## Dhaka to look

ceives in the August 21 grenade attacks on an Awami League rally, saying, although he is yet to read the report, what is important in this case

Morshed was briefing reporters at the foreign ministry on his 12-day trip to New York to attend the 59th United Nations General Assembly

On the concerns that Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh expressed last Wednesday over Indian insurgent camps in Bangladesh, he said, "To our knowledge there are no insurgents in Bangladesh and I have invited them to check for themselves." He added, however, "We will look into their concerns," and confirmed a statement of Delhi on discussions

under way on the insurgent issue. "Both of our prime ministers gave directives after their meeting in Bangkok in July to sort out all the security concerns and outstanding issues," said Morshed. "The concerns our mutual. If it is a concern of India, it is ours too, as we are trying to establish a common platform for the benefit of the

He said, "Security concerns of the neighbours have to be addressed through dialogues between structural committees," adding, "I did not experience any misunderstanding during our

has no hard evidence of such camps.

Morshed also denied a report on Dhaka's rejection of an Indian proposal for joint patrol along the 4,126-kilometre border during a meeting of the two home secretaries last month. He claimed it was Dhaka that proposed the agreed coordinated patrol to address Indian

He explained that a joint border patrol might lead to security forces on each side crossing the border. which may have political ramifications for both neighbours leading to confusion and misunderstanding.

**GRENADE ATTACKS** "That is the view of the independent commission not the position of the government," said Morshed, when asked for his comments on the

"The government will take a decision on the report based on the facts, and we should look forward to

that," he maintained. "When a foreign country is mentioned it can be any of the other 190 countries in the world," quipped the foreign minister, "So, we have to find out if there is any truth in what is being reported or whether any of the

Morshed told the reporters there was no serious differences of opinion in his talks with his Indian and Pakistani counterparts on the sidelines of the 59th UNGA.

"Both of them told me not to hesitate to call them for any discus-

there in his discussion with Indian Singh due to the recent exchange of water, Morshed said, "I did not notice any."

He reported to have stressed the importance of regional flood management in his meetings with Singh and US Secretary of State Colin Powell. "The time has come to put our heads together regionally," said Morshed as the message he

The FM said he asked both

## **Alliance rally** venue shifted for rain

public rally marking three years in power to Muktangan as Paltan Maidan has become unfit due to downpour in the last few days.

The decision came at an emergency meeting of Dhaka city units of BNP, Jamaat-e-Islami, Bangladesh Jatiya Party (BJP) and Islami Oikya Jote yesterday, said a press

The meeting at city BNP office in Nava Paltan with Dhaka Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka in the chair urged the leaders and workers of the alliance and the city dwellers to join the rally and raise voice against terrorism, bomb attacks and

anarchy in the country. The release blasted the Awami League's hartal call on October 10. They said the main opposition has already been isolated from the people and is calling hartals with a motive to hinder the post-flood rehabilitation programmes and

The meeting observed that the AL wants to come to power by capitalising the August 21 grenade attacks and does not want proper investigation and trial of the culprits. "The opposition is now resorting to destructive programmes to halt development work initiated by the

send their 'visionary plans' ahead of the 13th Saarc Summit in Dhaka so that a committee can set the agenda for participants to decide the direction of Saarc policies for the next

On the UNGA, Morshed said he is proud to have represented Bangladesh in presiding over it for the second time after late Humavun Rashid Chowdhury. He chaired the assembly as its vice-president on

He also narrated his meeting with UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, during which Dhaka pledged its support for a democratically elected Iraqi government with peacekeepers, in reconstruction,

He said to have reiterated to the UNSG the Dhaka's view that the root-cause of Middle East problems is the Israel-Palestine conflict, to diffuse which the roadmap to ME peace should be revived.

### IMF promises to include flood assistance in **PRGF**

**UNB**, Dhaka

IMF (International Monetary Fund) Managing Director Rodrigo de Rato has assured of considering the impact of recent floods in its assistance package under the Poverty Reduction Growth Facility (PRGF) being provided for Bangladesh.

