City bursts into violence

destinations. Thousands of people were seen walking to their places of

Road communications between the capital and a few districts including Chittagong and Sylhet also remained snapped as thousands of demonstrators barricaded the Dhaka-Chittagong and Dhaka-Mawa highways at Shanir Akhra, Jatrabari and Sayedabad from

early morning. Most parts of Mirpur-12 remained plunged in darkness as of 8:00pm last night since the Dhaka Electricity Supply Company (Desco) sub-offices could not restore power supply in the area with their equipment damaged by

the demonstrators. Sources said thousands of locals started gathering at different points of Mirpur, Pallabi and Kafrul after Tarabi

whole area had been without power since evening. They started assembling near the Desco head office at Mirpur-13 around 1:00am and asked the Desco officials

prayers Wednesday night as the

to resume power supply.

The locals turned violent around 1:15am and set fire to the Desco office and seven pick-up vans on the office compound. The fire also burnt some furniture and air conditioners of the

Meanwhile, a few hundred locals from the Bihari Camp and Mirpur-7 attacked the Desco sub-office at

Mirpur-11 Later, the agitating locals took to the streets and thousands of others joined them before long.

By the morning yesterday, thousands of people had taken position on the roads at Pallabi, Mirpur-10, Kazipara, Sheorapara and Mirpur-2.

They burnt tyres on the streets. During the agitation, the angry people burnt 13 pick-up vans of Desco, one minibus, two motorbikes and a CNG-autorickshaw in the areas. They also vandalised windshields of over 100 running vehicles and pelted stones at the wayside buildings and

garment factories. Life in Mirpur area became chaotic with people not being able to go to their destinations and schools, garment factories and other shops and offices

remaining closed. Several hundred policemen and Rab personnel went to the area in the morning in a bid to contain the situation. The police fired rubber bullets and teargas shells and sprayed water to quell the agitated people while the demonstrators indiscriminately pelted brickbats at the law enforcers.

At one stage, the agitating people encircled several hundred policemen at Mirpur-10 with the law enforcers apparently giving up as they ran out of ammunition

The locals entered and vandalised Desco sub-office at Mirpur-11 around 11:00am but no law enforcers dared to step forward to prevent the

The lawless situation continued until evening when the demonstrating people left the roads amid heavy

downpour. JATRABARI, SHANIR AKHRA, POSTOGOLÁ

Police virtually had no control over the mob in the areas under Shyampur, Demra and Jatrabari police stations after its dwellers took to the streets Wednesday night.

The people yearning for electricity of Jatrabari, Shanir Akhra, Dholaipar and Postogola barricaded the Dhaka-Chittagong and Dhaka-Sylhet highways and several other roads in the adiacent areas.

The agitators set fire to three vehicles and a local power office and vandalised around 10 vehicles leaving several transport employees injured The angry mob also chopped down

trees and set up barricades on roads with them. During the rampage, no law enforcers were seen in those areas. When

asked, a police official in a vehicle next to Jatrabari Police Station said. "We don't have the permission to take any actions.

Even though a mob was vandalising vehicles near a filling station next to he Jatrabari Police Station around 4:00pm, several police sergeants were seen taking shelter inside houses, leaving their motorbikes on the road.

Thousands of commuters and

eral miles to get a vehicle. Some had to sit inside their bus for hours, sources

The angry people also tore down banners, billboards, posters of local lawmaker Salauddin and another BNP leader Nabiullah Nabi.

Meanwhile, Demra, Shyampur Pani O Bidyut Sangram Parishad, which agitated for better utility services on May, threatened to go for tougher agitation programmes if the government failed to implement their 10-point demand by October 5. Convenor of the Parishad Mosleh Uddin Masud said they would organise a rally on October 8 if their demands were not met by October 5. He said they would go for programmes like strike and indefinite hartal.

KERANIGANJ

Following a power cut at around 12:30am yesterday, hundreds of people vandalised a Palli Bidyut office at Zinzira leaving at least 50 including law enforcers injured.

