

3 Bangladeshis among dead

FROM PAGE 1

"I was lying on the floor in a pool of blood. I was still conscious before police turned up and carried me to an ambulance," the survivor said, adding that he had been sitting on the second row on the right side inside the mosque. Reuters said at least 41 devotees were killed in that building.

This is the mosque, close to Hagley Park, where most of the Bangladeshis in the city attend their prayers.

Although Mohtasim survived, three other Bangladeshis have been killed in the grisly attack that New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern described as "the country's worst ever mass shooting".

Till filing of this report last night, the New Zealand authorities and hospital sources did not disclose details of the 49 dead.

According to Reuters, seven of the victims were killed at another mosque in Linwood neighbourhood while one person died after being taken to the hospital.

A Bangladesh foreign ministry handout did not give details about the three Bangladeshis.

"Among the casualties [about 50], there are reports of death of three person of Bangladeshi origin, and a few are critically injured. We still await details of them from the New Zealand security officials and hospital authorities officially," it said.

However, Shafiqur Rahman Bhuiyan, honorary consul to the Consulate of Bangladesh in Auckland, told The Daily Star over phone, "So far, we can say three Bangladeshis are among the dead."

At least four others were injured and being treated at the hospital. Several others could be missing, he said.

At one point, he handed over the phone to his wife Mahbuba Aziz, who

said the dead had been identified as Dr Abdus Samad, his wife, and Hosne Ara Farid.

Talking to this newspaper, Hosne Ara's family members in Jagalhat of Sylhet's Golapganj upazila confirmed that she was among the dead.

Quoting their relatives in New Zealand, they claimed that Hosne Ara died while trying to save her husband, who is living with disabilities.

The man survived.

Canterbury Christchurch University's College of Business and Law teacher Mesbahuddin Chowdhury also said those three were dead.

He added that Abdus Samad, a former teacher of Bangladesh Agricultural University in Mymensingh, had been living in Christchurch for about 20 years.

However, Samad's son Toaha Mohammad yesterday evening told The Daily Star he was not sure whether his father was dead or alive. He said he was told by the hospital authorities that his father had suffered bullet wounds.

Toaha also said his mother did not go to the mosque yesterday.

The Christchurch Hospital was teeming with people. Among them were a number of Bangladeshis desperately looking for their missing family members and friends.

The four critically injured at the hospital were identified as Lipi, Rubel, Mohtasim and Zakaria.

"Lipi Bhabhi sustained a bullet wound on her left chest. The doctors had an operation. It has been four to five hours since then and we are yet to hear of any more updates," said the victim's friend Mazfuza Akter Rina.

"What we have learnt is that she is still not out of danger. We still don't know when she will regain consciousness," she added.

Rina said she was also supposed to attend yesterday's prayers but skipped as her husband was ill.

"We are still looking for two more missing friends. We don't know what happened to them," she added.

She said one of them was Zakaria, and the other one was Omar Faruque. Zakaria was later spotted at the ICU of the hospital.

Asif Sheikh, an Indian dentist, was also looking for his Bangladeshi roommate Mozammel Haque, also a dentist.

Another Bangladeshi at the hospital, Mahbuba, said, "It is difficult to ascertain the number of Bangladeshis who was at the mosque."

"There is almost a curfew-like situation. Even the New Zealand government cannot say the actual number of the casualties," she added.

Consul Shafiqur Rahman said he would go to Christchurch tomorrow morning to extend support to the Bangladeshi victims.

The Bangladesh High Commission directly and through the Honorary Consul of Bangladesh in Auckland was circulating messages to the Bangladeshi diaspora in general, and Christchurch in particular, to remain calm, be indoors, avoid places of congregation and to obey the instructions of the law enforcers.

Mahbuba Aziz, Mesbahuddin and others living in Christchurch said that around 150 to 200 people of Bangladeshi origin live in the city. Some of them are teachers and students at the Canterbury Christchurch University and Lincoln University, Christchurch.

Some Bangladeshis, who migrate to Singapore as skilled labourers, also go to Christchurch to work as welders and technicians at different places, including at ship building sites, they added.

Meet

FROM PAGE 1

Lutfar said, "I don't want money. I teach the unprivileged children so that they can make their parents smile."

