

MOGHBAZAR BLAST

Counterterrorism unit to interrogate Titas Gas employees

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Counterterrorism officials will interrogate Titas Gas employees in connection with the Moghbazar explosion, which left 11 persons dead.

Investigators found gas lines in the building damaged due to the explosion.

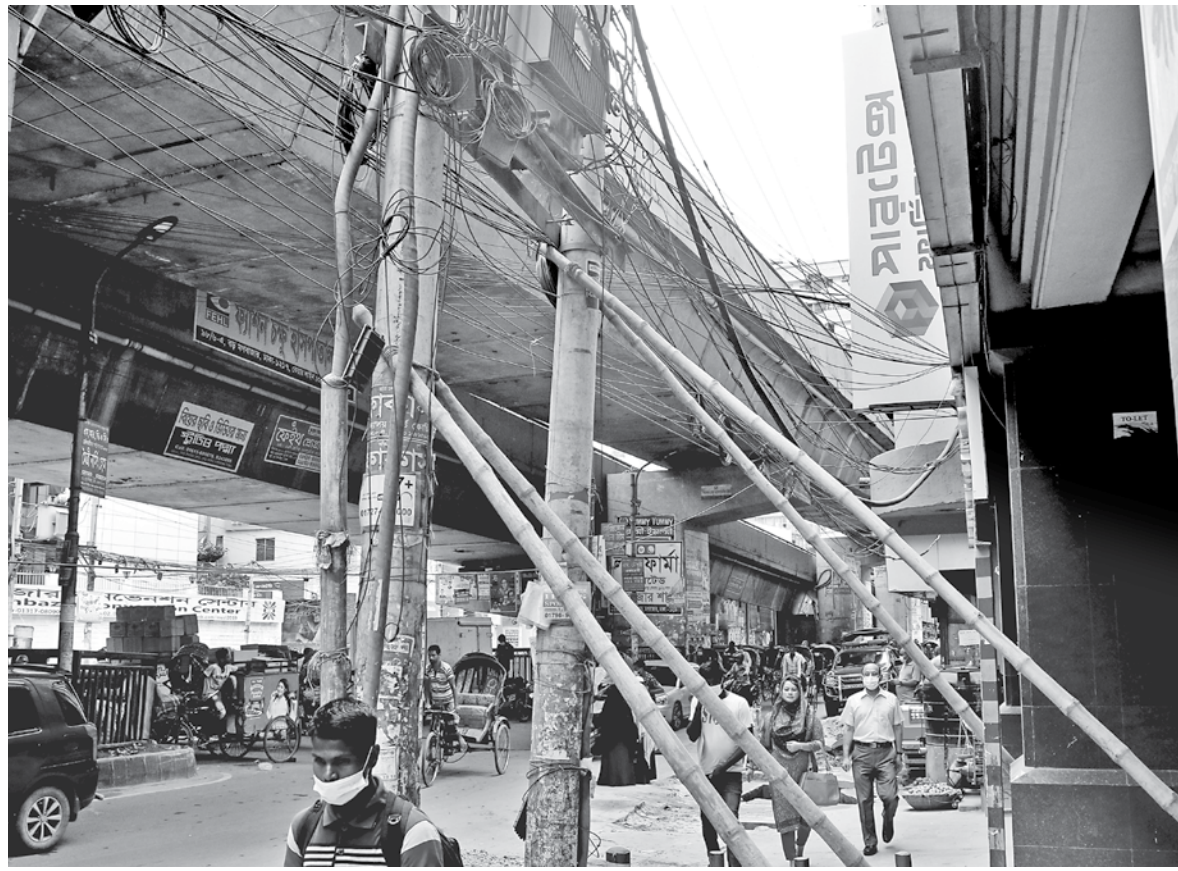
"We will interrogate employees concerned of Titas Gas," Md Asaduzzaman, chief of Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit told The Daily Star.

The case filed with Ramna Police Station following the blast has been transferred to CTTC's bomb disposal unit yesterday, he said.

The investigators said they have visited the spot yesterday, after seven days of the explosion, and found that gas was still coming out from a line, just five metres away from the building.

At least 11 persons died so far, and nearly 50 were injured in the explosion at a three-storey building on June 27.

Experts, after primary investigation, said accumulated gas was behind the massive explosion.



A transformer is leaned on one side and precariously held in place by bamboos at the capital's Moghbazar, where development work for sewage is being carried out. To add to the danger, pedestrians were seen walking under it to reach their destinations. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

No more

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have a "long vacation" due to the lockdown, they were roaming around with their family members.

