

Time bomb found at TNO office in N'ganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) recovered a powerful time bomb from the TNO office at Bandar Thana in Narayanganj yesterday morning.

Witnesses said a construction worker found the bomb at the stairs of the TNO office at about 7:30am.

On information, six teams of police and explosive experts of Rab-10 rushed to the spot and recovered the bomb and sent to Dhaka for defusing it.

It is still unclear who planted the bomb at the TNO office.

Nirbahi Officer of Bandar Thana Ali Hossain said, "Panic seized throughout the office just after spreading of the news."

BSF kills cattle trader

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

A Bangladeshi cattle trader was killed and his brother seriously injured early yesterday morning when the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) opened fire on them.

Abu Sayeed, 25 of Paschim Kota village of Shashapazila in Jessore, was killed on the spot and his younger brother Hafizur Rahman, 20, received bullet wounds.

Locals said four cattle traders went to Hatatgonj cattle market in India on Wednesday. While they were returning home, BSF of Sunarajpur Border Outpost (BOP) opened fire on them near Gunarajpur village in North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal, India.

The BSF dragged Sayeed's body away while the injured brother managed to escape. When contacted, Bangladesh Rifles Lt Col Asadur Rahman, commanding officer (CO) of 41 battalion, confirmed the incident and said a letter was sent to BSF authorities for holding a flag meeting and the return of the body.

'No alternative to Col (Retd) Oli in Ctg BNP politics'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some BNP leaders and civil society members of Chittagong yesterday urged the prime minister to allow Col (Retd) Oli Ahmed, BNP's standing committee member, to work for the country with due honour.

"The serious impact of the injustice to Oli Ahmed for not incorporating him to the cabinet will be seen in the next parliament election," they said in a joint statement.

The statement also alleged that Oli Ahmed was not evaluated fairly in the last Chittagong City Corporation Election due to persuasion by a certain party in a planned way.

"How many more days the countrymen will be deprived of a strong leadership by preventing him from serving the nation?" they questioned.

There is no alternative to Oli Ahmed in the politics of Chittagong BNP, the statement added.

The signatories to the statement included South and North Chittagong District BNP presidents, vice-presidents, Chittagong University teachers and student leaders.

Sabu, Shahed elected DRU president, secy

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Shafiqul Karim Sabu, senior reporter of BSS, and Shahed Chowdhury, senior reporter of the daily Shamokal, have been elected president and general secretary of the Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU).

The election was held on the DRU office where 518 members, out of 619, cast their votes through electronic voting machine on Wednesday.

Sabu bagged 281 votes while his nearest rival Mahmuda Chowdhury, senior reporter of the daily Dinkal, got 195 votes.

Shahed secured 302 votes to become general secretary, beating his nearest rival Shakhawat Hossain Badshah, staff reporter of the daily Inqilab, who got 183 votes.

Ilias Khan was elected joint secretary bagging the highest votes of 364.

Other elected members of the DRU executive committee are vice-president - Saiful Islam, finance secretary - Siddiqur Rahman, publicity & publication secretary - Shakhwat Hossain Apu and office secretary - Saiful Islam.

The members re Azmal Huq Helal, Aiyub Ansari, Shankar Moitra, Aminul Huq Bhuiyan, Mirza Mehedi Tomal, Majibur Rahman, Amia Ghatak Pulak, Shariful Islam, Patrik De Costa and Manjurul Bari Nayan.



A colourful procession was brought out in the city yesterday under the auspices of National Aids/STD Programme, Health Ministry, to mark the World Aids Day.

Five die of Aids every minute globally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

World Aids Day was observed yesterday with a call for giving more attention to prevent HIV infection among the people.

To mark the day, different organisations chalked out separate programmes which were participated by politicians, medical professionals, NGOs and UN officials.

A discussion titled 'Stop HIV/Aids, Make the Promise' was held at the LD Bhaban adjacent to Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

Bangladesh Parliament Members Support Group on Prevention of HIV/Aids and Human Trafficking (BPMMSG) organised the event which was chaired by Md Ashraf Hossain MP, vice-chairperson of BPMMSG.

Speakers at the discussion called for more funds to prevent the transmission of deadly virus HIV.

They urged the policy makers to allocate more resources to face one of the biggest health challenges in

the present day world.

"The issue of resource allocation for HIV programmes must come from the highest policy making level and parliament members have equal responsibilities to raise their voices on the issue," said the speakers.

