

## Raid in B'baria

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The investigators, meantime, said from now on they will feed the media with information related to operations only as they have instructions from the government top level not to disclose the findings of interrogation of the top JMB leaders.

The law enforcers also prevented photojournalists from taking photographs of the arrested JMB men during and after the operation in Brahmanbaria.

The law enforcers are yet to begin interrogation of Bangla Bhai who is undergoing treatment for burn and splinter injuries he had received during his capture on March 6 in Mymensingh.

Before starting the interrogation, the investigators will have to produce the militant before the court and obtain remand order.

### BRAHMANBARIA

Our Brahmanbaria correspondent reports: On information from JMB cadre Sabir Ahmed Dulal arrested at Paltan in the capital on March 8, the police and Rab-9 cordoned off Kazipara, Kandipara, Collegepara and adjacent places in the town at 3:00am yesterday and started a door-to-door search.

JMB operatives Sohel, 25, of Golkhali village of Akhaura, Alamgir, 28, of Mohammadpur village, and Arafat, 26, of Bhadugarh village, were arrested during the raid.

The three admitted to their involvement in the August 17 bomb blasts in the town.

"Sohel admitted that he knew about the August 17 bombing a few days prior to the attack," said a police source. The financial support for carrying out bombings at five points in Brahmanbaria was also provided via Sohel, the source added.

The law enforcers also picked up a local astrologer named Sukumar Roy for quizzing.

In the evening, the Rab and police members deployed at different points of the town arrested one Sheikh Mohammad Sumon, 25, at Kautoli in the town.

**SHERPUR**  
Members of the Detective Branch (DB) of police arrested JMB district commander Mozahidul Islam Sumon, 30, in Gourdar area of Nakla upazila in the early hours of yesterday, reports our Sherpur correspondent.

In another raid, sadar thana police arrested JMB Ehsar (full-

time) member Abu Syed alias Sumon, 28, raiding Nagpara village of Sherpur municipality.

The police produced the two before a first class magistrate's court with a remand petition. The court granted a 10-day police remand for them each.

Mozahidul, an accused of the August 17 serial bomb blasts in Sherpur, was a close aide of the JMB chief and would accompany him on his visit to Jamalpur and Sherpur.

The police were interrogating both the two JMB operatives last night.

### Private sector

**FROM PAGE 16**  
Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) at Hotel Peninsula in the port city.

She said the services (management and operation) of Chittagong Port should go for privatisation.

"Chittagong Port will have to be changed into a modern and competitive organisation to avail the scope for internationalising the city," the US envoy suggested.

Chammas said expansion of Chittagong Export Processing Zone (CEPZ) is a must because a total of \$4,000 million has already been invested in 420 plots. "Such kind of growth is encouraging."

She also assured more cooperation with the chamber so that more US investment could come in Chittagong. She praised the government for taking initiative to hand over the management of Chittagong airport to private sector.

Speaking on the occasion, CCCI President Saifuzzaman Chowdhury Javed sought cooperation from the charge d'affaires for duty and quota-free access of Bangladeshi garments to US market.

Javed also sought sincere cooperation from political leaders for political stability to ensure country's economic development.

Reiterating his demand for privatising Chittagong Port, the business leader said private sector is the pillar of economic development.

As part of her busy schedule in the port city, the US diplomat visited Chittagong court in the morning and held a meeting with the judges. She enquired about the security of judges after the arrest of militants.

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## US suspends

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The Peace Corps made the decision following a careful assessment of Bangladesh's prevailing security environment, and did not base its conclusions on any single threat or incident, the statement said.

The US Embassy, however, made it clear that security situation in Bangladesh will be periodically reviewed to determine whether to end or continue the suspension of Peace Corps programme in the country.

It further stated, "We have welcomed the capture of Abdul Rahman and Bangla Bhai of the [Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh] as significant steps forward in the campaign against terrorism and extremism. Ironically, one consequence of that success is concern over possible reprisal attacks against Americans or other Western nationals by JMB activists still at large."

Prior to the suspension decision, US Embassy officials told The Daily Star that there were as many as 71 Peace Corps volunteers mostly teaching English language in various districts.

Earlier, American Centre Director Jonathan Cebra told The Daily Star that most of the Peace Corps volunteers had already left their respective workstations for Dhaka.

The Peace Corps programme, starting in Bangladesh in 1998, was once suspended for some time in late 2001.

