



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 Raaspurnima Mela, receiving treatment at the Dinajpur Medical College Hospital.

PHOTO: STAR

Bomb blasts near Kantaji Temple

FROM PAGE 1 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 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 Sujan 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 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."

Nurul Amin, superintendent of The temple has been organising Dinajpur police, said the motive behind raaspurnima 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 raaspurnima 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.

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

According to new provisions, the

staff serving at the ninth grade and after discussing the issue with the below would be elevated to the next cabinet committee on salary discrephigher 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 promo-

The pay scale has 20 grades. Sources said Finance Minister AMA Muhith last month sent some alterna-

tive proposals to the prime minister

ancy 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 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.

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.

Besides, ruling party lawmakers in

some places accompanied AL candi-

dates during the submission of nomi-

nation papers. Some photographs of

their doing so were published in the

But, the EC officials say they haven't

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

When his attention was drawn to

the news reports, he said, "We usually

take note of news reports on any irreg-

ularities. But in this case, we did not

Shafiqul Islam Shimul, AL law-

maker from Natore-2, accompanied

the party-endorsed mayor hopefuls of

Natore and Naldanga municipalities

to RO Sharmin Akhter Jahan's office

But RO Sharmin, also the upazila

"As far as I know, MPs cannot join

nirbahi officer of Natore Sadar, thinks

electoral campaigns that will start

after the allocation of electoral sym-

bols [on December 14]. There is no

legal bar on MPs to accompanying a

candidate during the submission of

there was nothing wrong in this.

would definitely have taken actions."

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media as well.

even noticed it.

notice the issue."

on Thursday.

candidate.

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 crimi-

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 remands each. It also placed the other arrestee -- Shamsul Alam -- on a fiveday remand.

afternoon.

AL leader murdered in Demra

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unidentified assailants slew a wardlevel 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 Sanarpar, 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 Alam was sent to jail Thursday | 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 Sanarpar 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.

The blueprint for massacre

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"Tikka resorted to the killing of civilians and scorched-earth policy," Niazi wrote. "These orders were carried out in letter and spirit by Major General Farman and Brigadier Janzeb Arbab in Dhaka."

Niazi in his book mentions how

Major Gen Rao Farman who was responsible to carry out killings in Dhaka city had envisioned his plan. Niazi writes: "Major Gen Rao

Farman had written in his table diary, 'Green land of East Pakistan will be painted red'. It was painted red by Bengali blood."

The diary was found by the Bangali freedom fighters when they entered the Governor's House after the fall of Dhaka in December, 1971.

The genocide plan was set in motion with the Pakistani military starting a secret troops buildup mission in Dhaka. There were 10 battalions until then numbering around 10,000 troops. But the paramilitary border protection force, East Pakistan Rifles (EPR), mostly staffed with Bangali soldiers, had a strength of 12,000 troops.

The Pakistanis felt its troops were insufficient to face off the EPR, which they thought would revolt once the crackdown began.

The military planners arranged to fly in plain-clothes troops every nal. night by Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) flights into Tejgaon Airport so that no suspicion was raised among the Bangalis. This continued until March 1.

Salik writes: "The Bengali brigade major was kept out of this arrangement for reasons of security."

But the sinister move soon raised suspicions. Why were loads of tough-looking guys arriving every night, asked the Bangali ground crew. The Bangali staff refused to handle these secret flights.

"The Bengali staffs of PIA, Dacca were the first to boycott their work," Salik wrote. "They refused to handle the flights which brought troops (22 Baluch and 13 Frontier Force) from Karachi. Two Bengali youths even tried to blow up a Boeing but they were forestalled by the Pakistan Air Forces, which took over the flight handling and airport management from March 1."

"The 9 Division from Quetta, under Major General Nazar Hussain Shah, and 17 Division from Kharian, under Major General Shaukat Raja, were being flown in. The troops arrived with personal or light weapons," General Khadim Husain Raja, who spearheaded the genocide outside Dhaka, writes in his book "Stranger in my own country."

A separate ship brought their weapons and ammunitions. Seven thousand tons of ammunitions were brought in on the MV Swat.

The military had also planned to neutralize the EPR at Peelkhana, the headquarters of the paramilitary forces, and the police at Rajarbagh, the police HQ. These forces were manned by Bangalis. They were to be disarmed or killed.

The theatre was set by the Pakistan army. It was now a wait to raise the curtain, a wait for the sig-

"Major General Khadim Hussain was brooding over the possible outcome of political talks on March 25 when his green telephone rang at about 11 am. Lt. Gen Tikka Khan was on the line. He said, 'Khadim, it is tonight,'" Brigadier General Siddik Salik, who served the as the public relations officer as a major in the Pakistan army, wrote in his book "Witness to Surrender."

There was no written order, only a phone call to start the annihilation of a nation.

Immediately orders were passed down and troops got busy. Their preparation in no way was to quell any political unrest, it was a fullfledged preparation for war. War can be against an armed opposition. Here the opposition was sleeping civilians and so it turned out to be a preparation for genocide.

"I saw some junior officers hustling about mustering some extra recoilless rifles, getting additional ammunition issued, a defective mortar sight replaced," Salik wrote about March 25 night. "The tank crew, brought from Rangpur (29 Cavalry) a few days earlier, hurried with their task to oil six rusty M-24s for use at night."

But before that, President Yahya Khan had met General Tikka, Gen Hamid, Mitha, Iftekhar, Khuda Dad, and Omar at the residence of General Tikka Khan. "There we were instructed at around 6 pm to carry out the operation," Rao Farman Ali wrote in his book "How Pakistan Got Divided."

The nature of the operation is evident in Farman Ali's writing: "The ensuing operation was not same as other usual army operation. A usual army operation is carried out in aid to civil government... There was a need to use the force to restore the government's authorities. It was

necessary to suppress a mutiny." And force they used, blasting away a sleeping population, using flamethrowers and cannons and all

other weapons at their disposal. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who was chief political mastermind of this massacre, "remained behind to see what Tikka did," Niazi wrote. "Bhutto saw Dhaka burning and heard the cries of the people, the crackle of burning material, the roar of tanks, the boom of guns and rockets and the rattle of machine guns."

Kendra, said there should have been an

announcement from the government

before police started collecting infor-

people the purpose of the initiative

and how the information would be

Moreover, they do not have much trust

in the police," he told The Daily Star by

Police also should explain to the

"People are already panicked.

National Human Rights

Commission Chairman Mizanur

Rahman said law enforcers maintain-

ing a citizen database was not

unusual in developed countries. And

mation from citizens.

handled, he added.

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 "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 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).

CENTRAL DATABASE

The tenant's form asks for 15 types of information and a photograph and the one for mess owners and dwellers in the police? Muntasirul called on 13 types of information and a photograph. them".

'NOT MUCH TRUST'

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 Shahbagh 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

citizens in those countries have no problem with that because there is rule people to "have faith in them and help

of law there.

"But here in our country the context is different. There are allegations that police often harass people," he Police officials said collecting citizen Nur Khan, director of Ain o Salish

nomination papers," she told The Daily Star.

hibits MPs from joining all sorts of will take actions." 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 duct. RO, yesterday said he did not notice whether the MP had gone with the

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.

EC turns a blind eye 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 microbuses 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 Shailkupa 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 Munshigani municipality said, "Until now, I knew nothing about violation of the code. If The electoral code, however, pro- anyone files a complaint, we definitely 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 con-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.

from the police when he was in trou-