

Women JMB activists evade arrest in Tangail

Police say they are collecting 'more information' on 'listed' activists

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Female activists of banned Islamists militant outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) in Tangail are still active taking the alleged lenient view of police.

A senior police official when contacted however said, "We will soon take action against active female activists of JMB in the district".

Intelligence officials also admitted that there are women JMB activists in the district and said they will be arrested after getting "specific proof".

Most of the women JMB activ-

ists are in Rampur area in Kalihati upazila, Lawhati and Baropakha in Delduar, Taktarchala in Mirzapur, and Nalin, Kachua and Kalian areas in Sakhipur upazila of the district. They are active in their areas, sources said.

Though police have intensified their drive against male JMB activists across the district and arrested about 50 cadres, its female activists so far remained out of the net.

The senior official seeking anonymity admitted that police were taking time to arrest female JMB activists.

But many of them (women activists) are on the list and police

are collecting 'more' information to be sure about their involvement with JMB, he said.

Eleven JMB dens have so far been detected in Tangail district; 3 each in Delduar and Kalihatu upazilas, two in Sakhipur and one each in Basail, Nagarpur and in the Sadar upazila, other sources in police said.

Some sources claimed that militants are still being trained in shoals of Dhalesshari river in border areas of Delduar and Nagarpur upazilas. At Par Dhalla village, JMB activists also exploded bombs recently as part of training, they claimed.

Some women from the shoal

areas have joined the militant outfit only for money as they are very poor. They are mainly used for sending secret information.

The sources claimed that there are at least three women JMB activists from Par Dhalla but declined to disclose their names. They are evading arrest as they are women.

Another female student from Habla village in Basail upazila has been engaged with JMB for long. She is a leader and is trained in use of arms and exploding bombs like male cadres. All members of her family are also leaders of JMB and some of them have been arrested, the sources claimed.

Manhunt for 188 listed bombers in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Khulna Metropolitan Police (KMP) have launched operation to arrest 188 'listed bombers' in Khulna, including some women cadres.

Most of the 'listed bombers' are between 16 to 20 years, according to source in the city special branch of KMP.

The source said the young bombers can make a bomb within 15 minutes. Most of them are beneficiaries of political parties. They come from poor families and have been trained to hit targets.

The listed bombers are moving at large in guise. At least 100 of them are linked with outlawed parties while the rest are being harboured by political parties.

There are some women who are being used as carriers of bombs. They move wearing veil.

Of the 188 listed bombers, 44 are living in different areas in Khulna thana, 42 in Sonadanga thana, 40 in Khalishpur thana, 49 in Daulatpur and 13 in Khanjahan Ali thana.

At least sixty percent of the listed bombers are drug addicts, the source said. "We are investigating if any of these listed bombers has any link with JMB", said AC Zahur of DB.

3-DAY BDR-BSF TALKS END IN SYLHET

India agrees to help stop smuggling of arms, explosives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A Regional Indo-Bangladesh Border Conference ended here yesterday with officials of both the countries agreeing to resolve 'major disputes through discussions and by taking steps in time'.

The 3-day Deputy Director-General level meeting between the BDR and BSF began at 9-30 am on Thursday at private holiday resort Zakaria City on the outskirts of the city. Deputy Director General of BDR Brigadier General SM Golam Rabbani led the 9-member Bangladesh team while the 13-member Indian side was led by Inspector General of BSF in Shillong SC Sri Vastava.

The Indian team included two Inspectors General of Police, an Additional IG and four DIGs. The Bangladesh team included five Sector Commanders of BDR in Mymensingh, Rangamati, Khagrachhari, Comilla and Sylhet. Cross-border problems including smuggling of explosives and firearms from Indian states of

Meghalaya, Tripura and Assam into Bangladesh, killing of Bangladesh nationals by BSF and armed civilians, sheltering miscreants and other border crimes dominated the discussions, meeting sources said.

BDR raised the issue of smuggling of explosives and firearms into Bangladesh with highest priority and sought BSF help in stopping it. Indian officials agreed to take effective measures to stop it, the sources said.

Explosives are used in large scale in hilly areas of Meghalaya for limestone extraction.

This creates scope for easy smuggling of explosives into Bangladesh.

BDR also asked BSF to immediately stop killing of Bangladeshi civilians by its members and armed people.

The two sides also discussed smuggling of contrabands including drugs and liquor, re-installation of demolished or stolen border pillars, survey of the disputed lands, raising of barbed

wires fence by BSF.

