

# 13 killed in suicide bomb attack on Pak police

## Helicopter crashes during raid

AFP, Wazirand

A suicide bomber attacked police in Pakistan's lawless tribal belt on the Afghan border yesterday, killing 13 people, including seven policemen, officials said.

"The death toll has risen to 13. Seven are khasadar (tribal policemen) and we are trying to ascertain the identity of six others," Shafeerullah Wazir, the administration chief of Khyber, told AFP.

Rehan Gul Khattak, a local official, also gave a death toll of 13.

In Peshawar, a Pakistani military helicopter crashed while in action against militants in the country's northwest tribal belt on the Afghan border on Wednesday, officials said.

The fate of the two people on board was not immediately clear.

The Cobra helicopter was engaged in

an operation against militants in the Tirah valley of Khyber, a lawless district that straddles NATO supply lines into Afghanistan, said local administration chief Shafeerullah Wazir.

"It was a Cobra helicopter. It crashed during an operation against suspected militant hideouts in the area," he told AFP by telephone.

A military official confirmed that an attack helicopter crashed, but said the fate of its pilot and copilot was not known.

"We are trying to get details about the cause of the accident and fate of the pilots," military spokesman Major General Athar Abbas said.

Wazirand is a small town near Pakistan's northwestern city of Peshawar and on the edge of the tribal belt, which lies outside direct government control and has been branded by US officials as the headquarters of al-Qaeda.

Three other vehicles were also damaged by the blast and the shoes and slippers of the victims were scattered across the blood-spattered road, an AFP reporter said.

Rehan Gul Khattak, a local administration official, initially told AFP that six tribal police were killed and authorities were investigating whether it was caused by a suicide bomber or planted explosives.

There was no claim of responsibility, but Taliban and al-Qaeda-linked militants have killed around 3,000 people in bomb attacks across Pakistan, a key US ally in the war in Afghanistan, since July 2007.

Last Friday, at least 33 people were killed in bomb attacks targeting a bus of Shiite Muslim mourners and the hospital where the victims were rushed for treatment in Karachi, Pakistan's biggest city.



US Marines with 1/3 Marines Charlie Company battle insurgents on the outskirts of Marjah on Tuesday after seizing a major junction in the northeast of the city. US Marines have stepped up preparations for a major assault on a key Taliban bastion in southern Afghanistan hailed by officers as the biggest offensive of the eight-year war.



A supporter of former army commander General Sarath Fonseka (R) bleeds from his face after being hit by a rock during a protest rally in Colombo yesterday, held by opposition parties to protest the arrest of former army chief Sarath Fonseka.

## Lanka's opposition fears for Fonseka's life

AFP, Colombo United Nations

Sri Lanka's opposition parties demanded yesterday the immediate release of former army chief and defeated presidential candidate Sarath Fonseka, warning that he faced "assassination" in custody.

In a joint statement, the parties, which had backed Fonseka's failed challenge to President Mahinda Rajapakse in January elections, said they feared for the retired four-star general's life following his arrest.

"We have good reason to believe that the extra-judicial

arrest of General Fonseka may be followed up with assassination while in custody," the statement said.

Fonseka was taken into custody by military police on Monday night. The defence ministry says he will be court-martialed on charges of conspiring against the government while serving as head of the army.

Fonseka's family had been told Tuesday evening that he was being held at the naval headquarters in Colombo. His wife and a lawyer were allowed to visit him.

Fonseka quit the military in

November after falling out with Rajapakse and went on to challenge his former commander-in-chief at the ballot box.

Shortly after the January 26 vote, which Rajapakse won comfortably, the government accused Fonseka of plotting a coup to overthrow the president and assassinate members of his family.

And earlier this month, Rajapakse sacked a dozen senior military officers described by the defence ministry as a threat to national security. More were arrested from Fonseka's office.

## Militants attack US forces ahead of Afghan assault

AFP, Outskirts Of Marjah

US Marines came under attack from insurgents armed with sniper guns and rocket-propelled grenades as they geared up yesterday to overwhelm a Taliban bastion in Afghanistan.

Thousands of Marines along with foreign and Afghan soldiers are massing around the town of Marjah in Helmand, which officials say is one of the last areas of the southern province under Taliban control.

The flow of residents fleeing the imminent offensive has slowed, provincial officials said, after loaded-down cars, trucks, tractors and buses clogged roads from Marjah to provincial capital Lashkar Gar for days.

