Plan for 2-day holiday Lawmakers fail | More blasts feared

increased by Tk 25 to Tk 475.

This is the eighth time the present government has hiked petroleum prices since coming to power in October 2001. However, it had never increased the prices of all the 10 different types of petroleum simultaneously in the past.

"The first reason for the hike is that the price of oil has skyrocketed internationally," said Mahmudur Rahman. "The second reason is, the BPC continues to count loss like last year. If we had not increased the price, the BPC loss this year would have come to Tk 4000 crore. But now this loss will decrease by Tk 1700 crore.'

Mahmudur added that the BPC had historically made losses but gave a lot of import duties which was considered as profit. "But last year, the BPC loss exceeded the amount of duties it paid for the first time. The BPC made a loss of Tk 2700 crore while it paid Tk 2400 crore as duties," he said. "The third reason is, import of oil

is also creating heavy pressure on the foreign currency reserve. The price hike will now force people to be frugal with oil use, which will ultimately reduce the pressure on the reserve," he said.

Mahmudur observed that the new price level has come close to that in India. "In the past, higher oil price in India encouraged smugaling of oil [from Bangladesh]. Now this will not happen and as a result, the overall import of oil of Bangladesh will decrease," he said.

"Besides there was pressure on the government from the donors to increase the price," Mahmudur added.

"Even after this hike, we will still have to subsidise diesel and kerosene by Tk 11 per litre. However, we will not have to subsidise petrol and octane as the BPC's cost of petrol and octane is Tk 42 per litre," he pointed out.

Energy ministry proposals

In its proposal, the energy ministry recommended a two-day weekly holiday. The high number of government motor vehicles contribute significantly to the high demand for petroleum. A two-day weekly holiday will cut down one day's transport expense for government staff the proposal said.

The ministry also suggested closing of all shops except drug stores and restaurants after 8:00pm

After 10:00pm, all neon signs and billboards should be shut down. Illumination of public places should be barred.

Finally, the government should encourage the government institutions to use energy saving lights

Militants threaten

Hindu community if they continue to report on Jamaat and other Islamist parties. They said the journalists of Hindu faith do not have any right to write on the Islamist outfits

"Our aim is to establish Islamic rule in to vote in the next parliamentary

Our manpower will not decrease, no matter how hard you try writing against us and informing police of our activities. It's because we are in Jihad. We had declared in leaflets four to five months ago that DC (Deputy Commissioner), SP (Super-

nabbed, but that will not make us stop. And that's why we ask you not to write anymore against us.

Jamaat-e-Islami, Harkatul Jehad, Ahle Hadith, Jamiat-e-Ulamia Islam and Muslim Mujahid Party.

Anyway, do not inform police of it

and national anthem in the country Hindus will have to be converted to Islam before general elections: otherwise they will have to leave Pak

August 17 blasts.

Lately, police and intelligence agencies have made a list of some 42 people suspected to have been involved in the countrywide bomb blitz. The law enforcers have

Barakatullah, a teacher of Al Markaiul

Barakatullah, a leader of the banned Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), under interrogation said he was involved in detonating bombs in

BFUJ, DUJ

The BFUJ and DUJ leaders asked Saifur to refrain from making such irresponsible remarks: otherwise journalists will make tougher stance against him and other minis-

establish good governance by curbing corruption and crimes, maintaining law and order, practising democracy and ensuring free-

dom of the press. Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury and Monjurul Ahsan Bulbul, president and secretary general of the BFUJ, and Altaf Mahmud and Shah Alamgir, president and general secretary of the DUJ, addressed the

committee members. He ended the

The AL lawmakers at the meetng accused the speaker of making the parliament and the committee "dvsfunctional" by his "negative attitude". They also questioned the need to continue the system of

'The system should be scrapped if the private members' bills are not allowed to be placed in the House, AL representative of the committee and lawmaker Shawkat Ali told the speaker.

that the ruling party lawmakers were asked to consult with the prime minister before piloting any private members' bills.

n the House, sources said quoting

Talking to The Daily Star, committee member and BNP lawmaker Sardar Shakhawat Hossain Bakul also echoed the same view.

