

Victim sues Khaleda

FROM PAGE 1
The complainant said former BNP lawmakers Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintak, Helaluzzaman Talukder Lahu, businessman Giasuddin Al Mamun, Islami Bank Managing Director Nurul Islam, Krishak Dal General Secretary Shahjahan Mian, and some unidentified goons hurled grenades moments after Sheikh Hasina had stepped down from the dais.

The blasts were carried out on instructions from BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, Senior Joint Secretary General Tarique Rahman, Matriur Rahman Nizami, former state minister for home Luffozzaman Babar, Jamaat Secretary General Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mujahid, former BNP lawmakers Amanullah Aman, Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury, Mirza Abbas, Mosaddek Ali Falu, Barkat Ullah Bulu, and Salahuddin Ahmed.

The other accused include Jamaat leader Abdul Quader Mollah, Brig Gen (retired) Hannan Shah, the then National Security Intelligence (NSI) boss Maj Gen (retired) Rezzakul Haider, police chief Modabbir Hossain Chowdhury, BNP leader and former minister Aminul Huq, Rajshahi Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu, ex-additional IGP Faruq Ahmed, ex-DMP commissioner Khoda Bux, Islami Bank Chairman Abdul Halim, Shahidul Huq Jamal of Pirojpur, Ward Commissioner and BNP leader Chowdhury Alam and AKM Ahsanul Tayab Zakir of Bogra.

The magistrate asked the officer-in-charge of Paltan police to inquire into the case and submit a report.

Earlier, a day after the attack, police filed a case with the Motijheel Police Station against 200 people in connection with the grenade blasts. Two GDs filed by AL leaders Abdul Jalil and Saber Hossain Chowdhury the same day were merged with the police case.

The military-backed interim government on March 25 described the case as sensational and placed it on the list of the home ministry's monitoring cell for proper investigation and quick disposal.

However, sources said no headway has yet been made in the investigation.

CASE STATEMENT
The complainant said that he saw something blackish falling on the truck from the direction of Ramna Bhaban at 5:20pm. Soon the entire area was full of choking smoke and people running for cover as grenades continued to explode.

After the first four to five blasts the complainant went to 27 Bangabandhu Avenue along with several AL leaders including Swechhashebak League President AFM Bahauddin Nasim.

There he saw from a distance of some 10 yards a man named Nayan, 42, in white striped shirt and four others still throwing grenades.

As Badar Aziz Uddin [the complainant] and others began a chase after the grenade throwers, the law enforcers did not bother to catch the assailants. Rather, they fired rubber bullets and tear gas canisters on those already attacked.

He added that soon he fell injured as police continued attack-

UN team

FROM PAGE 16
The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), heads of the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence and the National Security Intelligence, and chief of the NGO Affairs Bureau.

The team discussed anti-money laundering legislation, its enforcement and use of illegally earned income in terror funding with the ACC chief.

They also talked about Bangladesh's intelligence infrastructure during the meeting with the officials of the intelligence agencies.

In the meeting with the NGO Affairs Bureau, the UN team brought up the issue of use of non-government organisations by different militant organisations to channel foreign and local funds, sources said.

During the meeting with the director general of shipping, the visiting team inquired about the measures taken by the authorities for port security and implementation of the UN's International Ship and Port Facility Security code or ISPS.

They particularly measured the ability of the security system to notice threats and implement security measures, collate security related information, and assess the port authority's capability to handle security during the changing circumstances.

The team also met 65 local bankers and stressed stronger implementation of UN resolutions 1267 and 1373.

The UN resolution 1373 obliges all states to deny financial support and safe haven to terrorists and share information about groups planning terrorist attacks.

The resolution 1267, largely targeted at the Al-Qaeda network, obliges states to impose a ban on travel of identified militants, put a comprehensive arms embargo on designated individuals and entities and freeze funds or other financial assets or economic resources of designated individuals and entities without any delay.

