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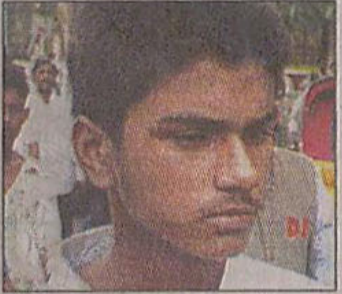
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Kakrail Mosque was used to train Aug 17 bombers

JMB cadre says in confessional statement



Faisal



Shammi

STAR REPORT

The capital's Kakrail Mosque, widely regarded as the fulcrum of Tablig Jamaat, had been used to train the militants how to switch on the bombs that rocked the country on August 17, an arrested militant told a Dhaka court yesterday.

In a confessional statement before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka, JMB cadre Faisal Ahmed said he and three other Jama'atul Mujahideen

Bangladesh (JMB) operatives, who were assigned to detonate a bomb at Rajarbagh Police Lines, stayed at the mosque for four days leading up to the serial blasts and took training necessary to operate a time bomb.

Faisal, who was arrested in Tangail on September 18, also said that JMB leader Uzzal had taken him and fellow JMB members Jahid and Habib to the Kakrail Mosque.

Tablig Jamaat is a religious movement supposed to be non-violent

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DU student shot near hall gate

DU CORRESPONDENT

A student of Dhaka University (DU) was shot in the leg by some unidentified youth near the entrance to Shahidullah Hall last night.

The bullet-hit, Rehan Dastagir James, 23, is an MSc student of soil science department. He lives in city's Mirpur area and is attached to Shahidullah Hall.

Sources said he got involved in a scuffle with some students of Mohsin Hall at TSC during an orientation programme for the first year students of soil science department yesterday evening.

Those students might have shot him in reprisal, they added.

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'No' to Tuesday Group's meet on poll practices

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has declined to permit Tuesday Group, a club of foreign diplomats in Bangladesh, to arrange a conference on 'the best election practices', saying that such move will amount to interference in the internal affairs of the country.

The message was conveyed to the Group when Canadian High Commissioner in Dhaka David Sproule and Norwegian Ambassador to Bangladesh Aud Lise Norheim called on Foreign Affairs Adviser Reaz Rahman yesterday afternoon.

The Tuesday Group comprises

the ambassadors and high commissioners accredited to Bangladesh from Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK, US, European Commission, and the resident co-ordinator of the United Nations.

The grouping has been planning to hold a seminar in Dhaka sometime in November this year on "International Electoral Best Practices". They claimed that they would hold the conference to provide Bangladesh with necessary technical assistance to make sure

the next general election is held in a free and fair manner.

Earlier, the press conference of the group scheduled to be held on September 14 had been cancelled amid objection from the government. It was called without consulting the foreign ministry, which is a clear violation of diplomatic norms, said ministry officials.

During the meeting with Foreign Affairs Adviser Reaz Rahman yesterday, the two members of the Tuesday Group requested to allow them to hold the conference for the betterment of Bangladesh, said sources.

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PRIVATISATION OF RUPALI BANK

WB may defer credit as no move to vacate stay

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The complications arising out of the privatisation of Rupali Bank may further defer the World Bank's (WB) Development Support Credit (DSC) to Bangladesh.

The finance ministry and WB sources said although the government has raised oil prices and reduced import tariff, the legal complications over the privatisation of Rupali Bank have turned out to be an obstacle to Bangladesh's getting the DSC loan.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) too expressed dissatisfaction over the issue and questioned the government's sincerity in

initiating moves to vacate the High Court's stay order over the privatisation process of Rupali Bank, sources said.

The privatisation of Rupali Bank has been a condition tagged by both the IMF and WB for releasing the Poverty Reduction Growth Facility and DSC loans.

The Privatisation Commission advertised Expression of Interest for selling 67 percent shares of Rupali Bank to private entrepreneurs on May 21 this year. But when a shareholder of the bank filed a writ petition on July 17 to stall the privatisation process, the High Court (HC) stayed the process until

disposal of the case. Following the HC stay order the Privatisation Commission halted all procedures of selling the shares of Rupali Bank.

An IMF mission while visiting Bangladesh early this month to review the latest economic state of the country raised the issue of privatisation of Rupali Bank in its meeting with the finance ministry, Bangladesh Bank and the Privatisation Commission. Officials of the WB's Bangladesh chapter were also present in those meetings.