According to the definition of the private members' bills in the rules of procedure of the Jativa Sangsad. any lawmaker who is not a member of the cabinet will be entitled to place in parliament any bill which will be considered as private members' bills. The House will decide the fate of the bills whether those will be passed or be rejected.

The lawmakers who submitted private members' bills proposing formulation of different laws, including amendment to the constitution, have become frustrated as their bills are not being placed in parliament. last January.

the meeting, the members led by its chairman met the speaker at his office in a bid to resolve the crisis.

The committee's recommendations to parliament, made by six separate reports, for passage and tabling of 14 bills, including 11 for amendment to the constitution have been being ignored since

concerned to seek permission from the law, justice and parliamentary affairs minister whether or not these 11 bills will be placed in parliament. The law minister gave the permission on April 20, 2004 but the speaker did not initiate any further secretariat said.

The amendment bills to the constitution were first submitted to the parliament secretariat and then sent to the parliamentary body for scrutiny. The other bills were sent to the committee for scrutiny after being placed in parliament and it recommended for passage.

The lawmakers submitted a total of 54 bills that were sent to the parliamentary body for scrutiny.

The government in its own nitiative passed two bills--one for formation of an anti corruption commission and the other, an amendment bill to constitution, for reintroducing women reserved seats in parliament. The lawmakers had placed similar bills long ago

passed one private members' bill in the current parliament to repeal a law on displaying the portrait of Bangabandhu at different government and semi-government offices.

Transport fare FROM PAGE 1

He said fare should be increased by at least 30 per cent to keep the transport sector operative. The association will hold an emer-

gency meeting this morning to chalk out a charter of demands to be placed before the government, Sear told The Daily Star. He however pointed out that the

government has many options like reducing duty on import of tyres and tubes of buses and trucks to give ncentive to transport owners.

Bangladesh Truck Malik Samity last night expressed deep concern over the price increase of all kinds of fuel and blamed the government for Tofazzal Hossain and Rustum Ali

Khan, president and general secretary of the samity, in a joint statement said the government pushed the transport sector toward a stagnation by raising fuel price twice in last three months. The fuel price hike will not only hit

transport sector but will also have a negative impact on the production of essentials including rice, consequently raising their prices, the state-

The samity has called an emergency meeting on Wednesday at Teigaon truck terminal to discuss the situation and an action plan to face it. Shajahan Khan, executive presi-

dent of Bangladesh Sarak Paribahan Sramik Federation, said transport sector could not survive without increasing the fare following fresh price rise of fuel. Fare should be increased on the

pasis of increased fuel cost, he added. Bangladesh Petroleum Dealers Association said fuel price rise will also increase cost of living and have a negative impact on the national econ-

Abdur Rahman and Syed Sajjadul Karim Kabul, president and general secretary of the association, in a joint statement said although the rise in fuel price was affective from yesterday, its supply to fuel stations was stopped Saturday afternoon, creating serious problems.

Long queues of vehicles were seen in front of all fuel stations on Saturday afternoon, they mentioned.

Our Rangamati correspondent eported that transport fair in different routes of the district has gone up due to

increased fuel price. In the distirct town, the fare hike is about 20 per cent.

a meeting on law and order. Mentioning a report of a Bangla daily on the union, Babar said he himself had received reports about

Asked whether the government is suspecting a joint attack by the groups, the state minister said, Yes, there is apprehension. We're never saying that there is no alarm and no-one should say that. There is an alarm and we're taking preparation for that."

The crackdown on three Islamist outfits -- the JMB, Siddiqul Islam alias Bangla Bhai-led Jagrata Muslim Janata, Bangladesh (JMJB) and Dr Asadullah Al Galib-led Ahle Hadith Andolan Bangladesh (Ahab) and Abdur Rashid alias Tapan Malitha-led Janajuddha led to the union, the agency reported.