Calling for immediate action to check transmission of the virus among the general people they said it is a global threat claiming over 8,000 lives every day.

In fact, five people die of Aids every minute, they added.

"Regrettably, people living with HIV/Aids (PLWHA) in Bangladesh still face stigma despite efforts to remove this disgraceful attitude. Medical practitioners in most of the hospitals and private clinics refuse to treat patients carrying the HIV virus," said Habiba Akhter, executive director of Ashar Alo.

Habiba pointed out that apart from focusing on the preventive side of the deadly infection it is also necessary to keep in mind that

those already infected "require care and support."

Global statistics on care and support for the HIV-infected people show that PLWHA live longer with appropriate care and support, she added.

Other organisations also observed the day through cultural programmes, rallies, processions and meetings at different places in the city.

In 2005, over three million people acquired HIV virus including 198 newly HIV-infected people in Bangladesh.

Imam Samity calls for public awareness against terrorism

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh Jatiya Imam Samity (BJIS) has urged all khatibs and imams of the country's more than 2,50,000 mosques to create public awareness against the terrorists and bombers.

In a statement yesterday, BJIS President Hafez Maulana Khalilur Rahman and Secretary General Maulana Kazi Abu Horaira said the khatibs and imams should speak out against terrorism and bombings on each Jumma day.

They said the conspirators have been up to their evil designs against our holy religion and also the country in the name of establishing Islam by blasting bombs and shifting the blame of this dastardly act on the ulema and the madrasa students.

The BJIS leaders urged the government to unveil the real faces of the bombers. "There is not even a single instance in the history of Islam where this holy religion has been established through terrorism, bombing or killing," they said.

According to their statement, Jihad (Islamic revolution) is not mandatory for the Muslims without a consensus and declaration of the ulema. "It is impossible to establish Islam or go to heaven by blasting bombs and killing people," it said.

Bomb blast in Gazipur condemned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different organisations have strongly condemned the repeated bomb blast by a suicide squad member of militants in front of Gazipur Deputy Commissioner (DC) office yesterday that left one people dead and thirty others injured.

Leaders of different political, socio-cultural, human rights, lawyers, trade bodies and business organisations also expressed deep shock and grief at the bomb blast that took place just within three days.

These organisations also brought out protest processions at different places across the country including the capital demanding immediate arrest of the militants especially Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) Chief Shaikh Abdur Rahman and Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB) Operation Commander Siddiqur Rahaman alias Bangla Bhai to protect the countrymen from the

militant attacks.

They urged the government to declare the militants as the enemy of the nation and take stern measures against them with a view to ending the bomb cultures in the country.

Blaming long-standing indifference of the government for the rise of militant groups, they also blasted the government for not taking effective steps against the perpetrators.

They also demanded compensation for the families of the victims and the injured.

Different associations of lawyers including Sammilita Ainjibi Samannoy Parishad and Dhaka Ainjibi Samity blasted the government for its failure to capture militant leaders and give security to the people including lawyers and judges.

They said bomb blast occurred again when they were observing hartal to protest the bomb blasts on the court premises in Gazipur and Chittagong on November 28 that left nine people dead and 78 injured.

Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh President Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury, in a statement, expressed concern over the repeated bomb blast in Gazipur.

He urged the countrymen to come forward to oust the alliance government immediately as militants have link with alliance partner Jamaat-e-Islami.

The organisations that condemned the bomb blast included Bangladesh Awami League, Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, Workers' Party, Left Democratic Front, Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh, Dhaka University Teachers' Association, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, Post- Graduate Doctors' Association and Chhatra Moitry.

3 Indians with guns caught at Jaintapur border

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The BDR men caught 3 Indians and recovered 3 SBBL Guns from their possession from Lalakhali border area in Jaintapur yesterday afternoon.

The patrol team of BDR nabbed the Indians at about 3:00pm from a place near the Afifanagar tea garden, about 1.5 kilometres inside from the zero line as they were moving suspiciously.

As they failed to give satisfactory answers, the border guards picked them up. Three SBBL guns, 17 rounds of ammunitions and a Kodak camera were also recovered from their possession. They introduced themselves as Lyngdoh, 45, R Pulong, 30 and W Swer, 35.

The BDR suspects them as members of insurgent groups, who had managed to cross the borders after being chased by the Indian security men. The Indian nationals were handed over to the Jaintapur police station.

