

Algerian attack aimed at president kills 22

AFP, Algiers

A suicide bomber killed 22 people and injured 107 in an assassination bid against President Abdelaziz Bouteflika in northeastern Algeria, state radio said yesterday.

Bouteflika appeared on television soon after Thursday's bomb attack near a mosque in the city of Batna to denounce the "criminals" and vow to pursue his national reconciliation policy.

National television had earlier put the death toll at 15, with 74 wounded in the latest bomb attack in the north African nation, which is still recovering from a civil war in the 1990s that left more than 150,000 dead.

The explosion killed and injured people in a crowd awaiting a visit by the president in the centre of Batna and witnesses quoted by the television said the bomb was hidden in a plastic bag.

The attacker was discovered by the crowd and triggered the blast before the presidential cortege arrived in that part of the city. Authorities did not identify the killer or say whether he was among the dead.

It was the closest that a suicide bomber has come to the president, who on Friday planned to attend the funeral of victims and go on touring the Batna region, rather than returning to Algiers as planned.

Bouteflika wanted to show "solidarity with the victims of the attack," Interior Minister Yazid Zerhouni said.

The president's reconciliation policy is intended socially to integrate Islamic activists who renounce violence that turned into an all-out war in the years after the army intervened in 1992 to cancel elections a fundamentalist party was poised to win.

But this year has seen three attacks claimed by al-Qaeda's self-

styled offshoot in north Africa, which killed at least 43 people and injured hundreds.

In April, two car bomb attacks near the presidential palace in Algiers and against a police station in the capital killed 33 people and injured more than 220.

Three months later, 10 soldiers were killed and 35 people wounded when a suicide bomber rammed a truck full of explosives into barracks at Lakhadaria, 100 kilometres (60 miles) east of Algiers.

The Salafist group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC), which has pledged allegiance to Osama bin Laden and renamed itself the al-Qaeda Movement in the Maghreb, claimed responsibility for those attacks.

"I will not for a single moment renounce the political project built on national reconciliation and security for all Algerians," the president said in his television appearance to denounce the "criminals" after the attacks.

Under Bouteflika's policy, a presidential pardon is offered to Islamist militants who surrender. About 2,000 Islamists have been freed from prison and the authorities say about 300 militants have given themselves up.

French President Nicolas Sarkozy condemned the bombing as "barbaric and senseless violence."

He assured Bouteflika of the "full solidarity of France and my unwavering support in your fight against terrorism."

Russian President Vladimir Putin also "strongly" condemned the "barbarous act" in a message to Bouteflika made public in Moscow and urged a strengthening of cooperation between their two countries to fight the "global scourge" of terrorism.

Algerian authorities have recently hardened their condemnation of armed Islamists who refuse to join the programme. "They should give themselves up or perish," Interior Minister Zerhouni said recently.

Attacks in Algeria, together with bombings in neighbouring Morocco, have revived Western fears of Islamist militants gaining a toehold in north Africa from which to launch attacks in Europe and beyond.

The blasts in Algeria have also raised a spectre of the return to the violence of the 1990s, which at its worst pitted the authorities against the hardline Armed Islamic Groups (GIA).

JMB man held in Comilla

A CORRESPONDENT, Comilla

Detectives yesterday arrested a member of outlawed Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) at a village in Muradnagar upazila of the district.

Acting on a tip-off, members of the Detective Branch of Police raided Hossainpur village of the upazila in the evening and arrested Aminul Islam alias Chotton, 30.

Police said Aminul, son of Joynal Abedin of Chandpur village under Comilla Sadar upazila, was involved in serial blasts in the district town on August 17, 2005.

During interrogation, Aminul told police that he was an "ehsar" member of the banned Islamist outfit.

Former Bogra MPs

FROM PAGE 1

his son Saifuzzaman Talukder, and 12 others.

On Wednesday, former BNP

lawmaker Kazi Rafiqul Islam Rafique and his two brothers were sued for extortion.

Karnipara Union Parishad

Member Zahidul Islam filed the case

with the court, accusing the three of

extorting Tk 2 lakh from him on

September 23, 2005.

party would bounce back to power

through the next general election.

Meanwhile, Hannan Shah said the BNP has been free of 'garbage' through the expulsion of Bhuiyan and Ashraf.

He said that the party chief has expelled the two on his recommendations as both the leaders have been engaged in 'anti-party activities'.

Talking to reporters at his Mohakhali DOHS residence, he said, "Both were expelled on September 2, just before madam's arrest. We were however waiting for an appropriate time to do it through the council."