"People from all walks of life respect me. This is my achievement. I have taught thousands of children all through my life, many of them are well-established now," he said.

One of his students, Mehedi Hasan, is the deputy assistant engineer at the Education Engineering Department in Rangpur's Pirgachha upazila.

Mehedi told this paper, "When I was in class-II in 1996, I could not afford extra tuitions due to poverty. Lutfar sir taught me for Tk 1 only."

Locals described how Lutfar enlightened the backward community. "People in this area were not aware of the importance of education."

Lutfar Rahman used to visit homes of poor farmers and convince them to send their children to schools," said Azam Khan, a 59-year-old resident of Baguria.

For Lutfar's contribution to education, the upazila parishad gave him a bicycle last year.

Before that, Lutfar used to walk to adjacent villages, said his wife Latiful Begum. The couple has two sons.

Md Harun-ur Rashid, chairman of Geedari Union Parishad, said almost everyone in Gaibandha was aware of Lutfar's contribution to education. He tackled so many obstacles and faced criticism even from his family, but he never gave up.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer Uttam Kumar Roy said, "I personally know him. Lutfar deserves respect from the society for what he is doing. I have assured him of any kind of help, but he never asked for anything."

Lutfar used to make Tk 40 to Tk 50 a day before and he still makes similar amounts today as many children get lessons for free. He had struggled to make ends meet before, but things have changed a little with his sons -- one an auto-rickshaw driver and the other a madrasa teacher -- contributing to the family.

'Drug peddlers'

FROM PAGE 1

Station, said the siblings were listed drug peddlers and wanted in several narcotics cases.

Mustaq and Mokter first used to work for drug dealers -- Bakhtiar Uddin and Jahangir Alam -- who are also siblings. After Bakhtiar and Jahangir arrested by police and sent to jail, Mokter and Mustaq took over the business and used to smuggle in yaba tablets, he added.

With the death of Mustaq and Mokter, over 300 suspected drug dealers and peddlers have been killed since the nationwide anti-narcotics drive began on May 4 last year.

Police claimed that over 60 of them were killed in "gunfights" triggered by internal conflicts.

AL, BNP share

FROM PAGE 16

Besides, pro-Awami League lawyers Jasim Uddin and Kazi Shamsul Hasan Shuvo have been elected to the posts of vice-president and assistant secretary while Afifa Afroz Rani, Chanchal Kumar Biswas and Shahim Sardar have been elected as executive members.

The seven other candidates from BNP-backed panel who were elected are Abdul Jabbar Bhuyan (vice president), Imam Hossain (Treasure), Sharif-U-Ahmed (assistant secretary), Kazi Akhter Hossain (executive member), Syeda Shaheen Ara Laily (executive member), Rashida Alam Oishee (executive member) and Osman Chowdhury (executive member).

'Belly destruction'

FROM PAGE 16

The Belly Destruction program started gaining attention after photos of overweight police officers taking part in the daily exercise routine went viral online.

"There are so many problems if you're a fat cop," Senior Sgt Maj Sornpetch Chantarak, a dietary enforcer in the new program, said. "You work slow and move slow as you go tumbling about. That's unacceptable if you're an officer tasked with arresting criminals, since you have to be deft and go quickly."

About 200 Thai police officers took part in the Belly Destruction pilot, and the results encouraged authorities to implement the program indefinitely. According to local reports, policemen weighing as much as 200 kilograms managed to lose up to 60 kilos of extra weight, while slightly overweight ones (around 80 kg) shed up to 20 kg.

Judging from the photos, police officers sent to the camp have their heads shaved and have to strip down to the waist to expose their bellies. They are also reportedly handed individual ID cards where their weight before and after the program is recorded to track their progress.

The photos posted on the Love Police Facebook page got quite a lot of attention, with most commentators commending the officers for working hard to shed extra weight.

"It's good you're losing some. I always see cops chugging beer while patrolling. How are you supposed to catch criminals like that?" one Facebook user wrote.

Mosque massacre

FROM PAGE 1

room-to-room, victim-to-victim, shooting the wounded from close range as they struggled to crawl away.

A 28-year-old Australian-born man has been arrested and charged with murder.

He is set to appear at the Christchurch District Court early today. Two other men remain in custody, although their link to the attack is unknown.