The IMF is channelling a fund of \$490 million in seven installments under the PRGF.

"The impact of the flood will definitely be featured in the PRGF and macroeconomic framework," he told Finance Minister Saifur Rahman as they had a meeting in Washington on Wednesday, according to a message

received in Dhaka yesterday. Rato also assured the minister of giving due consideration to a proposal for increasing resources for the Trade Integration Mechanism (TIM) to help countries mitigate the balance of payments shortfalls likely to result from the phasing out of MFA.

He noted with satisfaction the economic performance of the government of Bangladesh and hoped that the reform programme would be continued as envisaged in the I-

Saifur apprised the IMF executive of the impact of the recent devastating floods and also of the ongoing plementation status of the Interim

He made a commitment to maintain macroeconomic stability and

allocate increased resources to poverty reduction programmes. He. however, mentioned that the

government would require substantial external assistance for post-flood rehabilitation

The finance and planning minister called for equitable distribution of external assistance keeping in view the status of poverty levels and number of poor population in lowincome countries as well as their performance and economic man-

agement capacity. He pointed out that countries like Bangladesh, with no default record in debt servicing and have shown good economic performance, were not getting a fair deal from the Bretton Woods Institutions in terms of

resource flow He said that the IMF and the World Bank should help good borrowers with increased flow of resources rather than "reward some countries through debt forgiveness resulting from bad economic perfor-

Saifur also mentioned that Bangladesh is the first country to receive assistance from the IMF through its TIM to mitigate the likely

impact of MFA phase-out. IMF Deputy Managing Director Takatoshi Kato, IMF Director David Durton, Bangladesh Ambassador to USA Syed Hasan Ahmed, Bangladesh Bank Governor Fakhruddin Ahmed, Finance Secretary Zakir Ahmed Khan and World Bank Alternate Executive Director Akbar Ali Khan were present at the meeting.

## Flyover opens to public Nov

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country's first flyover in Mohakhali in the capital will be open to public on November 7. Prime Minister Khaleda Zia will

augurate the flyover. Communications Minister Nazmul Huda at a meeting at his ministry with authorities and officials concerned yesterday announced the date, said a communications ministry press release.

The meeting on review of the flyover's construction, inaugural preparation and plying of vehicles was told that installation of tremor controlling equipment in the flyover is on in full-swing.

The government and the World Bank have jointly financed Tk 113.52 crore for the 1.01km-long flyover, the construction of which started on December 6 in 2001 under the

Dhaka Urban Transport Project. State Minister for ommunications Salahuddin Ahmad, Communications Secretary M Shafiqul Islam, Dhaka Transport oordination Board Executive Director Quamrul Islam Siddiqui

## Fanatics, civil

and march towards Missionpara

"The Kadianis (Ahmadiyyas) are misleading the 'real Muslims' by calling their place of worship mosques," read an Aamra Dhakabashi press release yester-

one's property, but as Muslims, we have the religious obligation to save the fellow Muslims from being deceived by the Kadiyanis," the press release added referring to the prospective capture of the Ahmadiyya mosque.

cultural and political organisations and professional bodies have declared to resist the capture

Led by Narayanganj Sangskritik Jote, the South Asian People's Union against Fundamentalism and Communalism (SAPUFC), and Ekattorer Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee, these organisations

Narayanganj Ibrahim Fatemi said yesterday they had taken necessary preparations to stop the anti-Ahmadiyya zealots.

Police remained posted at different points of the town yesterday. Paramilitary Bangladesh Rifles might also join them today, said

Police picked up two operatives of Khatme Nabuwat while they were making announcement in loudspeakers Wednesday noon to let hem off an hour later

## Lashing rain brings

intensified into a land depression and remained almost stationary on the Gangetic plain. The more rain will occur, the weaker the depression will be." said Arzumand Habib. deputy director of Meteorological Department. "But it depends on wind situation and on many other

factors." she added. Dhaka had a 97-mm of rainfall in 24 hours till 6:00pm yesterday, reminding its residents of the horror of 341-mm rain for four straight days last month that sent most parts of the capital under knee- to waist-deep

Gusty winds uprooted many trees, blocking roads and causing traffic tailbacks in most parts of the capital.

