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Baghdad twin car bombs blow up 6

AP/REUTERS/AFP, Baghdad

A suicide attacker, stopped from reaching a hotel full of Americans, detonated his car bomb on a busy commercial avenue yesterday, killing six bystanders, wounding dozens and terrorising the heart of this tense city.

Another car packed with explosives and parked outside the hotel also blew up simultaneously, said a police officer at the scene.

A member of Iraq's 25-seat interim Governing Council, Mouwafak al-Rabii, was in the Baghdad Hotel at the time and suffered a slight hand injury, he told Al-Jazeera satellite television.

Police said an Iraqi security guard and the bomber were among the dead.

A huge cloud of smoke rose from the area as US armoured vehicles moved in, helicopters hovered overhead ambulances, and fire

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Iraqi policemen look on at an exploded car in flames outside the Baghdad Hotel, housing some members of the US-installed Interim Governing Council, in a double car bomb attack killing six bystanders and wounding 11 in the Iraqi capital.

Khaleda leaves for KL Tuesday to attend OIC Summit

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia leaves for Malaysia tomorrow to lead the Bangladesh delegation to the 10th Summit of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) in Kuala Lumpur from October 16-17.

The Bangladesh delegation includes Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan, Bangladesh's candidate for OIC secretary general Salauddin Quader Chowdhury, Prime Minister's Principal Secretary Kamaluddin Siddiqui, Foreign Secretary Shamsur Mobin Chowdhury and Bangladesh's Permanent Representative to OIC Ambassador SK Sharif Hassan.

The prime minister will address the summit highlighting Bangladesh's commitment to the OIC as well as the challenges facing the Islamic organisation and the Muslim Ummah.

"The grave situation in Palestine and prevailing uncertainty in Iraq will be at the centre of our preoccupations at the summit," a foreign ministry news release said.

It said the prime minister's participation in this important event would provide an opportunity to

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CPA meet ends with call for global peace

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 49th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) conference closed on Saturday with calls for new partnership in Commonwealth countries to ensure global peace and prosperity.

Attended by about 300 lawmakers of over 160 national, state, provincial and territorial parliaments, the meet urged the parliaments of Commonwealth countries to be more effective and implement policies and laws to develop their nations.

Participants of the event also underscored inclusion of women, the poor and small states in global partnership-building efforts.

Involving parliamentarians in international cohesiveness would empower them to fight inequities, said the Commonwealth lawmakers before they headed back home yesterday.

The conference beginning on October 4 also called for reforms in the United Nations (UN) and World Trade Organisation (WTO) to provide an adequate peacekeeping mechanism for the war-torn world and achieve the millennium

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Outgoing CPA conference president Jamir Uddin Sircar, right, presents a gift to his Canadian successor Peter Milliken in Dhaka yesterday.

Money link to Shinepukur as per deal, says BoI chief

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Executive Chairman of the Board of Investment (BoI) Mahmudur Rahman yesterday admitted taking monetary benefits from Shinepukur Ceramics but said all such benefits were part of a deal signed between him and his former employer at the time of severing ties with the private company and joining his new assignment at the BoI.

At a press conference at the National Press Club, Rahman

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JCD men crowd BoI chief's press conference

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It was meant to be a press conference. But when journalists turned up at the National Press Club to hear what the Board of Investment (BoI) Executive Chairman, Mahmudur Rahman, has to say, they found the VIP lounge crowded with unknown faces.

The seats for journalists were mostly occupied and newsmen had to take the backseat. A few minutes later, Mahmudur Rahman flanked by more outsiders appeared. The room was now sardine packed and chaotic with high.

Downstairs, on the press club lawn, more people, mostly in their 20s, milled around. They came in about 12 cars. Suddenly, a microbus arrived with Dhaka University of Engineering and Technology inscribed on it.

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Emergency eye care at DMCH resumes after 9 months

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Emergency service after office hours resumed Saturday after more than nine months at the Eye Department of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

"We resumed the service following orders from the director," Prof AKM Mukhtar, head of the department, said Saturday.

However, the service snapped since January 2 due to shortage of doctors restarted without appointment of any new doctors.

"We have resumed the service upon the return of the emergency medical officer (EMO) of the department, who was abroad to attend a course," DMCH Director Nazmul Huda said yesterday. "We are trying to make other necessary facilities available to the department to provide the service."

One of three clinical assistants (CA) of the department has been assigned to work during emergency.

The decision followed a meeting of the doctors and officials of the department with the DMCH director Saturday in view of the inconvenience of the patients. After the meeting, the director issued a notice invalidating the January 2 notice and asking the officials to take all necessary steps for resumption of the services.

On January 2, the DMCH authorities circulated a notice suspending

the emergency service and directing the officials to send patients coming to the department for emergency service after office hours to the National Institute of Ophthalmology (NIO) at Suhrawardy Hospital.

Sources on condition of anonymity said the emergency service was cut off due to the absence of accommodations for doctors working during the period. "It is not possible for a doctor to live in another part of the city and rush to the hospital on an emergency call," said a senior doctor.

