

CASES TAKE NEW TURN AS JMB KINGPIN CONFESSES TO INVOLVEMENT

Reinvestigation into Satkhira cinema, circus blasts ordered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

A court here yesterday ordered reinvestigation into the bomb blasts in a cinema and a circus in Satkhira town in September 2002 in which three people were killed and 125 injured.

After the incidents, three local Awami League leaders were arrested and quizzed by the Joint Interrogation Cell (JIC) in Dhaka but no clue to the incident was found.

The order for reinvestigation followed confessions by JMB kingpin Abdur Rahman and an arrested

cadre that the militant outfit was involved in the blasts.

On September 28 in 2002, a bomb exploded inside Roxy Cinema in the town at about 7:30 pm, leaving 90 people injured.

Ten minutes later, a second bomb went off in a circus in Satkhira Stadium, injuring over 36 people. The circus was organised as part of the traditional fair, 'Gurpukurer Mela'.

Three of the injured—Mortazul Alam Mukta, 15, Hafizur Rahman, 25 and Dr. Selina Parvin, 35 later died at hospital.

Immediately after the blasts, police arrested eight people including local Awami League leaders Pourasava Commissioner Mominullah Mohon, Dilip Kumar Biswas and Zulfiqur Ali Tota.

The arrested were quizzed by the JIC on November 7, 2002, but no clue to the blasts was found.

The two blast cases were transferred to Criminal Investigation Department (CID) for investigation. CID Khulna Zone ASP Maula Bux and CID Inspector Sukhranjan Samaddar were made Investigation Officers (IOs).

On April 11 last year, the two IOs submitted final reports to courts, saying they failed to identify the culprits involved in the blasts.

JMB cadre Masud Bin Ishaque, arrested from Khulna in September after last year's August 17 country-wide serial blasts, confessed to police that JMB blasted the bombs in the cinema and in the circus.

JMB kingpin Abdur Rahman in his recent confessions also said that the militant outfit was behind bomb blasts in cinemas, circus shows and mazars (shrines) across the country.

After their confessional statements, Khulna CID Inspector Akhtaruzzaman and Bagerhat CID Inspector Afsar Uddin were made IOs of Roxy cinema and circus blasts respectively.

They submitted separate prayers before Satkhira Additional Sessions Judge's court, seeking permission to reinvestigate the cases.

After hearing, Additional Sessions Judge Osman Haidar ordered reinvestigation into the blasts.



Unprotected gas pipeline ... The pipeline supplying gas from Jalalabad gas field to Fenchuganj Fertiliser Factory has surfaced near Sylhet city as erosion has removed soil, making it vulnerable.

One killed as bombs go off in 2 districts

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Kushtia*

One person was killed and two others were injured in two bomb attacks in Chuadanga and Kushtia Tuesday night.

According to police, about 10 youths riding several motorcycles came to Munshiganj Bazar in Chuadanga at about 9 pm and hurled two bombs on Asaduzzaman Asad and three others sitting near a shuttered shop.

Asad, 35, died on the spot while another person—Kutub Uddin—was injured. The gang sped away. Police from Munshiganj camp took Kutub to Chuadanga Sadar Hospital.

Later, one Rahul Raj, introducing

himself as a 'regional leader' of Janajuddho phoned some local journalists and said Asad was killed as he 'stood in the way of establishing a classless society'.

Police arrested three persons from Seheala village in the upazila yesterday in connection with the incident. They are Minarul, Achir Uddin, and Dinu. They were produced before a magistrate court, which sent them to jail.

In Kushtia, farmer Abdul Mannan, 45, was seriously injured when a bomb was hurled into his house at Bhurkapara village in Daulatpur upazila through an open window when he was asleep Tuesday night.



A procession was brought out in Khagrachhari town yesterday marking observance of World Water Day. Safe water is a scarce commodity in hills in summer.

Jubo Sanghati leader killed in Narsingdi

BSS, *Narsingdi*

A Jubo Sanghati leader was murdered at Kararchar village under Shibpur upazila in the district on Tuesday.

The victim was identified as Jahangir Alam Sani, 28, of the same upazila. He was the general secretary of Shibpur Upazila Jubo Sanghati, a faction of Jatiya Party (JP).

Police and local sources said, a group of Palli Bidyut linemen led by Jahangir and Akram went to Kararchar village to disconnect the electric line of the victim's poultry farm. At this, Sani locked in a quarrel with them and at one stage of altercation the linemen allegedly strangled Sani.