He said, "Our party chief has taken a right decision at the right time, and once again she proved herself to be an uncompromising leader."

About the pro-Bhuiyan leaders' claim that by taking the "autarchic decision" the former prime minister has in fact showed how badly the party needs reforms, Hannan said

Khaleda Zia had to make the decision all by herself as the country is now under the state of emergency.

Cricketer Opi

FROM PAGE 16

Sadek Road residence in Old Dhaka. Opi was produced before the court in the afternoon.

A Dhaka court had issued an arrest warrant against Opi on Thursday.

A few friends of Opi said the former cricketer has two wives and his relation with first wife Runi has not been well for the last two years.

Meanwhile, Ramna police said Runi was also arrested on Thursday in connection with a case filed for not repaying a loan and produced before the court.

Ahsanur Rahman Arju filed the case against Runi yesterday for not repaying a loan she had taken from him in February.

Opi is the first Bangladeshi batsman to strike a century in a One Day International (ODI) match. He played nine ODIs and 18 Test matches as opener of the national cricket team. He played his last ODI in 2003 in South Africa.

Yunus

FROM PAGE 16

will soon be appointed to this chair in consultation with Prof Yunus.

The varsity authorities formally appointed the Nobel laureate as honorary professor of the university in the department of economics. He will be entitled to all privileges of a regular faculty member of the university, including accommodation.

The university will send students to undertake researches in Bangladesh under the supervision of Prof Yunus. The micro-credit pioneer will also be included in various committees of the university.

Prof Yunus was also honoured yesterday in separate ceremonies by the Saudi Council of Chamber of Commerce & Industry and the Bangladeshi community in Riyadh.

Businessman

FROM PAGE 16

youths identifying themselves as Emon's friends called him out of his house at Islampur at around

10:00pm on Thursday and since then he had been missing.

He further said Shyampur police got a SIM card in the pocket of Emon's trousers, activated it and called him at around 3:30am. "Receiving the phone call, I went to the spot and identified my son," Ibrahim said.

The reason behind the killing could not be known until the filing of this report as of 8:00pm yesterday.

Family members said they have a quarrel with an influential man at Islampur over purchasing a house in the locality and Emon might have been killed for this reason.

10 Jamaat men

FROM PAGE 16

Chan Mollah, Hafez, Lutfor, Awal, and Abu Taleb.

The complainant alleged that the accused attacked the temple while the late Hossainpur were celebrating Jammashtami, the birth of lord Krishna.

He said, "Armed with sticks and sharp weapons, they stormed the Mandir and threatened us to stop the three-day programme. They knocked down the shed built for the guests, cut down trees and damaged the rath (chariot)."

Pradip claimed the loss would be around Tk 30,000.

Locals said there was already a dispute over the land of Siddheshwari Mandir. The accused had a lease issued in favour of Karamja Dakhil Madrasa. But the High Court ruled for a status quo to be maintained in response to a petition by the Mandir Committee for rejecting the lease orders.

Santhia police have arrested Abdul Awal, one of the accused. Contacted, Sub Inspector Mizan said, "We have recorded the case and are trying our best to arrest the rest of the accused."

Meanwhile, additional police force have been deployed in the area to defuse tension.

Koko

FROM PAGE 1

Sahana Afzal visited him in the jail.

Called in by the jail authorities, Associate Professor of BSMU Dr

Manjur Mahmud had examined his physical condition at 2:00pm and suggested admitting him to the Coronary Care Unit of BSMMU for better treatment. Earlier, a Dhaka court sent Koko to jail with orders to take care of his health.

Since his arrest, Koko had been under observation of two other doctors.

Koko's wife Sharmila Rahman and her grandmother visited Koko and his detained mother Khaleda Zia yesterday afternoon.

During the hour-long stay at the jail superintendent's room, Sharmila gave a jainamaz to Koko. Sharmila also visited Khaleda Zia at 4:45pm in the sub-jail on the Jatiya Sangsad premises.

Earlier on Thursday, Sharmila along with Koko's elder brother Tarique Rahman's wife Jobaida Rahman went to the gate of the sub-jail to meet her mother-in-law, but the jail authorities allowed only Jobaida to meet her.

Khaleda Zia was sent to the special jail after her arrest on September 3 while Koko was remanded for a week in a graft case. But he was sent to jail on Thursday before completion of the remand period.

