

## No plan to catch

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mosque can be ensured," he said, expressing his intention to place a proposal to the government in this regard.

The situation has already created resentment even among the law enforcement agencies as the fanatics attacked the law enforcers in Dhaka and vandalised a police station in Chittagong without any instigation, according to several sources.

Police sources said officials of different ranks have already conveyed this feeling to their superiors.

Meanwhile, Islamist organisations have pinned the blame on the police for attacking them and are planning tough programmes to force the government scrap the women development policy and remove Women and Children Affairs Adviser Rasheda K Choudhury.

"We know who are behind designing all these. But at the moment, we don't want to go after them as that might aggravate the situation further," a high-level official said who cannot be identified.

But those who actively took part in the Thursday and Friday's violence in Dhaka and Chittagong are going to face strong action, affirmed the official.

Using different names, activists of around two dozens of Islamist organisations including Jamaat-e-Islami, Islami Oikya Jote, Hizbut Tahrir, Khelafat Majlis and Islami Shashantantra Andolon took part in the post-Juma violence at the national mosque on Friday.

Though not present on the scene, many leaders of these organisations had time to time contact with the activists over phone during the "planned" movement, sources said, adding that many madrasa students also took part.

Several high-level discussions on how to tackle the issue have already taken place and the law enforcement agencies have been asked to collect details how such large demonstrations and violence occurred while emergency state is in force.

Since taking action against the top brass of the Islamists parties may add fuel to the fire, the law enforcement agencies have been asked to "advance carefully" but tackle the situation with "strong hand," said sources.

"Here is the old dilemma: if you attempt to take action, they will just say that the government is taking stance against Islam. Finally, you will not be able to do anything," said a government high official.

Since the caretaker government has already been troubled with price spiral and some other issues, it does not want to add another group to its opposition, he added.

To identify those who actively took part in Thursday and Friday's

violence, the government agencies have already started collecting evidence including video footage and still photographs taken by the intelligence agencies and print and electronic media.

The law enforcers said initially over 100 people can be identified though such pieces of evidence. "We will later be able to identify others through these people," a police officer told The Daily Star yesterday.

On staging demonstrations and violence violating the emergency, Home Secretary Abdul Karim said: "We will take steps according to the law."

Contacted by The Daily Star yesterday, Inspector General of Police Nur Mohammad said: "An investigation has already been initiated into this. We'll take necessary steps against everyone who will be found involved."

The police have already filed a case against 4,000 to 5,000 unknown people and arrested 17, while another case has been filed for the Chittagong incident.

## FOOD PRICE PROTESTS Haitian senate votes to oust prime minister

AP, Port-au-prince

Haiti's Parliament has voted to dismiss Prime Minister Jacques Edouard Alexis following deadly riots over rising food prices.

Senator Gabriel Fortune says 16 of Haiti's 27 senators voted in favour of the dismissal in Saturday's session. The vote reflects widespread frustration over rising cost of living in the impoverished country and days of looting and clashes between protesters and U.N. peacekeepers over high food prices.

Alexis survived a no-confidence vote over the government's handling of the economy in February. He was nominated prime minister in May 2006, succeeding former interim Prime Minister Gerard Latortue.

## Crossfire

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will gather at a house in the area, Rab-10 members encircled the house at 7:00pm.

Sensing presence of the law enforcers, the gang fired on them. The Rab members fired back triggering a gunfight lasting two and a half hours, said a Rab official.

"Both Tiger Anwar and Babu received fatal bullet injuries in the gunfight and died on the spot," he said.

Rab arrested three other accomplices of Anu from the spot and recovered two firearms.

## 11,000 sued for violence

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Islamist organisations, Islami Shashantantra Andolon (ISA), yesterday issued a five-day ultimatum to the government, asking it to scrap the Women Development Policy 2008 and remove Women and Children Affairs Adviser Rasheda K Chowdhury within "a day or two".

