

Bounty for arrest

FROM PAGE 1
Khalifapara village of Kamal Khan Hat in Jamalpur and Bangla Bhai as the son of Nazir Hossain Master alias Shamsher Ali of Kamipara village of Gabolli upazila in Bogra, the poster reads.

The poster shows the JMB chief attired in purjabis in two photographs while in shirts in as many. The other photograph shows him in coat and necktie. He appears bearded in one of the photographs, bald in another while wearing cap in another.

Bangla Bhai is shown bearded and wearing a cap in one photograph while he is in panjabi in the other three. One picture shows him to be in check shirt while another in coat and necktie.

The advertisement gave 28 phone numbers, as many mobile phone and fax numbers, and 12 email addresses for the public to contact.

Meanwhile, intelligence personnel said six top leaders of JMB including the military chief of the outfit were in the capital in the run-up to the August 17 blasts.

A top official of Detective Branch (DB) of police said they are convinced that the militant leaders were staying at five different places across the capital and got out of the hideouts soon after the blasts. Detectives have already raided a number of homes in Dhaka but failed to nab any of them.

The DB official, however, declined to elaborate on the identities of the five top JMB leaders.

Meanwhile, the law enforcers were continuing the hunt for electrician Amir, brother-in-law of Samad who managed to evade arrest during a raid at his South Goran house on Thursday. Police said Amir used to help Samad in making bombs.

Taking with them two suspects, DB police yesterday raided different areas of Old Dhaka but to little avail. The two suspects – Hiron and Kiron were held after their names were came up in the documents seized from the South Goran house.

"We are trying to find whether the two had supplied the plastic materials used in the bombs that went off on August 17. They will be shown arrested once we are sure about their links," said a top DB official seeking anonymity.

Taking Lokman, domestic help of the South Goran house, with them the detective police also visited different places to gather possible leads. Lokman was arrested along with Shammi, wife of Samad, on Thursday at their South Goran house from where police recovered a huge cache of bombs and explosives.

DB has already prepared a list of 17 suspects, basing on the statements of Shammi and Lokman, and is on a manhunt for those on the list.

Earlier, the law enforcers had picked up Basir Uddin Munshi, Shammi's father, and Abdur Rob, the person who registered the marriage of Samad and Shammi.

Moreover, members of Rapid

Action Battalion (Rab) carried out raids in different areas in the city, following statements from six arrestees including AHM Shamim, son of former Habiganj district ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami. However, the drives did not yield any result.

Five of the detainees were arrested at an East Bashabo house. Military chief of JMB Ataur Rahman is believed to have co-ordinated the blasts from the house.

Meanwhile, a Dhaka court yesterday placed Mosharrar Hossain, arrested for alleged involvement in blast incidents, on a three-day remand. Police sought for a seven-day remand.

In the forwarding report placed before the court, police said Mosharrar is an active member of militant group. Investigation reveals that he and his associates led by Moulana Abdul Mannan of Salkhira would conduct subversive activities and operate training camps in Badda, Uttara and some other places in Dhaka city.

Besides, he seems to be holding vital clues to the August 17 serial bomb blasts across the country.

On information received from him, police had raided different areas of the city and seized some alamas (evidences) left behind by the extremists. So he needs to be quizzed further.

BOMB HOAX

Panic gripped the teachers and students of Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) school at Mirpur in the city yesterday after an anonymous caller said some bombs were planted in the school.

Police said hoax bomb threats were made twice at 8:05am and at 8:22am by a male caller to the school's phone saying the bombs would go off between 9:00am and 11:00am. Teachers and students rushed out of the school following the threat.

Informed by the school authorities, Mirpur police rushed to the spot and carried out a thorough search but found no explosive devices. A general diary was lodged with Mirpur Police Station in this connection.

Our Narayanangi correspondent reports: Police arrested three serial blast suspects including one having military training from Panchrukhi area of Arai Hazar upazila on Saturday night.

They seized some books and some of those were penned by Ahle Hadith chief Dr Asadullah al Galib. The arrestees identified themselves as followers of Galib.

The arrestees include Joyнал, a former madrasa student, Baten, and Hazrat Ali. Police said Baten had been in Iraq and Libya and Joyнал had military training. They said there is militants' den in Panchrukhi where Moulana Amir Hossain had trained the zealots.

