Questions left unsolved

reiterating what they said a year ago--that "significant progress" has

been achieved in the investigation. Ruhul Amin, special superintendent of Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of police, who is supervising the investigation, claimed a year ago that they were about to complete the investigation and would submit the charge sheet

"We are waiting for a little more information before submitting the charge sheet," he told The Daily Star yesterday but failed to specify

Twenty people were arrested after the attack but 17 of them have been released as the allegation against them had "no merit". The rest three gave statements admitting to their involvement in the

The investigation has so far revolved around the confessional statement of Joz Mia arrested at his village home in Birkot of Senbagh, Noakhali on June 10 last year.

Those he named in his statement as involved in the attack left the country long ago. Khandakar Tanveer Islam Joy, Mokbul Hossain alias Mukul, Mollah Masud, Robin, Shafigul Islam, Zahidur Rahman and Jisan had been hiding in India since long before the attack took

"We have some evidence at our hands now, including the confessional statements and some names as disclosed by the three arrestees. We will have to collect some more evidence to ensure punishment to the accused," said Ruhul Amin.

The investigators seem to wait for these top criminals to return from India as the government is yet to take any initiative to bring home the prime accused including Joy and

The government has admitted that it will not be possible to bring to book the culprits before the ruling coalition's term ends.

The investigators said the case will be resolved once they can arrest these absconding criminals.

State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfozzaman Babar vesterday said he has instructed the law enforcers to prevent the top criminals who have been hiding across the border from slipping into Bangladesh.

QUESTIONS UNANSWERED The investigators are alleged not

to have collected the evidences. including the unexploded grenades. which were vital for the investiga-

Explosive experts of the army detonated two unexploded grenades--one found near the spot and another at the adjacent Gulistan Hawkers' Market--in the dead of night without taking the fingerprints on them. They carried out a similar detonation of another grenade recovered from the Dhaka Central Jail a day after the attack.

Ruhul Amin told The Daily Star vesterday. "We have come to know

that members of Jov's gang attempted to supply the grenade to their men inside the jail. Perhaps they planned to use it when they would appear before the court."

The government, however, never disclosed the information in the past two years.

The Supreme Court Bar Association, which conducted an inquiry into the attack, also blamed the government for destroying evidences.

The mystery behind the quick burial of two unidentified victims on August 22 night has not been

Although unclaimed bodies are supposed to be kept at the mortuary at least for 72 hours for identification, the police took the bodies away and buried those after a hurried autopsy. The investigators failed to justify the quick burial without identi-

Sources said at least one of the two was a primary suspect.

"We have succeeded to identify one of these two," the CID officer said yesterday but declined to

It could not be learnt whether the government took any step in the last two years regarding the law enforcers' failure to ensure security at the

According to the controversial confessional statement of Joz Mia, 20-21 people carried out the grenade attacks. But the law enforcers and intelligence agencies failed to capture any of them.

The investigators said grenades are smuggled into the country through several channels. But they have failed to track down who brought in the grenades used for the

Meanwhile, the government onemember judicial inquiry commission of Justice Joynul Abedin linked a foreign enemy with the attack but its report was not made public. The government is yet to declare whether there were any recommendations in the report and, if any, whether they were implemented.

The judicial inquiry commission claimed to have identified the perpetrators but its head declined to disclose their identity, hinting at the link of foreign enemies apart from the local ones.

"The incident is a naked attack on the independence and sovereignty of the country," Justice Joynul Abedin had told reporters.

Asked if the government will publish the report, Babar said yesterday, "It is not possible for me alone to decide on it. It is a matter of [political] decision.

The minister also opposed the udicial commission's findings about foreign links, saying, "It is difficult to say right at this moment.'

Baffled, they gave up

Afaz Uddin lost his daughter and lone bread earner, Asma could not go back to her husband's house due to loss of her father Hanif Miah who had promised his son-in-law a job as a dowry, and many others are still agonising for the loss of their beloved ones.

Many of the survivors became crippled, lost one or multiple organs. or living with splinter wounds. They still shiver in horror remembering the gruesome moments they under-

"I barely make my living with my two daughters," sighed Rasheda Akhter Ruma who has to walk on crutches.

Her husband died of cardiac arrest, followed by her two and a half-year-old son, leaving her 'alone with all the burdens in this harsh

Daulatun Nahar, being crippled, lost her teaching job, while her husband was fired from an NGO school as it was exposed that she was involved in a party work and injured in an attack on a political programme.

