Lawyers boycott court | Free trade area

Razzak Khan and advocate Zainul Abedin, vesterday morning met the chief justice at his office and requested him to continue the court activities.

The SCBA, on the other hand, took out processions on the Supreme Court premises, urging the judges and lawyers to abstain from their judicial work. The SCBA also held a protest meeting at the south hall of the bar.

Presided over by SCBA President advocate Mahbubey Alam, the meeting was addressed, among others, by former SCBA president advocate Ozair Farooq, advocate Rahmat Ali MP. Dr M Zahir, barrister Rafigul Islam Miah, advocates Subrata Chowdhury, Khondker Mahbub Hossain, Nurul Islam Sujan, BA Rashid, Fazle Rabbi, Mahbub Ali, Abu Bakar Siddique, Bashir Ahmed, Mamtajuddin Mehedi, Awasafur Rahman and Rabiul Alam Budu.

The SCBA will form a human chain at the main gate of the Supreme Court from 4:00pm to 5:00pm Saturday and hold a lawyers-people solidarity meeting at the Central Shaheed Minar at 4:00pm on Sunday in protest against the killing of judges.

The two groups of BNP-backed lawyers association, Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Forum, yesterday held separate press conferences at the SCBA building protesting the court boycott.

The faction led by BNP's Law Secretary advocate Zainul Abedin held its press conference at the north hall of the SCBA building. Advocate Abdul Wahab, deputy attorneys general Golam Kibria, Golam Mohammad Chowdhury Alal. Helaluddin Mollah and Badruddoza Badal, assistant attorney general Giasuddin Mithu, advocates Moklesur Rahman Zahid and Manir Hossain, among others, were present

Another faction led by advocate TH Khan held the press conference at the hall room of the SCBA annex building. Barrister Ziaur Rahman

Khan MP, advocates Shah Khasruzzaman, Saidur Rahman, Sanaullah Miah and Golam Arshed. among others, were present.

The two pro-government lawyers' groups expressed shock at the killing of two judges in Ihalakathi bu blamed the SCBA leaders for serving nolitical interests using the killing.

Reacting to the press conferences of the government-backed lawyers, SCBA Secretary advocate Enayetur Rahim said those who have held press conferences against the decision of the SCBA are the patrons of the extremists and bombers.

The lower courts in the capital -Dhaka Judge Court, Metropolitan Sessions Judge Court, District Magistrate Court and Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court remained almost inactive as the lawyers joined the boycott

Parishad, the forum of proopposition lawyers, also staged demonstration and held meetings on the court premises to protest the killing. It asked the lawyers to join the human chain and gathering on Saturday and Sunday.

The judges, meanwhile, gave a seven-day ultimatum to the government to ensure their security, otherwise they would go for a tough movement from November 21.

Senior assistant judges Sohel Ahmed and Jagannath Pandey were killed on November 14, a day after the Saarc Summit, in the bomb attack by a member of IMB suicide squad.

SC Registrar Mohammad Fazlul Karim and Deputy Registrar Mohammad Dalil Uddin yesterday met the families of the slain judges and consoled them. They also visited the spot where the two judges were

Mannan, an employee of Jhalakathi District Judge Court, who has been receiving treatment at the Sadar

law and order, prosecution, separation of

judiciary and strengthening of local

terrorism, the finance minister said, "We

have told them it is more of an interna-

tional phenomenon than a national one. It

is difficult to contain such type of terror-

ism with the normal law enforcement

to combat such terrorism, Saifur noted,

and are now framing laws to contain it

"We will also have to face it collectively.

The government cannot do it alone. The

entire nation needs to take part in the

Moudud Ahmed said the government is

committed to separate the judiciary. "We

have informed the donors about the

progress made in this regard and they

have appreciated it. They understood that

separation is concerned is basically of

nutting around 600 administration cadres

now working as magistrates under the

Supreme Court. "We have told them about

the steps we have taken to bring them

At a session vesterday a Norwegian

delegate asked the government to set a

deadline for making the ACC functional.

Moudud said the main issue as far as

Talking to the press, Law Minister

process," he maintained.

it is not an easy task."

he explained.

Bush and Tony Blair are also struggling

On the issue of Islamist militancy and

government bodies

Sammilita Ainjibi Samannay

The two also visited injured Abdul

Donors want

fund flow to the beneficiaries, besides increasing the cost of business and inefficiencies," Patel explained.

