

## Bomb-like object

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submitted yesterday against militants, including Abdur Rahman, Siddiqui Islam Bangla Bhui, and Rahman's brother Ataur Rahman alias Sunny for the August 17 blasts in Satkhira and Kushtia towns, however.

Assistant Superintendent of Criminal Investigation Department (CID) Munshi Atiqur Rahman, also the investigation officer (IO) of the blast cases, had told the newsmen recently that the charge sheets would be submitted yesterday.

Sources said they might be submitted today or within the next two or three days.

A correspondent from Gopalganj reports: A scavenger found the bomb-like object at the Gopalganj district and sessions judge's house at about 9:20am and informed the judge of the matter immediately.

A police team rushed to the scene and recovered the object, a rechargeable battery wrapped in red tape, and the handwritten note.

Superintendent of Police in Gopalganj Fazul Karim declined to show the note, but said it reads, "Conduct court proceedings as per Shariah (Islamic Law), otherwise we will take action in future."

Following the recovery, additional forces have been deployed in court-houses, deputy commissioner's office, residences of high officials, and other important points in the town.

The incident disrupted the normal functioning of the courts yesterday, said sources.

BDNEWS, Dhaka: The name of Ziaul Haq, who was taken on remand for a number of times, was dropped from the charge sheet submitted yesterday.

The other accused in the charge sheet placed before the court by investigation officer of the case Gazi

Ruhul Imam include Nurul Islam, Jub aer, Mahbu bur Rahman, Rokonuzzaman, Mamunur Rashid, Hasan, Nizamuddin alias Reza, Asad, Nurul Huda, Adam, Kawсар, Hasib alias Arif alias Asif, Rasel and Abdul Kaf.

Of the charge-sheeted, Rokonuzzaman had made a confessional statement before the court regarding the serial blasts.

In another development, police in Gaibandha arrested MA Kudus, 55, a suspected member of JMB, at Kalirhazar in Phulchhari upazila on Saturday. Details about the arrestee have yet to be known.

## Eleven die of diarrhoea in Gaibandha

**BDNEWS, Dhaka**

Eleven people including seven children died of diarrhoea in different parts of Gaibandha district in last two days.

Some 300 diarrhoea-affected people have been admitted into different hospitals of Fulchhari, Saghata, Sundarganj, Sadullapur, Sadar, Gobindganj and Palashbari upazilas in the district.

Meanwhile, diarrhoea situation has taken a serious turn in Nilphamari district with 3,000 more attacked with the disease over the past two days in Sadar, Domar and Syedpur upazilas.

According to the official estimate five people have died of the disease while local sources put the figure at 15.

Meanwhile, most of the 70 diarrhoea patients admitted to the 10-bed Sadar Adhunik Hospital are now huddling at the entrance, corridor and veranda.

## Ministers, MPs

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Joint Secretary General Tarique Rahman.

BNP's senior leaders, lawmakers of the three divisions and leaders of the party's front organisations also attended the programme held at the Prodhannomtri Bhaban.

The participants in yesterday's meeting also criticised the government's meeting also criticised the government of the spiraling price of essentials and electricity crisis across the country.

The party's senior leaders who attended the meeting, however, gave assurance that the crisis will be resolved soon as the government has already taken various measures.

"The price of essentials will be normal in three months," LGRD and Co-operatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan assured the grassroots level leaders.

Bhuiyan, also the secretary general of BNP, asked the party men to start a campaign in their respective districts to project the successes of the government. But he did not say anything about the internal conflict of the party.

Speaking at the meeting, SM Gaznavi, general secretary of Borhanuddin upazila unit of the party, said the party leaders who did not get any benefits are now aggrieved and those who have been benefited in the last four years are "acting cautiously."

"The ministers will leave the country if the party fails to win the next election, but we will have to stay and face the adverse situation," Gaznavi told the meeting.

## All cases

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and end of Ramadan. It directed the detective branch (DB) of police and Rab to patrol the areas in plain clothes along with their regular patrols.

