

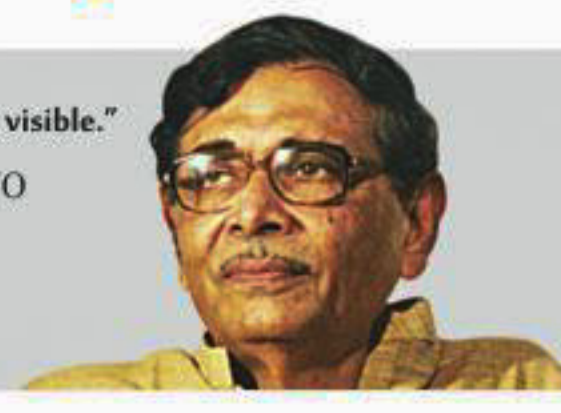
The Daily Star



"We will not care about traditional rules of government for relocation [of chemical warehouses and factories]. This is a state emergency."
 INDUSTRIES MINISTER NURUL MAJID MAHMUD HUMAYUN SAID AFTER AN EMERGENCY MEETING AT HIS OFFICE.



"The ACC could not earn people's faith... So it must do something visible."
 PROF ABDULLAH ABU SAYEED, FOUNDER OF BISHWO SHAHITTO KENDRO. (PAGE 3)



"Hate is moving into the mainstream -- in liberal democracies and authoritarian systems alike."
 UN CHIEF ANTONIO GUTERRES SAID ON COMBATING GLOBAL HATE SPEECH (PAGE 8)



A man with dubious past

Fresh details surface about suspected hijacker

STAR REPORT

As new details emerge about the youth killed in a commando operation during an attempt to hijack a flight on Sunday, his identity and activities appear quite dubious. The Rapid Action Battalion yesterday identified him as Polash Ahmed of Narayanganj after his fingerprints matched with that of a person in the criminal database. He was an accused in an abduction case filed on February 22, 2012. Mufti Mahmud Khan, Rab's legal and media wing director, told reporters that Polash was arrested along with an accomplice after he abducted a woman and demanded Tk 8 lakh in ransom. The victim was also rescued. Piyar Jahan Sardar of Dudhghata village in Sonargaon confirmed to The Daily Star that the suspect was his son Polash, born in 1994.

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Airport Armed Police Battalion has stepped up security following an attempted plane hijack on Sunday. The photo was taken near the Shahjalal airport yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

He had too many names

Says Polash Ahmed's ex-wife actress Shimla

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Actress Samsun Nahar Shimla said she would fully assist the investigation into Sunday's attempted plane hijack in which her ex-husband Polash Ahmed is a suspect. "I am ready to give any assistance for the investigation. I am ready to help the investigation process any time for the sake of my country's interest," the National award winning actress told The Daily Star over phone last night. Shimla, who is currently in Mumbai for a film shoot, said she had divorced Polash three months ago after knowing his "real background" and that he was "mentally imbalanced". "He looks sound but mentally he is not... I realised it two to three months into our marriage. We did not live together because my work was the first priority and he also appreciated it." Shimla said it was afterwards that she came to know that Polash was already married. She added that given his mental state, she decided to not prolong the relationship.



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Confusion reigns

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Witnesses and officials have been giving confusing accounts of what happened during Polash Ahmed's alleged attempt to hijack a Biman aircraft. Several passengers of the Boeing 737 on Sunday said there were gunshots in flight when the suspect made the attempt. One official said the suspect was killed in a shoot-out in the plane while several others said his firearm was a toy. At a TV talk-show the same day, State Minister for Aviation Mahub Ali said he came to know that the suspect was carrying a "toy gun". But yesterday, he told parliament that an armed passenger tried to hijack a Biman Bangladesh Airlines aircraft bound for Dubai.

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No red flags raised

Suspected hijacker went through all security checks; incident can hurt CAAB's credentials, experts say

RASHIDUL HASAN and SHARIFUL ISLAM

Polash Ahmed, who allegedly attempted to hijack a Biman flight on Sunday, boarded the plane at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport with no red flags raised at the security checkpoints. No pistol was detected and no suspicious behaviour was noticed when he made his way through metal detectors and his luggage passed through X-ray scanners at the entrance to the terminal and at the boarding gate.

