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AUG 21 GRENADE ATTACK

## Investigators still wait for bombers to walk into hand

ZAYADUL AHSAN

The sensational August 21 grenade blast case seems to be going nowhere as the investigators wait for the fugitive criminals, accused of assassination attempt on Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina, to return from India of their own accord where the government believes they have holed up.

An absence of the field level operators of the attack, the masterminds and motives behind the mayhem remain veiled in mystery. The investigators appear to be counting on the criminals to get back willingly and help them prepare a charge sheet in the case filed for the ghastly attack that left 23 people killed and scores of others injured two years ago.

The government, meanwhile, has yet to take any initiative to bring home the prime accused on the run including Khandakar Tanveer Islam Joy and Mokbul.



Perpetrators and masterminds of a massacre of this magnitude on August 21, 2004 still remain out of police dragnet. This photo was taken immediately after the grenade attack on Bangabandhu Avenue in the city.

Zealots clash with cops in Narsingdi

Police fire shots; 16 hurt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narsingdi

At least 16 people including four policemen were injured in a series of clashes between law enforcers and religious zealots as the fundamentalists tried to swoop on a minority sect in Narsingdi.

Police fired at least 20 shotguns to bring the situation under control when a Bangladesh Khame Nabuwat procession tried to attack followers of Barkatullah at Gazaria area yesterday evening.

Around 2,500 people yesterday held a rally before the procession at Dari Bausia Eidgah Maidan under the banner of Khame Nabuwat with Maulana Mohammad Hassan in the chair.

The bigots termed Barkatullah's

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VOTER LIST UPDATE

## Field level work ends today without scrutiny

Many still left out

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The field level task of updating the voter list ends today without checking the authenticity of about two crore applications for inclusion and deletion of names and with many names of people eligible to be voters still left out of the list.

The Election Commission (EC) however initiated a move to complete the entire task of updating the list by October and it is unlikely to extend the time limit again for the field level task.

The EC secretariat last Tuesday

sent a proposal to the cabinet purchase committee seeking exemption from the Public Procurement Regulation (PPR) 2003 for avoiding a long procedure of printing the voter list.

"Time is very short. We want to finish printing the updated voter list by October. So we requested the cabinet purchase committee to relax the required procedure in the PPR for hiring vendors for printing," EC Secretary Abdur Rashid Sarkar told reporters yesterday.

In absence of a procedure for scrutinising the applications,

many district election officers who had tried to check the authenticity, expressed doubt about the accuracy of the information collected by the temporarily recruited staff of the EC.

"I have personally checked some applications for inclusion of names and found duplications. Names of some applicants already exist on the present voter list," a district election officer told The Daily Star on condition of anonymity.

"We don't know how we will inspect the authenticity of the

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Makeshift sub-jail for arrested militants creates controversy

BISHAWJIT DAS, back from Chandpur

The government has declared the second floor of Chandpur deputy commissioner's office as sub-jail to keep the top militants during trial, adding to the ongoing controversy on legal and security grounds about such a prison house in the capital.

The district election office is also under the same roof of the

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Criminal killed in 'crossfire'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

A criminal was killed in 'crossfire' during a shootout between his cohorts and the police at Ramshankarpur Smashan (cremation) Ghat area of Bhairab upazila in Kishoreganj yesterday.

The dead, Abu Sama, 40, of Moutosi in Bhairab upazila, was accused in at least 14 criminal cases filed with different police stations, police sources claimed.

Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Bhairab Police Station Ziaur Rahman said, a police team intercepted Dhaka bound Mahanagar Probhati express train at Bhairab Railway Station on Friday around 10:00am and arrested Sama at a carriage. He was taken to Bhairab

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Kabita Parishad declares weeklong mourning for Shamsur Rahman

UNB, Dhaka

Jatiya Kabita Parishad, a national forum of poets, yesterday announced a weeklong programme to mourn the death of its founding president poet Shamsur Rahman, beginning today.

The parishad will open condolence books at TSC of Dhaka University and Aziz Supermarket at Shahbagh today, offer special prayer in front of the poet's grave tomorrow and join a citizens' condolence rally at the Central Shahid Minar in a procession from TSC on August 22.

It will also organise a poetry recitation programme at TSC on August 23, programme on poems and songs written by the poet

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## Govt sits idle as banned Huji holds open rally

Renames organisation; wanted militant leaders seen in meetings

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK

Banned Islamist militant organisation Harkatul Jihad al Islami (Huji) that comprises Afghan war veterans is carrying out activities in the capital but the government seems not to bother at all.

Many Huji leaders and activists, who are known for their role in running militant activities openly until the organisation was banned last year, held a meeting under a new banner of Sachetan Islami Janata (conscious Islamist people) at the Baitul Mukarram Mosque on Friday.

The names of these leaders--most sought-after figures following the grisly bomb attacks over the past few years--can be found on intelligence agencies' lists of Afghan war participants from the country.

Launched in 1992, the Huji operated for a decade in the country and now its leaders and activists are continuing clandestine activities after the ban.

