

Kabul blast kills 30

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ground just days into the Muslim holy fasting month of Ramadan.

No group has so far claimed the powerful blast, which a Western diplomatic source said was caused by a mortar salvo of explosives packed inside a water tanker.

Rescue workers were digging bodies from the rubble hours after the explosion as anguished residents struggled to get through the chaotic conditions for missing relatives. Dozens of damaged cars choked the roads as wounded survivors and panicked schoolgirls sought safety.

It was not immediately clear which group targeted the attack, but the attack suggests a major security failure and underscores spiralling insecurity in Afghanistan, where the Nato-backed military, beset by soaring casualties and desertions, is struggling to beat back insurgents.

Over a third of the country is outside government control.

The health ministry spokesman Waheed Majrooh said the death toll would continue to climb as bodies are pulled from the debris.

President Ashraf Ghani slammed the attack as a "war crime".

The Taliban - currently in the midst of their annual "spring offensive" - is believed to have been involved and "strongly condemn" the blast. The insurgent group rarely claims responsibility for attacks that kill large numbers of civilians.

The Islamic State group has claimed responsibility for several recent bombings in the Afghan capital, including a powerful blast targeting a Nato convoy that killed eight people earlier this month.

The sound of the bomb, which went off near Kabul's busy Zandab Square, reverberated across the Afghan capital, with residents comparing it to an earthquake. Most victims appear to be civilians.

The vigilance and courage of Afghan security forces prevented the VBIED (vehicle-borne improvised explosive device) from gaining entry to the Green Zone, but the explosion caused civilian casualties. "No NATO said in statement. EMBASSIES DAMAGED"

The BBC said its Afghan driver Mohammad Nazir was killed and four of their journalists wounded. Local TV channel TOLO TV also tweeted that a staff member Aziz Navin was killed.

The explosion damaged several embassies, which houses diplomatic and government buildings and is a maze of concrete blast walls, vehicle barriers and armed security guards.

German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel said the attack targeted the German embassy, and added that some employees had been injured, though he did not give further details.

He said the bomb had gone off "in the immediate vicinity" of the German embassy.

France, India, Turkey, Japan, the United Arab Emirates and Bulgaria similarly reported damage to their embassies, including shattered windows, as the blast drew an avalanche of international condemnation.

US ambassador to Afghanistan Hugo Llorens issued a scathing statement condemning the "complete disregard for human life" saying those behind the attack deserved our "utmost scorn".

Amnesty International said the attack underscored the fact that the conflict in Afghanistan is "dangerously widening the wake of the attack, alarm the international community."

Germany was forced to postpone a scheduled deportation flight of rejected Afghan asylum-seekers in the wake of the attack. The European nation has drawn criticism for sending back Afghans to an increasingly dangerous country.

Yesterdays blast was the latest in a string of attacks in Kabul, a province surrounding the capital had the highest number of casualties in the country in the first three months of 2017 due to multiple attacks in the city, with civilians being targeted.

Pentagon chief Jim Mattis has warned of "another tough year" for both foreign troops and local forces in Afghanistan.

Afghan troops are backed by US and NATO forces, and the Pentagon

has reportedly asked the White House to send thousands more soldiers to break the deadlock in the battle against the Taliban.

US troops in Afghanistan number about 8,400 now, and there are another 8,000 from Nato allies. The main aim is in an advisory capacity - a far cry from the US presence of more than 100,000 six years ago.

Two dead in Saudi school shooting

AFP, Riyadh
A teacher killed two staff at a private school owned by a prominent Saudi billionaire in Riyadh yesterday, a security source told AFP.

The school was closed and no children were there at the time, the US embassy in Riyadh said.

Police were hunting a suspect of Iraqi origin who worked at the school, the security source said, after the shooting.

A teacher took a gun and then went to the school room and he killed the assistant school principal and one of the employees," said the source who asked not to be identified because a formal statement would come later from Riyadh police.

Investigators are treating the case as a criminal matter and "not a terrorist incident," the source said.

