Fingers pointed

Development and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, at her office and asked them to make efforts to contain the prices during Ramadan.

The commerce minister was also present.

Khaleda directed the authorities to bring the wheeler-dealer businesspeople engaged in hoarding essentials to book.

Sources said the premier came down hard on the performance of the commerce minister and asked him to monitor the market himself. She reminded the commerce

minister that his predecessor under the past government monitored market every week and expressed doubt whether Khosru visited kitchen markets once in the past two years, sources said.

Official sources said at a joint meeting at the commerce ministry Khosru asked the home ministry to control markets, a proposal rejected outright by the home ministry Home ministry officials said

law enforcers would intervene in case of market manipulation only. The meeting identified extortion apart from hoarding a cause

Pakistan promises 'positive' response to Indian peace offer soon REUTERS, Islamabad

Pakistan said yesterday it would respond positively and soon to a set of Indian proposals seeking to improve relations between the nuclear rivals. Foreign Ministry spokesman

Masood Khan told a news briefing that internal consultations were city every year during Ramadan and under way to prepare a comprehensive response.

"Our response would be positive and robust because some of these proposals are obviously our own proposals. The only thing that had been done by India is that they have creatively rehashed, recycled them," Khan said.

New Delhi announced a dozen mostly symbolic proposals last week, seeking to save Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vaipavee's bid to end enmity between the neighbors, who nearly went to war last year.

The proposals include starting a new cross-border bus service between Indian and Pakistani Kashmir and the resumption of

hugely popular cricket contests. "Our response would be robust, we may accept some of their proposals and we may add. Our response would be compre-

hensive," Khan said. But he expressed regret over a statement by Indian Defense Minister George Fernandes that it was New Delhi's final effort to rescue the faltering peace process "You can't negotiate peace at gunpoint," Khan said.

for price spiral and asked law enforcers to give special attention to key points of import and transport of essential items.

in Savar

his prayers regularly.

Ramadan

begins

1:30pm everyday.

rate messages.

FROM PAGE 12

the country.

FROM PAGE 1

any US casualties.

wide area

security guards.

Baghdad, witnesses said US troops

opened fire, killing at least four Iraqi

civilians, after a roadside bomb

exploded as a US military convoy

passed. The US command did not

mmediately confirm the incident or

At the offices of the International

Committee of the Red Cross in

central Baghdad, witnesses said a

suicide bomber drove an explo-

sives-packed vehicle, apparently an

ambulance, right up to security

barriers outside the building at

about 8:30 a.m. and detonated it,

blowing down the Red Cross's front

wall, devastating the interior and

blowing shrapnel and debris over a

ters in Geneva that 12 people were

killed, including two of its Iraqi

employees. Baghdad ICRC spokes-

woman Nada Doumani said she

believed the employees were

Then, through the morning, four

other vehicles exploded at police

stations in the Baghdad area.

Ambulances, sirens wailing, criss-

"From what our indications are,

none of those bombers got close to

the target," Hertling said. But the

explosions outside police stations

left streetscapes of broken, bloody

bodies and twisted, burning auto-

mobiles. Iraqi police reported some

27 people killed in those attacks,

including 15 Iraqis at the ad-Doura

them, and other Americans were

wounded, said Lt. Sarmad al-

One US soldier was among

station in southern Baghdad.

crossed the city all morning.

The ICRC said at its headquar-

ules.

FROM PAGE 1

same day.

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Savar upazila five years ago.

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced

one Borhanuddin to death for killing

his father at Yearpur village under

Judge A H M Mustaque Ahmed of

the Court of First Additional District

and Sessions Judge, delivered the

case pressed charge against

Nine prosecution witnesses

were cross examined during the

been announced. From Saturday to

Wednesday, office timings will be

from 9:30am to 3:30pm while on

Thursday from 9:30am to 2:30pm.

