism and Christianity -- equal rights to pursue their religions.

The bill seeks to keep the phrase "Bismillahir Rahamanir Rahim" above the preamble of the constitution and allows religion-based politics.

A special parliamentary body for constitutional amendment was formed on July 21 last year to recommend the constitutional amendments. The 15 member committee, headed by Deputy Leader of Parliament Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, had members only from the AL-led ruling alliance as BNP declined to nominate any representa-

The move came after the Supreme Court declared illegal the 5th amendment to the constitution that legalised the military proclamations of late president Ziaur Rahman, the founder of BNP. Subsequently, the highest court struck down the 7th amendment to the constitution made by another military ruler HM Ershad and the 13th amendment that provided for the caretaker sys-

After holding a series of meetings and consultations with political parties representing the present parliament, eminent jurists, personalities and editors of different national dailies, the special committee placed its report in parliament on June 8 with a 51-point recommendation for changes to the

constitution. However, the main opposition BNP and its alliance partners Jamaat-e-Islami and Bangladesh Jatiya Party did not join the consultation organised by the special

committee. The cabinet on Monday approved the proposals prepared following the committee's recommendations, clearing the way for placing the proposals in parliament

in the form of a bill. EXTRAJUDICIAL KILLING

Pakistan indicts six troops

AFP, Karachi

A Pakistani court yesterday indicted six paramilitary soldiers and a civilian on murder and terrorism charges after an unarmed man was shot dead on camera in a public park, lawyers

Members of Pakistan's Rangers paramilitary force were caught on film killing Sarfaraz Shah, 22, after a civilian dragged him over to the troops, accusing him of robbery in Karachi on June 8.

Rangdhanu Abashik Prokalpa, Rangamatia Abashik Prokalpa, Roshayan Nagar, Havely Dream City, AWR New Garden and Ashulia City.

The team led by Executive Magistrate of Rajuk AKM Maruf Hassan started the drive around 9:30am and continued till the evening. "We have torn down the

hoardings as the realtors had been implementing their projects violating the Wetland Protection Act, 2000 and rules for land development," noted Maruf. Rajuk is taking action against unauthorised hous-

ing projects since last week following directives of the High Court, he added. Over 200 hoardings of around 90 housing projects

Mirpur, near Mohammadpur, Pallabi, Keraniganj, Uttara and Ashulia were pulled down during drives in six days since June 22, said Ashraf Ali Akhand, deputy director (urban planning) of Rajuk.

The projects include Modhumoti Model Town, Alamnagar, Chowdhury Garden City, Hajrat Shah Ali Abashik Prokalpa, Boshudha Abashik Prokolpa, Satmasjid Abashik Prokalpa, Probhati Abashik Prokalpa, Shoily Abashik Prokalpa, Satmasjid Abashik Prokalpa, Ensure Lake City and Nasim City.

An HC bench on June 8 directed the government to stop developing 77 unauthorised housing projects in and around Dhaka within 30 days.

The court in its verdict on a writ petition also ordered Rajuk and the police to stop advertisement, earth-filling and sale of plots by those housing projects and remove their hoardings immediately.

The bench of Justice AHM Shamsuddin Chowdhury Manik and Justice Gobinda Chandra Tagore also directed the city planner to submit a report on compliance with its directives within 40 days.

BNP's agitation

FROM PAGE 1 BNP Chair Khaleda Zia is to give her reaction to the constitution amendment bill today. She is expected to reiterate the strong party stance in favour of the care-

taker government system. On June 21, the party's standing committee in principle decided to resist the government's move to amend the constitution for scrapping the caretaker government system. But the party is yet to actually design its resistance programme, insiders say.

Meanwhile, party leaders have been talking about hartal soon or even next week on the caretaker gov-

ernment issue. BNP, however, has decided not to mix up the Arafat Rahman Koko issue with the caretaker government issue as it believes that there is a mass support for the caretaker government

issue, said BNP insiders. Koko, son of Khaleda, was sentenced to six years imprisonment on June 23 in a money laundering case. BNP said the verdict was

"politically motivated". A BNP leader said Koko's conviction also led to the delaying of agitation programmes as they did not want to give any impression that BNP announces hartal centring the chairperson's

According to BNP acting Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, fresh agitation programmes including hartal were supposed to be announced during a rally on June 23. But the Koko verdict forced BNP high ups not to declare any tough programmes.