The Secretariat compound also reeled under water. Attendance at government and private offices was very thin and banking activities slowed, especially in Motijheel commercial hub, as rainwater inundated many ground-floor banks. Markets and shopping malls

Rain swamped the VIP Road in front of the Prime Minister's Office and many other major city roads including Manik Mia Avenue, Bijoy Sarani, Dar-us-Salam Road, Airport Road, Mirpur Road, Outer Circular

looked almost deserted.

Road and Bijoynagar road.

wheelers and taxicabs had suffered A small number of rickshaws and three-wheelers braved the inundated roads only to charge twice the

and in passenger buses, three-

People stranded at bus stands

Submerged manholes and potholes on roads added to people's sufferings, as wheels of many rick-

shaws slipped into the hidden traps and passengers fell down in water. Malibagh, Shantinagar, Motijheel, Khilgaon, Badda, Gulshan, Banani, Dhanmondi, Kazipara, Mirpur, Shukrabad and most parts of old Dhaka were the

worst-hit areas. Water entered ground floors of nany houses in the capital and inside Dhaka-Narayanganj-Demra embank-ment. Hundreds of slum-dwellers moved onto streets as their shanties went under knee-deep water.

## AL leaders

FROM PAGE 12 the AL'S view and supported the

hartal programme. Both the parties will observe October 10; the day coalition government marks its three years in

office, as 'Black Day for Nation'. Yesterday's meeting also called on the people to observe the hartal and show a no-confidence in the government.

Leaders of Dhaka city unit AL, Jatiya Sramik League, Awami Jubo League, Mahila League, Bangladesh Chhatra League, Krishok League, Sechchha Sebok League and Juba Mahila League attended the meeting.

Meanwhile, Dhaka City unit AL held an extended meeting of its different thana units in the run-up to the October 10 hartal.

## JS body hails law

areas have again gone under water

which has almost reached the FROM PAGE 1 previous level. The rainwater which

Ranimahal area of Sarulia union in Demra, 17 pumps in Narayangani district and several others are pumping out rainwater at Shvampur in Demra from the last week of September.

Besides four pumps at Shimrail known as DND pump house under the Water and Development Board are in operation round the clock to pump out logged water from DND. Yet the effort is inadequate against

Dilara Mostak Nipa, a resident of Tengra, said, "Rainwater has entered our veranda. All roads have already gone under water. It seems the situation will be similar to the recent waterlogging in our area."

Mohammad Mizan, a resident of Konapara said. "We got relived of the immediate past waterlogging but

Situation at Dogair and Dogair bazaar area has tremendously worsened as most of the houses of that area are again under water, he

Situation of Sanarpar, Nemaikashari, Bagmara, Kadaltali, Rasulhanh Jalkuri Bhuigarh

Abdul Jalil, a resident of Jalkuri Khilpara said.

in Narayangani 43 shelter centres were opened in four union parishads -- Fatullah, Kutubpur, Godhnail and Siddirganj. Sixteen thousand people who took shelter in the last month there are still staying as the situation was not improved there until now, according to the district administra-

### Going by the press reports and observations of human rights the chairman claimed.

after a lapse of five months.

groups, present law and order scenario, however, does not provide grounds for the parliamentary body's complacency.

Newspaper reports and human rights campaigners state that, about 4,500 people were killed in 2003, up

from 4.000 a year ago. Home ministry statistics show 3,503 people were killed in 2002 and 3,550 in 2003. From January to June this year, 350 people were killed on average a month across

the country.

