

Two Jamaat leaders sheltered Dec 8 Netrakona bombers

JMB 'commander' Sunny discloses during interrogation

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

Two local leaders of Jamaat-e-Islami sheltered the JMB suicide squad members who blasted bombs in front of Udichi office at Azahar Road in Netrakona town on December 8 last year.

Eight people were killed and about 50 including 10 policemen were injured in the blasts.

This was disclosed by JMB (Jamaatul Mujahideen, Bangladesh) 'operations commander' Ataur Rahman Sunny during interrogation in Dhaka by the investigation officer (IO) of the two cases filed in connection with the blasts. A murder case and another case under the Explosives Act were filed after the blasts.

Sub-Inspector Mohammad Alaudin of Netrakona police station is the Investigation Officer (IO) of the two cases.

SI Alaudin told this correspondent that he and the Officer-in-Charge of Netrakona thana went to Dhaka recently to interrogate arrested JMB 'commander' Sunny in connection with the blasts.

Asked why charge sheets were not filed even after two and a half



Ataur Rahman Sunny

months of the incident, Alaudin said he is awaiting orders from higher authorities.

Sunny told Alaudin that the suicide bombers came to Netrakona about 15 days before of the (December 8) blasts and stayed under the shelter and protection of the two Jamaat leaders. One of them is a front ranking leader of Netrakona district Jamaat and the other is a teacher of a madrasa in the Sadar upazila. Alaudin said quoting Sunny, The suicide bombers also took the help of local Islami Chhatra Shibir activists in making preparations for

the attack.

Sunny also told Alaudin that the suicide squad was sent to Netrakona on orders from JMB chief Abdur Rahman and JMJB (Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh) chief Siddikur Rahman alias Bangla Bhai.

Alaudin said he got some other 'important information' from Sunny during interrogation, which will be very helpful in the investigation.

A high official of Netrakona police said investigations may have a new turn following Sunny's confessions. 'Sunny gave sufficient information about the bomb blast', the police official said.

When contacted, Netrakona thana Officer-in-Charge Samiul Alam said, 'We got important clues from Sunny and investigation is going on as per his statement of Sunny.' He however said submission of charge sheets may be delayed.

Earlier press reports said that before the December 8 blasts, JMB threatened the Netrakona Police Superintendent of bomb attack on his office and residence in case of action against Islamist militants. The threats were made over phone and the SP had also acknowledged the threat.



Police officials trying to calm down farmers agitating for fertiliser (left) and the barricaded Satkhira-Assassuni road at Dhulihar Bazar in the Sadar upazila yesterday (story on page-1).

PHOTO: STAR

I want punishment of killers, no help

Says ailing mother of Netrakona JMB blast victim Sudipta Paul

JAHANGIR ALAM, Netrakona

The JMB suicide bombing in Netrakona on December 8 last year ruined the family of Udichi activist Sudipta Paul Shelly, like many others.

Shelly was among the eight people killed in the blasts in front of Udichi office at Azahar Road in the town. She was the only earning member of the family. Fifty others were injured in the attack.

Shelly's parents - retired primary school teacher Sunil Chandra Paul, 70, and Aruna Paul, suffering from cardiac ailments. Sunil has to go to Dhaka often for treatment. Shelly's only brother Pintu Paul became mentally handicapped after the death of his sister.

They did not get any compensation from the government or any quarter. No government leader or official visited them after the incident.

This correspondent visited Shelly's parents' rented house at Azahar Road in Netrakona town recently. Ailing Aruna Paul was lying on bed. She said, her daughter's murder has crippled their family.

Asked about their treatment, she said some well-wisher relatives were



Sudipta Paul

helping them.

She said they did not seek any help from government. 'Killers have taken like of my daughter, my only son became shell shocked, my husband and myself are sick. But no government leader or official visited us.'

'I want punishment of the killers, not help', she said.

Shelly's friend Chandana Das, a university student and a cultural activist, said, the family is a victim of violence by militants. The government should come to their aid as the incident took place due to its failure.

FORGED FOREIGN BANK CHEQUES

Three banks defrauded of Tk 47 lakh in Jessore

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

Three banks here have been defrauded of over Tk 47 lakh using forged foreign bank cheques.

Forgery of three cheques worth US \$63,360 dollars was detected at Jessore branch of National Bank Ltd where Tk 40 lakh was withdrawn. The three cheques were allegedly issued from two US banks.

Another incident of forgery of nine Demand Drafts (DD) amounting to Tk 4,36,000 was detected at the Jhikargachha branches of Sonali Bank and Janata Bank. The demand drafts were allegedly issued in name of two other foreign banks.

National Bank sources said, one Bayazid, son of M Ahmed of

Piterson Road in Jessore town opened a Savings Account (No 2410) on April 10, 2005. He also gave two other addresses in the names of Qurayeshi Trading of Bayazid Bostami Road, Chittagong and Bagedi village under Kaliganj upazila in Jhenaidah district.

On the day of opening the account, he deposited a cheque of US \$11,508 dollars issued by a foreign bank. He deposited another cheque of US \$21,415 dollars issued by another foreign bank on May 4 last year. He deposited his third cheque of US \$30,437 dollars issued by the same foreign bank on June 8 the same year.