'I can neither walk much, nor lie on bed, not even sit comfortably for long due to the splinters lodged in my body." said Rumi Islam, recalling the horrendous, bloody incident. She took treatment at home and abroad but physicians failed to

remove the splinters from the body. And such are the cases of Asma Zerin Jhumu, Morshed Kamal, Beauty Nizam, Ratna Aktar Baby and around 200 leaders and activists of Awami League and its front

organisations. "It was a moment of standing between life and death," said city AL leader Morshed Kamal. "Bombs were hurled all around us, but we could not move due to the rush and

stampede ... as if waiting to see the end of life," he said. There are even those who were injured in the stampede after the blasts. Amena suffered badly for quite a long time as 'numerous people' stepped over her body, in

the chaos. On the eve of the second anniversary of the deadly grenade attack in the country that took away 24 lives, Morsheda Mridha was found crying in front of the Patuakhali grave of her only son Mamun, a college student, reports

our local correspondent. "I want to know the masterminds behind the cowardly mayhem." demanded the mother.

"Have I not lost my only child? What have I got instead? And why should I even be deprived of justice?" she threw a question.

Nepal peace

sought cooperation from Bangladesh with his landlocked country. Khaleda said Nepal could use Mongla seaport and Banglabandh land-port of Bangladesh as their outlets.

"We believe in peace and democracy," Khaleda was quoted as saying to the deputy prime minister of Nepal.

Amik apprised Khaleda that discussions were going on between Nepal and India with many proposals on the table, including the setting up of a tunnel for trade communications. And if they get a positive outcome, they would use Mongla

He said Nepal also wants more facilities for Nepalese students' education in medical colleges of Bangladesh and cooperation from Bangladesh in the pharmaceutical

The prime minister said Bangladesh would consider increasing medical seat quota for Saarc countries, including Nepal.

About cooperation in the pharmaceutical sector, she said Nepal could send a delegation to know about developments of the pharmaceutical industry here.

Khaleda stressed on enhancing the existing 'excellent' bilateral relations and said Bangladesh would do everything to improve the ties, particularly through cooperation in managing water resources and in trade, between the two coun-

She said, "If three neighbouring countries concerned can utilise water resources, the three would

Health Minister Khandokar Mosharraf Hossain and the PM's Principal Secretary Dr Kamal Siddiqui were also present.

Local govt bodies

FROM PAGE 16 signatures, Rahima Akhter of Araihazar UP under Raiganj upazila said

Selima Begum of Madaripur Paurashava suggested ensuring the women members' attendance in the monthly coordination meeting at the upazila level so that they know the decisions taken.

Speaking as the chief guest at the inaugural session, Speaker of Parliament Jamiruddin Sircar said the women MPs should go to the women members of the local governments, exchange their views and strengthen relationship that will gradually create awareness of their rights to play their due

Emphasising decision making capacity of women public representatives, he said one parliamentary seat from each of the 64 districts could be reserved for the women candidates to increase their participation in the direct electoral process.

Jahanara Begum MP said women MPs' meeting with the women members of local councils and listening to their problems may help formulate laws in parliament. Regular meetings with the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs can also help overcome their problems,

Helen Jerin Khan MP and Shirin Jahan, a ward commissioner of Dhaka City Corporation, presented two keynote papers on the relationship between the women MPs and women members of local government institutions, while Sarwari Rahman MP, leader of the Parliamentary Caucus on Gender. chaired the session.

Shahidul Haque Jamal MP. Parliament Secretary ATM Ataur Rahman, Assistant Resident Representative of UNDP Nojibur Rahman, Project Implementation Specialist of SPD Prof ATM Obaidullah also spoke.

Ex-speaker

FROM PAGE 16 constituencies in the 2001 parliamentary elections after he gave ultimatum to BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, still hopes to stand in the next parliamentary elections from either of the two constituen-

Shahjahan

Indoor Stadium pool.

He, however, turned slow in the last hurdle allowing India's Sandeep Sejwal to win the gold in 1.07:73s.

Shajahan, who clocked 1.07:99s in the heats, finished the final with a timing of 1.08:08s to win the second silver for Bangladesh in the regional Olympic extrava-

His compatriot Niaz Ali finished third to win his second bronze in successive days. Niaz, who bronze on Saturday, finished the 100m in 1.10:34s

"I started at BKSP in 1997 as a freestyle swimmer but changed to breaststroke in 2000," said Shahjahan.