There will be a 15-minute break for

Zohr prayers from 1:15pm to

essential public services such as

commercial banks, post offices and

hospitals will follow their own sched-

Minister Khaleda Zia and leader of

the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh

Hasina have greeted the country-

men on the occasion, issuing sepa-

working for development projects,

measures for prevention of

diseases, purchase of healthcare

equipment including those for safe

blood transfusion and safe mother-

hood programme and construction

of new sub-health centres across

Sources in the family planning

directorate said more than 90 per

cent of the union-level family wel-

fare centres have run out of drugs,

Meanwhile, Joint Chief of the

health ministry's planning cell Dr

Abdul Wahed Khan met the devel-

opment partners on Thursday to

discuss a possible bailing out of the

usually distributed among clients.

President lajuddin Ahmed, Prime

However, institutions rendering

Borhanu on November 19, 1999.

verdict in absence of the convict.

State Minister for Home Lutfuzzaman Babar also had a meeting with Mannan Bhuiyan and discussed price rise and law and order in the month of Ramadan

Talking to The Daily Star, most ministers held the commerce minister responsible for the market crisis which was eroding the image of the government.

"Instead of managing the arrest or surrender. market, he is busy with foreign trips," one of them said. 'It was a totally wrong decision to give the important portfolio to a 9:00am on October 9, 1998, Borhan complete businessman. I think

the prime minister should correct the wrong," said a key policymaker of the government.

1,500 cops to curb Ctg crime

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Additional 1,500 police personnel will be deployed in the port city from today to curb crimes during Ramadan A Chittagong Metropolitan Police

meeting yesterday decided to post the additional forces, mostly in riot gear. Special patrol teams will be posted to 154 important locations of the city, including shopping malls and commercial areas. Besides, surveillanceÊwill be

stepped up to avert any unprecedented incident during shopping hours, officials said. The commissioner of Chittagong division, deputy commissioners and

senior police officials attended the meeting, sources added. Incidents ofÊmugging, looting and other crimes increase in the port

Eid shopping, police said. Red tape

Biman staff FROM PAGE 12

They paraded through streets and HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted later held a rally They said influential officials are

targetting those who protest corruption in Biman and sought the prime minister's intervention. Biman Steering Committee said the suspension were not with-

drawn in 72 hours, it would go for more protests. Nasimul who joined Biman in

1978 is one of the senior pilots. On October 21, the Directorate of Medical Services of Bangladesh Airforce, which conducts medical checkup of all Biman pilots every six months, declared him unfit due to diabetes

current fund crisis and also to find Nasimul was first diagnosed out alternative ways of funding the diabetic two years ago, but the next health programme likely to be airforce cleared him as his physical aunched in January next year. m was under control Health Under the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) guidelines, pilots with controlled diabetes can fly. Talking to The Daily Star, centres anywhere. Nasimul alleged that his suspension was motivated. budget approval is nothing new. The "As I dare to disclose corruption, Planning Commission usually takes some high Biman officials involved in malpractice want to have me a few months to review the budget removed from the pilot list," he said. proposals but we hope to get approval soon '

Son to die for Rajuk orders halt to killing father **Aziz cooperative** complex construction

Probe finds 'massive anomalies' in building designs, approval

UNB, Dhaka The punishment of the convict

will be effective from the date of his Rajuk, the capital development authority, has challenged the According to the procession, authenticity of architectural plan of Borhan chopped his father Sultan the 14-storey Aziz Cooperative Mia to death at their house at about Shopping-cum-Housing Complex at Shahbagh.

In an order issued on October 22, committed the gruesome murder as his father rebuked him for not saying Rajuk has asked the real estate company which developed the Victim's brother Nasiruddin filed complex at Shahbagh to halt cona murder case with Savar Police struction and submit all original copies of its building designs and Station, accusing Borhanuddin the permission documents in seven The investigation officer of the days.

In a preliminary investigation on the Aziz Cooperative project, Rajuk found anomalies in designs and other documents including official approval of the architectural plan.

