



Police officials visiting the Jatra Pandal near the Kantaji Temple which came under a bomb attack yesterday. Abdul Jabbar, right, who was injured in the attack on the Raaspujima Mela, receiving treatment at the Dinajpur Medical College Hospital.

## Bomb blasts near Kantaji Temple

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victims. The site was about 500 yards from the temple.

Some 10 to 15 policemen, including the OC, were present there when the explosion occurred.

The injured were rushed to Dinajpur Medical College Hospital.

They are Saidur, 25, Abdul Jabbar, 28, Uma Kanta Das, 22, Sadhan Gopal, 35, Mosaddek, 23, and Mithu, 30.

The condition of Saidur and Sadhan was critical, a doctor of the hospital told The Daily Star wishing not to be named.

Injured Mithu at the hospital said he had heard a big bang while enjoying jatra at the pandal.

"After a few seconds, I felt I was unable to walk as my left leg was critically injured," he said.

All the patients received splinters, said

the doctor.

Nurul Amin, superintendent of Dinajpur police, said the motive behind the attack was not clear.

Asked if the attack was carried out by militants, the SP said they were investigating the incident.

"It was a minor incident," said Sujjan Sarkar, assistant superintendent of police at the scene.

A circuit like mobile motherboard and an electric wire were found at the spot, which might have been used to cause the explosion, he added.

The SP said the primary investigation had concluded that the bomb was homemade but the investigators were not sure whether any mobile device had been used as trigger.

Amalendu Bhoumik, a member of the temple's governing body, said, "We are

shocked by the grisly attack."

The temple has been organising raaspujima mela since 1756. People from different parts of the country and abroad join the festival. Violence was unprecedented, said Amalendu.

"The government must find out the culprits and give them exemplary punishment," he added.

The authorities closed the jatra following the attack. However, the raaspujima mela would go on.

Meanwhile, a case was filed with Kaharol Police Station against some unnamed criminals, according to the SP.

Rights organisation Ain O Salish Kendra yesterday expressed deep concern over the attack and hoped that the government would find the real perpetrators and take proper actions so that such incidents do not recur.



PHOTO: STAR

## SHIA MOSQUE SHOOTING

### 2 arrestees sent to jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

A Bogra court yesterday sent two of the three men arrested in connection with the Shia Mosque killing case to jail after they had been on seven days remand each.

Arrestees Anower Hossain, 40, and Jewel Mia, 24, hail from Chokkanu village of Shibganj upazila in Bogra, where the incident took place.

Inspector (enquiry) Kamruzzaman Mia of Shibganj Police Station, also the investigation officer of the case, said police had not recovered any information worthy of mentioning from the men during the remand. He said police would ask for their remand again if deemed necessary.

Unidentified gunmen opened fire on the devotees of Shia faith in Al Mostafa Mosque in the village on the evening of Nov 26 killing one person and injuring three others.

Following the shooting, cashier of the mosque Shona Mia lodged a case with Shibganj Police Station the same night accusing unidentified criminals.

Later, police arrested three men in this connection and a Bogra court granted a police request and placed Anower and Jewel on seven days police remand each. It also placed the other arrestee -- Shamsul Alam -- on a five-day remand.

Alam was sent to jail Thursday afternoon.

## AL leader

### murdered in Demra

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unidentified assailants slew a ward-level Awami League leader in capital's Demra area yesterday.

The body of Enamul Haque Gias, 50, general secretary of ward-8 unit Awami League under Sarulia Union in Demra, was found in a plot of land surrounded by walls at Paschim Sanarpur, police said.

Locals first noticed the body around 11:00am inside a bush and informed police who recovered it and sent to Sir Salimullah Medical College morgue for an autopsy, Sirajul Islam Khan, inspector (investigation) of Demra Police Station said.

Morgue sources said apart from a slit-throat, the body also bore many injury marks, which suggest he was severely tortured before killing.

The motive of the killing and identity of the killers are not clear yet but police primarily suspect victim's enmity with others over a land dispute as the cause of the murder.

Police picked up a man for interrogation in this connection, said Syed Nurul Islam, deputy commissioner (Wari Division) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

Enamul used to deal in different land businesses and also take part in local arbitrations. He developed enmity with different people over the issues, Islam said, adding that police had begun an investigation into the killing.

Quoting family members, police said Enamul left his Paschim Sanarpur house after receiving a phone call. He did not return until the morning but the family was not alarmed as he often spent nights away from home.

No case was filed in this connection.

## SELECTION GRADE, TIME SCALE

# Govt looks for alternatives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government might incorporate alternatives to the existing selection grade and time scale in the new pay scale for public servants, said officials.

Sources at the finance and law ministries said the government gazette on the pay scale might be issued by this week.

Although it was a weekend yesterday, the law ministry worked on the vetting of the gazette throughout the day.

According to new provisions, the

staff serving at the ninth grade and below would be elevated to the next higher grade upon completion of 10 years in service satisfactorily.

If the same employee completes another six years in service, he would automatically be elevated to the next higher grade.

Thus, two elevation of the staff serving at the ninth grade and below would be guaranteed without promotions.

The pay scale has 20 grades.

Sources said Finance Minister AMA Muhith last month sent some alternative proposals to the prime minister

after discussing the issue with the cabinet committee on salary discrepancy and some stakeholders.

One of the proposals was on the alternative system for elevating staff from grade eight and upwards to higher grades.

He also made recommendations on reforming the posting policies of 27 cadres.