Saudi media spoke of "disagreements" between the suspect and victims.

There has been a shooting at Kingdome School in Riyadh, the US Embassy said on its Twitter account.

School (S) closed, no children present. Police are only on the police car entering the school grounds, which were quiet.

Most schools in Saudi Arabia are on holiday.

One click away

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Other banned outfits which exist on Facebook at a smaller scale include Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Tehreek-e-Taliban Saudi, Tehrik-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi, Jamaat-ul-Akhras 313 Brigade, multiple Shia outfits and a host of Baloch separatist organisations.

An examination of some user profiles linked to these banned outfits indicates open support of sectarian and extremist ideology. A few of these profiles have also publicly 'liked' pages and groups related to weapons use and training.

While some of the Facebook pages and groups claim to be 'official' representatives of the outfits, others appear to be managed by members and supporters in ideological agreement.

The content shared on their forums is varied. Although there are occasional posts in the form of text or status updates, the more common updates feature photos, videos and memes shared to explain and elaborate on the outfit's ideology; provide updates on recent or ongoing events and on-ground activity; and encourage private contact and recruitment of motivated Facebook users.

In general, the Facebook updates are in Urdu or Roman Urdu rather than English, suggesting the content is primarily for local consumption. A very small number are in Hindi or Balochi, also indicating a niche target audience.

OPEN SPREAD OF IDEOLOGY
Ivitably, most of the Facebook pages and groups glorify existing leaders or those killed in the past while some banned outfits also campaign for the release of their activists.

ists or leaders.

In their Facebook updates, all banned outfits place blame on the state, or, in the case of outfits focused on Kashmir, on India.

In rare cases, pages and groups linked to these banned outfits share graphic content depicting acts of violence - including photos and videos of bodies.

The more organised outfits appear to have 'official' media cells sharing press releases and religious sermons or political speeches as both audio and video. Such pages and groups also share links from websites, blogs or Twitter accounts that appear to be run by members of these outfits. The content in general includes anti-state propaganda or hate speech directed at religious minorities and other members of society.

TIP OF THE ICEBERG
At all times, members and supporters of these banned outfits operating on Facebook have the option to shift communication from public to private.

User linked to, or interested in a particular banned outfit, can be friend and chat with like-minded users through these operating the pages and groups or click the provided links to websites and blogs. To establish contact off Facebook, all they would need to do is use the publicly listed email addresses or local phone numbers provided by the outfits.

The findings of this investigation are just the tip of the iceberg however, as a far larger number of pages and groups could exist without publicly using the name of the banned organisation in order to operate in secret.

Beneath the shine

FROM PAGE 1
threaten to upset the cart.

The driving up of remittance and the rise in the value of the taka are the main headwinds this year and a lot of the economy's health will depend on how Mr Muhiyeh devises a way to extract the currency from this sticky situation.

The relentless flow of funds from the workers in the Middle East that has kept our foreign exchange reserves ever buoyant is petering out fast. Remittance growth is already heading south as the petrodollar recedes from the scene and sustained low oil price. Exports have hit a rough patch because of Brexit, a sluggish global economy and internal structural factors. In many years our export growth has ended in a loss, and this year is almost touched naught. We are yet to feel the pressure on balance of payment but we might experience it with any upcoming imports and external shocks anytime.

SECTORAL REALITIES IN STATISTICS
We are enjoying the benefits of a stable macroeconomic environment. The GDP is growing but fewer jobs are being created. The latest BBS figures expose this stark reality of jobless growth. BBS has compared two sets of data - from 2010 to 2013, a period of three years, and from 2013 December to 2015, a period of one and a half years. During 2010-2013, when GDP growth was in the territory of 40 per cent, 100 new jobs were created. But during 2013 to 2015 when growth was much higher, only 14k jobs were created. We also see a stagnation of private investment that explains, at least in part, why enough jobs were not created.