He said the three-day discussion between the development partners and the government was all about how to move forward with the PRSP implementa-

"We had a very open and frank discussion. We spent a lot of time talking about the Anti-Corruption Commission this morning," Praful said, adding the day's two sessions were really focused on finding constructive ways to institute

ONATTACK ON JUDICIARY

Referring to the recent spate of attacks and killings of judges, the donors maintained that an environment where such things happen and no prompt action follows may damage Bangladesh's interests abroad. They said the government should find out quickly who did the crimes and

Patel said, "We are concerned because such incidents happen only in a very unstable environment. And if you don't do something about it very quickly, Bangladesh will become known more and more as a place of terrorism and violence."

 $under the \, Supreme \, Court, "he \, added.$ "The bottom line of what we have told Elaborating on the topic, the law the government is that we want to see minister said the government is consider-Bangladeshi citizens can come home in ing an interim measure. "One option is to the evening, feeling safe. If they are always give the 600 magistrates two options to worried that their children may not safely choose from -- to join the judicial service come back home, I think foreign investors or to continue in the administration cadre and development partners will also have but work in the judiciary on deputation. similar anxieties," he told the press.

However, he mentioned, the donors did get an assurance from the government, particularly from the prime minister, of acting seriously on these issues.

monitoring is the only way to ensure

gradual progress... this is the only way to

move forward. So, they have agreed and

Patel said the donors feel the govern-

On the donors' concerns over corrup-

tion and the ineffective Anti-Commission

Corruption (ACC), Finance Minister M

Saifur Rahman told the press that the

absolute power the ACC has been vested

with has made things complicated. He

said it is not enough to make a law or form

a commission, rather the people who

enforce the law or run the commission are

Saifur said for about three hours

vesterday they discussed the gamut of

governance issues including corruption,

 $the \, ones \, who \, make \, the \, difference.$

ment is serious about its commitments

and that is why they are supporting it.

we are optimistic about it," he remarked.

Meeting sources said Moudud echoed The donors at the meet agreed on a Saifur in telling the donors that the govnumber of concrete steps for moving ernment made the ACC independent and forward with the development process gave it absolute power, and so now cannot and also reached accord with the governdictate it what to do or to catch any particment to work together in monitoring its progress, the WB VP said. "The govern-A delegate of a European Union ment promised to sit with us, if we like to

country also raised the issue of deaths in discuss any issue or concern over things 'crossfire' and said such extra-judicial not moving in the right direction," he killing is not proper. Australia also raised the issue of human rights violation in this For example, Patel said, six months from now the donors would meet again here to take stock of the progress made and how things are moving. "I think joint

PM calls FROM PAGE 1

She said necessary financial support will be given to the families of the two slain judges. She also assured that employment would be given on priority basis to the family members of the two judges on the basis of qualifications.

and General Secretary Reazul Karim led the delegation. They expressed satisfaction over the government's steps already taken to ensure security of judges and bring the criminals to

Association President Rafigul Islam

Law Minister Moudud Ahmed informed the delegation members that the government has already taken adequate security measures at the judges'

residences and offices. The association leaders invited the prime minister to inaugurate the annual conference of the Judicial Service Association next month.

FROM PAGE 20

trade area and in turn raising living standards in South Asia.

However, differences persisted among members at their last meeting in the Bangladeshi capital Dhaka this month, with negotiations stumbling over a sensitive list of products, rules of origin and a compensation mecha-

At the end of their two day meeting on Sunday, the leaders of South Asian states however directed officials to iron out all differences during talks in Kathmandu on November 30

On Thursday, Singh pointed out that a free trade agreement concluded with Sri Lanka in 1998 had resulted in a "win-win" situation for both and "could be a model for similar agreements in the region."

He said that even two decades after its formation, saarc had "not succeeded in exploiting the immense economic potential of our region."

Intra-regional exports stood at a five percent of Saarc's combined total, compared with 55.2 percent for the European Union, he noted. "Hence, the need for implement-

ng Safta cannot be overemphasized. We hope the free trade area would help us to move forward towards the eventual goal of South Asian Economic Union.'

The summit over the weekend saw Saarc countries promising to fight the grinding poverty that afflicts millions across the region with renewed urgency and signing accords to ease restrictions on trade.

