

26 JMB men held during training

Arrestees include one Afghan war veteran, 2 suicide bombers; Rab had their forest camp in Mymensingh under watch

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh
Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday captured 26 Islamist militants while they were receiving military training in a remote jungle in Mymensingh.

The captured militants include two prospective suicide bombers and a veteran of the previous Afghan war.
The capture came a few days after the government had alerted all law enforcers about reorganisation of militancy in the country.

Rab, which has been interrogating the arrestees, said the militants belong to outlawed Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) that carried out 500 bomb blasts simultaneously across the country on August 17 last year.
The elite battalion also recovered some bomb-making materials and training equipment from a militant den at Jibontola village under Bhaluka upazila in the district. The den had four bunkers and two sentry outposts.
A 30-member team of Rab-9, led by Lt Col Nurul Momen and Flight Lt Faisal, carried out a 15-minute raid yesterday on the remote jungle at Jibontola village and captured the militants.
Rab intelligence was keeping an eye on the camp, some 800 yards away from Jibontola Madarasa, for

VOTER LIST EC finally gets truncated fund of Tk 25cr

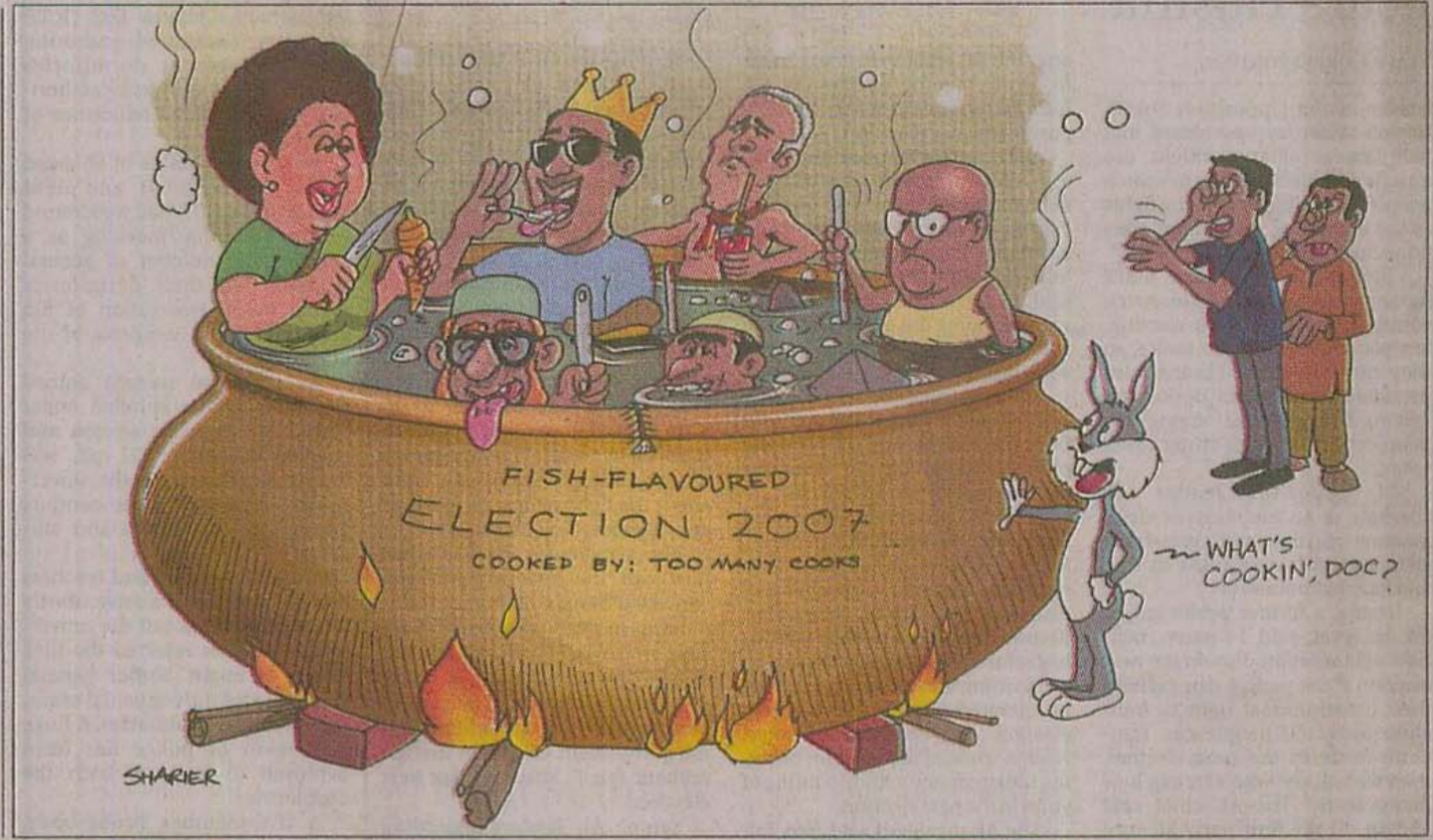
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two weeks after the Election Commission (EC) Secretariat's proposal for a fund of Tk 40.86 crore for updating the voter list, the finance ministry yesterday allocated Tk 25 crore.