The two-time 50m breaststroke national champion complained after the event that they have failed to improve personal timings because of the lack of minimum modern

facilities like gym equipments. "India and Sri Lanka get much more facilities than us but the result shows that we are not far behind in competition. If we had better facilities, we could have done better," said the boy from

Chapainawabgani. "We hope to do better in the short distance events and I am confident I will win gold in the 50m," he added.

Nazrul Islam won bronze in men's 50m freestyle while Sabura Khatun finished fifth among six swimmers in the women's 800m freestyle. Munmun Ahmed had the worst performance on the day. becoming last amongst seven competitors in the men's 200m backstroke. The women's 4x100m relay team (Sabura, Dolly, Mahfuza, Afsana) finished fourth among five

Mizanur Rahman was the other Bangladeshi to win a bronze in weightlifting (77kg).

Graft case

FROM PAGE 16

from the City Bank Limited in the name of a fake company AM Traders, Later, he with the connivance of others misappropriated all the money taken from the bank.

An official of the defunct Bureau of Anti-Corruption (Bac) filed a graft case against Zakaria and four others on June 2, 1999. The IO pressed charges against Zakaria and five others on March 15 this

were present in the court yesterday.

Metropolitan Public Prosecutor Abdullah Mahmud Hassan appeared for the state while Advocate Saveed Ahmed Gazi defended the accused.

Rush for record govt

to the tender. It found that BTTB had pushed out ZTE from the tender process giving it penalty points for lapses in its offer but at the same time. BTTB had not penalised Huawei for having the same lapses.

The review panel in its decision in last July said. "re-tender should be called after making specifications more correctly and clearly. Penalty points should be shown against each item where applicable." The second telecoms ministry

deal is the Tk 99 crore supply of 185

units of radio link for BTTB's rural network, to be awarded to another Chinese company China National Machinery & Equipment Import & Export Corporation (CMEC). However, documents reveal that the original bid sought 220 units of radio link. CMFC became the lowest

28, 2004 BTTB decided to re-tender the project. But that never took place. Instead, on June 13, 2006, the Chinese vendor directly persuaded the telecoms ministry and BTTB retracted the re-tender. Then BTTB doubled the budget but reduced the total number of radio links to 185 units. The move will make BTTB pay far higher price for a lesser number of equipment

bidder but its price was 2.5 times

higher than BTTB's budget. On April

The third telecoms deal is again set to go to Huawei. All the tender bids for this Tk 26 crore project to supply four units of Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) platforms to BTTB were found technically unresponsive by another review panel of the government. On July 24 last, the review committee gave its decision asking to re-tender the project. But the telecoms ministry brushed aside the verdict and forwarded Huawei's proposal to the cabinet committee

CWASA'S FAULTY DEAL

Another government review panel or July 31 contradicted the LGRD ministry's Tk 64 crore proposal to award a contract to local DCL & Associates for setting up a water treatment plant under Chittagong Wasa. Earlier in March, the Cabinet Purchase Committee also smelt a rat in this deal and rejected it.

The review panel detected gross irregularities in the tender, which was set to award the contract to a bidder quoting a suspiciously low price of Tk 64 crore which is Tk 30 crore lower than the second and third lowest offers.

The review panel of the planning ministry concluded that if the contract is awarded to the so-called lowest bidder, the purpose of the tender will not be properly served. It asked the authorities to negotiate with the second lowest bidder

Earlier in March, following the purchase committee's rejection, a three-member probe committee was set up with the LGRD secretary as its head. This committee also filed its report in July. Interestingly, the secretary recommended awarding the job to DCL & Associates, while the other two members a Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology professor, and the director general of Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED) strongly opposed it.

A DOZEN LAND DEALS

Of a dozen land deals worth Tk 222 crore. 10 schemes involve land development for Uttara Third Phase Residential Town Project at a cost of around Tk 100 crore. Sources said a vested interest group bagged the deals but they are not doing the jobs. Instead, these contractors subcontracted the jobs to third parties at

much lower costs. The eleventh land deal is the Tk 18 crore development work for

Purbachal New Town scheme. The twelfth deal is land development at a hefty cost of Tk 104 crore for Jhilmil Residential Project. Three vears ago, when the housing ministry floated tender for this job, it attached a condition that the bidder must own a dredger to qualify. The idea was to use the dredger to collect soil from the river near the project for land filling.