Red Cross

slightly injured inside the com-

this attack in the strongest terms

and expresses its heartfelt sympa-

thy with all the victims and their

families, not just our two employees

who were killed." Westphal told AFP.

death and injury among civilians is

prohibited by international humani-

tarian law and does negate the most

basic principles of humanity," he

tions in Baghdad over the next few

davs: there will be no immediate

decision taken on that, we need to

Associated Press. "It's a big shock.

It is obviously impossible to move

onto a normal day's business, so we

really have to step back and take

In Geneva, United Nations aid

But they said it was unlikely their

operations would be affected: They

already had cut back to skeleton

staffs because of the August 19

truck bombing of UN headquarters

agencies said they were shocked by

the bombings, but not surprised.

"Such an attack is a major blow

Westphal told The

take stock," Westphal said.

"We will also reassess our condi-

"Any deliberate attack causing

"The ICRC certainly condemns

Raiuk started the investigation after Áziz Cooperative Flat Owners and Inhabitants Welfare Society in a petition complained about the anomalies and questioned the legality of the architectural plan of the building. autonomous organisations have

FROM PAGE 1

added

for us,"

stock.

pound, Westphal said.

Contacted by telephone, Abdul Latif Hilali, the authorised officer of plan approval section of Rajuk who jected to harassment by the develsigned the order sent to the devel-

Conciliation of **Disputes Board Act** draft okayed

UNB, Dhaka

The cabinet yesterday approved the draft of a new law styled "Conciliation of Disputes (Municipal Areas) Board Act 2003" It replaces the Conciliation of

Disputes (Municipal Areas) Ordinance 1979.

The approval was given at a regular meeting of the cabinet held at the Prime Minister's Office with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia in the

A report on the statistics of the existing ponds and tanks and roadside water-bodies in public and private sectors across the country was presented in the meeting.

The meeting decided to send the statistics to Local Government Division for formulating a work plan for "proper use of these waterbodies under a supplementary programme for poverty alleviation".

Reports on implementation of the decisions taken in the cabinet meetings during the last two years were also presented before the cabinet.

Besides, an obituary reference on the death of Durre Samad Rahman, wife of Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman, was adopted by the cabinet meet-

Cabinet members and State Ministers for concerned ministries attended the meeting. Cabinet Secretary, Principal Secretary to the PM office and concerned secretaries were present

Diarrhoea

FROM PAGE 12 Prior to entering a European of Communicable Disease Control Union foreign ministers meeting in at the health directorate. Brussels, Straw also called the

Most of the upazila health centres in the districts are overcrowded with patients mainly suffering from the water-borne diseases, a senior health official said. "We are very much concerned at the rising attacks especially in the northern districts." he added.

Another official said the 31-bed and 50-bed upazila health centres are mostly unable to handle the rush of diarrhoea patients and are sending many serious cases to district hospitals.

Director General of Health Services Prof. Md Mizanur Rahman said. "We are aware of the situation and have sent a special medical team to all the affected districts. The team will suggest fresh strategies to

Intravenous cholera saline and

Price bull mauls The classified intelligence document

DHAKA TUESDAY OCTOBER 28, 2003

Prices goes higher

import duty, at least 14,000 tonnes of imported onion bought at a lower price during the past one week should have reached the market by now," the additional secretary said.

The commerce ministry, however, announced a week back that a kilo of imported onion should not cost more than Tk 18. That price was calculated taking all possible costs into account, the commerce ministry official said.

According to a monitoring report of the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB), imported Indian onion at Shyambazaar wholesale market was selling at Tk 18 a kilo.

A TCB source said the corpora-

tion has nothing to do with price-

The monitoring report that the market vesterday. commerce ministry received on Ruhul Amin of Mohammadpur October 25 said a kilo of Indian area bought bitter gourd at Tk 36 per onion sold at Tk 24 to 25 in the retail kilo from a market on Sadek Khan market, Salam added. Road Tuesday.

"It's true that the fall of onion prices Nizamuddin of Shahinbagh on the retail market is not upto the bought onion at Tk 26 a kilo from the desired level," said the additional wholesale market of Karwan Bazar secretary, "It is a bit baffling why the the same day. difference between wholesale and retail prices is so wide.'

