



A trawler begins to sink after it caught fire when its engine exploded killing two fishermen and injuring four others in the Karnaphuli river in Chittagong city's Fishery Ghat area yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## Qaeda trying to enter Assam

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remain cautious," Gogoi told a press conference here.

The global terrorist outfit had earlier too tried to set up links in the north east and Assam in association with insurgent groups here but failed to do so, he said.

Asked specifically if al-Qaeda has any link with the banned ULFA, Gogoi said, "I think they have links. Even if there is no direct link as of now, they have tacit understanding... They never

criticise each other."

The chief minister said security forces have received intelligence report that there are possibilities of some incidents during the forthcoming Durga Puja.

Earlier this week, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said Indian Muslims will live and die for the country and would not dance to the tune of al-Qaeda.

On September 4, the Centre had

sounded a country-wide alert after an al-Qaeda video surfaced in which the terror outfit threatened to carry out campaign in India and the initial assessment of Intelligence Bureau found the tape to be genuine.

The US media and intelligence agencies had said al-Qaeda has established a new branch to wage 'jihad' in the south Asia including India and, return the Islamic rule and impose sharia in the Indian sub-continent.

shall I buy it now?" Jayasree lamented.

Chirasree, too, alluded frequently to Margaret Mitchell's classic novel "Gone with the Wind" in the past few weeks. Having finished it, she talked a lot about Scarlett, the protagonist, and her survival with her mother.

The siblings virtually had no friends and kept to themselves. They seldom hung out with others and preferred to spend time at home.

Jayasree said she faced financial hardship following her divorce. Back then her brothers and sisters helped her in different ways but her children always felt embarrassed to receive any help from their maternal uncles or aunts.

Jayasree said she recently shared with her children that her job at Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha will not be extended after December this year. The siblings became more frustrated since then.

They have gone through a lot of

financial distress and were not prepared to take anymore in the coming days, she said. They sometimes cursed their mother for giving birth to them as all they saw was their mother's struggle.

"Perhaps no other knows what ill-fate means better than I do," she said.

Both the children said her goodbye when she had left home for office on Monday. "Chirasree was swaying over the phone when I last talked to her around 9:30pm that day," said Jayasree.

Psychiatrist Mekhala Sarkar, an assistant professor at the National Institute of Mental Health, said it is not a common phenomenon in our society for two siblings to commit suicide together.

Personality disorder or severe depression emanating from family incidents and the surrounding environment may drive persons to take their lives, she said.

Some leaders, he said, always create crisis for the organisation as they sometimes challenge the party supremo.

Criticising the BNP for calling a hartal, Tofail Ahmed said hajj flights are being operated now and people are busy with preparations for the ensuing Eid-ul-Azha and thus the shutdown will create sufferings for the Muslims.

Khalid Mahamud Chowdhury, organising secretary of AL, said some BNP leaders are now communicating with us to join the Awami League as they realised that their top leader committed a mistake by not contesting the January 5 election. AL leaders Mahbubul Alam Hanif and Abdur Razzak backed Khalid's claim.

The meeting formed 10 committees to monitor the AL's organisational activities in seven divisions. The last meeting of the party's advisory council was held on August 17 last year.

Abdul Latif Siddique, AL presidium member, lambasted party senior leaders Amir Hossain Amu and Tofail Ahmed for their roles during the political changeover in 2007.

Meanwhile, at least 12 people, including four policemen, were injured, as activists of Jamaat and its student body Islami Chhatra Shibir exploded crude bombs at Mirpur-10 in the capital and Sonadighir Mor in Rajshahi city.

Jamaat-Shibir men threw bombs at law enforcers from a procession at Benarashi Palli in Mirpur around 9:00am, leaving two policemen injured, said Syed Ziauzzaman, officer-in-charge of Pallabi Police Station.

Police later arrested Shibir activist Sanaullah, a student of Homeopathic Medical College in Mirpur, and recovered three crude bombs from the spot, he added.

In Rajshahi city, at least 10 people, including two police constables, were injured, as Jamaat-Shibir men clashed

with police.

Witnesses said Jamaat-Shibir activists brought out a procession from Sonadighir Mor around 8:00am. They hurled a crude bomb at a police vehicle, prompting the law enforcers to swing into action.

SM Sobhan, officer-in-charge of Boalia Police Station, said the attackers exploded at least 10 crude bombs during the clash while police fired around 100 bullets and tear gas shells to disperse them.

