Puzzling probes

Eid-ul-Fitr celebrated

The biggest Eid congregation of the country was, however, held at the historic Solakia Eidgah Maidan

Nurullah, principal of Hazratnagar Madrassah, led the prayers and Munajat attended by thousands of including India, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and other Muslim

lajuddin Ahmed and Mrs. Ahmed hosted receptions for diplomats

the holy Eid-ul-Fitr.

Khaleda placed wreaths at the mazar of the late leader and offered fateha there. She prayed for peace, progress and welfare of people of

Ministers, legislators, party leaders and her family members were present.

She later exchanged greetings with a cross section of people at the Prime Minister's Bhaban.

She extended Eid greetings to

the countrymen and wished peace, progress and prosperity of the country and the Muslim Ummah. Bangladesh Television (BTV)

and Bangladesh Betar put on special programmes commemorating the festival. Improved diet was served to the

inmates of hospitals, jails, orphanages and vagrants centers. Important buildings in the city

including the Bangladesh Supreme Court and Bangladesh Secretariat were illuminated with colourful lights. Road islands, main thoroughfares in the capital and in other cities were decorated with miniature flags and posters inscribed with "Eid Mubarak" in both Bangla

Awami League President and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina exchanged Eid greetings with her party leaders and workers, professionals, journalists, poets, intellectuals and foreign diplomats at her Sudha Sadan residence Friday morning.

In the afternoon, she went to the Bangabandhu Bhaban and Banani graveyard and offered munajat and fateha there seeking eternal peace of the departed souls of her father Sheikh Mujibur Rahan, mother Fazilatunnesa Mujib, brothers Sheikh Kamal, Sheikh Jamal and Sheikh Russel and other relatives.

She also prayed for peace and prosperity of the nation.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia called on President lajuddin Ahmed at the Bangabhaban Friday evening to exchange Eid greetings.

She stayed with the President

The first such incident took place in Jessore where bomb explosion at an Udichi function killed 10 people and injured more than 100 others. During the Al regime about six

FROM PAGE 1

smuggling syndicate

step to defame its leader.

implicating Bangladesh Nationalist

Party (BNP) leader Tariqul Islam,

now the information minister, and a

number of leaders of a regional

However, the BNP termed the

The 'failure' of the investigation

charge sheet a politically motivated

agencies has kept the people in the

dark about why these are happen-

ing, creating a widespread sense of

Upon taking office in October last

year, the BNP-led coalition set up a

iudicial commission to probe the

bomb explosions that took place

However, the report the commis-

embarrassed the government.

Understandably, the government

did not proceed with the report and

during the Awami League tenure.

took place across the country. After the BNP came to power the first explosion took place in Satkhira

such incidents of bomb explosion

on September 28 this year. Two powerful bombs simultaneously exploded at a cinema and

vear left at least nine people dead the district stadium where a circus was going on and claimed lives of three and left many others injured.

The latest bomb explosions in Mymensingh on Saturday evening in four movie theatres killed 17 people and left more than 200 people injured.

In another blast at a Kadiani mosque in Khulna on October 8 1999 killed seven people and left 10 others injured. Explosions at the CPB rally at the

Paltan Maidan in the city and on the Bangabandhu Avenue on January 20, 2001 left seven people killed and more than 50 others injured.

Ten people were killed and more than twenty others were injured in an explosion at the Ramna Batamul sion framed earned fame for its during the Bengali New Year celepolitical motivation which also brations on April 14, 2001.

> Catholic church at Bainarchar in Gopalgani claimed 10 lives and left at least 30 others injured. Another explosion at the

killed and over 100 injured. During the regime of the caretaker government in 2001 three incidents of bomb explosions took

the Awami League at Mollarhat in

Altaf: Al-Qaeda

The home minister also refuted a Reuters despatch that quoted him as saying the attack "may be an act of al-Qaeda". "I have never spoken to any Reuters correspondent either over telephone or in person.

He termed the report "baseless." imaginary and motivated" and requested Reuters to withdraw the "untrue and misleading" news.

He described the blasts as "not only sad but also cruel, ruthless, painful, despicable and unpardonable" and said these were part of a conspiracy to kill innocent people.

