the government identify exploration blocks on the basis of energy potentials and primary impression on the geological aspects of

Moreover, the government needs to approve a policy for the speculation survey before floating the tender. Petrobangla submitted a draft policy to the ministry six weeks ago, but it is yet to be approved.

Besides, the foreign ministry will have to complete marking the Bangladeshi territory in the deep sea before the survey starts.

Sources said the foreign ministry has a 10-year-old scheme to mark Bangladesh territory, which has not been completed yet.

Energy adviser Mahmudur Rahman upon taking over the energy ministry wanted to float the third round bid in December, and then in January next year.

The government in the early 1990s floated the first round bidding on unsolicited negotiation basis and the second round bid in 1997.

Both these bids had succeeded in drawing a good number of Production Sharing Contracts (PSC) with more than half a dozen international oil companies.

The bids also brought in over \$1 billion investment and resulted in gas production in Sangu, Ialalahad and Moulavibazar. In addition, a major discovery in Bibiyana is now being developed.

However, as gas consumption forecast signals a supply crisis beginning from 2015, the need for extensive exploration has again been emphasised. The government now wants to tap the Bay, which so far remains almost

An inter-ministerial committee, which includes the energy and the foreign affairs ministries, has been formed to expedite this

The draft Speculative Survey policy looks for surveyor, which will update the 30-year-old data of existing offshore blocks of 19,

'The world now has new technologies that can do better jobs in detecting energy potentials than those used 30 years ago," notes a Petrobangla source.

Bangladesh has no survey data on its deep-sea territory and a vast area in the south Bay has never been tapped.

The surveyor would roughly spend \$9 million to \$10 million on its own to collect the data. It will then sell the data to interested oil companies in the third round bid. The government will also have the data without any

Several American and British survey companies have already visited Bangladesh to take part in the upcoming bid for the specula-

'If the government okays the policy tomorrow and we float a tender, we will have to spend two months to receive bids, evaluate them and select a bidder," said a

"The surveyor will then need four months to physically conduct the survey and another four months to complete interpretation of the data it has gathered.

Then on the basis of the data the government will identify the blocks and float its tender. By that time, the tenure of the current BNP government will end."

Tri-nation pipeline

transit permission to bring the pipeline through Bangladesh, they gave no signal in this regard, he

throughl pipeline from Myanmar via Mizoram of the North-east, Banerjee added. Meanwhile, Advisor to Energy

If necessary, India will carry gas

Ministry Mahmudur Rahman said Bangladesh will have no objection if India considers installing gas pipeline avoiding Bangladesh

India's Energy Minister Moni Shankar Aiyar during his recent visit to Bangladesh had said that he would give a green signal after discussions with the cabinet, Mahmudur Rahman told the BBC.

"So, GAIL's version is something different officials have their own added.

pipeline. The Indian government has not officially given any final India, who is looking at the

observations on the tri-nation

project as a separate one, is not willing to incorporate any other issues with it, but Bangladesh's attitude is different, he said 'In commercial negotiations,

any country will see its own interests. As India has the major interest in the tri-nation pipeline and it is more profitable for them to take it through Bangladesh, we might also place some long unresolved issues with India. There is nothing to take it negatively for India," he said.

There might be discussions on the pipeline issue in the upcoming Saarc Summit where the two new to me," he said, adding, "I think nations could reach a consensus, he

The agency has also helped push

forth a six-party North Korean

nuclear agreement last month,

which it described as "a first step

toward the goal of the verifiable

denuclearisation of the Korean

nuclear non-proliferation twice

before in the past two decades on

major anniversaries of the nuclear

bombing of Japanese targets by the

given to the Pugwash group and its

founder Joseph Rotblat, and in 1985,

International Physicians for the

Prevention of Nuclear War received

efforts appear deadlocked, when

there is a danger that nuclear arms

will spread both to states and to

terrorist groups, and when nuclear

power again appears to be playing an

increasingly significant role, IAEA's

work is of incalculable importance,'

Founded in 1957 and based in

Vienna, the IAEA worked hard in the

months leading up to the 2003 US-

led invasion of Iraq to monitor and

map former dictator Saddam

Hussein's nuclear capacities.