"We have announced and told people in Marjah not to leave their houses as our operation is well planned and designed to target the enemy," said Daud Ahmadi, spokesman for Helmand Governor Mohammad Gulab Mangal.

"Civilians will not be harmed," he said. Another 75 families had left Marjah, on top of 164 families who left earlier, the spokesman said. Other officials have said more than 400 families have fled.

## Ban politics of Jamaat, Shibir

FROM PAGE 1

start of the trial of war criminals, the AL lawmakers also blasted Jamaat-Shibir leaders for the rampage at Rajshahi University and killing Chhatra League worker Faruk and cutting tendons of four others.

"Time has come to take final decision to ban politics of Jamaat-Shibir who are doing politics of killing in the name of democratic rights," AL lawmaker Suranjit Sengupta said.

Taking the floor on a point of order during discussion on the president's address, Suranjit also said those who cut tendons at dead of night cannot be given political rights.

After Suranjit, a number of lawmakers demanded floor to speak. But AL lawmaker Engineer Mosharrif Hossain, who was presiding over the sitting at that time as a member of the chairman-panel, did not allow them.

However participating in the discussion on the thanks giving motion, a number of AL lawmakers joined the attack

earlier launched by Suranjit.

"Jamaat-Shibir began the rampage as the government is going to hold trial of war criminals. Their political rights must be taken away," AL lawmaker Zinnatunnesa Talukder said.

Citing the killing of BCL man in Rajshahi University, an emotion choked Talukder said Shibir men launched the attack after Jamaat chief Matiur Rahman Nizami visited Rajshahi.

AL lawmaker Ashraf Ali Khan Khasur said Shibir men are successors of the war criminals. "They engaged in a conspiracy to destabilise the country," he said citing the barbaric incident at Rajshahi University.

AL lawmaker Mustak Ahmed Rulhi demanded immediate arrest of the perpetrators.

"Trial of war criminals must begin without delay," he said.

AL lawmaker Apu Uki said incidents like that at Rajshahi University will take place again until the trial of war criminal is held.

After Suranjit's motion, on the thanks giving motion,

AL lawmaker Fazle Rabbi Mia took the floor on a point of order and said brutality of Shibir at Rajshahi University has reminded the countrymen of the barbarity of Jamaat in 1971.

"They are worried after completion of trial of Bangabandhu murder case. Now they are plotting to hinder the government's initiative to hold trial of war criminals," Rabbi said.

He said the home ministry has directed police and Rab members to take immediate actions to control the situation.

"Why the home ministry's directives were not followed? Why they did not go there on that night? Why the officer in charge of Mathiar Police Station came to Dhaka on that night?," Rabbi asked.

He also demanded that the home minister issue a statement over the incident.

In response, Speaker Abdul Hamid hoped the home minister will come up with a statement and it should be as early as possible.

## 'Delhi works on strategy to deal with Ulfa'

ANI, Guwahati

Union Home secretary GK Pillai has extended an olive branch to insurgents operating in insurgency-hit northeast region of the country.

Talking to reporters here on the sidelines of a high-level meeting, Pillai said that he had conveyed a meeting with the chief secretaries, DGP and other officers in Delhi.

"We are working out a strategy for dealing with Ulfa, the recommendation of the official committee will be placed before the Union Home Minister who would then be discussing the matter with the Chief Minister of Assam," he said.

"We would be put the finalised strategy after discussion with the Home Minister of Assam," he added.

Stating that insurgent outfits from the North East region continued to operate from Bangladesh, Pillai said, there was positive response from the neighbouring government for halting terror activities against India from its soil.

Pillai said he had visited Myanmar recently and had fruitful discussions with leaders there for coordinated action in border areas against insurgents.

We are hopeful that Myanmar will launch an operation against the militants at the earliest," he added.

On the whereabouts of elusive Ulfa 'commander-in-chief' Paresh Barua, he said, Barua was probably somewhere in the Kachin-Myanmar border area.

Pillai was hopeful that Barua would attend the peace talks, but said the parleys could begin without him.

## Indian forces admit trooper may have shot Kashmir teenager

AFP, Srinagar

Indian security forces said yesterday they may have been responsible for the shooting death of a teenage boy in revolt-hit Kashmir that has sparked days of demonstrations.