The allocated amount is inadequate for conducting the huge task of updating the existing voter list, Secretary of the EC Secretariat Abdur Rashid Sarkar said, adding, "We will have to seek money again as it is not possible to complete the task with the allocated amount."

The finance ministry will have to allocate more money, which is required for completing the constitutional task of preparing the voter list, he said.

"We disbursed the money...but we put conditions and asked the EC Secretariat to implement the project of updating the voter list in



Caught red handed, let off the hook twice

STAR REPORT

The government did not take any action against Moulana Mufti Abdur Rouf, a veteran of the previous Afghan war, although he was arrested twice with militancy-related documents and training materials in his possession in 1995 and 2003.

Rouf, 42, during his arrest in Faridur in 2003, admitted that he had received military training in Pakistan and participated in the previous war in Afghanistan against the erstwhile Soviet Union.

Apart from working as a trainer for banned Jama'atul Mujahideen

Bangladesh (JMB) across the country while teaching at madrasas, Rouf also confessed to having links

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Moulana Abdur Rouf

Alliance fever sidelines electoral reform talks

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The much talked about electoral reforms have been sidelined by the latest politics of expanding electoral alliances, prompting political analysts to believe that the possibility of brining the reforms is slim during the tenure of the four-party alliance government.

With a new election around the corner, neither the government nor the Election Commission (EC) has any plan at this moment to bring reforms in the EC and electoral

laws, sources said.

Sensing ruling BNP's strategy to pass the buck to the interim government, Awami League-led 14-party opposition coalition is now planning to realise the demand for reforms during the tenure of the next caretaker government, sources said.

No remarkable progress has yet taken place in bringing reforms in the caretaker government system, EC and the electoral laws in the last five months since the opposition placed the reform proposals in the

parliament.

The ruling and opposition parties could not sit for a dialogue over the issue as they could not form a committee to deal with the proposals despite exchanging several letters in the last four months.

The prevailing stand-off over electoral reforms has prompted many political analysts to believe that the tenure of the current government will expire in October this year without resolving the issue.

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Mashrafee spoils Shahadat party

SPORTS REPORTER



Mashrafee Bin Mortuza

was flayed for 19 runs in the final over as Bangladesh suffered a painful two-wicket defeat against Zimbabwe in the thrilling third one-dayer at the Hatara Sports Club ground on Wednesday.

Mashrafee's nervous breakdown in the last over that saw Zimbabwe's Brandon Taylor hitting two sixes and a four to eke out a memorable win also spoiled a

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Edible oil turns too pricey in fortnight

Syndicate cashes in on slight price rise in int'l market

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Prices of the edible oil, spice, pulse and some import-based essentials shot up in the city markets as a syndicate of importers and wholesalers allegedly manipulated the market on the pretext of recent unrest in the Middle East.

Prices of soybean oil went up by Tk 12 and palm oil by Tk 14 a litre in the retail market within a span of 15

days, and traders accused a syndicate of the market manipulation. Some spices and essentials were also turning costlier everyday because of this syndicate, traders at different retail market alleged.

Soybean oil was sold at Tk 55-60 and palm oil at Tk 48-52 a litre in the retail market yesterday. Retail oil prices are Tk 2-3 more than the wholesale market ones but vary

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