Seventeen people have so far other explosives from different been killed and many others injured in the blasts. Of the injured, 36 have been admitted to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital, six to Mymensingh Combined Military Hospital and one to Suhrawardi Hospital. Altaf told the press confer-

> "Security forces have cordoned off and combed the entire area immediately after the tragic incidents. Twenty-one people have so far been arrested on suspicion and all-out efforts have been taken to identify the criminals involved with the incident," the minister said.

Altaf also referred to the prime ninister's and his visits to the bombed cinemas in Mymensingh. "She (prime minister) has ordered that the culprits would have to be identified. She has termed the incidents a sabotage and conspiracv against the entire nation and it is the responsibility and duty of all

citizens to resist this conspiracy.' The home minister said it is also the responsibility of the press to investigate what the conspirators wanted to prove through killing innocent people inside cinemas when people got a relief from crime as there is almost no criminal activity due to the current anti-crime

After reading out the written statement, the home minister

Dipjal arrested

Fatikchhari on Saturday night. In Moheshkhali, army recovered

nine firearms and arrested two pirates on the night before the Eid. In Magura, army recovered a

pistol and a bomb along with three rounds of bullets from the residence of a union leader at Madhukhali

paper, saying the prime minister had asked him to meet her and so he would only answer a few questions.

In response to a question, he said after coming to know of the bomb attacks, he had first talked to the prime minister and then talked to the civil administration concerned,

army, police, the BDR and ansars but not to a single journalist. "I have talked to a total of 37 people, but none of them was journalist, so the question to give any reaction to Reuters does not arise at

He said that there is a register of all incoming and outgoing phones at his home and anybody can check

When asked whether he talked to Reuters over his mobile phone, he said his mobile had gone out of

On the arrest of Awami League leaders Saber Hossain Chowdhury and Shafi Ahmed, and columnists Shahriar Kabir and Muntasii Mamun, he said "Their arrest is not linked with the explosions in

Altaf's remarks FROM PAGE 1

comments, but none wanted to venture out. "Let him (Altaf) face the music," said one minister, according

while others wanted to keep them-A section of high officials of the PMO, foreign, home and informa-

tion ministries along with the journalists-turned advisors at the home ministry were busy preparing a statement to be readout by Altaf at yesterday's press briefing. The draft statement was commu-

nicated to a number of senior party

the PMO advised Altaf to prepare a written statement denying his remarks. He also advised that the home minister should claim that he (Altaf) had never talked to any journalist after the incident.

The home secretary and other officials then prepared the statement and it was read out by Altaf.

Riddle **PM: Terrorist act**

"I am deeply saddened at the tragic incident," she said, expressing her deep sympathy for the members of

bomb blasts.

Members of law enforcement agencies and Aloka Cinema Hall authorities apprised her of the bomb attack. The three other movie houses that came under bomb attacks were Ajanta, Chayabani and Purabi.

While visiting the wounded dents.

She extended her sincere thanks to all those officials of the district administration, physicians and the people of Mymensingh town who immediately after the bomb blasts extended their all-out support and cooperation in rescuing the victims.

The prime minister said some evidence have been collected. She hoped that it would be clear to the nation within a few days who were

the persons responsible for the act of terror and where it was planned.

GOC of Mymensingh Cantonment Major General Moin Uddin Ahmed were present on the occasion.

officials of district administration and area commander and GOC of Mymensingh at the circuit house. the prime minister asked the people to remain alert about those who are out to create anarchy in the country. She called for beefing up security at all public gatherings and public

Deputy commissioner of Mymensingh briefed the prime minister on the incidents and how officials and dwellers of the town came to the aid of the bomb victims. He said 41 wounded people were now undergoing treatment at different hospitals.

Shuvra Dev nabbed noted in the rejoinder. Uttara Police Station filed a case on Monday with the Ramna Police

> Shajahan and Nazrul Islam Qureshi, a programme director of

one of the masterminds to have helped Kala Faruqe become a member of the cultural team.

Faruque was arrested from an aircraft at the Zia International Airport prior to leaving for Sweden. Police also held another member of

Airport Police Station and then to

describing Kala Faruque a victim of political harassment. Faruque was carrying the certificate and some pictures showing him with former to the National Orthopedics (pongu) Hospital where the on-duty doctors declared him dead.