Qaeda threatens

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"We are Muslims. We love peace, but peace on our terms, peace as laid down by Islam, not the so-called peace of occupiers and dictators."

As in other recent al-Qaeda tapes, the main threats were made against the United States and Britain.

"Don't believe the lies of the liars at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue and 10 Downing Street," the speaker said. "They have dispatched your sons and daughters to die lonely deaths in the burning deserts of Iraq and the unforgiving mountains of Afghanistan."

ABC said US intelligence believed the man who appears on the tape is Gadahn, who comes from Orange County, California. He made a similar tape last year that US intelligence said was authentic.

Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and the city police department released a statement admitting that Los Angeles was a terrorist target but saying there are no known credible threats against the city.

First Test

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For the Tigers, who have lost all three previous Tests against Sri Lanka, two by innings and the other by 288 runs, it is going to be a tough task having to do without two main bowlers Mashrafe bin Mortuza and Tapash Baisya who are ruled out due to injury.

Rasel will share the new ball with one-Test Shahadat Hossain.

Bangladesh however will pin their hopes on the strength of their batting that is bolstered with the return of Tushar Imran in the five-day contest.

The country's leading wicket-taker Mohammad Rafique will be playing his first Test against the Lankans. The slow left-armed will the potent weapon if Bangladesh are to contain the free-scoring batting line-up of Sanath Jayasuriya, Marvan Atapattu, Mahela Jayawar-dena and Kumar Sangakkara on a track that is expected to help the spinners. Jayasuriya, just two matches shy of earning his 100th Test cap for Sri Lanka, was involved in a record 576-run stand with Roshan Mahanama at this very ground against India in 1997.

Bangladesh will go into the match with a new opening pair as Nafees Iqbal, who had opened for the last seven Tests with Javed Omar, will be replaced by left-handed Shahriar, the Bangladesh A-team captain.

Skipper Habibul Bashar will bat at number three, followed by Mohammad Ashraf who scored a century on debut against Sri Lanka four years ago, Aftab Ahmed and Tushar Imran, who opened to the Test fold after three years as reward for his tremendous run with the A team in the England tour. Vice-captain and wicketkeeper Khaled Mashud will arrive before the four-bowler tail is exposed.

Spending cut

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for purchasing vehicles for an approved or revised approved project under ADP, purchase of the vehicle will be suspended for the moment if the vehicle has not been already purchased. Approval will have to be obtained from finance division for purchasing cars under the revenue budget. The per head entertainment allowance for meetings in various ministries, departments, directorates, and autonomous bodies has been reduced to Tk 6 from earlier Tk 12. Lighting in buildings, streets, islands, and setting up of arches will have to be avoided by government, semi-government, and autonomous bodies to scale down the waste of electricity. Austerity will have to be practised also in the observance of different 'days' and 'weeks'. Besides, electricity saving bulbs will have to be installed to bring down the consumption of electricity.

If necessary infrastructure and facilities are available, the petrol-run government vehicles will have to be converted to CNG. No new vehicles under revenue or development projects can be on the road before they are converted. Permission of the finance division will be required for the expenses to be paid in foreign currencies. Essential foreign tours of ministers, state ministers, deputy ministers, and secretaries, contributions to international organisations and repayment of the capital, and interests on foreign loans will be outside the purview of this rule.

The ministries have been directed to make economical use of utilities and pay bills for those services in time. The finance division will not accept proposals for any allocation additional to the approved budget. The proposals will be accepted only if they are essential and sent with the approval of the secretary of the ministry concerned.

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Khaleda flies to NY

FROM PAGE 1

beginning of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)'s 60th session.

As the organization turns 60, the management and members of the venerable middle-aged institution are making plans to celebrate its work and enact a series of reforms to ensure it remains relevant for another 60 years.

More than 175 heads of state and government are expected to participate in the plenary session in the vast General Assembly hall and in roundtable discussions, treaty-signings, and other meetings taking place in connection with the event, which will be the largest gathering ever of world leaders.

Over three days, world leaders have a historic opportunity to forge a new global consensus on the role of the UN in confronting key global security threats of the 21st century, including underlying sources of instability such as human deprivation and environmental decline.

The main focus of the summit will be reforms in the 191-member United Nations itself in order to make it more effective and efficient in its work throughout the world. The Prime Minister will address the High Level Plenary Meeting of the summit on the inaugural day on September 14 and will make a country statement at the general debate of the UNGA on September 17.

