

Plan to reorganise ‘underworld’, committees

Defection, seizure of arms weaken Jamaat-Shibir politics in Chittagong

SHAHIDUL ISLAM

Jamaat-e-Islami and its student front Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) are likely to reorganise their Chittagong committees with an aim to do 'better' in the next general elections, sources here said.

Jamaat-Shibir-backed 'underworld' in Chittagong faces a shaky situation as a number of its cadres either were killed in shootout with police or rival factions or had deserted the party.

Also, seizure of some sophisticated firearms including AK-47, Ak-56 and M-16 from its cadres by law enforcing agencies has dealt a blow to the party. Some notorious criminals emerged in the party taking advantage of the politics of arms and terrorism and became major source of strength for Jamaat-Shibir politics in Chittagong for quite a long time.

The Jamaat leadership is so much concerned and contemplating to reinvigorate the party, including the underworld, here ahead of the next parliamentary elections, sources said.

Particularly, the defection of Ahmadul Haq Chowdhury alias Ahmadya, a top terror in South Chittagong, came as a serious blow to Jamaat. He was instrumental in keeping up the stronghold of Jamaat-Shibir in Satkania and south Chittagong over the years.

A Jamaat leader in Satkania, who recently joined BNP along with Ahmadya, said, "So far as I know Jamaat, a fundamentalist party, and Shibir, largely dependent on its underworld which is passing a bad time, will try to regain the position at any cost."

In fact, the Jamaat-Shibir leadership

is heavily dependent on the arsenal of its strong cadres and terrorist syndicates in Chittagong, he said. The syndicates under the umbrella of political 'godfathers' operate in different areas in the city and district. They are involved in abduction, extortion, robbery, loot, arms dealings and killings for the party interest, he added.

Interestingly, whenever a top terror or cadre got arrested, killed or defected, the leadership disowns the fall guys. It happened in the case of Ahmadya, whom everybody knows as big factor for Jamaat in Satkania and south Chittagong.

Shibir Nasir, Gittu Nasir, Habib Khan, Sajjad Khan, Ahmadul Haq alias Ahmadya, Humayun, Yakub, Baityya Alamgir, Delwar Hossain alias Azrail Delwar, Hamidullah, Five Star Jasim, Saiful Islam alias Chhota Saiful, Baityya Yousuf, Bilai Saiful, BDR Selim, Bhagina Ramzan, Taslimuddin Montu, Monzur Alam and Sarwar Alam have emerged as the infamous leaders of 'Chittagong underworld'. They also figure prominently on the list of identified criminals.

They were also directly involved in most of the gruesome and sensational killings in Chittagong, said police sources.

Among the victims of the killings were: Awami League and Jubo League activists Shyamol, Jafar and Didar in 1991; Omar Ghani MES College BCL leaders Enam, Shahid and Mansur in 1997; AL leader and ward commissioner Liaquat Ali Khan in 1999; Eight BCL leaders in 2000; BCL leaders Abul Kashem and Abu Taher in 2000; Principal Gopal Krishna Muhuri in 2001 and former Chittagong port chairman Commodore Golam Rabbani in

2004. However, some recent incidents have weakened the 'underworld'.

The defection of Ahmadya along with his few thousand followers was a major setback for Jamaat. Leadership could not take it lightly. Shibir cadres attempted on his life twice in less than four months.

At least 11 top criminals of Jamaat-Shibir are now behind the bar and four were killed in encounters with police or murdered by the rivals.

Of them, Shibir Nasir, Sajjad Khan, Five Star Jasim, Baityya Alamgir, Taslimuddin Montu, Baityya Yousuf, Azrail Delwar, Shipon, Babul, Monzur Alam and Sarwar Alam are now in jail while Humayun and Yakub were killed in encounter. Hamidullah, injured during encounter, died in police custody. Chhota Saiful was gunned down by his rival Gittu Nasir.

Besides, seizure of sophisticated arms from the possession of arrested cadres was also a major concern for the leadership. The pro-Jamaat crime syndicates possessed 40 to 50 heavy arms like AK-47, AK-56 and M-16 ten years ago. It has been reduced to almost half in recent time following successful police operations.

Only four of the top criminals are now outwitting law-enforcing agencies. Gittu Nasir, convicted with death sentence in Principal Muhuri murder case, Habib Khan, convicted with life-term in Principal Muhuri murder case and chargesheeted accused in commissioner Liaquat murder case, BDR Selim and Bhagina Ramzan are now operating from underground.



