

July 27, 2006

## Govt fears further JMB attacks

### Law enforcers alerted about militants' regrouping

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has alerted law enforcement and intelligence agencies to step up vigilance across the country following information that Jama'at ul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) militants are reorganising themselves under different banners.

According to the alert buzz, operatives of the banned Islamist outfit JMB, which shook the whole nation with waves of bomb attacks since August last year, might go for further attacks at any place anytime.

Reports from our correspondents said the militants are trying to regroup in haor and beel areas of northern and north-eastern regions after a downturn in their activities due to arrest of most of their top leaders.

Sources said the government move for extra alert came after it received reports from intelligence agencies that JMB operatives are reorganising themselves at different places in the country.

The information itself appeared a wake up call for the government as it claimed credit on many occasions through statements at home

and abroad that it has successfully tackled the militancy menace.

The home ministry early this week sent urgent cyber message (coded message) to all deputy commissioners (DCs) and superintendents of police (SPs) to strengthen intelligence activities to track down where the militants are regrouping.

The DCs and SPs then sat with the upazila nirbahi officers, officials of District Special Branch and Detective Branch and officers-in-charge of police stations in their areas, and asked them to trace

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## PM for OIC steps to stop Lebanon killings

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has urged the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) to take effective steps to stop the killing of innocent people in Lebanon.

Khaleda made the call when a five-member parliamentary delegation of Turkey, led by Turkish Grand National Assembly Deputy Speaker Ismail Alptekin, met her at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) yesterday.

Condemning the killing of innocent people in Lebanon, the prime minister said Bangladesh and Turkey are the OIC members and since the OIC secretary general is also from Turkey he can play a strong role in ending the war on Lebanon.

She said Bangladesh and Turkey are playing an important role in various international forums.

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PHOTO: STAR

Thousands of opposition activists march towards Jatrabari intersection in the capital yesterday, the second day of the 14-party combine's road march.

## 14-party road march turns into a pre-poll campaign

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League (AL)-led 14-party opposition combine's road march on its second day yesterday virtually turned into a pre-election campaign with thousands of opposition loyalists and general people walking down the roads chanting slogans like Nouka, Nouka (AL's election symbol).

The marchers walked more than five kilometres from Narayanganj Ring Road to Jatrabari intersection that took about one and a half hours.

Waving banners, festoons and placards, they started marching at 4:20pm amid unprecedented security.

The six-day march programme till July 30 seeks to mobilise people to join the opposition's street agita-

tion to force the BNP-Jamaat alliance government to accept the proposed electoral reforms.

Thousands of people from Demra, Shyampur and other surrounding areas, who took to the streets demanding uninterrupted supply of power and water supply in recent months, joined yesterday's march.

The demonstrators shouted calls for having a government led by AL chief Sheikh Hasina through the next general election to bring an end to what they said is the ruling coalition's misrule and corruption.

They also chanted slogans in favour of a number of prospective opposition candidates in the next election.

The combine will organise road marches from unions to upazilas headquarters across the country

today and from upazilas to district headquarters tomorrow.

In the capital, it will organise a march from Nayabazar [2nd Buriganga Bridge] to Mukhtang on July 29 and finally from Amin Bazar to Russell Square at Dhanmondi on July 30.

The march programme held amid apprehension of subversive attacks did not see any untoward incidents both on the first day and the second day.

Yesterday, opposition supporters from different areas of the city and hundreds of other people lined up on the roads and welcomed the marchers. Many more, mostly women, watched the march from roadside houses and clapped.

Termining Demra-Shyampur and

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## Delhi wants direct bus service from Agartala thru' Dhaka

UNB, New Delhi

India has taken up with Bangladesh a proposal for starting a direct bus service between Agartala and Kolkata via Dhaka.

Details of the proposal as well as frequency of the bus service would be worked out by the bus operators of the two countries, Minister of State for External Affairs E Ahmed told Lok Sabha Thursday last.

He however said the proposal has so far not received approval of the Bangladesh government.

In reply to a question, the minister said some confidence building measures between India and Pakistan were aimed at avoidance of conflict between the two countries.

He said Lahore-Amritsar weekly bus service was already operational along with Amritsar-Nankana Sahib bus service. Similarly, Poonch-Rawalkot bus service also started on June 20 to promote people-to-people contact.

## Bangla Bhai's top aide arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Another top aide to the Islamist militant Siddiqui Islam 'Bangla Bhai', this time Bagmara upazila chief advisor to Jagrata Muslim Janata, Bangladesh (JMMJB), was arrested yesterday by the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in a raid at Shikdari Bazar in Bagmara.

