Bounty for arrest

Khalifapara village of Kamal Khan Hat

in Jamalpur and Bangla Bhai as the son of Nazir Hossain Master alias Shamsher Ali of Karnipara village of Gabtoli upazila in Bogra, the poster

The poster shows the JMB chief attired in puniable in two photographs while in shirts in as many. The other photograph shows him in coat and necktie. He appears bearded in one of the photographs, bald in another while wearing cap in another.

Bangla Bhai is shown bearded and wearing a cap in one photograph while he is in panjabi in the other three. One picture shows him to be in check shirt while another in coat and necktie

The advertisement gave 28 phone numbers, as many mobile phone and fax numbers, and 12 email addresses for the public to contact.

Meanwhile, intelligence personnel said six top leaders of JMB including the military chief of the outfit were in the capital in the run-up to the August 17

A top official of Detective Branch (DB) of police said they are convinced that the militant leaders were staying at five different places across the capital and got out of the hideouts soon after the blasts. Detectives have already raided a number of houses in Dhaka but failed to nab any of them.

The DB official, however, declined to elaborate on the identities of the five top JMB leaders.

Meanwhile, the law enforcers were continuing the hunt for electrician Amir, brother-in-law of Samad who managed to evade arrest during a raid at his South Goran house on Thursday. Police said Amir used to help Samad in making bombs.

Taking with them two suspects, DB police yesterday raided different areas of Old Dhaka but to little avail. The two suspects -- Hiron and Kironwere held after their names were came up in the documents seized from the South Goran house.

"We are trying to find whether the two had supplied the plastic materials used in the bombs that went off on August 17. They will be shown arrested once we are sure about their links," said a top DB official seeking anonymity

Taking Lokman, domestic help of the South Goran house, with them the detective police also visited different places to gather possible leads.

Lokman was arrested along with Shammi, wife of Samad, on Thursday at their South Goran house from where police recovered a huge cache of bombs and explosives.

DB has already prepared a list of 17 suspects, basing on the statements of Shammi and Lokman, and is on a manhunt for those on the list.

Earlier, the law enforcers had picked up Basir Uddin Munshi, Shammi's father, and Abdur Rob, the person who registered the marriage of Samad and Shammi.

Moreover, members of Rapid

Action Battalion (Rab) carried out raids in different areas in the city, following statements from six arrestees including AHM Shamim, son of former Habiganj district ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami. However, the drives did not vield anv result

Five of the detainees were arrested at an East Bashabo house. Military chief of JMB Ataur Rahman is believed to have co-ordinated the blasts from

Meanwhile, a Dhaka court yesterday placed Mosharraf Hossain, arrested for alleged involvement in blast incidents, on a three-day remand. Police sought for a seven-day remand.

In the forwarding report placed before the court, police said Mosharraf is an active member of militant group. Investigation reveals that he and his associates led by Moulana Abdul Mannan of Satkhira would conduct subversive activities and operate training camps in Badda, Uttara and terrorist target but saying there are

Besides, he seems to be holding vital clues to the August 17 serial bomb

dences) left behind by the extremists So he needs to be guizzed further. **BOMB HOAX**

Panic gripped the teachers and students of Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) school at Mirpur in the city yesterday after an anonymous caller said some bombs were planted in the school.

were made twice at 8:05am and at 8:22am by a male caller to the school's phone saying the bombs would go off between 9:00am and 11:00am. Teachers and students rushed out of the school following the threat.

