

Six nabbed for Satkhira bomb blasts

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Police arrested six people overnight for interrogation in connection with Saturday night's bomb blasts in Satkhira.

Two staff of Roxy Cinema - Ruhul Kuddus and Pradip Ghosh - were among those arrested. The others were Dilip Biswas, Zulfiqar Ali Tota, Bazlur Rahman and Jahangir Hossain.

Blasts at Roxy Cinema and the Satkhira stadium in the span of five minutes left some 125 people injured.

The earlier report that three people had also died turned out to be unfounded.

Meanwhile, Inspector General of Police Modabbir Hossain Chowdhury told journalists yesterday that a petrol bomb might have caused explosion and subsequent fire at Roxy Cinema.

Investigations were on to find out whether a remote control device had been used to detonate the

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Red alert against 'sabotage'

Police, paramilitary forces on vigil across the country; border watch geared up

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The police and the paramilitary forces have been put on red alert across the country to net the criminals responsible for Saturday's bomb explosions at Satkhira that left some 125 wounded.

According to home ministry sources, police and intelligence agencies have been asked to keep vigil on the movement of suspects and guard against any sabotage attempt.

Besides, the ministry has also instructed the paramilitary BDR forces to remain on high alert at the border points so that the criminals cannot leave the country.

The government now believes that the bomb explosions, first such incidents since the BNP assumed power on October 10 last year, were pre-planned.

Sources said the government apprehends that more such sabotages may take place to 'create lawlessness and instability ahead of the celebration of the BNP-led

alliance's one year in power' on October 10.

Talking to The Daily Star, an influential minister said the explosions took place following the statement of a cabinet minister in the parliament during discussion on law and order claiming that the present situation is much better than what it was during the Awami League (AL) rule.

The BNP leader said the government thinks that the 'criminals and conspirators' might have been provoked by the cabinet minister's statement to blast the bombs.

He said the intelligence agencies had tapped conversations of some people who talked about the Satkhira explosions and wanted to know the situation in Dhaka.

The minister said the government suspects that there was a plan to explode bombs in Dhaka simultaneously, but that attempt did not succeed.

Meanwhile, talking to The Daily Star, State Minister for Home Lutfozzaman Babar termed the incident pre-

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Hasina holds BNP liable for bombing

UNB, Ashuganj

Opposition leader Sheikh Hasina has said the BNP-Jamaat government will have to take the responsibility for Saturday's terrible bomb blasts in Satkhira.

"BNP is expert in manufacturing bombs... They had staged seven bombing incidents during the Awami League rule. BNP-Jamaat will have to take the responsibility for Satkhira blasts that killed 10 people," she said.

Addressing a big public rally near the Bangladesh-UK Friendship Bridge yesterday noon, Hasina observed, had the Prime Minister not "told a lie" and had she punished the BNP attackers on her car at Kolaroa on August 30, the tragic incident in Satkhira would not have occurred.

"On the contrary, the Prime Minister protected the BNP activists who attacked my car and beat up journalists, though her minister and MP sought apology to Satkhira journalists and people for the incident," she said.

Before the bomb blasts in Satkhira, she said, Jamaat had threatened to bomb the circus party and "they did it in collaboration with BNP."

Recalling the seven deadly bomb explosions during her rule, the former prime minister said the CID inquiry into those blasts found a conspiracy cooked up at that time at "Hawa Bhaban" about the bombings to discredit her government. She mentioned that many of her party leaders and workers were

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Rift in Bari commission

Two members say culprits for bombings couldn't be identified

ZAYADUL AHSAN

The Bari commission report on the bomb incidents during the Awami League (AL) rule has come under renewed controversy, as two of the three members of the team have said the investigation could not nail down the culprits responsible for the attacks.

Moreover, there remain question marks over the credibility of the report, as the two members - Additional Secretary of the home ministry Mostafizur Rahman and Joint Secretary of the defence ministry AKM Kamaluddin - refuted

some sensitive remarks in the report. In a note of dissent, they said former Judge Abdul Bari Sarkar should not have put his personal views in the report.

The BNP-led coalition government formed the judicial probe body on December 29 to investigate seven bomb blasts from June 30, 1996 to September 30, 2001 in which about 70 people died.