The bankers told the UN team that most terrorist organisations are homegrown so the chances of use of foreign funding in the local banking system are unlikely.

ing the injured AL leaders and workers.

Later when some leaders tried to help the then opposition leader of parliament get on her car, the attackers began throwing grenades again and opened fire on them.

The complainant alleged that the attack was designed to kill Hasina and the other top AL leaders. He said the law enforcers deployed there had all along been aware of the plot and played a mere onlooker's role.

He also observed that police attacked the AL men to ensure the raiders escaped unchallenged.

In the case statement, he accused the then ruling alliance leaders of destroying the crime scene evidence. They also hid the footages that private television channel ntv telecast in the evening of August 21.

Besides, the two unexploded grenades recovered from the scene were destroyed in haste without collecting the fingerprints supposed to be on them, alleged the complainant.

Ramna police refused to take any complaint and which is why he had to file the case with a court.

The complainant said it took him long to come up with the complaint as he was under treatment at different hospitals and there was intervention from the immediate past government.

He said the remarks of Khaleda Zia and her associates ridiculing the repeated attacks and death threats against Sheikh Hasina had in fact incited the killers of August 15 and November 3 in 1975 and their henchmen to stage the August 21 blasts.

The case was filed under the sections 324/325/204/326/427/307/302/506/34 of the penal code and section 3/4 of Explosive Substances Act.

New candidates

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that begins on June 10 at Sripur, he said people's representatives would be involved in the voter enrolment activities through a three-member team including a ward commissioner and his nearest contestant in polls. Municipality chairmen will be involved at upazila levels, he added.

Sakhawat also said discussion with political parties is required as there are proposals like 33 percent women representatives in party ranks and positions and de-linking of their front organisations and branches abroad.

According to a draft proposal set by the commission, a political party will not be allowed to participate in the elections if it has any front organisations or branches abroad.

Earlier, a three-member National Democratic Institute (NDI) team led by Deborah Healy met the chief election commissioner at his office. Election commissioners Sahul Hossain and Sakhawat Hossain were present in the meeting.

After the meeting Deborah Healy told reporters that the NDI would hold a conference on how to ensure facilities for physically challenged people in the election process. She said they informed the EC about the election model of Ireland and urged the EC to send representative to the conference.

"We are thinking about having information on the registration form to identify the physically challenged people," Sakhawat said.

Tarique

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Tarique for about 25 minutes in presence of Senior Superintendent of Dhaka Central Jail Golam Haider and an officer of special branch (SB) of police.

"We primarily discussed legal aspects of the cases filed against Tarique," Nasiruddin told The Daily Star.

However, sources outside Dhaka Central Jail told The Daily Star that Tarique's lawyers entered the jail at 4:30pm and came out around 7:15pm.

Tarique was arrested at Khaleda Zia's Dhaka Cantonment home on March 7 after a businessman filed an extortion case against him with Gulshan Police Station.

Budget

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Written opinions and recommendations on the budget can be sent directly or by mail as well. All opinions and recommendations will be considered and measures will be taken to reflect reasonable suggestions on the budget.

After finalising the budget in this process, it would come into force through promulgation of an ordinance, the handout said.

To ensure wider participation, the link of the Finance Division website will also be available on the following government websites: www.bangladesh.gov.bd, www.nbr-bd.org, www.plancomm.gov.bd, www.w.i.m.e.d.g.o.v.b.d, www.bdpresinform.org and www.cao.gov.bd.

The government hopes that all print and electronic media of the country will circulate all information and documents on the budget properly and help in participation of all.

Five held

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alias Dulal, 45, is a nephew of Eng Afsaruddin and the caretaker of the factory.

The other four arrestees are Abu Bakar, Jasim Uddin, Rabiul Hossain and Abdul Alam -- all from Chandanaish and Patiya upazilas.