Set up to alleviate poverty and promote economic cooperation, Saarc has been dismissed by critics as a talking shop that has achieved little since it was formed in 1985 due to mistrust and squabbling between

Minister sees

FROM PAGE 20

situation) in the country's northern region and termed media reports on it false and the opposition campaign politically motivated.

"There is no Monga in the northern districts of the country and...no one died from starvation," he said at a press conference in PID conference room at the secretariat.

The minister also saw political reasons when his attention was drawn to the reports on Monga in the $new spapers\, and\, electronic\, media.$

"These were absolutely biased and propaganda. We probed many media reports about Monga but did not find any authenticity of those,'

The minister, however, admitted absence of employment opportunity in the region in this season, but outright rejected existence of Monga.

Mentioning the poverty as an annual phenomenon in the northern region of the country, he also said the to tackle the situation.

"We have already provided about 15.80 lakh VGF and VGD cards through which 38 thousand metric tons of foodgrains was distributed in the five districts where the number of total families is 19.05 lakh," he added.

Besides, the government has allocated Tk 15.50 crore for various projects under the social safety net programme.

He also stressed the need for land reform and establishing industries in the poverty-stricken northern

Deputy minister for food and disaster management Asadul Habib Dulu, who also faced volley of questions from the journalists, denied any irregularities and corruption in distribution of the VGF and VGD

cards among the poor. Terming the allegations politically motivated, he also pinned the blame on a vested quarter for trashng his image.

He, however, said that there were some faults in making the list and army personnel revised the list after

Lankans vote

FROM PAGE 20

midnight (1800 GMT).

A total of 13.3 million people were eligible to vote to elect a president for a six-year term from among 13 candidates. However, the election was seen as a face off between the present and former premiers.

Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapakse, who wants to review the peace process with the rebels, expressed confidence that he could celebrate his 60th birthday Friday as the country's fifth executive head of

His main rival, 56-year-old opposition leader Ranil Wickremesinghe who supports the peace process, was also upbeat.

The island's Tamil minority, around 13 percent of the 19.5 million population, shunned the election which was seen as a setback to Wickremesinghe.

Reports from Tamil-dominated areas in the northeast said tyres were burnt on the road by the guerrillas to discourage voting.

Opposition plans

has already declared to counter the opposition parties programmes in the

"If the opposition can organise 10 lakh people in their rally, we will hold a grand rally with 25 lakh people," Bhuiyan, also the secretary general of the ruling BNP, said at a discussion meeting in the capital on November 7. The leaders of the ruling alliance are pondering over holding the grand rally in the capital early in the next month, sources said.

Talking to The Daily Star vesterday General Secretary of Dhaka city unit of BNP Abdus Salam said, "We will sit soon to fix the date of holding a grand rally."

At present, the AL and its allies and their front organisations, are working to ensure participation of over 25 lakh people at the gathering with a plan to organise people from ten districts adjacent to Dhaka

The senior opposition leaders vesterday held a rally at Narsingdi and Manikganj to motivate the people to join the grand rally in Dhaka. Similar rallies are planned to organise in Savar and in Keranigani tomorrow and in Brahmanbaria on Saturday. Besides they will start a two-day publicity campaign using loudspeakers in the city on Saturday.

AL, that has been boycotting the parliament since last year, is likely to continue its boycott as the party policymakers are not thinking about joining the upcoming session slated for

We will discuss the issue of joining the upcoming parliament session after holding the grand rally," Opposition Deputy Leader Abdul Hamid vesterday

Referring to the speaker's phone call

Charges pressed

sheet to a first class magistrate court of Tangail.

The accused are -- IMB Chief Shaikh Abdur Rahman, JMJB Chief Siddiqul Islam alias Bangla Bhai and Mokhlesur Rahman Sumon of Mizapur Purba Para village under Jamalpur Sadar upazila. At present, all of them

Rahman and Bangla Bhai were the masterminds behind the August 17 countrywide serial bomb blasts, the report mentioned. The blast at the Madhupur Bus Stand was part of the serial attacks, carried out by Sumon.

Earlier, SI Shajahan filed a case under Explosive Substances Act and Special Power Act with Madhupur

AL rally attack

confessional statement, saying most wanted criminals Subrata Bain, Molla Masud and Mukul ran the attack that killed 22 people and injured over 200.