In Sylhet region, most of the disputed lands on the border are under possession of India while Bangladeshi farmers are barred from cultivating those for long. The talks were held in a cordial atmosphere and BSF officials showed a positive attitude towards resolving the disputes, a BDR official said.

BSF also alleged intrusion into India by the BDR personnel and civilians, unprovoked firing by BDR, fishing in border river Kushiara by Bangladeshis during odd hours and stressed construction of border fence within 150 yards. Bangladesh has been opposing this as existing border rules do not allow such construction.

At the end of talks at 1 PM, the Indian team left Bangladesh through Tamabil border yesterday afternoon.

Earlier, officials of both the countries met BDR Director General Major General Jahangir Alam Chowdhury in Dhaka on Friday and briefed him about the talks.



PHOTO: STAR

A partial view of the meeting against acid violence, held at Shaheed Abdur Razzak Park in Satkhira yesterday.

Unite to resist acid violence

Thousands raise voice in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

It was a unique event for the people in small Satkhira town. Irrespective of class and cast, they joined hands to resist acid violence and terrorism.

Several thousand people including women attended a rally and marched the streets hand in hand yesterday, chanting various slogans against acid violence and demanding tougher laws to eliminate the heinous crime.

The programme was organised by Satkhira Development Network (SDN), a local NGO with assistance from the Acid Survivors Foundation (ASF).

The procession was brought out from Satkhira Government High School and terminated at Satkhira Shahid Abdur Razzak Park with a rally.

With Farida Akhtar Banu in the chair, the rally was addressed by, among others, Prof. Asit Kumar

Majumdar, journalists Prof. Abu Ahmed and Kamruzzaman, Abdus Sabur, Kazi Saidur Rahman, Monzur Hossain, Sheikh Haroon Ur Rashid and acid victims Jhharna Khatun and Rabiul Islam.

The speakers made an appeal to all, specially civil society members, to stand by the survivors of acid violence and help them to lead a normal life. They stressed the need for treatment and rehabilitation of the victims and to create awareness against the crime.

They said acid throwing incidents increased alarmingly across the country as the culprits escape punishment, using legal loopholes. They demanded tougher laws to curb the crime and joint efforts by people of all classes to create awareness against the crime.

At the rally acid violence victim Jhharna Khatun and Rabiul Islam described their ordeals and called for extending a helping hand for

rehabilitation of all such victims in the country and for tougher laws to stop recurrence of such incidents.

Creating awareness among people could reduce the crime to a great extent, they said. Some of the speakers termed acid terrorists as enemies of society and called for socially boycotting them.

4 JMB suspects held in Jessore

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

Four banned Jama'atul Mujahidin Bangladesh (JMB) suspects were arrested by Jessore Kotwali police from four villages in Jhikargachha upazila on Saturday.

The arrested are Mostafa Kamal, son of Liakat Ali of Kulia village, Solaiman Hossain, son of Ayub Ali of Towra village, Shamsur Rahman, son of Abu Bakr Biswas of Jafarnagar village and Mizanur Rahman, son of Janab Ali of Beneal village. They were arrested as per confessional statements of 5 JMB men, police said.

Of them Kausar Ali, Abdul Khaleq and Abul Kashem were arrested in Keshabpur upazila on January 3 and Alauddin and Akhtaruzzaman were arrested in Abhaynagar upazila on January 5.

The arrested were being quizzed till filing this report at 6 pm on Saturday.

2 killed in Sirajganj road mishap

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

Two persons were killed and five others injured when a bus collided head on with a truck at Jhaoil in Kamarkhand upazila on the Dhaka-Dinajpur highway yesterday.

The dead are Shah Alam, 30 and Moez Uddin 27, of Pabonta village in Saghata upazila of Gaibandha district.

Police recovered the bodies and sent those to hospital morgue for autopsy.

AL men left out of voter list in Khagrachhari

Leaders allege

A CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Awami League (AL) leaders here alleged that more than 5,000 party men of the district were dropped from the voter list because of their long absence from homes.

They are away from homes to get rid of oppression and fake cases being lodged by BNP activists since the last general election, AL leaders said.

Enumerators are yet to visit most of the areas inhabited by Hindus, Tripura Marmas, Chakmas and AL workers although several days were passed since beginning of preparation of new voter list from January 1.

The areas are southern part of Khagrachhari town, Shalban ADC tilla, Narikel Bagan, western part of Masterpara, Ananda Nagar and Mahazanpara.