Usually, the TCB is supposed to import commodities to ease market crisis. But the state-run corporation has not been doing its job for long.

said the annual demand for onion in

Bangladesh is 600,000 tonnes against

140,000 tonnes of domestic produc-

On the kitchen market yesterday,

tomato sold at Tk 50-52 a kilo, up

from Tk 34, brinjal at Tk 22-32 from

Tk 18 and green chilli at Tk 40 from

Tk 16 three weeks ago. A kilo of

bean sold at Tk 50-60 from Tk 25

"With the price hike of all essen-

tials, we are facing a tremendous

kitchen market shopping," said

Nurjahan Begum of Mirpur-1 while

shopping at Karwan Bazar kitchen

pressure on our monthly budget for

cucumber at Tk 25-35 from Tk 12.

fixing: it just collects market informa-"Though it is TCB's chartered tion, makes an analysis and sends a duty to handle such situation, it is daily report to the commerce minisside-tracked due to the govern-Citing statistics of the Department ment's policy," a commerce ministry of Agricultural Marketing, the source source said

arrest and a mob beat him and

others up. But, an autopsy report

prepared by a medical board did not

find evidence to corroborate the

police version that the young man

died from wounds he had suffered

OC and some other policemen

tortured their son to death as they

failed to pay the policemen Tk

lakh, which they had demanded

Main opposition Awami League's

Organising Secretary Saber

Hossain Chowdhury visited the

Meradia house of Sumon and

A three-member delegation of AL

One thousand and five hundred

awmakers will also visit the resi-

The OC denied the allegation.

consoled his family members.

dence of Sumon this morning.

Sumon's parents alleged that the

due to the jump.

Khilgaon OC FROM PAGE 1 jumped to the ground from the roof of a six-storey building to escape

protesting the death of Shakil Ahmed Chowdhury Sumon, who was a resident of the locality, in Khilgaon police custody. They demanded punishment to the officer-in-charge (OC) and others responsible.

Shopkeepers in ward No. 26 (Meradia, Shepahibagh and Goran) of Dhaka City Corporation kept their shutters down from 8:00am to 1:00pm to press their demands.

During the hartal hours, the ocals took out a protest procession.

Sumon's family reiterated that they would file cases against Entejar Rahman and some other policemen of Khilgaon Police Station on charge of torturing Sumon to death.

"We'll definitely file the cases soon. I won't spare the killers of my son," said Sumon's mother Noorjahan Begum

Question leak Khilgaon police arrested Sumon FROM PAGE 12 and four others during an alleged 'We are working to prepare another robbery attempt at house Kha/20 at set of questions for the test," the DIG Malibagh Chowdhurypara said Thursday night. The four were allegedly carrying three firearms constables of Dhaka Metropolitan and some lethal weapons. Police were to sit for the test at

Police claimed that Sumon Rajarbagh Police Line.

8th JS limps

cotted most sittings, the House met on two-thirds of its total workdays without the AL lawmakers. Legislators of the AL stage

circumstances' The drive was widely criticised at ome and abroad rights record.

which about 50 people were killed

across the country in 'mysterious

tackle the situation.'

oral saline are commonly prescribed for the affected. Most of the serious patients have been attacked for a second or third time in less than a week. They appeared malnourished, reports said.

quarters were reviewing operations. "It's too early for us at the moment to say how this attack will impact on our activities," Westphal said. "We will have a fairly clear idea within the next few days how we

Laden's hideout located

want to proceed.