Contrary to US claims, the group

deemed that Iraq did not have weap-

ons of mass-destruction, a conclu-

been involved in failed attempts to

revitalise the nuclear non-

proliferation treaty.

The IAEA has over recent months

When they receive the presti-

gious Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo at a

ceremony on December 10, the

anniversary of the death of prize

founder Alfred Nobel in 1896, the

agency and its director general will

both receive a gold medal and split a

cheque worth 1.3 million dollars (1.1

sion that is widely accepted today.

the Nobel Committee said.

"At a time when disarmament

In 1995, the coveted award was

United States in World War II.

the prize.

The Nobel jury has rewarded

peninsula in a peaceful manner."

said earlier this week.

IAEA & its chief win

IAEA and its Egyptian director general Mohamed ElBaradei yesterday for their work against nuclear weapons proliferation, the Nobel committee said. The International Atomic Energy

Agency and its chief were honoured "for their efforts to prevent nuclear energy from being used for military purposes and to ensure that nuclear energy for peaceful purposes is used in the safest possible way," it said in

The Nobel Committee's choice comes 60 years after the United States dropped two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan on August 6 and 9, 1945, the world's first nuclear attacks.

"At a time when the threat of nuclear arms is again increasing, the Norwegian Nobel Committee wishes to underline that this threat must be met through the broadest possible international cooperation," it said.

The IAEA and ElBaradei were chosen out of a record 199 candidates for this year's prize.

"In the world today, international cooperation in this area is decisive to ensure that we achieve a stable and good world," Nobel Committee president Old Danbolt Mjoes told reporters following the announcement, adding: "It was not an especially difficult choice this year"

The UN agency and its head have been instrumental in the thorny negotiations in Iran and North Korea over the past year that have brought the dangers of nuclear proliferation to the forefront of international consciousness

The IAEA's 35-nation board of governors this year found Iran guilty of violating the nuclear nonproliferation treaty, and has threat-

ened to take the country before the UN Security Council. "I am optimistic that in the coming months we will see a resumption of these negotiations," ElBaradei

6 US marines

other combat units moved into western regions of al Anbar province on the Syrian border a week ago in "Operation Iron Fist," which US commanders said aimed to stop the flow of arms and foreign fighters into

The military said at least 20 insurgents had been confirmed killed on Wednesday when US aircraft bombed a three-storey hotel in the town of Husayba US tanks killed two more gunmen in

the nearby town of Karabila after moving in to support forces who had come under small arms fire. A further seven insurgents were shot dead east of the town the same day in a gunfight with US marines, a military statement said. The operation "aims to deny al-Qaeda

in Iraq terrorists the ability to operate freely in the Euphrates River Valley and to prevent the terrorists from influencing the ocal population through murder and intimidation," the statement said. US officials say the western Iraq

campaign will continue at least through December, seeking to turn back a rising tide of insurgent violence before an October 15 referendum on a new constitution and a vote in December for a new parliament The two polls, and the expected start

this month of the trial of Saddam Hussein, have inflamed tensions within Iraq's Sunni Arab minority, which fears its former influence will be permanently lost to majorityShias and their Kurdish allies. US and Iraqi officials say the domestic

insurgency has been augmented by foreign Islamist groups such as al-Qaeda in Iraq -- one of the most feared -- which have sent fighters to the country to take on US Hospital sources in the region say a

number of civilians have been hurt in the ighting, which has seen US troops backed by fighter aircraft pound local towns and villages thought to be insurgent strong-Washington and Baghdad see the

stretch of the Euphrates valley running from the Syrian border to the town of Ramadi, 110 km west of Baghdad, as the main entry route for arms and insurgents. Syriadenies beingused as a transit point.

About 4,800 US forces and 4,200 Iraqi roops are engaged in campaigns throughout the Euphrates valley. Friday's US statement gave no details of US casualties In a separate statement, the military

'River Gate," US Marines and Iraqi soldiers escaped injury when they were attacked by a roadside bomb wired from a nearby mosque in the central town of Haditha. "Iraqi soldiers and Marines discovered

said in one wing of the campaign, dubbed

the initiating device for the explosive inside the mosque. In addition, numerous artillery rounds, pre-wired and ready to use as roadside bombs, were hidden on the mosque grounds," the statement said.