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### Petrobangla

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Tullow bought the exploration rights from the blocks' original operator Oakland in 1999. The Irish company drilled a couple of exploratory wells in the blocks but failed to strike anything significant.

Oakland signed the Production Sharing Contract (PSC) with Petrobangla back in January '97 with very relaxed terms and conditions.

Later the PSC for these blocks were extended twice despite Tullow failed to fulfil the contractual commitments.

Petrobangla will forward its approval to the energy ministry for its approbation, sources said.

### Militants

**FROM PAGE 16**

Most of the ehsar [fulltime activists] members of outlawed Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), even several district or regional commanders, arrested so far are hardly 18 to 20. Two ehsar members held last year in Natore were only 16.

Even young members of the militant leaders' families were not spared from being brainwashed. JMB supremo Abdul Rahman's sons took part in militant operations when they were only 14.

Mahmud alias Ashraf, Rahman's second son, was 14 when he took part in Bagmara operations in 2004.

"Motivating the young ones is not only easy. They are also better subject for training and become much more skilled than adults," said a source close to JMB.

Young activists are so tactfully indoctrinated that they do not bother sacrificing their lives or go for any kind of missions they are assigned to, the source added.

The fanatical comment that Rahman's eldest son Nabil made - "Give me an AK47, I'll kill you all," - to Rab after his arrest in Comilla proves such motivation.

JMB leaders used to recruit members mainly from madrasas, while some others admitted to be former members of Islami Chhatra Shibir, Ahle Hadith Andolan, Bangladesh (Ahab) and Ahle Hadith Jubo Sangha (AHS).

Mahmud, being Rahman's son, had the opportunity to receive training from JMB second-in-command Bangla Bhai, who used to keep him around during his operations.

"Look at our junior Mujahid," Bangla Bhai told journalists in 2004 while introducing Mahmud with a green turban. "He is so lucky to have the opportunity to take part in the way of sacrificing life for Allah."

"Bangla Bhai is my commander. I came to eliminate the outlaws. I will stay here as long as it takes," was the humble reply of Mahmud, who was guarding the gate of the press conference with a hockey stick in hand.

### Disaster

**FROM PAGE 16**

The residents, however, again started living in the building after 20 days.

Constructed in early sixties, the buildings have developed cracks and holes in every floor and most of the verandas have broken down. The residents have repaired some damaged stairs with bamboo and unclean drains, Maya added.

14-party leaders including Mostafa Mohsin Montu, Hazi Mohammad Selim, Omar Ali, Mukul Chowdhury, Faiz Uddin, Qamrul Islam, Shah Alam Murad, Saidur Rahman, Shafiqur Rahman and Qamrul Ahsan attended the meeting among others.

Additional law enforcers will be deployed throughout the Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue to avert any untoward incidents.

On March 6, the 14-party laid siege to the Dhaka Electricity Supply Authority (Desa) protesting the unprecedented power crisis in the capital and most of the parts of the country.

## EC delegation urges

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## Construction yet another

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events. If one worker dies at his workplace, it is no big news and so is not covered. It also helps the employer deprive the dead worker's family of due or any compensation at all.

He also comes down heavily on the government for never taking any steps to reduce the accidents in these unsafe sectors.

**ACADEMIC STUDY**

The February 25 Phoenix Fabrics building collapse in the city's Tejgaon Industrial Area clearly demonstrates the wretched condition the construction workers are in.

Mizanur Rahman, 22, a painter, is one of the 22 ill-starred construction crew killed in that infamous accident, which also injured more than 50 others.

His wife Shefali, 17, a garment factory worker, found his decomposed body two days after the disaster. But, she has no idea to whom to turn for justice and compensation for the death caused by wilful violations of building and safety codes and some other laws.

The autopsy report says Mizan died from a heavy blow on the right side of his head and face crushing his jaw and scull.

Both Mizan and Shefali married two years ago from Rajupur Village of Jhalakathi. When asked if she wants to file a case against the building's owner, the teenage wife says, "I don't know how to do that." She studied up to class VIII at a rural madrasa.

On this point, Mohammad Bachchu Mia says, "See, if we file a case against the building's owner, we'll have to run it for years. But, we don't have that kind of money."

Bachchu is the general secretary of Bangladesh Construction Workers Federation's Tejgaon unit.

He also points out that the caretaker of the building told us they won't give any compensation if we file any case against them. So, we think it's better to get a few thousand taka from the owner than going for a lawsuit."

The report of a Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakha (Rajuk)

probe committee says the building collapsed due to its weak