ANI, Lahore

NEWS

oper concerned, confirmed that the preliminary investigation revealed massive anomalies in construction of the complex. Rajuk in its letter also asked Aziz Cooperative to stop the ongoing extended construction work on a

planned 18-storey medicine market on the project land and warned of legal action if the developer failed to comply with the order. Beside, Rajuk has asked the developer to immediately provide

some facilities like staircases to the flat owners. According to the flat owners, the Industrial Promotion Services and Aziz Cooperative Housing Society signed an agreement in 1984 and started registration, construction

Cross bombing in Irag.

deterred.

the owners. There are some 160 flat owners and 650 shop owners in the com-

Contacted, AK Mohammad Hossain, president of Aziz Cooperative Flat Owners and Inhabitants Welfare Society, told the news agency that they were sub-

security situation in Baghdad "un-

satisfactory." Still, he said the over-

all situation in Irag is getting better

He said the coalition will not be

Baghdad and at the Geneva head-

He said ICRC officials in

and allocation of shops and flats to

plex

Pakistan and India have fought three wars since gaining independence from Britain in 1947. two of them over the disputed Himalayan territory of Kashmir.

Minister catches clinics carrying advance medical for jobseekers to Malaysia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment Mohammad Quamrul Islam yesterday paid surprise visits to some medical centres at Banani conducting advance medical checkups for jobs in Malaysia

He found several hundred people lined up for medical checkups at these centres although it is months away before manpower export to that country resumes.

The medical centres the minister visited include International Health Centre and Medinova Medical Services Limited at Banani Road 4, and National Medical Centre at Road 11.

The minister also visited AM Travels Limited at Chairman Bari following information that the agency took advance payments from people for jobs in Malaysia.

He instructed the recruiting agencies to stop receiving passport and money from job seekers and medical centres to stop conducting their medical checkups before manpower export formally resumes

Otherwise, their licences would be cancelled, the minister said.

Sonali Enterprise, Eastern Overseas, Gold Star, Blue Star and East Bengal Overseas are also among recruiting agencies that took money for employment in Malaysia, people alleged.

Bush

FROM PAGE 1 the near simultaneous bombings. Britain led a chorus of outrage among staunch US allies but vowed

there would be no backing down from the drive to rebuild and restore stability to oil-rich Iraq, where US-led forces come under almost daily

attack. British Prime Minister Tony Blair "utterly condemns these evil and wicked attacks," his spokesman said. 'The terrorists and criminals

> responsible for them are obviously the enemies of the Iraqi people inasmuch as they are deliberately targeting those organisations who are helping to build towards a free and stable Iraq.

"But that work will continue," Blair's spokesman said. France, a leading anti-war cam-

paigner, also condemned the attacks but emphasized the importance of restoring sovereignty to Iraqis as a means of stopping the bloodshed.

"Faced with such acts of violence, there is now more than ever an urgent need to launch a political process based on the restoration of Iragi sovereignty, mobilizing all forces with a view to rebuilding the country,' foreign minister spokesman Herve Ladsous said.

US Secretary of State Colin Powell conceded Sunday he had been surprised by the intensity of the attacks

In Brussels, EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana said bluntly "the situation is not very good" and said he hoped the US-led occupation force could regain "the control which is necessary for ... security."

Saddam

FROM PAGE 1 Iraq," the deputy minister added. "I am telling you that we are

waiting for him and his supporters." Hakim, an ad-Doura officer. The US For about half an hour, Ibrahim command did not immediately inspected the devastated bomb site confirm those American casualties. in central Baghdad where 12 people Teams of US military police have been stationed at Baghdad police

Minister Khandaker Damien Personnaz, spokesman

Mosharaff Hossain admitted the for the UN Children's Fund, said it's fund crisis but said, "We have not surprising because it's hapenough stock of drugs and there is pened before, at the UN headquarno shortage of drugs in health ters in Baghdad.

Agencies said it's unlikely that He explained, "The delay in they will scale back their operations after the latest attack, because they have already done so.

Meantime, British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw says he's shocked and outraged at the Red

Baghdad bloodbath kills 35

stations in recent months

Ahmed Abdel Sattar.

were killed.

behind his stand.

At a fifth police station in central

Baghdad, officers stopped a suicide

bomber before he could detonate

his Land Cruiser. "He was shouting,

Death to the Iragi police! You're

collaborators!" said police Sgt.

were killed and 10 others wounded

at the Red Cross bombing. Dr.