Alamgir in that rally had said fresh agitation programmes would be announced on June 28 but on that day Alamgir said the programmes will be announced by the chairperson on July 3.

While talking to The Daily Star, BNP standing committee member Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain yesterday parried questions about the party plans. He said, "Let's see what the government does as the chairperson made clear our party's stance on caretaker government system."

Rajuk knocks Caretaker system

FROM PAGE 1 our political culture. THERATIONALE

The reason for abolishing the CTG system is very straight forward. Sheikh Hasina declared that no unelected person should be allowed to run the country for however small a period. This is against the fundamental principles of democracy and elected government. The CTG is a nonelected body and hence it should be abolished. The argument is flawless and that is why no democratic constitution in the world has it, just as we did not have it in So, how did we get into it?

Who brought it in? And most

importantly, why did they do so? The answers for all the three questions are also straight forward. We instituted the CTG in the face of relentless mass agitation by Awami League, spread over a period of several years, culminating into continuous hartals of five days, seven days, and lastly noncooperation for an indefinite period. Why? Because Awami League, the then opposition party, did not have the confidence that the BNP government led by Khaleda Zia would ever give "free and fair" election. What evidence did AL have to substantiate their demand? None till Magura came along (Magura is the name of the place where a by-election was held in 1994, in which massive rigging by ruling BNP took place) and gave credence to AL's demand for a CTG. This, in spite of the fact that under BNP in the Dhaka mayoral election AL's Md Hanif won and became the first elected mayor ever in the country. May be it was BNP's defeat in Dhaka that made them nervous and rig the poll in Magura. But the result was a massive swing of support for the CTG proposal of AL.

question during that period to many AL leaders, including Sheikh Hasina, that how they could demand something which was not in the constitution of Bangladesh, and had no precedence in the world. The answer was, "Constitutions are made for the people, and not the people for the constitution. If the people feel the need to change the constitution, then it should be changed to suit the needs of the people.' Under this argument AL pushed for the CTG system, built a mass agitation behind it, and was finally able to force BNP to adopt it in the 7th parliament, which AL leaders correctly claimed to be their singular achievement.

This writer posed the

So why its symbol of achievement is suddenly today so abhorrent that it must be changed in a hurry, though the next election is more than two and a half years away? (See our editorial)

The question here is why does Sheikh Hasina want to abolish the CTG in such a hurry?

The reason for abolishing it could be the aberration the system exhibited during its last tenure. Of special significance is the ease with which the CTG was able to extend its 90-day tenure into a twoyear one under the guise of an emergency. What will prevent any future CTG from extending to similar if not longer tenure? Because of its longer stay in power the CTG got involved in many activities that it was not empowered to do.

The additional reason for

the PM to hate the CTG is

that it first imprisoned her, tried to force her into exile, and then tried to forcibly retire her from politics, both BNP? by allurement of privileges When we know the and threats of dire consequences. The role of DGFI was particularly nefarious on this count. Also during that time the incident with Dhaka University teachers and students, and an attempt to float political

grave doubts about the CTG

parties, which would no

doubt do its bidding, created

formula.

THEMETHOD

While the PM's reasons for wanting the CTG system scrapped is understandable, the process and speed with which she is pursuing it is NOT. In fact it is baffling.

