

HuJi men holed up

FROM PAGE 1 Mujahidin, Bangladesh (JMB). Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMB), Shahadat Al Hikma, Ahle Hadith and a number of Arakan rebel groups as trainers in armed combat after 2000 following a crackdown on them. A number of their top leaders are now holing up in the different Middle Eastern countries.

The organisation has also opened a number of militant groups which have not been banned yet.

A senior intelligence officer yesterday told The Daily Star that they are yet to plan how to catch Huji members as they do not come to the open.

But many, especially those in the media, recall how Huji first came to light at the heart of the capital years back.

Wearing fatigues, the militant leaders sat shoulder to shoulder at the Jatiya Press Club and boastfully described how they fought in the Afghan war. They demanded that Bangladesh be turned into an Islamic state.

The group, for the first time came to light as Huji, then paraded through the Dhaka streets a day later after Jumma prayers to claim victory over the Soviet forces in Afghanistan.

These happened in 1992. In 2002, the US blacklisted Huji as an international terrorist organisation. It took the government three more years to ban it Tuesday after much denial of its existence in Bangladesh.

The US went one step forward to blacklist the Bangladesh chapter of Huji in 2003, but the government's denial continued as Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan then said he had not seen "any activity of such organisation in Bangladesh".

Lawmakers of Jamaat-e-Islami, whose link with the militants is now becoming evident following bomb blasts, also denied Huji's existence in Bangladesh.

As mentioned in yesterday's issue, Jamaat lawmaker Riasat Ali Biswas told parliament on September 11: "Reports of militant training of Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) and Harkatul Jihad to turn Bangladesh into an Islamic state are nothing but propaganda."

And under such lenience and denials, Huji spread its wing in madrassas, set up training camps in the hill tracts and carried out killing attempts including that on former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and poet Shamsur Rahman.

The militant leaders who attended the 1992 press conference -- Abdus Salam, president of Huji Bangladesh, field commander Manjur Hasan, Dhaka city unit president Maolana Delwar Hossain, publicity secretary Mufti Shafikur Rahman, Maolana Mufti Abdul Hye -- are now untraceable. Forty-one of the Huji men arrested at a Cox's Bazar training camp with arms in 1996 and sentenced to life-term, were released on bail after the coalition government came to power.

Only Mufti Hannan, a central committee member of Huji, who rose to a top rank has been arrested on October 1. At the 1992 press conference, Huji leaders in sleeveless olive war jackets over traditional Kabul dresses and ash traditional Afghan caps detailed its international link, which was overlooked by the successive governments including that of the Awami League.

Huji leader Obaidur Rahman Nadvi read out a scripted statement at the press conference while a young Mujahidin commander, Manjur Hasan, replied to questions from reporters.

Manzur Hasan, who himself is an Afghan war veteran, told the reporters that Bangladeshi youths went to Pakistan on study and tourist visas and joined Jihad (holy war) in Afghanistan. Huji said the first Bangladeshi Mujahidin group was formed by commander Abdur Rahman in 1984, who later died in 1989 in the Afghan war.

Describing Bangladeshi militants

contribution to the Afghan war, the Huji leaders said Bangladeshi mujahidins made great contributions to the wars in Urgan, Gazi, Khost, Gardez, Jalalabad, Panshir, Kabul, Kandahar and Heerat. The Huji leaders asked then BNP government to recognise the Mujahidin government in Afghanistan and send all necessary aid to the war-torn Afghanistan.

They also demanded of the government to show appropriate respect to the Bangladeshi 'martyrs' in Afghanistan and establish a complete Islamic state in Bangladesh.

A list of Bangladeshi 'martyrs' in Afghan war between May 10, 1989 and April 7, 1992 were given in the press conference.

LIST OF BANGLADESHIS KILLED IN AFGHANWAR

1. Commander Abdur Rahman Faruki, Jessore
2. Maolana Nurul Karim, Jessore
3. Hafez Motiur Rahman, Gazipur
4. Hafez Abdul Momen, Momenshahi (Mymensing)
5. Maolana Quamruzzaman, Jessore
6. Raihan Uddin, Gazipur
7. Maolana Sheikh Ismail, Gazipur
8. Maolana Abdul Matin, Faridpur
9. Badrul Alam, Faridpur
10. Hafez, Rahmat Ullah, Dhaka
11. Maolana Abdul Hamid, Momenshahi (Mymensing)
12. Saifullah, Barisal
13. Mosharraf Hossain, Comilla
14. Rabullah, Dhaka
15. Professor Rafiqullah, Noakhali
16. Siddiquallah Chowdhury, Noakhali
17. Mufti Obaidullah, B, Baria
18. Nurul Islam, Khulna
19. Mohammad Faruk, Khulna
20. Abdullah, Khulna
21. Nurul Islam, Bogra
22. Faizullah, Noakhali
23. Abdul Gafur, Chittagong
24. Mohammad Ali, Barisal.