After the residential quarters used by emergency service doctors fell vacant late last year, the authorities allocated those to other doctors. Later, the eye department asked for allocation of the quarters for its doctors later but to no avail.

Sources said the service was resumed on assurance of accommodation for one CA in the doctors' quarters.

The department has two professors, one associate professor and two assistant professors as college staff, one resident surgeon (RS), one registrar, three CAs and an EMO as hospital staff and two medical officers and the RS as outdoor staff.

"The department needs two more doctors to run the emergency service," the senior doctor said.

AL MPs barred from seeing CPA delegates at Sonargaon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three Awami League (AL) lawmakers were allegedly harassed by securitymen at Sonargaon Hotel on Friday night when they went there to hand over the letters and crests from Opposition Leader Sheikh Hasina to Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) delegates.

"Security personnel took away the gifts and a briefcase containing the letters from one of the lawmakers and kept them waiting at the entrance to the hotel for over two hours," Deputy Opposition Leader Abdul Hamid told reporters at a press conference at the party's Dhanmondi office yesterday.

Hamid said party deputies Faruque Khan, Dr Abdur Razzak and Tanjim Ahmed Sobel went to hand over Hasina's letters and crests of boat, the main opposition party's election symbol, to heads of delegation.

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Sharp fall in Padma water level cripples ferry service

Thousands of vehicles stranded at Paturia, travellers left to suffer

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Thousands of passenger and other transport vehicles waiting to be ferried across the Padma were stranded yesterday after ferry services on the Paturia-Daulatdia route were hampered due to a fall in the water level.

Vehicles on way to Paturia ferry terminal were stuck in a traffic jam extending some five kilometres while the queue at Daulatdia terminal was some three-km long after services were disrupted since Saturday morning.

The number of ferries servicing the route was curtailed due to the

danger of being damaged by or running aground on shoals that rose up in places following a decrease in water levels.

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC) Chairman Shamsur Rahman Biswas Shimul told this correspondent that the main channel on Paturia and Daulatdia route had lost navigability since last Tuesday and there are hidden shoals at many places including near Daulatdia terminal.

In addition, ferries currently navigating the treacherous route carry only a third of their normal

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The one time paint for many seasons...

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HSC results today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Results of Higher Secondary Certificate, Alim, Fazil, Kamil and Business Management examinations under nine education boards will be published at 4:00pm today.

The education minister will hand over a copy of the results to prime

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Law and order stays low in alliance rule

STAR CRIME DESK

The four-party coalition government has seen a slide in law and order after riding to office with a two-thirds majority two years ago on a poll plank dominated by promises of cutting crime and corruption.

Rights organisations say militant outfits have shown their fangs while political killings, persecution of religious minorities, repression on women and children, killing of children and kidnap of businessmen and extortion continue unceasingly.

Militant outfit Juma'atul Mujahidin's firefight with police in Joypurhat, the killing of a man at Fatulla by Hizbut Touhid operatives, the killing of two policemen and looting of arms at Fakirhat in Bagerhat by outlaws and recovery of arms from the hideout of Shahadat-al-Hiqma in Dinajpur rang alarm bells.

According to Odhikar, 933 people were killed, 18,841 injured and 8,783 arrested in incidents linked to political violence, 2,517 women were raped and five journalists were killed and 61 assaulted since the present

government took office.

The killings of the leaders of main opposition Awami League -- Monjurul Imam in Khulna, former lawmaker Momtaj Uddin in Natore, SK Mukherjee in Jhenidah and Krishak League leader SM Azam in Bogra -- shocked the nation.

The list of sensational killings also included Gopal Krishna Muhuri, Gyanajyoti Bhikkhu in Chittagong, four devotees in Malibagh by ansars, BUET student Sabequn Nahar Sony and actor Syeda Tania Mahbub Tinni.

Ward commissioner of Dhaka Saidur Rahman Newton, Raju, Shahdat Hossain Shikder and Bina, former ward commissioner Khaled Imam and commissioner aspirant Wahiduzzaman were gunned down.

The arrest and harassment of AL leaders Tofail Ahmed, Saber Hossain Chowdhury, Shaif Ahmed, Mukul Bose, Shaikh Bazur Rahman and Bahauddin Nasim, columnists Muntasir Mamun and Shahriar Kabir drew flak from the civil society.

In the wake of widespread criticism of 'torture of political leaders and activists in detention' after

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Announcing the 10 Semi-finalists for the Women's Agripreneur Oscars!

Tina Salem and Nazrul Islam of ATDP announced the semi-finalists

And The Semi-finalists Are...

Selina Quader, Aparna Paul, Shahjadi Begum, Zeba Rasheed Chowdhury, Shahida Khanam, Bilkis Mortuja Parvin, Jahanara Begum, Daly Halder, Saleha Akhtar, Monica Mustari Arju

Coming Soon: Profiles of Each Semi-finalist!

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