Meanwhile. Iraqipolice have found the bodies of 22 men handcuffed and shot dead in an area near the Iran border officials said on Friday.

Police said the bodies were found near Badra town in Wasit province, 69 miles southeast of Baghdad, on Thursday.

They were taken to a local morgue and hen transported to the Iraqi capital Baghdad where many of the victims had apparentlylived, police said. Familymemberschanting "Thereisno

God but God" picked up some of the bodies on Friday, taking them home in flag-draped coffins. Some family members said their relatives had been abducted from their homes almost three months

One old woman walked along the street nearby screaming "where's my brother, where 's my brother."

Many of the victims appeared to be members of Iraq's Sunni Arab minority, but there was no confirmation of that. Sunni insurgents are waging a bloody

struggle with the Shia majority and its northern Kurdish allies. Some Sunni leaders have accused Shia militia of carrying out revenge attacks against

Police said shepherds in Wasit discovered the bodies in an area between Badra and the neighbouring town of Jassem and alerted local police.

Taiwan president FROM PAGE 16

not dialogue, this is surrender," he said, speaking in the presidential palace in central Tainei.

 $He\,added\,he\,would\,not\,allow\,Taiwan$ to follow the Hong Kong model, whereby the former British colony became a Special Administrative Region of China in 1997. China has promised Taiwan more autonomy than Hong

Kong if it accepted Beijing's authority. China and Taiwan have disputed sovereignty over the island since the end of the Chinese civil war in 1949 and Beijing has threatened war if Taipei

pushed for formal independence. CHEN SAYS HEWON'T FLINCH

Chen denied that his stance was inflammatory, however, saying he believed in "reconciliation without flinching." He said he wanted "to hold a firm stance without becoming confrontational."

Chen said he hoped talks on closer economic links, including direct passenger and cargo air links, and allowing Chinese tourists to visit the island, could continue and be successful despite the tough rhetoric around the sovereignty

He said there was no need to declare independence because the facts already proved that Taiwan was a country. "It's a reality. It's the status quo. If we

do not ourselves acknowledge that we are a sovereign, independent country, if even we don't have confidence in Taiwan being a sovereign, independent country, how can we seek support from

Delhi's terms

serious problems to enter Indian

The Indian government has recently issued a circular compelling Bangladeshi exporters including those of cement and building materials to take an ISI certificate from the Bureau of Indian Standard (BIS).

The certification process has also been made very cumbersome, time consuming and exorbitantly costly. which is to be obtained every year from New Delhi, the study notes Bangladeshi exporters seeking the

certificate have to submit their factory

plan, design, layout plan, production flow chart, qualification statement of their lab experts, and statement of lab They must also produce description of production equipment, road map of production factory to export-

stations of destination of exports. The Bangladeshi exporters will also have to set up a branch office in India manned by local people. Permission from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is

import interface, road map of factory

to the airports and bus and railway

a must to open the branch office, the

After receiving all these documents with the application for ISI certification, Indian BIS officials will visit the concerned export units in Bangladesh if granted by their government.

The study further says Bangladeshi exporters will have to bear all the costs related to visit and inspection by the Indian team. They will also have to bear the cost of all lab tests done in an independent lab selected by the inspection team. But the hassle does not end here.

After getting the ISI certificate, the exporters have to stamp the ISI mark as well as the retail price on the outer package of the export items.

Bangladeshi exporters will have to pay a huge amount of money as initial fee for the certification in addition to one percent to 1.7 percent levies on invoice value of goods

Moreover, they will have to pay \$2,000 as annual marketing fee and additional service tax at eight percent.

There are also some other costs for obtaining certification from the BIS

Dhaka asks Delhi

of intense negotiations on disarmament we could not agree on a common disarmament and non-proliferation agenda. Even the UN World Summit held on September 14-16 in New York failed on this very vital front in maintaining international peace and secu-

"We believe that sheer lack of political will on the part of some has brought us to this situation of possibly dangerous deadlock. It has certainly made the world a much more dangerous place than ever before," the foreign secretary told the UN committee.