Tapan was enraged and bent on revenge after some of his followers including his younger brother were killed in 'crossfire'. Bangla Bhai was also furious as a number of JMJB men were arrested after he went into hiding last year. After the arrest of Galib and

banning of the JMJB and JMB on February 23 and subsequent arrests of the JMB, JMJB and Ahab men, they planned an attack to frighten the government and show off their strength, according to the The report however confirmed

Janajuddha was not involved in the August 17 explosions and blamed it on the JMB following seizures of leaflets and confession of its activ-

The home ministry in the wake of the report yesterday to beef up security in Dhaka and elsewhere. It ordered the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) to conduct constant raid on slums and criminal dens and asked other agencies to initiate operation to arrest listed criminals. Babar also asked owners of

different markets who are yet to

install closed-circuit television (CCTV) to set up the CCTV immedi-

AUGUST 17 PROBE

The government yesterday claimed the progress of probe is satisfactory. "Besides arresting filed-level operatives, we've arrested some

second-grade ones." Babar told

reporters. "In some districts, we've traced the total process -- how the bombing took place and who were involved We've arrested a good number of people involved in the attack."

Yesterday's meeting was told that the whole syndicate has been tracked. As many as 300 people were arrested in this connection and 203 are now in custody. The arrestees from Satkhira. Kushtia. Tangail and Gazipur have given significant information.

TIGHTENED SECURITY **DURING RAMADAN**

Over 35 mobile courts will work during the month of Ramadan beginning in the first week of October. More check-posts will be added to existing 100 ones and block-raids will be intensified during the month.

The meeting ordered to observe a month-long 'traffic month' to be launched seven days before the Ramadan to ease traffic congestion in the city

MOBILE COURT

The ministry asked the mobile courts working across the country to deal out strong punishment to those who will be found guilty second time of food adulteration. It instructed the courts to jail such people.

The mobile courts have so far jailed 33 people, filed 932 cases and collected a fine of Tk 56 lakh in connection with food adulteration until yesterday.

The meeting was also told that the reform to the Pure Food Ordinance is about to be finalised.

Growth to get a knock3

"The government had to increase fuel price because of the global market situation and the pressure that is building up on fiscal and external balances," said Dr Debapriva Bhattacharva, executive director of the Centre for Police Dialogue (CPD). "The subsidy given on fuel is a contingent liability of the government which is not immediately reflected on the fiscal balance, rather the nationalised commercial banks have to shoulder the burden. On the other hand, it is not sustainable to import oil at such a high rate and subsidise it as the foreign exchange reserves come under pressure. The price hike will dampen demand to bring fiscal and external balance.'

Increased global price has made petroleum one of the significant components in the country's import payment bill. In FY2000, petroleum import bill was \$638 million or 7.8 percent of the total import bill, but in FY05, it stood at \$1,602 million or 12.2 percent of the total imports, according to a CPD analysis. In the past one year alone, petroleum import grew by 20.6 percent in dollar value.

But, Debapriya said, the flip side of the price hike is that it will lead to increased production cost, eroding competitiveness of the real

As it stands today, the anticipated outcome of the oil price hike will be a cycle of higher price, higher wage, higher inflation and

Companies are now thinking of a three-way strategy to combat the situation. Some are thinking of increasing their product prices; some apprehend that the market will react negatively to higher price and so think of lowering profit margin, while others are trying to revisit internal process and

"Our back is against the wall," said Sarwar Ahmed, managing director of Syngenta Bangladesh Ltd, a multinational agro-input company. "The taka devaluation has hit our imports badly, and the oil price hike will make the situation worse. So far, we did not think of increasing product prices, but now we have to rethink.'

He thinks a buoyant paddy market will factor in higher product price, but he is not so sure if the farmers will be able to pass the

Ashfaq-ur-Rahman, managing director of Novartis, a multinational pharmaceutical company, thinks of a different strategy. Although the oil price hike will have direct and indirect impacts on the process, he wants to revisit the input and output process and increase efficiency.