Shafiq, son of a peon of the Chest

Diseases Hospital, is wanted for killing two members of rival Kala Jahangir group near TB Gate at Mohakhali in

sors could say who masterminded the Metropolitan Magistrate Shafiq

Shafig said one Robin asked him and Rana to meet at one "Jiboner mess" in Moghbazar, where he disclosed the

planned by Subrata, Masud and Mukul.

"A day before the Awami League meeting, at a place near the Baitul Mukarram Mosque Robin showed us the detailed plan of the attack and the points where we will have to take position," Shafiq said.

Robin handed Shafiq, Rana and Joj

Mia a grenade each and kept one for himself and asked Shafiq and Rana to wait on the east side of the Bangabandhu Avenue before the AL meeting, said the statement. "On August 21, Robin called us at

around 4:30pm and told us to mingle with the people attending the meeting," Shafiq said, adding, "We were instructed to throw the grenade after one of our leaders throws one first."

Both Shafiq and Rana said in their statements they were strictly instructed not to throw grenades on the dais,

PM may visit FROM PAGE 1

the OIC member states.

prime minister is likely to travel to South Asian capitals, including New Delhi and Islamabad, next year as

Reporter strangled FROM PAGE 1

Physical evidence made the police believe that Gautam was strangled by using the rope. Before leaving, the assailants left the door closed from

house at Jhiltali. But he often used to stay in the office. For the last four or five days he slept in a cot in his office.

and joined the Samakal about six

President of Faridpur Journalists

The rally announced a four-day mourning when local newspaper offices will hoist black flag and journalists will wear black badge.

the November 22 grand rally.

told The Daily Star.

to him on Wednesday, the deputy leader said the speaker does not have anything to do unless the ruling party high command directs him. "I am in doubt whether the speaker has initiated the move to bring the main opposition in parliament on his own or advised by the ruling party high command," he added.

are evading arrest

police station the same day after the

which might create problem for the

"elders brothers" Subrata, Molla

They were paid Tk 5,000 each in

After the attack, Shafiq and Rana

Later, on Mukul's suggestion,

Shafiq went to Kolkata on October 9 to

evade arrest and sneaked into

took separate buses for Moituli,

Masud and Mukul

advance, they said.

Earlier on June 26, Joj Mia, arrested at Senbag in Noakhali, also gave confessional statement, naming 12 persons, including Rana and his brother-in-law

However, none of the three confes-

Anwar recorded the criminal's statement, identical to the one made by

plan of attack 10-12 days before August According to Shafiq's statement, Robin told them that the attack was

Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan told reporters that the peace process in the Middle East would figure prominently at the summit meet of the heads of state and government of

He told the reporters that the

The exact dates of the prime minister's visit are yet to be con-

Friends said Gautam was living in a

Gautam came from a Zamindar family of Bhanga. He began his career with Protham Alo since its inception

The autopsy report said it was a case of homicide.

Journalists strongly protested the murder of Gautam. A rally chaired by Association Munshi Harunur Rashid demanded arrest of the killers within Bangladesh through the Benapole border after 19 days. He met Subrata, Masud, Mukul Zahid--another grenade thrower, and others in Kolkata, Shafiq said. Acting on Joi's statement, police

The Daily Star

arrested Shafig and Rana at Moituli on

November 4 with two revolvers and 40

in the city have decided to establish a special relief fund to assist the Monga-affected people of the coun-

At a meeting held at The Daily Star office on November 15, they also decided to suspend the "O" and "A" Level Grand Award presentation ceremony and donate the fund in aid of the Monga victims.

It was further decided to raise additional funds, on a voluntary basis, from parents, teachers, students and school management for

this purpose. The Daily Star has pledged Tk 6 lakh from its own resources. To mange the fund and coordinate the relief activities, a nine-member coordinating committee has been formed with Niloufer Manzur

(Sunbeams) as the coordinator. The other members of the committee are Rahat Nilufar (Green Herald), Feroz Khan (Scholastica), Rabeya Nawaz (Dhanmondi Tutorial), Ferdowsi Ruby (The Aga Khan School), Selina Halim (Play Pen), Humaira (Maple Leaf), Khairul Alam (Green Gems) and Syed Fahim Munaim (The Daily Star).

Biman

FROM PAGE 20 straightaway on Dhaka-Jeddah oi Dhaka-Riyadh route.

