

Indian police foil bid to blow up state assembly

Indian police said yesterday they foiled a plot by suspected Pakistani Islamic militants to blow up the state legislature in the high-tech southern city of Bangalore.

Two militants carrying sketches of the legislature were arrested after a gunfight with police in Mysore, southwest of Bangalore, late on Thursday, a police chief said.

"They were planning to carry out this devastating strike. The satellite phone numbers had calls tracing back to Kashmir and Pakistan," said BS Sial, police director general of Karnataka state of which Bangalore is the capital.

"We've averted a major disaster," he told reporters.

The 300-room legislature, containing nearly two dozen government departments, is in the centre of Bangalore, home to more than 1,500 domestic and foreign companies including Cisco, Dell, IBM and Microsoft that accounts for 35 percent of India's software exports.

"A satellite phone, a laptop and an AK-47 rifle were (also) seized" from the suspects, Sial said. "Documents seized reveal they are from Pakistan."

Mysore police commissioner Pravin Sood said police believed the Al-Badr guerrilla group, fighting Indian rule in Muslim-majority Kashmir, was behind the plan.

The discovery of the alleged plot followed agreement by the nuclear-armed neighbours last week to resume peace talks in mid-November to resolve their dispute over Kashmir and other outstanding issues.

India and Pakistan have fought three wars, two over Kashmir that each hold in part but claim in full.

The peace talks were put on hold after commuter train blasts in India's financial capital Mumbai in July that killed 186 people.

New Delhi blamed the explosions on Pakistan's elite spy agency, the Inter-Services Intelligence, a charge Islamabad denied.

FROM LEFT... Firefighters try to douse flaming vehicles in the garage of Redwan Ahmed, who quit BNP and joined Liberal Democratic Party on Thursday, after BNP men set fire to the cars parked in his Uttara residence the same day. BNP men ransack and torch the Khulna home of former Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali after he left BNP and joined the newly floated Liberal Democratic Party.



PHOTO: STARFOCUS BANGLA

FROM LEFT... Firefighters try to douse flaming vehicles in the garage of Redwan Ahmed, who quit BNP and joined Liberal Democratic Party on Thursday, after BNP men set fire to the cars parked in his Uttara residence the same day. BNP men ransack and torch the Khulna home of former Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali after he left BNP and joined the newly floated Liberal Democratic Party.

Alliance leaders lobby for relief till tenure's end

Lawmakers, influential leaders and activists of the four-party alliance government thronged the ministry of food and disaster management till the end of the government's tenure in an attempt to get allocations of relief under Test Relief (TR) and Gracious Relief (GR).

Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf signed dozens of applications allocating 50 to 100 metric tons of rice against each application under GR until October 23, the government's last day of office.

Sources, however, said the ministry refused to release the relief allocated at the tag end of the government's tenure.

"We stopped releasing the relief

which were allocated during the last week of the government," said a high official of the ministry. He said they thought the allocations were given due to pressure from high-ups and its release would create controversy in future. Decisions on these allocations would be taken later, the official added.

The official could not say the total amount of relief allocated during this time. He told The Daily Star yesterday that a large number of allocation papers remain pending.

According to another source, the last week's allocations alone stand at several thousand metric tons of rice.

SSF takes over Hasina's security

A 40-member Special Security Force (SSF) and some 20 members from President's Guard Regiment (PGR) was deployed around the residence of the Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina at zero hours last night prior to the end of the present government's tenure.

The SSF high-ups at a meeting on Thursday decided that they would take charge of security for the Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina immediately after the end of the tenure of the BNP-Jamaat coalition government and the chief advisor to the caretaker government taking charge.

As part of preparation, an advance SSF team twice visited Hasina's Sudha Sadan residence in Dhanmondi yesterday while a team of divers of the navy searched the bed of Dhanmondi Lake around her residence. A dog squad

2 outlaws killed in 'shootouts'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Two underground operatives were killed during "shootouts" between the law enforcers and their accomplices in Jhenidah early yesterday and on October 23.

They were identified as Ishaq Ali, 42, of Viana Union under Harinakundo upazila, and Moazzem Hossain, 40, of Manikdih village under Kotchandpur upazila.

Police arrested Moazzem Hossain alias Masud, area commander of outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP-Janajuddho) at his village at around 11:00pm on Thursday.

On his confessional statement, police took Masud to Manderbaria at about 3:30am yesterday to recover hidden firearms and arrest his accomplices. When they reached the area, Masud's cohorts opened fire on the law enforcers, prompting them to retaliate.

Police said Masud received bullets during the shootout and died instantly. They said the outlaw was an accused in six cases including three for murder.

One locally made gun and six bullets were recovered from the spot.

Detective Branch (DB) Police arrested Ishaq Ali at Bakchua village on the night of October 22.

On his statement, police took him to Viana village to recover hidden firearms and his cohorts in the early hours of October 23. Sensing the presence of the law enforcers, Ishaq's accomplices opened fire on the policemen, forcing them to retaliate.

Police said Ishaq was shot during the encounter and died on the spot. He was wanted in seven cases including four for murder, they said. Police recovered one pipe gun and three bullets from the scene.

LDP vows to retaliate within 48 hours

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) Executive President Col (ret'd) Oli Ahmed urged Justice KM Hasan—the natural choice as the chief adviser to the next caretaker government—not to join the administration that will help those who had been involved in massive corruption in the last five years.

But the leader of the newly floated party declined to say any further in this regard while talking to reporters at a press briefing at the party's Baridhara office yesterday.

Blaming BNP for the attacks on his party leaders' homes at different places across the country, he warned that every one involved in the "heinous" act will face tough punishment.

"No mercy will be shown to those who attacked on my colleagues' houses. We will take action within 48 hours," he said.

