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Dhaka North City Corporation men demolish an illegal structure to recover the Karwan Bazar car park in the capital yesterday. Several unauthorised shops were also knocked down near the kitchen market there. *Below right*, the area after the drive.

PHOTO: SK EnAMUL HaQ



Karwan Bazar car parking space cleared

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The authorities of Dhaka North City Corporation in an eviction drive yesterday recovered Karwan Bazar car park from decades-old illegal occupation.

They also freed major roads at Karwan Bazar kitchen market from unauthorised street vendors, who kept more than half of the wide roads occupied for years in connivance with local thugs and a clique of law enforcers.

The main thoroughfares and surrounding areas of Karwan Bazar, one of the busiest commercial hubs in the capital, remain congested with hundreds of vehicles parked haphazardly, leaving the designated car park illegally occupied for decades.

Unauthorised parking of buses, pick-up trucks, private cars, rickshaws, rickshaw vans and pushcarts along with scores of street vendors create bottlenecks

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'EC, AL join hands to rig UP elections'

Alleges BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP has alleged that the ruling Awami League and the Election Commission are plotting to ensure victories for the AL candidates in the union parishad polls through electoral irregularities, but the AL and the EC have brushed aside the allegations.

Local administration, election officials, and ruling party cadres have jointly chalked out a massive plan to elect AL's candidates unopposed, it said. A BNP delegation, led by its Joint Secretary General Rizvi Ahmed, yesterday met EC Secretary Sirazul Islam at the latter's office and submitted a letter, bringing allegations against polling officials and AL men.

In response, the EC said the BNP was raising allegations in a generalised manner instead of being specific. And the AL said it does not see anything wrong if AL candidates are elected unopposed because of the people's "confidence in the AL government".

After the meeting, Rizvi told reporters that at least 114 BNP candidates were out of the race due to obstructions from the AL men and election officers. At least 51 AL candidates were set to be elected unopposed, he said.

Homes of several BNP-backed chairman aspirants have been vandalised and looted and returning officers in some UPs cancelled nominations of BNP candidates on lame excuse, Rizvi alleged.

When the EC is supposed to act as the guardian, its officials are playing a biased role. The commission had turned into an order-bearer of the executive, he further alleged.

Polls to 738 UPs will be held on March 22 in first phase. For the first time in Bangladesh, elections for the post of chairman would be held on partisan lines and 16 political parties, out of 40, are taking part in the polls.

Meanwhile, the BNP has decided to send letters to upazila units, where the party-nominated aspirants could not file nominations, asking for explanation as to why the units failed to have their chairman aspirants' candidacy ensured.

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SAUDI-LED ALLIANCE Moscow initially surprised by Dhaka's joining

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Russia was initially surprised by Bangladesh joining the Saudi-led 34-nation "Islamic Alliance" to combat terrorism, but is not worried over the present activities of the coalition.

"Despite our initial astonishment upon [Bangladesh] joining this Saudi Arabia-led coalition, we are not, for the moment, taking care about further development of this coalition and its activities," said Russian Ambassador in Dhaka Alexander Nikolaev.

Responding to a question at DCAB Talk yesterday, he said the coalition has lost significance after the recent joint statement of the US and Russia on cessation of hostilities in Syria.

He said the Bangladesh foreign ministry "underlined" many times that troops from Bangladesh would be deployed following the UN Security Council resolutions.

Addressing the talk organised by the Diplomatic Correspondents Association, Bangladesh (DCAB) at the Jatiya Press



Alexander Nikolaev

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Cyborgs may soon become a reality



MAIL ONLINE

The US military has successfully implanted and tested its first 'brain modem' on an animal subject.

The tiny, implanted chip, developed by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (Darpa), uses a tiny sensor that travels through blood vessels, lodges in the brain and records neural activity.

Neurologists injected tiny sensors into livestock's veins and then recorded the electrical impulses that control the animals' movements for six months.

The sensor, called a 'stentrode', a combination of the words 'stent' and 'electrode', is the first step in the military's desire to allow soldiers to control machinery with their minds.

Hypothetically, this could allow servicemen to use the 'brain modem' to maneuver drones.

The stentrode is the size of a paperclip, flexible

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Huge amount of fertiliser kept out in the open

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

A huge quantity of urea fertiliser stored in the open in front of the Mahendranagar Warehouse in Lalmonirhat sadar upazila is at risk of being lost due to rainfall.

Workers of the Bangladesh Chemical Corporation at the warehouse complex told The Daily Star that urea fertiliser is routinely stored in the open due to lack of warehouse space.

Officer-in-charge of the warehouse Abdul Hanif said that the storage capacity for fertiliser is 9,000 tonnes, but the supply required for Lalmonirhat farmers is 23,000 tonnes. "A lot of fertiliser is stored outdoors," says Hanif, "but measures are not taken to protect it from rain."

The district's 51 registered fertiliser dealers have been taking supplies from the warehouse daily, Hanif said and believed that better

sEE PAGE 11 COL 3

DOUBLE MURDER Court decides on March 6 about charge against Rony

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court will announce its decision on March 6 whether it would frame charges against Bakhtiar Alam Rony, son of ruling Awami League lawmaker Pindu Khan, in connection with a double murder in the capital April last year.

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Twin suicide blasts kill 70 in Baghdad

REUTERS

A twin suicide bombing claimed by Islamic State killed 70 people in a Shi'ite district of Baghdad yesterday in the deadliest attack inside the capital this year, as militants launched an assault on its western outskirts.

Police sources said the suicide bombers were riding motorcycles and blew themselves up in a crowded mobile phone market in Sadr City, wounding more than 100 people in addition to the dead.

A Reuters witness saw pools of blood on the ground with slippers, shoes and mobile phones at the site of the blasts, which was sealed off to prevent further attacks.

In a statement circulated online, Islamic State said it was responsible for the blasts: "Our swords will not cease to cut off the heads of the rejectionist polytheists, wherever they are," it said, using derogatory terms for Shi'ite Muslims.

Iraqi forces backed by airstrikes from a US-led coalition have driven Islamic State back in the western Anbar province recently and are preparing for an offensive to retake the northern city of Mosul.

But the militants are still able to strike outside territory they control, often targeting members of Iraq's Shi'ite majority, most recently on Thursday when two Islamic State suicide bombers killed 15 people at a mosque in the capital.

Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi said the attacks were in response to Islamic State's recent defeats: "This gang targeted civilians after it lost the initiative and its dregs fled the battlefield before our proud fighters," he said in his official

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A huge amount of urea fertiliser stacked under the open sky in front of a warehouse at Mahendranagar in Lalmonirhat due to storage space shortage. The fertiliser degrades if left out in the rain. The photo was taken on Saturday.

PHOTO: S DILIP ROY



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PRAYER TIMING
FEBRUARY 29

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
5-15	12-45	4-30	6-05	7-30

JaMAAT 5-50 1-15 4-45 6-10 8-00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION