The Baily Star

# NEWS

# **UN inspectors ready** to return to Iraq

#### **REUTERS**, Vienna

UN inspectors, barred from most of Iraq since last year's invasion, are ready to return to probe the disappearance of equipment that could be used in atomic weapons, the United Nations nuclear watchdog

"We are ready, subject to Security Council guidance and the prevailing security situation, to resume our Security Council mandated verification activities in Iraq, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) spokesman Mark

Gwozdecky said yesterday. The IAEA, which monitored Saddam Hussein's nuclear sites before last year's Iraq war, informed the U.N. Security Council this week that equipment and materials that could be used to make atomic weapons have been vanishing from Iraq but neither Baghdad nor Washington had noticed.

Iraq's Science and Technology Minister Rashad Omar said in Baghdad on Tuesday everything at the nuclear sites belonging to his ministry was accounted for and that there had been no recent disappearances

"The locations that belong to the Science and Technology ministry are secure and under our control, Omar told Reuters.

He said nothing had gone missing since a looting spree after the U.S.-led invasion in March 2003, which the United States and Britain said was to rid Iraq of weapons of mass destruction. Both countries now admit Saddam had no caches of banned weapons But a Western diplomat close to

the IAEA said Omar's comments did not appear to apply to the sites the IAEA was worried about -- which may belong to Iraq's defence ministry.

Omar specifically referred to the Iraqi nuclear research complex at Tuwaitha near Baghdad, the one site where the IAEA has conducted limited inspections last year and this year.

"The concerns raised in the (IAEA) letter centre around material and equipment in dozens of other facilities, most of which are part of the broader complex of former military-related facilities," the diplomat said on condition of anonymity.

Satellite imagery shows entire buildings in Iraq that once housed high-precision equipment have been dismantled, IAEA chief Mohamed ElBaradei said in a letter to the U.N. Security Council.

In 1991, the IAEA detected Saddam's clandestine nuclear weapons programme and spent the next seven years investigating and dismantling it. By the time U.N.

Power crisis

#### inspectors fled the country ir December 1998, Iraq's covert atom bomb programme was gone.

## Rab accused FROM PAGE 1

the cases, the groups alleged.

Mohammad Ali and Sumon The stereotyped explanations

on the 33 killings in Rab actions until yesterday remind us of the 56 killings in the Operation Clean Heart when law-enforcing agencies claimed the victims died of heart attack," said a statement Sultana Kamal read out at the press confer ence

nance in 2003 (after Operation in cases of the killings," she said. trend of killings and anticipating future legal status of such killings." Rab shot writer Ali dead in the

Sumon, a major witness to the killing of lawmaker Ahsanullah Master died several hours after his arrest as an extortionist

hampering probe to find out 'godfathers' and their hideouts, the rights bodies said. Their demands include fair

custody, compensation to family members of the victims, compliance with higher court directives concerning the constitution, laws, arrest and remand, and accountability of the law-enforcing agencies. They also asked the government

ernment agencies and their activind beyond the reach of the law.

Kamal said they are not against Rab but against their activities that violate human rights. The situation is going out of control, she added. Asked if they plan to sue Rab,

this matter but the victims' families are eager to file cases. Thirty-three people died from police torture last year, 23 in the first

Rahman Rose of Nijera Kori, Sofia Ahmed of Karmaiibi Nari, Abdus Salam of Jatiya Ainjibi Parishad and Ferdousi Akther of Naripakkhya also spoke at the press conference.

They received 518 million cft

gas, much less than the demand,

yesterday, which caused a power

generation shortage of 500 mw at

several gas-based power plants

including Ghorashal and Raozan.

Talking on the gas demand

Petrobangla officials said they

would not be able to supply more

than 565 million cft gas a day, the

not possible for Petrobangla if it is to

maintain the current supply to

fertiliser industries, said its officials.

PDB official said, "These types of

meetings are going on for years

without making any tangible solu-

tion and load management is

Rahman told The Daily Star: "Al-

though Petrobangla told us about

their limitations to supply gas

according to our demand, they said

PDB Chairman Mokhlesur

More gas supply to the PDB is

About yesterday's meeting, a

meeting sources said.

always suggested."