Besides, it also proposed to increase the number of weekly flights to seven $instead\, of six\, on\, Dhaka\text{-}Lond on\, route.$ However, Biman was asked to make

arrangements with its partner airlines

so that New York flights can be oper-

Frankfurt, Dhaka-Paris and Dhaka-

route for each flight.

ated from Biman's London flights. On the Singapore route, the committee recommended operation of wide-bodied DC-10 aircraft instead of the Airbus. This flight route should be Dhaka-Singapore-Kuala Lumpur and

Harsh recommendations were made for the domestic routes where Biman was asked to stop all but Dhaka-Sylhet route as it found the flights were being run with hefty losses. The 78seater Fokker-28 carries only six to seven passengers causing huge losses, the committee said. The committee noted that Biman

loses most on the Dhaka-New York attack, Tejendra's son Dr Bimal Shil and his [Tejendra] brother Shachindra The international and regional Lal Shil, who lost her three daughters routes that were recommended for closure by the committee are Dhaka-

Besides, it suggested closure of the Dhaka-Singapore via Bangkok route Biman incurs Tk 25 lakh in loss on this camp is still there to guard the gutted

Suicide squad

collective efforts of all to eliminate.

in the name of Islam.

the metropolis.

He stressed the need for creating

During the meeting, the association

leaders, led by its president Md

Helaluddin, informed the state minis-

and market owners in

political leaders, top criminals and

policemen get money of the smuggled

drugs, a prime cause of spreading

terrorist incidents will come down," the

members of the delegation told the

"If drug peddling can be destroyed

They demanded rehabilitation of

hawkers at eight designated places of

Dhaka City within the next 15 days in

consultation with Dhaka City

The association that represents

about 250 markets and shopping malls

in the capital demanded import of tax-

free metal detectors and CCTVs for

state minister to evict Balurmath slum

at Mirpur Mazar Road allegedly used

for drugs trading and training of crimi-

nals. They also informed that some 568

groups are operating in the city who are

deceiving people through various vile

take necessary actions against the drug

The Detective Branch (DB) of police

produced Hannan before the Chief

Metropolitan Magistrate's Court

Dhaka at 2:00pm on completion of a

seven-day remand in the August 17

Rajuk blast case and Investigation

Officer Zahidur Rahman Chowdhury

sought 10-day's remand for further

The information obtained from

Hannan is being verified and the

militant linchpin needs to be con-

fined in the custody until the investi-

gation is over, said the forwarding

report placed before the court in

Babar asked police, DB and Rab to

The shop owners also urged the

installation at their markets.

traders and criminals

Militant

FROM PAGE 1

interrogation.

They alleged that some influential

ter of various problems facing the shop

mass awareness by social leaders, professionals and civil society members against terrorism being carried out Sunamganj early yesterday

> Indian territory, leaving behind a bag with explosives and detonators when BDR troops on patrol chased him after he had entered Bangladesh at about

4:00am yesterday. CONFESSION BY JMB MEMBER

An operative of JMB arrested in city's

Twenty-five-year old Rezaul Karim Raju, who hails from Jamalpur, also

Kindergarten in Gazipur, Rezaul said IMB leader Habib had been the trainer while another leader Jahid got him

heaven after death. Later the same day he blasted the bomb in the airport area while Jahid exploded his bomb at Gulshan-1 intersection.

Metropolitan Magistrate Nani Gopal Biswas recorded the statement under 164 of the Criminal Procedure Code

Sources in Detective Branch of police said they arrested Rezaul, following up the provided by Masud, who was arrested on August 22 during a raid to arrest Habib, the man alleged to have been in charge of staging the blasts in Gulshan area Meanwhile in Kurigram, police

resterday arrested JMB member Saidur

n Kodalkati Bazar of Rajibpur upazila, reports BDNEWS.

connection with the Rajuk blast case. Also the forwarding report on the Jatrabari blast case stated Hannan along with his accomplices exploded bombs across the

create panic across the country. After hearing, Metropolitan Magistrate MA Salam granted the remand prayer. "I could not stand and my left

hand is numb. Sometimes, I vomit

with blood due to severe headache.

Moreover, I am in the police custody

country including Jatrabari area to

for over 44 days," Hannan told the court when he was asked about his rights of private defence without any Rab members took Hannan to the

court, wearing him helmet and a bullet proof vest. Mufti Hannan, who escaped arrest for several years, was already shown arrested in four other blast

cases filed with the Tejgaon, Ramna

and Motijheel, Demra police stations.