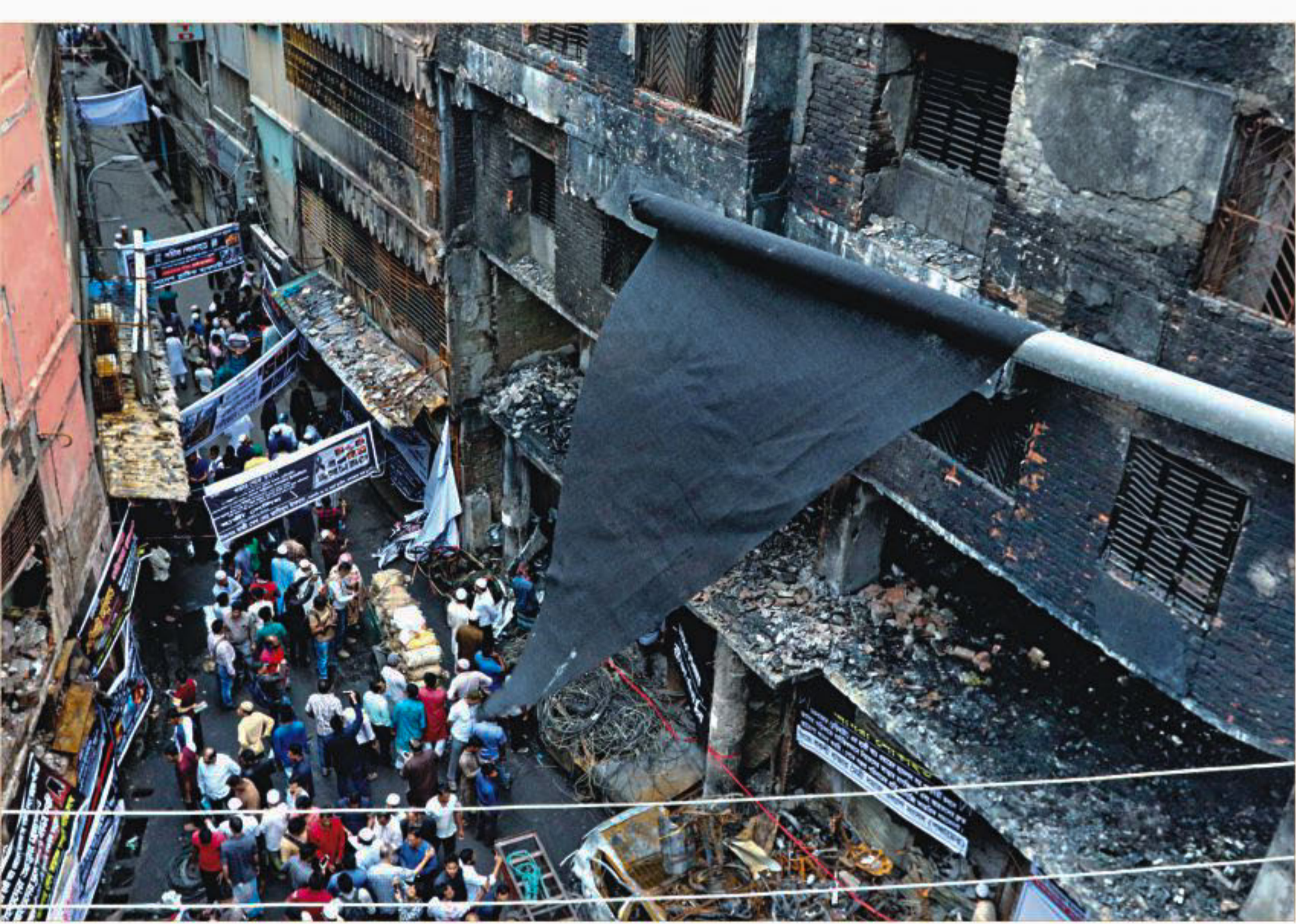
There was no flaw in the security system of the airport, claimed officials at a joint press briefing yesterday. "Today [yesterday] we have showed you how a passenger has to go through security screening after entering the airport terminal and before boarding. There was no security hole at the airport through which a person would be able to get aboard an aircraft bypassing security checks," State Minister for Civil Aviation Mahub Ali said during

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CCTV grab shows Polash at Dhaka airport

PHOTO: COLLECTED



A black flag hangs by the roof of a building as locals prepare for a human chain at the site of a deadly fire in Old Dhaka's Chawkbazar. The nation observed a day of mourning yesterday in memory of the victims of the tragedy.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Another fire victim dies

Chawkbazar mourns lost loved ones

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The battle for life of 45-year-old Chawkbazar fire victim Anwar Hossain ended last night at the intensive care unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital's burn unit. Samanta Lal Sen, chief coordinator of the National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery at DMCH, said Anwar breathed his last around 10:30pm. With this, the death toll in Wednesday's fire rose to 68. Meanwhile, the country yesterday observed a day of national mourning for the victims of Chawkbazar fire. Marking the day, all government,

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All hail the local heroes

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Amidst a hail of flaming cans and other flammable objects, courageous locals emerged as first responders to Wednesday's devastating fire which engulfed the four-storey Haji Wahed Mansion in Chawkbazar's Churihatta. Elderly people, along with youths, engaged in voluntary activities and tried to control the flames until fire officials appeared. Afterwards, they assisted the officials to quickly locate nearby water sources. They also helped water down nearby buildings to control the spread of the fire. Locals also helped others evacuate buildings near the source of fire before firemen had reached the spot, saving numerous lives in the process. Moreover, they helped some 40 injured get primary medical treatments at different



hospitals. Irfan Hossain Imon, 20, an HSC student at Dr Shahidullah College, said he, along with a friend, was returning to his home in Churihatta from Jurain on a motorbike when he heard about the fire over phone. Upon reaching the spot, Imon saw there was a power-cut in the entire area, with only the devastating blaze lightening nearby alleys.

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CHEMICAL WAREHOUSES Relocation to be done in 6 months

Govt sets deadline; DSCC to launch drive Thursday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday set August 25 as the deadline for relocation of all chemical warehouses and factories from Old Dhaka. It made the move five days after a devastating fire killed at least 68 people in Chawkbazar, an incident that harks back to the Nimtoli inferno which had left another 124 dead in 2010. Both the disasters were chemical-fuelled. Following the Nimtoli tragedy, different quarters had urged for removing chemical warehouses and factories from the old town. However, all those calls fell on deaf ears. Even after Wednesday's tragedy, the area is crammed with the risky business. Industries Minister Nurul Majid Mahmud Humayun announced the deadline yesterday, following an emergency meeting with relevant stakeholders, including businessmen, trade chambers leaders and officials from

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Somebody has to take responsibility

HC bench observes on Chawkbazar tragedy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Chawkbazar fire might not have taken place, had the recommendations of a probe committee after the 2010 Nimtoli fire been implemented, the High Court said yesterday. Last week's Chawkbazar fire cannot be termed as a mere accident. It is an undesired incident and somebody has to take the responsibility, the court said while hearing several writ petitions filed in connection with the fire. After the Nimtoli tragedy in 2010, a government-probe committee made 17 recommendations including relocating the warehouses to nonresidential areas, enforcing

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