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Burnt warehouse lacked fire safety

One more victim dies; reasons for blaze still unknown; probe body formed

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and KAILASH SARKAR

The warehouse of Goodnight Mosquito Coil and Spray at the capital's Khilkhet had no fire-extinguishers and the workers there were not trained to do their jobs properly.

Statements of workers and warehouse authorities vary sharply. And mystery shrouds what actually the workers were doing in the warehouse when it went up in flames. It is still to be ascertained what caused the fire.

The blaze at the warehouse on Friday night killed six workers, five on the spot, and left five others critically injured. The deceased workers are Almas, Tofazzal, Aminul, Yusuf, Russel and Anwar. Of them, Russel, Yusuf, Tofazzal and Aminur were of the same family.

The injured were having treatment at the

Burn and Plastic Surgery unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). Six of them were brought in early yesterday, but Anwar, 26, succumbed to his injuries.

According to sources, the fire broke out when workers, basically labourers with little skill, were puncturing cans to let out the chemicals and gases. The cans had expired their best-before-use dates.

They said the liquid chemical from the punctured cans was kept in large barrels that also caught fire, resulting in a blow up.

On June 3, the Nimtoli inferno claimed the lives of 123 people in the capital and afterwards the government took several measures to ensure that flammable chemicals are not handled or stored in populated areas. This fire is

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Salma Begum keeps vigil by the bedside of her son Jewel Mollah at Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday. Jewel had most of his body burned severely in Friday night's fire at an anti-mosquito spray warehouse in the capital.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Salma's dream shattered in Khilkhet fire

RAKIB AHAMMED

Salma Begum could not set out for Dhaka when she heard that her son suffered severe burns in the warehouse fire on Friday night. She did not have the money to travel.

The mother finally managed to borrow Tk 2,000 from neighbours yesterday morning to reach Dhaka Medical College Hospital where her son Jewel Mollah, 24, was undergoing treatment with almost cent percent burn injuries.

Jewel of Bagerhat is one of the victims of the devastating fire at the capital's Khilkhet.

Five more injured are also undergoing treatment at DMCH. Of them, four are in "very critical" condition, as most of their bodies were

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Somali pirates seize ship heading for Bangladesh

AFP, Nairobi

Somali pirates yesterday captured a Thai bulk carrier with its 27 crew members in the Arabian Sea, a maritime official said.

The Thor Nexus was seized in the early hours while on its way to Bangladesh from the United Arab Emirates. All its crew members are Thai, said Andrew Mwangura of the East African Seafarers Assistance

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SHERPUR BORDER Grenade, ammo found again

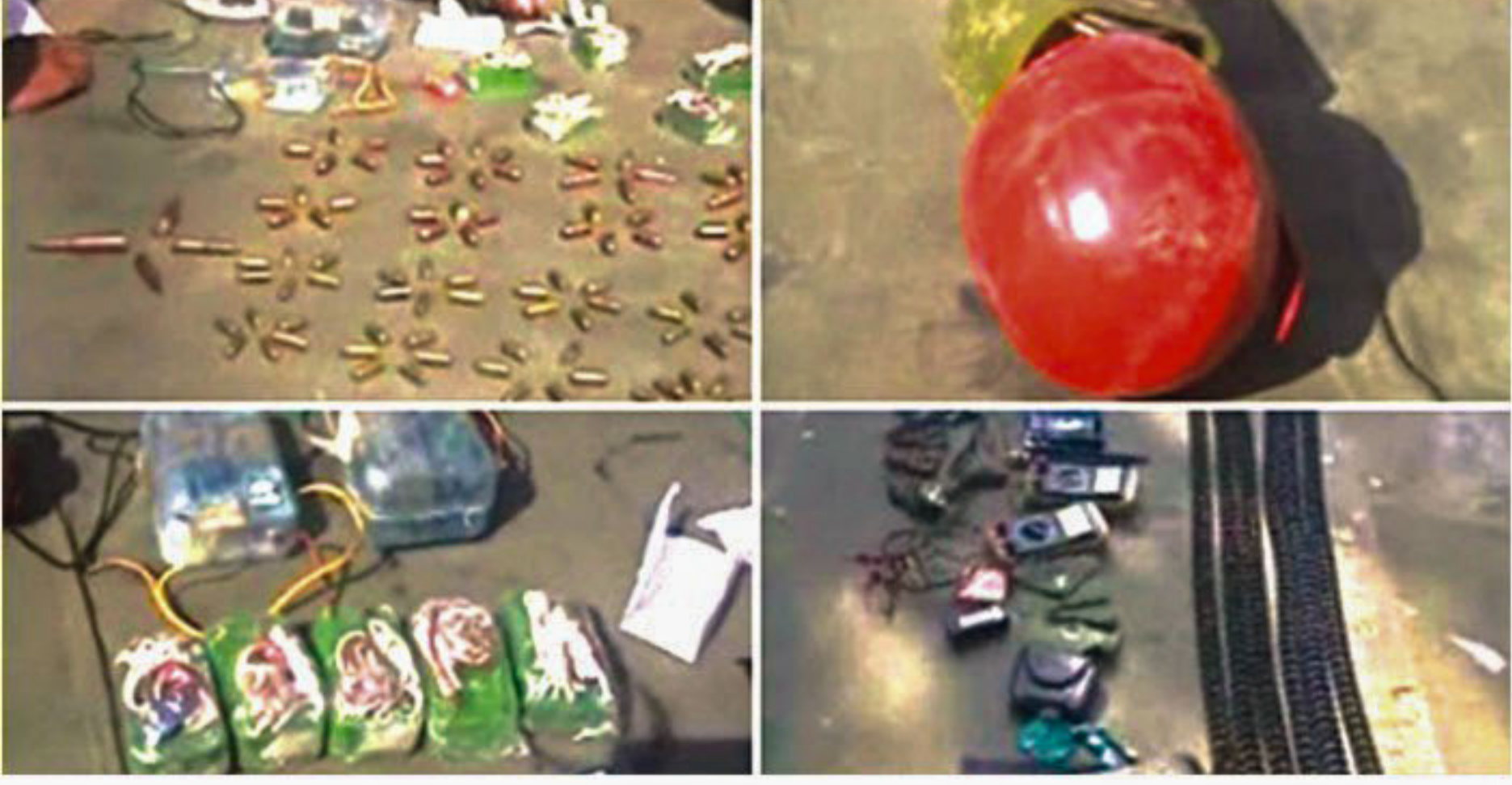
OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) personnel recovered ammunition including bullets, fuses used for detonating mines and a grenade from bordering Bakakura village in Jhenaigati upazila of Sherpur district yesterday.