Her other engagements include meeting with the US Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice on Sept 15 at the Grand Hyatt Hotel, where the Prime Minister will stay during her visit to the USA. Official sources said Khaleda and Rice would discuss the entire range of bilateral issues between Bangladesh and the USA.

Khaleda Zia will hold a large number of bilateral meetings including with the leaders of the Maldives on Sept 14, as well as Thailand, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Mozambique on Sept 16. Besides, the Chairman of the Wall Street Journal, the Executive Director of UNICEF, the Administrator of UNDP and the Chairman of the Bangladesh Caucus, Joseph Crowley will call on her.

She will also join a lunch to be hosted by the UN Secretary General in honour of the heads of state and government, a reception to be hosted by the US President and a reception by the Bangladeshi community in the USA.

At the sideline, Khaleda Zia will attend the inaugural session of the first meeting of the Clinton Global Initiative in New York on Sept 15. She will lead a 26-member Bangladesh delegation to the World Summit, which include ministers and high officials. Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman, who is now in the USA, will join the delegation

Forex reserves

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\$293 million on Thursday, the reserve came down as low as equal to two-and-a-half-month's import expenditure. The reserve equal to three months' import cost is considered safe internationally.

A source at the Bangladesh Bank said the price hike of fuel in the global market and a sharp rise in import have created this pressure on the country's reserve.

The central bank sold around \$700 million to the nationalised commercial banks to pay off the import cost of fuel from January to the first week of September. The source however said the recent price spike in the local market would not help lift the pressure off the reserve. What is necessary in this regard is bringing down the consumption of petroleum, the source added.

Although the central bank has to usually pay around \$200 million as ACU bills every two months, the huge rise in import in recent times has forced it to pay more. The BB paid around \$300 million in September and it had to pay around \$ 350 million in July.

Imports saw a sharp rise by 21 percent last year, while the rise was only 13 percent the previous year. The government and the central bank have taken a number of initiatives to ease the pressure on the reserve, the source said.

Third round bidding

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publication for the bidding, evaluation procedures and amendment to the model PSC will be finalised.

Sources concerned said Petrobangla will give 45 days timeframe after floating the tender for the 3rd round bidding. The PSCs will be signed in the next 45 days after completing the evaluation and negotiations.

"It is possible to complete all the procedures in 90 days with maintaining total transparency," Mahmudur Rahman told BDNEWS.

However, energy specialist Prof Nurul Islam said that the government should not go for a hurried bidding and signing of PSCs immediately before the general elections.

"The government must invite an open debate on our achievements from the previous PSCs. Then the government should go for the 3rd round bidding," said Prof Islam, director at the Appropriate Technology Institute of the Buat.

He said he doesn't see eligible people in the country who can negotiate in the bidding protecting the national interests.

"We can't leave the country's interests to some bureaucrats of Energy Ministry and Petrobangla," he told BDNEWS.

while Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan will leave here on Sept 15 to join the PM's delegation.

Foreign Ministry Advisor Reaz Rahman, Rozy Kabir MP, Foreign Secretary Hemayetuddin and Secretary to the Prime Minister Khandaker Shahidul Alam have also been included with the Bangladesh delegation.

She will leave New York on Sept 17 after delivering her address at the UNGA and is expected to return home in the early hours of Sept 19.

The upcoming summit will review implementation of the Millennium Declaration and follow up to the major United Nations conferences and summits. The event will be a historic opportunity for the world leaders to take stock of the progress achieved so far in this regard.

The summit is also expected to inject new energy in pursuit of the objectives of the conferences.

UN Secretary-General Annan put forward an ambitious set of reform proposals in March 2005 that are now being considered by the UN General Assembly in preparation for the upcoming Summit meeting.

Despite the challenging times, Foreign Ministry officials here said the September Summit marks the most important opportunity in decades to launch the far-reaching reforms that will be required to prepare the UN to confront today's new and daunting global security problems.

The primary purpose of the United Nations, as defined by its charter, is "to maintain international peace and security." Toward that end, the UN charter stipulates a set of mechanisms for the Security Council that are designed to galvanize a collective response from UN members when confronted with a compelling threat to global peace and stability.