The officer-in-charge of the

ordered a security alert all over the country to prevent any such attempts of terror acts.'

office yesterday afternoon, the home minister flatly denied having said anything to Reuters. He also issued a rejoinder to

Reuters that says the following: "The report has quoted me as saying that the bombing could be the work of Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda network or some other terror "I would like to assert that never

ever have I spoken to any Reuters correspondent on any issues in recent days. There is therefore no question of my speaking to anybody on the Mymensingh incident. It is indeed surprising that an international news agency of such a high repute could take recourse to such untruth based on figment of imagi-"I would also like to categorically

state here that there is no Al-Qaeda network on the soil of Bangladesh. This fact is very much known to the whole world. There is however a massive mandate of the people.

country for its narrow political ends. I hate to believe that Reuters, for which I have the highest personal respect, may unwittingly play into

Reuters last night following the issuance of the rejoinder and Reuters stood by its report. International media all over the

orld including the Voice of A (VOA) picked up the Reuters report. The VOA broadcast the home minister's observations that Al-Qaeda or similar terrorist groups might have carried out the Mymensingh attack.

the departed souls and expressed The AL will hold a presidium deep sympathy with the bereaved. The former prime minister recalled some incidents of bomb

(1996-2001) and alleged that the perpetrators joined hands with the She believes the bomb blasts are part of a ploy to eliminate the spirit of the country's independence, secular democracy, liberal thinking and

blasts that took place during her rule

the opposition AL. Many BNP-Jamaat men were on trial in connection with the bomb blasts at Jessore, Ramna Batamul. Narayangani and Paltan, but they were relieved of the charges after the alliance came to power, she

Hasina has also said the arrest of her political secretary Saber Hossain Chowdhury, other party leaders and Muntasir Mamun, a columnist, and Shahriar Kabir, a iournalist, within hours of the Mymensingh bomb blasts demonstrates that "it's a staged drama".

AL team off to Mymensingh

An AL delegation led by senior presidium member of the party Abdus Samad Azad left Dhaka for Mymensingh yesterday to visit the sites of bomb blasts and meet the victims' families.

The delegation members are AL presidium members Abdur Razzak and Abdul Jalil and central leaders Motia Chowdhury Abdul Mannan Khan, Dr Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin. Abdul Latif Siddigui, Dr Abdul Mannan, Dr Aman Ullah, MP, Syed Ashraful Islam, MP, Mirza Azam, MP, and Tanjim Ahmed Sohel Taj,

AL presidium meeting

meeting at its Dhanmondi office today to review the latest situation against the backdrop of the bomb AL protest rally

stage a protest rally in the city tomorrow, demanding immediate release of the arrested party leaders, including Saber Hossain Chowdhurv.

Sonali Bank

page of the cheque book has been stolen, the MD said in a press statement yesterday morning.

my cashier to withdraw Tk 80 lakh from the account against the missing bearer cheque," he contended. According to complainant Abul Bashar of the Corporate Branch of Sonali Bank, Cashier Mushfigur Rahman of the Southern Foods Ltd. withdrew Tk 80 lakh. But he took away Tk 67 lakh with him and left the

Ekramul Azad - into custody.

FROM PAGE 1 were recovered at Muktapur area of

The panic-stricken people rushed to the second floor of the hall seeing smoke emitting from the rooftop but only found several fatally injured people in a pool of blood. "Some of them had their hands blown off while others had lost their legs." said

to the MMCH.

The second bomb exploded on in a span of half an hour.

crowded with viewers, as it was the

near and dear ones.