Rab and police tried to bring the situation under control around 4:00am but the angry mob surrounded the law enforcers and burned down a Rab vehicle. Witnesses said law enforcers, after reinforcements arrived tried to disperse the mob which led to chases and counter chases.

Keraniganj police said around 10 policemen were injured and the agitators snatched a wireless set from policeman. Five people have been picked from the spot.

Meanwhile, a mob protesting against power cuts set ablaze a double-decker bus near Suritola Primary School in old Dhaka, UNB reports.

Witnesses said the mob while holding the street protest burned the ous down around 8:20pm yesterday. SAVAR

Twenty people were injured in police action on the demonstrators who laid a siege to Palli Bidyut Samity Office-1 at Savar on Wednesday night, demanding uninterrupted power supply.

As the locals incensed over prolonged power cuts attempted to ransack the office at about 10:00pm, police charged baton on them.

SYI HFT People went on the rampage at PDB offices, sub stations and Palli Bidyut offices at places in Sylhet Wednesday night, reports our correspondent.

After a three-hour outage in onethird of the city area, about 200 people brought out processions from the city's Kazitola and Barutkhana and went to PDB's Sylhet Division-II office at about

They vandalised the office and set fire to two motorbikes while some employees were trapped inside. The situation eased after police

and officials went there. Villagers from Kumargaon. Sheikhpara, Tukerbazar and Chorugaon went on a rampage at 20MW nower station at Kumargaon on the city suburb after the Tarabi prayers as the area ran without power for three hours during the day time and

plunged into darkness after the Iftar. The demonstrators left the area about an hour later when the officials assured them of taking steps for

resumption of power supply.

As South Surma, Subidbazar, Mirer Maidan, Kewapara, Kolapara, and Sagordighirpar areas remained

without power from 7:00pm to 2:00am yesterday, people held a protest rallv About 2,000 people of Golapgani

upazila obstructed traffic on Sylhet-Zakiganj road after the Tarabi prayers on Wednesday and vandalised Palli Bidyut Samity zone office. They set a ckup and a motorbike on fire.

People plaqued by power outages vandalised the upazila Palli Bidyut Samity office after the Tarabih prayers on Wednesday night, the DGM of Palli Bidyut Samity in Beanibazar upazila

NARAYANGANJ

About 5,000 people affected by power disruption vandalised Desa power substation at Mondolpara early yesterday and locked in clashes with police.

After power supply was stopped from the 17MW substation on Wednesday midnight, people of Deobhog, Baburail, Jollarpar, Paikpara, Tanbazar, Neemtola and DIT commercial area took to the streets and asked the locals over spondents report

Joined by many more, the demonstrators attacked the substation and vandalised 7/8 vehicles

Tension gripped the area as police charged batons on them.

CHITTAGONG

Following frequent power outages for seven to twelve hours every day in the port city, the Consumers Right Protection Committee (CRPC) yesterday gave an ultimatum to the government for smooth power supply, reports our correspondent.

In case of failure, they warned of a violent movement even during the holy month of Ramadan.

The CRPC Chairman Khorshed Alam Sujan presided over the meeting that was addressed by Shahriar Khaled, Jasmine Sultana Paru, Mohammad Mohiuddin, Siraiul Islam and Momena

Akter Navan

NARSINGDI Several thousand textile workers vesterday blockaded the Dhaka-Chittagong railway at Amirganj Rail Station in Raipura upazila for four hours demanding uninterrupted

power supply, UNB reports. The aggrieved workers put roadblocks on the rail line at 6:45am, disrupting train communications on the route.

Upakul Express, Parabat, Mohanagar, Egaro Sindhur, Titas and Surma Mail remained stranded in and outside the station, causing immense

suffering to thousands of passengers. The workers withdrew the blockades at 11:00am after Narsingdi Deputy Commissioner Firoz Salahuddin and police officials assured them of uninterrupted power

"The textile mills experience 8/9 hours of load-shedding every day which causes low production. As a result, we are being deprived of salary which is proportional to production,"

said labour leader Ruhul Amin. A worker was killed in police firing when the demonstrators attacked Palli Bidyut Office-2 at Choala in the town

on September 14. SATKHIRA

Locals ransacked Jhaodanga Palli Bidyut office in the district yesterday protesting frequent load shedding during the last three days, reports

The angry people broke the windowpanes of the office and ransacked furniture and documents during the two-hour siege programme.