To much enthusiasm of the visitors, a new pair of emu, the second largest species of bird, arrived at Chittagong Zoo on Tuesday. The birds aged six months were bought from Dhaka, raising the number of birds and animals at the zoo to 240 while some new guests are also likely to arrive soon.

CDA to build road-cum-embankment, new township along Karnaphuli

ABDULLAH AL MAHMUD

Chittagong Development Authority (CDA) has initiated a new project to construct a road-cum-embankment and develop a new township along the river Karnaphuli.

The project has been taken as a part of its programme for speedy urbanisation of the port city in line with the concept of commercial capital.

The project aims at building an embankment on the river Karnaphuli to save the city from tidal surge and developing a new township with urban facilities on the right bank of the river. The road on the embankment will be used as outer ring road linking Chittagong port area to Cox's Bazar and southern part of

Chittagong.

CDA has already started feasibility study of the project at an estimated cost of Tk 3.42 crore. Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) is providing financial assistance for the study to be completed in two years.

The feasibility study is to help formulate a project for construction of a road-cum-embankment stretching from Sadarghat Road to Kalurghat Bridge and a new township on the river bank, CDA sources said.

The fund for implementation of the project will come partly from foreign aid and partly from the government and CDA itself, they said.

The area stretching from Sadarghat Road to Kalurghat Bridge along the

Karnaphuli forms the part of Outer Link Road network identified by Chittagong Metropolitan Master Plan (CMMP), sources said. The master plan also gave guidelines for planned urbanisation of the area.

CDA took the initiative as per the guidelines of the master plan at the directive of former commerce minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury, MP.

A representative from JBIC at a meeting with CDA officials in December in 2002 had shown interest in the project that prompted it to take initiative, sources said.

Despite being located very near to the heart of the city, the proposed project site remained underdeveloped due to insufficient infrastructure facilities. If

linked with the proposed road, the new town will be a 10-minute distance from the city centre or the old town.

They said that housing complexes, educational institutions, hospitals and markets are included in the proposed new town while the road-cum-embankment would be used as outer ring road. The road might also be a good link to the Asian Highway leading to Myanmar and Thailand. It would enable Asian countries to avail facilities of Chittagong port.

Besides, parks, motels and other tourist facilities would be developed at the new town and along the road-cum-embankment to provide riverside recreation to the city dwellers, they said.

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Sharks Threatened



A vested quarter in the port city is engaged in catching young sharks to collect their fins for smuggling. Such indiscriminate poaching is having a deleterious impact on shark numbers. *Left* Fins of sharks have been kept in the sun for drying. *Bottom* A man shows a shark without its fin. The pictures were taken from Fisheryghat area.

STAR PHOTO



Jewellers submit memo to mayor

Leaders of Bangladesh Jewellers' Association, Chittagong, submitted memorandum to Chittagong City Corporation Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury on Saturday.

They in the memorandum said that the anti-smuggling task force seized huge quantity of mortgaged ornaments 'unlawfully' from Nath Jewellers at Boxirhat in absence of the owner on August 11.

"The owner has long been doing the business with legal trade, dealing and mortgage licences and also having those documents renewed properly from time to time. Yet he fell victim to illegal treatment from the law enforcing agencies, which has damaged his reputation," the leaders said.

They sought mayor's cooperation in getting back those ornaments, withdrawal of the case and release of the staffs arrested so far. He assured them of his cooperation.

Association president Shafique Ahmad, General Secretary Advocate Amol Dhar, Joint Secretary Swapan Chowdhury and other Association members and jewellers were present.

Seminar on 'CNG and its benefit'

A seminar on 'CNG and its benefits in automobiles' was held at Hotel Agrabad on Friday.

Rotary Club of Agrabad and Intraco CNG Limited jointly organised the seminar. Professor Dr Mohammad Tazul Islam, an automobile expert at Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology (Cuet), presented the keynote paper and give guidelines about the ways of converting vehicles into CNG.

"Better knowing of CNG and its usage in automobiles can benefit the vehicle owners to a great extent," the speakers told the seminar.

Rotarian Dr Panna Lal Saha, Intraco CNG Chief Executive Mohammad Irad Ali, Intraco Director Gias Uddin, engineer Mohammad Ali and Rafi Ahmed also spoke.