STAFF CORRESPONDENT Jatiya Oikya Mancha leaders yes-

slates price

hike

essentials.

essentials

Rahman Manik.

city streets in procession.

shot dead

**BNP** leader

Mamun-or-Rasul alias Babu Khan.

Police said up to 10 assailants

The criminals shot Babu, also a

contractor, in his head and abdomen

and left him dead on the spot.

track: IMF

vesterday.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Missanke Weerasinghe made

ministry (

this observation to reporters after he led a six-member IMF delegation

that met Finance Minister M Saifur

that grabbed the state power

leaders of the Durga Puja celebra-

tion committee who met the AL

leader at her Sudha Sadan resi-

of Khaleda 'totally failed', Hasina

said "Awami League is the people's

party and we have enough confi-

She alleged that the religious

minority are under tremendous

pressure in this regime. "Instead of

giving protection to them, the gov-

ernment is creating panic among

the minority people with an eye on

next general elections," she

claimed. "They (government) try to

prevent the minority people from

"None of the machinations of the

alliance government will be effective

when mass upsurge throws them

out of power," the AL chief cau-

CR Dutta, Subarata Chowdhury

and Chitta Ranjan Sircar led the

delegation and invited Hasina to join

activities and pragmatic policies and

steps of her three-year-old govern-

ment, the prime minister said the

coalition government fulfilled many

of its election commitments and the

rest would be implemented in the

flood-affected farmers of all assis-

tance to recoup their losses. She

distributed VGF cards and relief

among the flood-stricken people of

Employment and Minister-in-

Charge of the district Amanullah

Aman and Local MP Kazi Salimul

Haq Kamal also spoke.

State Minister for Labour and

The prime minister assured the

going to the polling centres."

the puja celebrations

PM warns

FROM PAGE 12

next two years.

the upazila

Terming the alliance government

reforms under the PRGF.

Hasina

FROM PAGE 1

dence

nower.'

tioned

of police of Kushtia, visited the spot.

alliance government.

The leaders at a rally in

Muktangan in the city blamed the

soaring prices on the inefficiency of

the government and demanded

mmediate control on price hike of

Syedur Rahman Sayeed, conve-

nor of the party's city unit, chaired

They also expressed concern at the killing of the innocent people like

Majumder.

"Passage of the indemnity ordi-Clean Heart) deprives us of justice "We are horrified by the current

in Kushtia open for housing a criminal and **OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia** 

Criminals gunned down a BNP leader in Kuripol village of Mirpur upazila in the district Tuesday Killings of criminals are also

president of Mirpur upazila unit BNP, came under attack when he was returning to his Birnagar house with two BNP activists by a motorcycle at around investigation of all killings in police 9:30pm.

stopped Babu on Kuripol bridge and took him a few yards away at gunpoint. However, they let off the two BNP activists. Ramzan and Enamul. who said the killers were familiar to Babu.

to ensure accountability of all govties and not to make any move or comments which might make the agencies think they are indemnified

Replying to a query, Sultana money Financial

she said they are yet to decide on sector reforms on

six months of this year and 30 between June 21 and September

Farida Yasmin of Blast, Rezanur

## Oikya Mancha Govt to assess Tata's

#### FROM PAGE 1 the finance minister added.

"A tough negotiation may be needed, in particular, on the issue of supply of requisite gas and its pricing," Saifur said and hinted at a cautious approach before sealing a terday said economic hardship of deal with the Indian conglomerate. the common people has peaked in

Donor agencies including the the wake of rocketing prices of World Bank (WB) and Asian Development Bank (ADB) commit-They also asked the people to ted providing necessary support to unite and launch movement against the Indian conglomerate's investthe BNP-Jamaat-led four-party ment proposal.

The commitment came during a meeting of the Tata Group chairman with the representatives of international donor agencies.

Earlier, the WB committed \$2 million for a study on the investment proposals and preparing terms and conditions by a technical committee of Petrobangla, which oversees the gas sector.

the rally, which was also addressed by Saiduddin Ahmed, Shamsul The Indian industrial giant plans Alam Dudu, Harun-or-Rashid, Avub to set up two 500-megawatt gas-Khan. Rafigul Islam and Svidur based power plants in the western region of Bangladesh, a 2.4 million After the rally they marched the tonne-capacity steel plant and a 1 million tonne-capacity fertiliser plant as part of the \$2 billion investment package.

