

Kingpins remain

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interrogate them today and tomorrow," said an investigator asking not to be identified.

The investigators are focusing on the alleged link between the attackers and international terrorist outfits and the source of their money.

Farruk Ahmed, head of the national investigation, said officers are still gathering evidence and information from the suspects, who have arrived in Dhaka. "Hopefully we will find out the culprits very soon," he was quoted by the AFP news agency as saying.

"We're confident that after interrogating all the suspects from all these districts we can find the root of all this. It's now a matter of time," Farruk added.

Detive Branch (DB) of police raided different areas in the capital with Rabul Islam, one of the seven people arrested from Zia International Airport (ZIA). Rabul is an Imam of a local mosque at Ihsan Colony and a third-year student of Islamic studies at Jangannath University College.

A DB source said they are visiting different areas to verify information Rabul had earlier revealed. On completion of the raid, law enforcers would be able to know whether he gave false information, the source added.

JMB activists Nasir and Munna, who have already admitted to being involved in the bombings, were brought to Dhaka last night. The cops sent them to the capital from Satkhira at 2:30pm under police escort.

Madrasa student Abul Kalam Azad, who was arrested by Khulna Metropolitan Police on Thursday with video of Osama bin Laden's speeches and military-style training techniques, was transferred to the capital yesterday.

Khulna unit General Secretary of Ahle Hadith Andolan, Bangladesh (Ahab) Golam Moktar Babu was also sent with Azad, an Ahab activist.

Shamsul Alam, regional leader of the JMB held by Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in Kushtia, has also arrived in Dhaka.

Police have meantime arrested at least 25 more suspects and JMB leaders and activists from different parts of the country.

Seven of them were arrested in Gaibandha, six in Chapainawabganj, four including Imams of two mosques in Barisal, three in Joypurhat, two in Panchagarh and one each in Narayanganj, Tangail and Jessore.

Our Gaibandha correspondent reports: Police suspect one of the seven arrested during overnight raids is a close associate of JMB chief Bangla Bhai, while six others are JMB activists.

The arrestees are Jahid Raheen Shimul, 27, Sanwarul Islam, 26, Khalilullah Jewel, 30, Abdul Jalil, 45, a close sidekick of Bangla Bhai, Atiqur Rahman Bikul, 26, Azizul Islam, 36, and Piyare Alam, 46.

Police yesterday raided the Gaibandha house of JMB central leader Mehdi Matin, who was in the district on August 17 until 12:30pm, but failed to nab him.

The police however seized religious books on jihad and letters from his fellow leaders of Sylhet, Comilla, Munshiganj, Lalmonirhat and elsewhere. They also seized a manuscript written by Matin similar to the leaflets found on the day of the explosions.

The father-in-law's house of Jail, a teacher of Munshirhat High School, is located at Kurnipara village in Gabtali, Bogra, adjacent to the house of Bangla Bhai. He was the matchmaker of Bangla Bhai and his wife Fatema Khatun, daughter of Ibrahim Khalil.

London's police

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and for the officers involved to "face justice".

Blair told the BBC: "We have apologised (for the fatal shooting) and we take responsibility for it".

But he added: "It is one death out of 57, and the huge context here is the largest criminal inquiry in English history, with 52 innocent victims dead ... with four dead bombers and one tragic death.

"We can't let one tragic death outweigh everything else."

Border shootout

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shoulder while working in a farm-land some 800 yards off the zero line, BDR sources said, adding he was rushed to the local upazila health complex.

The shooting stopped at 5:10pm with local BDR officials hoping that their BSF counterpart might agree to hold a flag meeting sometime late last night or early today. BDR Director General Major General Jahangir Alam Chowdhury told The Daily Star in Dhaka last night.

He said he heard of one case of injury in the Bangladesh side and two to three cases in the Indian one.

"At a place called Gilabari, a BOP [border outpost] had been facing erosion by the Mahananda river. When we attempted to drop stones in our side of the river to protect the BOP, the BSF barred the BDR from doing so. But, they started dumping sandbags in their side of the river [at Bholahat] and opened fire at our border guards," described the BDR chief.

Most of the panicky residents in the border area left their villages by the afternoon, while a huge crowd of onlookers gathered at a safe distance to watch the situation.

BDR sources and witnesses said the BSF members of Mousia camp opened started shooting at the BDR while dumping sandbags in the Mahananda river at the no-man's land without 'any permission and

Hasina

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ministries. "She (Khaleda) will have to bear the responsibility."

She said: Just see the relaxed faces of the ministers. Foreign minister and foreign secretary had said there is no reason that the prime minister will shorten her China trip cancelling the dinners and lunches. Announcement of her early return was announced only after I raised the issue in my press conference.