**NIGHT-COACHES**

The meeting also directed the owners of night coaches to be alert as robbers take the chances of robbing during Ramadan, especially after the Eid.

It also asked the law enforcement agencies to use metal detectors to search the passengers and to take footage on DV cams when they board buses.

**BLOCKRAIDS**

The law enforcement agencies said they have conducted more than one and a half thousand blockraids in the last month.

Rab said it has conducted 550 block-raids in the 28 police stations in the last one month until October 15. The criminals might have fled the city fearing arrests for the raids, said a Rab official in the meeting.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) said they have conducted 1,022 block-raids in different areas under 28 police stations in the capital in one month and arrested 4,720 people.

**DRUG-PEDDLING**

The law enforcing agencies marked Mirpur as one of the major areas for drug peddling. Police informed the meeting that there are around 63 floating spots alone in Mirpur where the peddlers roam and sell phensidyle. Law enforcers termed this a new strategy to peddle drugs by constantly changing spots to avoid arrest.

The meeting directed police to continue the block-raids in those areas to curb the peddling.

Home secretary, Inspector General of Police, Director Generals of Rab, Detective Branch and Special Branch, DMP Commissioner and other concerned officials were present in the meeting.

## 3 newspapers

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far allowed to obtain newspapers of his choice from outside.

The three newspapers permitted for reading inside prisons are perceived as "soft to the government" and "anti-opposition".

Meanwhile, prisoners cannot watch programmes from any television channel other than the state-owned Bangladesh Television and listen to any radio station other than Bangladesh Betar.

The government restriction on mainstream newspapers inside the jails came after two senior BNP ministers on Saturday castigated the media for not projecting "positive news" and showing interest in "subjective journalism".

## 8 cops

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Other injured including the police received treatment at Ukhiya Health Complex.

Meanwhile, sadar thana police arrested five robbers including notorious bandit Jamaluddin, who is wanted in a dozen cases, at the town. The four others are Khorshed, Jafar, Bokkar and Jahangir.

## Jamaat man linked

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militants' rented house before the rickshaw owner. He had persuaded a serial blast to rent out his rickshaws to three of the bombers.

Netrakona Sadar police arrested Rahman, an assistant teacher of Sreeharibali Dakhul Madrasa, on October 6, but had to free him within the next 18 hours under huge pressure from local Jamaat and BNP leaders, sources said.

Jamaat district Secretary Moulana Enamul Haq, Sadar upazila Jamaat Ameer Moulana Joynal Abedin and some top BNP leaders are among the people who went to the police station to have Rahman freed.

Joynal Abedin, Sadar upazila Jamaat ameer, said Rahman was a former Jamaat activist. He left Jamaat soon after the Liberation War.

However, locals said Rahman had joined BNP only four to five months ago and before that he was involved with Jamaat politics.

Abedin also said that Rahman is now a member of the nine-member convening committee of South Nishiura union BNP.

Asked why the Jamaat leaders rushed to Sadar Police Station soon after his arrest, Abedin said they went there rather to convince police not to release Rahman.

Abdul Khaleq, BNP convenor of South Nishiura union, told The Daily Star yesterday that Rahman is a member of the convening committee. He said Rahman had been a Jamaat activist before joining ruling BNP around five months ago.

## JS body questions

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Mahbubur Rahman, also a former army chief, did not elaborate on the issue, but said: "We have discussed [at yesterday's meeting] whether the Armed Forces Division under the Prime Minister's Office is consistent or not."

The defence secretary and the principal staff officer (PSO) briefed the meeting about the activities of the ministry and the AFD. They said the AFD discharges most of the important and sensitive tasks in co-ordinating the armed forces.

After the briefing the lawmakers of the main opposition Awami League (AL) raised a number of questions. "I wanted to know what task the Joint Chief of Secretariat had done in 1978, but the PSO did not answer," AL lawmaker ASHK Sadequet told The Daily Star.

