

# JMB, Huji militants in Jhenidah regrouping

## 39 out of 45 listed by police yet to be arrested: Over 200 active in district

Hossain Seraj, back from Jhenidah

MAGURA: Suspected activists of JMB and Huji who had fled their strongholds in Jhenidah town after the August 17 blasts are regrouping in their respective areas, taking advantage of alleged lax vigilance by law enforcers, sources claimed.

Sources in intelligence agencies and locals said, before the August 17 blasts, over 200 activists including trainers of Harkat-ul-jihad (Huji) and Allahr Dal, an offshoot of JMB (Jamaa'tul Mujahedin, Bangladesh), were active at different madrasa complexes and mosques in Pabahati, Adarsha Para, Mohila College Para, Hamdah, Sikarpur, Boro amarkundu and Baparipara in Jhenidah municipal area.

They have strongholds also in Modhupur, Kangsha and Bharuapara villages in the Sadar upazila, and in Kashimpur and Bakshipur in Shailakupa upazila, intelligence sources said.

After recruiting poor youths including madrasa students, JMB under the banner of Allahr Dal, used to train them to use arms and bombs, according to intelligence reports and confessions made by arrested Huji cadres.

Eleven activists of Allahr Dal were

arrested from a madrasa hostel at Arabpur in Jhenidah town on October 20, 2003 when they were taking training from Huji cadre Abul Kalam Azad alias Bulbul. Bulbul escaped during the raid. All the 11 were later released.

On November 18, police arrested Bulbul from Garaganj Bazar in Shailakupa upazila. Bulbul hailed from Bakshipur in the same upazila. He used to stay at his father-in-law's house at Garaganj village and ran JMB activities, working as a tailor in Garaganj market, locals said.

"In last three years, Huji top leader Mufti Abdul Hannan several times met Bulbul and police were informed about this, but to no effect", a Union Parishad member in Garaganj told this correspondent during his visit to the area on Friday. He had left the area immediately after the August 17 blasts but returned after some days, the UP member claimed seeking anonymity.

Talking to The Daily Star, Jhenidah Police Superintendent Akram Hossain however denied the allegation of police inaction. He said 45 suspected Islamist militants have been listed and six of them arrested.

Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Jhenidah Sadar police station Md Azizul Huq said they were trying to nab suspected

militant cadres and rest of the charge-sheeted accused in the August 17 blast case.

Six bombs went off in different areas of Jhenidah town on August 17.

Police in a raid on August 19 arrested two Allahr Dal members including Tarikul Islam alias Rinku. They were sent to the Joint Interrogation Cell (JIC) in Dhaka on September 21 after they gave confessional statements before court.

Acting on their statements, Detective Branch (DB) police in Dhaka on September 3 arrested one of the alleged kingpins of Jhenidah blast Abu Taleb Ansari alias Babul Ansari, a leader of Allahr Dal and security officer at parliament secretariat. He hailed from Bridgeroad in Gaibandha town.

Another leader of the outlawed outfit named by the arrestees - Matin Mehedi alias Matinul - is yet to be netted. He is the son of Enamul Huq of the same area. Matin Mehedi was earlier arrested in Jhenidah on October 20, 2003 along with 10 other suspected militants, but released on bail.

Later, acting on their confession, Jhenidah police also arrested three other militants from Hamdah and Sikarpur area in the town.

# NETRAKONA ARRESTEE OC says JMB cadre, SP says terrorist

Jahangir Alam, Netrakona

After four days of arrest of Julon Mian, Barhatta police yesterday claimed that he is a suspected cadre of Jama'at ul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) and was involved with the banned Islamist outfit for long.

Julon Mian, 25, of Garma village in Barhatta upazila in Netrakona district was arrested by Barhatta police on the night of November 21.

Just after the arrested of Julon, Mostak Ahamed, Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Barhatta thana, told journalists that he was arrested in a women repression case. Police sent him to court under Section 54 on the following evening. The court rejected his bail prayer and sent him to jail.

But on November 24, the Barhatta thana OC sent a prayer to Netrakona Deputy Commissioner's office seeking three month's detention of Julon.

Julon's wife Mamata Begum yesterday submitted a prayer to the Inspector General of Police (IGP) against OC Mostak Ahamed claiming that her husband was arrested on the false allegation of his involvement with JMB only to harass him. He is not accused in any

case, she claimed in the prayer.

When contacted by this correspondent yesterday, OC Mostak Ahmed reiterated that Julon is a suspected JMB cadre and there is complaint from people against him in this regard. Julon was arrested after investigation, the OC asserted.

"We will submit a prayer for Julon's remand for seven days after the detention prayer is granted", the OC said.

But Netrakona Police Superintendent Mohammad Ali Hossen Fakir talking to this correspondent said, "Julon is a terrorist, not a JMB cadre."

"OC Mostak gave you wrong information. He was involved in acts of terrorism, not with JMB", the SP said.

This correspondent visited Garma village in Barhatta upazila. Some local people said Julon could be involvement with JMB as there are some JMB activists in the village.

Mentionably, SP Ali Hossen Fakir was earlier threatened over telephone in the name of JMB not to "disturb" JMB cadres in the district.



Diarrhoea patients on the floor of Ghatail Upazila Health Complex.

PHOTO: STAR

# Diarrhoea alarming in 3 districts

## 40 killed, 20,000 attacked in Tangail, Jamalpur and Sherpur: 4 die in Gaibandha

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Diarrhoea situation is alarming in Tangail, Jamalpur and Sherpur districts with the death toll reaching 40 so far.

Over 20,000 people have been attacked with the disease in last 45 days. In Gaibandha, the disease killed four people in the last two days. Another about 250 have been attacked.