A team of police from Bayezid Bostami Police Station led by Officer in Charge (OC) Matiu Islam raided a two-storied building at the abandoned factory on 74/81 Nasirabad Industrial Area at around 2.00pm yesterday.

At one stage of quizzing, Dulal, the caretaker, admitted to having licensed firearms and bullets kept in the toilet. The law enforcers recovered the arms and ammunition hidden inside a steel armoire in the toilet, said OC Matiu.

Two of the arrestees, Bakar and Jasim, told journalists that they were hired and stationed there to help Dulal guard the abandoned factory.

OC Matiu suspects that the firearms and bullets could belong to a crime gang based in Chandanaish of south Chittagong and these were meant for use during parliamentary elections.

Sources said police might interrogate Eng Afsaruddin over the recovery.

Eng Afsaruddin ran for member of parliament in the 2001 general elections on AL ticket from Chittagong 13 (Chandanaish) against Col (ret'd) Oli Ahmad.

EC happy

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think it is dealt in a very correct manner," EC Head of the Delegation Ambassador Stefan Frowein told reporters after meeting with ACC Chairman Lt Gen (ret'd) Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury at his office yesterday.

"We are satisfied with that. We will follow it closely," he said.

For the European Union, the question of anti-corruption is important, he said, adding it is interesting to see the ACC's plans for the future.

Meanwhile, a six-member United Nations counter terrorism team, led by Sergey Karev, Director of UN Counter Terrorism Committee, met ACC Secretary Delwar Hossain. The team expressed keen interests in the commission's activities after January 11.

ACC sources said the team wanted to know about the reconstituted Anti-Corruption Commission and the secretary apprised them of activities of the commission. The UN team was impressed by its first-January ACC activities.

Special court

FROM PAGE 1
The NBR sued Lobi for evading Tk 17 crore tax in violation of Section 165/166 of the Income Tax Ordinance 1984.

When the Judge of the special court, set up at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban complex, read out the charges, Lobi, standing in the dock, pleaded not guilty.

According to the case, Lobi repeatedly gave "false" information about his real income and expenditure to the Income Tax Department and did not show his return on income tax. He also "used his position to conceal information about his real income", the complainant alleged.

After his arrest, the Central Intelligence Cell (CIC) of NBR collected information about his different bank accounts wherein they found Tk 22.25 crore. Lobi did not submit statement of the money to the NBR for the fiscal year 2005-2006, the complainant said.

Moreover, the complainant said, Lobi, also former president of Bangladesh Cricket Board, did not submit statement about the income from his M/R Rupashi Energy Filling Station to the NBR.

The joint forces arrested Lobi at his Gulshan residence in the city on February 6.

Cooked up story

FROM PAGE 1
The infamous Hawa Bhaban.

Police officials, who until the political scene change were tight-lipped about the case, are now talking about how the focus of the case was shifted. They say the then supervising officer of the case, Ruhul Amin, had churned out Joj Miah out of nowhere to cover up the real criminals. As the petty criminal made the so-called confession about his involvement in the attack, the CID paid Tk 2,500 for Joj Miah's family's upkeep, his sister later told the media.

Investigation officer of the case Munshi Atiqur Rahman told The Daily Star that the current investigation is ignoring the 'Joj Miah theory' and claimed that significant progress has been made into the case and that search for the suspects is on.

Investigators also rule out the involvement of Ulfa rebels as the Indian media reported. The military-backed government on March 25 had branded the assassination attempt on Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina as a sensational case and enlisted it with the home ministry's monitoring cell for proper investigation and quick disposal.

Biman offers

FROM PAGE 16
On May 19, the Council of Advisers approved to turn the national flag carrier into a PLC by June for making it a healthy and profitable commercial venture.

A high-powered committee headed by the secretary of the civil aviation ministry in March made recommendations to this effect.

The national flag carrier now has a 4,900-strong manpower. As a PLC, Biman Bangladesh Airlines will be owned by at least seven public organisations through floating of shares, a high official of Biman said.