Palli Bidyut DGM Mahbub Ali said some 31,000 subscribers of Sadar and Kalaroa upazilas need 31MW power every day, but are getting barely 2MW over the last few days.

MAGURA

Aggrieved people attacked the power office in the town on Wednesday night and vandalised a pick up van, doors and windowpanes and furniture of the office during the attack that began at 9:00pm. Police arrested one Tanmoy

during the incident. **MUNSHIGANJ**

Hundreds of people demonstrated in front of Palli Bidyut offices at Louhajang and Sirajdikhan upazilas vesterday morning demanding smooth power supply, reports a corre-

spondent. The demonstrators also kept Palli Bidyut Samity DGM Tapan Kumar Das confined for several hours.

UNB adds: In the wake of attacks by power-hungry people, the fieldlevel officials of Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (Desa) vesterday urged the government to arrange special security for their offices

They strongly appealed for declaring all power outlets key-point installations and deployment of adequate

security for their safety The officials raised the demand at a meeting with Desa Chairman Brig General Nazrul Hasan at Desa head-

quarters in the city

October 6.

Power sector

was supposed to go into full operation today. But this has become uncertain due to the NBR's refusal to release the equipment from Zia International Airport. These equipment have been imported for maintenance work of the plant on an urgent basis in the context

of the grim power scenario. Meahnaghat plant, CDC Globelag, told the NBR that as per agreement. payment of tax for the equipment officials refused to accept this argument and the CDC met with the power secretary to resolve the impasse. The secretary on Wednesday requested the NBR to act immediately as this was

worsening the power situation. Meanwhile, to tackle the mess. State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfozzaman Babar yesterday came in aid of the power ministry. He discussed with the power secretary on how to minimise the load-shedding level and later briefed the law enforcement agencies on handling the public discontent.

Babar also suggested that the PDB should ensure uninterrupted power supply to mosques and cold storages.

He assured the Power Division of security measures at all important power installations. Moreover, he assigned some senior officials of his

ministry to help the Power Division coordinate with different authorities and remove obstacles. A home ministry source said they were also asked to assist the PDB to resume operation of Tongi 80 MW plant that has remained

shut for quite some time. for industrial establishments or billboards. Load management will have to be participatory and it may be implemented by voluntary stoppage of power consumption at the markets, this is the month of Ramadan, no

The PDB said the power plants yesterday generated 3,090 MW power against an officially estimated demand of 4,200 MW and unofficially estimated 4.900 MW. The PDB has been playing down the actual power demand for the last three years as the

include Karnaphuli-1 and 5 units with 90 MW capacity. The PDB can't say when these plants will resume opera-

Ghorashal 50 MW unit that is capable of generating 30 MW power also remains shut. No one knows when it will resume operation. The fifth Ashugani 150 MW unit also remains shut with no known date for resumption of operation. Similar uncertainty looms over 70 MW Shahjibazar plant

The four-party alliance government's claimed achievement in power sector Tongi 80 MW power plant, built

more than 80 shutdowns since March 2005 and now remains inoperative. If is not known when this sub-standard plant will resume operation

This government's another achievement Barapukuria 250 MW coal-fired power plant remains half shut amid a host of troubles. At first both its units went off earlier this month. After the first unit resumed operation about two weeks ago, the Chinese plant operators said the second unit would be in operation on September 23. Then they rescheduled it to September 29. And now they have once again rescheduled it to

Haripur 100 MW plant undergoing overhauling will resume operation on

Ghorashal-3 and 6 units, each with 210 MW capacity, will resume operation tomorrow and today respectively. Shahjibazar 12 MW plant resumes operation day after tomorrow.

