

The Daily Star

COMMITTED TO
People's Right to Know

September-12-2005

Low cost bombs alarm for everyone, report says

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK

Trained professionals manufactured the August 17 bombs using materials mostly available in common markets and worth a maximum of Tk 100 and assembled them using a simple method, says a report of the government's explosive experts.

Such a low cost and simple methods for making bombs sends a "clear alarm for everyone that a terrorist can attack at any place at their desired time with

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Bounty for arrest of Abdur Rahman, Bangla Bhai

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday announced bounty for information leading to whereabouts of Abdur Rahman and Siddiqui Islam alias Bangla Bhai, both accused of murdering the August 17 country-wide blasts.

Advertisements to this effect will be made today. They will contain 10 separate photographs, five each on different looks of the two militant leaders, and contact phone and fax numbers and email addresses.

In other developments, police in Narayanganj yesterday arrested three people with suspected links to serial blasts while three people detained in Satkhira gave statements to a magistrate, admitting their involvement in the near-simultaneous explosions.

Government sources said posters containing photographs of Abdur Rahman and Bangla Bhai would be circulated soon.

The police headquarters sent a copy of the advertisement to The

Daily Star last night. It requests the people to assist the law enforcers in tracing the two militant kingpins. It asks the people to contact the law enforcers if they had any information about the two.

The ad said identity of the informer will be kept strictly confidential and if their information translate into the capture of the militants they will be given due reward.

The advertisement said Abdur Rahman, chief of banned Islamist

militant group Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), operates under different aliases like Moulana Md Abdur Rahman, Ehsan Moulana and Ehsan. Bangla Bhai, chief of Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB), another banned Islamist outfit, used Siddiqui, Azizul Islam, and Omar Ali Litu as his names on different occasions.

It identified Rahman as the son of late Abdullah Ibne Fazal of Charsh

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PHOTO: STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The capital witnessed serious traffic jam yesterday, following opening of offices after two-day weekly holiday that came into effect from this week. The picture was taken near Shahjahanpur intersection.

Six bills tabled in JS to raise high-ups' perks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Six bills were introduced in the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday proposing 45 percent hike in the remuneration and privileges of the president, prime minister, speaker, deputy speaker, ministers, state ministers, deputy ministers and judges of the Supreme Court (SC), and 50 percent for members of parliament.

Explaining the proposed remuneration hike for the speaker, deputy speaker and members of parliament, the bills said 'increase in the cost of living' is the reason for this.

In case of the others, the bills cited 'changing economic situation' and 'implementation of the national

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PHOTO: POLICE
These 10 photographs -- five each of Abdur Rahman, above, and Bangla Bhai -- will be included in the advertisement to be made today announcing bounty for their arrest.

Hospital fee hike goes after minister's ignorance drama

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The health ministry yesterday cancelled the September 3 circular raising fees for different services and medical tests in the public hospitals down to district-level while the minister for health claimed he had no knowledge of issuance of the circular.

Different newspapers yesterday ran reports based on the circular through which fees and charges for admission, outdoor/emergency tickets, paying beds, ambulance service, and most of the medical examinations were increased by, in some cases, as high as up to 400 percent. Upazila health complexes, however, did not fall within the ambit of the order that took effect from Saturday last.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain yesterday described the notification as 'highly irregular'. Talking to The Daily Star, he also said, "I didn't know anything about the order. Former health secretary Sarwar Kamal had ordered the issuing of the circular without consulting me."

In reply to a query, Mosharraf who claimed to have learnt about the circular from The Daily Star news yesterday, said, "I have already ordered cancellation of the circular as it didn't have my approval."

"In fact, I would never have approved such a circular which would mean immense sufferings to the people, especially the poor," he said adding that notification of such

serious implications for the public should have had a cabinet summary.

AFM Sarwar Kamal last night told The Daily Star, "The proposal for rise in user fees was submitted to the finance ministry six months ago and was approved two months ago."

He said health minister knew about the proposal and circular all along.

About a month ago, at a coordination meeting attended by all heads of health departments, Joint Secretary (hospital) Fazlur Rahman raised the issue of increasing user fees, said Sarwar adding that he himself had explained it in detail to the health minister.

The very meeting had decided to

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Major outages grip country

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A chronic load shedding grips the country with little hope of a major respite soon, as about 13 power plant units have gone for emergency maintenance and rehabilitation work.

Although frequent and prolonged power cuts show serious level of load shedding, the figures given by the Power Development Board (PDB) do not suggest anything unusual.

According to the PDB, the load

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Forex reserves slide down to \$2.73b

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The foreign exchange reserve yesterday came down to \$2.73 billion after paying off the import bills of the Asian Clearing Union (ACU). Last week the reserve was about \$3 billion.

After paying off the ACU bills of

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Spending cut by 10pc, restriction on car purchase

REZAUL KARIM BYRON

The government has cut back expenditure by 10 percent on some particular items in the current revenue and development budget and placed a restriction on the purchase of vehicles to offset the impact of global spike in fuel prices.

Finance Division in a circular yesterday said a culture of wasteful expenditure has developed among different ministries and departments. The government has therefore taken some austerity measures to ensure the best use of its limited resources.

Allocation of petrol and lubricant for different ministries, divisions and departments under them has been reduced by 10 percent. The ministries have been asked to cut the

monthly fuel allowance against a car by 10 percent.

Allocation for "other expenditures" under supply and services in the revenue budget and annual development projects has been lowered by 10 percent. A finance division source said the daily office expenses fall into this category for which budgets ranging from Tk 50,000 to 1 crore have been allocated in favour of different ministries, departments and corporations.

New projects or those already in the process of getting approval must not have provisions for cars. However, vehicles can be hired if it is essential for a particular project.

Moreover, if there is a provision

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Bapex-Niko deal challenged in HC

UNB, Dhaka

The controversial agreement with Niko, a Canadian gas exploration company that inflicted damage to the Tengratia gas field, was challenged in the High Court yesterday.

Three human rights bodies --

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Khaleda flies to NY today to join UN session

REZAUL KARIM

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia flies here for New York this morning to join the three-day World Summit on September 14 that marks the

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Sports News Grameen Phone

First Test starts today

AL MUSABBIR SADI from Colombo

Opening batsman Shahriar Nafees and left-arm swing bowler Syed Rasel will make their debut when Bangladesh take on Sri Lanka in the first Test here today.

The match will start at 10:30am at the Premadasa Stadium, which is staging its first Test in seven years.

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