The chief suspect allegedly published a racist "manifesto" on social media before the attack, featuring conspiracy theories about Europeans being displaced, and details of two years of preparation and radicalisation leading up to the shootings.

"It is clear that this can now only be described as a terrorist attack," said Ardern. "From what we know, it does appear to have been well planned."

Two IEDs (improvised explosive devices) were found in a car and neutralised by the military, police said.

Speaking in Sydney, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison described the gunman as "an extremist, right-wing, violent terrorist".

His two targets were the Masjid al Noor mosque, where 41 people died, and a second, smaller mosque in the suburb of Linwood, where seven more died. The remaining victim succumbed in hospital.

The dead were said to include women and children. Around 48 people were treated for gunshot wounds at Christchurch Hospital, including young children, with injuries ranging from critical to minor.

Three Bangladeshis were among the dead, according to the Bangladesh consulate in Auckland.

In a chilling account, Khaled Mashud, Bangladesh's cricket team manager, described how most of the Bangladeshi team drove up to the Masjid al Noor in a bus just as the attack got underway.

Just when the players were about to enter the mosque, a lady warned them that a gun attack was going on inside the mosque, saving their lives, reported our reporter Mazhar Uddin, who was with the team.

"We were very close, we could see the mosque. We were maximum 50 yards away. I would say we are very lucky," Mashud told reporters in Christchurch.

"If we were there three to four minutes earlier, we would have been in the mosque, massive thing might have happened."

The distraught players managed to safely make their way back to the Hagley Oval cricket ground -- a kilometre away from the shooting scene.

Bangladesh Cricket Board spokesman Jalal Yunus later said the team were "shocked" but unharmed and had been ordered to stay in the team hotel.

New Zealand police described the footage shot by the gunman as "extremely distressing" and warned web users that they could be liable for up to 10 years in jail for sharing such "objectionable content".

In addition to the footage -- which AFP has verified, but is not distributing -- a number of pictures were posted to a

Palestinian land seized by Israeli army, given to settlers: NGO

AFP, Jerusalem

Israel grabbed over 10,000 hectares (24,700 acres) of Palestinian land in the past 50 years, citing security needs, but nearly half has gone to its West Bank settlements, an Israeli NGO said Thursday. A report by Kerem Navot, which monitors Israeli settlement and government land appropriations in the occupied West Bank, covers seizure orders issued between 1969 and 2014.

It says that nearly 47 percent of the land requisitioned under rules permitting seizure for "urgent military needs" is today used for settlement housing or access roads.

Some was initially used to house military infrastructure that was later passed to settlers, it says.

Israel occupied the West Bank in the 1967 Six Day war and today about 450,000 Israelis live there in settlements deemed illegal under international law.

The Israeli military told AFP on Thursday that it was unaware of the report but that it would be "studied by the competent authorities".

The report's author, researcher Dror Etkes, said that the first wave of settlement took place under the relatively doveish Labour party.

"The Labour party, between 1967 and 1977, is the party that establishes the concept of seizure of land for settlements," he said at press briefing ahead of the report's publication.

Seizures peaked, however, between 1979 and 1983 under the right-wing Likud, he said.

Kerem Navot says that under humanitarian law such requisitions must be temporary and the owners must be compensated.

But it says that its research shows that 60 percent of the Palestinian land appropriated by Israel is being held indefinitely and there is no "fair compensation mechanism".

Even the setting up of the Palestinian Authority under the Oslo peace accords did not halt the seizure of land supposedly under PA control, Etkes said.

And in the rare case when seizures were cancelled, "not once was the land returned in the same state it had been prior to confiscation," he said.

social media account showing a semi-automatic weapon covered in the names of historical figures, many of whom were involved in the killing of Muslims.

The attack has shocked New Zealanders, who are used to seeing around 50 murders a year in the entire country of 4.8 million and pride themselves on living in a secure and welcoming place.

Police, who initially imposed a city-wide lockdown, sent armed officers to several locations.

In Auckland, 1,000 kilometres (600 miles) away, two unattended bags left near a railway station were detonated by military explosives experts.

Police also attended a property in Dunedin which they believe is linked to the attack and evacuated nearby residents. The southeastern city was named in the suspect's manifesto as the original target for his attack.