The statistics show a total of 1,27,616 crime incidents took place in 2002 and 1,25,639 in 2003. From January to June this year, average crime incidents numbered 10.500 a month. Human rights groups, however,

claim the figures to be much higher. As many as eight major explosions killing 63 people took place during the rule of present alliance government

The recent spate of bomb and grenade blasts has caused a panic among the population across the At yesterday's meeting, members of the committee, all belonging

to the BNP led ruling alliance, steps initiated by home ministry to curb crime, sources said. A member of the committee blasted the media for blowing many incidents up out of proportion. He proposed that the media cell of the home ministry be strengthened to

counter propaganda against the government, sources said. In an attempt to rationalise their observation committee Chairman Prof Shajahan Mia vesterday told The Daily Star that for a country with over 14 crore people, the crime rates were not so high.

"Current law and order is better than popular expectations. We hope the situation would be even better.'

The parliamentary body had always expressed satisfaction with law and order. The then committee chairman Abdul Mannan, who later resigned from the ruling BNP, on several occasions, resolved that law and order was satisfactory. But before his resignation from the parliament, Abdul Mannan led standing committee asked the government to stop intimidating police administration into serving partisan interests.

After Mannan's resignation in March, the committee sat only once to scrutinise two bills in last April. On September 16. Shaiahan Mia was appointed chairman of the committee. According to the rules of procedure of the Jatiya Sangsad, the committee should have held at least 14 meetings since its formation. But it held only nine meetings

including yesterday's. The parliamentary body at yesterday's meeting extended its support to the Rapid Action Battalion's (Rab) operations. Though as many as 32 people, mostly crime suspects, were killed reportedly in Rab custody attracting criticism from the press. Of the people killed in 'crossfire'. four were among the top listed criminals.

The committee chairman however claimed that those who got killed were hardcore criminals and there is public support for these killinas.

The committee asked the home ministry to take necessary security measures to ensure that the Durga Puja and Ramadan end peacefully.

ministry apprised the committee of different steps to maintain law and

### Car bomb Senior officials of the home FROM PAGE 12

# High borrowing fear

was Tk 649 crore, according to a Bandladesh Bank economic update released in September. The figure is 10 percent bigger than June 2004

and 217 percent the July 2003. If the trend goes on, it will only widen the budget deficit. A draft aide memoire of the World Bank (WB) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) warns that the total budget deficit may rise from 3.2 percent of GDP in FY04 to 4.4 percent in FY05.

The government's target is to borrow Tk 2,599 crore from the banks this fiscal year, but government officials doubt if the target is feasible. Sources said apart from committing huge additional resources for the post-flood rehabilitation, the government may well have to spend an extra Tk 1.000 crore on payment of salaries to the government employees under the new pay structure to be effective

No allocation is there in the

budget for the purpose. A joint assessment of the WB and ADB puts the recovery need for the first floods this year at about Tk 6,600 crore. Sources at the finance ministry said the government released some Tk 1,400 crore until the middle of last month for postflood reconstruction

The Finance Division has allocated Tk 23 crore to the health ministry for buying medicine, Tk 70 crore to agriculture ministry for farm rehabilitation, Tk 30 crore to fisheries and livestock ministry and Tk 3 crore to Department of Public Health Engineering.

It has also allocated Tk 1,200 crore under the maintenance head to different ministries for spending on the post-flood rehabilitation programme. Finance ministry sources said

the Finance Division is receiving

demands for more allocation. More

demands are likely to be placed

soon at the division for repairs of

schools, roads and other infrastructure damaged by the excessive

The government will need crores beyond the total budgetary allocation for the rebuilding programme, but donors have made no concrete assistance commitment. The WB and ADB have hinted at

releasing some \$300 million for the

rehabilitation programme through reallocation of the funds of the projects already in the pipeline. However, the banks stipulate that the funds would have to be spent on the sectors for which they had been allocated. Sources said the condition has prompted the finance ministry to seek fresh credits in budgetary

support. It argues that the govern-

ment will need the money for

maintenance in the end of the year

although it is spending the money on the rebuilding programme. The finance minister earlier announced that the government would take up no new projects, except for the donor-funded ones. unless it is absolutely necessary. But officials at the planning ministry said they are under relentless pressure for taking up new projects and may have to eventually start

fresh projects. "That is why we have asked the World Bank for fresh credits in budgetary support so that we can freely spend the money that the different sectors are in need of wherever necessary," an official at the Economic Relations Division of the finance ministry said, preferring

The government placed its arguments at the meeting with the ioint mission of the WB and ADB last month. The finance minister also pleaded the case on the sidelines of the annual meeting of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in Washington DC

### Tax case against **Ershad** adjourned

COURT CORRESPONDENT

till Nov 13

A Dhaka court yesterday adjourned until November 13 the hearing of the income tax corruption case against former president HM Ershad.