Shawkat Ali asked the PSO if any organisation like AFD exists in any other country.

The PSO however claimed that there is no problem in co-ordinating the armed forces and they are successfully sending troops to the UN peacekeeping missions.

Shawkat Ali said if the prime minister does not hold the defence portfolio and a defence minister is appointed, then conflict will arise in exercising the power of AFD.

Water Resources Minister Hafizuddin Ahmed, who is on the committee, told the meeting that no question was raised in the last 15 years about the activities of the Armed Forces Division. "Why has this issue been raised now?" he asked.

Hafiz however suggested further discussion on the agenda before any recommendation to be made by the committee, meeting sources said.

## Bar body won't meet

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"Tomorrow morning (this morning) at around 10:30 am, we shall first check if Faizee is there. If he's there, it will not be possible for us to make this courtesy call," he added.

The SCBA received a letter on October 9 from the Chief Justice's office inviting its leaders to the courtesy meeting. On October 11, the SCBA executive committee at a meeting noted that the controversy over Faizee's LLB certificate and his real age have not been resolved and that the SCBA has been demanding the authorities not to assign Faizee in any judicial works.

In such a situation, the meeting decided to request the Chief Justice to take steps to ensure that Faizee is not present at the courtesy meeting. Otherwise, the SCBA will not participate.

The resolution of the meeting was later sent to the chief justice. But the Chief Justice's office had not replied as of yesterday.

"Our demand about the removal of Faizee from the judiciary stands unchanged," Mahbubey Alam pointed out.

He added, the SCBA secretary on June 30 wrote to the president to resolve the Faizee controversy. The president's office then forwarded this letter to the Law Ministry to take "appropriate actions as per the law". But since then, no steps have been taken.

"The government could have resolved the issue easily. The notification through which Faizee's appointment was issued could have been withdrawn to end this matter," he said.

Mahbubey noted that some BNP-Jamaat leaders under the banner of Dalmara Madrasa in Fatikchhari of Chittagong accorded Faizee a reception last month. "At that place, Faizee gave a speech in the manner of a politician," he added.

## NEC okays

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However, the document has not specifically said anything about the sources to meet the cost of implementing the PRSP.

BSS adds: Prime Minister Khaleda Zia said the PRSP is the document of the government's development plan to ensure social stability, economic growth and poverty reduction.

The formulation of PRSP does not mean the end of poverty, but a primary and remarkable step toward removing poverty, she added.

The PRSP has been adopted in line with the objectives of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Bangladesh by 2015, she said, adding that her government is committed to attaining the MDGs by that time.

Bangladesh has already achieved significant progress in various fields of poverty reduction, but there is no scope for complacency and the PRSP has taken into consideration the need for making multi-dimensional approach to remove widespread poverty, Khaleda said.

UNB adds: Expressing her government's will to translate PRSP into a great charter of rights of the

poor, the prime minister asked all concerned to work sincerely to implement its provisions for transforming Bangladesh into an abode of peace and plenty for all.

The PM said key objective of her government's development programmes is quick alleviation of poverty, ensuring people's overall socio-economic development.

The PRSP has been formulated fully on "our own initiative" and through massive participation of all stakeholders, she noted.

## 15 hurt

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The clash turned fierce as the BCL, the student wing of main opposition of Awami League, and the Bangladesh Chhatra Union (BCU) joined hands with JCD to resist ICES on the campus.

Both the sides used stick and brickbats during the clash.

Police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control. Additional police were deployed on the campus to avoid further outward incident.

Sources said Shibir is amassing outsiders on the campus sparking off panic among the students of the university apprehending further violence.

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## Gas rationing

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The Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources has initiated the plan following concerns of the business community over the acute gas crisis, especially faced recently in the Tongi-Savar belt.

## One killed

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incidents, extortion and grabbing houses.

The press release also said that a pistol and five bullets were recovered from Badsha.