He reiterated Bangladesh's call for convening an international conference to reach agreement on a phased programmne that would provide elimination of all nuclear weapons. Bangladesh also called for conclusion of nuclear weapons convention.

Over the armed conflicts and law and order situation that have devastating effect on societies and economies of developing nations, Hemayet said: "In Bangladesh, an otherwise peaceful society, unbridled flow of small arms and light weapons through our porous borders and their illicit trade have been significantly frustrating government

efforts to improve the law and order

"We, therefore, value the initiatives aimed at curbing such flow of an illicit trade in small arms and light weapons," he said, adding, "If we are to stop the perpetuating cycle of violence, we must focus on prevention including through addressing the root causes of violence.'

The foreign secretary informed that Bangladesh has destroyed all its stockpiles of landmines in fulfilment of her commitment to the international instruments on landmines and called for providing assistance to landmine clearance operations as well as in rehabilitating the victims.

Govt starts

FROM PAGE 16 Under the programme, 900 cards have been allocated for nine wards of each union of the country. Each cardholder will be entitled to six kgs of rice during the drive.

Speaking on the occasion, Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf said corruption and nepotism will not be tolerated in the sale of rice at subsidised price to the poor.

He directed the local administration to monitor the drive.

More areas

Embankment has developed large cracks at six points on it and river Ghagot was flowing 46 cms above the danger mark.

Our correspondent from Nilphamari reports: Sufferings of the flood-affected people seem to have increased with the receding of water. About three lakh people are faced with acute crisis of food and pure drinking water. Diseases like diarrhoea and skin rashes are said to be spreading fast among the people especially the children.

About 15 thousand people have taken refuge in 30 shelter centres, where the district administration has been supplying foodforthelastfourdays.

Meanwhile, the right embankment of Dinajpur Main Canal under Teesta Irrigation Project is in danger after the locals of Kathali village under Jaldhaka upazila on Thursday cut a stretch of about 100 feet from it to make way for the flood water to get out of the area.

According to a source of Agriculture Extension Department (DAE), about 805mm rainfall in the last three days ending on Wednesday has caused extensive damage to roads, bridges, culverts, houses, schools, colleges and crops in the district.

Two children-- Dipak Chandra Roy, 7, of Saidpur upazila and Shaiful, 5, of Kishoreganj upazila -- drowned in the flood

The overall flood situation in Saidpur

About 150-foot long boundary wall around Saidpur Railway Workshop has collapsed in the recent flood. Saidpur-Dinajpur Highway at Kundal and Saidpur-Rangpur Highway at Dowani Para remained submerged threatening the road communications between those places.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) of Saidpur Shamsul Alam said the authorities have taken measures to protect the town protection dam. Meanwhile, diarrhoea has been

spreading alarmingly in the flood-affected areas. The worst affected villages are Sonarai of Sadar upazila, Jarabari of Domai upazila and chars on the Teesta River in Dimla upazila, District Health Department sources said some 250 people are being treated at different hospitals and field centres of the Health Department for the The Ministry of Relief and Disaster

Management has allotted 50 metric tonnes of rice and Tk 1 lakh in cash for the flood victims of Nilphamari district. According to the sources in District Administration, 45 metric tonnes have already been distributed. The district needs more allotment of rice and money to cope with the situation, added the sources.