When jobs are slow to come, the government's imposition of VAT on a raft of products to generate money will certainly have a big dent on the real economy. Life 15 percent is not just 15 percent. It is applied on value addition and so it increases at compound rate as a product passes various phases and hands. So the effective hike in price will be significant.

If growth is for people's welfare and giving them a life of comfort, then the VAT increase will not help in that direction.

BIG CANDIDATES, LITTLE ACTION
The government is growing hot on one of the crucial pillars of a stable economy - the financial sector - is bleeding. We have seen big scandals in banks with little actions. In last one year, the amount of default loan has crossed the bill of 15,000 crore that could have completed the main component of the Padma Bridge. This does not reflect the amount

that the banks have written off. Realisation of bad debts is very poor, only about 5.5 percent. Top bankers at a recent meeting with the Finance Minister raised concerns of capital flight and money laundering.

To add to the challenges ahead is the fact that we are going to graduate from the LDC status next year to middle income country. This category which means we will no longer be entitled to certain benefits such as concessional loans, ODA and GSP. The next 10 years will be the crucial preparatory stage for the next 10 years. We need special attention and investment in diversification, productivity enhancement and investment in social issues like improving labour safety, health care, and environmental standards. Very little is being done in these areas. What we find in the name of protecting the environment is just shifting the problem from one area to another as the leather industry relocation.

We need to increase the social sector outlay and unfortunately because of heavy investment in the much needed infrastructure, very little money cannot be found to do this. This poses the perfect dilemma if you do, damned if you don't.

BIG PROSPECTS, POOR PLANS
But much of it could have been better used in the big projects we properly planned and implemented. Any big project has two goals to fulfill - that it has to end on time within the budgeted cost and that it has to deliver on whatever it has been set as the financial sector.

The stark truth of the big projects in Bangladesh is they unacceptably fail to meet the first objective and then more often than not the second one too. Take the example of the 15 percent highway project that has overrun its original cost, from Tk 1,655 crores to Tk 3,800 crores, and is yet to be complete. Meanwhile, the unfinished road is leading to extreme traffic backups at Meentek and as the Megha Bridge and other points that eat up the presumptive benefit of the project.

BIG MONEY, HIGH COSTS
The government is resorting to non-conventional sources of foreign assistance. We are taking loans from China, India and Russia. Such sources are easy to tap but lopsided. They lack transparency and accountability. The previously necessary high which makes it all the more urgent for us to see that

projects conceived of funds from such sources are tightly implemented because any delay means bleeding the coffer. Unfortunately they have yet to achieve that effect.

So such delays are causing the same cost being carried over to the year after at the expense of smaller social sector spending and implementation of other key needed infrastructure project - after all, we do not have an unlimited number of employees to look after a plethora of big projects.

The Indian line of credit is a case in point as we have not been able to utilise it fast enough. Only 65 percent of the first line of credit has been used - and it had many important components such as rail link constructions along Khulna-Mongla and Joydepur-Kamalapur corridors which are being delayed for various reasons including land acquisition - and disbursement of the second LOC has not started yet while a third LOC is being released for signing.

LESS OF THE PIE FOR SOCIAL SECTORS
We may claim Bangladesh has achieved a lot in the last 10 years or so in terms of economic development. The continuous clogging of GDP growth of 6 percent and above may be a point, or the stable macroeconomic outlook or the gradual increase in per capita income to \$1600 that makes it possible for us to qualify to be called a middle income country. They have been the dividends of the grueling reforms initiated since the 1990s.

But somehow the burners seem to have died down and reforms stagnated and even reversed in some cases such as the financial sector. To survive as a middle income country, it needs continuous efficiency enhancing steps. Unfortunately Bangladesh has yet to get the new rules in place and that is reflected in the World Bank's recent report of Doing Business where Bangladesh still ranks low in the rank at 176th position out of 190 countries. True, it has improved two notches up from last year, but in the recent global architecture such minor improvement does not make any difference.

This hemorrhaging of money has a vicious effect - as project cost go up in the name of inflation, it takes more and more loans. This leads to bigger and bigger loan repayment obligation as it happens today. This in turn means less and less of the pie available to foot the bills for the previously necessary social sectors.

