



PHOTO: STAR

Guides for military training, microscope, balance scale, left, and detonators, bombs and gun powder seized from Basabo and Goran Thursday were shown to media men at the city's DB office yesterday.

Another big arms haul in Naikkhangchhari

8 AK47s, 4 LMGs and 3,559 bullets seized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) seized huge arms and ammunition including eight AK47 assault rifles, four light machine guns and 3,559 bullets during a raid in hilly Naikkhangchhari upazila on Thursday night.

On information, the border guards raided frontier Murangtla and hunted out the arms cache along with 52 magazines, 13 containers of explosive making liquid,

uniforms and other military materials, BDR sources said.

However, no-one was arrested in connection with the seizure.

Army Regional Commander Brigadier General Abul Kalam Md Humayun Kabir said, "The possessors of these firearms have fled in the wake of our raids on the hilly border areas."

"A military unit equipped with mine, metal and explosives detectors is working in the areas to dig out

the hidden arms they have left behind."

Army sources said about 40 percent to 50 percent of the arms and ammunition hidden in Bandarban have so far been seized. They suspect about 300 sophisticated weapons are still hidden in the hilly district.

Naikkhangchhari has borders both with India and Myanmar with deep forest on one side and the Bay

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Massive hunt for more militants' dens in capital

SHARIFUL ISLAM

A huge quantity of arms and explosives gathered to launch attacks on government and private establishments has been kept at several other hideouts of Islamist militants in and around the capital, law enforcers suspect.

They raided around a dozen places on Thursday night following information extracted from suspects in the August 17 serial blasts arrested with bombs, firearms and bomb making materials from two dens in the city. The drive however did not prove a success.

"We don't think militants used

only one or two places to hide their firearms and explosives. We are on a massive hunt to find out the other dens," said a top official of the Detective Branch (DB) of police.

Soon after the serial blasts, intelligence agencies cautioned that members of the militant outfits -- Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) and Harkatul Jihad -- are reorganising themselves in the capital to hit some government establishments including the Secretariat, NGO head offices and business establishments. Security was then beefed up.

Earlier, taking advantage of the law enforcement agencies' slack-

ness, the JMB and Harkatul Jihad had built a strong network of militants at different madrasas, students' mess and low-cost houses around the capital over the years, locals said.

They are now reportedly carrying out their activities in Demra, Jatrabari, Kajla, Matuail, Bashabo, Manda, Mohammadpur, Adabar, Shyamoli, Lalbagh, Kamrangirchar, Amin Bazar, Savar, Kuril, Badda, Uttara, Tongi, Uttar Khan, Dhakkin Khan, Mirpur, Ibrahimpur and Baunia and Matikata areas in the city and its outskirts.

Intelligence agencies are trying to track down the dens of these

militants and the arms and explosives.

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and police on Thursday seized 20 times bombs, firearms and a huge quantity of bomb making materials resembling those used in the serial blasts from two houses of suspected militants at East Bashabo and South Goran.

Ataur Rahman, brother of JMB chief Abdur Rahman, used to visit one house and coordinated the serial blasts while the other was used to store the explosives and make bombs, sources said.

Law enforcers have started a

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Extortionists in Meherpur, Kushtia kill 2

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Extortionists killed an expatriate and a trader in separate incidents in Kushtia and Meherpur on Thursday night and early yesterday.

The victims are cow trader Amirul Islam of village Koldiar under Daulatpur upazila of Kushtia, and expatriate Abdus Salam of village Dariapur under Mujibnagar upazila of Meherpur.

Kushtia police said a gang picked up Amirul, 40, from Sonakundi Bazar at about 7:00pm on Thursday night for not paying them toll. They took Amirul to a nearby jute field and chopped him to death.

The gang had earlier demanded Tk.50,000 in toll from Amirul. As Amirul refused to oblige, they threatened to kill him, family sources said.

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Indian mob lynches four Bangladeshis

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Indian border guards picked up four Bangladeshis nationals in Akhaura and handed them over to an Indian mob, who lynched them in the early hours yesterday.

The victims are Muzammel Haq Bhuiyan alias Mozailla, 35, and Abdur Razzak, 31, of Kuripaika and Mohammad Alam, 32, of nearby Abdullapur village. The identity of the fourth could not be known immediately.