Informed by the school authorities, Mirpur police rushed to the spot and carried out a thorough search but found no explosive devices. A general diary was lodged with Mirpur Police Station in this connection.

reports: Police arrested three serial blast suspects including one having military training from Panchrukhi area of Arai Hazar upazila on Saturday

some of those were penned by Ahle Hadith chief Dr Asadullah al Galib. The arrestees identified themselves as followers of Galib.

former madrasa student, Baten, and Hazrat Ali. Police said Baten had been in Iraq and Libva and Jovnal had military training. They said there is militants' den in Panchrukhi where Moulana Amir Hossain had trained the

industrialists have

installed big power generators. We

believe they generate up to 800 MW

interested in selling a part of their

generation and the government is

Mokhlesur Rahman and Qari

was highly critical of Jamaat-e-

Islami, saying that its "main objec-

tive is not to spread Islam, but to

counter Awami League and earn

Islam for political gains and of

damaging the image of Islam "by

e-Islami are being arrested and

harassed, and the real culprits being

released... the government itself is

trying to protect Jamaat from the

blame of the August 17 serial bomb-

peace. It does not support torture on

minority and opposition that the

government was doing continu-

tioned the performance of the

intelligence agencies and said "it

would have been impossible to

"We've to unite to save the coun-

try, Islam and the religious people

from the hands of this 'jalem' (op-

issue a circular asking the authori-

ties concerned to implement the

minutes of the meeting, said the

copies of the five-page circular

signed by Abdul Mannan, senior

assistant secretary of the health

ministry, were sent to 13 officials

including the health minister, both

the director generals of health

services and family planning, and

the chief accountant of the ministry.

The minister had even signed the

Official documents show that

pressor) government," she said.

Hospital fee

new user fees, he observed.

former health secretary.

The opposition leader ques-

She said: "Islam is a religion of

She accused Jamaat of using

'Those who are against Jamaat-

The Awami League president

interested in tapping this area," the

"Many of these industrialists are

to 1.000 MW." said a source.

Hasına

Mozammel Hag.

illegal money."

exploding bombs.'

FROM PAGE 16

Major outages grip

shedding was 331 megawatt yesterday, 349 MW on Saturday and 400 MW on Friday. The PDB put the peak power demand for yesterday

According to the Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (Desa), the capital which consumes one third of the country's power, had a load shedding of only 90 MW yesterday.

But there was no power in most parts of the city -- from Uttara to Old Dhaka, Jatrabari to Dhanmondi and most other areas.

But this figure, according to PDB power experts, is absolutely misleading. Such figures are manufactured considering political back-

"According to the Power Systems Master Plan (PSMP), the country's present power demand should toggle between 4,500 MW and 5,000 MW. But the PDB's official figures show it around 3.800 MW just to give an impression that the nation is not lagging far behind in power generation." guipped an expert.

The 13 shut down PDB plants have generation capacity of 750 MW. Among these, two units of Karnaphuli hydroelectric plants, each generating 50 MW, will not come back into operation before December and June next year.

The Ashugani 150 MW and Ashugani 30 MW will come into operation in October, while generation at the 30 MW plant of Fenchuganj will resume in

The Ghorashal sixth unit of 210 MW, three Haripur units totalling 100 MW, Ashuganj 34 MW, Khulna 110 MW, Bheramara 20 MW and Baghabari 71 MW unit resume operation by this month.

"We have failed to add new power projects in pace with the growth of demands," said a PDB carry out such serial bomb blasts official, adding, "This kind of load simultaneously across the country shedding is the inevitable consewithout the government help."

quence. The ruling BNP-led alliance government has so far signed only one power project of 80 MW in Tongi

with Chinese company Harbin. This self-finance simple cycle power plant came into operation

one year behind schedule in March this year. The government signs its second

agreement -- again with Harbin -today to set up a 90 MW combined cycle power plant in Fenchugani though the Chinese company lacks the experience to set up such plants.

The Fenchugani plant will take

up to three years to be complete. Meanwhile, to find alternative power sources, the government has formed a committee with members of the Power Cell of the energy ministry to determine the number of captive power generators in the

some other places in Dhaka city. blasts across the country. On information received from him, police had raided different areas of the city and seized some alamats (evi-

Police said hoax bomb threats

Our Narayanganj correspondent

They seized some books and

The arrestees include Joynal, a

Skipper Habibul Bashar will bat at number three, followed by This two-month old committee is now studying the country's captive power sector and is expected to file a report in another month. 'Since the government gave tax wicketkeeper Khaled Mashud will arrive before the four-bowler tail is holidays for captive power genera-

Spending cut

for purchasing vehicles for an approved or revised approved project under ADP, purchase of the vehicle will be suspended for the moment if the vehicle has not been

purchasing cars under the revenue budget.