"We need to know how much gas is in store in Bibiyana Gas Field and how long it will take to extract gas from the field before sealing an agreement with them (Tata). "If we do not take these into

account. we cannot ensure uninterrupted gas supply to the proposed Tata plants and the projects will fall sick," Saifur said.

An expression of interest, which was to be signed yesterday between Tata Group and the government, will specify which sectors Tata Group wants to invest in, he said referring to his yesterday's meeting with the Group chairman.

The Group will set up gas-based power plants in the western region and if there is surplus power after meeting local demand, it will export that to India, the finance minister

BNP lawmaker Shahidul Islam and Shahabuddin Ahmed, superintendent

Police could not identify the motive behind the killing. Family sources claimed extortionists had threatened Babu with death if he failed to give them covered.

In the GCI index. Bangladesh slipped from its position at 77 in 2002 (of 80 countries assessed) to 98 in 2003 (of 102 countries) and then to 102 this year. India ended 55th, Pakistan 91st and Sri Lanka 73rd. China found its slot at 46th and Vietnam 77th

Other than India, which made up by one place, all of these countries also slipped from their previous year's position.

In the Technology Index, Reforms in financial sector are on Bangladesh ranked 100th, slipping track under the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF), said the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the first stage of its third from last year's position of 95, showing a poor adoption of innovation to boost growth. India made a review of the PRGF programmes

Health minister opens

He said the Indian conclomerate has expressed the intention to set up steel and fertiliser plants.

"But everything depends on (availability) of gas supply and the pricing," Saifur told the media. The finance minister added: "On

our part we need to look at how quickly we can develop the gas fields and extract gas from these fields... We also need to assess the domestic gas consumption and how much gas they will need before sealing the agreement."

On the gas pricing, Saifur said, the government will have to supply gas to the proposed Tata plants for 15 to 20 years and for that, it will have to start a tough negotiation about what the gas pricing would be during that period.

The gas pricing would have to be commensurate with the volatile international fuel prices, he added. "These elements (supply and price) will have to be there in the

agreement to protect interests of both sides," the finance minister On the economic viability of the planned plants, Saifur quoted Tata

Group officials as saying, "You (Bangladesh) have gas and there is no point keeping them underground. The gas needs to be properly utilised Asked if the Indian conglomerate

is interested only in gas-based industries, he said, "Is it not natural, what else does Bangladesh have other than gas?"

On whether the fertiliser plant Tata plans to set up will be a repeat of the Kafco (Karnaphuli Fertiliser Company) fiasco, the minister admitted that they have had a bitter experience with Kafco and that this time they will conduct a feasibility study on the planned Tata projects

in a professional efficient manner He ruled out the possibility of supplying gas to the Tata plants at

## Bangladesh loses out

#### FROM PAGE 1

The BCI evaluates the underlying microeconomic conditions defining the current sustainable level of productivity in each of the countries

In the Macroeconomic Environment Index, Bangladesh performed better ending at 74th, two places down from last year's. India stood 52nd, Pakistan 67th, Sri Lanka 73rd, China 24th, and Vietnam 58th

> In the Public Institutions Index, Bangladesh was rewarded with the lowest rank of 104th, showing poor public reforms. Only Pakistan is

closest to Bangladesh ranking at the position of 102nd. In the BCI, India has improved its position by 7 places to 30th,

#### Pakistan slipped to 67th, Sri Lanka dropped to 73rd, Vietnam slipped to 79th while China improved to 24th.

62nd and Vietnam 92nd.

Ratan Tata, the Group's chairman, told reporters that they have not so far faced problems with their BNP high-ups observed that the

proposal He added that he would be able to explain their position after meetings with the ministers today. WB. ADB READY

TO SUPPORT The donor agencies took the biggest investment proposal in Bangladesh from India positively and committed to providing support in making the proposal a reality,

meeting sources said. International Finance Corporation, the private-sector arm of the WB, co-ordinated the meeting at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel vesterday

"Bangladesh has natural gas and Tata has money and technical expertise, so both could be benefited on the basis of a mutual understanding," said David Hughart, operations advisor of the WB, after he meeting.

He, however, said more discussions are still required.

"We are very much encouraged by the proposal and ready to facilitate it through infrastructure development," said Hua Du, deputy country representative of the ADB. She said if necessary, the ADB

would also provide supplementary support for the investment project.