**DHAKA CASE**  
Sub-Inspector Ershad Ali of Paltan Police Station filed a case Friday night against the 17 identified individuals and 4,000 to 5,000 unidentified others in connection with the violence and assault on police near the Baitul Mukarram National Mosque.

The seventeen activists, arrested from the spot on Friday, were sent to Dhaka Central Jail yesterday after they were produced before the court.

They accused face the charges of violating Emergency Power Rules, snatching firearms from the police, endangering lives, vandalising properties and obstructing police duties.

The arrestees include A Mannan, Syed Sakib, Abul Qasem, Osman Gani, Mostafa bin Hossain, Syed Hossain, Enamul Hasan, Ehsanul, Rahmatullah, Obaidullah and Mostafa Kamal. Names of the other arrestees could not be known immediately.

Although another case was filed for violence in the same area the day before, on Thursday, anyone has yet to be arrested.

**CTG CASE**

Police yesterday filed a case against over 6,000 unknown people in connection with the attack on Hathazari Police Station Friday evening.

Around five platoons of additional police force were deployed at the police station as a precautionary measure after madrasa students attacked the station following rumours that an imam was killed in Dhaka during clashes with police Thursday.

Sub-inspector Md Waliullah filed the case with Hathazari Police Station Friday night against 6,000 to 7,000 unknown people on charge of damaging furniture, arson and injuring police officials by hurling bricks after storming the station.

According to the first information report (FIR), 6,000 to 7,000

## Bush says no plans to attack Iran

AFP, Crawford

US President George W. Bush said Friday he has no intention of attacking Iran, in an interview in which he also gave some advice to his successor on how to deal with the Islamic Republic.

Questioned during an interview with ABC television whether his intention was to not attack Iran, Bush replied: "Exactly" -- although he refused to rule out the use of force altogether.

"I have always said all options need to be on the table, but my first effort is to solve this issue diplomatically," he said from his Texas ranch.

Bush said he was not planning an attack, adding: "I'm chuckling, because, you know, from my perch, my perspective, these rumors happen all the time ... I wouldn't say they're amusing. It's part of the job, I guess."

The president accuses Iran of seeking nuclear weapons and arming and funding groups fighting US forces in Iraq.

And he made clear in the interview that he would act to protect Americans or Iraqis from Iranian actions in neighbouring Iraq.

"The message to the Iranians is: we will bring you to justice if you continue to try to infiltrate, send your agents or send surrogates to bring harm to our troops and/or the Iraqi citizens," he said.

Asked to elaborate on this "justice," Bush replied: "It means capture or kill, is what that means."

Without less than ten months until he leaves office, the president also offered some advice to his successor in the White House, including thinly veiled criticism of Democratic presidential hopeful Barack Obama.

The Illinois senator has said he would open a dialogue with Iran if elected president, while Bush has said any talks must take place in a multilateral forum and on condition that Tehran suspend its sensitive nuclear activities.

"If you send the wrong signals as the president to the Iranians, they may pocket that signal, become even more difficult to deal with," Bush said.

## Delwar

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delegates of Barisal Bar Association, dismissed Hafiz's claim of being the lawful secretary general of the party. The verdict of the High Court in fact did not specify who the lawful secretary general of the party is, Delwar added.

"The party will run according to the instructions of its chairperson and its constitution," he said adding, "One cannot be a leader simply with a court verdict or a certificate."

A vested group is out to destroy BNP, but they will not succeed as the party is united under the leadership of Khaleda Zia, Delwar reiterated.

BNP Joint Secretary General Selima Rahman, Law Affairs Secretary Joydul Abedin, Barisal unit BNP Secretary General Nazrul Islam Rajon and its former general secretary Obaidul Haque Chan spoke during the meeting among others.

Maj (ret'd) Hafiz in the meantime urged Delwar and other standing committee members of the party to take a clear stance for freeing the party from "pollution".