The per head entertainment allowance for meetings in various ministries, departments, directorates, and autonomous bodies has been reduced to Tk 6 from earlier

Lighting in buildings, streets, islands, and setting up of arches will have to be avoided by government, semi-government, and autonomous bodies to scale down

Austerity will have to be practised also in the observance of different 'days' and 'weeks' Besides, electricity saving bulbs will have to be installed to bring down the consumption of electric-

If necessary infrastructure and facilities are available, the petrolrun government vehicles will have to be converted to CNG. No new vehicles under revenue or development projects can be on the road

Permission of the finance division will be required for the expenses to be paid in foreign currencies.

Essential foreign tours of ministers, state ministers, deputy ministers, and secretaries, contributions to international organisations and repayment of the capital, and interests on foreign loans will be outside the purview of this rule.

The ministries have been directed to make economical use of utilities and pay bills for those services in time.

accept proposals for any allocation additional to the approved budget. The proposals will be accepted only if they are essential and sent with the approval of the secretary

of the ministry concerned. Besides these measures, the government last week introduced two-day weekly holiday to cushion the effects of fuel price hike on the

Khaleda flies to NY

while Foreign Minister M Morshed

Khan will leave here on Sept 15 to join

Rahman, Rozy Kabir MP, Foreign

Secretary Hemayetuddin and

Secretary to the Prime Minister

Khandaker Shahidul Alam have also

been included with the Bangladesh

She will leave New York on Sept 17

The upcoming summit will review

after delivering her address at the

UNGA and is expected to return home

implementation of the Millennium

Declaration and follow up to the major

United Nations conferences and

summits. The event will be a historic

opportunity for the world leaders to

take stock of the progress achieved so

inject new energy in pursuit of the

forward an ambitious set of reform

proposals in March 2005 that are now

being considered by the UN General

Assembly in preparation for the

Despite the challenging times,

Foreign Ministry officials here said the

September Summit marks the most

important opportunity in decades to

launch the far-reaching reforms that

objectives of the conferences.

upcoming Summit meeting.

The summit is also expected to

UN Secretary-General Annan put

in the early hours of Sept 19.

far in this regard.

Foreign Ministry Advisor Reaz

the PM's delegation.

beginning of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)'s 60th

session. As the organization turns 60, the management and members of the venerable middle-aged institution are making plans to celebrate its work and enact a series of reforms to ensure it remains relevant for another 60 years.

More than 175 heads of state and government are expected to participate in the plenary session in the vast General Assembly hall and in roundtable discussions, treatysignings, and other meetings taking place in connection with the event, which will be the largest gathering ever of world leaders.

Over three days, world leaders have a historic opportunity to forge a new global consensus on the role of the UN in confronting key global security threats of the 21st century, including underlying sources of instability such as human deprivation and environmental decline.

The main focus of the summit will be reforms in the 191-member United Nations itself in order to make it more effective and efficient in its work throughout the world.

The Prime Minister will address the High Level Plenary Meeting of the summit on the inaugural day on September 14 and will make a country statement at the general debate of the UNGA on September 17

Her other engagements include meeting with the US Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice on Sept 15 at the Grand Hvatt Hotel, where the Prime Minister will stay during her visit to the USA. Official sources said Khaleda and Rice would discuss the entire range of bilateral issues between Bangladesh and the USA.

