

MILITANTS ACTIVE IN GAIBANDHA

JMB sending leaflets to schools, colleges by post

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Gaibandha

Activists of banned Islamist outfit Jamaatul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) are still active in Gaibandha district. They are sending by post the copies of August 17 leaflets to

different colleges, schools and union level public representatives. These leaflets were found at bomb blast spots on that day (August 17). The chairman and some members of Mohimaganj Union Parishad in Gobindaganj upazila said they received such leaflets of Jamaatul

Mujahideen, sent by post. The letters bore seal of Gaibandha Head Post Office. This is creating panic among local people, they said. "We are panicked and confused after receiving Jamaatul Mujahideen leaflets by post", said Ataur Rahman, Principal of Adarsha College in Gaibandha.

Police said the leaflets sent by post are similar to those found at Takierbazar in Plashbari upazila on December 25 last year and at Mohimaganj BRAC office on February 10 this year. The bombs that exploded at the two spots earlier had time device, police said.

Sources in Gaibandha police and intelligence agencies said they are keeping watch on Saghata upazila, a 'den of Islamist extremists'.

Jamaatul Mujahideen alleegdy started its activists in the upazila in early last year. Ahle Hadith Bangladesh chief Dr. Asadullah Galib and JMB Commander Siddiqui Islam alias Bangla Bhai had visited the areas.

Bangla Bhai had a special advantage in building a network of

his activists in the area as his father-in-law is a native there, police and some local people said.

Dr. Galib has a large number of followers in Saghata upazila, sources said. He has set up a Taudhidi Trust on 22 bighas of land there with financial assistance from some donor organisations based in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

Dr. Galib has also built madrasahs and orphanages at Jumarbari, Barokona, Kundopara, Chandpur and Basanterpara in Shaghata upazila. At Barokona, there is a three-story residential Qawmi Madrasa, wherefrom organisational work is being done.

Both Dr. Galib and Bangla Bhai paid several visits to the area during December last year and January this year, sources said.

They claimed that Bangla Bhai recruited many of his armed followers from this area. They were involved in bomb blasts in Joypurhat and Gurgola in Dinajpur and in Gaibandha district, locals said.



Journalists under the banner of Barisal Reporters Unity observed a token hunger strike on the premises of Aswani Kumar Hall in the city yesterday to protest bomb blasts on premises of press clubs and newspaper offices in the country on August 17.

Jewellers keep shutters down in Sylhet city

One of 2 shop owners beaten up allegedly by JCD still unconscious at hospital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Over 150 jewellers in Sylhet city kept their shutters down yesterday to protest the attack on a jewellery shop and its owners Sunday night.

A group of JCD activists attacked and damaged the shop and seriously injured its two owners, witnesses and police said.

The owners, who are brothers are now undergoing treatment at Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital for critical head injuries. One of them was still lying unconscious when the report was filed yesterday afternoon.

At about 9:30 pm on Sunday, two JCD men parked their private car in front of Gharoni Jewellers in the

city's busy Zindabazar area. Azmal Hossain, one of the shop owners, requested them to keep the car at a distance from the shop. At this, the JCD men became angry and threatened him.

Within minutes, a group of about 20 JCD men reached the spot and picked Azmal to a nearby narrow lane, witnesses said.

There, they beat him, hit him on the head with bricks and fractured one of his hands. On information, Azmal's elder brother Afzal came. The JCD men also beat him, causing head injury.

The group then looted gold ornaments and money and ransacked their shop. Panicky shopkeepers nearby downed their shut-

ters but none came to the rescue of the two brothers, witnesses said.

The two were later taken to hospital.

Police picked up an employee of a shop as 'suspect'. Police also arrested four others yesterday afternoon in connection with the attack.

But locals said the five picked up by police were innocent people.

A case had been lodged with Kotwali police, accusing 12 people including seven JCD activists.

Sylhet Chamber of Commerce and Industry and other local trade bodies in separate statements protested the attack and demanded immediate arrest of the culprits.

5 JCD men among 11 chargesheeted in Barisal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Barisal Kotwali police on Monday submitted charge sheet against 11 accused including five JCD activists in two cases for arson and attack on the Christian Polli in the city on July 23 and 24.

The accused are JCD (Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal) activists Monir, Sajal, Sabuj, Sumon and Shahin; and Mamun, Kalu, Susanta, Majibor Rahman, Bibhasa and Hannan. All of them were named in the FIR.

Sub-inspector Mosharrif Hossain submitted charge sheet to the court of Magistrate Munim Hassan in one of the case for attack and arson. The other charge sheet was submitted to the same court by Sub-inspector Emran Hossain for demanding toll from a resident of the Christian Polli.

The separate cases were filed by Papri Boiragi, wife of Badal Boiragi and Punuradhan Baroi.

One person was critically injured, four shops were gutted and properties worth Tk five lakh were damaged in the incidents, the victims claimed earlier.

Aug 17 bombing threat to democracy, sovereignty

RU teachers tell protest rally

RU CORRESPONDENT

The Progressive Teachers Association (PTA) at Rajshahi University (RU) yesterday organised a protest meeting on the Senate building premises protesting the Wednesday's serial bomb across the country.

With PTA Cnvenor Prof Muhammad Nurullah in the chair, speakers at the meeting expressed deep concern over the incident, saying it is a threat to democracy and the country's sovereignty.