"I don't want to increase product price, but want to improve efficiency," he said. "Also, I will focus on exploring sales opportunities to absorb the shock internally." Deen Islam, finance director of

Monno Ceramics, said his company will have to lower profit margin for exports as unit order price will not increase. Similarly, the garment sector will also have to give up a part of their profits. Debapriya suggested a few steps, such as structural reforms to

bolster productivity growth and

looking for alternative energy

source. But he feels the whole idea

of increasing fuel price hike is

lopsided as it should have come in a comprehensive package.

increase, it could have been done in phases through routine adjustments," he said. "The shock could have been minimised by cutting unproductive public expenditures and corruption as the savings through these measures could have been used to subsidise fuel There is no conservation strategy such as extended use of daylight or austerity drive in sight."

hike was inevitable but he said the move should be supplemented by austerity measures that may include two-day weekly holiday and cut in unnecessary public expenditure. As the economy is evolving now with a number of strains, Dr

situation. "A confluence of negative features might lead to a situation where it would difficult to achieve growth target for this year." he said. 'Time will tell whether the economy would be able to absorb such a big

24 Indian

ambushed officials returning from an event celebrating India's Independence Day in the southern state of Andhra Pradesh, killing nine

after the Indian government rejected a parliamentary panel's talks between the federal government and banned Maoist groups. The federal government said it would offer assistance to states fighting the insurgents.

After the ambush in Andhra Pradesh, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh promised to hunt down the Maoist rebels responsible for the deaths. He also urged Maoist groups to take part in electoral politics instead of armed rebellion.

Outlaw leader FROM PAGE 16

Narayanganj police handed him over to Chuadanga police on Saturday. Chuadanga police quizzed Amir further to locate the hidden firearms and his accompli-

Following his statement, hour-long gunfight.

was caught in crossfire, police said. A shutter gun and five bullets were retrieved from the spot.

According to police, Amir, an accused in 17 cases including 13 for murder, had long been absconding and recently started working at Bardi temple assuming the name

Bangladesh

FROM PAGE 16 supersub and big guns like Sanath Jayasuriya, Muttiah Muralitharan and Chaminda Vaas were all rested but the second-string Lankan attack still tore through the Tigers' batting to dismiss the visitors for 108. It was Bangladesh's second lowest total

match began after a one-hour delay and when the Lankan innings was just 1.4-overs old, another 50minute rain interruption saw their target revised to 106 in 46 overs.

playing for the first time in the series made the most of his opportunity to notch his 12th ODI half-century to wrap up victory inside 22 overs. The left-handed opener cracked half a dozen boundaries to score 52 off 61 balls to steady the innings after Tapash Baisya had removed Upul Tharanga and one-down Dilhara Lokuhettige cheaply. Opener Upul Tharanga's impres-

ninch-hitter Dilhara Lokuhettige slashed the ball to Syed Rasel at deep third man on two. and Aviska left one run shy of the target when he pulled a short ball by

sive run came to an end as the

southpaw, fresh from hitting 60 and

105, was clean bowled on nine while

overs as the innings rapidly fell apart.

The two rookie pacers had no venom in their bowling but the Tigers added just seven runs to lose Javed Omar (18), Shahriar Nafees (21), Mohammad Rafique (1), Mohammad Ashraful (0), Aftab Ahmed (1) and Habibul Bashar (1)

total past the 100-mark Man-of-the-match Fernando finished with 3-19 and Maharoof

with 3-25. Upul Tharanga was adjudged man-of-the-series. Sri Lanka won the first two

matches by 88 and 75 runs. Bangladesh will start their preparation for the two Tests with a prac-