Khaleda Zia will hold a large number of bilateral meetings including with the leaders of the Maldives on Sept 14, as well as Thailand, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Mozambique on Sept 16. Besides, the Chairman of the Wall Street Journal, the Executive Director of UNICEF, the Administrator of UNDP and the Chairman of the Bangladesh Caucus, Joseph Crowley will call on

She will also join a lunch to be hosted by the UN Secretary General in honour of the heads of state and government, a reception to be hosted by the US President and a reception by the Bangladeshi community in the At the sideline, Khaleda Zia will

attend the inaugural session of the first meeting of the Clinton Global Initiative in New York on Sept 15. She will lead a 26-member

Bangladesh delegation to the World Summit, which include ministers and high officials. Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman, who is now in the USA, will join the delegation

Forex reserves

FROM PAGE 1 \$293 million on Thursday, the reserve came down as low as equal to twoand-a-half-month's import expenditure. The reserve equal to three months' import cost is considered safe

A source at the Bangladesh Bank said the price hike of fuel in the global market and a sharp rise in import have created this pressure on the country's

The central bank sold around \$700

million to the nationalised commercial

banks to pay off the import cost of fuel from January to the first week of September. The source however said the

recent price spike in the local market would not help lift the pressure off the reserve. What is necessary in this regard is bringing down the consumption of petroleum, the source added. Although the central bank has to usually pay around \$200 million as

ACU bills every two months, the huge rise in import in recent times has forced it to pay more. The BB paid around \$300 million in September and it had to pay around \$350 million in July. Imports saw a sharp rise by 21 percent last year, while the rise was only 13 percent the previous year. The

government and the central bank have

taken a number of initiatives to ease

the pressure on the reserve, the

Officials at Petrobangla said the upcoming bidding for oil-gas exploration will be conducted only for the Bay of Bengal. "This time the size of the blocks will be smaller than the

tion of the blocks will be within 80-85 nautical miles.

There are proposals for creating several more blocks along block 21 following the offshore blocks of Myanmar in the east. These blocks could be within economic zone of 200 nautical miles.

survey," the official told BDNEWS. The EMRD expects that compa-

The ONGC and GAIL of India and several other companies of South Korea and China have expressed their willingness to take part in the offshore oil, gas explora-

BSF may return 2 bodies today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) sources said Border Security Force (BSF) of India may return the bodies of Bangladeshi nationals today after three days of Sources said among the four dead

two are Indian nationals and two are Bangladeshi. The victims were captured inside Bangladeshi territory by BSF and Indians and confined in a house at Gangail village of Tripura in India. They were lynched by an Indian mob from there and reportedly chopped to pieces. The victims are Muzammel Haque

Bhuiyan alias Mozailla, 35, the son Idris Mia of Kuripaika village in B'baria. He played a vital role in the killing of BSF men who intruded into Bangladesh for robbery. The BSF had declared a bounty of Tk 50,000 for his capture. Abdur Razzak, 31, the son of Daulat Bihari Bhuiyan was an associate of Mozailla from the same village Muhammad Alam, 33, a criminal from India, was in hiding at Abdullapur village in Bangladesh. He had married Helena Begum, 30, a Bangladeshi. Sources said Alam, who had been living in Bangladesh for two years, was sending information to India. Sujit Sarker, 33, according to Indian reports, was of Kolkolia village at Siddai thana in the Indian state of Tripura. Sujit was the informant of Indian detective branch, the source added.

The BSF admitted the death of four people through a letter to BDR but did not give the identity of the two Indian nationals. The BSF and BDR have increased patrol near Hirapur.

Israel declares FROM PAGE 16

territory for a permanent hold on

larger areas of the occupied West Bank where 245,000 settlers live isolated from 2.4 million **Palestinians** In a sign of tensions, the depart-

ing army called off a Gaza handover ceremony on Sunday after Palestinians said they would boycott it in anger over Israel's failure to agree on allowing freedom of movement to and from the strip. Sharon stoked Palestinian anger

when he reiterated in a Washington Post newspaper interview that despite US objections Israel would keep building in large West Bank settlement blocs it intends to keep under any future peace deal. Sharon's rightist opponents call the Gaza pullout a betrayal of Jewish claims on biblical land and a reward for

for renewed peacemaking after five Looking on impatiently from nearby hilltops, Gazans prepared to take to the streets in celebration.

a Palestinian uprising. But US-led

mediators see it as a possible catalyst

Low cost bombs FROM PAGE 1

their desired devastation," the report

The report puts a maximum price tag of Tk 40 for all the materials used in each of the bombs, except for the Aside from the detonators, all the

parts of such a bomb are available in electrical spare shops. "The components are generally used to prepare various electric circuits or devices," the report points out.