The IMF mission raised questions about the government's efforts

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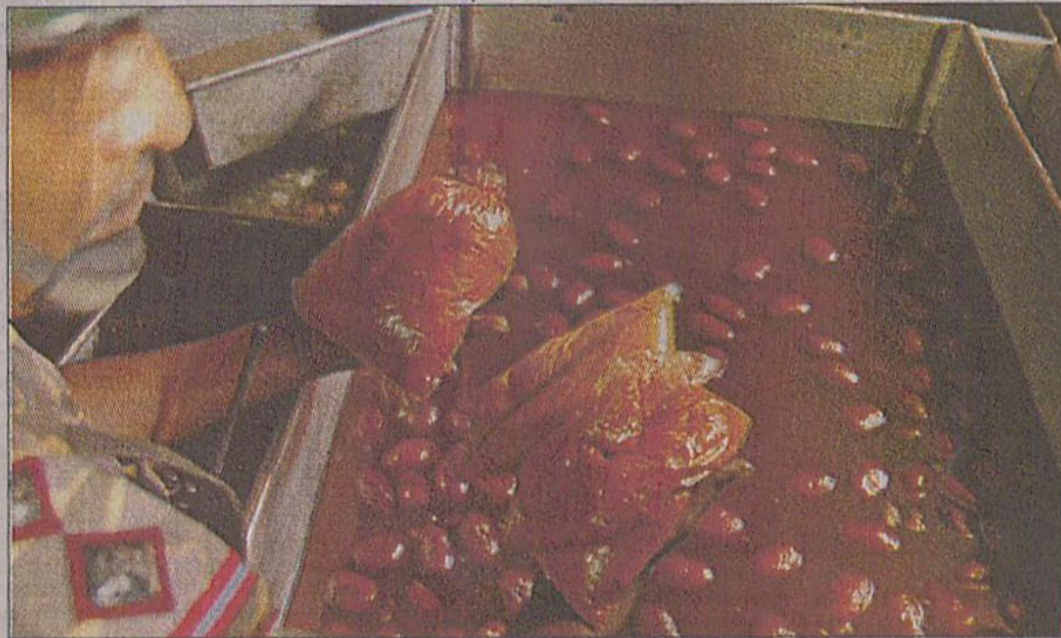


PHOTO: STAR

A mobile court member shows packets of textile dye used in sweetmeat at the factory of Adi Banoful at Dholar Par in the capital yesterday. The sweetmeat shop had been fined twice earlier for the same reason.

Graft, inefficiency, poor governance hindering growth

President says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday said corruption, inefficiency, governance problems and weaknesses in institutional management are pushing up the cost of doing business in the country and hindering improvement of the standard of living of the people.

"Because of these reasons, we are not getting expected results in poverty alleviation despite all our efforts... We need to conduct a baseline survey to identify the weaknesses, and continuously try to

come out of this situation," Iajuddin said.

The president was speaking as chief guest at the launching ceremony of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry's (DCCI) 'Vision -- 2021 for a Prosperous Bangladesh' at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the capital.

Iajuddin said there could be no compromise on addressing issues of corruption and rule of law. Some countries at the same level with Bangladesh are moving ahead, and

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

RAMADAN, DURGA PUJA, SAARC SUMMIT

City to come under security blanket next month

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The capital comes under heavy security "round the clock" from October as the government sets off special measures across the country during Ramadan, Durga Puja and the Saarc Summit.

The mobile courts presently carrying out drives against unhygienic food only in the metropolitan cities will start operation in all districts from October 2.

Besides increasing the number of law enforcers in the capital, the home ministry yesterday also set up a monitoring cell headed by Dildar Ahmed, deputy secretary (administration).

People have been advised to dial

7168199 in Dhaka to record their complaints regarding security and other problems with the cell, which will work in three shifts round the clock until the Saarc Summit ends. Complaints may also be sent by fax at 7171593-5.

"People will call the cell if any problem needing immediate solution occurs anywhere or if they think the problem is unmanageable," State Minister for Home Affairs Lutuzzaman Babar told reporters after a meeting on law and order held at his ministry yesterday.

Another monitoring cell will be set up at the office of inspector general of police soon where people may call especially for police help. Identifying 533 crime points in

the capital, the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) has planned strategy for keeping these places under watch during the period.

"Forty-one temporary camps will be set up in Dhaka and policemen stationed at these camps will work as striking force on emergency call," said Babar.

Besides, 70 police teams in plainclothes will also work.

"We're tightening security across the country this year more as the number of puja mandaps has increased by about 1,000 from the previous 18,000," the state minister said.

The number of check-posts has also been increased to 76 from 35

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Oust partisan poll officials for fair polls

Says Hasina

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the BNP-Jamaat-led coalition government has appointed party activists to the Election Commission (EC) to rig the next general election sensing their defeat.

"Free and fair election is not possible under the current chief election commissioner, secretary of the Election Commission Secretariat and the recently appointed upazila election officers," Hasina said.

"We are demanding immediate ouster of these people," Hasina said while addressing a programme at her party's Dhanmondi office to mark the joining of a former bureaucrat and two Jatiya Party (JP) leaders

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Myanmar to take back remaining Rohingya

PM, Gen Mann talk common issues

UNB, Dhaka

Myanmar Chief of General Staff and member of the State Peace Development Council (SPDC) General Thura Shwe Mann yesterday said the process of repatriation of the remaining 20,000 Rohingya refugees from Bangladesh will be expedited.

The Myanmar general said this while talking to Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at her office.

Apart from the repatriation of the refugees, cross-border highway construction, onion import from and possible exports to Myanmar

were discussed during the meeting. Khaleda said Bangladesh and Myanmar should work together to exploit the resources of the two neighbouring countries for prosperity of both the peoples.

Regarding the proposed Asian Highway, Myanmar stressed quick completion of 23-kilometre cross-border road up to Myanmar border by Bangladesh.

Emphasising enhancement of trade between the two countries, Khaleda showed interest in importing onions and pulses from Myanmar.

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