Judge Rezaul Karim Khan of the Special Court for Dhaka Division issued the order following a time

petition by the defence lawyers. Moving the petition, Advocate Sheikh Siraiul Islam said he had earlier filed another petition to revert the case to argument from judgement. He had some important points that were not discussed during the trial, though he had completed his arguments, he reasoned.

As he was not in position to take part in that petition hearing, he

prayed for adjournment. Ershad was absent from the court due to inclement weather. The court has adjourned the

case thrice following time petitions by the defence lawyers. The Bureau of Anti-corruption (Bac) filed the case against Ershad

and three tax officials of on July 27, The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) gave the Bac a nod to press charges against the accused on November 30. 1992, but decided to

exempt the taxmen from the case he same day. The Bac in the case filed with Ramna Police Station alleged Ershad, while in power, paid Tk 7.43 lakh as income tax for six years

(1983-1989) but withdrew Tk 2.76 lakh later without submitting any documents. The investigation officer of the case pressed charges on December 19, 1992, stating Ershad as the lone accused and showing

the taxmen as prosecution witnesses. The court framed charges against the former president on June 17, 1993 and recorded statements of the prosecution witnesses during the trial.

## Austria's Jelinek

FROM PAGE 12 which was made into an acclaimed

film by Michael Haneke in 2001, will take home the prize sum of 10 million kronor (1.1 million euros, 1.3 million dollars). Her texts defy exact definition. They contain prose, poetry, incanta-

tion and hymn, theatrical scenes and filmic sequences. One of her basic themes is the inability of women to "fully come to life in a world where they are painted over with stereotypical images", the

Academy said in its citation. In "The Piano Teacher", as in a series of other novels, Jelinek presents a pitiless world of violence and submission, hunter and prey,

the jury said. She will receive the Nobel Prize, which consists of the prize money, a gold medal and a diploma, from Sweden's King Carl XVI Gustaf at a formal ceremony in Stockholm on December 10, the anniversary of the death of Alfred Nobel, the founder of the Nobel Prizes, in 1896.

The Literature Prize was the fourth of the six coveted awards to be handed out this week.

The Peace Prize will be announced on Friday, and the final prize, that for Economics, will be announced on Monday

The prayer gathering in Rasheedabad Square had lasted the whole night and the crowd was beginning to disperse when the predawn calm was shattered by the

explosion. Multan is known as the "city of saints" for the numerous Sufi Muslim saints buried in glittering blue-tiled shrines, but has long been a hotbed of Islamic extremism.

Sheikh Rashid condemned the attack as "an act of brutal terrorism". Outside the hospital victims relatives chanted slogans against Shias and vowed revenge.

Pakistani Information Minister

Hundreds of police and paramilitary troops were deployed to guard mosques and religious schools in several cities to prevent follow-up

violence. Ludhianvi called a two-day mourning period for Thursday and

## Rain to continue

FROM PAGE 1 said Dhaka residents will not see the sun before Monday as the weather

will remain cloudy until that time Weather officials said heavy rainfall with gusty wind may occur in many places in Dhaka, Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong, Rajshahi and Sylhet division until this evening.

The met office warned a three to

four-foot high tidal surge may strike the coastal areas today due to stormy wind in sea. It advised hoisting cautionary signal number two at inland ports and signal number three at maritime

ports. All fishing boats and trawlers

over North Bay should remain close

to the coast till further information, it Meanwhile, the depression formed in the Bay three days ago first moved towards Orissa coast. The maximum sustained wind within 44 km of the depression centre was about 40 kph rising to 50 kph in gusts/squalls.