Trump

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An American pullout from the 196-NATO Paris Agreement would lead a major blow to the so-called 'climate diplomacy' which, less than 18 months ago, celebrated the historic pact made possible by a hand-fought agreement between Beijing and Washington, under president Barack Obama's leadership.

The United States is the world's biggest carbon emitter after China. President Trump, who once called climate change a "hoax," Washington has resisted intense pressure from its partners to commit to respecting the global accord.

Since taking office on January 20, Trump has sent out contradictory signals on the Paris deal - reflecting the different currents within his administration, on climate change but also on the wider issue of the United States' role in the world and their relation to multilateralism.

The head of the Environmental Protection Agency Scott Pruitt has openly advocated quitting a deal he judges "bad" for America.

But the corporate world has by and large come out in favour of staying in the accord. A dozen large groups including the oil major BP, agrochemical giant DuPont, Google, Intel and Microsoft, have urged Trump to remain part of the deal.

Under Obama, the United States had pledged to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 26-28 percent below 2005 levels by 2025.

2 'outlaws'

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12:30am on getting a tip off that 10 to 12 members of the outfit were holding a secret meeting there.

Sensing their presence, the outlaws opened fire, prompting Rab to retaliate, he said adding that the gangsters lasted around 15 to 20 minutes and Rab afterwards found the two bullet-riddled bodies.

Doctors at the health complex declared the two dead around 2:00am and the bodies were handed over to police, who sent those to the morgue for autopsies.

Rights body Ain O Salkil Kendra says 49 persons were killed in "crossfire" involving law enforcers between January and April this year, and that the countryside figures in 2016 and 2015 were 159 and 146 respectively.

Blessings

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However, the robot is being met with mixed reactions. Some churchgoers think it's great while others say they "cannot imagine a blessing given by a robot."

One man visiting the church tells the Mirror that while the robot is interesting, it lacks the human touch.

"The machine should not replace the blessing of a pastor," clergyman on Gehert.

According to the Daily Star, the robot was launched in the historic town of Wittenberg to mark 500 years since German priest Martin Luther published "The 95 Theses" - a work widely acknowledged to have sparked the Protestant Reformation.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer
Chittagong PWD Division-IV, Chittagong
Phone: 031-726161 Date: 05.02.2017

Memo No. ১১৮

Invitation for Re-Tender

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Housing and Public Works
2	Agency	Public Works Department (P.W.D.)
3	Procuring Entity Name	Executive Engineer, Ctg. PWD Division-IV, Chittagong
4	Procuring Entity Code	Not used at present
5	Procuring Entity District	Chittagong
6	Invitation Ref.	3187/2017
7	Invitation Ref No	B-1369/2017
8	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (OTM)
9	Budget and Source of Funds	GOE Fund
10	Funding Information	None

PARTICULAR INFORMATION

12	Project / Programme Name (if applicable)	"Establishment and Modernization for BSTI Regional Offices"
13	Tender Package No.	Ctg. PWD Div.4/OTM/2017/17
14	Tender Package Name	"10 storied Regional BSTI office at Agrabad, Chittagong including internal electrification, sanitary and water supply."
15	Tender Publication Date	23/05/2017
16	Tender Last Selling Date	04/07/2017
17	Tender Closing Date and Time	Date: 12.00 NOON
18	Tender Opening Date and Time	05/07/2017 3.00 PM
19	Name & Address of the office	Office of the Executive Engineer, Ctg. PWD Division-IV, Agrabad, Chittagong
20	Place / Date of Time of Sale of Tender Document (Principal)	Office of the Executive Engineer, Ctg. PWD Division-IV, Agrabad, Chittagong
21	Pre-Tender Meeting (Optional)	Date: 04/07/2017 Time: 11.00 AM

NO CONDITIONS APPLY FOR SALE, PURCHASE OR DISTRIBUTION OF TENDER DOCUMENTS

1	Receiving Tender Document	i) Office of the Divisional Commissioner, Chittagong ii) Office of the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Chittagong iii) Office of the Superintendent Engineer, Ctg. PWD Circle-II, Chittagong
2	Opening Tender Document	iv) Office of the Ctg. PWD Division-IV, Agrabad, Chittagong Tender will be opened on 04/07/2017 at 3.00 PM in the office of the Executive Engineer, Ctg. PWD Division-IV, Agrabad, Chittagong. Intending tenderers or their authorized representatives may remain present to witness the opening.

