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Bank accounts of Bangla Bhai, Abdur Rahman found

Tk 12 lakh already withdrawn

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bank authorities have found only three accounts opened by suspected militant leaders Bangla Bhai, Abdur Rahman and Maolana Obaidur Rahman, with a total of nearly Tk 12 lakh as deposit, almost the whole of which had already been withdrawn, said a bank source.

Siddiqur Rahman alias Bangla Bhai had a joint account with Abdul Awal and Shafiqul Islam in Al Arafah Bank's Bagura branch. Tk 10 lakh was deposited when the account was opened in 2003. The money has already been withdrawn.

Another bank account was opened in Islami Bank's Zamalpur branch in 2003 on behalf of Allamah

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AUG 17 BOMB BLASTS

Local or foreign group was behind JMB

Suspects govt probe body report

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK

A high-profile government committee formed to probe the August 17 bomb attacks across the country has opined that "a vested third party", inside or outside the country, may have worked behind the Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB). The banned Islamist militant organisation alone cannot afford the huge money, manpower and network involved in the near simultaneous attacks, it said.

Although it failed to unearth the mystery behind the attacks, the seven-

member committee, headed by the additional inspector general (IG) of Special Branch, has asked for immediate arrest of JMB chief Abdur Rahman, militant kingpin Siddiqul Islam alias Bangla Bhai and their top aides.

The committee in its nearly 200-page report also recommended for tracking the sources of funds to the militant group.

Emphasising the need for modernising madrasa education and introducing a uniform system to stop motivating madrasa students towards militant activities, the report recom-

mended strengthening intelligence, raising vigilance across the country and close monitoring of activities of those involved in terrorist activities.

The committee was first given 15 days' time to submit its report, identifying the bombers and masterminds behind the attacks and with recommendations to prevent recurrence of such incidents. It, however, had to get the time extended several times before submitting its report to the home ministry by the end of last week.

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PHOTO: STAR

Parked cars often occupy a large portion of roads in Motijheel Commercial Area of the city, contributing to the disgusting traffic jam. The photo was taken yesterday.

12 bombs seized on Sunamganj border

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) personnel seized powerful hand-bombs and explosives reportedly left behind by a fugitive Indian national on Tekerghat border in Sunamganj yesterday.

According to BDR sources, they found a bag containing 12 powerful hand-bombs, six detonators and explosives.

When contacted, a top official of the BDR headquarters, requesting anonymity, told the news agency that the destruction power of such a bomb is much higher than that of a hand grenade.

The sources said the Indian, carrying the bag, was trying to enter Bangladesh illegally through the Tekerghat check post at 6:45pm.

When the BDR men challenged the man, he ran away, leaving the bag near the check post," a BDR official said.

EARTHQUAKE

Islamabad hasn't

decided to

postpone

Saarc summit

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Pakistan on Monday said it has not yet taken any decision on postponement of the Saarc summit to be held in Dhaka next month in the wake Saturday's devastating earthquake.

"No decision of this nature has been taken as yet," a Pakistan foreign office spokesperson was quoted by the Press Trust of India in media reports.

"I cannot say whether we will be looking for postponement. We will be able to comment on it in two days

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REPORT CARD ON MINISTERS

4 years in office

Saifur's reforms miss the poor

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

For whatever reasons Saifur Rahman is acclaimed as a top-performing member of the alliance government's 50-plus strong cabinet, it certainly is not for improving the lot of the masses, especially the poor, in the last four years.

As the finance and planning minister, his apparent success has remained confined to macro-economic stability,



some reforms in the financial sector and improving the tax management.

But the purchasing capacity of the poor has been on a perpetual descent throughout the last four years, while the pockets of a section of people have been bloating with black or ill-gained money. Corruption has reached an all-time high, with the general populace becoming increasingly deprived of the benefits of the country's GDP growth.

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Moudud admits failure to form HR commission, separate judiciary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Moudud Ahmed yesterday admitted that the government is yet to succeed in forming a human rights commission and separating the judiciary.

He however said he is 'very hopeful' that these two major steps needed to put democracy on a firm footing and ensure law and order will be taken in the next one year.

Addressing a press briefing at his ministry on the occasion of completion

of four years of the BNP-led coalition government, Moudud said the issue of separation of the judiciary is now lying with the Supreme Court.

The formation of Judicial Service Commission is a big step towards separation of the judiciary, he said. Twenty-five assistant judges have already been appointed through this commission and 140 others are in the process of appointment.

The minister said an interim arrangement to replace the civil

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PM renews stance against religious terrorism

Asks Hindus to help law enforcers with info

UNB, Dhaka

Renewing her government's firm stance against terrorism in the name of religion, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has said no religion supports terrorist acts.

"Help the law-enforcers arrest those who carry out terrorist activities, no matter what religion they belong to," she said while exchanging greet-

ings with the noted personalities of the Hindu Community on the occasion of Durga Puja at the International Conference Centre (ICC) yesterday.

The prime minister said the people of all faiths living in Bangladesh have one identity--Bangladeshis.

She urged all irrespective of religion and opinion to work together to

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Bomb materials, jihad books by Jamaat leaders seized in Rajshahi

Abdur Rahman's son-in-law replaces Bangla Bhai as JMJB commander

STAR REPORT

Police yesterday seized bomb-making materials and books on Jihad written by Jamaat scholars from a den of the August 17 bombers in Rajshahi following statements of the militants who were arrested in Natore last month.

During a raid in city's Baliapukur area, police recovered designs of bombs, documents of bombing plan, electric circuits, plastic bottles, leaflets of Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB), and diaries containing guidelines for militants.

Meanwhile, militant kingpin Siddiqul Islam alias Bangla Bhai was

known to have handed over the operations command of the banned JMJB to Abdul Awal, son-in-law of Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) chief Abdur Rahman.

Sources close to JMB said Awal will now act as the operations commander of the militant outfit that claimed the responsibility for the August 17 serial blasts.

In Khulna, Islamic zealots yesterday threatened the divisional commissioner, deputy inspector general (DIG) of police, Khulna Range and local journalists with death, reports

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