The National Bank authorities posted Tk 40 lakh in Bayazid's account. Bayazid withdrew the entire amount by August 8 the same year.

Earlier, Tk 2,10,000 was allegedly defrauded of Jessore branch of the National Bank following deposit of a cheque amounting to US \$3,375 dollars by one Mahbub Hossain, son of late Abdul Jabbar Lashkar of Bahadurpur village under Sadar upazila in his account. A foreign bank issued the cheque.

The authorities of Sonali Bank, Janata Bank and National Bank lodged cases with Kotwali Police Station. The forgers have gone into hiding since detection of forgery.

Sources said some dishonest bank officials might have been involved in the forgery. Police sources said they are trying to arrest the culprits.

Imam's wife reveals JMB attack plan

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

A plan for grenade attack on Satkhira Deputy Commissioner's (DC) car and the district jail by the banned Jamaatul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) suicide squad came to light on Monday.

A woman informed this in a letter sent by post to the DC. She concealed her name and address and identified herself only as wife of an Imam of a mosque. The letter reached the DC office in the afternoon, police sources said.

In the letter, she stated that her husband along with some young men chalked out the plan. She wrote, 'I have heard the plan when they took the decision at a meeting held at my house'.

She said the young men also vowed to sacrifice their lives anytime. 'I also saw a grenade kept hidden in a heap of straw', she said.

When contacted, Satkhira DC Md Ilas and Sadar Police Station officer-in-charge (OC) Shajahan confirmed the incident.

A general diary (GD) was filed with Sadar Police Station.

They did not get any compensation from the government or any quarter. No government leader or official visited them after the incident.

This correspondent visited Shelly's parents' rented house at Azahar Road in Netrakona town recently. Ailing Aruna Paul was lying on bed. She said, her daughter's murder has crippled their family.

Asked about their treatment, she said some well-wisher relatives were

Garo people forgetting their mother tongue

Schools teach in Bangla, no move to revive their alphabets

MIRZA SAHKIL, Tangail

Indigenous Garo people in Tangail and Mymensingh districts are forgetting their mother tongue.

This correspondent during a visit to Garo inhabited areas in Modhupur was surprised to see that most of the indigenous children can not speak in their mother language. Some children understand the language but can not speak.

According to Garo leaders in Modhupur, there are at least 1,25,000 indigenous people in their communities in the country. Of them, around 40,000 are in Modhupur region comprising parts of Tangail and Modhupur.

Elderly Ajoy-a-Mra said their children are forgetting the language as Bangla is the medium of education at primary schools. At workplaces also, Garo people use Bangla or English language.

A United Nations Charter gives all communities of the world the right to get educated in their mother languages. Bangladesh is a signatory to the charter. A bill ratifying the Charter was passed in parliament in 1997 but the law is yet to be implemented in case of indigenous people.

On investigation, it was gathered that a few of the Garo people are acquainted with alphabets of their mother tongue, 'Achik'. The alphabet were lost when their ancestors came to the region from Tibet following a famine there.

The elders in the community

said 'Achik' alphabets were lost over the years due to onslaught of a different culture having a different language in an alien land. Moreover, many of their ancestors who knew the alphabets were killed in encounters with locals.

They however said the 'Achik' language can be developed here with government patronisation as this is the medium of education for Garo people in Meghalaya across the border. 'Achik' language is being used there through Roman alphabets, they said. Garo people in Tripura state of India also use the 'Achik' language, they said.

Shanti Sangma, an indigenous woman leader in Modhupur, said she talks to her children in Achik language at home, least they forget the mother tongue. But it is a fruitless exercise because the children will ultimately forget the language as they have to learn in Bangla at school and because they are not acquainted with the 'Achik' alphabet, she said.

Samoren Chichim, a Garo teacher in Modhupur, said, 'If the mother language is not introduced at primary level education, the children will ultimately forget it.'

Prof. Babul De Nokrek, president of the Adhima Garo Youth Association, said the Garo language can be revived if it is introduced at primary schools. That needs patronisation by the government, he said.

6X3

11X3

Power failure costs jute mills Tk 75 cr in four months

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Twenty-two state owned jute mills in the country incurred a loss of Tk 75 crore in last four months due to power failure.

Besides, eight state owned jute mills in Khulna lost Tk 20 crore in last one month due to irregular attendance of permanent workers, acting secretary of the Ministry of Jute and Textiles, AMM Solaiman Chowdhury said during a visit to jute mills in Khulna on Saturday.

Later at a meeting of jute mill officials at Khalishpur in the same afternoon, Solaiman said the government is taking steps to reopen the closed state owned Daulatpur Jute mill in July this year. Overhauling of the mill will begin later this month, he said.

He also warned officials and CBA leaders of punishment for neglect to duty and corruption.



Jasim Mela begins today

STAR NATIONAL DESK

A fifteen-day Jasim Mela, commemorating contributions of folklorist poet Jasimuddin, begins in Faridpur today.

The programmes that will also include exhibition of his works and cultural functions will be held at the Jasim Uddyan, at the poet's ancestral home in Gobindapur village in Ambikapur union in the sadar upazila.

The fair has been organised jointly by Jasim Foundation and Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC).

6X3