Heavy rain

FROM PAGE 1

upazilas. The district fisheries department sources said more than 1,200 shrimp enclosures and over 5,000 ponds in Galachipa, Kalapara, Dashmina, Baufal, Dumki, Mirzaganj and Sadar upazilas were inundated.

Our Nilphamari correspondent reported that heavy rainfall over the last three days submerged several unions of the district including East Chaatni, West Chaatni, Khagkhriboari, Tepakhorbari, Goyabari, Khalisa, Chapani, Jhugaccha, and Chapani of Dima upazila, Goolmunda, Shoulmari, and Koimari of Jaldhaka upazila.

Our Barisal correspondent reported that communication on 28 internal and five coastal routes of the region were often disrupted due to choppy rivers. The report also added that continuous adverse weather was pounding the region for the last two days.

Government new agency the BSS reported that the flood situation in the country worsened following continuous rise in the water levels of the major rivers due to heavy rainfall in almost all the northern districts.

A number of villages on shoals, agricultural lands, bazars and educational institutions on the banks of the Teesta, Brahmapura, Dharla, Ghagot, Dudhkumar, Jamuna, Zinziram, Sonavori and on the banks of other tributaries are facing threats of being washed away due to land erosion. UNB reported that around 50,000 people of 40 villages in Lalmonirhat were marooned by a fresh flood.

Our correspondents from Rangamati and Khagrachhari reported that several thousands of people from 11 upazilas of the two districts were marooned by a fresh flood in the 24 hours preceding last evening. Thousands of people took shelters on high lands and in flood shelters.

In the 24 hours preceding 8:30pm yesterday 120mm of rain fell in Khagrachhari, inundating

Tornados

FROM PAGE 16

Talukderpara village in the upazila at around 8:00am, damaging 23 shops and two houses completely.

Eight people were injured in roof collapse during the violent storm that continued for two minutes. The injured are undergoing treatment at Sandwip Upazila Health Complex.

the bus terminal in the district headquarters.

Ten to fifteen houses were inundated on the banks of the Chengi River, while 50,000 people in 50 areas of the district headquarters were marooned.

Our Rangamati correspondent reported that the water in Kaptai Lake is rising towards the danger level. If the situation continues for five or seven more days, two-thirds of the low lying areas of the district will be submerged.

Reports received from Noakhali said heavy downpour there flooded most of the district.

Indian Maoists target politicians: 3 killed

AFP, Hyderabad

Maoists rebels targeted a federal MP and a state minister from India's ruling Congress party in a bomb attack that left three people dead, police said yesterday.

The attack occurred southeast of Hyderabad, the capital of southern Andhra Pradesh state, as MP Janardhana Reddy and his wife, a state minister for women development and child welfare, were on their way to a university event.

An apparently remote-controlled bomb hit their convoy as it passed over a bridge, killing two party activists and a driver. The couple were unhurt.

"When the convoy was passing over a culvert, the Maoists targeted one of the cars, thinking they were in that vehicle," Nellore district police chief K Lakshmi Reddy told AFP.

"(Minister) Reddy and his wife were unhurt as they were travelling in a bullet proof car," he said.

"Certainly, there is the hand of the Maoists behind this attack," the police official said, explaining that the MP -- a former chief minister of the state -- was on a Maoist hit list after outlawing them in 1992.

Officials say India's Maoist insurgency threatens huge swathes of India's centre, east and south.

Originally a peasant uprising which erupted in 1967 in the eastern state of West Bengal, the rebellion has spread to half of India's 29 states -- prompting Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to describe them as the single biggest threat to India's internal security.

The Maoists say they are fighting for the rights of neglected tribes and landless farmers.

England-India

FROM PAGE 16

the decider at the Lord's here Saturday.

The Indians have already made the tour of England memorable by winning the Test series 1-0 after a gap of 21 years and an ODI series victory would serve as the icing on the cake.

Rahul Dravid and his men have shown tremendous resilience to bounce back from a 1-3 deficit and the hallowed turf of the Lord's provides the perfect setting for an engrossing battle between the two teams.

The sensational win in the last game at The Oval on Wednesday will be a huge morale-booster for India as the batsmen showed character to snatch a win from the jaws of defeat.

The seven-batsman strategy paid dividends for the team in the last two matches and it was the scintillating strokeplay by youngster Robin Uthappa, who came into bat at number seven, which helped India clinch the cliff-hanger at the Oval.

The visitors will probably retain the same combination for the summit showdown where the batsmen would again have to play a big role.

David knows that the decider will not be a cakewalk for his players who have to show a lot of character to win their third match on the trot.

