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PM cuts short trip

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia returns home at midnight today cutting short her visit to China in the wake of the Wednesday's bomb attacks across the country.

Khaleda, who flew to China Wednesday morning on a five-day official visit, is flying back home

SEE PAGE 19 COL 8

No indication of Saarc summit postponement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The South Asian states have expressed concern at the hundreds of bomb blasts in Bangladesh on Wednesday but none of them has

SEE PAGE 19 COL 3

Evidence, confessions point at JMB hallmark

Agencies suspect foreign link

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK

Intelligence agencies are certain that Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) carried out Wednesday's countrywide bombardment and also suspect a powerful foreign ally of the banned Islamist militant organisation was involved in it.

Investigators avoided blaming the JMB instantly for the attacks, even after its leaflets had been found at most of the explosion spots. But

they are now quite sure of the JMB responsibility, as some of the people arrested following the explosions have admitted to being JMB activists and carrying out the bombings.

But, the arrestees making the confessions are merely JMB grassroots, who do not know the motive and the target of the attacks or the masterminds behind. "The only thing they are owning up is that they became involved in the act to establish an Islamic rule in the country," said an investigator, seeking ano-

nymity.

As the arrestees fail to provide any further details, the investigators are now looking for those who engaged them to plant or blast the

bombs.

Law enforcers yesterday raided a number of places in search of the recruiters, based on the names and

SEE PAGE 19 COL 1

JMB activists' confession

STAR REPORT

Three people including two Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) activists arrested in the capital and Satkhira have admitted

to having carried out blasts in their districts Wednesday, the day a series of explosions rocked the entire country.

Meanwhile, Superintendent of

SEE PAGE 19 COL 1



Dhaka, Beijing agree to boost trade, investment

Sign 6 accords, MoUs, exchange of letters

UNB, Beijing

Bangladesh and China yesterday agreed to intensify cooperation in various fields designated during summit talks between the two countries, including peaceful use of nuclear energy and boosting trade and investment.

At the officials talks held at the Great Hall of the People, the two sides, led by Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, China agreed to give assistance to Bangladesh for peaceful use of nuclear energy for medicine and electricity generation.

Besides the assistance for Rooppur Nuclear Plant, the host side also agreed to provide Bangladesh with a grant of about 300 million RMB for the North Dhaka Water Treatment Plant and Sewerage Plant.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 8



PHOTO: AFP

Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao chats with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia during her visit to Beijing yesterday.

100 netted in massive hunt for bombers

STAR REPORT

Law enforcement, intelligence and security agencies began a massive hunt for suspects of the well-organised militant group that carried out Wednesday's 459 bomb blasts in 63 districts of the country.

They nabbed around 100 suspects and lodged around 300 cases until last night.

Some of the arrestees, who claimed themselves to be members of the self-claimed militant group Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), were taken on remand and sent to Joint Interrogation Cell (JIC) for further quizzing.

Sources said a four-member high-powered committee, headed by Additional Inspector General (AIG) of Police (Special Branch) Farrukh Ahmed, was formed Wednesday night to probe the blasts, but no official notification was given until filing of this report at 10:00pm last night.

Meanwhile, the police have decided to lodge separate cases for each of the bomb blasts with the police stations concerned.

Additional security measures

have been taken in the border areas and the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) was asked to remain alert so that none of the bombers or members of the militant groups can escape the country.

Dhaka: Fifteen separate cases were filed and four people were arrested in the capital yesterday.

The police arrested two people from Mirpur and two others from Uttara yesterday morning.

Of the 15 cases, five were filed with the Ramna, two each with Motijheel and Kotwali and one each with Lalbagh, Paltan, airport, Mirpur, Khilkhet and Demra police stations.

The airport police took the seven arrested Wednesday on a two-day remand each under Section 54 of Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC), while Ramna police brought Ruhul Amin Bachchu on a five-day remand showing him arrested in a regular case.

Satkhira: Twenty people, including JMB activists Nasir and Munna, were nabbed in the district after the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

No serious govt talks yet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The first 24 hours after the country's largest terror attack passed without any major safety assurance from the government to the people or without any serious top-level action demonstrating the direction the government is moving to.

While the government issued a press note denouncing Wednesday's

SEE PAGE 19 COL 3

Over 100 bombs seized from Munshiganj

UNB, Munshiganj

More than 100 homemade bombs were seized from a house under lock and key at Baligaon in Tongibari upazila of the district yesterday evening.

Police arrested a woman named Rashida Begum, 38, suspecting her involvement in making the bombs.

Shah Alam, officer-in-charge (OC) of Tongibari Police Station said the bombs seem not so powerful but enough to create panic by blasting them.

Munshiganj is the only district where no bomb was blasted on Wednesday.

Jama'atul tentacles spread in 5 1/2 years

Law enforcers' laid-back approach made it possible

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

Militants of Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) spearheading an armed Islamist revolution have sprouted over the last five and a half years taking advantage of a laid-back approach of the law enforcers.

After Wednesday's series of blasts rocking the whole country, senior officials of the law enforcement agencies observe that the operatives would not have built their stronghold had the previous incidents been dealt with seriously.

Most militants were arrested only to be released on bail later to go ahead with their activities. In some cases, the incidents were not even investigated further.

Militant linchpin Asadullah Al Galib was arrested following certain pressure, but his followers JMB chief Abdur Rahman and Sidiqul Islam alias Bangla Bhai are still at large.

The JMB with its antagonism to cultural functions, cinema, theatre, shrines and NGOs started spreading

its network all over the country since the late 1990s with support from the Middle East.

Having come public after the BNP-Jamaat coalition assumed power, the outfit has now proved its nationwide web towards waging an armed revolution to establish what they claim "the rule of Allah".

The JMB is, however, learnt to be the youth front of the Al Mujahideen, the parent organisation that began working in the mid-1990s and still remains obscure.

Jama'atul Jihad, Jama'atul Mujahideen, Ahle Hadith Andolon Bangladesh (Ahab), Ahle Hadith Jubo Shangha, Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB), Harkatul Jihad, Hizbut Tawhid, Tawhidi Janata, Islami Jubo Shangha, Islami Shangha, Al Falah A'am Unnayan Shansha and Shahadat-e al Hiqma are believed to be missions of the Al Mujahideen.

SEE PAGE 19 COL 4