Till yesterday, thousands of people from the town and the nearby villages thronged the MMCH, the Military Hospital, and different clinics, in search of their relatives.

donated blood to save the lives of the victims. Police picked up 21 officials and employees of the four cinema halls for interrogation.

badly damaged, said, "I along with my husband and one-year old child were enjoying a film at Chhayabani Hall." I suddenly heard a big sound around me and later saw both of my legs hit by splinters." Her husband and child, however, escaped unhurt. "I went to Chhayabani Hall with

injured woman, at the hospital.

others and saw blood oozing out of my legs," she added.

went into the hall after the incident. There was heavy smoke inside the hall and people were crying. We

the floor. Around 15 seats at the hall

Sainuddin, a witness.

second day of the Eid-ul-Fitr holidays. Anticipating the heavy rush, the hall authorities arranged for extra accommodation facilities at the halls, local people said. Immediately after the explo-

shops and joined the rescue operations with the Fire Brigade and army personnel. They took the injured to the MMCH. Hundreds of people rushed to the hospital to see their

People also spontaneously

Shilpi, who had both of her legs

my husband to watch a film. An

was going on. I ran out of the hall like

panicked and coming out of the cinema hall. Initially, we could not understand what had happened inside the hall," said Subrata Goswami, an employee of The Daily Star who was in Mymensingh during Eid holidays and was present near the Aloka Cinema hall when a bomb exploded.

" I and some of my local friends

Three more explosions took place, one after another in three other cinema halls when local people and Fire Brigade personnel were busy rescuing the victims of Ajanta Hall and were rushing them

the first floor of Chhayabani Cinema Hall at about 6:45pm followed by blasts at Purabi and Aloka cinema halls. These three bombs exploded All the four halls were over-

sions, local people shut down their

explosion minutes before the interval created a big smoke inside the hall and everybody was trying to escape," said Sathia, another "At first I could not guess what

were heavily damaged," he added. Goswami said at least five persons had been killed instantly and around 20 were injured at Aloka hall, and the conditions of some of the

'Dhangsa' started at 6.20 pm.

the incident at Aloka cinema hall. Police and fire fighters reached Aloka hall immediately after the incident. The army personnel rushed to the spot after the arrival of the police and fire fighters and cordoned the area off. They also

Most of the victims were hit in their lower limbs of the body as the last three bombs were planted under the seats. Lucky, a student class IX, hailing from Nakla upazila of Sherpur, said she heard a sound of explosion when the cinema was half way through. "Everybody was

running for safety. Army men have been guarding the four cinema halls since the

Neither police nor people have any idea about the men behind the blasts and their motives. Police sources said that these bombs were remote-controlled powerful explosives. "The bombs were not locally made," said a high police official.

Mymensingh still cannot believe that such an incident could take place in a peaceful town like theirs. Police have collected the evi-

The traumatised people of

were examining them. Kotwali Police Station ATM Faruk Ahmed said that police were exam-

can't say anything specifically right now." he added. Replying to a question, the OC said police were examining the recovered splinters and other

ining everything to ascertain the

motive behind the bomb blast. "We

The Superintendent of Police (SP) of Mymensingh Motiar Rahman told The Daily Star that they did not yet have any clue as to the motive behind the attacks. "All the intelligence agencies are investigating it separately and we hope the motive behind the attacks will be

attacks were designed to create a reign of terror in the town and the whole country. "We don't suspect anybody," he said replying to a

which was scheduled for a trip to Shajahan. "Shuvra sent a proposal to the cultural affairs ministry for the trip and also sent a list of artistes which included Kala Faruque's name. He

even reminded the ministry to okay the list," the commissioner said. Police are also looking for ABM Shajahan, a Jatiya Party (Ershad) leader, who issued a certificate

Debutant Anwar Hossain folafter his 89 not out in the third onelowed his opening partner in the day, scored a dominating 52 off 99 next over, playing an expansive

> contest, surpassing his previous best of 39 against Sri Lanka. Already with a reputation of being Bangladesh's crisis man, the

rable Test debut.

series where he captured 12 wickets, maintained his lofty standards finishing with 4-58. Collins, who started the rot, also took the last wicket to finish with 5-

ioined together to dead-lift the battered team putting on 73 runs for An ever-improving Kapali, fresh

It was the highest score for the young right-hander in five-day

19-year-old from Sylhet struck nine Mashud played a captain's

58. It was his second five-wicket haul after his 6-76 against New Zealand in June this year.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Khandakher Musharraf

Hossain, Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury, State Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources AKM Musharraf Hossain, Delwar Hossain Dulu MP, Shah Shahid Sarwar MP Raushan Ershad MP. Kader Siddiqui MP, Fazlul Hug Amini MP, Chairman of Red Crescent Society ZA Khan and