Foreign airlines

vesterday.

FROM PAGE 20 The representatives of the foreign airlines agreed to reduce airfare at a meeting with the State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Mir Mohammad Nasir Uddin at his secretariat office

Representatives of the Saudi Arabian Airlines, Qatar Airlines, Kuwait Airlines, Emirates, Gulf Air and Pakistan International Airlines were present at the meeting. The six airlines agreed to ferry non-

ballottee hajj pilgrims at the fare fixed by the government following request by the state minister. Sources at the religious affairs ministry said about 50,000 nonballottee pilgrims are expected to perform Haji this year. The number of hallottee pilgrims is 2,600. Biman Bangladesh Airlines will carry a total of

18,000 Hajj pilgrims -- both ballottee and non-ballottee. Five foreign airlines will ferry 8,000 Hajj pilgrims while Saudi Arabian Airlines will carry the rest of the pil-

$grims, according to \, meeting \, sources.$ Horror spectre

When asked about the latest developments in the probe, Investigation Officer Clarence Gomez, also an ASP of Satkania circle, yesterday said the case is now at the home ministry's monitoring cell and he would submit the charge sheet only when the ministry asks him to

When asked why UP Chairman Aminur Rahman Chowdhury, the prime suspect, has not yet been held, Gomez said the matter lies with the higher authorities, not him. On the night of November 18, 2003, Геjendra Shil and 10 others including a

newborn baby were incinerated. The others killed on that night include Tejendra's wife Bakul Bala Shil, 60, his son Anil Shil, 42, daughter in-law Smriti Rani Shil, 30, two grand children Rumi Shil, 12, Sonia Shil, 7, three nieces Babuty Shil, 25, Prasadi Shil, 17, Annie Shil, 07, a four-day-old baby and another close relation Debendra Shil, Immediately after the barbaric

(Babuty, Prasadi and Annie) in the arson, left their village house, and since then have been staying in the city. The day after the carnage, a 10member police camp led by a havilder inject instability into the situation, was set up on the yard of the house. The and not in a manner that would sug-

JMB now threatens

uses from bordering Ratanpur Baganbari in Chhatak upazila of

BDR officials said a man ran into the

Uttara on Wednesday confessed to a magistrate yesterday that he blasted a bomb near Zia International Airport on August 17.

admitted that he and seven others took training on how to operate a bomb at a mosque in Movnertek of Uttara a day before the countrywide blasts A teacher of Taragachhi

involved in 'jihad', by promising him Rezaul also told the magistrate that Habib had supplied him with a time bomb in a gift box early in the morning of August 17 at a house in Abdullahpur.

Son of Sadu Molla, Saidur hails from emote Char Kharubhaz in the district.

The BDR has beefed up security along the Indian border in Thakurgaon

Mir Nasir

FROM PAGE 1 him to step down over his failure in

resolving the crisis, sources said.

Nasir was at the Prime Minister's Office since the afternoon to meet Khaleda, who reportedly declined to meet him. The five-day ultimatum given by

363 Hajj agencies, responsible for

arranging the religious journey to

Makkah for 56,000 prospective pil-

grims, for resolving the stalemate over this year's inflated Hajj flight fare expired yesterday. The cash-strapped state-run Biman Bangladesh Airlines has already expressed its inability to fly more than 4,000 ballotee pilgrims to Saudi Arabia for January 9, 2006 Hajj while the

foreign airliners have asked for a highly

inflated fare of \$1,350, compared to

following rumours that seven members of the JMB suicide squad were holed up in the district town with a plan to strike again, reports UNR

A senior official of BDR's Battalion 20 said the measures have been taken in response to the overall security situa-

tion of the district. The police and other security forces have also stepped up efforts to ensure security in the district reportedly following an intelligence report from the capita, said sources. According to the

dispatched to Dinajpur. Seven members of the squad had already entered Thakurgaon, a district

possible hideouts of JMB men across the districts but to no effect.

field in Singia village under Sadar upazila. The recovery caused panic among the locals. The device, wrapped in red tape and electric wire, has been taken for examination by the army's explosives experts. Deputy Commissioner of

recovered on Tuesday from a paddy

assigned to be with the judges in line with government directives. 2-day-old girl

the sand. Hearing the cry, she realised it was still alive.