The Deputy Commissioner of

Nilphamari Rabindra Nath Roy Chowdhury however told journalists that the situation is now under control.

different unazilas have visited vario

The deputy commissioner and UNOs

shelter centres to observe the relief distribution activities on Friday. The District Agriculture Extension Department (DAE) said the production of Aman and vegetables would not be ham pered if the flood waters recede quickly. But

if those remain stagnant it would cause UNB from Naogaon reports: Water of Chhoto Jamuna and Atrai rivers, passing through the district, continued to rise further, deteriorating the flood situation in the district in the 24 hours ending at 6:00am

Fresh areas of the district town have been submerged as flood control embankments at three places along Chhota Jamuna

river have developed breaches. Meanwhile, two groups of villagers came face to face over cutting a hole in a dam at Tajnagar in Sadar upazila yesterday

Crops on thousands of hectares of land and several villages of Sadar and Badalgachhi upazilas in Naogaon and Akkelpur upazila in Joypurhat went under water after a group of people had managed to cut a hole through the dam on the

Flood situation worsened in Adhaipur Mathurapur, Bilasbari and Kola unions of Badalgachhi upazila. An unidentified man was swept away by a strong current in

Official sources said some 419,450 people of six unions of seven upazilas in Naogaon district have been affected. Flood caused by heavy rain and onrush of water from across the border destroyed 61.760 houses, submerged crops on 41,235 hectares and washed away fish worth several crore taka from ponds.

BSF abducts one in Sylhet

westernside.

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) abducted a Bangladeshi labourer from Utma border in Companiganj upazila on Thursday. Local people said when 10 to15

labourers were extracting stones from a quarry near a border pillar, the BSF men entered the Bangladesh territory and picked up Umar Ali, 35, at about 8:00am. The other labourers managed to escape.

The BDR strongly protested the incident

Senate clears **\$445b** for defense

The US Senate cleared a \$445 billion bill to fund the Pentagon on Friday which includes another \$50 billion for the Iraq war, after rebuking the Bush administration for abuse of detainees $at \,Abu \,Ghraib \,prison \,and \,elsewhere.$

On a unanimous vote, senators sent the defense spending bill to a conference with the House of Representatives where it faces a battle over Senate amendments to restrict the Pentagon's interrogations and treatment of military prisoners and

Earlier in the week, the Senate bucked a White House veto threat and overwhelmingly backed an effort by Sen. John McCain, an Arizona Republican who was tortured while a prisoner of war in Vietnam, to establish the Army field manual as the standard for interrogations and bar cruel and degrading treatment of anyone in U.S. military custody.

Senators also voted to clarify the legal status of enemy combatants at the Guantanamo Bay military prison and increase congressional oversight of their detention and release.

Under that amendment, President George W. Bush must submit to Congress procedures for the tribunal on detainee cases and the review board on detainees' status. It also bars use of statements obtained with "undue coercion" when determining status of a detainee.

Final passage of the defense bill was delayed a day by an unrelated dispute over a demand by Sen. Mary Landrieu, a Louisiana Democrat, to free up relief money more quickly for $victims\,of\,the\,Gulf\,Coast\,hurricanes.$

The White House, which threat ened to veto the must-pass spending bill over the detainee measures, said it will work in the House-Senate conference for a final bill with language more to its liking. It argues the measures would tie its hands in fighting terror-"We will continue to work with

congressional leaders as they move

forward. This is part of the legislative

process, and there is more to go,"

White House spokesman Scott

McClellan said on Thursday, noting the House version did not include the detainee measures. But with the Pentagon needing more money by mid-November for the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, the administration may be quicker to accept restrictions on its detainee

ing bill, several senators said. The Senate defense bill's \$50 billion in emergency funds for the wars brings their costs to more than \$350 billion, with most of that spent in Iraq. The administration is expected to seek more war money in February or

policies to avoid holding up the spend-

March next year. The House bill has \$45 billion for the wars, but House members are expected to agree to the higher num-

Barapukuria FROM PAGE 16

mine. To avert any casualties, the authorities suspended extraction on October 4 and shifted the mine workers but they failed to prevent damage to machinery at the mining site.