At a meeting with ministers, MPs,

"It is determined to malign a

Channel i of involvement in including Kala Farug in the cultural team. Ramna police said Shuvra was

Station accusing Shuvra Dev, ABM

Police said they are looking for

the team, Qureshi, who is now in jail. Farugue was later taken to the

the Uttara Police Station. According to police, Faruque was shot in the leg as tried to escape when he was taken to the Osmany Hostel of the Textile College at Teigaon on November 5 to nab his accomplices. Injured, he was taken

> week's remand for each of the three others arrested. The investigating officers recom-

mended their detention under the Special Powers Act, 1974. Saber, Muntasir and Shafi were taken to the court hajat at 2.15pm and an hour later they were produced before the court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Mamun-al-

Rashid.

Barrister Amir-ul-Islam, Advocates Syed Rezaur Rahman, Rahmat Ali MP, Abu Sayeed Sagar, Shahara Khatun, and Abdur Rahman Howladar moved the bail petitions for the arrested and demanded cancellation of remand. Metropolitan Public Prosecutor

(PP) Abdullah Mahmud Hassan and Additional Public Prosecutor Golam Mostafa Khan opposed the bail petitions and prayed for seven days' remand. Kabir was taken to the court hajat

bail prayer for him but the prosecution opposed it and prayed for a 10day remand. After hearing the two sides, the magistrate rejected the bail petition and enlarged Shahriar with a three-day remand. In both the cases, the defence lawvers submitted petitions seeking

stay orders of the remands on the

plea that they would file criminal

revisions with the High Court

According to the MD, the balance it is quite absurd that I would send

remainder behind with the cash department for unknown reason. However, no one turned up to collect

of the bank -- Apurba Kumar Roy,

Meanwhile, Cashier Mushfigur Rahman surrendered to court vesterday noon. The court however

rejected his bail petition and placed him on police remand for interroga-

Family members of the arrested persons claimed that while picking them up from their residences at dead of night, the policemen did not

that they were being taken out only for interrogation and not for arrest. Detectives raided Saber's Paribagh residence at about 3:20am and took him to the Minto

November 20, following a

for their identity, they claimed to be detectives. They said their boss Deputy Commissioner of the DB Muntasir"

Saber got freed from jail on

month detention under the Special Power Act on October 23. Saber's wife told The Daily Star yesterday that she was greatly frustrated over the fresh arrest of her husband, within two weeks of his release upon a High Court order. "I'm surprised that the same charges have been brought against him (Saber). He was just released

His wife later told The Daily Star that "they (policemen in civil dress) looked for Muntasir. When I asked

him at the DB office in the morning but failed. She handed medicines for Muntasir over to an on-duty sentry there. A team of Gulshan police along

The Dhaka city unit of the AL will

the money till 12:00am on

show any arrest warrants; rather in some cases they (policemen) said

November 13 High Court order declaring an earlier detention order illegal. Arresting him from Zia International Airport on October 20, prior to his departure for London, the police brought sedition charge against him and sent him to one-

upon court order declaring his Another DB team raided the

Mahfuzul Haq wanted to talk to

The Daily Star, " The policemen knocked at our door at 2 am and as my father opened it they wanted him to go with them to the Gulshan Police Station saying that the officer-in-charge wanted to talk to him. He (Shahriar) wanted to know

Shafi's Dhanmondi residence and high officials.

is on bail in a case that was filed

were sent to the hospital. Although police seized the

Upazila Saturday.

Medical College Hospital where

Over 20 fire-fighting vehicles from Tejgaon, Mohammadpur, Palashi,

2:40am, saving over 80 shops. most of them groceries, hotels,

would be interrogated only." taken to some other place under

January 20 this year.

and more than 30 others injured. In another explosion at the Upazila Health Complex quarters in Sunamganj in September 2001 four people, including an eight-year-old boy, were killed. On the same day in another explosion at a house in

Sylhet two others died. Moreover, the law enforcers and different intelligence agencies recovered powerful bombs from a public meeting venue of the then Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Kotalipara in Gopalgani, the Janakantha newspaper office and

sources and the men behind it.