Nagarbari ferry

FROM PAGE 16

impossible for them to restore Nagarbari-Aricha ferry service.

"We are facing trouble meeting demands of Aricha-Daultodia route. At least eight ferries are required to have smooth operations on that route," he told.

He said overloaded trucks prefer to take the ferry instead of the Jamuna Bridge, as there is weight restriction there. Overloaded trucks often damage the decks of ferries, he said, adding that they have informed higher authorities about the issue.

The Nagarbari ferry service used to save 60-70km of distance for trucks going to Dhaka from Pabna. "If we go to Dhaka using the ferry it saves us 10-20 litres of fuel," a trucker told The Daily Star. Trucks are using the Jamuna Bridge, which increases their transport cost. In turn, the additional cost is dumped on the businessmen who send and bring in goods, he said.

Around 50 to 60 trucks used to board the ferries every day when the ferry service was operational, paying the government Tk 40,000-50,000 daily in revenue.

The suspension of ferry service had an adverse impact on small businesses at Nagarbari terminal as well.

Sharif

FROM PAGE 16

on Friday adjourned the case until Sept. 13 to ensure the next hearing takes place after the Sharifs are inside the country. The brothers are currently in London.

Musharraf, a key US ally in the war on terror whose popularity has shrunk since his failed attempt to fire the country's top judge earlier this year, has repeatedly said that Sharif must remain in exile for 10 years under the terms of a deal reached in 2000. But the Supreme Court ruled last month that Sharif was free to enter Pakistan and that his return should not be obstructed.

Musharraf is expected to seek re-election by lawmakers by mid-October, but has yet to make a public commitment to resign as army chief if he continues as president. Many experts say that to keep his uniform the main source of his power beyond 2007 would violate the Constitution.

To help smooth the way, Musharraf is trying to strike a deal with another exiled former prime minister, Benazir Bhutto, that could lead to them sharing power.

New RCC list

FROM PAGE 16

The task of preparing voter list with photographs and national ID cards will begin in Paba upazila on September 11 although data collection by enumerators had already begun at Nawhata under the upazila.

The national ID cards will carry name of the registered person, their parents' names, date of birth, ID number, photo, signature, address, blood group, and a bar code encrypted with personal data.

The bar code will prevent duplicating of the ID cards, said officials, adding that computer software will also detect persons who try to register twice.

A body of 908 enumerators, 182 supervisors and 30 assistant registration officers worked for the task in Rajshahi city and they will also help in the task in other areas.

In the registration process 540 trained data entry operators divided into 37 groups were engaged using 250 laptops, high resolution web cameras and digital fingerprint readers.

Nepali Cong

FROM PAGE 16

central committee member, said Nepal's oldest and largest party had taken a "most important and relevant decision" to ditch the king.

Already unpopular when he came to the throne after a palace massacre blamed on a drunken crown prince in 2001, King Gyanendra earned international condemnation when he sacked the government and assumed direct control in February 2005.

He was forced to end his direct rule in April 2006 after sidelined political parties and rebel Maoists organised massive nation-wide protests.

The rebels went on to sign a peace deal and take up positions in parliament and an interim cabinet, and have been campaigning hard for the monarchy to be abolished.

The Unified Marxist-Leninist Communist Party (UML), the Himalayan nation's second biggest party, also wants a republic.

Veteran Congress leader and Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala had said in the past that some space should be left for the

DU violence

FROM PAGE 1

arrested at any cost so that similar incidents do not repeat," the official told The Daily Star, preferring not to be named.

Second Officer of the Shahbagh Police Station Akhter Morshed said that it would take one or two more days to verify the names and photographs of those.

Another police official said decision on whether names of the general students would be omitted from the cases would be taken today as per instructions from the government high-ups.

He told The Daily Star that they have already been directed to submit the charge sheets by September 9.

Sources in the police said at least 46 people have been arrested in different cases filed with Shahbagh Police Station and 28 in five cases with New Market Police Station.

Besides, police have been calling the students on their cellphones and asking them to surrender at the respective police station in the capital, the sources added.

If those contacted do not turn them in, they would soon be rounded up.

The student unrest broke out on August 20 at DU and spread to other educational institutions in the following days, forcing the government to impose a curfew on August 22 evening.

A one-member judicial inquiry committee led by retired High Court Judge Justice Mohammad Habibur Rahman Khan has been investigating what in fact led to the violence.

