

Suicide bombers kill 69 at Baghdad mosque

AFP, Baghdad

Three suicide bombers killed at least 69 people and wounded some 130 others as worshippers left a Shia mosque in Baghdad after weekly Juma (Friday) prayers, in the second major attack on Iraq's majority community in as many days.

The blasts took place outside northern Baghdad's Baratha mosque where the imam, or prayer leader, Sheikh Jalaluddin al-Saghir, is an MP with the Shia United Iraqi Alliance, the largest bloc in the Iraqi parliament.

Immediately after the attack Iraqi authorities appealed on state television for public blood donations. A health ministry source was quoted as saying the bombings killed 69 people and wounded another 130.

An Iraqi security official told AFP that two of the bombers were disguised as women.

Iraqi and US military forces quickly cordoned off the entire area as dozens of pick-up trucks, ambulances and private vehicles started to ferry the victims to hospitals.

Victims were also carried away in handcart and blankets, as men, beating their chests in grief, searched for relatives who had attended the prayers at the mosque.

Patches of blood and dozens of shoes were left scattered outside the entrance of the mosque where the bombers blew themselves up in the midst of the departing worshippers.

The triple attack followed a car bombing Thursday that killed 10 people in the Shia shrine city of

Najaf and came amid a political deadlock as Prime Minister Ibrahim Jaafari refused pressure to step down.

The latest bombings evoked the February 22 dynamiting of a Shia shrine in the northern town of Samarra that triggered Shia reprisals against Sunnis across Iraq.

Hundreds died in the ensuing tit-for-tat killings between the two religious groups, raising fears of civil war.

In Thursday's attack in Najaf, a car bomb exploded close to the revered Imam Ali shrine and near the offices of senior cleric Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani and radical

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

'Resist black money holders from coming to power'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The nation will be destroyed if the owners of black money continue to be in power in the future, Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain said at a seminar yesterday.

He called upon journalists to work hard in raising mass awareness so that the people refrain from voting into offices the holders of black money.

There should not be any compromise with those who earn money illegally and come to power to run the nation, he said at the seminar on 'Affected Mass Media During the Alliance Government' organised by Journalists Forum Against Repression, representing newsmen of state-run wire service BSS who were dismissed from their jobs by the alliance government. The seminar was held at National Press Club in the capital.

Terming the four-party alliance government a 'big liar', eminent jurist Dr Kamal said ministers, including the prime minister are continuously lying to the people, which is 'fascism in the name of democracy'.

"When media wrote about Bangla Bhai, ministers said he was a creation of the media, but now

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6



PHOTO: STAR

Australian cricketers engage in a rugby game as part of their training session at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium yesterday. Australia will play their first Test match at the same venue tomorrow.

Indian sugar seized, 7 held in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Khulna police around 6:30am yesterday recovered 1700 kg Indian sugar packed in 34 bags on a trawler in Skid Ghat and arrested seven people in this connection.

The arrested were identified as Shakil, Shahidul, Shahin, Alauddin, Motaleb, Khokon Molla and Shahadat Hossain.

Officer-in-charge (OC) Abdul Hamid of Khulna Police Station claimed the arrestees are members of a sugar-smuggling syndicate. Police also seized the trawler.

The arrestees told police during

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Nor'wester kills 4 in Sirajganj

UNB, Sirajganj

Four people were killed and 250 others injured as nor'wester swept 15 villages in Kamarkhand and Kazipur upazilas of the district yesterday.

Local sources said the storm started lashing seven villages of Kazipara upazila at about 6:10 pm and continued for 10 minutes, killing three people and injuring 200 others. The identity of the dead could not be known.

Officials, however, could not confirm any death as of 7:00pm.

The affected villages are

Muslimpara, Boraitali, Biyara, Megai, Sindabari, Charpara and Khudbandi.

Over 500 thatched houses collapsed and a large number of trees and electric poles were uprooted during the storm.

In Kamarkand, nor'wester hit eight villages early yesterday, killing one person and injuring 50 others.

The dead was identified as Karuna Begum, 35, of Khamar Baradhul village. She died in house

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Rivals murder AL leader in Kishoreganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

A local Awami League (AL) leader was killed by rivals within the party at Shadullarchar Bazar in Kishoreganj Sadar upazila around 2:00pm yesterday.

The victim, Shahidul Alam Khan, 40, was information and research secretary of Kishoreganj Sadar upazila AL. His father late Abdul Bakker Khan was a former upazila chairman and also an AL leader.

As Shahidul Alam reached Shadullarchar Bazar by a motor-bike, his rival group led by union AL leader Moazzem Hossein Rubel attacked him with knives and bamboo sticks, sources said.

He was taken to Kishoreganj Sadar Hospital where he was declared dead, hospital sources said.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Outlaws explode 4 bombs in Chuadanga

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Four bombs exploded in front of four houses at Daulatdia village, an outlaw infested area in Sadar upazila of Chuadanga, early yesterday.

However, no one was injured and no damage done in the explosions.

According to police, a gang allegedly belonging to an outlawed party exploded the bombs in front of the houses of Abdur Razzak, Nazmul Imam, Rabiul Islam and Azizul Haq of the village at about 3:30am.

Outlawed Janajuddho faction of

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

ATTACK ON INDIGENOUS VILLAGES

Khagrachhari girls not raped, govt doctors say

PINAKI ROY from Khagrachhari

A medical board of Khagrachhari Sadar Hospital said yesterday that two indigenous girls of Sai Pru Karbaripara who were allegedly raped during Monday's attack on three indigenous villages were not actually raped but physically harassed and tortured.

Noapara and Chakrapara -- which the Bengali settlers attacked following a land dispute on April 3, still remains unusual.

Most of the indigenous people of the villages had not come back home until yesterday.

Most of the students of Shishughar, an orphanage home for Buddhist children in Sai Pru Karbaripara, also fled from the orphanage following the attack and

the school remains closed.

Although the injured indigenous girls, who were allegedly raped, were admitted to the hospital immediately after the attack, the medical board examined them on the morning of April 5, 48 hours after the incident.

"We tried to examine them but they did not agree. Later, people from their community convinced

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Prayer Timing		
April 8		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-40	5-15
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-21	6-24
Esha	7-45	8-15
Source: Islamic Foundation		