Constitutional amendments are never done in a hurry. PM's comment that as she has two-thirds majority, the opposition's suggestions can be incorporated later through further constitutional amendments, basically makes farce of both the

constitution and its amend-

How will the PM and her

ment process.

government answer the question that the constitutional changes are being brought about without waiting for the full text of the Supreme Court verdict, which is supposed to be the main justification of the amendment in the first Constitution is the fundamental source of laws, and the governance process in a democracy. It should be

sacrosanct, above all controversy, and reflecting the highest articulation of our fundamental values of freedom, justice, equality, fundamental rights, etc. Changing the constitution without waiting for the full judgement of the SC, speaks of naked political expediency of those in power, and exposes their intention of using the "short order" of the SC for their own political POLITICAL CULTURE

We believe that the PM will

admit (and hopefully also Khaleda Zia) that all our political problems stem from our peculiar and specific political culture, whose hall mark is the complete lack of trust between the ruling and the opposition parties. This is the root of all our political problems. There is instant NO from the opposition to all suggestions of the government, regardless of which party is in power, and how good and beneficial the proposal is. The parliament boycott, which AL decries today, was their norm during BNP's last tenure. The economy destroying hartal is condemned by the party in power and practiced by the opposition, again regardless of it being AL or BNP. Thus there is a total lack of morality in their respective positioning which are filled with only political opportunism.

The lack of trust was also the reason for, what we call, 1/11. It started with BNP changing the retirement age of judges, that led AL to suspect that Justice KM Hasan was a BNP sympathiser, and as such not to be trusted to deliver a free and fair election, that led to a demand for a different chief adviser, that gave BNP the opportunity to prompt president lajuddin to proclaim himself as the chief adviser, who then ran the CTG on orders from Hawa Bhaban, and so on and on.

All this led to 1/11. The root of it all was mutual suspicion between AL and

Let us pose a hypothetical question. If BNP was in power today, and it was proposing to abolish the CTG because of the same SC verdict, what would have been the reaction of the present ruling party? Need we answer?

The CTG was proposed by AL in the mid nineties because of the mistrust that we just spoke about. The only acceptable way to hold elections, AL repeatedly demanded at that time, was to create a neutral, nonpartisan body, caretaker body. And so it was.

The question is, has the situation changed? Has trust between the two sides increased? In fact the contrary is true. Will BNP accept an election under AL government? Would AL have accepted an election under

answers to these questions, then why are we playing such dangerous games with the future of democracy? We conclude by quoting

in full the short order of the SC that triggered the amendment process. "Short Order: It is hereby

declared: (1) The appeal is allowed by majority without any order as to costs. (2) The Constitution (Thirteenth Amendment) Act. 1996 (Act 1 of 1996) is prospectively declared void and ultra vires the Constitution. (3)The election to the Tenth and the

held under the provisions of the above mentioned Thirteenth Amendment on the age old principles, namely, quod alias non est licitum, necessitas licitum facit (That which otherwise is not lawful, necessity makes lawful), salus populi suprema lex (safety of the people is the supreme law) and salus republicae est suprema lex (safety of the State is the Supreme law) The parliament, however, in the meantime, is at liberty to bring necessary amendments excluding, the provisions of making the former Chief Justices of Bangladesh or the Judges of the Appellate Division as the head of the Non-Party Caretaker Government. The Judgment in detail would follow. The connected Civil Petition for leave to appeal No.596 of 2005 is accordingly, disposed of."

Eleventh Parliament may be

There is of course a lot of vagueness in the order. It is also possible to interpret it in different ways. But there are enough elements in it for a dialogue between the two sides to have taken place, and some peaceful solution could have been found in solving the political problems that are looming large. While the SC's short order

sets the legal ground, hold ing credible elections is primarily and fundamen tally a political task, and i can only be solved politically. While the SC gave the legal opinion, it was up to the parliament to find a political solution. Here of course we

severely fault the opposition for never attending the Sangsad, which is where they should have been every minute of the session, to voice their concerns, and to warn the government and the nation of the dire consequences of unilateral actions on constitutional amendments. Their action constitutes betrayal of democracy, betrayal of their pledge to voters to represent them, and also a betrayal of their responsibility to defend the constitution.

In democracy, political parties that enjoy a huge majority in the parliament sometimes confuse "majoritarianism" with democracy. While majority rule is the way democracy functions, there is also the danger of "brute majority" imposing its views and "bulldozing" descent.