6 JMB men got Tk 1 lakh for Sirajganj blasts

Arrested Tarikul tells interrogators

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Sirajganj*

Arrested Jama'atul Mujahedein, Bangladesh (JMB) Ehsar member Tarikul Islam yesterday said he along with five cadres blasted nine bombs in Sirajganj town on August 17 last year and they were paid Tk one lakh for this.

The bombs were brought to the town from Bogra in a bus, Tarikul confessed to a team of interrogators on the first day yesterday of his

seven-day remand.

JMB cadre Jweel alias Shahin of Bhola Hat village in Rajshahi brought the bombs, sent by its Sura member Abdu Awal, son-in-law of JMB chief Abdur Rahman.

But he is yet to disclose the names of the five cadres, police sources said.

Tarikul was arrested on Sunday from Shail Khol bus stand in the town.

A team comprising Additional

Police superintendent AKM Aminul Haque, Detective Branch Officer-in-Charge (OC) Nikhil Chandra Mondal and Sadar thana OC Abdul Jabbar is interrogating him.

Tarikul said he joined JMB in 2000 and met its kingpin Siddiqui Islam Bangla Bhai in Khulna in 2003 for the second time. He took nine days' training on use of arms in Naogaon and Rajshahi, he said.

BNP-Jamaat will be routed if fair polls held, says Nasim

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Gaibandha*

The four-party alliance will be routed if the next parliamentary election is held in a free and fair atmosphere, Awami League central leader and former minister Mohammad Nasim MP claimed here yesterday.

Realising this, the ruling alliance is opposing the proposals for reforms of the caretaker system and the Election Commission (EC), he told as public meeting at Mohimaganj.

He reiterated his party's stance that

there would not be any election without reforms.

The meeting was organised by Gobindagnaj upazila Krishak League, AL's peasant front, to commemorate the death of three farmers when police opened fire to quell demonstrations there for fertiliser in 1996 during the tenure of the then BNP government. Forty people were injured in the incident.

Nasim alleged that whenever BNP comes to power, there is crises of fertiliser, fuel and electricity and poor farmers are the worst sufferers.

Farmers are staging demonstrations, putting up road barricades and besieging dealers' shops and power supply offices but the government is unconcerned, he said.

After losing public support, the BNP-Jamaat alliance government has resorted to heinous tactics to cling to power. They are sheltering militants and criminals to use them in the next election for vote rigging, he claimed.

Militancy will not stop unless godfathers of militants are arrested, Nasim said.

Identify, round up mentors of JMB to root out militancy

Noor says in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

The Awami League central publicity secretary Asaduzzaman Noor MP yesterday urged youths to unite to oust the BNP-Jamaat government to save the country and its people from the clutch of militant and undemocratic forces.

"Youths can play a vital role in dislodging the anti-people government by turning the on-going agitation into a mass upsurge and rescue the country from the fanatic militant forces", Noor said while addressing a gathering of young people at Shalkha College ground. It was organised by Tala upazila Jubo League.

The AL lawmaker alleged that a partner in the ruling coalition is behind creation of Jama'atul Mujahidin Bangladesh (JMB) and Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB).

Expressing concern over growing militancy and fanaticism in the name of Islam, which never supports violence.

"They (the ruling coalition partner) have created militant organisations only to capture power in the name of religion", he said. Islamist zealots are defaming the religion, destroying democracy and defacing the country abroad, he said.

Noor claimed that Islamist outfits are still active in the country under different names and their international links are intact.

He regretted the government's role saying, militancy cropped up under its protection.

"At the initial stage, when we were

demanding action against militants, the government was telling people that it was created by the media and was part of opposition's planned propaganda to tarnish country's image.

"It took a long time when the government finally admitted existence of powerful militant groups in the country".

Mere arrest of JMB kingpins and a handful of cadres will not end militancy unless their mentors and protectors in the government are identified and arrested, the AL lawmaker said.

He demanded immediate arrest of ministers, MPs and officials who protected JMB kingpins Abdur Rahman and Siddiqui Islam Bangla Bhai.

He reiterated that arrest of Abdur Rahman and Bangla Bhai is a drama, staged to divert people's attention from power-fuel-fertiliser crises and price hike of essentials and foil the anti-government agitation.

Satkhira AL president Sheikh Mujibur Rahman told the meeting that the BNP-Jamaat government would be forced to accept opposition's electoral reform proposals for holding a free and fair election.

The meeting was also addressed by, Satkhira AL general secretary Nazrul Islam, Jubo League central Organising Secretary Mahbubur Rahman Hiron and Tala upazila Jubo League President Mir Zakir Hossain.

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