A company board would be formed comprising these organisations that will take all decisions regarding Biman.

Ministry of Civil Aviation would send the draft of ordinance to law ministry within a few days for vetting, he said adding that after getting their (law ministry) approval, papers would be sent to Joint Stock Company office for registration.

Then the Council of Advisers will give the final approval that will turn Biman into a PLC.

"Under the Memorandum of Articles, the rules and regulations, nature of business, capital, management of Biman as PLC have been identified, while under the Articles of Association, terms and conditions of PLC have been explained," a Biman high official said while talking to The Daily Star.

After completing all processes, the president will issue a new ordinance, which will replace the prevailing ordinance (1978) under which Biman is running now," Managing Director of Biman Bangladesh Airlines Dr MA Momen told The Daily Star yesterday.

"Present logo and call sign of Biman will remain unchanged," he said adding that the liabilities, audit

and balance of Biman would be worked out soon.

About rejection of the VRS notice, a high official of Biman Bangladesh Airlines said that they would decide about this after the given date expires. "Biman will try to ensure that its skilled officials and employees do not leave under this scheme," he added.

Implementation of the VRS scheme will require Tk 300 crore and the World Bank has already provided the amount to the government, sources said.

After turning into a PLC, a private operator will be appointed to run the airlines on a commercial basis, a Biman official said.

Biman now has Air Service Agreement (ASA) with 42 countries, of which it uses only 18.

EU Troika

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Four others will accompany him from Germany, the European Commission, European Council Secretariat and the Portugal embassy in New Delhi.

The Troika delegation is scheduled to meet Chief Adviser Fakhrudin Ahmed, the foreign adviser, the law and justice adviser, the army chief, the chief election commissioner (CEC), the Anti-Corruption Commission chairman, the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence, the acting foreign secretary, the home secretary and the foreign envoys.

The delegation will also meet with the Awami League and BNP leaders during their stay.

They are scheduled to hold a press conference on Saturday, June 9.

37 local firms

FROM PAGE 16
Purbani Energy, Saiham Power, Summit Power, Abdul Momen-AM Energy and Energypac-Confidence Power Venture.

Two tenders were submitted for 30MW Jangalia, Comilla, project and the bidders are Summit Industrial and Mercantile Ltd and the Prime Energy Ltd. And the same number of tenders was received from Summit Industrial and Mercantile Ltd and the Prime Energy Ltd for 30MW Ruppangj, Naranganj, project.

Those who offered tenders for 30MW Maona, Gazipur, project are RAK Power, Summit Power and Noorpore Power.

Three offers were received for 20MW Barabkunda, Chittagong, project and the bidders are Summit Industrial and Mercantile Cor Ltd, Asian-Entech Power Corporation and Regent Textile Mills Ltd.

Three firms submitted offers for 20MW Feni project. They are Rafique Power Generation and Engineering, Youth Spinning Mills and Asian-Entech Power Corporation Ltd.

Four firms--Summit Industrial and Mercantile, Youth Spinning Mills, Asian-Entech Power Corporation Ltd and the Association of Dandy Group and ECBL--

submitted offers for 20MW Tangail project.

Another four have submitted tenders for 20MW Narsingdi project. They are Noorpore Power, Summit Power, Asian-Entech Power and Prime Energy Ltd.

The firms vying for 10MW Mohalpur of Feni project are Energypac-Confidence Power, Abdul Momen Ltd-AM Energy, Quasem Drycell and Saiham Power Ltd.

A total of six firms submitted tenders for 10MW Habiganj project. The firms are East Cost Trading, Abdul Momen Ltd-AM Energy, Noorpore Power, Quasem Drycell, Saiham Power and Energypac-Confidence Ltd.

An official of the Power Cell told the news agency that all the bidders submitted two offers--technical and financial--separately in a two-envelope system.