Police warned Muslims across the country not to visit mosques "anywhere in New Zealand" in the wake of the Christchurch attacks.

The attack shocked the local Muslim population, many of whom had come to New Zealand as refugees.

The Ardern government has been vocal in its support for opening the doors to those suffering from wars in Syria, Afghanistan and beyond.

At least two Jordanians were among the dead, according to that country's foreign minister, while Pakistan foreign ministry spokesman Mohammed Faisal said four citizens of his country were being treated in hospital for injuries and another five were missing.

The attacks sparked horror and revulsion around the world.

US President Donald Trump condemned the "horrible massacre" in which "innocent people have so senselessly died".

Mass shootings are very rare in New Zealand, which tightened its gun laws to restrict access to semi-automatic rifles in 1992, two years after a mentally ill man shot dead 13 people in the South Island town of Aramoana.

However, anyone over 16 can apply for a standard firearms licence after doing a safety course, which allows them to purchase and use a shotgun unsupervised.

Christchurch, a relatively small city on New Zealand's south island, hit global headlines in 2011 when it was struck by a deadly earthquake, killing more than 180 people.

Painter

FROM PAGE 16

the seven from Kuril highway area on Thursday night and recovered 1,500 riyal (equivalent to Tk 33,585), Tk 3,822 and 10 mobile phones from them, said Sarowar.

The Rab official said the gang used the Saudi Riyal to con people as it has a high rate in the country. The gang members mainly targeted elder people so that they could easily convince them.

Sarowar said the gang's major target was during the hajj, when a number of people went to Saudi Arabia.

They mainly chose densely populated areas such as in front of shopping mall or intersection so that they could easily mix with the crowd, said the commanding officer.

Legal action will be taken against the arrestees, the official added.

Mud house

FROM PAGE 16

"They collected mud from cropland on the east side of the house," he said, adding, "They did it out of pleasure. They thought their sons and daughters would live in it together."

They used bamboo, wood, and straws mixed with mud for the walls and floors. For the roof, they used 200 bundles of corrugated iron sheets collected from several shops, according to Azahar.

Since the demise of Akandas and Mondols, families of eight of their sons have been living in the house, said Cheragpur Union Parishad Chairman Shibnath Mishra.

Although many tourists visit the house every year, the heirs, for whom it was built, have hurt its grandeur whilst dividing it among themselves with walls.

"Before one could go to any room through any of the main doors but now the successors have built mud or concrete walls at places," Azahar told The Daily Star.

During a recent visit, this correspondent saw some inheritors erecting concrete walls and placing tiles. Some were putting red mud and white lime on the floors and walls for preservation.

Taher's son Masud Rana said he brought some changes with concrete and tiles because repairing with mud was difficult. "The mud repair process needs expertise and time. We don't have that."

Azahar's wife Reshma Begum said, "My in-laws had strong aesthetic sense. But their inheritors hardly understand it. I frequently repair my portion."

The residents now use some rooms for storing harvests and some as guest rooms. "All the rooms are used somehow. The 20-inch walls keep us cool in summer and warm in winter," said Reshma.

Sometimes the house moves when someone walks on certain parts on the first floor, she added.

'Our lands will never be theirs'

FROM PAGE 1

conspiracy theory originating in France that believes European populations are being displaced in their homelands by immigrant groups with higher birth rates.

The dossier, which has been described by Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison as a "work of hate", praised US President Donald Trump as "a symbol of renewed white identity and common purpose".

The 28-year-old Tarrant also claimed that he had "brief contact" with Anders Breivik, the Norwegian white supremacist who murdered 77 people. He claimed he had received a "blessing" from the Norwegian mass killer for his future actions.

The dossier stated objections to immigration and multiculturalism, and decries the "decaying" culture of the white, European Western world.

Sky News heard that the town of Grafton, where Tarrant lived in New South Wales, is in shock, trying to come to terms with how a "polite, well-mannered young man" came to find himself on a path that led to Christchurch.

He was a student at the local high school and went on to work at a gym, where his former boss said he regularly volunteered his time to train kids for free, sky News added.

In April 2010, his father died suddenly of cancer aged 49, leading Tarrant to set off on a seven-year trip around the world. It was at some time during this journey that former friends now speculate he was "perhaps radicalised".