Bheramara 20 MW plant will resume operation on October 7, Baghabari 71 MW plant in December and Baghabari Westmont 45 MW plant on October 15.

power plant, capable of generating up to 380 MW, are now generating 20 MW less due to short supply of gas

Chair rejects

legislator Abdur Razzak raised the issue and demanded discussion on

power crisis. The AL presidium member said people in the city last night took to the streets as they did not get electricity. They are now in a movement for power supply, and thousands of people are demonstrating in Sayedabad, Shanir Akhra, Mirpur, Tejgaon areas. And despite repeated requests from the opposition in parliament, the crisis is yet to be resolved.

Razzak said the country is plagued with scarcity of electricity. Ramadan fasting is also being affected as people are not getting electricity at the time of iftar. So, they are forced to come out of their houses and take to the streets, he

Another AL lawmaker, Suranjit Sengupta, demanded that all proceedings of the House be adjourned for holding a general discussion on power crisis across the country.

The government has destroyed power sector through corruption such as taking 'commission', and people want to know what it has done in the last five years of its tenure, he said.

"It is an unusual situation...Production in mills and factories has stalled. The matter must be discussed in parliament today (yesterday) and the government must explain the power situation,"

As the deputy speaker did not respond to the opposition's persistent plea for discussing the crucial

issue by adjourning other business, agitating AL members left the House at 12:22 pm but returned after two

AL legislators Mahbubur Rahman and Farukh Khan, and BNP's Altaf Hossain Chowdhury, who is a minister without portfolio, Ferdous Akhter Wahida and Zainal Abedin Faruk spoke on different issues.

the government has taken no initiative to rescue people missing in the recent storm in his constituency in

minister during her visit to the coastal belt on Tuesday rather 'blamed the dead and the missing people' saving that those who went to the sea violating weather signal

But the met office had not circulated any signal before the storm, the lawmaker said.

to bury the recovered bodies of the

Rejecting the allegation, Altaf Hossain Chowdhury said met office had announced cautionary Signal-3 before the storm. "Before taking any

was an unusual and sudden storm that they had never seen, Altaf

AL ready to compromise

"I know when he will call me." the AL general secretary told The Daily Star, declining to elaborate on the

He said he is hopeful of breaking

the deadlock through talks. Replying to another query, he said if a dialogue takes place, then it would obviously be on a one-to-one basis where three to four leaders from each party will assist the secretaries general.

Meanwhile, sources said Bhuiyan has had telephone conversations with some of the senior ministers and leaders over the talks with AL. A decision on making a formal proposal for talks might come after his meeting with the BNP Chairperson and Prime Minister Khaleda 7ia.

On the other hand, Jalil too has been consulting the senior opposition leaders about strategies and tactics for the planned discussion

with the ruling party. They have been thinking about how far they should concede to the BNP over the reform agenda. Jalil will also sit with Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina after getting a formal proposal from

Bhuiyan, AL sources said. The possibility of a secretaries general level dialogue had opened up following telephone conversations between Bhuiyan and Jalil. After the talk. Jalil softened his

stance and said if Bhuiyan gives a formal proposal even over telephone, he will agree to sit for discussion about the reforms

Besides Jalil-Bhuiyan telephone conversation, the country's business leaders have been trying from Tuesday night to bring the two leaders at the negotiating table to resolve the ongoing political dispute stemming from the proposed electoral reforms. They already had at least three meetings with Bhuiyan and Jalil and look to sit with them

US Ambassador in Dhaka Patricia A Butenis too held a meeting with AL chief Sheikh Hasina while Indian High Commissioner Veena Sikri met Jalil on Wednesday, both stressing the need for an immediate dialogue After the meeting, Jalil said there

suffice to hold a dialogue on getting the nod from the parties. Replying to a guery, he said the 14-party combine is not considering Grameen Bank Chairman Dr Muhammad Yunus as head of the

is no need for any mediation and

that he and Mannan Bhuiyan will

caretaker government Farlier on Wednesday, addressing a civil society dialogue in the city Yunus said he would be willing to take the helm of the interim government, if proposed.

Bangla Bhai ready

added.

well as in the High Court for a trial by an Islami Jury Board as per the

Islamic Shariah Law. "Besides, he filed a regular appeal challenging the High Court ruling that upheld the lower court's verdict condemning to death seven JMB leaders including him." Helal

"It's a contradiction that Saifullah while calling for a trial by an Islamic jury is filing a regular appeal, recognising the existing judicial system." observed the deputy attorney general.