"Former home secretary Omar

Faruk was involved with the attacks and we will take action against him under speedy trial act," Oli told reporters, adding, "I hope the administration will take proper action against the culprits."

"The authority should keep an eye on the airport because we heard that a few members of Khaleda Zia's family are leaving the country," Oli said.

"We cannot allow the rule of a corrupt prince or dynasty in the country," he said adding that Bangladesh is not for any "queen" or "prince".

Oli urged the nation to capture the corrupt BNP lawmakers and ministers and hand them over to police.

Criticising BNP leaders, he said the party of Mosharraf and Nazmul Huda cannot be considered the main party since they were not in the BNP when it was formed. "We

WE'RE RESIGNING BECAUSE... What their resignation letters stated

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It is impossible to carry on with the BNP for any person of conscience, leaders and activists of the newly emerged Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) observed in their resignation letters to the BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia.

"Under the dual leadership of you and your son Tarique Rahman, some ministers, MPs and leaders have broken all records of corruption and tarnished the image of the party", the letters read.

Moreover, the renegades pointed finger at the unchecked price hike of essentials and the

BNP admits to militant link as Alamgir quits

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Shortly after BNP leader Alamgir Kabir's MP's resignation from the party and his joining Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) on Thursday, the local BNP brought out angry demonstrations in Naogaon and torched his house in the town.

Branding him as a 'patron of the militants', local BNP leaders at a

House of CEC's father-in-law ransacked

UNB, Khulna

The house of father-in-law of Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Justice MA Aziz in front of Shaheed Hadis Park in the city came under attack last night.

Family members said some Awami League activists entered the house of late Abul Kashem at about 7:45pm, ransacked three rooms on the first floor and damaged the electronic gadgets. They also tried in vain to set the house afire.

The attackers chanted slogans demanding resignation of the CEC and left the scene.

No one was arrested. Police have been deployed at the house.



PHOTO: STAR

Muslim devotees leave the Jatiya Eidgah Maidan in the capital in processions after Eid-ul-Fitr prayers on Wednesday to celebrate the holy festival with their loved ones.

RMG factory owners to seek president's help

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ready-made garment factory owners will try to meet President Iajuddin Ahmed and seek his help to protect the industry from the ongoing political unrest.

"We will try to meet the president and seek his administrative support for the industry," SM Fazlul Hoque, president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) said in a press conference yesterday.

He said the BGMEA would also write to the president in this regard.

Fazlul said they already urged

major political parties to protect the industry from the turbulence.

"We met Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina and sought her cooperation as she had previously provided support to us," he added.

He said the BGMEA also talked to Chittagong Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Choudhury for his support so that they could export their goods using the Chittagong Port.

The Awami League-led 14-party alliance announced to besiege

Eid-ul-Fitr celebrated

UNB, Dhaka

The holy Eid-ul-Fitr, one of the greatest festivals of Muslims, was celebrated across the country on Wednesday.

In the capital, the main Eid congregation was held at National Eidgah in front of the Supreme Court building at 8:30am.

Khatib of Baitul Mukarram National Mosque Maulana Obaidul Huq led the congregation and offered munajat seeking divine blessing for peace and progress of the country, welfare of the people and greater unity of the Muslim ummah.

President. Iajuddin Ahmed,

Prayer Timing		
October 28		
	Azan	
Fajr	4-50	5-25
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-32	5-35
Esha	7-15	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

Khaleda to address rally today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia will address a rally in front of the BNP office at Naya Paltan in the capital this afternoon.

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday made the announcement at an emergency meeting of BNP city unit at Bhasani Auditorium in the city at the end of the government's tenure while the controversy over the chief of the caretaker government is yet to be solved.

Mannan Bhuiyan said they will not attack any rally, but will resist offensive activities with the help of people if any party wants to do anything unruly during the transition period.

Meanwhile, both Awami League (AL)-led 14-party alliance and Jatiyatobadi Samic Dal, a front organisation of the BNP, announced holding a rally at Paltan Maidan today.

BNP is a major political party that has the tradition of movement on the streets and so it is not afraid

Govt okays purchase of fertiliser hurriedly

STAR REPORT

The cabinet's purchase committee in a last minute meeting on the day before Eid holidays approved the purchase of three lakh metric tons of urea fertiliser to avert a potential crisis in December-March.

The proposal to purchase the fertiliser, worth over Tk 700 crore, was placed before the same committee on October 15 but it was rejected. Committee Chairman M Saifur Rahman had asked the industries ministry to re-tender the purchase as he thought the international fertiliser price would go down and a re-tender would make the purchase cheaper.

However, when Prime Minister Khaleda Zia was made aware of this rejection upon her return from Saudi Arabia on October 21, she took the initiative to approve the procurement before the government handed over power to the caretaker government.

The government's delay in taking decisions had led to serious fertiliser crises in the past.

Under the PM's directive, the purchase committee for the first

Jai Jai Din suspends publication

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The daily Jai Jai Din suspended its publications for an indefinite period yesterday for what the management claimed "some problems with generator."

The management of the Bengali newspaper, which brought its first issue on June 6 this year, also terminated 104 journalists and staff including the chief news editor yesterday, incidentally the last day of the BNP-led coalition government.

Employees of the newspaper first came to know about the surprise decision in the morning when they found the office at the Jai Jai Din Mediaplex, Love Road, Tejgaon under lock and key with a notice posted near the main entrance.

"Publication of the daily Jai Jai Din will remain suspended until the generator starts to function fully," read the notice, printed on the letter pad of the Jai Jai Din



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Rescuers lay down bodies recovered from the Meghna on a boat after a launch carrying around 150 passengers collided with a cargo vessel and sank in the river on Monday.