Tarique

FROM PAGE 16 being discussed widely in the diplomatic circle.

However, a top official of an intelligence agency accompanied Tarique in those meetings, the source said.

A week after his meeting with Tarique, the high commissioner of a Commonwealth country while talking to a top BNP leader referred to his discussion with Tarique.

Sources said the high commissioner told the BNP leader that he could not agree with Tarique's interpretations of the August 17 blasts and the extremist activities in the country.

'Killer' Faruq dies

FROM PAGE 16 Mirpur area and also accused in two dozen cases including eight for murder, sources in the Shah Ali Police Station said.

Following the information Faruq gave during quizzing in custody, a DB team set out with him in the hunt for arms and ammunition around 1:35am yesterday morning, a press release said.

As soon as the team reached the intersection near Nababerbagh, Faruq's accomplices opened fire on the DB team, the press release claimed.

As the DB team returned fire Faruq tried to flee but fell in the line of fire and received bullet wounds in the head and chest, the police note read. Faruq's accomplices, however, fled the scene.

Faruq was rushed to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH) and the duty doctors declared him dead at 2:20am. The injured policemen were taken to Rajarbagh Police Hospital for treatment.

The police also recovered an automatic pistol, five rounds of ammunition of different types and two bullet shells from the spot.

Sylhet judge injured

FROM PAGE 1 whether Akhtar has any link to militancy, although the Islamist militants, after the October 3 blasts at courts, vowed to carry out attacks on the judges to compel them to establish Islamic Sharia in the judiciary.

Witnesses said when the judge reached near his Kumarpara house, his driver noticed a young man in front of the car. As the driver, Abdus Salam, asked the man to leave the

place, Akhtar threw a bomb at the judge while he was getting down from the car.

The bomb hit the car and the judge sustained minor injuries in his legs.

When the driver chased the fleeing bomb thrower, he blasted another bomb and ran away. Pedestrians caught him after a few minutes on Chhadarpur lane.

Later, police and Rapid Action Battalion teams visited the spot and recovered a live bomb in front of Malancha Community Centre, a few yards off the judge's house.

The investigators collected splinters of the bomb, but could not ascertain the motive behind the attack. A police officer said the bombs were homemade and not very powerful.

Deputy commissioner of Sylhet told The Daily Star that security has been stepped up at courts and other key installations in the city.

Meanwhile, the judge yesterday sentenced five people to life term imprisonment in a

murder case of Biswanath upazila. The investigators could not say if the bomb attack had any link to the judgement.

Additional police have been deployed at the judge's house.

Akhtar Hossain told the police that he hails from Sarishabari upazila of Jamalpur.

The Mayor of Sylhet City Corporation, Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran, also visited the judge's house after the incident.

Pollution

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Some fish farmers were also seen sprinkling lime into the lake. "When the water stinks and fishes start to die, we sprinkle lime into the water to reduce the pollution," said Abul Mia, an employee of the Ahad and Company, a leaseholder of the lake.

When asked, Anwar Alam, general secretary of the Gulshan Society, said they have already taken a move to restore the lake. The society held a meeting with the chairman of the Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk) on Sunday in this regard, he said.

"The major discharge of sewage is occurring in the Badda and Shadatpur parts of the lake. We told the Rajuk chairman to demarcate the lake and find a solution quickly," he said.

On the drainage connection from the two roads to the lake, Anwar pledged to take steps in this regard.

Hannan taken on fresh 7-day remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Mufti Abdul Hannan, operations commander of the banned Harkatul Jihad's Bangladesh chapter, was placed on a fresh seven-day remand yesterday on charges of August 17 countrywide bomb blasts.

Detective Branch (DB) of police produced Hannan before the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka at 5:00pm on completion of the five-day remand in the case filed for the blasts on the Supreme Court premises.

Two Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) members took a glum looking Hannan to the court of Metropolitan Magistrate Mir Ali Reza. He was wearing a helmet and a bullet proof vest.

