

## Suspected bomb recovered

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recently launched a drive to demolish illegal structures in the area.

Informed by police, army bomb experts deactivated the bomb and took it for examination.

Earlier, Mohammadpur police recovered two bombs from a madrassah at Mohammadpur Hosung Estate on February 3 soon after Islamic zealots killed a police constable inside a nearby mosque. Initially, police claimed that these were 'a pair of sophisticated powerful bombs' but they are yet to seek help from army bomb experts. Finally, the bombs were dumped at the malkhana of the thana.

Yesterday's one was silver-coloured and cylindrical in shape. The bomb along with two round-shaped magnets was kept right under the driving seat of the deep ash-coloured Toyota Corolla car. Wrapped with cello tape the bomb also contains batteries and circuits.

No case was filed till filing of this report last night.

## Buddha Purnima celebrated

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Buddha. The day was a public holiday.

To mark the day, a colourful peace rally was brought out from the Jatiya Press Club in the morning which was inaugurated by State Minister for Religious Affairs Moulana M Nurul Islam as chief guest.

Prof Ethin Rakhaian MP was present at the occasion as special guest.

Among others, Srimat Bodhimitra Bhikkhu, trustee of Buddhist Community Kalyan Trust, Dr Bhikkhu Sunithananda, convener of Bangladesh Buddhist Citizens' Forum and Srimat Dharmajyoti Bhikkhu, head of Shakyamuni Buddha Bihar, were present as chief guest.

Buddha Purnima festival was celebrated also in Chittagong Hill Tracts and Cox's Bazar in a befitting manner.

## Assembly elections

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Tamil Nadu. Congress is a constituent of the Front led by Jayalalitha's party in Tamil Nadu.

In Assam, Congress is likely to get 75 to 80 seats in the 126-member state assembly against 27 to 32 by ruling Asom Gana Parishad in alliance with BJP, according to "Outlook-CMS" projection.

The electioneering in the five states has touched its peak with star campaigners of all parties in the field. In West Bengal, Sonia Gandhi shared the dais with Mamata Banerjee four days ago and launched a vitriolic attack on the Left Front. But interestingly, the two ladies did not share the podium in Englishbazar assembly constituency in Malda district where the two parties' candidates are pitted against one another.

In Kerala, the wind seems to favour the Congress although the party was late in hitting the campaign trail because it was bogged down by a sharp feud between rival

## Good number of allottees

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"The biggest problem in Uttara third phase would be to find earth to fill up the low-lying sites. Rajuk would have to pay a lot more money because it has to bring earth from faraway places to develop the site," said an official adding that some of the sites go under 10 feet of water during rainy season.

Rajuk officials also feared that the expensive site filling and compensation would increase the per katha price which would be calculated when the plots are ready for handing over.

"Initially, it was announced that the price of per katha land in the project would be around Tk 1.5 lakh but now top Rajuk officials fear that after developing the land they would have to fix the price between Tk 3.5 and four lakh to recover the cost," said a top Rajuk official.

Whatever Rajuk has done, it has not upset anyone of its own 300

applicants. Rajuk has allotted plots to 300 of its sweepers, peons, doormen, clerks and officials. Rajuk officials said they did not understand how the low-paid employees would be able to come up with such an amount to buy the plots.

A total of 246 lucky ones, however, have been allotted readily available residential plots between Uttara Sector 9 and 14. The fate of the remaining 2,421 is uncertain till date. Out of these 246 lucky ones there are eleven serving ministers, 61 Members of Parliament and 164 ruling party leaders of different categories and Rajuk officials.

The Rajuk beneficiaries include 65 MPs and ministers, nine judges, 71 freedom fighters, 30 cultural activists and artists, 58 journalists, 1,139 officials of the government and autonomous organisations, 161 foreign currency earners, 618 businessmen, 31 affected people and 390 of other category.

## Cabinet may okay draft

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ment would de-regulate the electronic media before it completes its term.

Over the period, the government allowed a private television channel and a radio station to operate. It also closed down state-run dailies. The Bangladesh Times and the Dainik Bangla.

So, the autonomy of Betar and BTV will virtually end government control on the media.

Talking to this correspondent yesterday, Minister of State for Information Prof Abu Sayeed said, in the present age of free flow of information, autonomy has become an obsolete concept.

"Rather, our focus is more on creation of an environment so that private channels can operate and enjoy complete freedom. Giving licence to ETV was a bold step of our

government," Sayeed said.

Citing examples, he said, in Japan and the Philippines state-run media work in tandem with private channels. "Nevertheless, our government has decided to give autonomy as per our pre-rolls pledge."

Asked about the fate of the existing staff of Betar and BTV, Abu Sayeed said they will continue to work in their respective institutions.

Declining to give details, he just said that after gaining autonomous status, both Betar and BTV would enjoy "equal freedom as Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (a government-owned news agency) is enjoying now."

A similar commission was set up in 1991 during BNP rule. It had prepared a set of recommendations but nothing substantive came out.

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PHOTO: STAR  
Artiste Sharmin Hossain rendering song at the Shishu Academy auditorium on the last day of the Jatiya Rabindra Sangeet Utsab yesterday.

## PM tells SC Bar members

FROM PAGE 1  
the opposition at time of national need or crisis", she said. The leader of the opposition Khaleda Zia did not extend any cooperation to the government during the recent border problem, she regretted.

She said the BNP chairperson was uttering hollow words like presenting gallantry awards to three BDR personnel killed in the border skirmishes. Sheikh Hasina questioned why Khaleda Zia did not do the same when two BDR men were killed in such a border clash when she was in power.

She said since 1947, there has been no demarcation line along the 150 miles borderline of the country. No government in the past took any steps to resolve the border demarcation problems. We have successfully demarcated the entire border line excepting 6.5 km in various stripes.

Arrangements were made by the previous government to keep open

the Tin Bigha Corridor for only one hour a day, but we have succeeded to keep it open from dawn to dusk.

The prime minister told the bar executives that the country's judiciary has been exercising the highest freedom during the tenure of her government. No government in the past could take so many programmes and projects that her government has taken for the development of judiciary and welfare of the judges, court officers and employees.

Responding to some suggestions and demands of the bar executives, the prime minister said it would not be possible to eradicate terrorism if the criminals and offenders are not properly tried in the court of law.

Seeking cooperation of the lawyers for trial of terrorists and corrupt elements, the prime minister regretted that many corrupt elements could not be brought under

justice because of prolonged trial and lapses and loopholes of the existing laws.

Bar president Abul Baset Majumder and Secretary Md Momtaj Uddin Fakir while appraising their various professional hazards, called upon the prime minister to extend her assistance in constructing the Supreme Court Bar Building, installing lifts of the main building and setting up a clinic inside the Supreme Court premises.

The prime minister patiently heard their demands and assured them of her help in doing the necessary. Other members of the delegation were Al-haj Mohammad Shamsul Alam, Md Mizanur Rahman Bhuiyan, Saifuddin Ahmed Chowdhury, Mohammad Abdullah, Md Abdur Rashid, Md Helal Uddin Mollah, B A Rashid, Syed Maimuna Begum (Taskin), Md Abdul Quader Talukder, Reba Kaniz, Md Zafar Ali, and Md Alamgir Kabir.

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