Law ministry officials said the draft of the government gazette did not accommodate all the recommendations of Muhith. Some of the suggestions would be implemented later through issuing circulars.

## EC turns a blind eye

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Besides, ruling party lawmakers in some places accompanied AL candidates during the submission of nomination papers. Some photographs of their doing so were published in the media as well.

But, the EC officials say they haven't even noticed it.

EC Secretary Sirazul Islam said, "We have not received any allegation of the violation of electoral code on that day. If we had received complaints, we would definitely have taken actions."

When his attention was drawn to the news reports, he said, "We usually take note of news reports on any irregularities. But in this case, we did not notice the issue."

Shafiqul Islam Shimul, AL lawmaker from Natore-2, accompanied the party-endorsed mayor hopefuls of Natore and Naldanga municipalities to RO Sharmin Akhter Jahan's office on Thursday.

But RO Sharmin, also the upazila nirbahali officer of Natore Sadar, thinks there was nothing wrong in this.

"As far as I know, MPs cannot join electoral campaigns that will start after the allocation of electoral symbols [on December 14]. There is no legal bar on MPs to accompanying a candidate during the submission of nomination papers," she told The Daily Star.

The electoral code, however, prohibits MPs from joining all sorts of election activities.

Dhaka-20 lawmaker MA Malek too went with the AL favourite in Dhamrai municipality to the RO's office.

However, Syed Shariful Islam, the RO, yesterday said he did not notice whether the MP had gone with the candidate.

Also on Thursday, Dhaka zila parishad administrator Hasina Dowla and Savar upazila parishad's panel chairman Parvej Dewan joined an electoral campaign for the AL's mayor aspirant in Savar, using government vehicles.

The code of conduct does not allow use of government facilities in electoral activities.

Savar RO Shah Alam said, "I did not find any such violation. Nobody filed any complaint either. Now that you [reporter] have raised the matter, I will look into it."

In Tarabo municipality of Narayanganj, AL-backed mayor candidate Hasina Gazi went to submit the nomination paper with a motorcade of over 150 buses and minibuses and more than 50 motorbikes.

Tarabo RO Lokman Hossain said he was aware of the incident. "I have directed the law enforcement agencies to investigate it. I will take action on the basis of their report."

All sorts of showdowns, processions and motor rallies are forbidden during submission of nomination papers.

Apart from these, AL candidates staged showdowns and brought out processions in some other places, including Golapganj, Kanaipur and Jakiganj of Sylhet; Harinakunda and Shaikupa of Jhenidah; Madhobdi of Narsingdi; Sreepur of Gazipur; eight municipalities in Tangail; Munshiganj and Mirkadim of Munshiganj and Jakiganj of Sylhet, according to news reports.

RO Fazle Azim of Munshiganj municipality said, "Until now, I knew nothing about violation of the code. If anyone files a complaint, we definitely will take actions."

Candidates can face a fine of Tk 50,000 or a six-month's jail term or both and even lose their candidacies for flouting the electoral code of conduct.

Former election commissioner M Sakhawat Hussain thinks the EC should not keep waiting for formal complaints.

"Instead, it should play a proactive role in taking actions [for violation of the code] on the basis of news reports as the media plays the role of a watchdog during elections," he told The Daily Star.

## Police move vexes people

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passport, driving licence and national ID numbers.

A Dhanmondi resident said some cops went to their building several days ago to distribute the forms. His flat owner gave him one to fill in, but he said he would return it to the cops without filling it in.

He said he did not trust police, given the widespread allegations that some of its members often harass people, torture citizens in custody, extort money from them and even kill them.

"I have a hunch that my personal details will not be safe," he said, asking not to be named.

A private company employee, who lives in Mohammadpur, said he did not share his information with cops because of his past experience.

He claimed once he sought help from the police when he was in trou-

ble, but police did not do anything.

**THE DETAILS**

The form for house and flat owners asks for 17 types of information with a photograph.

These are the individual's name, father's name, date of birth, marital status, the type of house, present and permanent address, religion, occupation and workplace address, educational qualification, cell number and email ID, national ID number, passport number, contact person, names and details of domestic help, driver and security guard (along with their photos).

The tenant's form asks for 15 types of information and a photograph and the one for mess owners and dwellers 13 types of information and a photograph.

**CENTRAL DATABASE**

Police officials said collecting citizen

information was part of their plan to create a central database.

It was seen in the past that militants took shelter briefly in the city, committed crimes and then fled. With the database, it will be easier for the police to catch the criminals, said Abu Bakar Siddique, officer-in-charge of Shabbag Police Station.

Asked if police launched any campaign to inform the public about the initiative, Muntasirul Islam, deputy commissioner (media) of DMP, said there was no formal publicity. But he claimed police have been informing people about the plan in various meetings and seminars.

But what about people's loss of trust in the police? Muntasirul called on people to "have faith in them and help them".

**'NOT MUCH TRUST'**

Nur Khan, director of Ain o Salish

Kendra, said there should have been an announcement from the government before police started collecting information from citizens.

Police also should explain to the people the purpose of the initiative and how the information would be handled, he added.

"People are already panicked. Moreover, they do not have much trust in the police," he told The Daily Star by phone.

National Human Rights Commission Chairman Mizanur Rahman said law enforcers maintaining a citizen database was not unusual in developed countries. And citizens in those countries have no problem with that because there is rule of law there.

"But here in our country the context is different. There are allegations that police often harass people," he said.