Due to that, law enforcers and administration were seen to be stricter yesterday on the third day of the lockdown.

About Friday's incident, OC Utpal Barua of EPZ Police Station said, "As most of the people were locals, we did not take any strict action against them. We warned them not to come out this way amid the lockdown."

"We have deployed additional police force in the area and will not allow anyone there," he said.

Besides, army and BGB members were also seen patrolling city and upazila areas yesterday.

Only a handful of private cars were seen on roads while presence of people was also very thin. People who went outside had to face queries from law enforcers.

A team of army was seen checking vehicles in Chattogram City Gate area in the morning.

Six teams of army and BGB each, police and Rab personnel were deployed to enforce lockdown in the district.

Umar Faruk, executive magistrate and staff officer of Chattogram administration, said nine executive magistrates were conducting mobile court drives in the city.

Shyama Kumar Nath, additional commissioner (traffic) of CMP, said 16 check posts have been set up in different points of the city.

Strict lockdown was also being ensured in upazilas too.

UNO Sheikh Jubayer Ahmed of Anwara upazila said 10 people were fined Tk 3,000 for violating lockdown rules yesterday.

Plan was

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Two of the outfit members -- Sayed Taimia Ibrahim alias Anwar (30), and Maruf Chowdhury (27) -- gave confessional statements in the court, in a case filed with Rampura Police Station.

Ahamedul Islam, additional deputy commissioner of CTTC unit, told The Daily Star that Ansar Al Islam is now trying to represent the Al-Qaeda activities in the country.

"For this, the outfit has joined with Hefajat-e-Islam," said Ahmedul, who is coordinating the case's investigation.

This is why the outfit is not conducting any operation at the moment and giving priority on recruiting members.

They are using social media and publishing house as a tool to spread their ideology, Ahmedul added.

Even the arrestee, Maruf Chowdhury, has mentioned the use of a publishing house for printing books on extremism in his confessional statement, the official said.

Maruf said he used to work as an executive in the human resource department of a company, said court sources.

Its sister concern used to sell different extremist books online and show those books in their bestseller list, said Maruf in the statement, adding

that writers of some of those books are Harun Izzhar and Ali Hasan Osama.

Harun and Osama were earlier arrested by the law enforcers over their connection with extremism.

Sources said both Anwar and Maruf in their statement mentioned that they have joined the Al-Qaeda inspired outfit in 2016 watching content on social media.

Anwar said he used to collect funds for the outfit.

Maruf said he even went to Rohingya camp in 2017 and stayed there for around 20 to 22 days. During the stay, he spent Tk 15,000 to Tk 20,000 on charity work in the camps and tried to recruit Rohingyas for the outfit, according to CTTC sources.

A high official of CTTC unit said the outfit believed that "Kashmir and Arakan is the centre of AQIS and that is why Ansar Al Islam is trying to send people there".

CTTC, however, said they were yet to get any proof that people have been sent there from Bangladesh.

ADC Ahmedul said they have got some information about the outfit's strategy from the arrestees and are now analysing the information to trace its absconding members.

CHATTOGRAM MEDICAL COLLEGE HOSPITAL
Dialysis patients' protest halts sudden cost hike

Pvt centre wanted to charge six times

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

Following news of a sudden price hike for hemodialysis services at Chattogram Medical College Hospital (CMCH), patients demonstrated in front of the dialysis centre -- run by a private company -- on Wednesday.

This prompted hospital authorities to intervene and postpone the sixfold rate hike by mediating between the private company and the health ministry.

Earlier in the day, this correspondent spoke to Prafulla Kumar Nath (58), who has been coming to CMCH's dialysis centre since 2018.

"It feels like a bolt out of the blue," said Prafulla, hailing from Mirsarai upazila. "We didn't even get any prior notice," he said after coming to know the hospital's dialysis centre was going to charge six times more than before.

He said he used to pay Tk 486 per session for his eight sessions per month. But if the price hike goes through, he will have to pay Tk 2,666 for the same service.

"The reason we come to CMCH is because we cannot afford private hospitals, where they charge around Tk 3,000 per session," said Manzurul Haque, who accompanies his mother to the centre. "If the subsidised rate stands at Tk 2,600-plus, where do we go?"

Like the two patients, around a hundred more and their attendants were seen agitating in front of the centre on Wednesday, protesting the price hike.