Road accidents FROM PAGE 12

A case was filed with Bhaluka police but no one was arrested. In Tangail, our correspondent writes, at least nine people were killed and 30 others seriously injured when two passenger buses collided head-on at noon on the

Dhaka-Tangail highway. The dead included the drivers of the two buses and a helper.

According to police and eyewitnesses, two passengers died on the spot, four on the way to hospital while the rest at the Mirzapur Kumudini Trust Hospital. The victims could not be identified. A case was filed with the

and 25 others injured when a passenger bus skidded off the Dhaka-Chittagong highway at Tribordi Saturday.

The victims could not be identified and their bodies were sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) for autopsy. The injured

Kashemabad in Gournadi Marium, 20, and Jitu, 7, were rushed to the Sher-e-Bangla

On Thursday, at Madhabpara in Babugani Upazila, one Abdul Khalegue, 55, was knocked over by a passenger bus.

Kurmitola and the Fire Brigade Headquarters were employed in dousing the fire. They brought the fire under

control at 11:30pm and doused it by The market housed 181 shops,

restaurants, hairdresser's and spice

with detectives raided the Mohakhali residence of writer, columnist Shahriar at about 2 am and took him to the Gulshan Police Station. He was later taken to the Cantonment Police station before being produced in the court in the

whether he was to be arrested or just to be interrogated. They said he "Later on my uncle went to the Gulshan Police Station taking water and a shawl for my father." But as the day progressed, Arpita said, the family lost contact with Shahriar as Gulshan police said Shahriar was

Another team of the DB raided the residence of young AL leader

against him to harass him politically.

In Narayanganj, two people, including an old woman, were killed According to police and eyewit-

nesses, the Dhaka-bound bus fell into a roadside ditch due to a brake failure, killing two instantly.

In Barisal, according to our correspondent, a woman and her sister were run over by a passenger bus on the Dhaka-Barisal highway

vehicle, its driver and helper

The same day, one Barek Munshi, 50, was hit by a passenger bus on Bandh Road in the town.

afternoon. Shahriar's daughter Arpita told

directives from the 'higher authori-Shahriar was arrested on November 22 last year, on his return home from India, and a sedition charge was pressed against him. However, he got released on

arrested him at about 3:30am. The wife of the former student leader told The Daily Star that plainclothes entered into the house and picked her husband without showing any warrant of arrest. She said that the plainclothes told her that they went to arrest him upon orders from very Family members said that Shafi

"Suddenly, there was a heavy explosion. People were greatly

injured were critical. The incident took place immediately after the evening show of the movie "Later we came to know that

questioned the local people about the incident.'

incident took place. Security has also been beefed up in the town.

dences of the bomb attacks and The Officer-in-Charge (OC) of

materials. He said all the bombs were of the same type and were exploded one after another.

Cricket: Kapali

drive off Vasbert Drakes to be caught behind the wicket. Collins then removed Mohammad Ashraful for six and Habibul Bashar, who scored an aggressive 24, leaving Bangladesh

confident of reaching his tenth halfcentury. Things turned from bad to worse when experienced batsman Aminul Islam was trapped in front of the

And it was at that stage Alok

Kapali and skipper Khaled Mashud rested in the one-day series, set the tone striking with the very first ball of the innings that sent the off-stump of Hannan Sarker cart wheeling.

> boundaries. knock of 24 before becoming the second victim of Drakes, who also removed Kapali in successive overs

of his second spell to make a memo-The 33-year-old paceman from Barbados, who tormented the Bangladesh batting in the one-day

But at a press conference at his

group of people which is, in league with some external forces, trying to play a false Al-Qaeda card. Its motive is very simple. It passionately believes that this is the best ploy to harm a government that came to power a year ago through a

the hands of this vicious choir of such people," the home minister The Daily Star contacted

FROM PAGE 1

AL leaders Saber and Shafi were

produced before the Chief

Metropolitan Magistrate's Court

yesterday afternoon along with

columnists Muntasir and Shahriar,

with two separate forwarding

filed by the defence, the court

After rejecting the bail petitions

granted a three-day remand for each of them. The police had sought a ten-day remand for Shahriar and a

Barrister Shawkat Ali Khan,

at 3.30pm and an hour later he was produced before the court of Metropolitan Magistrate Nurul Karim Maiumdar. Defence counsels moved the However, the prosecution opposed it and the magistrate rejected the bail petitions. The defence also strongly

against the remand orders.

pleaded for the arrested not to be

put under the Joint Interrogation

Cell (JIC) during the remand period.