Our Tangail Correspondent reports: Diarrhoea killed 22 people in Tangail, 14 in Jamalpur and 4 in Sherpur district in 45 days. The disease is spreading in remote areas of the districts.

In Tangail, the dead included eight children. Over 15,000 were attacked with the waterborne disease in eleven upazilas of the district, sources said.

Of the dead, 14 are in Madhupur, three in Ghatail, two in Kalihati, one in Delduar and two in Tangail Sadar upazila.

The worst affected villages in Madhupur are Musuddi, Khamarpara, Charpara, Shaya and Jhugna.

The disease is also spreading in Karimpur, Dighalkandi and Dewlabari in Ghatail upazila; Huga, Katuli and Gharinda in Tangail sadar; Kashil, Bangra, Pichuti and Dapnazar in Basail; Zokarchar, Chockkhilda and Bilborni in Kalihati; Borni, Betjha and

Dewlee in Delduar and Barati in Mirzapur upazila.

This correspondent while visiting upazila health complexes in Madhupur and Ghatail on Friday found diarrhoea patients being treated on hospital floors in an unhygienic environment.

Sources in Tangail District Health Control Room however said 10 people died from diarrhoea and 12 others from different diseases including pneumonia. Over 8,000 diarrhoea patients were treated in different government hospitals of the district, they said.

Unofficial sources however claimed that at least 15,000 diarrhoea patients took treatment at government hospitals and field treatment centers in the district.

An official at the control room said the situation is still under control and there is enough oral saline packets and other medicines in their stock. Besides, 117 medical teams are working in the district to combat the disease.

Among the dead, 11 are in Sarishabari, two in Madarganj and one in Islampur upazila.

Dr. Abdus Sabur, resident medical officer (RMO) at Sarishabari Hospital said the situation is normal and nine medical teams are working in the affected areas.

In Sherpur, at least four people were killed and 500 have been attacked with diarrhoea in different areas of Nalitabari upazila, where the disease is spreading, sources said.

At least 200 patients took treatment at Nalitabari Upazila Health Complex in last few days, sources there said.

Sources at Sherpur civil surgeon's office said several medical teams are working in affected areas.

Our Gaibandha Correspondent reports: Diarrhoea claimed four lives in last two days in the district. At least 250 people have been attacked.

According to sources at the civil surgeon's office, at least 11 people die from the disease and 1365 were attacked in a week.

At least 175 patients have been treated in upazila health complexes while 62 others were admitted in the last two days, they said.

The dead are Fatema Khatun, 2, of Dakhin Santola village in Sadullapur upazila; Azizul, 60 and Rimon, 5, of Ujir Dharani in Gaibandha Sadar; Bahadur, 50, of Bhutmara village in Shaghata upazila.

"The situation is under control and we have adequate stock of IV saline", one source at the control room at civil surgeon's office said.

A total of 106 medical teams are working in seven affected upazilas, they said.



Road without transports (left) and a rally being held in front of Aswani Kumar Hall in Barisal city during the Barisal Achal programme yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

# Life stops for half an hour in Barisal divn

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Life came to a halt for half an hour from 11 am yesterday in Barisal division as people poured on streets leaving their workplaces to press their nine-point demand for development of six districts in the division.

As the clock ticked 11, whistles and sirens blared in the six district headquarters and upazila towns and all came on nearby roads leaving work. All vehicles and other transports stood standstill where they were.

Even river transports and ferries stopped moving.

People including students, government employees formed human chains and held rallies on nearby roads. In Barisal city, such programmes were held at 32 points.

Public representatives, teachers, political leaders, cultural and human rights activists and NGO leaders and

activists also participated in the programs.

The Barisal Achal (standstill in Barisal) program was earlier called by the Barisal Division Development and Rights Protection Forum to press the demands.

The nine - point demand includes regular Biman flight to Barisal, gas supply from Bhola gas field, setting up of a public university, construction of bridges at Dapdapia and Bekuta, shifting of BIWTA head office and renovation of the marine workshop, setting up of a floating dockyard, development of Kuakata tourist spot and establishment of export processing zones in Barisal and Patuakhali.

Agitation to press the nine-point demand was started in Barisal division in November. Earlier, rallies were held and human chains formed in different areas of the division to press the demands.

# 2 BDR men closed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Two Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) men were closed for violating service discipline in Meherpur last week.

The action was taken against Tetulbaria Border Observation Post (BOP) Commander Badsha Mia, and Kazipur BOP Commander Moyin Uddin for firing gun shots at villagers at Kazipur village in Gangni, Meherpur on November 18.

Fifty innocent villagers were injured, 20 of them with bullet wounds.

According to sources, the BDR commanders maintained liaison with Laltu, a gang leader of robbers in Gangni area. They attacked the villagers to rescue Laltu's father Anisur Rahman. They also picked up a critically injured villager Atahar and tortured him.

The villagers confined Anis demanding arrest of Laltu who along with his accomplices Rezaul, Safiul, Moni, Nara, Mobirul, Muhaddeds and others looted Tk 30 lakh from 20 traders on a bus at Sahabnagar bazaar on the Kushtia-Meherpur highway on November 1.

But none was arrested although 10 criminal cases were filed against Laltu and his 30 accomplices with Gangni Police Station on November 9.

Frustrated traders caught Laltu's father on November 18 demanding immediate arrest of Laltu. The BDR men who came to his rescue launched the attack on the protestors injuring 50 of them.

After the incident, 9 Rifles Battalion Commander Captain Refayat visited the spot and closed them.

# 3.5X3

# 6X3

# 9X3



PHOTO: STAR

Journalists staged a sit-in in front of Mymensingh Press Club yesterday in protest against the murder of Gouton Das, Staff Correspondent of daily Samakal in Faridpur.