The four-fifths majority that "Moha Jote" enjoys is also a "treacherous crown" It is very easy to fall into the trap of considering one's own opinion as that of the people. The arrogance that emanates from such a position is a dangerous allurement that often leads to the quicksand of overconfidence, and consequent overestimation of one's own strength, and underestima tion of the strength and

popularity of the opposition. The history of all twothirds majority governments of South Asia is example o such follies.

AL's left allies

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) yesterday morning. Workers Party chief Rashed Khan Memon chaired the meeting.

The march will start from the Central Shaheed Minar premises around 12:00pm. Meanwhile, Workers

Party and Jatiya Samajtantik Dal (JSD) lawmakers yester day submitted 30 amendment notices on five to seven issues, including the above mentioned ones, to the Speaker. Talking to The Daily Star,

Menon said, "We will not vote against the main bill on the constitution amendment. We will just support our amendment notices." The five lawmakers of

Workers Party and JSD held a closed-door meeting at Menon's parliament office to fix their stance on the constitution amendment issue.

Menon and JSD Chief Inu gave note of dissent for not deleting Islam as the state religion and Bismillahir Rahmair Rahim while preparing the final recommendations of the JS special committee on constitution amendment.

JCD calls

FROM PAGE 20

University in protest at what they claim is renaming of an under-construction dormitory as Begum Sufia Kamal Hall from Begum Khaleda Zia

"We will observe the strike on July 2 and 3 protesting the university administrators undemocratic decision," said JCD General Secretary Amirul Islam Alim at a press briefing at the party's central office at Naya Paltan in the capital. The decision of naming the

new dormitory for female students after late poet Begum Sufia Kamal was taken last night at a meeting of the DU Senate, the highest policy making body of the institu-Pro-BNP and Jamaat teachers and senate mem-

bers, however, protested the decision. They said a senate meeting in 2005 approved of naming the dormitory after Begum Khaleda Zia. DU Vice-Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique, who chaired the Senate session, said the proposed name for

Kamal Hall in 2005 but the BNP and Jamaat-backed DU administration named the hall after Khaleda Zia. The Senate changed the dormitory's name to the proposed name maintaining

all rules, the VC told The Daily

the hall was Begum Sufia

The VC also said the DU syndicate decided not to name any dormitory of the university after any person alive. At present, there are 18 dormitories which were named after deceased people. The construction of the 10-

expected to be completed early next year, said DU offi-The two-day annual Senate meeting that ended last night also approved of

storey dormitory with accom-

modation for 1,000 students is

around Tk 278 crore for DU for the fiscal year 2011-12.

Facebook **FROM PAGE 20**

Google has simply reproduced features of Facebook while adding a video chat function. Google, which handles

roughly two out of every three internet searches in the US, has taken several stabs at Facebook in recent years. But its previous efforts ended in failure, with both

Google Wave and Google Buzz proving unpopular with users. NEWFUNCTIONS The company is now boasting that four features in Google+ could help make the

company a permanent

player in social networking: Circles - a functionality that allows individuals to place friends into groups, allowing users to share different forms of content with

targeted clusters of friends * Hangouts - live multiuser video conferencing that permits friends to drop in and out of live group conver-

sations * Huddle - group instant

messaging * Sparks - a feature that connects individuals on the network to others with com-

mon interests.

The current version of Google+ has only been released to a small number of users, but the company has said it soon hopes to make the social network available to the millions of individuals that use its services each day.

But some analysts have said Google could have a difficult time converting Facebook devotees to their new social network.

"People have their social circles on Facebook - asking them to create another social circle is challenging," Debra Aho Williamson, principal analyst with research firm eMarketer, told the Associated Press news agency.

North Korea threatens 'sacred war' on South

AFP, Seoul North Korea threatened

yesterday to launch "a retaliatory sacred war" against South Korea for alleged slander as the two sides held rare talks on a stalled joint tourism project. A Pyongyang government

spokesman accused the South's frontline army units of displaying slogans slandering the North's "army, system and dignity" and said they are "little short of a clear declaration of war".