As BNP activists were appointed as enumerators, they are enlisting names of BNP men although they are away from homes due to business purposes, alleged district AL president.

A Jatiya Party leader of Masterpara told this correspondent on condition of anonymity that the BNP activists are controlling everything from their den at Kalabagan.

Resist voter list manipulation, Inu tells Bheramara meeting

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Jatya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) President Hasanul Haq Inu has said massive irregularities are being done in voter enrolment to allow the BNP-Jamaat alliance government retain power.

Election Commission officials in districts, at the behest of ruling parties, have appointed party men in voter enrolment and they are making the voter lists as per their will. Fake voters and being listed while minority community people are being avoided in many areas, he alleged while addressing a public meeting at Bheramara High School ground on Friday.

They are manipulating the voter lists sensing that people will vote them no more, he said and urged the people to build a movement so that they can not hold a "mock election" and perpetuate power.

He said there is not reason for the people in power to believe that they will be able to cling to power forever. People will reject this government in the next election, if it is held in a free and fair manner, he said.

This government protects

fundamentalist forces, who are blasting bombs and killing pro-liberation forces to create a law and order situation in the country to help BNP-Jamaat cling to power through conspiracy, the JSD president alleged.

to Islamist militant outfits JMB (Jama'atul Mujahideen, Bangladesh) and JMJB (Jagrata Muslim Janata, Bangladesh) have been created under the protection of ruling parties, he claimed.

Opposition parties earlier warned the government time and again about activities of JMB and JMJB but they did not care, he said.

He alleged that a partner in the ruling coalition created the militant Islamist outfits and are protecting them now. Bomb blasts and killings in the name of Islam will not stop so long the Jamaat-Islami will remain in the ruling coalition, Inu said.

"Jamaat is behind Islamist militancy. Most of the arrested militants confessed to police that they were Jamaat-Shibir activists", he said.

"Once BNP led Jamaat but soon Jamaat will lead BNP", he said. Inu claimed that the government wanted to liquidate the 14-party

alliance. Failing to do so, it is now manipulating the voter list.

"People are now conscious and they will resist any move to prepare a fake voter list and hold a farcical election," the JSD leader said. "Nab enumerators who manipulates voter list and handed them over to lawenforcers", Inu told the meeting.

Inu bitterly criticised killing of four sugarcane farmers in Daulatpur on December 28. "The BNP-Jamaat failed to control price of essentials. They killed innocent farmers for producing molasses from sugarcane grown on their fields".

The JSD leader called upon the people to intensify the on-going anti-government agitation and unite under the banner of 14-party alliance to oust the "failed" government.

With Bheramara upazila JSD President Nabir Uddin the chair, the meeting was addressed by, among others, JSD central general secretary Syed Jafar Sazzad, Joint Secretary Shirin Akther, Karim Sikdar, Kushtia JSD President Sahabub Ali, General SA Abdul Alim Sawpan, Emdadul Haq Ata, Golam Mohsin, Arati Nandi and Asit Kumar Shingho Roy.

Satkhira BNP split ahead of Khaleda's visit

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Internal conflict in Satkhira BNP has again surfaced as the two groups held separate meetings in the town ahead of party chief and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's visit to the district today.

The district BNP is virtually divided into two groups over formation of a new district committee. The internal feud is continuing for the last 18 months.

A faction of BNP led by its district president Habibul Islam Habib MP on January 1 held a preparatory meeting at Satkhira Circuit House to make the Prime Minister's January 8 public meeting at Kalaroa a success. Habibul Islam was in the chair.

Speakers at the meeting criticised the other faction led by

Rahmaullah Palash and MA Jalil, holding them responsible for "splitting and weakening" the party ahead of the PM's meeting to serve interest of conspirators".

The other faction led by its district general secretary Rahmaullah Palash held a separate meeting at Satkhira Circuit house on January 4 to make Khalada Zia's meeting a success.

The BNP high command on June 8 last year dissolved the district committee headed by MA Jalil and Syed Itekhhar Ali and formed a convening committee comprising Habibul Islam Habib MP, MA Jalil and Rahmatullah Palash and asked them to form a full fledged committee within three months.

But the committee could not be formed due to internal feud, party sources said.



PHOTO: STAR

Workers and employees of Mugura Textile Mills formed a human chain in Mugura town on Wednesday for payment of 14 months' arrears salary.

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