The United Nations has helped bring about over 170 peace settlements, including those that ended the Iran-Iraq war in 1988, led to the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan in 1988, and brought the El Salvador civil war to a close in 1992.

The 60 UN peacekeeping missions since 1948 have helped countries maintain cease fire, conduct free and fair elections, and monitor troop withdrawals in numerous global hotspots, including ongoing missions in the Middle East, Haiti, Kosovo, Sudan, and Liberia, among others.

Bapex-Niko

FROM PAGE 1
Bangladesh Environment Lawyers' Association (BELA), Ain-O-Shalish Kendra (ASK) and Odhakar -- in a public interest litigation writ said Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration and Production Company (Bapex), subsidiary organ of the energy ministry, has no locus standi for entering into joint venture agreement with a foreign company on national resource.

The agreement signed nearly two years ago was in violation of the Petroleum Act as well as Bangladesh environmental law. It was done in derogation of the constitution, in a non-transparent manner with mala fide intention to confer undue benefit to Niko and its allies.

The agreement was to the detriment of the country and in gross abuse of power, submitted the petitioners.

The faulty drilling by Niko has reportedly resulted in blowout in Tengratilla gas field twice in January and June inflicting a heavy loss of gas and environmental damages.

The joint venture agreement was signed on October 16, 2003 between Bapex and Niko for the development and production of petroleum from 'marginal/abandoned' gas fields of Chhatak and Feni.

Moving the petition, Dr Kamal Hossain pleaded for freezing the bank account of Niko and suspending the payment against the supply of gas from its Feni field.

He also sought to rescind the agreement and payment of adequate compensation for damaging the country's natural resource and environment.

The inconclusive hearing of the writ resumes today in the vacation bench comprising justices MA Rashid and M Fazlur Rahman.

BSF may return 2 bodies today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) sources said Border Security Force (BSF) of India may return the bodies of Bangladeshi nationals today after three days of waiting.

Sources said among the four dead two are Indian nationals and two are Bangladeshi. The victims were captured inside Bangladesh territory by BSF and Indians and confined in a house at Gangail village of Tripura in India. They were lynched by an Indian mob from there and reportedly chopped to pieces.

The victims are Muzammel Haque Bhuiyan alias Mozailla, 35, the son Idris Mia of Kuripaka village in B'baria. He played a vital role in the killing of BSF men who intruded into Bangladesh for robbery. The BSF had declared a bounty of Tk 50,000 for his capture. Abdur Razzak, 31, the son of Daulat Bihar Bhuiyan was an associate of Mozailla from the same village. Muhammad Alam, 33, a criminal from India, was in hiding at Abdullapur village in Bangladesh. He had married Helena Begum, 30, a Bangladeshi. Sources said Alam, who had been living in Bangladesh for two years, was sending information to India. Sujit Sarker, 33, according to Indian reports, was of Kolkolia village at Siddai thana in the Indian state of Tripura. Sujit was the informant of Indian detective branch, the source added.

The BSF admitted the death of four people through a letter to BDR but did not give the identity of the two Indian nationals. The BSF and BDR have increased patrol near Hirapur.

Israel declares

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territory for a permanent hold on larger areas of the occupied West Bank where 245,000 settlers live isolated from 2.4 million Palestinians.

In a sign of tensions, the departing army called off a Gaza handover ceremony on Sunday after Palestinians said they would boycott it in anger over Israel's failure to agree on allowing freedom of movement to and from the strip. Sharon stoked Palestinian anger when he reiterated in a Washington Post newspaper interview that despite US objections Israel would keep building in large West Bank settlement blocs it intends to keep under any future peace deal.

Sharon's rightist opponents call the Gaza pullout a betrayal of Jewish claims on biblical land and a reward for a Palestinian uprising. But US-led mediators see it as a possible catalyst for renewed peacemaking after five years of violence.

Looking impatiently from nearby hilltops, Gazans prepared to take to the streets in celebration.

Low cost bombs

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their desired devastation," the report notes. The report puts a maximum price tag of Tk 40 for all the materials used in each of the bombs, except for the detonator.

Aside from the detonators, all the parts of such a bomb are available in electrical spare shops. "The components are generally used to prepare various electric circuits or devices," the report points out.

The experts could not determine the country of origin of the detonators as it is not available in the local market.

But this type of detonator is used for military and commercial (oil exploration, mining) purposes. "The price of a similar type of military detonator is approximately Tk 55," the report says.