Tough anti-terror

deployed all of its might to trap and punish the conspirators and extrem-

The minister said there is no

"We have to unite irrespective of suppressing extremists and terrorists. Everyone should cooperate the government," Moudud said, adding that the government seeks help and assistance from all quarters in this

only be taken when the guilt is proved through proper investigation and prosecution. "The investigation process is not strong enough. There is a lack of

necessary trained human resources required to probe such offences." he admitted. Moudud however said the government has taken massive programmes to build trained and

Referring to Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), he said, "Steps have been taken to make the members of the law enforcement agencies efficient, strong and more capable. "I don't think the Rab has so far made any misuse of power,

he categorically said. Moudud said there is no dearth of

countries new laws are being made to cope with the changed situations. Besides, there are many international or transnational laws to cope with terrorism and subversive activities like those enacted in India Pakistan, the US and the UK.

Sources said opening of the consulate offices in Sydney, Australia, was a commitment of the prime minister, while consulates in Milan, Italy and in Miami, USA were promised by the countries.

the consulates.

Aiyar arives in Dhaka

with top Bangladesh leaders.

Sources said Aiyar's visit to Dhaka s primarily to discuss the proposed \$1 billion tri-nation gas pipeline project which would tie Myanmar and India

Aiyar was due to arrive on August 27 but his arrival was delayed following extension of parliament session in

A high official from the ministry of foreign affairs told The Daily Star vesterday that Aiyar, an influential and senior minister of Indian government, s coming to Dhaka at the invitation of Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan. "Aivar is an important leader of

ruling Congress Party and he holds vital portfolio," he added. When asked whether the Indian

minister will discuss energy issues including the proposed tri-nation gas pipeline, the official said, "It's a goodwill visit, there is no specific agenda. "He will have meetings with the

prime minister, finance minister,

foreign minister and adviser to the

energy ministry to discuss bilateral issues." the official added. According to the programme schedule, Aiyar will have a separate

meeting with the foreign minister and the energy adviser in the morning. He will meet the prime minister and the finance minister in the afternoon.

The Indian minister will also pay courtesy call on Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina in the afternoon. He will leave Dhaka on

Tuesday. Sources said, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh recently had an exclusive meeting with Aivar and External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh and discussed India's course for breaking the apparent impasse over the proposed tri-nation gas pipeline.

The meeting cleared Aiyar's visit to Dhaka for a trilateral memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Bangladesh and Myanmar, which was delayed due to some bilateral issues.

Bangladesh agreed to allow the pipeline through its territory but set some preconditions. Dhaka insisted on some demands including the use of Indian territory for transporting goods to Nepal and Bhutan, allowing Dhaka to bring power from these countries and steps by New Delhi to reduce the

New Orleans left

Guard who had been standing watch over the facility for nearly a week as some 20,000 hurricane survivors

waited for rescue. On Sunday, utilities planned to send trucks into the city to assess storm damage for the first time since Katrina struck. Morgan Stewart, a spokesman for electricity provider Entergy Corp., said the National Guard would escort the company's

The convention centre was "almost empty" after 4,200 people were removed, according to Marty Bahamonde, a spokesman for the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Earlier estimates of the crowd climbed as high as 25,000. Thousands of refugees dragged

Yolando Sanders, who had been stuck at the convention centre for five days, was among those who filed past corpses to reach the buses. Anyplace is better than here," she

their meager belongings to buses, the

mood more numb than jubilant.

"People are dying over there." Nearby, a woman lay dead in a wheelchair on the front steps. A man was covered in a black drape with a dry line of blood running to the gutter, where it had pooled. Another had lain on a chaise lounge for four days, his stocking feet peeking out from under a

By mid-afternoon, only pockets of stragglers remained in the streets around the convention centre, and New Orleans paramedics began carting away the dead. The exact number of dead won't be known for some time. Survivors were

still being plucked from roofs and

shattered highways across the city

President Bush ordered more than 7,000 active duty forces to the Gulf Coast on Saturday. There are people in apartments and hotels that you didn't know were

there," Army Brig. Gen. Mark Graham The overwhelming majority of chaos were those without the resources to escape and, overwhelm-

ingly, they were black. The first few days were a natural disaster. The last four days were a

14-party vows

FROM PAGE 1

Jalil said, adding that the government got panicked after the verdict as their misdeeds came out through the iudament.