INFORMATION FOR TENDERER

21	Brief Description and Qualification of Tenderer	This invitation for tender is open to all qualified Tenderers as per the following conditions:
(a)	The minimum number of years of general experience of the Tenderer in the construction works as Prime Contractor or Sub-Contractor or Management Contractor shall be 10 (ten) years.	
(b)	The minimum specific experience as a Prime Contractor in successfully completing at least (one) number of RCC building construction work in a single contract amounting to Tk. 20,000 (Twenty) crore in Government / Semi-Government / Autonomous Organization of construction during last 5 (five) years.	
(c)	The work certificate for successful completion of a building construction work shall have to be issued by an officer not below the rank of Executive Engineer of concerned Department/Organization duly verified by the concerned Executive Engineer of PWD of that district under whose jurisdiction the work has been done. Prescribed form "Work Certificate" for this purpose will be available in the tender document.	
(d)	The Tenderer shall have a minimum average annual construction turnover during last 5 (five) years of Tk. 25.00 (Twenty five) crore. Total completed projects received or contracts in progress or completed contracts under public funding during last 5 (five) years shall be at least equal to the limit in the support of average annual construction turnover.	
(e)	The minimum amount of liquid assets or working capital or credit limit of the Tenderer shall be Tk. 2.25 (Five point Two Five) crore. Document submitted along with the tender must be accompanied by a bank certificate of cash or credit limit of the Tenderer. Prescribed form for line of credit for this purpose shall be submitted as per form PWS/7 of tender and certified by the Tenderer having issued the tender price more than 10 (Ten) percent above or below the official cost estimate. The Tenderer is hereby notified.	
(f)	The minimum Tender Capacity shall be Tk. 28,000 (Twenty Eight) crore.	
(g)	The Tenderer must possess: i) Up-to-date income tax clearance certificate. ii) Up-to-date VAT clearance certificate. iii) Up-to-date trade license.	
(h)	The Tenderer shall have a valid contractor and supervisory license from Electricity Licensing Board, Government of Bangladesh.	
(i)	All documents of documents mentioned in (b), (c), (d) & (e) are to be submitted.	
(j)	Any unexplained receipt must be enclosed with the Tender.	
(k)	Other required eligibility and conditions of the Tenderer are as mentioned in the tender document.	
(l)	Earth work, Brick work, RCC work, Sanitary work, Internal Electrification, Water Supply.	
(m)	Up-to-date AEC category contractor and supervisory license from Electricity Licensing Board, Government of Bangladesh.	

Price of Tender Document (Tk)

Package	Identification of Lot	Location	Tender Security	Completion Time
01	01	Agrabad, Chittagong	Tk. 85.00 (Twenty Five) Thousand only	21 (Twenty One) Month (Five) lac.

Brief Description of Works

01	01	Construction of 10 storied Regional BSTI office at Agrabad, Chittagong with 10 storied foundation including internal electrification, sanitary and water supply.
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Name of Official Inviting Tenderer: Ahmed Abdullah Noor
Designation of Official Inviting Tenderer: Executive Engineer
Address of Official Inviting Tenderer: Chittagong PWD Division-IV, G.O. Building No.11, Agrabad, Chittagong
Contact details of Official Inviting Tenderer: Telephone No: 0317261611 Fax: 031-801-70325, e-mail: aej4@pdw.gov.bd
The Procuring Entity reserves the right to reject all the tenders or annul the Tender proceedings.