The experts could not determine the country of origin of the detonators as it is not available in the local market.

But this type of detonator is used for military and commercial (oil exploration, mining) purposes. "The price of a similar type of military detonator is approximately Tk 55," the report says.

This means that the Jamaatul Muiahedin Bangladesh (JMB) needed to invest, at minimum, only around Tk 50,000 to make the approximately 500 bombs that simultaneously rocked 63 district headquarters on August 17.

"This investigation shows that a militant group does not need a lot of money to send a terror wave." an investigator comments to The Daily Star. "It's their determination, networking and planning that is the prime concern for us."

The report adds that a medium caliber expert on electric circuits prepared the time circuit.

"The connection pattern and pattern of equipment suggests that it was prepared at the same place and most likely a single individual connected the components, except the soldering iron part. The individual had good knowledge of the colour code of electric wires. In no case was the colour code violated, which indicates the individual's professionalism, skill and technical training in this regard. An expert can prepare around 50 complete circuits within 12 hours of a day.'

The experts also conclude that the explosives were probably intentionally made less harmful, possibly to avoid checking and detection by security forces. More harmful bombs would have increased the size of the explo-

Due to the use of a small amount of gunpowder and homemade explosives, victims at very close proximity to the bombs sustained small but lethal splinter injuries and serious burn effects. People at a distance of more than three feet could have been safe from the blast. The experts noted that the com-

plete bomb was handed over to the carriers, keeping the battery pack disconnected from the circuit. It is assumed that an expert conducted a training or a briefing session at the district headquarters to train the carriers how to connect the battery pack with the circuit, start the delay time by switching the timer on and place the bomb at a desired place.

Last Wednesday night, law enforcers recovered a huge number of bombs, materials and detonators from JMB's den in the city's Goran area According to experts, these bombs and their materials were identical to those used on August 17.

6 more camel jockeys

programmes. We don't want to see the children of this country trafficked for being used as camel jockeys or in any other risky jobs," said Bahaduruzzaman, chairman of Barura Paurashava.

Abdur Rouf, additional secretary of home ministry, in his speech said poverty and ignorance of the people are the main reasons behind the trafficking of the children. Urging the leaders of the area to

come forward to help the poor, he said "You must become aware of such crimes and change your own fate by hard work, so that the unscrupulous people can never cheat vou." Terming the parents' approval in

sending their children to a foreign land a punishable act, Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association (BNWLA) Executive Director Advocate Salma Ali said it is very hard for the former jockeys to recover physical and psychological health, as they were abused in the early years of their lives. Barura Upazila Nirbahi Officer

Janajuddha denies link to blasts

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

The Janaiuddha faction of outlawed Purba Banglar Communist Party has said the government is patronising Islamist militancy in the country and killing its activists in the name of 'crossfire The splinter group on Sunday

announced this in leaflets on the August 17 serial blasts styled "The 17th August bomb attacks and our political stands. Jessore Press Club authorities

the Janajuddha central committee "The alliance government led by Khaleda-Nizami is patronising communal militants and repressing the rebel progressive people," the

received a copy of the leaflet sent by

"We are astonished by the countrywide bomb attacks on Áugust 17," the outfit added. The government is spending

crores of taka for the army, police and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab). depriving the poor, it alleged. "The Rab and police are frequently killing the rebels in the name of crossfire and encounter to

Islamist militants. The breakaway outfit also threatened to kill 'the class enemies' in villages, towns and ports level across the country.

enhance the government support to

Six bills

FROM PAGE 1

leaflets said.

pay scale 2005' as the reasons for proposing the hike

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuivan piloted the bills proposing remuneration hike for the president, prime minister, ministers, state ministers nd deputy ministers.