On October 5, mining experts sensed leakage of carbon dioxide and burning methane underground in the mine area. To avert danger, they sealed a 450 by 120 metre area, sources said. After the incident, the CMC sent a

Company, claiming the insurance money of about Tk 1,200 crore, sources Barapukuria Coal Mine Project Authority high officials told The Daily Star that without completing some vital construction work in the mining areas, the authorities started coal extraction, which led to leakage of

letter to its insurer General Insurance

construction work would take at least $six\,more\,months\,to\,complete.$ Experts pointed out it would be quite difficult to extract coal from the mine and even if it is possible, it would take at least one year more. The machinery and equipment might also become unsable due to the incident.

gases posing danger. The remaining

Barapukuria is now going to be delayed, causing deferral of a coal purchase agreement with the PDB and Petrobangla. Sources in the power project authorities said the 250-MW coalbased Barapukuria thermal power

plant will go into operation when they

get sufficient coal. The project director

The coal-based power project at

said they have completed their preparations to press the plant into service. According to the contract with the CMC, it will develop the field and hand it over to the energy ministry. The government took up this project 10 years ago to supply coal to Barapukuria coal-based power plant, and to explore

The Chinese company had earlier announced that Bangladesh would enter coal mining era in July this year with the start of commercial production at Barapukuria. The mine has a deposit of about 390

million tonnes of high quality bitumi-

nous coal within 6.68 sq km area and 20

percent of it can be extracted, sources

mentioned.

new energy sources in the country.

JMB, Janajuddha

also been under special watch.

Referring to the August 17 serial blasts, the letter said, "The corrupt Money Loan Court, banks, NGOs and the House Building Finance Corporation bankrup innocent peo-

Earlier, militants also threatened to blow up the local press club and eight other important establishments SECURITY OFFICIAL REMANDED

Our staff correspondent adds: Detective Branch (DB) of police in Dhaka has started quizzing Abu Taleb alias Babul Ansari, assistant security officer of the parliament secretariat, who was arrested in Dhaka on

Road Staff Quarters house after the arrest of a JMB activist in Jessore. The arrestee had told a magistrate Taleb was the mastermind behind the blasts in Jessore, said a top DB official.

Police nabbed Taleb at his Green

Parliament secretariat authorities on Tuesday suspended him for his alleged links to militants.

Sources said intelligence men had watched him for 15 days after the superintendent of police in Jessore sent a letter to Dhaka Metropolitan Police asking them to arrest Taleb. The SP sent the letter following confessional statement of an accused arrested in Jessore.

The detectives on Thursday produced Taleb before a Dhaka court, which remanded him for seven days.

"We are certain about his links to the JMB. We are now trying to find out information about the outfit's network," said DB Additional Deputy Commissioner Shafigul Islam.

Ranu Ansari, Taleb's wife, has nowever claimed her husband is 'innocent.

She told reporters the DB called her husband out of their house at around 2:00am on Monday night. She went to the DB office next day to meet him, but she was not allowed, Ranu

Police sources quoting Ranu said Taleb used to visit his Gaibandha house in the first week of every month.

what type of people used to visit their

house as she was never allowed to

appear before visitors Meanwhile, detectives arrested two more JMB leaders in Kazipara in the capital last night following Taleb's statement. The identities of the arrestees could not be known immedi-

Detectives were raiding different places outside the capital with the arrestees, said a top DB official asking not to be identified. Taleb hailed from Bridge Road in

Gaibandha and did his master's in political science from Dhaka Fresh combing operation has been launched in the Sundarbans in search of militants' dens and training camps

arrestee, reports our Khulna staff correspondent. The move came following a dramatic turn in the investigation into the August 17 blasts in Khulna and Bagerhat, as police got information

following information confe

Police sources said JMB cadres including Shahidullah alias Lokman have given important information during interrogation about underground activities in the remote areas

n the Sundarbans

kilometres of South Talpatty Island near Indian border, said unconfirmed The sources said most of the coastal belt including South Talpatty

sland is the safest hideout for pirates

and other criminals. These criminals

It is difficult to locate these dens as

most of them are situated within 100

remote areas are close to Indian borders.

"We cannot rule out the possibility of a close link between Islamist extremists and terrorists of the Sundarbans," said a senior police officer of Khulna confirming the

ongoing crackdown. The Raimangol, Malancha, Arhpangashia, Ilshemari, Andharmanik, Kalabogi, Satmukha and Agunjali rivers of the entire Sundarbans are the safest routes for movement of criminals of both the countries, said a highly placed source of the western wing of Sundarbans Forest Division (SFD).