The 124-page report submitted to the government on September 16 held AL President Sheikh Hasina, former home minister Mohammad Nasim, former industries minister

Tofail Ahmed, political advisor to Hasina Dr SA Malek and some others responsible for the bomb attacks.

"The chairman of the commission, retired judge Abdul Bari Sarkar, volunteered to write the report," the note of dissent said. He submitted the draft report at the meeting of the commission on September 12.

The report did not explain the methodology, scope and limitations of the investigation. Some remarks and paragraphs of the report should

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Another ward commissioner gunned down in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A ward commissioner of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) was gunned down yesterday by unidentified gunmen in front of the Holy Child Pre-Cadet School Hostel at road No. 8, Sector 6 in Uttara Model Town in the city.

The gunmen shot Shadat Hossain Shikder, 40, commissioner of ward No. 90 of the DCC, point blank as he was on his way back home after dropping his eldest son at the school hostel at about 3:45pm.

He is son of late Tofazzal Hossain of Karimullah Bagh in the city's Shyampur area. He was fourth

among his six brothers and three sisters. He left three sons and his wife.

According to family sources, Shadat, his cousin Babul, two sons Zidan and Jishan, his relative Lulu and driver Kamal went to the school at about 3:00pm and paid the hostel fees of his eldest son Shuvo. Shadat and Shuvo then went shopping at a nearby market.

After they were finished, Shadat dropped Shuvo at the hostel. He then received a call on his mobile phone and the caller wanted to know where he was at the time. As he said he was in front of the school, three armed youths riding a car

appeared there within a few minutes and shot him in the head from a close range, witnesses said.

Babul and his driver rushed him to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where the doctors declared him dead.

His Namaj-e-Janaja will be held in front of the Central BNP office at Naya Paltan in the city after Zohr prayers today.

Utara police said they are yet to find out the reason behind the killing or the killers.

Shyampur police said Shadat was an accused in at least 19 cases including six for murder and posses

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An underprivileged child holds a placard with calls for an end to violence on children yesterday in the city in a colourful procession of Aamra Kuri, a children's organisation, to mark the Child Rights Week 2002.

Khaleda shocked at murder of children

UNB, Dhaka

Expressing deep anguish over the recent murders of some children in the city, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday wondered how any person can be so cruel, barbarous and heartless to children.

She was inaugurating the Child Rights Week 2002 at a function held at the Osmani Memorial Hall in the city.

A large number of children were present there to seek from the society their legitimate rights.

The prime minister noted that the murderers were either friends, or neighbours or close relatives of the victims. "How they could be so cruel, barbarous and heartless!"

Khaleda Zia said the society can not ignore the erosion of social and moral values. The causes must be

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DU halls reopen

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

All residential dormitories of Dhaka University (DU) reopened for the resident students yesterday after 63 days of unscheduled closure. As per the decision taken by the DU authorities on September 14, the classes will resume on October 3.

Yesterday the students, after showing identity cards at their respective hall gates, entered the halls.

Before entering the halls the students registered their names in the register book.

The presence of male students was higher while that of female students returning to the four female dormitories was very poor. Some Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) activists, driven away earlier

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SHADY, SHODDY DEALS

Loans without risk analysis, sanction letters in a flash

INAM AHMED and SHAHRIAR KARIM

At one stage, mismanagement at Al-Baraka Bank Limited was such that the bank sanctioned loans without any scrutiny of the project proposals and loan risk analysis.

Moreover, credit facilities were extended to business houses that had previous records of huge loan defaults. Interestingly, the loans were approved in a flash.

Beximco Foods limited was sanctioned a Tk 9.25 crore loan on March 25, 1997 for its factory in Chittagong, to be repaid in 12 months.

The factory was not even in the bank's command area. It was impossible for the bank to supervise activities related to purchase of raw material for the factory.

When the public limited company, engaged in processing and packaging,

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ICC Trophy final rained out

AFP, Colombo

The Champions Trophy cricket tournament day-night final between India and Sri Lanka was abandoned due to rain at the Premadasa Stadium yesterday. The match will be replayed today.

India, needing 245 to win, were 14 for no loss in two overs when umpires Steve Bucknor of the West Indies and David Shepherd of England called off

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PHOTO: AFP

Sri Lankan skipper Sanath Jayasuriya pulls one to the boundary on his way to scintillating half-century in yesterday's washed-out ICC Champions Trophy final against Indian at the Premadasa Stadium in Colombo yesterday.