Advocate Sufia Khatun, counsel for Khaled Saifullah, yesterday said they have filed criminal miscellaneous petition for a leave to appeal as they have yet to get the certified

copy of the High Court verdict. We will file the regular appeal after getting the certified copy of the High Court verdict," she said.

Meanwhile, Rafiqul Islam said

they learned about Bangla Bhai's wish to file an appeal against the death sentence yesterday morning from the jail authorities "Following instructions from the jail authorities, we submitted neces-

sary papers to them and the process is now underway," he said adding that the jail authorities did not allow them to meet Bangla Bhai though. "We have plans to file a regular

appeal as well in the Supreme Court through a lawyer," he added. On May 29, a trial court in Jhalakathi handed down death sentences to the seven JMB leaders for killing two judges of the district court and on August 31, the High Court upheld the verdict. Of the

convicts, Arifur Rahman is still at

large while the rest are behind bars. None of the militant leaders appointed any lawyer during their trial in the lower court and High Court saying that they are against the existing worldly juridical system and their move was to establish Islamic Shariah Laws

the murders through blasting bombs, has already filed a jail The other three--Abdur Rahman. Ataur Rahman Sunny and Abdul

Iftekhar Mamun, who committed

Awal--have yet to file any leave to

Govt delaying

appeal petition.

Hasina also blamed government's widescale corruption for the worsening power crisis, saying that investors turn away from power sector, as the government wants a big 'percentage' from everyone. She also noted that the power situation was much the same during the

BNP's 1991-1996 regime Meanwhile, hundreds of AL and its front organisations' leaders and workers and admirers thronged the Sudha Sadan to greet Hasina on her birthday. Her husband Dr Wazed Miah presented her flowers in the

morning Queued up in long lines, the AL leaders and admirers brought flowers, fruits, sweets, cake and candy to greet the AL chief. In a simple ceremony Hasina cut her birthday cake.

Recalling the memories of her birthday with family members and friends, she said that her birthday was never celebrated with festivity. "I forget all my sadness and pain when I receive plenty of love and affection from the people of Bangladesh." Hasina added. She asked the countrymen to pray for a hunger and violence free Bangladesh.

Hasina, eldest daughter of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, severely criticised that Rahman, was born at Tungipara in procurement Gopalgani on this day in 1947. She was elected president of the party on February 1981 while she was in exile and returned to Dhaka on May 17 1981. She has been leading the AL since then and became Prime Minister in June 1996.

Meanwhile, Speaker Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar greeted Hasina on her birthday. "Many happy returns (of the day), I wish her good luck," he said urging the AL lawmaker Rezaul Karim Hira to convey the message to his leader

RAMNA BLAST CASE

Mufti Hannan's brother remanded again

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Banned Islamist outfit Harkatul Jihad's (Huji) operations commander Mufti Abdul Hannan's brother Mohibullah alias Mofizur Rahman was placed on a three-day fresh remand vesterday for the third time in connection with the Ramna Batamul blast case.

Earlier, Huji member Mofiz, also an arrestee in a murder case filed with Gopalgani Police Station, was placed on a nine-day remand in the same case to obtain vital leads about the blasts.

But the investigation officer (IO) failed to dig out any vital clue from him during previous remands, sources said

remand, the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) produced Mofiz before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) Court, Dhaka and sought another six-day remand for further interrogation. Ten people died and several others were injured on April 14,

On completion of his four-day

2001 when bombs went off on the crowd gathered to celebrate the Bangla New Year near the Batamul inside Ramna Park. On September 10 and 14, Hannan and his accomplice Mamun

were shown arrested in the same case and were remanded for inter-In the forwarding report placed before the court, CID Inspector Abu Hena Mohammad Yusuf, also the IO of the case, said the information gathered from Mofiz about the blasts was being verified. So, he needs to be interrogated intensively

the blasts. After the hearing, Metropolitan Magistrate Syed Mohammad Mojibul Haq granted a three-day

to find out more information about

remand. The police so far arrested 12 people in connection with the Ramna Batamul blasts but all of them obtained bail from the High Court.