They recalled that in some previous

instances Shahriar and Saber were

tortured in the name of interrogation

Responding to plea, the court

instructed that during their remand

periods only the respective investi-

gation officers would interrogate the

arrested persons. Relatives of the arrested persons and political leaders and activists crowded the whole court premises from early morning. Additional police forces were deployed to maintain discipline on the court premises. Policemen, both in uniform and

plainclothes, also raided the resi-

dences of former ministers and

opposition leaders - Tofail Ahmed.

Amir Hossain Amu and Mofazzal

Hossain Maya - and columnist Abed

Khan in a bid to arrest them but none

detective teams made separate

attempts to arrest 'suspected peo-

The law enforcing agencies and

of them were at home, police said.

ple' mostly linked with opposition polities, sources added. Of the four arrested politicians and columnists, Shahriar was nabbed for his alleged involvement with the two foreign journalists, who are now in the Dhaka Central Jail. The three politicians are facing charges of playing a subversive role with the objective of creating lawlessness, damaging communal

harmony, and tarnishing the image

The Dhaka Metropolitan Police

(DMP) Commissioner Md Abdul

Qayyum told the journalists yester-

day that police had strong evidence

of the arrested persons' involve-

ment in blurring the country's image

of the country abroad.

Later Muntasir's wife tried to visit

mosques in the city. But the authorities failed to find out clue of the In June 3, 2001 bomb blast at a

Narayanganj Awami League office on June 16, 2001 left 22 people

Explosion at a public meeting of Bagherhat district in September last

Mirzapur Police Station. Hasina: Extremists

FROM PAGE 12 Rupsha Police Station stating that a was zero in the current account. "So,

December 4, the complainant Police have taken three officials Sheikh Yakub Ali and Mostafa

Saber, Shahriar, Muntasir held

Road office of the Detective Branch (DB) for interrogation.

earlier detention illegal," she said. Ramna residence of Dhaka University teacher, historian, and columnist Muntasir and picked him

90 shops

FROM PAGE 12

escaped

whether he had talked to any journalist or not.

order as the battery ran out. Besides, there was also no network signal inside his residence.

Mymensingh.'

Many suggested that the government should completely deny Altaf's reported comments to Reuters selves away from the crisis.

leaders and ministers and then it was decided that the best damage control mechanism would be to deny the comment.
Finally, an influential official at

Cinema blasts kill 17

similar incidents took place at three other cinema halls in the town and all these happened before or after

revealed soon," he added. He, however, said that the

in Kishoregani district. Maulana Abul Khair Mohammad

devotees from home and abroad, countries Earlier in the morning, President

and people from all walks of life at the Bangabhaban. Prime Minister Khaleda Zia visited the mazar of late President Ziaur Rahman on the occasion of

the bereaved families. The prime minister said mourning day would be observed today in Mymensingh for those killed in the

moviegoers at the Mymensingh Medical College Hospital and Combined Military Hospital, the prime minister asked the attending doctors to ensure adequate treatment including food and medicine for them. She also wanted to know from some of them about the inci-

him to the police station. He was produced before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka with a prayer for remand, but the court sent him to the Dhaka Central Jail. Dhaka Metropolitan Police

(DMP) Commissioner Mohammad

Abdul Qayyum told journalists that

Shuvra was arrested for his 'involve-

ment' in forgery and distorting of

information about his cultural team

president Hussain Mohammad Ershad to take political asylum in

tottering at 40 for four. Bashar however become first Bangladesh batsman to score 1,000 runs in Test cricket when the stylish right-hander, starting his 16th Test on 990 that included nine 50s and a solitary century, clobbered 11 runs in the second over of Drakes. The 30-year-old batsman threw away his wicket when he was looking

Bangladesh lost half their wickets

wicket by fast bowler Jermaine Lawson for one. By then