Allawi Attivah of the Ibn al-Nafeez

hospital also put the toll at 10 dead.

and said 12 were injured. Nada

Doumani, Baghdad spokeswoman

for ICRC, said she believed one or

two of the Red Cross's Iraqi guards

Hertling said he believed the

attacks may have been timed with

the start of Ramadan in order to

heighten tensions during the fasting

month, when Muslims abstain from

food and drink during daylight hours

Near the three-story ICRC

and religious feelings run high.

who would not give his name.

Hertling said about 10 Iragis

him" "Bin Laden could hardly ask for a

has said.

better hiding place. It's impossible to access the area where he is hiding," The Daily Times quoted the report as saying while referring to the mountains covered with shrubs and smugglers' trails. Bin Laden has been on the run since

The world's most wanted terrorist Osama

bin Laden is hiding in the difficult terrain of

mountains northeast of Kabul, an intelli-

gence report prepared by the

nternational Security Assistance Force

"which is providing militarily support to

the US-led coalition entered Afghanistan in 2001 after the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

FROM PAGE 1 his salary increased Tk 240 to Tk 4.263 a month

"But my landlord increased rent by Tk 200 and I have to spend Tk 200 more a week on grocery," he said. "I live in Gandaria and have to pay Tk 5 in fare instead of the previous Tk 2."

A private employee said his salary did not increase in the last five years, while his house rent alone increased Tk 1.000

engagement now are too lenient."

completing our mission" in Irag.

Iraq's shadowy insurgents.

Red Cross building, was pock-

marked with a half-dozen or more

Two Iraqi security guards also

were hurt. The command did not

immediately identify the dead

"Meet the Press."

coalition.

walkouts on 51 workdays they attended the Jatiya Sangsad. The sitting parliament began its

ourney on October 28, 2001 with the main opposition boycotting the House, rejecting poll results and alleging widespread persecution of its leaders and minority communities in the wake of the October 1 ballot

The AL joined the House in the third session on June 24, 2002 and maintained the run until the eighth session when a junior minister's remarks against Leader of the **Opposition Sheikh Hasina incensed** its deputies, who staged a noisy walkout never to return to the next session

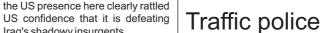
And the AL is yet to make its mind on joining the Jatiya Sangsad.

Yet the current parliament will go down in history for 'creating some rare precedents' including the 'removal of an elected president by a parliamentary party resolution' in June last vear.

AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury tendered his resignation from presidency after the parliamentary "There is no doubt about it that party of the Bangladesh Nationalist we need to change the rules of Party (BNP), the coalition leader, engagement with these people," alasked him to step down. Rabii told CNN. "The rules of

It created another precedent by adopting a censure motion against The rocket attack Sunday struck the sitting leader of the opposition the Al-Rasheed Hotel, where for her comment about the late Wolfowitz was staying at the end of president Ziaur Rahman. a three-day Iraq visit. The deputy The House also passed the joint

defense secretary said afterward forces indemnity bill, indemnifying that attack "will not deter us from the army, Bangladesh Rifles and police personnel who manned the anti-crime Operation Clean Heart in But the bold blow at the heart of



FROM PAGE 12

"We'll have to get the security 'The initiative to run metered CNG situation under control." Secretary vehicles could not change the fate of of State Colin Powell told NBC's drivers. They are deprived and harassed in many ways," said The concrete western face of the Sirajul Islam, assistant director of 18-story hotel, located more than the BRTA. two miles west of the international

The government fixed the daily rent of a CNG three-wheeler at Tk 300. But most owners are collecting Tk 400 to Tk 500 from them, he added.

least two dozen rooms. The US The inadequate number of CNG command said the wounded stations and low pressure in gas included seven American civilians. supply also compound the drivers' four US military personnel and five sufferings. non-US civilians working for the

About 10.000 three-wheelers are now plying the city roads, of them 7,000 are run by the CNG autorickshaws. Thirty-two filling stations in Dhaka and one in Chittagong are struggling to cope with the daily demand for gas.