On June 14, 2001, one of the arrestees. Moulana Akbar Hussain. gave a confessional statement to a metropolitan magistrate and disclosed names of Mufti Hannan and others involved in the blasts

No Khaleda

there for about 10 days.

the country as well from October 11. Khaleda Zia, also BNP Chairperson, will fly for Saudi Arabia on October 10 and she is likely to perform Umrah on October 12. Sources said the PM might stay

Hasina, the AL president, will be headed for USA on October 11 to ter-in-law. Hasina is expected to come home before the Eid-ul-Fitr, AL

On the other hand, Sheikh

while talking to The Daily Star yesterday at his Mercantile Bank office. Jalil is supposed to fly for Singapore on October 11 for a medical check up. He will stay there

General Secretary Abdul Jalil said

for three days.

\$211m deal signed FROM PAGE 1 during her first China visit in 2003 discussed this project with the Chinese premier who instantly

"supplier's credit" system.

against the supplier's credit system. which is a non-transparent financing mechanism that encourages corruption, shelved the project until early this year. Now the project's lending term has been converted to "buyer's credit". According to the loan agreement between the two countries, the

interest rate has been fixed at 2 per

cent while Bangladesh will have to make a down-payment of 5 per cent of the total project cost or \$10.5 million. The repayment period is 20 years. The management fee is 0.2 per cent and the loan disbursement period is five years. Sources said China Exim Bank submitted a loan proposal in this regard and the government's Hard

Term Loan Standing Committee on

August 8, 2005 identified the loan

terms as "buyer's credit" since the loan terms are rigid. During the previous Awami League government's term, the same Chinese company was set to install a digital telephone exchange with very low quality equipment. When the BNP came to power, the cabinet members, especially Saifur

The BTTB presently has around 600 telephone exchanges across the country, with 75 per cent of them digitised. The remaining 25 per cent exchanges are situated at the upazila level and desperately need modernisation.

million phone lines while it is unable to meet the huge demand of more than 5,00,000 phones due to a lack of expansion of its exchanges, the sources pointed out.

The BTTB now provides 1.1

40 tortured bodies

Seven policemen and three Iraqi Interior Ministry special forces were injured in

three different bomb attacks in the capital. Meanwhile Wednesday, American troops killed eight people four of them women after taking heavy fire during a raid on a suspected terrorist's house northeast of Baghdad, the US command said. But relatives of the dead disputed the US account, saying their family had nothing to do with any terrorist group.

In all, 23 people died violently around Iraq, including at least 10 killed in a shootout Wednesday night near a Sunni mosque in Hurriyah, a northern neighbourhood of Baghdad, police said. The US command also announced the deaths of a Marine and a US soldier, both killed in action Monday in Anbar province.

Outside the pockmarked house, which relatives said belonged to Mohammed Jassim, bullet casings littered the ground and blood stained the sand. Family members cried and consoled one another as the bodies of the women were taken away.

"This is an ugly criminal act by the US soldiers against Iraqi citizens," Manal Jassim, who lost her parents and other relatives in the attack, told Associated Press Television News

Irag's major Sunni clerical organisation, the Association of Muslim Scholars. condemned the raid as a "terrorist massacre. The attack in Baqouba, 48km northeast of Baghdad, came as a new poll by

the State Department and independent researchers indicated a strong majority of Iragis want US-led military forces to withdraw immediately from the country. The poll, obtained by The Washington Post, showed, for example, that nearly three-quarters of Baghdad residents would feel safer if the US and other foreign forces left Irag with 65 percent favouring an immediate pullout. The top US military spokesman in