Sources said the condition was imposed to award the contract to a particular party as it is not the concern of the authorities how a contractor supplies soil to fill up low lying

Two years back, one bidder was selected to do this job at the rate of Tk 107 for per cubic metre of land development. However this bidder could not use the dredger.

Now the authorities have lifted the condition of using the dredger and

Ex-navy officer

FROM PAGE 16 Muzakkir Ahmed said his father might be killed as a sequel to a feud that followed his involvement in social activities in the area. The criminals also took away gold orna-

ments worth around Tk 1 lakh. he Moveeinuddin, who was the vice-president of Sector10 Welfare Society, restricted plying of trucks from Ashulia to Uttara through the streets of Sector 10, which infuri-

taker of the house Raibul Islam. Following the move, criminals from nearby Rana Bhola area came

ated some truck owners, said care-

sometime between 12:30am to 4:00am yesterday when he was alone in his room at a house on Babar Road in Mohammadpur.

Police recovered the body in the

increased the cost of per cubic metre

increasing the project cost by Tk 24 **BARAPUKURIA POWER PROJECT**

land filling to Tk 137 from Tk 107,

The power ministry proposed a Tk 11 crore deal for one year service from experts of the Chinese company CMEC at the 250 mw coal fired power project in Barapukuria.

Sources said the government already spent nearly 2 million dollars to train its own manpower to run the plant. CMEC's contractual term expired and its experts should have left the country by now. However, sources said the experts are continuing to work at the plant without any approval from higher authorities. The power ministry's proposal is aimed at egitimising the experts' over-stay and the unnecessary payments made to them, while the plant is under-performing and running behind schedule.

The power project was built at a cost of nearly 260 million dollars under supplier's credit costing over 100 million dollars more than other projects of similar size. Abrother of an nfluential parliamentarian of the ruling BNP is the beneficiary of all components of this project as the local agent of many Chinese companies involved there

OTHER DEALS

Other deals to be tabled today include a Tk 185 crore procurement of 1,00,000 tons of fertiliser, settlement of Tk 30 crore extra financial claims by the contractor of Pakshi Bridge, setting up of the National Institute of Neuro-science at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka at a cost of Tk 37 crore, and Tk 6 crore appointment of a supervision consultant for the Gulistan-Jatrabari flyover.

MRP-NID

The home ministry's Tk 1561 crore proposal for procuring machine-readable passports (MRP), visas and national identity cards (NID) from a German company G&D might also be tabled today. This proposal was rejected on July 17 and the home ministry was asked to re-tender it and to drop the costly NID component from the re-tendering.

But a powerful group -- eager to draw commission from G&D by getting the project approved using their influence -- succeeded in reviving it through the Prime Minister's Office (PMO). The PMO asked the finance minister to approve the

The home ministry's proposal says that in the first year of the fivevear programme, three million MRPs will be issued. During this phase, the contractor will provide necessary hardware, software, local and foreign manpower, and consumables to the immigration and passport depart

The home ministry adds that the new passports and ID cards will increase acceptability of Bangladeshi passports internationally, which will eventually increase overseas employment, help implementation of the government's national security policy, boost direct revenue earnings, and resolve international pressure on Bangladesh on introduction of such passports etc

Bangladesh has an international obligation to introduce MRP by 2007. But there is no obligation for the NID scheme. In addition, there is no approval of the prime minister to set up a national registration department which will issue NIDs. In addition, the law required for the NID implementa-

tion has yet to be framed

DAPDAPIA BRIDGE The purchase committee earlier rejected the Tk 139 crore Dapdapia Bridge project on the Barisal-Patuakhali Road. The purchase committee asked the communications ministry to form a committee to find out why the tendering authorities had selected the second lowest

bidder for the construction. The ministry argued that since the lowest bidder's offer was 30 percent lower than the estimated project cost and the second lowest bidder's offer was 22 percent lower, it assumed that lower price offer implies lower quality of work and that is why it picked the second lowest bidder.