Asked whether Tata has had any specific proposal for logistics or other support for implementation of its projects, she said the proposal was made to the government and donor agencies would discus about it with the government later on.

Hua said the ADB has been providing support for long for development of the private sector in Bangladesh. "So it would also continue in future."

AHSANULLAH MURDER Arrest warrant against Dipu, remarkable achievement standing at 63 next only to China. Pakistar 16 others ranks 87th, Sri Lanka 81st, China

#### COURT CORRESPONDENT

Speedy Trial Tribunal-1in Dhaka yesterday issued warrant of arrest against Nurul Islam Dipu, a Chhatra Samaj leader and sixteen others accused in the Ahsanullah Master MP murder case.

Judge Shahed Noor Uddin gave the order as the accused have been absconding since the murder.

The tribunal also fixed October 17 survey said every day 67 motorised for appearance of the accused and vehicles are added to the already directed the Gazipur Jail authorities congested roads in the capital. As to produce Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal many as 20 railway crossings in leader Nurul Islam Saker and 12 different parts of the city are adding others, now in custody before the to the traffic gridlock. court on the date.

Earlier, on September 19 the government transferred the case to he tribunal for its quick disposal.

the same road, haphazard parking, Gunmen opened fire on Ahsanullah keeping garbage containers on Master at a rally of Awami streets and minimum fine for viola-Shechchhasebak League, the voluntion of traffic rules cause traffic jam. teer front of Awami League at Noagaon

## **BNP** rejects AL demand

to win.

Rejecting the demand, environ-

ment minister and BNP Vice

President Tariqul Islam said, "It is

very difficult to understand what

they are saying when they made

allegations of covert and overt

rigging in the elections after failing

debate on the caretaker govern-

ment as it was settled through

incorporation into the Constitution.

rejected a petition against the

caretaker government system and

declared the system as constitu-

tional." said Tarigul, hinting that

there was conspiracy behind the

demand of the main opposition.

met office said yesterday evening.

further and move in a north-

It said the low is likely to intensify

Maritime ports of Chittagong

All fishing boats and trawlers

have been advised to come close to

the coast and proceed with caution

MEETING ON TRAFFIC, JAM

A parliamentary standing committee

meeting on communication ministry

yesterday discussed possible ways

to reduce traffic congestion in the

The communications minister

expressed dissatisfaction at the

slow implementation of the initia-

tives taken by his ministry to

improve traffic system by easing

obstacles to implementing the

steps," meeting sources quoted

Nazmul Huda as saying at the

Committee members alleged

many old vehicles are plying the

streets of Dhaka despite cancella-

tion of the route permit of over 20-

year old vehicles, which cause air

its report submitted at the commit-

tee meeting that traffic situation has

improved significantly after it

Manjur Hossain presided over the

from blaming the BNP lawmaker from Anwara, Sarwar Jamal Nizam.

Last week, Farman Reza at a press conference here pointed his

refuted the allegation at a counter-

press conference on Tuesday.

nger at Nizam. The lawmaker

Farman Reza handed over the

Committee chairman Syed

nposed ban on old vehicles.

Family of

Jamal

FROM PAGE 12

The BRTA, however, claimed in

"A vested quarter is creating

Cox's Bazar and Mongla have been

advised to hoist local cautionary

Another

northwesterly direction.

FROM PAGE 1

signal no three.

capital

congestion.

meeting.

oollution

meeting.

"Moreover, the High Court

He said there is no scope for

FROM PAGE 1 disgrace to the democratic process'

government movement.

eral elections.

opposition is trying to create a new

issue with the caretaker govern-

ment system as they failed to get

public support in the anti-

On Tuesday, a meeting of

Awami League Central Working

Committee discussed the care-

taker government system and

observed that some reforms into

the system is necessary to ensure

neutrality of the interim govern-

ment in conducting the next gen-

been incorporated in the

Constitution following a consensus

of BNP and Awami League in 1996

to ensure free, fair and neutral

voting", said Khandaker Mosharraf

Hossain, health minister and BNP

"No one having faith in democ

Mosharraf said all the general

elections under the interim govern-

ment earned acclamations both at

home and abroad while many have

As part of the Traffic Week

programmes, the police and Dhaka

City Corporation (DCC) yesterday

seized 130 unauthorised rickshaws

in the capital. Nearly three lakh

unlicensed rickshaws ply the streets

of Dhaka while only 79,000 have

rickshaws sparked instant protest

among rickshawpullers who formed

a human chain from the High Court

to Shahbagh crossing. During the Traffic Week that

started on October 9, the traffic

department and a number of mobile

courts filed cases against more than

13,000 vehicles for not carrying

legal documents, sources at the

Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP)