The selfless leaders of the party are being ignored as the party was being run by "pocket committees", using Khaleda's name, said Hafiz while addressing leaders and workers of a faction of Jatayatnabadi Jubo Dal, the youth front of BNP, led by Jubo Dal Senior Vice President Ali Akkas Nadim at his Banani residence.

Reforms in the party need to be implemented urgently for democracy in the party, Hafiz said emphasising the need for electing committees at all levels of the party.

An elected committee of Jubo Dal would be formed in the future as per the constitution of the party, he added.

## Noab, BSP

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on the chief adviser at his office.

The delegation thanked the chief adviser for waiving import duty on newsprint in 2007-08 following their meeting with him last year.

About waiving VAT, Fakhruddin said he would talk to the finance ministry to consider the matter "as a whole as the government wants the newspaper industry to flourish in Bangladesh".

On raising the rate for government advertisement, he agreed with their demand, saying that he will ask the information ministry to make a report on it in consultation with the finance ministry and he will take action after getting the report.

The Noab and BSP leaders also sought payment of advertisement bills centrally. The chief adviser assured them that he would ask the information ministry to make the payment system uniform.

Noab President Mahbubul Alam, BSP Vice president Gollam Sarwar, Noab Vice president Matir Rahman, Treasurer Matir Rahman Chowdhury and Noab members AMM Bahauddin, Reazuddin Ahmed, ASM Shahidullah Khan and Altamas Kabir were on the delegation.

Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Syed Fahim Munaim was also present.

## Grenade thrower

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investigating the cases, yesterday said, "Planners and attackers of Ramna blasts and August 21 attacks are almost the same people. So, the authorities have asked us to submit charge sheet in the blasts case after charges are pressed in the grenade attacks case which is more sensational."

Earlier, CID chief Javed Patwari said they would submit charge sheet in the grenade attacks case within this month.

Investigators resumed probe into the Ramna carnage on instructions of the home ministry last year and found that militant outfit Huji planned and carried out the blasts.

The grisly incident at Bangla New Year's Day function on April 14 in 2001 left 10 people killed and many others injured while 24 people were killed and scores injured in the grenade attacks on an Awami League rally on August 21 in 2004.

Although seven investigation officers (IOs) and five supervising officers of the case were changed till February last year, the probe made little headway for political intervention by the then rulers.

The home ministry on February 28 last year included the case in its list of sensational cases for warranting quick disposal, and formed a three-member task force comprising Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) officials to oversee the probe.

Mufti Hannan in November 2006 confessed before a magistrate to carrying out the blasts, and this expedited the probe to some extent under the caretaker government.

Investigation into the case went well during the first five months but the progress stopped when the four-party alliance came to power in October 2001.

Police arrested Moulana Akbar Hossain, principal of Madaninagar Madrasa at Demra, soon after the

incident. He gave a confessional statement on June 14, 2001 mentioning that the attack was planned at a mosque on Satmasjid Road in the capital's Mohammadpur, and 10 people took part in the attack.

The then IO identified four of them -- Mufti Hannan, Moulana Sheikh Farid, Mufti Abdul Hye and Moulana Abdur Rouf. Investigators also arrested 12 suspected attackers at that time.

One of the 12, Mizanur Rahman Swadhin of Patuakhali, was appointed police sub-inspector during the four-party rule. He was sacked after the present caretaker government took over.

The BNP-led alliance government dismissed militants' involvement in the blasts and instead blamed it all on the then main opposition Awami League (AL). During the alliance rule, the arrestee suspects including Moulana Akbar got released on bail and are absconding since then.

Akbar's confessional statement to a large extent matched with that of Mufti Hannan given before a magistrate. Hannan said the attack was planned at a house in Mohammadpur.

According to him (Hannan), he held several meetings with Sheikh Farid of Khulna, Moulana Abdul Hye of Narayanganj, Moulana Akbar and Moulana Abdur Rouf at a Mohammadpur house to plot the attack.