"The faces of the ministers and prime minister's reluctance to cut short the visit clearly indicated that they all knew it, they prepared the blueprint of the attacks and they used the intelligence and law enforcement agencies," she said.

Hasina said the serial bomb attacks were not possible without the participation of the government and its machinery.

One reason, Hasina said, was to hold her responsible for the bomb blasts. "Even a banner was ready and the BNP leaders brought out a procession holding me responsible for the serial blasts."

Indicating Hawa Bhaban, the opposition leader said: "We have information that the bhaban is preparing a blueprint to unleash such attacks on mosques and schools."

"This government only knows money and power ... They don't bother people's lives," Sheikh Hasina said, adding that the BNP-Jamaat alliance is out to prevent the Awami League from coming to power as they amassed huge wealth.

College student

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at about 2:45pm, a CNG-run three wheeler driver and a pedestrian found him lying on the street below Rampura Overbridge and immediately took him to his house.

He sustained cuts on his right hand, left leg, and head. His mobile phone set and some money were either stolen or lost. Due to injuries, Manik could not say anything about the incident.

The family members rushed him to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital at 4:00pm.

They however have yet to file a case in this connection, as they are not sure whether the attack was carried out by unidentified assailants or it was a sequel to previous enmity.

When contacted, an on-duty officer of Khilgaon Police Station said they did not receive any complaint yet.

Kala Jahangir's

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self defence, the press release said.

Panu tried to flee during the firing and was bullet-hit in his accomplices' firing. The gang members then retreated and Rab recovered a revolver, a shutter gun and three bullets left by them, it added.

The body was sent to Gazipur Sadar Hospital.

Dr Kamal

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"It is a matter of effective investigation whether the instigators and masterminds of the bomb and grenade attacks are in the government," he observed.

Dr Kamal said a number of deadly attacks including the August 21 carnage took place in the country, but no effective measure has been taken to avert such incidents.

"An effective national enquiry commission should be constituted with experts from the government agencies and all sections including the opposition, retired judges, retired police officials, advisers to caretaker government and civil society members to probe the incidents," he added.

"If the attackers are not identified and tried at this moment, more deadly attacks will take place in future," he warned.

The eminent lawyer Dr M Zahir said those who carried out the nation-wide blasts are very organised.

"Incidents of bomb and grenade attacks have been taking place in the country for several years. Not to identify, arrest and punish the perpetrators is the sustained failure and weakness of the government," she maintained.

"The failure of the government to identify the attackers, their instigators and masterminds seems to me very mysterious. If they are not identified and tried immediately, they will hit in a larger scale next time," she warned.

Commanding Officer of 28 BDR Battalion Lieutenant Colonel Zahid Hasan could not be reached, as he was in Dhaka.

Fearing a Leftist challenge

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had hoped to meet him again.

However, more than two decades would elapse before a meeting between the two of us occurred once again. A request came from this individual through intermediaries asking if he could meet me. He had his own reasons for wanting to see me. After prolonged negotiations through intermediaries who I trusted I flew from the United States and made contact with this individual in a European capital. He also flew in from another continent. Our meeting lasted five hours.

Among the many things that this individual discussed with me one important point concerned his description of how both Mustaque and General Ziaur Rhaman had been in contact and in discussions with the Majors for more than six months prior to the actual coup. This individual had personally attended numerous meetings that Major Rashid had separately held with Zia and Mustaque. In a British television interview in August 1976 with The Sunday Times' journalist, Anthony Mancarenas, Rashid described a meeting with General Zia on March 20, 1975, in which a coup was discussed in detail. This meeting took place five months before the coup. My source attended this meeting with General Zia but claimed it was not the first in which plans for a coup were discussed.

General Zia, who was then Deputy Chief of the Army, expressed reluctance to take the lead in the required military action but made clear about his interest in the matter. The junior officers had already worked out a plan, Rashid told Zia, and they wanted his support and leadership. Zia temporized. According to the account given by Rashid to Mancarenas and confirmed by my source, Zia told him that as a senior officer he could not be directly involved but if the junior officers were prepared, they should go ahead.

According to my informant, the Majors hoped right up until the end that Zia would take the lead in the coup. Although they were in constant, yet discreet, contact with Mustaque, their view was that the best option would be one that did not make Mustaque head of a new government. The best option from the Majors' perspective was to establish a Military Council as the commanding authority after the coup. In fact, it was largely Rashid who was in charge of defining the options for his group. It was their hope that Zia would lead such a coup. While the junior officers might have preferred a senior officers' coup with Zia at the head, they secured the next best option. With General Zia's neutrality assured, the junior officers could move ahead without fear that Zia would throw his forces against them at the crucial moment.

