

Hamas govt halts work after clash with Fatah

8 people killed in fighting

AFP, Gaza City

Three Palestinians were wounded yesterday in West Bank clashes between gunmen from the ruling Hamas faction and its rival Fatah, the day after eight were killed in factional unrest in Gaza.

With the Hamas-led government halting work in protest at the violence, two bodyguards of Hamas deputy prime minister Nassereddin al-Shaer were shot in the northern West Bank town of Nablus, security and medical sources said.

Shaer, who was detained for weeks as part of an Israeli clamp-down on the Islamist Hamas and

was released only last week, was not in the car but one of his guards was seriously wounded.

Earlier, a member of the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades linked to president Mahmud Abbas's Fatah was wounded by Hamas gunfire in Nablus, the sources said.

After the Hamas-led government saw its headquarters in the West Bank city of Ramallah stormed by Abbas loyalists on Sunday, it announced that work was being halted in all government ministries.

The government "has announced the suspension of work in government institutions because of the attacks against the seat of

government in the West Bank and attempts to kidnap officials," spokesman Ghazi Hamad said.

Prisons minister Wasfi Qabha had overnight denied reports that he had been the target of a kidnap attempt by militants loyal to Abbas.

The Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades called a general strike in protest at Sunday's clashes and it was widely observed in Ramallah, where all the shops in the city centre were closed.

The fresh unrest came as US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice flew into the Middle East and pro-Western Arab governments

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Nobel prize for genetic discovery

2 US scientists share honour

AFP, Stockholm

Two US scientists, Andrew Fire and Craig Mello, yesterday won the Nobel Medicine Prize for discovering how to silence malfunctioning genes, a breakthrough which could lead to an era of new therapies to reverse crippling disease.

"This year's Nobel laureates have discovered a fundamental mechanism for controlling the flow of genetic information," the jury declared.

Their discovery, called RNA interference and which occurs in plants, animals and humans, was published in 1998.

That leaves a bare eight years between publication and a Nobel award, which approximates to a record for fast-track recognition. A

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4



PHOTO: STAR

Hindu devotees gather at Cox's Bazar beach during immersion of goddess Durga in the Bay of Bengal on Bijoya Dashami yesterday.

Durga Puja ends with festivity

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The five-day Durga Puja, the greatest religious festival of the Hindus, ended yesterday with the immersion of Durga idols all over the country.

Bijoya Dashami, the special ceremony to reaffirm peace and good relations among people, was also celebrated afterwards.

Hundreds joined a procession from Palashi in the capital and paraded the city through the National Press Club, Gulistan, and English Road with idols of Durga and her children Lakshmi, Saraswati, Kartik and Ganesh before the immersion.

"At least 15 Durga idols were brought at Waiz Ghat for immersion in the Buriganga after parading through the city at 5:20pm," Jayanta Sen Dipu, president of Mohanagar Sarbojonin Puja Committee, said yesterday.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

Sehri, Iftar timing			
Ramadan	Oct	Sehri	Iftar
9	3		5-47
10	4	4-32	5-46
11	5	4-32	5-45

Prayer Timing		
October 3		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-31	4-42
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	5-47	6-05
Esha	7-30	8-00
Source: Islamic Foundation		

Power shortage further dips

225MW Meghnaghat-1 shut down

UNB, Dhaka

A 225 MW unit of Meghnaghat power plant was shut down yesterday, bringing down the power generation output to about 3,000 MW during the peak hours.

According to official sources, the

unit-1 of the Meghnaghat power plant, owned by private company Globeleq, was shut down for its scheduled maintenance.

However, the electricity shortage was not that much severe yesterday as it was a public holiday on the occasion of Durga Puja.

But, the officials said, the power crisis would deepen further in the coming days as the demand would go up to about 5,000 MW compared to 4,000 MW on a holiday.

"So, the consumers are going to face even a worse situation from tomorrow [today] as the extent of load-shedding is likely to intensify," an official told UNB yesterday.

PDB officials said the power generation is unlikely to improve

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