AL to mourn

alliance will place wreaths at

Twenty-three people, including AL leader Ivy Rahman, were killed and over 400 others wounded in the barrage of grenade blasts at the AL's anti-terror rally attended by the entire leadership of the party.

organise road marches from different city points towards the party central office at 3:00pm. The party leaders, workers and

To mark the day, the AL will

supporters will observe the twominute silence on their way to the Bangabandhu Avenue at 5:22pm. the time of the first grenade blast. Candles will be lit in front of the

memorial plaque in the evening. All units of the party will organise similar programmes across the

country, said an AL press release.

capital to protest the August 21 attack. CPB leaders and workers held a rally in front of the party central office where the speakers denounced the government for its failure to bring the culprits to justice.

US congressmen

FROM PAGE 16 This was a high-level reaction from the US side on the eve of second anniversary of the deadly attack on AL rally, which was an attempt to assassinate AL chief Sheikh Hasina and other senior

"Despite assurances of a proper investigation of the attack evidence was not properly preserved and individuals with no connection to the crime were brought forward as false suspects and ultimately released," they said. They further observed that those

responsible appear to have gotten away with impunity. "Besides, assistance provided at the

request of your (Khaleda Zia) govern-

ment by the United States and other nations was not utilised fully to investigate the attack," the letter said. The attack subsequently escalated political violence in Bangladesh in both quantity and severity that included killing of former finance minister and AL leader Shah AMS Kibria, emer-

gence of Islamic radical groups, the

first suicide bomb attacks in the history

of Bangladesh, along with 469 simul

taneous bombings across the country in last August, the congressmen said. Failure of the investigation is symbolic of a serious diminution of rule of law in Bangladesh and it has emboldened lawlessness and allowed Islamic extremist elements to gain ground in Bangladesh, they added

They also expressed concern over the impact of the failure of the investigation into the attack on the next general elections in Bangladesh.

"With the national election in less than six months the failure to apprehend suspects and mete out justice in this high profile attack on the head of the opposition party, send a disconcerting message to voters for the potential of intimidation and violence in the run up to the election."

The signatories of the letter are Joseph Crowley, Charles Gonzalez, Alcee Hastings, Frank Pallone, Diane E Watson, Eliot L Engel, Robert Wexler, GK Butterfield Corinne Brown Janice D Schakowsky, Michael Capuano, Barney Frank, Brian Higgins, Sherrod Brown, Debbie Wasserman Schultz, Kendrick B Meek, Anthony D Weiner and Al Green.

Voter list updating

allegations against allowing underage people to apply have been made in many areas

The field-level staff starts compiling the information received in applications from today. They are supposed to complete the compilation by August 26. After that the updated list would

be kept on display for public inspec-

tion for three days. HC rule on govt

FROM PAGE 1 remaining seats," the petitioner stated, pointing out a discrepancy here with regard to spending for the elections.

He said the candidate can spend maximum Tk 5 lakh for one constituency. But when one contests from five seats at a time in that case there is no prescribed law regarding the expenditure against these seats. This has created an inconsistency.

Mohammad Ali moved the writ HuJi comeback

FROM PAGE 1 need to examine the reality and the whole situation," Babar told report-

ers at his office yesterday. Asked whether the government has any information on more militant organisations' launching political programmes, the state minister said. "There is no scope for any militant organisation to hold political activities.

7th Expert Group

to have a skilled and a creative workforce; and to become a globally integrated economic and commer

cial regional hub. Over the next 15 years, an increased size of the population, greater urbanisation and economic growth will present environmental challenges such as increased levels of soil degradation and industrial wastewater, a rise in domestic sewage and hazardous wastes, and a depletion of our water and coastal resources. Increased levels of air and water pollution and the loss of natural habitats --primarily due to deforestation --will also be some of potential negative environmental consequences of Bangladesh's

growth over the coming years. A strategy for better management of our environment will have to be based on collaborative efforts by a determined government, conscious citizens and responsible businesses. Al these and many more relevant issues will be deliberated and consulted upon at today's session, says CPD press release.

The outline of the Vision 2021 for Bangladesh has been drafted on the basis of recommendations and aspirations propagated by a large umber of people attending the regional civil society dialogues at various places of Bangladesh,

The Vision 2021 for Bangladesh will eventually be presented to the next elected government and parlia-

Lebanon truce

into the area by helicopter, was defensive and designed to disrupt weapons supplies to Hezbollah

from Syria and Iran. It denied it had violated the UN truce resolution, which allows it to act in self-defense, and accused Hezbollah of a breach of the

ceasefire by smuggling weapons. One Israeli soldier was killed and two wounded when the commandos clashed with Hezbollah guerrillas near the village of Bodai, 26km from

the Syrian border. Hezbollah denied it had suffered any casualties after security sources in Lebanon said three querrillas were killed.