7 Americans

FROM PAGE 16

The Iraqi government announced Thursday it was adding millions of dollars to Anbar province's budget to help rebuild the region.

The step came days after a surprise visit to by President Bush to Anbar, where he met top Iraqi officials as well as tribal leaders.

During a conference held Thursday in the provincial capital of Ramadi, 115km west of Baghdad, the government allocated additional \$70 million to the Anbar budget, Interior Ministry official Col Tariq Mohammed Youssef said. He added that 6,000 jobs will be created for Anbar residents, although he did not give more specifics.

Another \$50 million was allocated to compensate citizens who suffered from military operations.

The conference was attended by Iraqi Vice Presidents Tariq al-Hashimi and Adel Abdul-Mahdi, Deputy Prime Minister Barham Saleh, US ambassador to Iraq Ryan Crocker as well as US presidential candidate Joe Biden, a Delaware Democrat.

monarchy in Nepal, including the suggestion that Paras's four-year-old son Hridayendra be declared king.

But top Congress politician Acharya said now "the Nepali Congress, UML and the Maoists have all now taken a republican stance."

"I think this means that the place of a monarchy in Nepali politics has ended," he said.

The party move capped a difficult week for the king, who was traditionally considered to be the living incarnation of a Hindu god.

On Thursday, Gyanendra's only son suffered what doctors said was a "major" heart attack -- a common occurrence in Nepal's royal family and apparently aggravated by the 36-year-old Paras' playboy lifestyle.

"Prince Paras is under regular observation and he is recovering well," Shyam Bahadur Pandey, one of the doctors treating the prince, said Friday.

"He had high levels of cholesterol and blood pressure, so we are going to advise him to control his diet once he gets better," Pandey said.

The crown prince has been mired in controversy, with accusations against him including drunken armed assaults in Kathmandu discotheques, speeding through the streets of Kathmandu on his Harley Davidson and beating police officials.

Tens of thousands of Nepalis signed a petition calling for action against the prince in 2000 when his vehicle struck and killed a popular singer. No action was taken.

His motorcade was stoned in Kathmandu in December 2005. Paras later suspended three senior police officials, accusing them of failing to provide proper security.

Laden to taunt US again in video marking 9/11

AFP, Washington

Osama bin Laden plans to emerge from the shadows to taunt the United States again in a video message marking the sixth anniversary of the September 11 attacks, US-based monitoring services and a militant website said.

The video from the world's most-wanted man, first announced late Thursday by US services that monitor militant websites, would be the first such appearance by the Saudi extremist since October 2004, when he threatened new attacks against the United States just days before a US election.

A US official said bin Laden's al-Qaeda network was using the media to manipulate and try to terrorize Americans.

"The SITE Intelligence Group has learned that a new video message is forthcoming from the head of al-Qaeda" on the 9/11 anniversary, said the group, which monitors extremist websites and publications.

The al-Qaeda network's media arm, as-Sahab, announced the video in a notice posted on jihadist forums at about 2115 GMT, according to SITE.

"Soon, God willing, a videotape from the lion sheikh Osama bin Laden, God preserve him," the notice read.

A website used by Islamist militants that carried the notice showed a photo of bin Laden in which his black beard did not have the usual streaks of gray.

He was also not wearing a camouflage jacket as in previous appearances. Instead, the top-half photo showed him wearing a white robe topped by a beige cloak, similar to the traditional dress of men in the Gulf region, and looking more like a Muslim cleric than a fighter.

The video of the soft-spoken al-Qaeda leader, who has claimed credit for the 9/11 attacks, will be examined intently with every word and visual detail dissected by intelligence agencies in Washington and around the world.

Expelled two

FROM PAGE 1

informed the EC about the changes in the party's line-up. It told the commission that the former LGD minister does not belong to the party anymore and cannot represent it at any level.

Since then, the factions led by Bhuiyan and Khandaker Delwar continue to be at odds over establishing themselves as the mainstream.

Sources said both the groups have taken measures to hold council to ensure their control over the party. Bhuiyan faction wants to hold the council amid the state of emergency, but pro-Khaleda group wants it after withdrawal of the ban on indoor politics.

"We will announce schedule for the party council after the government lifts the ban," Hannan Shah said yesterday.

Reiterating his claim that they still are the real BNP, the expelled secretary general yesterday told reporters, "We're the successors to late president Ziaur Rahman."

"Through reforms we will mould the BNP into a more acceptable, powerful and pro-people organisation and most of the leaders and former lawmakers are with us," he said adding that they are hopeful the

was fairly clear.