'Saarc a powerful force in global arena'

BSS, Dhaka

'Saarc is a powerful force in the global arena' was the conclusion reached at a largely attended seminar at the prestigious Asia Society in New York recently, according to a message received in Dhaka yesterday.

Dr Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, the current Chairman of the Group of Saarc Ambassadors at the United Nations and the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the UN, delivered the introductory speech, summarising the outcome of the Saarc Summit held in Dhaka.

Tracing the origin of Saarc, he said, "It was the product of a simple concept, that the countries of the region would gain more by cooperation than by confrontation." He added: "This also demonstrates that some of the great achievements in the annals of humanity flowed from the simplest of ideas."

The seminar was also addressed by the ambassadors of India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bhutan.

Shujan discusses political reforms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shushashoner Jonyo Nagorik (Shujon) held a general meeting at its office on Wednesday to discuss political reforms and some necessary steps for the next parliamentary election.

Presided over by Convenor of the Shujon Prof Muzaffer Ahmad, the meeting was attended by Member Secretary of Shujon Dr Badiul Alam Majumder, columnist Syed Abdul Moksud, Justice Kazi Ebadul Haque, former chief news editor of Bangladesh Television Rafiqul Islam Sarker, educationist Dr Meher-e Khoda and former additional secretary Badre Alam Khan.

Prof Muzaffer Ahmad said that if the candidates in the election comply with the election code of conduct, there is no need for them to spend Tk five lakh in the run-up to the polls.

Rather, it will create scope for the honest and competent persons to take part in the election, he added.

Monitoring the election is not enough; now it has become necessary to monitor democracy, said Dr Badiul Alam Majumder.

It is time to take necessary steps in this regard soon without waiting for the assistance of NGOs or donor countries, he added.

Obituary



Advocate Anwara Idris, former DCC commissioner of Sutrapur, passed away on November 29 at the age of 68, says a press release.

She was the wife of late Mohammad Idris, a former public prosecutor. She left behind three daughters, one son and a number of grandchildren.

She was buried in her family graveyard at Kapasia in Gazipur.

Her quikhwani will be held at her Banani residence in Dhaka after Asr prayers today. Relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to attend the quikhwani.

Abdul Gafur

Abdul Gafur, founder-general secretary of Bangladesh Bus Truck Owners' Association and Bangladesh Launch Owners' Association, and president of Tikatuli Jame Mosque, passed away at his Hatkhola Road residence in the city on November 27 at the age of 73, says a press release.

He was also a former director of the FBCCI.

He is survived by his wife, two sons, three daughters.

A milad mahfil for salvation of the departed soul will be held at Tikatuli Jame Mosque after Asr prayers today.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to attend the milad.



14-Party opposition combine took out a procession in Chittagong city during hartal hours yesterday protesting bomb blasts in Gazipur and Chittagong.

Attack carried out

FROM PAGE 1

On information provided by Razzak, Chapainawabganj police picked up 10 of his relatives and neighbours, raiding his and grandfather's homes at Jamaat dominated Tikrampur areas in the town, our Rajshahi correspondent added.

Razzak told reporters that he carried out the attack following Allah's order. When asked who gave him the order, Razzak said, "I got the order from Quran."

Razzak also said that his target was the deputy commissioner's office. He tried to enter the office, but police made it all wrong.

Immediately after the blast, he stood still although he suffered severe injuries. Cops who stood close to him asked him to lie down but he refused. "I will kill them all, blow all of them and I want to be a shahid," he shouted, claiming to have been 'carrying out orders of Allah'.

"The fire service men forced him to lie down on the ground, pouring water on him," said Constable Mizanur Rahman.

"I along with several of my fellow policemen aimed our gun at him but he put his hand inside the jacket he was wearing," he continued.

"We threatened to shoot him - thinking he might have had another bomb inside his jacket - if he does not pull out his hand," said another constable Aiyub. "But, instead he gave us a smile, a smile of joy."

A police official ordered the constables not to shoot and to keep

him alive. Two constables then ran to him and held his hands behind his back.

He was first taken to Gazipur Sadar Hospital where he underwent surgery, then later referred to Orthopaedics hospital in Dhaka, where he underwent further surgery.

Razzak told reporters that he came to Tongi from Chapainawabganj on November 30. He stayed at a residential hotel called Hotel Anamika Anasik at Tongi.

The hotel authorities said Razzak introduced himself as Shakil, son of Abdus Sattar, of Rajshahi. "He [Razzak] told us that he came to Tongi for a visit and boarded into the hotel at 11:00am on November 30 for two days," said Abdul Salam, manager of the hotel.