After the August 17 serial bomb blasts last year, Abdus Sattar Master's name along with Prof Lutfar, Mahtab Khamaru and Abul Member were included in the list of 300 suspects compiled by the law enforcing agencies; but later, the names of the ones mentioned above were erased from the list following directives from the home ministry.

Sattar Master was one of the masterminds of JMMJB killing missions in 2004 as well. In the last week of June, 2004, five JMMJB men led by Sattar Master abducted Yasin, son of Ismail, hung him from a tree near Kodpara madrasa and beat him to death.

Lieutenant Colonel Quazi Shamsuzzaman Khan, commander of Rajshahi Rab unit, confirmed Sattar Master's arrest

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## Outlaw shot dead by rivals

A CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

The second-in-command of Pabna region Purbo Banglar Communist Party, ML (Janajuddho), Shajahan Ali alias Shajai was shot to death, allegedly by party rivals, during early hours yesterday at Ataikula under Pabna district.

In the backdrop of deteriorating law and order situation in the area, it is the third consecutive murder in Ataikula within the last five days.

Ataikula police recovered Shajahan's body from Chomporpur village under Ataikula thana.

The victim Shajahan Ali, son of Khair Mollah of Char Hapania under Ataikula thana, was a listed criminal and was wanted for 15 cases including five for murder, said Ataikula police.

The party rivals might have abducted and killed him, suspects the Ataikula police.

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## BNP satisfied with voter listing

### MK Anwar, Aminul Haque meet CEC to make the point

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Agriculture Minister MK Anwar and Post and Telecommunications Minister Aminul Haque in a meeting with the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) yesterday expressed their satisfaction over the present situation centering the ongoing task of updating the voter list.

The two senior leaders of the ruling BNP expressed the party position on the EC's voter listing task when cross sections of people along with the opposition political

parties are demanding resignation of the 'controversial' CEC and two other election commissioners.

"We are definitely satisfied with the present activities of the Election Commission in updating the voter list," MK Anwar said after the meeting with the Election Commission (EC).

The EC is now on the right track, he added.

"We went to the Election Commission on behalf of our party and inquired into the prevailing situation over updating the voter list," the minister, also a vice-

president of the ruling BNP, said. "As a vice president of the party, I went there. Otherwise, I don't have any business with the Election Commission as a minister," Anwar said.

Various corners have commented on the preparation of the voter list to create confusion over holding of the next election in time, he said, adding, "So, we wanted to know the progress of the task of updating the voter list. We are not worried about the present progress in updating the voter list. It will be

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## BSF kills 1

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

The Indian Border Security Force (BSF) last night gunned down a Bangladeshi cattle trader inside the Indian territory across the bordering village of Keragachhi of Kalaroa upazila.

The dead was identified as Anisur Rahman, 35, son of Alhaj Samsur Rahman of village Baksa in Kalaroa upazila.

According to Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) sources, BSF personnel of Tarali camp under Swarupnagar Police Station of 24 Parganas district in West Bengal opened fire on the victim inside the Indian territory at Tarali last night while the victim along with other traders were returning to Bangladesh with cattle from India.

BSF reportedly picked up and took the victim's body away.

Major Humayun, second-in-command of BDR's 41 battalion, confirmed the incident.

Immediately after the killing, BDR sent a letter to the BSF authorities protesting the killing and asked BSF to return the body.

Meanwhile, the BSF at Gunarajpur outpost under Swarupnagar Police Station in 24 Parganas district, India opened fire

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## PREACHING HATRED

### Jamaat MP Saidee in UK hot soup

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK and BISHAWJIT DAS

The British media blasted its government for not revoking Jamaat-Islami lawmaker Delwar Hossain Saidee's visa this month although the Home Office has been considering excluding him from the UK following last year's July 7 bombings in London.

Quoting several British MPs, the online and print media branded Saidee as a "preacher of violent hatred against the West" and criticised the government for granting him visa.

Referring to British Prime Minister Tony Blair recently saying "not to tolerate the preachers of hatred against the West", the media cited several leaked emails exchanged among the advisers of Home and Foreign Offices expressing discontent at the government's allowing a "threat" like Saidee in the country.

Channel 4 on July 14 released a film titled "Who Speaks for Muslims?" by Martin Bright, political editor of the New Statesman, portraying Saidee as a radical extremist and the UK government's reluctance for not excluding him from the UK.