On his instructions, Sabbir and Jahangir made several powerful bombs applying the methods used by the Taliban in Afghanistan. Abu Taher, Hasan and Faruq planted bombs at the Ramna venue of Chhayanaat's traditional New Year programme.

Police have so far arrested 12 people including Mufti Hannan, Moulana Abdul Latif, Moulana Monir, Moulana Idris, Moulana Abdur Rouf and Moulana Abu Taher, Waliur-1, Waliur-2.

## Billion dollar fund

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Recently, Raja Debasish Roy, special assistant to the chief adviser on environment, has strongly stressed on clear government oversight of such a 'multi-donor funding mechanism'. But the fund would also be designed to be flexible and less bureaucratic.

Despite being at the forefront of the countries affected by climate changes, Bangladesh has received only \$10 million in foreign aid over the past decade, even though recent donor estimates put future climate change adaptation bill for the country at over \$1 billion.

Talking to The Daily Star, a number of climate change experts, NGOs and donors have also raised questions about Bangladesh's ability to absorb such a huge fund and implement projects in such a wide variety of sectors based on declining implementation rate of the Annual Development Plan.

The government says its implementation rate has significantly improved in the past decades and capabilities are already expanding. In addition, ERD Secretary Bhuiyan said: "The civil society (NGOs) and private sector have also increased their capabilities, so as a nation, Bangladesh's capacity has improved by leaps and bounds."

The idea of the fund was floated in the aftermath of Cyclone Sidr and World Bank-led study that projected a \$4 billion need for climate change adaptation, protection of the southern coast and disaster reconstruction.

## Govt-AL talks

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decided to use the SMS from the commerce advisers as the 'alternative path', the sources added.

At yesterday's meeting, held in acting AL president Zillur Rahman's Gulshan residence, the presidium formed a seven-member delegation headed by Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury for the talk. The other members are Amir Hossain Amu, Abdur Razzak, Tofail Ahmed, Saranjit Sengupta, Matia Chowdhury, and Syed Ashrafur Rahman.

In another development, Syed Ashraf last night told reporters that they would discuss five issues at the talks with the government.

Those would be release of party chief Sheikh Hasina, declaration of election schedule, withdrawal of the state of emergency, measures to contain price hike and the situation in general.

He admitted that the commerce adviser had indeed sent an SMS to Zillur Rahman and invited the AL to a pre-dialogue meeting today.

**NEWS BRIEFING**  
Briefing reporters after the meeting, Syed Ashraf said they were waiting for a signal from the government to sit for the second round of talks. He also said they will sit for the talk as soon as the schedule and the venue are set.

"We are ready to sit with the government as we're sincere about the discussion," he headed.

Asked whether they were 'pressured' by 'influential quarters', the AL leader denied and said "no unseen force" was putting pressure on them.

The AL spokesman also hoped that the government's final dialogue will be held with detained party President Sheikh Hasina.

The meeting also expressed deep concern over Friday's violence at Baitul Mukarram mosque and the attack on Hathazari police station by madrasa students. It held Jamaat-e-Islami responsible for the incidents

## Motia

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party leaders and workers to enquire where she can find an OMS outlet to buy some rice. One of them said she could try the one at Kadamtala in South Basabo.

Motia said, "I reached there at 8:30am and queued up till 2:00pm, but the supply of rice was exhausted with around 150 people ahead of me."

The senior AL leader, who lives in Maghbazar, told reporters, "Buying 5 kg rice from an OMS outlet could have saved me up to Tk 45, and with that I could have bought two half (eight pieces) eggs."

Meanwhile, Col Mujibul Haque, commander of BDR Dhaka, told The Daily Star last night that they would open 25 new fair price shops in the city today. Those would be in addition to 50 such shops operating in different areas across the capital.