"We are trying our level best to enforce traffic rules and laws, prose-

cute vehicles not carrying legal

documents and seize unlicensed

Deputy Commissioner of DMP

Traffic (North) Zahirul Islam told the

Police sources quoting a recent

Besides, frequent digging of

roads by utility agencies, allowing

slow and fast moving transports on

rickshaws to reduce traffic jam,

The seizure of unauthorised

Traffic nightmare

observed the system as a model.

racy can make such a demand,'

said Mosharraf, calling the opposi-

Standing Committee member.

tion demand 'unfortunate'

FROM PAGE 1

licences.

said

Daily Star

double than usual fare."

"The caretaker government has

last night, see u the Dally ing anonymity.

State Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources AKM Mosharraf Hossain and State Minister for Power Iqbal Hassan Mahmood, high officials of Petrobangla, PDB, PGCB (Power Grid Company of Bangladesh, Desa (Dhaka Electric Supply Authority), Desco (Dhaka Electricity Supply Company) and REB (Rural Electrification Board) sat at a meeting at the Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources yesterday to discuss the issue.

The PDB officials at the meeting said the countrywide power demand of 3400-3500 megawatt will shoot up to 3700-3800 during the coming Puja and Ramadan, said a source.

Officials of the PDB, which runs most of its power plants on gas, said gas demand will increase to at least 650 million cft (cubic feet) from the existing supply to generate the required power.

A PDB official present at the they would try to increase it." meeting said there is a shortage of "We'll take all possible measures to meet the demand," he said. around 150 million cft gas a day

## North floods

#### FROM PAGE 12

from across the border was responsible for the flash flood.

The river Chhoto Jamuna continued to swell, flooding nine wards of Naogaon municipal areas and affecting 66 unions in nine upazilas of Naogaon. The affected upazilas are Naogaon Sadar, Manda, Mahadevpur, Niamatpur, Patnitola, Badalgachi, Sapahar, Porsha and Nazipur.

About 2000 homeless people took refuge at 11 flood shelters in the affected areas where only 20 maunds of chira was distributed as relief.

Government assessment counted about 54,300 families as badly affected by the flood that also damaged some 2,975 houses completely and partially damage 22,700 houses. Some 88 kilometers of metalled road. 454 kilometers of katcha road, nine bridges and culverts were also damaged. Standing crops on 28,300 hectares of land have been totally destroyed.

Quamrul, 20, of Bakshimul village and 4-year-old Joynul of Bidyadharpur village of Mohanpur upazila in Rajshahi drowned in floodwater on Tuesday.

Diarrhoea broke out at Mohonpur, Bagmara and Keshorehat areas of Rajshahi

causing the death of two and affecting some 50 others Fresh areas of Mohanpur and

Bagmara upazilas of Rajshahi have been flooded as strong currents caused breaches in the flood control embankment at Tengra and Meladi. Standing crops, vegetables, fish farms on over one thousand hect-

ares of land have also been washed away by floodwater. At the Keshorehat municipality, 17 areas have been flooded while some 50 villages of Sabaihat area are affected. About 15 medium-

sized beels and 90 ponds used for pisciculture on lease and 35 betel leaf gardens were flooded

### Crashed F28 FROM PAGE 12

The team went back to Dhaka yesterday and is expected to fly in to the northeastern city today. An official said authorities would

detach some more parts of the damaged aircraft to reduce its weight for pulling it to the runway end

Crane would be used for the job if needed. As both engines of the aircraft are in good condition, these would be separated for use in other crafts, the official said

FROM PAGE 12

terday to discuss financial sector fever. Heart disease, in the country, especially among the younger The IMF team started their review of the PRGF in Bangladesh population is increasing which is of areat concern." on October 10 and is expected to complete the review by October 23.