The forwarding report placed by police before the court said Hannan gave nicknames of many people involved in the bombings. He needs to be further quizzed for the full names and addresses of those people, the report said, appealing for a further 10-day remand.

Hannan was arrested at Madhya Badda in Dhaka on October 1 after several years of absconding. He was later arrested in the bomb blast case filed with Teigoan Police Station.

Hannan, who is yet to appoint a lawyer, told the reporters that no lawyers agreed to defend him.

When asked about the government ban on his organisation, Hannan said, "I have no organisation. It does not matter whether the government bans it or not."

Govt to set up

FROM PAGE 16 It was discussed in the meeting that the next summer would be a very crucial time from the political point of view, as the tenure of the present government concludes in October 2006.

She also instructed the Energy Division to improve the gas supply situation as soon as possible by taking some emergency measures.

Meanwhile, the power sector experts questioned the decision on installation of five IPP plants within the next 6-7 seven months.

They said it will be simply impossible to implement any power generation project within a short time, as setting up of a power plant is a time-consuming matter.

Chairman of Khulna Barge Mounted Power Plant Mohammed Aziz Khan said it needs at least 15 months to implement a power plant project.

The 110MW Khulna Barge Mounted Power Plant was set up as the country's first IPP plant in 1997.

However, Chairman of Westmont Power (Bangladesh) Limited Tajul Islam Faruque said setting up of a power plant is sometimes possible within a short time if the government is determined to do so.

Westmont Power installed a 90MW IPP plant at Baghabari in 1998.

PDB Chairman ANH Akhtar Hossain said his organisation plans to invite tender for the proposed 50MW IPP plants within the next month.

"We'll start our job from tomorrow for the proposed plants," he said.

Security teams

FROM PAGE 1 Bangababhan, Dhaka Sheraton Hotel, mazar of late president Ziaur Rahman, Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre (BCFC) and International Conference Centre (ICC).

Heads of state and government of the Saarc nations and other delegates will stay and attend the programmes in these venues during the November 12-13 summit.

The teams will inspect Zia International Airport, National Mausoleum at Savar and Brac Centre at Gazipur today.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, an official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said inspection is a standard practice ahead of any such summit.

He said the government has taken all-out measures to ensure foolproof security for the heads of the state and government and the other delegates. All the heads of the delegations will be given equal security, protection and protocol during their stay in Dhaka.

More than 600 officials and journalists are expected to be in Dhaka for the summit.

Four agreements for promoting trade and investment among the seven Saarc countries are expected to be signed during the summit, officials said.

They said the two-day summit will conclude adopting the Dhaka Declaration, seeking cooperation in seven critical areas such as poverty alleviation, economic cooperation, social charter, disaster management, terrorism and strengthening of the Saarc Secretariat.

Saarc was formally launched in Dhaka when the heads of state and government of the association formally adopted its charter on December 8, 1985.

The Saarc Secretariat was established in Kathmandu on 16 January 1987. Its role is to coordinate and monitor the implementation of Saarc activities, and serve as the channel of communication between Saarc and other international organisations.

The Dhaka summit will focus on South Asian orientation and implementation of decisions taken at the previous 12 summits. The last summit was held in Islamabad in 2004.

The 13th Saarc summit, which was originally scheduled for January this year, was postponed twice - first due to the tsunami disaster and later in February because of India's denial to attend the summit following a coup in Nepal and alleged security problem in Bangladesh.

When agony ends

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case he had filed.

Armina, daughter of peasant Mamunur Rashid of Tetulia village in Dhamrai, was studying in her house when Mahubb, son of Mizanur Rahman of Gazipur, called her to his room at around 10:00am on January 27 this year.

The alleged rapist went to visit his grandfather Dudu Miah, a village leader.

As Armina entered the house, Mahubb's two accomplices--Rakib and Rabiul--locked the door and played music on cassette player from the adjacent room.

Mahubb raped the girl and released her at around 1:00pm.

Three days later, having failed to get justice at a village arbitration, as Mamunur Rashid was readying to file a case with the Dhamrai Police Station, the three culprits set fire to a sleeping Armina in her roadside room.

Judges' retirement

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be the next chief of the caretaker government, has always been loyal to BNP-Jamaat. During his term as the judge he had felt embarrassed to hear the Bangabandhu Murder case, she added.

Addressing a discussion on the 41st birth anniversary of Sheikh Russell, Hasina accused the BNP-Jamaat led coalition of shielding the killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Sheikh Russell Jatiya Shishu Kishore Parishad arranged the discussion at the city's Osmani Auditorium.