After the verdict, the BNP has no

moral right to cling to power anymore

as it was formed through an illegal process, Jalil observed. Blasting Law Minister Moudud Ahmed, the AL leader said, "If the verdict is worthless at all, then why the government rushed to the residence of

a chamber judge in the midnight and managed a stay order on it." AL Presidium Member Amir Hossain Amu, who presided over the rally, urged people to unite under the banner of 14-party alliance to launch a mass movement and oust the BNP-

Jammat-led coalition government. "We will force the alliance to quit and install a democratic government through a free and fair election," he said, adding that the AL from the very beginning was vocal against all military regimes. AL leader Abdur Razzak vowed to

the caretaker government and Election Commission. "We will implement the observation of the verdict after forming government of people," JSD leader Hasanul Haq

resist any election without realisation

of opposition's demand of reforms in

Emphasising greater unity of all pro-liberation democratic parties, he said. "The terrorists and militants will be ousted and brought to justice."

Workers' party leader Bimal Biswas said the verdict "appreciated by the nation" has brought new dimension to the history of the country's politics, democracy and rule of law.

Awami League leaders Motia Chowdhury, Mohammad Hanif, and Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya, Samyabadi Dal leader Dilip Barua, Gono Forum leader advocate Subrata Chowdhury, Ganotantri Party leader Azizul Islam Khan, NAP leader MA Gani and Gono Azadi League leader Abdus Samad also addressed the

Later the opposition leaders led a big procession that ended at the Central Shaheed Minar after parading different city streets.

man-made disaster." said Phillip Holt. 51, who was rescued from his home Saturday with his partner and three of

been evacuated from the city, seeking safety in Texas, Tennessee and many Texas Gov. Rick Perry warned Saturday that his enormous state was

Emergency workers at the Astrodome were told to expect 10,000 new arrivals daily for the next three days. In Washington, Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta announced that more than 10,000 people had been flown out of New Orleans in what he called the largest airlift in history on

continue as long as needed. 5,000 people had been treated at the unit, but fewer than 200 remain

about 30 people had died, some of them elderly and ill. The bodies were peing kept in refrigerated trucks as a temporary morgue.

At the convention centre, people stumbled toward the helicopters,

downplayed many times before the

be operating in the country. BBC quoted the joint secretary

opposition parties' concern that

international terrorist groups might

Britain a few days ago. People there have been victims of international terrorism and what's happened here is continuation of those acts of

is squarely blamed for terrorist attacks in the west, had anything to do with the August 17 explosions, he said. "They might be a part of the attacks that were conducted out of an international conspiracy." On international terrorist organi-

sations' possible existence in

Bangladesh, he said one or two of

them might have come here or have contacted a section of misled neople and have had the blasts done. Asked whether those who carried out the attacks are being identified, he said, "So far I've learnt from newspapers and our leaders, I think the government is trying its best [to identify]. Maybe we're also contacting those who had been the victims

It is relative, as there is no way to measure the initiatives that have been taken after the blasts, he said replying to a question whether the government initiatives are satisfac-

Whether the blast will adversely affect the people's trust in the ruling

alliance's electoral pledge to ensure

public safety, he replied it will not

tarnish the image of BNP. He also said the party and its allies will keep on having a strong

investigation is heading towards the right direction. The investigators are trying to unearth the involvement of the Jama'atul Mujahideen or any possible foreign links in the nearsimultaneous explosions, they

Hossain Dhali, an alleged leader of Harkatul Jehad and superintendent of the same madrasa, however **EXCERPT FROM THE LETTER**

Bangladesh through an armed revolution. We will continue to attack to achieve the goal. No Hindu reli-Police said Morshed and Jobaer gious fair will be allowed in Pakwill soon be sent to Dhaka to face Bangla and no Hindu will be allowed grilling at Joint Interrogation Cell.

intendent of Police), and other police officials will not act against Bangla Bhai, Ahle Hadith and Jamaat.