Police and BDR sources said, on information a team led by Company Commander Mafizul Islam of BDR Nakshi Camp in Jhenaigati rushed to the spot and recovered 97 bullets of pistol, rifle, light machine gun (LMG); a hand grenade, seven fuses, three satellite phone sets and a mobile set in an abandoned state around 12:45pm.

The team also recovered huge quantity of paper and

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Television grabs show the bullets, grenade, detonators and switches recovered by the border guards from Jhenaigati upazila in Sherpur yesterday.

Govt moves to formulate anti-stalking guidelines

Proposal for increasing jail term for offenders

ASHUTOSH SARKAR with PANKAJ KARMAKAR

The government has taken a host of decisions that include formulation of a policy and guidelines, and enactment of a law providing for up to seven years' imprisonment to prevent incidents of stalking in the country.

The Women and Children Repression Prevention Act, 2003 will be amended to

ensure strict enforcement of it in fighting stalking. Moreover, steps will be taken for proper application of the ICT Act and Cyber Crime Act.

And to stop sexual harassment in educational institutions, a law will be made in consistency with different international laws and conventions.

The decisions were taken at an inter-ministerial meeting in the wake of last

month's High Court directives to the government concerning stalking of women and girls with tragic consequences, sources at the attorney general's office said.

The meeting was held on November 4 at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) with Principal Secretary Md Abdul Karim in the chair.

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PM sits with intelligence men today

'Possible threat' to national security to be discussed

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister (PM) Sheikh Hasina will sit with the intelligence agencies today to review the current law and order situation, including possible threat to national security.

Sources at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said

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Today's hartal postponed after talks with govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sammilita Ulama Mashaikh Parishad yesterday postponed today's countrywide dawn-to-dusk hartal following a negotiation with the government.

"We've decided to postpone the hartal, as the government has assured us of addressing our demands in phases and also for the sake of Christians' biggest festival Christmas," Abdul Latif Nezami, secretary general of Islami Oikya Jote, told a press briefing at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

On December 8, the parishad, a forum of religion-based parties, called a hartal for today protesting some provisions in the new education policy.

Their demand included removal of the director general of the Islamic Foundation and making madrasa education a specialised one instead of generalising it as has been envisaged in the policy.

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Grameen does not require registration with MRA

It clarifies reports

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Grameen Bank does not require registration with the Microcredit Regulatory Authority (MRA) to run microfinance activities since the bank operates under a special ordinance, the bank has said.

The clarification came yesterday following news reports that the parliamentary standing committee on the finance ministry has raised questions about the legitimacy of bank's microcredit operations.

The MRA is the state-run agency to monitor and supervise microfinance operations of non-governmental organisations in Bangladesh, and it is mandatory for an NGO to obtain licence from the MRA to operate microlending operations.

Organisations set up under the Societies Registration Act 1860, the Trust Act 1882, the Voluntary Social Welfare Agencies (Registration and Control) Ordinance 1961, Cooperatives Act 2001 and

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MTB opens 65th Branch in Habiganj, where Haor touches the horizon...

Grand Opening Sunday, December 26, 2010

MTB Habiganj Branch Jamil Complex 5706 Shayesta Nagar, Habiganj 3301 Contact: 017 3278 6417

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