A senior paramilitary officer said one of his troopers may have been involved in the death of 17-year-old Zahid Farooq, who witnesses say was gunned down after a group of boys refused to leave a high-security area.

Doctors said Farooq, who was the second teenager to be killed in a week, had suffered bullet wounds in his chest.



Pakistani Shia Muslims shout slogans during a protest against bomb attacks in Karachi on Tuesday. Suicide bombers rammed into a bus in Karachi on February 5, then hit a hospital where casualties were rushed for treatment, killing 33 people and wounded 170 in the second assault on Shias in the Pakistani city in weeks.

## 600 Shibir men sued, 63 held

FROM PAGE 1

and Shibir dominated areas picked up 63 Shibir men. Twenty-eight of them were placed on five-day remand each.

Rajshahi University Chhatra League General Secretary Majedul Islam Opu filed a murder case in connection with the killing of Faruk Hossain, a Chhatra League worker and final-year student of the mathematics department, around 4:30am yesterday accusing 64 people, including 35 named Shibir leaders and workers.

Mothar Police Station Sub-Inspector Ershadul Alam filed the other case with the same police station around 1:30am accusing over 500 unnamed and 29 identified Shibir men, said Mirinal Bhattacharya, assistant commissioner of police.

Rajshahi University Shibir President Shamsul Alam Golap and General Secretary Mobarak Hossain were accused in both the cases.

Tuesday's violence at Rajshahi University left Faruk Hossain dead and 100 others injured. Faruk was hacked to death by cadres of Shibir in an overnight attack on different Rajshahi University dormitories. Students said Shibir men captured eight dormitories, which were dominated by Chhatra League.

Rajshahi Metropolitan Police last night suspended eight policemen for negligence of duty at Shah Makhdom Hall where Faruk was killed.

The suspended policemen are Assistant Sub-Inspector Mohsin Alam of RMP Detective Branch, Nayek Al Mamun, constables Nayek Haque, Arifur Rahman, Ishaq Ali, Monwarul Islam, Akkas Ali and Khairul Bashar of riot police department.

They have been closed to Rajshahi Police Lines, police sources said.

RMP Commissioner Nawsher Ali told The Daily Star that the decision was made following a primary police investigation.

A joint team comprised of Rapid Action Battalion and police personnel between 1:30am and 6:00am picked up around 45 Shibir men raiding Rajshahi University, its adjacent areas including Binodpur, Meherchandi, Budpara and other areas of Rajshahi city and surrounding districts.

Police said the arrestees include two named in the first information report—Hasmat Ali Liton, president of Abdul Latif Hall Shibir unit, and Abdur Razzak, general secretary of the dormitory unit of Shibir. They were arrested at private students' messes in the city.

However, only 28 were shown arrested and sent to court in connection with both the cases, police said. The Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Ruhul Amin granted five-day remand for each of them. Police had sought seven-day remand for each, said Debendranath, a court inspector.

Rajshahi Metropolitan Police Deputy Commissioner Sardar Nurul Amin told The Daily Star that they had arrested the Shibir men for interrogation. "After proper investigation into their involvement, some arrestees were released upon their undertakings."

Police arrested 18 Shibir men at a mosque in Parilla of Poba upazila around 11:00pm last night. "All 18 are students of Rajshahi University and were arrested following a tip off," said Abu Bakar Siddik, officer-in-charge of Poba Police Station.

Meanwhile, State Minister for Home Affairs Shamsul Haque Tuku visited injured Chhatra League workers and Armed Police Battalion members, injured in a road accident

while going to Rajshahi University, at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital yesterday.

Inspector General of Police Noor Muhammad too went to Rajshahi Tuesday night and visited the injured at RMCH.

During the IGP's and the state minister's visit to RMCH, injured Chhatra League workers alleged that policemen were silent and some of them looked the other way when Shibir cadres killed Faruk and dragged his body some 500 yards to dump in a manhole.

The IGP held meetings with senior officials of RMP and the district late into Tuesday night. He held a conference with superintendents of police of different districts in Rajshahi division till 1:30pm yesterday. He visited the campus on his way back to the capital.

The IGP told The Daily Star, "We sat to look into the whole Rajshahi University incident, identify those who were given duties during the incident and how much they were able to carry out their duties."

"We also discussed how the incident began and how it happened. We will sit with the state minister for taking actions against law enforcement officials, if found to have neglected their duties."