If passed, their remuneration will ncrease for the second time during the coalition government's tenure. Law Minister Moudud Ahmed

placed the bills proposing a hike in the remuneration of the speaker, deputy speaker, members of parliament and Supreme Court judges. All the bills were sent to the

standing committee on Law. Justice

and Parliamentary Affairs for scru-

tiny, asking it to give reports in three As per the bills, the president's remuneration will rise to Tk 33.400 a month from 23.000 now and that of the prime minister to Tk 32,000 from

Ministers' remuneration will be raised to Tk 29,000 from Tk 20,000, state ministers' to Tk 26,100 from Tk 18,000 and deputy ministers' to Tk 24.650 from Tk 17.000. Remuneration of the chief justice

Tk 22,000.

will rise to Tk 30,500 a month from Tk 21,000 now, that of judges of the Appellate Division of the SC to Tk 29,000 from Tk 20,000 and judges of the High Court Division of the SC to Tk 27,000 from Tk 18,500. For the period from January 1 to

June 30 this year (retrospective effect), the chief justice will get Tk 28,125 a month, judges of the Appellate Division Tk 26,750 and judges of the High Court Division Tk 24.875. As proposed in the bills, the

speaker's remuneration will increase to Tk 31,200 from Tk 21,500, deputy speaker's Tk 29,000 from Tk 20,000 and lawmakers' Tk 15,000 from Tk 10,000.

The hike will be effective from July 1 this year.

If the bills are passed, the PM's salary will rise for the seventh time while that of ministers, state ministers and deputy ministers for the ninth time since independence.

Government employees' salaries were hiked on six occasions during this period. Under the present government

remuneration and privileges of the president, prime minister, ministers, state ministers and deputy ministers were earlier raised in 2003. Lawmakers' remuneration and allowances were also increased the same year. During the seventh parliament's

tenure, the PM's remuneration was

increased, keeping other facilities

unchanged, while remuneration and

other facilities of the ministers were

Selim Abed, Officer-in-Charge (OC) Faruk Ahmed Chowdhury, director of United Development Initiatives for Programmed Actions (Uddipan) Imranul Huq Chowdhury and other local leaders also spoke at the programme. A shelter home of BNWLA in the

city took in the children after their return from the UAE, that began from August 11. A total of 83 children returned home so far and over 100 are awaiting repatriation in three shelter homes in Abu Dhabi. As of yesterday, 17 children in

total were handed over to their parents. Of them, six in Cox's Bazar, seven in Narsingdi, one in Gopalganj, one in Sylhet and two in Habiganj, BNWLA officials said.

A committee comprising of officials from the home ministry, United Nations Children Fund (Unicef) and International Organization for Migration (IOM) is managing the rehabilitation and reintegration process.

lop Janajuddha FROM PAGE 16

Khilgaon Police Station, acting on a tip off, raided Coast to Coast Apparel at 618/C in Khilgaon Chowdhury-para around 11:45am yesterday and arrested Bahadur.

Police said Bahadur is a leader of BDR Altaf group of Janajuddha faction and leads an armed wing of the outlawed party. He was a close associate of Altaf who was killed last year in an encounter with police at Paikgacha upazila in Khulna district police said. Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Botiaghata Police Station Mahbubur

five days ago with a few suspects arrested in connection with the August 17 blasts. He came to know at east seven Janajuddha members including Bahadur were hiding in the capital, who were absconding since November 2004, he added. Learning about Bahadur's hiding

Rahman said he came to the capital

in the cutting section of the factory, the OC requisitioned police force and raided the garments factory esterday. Bahadur was taken to Khulna last night for interrogation.

Koizumi

FROM PAGE 16

Koizumi called the early election last month after rebels in his party shot down his long-held goal of privatising the gigantic post office, a move he has argued is the key to revamping the world's second-largest economy.