On Wednesday, the depression turned into a well marked low but it intensified into a land depression again yesterday, Indian met office

## Crime takes on

ber of elite crime-busting forces over the last few months a slight improvement has been witnessed but a series of grenade attacks has brought a new dimension in crime creating a deeper sense of insecurity among the people.

Crime statistics indicate home ministry's performance in the first three years of BNP-led government's tenure was not satisfactory as its anticrime measures seem to have a little impact on the widespread criminal incidents across the country.

Grenade attacks on political rallies, shrines and cinemas, brutal killings of political leaders and journalists in broad daylight, increased activities of outlaws, extremists and fanatic forces, abduction of businesspeople and retrieval of their shredded bodies are some grisly examples of crime that have overshadowed the anticrime steps.

People are still being haunted by the horrors of grenade attacks on an Awami League (AL) rally on August 21 in Dhaka, a futile attempt on the life of Leader of the Opposition and AL President Sheikh Hasina, that killed 20 people and injured more than 200

The killings of AL lawmaker Ahsanullah Master (May 7, 2004), Khulna AL leader Monzurul Imam (August 25, 2003) and former Al lawmaker Momtajuddin Ahmed in Natore (June 7, 2004) are still fresh in

memory. Eight major bomb and grenade attacks that left 63 people killed in the last three years sent a chill down the nation's spine. These include bomb and grenade blasts at Shahjalal shrine in January and May and bomb explosions

in two cinemas in Sylhet in August.
The grenade attack on British High Commissioner Anwar Choudhury in Sylhet on May 21 drew attention of the world community about Bangladesh's

vulnerable crime situation. The retrieval of the bodies of old Dhaka businessman Shamsul Islam and his son Russel Sheikh in 200 pieces and abduction of Chittagong BNP leader and magnate Jamal Uddin Ahmed Chowdhury worried the

business community.

The government enacted speedy trial act and formed speedy trial tribunal launched Operation Clean Heart and Operation Spiderweb by joint forces and a combing operation in the Chittagong Hill Tracts but failed to make significant improvement. The Operation Clean Heart in 2002,

manned by army, police and Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) drew widespread criticism for 54 deaths in their custody. The recently launched Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) is also going ahead with the same strategy. During the Operation Clean Heart

army showed reason for deaths in their

custody as "heart attacks" while the Rab is saying the criminals are being killed in 'crossfire'. Crime-busting Rapid Action Team worked for more than a year in Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) area and then the government deployed 'Cobra' and 'Cheetah' drafted with trained policemen to launch a crackdown on

Human rights group Odhikar says a total of 111 people were killed in the hands of law enforcers in last nine months of this year. Since Rab hit the street 32 crime suspects including four listed criminals were killed in "crossfire" Police sources claimed law and

the criminals.

death of top criminals but new gangs are replacing them and taking control of the crime-prone areas. Speedy Trial Tribunal that the government introduced to ensure swift

cases out of 742, sentencing 216 people to death. In the biggest-ever arms haul on April 2 this year in Chittagong, the police made a chanced seizure of 10

truckloads of rocket launchers, hand

trial of criminals so far disposed of 470

bullets. The haul dwarfs the seizure of a mind-boggling 100,000 rifle bullets and 200 kg of explosives in Bogra.

Till date investigators could not identify or arrest the gunrunners or the mastermind behind such big arms and ammunition hauls that raised many questions about the vulnerable system of vigilance by the law enforcement

The people in northwestern Bangladesh saw the rise of Bangla Bhai, self-styled operation commander of Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB) whose fanatic operatives killed at least 15 people sending a terror wave in the region. Prime minister's reported instruction to the police to arrest Bangla Bhai is vet to be carried out.