Though it might seem like the dialysis centre is part of CMCH's public offerings, sources inside the hospital told The Daily Star that the centre is actually operated under the management of private company Sandor Medicaids Pvt Ltd, on the basis of a public-private partnership (PPP) that began in 2017.

As per the agreement, sources said, the company receives Tk 2,666 per session, but this is split between the patients, who pay Tk 486, while the government bears Tk 2,180.

Under the agreement, the company set up 31 dialysis machines, where disadvantaged patients recommended by the hospital authorities receive services at the subsidised rate.

As per the agreement, the company has to transfer the centre back to the government after 10 years, according to CMCH sources.

Speaking to this correspondent on Wednesday, CMCH director Brig Gen SM Humayun Kabir said he also thought that the decision was inhumane, and he intervened once he got news of the patients' demonstration.

Although there are nine machines in the Nephrology ward of CMCH, the government still signed the agreement with Sandor, a foreign company, to set up the dialysis centre so that more patients can avail the facility at a cheaper rate, he said. "If poor patients do not get the service at a cheaper rate, there will be no point to it."

"The company tries to do this (realising additional charges) every now and then. When I ask them about it, they always say they're not getting their bills from the government in time," the director claimed.

"I told them if they have any issues with the government office, it can be solved through discussions. If needed, I can write to the government for them, but they cannot charge exorbitant rates from patients."

"They have postponed the price hike for now," he assured, adding, "They are using the infrastructure of CMCH. They cannot deal with patients like a private centre."

This correspondent tried to talk to on-duty doctors of the centre but none of them wanted to comment on the issue.

The newspaper also tried to contact Sandor officials in the centre over phone, but no one received the calls despite repeated attempts.

Contacted yesterday, the CMCH director said, "Sandor has sent the ministry a bill detailing their dues. The ministry has sent me a letter and asked me verify it. I have formed a committee to investigate whether the bill is accurate or whether there's any discrepancy. The committee will file its report tomorrow."

More people

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conducting drives throughout the day while teams of police, army and BGB patrolled the city and other areas of Rajshahi.

In Bilsimla area, law enforcers detained two young brothers for roaming around without masks. They were released once their mother went to the spot and assured law enforcers not to let them go out.

Lt Col Ziaur Rahman Talukder, director of Rab-5 in Rajshahi, said the force members have been directed to ensure lockdown by raising awareness among people.

"But some curious people are not

following the lockdown rules and coming out of their home. We are handing them over to the mobile courts," he said.

Abu Aslam, additional district magistrate, said the administration was ensuring the lockdown in coordination with the major organisations of the government.

Four platoons of army from Bogura cantonment, one company of BGB, Rab, police, battalion ansar all are working together in this regard in Rajshahi.

"We are calling upon people to cooperate with the government to ensure a successful lockdown," he said.

Waterways

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A trawler operator working at the ghat said on average, each trawler carried 30 to 50 people, along with bicycles, motor-bikes and goods.

Masum Sikder, a shop owner, said he had come to the ghat with his family to leave for their village home as it is not possible to keep shops open during the lockdown.

Besides traders like Masum and low-income workers, students were also leaving for their village homes, madrasa student Al-Amin told this correspondent.

When this correspondent spoke to people at Beltala, they said they were being forced to move for emergency work and medical treatment.

Meanwhile, locals said at least 2,000 people have been crossing the Kirtankhola and Arial Kha rivers every day since the start of the lockdown.

While law enforcement agencies are monitoring the situation, trawler operators are finding ways to evade their eyes.

When executive magistrate Mushfiqur Rahman's mobile court consisting of a BGB unit went to Beltala after receiving information of a trawler, hoping to seize it upon its return, their effort ended in vain as the trawler simply did not return to the ghat sensing their presence.

Even though three executive magistrate-led mobile courts are active in the city, it is still not enough to contain the trawler movement.

The courts fined 23 individuals and organisations Tk 35,200 yesterday.

"People are not allowed to travel, not even on trawlers," executive magistrate Mushfiqur said. "We will continue our drives to stop this."

32 people

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One of them was Asaduzzaman Rahul, a construction worker. He, however, said his work site was in Mujgunni area of the city but he lived at Rupsha ghat. "When I was passing through Shibbari mor, a police official detained and handed me over to a mobile court."

"How will I go to my work site? If I don't go there regularly, I will be sacked. My fellow workers are also facing similar problems," Rahul added.