He had vowed to resign if the LDP did not win but the Tokvo Broadcasting Corporation, just moments after the voting closed, said its exit poll showed the LDP would get 307 seats in the 480-seat lower house of parliament.

They had only 249 seats when Koizumi dissolved parliament in a huff last month when defectors from the LDP blocked the privatisation of the Japan Post. And the LDP was efending 37 fewer seats as Koizum purged dissenters.

The main opposition Democratic Party was a distant second with 105, the projection said, giving Koizumi a renewed mandate to push through a reform he says can bring about

major changes to Japanese politics. Public broadcaster NHK said the LDP was expected to have won seats in a range between 285 and 325 while the Democratic Party was forecast to have won between 84 and 127 seats.

Official results were not expected for hours but senior LDP lawmaker Toranosuke Katayama expressed confidence. "So far I have received good

reports on the outcome," he told TV Asahi. "I believe voters supported our reform initiatives and our efforts to continue them." Koizumi, one of US President George W. Bush's closest allies

abroad, called the election more than two years ahead of schedule. The early vote was seen as a risky gamble, with observers and even many in his party suggesting that he would drive the LDP, which

has ruled Japan almost non-stop

since 1955, out of power. But within days of the decision last month, opinion polls showed that the wilv Koizumi, who broke the mould of normally staid Japanese politicians, would muster strong popular support.

Unique march

committee, Chittagong unit, organised the procession.

FROM PAGE 16

Earlier, a brief rally chaired by committee chief Khorshed Alam Suian demanded immediate withdrawal of the increased fuel price.

Speakers at the rally said the price hike will adversely affect the national economy and all sections of people directly or indirectly. The poorer section of the society will be the worst sufferers, they added. Key sectors like agriculture

industry and transport will be in peril shortly due to the price hike of fuel they said. Those who spoke included lawyer Rana Das Gupta, Dr Dilip

Dey, journalist Asif Siraj, city ward commissioner Tarek Solaiman Selim, Sabiha Musa, cultural activists Kamrul Hasan Badal, Shahriar Khaled and Jasmine Sultana Paru, women's rights activists Momena Akhtar Nayan and Jasmina

Qaeda threatens

FROM PAGE 16 "We are Muslims. We love peace, but peace on our terms, peace as laid down by Islam, not the so-called peace of occupiers and dictators."

As in other recent al-Qaeda tapes, the main threats were made against the United States and

"Don't believe the lies of the liars at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue and 10 Downing Street," the speaker said. "They have dispatched your sons and daughters to die lonely deaths in the burning deserts of Iraq and the unforgiving mountains of Afghanistan.'

ABC said US intelligence believed the man who appears on the tape is Gadahn, who comes from Orange County, California. He made a similar tape last year that US intelligence said was authentic. Los Angeles Mayor Antonio

Villaraigosa and the city police

department released a statement

admitting that Los Angeles was a

no known credible threats against First Test

FROM PAGE 1

For the Tigers, who have lost all three previous Tests against Sri Lanka, two by innings and the other by 288 runs, it is going to be a tough task having to do without two main bowlers Mashrafee bin Mortuza and Tapash Baisya who

are ruled out due to injury. Rasel will share the new ball vith one-Test Shahadat Hossain. Bangladesh however will pin heir hopes on the strength of their batting that is bolstered with the

return of Tushar Imran in the five-

day contest. The country's leading wickettaker Mohammad Rafique will be playing his first Test against the Lankans. The slow left-armer will the potent weapon if Bangladesh are to contain the free-scoring batting line-up of Sanath Jayasuriya, Marvan Atapattu, Mahela Jayawar-dena and Kumar Sangakkara on a track that is expected to help the spinners. Jayasuriya, just two matches shy of earning his 100th Test cap for Sri Lanka, was involved in a record 576-run stand with Roshan

Mahanama at this very ground against India in 1997. Bangladesh will go into the match with a new opening pair as Nafees Iqbal, who had opened for the last seven Tests with Javed Omar, will be replaced by lefthanded Shahriar, the Bangladesh A team captain

Mohammad Ashraful who scored a century on debut against Sri Lanka four years ago, Aftab Ahmed and Tushar Imran, who returns to the Test fold after three vears as reward for his tremendous run with the A team in the England tour. Vice-captain and

already purchased. Approval will have to be obtained from finance division for

the waste of electricity

before they are converted.