RU Bangabandhu Parishad Senior Vice- president and former Social Science faculty Dean Prof KHM Zihadul Karim said this is part of a blueprint by anti-liberation elements against pro-liberation forces.

He said the BNP government is responsible for the attacks made by 'anti-liberation forces' because it is protecting them. Bomb attacks and other crimes increased in the country since the government assumed power

in 2001.

RU Senate member Prof Ananda Kumar Saha said the attack, made by religious extremists, is a threat to sovereignty of the country and demanded immediate arrests of those involved in the incident.

RU Syndicate member Prof Abdus Sobhan said the countrywide bomb blasts was a pre-planned action to create instability in the country and panic the people.

He said the government was alerted earlier about rise of religious extremists but it did not take any action against them. Their leader 'Bangla Bhai' was arrested with arms in Bagerhat but was released, he said.

The August 17 bombings prove that earlier grenade attacks and murder of progressive forces were done by 'anti-liberation forces'.

Prof Shah Azam Shantonu said that some fanatic forces want to establish a Taleban-like government in the country, which will destroy democracy and stop progress and development. They will target to destroy social progress in the country.

The meeting, conducted by Prof Hasibul Alam Prodhan, was also addressed by Prof Abdur Rahman, Prof Moloy Kumar Bhowmik, Prof Mahbubur Rahman, Prof Shah Newaz, Prof Abdul Khaleq and Prof Fayekuzzaman.

Hartal observed in Sirajganj for road repair

A CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

A dawn to dusk hartal was observed in Sirajganj yesterday demanding renovation of damaged roads in the district and good road links with the municipalities and upazilas.

The hartal was jointly called by Shahzadpur Upazila Transport Owners and Workers Association, Augnibina Club, Progoti Club, rickshaw-pullers and some other social organisations.

Pickets brought out a procession at 9 in the morning.

All modes of transport remained off the road while educational institutions and business establishments remained closed during hartal hours.



PHOTO: STAR
The summer variety BINA Tomato-2 grown on a filed on the BINA campus in Mymensingh in the current season.

Summer tomato opens new scope for farmers

BINA releases three varieties

AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

Summer variety tomato, evolved by Bangladesh Institute of Nuclear Agriculture (BINA), has opened a new opportunity for farmers. It holds good prospects for high profit and will be an import substitute.

This year, BINA released three summer varieties Bahar, BINA Tomato-2 and BINA Tomato-3—for cultivation. Two others— BINA Tomato-4 and BINA Tomato-5 are ready for release, BINA sources said.

Cultivation of the crop this year at farmlands near BINA yielded between 1800 and 2000 kilograms of tomato from 10 decimal area. Farmers sold those at between Tk 40 and Tk 50 per kg, said BINA Principal Scientific Officer (PSO) Dr Shamshad Begum. She developed the varieties.

BINA started experiments on

summer variety tomato in 1997.

A farmer can raise three crops from February to September, BINA sources said. But it needs some extra care. The crop has to be grown under polythene sheds to protect it from excessive rain, they said. This does not cost much.

The summer variety tomato is yet to be popular due to lack of publicity, said Dr AFM Feroj Hasan, Senior Scientific Officer (Training, Communication and Publication) of BINA. "We trained about 500 farmers from different corners of the country on tomato cultivation in last couple of years. More farmers should be trained and there should be more demonstration plots", he said.

Dr Shamshad Begum said the BINA summer variety tomato is large in size, fleshy and more tasty than those imported from India. It is more nutritious as it contains more

vitamin-C than the winter varieties. It is more suitable for small and marginal farmers as it needs only 70 to 80 days from sowing to harvesting, she said.

Farmer Moksed Ali, said he cultivated BINA Tomato-2 on about 15 decimal land. The yield was not like that in BINA demonstration plots but it was highly profitable. Ali said he sold over 2000 kilograms in local markets and earned about Tk 50,000.

"It was beyond my imagination how one crop on 15 decimal land can earn such a big amount", he said while talking to this correspondent recently.

Ali said he will cultivate summer variety tomato in large scale next year. It will be a good business, he noted.

10X3

Triple murder case accused dies in custody in B'baria

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

A triple murder case accused died in a hospital here on Monday.

Hospital sources said, Babul, 25, who confessed to killing of Akhter, a first class contractor at the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), his wife Joly and 2-year-old daughter Ama, died at Brahmanbaria Sadar Hospital at about 5:20 pm.

Earlier, he was sent to the hospital from jail custody with chest pain at 4:50 pm.

The Resident Medical Officer (RMO) of the hospital, Dr Rana Nurus Shams said to this correspondent that Babul had breathing problem. He died while he was

being given oxygen, he said.

His autopsy was done at Brahmanbaria Sadar Hospital under the supervision of a 5-member team headed by first class magistrate Syed Nurul Bashir.

The team did not find any injury mark on the body, the RMO said.

However, the victim's widow, Shireen Sultana Akhter said that her husband might have been murdered in jail because of his disclosure of the clue to the murder.

Following Babul's confessional statement before a first class magistrate, police rounded up Kabir, Pias, Masum, Akter's brother Sirajul Islam, nephews Sohel and Rajib. All of them are now in jail custody.

4X3