The body was recovered by police and sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

In a separate press release by Rab, four people were captured in isolated raids from Jurain, Mohammadpur and Fatullah areas for smuggling, selling drugs and possessing illegal firearms. During the raids, Rab also recovered a marble stone statue of an idol, two revolvers and two bullets.

## Old city dwellers

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it to their homes using hired vehicles.

On contact AKMA Hamid, executive engineer of Dhaka Water and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) Zone-2, said, "The supply from the pump houses reduced due to power cuts. Besides, we were not aware of the acute water crisis prevailing there."

"Now we will try to solve the problem", he added. He also said there are about 120 houses in Tekerhat that have no reservoirs.

Meanwhile, Wasa said to ensure smooth water supply it has 24 deep tube-wells, 15 newly installed and nine repaired, in different areas of the city including Narayanganj.

Wasa men are also supplying water at 50 points in the city with water tanks before the time of Iftar, Wasa officials added.

## Security teams

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The Daily Star yesterday on condition of anonymity.

Foreign Affairs Adviser and Saarc Chief Coordinator Reaz Rahman yesterday told diplomatic reporters that Bangladesh has speeded up the pre-submit work after Pakistan had reconfirmed its participation despite the October 8 devastating earthquake.

"Pakistan has clarified that they are committed to come... so far this is like the green signal we have received," he said.

Pakistan has already postponed the October 21-22 Saarc Commerce Ministers' Meeting in the wake of the quake, that left around 4,000 people killed.

The 11th Committee of Experts (CoE) Meeting on South Asian Free Trade Area (Safra) slated for October 18-22 has also been put off. The meeting is now going to take place in Kathmandu from tomorrow.

The commerce ministers' meeting is due to be held by January 1 next year.

Replying to a question, Reaz Rahman said four agreements for promoting trade and investment among the Saarc countries are expected to be signed during the Dhaka Summit.

He said the truncated 2-day summit would end up with Dhaka Declaration seeking cooperation in seven critical areas like poverty alleviation, economic cooperation, social charter, disaster management, terrorism and strengthening of the Saarc Secretariat.

"Timing of this summit is very important as the Saarc is beginning its third decade into operation," the foreign affairs adviser said, adding, "The Dhaka summit will focus on South Asian orientation and implementation of decisions taken by the

previous summits."

On another question, he said some of the programmes, like retreat for the spouses of the Saarc leaders, were reorganised considering the security factor. The retreat will now be held in Dhaka, which was planned to be held outside the capital before the second postponement.

He said the plan for a cultural evening by Saarc member states was also dropped from the programme schedule.

Regarding security issue, Reaz Rahman said six sub-committees have been working to ensure maximum security during the summit.

Some 250-300 members of the official delegations of the Saarc countries are expected to arrive in Dhaka for the summit. Besides, around 300 foreign media personnel are likely to cover the summit.

Saarc was established when the heads of state and government of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka formally adopted its charter on December 8, 1985 in Dhaka.

Saarc provides a platform for the peoples of South Asia to work together in a spirit of friendship, trust and understanding. It aims to accelerate the process of economic and social development in the member states.

The 13th summit was postponed twice--the first time in January in the wake of the December 26 tsunami tragedy affecting three Saarc countries and the second time due to India's denial to attend the summit in February following a coup in Nepal and alleged security problem in Bangladesh.

Under the Saarc Charter, participation of the top leadership of all member nations is mandatory for the summit to take place.

## Ex-Motijheel OC

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Razzak filed with Kaural Police Station on September 14.

He argued although Rafiqul was named the prime accused in the beginning of the FIR, the complainant mentioned three others -- Habibur Rahman Taaj, Mintu and Shamsuddin Howladar -- as the architects of the killing.

Moreover, one of the accused Hasibul Haq Johnny, who made a confessional statement before a magistrate on September 22, did not point his finger at the cop.

The advocate said Rafiqul had been at a lower court to make his statement on a duty call when the murder was committed.