He only carried a small shopping bag with him, Salam continued. "A scarf was only viewed on the top of the bag," he added.

Hotel boy Reaz told The Daily Star that he went out of the hotel at noon, came back in the afternoon and did not have his lunch or dinner at the hotel.

A youth of his age came to meet him Wednesday evening and the two went out, said another manager, Nasir Uddin. Razzak then returned to the hotel alone at around 10:30pm.

The hoteliers said that he did not seem suspicious, adding that he went out of the hotel yesterday

morning at 7:00am.

Razzak said he went to Gazipur yesterday morning from Tongi on a bus and remained mum about what he did there before the blast.

The arrestees in Chapainawabganj are his day-labourer father Abdul Khalek, uncle Abdul Karim, Karim's wife, mother, grandmother, maternal uncle, maternal aunt and a few neighbours.

Nothing offensive was found during the raid, said an official, only an Arabic magazine.

Razzak's grandfather, Alhaj Ahmed Ali, a Jamaat adherent, fled away sensing the police operation.

Razzak, a class X student of Namo Shankarabi Hefzul Madrasah at the town's Natunhati areas, left the house on the 9th day of Ramadan.

His parents and grandmother informed police that Razzak used to live in his grandfather's house for two years. He did not go back after he left the house.

Neighbours said that Razzak became involved with Jamaat-Shibir after he shifted to his grandfather's house and his grandfather did not answer their repeated questions why he did not return home during the Eid.

Top man of JMB suicide squad

FROM PAGE 20

agency and police on Wednesday held four people in Rangpur Cantonment and court area for suspected links to militant outfits.

Police said the intelligence agency men caught Abdullah-al Mamun of Gaibandha and Heyatur Rahman of Bogra while they were loitering in the cantonment area.

The two were taken to the intelligence office and interrogated for about 20 hours. Currencies of India, Pakistan and Dubai were recovered from them, added the police sources.

Meanwhile, Kotwali police arrested two suspected JMB militants in Rangpur court area yesterday.

The arrestees were identified as Sayed Zaman of Chilimari upazila and Azizul Islam of Ulipur upazila of Kurigram district.

Police also held Abdul Khaleque, another suspected JMB operative, on the Teesta Bridge at Lalmonirhat yesterday. They recovered from him leaflets, documents and cellphone numbers of some JMB men holed up in char areas of Milonbazar in the district.

A sub-inspector of Lalmonirhat

police said the leaflets call for the people to establish Islamic rule in the country.

Our court correspondent adds: Police arrested Mohammad Maifud Haider Rubel at the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) Court, Dhaka for suspected involvement in the August 17 countrywide blasts.

Rubel, 21, of Natore, was arrested as he asked Court Sub-Inspector Mohammad Nazmul who the courtroom was closed yesterday.

When the on-duty policemen asked him why he was there, he could not give a satisfactory answer. Rather, the reasons he mentioned for his coming to the court were contradictory.

The youth was handed over to Kotwali police the same day.

Our staff correspondent from Sylhet reports: The suspected JMB suicide squad member Ismail Hossain, arrested by Sylhet Kotwali police Wednesday, was sent to jail from a magistrate court yesterday.

Police nabbed him from the city's Islampur area, acting on a confessional statement given by an accused in an August 17 blast case

in Chandpur.

Our Narsingdi correspondent reports: Detective Branch of police has arrested three suspected JMB operatives in the district.

M Ershad was arrested in District Sessions Judge's Court area on Wednesday night and following up the information obtained from him, police later arrested Mahmud Hasan at Kumardi Purbapara village of Shibpur upazila and Khokan in Duttapara area of Narsingdi town.

Mahmud Hasan, imam of Kumardi Purbapara Jame-mosque, hails from Gopalganj district and Khokan from Cox's Bazar. DB police also recovered books on Jihad and other important documents related to JMB.

Our Manikganj correspondent reports: Police yesterday held suspected militant Mojibur Rahman, 30, on the premises of deputy commissioner's (DC) office in the district.

Hailing from Singair upazila of the district, Mojibur was handed over to sadar police.

Weather Today. Dry weather likely. UNB, Dhaka. Table with temperature and humidity data for various cities.

Dhaka Today. Dialogue. Meeting. Rally. Save Environment Movement will hold a rally demanding measures to stop pollution and encroachment of the canals of the Buriganga River.