My remarkably well-placed source made a rather interesting comment when he noted that he had been present during two different meetings one with Zia and a separate one on a different day with Mustaque in which Major Rashid independently raised a question concerning what the attitude of the United States would be to the coup.

Clearly, these conservative elements within the establishment organised themselves to act

according to their own distinctive "doctrine of pre-emption" before other forces had an opportunity to act or Mujib found a path out of the deepening crisis his government faced. Some of the elements that backed the coup within the security services retained a distinct nostalgia for the days of Pakistan and would themselves constitute a force in the years ahead seeking to turn back the clock through the establishment of a new dictatorship.

Those planning the coup clearly believed that in approaching the US there were elements within the American government who might well be sympathetic to their plans. But, according to this source, Zia stepped back into the shadows once it emerged that a massacre had occurred at Mujib's house and the houses of other relatives in which women and children were mercilessly killed alongside their menfolk.

According to this source, Rashid himself was shocked at the killings and believed in the years that followed that there had been a "hidden plan" submerged within the coup that he neither knew about nor controlled. Nevertheless, neither Rashid nor Farooq, the two junior military principals of August 15th, publicly disowned the killing of the families. Walking on thin ice they were not about to disown the actions of the small contingent of soldiers which were solidly behind them and now deeply implicated in an action that Rashid and Farooq had led them into.

Indeed, this source claims some killings were indeed planned for August 15th. At least four Awami League leaders were to be removed from their residences and taken to a designated location where they would be executed. This plan included the killing of Sheikh Mujib. However, this source claims there was no premeditated plan among the officers organizing the coup to fire weapons on the families. As in many such situations, the unpredictable rule and brutality took command.

After the coup there was very little analysis of the contradictory phenomena which existed. Ignored was the stark juxtaposition that, in the two years prior to the coup, it was the country's organized left wing parties such as the JSD, the National Awami Party (Bashani), and the underground organizations like the Sharabohara Party, which had developed and mobilized public sentiment against Mujib's regime; yet, when the critical moment of collapse came for Mujib, it was not from a leftist mass uprising "The Revolution" as had been feared, but from a narrowly-based conspiracy of the right.

The challenge being developed and prepared by radical nationalist forces was pre-empted by the August events. The coup itself was an inside job by right wing elements within Mujib's own party, his own cabinet, his own secretariat, his own national intelligence service, and the national army, who viewed Mujib's leadership as no longer capable of holding out against a left wing challenge to their interests.

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Only 2pc launches

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opportunity to take the launch to a safer place on an emergency basis and thereby save the lives of hundreds of passengers," he said.

"Installing an aneroid barometer and hygrometer on every launch on the inland waterways should be mandatory during its registration and survey," Emdad asserted.

Another BIWTA official requesting anonymity also expressed the same view, pointing out that there are no other ways to forecast tornados and nor'westers.

"Talking to the launch owners, we know they are also interested in installing such cheap but essential weather forecasting machines on their launches," he said adding, "But the main problem is that these machines have to be imported whereas they could easily be produced locally."

"The widespread use of aneroid barometers and hygrometers on launches will be easier when our scientists come forward to manufacture them locally," he added.

The BIWTA official also stressed the need for government subsidies on manufacturing aneroid barometers and hygrometers locally.

Bangladesh Launch Owners' Association President Giasuddin Al Mamun also acknowledged the necessity of installing these machines for saving the launches from tornados and nor'westers.

Considering the cheap price of these machines, he said some launch owners may afford them.

He, however, denied receiving any direction from the shipping ministry for installing aneroid barometers and hygrometers on the launches.

Meanwhile, Shahabuddin Milon, owner of the MV Paterhat, said, "The installation of the barometer on a launch is not enough in the present context as there is an acute shortage of safer places to take shelter on the different river routes during tornados or nor'westers."

He, however, said launch owners may be inspired to install weather forecasting machines on their launches if they government provided loans.

The launch owners are in danger because of increasing diesel prices and the suspension on reconditioned launch engine imports, Milon, also the vice chairman of the association, said.

Asking the launch owners to install these weather forecasting machines on their launches at a moment of such crisis will definitely anger them, he added.

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One of the most stable countries in the Middle East, Jordan is one of only three Arab states to have diplomatic relations with Israel but, unlike the Red Sea resorts of Egypt, it is not a regular destination for Israelis.

The kingdom, the home country of Iraq's most wanted man Abu Musab al-Zar