People stood in line for hours in scorching weather yesterday to buy rice at different BDR shops, OMS outlets and spots of direct sale by the food department.

## BDR, BSF

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ted to making the border secure and peaceful.

Asked about the recent firing incidents between the two forces in the North Bengal region, Ahmed said Bangladesh wanted a peaceful border and such incidents have come down significantly in recent times.

"Neither BDR nor BSF have any intention to fire at each other," he said.

He added that he was for joint patrolling by BSF and BDR to check border crimes and increased bonhomie between the two forces.

On the issue of development of infrastructure facilities within 150 yards of international boundary pertaining to land ports, immigration check posts and land custom stations, Ahmed suggested the restriction of 150 yards be waived in view of growing trade ties between the two countries.

The next DG level meeting between the two forces will be held in Dhaka in September.

In the conference, BSF emphasised on the need for reciprocal action from Bangladesh regarding handing over listed Indian criminals arrested in Bangladesh, including insurgent leaders, issued with Interpol red corner notice.

India recently handed over some wanted Bangladeshi criminals to Dhaka.

On the possibility of extraditing ULEA general secretary Anup Chetia, who is in a Dhaka jail, to India, the BDR chief said there was no extradition treaty between the two countries at present. Besides, some cases against Chetia are still ongoing in Bangladesh courts.

"Unless and until the court takes a decision, we cannot hand over him to India," Ahmed said.

## 1,000MW

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some gas available for the Raozan and Shikabaha power plants to increase power production. "But it was temporary," he noted.

"Right now it is boro harvesting season. We have dedicated 1,000MW power for irrigation by providing 2.25 lakh special connections at high priority. Once this harvesting time is over, we can divert this power to other sectors," he pointed out.

A PDB official said the real power situation was worse than the official picture. "The Rural Electrification Board (REB) needs 2,000MW but is given less than half of that. Desco need more than 1,800MW power and the PDB needs another 2,000MW," he added.

A part of these unofficial demands of customers not connected to the national grid are met by alternative sources of power, he noted.

The Power System Master Plan (PSMP) of 1995 projected the power demand for this summer at 6,000MW. "Since the PSMP's projections had been proven to be solid, we can say we are giving a false and lower official power demand figure. This is why the terrible load-shedding does not match with the official load-shedding figures," he pointed out.

Besides, due to the rising heat power consumption has shot up so much that sometimes local power distribution systems tend to fail.

Frequent load shedding was reported from almost all parts of the city. In Karwan Bazar, power disruption occurred five times with more than five hours of outage between 8:00am and 5:00pm. Multiple power cuts for periods totalling two to three hours occurred in Eskaton Garden, Dhanmondi, Kalabagan, Moghbazar, Khilgaon, Goran, Shahjahanpur, Mohammadpur, Banani, Uttara and other places yesterday.

Petrobangla's affiliates which supply gas are presently rationing supplies to power plants, fertiliser factories and some industrial and commercial consumers. Against a demand of 2,000 million cubic feet of gas a day, Petrobangla is currently supplying 1,770 million cubic feet. Even though it can supply more, the present pipeline network does not allow it to increase the supply where it is needed the most.

The PDB needs 840 million cubic feet of gas per day to generate 4,028MW power, but Petrobangla and its affiliates can supply maximum 679 million cubic feet of gas per day. Gas crisis has forced it to cut power production at the Raozan plant by 240MW, Ghorashal 220, Sikabaha 10, Haripur 320, Siddhigang 90, Mymensingh 77 and Ashugang by 10MW. The authorities are now even requesting more than 200 industries to limit the use of gas.

## Nepal election

**FROM PAGE 16**

Prashant Jha.

However, he cautioned "we can take the first-past-the-post as some sort of trend, but not necessarily extrapolate it fully. There will be differences and other parties are banking on that now."

In the capital, thousands of Maoist supporters staged impromptu victory rallies, waving hammer-and-sickle flags, shouting Maoist slogans and throwing red celebratory powder to celebrate their early victories.