The Tender Evaluation Committee (TEC) of the Power Cell initially opened the technical offers.

He said the financial offers of the bidders would be opened after completion of technical evaluation, which may take about a month.

Inflation hits

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increasing agriculture production and to supply agricultural inputs at low costs.

Of this amount, Tk 350 crore will be allocated for agriculture research, Tk 750 crore for diesel supply and Tk 1312 crore for supplying fertiliser and electricity at subsidised rates.

Asked about the increasing inflation rate, Finance Adviser Mirza Azizul Islam yesterday told reporters that the coming budget would propose to provide diesel to the farmers at a low price.

"We are going to propose allocation for agricultural research to increase agro production," he said.

Besides, social safety net would be expanded with higher allocation, he added.

Inflation rate of food items rose by 0.45 percentage point in April reaching 8.98 per cent compared to the rate of 8.53 per cent in March, according to available data.

On the other hand, inflation rate of non-food items rose by 1.59 percentage point in April reaching 7.36 per cent compared to the rate of 5.76 per cent in March.

However, inflation rate of non-food items was between 4 to 6 per cent in the recent months, which crossed 7 per cent.

Overall inflation rate in rural areas increased by 0.90 percentage point reaching 8.45 per cent in April compared to the rate in March.

Inflation of food items in rural areas rose by 0.29 percentage point in April reaching 8.79 per cent compared to the rate in March, whereas inflation of non-food items increased by 1.9 percentage point to 7.83 per cent in April.

Overall inflation rate in urban areas increased by 0.74 percentage point reaching 7.86 per cent in April compared to the rate in March.

Inflation of food items in urban areas rose by 0.84 percentage point in April reaching 9.44 per cent compared to the rate in March, whereas inflation of non-food items increased by 0.62 percentage point to 6.09 per cent in April.

Marking a positive change, prices of rice and flour decreased by 3 to 8 per

Dhaka-Kolkata

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signed by the two countries.

The draft prepared in the light of a previous agreement signed in 2001 would be sent to New Delhi soon.

Earlier, passenger train service between the two cities was introduced towards the end of the Awami League government's tenure in July 2001. One passenger train had run on trial basis. But the service was cancelled after the BNP-led coalition came to power.

Communications ministry sources said Dhaka wants to run the service every alternate day but New Delhi thinks it might not be viable. It proposed a once-a-week service.

Meanwhile, the Indian authorities have decided to provide customs and immigration services at Gede where the train service would enter their territory, and not at Saldah.

They have also disagreed on Dhaka's proposal for a separate food coach in the passenger train.

Dhaka had also proposed a 700-seat train for the service but Delhi wants a 300-seat one.

APTI report from Kolkata says the June 16 deadline for introducing Kolkata-Dhaka rail link may not be achieved because arrangements for running the service are not complete.

Train service between the two cities will start but it requires some more time, West Bengal home secretary PR Roy was quoted as saying.

Taxmen

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The government yesterday issued a Statutory Regulatory Order (SRO) in this regard.

The NBR chief instructed the tax officials not to ask people about the sources of their money. "In case of any confusion just come to me," he asked the officials.

Rahman also told them that he had meetings with the chief adviser and the army chief who also asked him to implement the amnesty in a manner so that people are not harassed.

The government has offered an amnesty to the tax dodgers to legalise their undeclared but legally earned money.

10,000 fear

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as it shows on paper, has been so amateurish that the local people termed it "a story of gross corruption". None of the gazettes by the ministry specifically points out any plot number or size of the acquisition of the land, according to documents obtained by The Daily Star.

"Our suffering and feeling of uncertainty today [Tuesday] is the result of gross corruption at the Ministry of Land and the DC office, we want to know where the money for the land acquisition went," said Narayan Sarkar.

Lightning kills

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Our Pabna correspondent also reported killing of a young boy by lightning early yesterday.