Five Jamaat-Shibir men were arrested from the spot, he said.

Jamaat claimed five of its Rajshahi city leaders were badly injured in police action.

Jamaat and Shibir held protest programmes across the country yesterday demanding Sayeedee's release.

## Family members meet Sayeedee at Kashimpur jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Family members of Jamaat-e-Islami leader Delawar Hossain Sayeedee met him at Kashimpur Central Jail yesterday, two days after the Supreme Court commuted his capital punishment to jail until death for committing crimes against humanity during the Liberation War.

Sayeedee's wife, three sons and a niece met him for around 30 minutes for the first time after the SC verdict.

"My father is dissatisfied with the [SC] verdict... He believes that he is a victim of the government's political vengeance in what is a politically motivated case," his son Masood Sayeedee told The Daily Star last night.

"He seeks blessings from people so that he can come out of the jail to dedicate his life for the service of Quran," said Masood quoting his father.

He added that his father's health condition was quite well.

The SC on Wednesday commuted Sayeedee's death sentence handed down by the International Crimes Tribunal-1 on February 28 last year on charges of killing, abduction, torture, rape and forced religious conversion.

A five-member bench of the apex court, headed by Chief Justice Md Muzammel Hossain, delivered the verdict based on majority views that spared the 74-year-old Jamaat nayeb-e-ameer gallows.

## The last show

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Azizul Islam and Bijan Chowdhury when suddenly the veteran tabla player collapsed on the stage.

The 75-year-old pundit was whisked off to a nearby hospital where he was declared dead, said Ahmed Iqbal Haider, director of TIC.

"His [Pundit Bijan] wish came true," said Dolan Kanungo, a famed guitar player. "Last Saturday [September 13] I had an opportunity to do rehearsals with him at my residence... that day he told me he wished to leave the world while playing his tabla."

Pundit Bijan was a true tabla artiste, who dedicated his life to classical music, said Poet Arun Dasgupta.

Born on November 4, 1939 in Brahmanbaria, Bijan took tabla lessons from Pundit Shih Shankar Mitra and Ustad Ershad Ali Khan.

He lived with his wife and two sons at Hemsen Lane in the port city. He accompanied numerous famous artistes of India, Bangladesh and Pakistan at home and abroad. Most of the famous tabla players of Chittagong are his students.

The body of Pundit Bijan was taken to Chittagong Central Shahid Minar yesterday at 11:00am when different socio-cultural organisations and teachers and students of music schools paid their last respect by laying floral wreaths there.

"It is still unbelievable to me that this is how he left us all," said Ustad Azizul Islam.

"He [Pundit Bijan] has been accompanying me for 40 years with his tabla. From now, his face will appear before me whenever I will perform before an audience."

He was the finest classical tabla player the country had, Ustad Azizul Islam said.

## British Council's

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activities in about 110 countries, its Deputy Chair Baroness Prashar said many libraries had been however closed across the world over the last 10 years.

"Our British council libraries have been reduced from 225 across the global network to around 20," she said, adding that in South Asia, most libraries survived.

However, memberships have dropped in Bangladesh too, and many books and journals had to be removed between 2007 and 2013, Sarwat Masuda Reza, the council's resource centre manager, told The Daily Star.

British High Commissioner Robert W Gibson hoped that the newly furnished library would be a knowledge hub of the 21st century and would offer more than just books.

Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, the chief guest, reflected on how the council had been a learning centre for generations of Bangladeshis and hoped for its continuation.

## Politicians should

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Nagorik, or SHUJAN, organised it at a restaurant in Rajshahi city.

Prof Majumdar said it was normal for the parties to have differences in opinions in a democracy, and the government should respect those dissent views.

Dilip Kumar Roy, central coordinator of SHUJAN, presented the draft of a national charter.

SHUJAN's Rajshahi district unit president Prof Jalal Uddin Sarder presided over the programme and general secretary Dr Hemayetul Islam Arif moderated it.

The supporters of Ranga allegedly hurled several crude bombs at the

## PM leaves for US tonight

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from Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport at 9:30pm.

The flight is expected to reach John F Kennedy International Airport in New York at 8:25am (local time) on Monday.

According to govt sources, Hasina is leading a nearly 200-member delegation to the UNGA this year, the biggest entourage since her taking office in 2009.