The finance division will not

interests to some bureaucrats of Energy Ministry and Petrobangla,"

will be required to prepare the UN to confront today's new and daunting global security problems. The primary purpose of the United Nations, as defined by its charter, is "to maintain international peace and security." Toward that end, the UN

designed to galvanize a collective response from UN members when confronted with a compelling threat to global peace and stability. The United Nations has helped bring about over 170 peace settlements, including those that ended the Iran-Iraq war in 1988, led to the withdrawal of Soviet troops from

Afghanistan in 1988, and brought the

charter stipulates a set of mechanisms

for the Security Council that are

El Salvador civil war to a close in 1992. The 60 UN peacekeeping missions since 1948 have helped countries maintain cease fires, conduct free and fair elections, and monitor troop withdrawals in numerous global hotspots, including ongoing missions in the Middle East, Haiti, Kosovo, Sudan, and Liberia, among others.

FROM PAGE 1 Bangladesh Environment Lawyers Association (BELA), Ain-O-Shalish Kendra (ASK) and Odhikar -- in a public interest litigation writ said Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration and Production Company (Bapex) subsidiary organ of the energy ministry, has no locus standi for entering into joint venture agreement with a foreign company on

Bapex-Niko

national resource.

two years ago was in violation of the Petroleum Act as well as Bangladesh environmental law. It was done in derogation of the constitution, in a non-transparent manner with mala fide intention to confer undue benefit to Niko and its The agreement was to the detri-ment of the country and in gross

The agreement signed nearly

petitioners The faulty drilling by Niko has reportedly resulted in blowout in Tengratila gas field twice in January and June inflicting a heavy loss of gas and environmental damages. The joint venture agreement was signed on October 16, 2003

abuse of power, submitted the

development and production of petroleum from 'marnal/abandoned' gas fields of Chhatak and Feni. Moving the petition, Dr Kamal Hossain pleaded for freezing the bank account of Niko and suspend-

ing the payment against the supply

of gas from its Feni field.

between Bapex and Niko for the

He also sought to rescind the agreement and payment of adequate compensation for damaging the country's natural resource and environment. The inconclusive hearing of the

writ resumes today in the vacation

bench comprising justices MA Rashid and M Fazlur Rahman. source said. Third round bidding

publication for the bidding, evaluation procedures and amendment to

Sources concerned said

Petrobangla will give 45 days

timeframe after floating the tender

for the 3rd round bidding. The PSCs

the model PSC will be finalised.

will be signed in the next 45 days after completing the evaluation and negotiations. "It is possible to complete all the procedures in 90 days with maintaining total transparency,'

Mahmudur Rahman told BDNEWS.

Nurul Islam said that the govern-

ment should not go for a hurried

However, energy specialist Prof

bidding and signing of PSCs immediately before the general elections. "The government must invite an open debate on our achievements from the previous PSCs. Then the government should go for the 3rd round bidding," said Prof Islam, director at the Appropriate Technology Institute of the Buet.

nies of USA, Europe, India, South Korea. Malaysia and China will take He said he doesn't see eligible part in the 3rd round bidding. people in the country who can negotiate in the bidding protecting the national interests. "We can't leave the country's

previous blocks," said a Petrobangla official. He informed that previous four blocks (15, 19, 20 and 21) will be divided into eight blocks. The posi-

"However, demarcation of blocks and their number will be determined only after getting the results of nonexclusive speculative seismic

tion in Bangladesh.