

## Bomb blast at CPB rally kills 4, injures 50

By Staff Correspondent

Four persons were killed and at least 50 injured, 15 of them seriously, in a powerful bomb explosion at a rally of the Communist Party of Bangladesh at Paltan Maidan in the city yesterday afternoon.

Several persons with their limbs blown off were seen lying in the middle of the Maidan where the bomb exploded at about five pm, witnesses said.

The dead were identified as Abul Hashem, 45, a worker of Latif Bawani Jute Mills at Demra; Mukhtar Hossain, 40, a carpenter from Demra; Himangshu Mondol, 30, a CPB leader from Batiaghata in Khulna and Badal Biswas, 35, also from Khulna.

They all died on the spot. The bodies were sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) morgue for autopsy.

The death toll may rise, hospital sources said when the report was filed at 11 pm.

Twenty-eight of the injured were admitted to DMCH. They are Swapan, Milon, Shukumar, Ahsan, Badal, Bipradas, Sunil, Mizan, Rafiq, Dibakar, Salimullah, Dipak, Aslam, Mashuri, Bishwajit, Shakti Padma Roy, Abdul Karim, Latif, Laskhan, Nitai Gain, Palash, Nayan, Razzak, Naren Ganguli, Abdul Aziz, Mahadev Sarkar,

Mrittunjoy Roy and Jahangir.

The other injured were treated at various clinics.

The bomb went off when CPB Presidium Member Moshed Ali was addressing the grand rally prior to a planned 'Red Flag Procession'.

The Maidan was thronged by several thousand CPB workers from different parts of the country.

Within minutes, the venue looked deserted while CPB leaders on the dais were calling for police help to take the bomb victims to hospitals.

As police did not respond, party men took them to DMCH.

People attending the rally told this correspondent that they heard an explosion at the middle of the field and saw a column of black smoke billowing.

Some witnesses suspected that the bomb was kept inside a polythene bag while others said it might have been planted under the ground beforehand.

After the incident, agitated CPB workers resorted to violence and damaged vehicles in Zero Point, Purana Paltan and Topkhana areas. They also hurled sticks at police, who then charged batons and fired

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### PM talks to CPB Gen Secy, expresses deep shock

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina contacted the CPB office over telephone after the bomb blast at its rally yesterday and expressed her deep shock at the killing of four people, reports UNB.

Hasina talked to CPB general secretary Muzahidul Islam Selim at around 7 pm and inquired about the incident.

During the telephonic talks, Selim requested the Prime Minister to immediately set up an inquiry committee, identify the culprits and punish them.

Talking to UNB over phone, CPB president Manjurul Ahsan Khan said yesterday's bomb blast at Paltan Maidan had similarity with the explosion at Udichi function at Jessor where 10 people were killed on March 6, 1999.

Khan would not say precisely

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Zohra Tajuddin, wife of late Tajuddin Ahmed, addresses the Paltan Maidan rally of Communist Party of Bangladesh (top) minutes before a powerful explosion sent leaders and activists running for safety (middle). The explosion killed at least four people and injured more than 50 (bottom) yesterday. --Star photo

### Khaleda, others condemn bomb attack

By Staff Correspondent

Opposition Leader and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia has strongly condemned the bomb attack on the CPB rally at Paltan Maidan, leaving four people killed and over 50 injured and held the government responsible for it.

In a statement yesterday, Khaleda said the Awami League government plotted the incident after sensing its defeat in the coming election.

The country has become a place of anarchy and misrule due to total failure of the government. "There is no security of people under this government," she said. The BNP chairperson prayed

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### 8-hr hartal in city today

By Staff Correspondent

The left leaning 11-party alliance has called an eight hour hartal in the city from 6am today protesting bomb attack on a rally of the Communist Party, Bangladesh (CPB), at Paltan Maidan yesterday evening.

CPB general secretary Muzahidul Islam Selim gave the hartal call at a protest rally in front of the Jatiya Press Club immediately after the incident.

Meanwhile, the BNP-led four-party opposition alliance has extended its support to the hartal.

The BNP-led four party alliance has also called a country wide dawn-to-dusk hartal on Monday demanding immediate resignation of the government and repeal the Public Safety Act.

### The bomb was thrown into the crowd?

By Staff Correspondent

The powerful bomb that exploded at the rally of the Communist Party of Bangladesh yesterday might have been thrown into the crowd, a bomb expert who defused bombs after the 1990 Gulf War told The Daily Star yesterday.

The impact suggests that the bomb was made by wrapping explosives with barbed wire, small nails and pieces of corrugated metal.

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	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Jan 21		5.37 pm
Jan 22	6.43 am	

#### Prayer Timings

January 21

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5.30	6.10
Zuhr	12.45	1.20
Asr	4.05	4.20
Maghrib	5.40	5.45
Esha	7.15	7.35

Source: Islamic Foundation

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