The Times Online carried a news item the same day on "hard-line Islamist cleric" Saidee's arrival and said the government advisers wanted him banned from Britain.

"The Home Office and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office considered excluding Saidee, an MP in Bangladesh who preaches violent hatred against the West and is accused of war crimes, last year," the Times Online said.

"But despite a series of email exchanges in September, his visa was never revoked and the Home Office issued no exclusion order."

"The Foreign Office's Islamic issues adviser [Mockbul Ali]

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## Bangladeshis reluctant to quit Lebanon

Says IOM

AFP, Dhaka

Thousands of Bangladeshis trapped in war-torn Lebanon do not want to leave the country because they fear losing their jobs, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) said yesterday.

"Most of them are not interested in leaving the country as they fear that if they leave, they may not be able to go back to their workplaces once the conflict ends," said an official at the inter-governmental body, which is coordinating some evacuations.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said many workers did not have proper documents and were therefore hesitant to list their names for evacuation.

Only 61 of the 10,179 registered Bangladeshis in Lebanon had signed up for evacuation as of Tuesday, the official added.

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## 4 UN observers killed in Israeli air raid

### Fighting intensifies on border; 15 Palestinians killed in Gaza

AFP, Beirut

Fighting on the Lebanon-Israeli border intensified yesterday after an Israeli air raid killed up to four UN observers and some 20 soldiers were wounded in fighting in Bint Jbeil, an Israeli spokeswoman said, referring to a key town in south Lebanon. Her statement followed a report on Israeli army radio that 13 soldiers were "hit" in heavy fighting there.

The Arabic news channel Al-Jazeera said 13 soldiers were killed and 12 wounded.

Countries at the 15-nation Rome meeting also agreed to hold multi-lateral talks soon on an international buffer force, an idea espoused by US Secretary of State Condoleezza

Rice. "The mandate of the security force will be discussed over the next several days," Rice told journalists in Rome. "We have asked for urgent meetings to take place so that a force can be put together."

The talks -- from which there had been scant hopes of a quick ceasefire emerging in light of US and British opposition -- was overshadowed by the deaths of the UN peacekeepers.

Governments around the world expressed shock and anger at the deaths in the Israeli raid on Tuesday which UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said appeared deliberately to target the observer post.

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## Rome meet fails to agree ceasefire

Pledges 'urgency'

AFP, Rome

A 15-nation crisis conference failed yesterday to agree on calling for an immediate ceasefire in the Middle East but vowed to work with "utmost urgency" for a truce.

In a declaration released after the five-hour Rome conference, the countries expressed "determination to work immediately to reach with utmost urgency a ceasefire to put an end to the current hostilities."

A ceasefire to end the bloodshed in the region "must be lasting, permanent and sustainable," they said.

The powers gathered here also called on Israel to exercise "utmost restraint" while welcoming Israel's decision to let aid into Lebanon including aid flights to Beirut airport.

But the ceasefire pledge fell far

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## News analysis

### 'Un'intended fallout of black money whitening

INAM AHMED

There have been more rumours than reports once the last financial year came to a close. This was the last year of the unethical and immoral offer to make black money white simply by paying a 7.5 per cent tax. The final week of the fiscal year saw a flurry of activities by the holders of black money or undeclared wealth who thronged to the NBR office to legitimize their earnings.

What happened next was something unexpected. The reporters from their instinctive urge to get their hands on something interesting rushed to the tax office, trying to get a list of people who got their money whitened. Naturally, there

must be many big fishes on the list Bangladesh after all is the most corrupt country if the TI corruption index is anything to go by.

But reporters came back frustrated. They were told that the list is sacrosanct. The state wants to protect those people who earned money by means known and unknown, straight and bent. After all, you cannot 'malign' the 'respectable' types. Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman told parliament point blank: "The list of people whitening black money will not be revealed under any circumstances, even in case of instructions from parliament."

Now it was anybody's guess that the list must actually contain

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## Two energy ministry staff suspended for 'graft'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The energy ministry has suspended two officials and transferred one of Meghna Petroleum Corporation on grounds of corruption and forwarded the cases to Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) for investigation.

Energy Adviser Mahmudur Rahman told the press yesterday that the two suspended officials were found to have illegally sold enormous volumes of petroleum products on credit.

The other official has been transferred to another post following press reports on his suspicious amount of wealth.

However, sources said the ACC did not receive any such cases as of yesterday evening.

In-charges of Fatullah and Godnail depots of Meghna

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