Some other much-talked-about bills passed by current parliament include repeal of the security of the members of Father of the Nation's family act, the display and preservation of the portrait of the Father of the Nation act and the Public Safety Act. The remarkable new legislation includes two separate bills on

speedy trial act and speedy trial tribunal, the Gram Sarkar bill and a set of bills to raise the remuneration of the speaker, deputy speaker, the prime minister, ministers and legisators

It engaged in only one general discussion on law and order.

The current parliament met on fewer workdays than earlier two parliaments. By the ninth session, the fifth parliament saw 210 workdays and the seventh parliament 188

But analysts say the most critical phase of the current parliament will emerge soon when the next session is summoned in mid-November.

"It will be time for the AL to decide whether they'll join the House or not," an analyst said.

The past two parliaments -- fifth and seventh -- began their journey with the participation of the main opposition.

Both parliaments saw the boycott of the main opposition parties in the third year of their tenure

US wildfires FROM PAGE 12

ng lives and property," he said,

declaring emergencies in Los Angeles, San Diego, Ventura and San Bernardino counties.

The latest blaze in the state is also the biggest -- a 36,000-hectare (90,000-acre) fire that has joined two other fires in the region to burn 236 homes and chew up at least 93.000 acres near the city.

"The fire has now gone into outlying parts of the city of San Diego and has also crossed the border into Mexico," said Adriana Uribe of the San Diego County Sheriff's Department.

Sheriff William Kolender said parts of the city of 1.2 million people were being evacuated and told residents "not hesitate to pack your belongings and leave" if the fire came their way.

daping crack had opened in a back wall, some 100 yards from the blast site, where a crater some five yards across quickly filled with water.

said someone began firing off an automatic weapon immediately after the explosion "100 bullets or more." He said he believed it was a gunmen somehow associated with the bomber "who wanted to scare

Spokeswoman Doumani said more than 100 workers would normally be at ICRC after 9 a.m., but staffers said only about one-quarter that number were present at 8:30

"Of course we don't understand why somebody would attack the Red Cross," she said. "The Red Cross has operated in this country since 1980, and we have not been involved in politics." Asked whether the organization would remain in Iraq, she replied: "I don't even know

Two buildings away, the explosion devastated the interior of the Al-Nawal private polyclinic operated by Dr. Jamal F. Massa, 53, who had been planning to open it as a fullfledged hospital next month.

wife and daughter in his house The vehicle had stopped some 60 feet in front of the Red Cross headquarters, "at a line of barrels we have had in front to protect the building," one Red Cross employee,

The blast blew down a 40-foot section of the ICRC front wall, demolished a dozen cars in the area and apparently broke a water main, flooding the streets. The inside of the building was heavily damaged, ittered with shattered glass, doors support for the US occupation.

blown off their hinges, toppled The US general Hertling said bookcases and collapsed ceilings. A Monday was "a great day for the

Iragi police" because security controls prevented the bombers

The Red Cross staff member

a.m.

building, cigarette vendor Ghani what we're going to do.' Khadim, 50, said he saw an Iraqi ambulance pass by his stand and approach the small compound some 100 yards away. It suddenly exploded, he said, and the blast blew out windows and injured his

We feel helpless when we see this," he said. He said he couldn't understand why the Red Cross would be attacked, since it had even reduced its foreign staff recently.

blast holes. Windows shattered in at "This only hurts guards and other Iragis. The Red Cross and other international aid organizations had reduced their Baghdad staffs after

the car bombing of UN headquarters in Baghdad on Aug. 19, in which 23 people died in what appeared to be a warning against international

American, but Wolfowitz said he was a US colonel.

from reaching their targets. But Mouwafak al-Rabii, a Shiite Muslim member of the USappointed Iragi Governing Council

said the United States must speed up the training of Iraqi police and soldiers and employ ruthless measures to crush the insurgency. people more.'