We --Abdur Rahman, Siddigul Islam Bangla Bhai, Al Galib, and Delwar Hossain Saidee--have decided in a meeting that we will execute those who will write against

[the letter]. we are spread all over the country. Ekushevl August 15 Tagore songs

Juma'atul Mudar-resin Bangladesh, was taken on a five-day remand vesterday. He was arrested on Friday night for suspected links to the

Islami As Salafi Madrasa and Orphanage in the district, yesterday confessed to having participated in staging the blasts in the district. M Mustafa Kamal, superintendent of Bagerhat police, said

They also said all previous records of killing and assaulting journalists and professional risks have been broken during the rule of the fourparty alliance government. Bangladesh is the most dangerous country in Asia for journalists, they

denied his involvement in the incident. Mongla police arrested him on Friday morning, following the confessional statement given by Morshed.

he was involved in the August 17

The JMB leaders and activists

eanwhile, continued distributing

leaflets among the people of the

district and they seem to be still

Farmers, poor

agricultural commodities (higher

transport and marketing costs being

included) that will badly affect the

urban poor consumers and marginal

prices will seriously hit the farmers

who require diesel to irrigate

cropland and kerosene to lit candles

and lanterns at their homes," Director

General of Bangladesh Institute of

Development Studies Dr Quazi

"It is understood that the govern-

ment may need to increase the

petroleum prices for fiscal balancing,

for maintaining macro-stability but

not at the cost of poverty alleviation.

Government needs to work out

protection mechanism for the poor.

You just can not equally expose al

segments of the society to the fiscal

hike will be felt in coming Boro sea-

son when farmers will have to buy

diesel in higher price to irrigate their

paddy fields, sources in the

Department of Agriculture Extension

have to incur extra costs on diesel

purchase for supplementary irriga-

tion to rain-fed Aman cultivation due

to this year's less amount of rain at

now in operation for irrigation across

the country, 731.612 are diesel-run

and the remaining 54.392 electricity

run while farmers use roughly six to

seven lakh tonne of diesel a year

mainly to irrigate winter rice Boro and

provide supplementary irrigation for

difference between the two systems

is as high as Tk 600, the ministry

sources said, adding that farmers

using diesel-run pumps have to incur

30 per cent more cost than those

using electricity-run pumps as the

latter get power supply in subsidised

August, 2003 to provide Tk 310 crore

subsidy for diesel used in irrigation

got nod from the Cabinet Committee

on Agriculture and was recom-

mended by the Parliamentary

Standing Committee on Ministry of

shelved so far due to finance minis-

run irrigation pumps is needed to

match the subsidy that farmers are

already enjoying in using electricity-

run irrigation pumps, MoA officials

said, adding that the subsidy would

enable farmers to keep their produc-

Food and Disaster Management

Asadul Habib Dulu told this corre-

spondent that due to an already rising

trend in rice price, the government

will launch a vigorous vulnerable

group feeding and open market sale programme from later this month.

Meanwhile, Deputy Minister for

But the proposal has remained

The proposed subsidy for diesel-

Agriculture for approval.

try's negative attitude.

tion costs equitably low.

A MoA bailout proposal made in

Now per acre irrigation cost

Aman, official statistics say.

Out of the 786,004 shallow pumps

rious pockets, they noted.

Even before that, the farmers may

The real pinch of the diesel price

adjustments," said Shahabuddin.

'The rise in diesel and kerosene

blasts in Gaibandha.

FROM PAGE 1

and small farmers.