Crowded mostly with children of different ages, the auditorium went completely silent as the former prime minister in an emotion-choked voice reminisced the days with her brother Russell.

The youngest child of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib, Russell was slain along with others of the family on August 15, 1975.

"My brother was not a politician. I wonder why they [killers] had to take his life. Instead of bringing the killers to book, Major Ziaur Rahman and his accomplices had enacted the infamous Indemnity Ordinance to save the killers," Hasina observed.

The opposition leader said the four-party alliance has failed miserably to deliver and as a result, there is no security for people's life, not even for the children.

"Lawlessness has reached such a point that even children like Noushin

The girl was taken to Savar Gono Swasthya Hospital and later shifted to the burn unit of the Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH).

The DMCH authorities released the girl on October 1 as they found she had no chance of survival.

Armina died at her house at 3:20am on October 16.

Dhamrai police arrested Rabiul soon after the incident but failed to capture prime accused Mahubb and his other accomplice Rakib, who is also his uncle. The police said they are trying to catch them.

Three months ago, the family of Mahubb offered Tk 5 lakh through a village arbitration, which the victim's father spurned. Mahubb's family then started to threaten him to withdraw the case.

However, Mamunur Rashid does not see any hope of justice as Rabiul has recently come out of jail on bail.

and Shihab had to die at the hands of ruling party-backed criminals," the opposition chief stated.

She said the plight of children is not a cause of concern to the BNP-Jamaat alliance, which is rather busy conspiring how to cling to power. Price hike of essentials has gone to such an extent that the poor mothers are now forced to go from door to door, begging food to feed their hungry children.

Hasina said the government has distorted the history of the Liberation War. "Textbooks these days are full of distorted information to mislead our children," she added.

She urged the teachers and guardians to stay alert so that their kids do not get confused with the history twisted to the advantage of the anti-liberation forces.

Describing the present government as "uneducated and greedy," she said the nation cannot expect anything better from these 'despotic rulers'.

Besides the discussion, the Parishad organised contests in various arts for the children. Hasina handed over the prizes to the winners. Some were awarded for their excellence in this year's SSC examinations.

Presided over by Mahamudus Samad Chowdhury, the programme was addressed also by Barrister Amir-Ul Islam, Daily Jugantor Editor Abed Khan, Prof Mustafa Nurul Islam, Advocate Tarana Halim and Parishad President KM Shahidullah.

Karwan Bazar

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minister, expressing his confidence that the summit will be held peacefully, mentioned that visiting Indian and Maldives security experts are also satisfied with the steps.

"They have examined the total arrangement and so far we've heard, they've some sort of satisfaction," he told reporters after the meeting.

About 20,000 policemen and 1,300 Rab members along with the paramilitary Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), Special Security Force (SSF), President's Guard Regiment (PGR), Ansar, and intelligence men will form a security blanket during the summit, sources in the home ministry said.

The SSF will be responsible for security of the VVIPs and VIPs who will be flying in a few days before the summit.

Five subcommittees on security apprised Babar at the meeting about the details of their security measures.

The Inspector General of Police (IGP) heads the subcommittee on law and order, the director general (DG) of the SSF the subcommittee on security, the DG of Director General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI) on intelligence, the additional IGP of Special Branch (SB) on civil intelligence and the Commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) on traffic.

The SSF and PGR will be responsible for security of the main venue, the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar.

While briefing the minister about their measures, high security officials expressed concern about Karwan Bazar wholesale market, which houses numerous fish and vegetable depots, saying it creates heavy crowding for several hours each day.

Criminal incidents are known to take place there, and many criminals take refuge in the area, easily mingling with hundreds of market-goers, the officials said.

As the officials also expressed concern over the proximity of the market to Dhaka Sheraton Hotel and Hotel Sonargaon, where the VVIPs and VIPs will stay during the summit, the minister ordered the market closed for four days.

The meeting said the concerned ministry would arrange for the shifting of the market to a suitable place.

Expressing concern at the activities of teenage criminals, the state minister ordered law enforcers to neutralise them.

The meeting was told that, as many top criminals have gone into hiding because of the operation of law enforcers, teenage criminals have filled the position and are carrying out criminal activities.

"Besides, it does not require much money to hire them for committing brutal crimes," said a source who was

BNP, AL trade

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on the basis of some newspaper reports exemplifying yellow journalism," Communications Minister Nazmul Huda told the BBC.