He also disputed feuds between the cop and Momin's family over land property as stated in the FIR, terming those 'all false'.

He mentioned the killing of Panu, an accomplice of Mirpur top goon Taaj, as the reason behind the murder. Momin's family held Panu and handed him over to Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) that led to his death in 'crossfire'.

Meantime, Metropolitan Public Prosecutor Abdullah Mahmud Hassan, on the contrary of practice, upheld the contradictions in the FIR instead of objecting the bail petition. He also left the issue into the judge's consideration.

But the lawyers appointed by the complainant raised their voice against the petition.

Advocates Habibur Rahman Shawkat and Mujibur Rahman said Rafiqul was directly involved in the killing and the victim's family are on the run as he is threatening them to withdraw the case.

They also said two other accused -- Zia and Jewel -- made extra-judicial confession to the Rab. They named the former OC the mastermind behind the killing, but somehow it disappeared from the forwarding report submitted to the court.

After the hearing, Judge Momin Ullah directed authorities to bring the copy of Johnny's statement and announced to

give his order later.

Hearing the judge's declaration, around 1,000 waiting people, lawyers and litigants yelled and shouted for an immediate order. Three arrestees produced before the same court in another case also chanted slogans "hang the OC" from the dock.

The judge later ordered from his chamber to send the ex-OC to jail. Police handcuffed and sent him to prison in tight security.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police closed Rafiqul on September 15 and suspended him on October 2 for not reporting to Rajarbagh Police Lines.

Rafiqul surrendered before the High Court on October 2 for an anticipatory bail but the court asked him to surrender before the metropolitan sessions judge's court in two weeks.

## Ctg port

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wheat would be maintained jointly by CPA and Chittagong Customs Authority while the concerned shipping agent, Humayra Shipping Agency, will remain the custodian of the wheat until its disposal.

SM Nurul Haque, acting president of CCCI, presided over the meeting.

The meeting was held in two sessions. In the first session the port users discussed ways and means to solve the problem that prompted the strike and put forward the 11-point recommendation. The recommendations were discussed with the striking lighter vessel owners and workers in the second session.

Fisheries and Livestock Minister Abdullah Al Noman directed the concerned authorities to release the stalled lighter vessels after unloading the wheat to CSD in a meeting on Friday.

Meanwhile, the unloading of the wheat could not start yesterday as the warehouses are yet to be selected.

## Rice gives London

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Iran meanwhile on Sunday said that it would not return to a full freeze of its disputed nuclear activities, but nevertheless voiced confidence it would not face referral to the UN Security Council.

On September 24 the board of governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) adopted a resolution on Iran's nuclear programme which -- while falling short of an immediate call for the issue to be taken to the UN Security Council -- set out the steps that could lead there.

Since then Tehran has indicated it is willing to resume talks, but reiterated its right to process uranium.

September's vote "was an opportunity for the Iranians to get back into negotiations to find an acceptable solution that allows them to have a civil nuclear power that does not raise questions", Rice said Sunday.

"I am not (going) to set deadlines... At the time of our choosing, we will push for a referral" to the Security Council, she added.

Rice was meanwhile equally supportive over Britain's accusations that a series of deadly attacks on troops in

southern Iraq provided evidence leading back to Iran and the militant group Hezbollah.

"I have every reason to believe that the British are right about this," the secretary of state told BBC radio.

"I trust the British on this issue because the British are operating in the south (of Iraq). They know the situation there. The British are our allies, I have every confidence in what the British are saying."

Rice told reporters: "We have tried to get over a message to them about this issue."

The United States does not have an ambassador in Iran, where its interests are represented by Switzerland, while Tehran has a permanent representative at the UN in New York.

"We have channels. We use them rarely, specifically, to deliver messages," Rice added.

She was due to return to Washington later Sunday after a week-long official tour that began with a four-nation tour of Central Asia, before moving on to Paris, Moscow and finally London, where she held a working dinner Saturday with her counterpart Jack Straw.