Seven journalists were killed and 678 were subjected to repression during the last three years while 1236

other journalists given death threat. On July 24 this year, Chittagong businessman Jamal Uddin Ahmed Chowdhury was kidnapped. Still no one knows where he is, despite repeated government commitments to rescue him. Four other magnets of the port city

were abducted after Jamal The grisly incineration of 11 members of a minority family in Banshkhali under Chittagong district in November last year and three of a family in Bagherhat were followed by another attempt to incinerate nine of a

family in Jhalakati. Ten passengers were burnt alive when a BRTC double-decker caught fire in front of Dhaka Sheraton Hotel on June 4 this year. Investigators suspected it as an act of arson but could

not vet find any clue. Some 50 policemen were killed in the last three years while encountering the criminals. Of them, some 20 were killed in shooting and bomb throwing by extremists in Khulna and other districts

in the southwestern "valley of death."

In the recent wave of attacks on the

law enforcers, two policemen were shot

dead in Motiiheel on June 20 this vear and one constable at Rayerbazar in the capital on July 12. People's distrust of law enforcers triggered several incidents of killing of suspected criminals in mob beating. The most dreadful incident took place in a remote char (shoal) area of Noakhali

when mobs lynched 39 alleged forest bandits in December last year. Locals alleged that a ruling BNP legislator had instigated them to engage in the massacre of bandits who established a reign of terror in the

seaboard district.

The government however claims law and order has improved a lot. A parliamentary body yesterday said the law and order is much better than in any other time in the past, although statistics show no significant change in the crime scenario.

According to press reports and

human rights groups, about 4,500

people were killed in 2003, up from 4,000 a year ago. Home ministry statistics however show 3,503 people were killed in 2002 and 3,550 in 2003. Police sources said on average 350 people were killed a month from January to June this year. The trend shows a little improvement from July to

were killed, although human rights groups believe the figures are much The rights groups say 395 people

were killed in September, 779 in August and 776 in July across Bangladesh. The home ministry records also show a total of 1,27,616 crime incidents in 2002 and 1,25,639 in 2003. From January to June this year, on average 10,500 crime incidents occurred a

the king reigns for life -- and warned

that the move could plunge the

when Hun Sen and Ranariddh

eventually formed a government in

that Hun Sen, who controls a majority

of positions in the throne council.

The post-election feuding ended

Afterwards some analysts said

country into chaos

July this year.

## grenades, AK-47 rifles and over 18 lakh month across the country. King Sihanouk

FROM PAGE 12 abdicated," Prince Norodom Ranariddh told reporters. The king -- a major Asian political figure of the 20th century -- posted a note on his website late Wednesday saying ill health prevented him from staving on as king and asking

Cambodians to allow him to step

"The king said Chea Sim (the

Senate president) will be the acting head of state and he has written that from now on, Norodom Sihanouk is retired," the clearly emotional prince The king, 81, who first came to the throne 65 years ago, called off his

Thursday after repeated threats to abdicate since leaving the country in January. He was furious about being sidelined after trying to resolve a year-long political crisis following nconclusive national elections in

plans to return to Cambodia on

July 2003 and concerned about his "We still hope that the king tomorrow or the day after tomorrow will agree to be the king again," said Ranariddh. He said the nine-member throne council, which is supposed to elect a successor from the king's

bloodline, should ask him to recon-Diplomats and observers said they believed the king's decision could be seen as his last big push to influence the

naming of his successor. The king is known to favour Prince Sihamoni, 51, a former dancer and Ranariddh's half-brother. One observer said it was "too early to tell what this means, but it

could be a move on his part to move things forward," referring to a new law promised by Hun Sen and Ranariddh to clarify how the king's heir would be chosen. "We've got to maintain a bit of scepticism given Sihanouk's previ-

ous bouts of 'abdicationism'," Western diplomat told AFP, referring to his repeated threats to abdicate. Premier Hun Sen last month cast doubt on the legal right of the king to secretly promised to support Ranariddh's succession to the throne in return for him joining his government. Ranariddh, 60, later publicly gave his support to Sihamoni.

demonstrations" to mark his return. The protests were not connected to his party, he said. "Sam Rainsy's letter yesterday to the king not only led to the king

Opposition leader Sam Rainsy on

Wednesday wrote to the king warn-

ing of "at least verbally violent

deciding not to return, but also to abdicate," Ranariddh said. "I think that Sam Rainsy's activities have been aimed at bringing political and constitutional turmoi because the king's abdication will lead to a serious situation in the nation," he said. Rainsy denied the

charge. After news of the abdication, the capital, which has descended into unrest during previous times of political crisis, remained calm.