Panic gripped the locality following the incident as Border Security Force (BSF) gunned down three Bangladeshis in Putia near Kashba border 10 days ago.

Locals alleged the BSF held Alam, Razzak and the unidentified man inside Bangladesh territory in Kalikapur and dragged them into India at around 5:00am.

The same team returned again at 7:00am and picked up Mozailla,

they added.

The BSF handed the four to locals of Gangail village in Tripura state. The mob beat them up severely and hacked them to death. The BSF sent the bodies to a local hospital in Agartala, sources said.

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) asked the BSF for a flag meeting, to which the Indian border guards did not respond, BDR sources said.

Sources said the BSF announced a bounty of Tk 50,000 for nabbing or even killing Mozailla. He was one of the most wanted criminals of the BSF and was arrested several times on charge of smuggling motorcycles into Bangladesh.

Deputy Commanding Officer of BDR Major Mahmudul Hoq admitted at least three deaths. The BDR will be sure about the number after the BSF returns the bodies, he added.

Correction

A report published in The Daily Star on Friday inadvertently mentioned that Prime Minister Khaleda Zia had left for New York on Thursday. In fact the prime minister is scheduled to leave Dhaka for New York on September 12 (Monday). We regret the error.

S Arabia seizes smuggled ammo

REUTERS, Riyadh

Saudi Arabia has seized 190,000 rounds of ammunition smuggled from neighbouring Kuwait in a truck, Al-Jazira newspaper said yesterday.

The consignment was intercepted in the northern Hafr al-Batin province after a tip-off from a Saudi woman, the paper said.

Saudi officials were not immediately available to comment.

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MADHYAPARA HARD ROCK PROJECT

Faulty deal doubles cost, makes it white elephant

SHARIF KHAN and KONGKON KARMAKER

A faulty supplier's credit deal with cash strapped North Korea has turned the prospective Madhyapara hard rock mine project a white elephant for the country, already seven years behind schedule with the project cost almost doubled.

The project cost has now risen to Tk 1,275 crore from Tk 650 crore originally due to the delay.

As per the latest deadline, the mine was supposed to begin commercial production Thursday and

Petrobangla is to take over it from the North Korean developer -- Namnam-- next month. But so far only 90 percent of the project has been completed, half of it by 1998.

"It will take at least three to six months more for Namnam to complete the task even if it works in full gear," says a Petrobangla source in Dinajpur.

But the delay involves the need for more funds. Now Petrobangla can neither swallow the project nor give it up.

"Petrobangla formed a committee a couple of weeks ago to see how much Namnam has invested in

the project and when," says a senior official.

Repeated failures of the North Korean company have led the authorities to believe the suppliers' credit was never disbursed as per the agreement.

The supplier's credit and the agreement with Namnam were designed in such a way that the project is virtually being implemented with Petrobangla's money.

The project stumbled repeatedly when Petrobangla stopped payment although 90 percent of the funds was supposed to come from North Korea.

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'PM out to save Aug 17 culprits'



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the prime minister's latest speech in parliament was aimed at 'saving the real perpetrators of the August 17 countrywide blasts'.

"She [prime minister] seems eager to spare the criminals instead of bringing them to book," Hasina, also the president of Awami League (AL), said while addressing a press conference at Shudha Sadan.

Referring to the prime minister's proposal for enacting new laws to curb crimes, the AL chief said there are already a lot of laws in the country, and those could be effectively

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'Expelled' Noorani to make public 'hidden agenda'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

International Khatme Nubuwaat Movement, Bangladesh (IKNMB), a platform for anti-Ahmadiyya campaigners, has expelled a top leader of the outfit for 'anti-organisational activities.'

Ameer (president) of Khatme Nubuwaat Mahmudul Hasan Mamtazi and Secretary General Nazmul Haq yesterday at a press conference in the city said Mufti Noor Hussain Noorani, senior nayebe-ameer (vice-president) of IKNMB, was dismissed from the organisation on September 4.

Mamtazi and Haq also told the press conference arranged at Khatme Nubuwaat's Tejgaon central office the decision was taken after Noorani had taken the Ahmadiyyas' side, taking money from them.

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