The Lebanese government rowed to crush any attempt on the Lebanese side of the border to break the truce, saying anyone attacking Israel would be considered a traitor. The army will be very tough in

dealing with such an issue, Lebanese Defense Minister Elias al-Murr told a news conference. 'Any rocket fired from Lebanon will benefit Israel," he said, suggest-

ing such an incident would provide a pretext for the Jewish state to attack Lebanon. The minister said he was confident Hezbollah would stick to the

truce and not try to rearm.

would crack down on arms shipments. "There is no flexibility on arms smuggling," he said. Israeli reconnaissance planes flew over Lebanon on Sunday. Witnesses and Lebanese security

Murr said the army now controlled

the entire border with Syria and

sources said high-altitude flights covered virtually the whole country from its war-torn south to close to the border with Syria in the north and east. In Jerusalem, Israel's top gen eral conceded his army had failed to

Lebanon and 157 in Israel. "The feeling of the public is that it was not a knockout blow. Lieutenant General Dan Halutz told the Israeli cabinet, according to a government source

France said it had asked

European Union president Finland

destroy Hezbollah during the war, which claimed 1,183 lives in

to call a meeting of the bloc's member states to discuss Lebanon. A Finnish official said the EU's Political and Security Committee would meet on Wednesday. Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora inspected damage in

Hezbollah stronghold ravaged by Israeli air strikes. "This is a crime against humanity committed by Israel here and in other areas of Lebanon," he said in

Iran said it was working on an aid

package to help rebuild shattered

areas of Lebanon, but a senior Foreign

Beirut's southern suburbs, a

Ministry official said nothing had yet been decided. Hezbollah began last week paying cash compensation to the former occupants of 15,000

destroyed homes and has vowed to

repair thousands more homes damaged by Israel across Lebanon. Israel and the United States have expressed concern that Hezbollah will use Iranian money to rebuild

Lebanon, consolidating the group's standing. Hundreds of thousands of refugees have returned to their ravaged villages in south Lebanon since the

truce. 'They are going to need a year to clear the rubble, to rebuild, and to

start again," said Cassandra Nelson

Hasina says

of aid group Mercy Corps.

aovt

FROM PAGE 1 national and international quarters and staged a mockery of investigation instead, Leader of the Opposition

Sheikh Hasina said yesterday. "We wanted proper investigation. justice and punishment to the criminals. We wanted an international investigation to stop recurrence of such heinous attacks, but the government has made the investigation a total farce," Hasina, also the Awami League (AL) president, said in a message on the eve of the second

anniversary of the brutal attack. Referring to the August 21 grenade attack that killed 24 AL leaders and activists and injured 500, the AL president said the government is reluctant to carry out a proper investigation even though there is interna-

tional pressure on this matter. Hasina said no attacker was arrested although a large number of law enforcers including members of different intelligence agencies were present at the rally. After the attack, instead of captur-

ing the attackers and taking the injured to hospitals, the police were busy lobbing teargas shells to allow the attackers flee the crime scene. Also, the government swiftly destroyed the evidence of the attack, said Hasina. Judges and lawyers were killed last year in bomb attacks again since the government did not investigate, arrest and punish the offenders of the August

especially Jamaat-e-Islami, has a close link with them, alleged the former prime minister The AL chief said it seems that there is no government and rule of law in the country. Bangladesh now holds a tarnished image abroad due to human rights violation, extra-judicial killings and for patronising militant outfits. "So people must know who are

21 attack. Training of militants is still on

in different parts of the country and the

BNP-Jamaat alliance government,

involved in the series of bomb and grenade attacks" Hasina said the people are going through great difficulties due to price hike of essentials and the only way to saving them and the country is by

overthrowing the present government. Hasina urged the countrymen to be united and fortify the ongoing movement for reforms in the caretaker government and the election commis-

90 killed

FROM PAGE 16 have left scores of people dead this year with security officials saying they are determined to root out rebel opera-

A suicide bomb in the town's

bazaar on August 3 killed 21 civilians in one of the bloodiest such attacks in the insurgency.