The source expressed his grave concern over high security risk in the remote areas in the world's largest mangrove forest. 'Our forces are not enough to enter

the inaccessible areas of the Sundarbans. Yet, we have taken the high risk to locate the militants' dens, if any," said a high official of Bagerhat district police.

MOREARRESTS

Our Netrakona correspondent reports: Police on Thursday night arrested a JMB activist, who admitted to his involvement in the August 17 blasts in the district.

The arrestee is Sana Ullah, 25, son

of Maulana Abdul Quddus of Maowa

village in Gouripur in Mymensingh. Police force from Netrakona and Gouripur nabbed Sana at his village $The \, of ficer-in-charge \, of \, Netrakona \,$

active JMB member, who blasted six Meantime, Netrakona police released a JMB suspect, Maulana Abdur Rahman, yesterday after pick-

ing him up from his Sreepur Bali

Police claimed they had quizzed

Madrasa on Thursday night.

Police Station told the press Sana is an

him for several hours and released him finding no clue to his involvement Besides, police on Thursday arrested Motiar Rahman, son of Abdul

Latif, at his Ratnai Kashidanga house in Baliadangi upazila in Thakurgaon suspecting his link to the JMB, BDNEWS adds. Earlier, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) detained Asadullah, an assistant teacher of Battali Shah Majidia Nurani

Chittagong, on Thursday night in connection with the October 3 bomb attacks on two courts. The Rab following his statement nabbed two others -- Abu Sadat Savem alias Savem Chowdhury in

Madrasa in Lohagara upazila in

Abu Raihan in Feni -- the same night. Rab sources said all the arrestees are members of the IMB's hit-group. reports UNR

The Rab said Asadullah, a member

Rumaliachhara in Cox's Bazar and

of law formulation section of Nezame-Islam party, was engaged in militancy along with teaching for the last Sayem was imparting training to

militants for the last two years after launching an institution named 'Cox's

Idols vandalised about such dens and camps run by the notice of the local people yesterday

> (Rab) from Jessore visited the spot. The miscreants damaged the idol of Durga at the temple of Sri Satva Naravan in Labanchara area of Khulna

On information, police and mem-

bers of the Rapid Action Battalion

on the same night. Locals said the miscreants entered the temple at the dead of night and

damaged the idol. Locals along with police arranged night patrol for 120 mandaps in the

New York has been on alert since the

September 11, 2001 attacks on the

World Trade Center and bolstered

security after the July 7 attack on

London's transit system that killed 56

people. Those bombers carried explo-

New York Gov. George Pataki

ordered hundreds of National Guard

and police to step up security on mass

transit systems and gave authority to

Connecticut and New Jersey police to

operate on commuter trains in and out

Threat to NY subway

York, moving 4.5 million riders a day in the country's largest city.

"It's a little quieter than normal. That

makes me a little nervous," said Lisa Marie Dipaola, 24, from the platform beneath Times Square on her way to her investment banking job. Bloomberg, a habitual rider who is also in the middle of a re-election campaign, took the subway home on

Thursday after calling a snap news

conference to announce the threat and

rode the train back to work again on

Millions of others have no choice. "I have to use the subway," said teacher Milagros Madera, 42, who brought her five- and six-year-old sons onto the train despite the threat. "They love riding the subway," she said.

While New York authorities put the city on high alert, officials in Washington downplayed the threat. White House spokesman Scott

McClellan said on Friday that the threat to the subway was "of doubtful credibil-The information was shared with

local officials "out of an abundance of caution" but there was no plan to raise the threat level for New York or the country, said Homeland Security Department spokesman Russ Knocke late on Thursday.

8 die

FROM PAGE 16

Ghulam Ahmad, a 19th century Indian religious leader who claimed to be a prophet seeking Islam's renewal. The religious group differs with other mainstream Muslim groups over the definition of Islam's founder Mohammad being the "final" prophet.

The sect was founded in 1889 by Mirza

Ahmadiyas have been persecuted and ostracized in many countries, including mainly Sunni Muslim Pakistan, where a law dating to the 1970s forbids them to call themselves

3rd round bid