The entourage members include the finance, foreign, health, expatriate welfare and food ministers. Several MPs, officials of different ministries, eminent citizens, journalists and around 70 businessmen are also accompanying Hasina.

Last year in the 68th UNGA, the prime minister led a 134-member delegation.

The theme of this year's UNGA general debate is 'Delivering on and Implementing a Transformative Post-2015 Development Agenda.'

The UNGA is likely to adopt the UN's Post 2015 Development Agenda as the time-frame for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) expires next year.

Hasina is expected to deliver her speech, as usual in Bangla, on September 27 at the UNGA on behalf of Bangladesh, said foreign ministry officials.

She in her speech would focus on international peace and security, democracy and good governance, Bangladesh's leading role in women empowerment, rights of migrant workers.

## Dhaka for fresh

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India later wrote off \$200 million of the \$1 billion credit as grant.

"We are expanding our cooperation in diverse areas. Bangladesh wants to be India's number one friend," Mahmood Ali said at a press conference at Taj Mansingh Hotel yesterday, wrapping up his four-day visit during which he met top Indian leaderships including President Pranab Mukherjee and Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Bangladesh would offer land to Indian companies to set up exclusive economic zones, he added.

However, the foreign minister-level talks that concluded yesterday saw no headway in the longstanding issues of the Land Boundary Agreement (LBA) and the Teesta water sharing deal, reports our New Delhi correspondent.

Despite this, Ali said, "We are very happy about the outcome of the JCC".

He also said that he was not disappointed at the fact that no headway was made on the Teesta and the LBA issues.

"We understand the problems and hope that something will come up... things will happen and relations between the two countries are on an upswing," he said.

The minister said during his meeting with opposition Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad yesterday, he had raised both the issues. "We have been assured that all political parties and people of India are in it together."

Asked whether this included Mamata Banerjee's West Bengal government, Ali said, "Everyone is a partner in enhancing cooperation between Bangladesh and India".

The foreign minister said Bangladesh was hopeful about early signing of the pacts.

"If the political relationship is good, then everything will fall into place... Everything is actually falling into place," he added.

Asked when jailed ULFA leader Anup Chetia will be extradited to India, Mahmood Ali refused to give a timeframe but said it would take place "soon".

On reports claiming money from Saradha chit fund scam in West Bengal found its way to Jamaat-e-Islami in Bangladesh, the minister said his government did not have any information about it.

At the press conference, Indian foreign ministry spokesperson Syed Akbaruddin said the water sharing was a "sensitive" issue that needs to be addressed in a manner that would be fair, equitable, and have no negative impact on any of the parties.

Referring to his meeting with Narendra Modi on Friday, Ali said he was touched the way Modi hailed the contribution of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his daughter and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to Bangladesh.

"When I briefly recounted the history of Bangladesh after the killing of Bangabandhu and the return of Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister Modi responded by saying Bangabandhu had created the country and his daughter Sheikh Hasina saved it," he said.

Ali said the relationship between the two countries was "forged in the blood that we shed together during the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War."

## 15 hurt as JP men clash

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On Friday, convening committees of both district and city units announced a rally yesterday at Rangpur Public Library ground.

On the same day, activists loyal to Ranga also called another rally at the same venue protesting Ranga's removal from the presidium post and dissolution of previous district and city unit committees.

Sensing an intra-party clash, the district administration on Friday night imposed section 144 from 6:00am to 6:00pm yesterday at the Public Library ground and its adjacent areas to avert any untoward incidents.

Due to the imposition of section 144, both JP factions postponed their rallies.

The convening committees, however, brought out a procession from Ershad's paternal home in the New Senpara area.

The supporters of Ranga allegedly hurled several crude bombs at the

procession, reports our Rangpur correspondent, quoting eyewitness.

"The procession came under attack when it was crossing Shapla Chhatar area at around 12:30pm leaving at least 15 JP men injured," said Hossain Mokbul Shahriar, nephew of Ershad and member secretary of JP Rangpur district convening committee.

Ershad's supporters too counter-attacked supporters of Ranga with sharp weapons, turning the Shapla Chhatar area into a battle ground for about 15 minutes.

Samsul Haque, joint general secretary of the dissolved district Jatiya Party refuted the allegation, saying none of them were involved in the attack.

"They [Ershad's supporters] blasted crude bombs and blamed us for it," he said.

The injured were taken to the Rangpur Medical College and Hospital.