Meanwhile, visiting various areas of Khulna city including Khalishpur, Goalkhali, Royal Mor, Picture Palace mor, Moylapota, Nirala, Gallamari, Sonadanga bus terminal, Daulatpur, Boyra Bazar and Rupsa, it was seen most shops were closed.

However, the streets were more crowded with people than the last two days. Many rickshaws and rickshaw-vans were also seen plying city streets.

According to district police sources, 26 checkpoints have been set up under nine police stations of the district.

138 women

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Mahila Parishad regularly compiles the data to document incidents of reported violence against women and girls.

The data was taken from 13 national dailies -- The Daily Star, The Independent, New Age, The Daily Observer, The Daily Prothom Alo, The Daily Kaler Kontho, The Daily Ittefaq, Sangbad, The Daily Janakantha, Bhorer Kagoj, Samakal, Jugantar and Bangladesh Pratidin.

A quiet

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At the same time, Border Guard Bangladesh members were also seen patrolling major areas of the town. Presence of law enforcers were also seen at upazila headquarters.

According to police officials in Dinajpur, at least 116 cases have been filed, and Tk 85,500 realised for violating the lockdown rules in the last two days.

12 RMG workers fall ill at Savar workplace

Reason remains unknown

OUR CORRESPONDENT, SAVAR

At least 12 workers of a readymade garment factory fell sick at their workplace due to unknown reason in Savar yesterday.

They were admitted to nearby Habib Clinic and Diagnostic Centre at Dakkhin Bypile and the authorities of Donglian Fashion (BD) Ltd kept the factory closed for the day, factory sources said.

The sick workers include Mahfuzul (27), Arif Hossein (30), Mosharaf Hossein (27), Sourav (25), Arifa (25), Mst Baby (25), Aleya (30), Rina Akter (27), Shyamoli (27) and Ismail (60). However, two other workers' names could not be known immediately.

Workers said a woman first vomited and suffered from bad headache around 8:15am. Other workers started falling ill after she had been taken to the clinic.

Workers claimed they had been suffering from such physical problems for the last few days although the authorities denied it.

Doctors at the health care centre told reporters that they were treating the workers

but were yet to identify the cause behind their illness.

Savar Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer Dr Sayemul Huda said he was not aware of the incident. It might be symptoms of Covid-19 or food poisoning, he said.

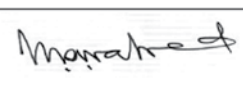
"Firstly, I urge the sick workers to get tested for coronavirus," he added.

Contacted, Rafiqul Islam, manager (admin and compliance) of the factory, told The Daily Star that around 150 workers joined work in the morning like every day.

A female worker fell sick first and she was taken to hospital, he said. After a while, six to seven workers fell onto the floor due to dizziness. "Actually, we are still to understand what had happened to them."

Rafiqul added that following the incident, panic spread fast among the workers.

Sorwar Hossain, organising secretary of Bangladesh Textile and Garments Workers League, told the newspaper that they heard that workers of the factory often fall sick.