Police and local sources said Sohel, 10, the dead, of Hakimpur village under Shujanagar upazila, was collecting mangoes beneath a mango tree near his residence when lightning struck him killing him on the spot.

According to our Comilla correspondent, lightning killed Enamul Haq, 22, of Ramchnadrapur village under Burichang upazila of the district, while he was returning home from Kongshanagar market.

In Manikganj, two farmers were killed by lightning yesterday, reports our district correspondent.

They are Shamsul Islam, 20, of Lemubari village under Sadar upazila, and Bulu Khan, 60, of Charmastal village of Daulatpur upazila.

12 'militants'

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The information gathered from Rawnak, Rab officials said in a press briefing held at Kushtia Rab office.

The arrestees admitted to being involved in regrouping activists of the Allahr Dal, founded by Matin Mehedi, a detained Islamist militant kingpin, claimed Rab officials.

The arrestees were handed over to Kushtia sadar police. Police will soon produce them in court.

Our Barisal correspondent reports, Sharikal police arrested three activists including a leader of Hijub Tahwid while they were propagating militant ideology at Adhuna-Senerhut bazar under Sharikal union of Gournadi upazila on Monday night.

The three arrestees are Alamgir Howladar, regional leader of the outfit, and activists Jamal Sharif and Anis Sheikh.

Several books and leaflets written by organisation chief Bayzid Khan Ponnai from Karolia, Tangail have been seized from the arrestees, said M Mahbud, sub-inspector in charge of Sharikal police camp.

The three were handed over to Gournadi police. Manzur Morshed, sub-inspector and second officer of the police station, lodged a case under section 54. The arrestees were produced before a court on Tuesday afternoon with a seven-day remand prayer for interrogation.

The magistrate of the court sent the arrestees to jail and fixed next week for the hearing of the remand prayer.

Houses up for grabs

FROM PAGE 1
house to the government. Finally, Rajuk repossessed the house on May 30.

The joint forces are currently investigating those alleged shady real estate deals. Mirza Abbas is in jail now, and the Rajuk authorities made 32 of its officers, including the former chairman and the former chief engineer, officers on special duty (OSD) in connection with the web of corruption in the agency.

Rajuk Chairman AKM Harun recently told The Daily Star that the Anti-corruption Commission (ACC) filed cases of corruption in connection with the underhanded deals.

Rajuk sources said the government agency put an advertisement in three newspapers on May 23, 2004 announcing auctioning of those 18 houses. They sought from each auction participant Tk 1 lakh deposit for per katha of land he or she was competing for. A total of 156 people took part in that auction, the sources added.

"But at the end of the process, BNP leaders and other influential people succeeded in buying those houses through bidding the highest prices," said a Rajuk source.

The total amount of lands on which those houses stand, is 245.32 kathas, which were sold for a total of about Tk 65 crore. But according to an estimated present market price, a katha of land in those posh areas is no less than Tk 1 crore. Adding the value of the houses to the total estimated price of land, the Rajuk sources calculate the amount of money swindled at no less than Tk 300 crore.

Rajuk sources said Tarique Rahman, elder son of Khaleda Zia, allegedly bought a house at the address of NYK-6 of Road -89 in Gulshan under the name of Shamsuddin Ahmed, a director of Bashundhora Group. The house on a land of 25.36 kathas was sold for only Tk 5,98,41,000. Later, AYM Kamal, a member of the BNP central committee, was awarded the power of attorney of the property. Now, Tarique and Shamsuddin are in jail and nobody is living in the house.

This correspondent called the resident phone number of AYM Kamal several times, but he could not be reached for comments.

Former commerce minister Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury allegedly bought a house at the address of NWB-16 on Road-66 in Gulshan under the name of Iftekhar Uddin Ahmed. He bought the house on 20 kathas of land for only Tk 4,89,00,000.

When asked, Amir Khasru said there was nothing shady in the deal. "I myself paid the money