The header photo on Tarrant's Twitter account shows a victim of the 2016 Bastille Day terror attack in Nice.

The famous photo by Reuters photographer Eric Gaillard came to symbolise the Bastille Day massacre when 84 people were killed by a truck ploughing into holidaying crowds.

Tarrant described his reasons for the disgusting attack as to "show the invaders that our lands will never be their lands, our homelands are our own and that, as long as a white man still lives,

they will NEVER conquer our lands and they will never replace our people".

Tarrant revealed he had been planning an attack for up to two years, noting he decided to target Christchurch three months ago.

He said New Zealand was not the "original choice for attack", but described it as "target rich of an environment as anywhere else in the West".

The gunman described the attack as an act of "revenge on the invaders for the hundreds of thousands of death caused by foreign invaders in European lands throughout history ... for the enslavement of millions of Europeans taken from their lands by the Islamic slavers ... (and) for the thousands of European lives lost to terror attacks throughout European lands."

"We must ensure the existence of our people, and a future for white children," he added in his manifesto.

He also said the attack was to take revenge for Ebba Akerlund, the 11-year-old child who was killed in a 2017 terror attack in Stockholm.

Tarrant described the Stockholm attack as the "first event" that inspired him to commit the attack, particularly the death of the 11-year-old girl.

"Ebba (sic) death at the hands of the invaders, the indignity of her violent demise and my inability to stop it broke through my own jaded cynicism like a sledgehammer. I could no longer ignore the attacks."

However, the mother of the Swedish girl expressed her horror at yesterday's shooting.

"She spread love and caring, not hate. I feel the pain of the families affected by this. I condemn any form of violence," Jeanette Akerlund told Swedish public television SVT.

"It's deeply tragic that Ebba's name is abused in the name of political propaganda," she told daily Aftonbladet.

Tarrant said yesterday's attack was also inspired by a trip he took to France in 2017.

"For many years I had been hearing and reading of the invasion of France by non-whites, many of these rumours and stories I believed to be exaggera-

tions, created to push a political narrative.

"But once I arrived in France, I found the stories not only be true, but profoundly understated. In every French city, in every French town the invaders were there."

Tarrant said he feels no remorse for the attack. "I only wish I could have killed more invaders, and more traitors as well." He also said there "was a racial component to the attack" and described it as "anti-immigration" and "an attack in the name of diversity".

He also said he will plead not guilty if he survives and goes to trial.

Shortly before the attack began, an anonymous post on the discussion site 8chan, known for a wide range of content including hate speech, said the writer was going to "carry out an attack against the invaders" and included links to a Facebook live stream, in which the shooting appeared.

"If I don't survive the attack, goodbye, godbless and I will see you all in Valhalla!", it added.

Many anonymous users responded praising him for the attack, with comments like "Godspeed" and "that video is so goddamn good".

In the days leading up to the attack, Tarrant posted photos to his now-suspended Twitter account of what appears to be guns, ammunition and a military-style vest.

The weaponry is scrawled with references to ancient battles and more recent attacks against Muslims.

In one image he writes "For Rotherham, Alexandre Bissonnette, Luca Traini".

Bissonnette was sentenced to 40 years for shooting six people dead in the 2017 shooting at a mosque in Quebec. Traini, an Italian man, is serving 12 years in prison for the shooting of six African migrants in a racially motivated attack in October last year.

Tarrant also frequently posted links to articles about extremism in Europe, multiculturalism and previous terror attacks.

North's usual rhetoric at tense points in its dealings with Washington. North Korea expert Joshua Pollack said North Korea may be delivering an ultimatum.

"They're putting down a marker, saying which way things are headed if nothing changes," Pollack, of the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies in Monterey, California, said.

The second Trump-Kim summit broke down over differences about US demands for Pyongyang to denuclearise and North Korea's demand for dramatic relief from international sanctions imposed for its nuclear and missile tests, which it pursued for years in defiance of UN Security Council resolutions.

UPDF member

FROM PAGE 16

was not involved in the incident.

Nure Alam, officer-in-charge of Panchchari Police Station, said the body was sent to Khagrachari District Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

No case was filed till 9:00pm yesterday.