child's leg popping out from beneath

child smeared with blood and covered in a polythene sheet from the

found eaten up by the crows. Dr Mizanur Rahman, assistant registrar of the paediatric surgery ward, said, "The child has lost a lot of blood and needed immediate sur-

gery." However, he was hopeful about

"Because if they have their way to

impose their medieval vision on that

country in that part of the world there

would be an enormous price to pay,'

down as Iraqi security forces build up.

would be "a recipe for disaster," US

Brigadier-General William Webster,

the commander of coalition forces in

strategy, but setting a date without

conditions being met is a loser," he

said, referring to the need to build up

Iragi forces to take over from US-led

If the United States was to set a

specified date for withdrawing troops,

insurgents could just wait until they

left before renewing their war against

Iragi authorities. And then "the lives

of (US) soldiers killed would have

extremely difficult conversion for any

regular army, even a superpower. But

I'm convinced that while it's infinitely

frustrating... in the end we're going to

Meanwhile, international concern

grew over the alleged abuse of Iraqi

detainees by security agencies follow-

ing the discovery of 173 mostly Sunni

Arab prisoners at an interior ministry

lockup in Baghdad where they were

"Fighting an irregular war is an

been in vain," Webster added.

be successful," he added.

"Yes, we ought to have an exit

Baghdad, said Wednesday.

Bush has said US forces will draw

Setting a fixed date for withdrawal

wait us out." he added

hances of the girl's survival

were also wounded in the clash which

troops withdrawn from that country, USA Today noted.

people, that's irresponsible," Bush said Thursday during a visit to South

But his administration was dealt a setback Tuesday when Democrats and Republicans in the Senate supported an amendment to require the president to make regular progress reports on the war, just a year ahead of elections that could weaken Republican control of Congress.

iust over 150,000.

unconfirmed report, a 10-member suicide squad of JMB had recently been police official said, requesting anonym

Sources also claimed the JMB squad is likely to strike within a week, but they

did not specify the targets. Acting on the intelligence, police eams have carried out raids on several

Acting OC of Thakurgaon Police

Station Mazhar Hossain said police on Tuesday night raided in vain Lakshmipur-Debadangi village under Sadar upazila for three people suspected to have a direct role in the August 7 blasts. Imam Abdul Gafur of Thakurgaon Ahle Hadith Mosque and Rezwan alias Razzak, a student of Ranisangkoil Kuwaity Madrasa, were among the suspects. Earlier, a bomb-like device was

Thakurgaon Gazi Mizanur Rahman said security had been further tightened on the court premises and other important installations while gunmen were

"I was frightened to rescue it myself and informed the incident to the police patrolling nearby and the

sand grave.

10 GIs killed

erupted after they were caught in an

ambush on a farm on the outskirts of

President George Bush's administration, facing growing pressure over the war, has launched a counterattack against critics who say it manipulated pre-war intelligence to win support for the Iraq invasion, challenging both opposition

Bush took the lead in the campaign in a November 11 speech when he branded his Democrat critics as "irresponsible" for having called on the government to declare a timetable

US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld Tuesday warned against a

over responsibility to Iraqis as soon as

possible and leave, Rumsfeld said. "But not in a manner that is preciptous, not in a manner that would pecking at something in a circle. Curious she advanced and saw a

dwellers of the slum I live in," Minara One Ameena Begum dig out the

Half of the baby's right chin and the lower part of her left leg were

Meanwhile, a USA Today/CNN/Gallup poll released Wednesday said 54 percent of Americans want US troops withdrawn from Iraq within the next 12 months. In 1970, a pivotal year in which

sentiment swung against the Vietnam

war, a similar number wanted US

Democrats and the press. "I expect there to be criticism, but when Democrats say that I deliberately misled the Congress and the

to withdraw US troops from Iraq.

precipitous withdrawal from Iraq, where US numbers currently number The United States wants to hand

said to have been tortured and British Defence Minister John Reid described the abuse of detainees in Iraq as "totally unacceptable", UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said he was "deeply concerned", and EU

an international investigation, but the US State Department said it was satisfied with the probe launched by

Sunni Arab leaders have called for

foreign policy chief Javier Solana said

such abuse would not help stabilize

gest to a terrorist that all he has to do is

the country.