Center for Environmental and Geographic Information Services (CEGIS)	
House # 6, Road # 23/C, Gulshan-1, Dhaka-1212	
Tender Ref. no 42.06.2626.101.06.001.21.1411	Date: 29 June, 2021
Invitation of Tender	
for	
(i) Supply, installation & commissioning of Fire Detection & Protection System and (ii) Supply, installation & commissioning of lifts for CEGIS Office Building at Plot No. F-14/E, Agargaon, Sher-E-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka.	
Name of Organization	Center for Environmental and Geographic Information Services (CEGIS)
Invitation for	Procurement of Works
Invitation Ref. No. & Date	42.06.2626.101.06.001.21-1411, 29 June, 2021
KEY INFORMATION	
Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (OTM)
FUNDING INFORMATION	
Source of Fund	CEGIS fund
PARTICULAR INFORMATION	
Project name	CEGIS Office Building Construction Project
Tender Packages Name	Package I: Supply, installation & commissioning of Fire Detection & Protection System and Package II: Supply, installation & commissioning of lifts for CEGIS Office Building at Plot No. F-14/E, Agargaon, Sher-E-Bangla Nagar
Last Date of Selling Tender	03 August, 2021 by 05:00 p.m.
Last Date & Time of receiving Tenders	04 August, 2021, by 01:00 p.m.
Opening Date & Time of Tenders	04 August, 2021, 03:00 p.m.
Name & Address of the office for Selling, receiving & opening of Tender Documents	Center for Environmental and Geographic Information Services House # 6, Road # 23/C, Gulshan-1, Dhaka-1212
Place, date and time of Pre-tender meeting	Conference Room of CEGIS office, House 6, Road 23/C, Gulshan-1, Dhaka-1212 Date: 27 July, 2021, Time: 10:30 a.m.
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER	
Brief Eligibility and Qualification of Tenderer	Tenderers shall have experience certificates in supplying, installation & commissioning of the respective works in Government/Semi-Government/ Autonomous bodies/Private buildings by Developers. Tenderers shall also have Trade license, VAT registration and TIN numbers including Income Tax Certificates and other criteria specified in Tender Documents.
Brief Description of Works	Supplying, installation and commissioning of relevant works as specified in the packages and respective tender documents.
Price of Tender Document	Tk. 2000.00 (Taka Two thousand) only (non-refundable) individually for each of the tenders
Tender Security	For Package I: Tk.5.00 (five) lacs; and for Package II: Tk. 3.00 (three) lacs; in the form of Pay Order or Bank Draft in favor of CEGIS
Completion Time	9 (nine) months
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS	
Name, Designation and Address/Contact details of Official Inviting Tender	Md. Sarfaraz Wahed, Project Director, CBCP CEGIS, House # 6, Road # 23/C, Gulshan-1, Dhaka-1212 Phone # 222282551, 222263581, E-mail: mswahed@cegisbd.com
Tenderers having quoted the tender price more than 10 (Ten) percent above or below the official cost estimate, the tender will be treated as non-responsive	
The contract shall be awarded to the lowest responsive Tenderer having no arithmetical or other anomalies in the amount quoted, fulfilling the criterion mentioned in Sl. No. 13 and in the Instructions to the Tenderers (ITT) and Tender Data Sheet (TDS) of the respective Tender documents.	
The Procuring Entity reserves the right to reject all the Tenders or annul the Tender process.	
 Project Director, CBCP	

43 die in

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have died trying to cross the Mediterranean between January 1 and May 31, compared to 1,400 last year.

Reuters yesterday reported that in recent months, several drowning incidents have occurred off the Tunisian coast, with an increase in the frequency of attempted crossings to Europe from Tunisia and Libya towards Italy, as the weather has improved.

"The navy rescued 84 migrants and 43 others drowned in a boat that set off from Libya's Zuwara towards Europe," Red Crescent official Mongi Slim said.

Hundreds of thousands of people have made the perilous Mediterranean crossing in recent years, many of them fleeing conflict and poverty in Africa and the Middle East.

Arrivals in Italy--one of the main migrant routes into Europe-- had been falling in recent years, but numbers picked up again in 2021.

Almost 19,800 migrants have arrived since the beginning of the year against just over 6,700 in the same period last year, Reuters cited Italian interior Ministry figures as saying.

No vacant ICU

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"There is no way left to admit any patient here", he said.

During a recent visit to the hospital in Dinajpur, The Daily Star correspondent also found that serious patients were being taken to Dhaka by ICU-supported ambulance.

Seeking anonymity, a doctor of Abdur Rahim Hospital said the existing 16 ICU beds is not enough to treat the enormous number of Covid-19 patients.

Besides Dinajpur, patients from other districts, including Thakurgaon, Panchagarh and Nilphamari, come to 100-bed Covid unit of the hospital if they needed ICU support.

In Rangpur, two more private hospitals, including Rangpur Community Medical College Hospital and Prime Medical College and Hospital, have ICU support.

According to the Director of Health (Rangpur), there are 39 ICU beds in Dinajpur and Rangpur. Of them, 26 have been allocated for the treatment of Covid patients.

Last year, the number of ICU beds was only 13. Health officials in these districts said authorities have been struggling to treat the rising number of patients just because of the lack of ICU beds.

According to health directorate information in Rangpur, there are 12 designated hospitals in eight districts of the Rangpur division to provide treatment to Covid-19 patients.

The number of beds is around 700. According to the available information, at least 400 Covid-19 patients remained admitted at these hospitals yesterday. At the same time, all ICU and HDU beds remained occupied.

So far, 537 people died in eight districts of Rangpur. Among them, the maximum of 193 were from Dinajpur.

On Saturday, at least 14 people died in Rangpur division. Besides, 532 new cases were found in the eight districts in last 24 hours.

At least 715 new covid-19 cases were found in eight districts of Rangpur on Friday. The daily positivity rate is around 34.79 per cent. On the other hand, eight people died in the division on Friday.