Women Welfare Trust launched

A new organisation named Chittagong Women Welfare Trust was launched here on Friday with Sheikh Faridatunnesa Tahmina and Hosne Ara Munni as its first president and general secretary respectively.

Jatiya Mohila Sangstha, Chittagong chapter chairperson and Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) leader Dr Kamrun Nahar Dastagir was present as chief guest. She hoped that the trust would stand beside the distressed womenfolk of the society and help them towards self-reliance.

Hasina Chowdhury, Noorjahan Begum, Kumkum Sarwar and Munmun Ahmed also spoke.

One lakh drug addicts in Ctg

Speakers at a discussion here on Friday expressed concern at the rising trend of drug addiction in Chittagong and urged all to help reduce the menace from the port city.

"The port city has now over one lakh drug addicts but it lacks enough facilities to treat them," they said at the discussion in the ARK auditorium, a drug addiction treatment and rehabilitation centre, at Chandgaon in the city. Madok Nirodh Committee (Manic) organised the discussion with Ranjit Kumar Chowdhury in the chair.

Senior lawyer Mafizul Haq Bhuiyan was present as chief guest. Consultant of World Health Organisation (WHO) Tapan Kumar Nath, Advocate Madhu Maloti Chowdhury, engineer Biren Mistri, Mostafa Kamal, Salah Uddin, SM Masrur Rahman, Shamima Sultana, Rokeya Khanam,

Jannatul Ferdous and ARK chief executive Parvez Ahmed participated in the discussion.

Concern at ship-breaking atmosphere

Sitakunda Ship Breaking Observer Forum and a team from Scotland exchanged views about the present state of ship breaking industry at a meeting was at Sonaichhari on Thursday.

Scotland team leader Miss Laina, Dr Shamima of 'Manusher Jonno', Mouri Muhini Mohan, Mohammad Monju and Basanti Sen of Communica Consultancy, programme officer of Young Power for Social Action (YPSA) Abdullah Al Mamun, Assistant Programme Officer Mahfuza Akhter, field officer Kanij Sumaiya, forum leaders Syed Forkan Chowdhury and Quaiyum Chowdhury attended the meeting.

The speakers expressed grave concern at the subhuman working atmosphere at ship breaking industry, environmental hazards and pollution, and ill treatment to the workers by ship breakers.

Khelaghar for a better society

Chittagong south district unit of Khelaghar organised a rally at Zila Parishad auditorium on Friday.

Speakers at the meeting underscored the need for upbringing the children properly to build a better society free from communalism and other social evils. "Thousands of Khelaghar activists and members can help achieve that dream," they said.

District President Pradip Bhattachariya chaired the meeting. Former presidium member Ashish Sen, engineer Rathin Sen, district vice-president Osman Gani Chowdhury Babul, Sanath Kumar

Chowdhury, General Secretary Subimal Ghosh Riton, Professor Biplob Basu, Baghirath Das and Polash Chowdhury addressed the meeting.

The meeting also condoled the death of eminent journalist Santosh Gupta and eminent writer and Dhaka University teacher Professor Humayun Azad.

IUB seminar on Internet

A seminar on 'Internet use in business and management' was held on the Chittagong campus of Independent University of Bangladesh (IUB) on Wednesday.

Rebecca Macduff, the information resource officer on Bangladesh-India-Nepal-Sri Lanka at US Embassy in Delhi, was present as key speaker on the subject. She highlighted the significance of Internet use and its different practical aspects.

Coordinator of the seminar Syed Saifdarul Haq also spoke. IUB, Chittagong campus and the American Centre of US Embassy in Dhaka jointly organised the seminar.

Termination of 2 schoolteachers protested

Leaders of Hathazari chapter of Bangladesh Teachers' Association at a meeting on Friday protested the removal of two teachers of South Mekhal High School and demanded their reinstatement in jobs immediately.

"The school managing committee sacked senior teachers Mohammad Selimuddin and Nurul Alam without showing any specific reasons violating the law," they said. Mohammad Ali presided.

Association's Hathazari President Ranjit Kumar Nath, Vice-President Ratan Nath, General Secretary Firji Chowdhury, Moulana AAM Shaker, Narayan Chakraborty and Jahangir Alam also spoke at the meeting.