Hun Sen would try to meet the king in Beijing to try to get him to change his The king has steered his country through turbulent decades marked

Ranariddh said he. Chea Sim and

by coups, wars, genocide, and eventually peace. During the genocidal years of Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge regime in the late 1970s, he spent the year under house arrest and five of his 14

After another period in exile after

the Khmer Rouge was ousted, he returned home in 1991 and was restored to the throne two years later.

children were killed.

is how the government reacts to it. (UNGA) as its vice-president.

> the fifth day. and health and education sectors.

peoples of the region.'

previous discussions on the issue." The minister quoted the Indian side as telling him they had interrogated some Indian criminals to gain information about existence of Indian insurgent camps in Bangladesh. He also referred to an Indian press report, which said Delhi

concerns over border security.

judicial commission's report hinting at a 'foreign hand' in the August 21 grisly attacks that killed at least 20.

information is being misinterpreted. UNGAAND SIDELINES

sion or help "he reported On a question if any cloud was External Affairs Minister Natwar allegations on security, trade and

## conveyed to Powell and Singh. Singh and Khursheed M Kasuri to

STAFF CORRESPONDENT The ruling BNP-led four-party alliance has shifted its October 9

release.

development spree in the country.

alliance government," the news

FROM PAGE 12 gather and hold a demonstration at DIT Mosque after the Juma prayers

Ahmadiyya mosque.

day.
"We don't want to capture any-

Meanwhile, a number of socio-

have asked the people to assemble at the mosque in the morning to foil the bigots' capture programme.

DND dam

FROM PAGE 12

was pumped out before has come A total of five pumps installed at

the huge volume of rainwater.

now the suffering has come back by inundating all the roads and many houses of our area.'

Delpara, Lamapara, Tusharpara, Pathantali, Godhnail and Kadamtali of Siddirganj upazila in Narayanganj district and many parts of Fatullah

upazila has taken a serious turn. "We are already in trouble. Now it becoming severe and severe,

## tion sources

2 more held

FROM PAGE 12 Reza after hearing granted three day remand. The two other arrestees were also placed on three-day fresh

Abdur Rahim and Waliullah alias

Walin were produced before the same

court on completion of three-day. The

remand.

IO sought for five-day remand but the court granted three days. The CID picked up Rahim, caretaker of a public toilet at Fulbaria Railway Super Market, on September 26, while Walin was arrested from Fulbaria Railway Colony two days back.

Eight people -- Tusher, Litan, Rahim, Walin, Abdur Rahman,

Saibal Saha Partha, Habib alias

Hannan and Badsha Miah -- have

### so far been shown arrested in the August 21 grenade attack case.

6 Rab men

FROM PAGE 1

inspector Shakhawat Hossain, son of Anisur Rahman of Pirujali village in Joydevpur, who died at the RMCH, from Mymensingh police and Habildar Mozammel Haque of Fulbari in Govindaganj upazila in Gaibandha, from third Armed Battalion Police, driver Musleh Uddin of Charfalcon village in Ramgati in Laxmipur from 29 East Bengal Regiment, soldier Ferdous Alam of Talukandi in Peergani upazila in Rangpur from OCU 15 Field Regiment Artillery, soldier Abdur Rahman of Jogihat in Ghatail upazila in Tangail from Bir Force. and gunner ABM Rabiul Alam of Sutanara village in Sariakandi upazila in Bogra from Bangladesh Naval Academy in Potenga.

The driver and helpers of the bus

The Rab, police and army high

fled leaving the Rab vehicle

smashed on the road.

ups have visited the spot.

# FROM PAGE 1 "The well marked low in India has