

Gunmen for SC, HC judges

Lower court judges ignored as police unable to provide them with 24-hour security

CHAITANYA CHANDRA HALDER

The government yesterday provided gunmen for the Supreme Court (SC) and High Court (HC) judges and tightened security at the Dhaka courts after two Jhalakathi judges were assassinated in a suicide bomb attack on Monday.

The authorities, however, did not take any steps to ensure security of the lower court judges who asked for security after the brutal killing. The police department has admitted its inability to provide gunmen for all the judges at this moment.

Bangladesh Judicial Service

Association (BJS), an organisation of judges, leaders yesterday met Chief Justice Syed JR Mudassar Husain and requested him to take steps for tightening security for all the judges across the country.

The BJS leaders said judges in the country are now under threat and unable to conduct the court proceedings fearing bomb attacks, sources said.

Some 77 gunmen were provided to five judges of the Appellate Division and 71 judges of the HC Division and the SC Registrar. The chief justice already has state security.

No initiatives have been taken to ensure the security of the lower court judges, who are the main target of the attackers, the BJS alleged.

The inspector general (IG) of police yesterday after a home ministry meeting told the press that his department cannot provide security for all the judges round the clock. Police can give protection to the judges during their movement only, he added.

"District judges have been provided with gunmen," the IG said. "Police will patrol the areas where they [judges] reside and give protection to them during their movement."

"The district administration will build up a system for their security," the IG said.

The BJS leaders, however, said the government after the August 17 and October 3 bomb blasts across the country targeting courts and other establishments, announced to provide the district judges with gunmen, but all the district judges are yet to get such security.

After the killing of two judges, the BJS on Monday gave a seven-day ultimatum to the government to ensure security for judges and pay Tk 50 lakh as compensation to them during their movement."

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BOMB ATTACKS Ministers, MPs feel insecure

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In the wake of the brutal assassination of two judges in Jhalakathi on Monday, ministers and ruling party lawmakers said they are worried over the growing trend of bomb attacks.

"You never know when I'd be attacked by the assailants," Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday told journalists at his office, expressing his feeling of insecurity.

"You (journalists) always come to me and ask questions standing beside my car. If I'm attacked, you will also die," Saifur said, voicing concern over the bomb culture.

Emphasising collective efforts of all to get rid of the menace, the finance minister said, "It's our

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Rout graft, violence to get more assistance

Donors react to govt's plea at PRS Forum

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Donors yesterday told the government if it fails to eliminate corruption and violence, and to bring transparency in governance and improve it, it would be difficult for them to continue assisting Bangladesh.

The donors made it clear on the opening day of the three-day Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) Forum in the city in response to the government's request for enhanced support from them.

"If over the next 15 months opportunities are held hostage by hartals

and violence and by petty partisan advantage, the PRSP and all aspirations like it will be hollow. And the international community would have no choice but to review its support," said World Bank (WB) Vice President Praful C. Patel at the inaugural session of the first-ever PRS Forum in the country.

Referring to the repeated ranking of Bangladesh as the most corrupt country in the world, he said, "Donors find it extremely difficult to support Bangladesh's critical development challenges under the kinds of pressure brought to bear by this issue, this

elephant in the room."

Later, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia in her inaugural speech urged the donors to come up with more aids to help Bangladesh address its socio-economic challenges and achieve the millennium development goals (MDGs). "We need continued support of our development partners," she said, "to sustain and carry forward our poverty reduction efforts and achieve the MDGs by 2015."

She expressed the hope that the forum would contribute significantly to a better facilitation of the

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Bomb materials found at assassin's house

11 held; half-day hartal in Jhalakathi today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Police yesterday recovered huge bomb-making materials, books and leaflets of banned Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) from the house of Mamun who carried out Monday's suicide bomb attack, leaving two judges killed in Jhalakathi.

Besides, 11 people including a principal of a madrasa have been arrested in different places of the town during an extensive manhunt launched by police immediately after the blast.

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Left speechless by his father's violent death, 2½-yr-old son of slain judge Jagannath Pandey gives a blank look of grief.



PHOTO: STAR

Hunt on to net JMB suicide bombers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In the wake of Monday's bomb attack in Jhalakathi that killed two judges, the law enforcers including intelligence officials are carrying out a countrywide hunt for members of the suicide squad of outlawed Islamist outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), said a top police official.

Lists of suicide squad members of the militant organisation, prepared by the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) intelligence, have been distributed among law enforcers across the country to crack down on them.

Earlier, newspapers reported that the banned JMB and Jagrata Muslim

Janata Bangladesh (JMJB) have formed suicide squads comprising 'Ehsar' (who sacrifices his life).

The law enforcers failed to prevent the tragic incident although press reports, quoting JMB sources, had already said the suicidal squads will make orchestrated attacks to avoid arrest.

Meanwhile, State Minister for Home Luthfozzaman Babar at a meeting with top officials of police, Rab, intelligence agencies and BDR yesterday discussed the next course of action against the militants.

The bomb attack in Jhalakathi dominated the five-hour meeting

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Blast probes stuck as top JMB leaders duck arrest

Intelligence now targets 7 prized fugitives

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK

The government and law enforcement agencies worry as the ban slapped on Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) and the post-August 17 massive hunt for JMB

operatives across the country does not seem to have decapitated the extremist outfit.

Until last Monday following the August 17 countrywide serial bomb blasts, the Islamist militant group has

carried out three attacks, killing four persons including two judges.

The law enforcers have netted more than 400 suspects in connection with these attacks and many of these detainees have identified

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Abdur Rahman



Bangla Bhai



Ataur Rahman



Abdul Awal



Salahuddin

London wants to fight terrorism with Dhaka

UK minister Howells tells Morshed

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Visiting UK Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Kim Howells MP yesterday said the British government wants to work together with Bangladesh to combat terrorism.

Emerging from a meeting with Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan, the British minister told the diplomatic correspondents that "killing of two judges in Bangladesh by terrorists is certainly a big signal for all of us and we must think it deeply and work relentlessly to defeat the terrorists."

Replying to a question, he said the British government has been assisting Bangladesh police and will further provide skills development and efficiency enhancement training so that police here can tackle the terrorists.

When asked whether the Bangladeshi government failed to contain the terrorists, Kim Howells said, "I don't think the government has failed because terrorism is now a trend and many countries of the world came under terrorist attacks."

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