This means that the Jamaatul Mujahedin Bangladesh (JMB) needed to invest, at minimum, only around Tk 50,000 to make the approximately 500 bombs that simultaneously rocked 63 district headquarters on August 17.

"This investigation shows that a militant group does not need a lot of money to send a terror wave," an investigator comments to The Daily Star. "It's their determination, networking and planning that is the prime concern for us."

The report adds that a medium caliber expert on electric circuits prepared the time circuit. "The connection pattern and pattern of equipment suggests that it was prepared at the same place and most likely a single individual connected the components, except the soldering iron part. The individual had good knowledge of the colour code of electric wires. In no case was the colour code violated, which indicates the individual's professionalism, skill and technical training in this regard. An expert can prepare around 50 complete circuits within 12 hours of a day."

The experts also conclude that the explosives were probably intentionally made less harmful, possibly to avoid checking and detection by security forces. More harmful bombs would have increased the size of the explosives.

Due to the use of a small amount of gunpowder and homemade explosives, victims at very close proximity to the bombs sustained small but lethal splinter injuries and serious burn effects. People at a distance of more than three feet could have been safe from the blast.

The experts noted that the complete bomb was handed over to the carriers, keeping the battery pack disconnected from the circuit. It is assumed that an expert conducted a training or a briefing session at the district headquarters to train the carriers how to connect the battery pack with the circuit, start the delay time by switching the timer on and place the bomb at a desired place.

Last Wednesday night, law enforcers recovered a huge number of bombs, materials and detonators from JMB's den in the city's Goran area. According to experts, these bombs and their materials were identical to those used on August 17.

6 more camel jockeys

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programmes. We don't want to see the children of this country trafficked for being used as camel jockeys or in any other risky jobs," said Bahaduruzzaman, chairman of Barura Paurashava.

Abdur Rouf, additional secretary of home ministry, in his speech said poverty and ignorance of the people are the main reasons behind the trafficking of the children.

Urging the leaders of the area to come forward to help the poor, he said "You must become aware of such crimes and change your own fate by hard work, so that the unscrupulous people can never cheat you."

Terminating the parents' approval in sending their children to a foreign land a punishable act, Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association (BNWLA) Executive Director Advocate Salma Ali said it is very hard for the former jockeys to recover physical and psychological health, as they were abused in the early years of their lives.

Barura Upazila Nirbahi Officer

Janajuddha denies link to blasts

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

The Janajuddha faction of outlawed Purba Banglar Communist Party has said the government is patronising Islamist militancy in the country and killing its activists in the name of 'crossfire'.

The splinter group on Sunday announced this in leaflets on the August 17 serial blasts styled "The 17th August bomb attacks and our political stands."

Jessore Press Club authorities received a copy of the leaflet sent by the Janajuddha central committee.

"The alliance government led by Khaleda-Nizami is patronising communal militants and repressing the rebel progressive people," the leaflets said.

"We are astonished by the country-wide bomb attacks on August 17," the outfit added.

The government is spending crores of taka for the army, police and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), depriving the poor, it alleged.

"The Rab and police are frequently killing the rebels in the name of crossfire and encounter to enhance the government support to Islamist militants."

The breakaway outfit also threatened to kill 'the class enemies' in villages, towns and ports level across the country.

Six bills

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pay scale 2005' as the reasons for proposing the hike.

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan piloted the bills proposing remuneration hike for the president, prime minister, ministers, state ministers and deputy ministers.

If passed, their remuneration will increase for the second time during the coalition government's tenure.

Law Minister Moudud Ahmed placed the bills proposing remuneration hike for the president, prime minister, ministers, state ministers and deputy ministers.

All the bills were sent to the standing committee on Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs for scrutiny, asking it to give reports in three days.

As per the bills, the president's remuneration will rise to Tk 33,400 a month from 23,000 now and that of the prime minister to Tk 32,000 from Tk 22,000.

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As proposed in the bills, the speaker's remuneration will increase to Tk 31,200 from Tk 21,500, deputy speaker's Tk 29,000 from Tk 20,000 and lawmakers' Tk 15,000 from Tk 10,000.

The hike will be effective from July 1 this year. If the bills are passed, the PM's salary will rise for the seventh time while that of ministers, state ministers and deputy ministers for the ninth time since independence.