Iraq, Maj. Gen. William B. Caldwell, told reporters there had been a spike in violence in Baghdad with the onset of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, which officially began on Monday. Suicide attacks were at their highest level ever, he said without giving figures. "We are seeing an increase in

illegal armed groups are punching back in an effort to discredit the government of Iraq and more specifically the Baghdad security plan," Caldwell said. "This has been a tough week.' He said murders and executions are currently the No. 1 cause of civilian

attacks, as anticipated. The terrorists and

against sectarian death squads have been stepped up. Since mid-July, 29 death squad cell leaders and 254 members have been killed or captured, Caldwell said. There were 14 operations in the past week

resulting in two cell leaders and 42

deaths in Baghdad, and operations

members killed or captured. "Iraqi security forces are making a concerted effort to defeat the insurgency and stop sectarian violence," Caldwell said. "Specifically Iraqi security forces are taking the fight to death squads within the Baghdad area."

On Wednesday alone, the bodies of

15 people found in various areas outside Baghdad were delivered to the morque in Kut, 160km southeast of the capital. Most showed signs of torture and had their hands and legs bound; five were beheaded.

security drive to clear the capital neigh-

bourhood by neighbourhood, was

launched this summer after US generals

warned sectarian violence was leading

toward civil war. Sweeps have been started or completed in about half the neighbourhoods of the capital. As of Sept. 25. 95.757 buildings had been cleared, 124 prisoners taken and 1,785 weapons seized in the operation. As part of the infrastructure rebuilding component, 6.6 million cubic feet of trash

has been removed from the streets, Caldwell said. There is a noticeable difference in the

FROM PAGE 20 the BNP-led alliance will resist any agreed to provide the finance under disturbance even after transfer of However, Saifur's resistance She alleged the opposition is trying

Reform proposals

The prime minister urged the opposition to uphold democratic process and keep trust in the people's verdict, saying that there is no alternative to elections. Chaired by local MP Abu Sved

Bhuivan, the meeting was also

addressed, among others, by Prime

Minister's Political Secretary Harris

Chowdhury, State Minister for LGRD

to create constitutional vacuum,

knowing well that people will again

vote for the BNP for development and

Ziaul Huq Zia and Saimoom Begum Addressing another rally at Ramgati College ground, the prime minister said the opposition wants to foil the upcoming general elections

because it has nothing to say in seeking vote from the people. She hoped people will vote for the BNP-led alliance to protect the consti-

tution and maintain religious values.

development and communal stability. The prime minister said the opposition doesn't want people's welfare and their education. So, the party is obstructing country's forward march by enforcing hartal, strike and other anti-development programmes.

Listing various socioeconomic

various sectors, Khaleda said

progress and government incentives

farmers have got fair price of their farm products, which they did not get during the previous government's rule. She mentioned that her government has allocated Tk 1300 crore to

agriculture against Tk 100 crore

allocated by the previous government. Earlier, the prime minister laid foundation stones of Ramgati 20-bed hospital, inaugurated Alexander regional highway and Ramgati digital telephone exchange. She also announced the setting up of Kamolnagar new upazila.

neighbourhoods that have been targeted, Caldwell said. "When you look at the areas we've operated in. Dora used to be the highest amount of murders and executions within the entire city of Baghdad, and today now it's really probably the lowest level within the entire city because of the operations, he said. In the southern city of Basra, British and Iraqi troops launched a security operation Wednesday aimed at rooting out corrupt police, pacifying the city and helping residents rebuild, the

British military said. Some 2,300 Iraqi army troops and 1,000 British soldiers started Operation Sinbad, with 2,000 more British troops conducting operations in the surrounding area, said British forces spokesman Maj Charlie Burbridge. A key component of the operation is a crackdown on police corruption, he said.

Since January 2005, the predominantly Shia city has fallen under the influence of Shia militias, which have infiltrated police and local government institutions. In June, Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki declared a state of emergency in Basra following a rise in violence among mostly Shia groups competing for power.