Referring to another survey carried out between 2002 and 2004 the minister said, "Out of 843 children between 1 and 12 years of age hospitalised for heart diseases at the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD), through conspiracy," Hasina told 78 per cent have suffered from various kinds of heart defects since birth."

The minister later formally inaugurated the University Cardiac Centre at BSMMUH. The centre has a modern operation theatre with a cathlab next door, a five-bed intensive care unit, 14-bed coronary care unit, a twelve-bed post coronary dence in people to be back to care unit and a ten-bed step-down unit

> All open heart surgeries and nonsion.

## Huda admits irregularities

#### FROM PAGE 1

number," meeting sources quoted the communications minister as saving at the meeting held at the Jativa Sangsad Bhaban.

The ministry earlier faced widespread allegations of corruption in the import and distribution of the three-wheelers and issuance of licences for the operators.

Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA), the motor vehicle licensing authority under the ministry, however submitted a report at the meeting claiming that 13,000 CNG-run autorickshaws are running on the city's streets.

The minister and the parliamentary body rejected BRTA's figure and asked it to scan the licence numbers of all the autorickshaws by setting up mobile courts.

A section of unscrupulous operators are using fake licences to run the CNG three-wheelers but the BRTA cannot take any action against them as the operators have underhand dealings with some corrupt BRTA officials, the meeting observed.

"Because of the fake licences the government is losing a huge amount of revenue," Syed Manjur Hossain, chairman of the committee, told The Daily Star after the meeting

BRTA high officials failed to give The prime minister also a satisfactory answer to the allegaaddressed another meeting at Jagla tion. They said BRTA is facing a High School ground in Sadar manpower shortage in discharging upazila and distributed relief and its activities smoothly. VGF cards among the flood victims.

In the report BRTA mentioned a

invasive (closed heart) interventions will be provided from the centre which also has an outdoor service with an emergency wing.

The centre will be run by a team of 14 cardiologists and six cardiac surgeons already trained with an additional 18-member medical team to supervise admission and other

The centre is also staffed with 44 nurses especially trained in cardiac care and 52 technicians to run and supervise all the medical equipment of the centre.

State Minister for Health Mizanur Rahman Sinha, Health Secretary AFM Sarwar Kamal, Prof M A Hadi Vice Chancellor of BSMMU Prof MA Hadi. Saiful Islam and Secretary General of Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) Dr AZM Zahid Hossain were also present at the inaugural ses-

pediatric surgeon Prof M

Tk 7 crore project that has been undertaken to computerise the data about BRTA's registration, licence and vehicles. The World Bank is funding the scheme under the

Dhaka Urban Transport Project. In January this year, the parliamentary standing committee took a swipe at the communications minister for what it said was 'corruption in import and distribution of CNG autorickshaws,' an allegation the minister denied outright.

Members of the parliamentary body alleged that price of a CNG autorickshaw had gone up to as high as Tk 3.67 lakh while the actual price was Tk 1.67 lakh as a result of a monopoly on imports by Uttara

Motors. Two sub-committees were formed to probe into the alleged irregularities of the importing of CNG autorickshaws and the issuing of licences, and in the allocation of land to set up CNG refuelling stations. None of the sub-committees

has vet finalised a report. However, another subcommittee on Jamuna Resort, yesterday submitted its report. Referring to it, the committee chairman said a five-star hotel would be built there. The army has already vacated the place, which they had been using for training purpose.

The meeting discussed some other issues including traffic congestion in the capital and Mohakhali flyover, which is expected to be opened on November 4.

near the legislator's house in Tongi on May 7. Schoolboy Omar Faruq Ratan was also killed and at least five others were hurt in the incident.

The slain lawmaker's brother Motiur Rahman filed a case with Tongi Police Station the next day naming 17 as accused.

The Criminal Investigation Department on July 10 brought charges against 29 people and charged Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal leader Nurul Islam Sarker with masterminding the assassination.

The charge sheet shows 78 people as prosecution witnesses.

#### One more FROM PAGE 12

Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka at 4:30pm seeking seven-day remand.

The investigation officer in his remand prayer alleged Ata, a hawker, was assisting the attackers on the footpath near Bangabandhu Avenue. He needs to be guizzed to trace the whereabouts of his accomplices, the IO added.

Metropolitan Magistrate Mir Ali Reza granted five-day remand.