Mufti Yahya, known among his men as "commander Yahya", was present at the meeting, a Huji activist confirmed. Investigators searched for the Afghan war vet-

eran for his suspected involvement in the grenade attack on Bangladesh-born British High Commissioner Anwar Choudhury in Sylhet on May 21, 2004.

The law enforcers and intelligence agencies, however, claimed they did not know or failed to recognise Yahya and his associates.

"We do not know whether these people are involved with Harkatul Jihad or not. The intelligence agencies have not confirmed us yet," Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner SM Mizanur

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## Parties should select candidates thru' voting at grassroots level

Regional dialogue at Pabna told



RAFIQ HASAN and TOPU AHMED, from Pabna

Speakers at the regional dialogue at Pabna yesterday emphasised direct election in seats reserved for women, selection of candidates through secret vote of local leaders and workers and bringing reforms

in the Election Commission and political parties.

If the national level leaders are honest, the grass roots leaders would automatically be honest, they said.

They underscored the need for an emergency meeting of the major political parties for holding a free and fair election in 2007 which is 'very crucial' for implementation of vision 2021.

The speakers also demanded turning the Pabna Edward College

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## Cancelled telecoms deals revived

One deal overpriced by 200pc, other unnecessary

ABU SAEED KHAN

The Ministry of Post and Telecommunications has revived two cancelled contracts totalling \$15 million for two Chinese companies and forwarded purchase proposals to the Cabinet Committee on Public Procurement (CCPP), which will meet on Monday.

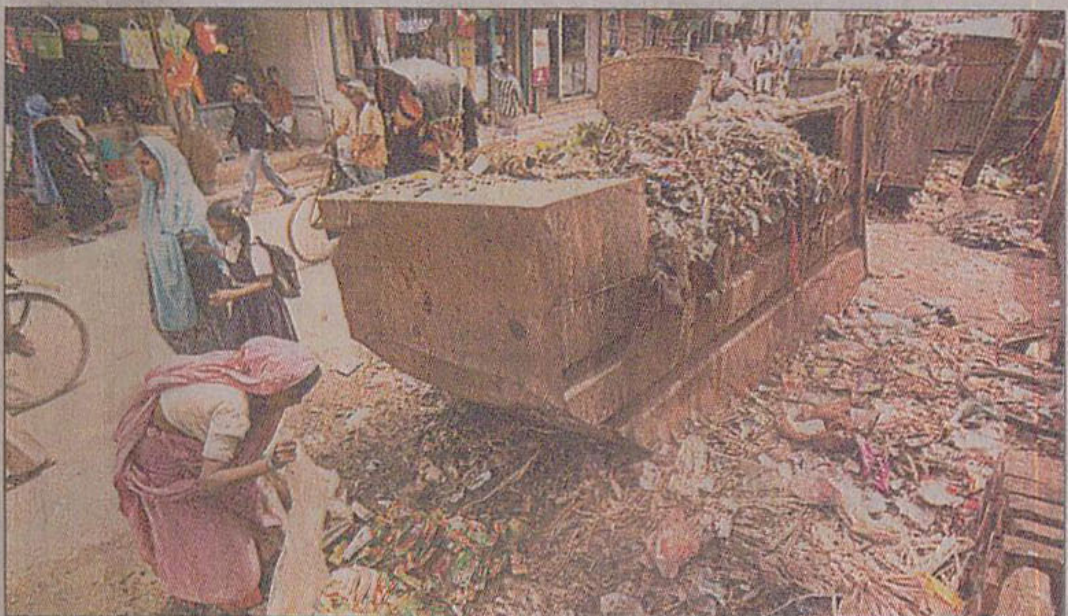
One of these two deals is overpriced by more than 200 per cent while the other is completely unnecessary and is based on a

flawed bid, sources said.

Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTBB), the customer, cancelled one of the deals more than two years back on financial grounds. The Ministry of Planning recommended cancellation of the other contract on technical reasons recently.

But the telecommunications ministry has ignored both the decisions and decided to table the purchase proposals for consideration of the CCPP which will be

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A dumpster placed almost in the middle of a road near Wapda Colony at Mughdipara in the capital makes movements of pedestrians and vehicles difficult. Local residents say it spreads foul odour as it is replaced only once a week.

## Roadside bins in city pose health hazards

DCC ill-equipped to manage wastes

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Improper use and poor maintenance of 4,500 dumpsters in the capital, overflowing with mountains of garbage, are threatening the environment of the city and the

health of its residents.

Random dumping of wastes outside the dumpsters, usually on streets, has become a common practice of the city residents, as there is no monitoring body to control the bad habit.

Unplanned deployment of the dumpsters along with improper disposal of wastes are the key reasons for the spread of various diseases and for aggravating many side effects of diseases among the

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## Booters lose to India, out of SA Games

Silver in swimming

AL MUSABBIR SADI from Colombo

Bangladesh bowed out of the 10th South Asian Games football competition with a 2-1 loss to archrivals India at the Sugathadasa Stadium here yesterday.

Although Bangladesh had beaten India for the first time in the history of the regional Games at this very ground in 1991, the current crop, despite playing a very attacking game in the second half,

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