In Baghdad, meanwhile, the prime minister's military office said a leader of the militant 1920 Revolution Brigades was arrested Tuesday in the village of al-Jazira. The group is believed to be responsible for numerous attacks against US forces and a series of

Another leader of the group and seven aides were arrested Saturday in the same area, about 100km north of Baghdad. Authorities have not released the insurgents' names. In the US-led raid in Baqouba,

American soldiers came under fire when

approaching the home of a suspect linked to the leaders of al-Qaeda in Iraq. the US command said in a statement. US troops killed two terrorist suspects, then called in air strikes "due to the heavy volume of enemy fire from the target building," the military said. After the attack, they found the bodies of two more terror suspects and four women in the

building. Three people were wounded, including two suspected terrorists who were detained, the military said. The troops also found weapons and a global positioning system, the military

A family member said all eight people killed were relatives and disputed that they had any links to a terrorist group. "The Americans killed my relatives who had no guilt or relation with any group," Saleh Alitold The Associated Press They were innocent people," said

entered our house at dawn. I found my father, mother, aunt and sister-in-law laying dead. We were an 11-member family. Eightwere killed." Caldwell said the American patrol had

Manal Jassim, the homeowner's daugh-

ter. "We were sleeping when they

broadcast messages for people to leave the building peacefully but gunfire was the only response. "It's extremely unfortunate whenever there's a loss of life. And nobody's quite sure what the connection was to all those

people that were firing their weapons

from that home. But it's unfortunate that

anybodyeverhastodie."he said

Mahashasthi puja.

Durga Puja Durga and her children Lakshmi. Saraswati, Kartik and Ganesh, who the Hindus believe descend on earth

on invitation from the devotees

through Bodhon rituals and

Devotees' presence at the

mandaps was much less than expected yesterday However, leaders of Bangladesh Puia Udiapan Parishad and Mahanagar Sarbajaneen Puja

Committee said people from all walks

of life will gather at the puja mandaps

from today as the main puja begins

from Mahasaptami. Metal detectors and close-circuit cameras will be installed at the highrisk and big puia mandaps across the country today, home ministry sources said. Meanwhile, the government has identified 8,209 puja mandaps as high-risk centres and 5226 others as low-risk ones.

every puja mandap while Rapid Action Battalion, Bangladesh Rifles and the police will patrol the puia venues for ensuring the security of the visitors. Monitoring cells have been formed

to help the Hindus observe their

Mission, Ramna Kali Mandir

Siddheswari Kali Mandir, Tanti Bazar,

Ansars have been deployed at

The prime puja mandap in the capital is at Dhakeshwari National Temple. Large mandaps have also been put up at Jagannath Hall of Dhaka University, Ramkrishna

biggest annual religious festival.

Shankhari Bazar, Bangla Bazar, Mohakhali and Farmgate. Different political, social and cultural organisations, meanwhile continued to felicitate Hindus on the eve of the festival. They also condemned the attacks on puja mandaps

and damage done to Durga idols across the country.

6 Hijbut Tawhid FROM PAGE 20

The seized books propagate their ideology and ask the people to come forward to establish an Islamic state, while the leaflets read "this Islam is not real Islam," and so "Jihad is a must for all the Muslims to establish the real Islam.

32 and Tutul Hossain, 22, of Banjaghat, Mohon, 28, Ali Hossain 30 and Mujib, 22 of Nishchintopur and Tutul, 19, of Harabhanga village in Gangni upazila. They are being quizzed at

The arrested are Ziaur Rahman,

Gangni Police Station. Police said they arrested five Hijbut Tawhid men from the same area on January 12 this year but they got bails from the

people entering and leaving the city suffered immensely due to the road

Sources said the operator of would imply double taxation. The NBR

Being apprised of the power situation, Babar requested the authorities concerned to implement load management measures. He suggested that putting out illumination of all billboards across the country could save 25 MW power. Besides, some industrial establishments with low productivity can also remain off-line and save another 50 MW power.

But on the suggested load management, PDB sources said this is impossible as there is no separate line which consume huge power. Since market will be willing to do so.

government miserably failed to increase power generation According to the PDB data, the power plants that have been shut

and 60 MW Khulna plant.

by Chinese company Harbin, scored

December 31 next vear

The two 210 MW units of Raozan

Mahbubur Rahman alleged that He regretted that the prime

were facing misfortune.

"The government has failed even strom victims," he added.

measures, the atmosphere turned calm," he said. The fishermen who returned from the sea after the storm said it