Among the Maoists rejoicing was the party's charismatic leader Prachanda, who got twice as many votes as his nearest rival in his Kathmandu constituency.

"I thank all Nepalese people for giving us the responsibility to make a new Nepal. I will remain fully committed to the peace process and multi-party democracy," said Prachanda, whose nom-de-guerre means "the fierce one."

Prachanda, a former school teacher who spent 25 years underground -- 10 of them in armed struggle to topple the monarchy -- has said he wants to be the first president of a republican Nepal "if the masses want to give me the responsibility."

The Maoists swept eight out of 10 constituencies in the hill-ringed Kathmandu capital region, a traditional bastion of the monarchy.

Seventeen constituencies had been won by the Maoists out of 29 seats declared and the party was leading in another 65 constituencies, election officials said.

The centrist Nepali Congress had won or was leading in 28 constituencies while the left-of-centre Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) had won or was leading in 22, the officials said. Smaller parties were winning or leading in the remaining 19 constituencies being counted.

The polls were the climax of a peace process that ended the decade-long insurgency which claimed 13,000 lives.

Former US president Jimmy Carter urged that the Maoists be struck off the US terrorist list after the former rebels' strong early showing.

"My hope is and my cautious expectation is that the US will in the future recognise the authenticity and the non-terrorist nature of the commitment of the Maoists," the Democratic president told journalists in Kathmandu.

The Maoists are still classed by Washington as "terrorists" even though they signed a peace deal with mainstream parties in late 2006, declaring they were ready to embrace democracy.

"It's a great moment for me to be a part of the Maoists' victory," said Rana Mahajan, a 36-year-old grocery shop owner in Kathmandu.

But "I hope they don't turn out to be like all the old parties," said the grocer, referring to the two biggest parties -- the Nepali Congress and Communist Party of Nepal (Unified

Marxist-Leninist) which is regarded as communist in name only.

The strong early showing by the Maoists was regarded as unexpected by observers.

"Of course it's a surprise," said a Western diplomat on condition of anonymity. "We were expecting them to get around 10 to 20 percent (of the vote). We heard they were unpopular, but the reality has turned out to be different."

The Maoists' transition from feared guerrillas to a mainstream party has not been smooth, and they came in for a barrage of criticism for their conduct in the poll build-up, accused of using threats and violence to intimidate voters.

The pre-election period was marred by violence but the elections were relatively peaceful, with around 60 percent of the 17.6 million voters turning out, the election commission has said.

## RMG workers

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drag away four to five policemen including the two officials to a secluded place tearing their uniforms, prompting police to open fire from shotguns.

The clash spread rapidly as soon as police fired rubber bullets. The law enforcers were caught in a helpless situation with a huge number of workers attacking them with brick bats and sticks from many sides. A large number of police and Rab personnel were deployed to tackle the situation, which led to innumerable chases and counter chases between the angry workers and law enforcers.

Around 11:00am a contingent of army personnel from Fatullah arrived at the spot and tried to calm the workers. The situation came under control after members of law enforcing agencies contacted labour leaders Advocate Mahabub Rahman and Advocate Mantu Ghosh, who assured the workers of solving their problem by sitting with Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA).

Jamaat's district unit Amir Maulana Mainuddin denied the allegation of their labour wing's involvement in the attack on the law enforcement. "We were not involved in it," he told reporters.

BKMEA President Fazul Haque, however, told reporters that the unrest might have been the result of a 'political provocation', although he did not comment on the allegation that Jamaat's labour wing was involved in it.

"We sympathise with their demands. But our condition should also be considered. Prices of raw materials like cotton and chemicals increased, but prices of garments did not," Fazluz said.

Bangladesh Textile Garment Workers' Federation President Advocate Mahabub Rahman said the labour unrest was sparked by price hikes of essentials.

## Taiwan sees results from landmark China talks