The TI report is part of a plot to turn the country "non-functional", he added.

"The country became champion in corruption because of massive nepotism, politicisation, partisanship and other corruptions by the four-party alliance government," said Awami League Presidium Member Toifal Ahmed, who is also a former minister.

All should come up and become united to stop the present government to save the country from ruin, he said.

The ruling party has already made the country champion in corruption for four times and it should now make a commitment that it would not make the country champion in corruption in the next year, said Obaidul Kader, a former minister and present presidium member of the AL.

Gono Forum President and convener of Jatiya Oikya Mancha Dr Kamal Hossain also blamed the four-party alliance government for becoming champion in corruption for four times.

"General people are not corrupt, rather a section of people belonging to the ruling party are mainly involved in massive corruption," he said. He demanded a national government in order to come out of this corrupt cycle.

President of Bikalpadhra Bangladesh AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury said the massive corruption of this government is reflected in the TI report that tarnished the country's image with the world.

To come out of this shameful position, a national government comprising honest, brilliant and patriotic forces should be formed, he said.

Huge urea

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To make up the massive nine lakh MT supply shortfall, the government has already issued work order for importing two lakh MT and floated another tender yesterday for two more lakh MT urea fertiliser. Besides, the government also plans to procure 3.5 lakh MT urea more from Karnaphuli Fertiliser Company (Kafco) in Chittagong at the international market price.

BCIC officials told The Daily Star yesterday that shutting down of Palash urea fertiliser factory until December this year would mean a fall in domestic urea production by at least 50,000 MT, further putting pressure on the country's foreign exchange reserve to meet up huge fertiliser import bills.

As against the domestic production cost of Tk 6,000 an MT of urea, the government is now being compelled to buy it from the international market at as high a price as Tk 18,000 to Tk 19,000 an MT.

The government also provides large subsidies in urea and, so, the BCIC has to sell it at Tk 4,800 per MT to the dealers across the country against the production cost of Tk 6,000.

So, in case of imported urea, the government would have to bear a subsidy to the tune of Tk 13,200 per MT, the sources pointed out.

The government is now hurrying up to replenish the buffer stocks of urea, as much of the bulk has already been used up for Aman while the prime demand period is just about two months away.

During the irrigation-fed winter rice, Boro, season, from late December through March, farmers usually require up to 15 lakh MT of urea.

TI brands

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corrupt countries.

Even after forming the Anti Corruption Commission in 2004, Bangladesh could not improve its position in the last five years since 2001 when Bangladesh first got the lowest position, Ahmed said.

International investors may hesitate to come to Bangladesh, Mozaffar Ahmed said, commenting on the impact of the country's championship in TI's corruption index for five times.

"If we could improve our situation, the donors would not have tagged so many conditions while giving loans," he said, adding that poor people are the worst victims of corruption while the bureaucrats, businessmen, and politicians are its main beneficiaries.

The performance of Anti-Corruption Commission in Bangladesh is still questionable, Ahmed said.

He expressed the hope that the government and political leadership including the opposition would come up to do something for reducing corruption in the country.

Responding to a query, Ahmed said information gathered for making TI corruption index was not supplied by the TI, which is a separate body.

Rejecting the allegation of any partisanship, he told journalists that there are at least 16 sources for collecting information about a country.

The TI observed that more than two thirds of the 159 nations surveyed in the index scored less than 5 out of a clear score of 10, indicating serious corruption in most of the countries.

"Corruption is a major cause of poverty as well as a barrier to overcome it," said TI Chairman Peter Eigen.

The TI suggested low-income countries to increase resources and develop political will for anti-corruption efforts and enable greater public access to information about budget, revenue and expenditure to reduce corruption.

Next to Bangladesh and Chad, Turkmenistan secured the second highest position in corruption, followed by Myanmar, Haiti, Nigeria, Equatorial Guinea, Ivory Coast, Angola and Uzbekistan.

Charge sheets accuse

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Shaikh Abdur Rahman and his brother Ataur Rahman alias Sunny for blasts at nine places in the district on August 17.

In both the Sathkira and Kushtia charge sheets, ASP of Criminal Investigation Department (CID) Munshi Atiqur Rahman, also the investigation officer (IO) of the blasts cases, remarked that outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP)-Janajuddhdo faction had conspired with the banned Islamist outfit to stage the August 17 blasts, said sources.

He also mentioned that the August 17 attacks were in reprisal for the government ban on JMB and JMB.