Shahabuddin said

told The Daily Star

He was arrested at Al Markaiu

Islami As Salafi Madrasa and

Orphanage on August 24. Jobaer

BDNEWS from Gaibandha reports: Police have launched a massive manhunt for top JMB cadre Abdul Aziz of Fulchhori upazila. On examining the information gathered, police are convinced that

Some of our activists may be

How many of our activists will you There will be no December 16fthe Victory Dayl, February 21[Amar

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS Riazul Islam, a top local leader of

launched drives to round them up. UNB from Bagerhat reports

FROM PAGE 1

They said instead of maligning the press, the government should

meeting without any fruitful result.

private members' bills.

The speaker told the lawmakers

Otherwise, they might face the Article 70, losing their memberships

This has prompted the committee to stop scrutinising any new bill since Sticking to its position, the committee at yesterday's meeting did not discuss any new bill. Following

The speaker asked the officials

steps, sources at the parliament

before the government efforts. The government has so far

transport fare, said Seraj, also a BNP

nigher interest rate.

increase efficiency.

cost on to the final consumers.

"Instead of a sudden big

Manzur Elahi, president of Bangladesh Employers' Federation, also thinks the oil price

Mustafizur Rahman director of the CPD, feels the growth would be a victim of the

increase in oil prices.

solve the problem. We are doing the maximum possible to bring peace to these regions," Jaiswal added. Last month Maoist guerrillas

The incident happened days recommendation for direct peace

Chuadanga police took him to Boldia to retrieve the firearms. Police said as they reached the village around 11:30pm, the PBCP cadres opened fire on them. The cops fired in return resulting in a half Amir died on the spot when he

through Bangladesh. against Sri Lanka. The reduced 48-overs-a-side

And Aviska Gunawardene,

Thilan Samaraweera was run out Khaled Mahmud straight to Tushar

Imran at midwicket. Earlier, after being put into bat by stand-in captain Mahela Jayawardene, the Bangladesh openers added 47 runs in eight overs. But first change Dilhara Fernando captured three wickets in his first spell and Farveez Maharoof, whose 4-over first spell went for 23 runs, returned to bag 3-2 in four

The tail, however, dug in deep to avoid more humiliation by taking the

tice match at the Colts Cricket Club ground from September 7.

FROM PAGE 1 considers the August 17 blasts as deep-rooted conspiracy against democracy, constitution, humanity and the very existence of the nation. That is why the government has

scope to view these incidents from any partisan outlook as they are related to the country's independence and sovereignty. party and ideology on the issue of

He said although there are strict laws against terrorism, actions can

skilled human resources through establishment of strong and capable investigation units

sincerity on the part of the government to unearth the elements responsible for the August 17 serial blasts. The government would, if need be, invite international and foreign agencies for help in this connection, he added. He pointed out that in many

Govt to open FROM PAGE 16

finance minister and state minister for home during their visits to those The meeting also discussed economic benefits, services to the expatriate Bangladeshis and business related aspects of opening of

The proposal will soon be placed before the cabinet meeting for final

their ageing Chihuahuas. They left a fourth behind they couldn't grab in Tens of thousands of people had

other states running out of room, with more than 220,000 hurricane refugees camped out there and more coming.

US soil. He said the flights would Thousands of people remained at Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport, where officials turned a Delta Blue terminal into a riage unit. Officials said 3,000 to

"In the beginning it was like trying to lasso an octopus. When we got here it was overwhelming," said Jake Jacoby, a physician helping run the Airport director Roy Williams said

Others throughout the airport

awaited transport out of the city.

dehydrated and nearly passing out from exhaustion. Many had to be carried by National Guard troops and police on stretchers. And some were being pushed up the street on office

chairs and on dollies.

rarique FROM PAGE 1 Bangladesh territory. The government had

general of the ruling party as saying that the attacks were made as part of an international conspiracy. "It is my personal opinion that the same thing happened in the US and

Asked whether al Qaeda, which

of terrorist acts abroad on how they can help us as we too are trying to keep our country safe."

tory or not. The government is trying to the maximum to take into the matter, he added.

stance on blast incidents. Meanwhile, police said the

Rail Road area of the town on August

ters who slander the press.