Chhatra League President Mahmud Hasan Ripon at Dhaka University yesterday alleged that the leaders and activists of Jamaat-e-Islami and its student wing Chhatra Shibir, who work in the police department and the university administration, attacked Chhatra League men at Rajshahi University.

Meanwhile, Chhatra League workers beat up Jamaat supporter Khorshed at Bagha upazila and damaged the upazila Jamaat office around noon. In Rajshahi city, Chhatra League workers hurled bricks at the office of Islami Life Insurance Ltd from a procession

damaging its windowpanes.

A spate of violence has also been reported from Nilphamari, Pabna, Patuakhali, Gaibandha Barisal and Habiganj.

Kishoreganj upazila Jamaat office in Nilphamari was ransacked by a mob yesterday. Sources said Chhatra League brought out a protest procession around yesterday noon and when it reached the Jamaat office around 2:00pm Jamaat activists verbally abused the Chhatra League men, sources said.

The mob then ransacked the office.

Chhatra League men ransacked Pabna Press Club yesterday forcing Chhatra Shibir to postpone a press conference there. Shibir had called for the press conference there yesterday to protest the attack on two student messes near Edward College Tuesday night. Shibir activists stayed at the messes.

Police obstructed Shibir men from entering the press club on security grounds.

Local journalists later barricaded the Pabna-Rajshahi Highway for two hours demanding punishment to the attackers.

In Patuakhali, Chhatra League ransacked at least eight rooms of Shibir activists in Patuakhali Science and Technology University Tuesday night. Over 50 Chhatra League activists attacked Sher-e-Bangla Hall and M Keramat Ali Hall and ransacked the rooms.

In Gaibandha, Chhatra League and Shibir activists clashed in Palashbari upazila Tuesday night leaving at least 15 people injured. Chhatra League men also attacked the local Jamaat office, sources said.

Chhatra League activists set ablaze the Jamaat-Shibir office at Anantapur of Habiganj and vandalised the Jamaat office in Mehendiganj of Barisal last night.

## Govt takes

FROM PAGE 16

Education Board, and Madrasa Education Board by March 15, he added.

Nahid said the education ministry will compile the data and hand over the total demand for books to NCTB after March 15, and the textbook board will start printing the books right after that.

He said during printing and distribution of free school textbooks for this academic year the ministry found that the initial total number of students collected in October last year later increased by 16 percent, causing some problems in the distribution.

The government will take actions against those people who created problems through non-cooperation with the government during distribution of books for this year, the minister added.

Seeking cooperation from all, he said, "We want to complete the job more smoothly, and we hope that we will be able to print the books and distribute them before the classes start next year."

About updating the curriculum, he said the government wants to introduce modern curriculum at all levels of the school system, but that will take time as it is a huge task.

Regarding admission trade in schools, he said the government is taking specific steps to curb the practice.

"We have already launched online admission process, and will expand it next year to tackle such problems," he said.

Members of the committee and high officials of the education ministry were present at the meeting.

## INVITATION FOR TENDERS

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Under an agreement between the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and the Government of Canada, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has provided funds for the **Strengthening of Comptrollership and Oversight of Public Expenditure (SCOPE) Project**. The SCOPE project intends to apply part of the allocation of this credit to payments under the contract for: **Supply, Installation and Configuration of a wide area network and related information systems for the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General**.

Cowater International Inc., the Canadian implementing agency of the SCOPE project now invites sealed tenders from eligible bidders for the supply of related goods/services. The Tender package describes three sub-systems. Bidders are required to submit bids for all sub-systems together as one proposal.

A complete set of bidding documents in the English language will be available upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Taka Three Thousand, for which a receipt will be issued. Bidding documents are available at the address below, during working hours

SCOPE Project  
C/o CIDA Program Support Unit  
House 19, Road No. 3  
Block K (Off Park Road)  
Baridhara, Dhaka-1212  
Bangladesh

Tel: 8824740-44

**BIDS WILL BE ACCEPTED UNTIL 2:00 p.m. THURSDAY 11 MARCH 2010**  
Site visits may be arranged by contacting the following:

Mr. Peter J. Armstrong  
Field Project Manager  
SCOPE Project  
2nd 12-Storeyed Government Building (9th floor)  
Segunbagicha, Dhaka-1000

Tel: 9335363 or 9335357