Two youths Tusher and Litan arrested on the same charge are now facing interrogation. The CID picked up them from Ananda Bazar slum on Secretariat Road in the city on October 6.

Nine people -- Ata, 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

## Rab to swing

FROM PAGE 1 their action, especially death of suspected criminals after arrest.

"The countrymen are now appreciating the work of Rab, so we cannot stand against people's aspiration. Creating controversy about its work particularly over crossfire, is absolutely motivated," he said after the meeting with Rab officials.

The meeting discussed the activities of the elite force during the last six months. The minister said that Rab would have to be more cautious in keeping the law and order under control ahead of Ramadan and Eid.

The meeting was apprised that the Rab members recovered at least 263 illegal arms and arrested more than a thousand people, including four top terrors, on various charges. Among others, Home Secretary Mohammad Omar Farook and Director General (DG) of Rab Anwarul lqbal were present at the meeting.

The traffic denartment has so fa introduced automatic signal system at 15 points and targeted to bring 70 points under the system by December.

letter to the Criminal Inves Department (CID). Meanwhile, Chittagong South BNP President Ahmed Khalil Khan has requested CID to look into the allegation raised by Jamal's family.

## 4 US soldiers killed

FROM PAGE 12 convoy," a military statement said.

The latest deaths bring to 1.072 the number of US soldiers killed in Irag since the start of the US-led invasion of the country in March 2003, according to a Pentagon tally. The blast came as the US military went on the offensive Tuesday in the Sunni heartland of Iraq.

US warplanes struck Fallujah, the epicenter of the Sunni Muslim rebellion, three times and raided at least seven mosques in Ramadi, arresting a senior cleric.

Warplanes dropped a 500pound (250-kilo) bomb on insurgents on the eastern fringes of the city after a firefight late Tuesday, a military spokesman said.

A first raid targeted Al-Haj end. Hussein restaurant in central Fallujah, famous across central Iraq for its kebabs. Four people were killed and six wounded, including restaurant staff. hospital sources said

The US military said it was a known meeting place for Iraq's most wanted militant, Abu Mussab al-Zarqawi, and his radical Unity and Holv War group.

Four hours later, US aircraft returned to strike the battle-scarred city, considered a hub for insurgents, destroying a suspected Zarqawi hideaway, the military said.

The military has intensified its blistering air strikes on Fallujah since September, saying it is seeking to restore law and order in Iraq by elections planned for January.

Also in the restive Al-Anbar province of western Iraq, US Marines and Iraqi forces carried out predawn raids on at least seven mosques in Ramadi, sparking shootouts in which two Iragis were killed, the military and hospital sources said.

The Committee of Muslim Scholars, an influential Sunni body which represents 3,000 mosques, said the Americans and Iragis had arrested their representative for Al-Anbar province, Sheikh Abdul al-Aleem al-Sadi, and his son.

As the Sunni Muslim insurgency raged on, Shiite rebel Moqtada al-

Sadr's rebellion appeared to be winding down as the preacher called on his followers to disarm under an agreement with the Iragi aovernment.

In Baghdad, dozens of Sadr's Mehdi Army militiamen and arms dealers lined up outside a police station to sell weapons to police on the second day of a five-day period for the fundamentalist movement to disarm in Sadr City.

After the disarmament drive's slow start Monday, Iraqi officers were more hopeful that six months of clashes in the overcrowded slum between the Mehdi Army and US troops might finally be coming to an

Meanwhile Iraq pleaded with the international community to play a bigger part in rebuilding the warshattered nation at a donors conference to assess how to spend billions of dollars in aid.

Interim Deputy Prime Minister Barham Saleh told representatives of some 55 countries and organisations that donors should waive the debt from the rule of Saddam Hussein and that the United Nations should play a more active role in Irad.

"We need more UN support and we need it now. Please don't let the Iraqi people down," Saleh told the opening of the two-day conference in Tokyo.

The donors' conference is the fourth since the fall of Saddam and the first since the interim government took over from US-led forces in June.

The interim government has said t will propose to the donors a wish list of commitments to 324 projects costing a total 43.5 billion dollars. including 53 related to infrastruc-

Host Japan announced it would devote 40 million dollars of the five billion dollars it has already pledged to support Iraq's legislative elections due in Januarv.