Afghan officials also announced Sunday that six policemen and four Taliban rebels were killed when mili-

the western province of Nimroz

Three policemen and five Taliban were also wounded in the clash Saturday in Delaram district, which has seen several Taliban-linked attacks including against foreign nationals working on road construction projects.
The US-led coalition that helped to

tants attacked a border police patrol in

topple the Taliban in late 2001 announced on Saturday that four of its soldiers were killed in other clashes that day. In one a bomb struck a unit of the US-led coalition force in hostile Pech district of the eastern province of

Kunar. The rebels then opened fire with small arms and artillery. Three US soldiers were killed and

three wounded, coalition spokesman Colonel Thomas Collins told AFP In Uruzgan in the south a US

soldier training the national army and

an Afghan troop were killed in heavy

fighting with up to 150 insurgents.

Three other US soldiers were The coalition, which numbers more than 20,000 mainly American troops, transferred authority of the southern provinces to Isaf on July 31 but still commands the east where it focuses

Isaf, which has 21,000 troops from

37 nations, is also in charge of west and north where it is trying to extend government authority and facilitate econstruction. The force has had a tough time

on hunting down insurgents.

neighbouring Pakistan.

stampede.

told AFP.

about 10 soldiers in hostile action in the past three weeks alone. The Taliban insurgency has shown no signs of abating despite the efforts of thousands of foreign and Afghan troops. Afghan officials sav rebel fighters are being trained and armed in

"But the unity shown then by the

Adhamiyah people with those with

Kadhimiyah helped heal wounds," he

said, referring to two districts -- one

Sunni and one Shia -- linked by the Al-

Aima bridge, the scene of last year's

southern city of Amara to take part in

this year's pilgrimage. "It took us seven

days. We risked our lives and braved

all possible danger to reach here." he

million pilgrims to attend the ritual.

Security forces expect more than a

Iragi authorities have created a

detailed security plan and imposed a

vehicle curfew across much of central

Baghdad from nightfall Friday for two

. Kareem Risan, walked from the

since moving into the south, losing

Snipers kill 20

FROM PAGE 16 ambushes on "takfiris" or Sunni extremists, but some Sunni leaders claimed Shias had provoked the attacks and government security forces had stood by as militiamen

attacked Sunni homes and mosques.

"We demand that the government stand up to these saboteurs and those who are trying to destabilise the country" said a statement from the Islamic Party, the main Sunni group in Iraq's coalition government. Despite the threat of attacks, men

women and children carrying green, orange and yellow flags and Korans many of them dressed in traditional Shia black outfits, gathered at the tomb of Imam Musa Kadhim. Iraqi and US security forces were

on a high alert to protect pilgrims,

many of whom have walked barefoot

teers sprinkled rose water on them and others prepared rice and meat to be served as lunch to the devotees.

Health officials put the average

daily death toll at 50, while Iraqi and US forces have deployed more than 30.000 troops under an ambitious security plan designed to return order to the capital.

days until after the crowds have from across Iraq over the past week to to his house over a month back and which are being organised collabordispersed Sunday evening. Baghdad which is gripped by a bloody AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil threatened him of dire conseatively by Centre for Policy Dialogue In the run-up to the holy festival Shia-Sunni sectarian conflict in a statement yesterday urged the The IO also prayed for order of quences, he said, adding that a jhut (CPD), the Prothom Alo, The Daily Baghdad has been even more tense Troops and volunteers offered food party's different units to observe the trader of the area was also angry attachment of their moveable prop-Star and Channel-i. The Nagorik than it was before last year's event. and water to the pilgrims as they erties vesterday. with him as he restricted such anniversary. Committee 2006 is now going Daily insurgent bombings target arrived and made their way to the Meanwhile, the Communist Two accused Ahmed Fuad business in the residential area. through a process of consultation crowds of Shia civilians, while so-Chowdhury and Mohammad Unknown criminals slaughtered Party of Bangladesh (CPB) yester-Pilgrims inside the mausoleum with expert groups about the draft called death squads hunt members of day staged demonstrations in the kissed the tomb, while outside volun-Shafigul Alam are on bail and they security guard Mujibur Rahman, 40, the Sunni minority.

"It was a shattering experience for ment with a more detailed descripus when so many people died on the bridge last year," said Haider Sadek, a tion of short and medium term Shia from Baghdad.