

Aug 21 probe

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Talking to The Daily Star, Additional Special Superintendent of Police Abdul Kahar Akand of CID said, "We have talked to a number of former and present senior officials at the CID office in the last few days."

Asked, Akand who is investigating the case said many others might be grilled for the sake of the investigation but declined to name anyone.

Special Superintendent of Police Meer Shahidul Islam of CID-Metro on Tuesday said Rumi, Amin and Obaidur were quizzed separately as they showed up individually at the CID headquarters in Malibagh. They had earlier been summoned in connection with the August 21 case, he added.

Sources say former NSI DG Rezaul Haider Chowdhury, now detained in connection with Chittagong arms haul case, the then acting Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) commissioner SM Mizanur Rahman and some other intelligence officials might be summoned for questioning.

The sources add one of the top intelligence personnel

helped Maulana Tajuddin, brother of detained former BNP deputy minister Abdus Salam Pintu, to flee from the country.

Meanwhile, the investigation officer of the case, in connection with misleading the probe, ASP Rownakul Huq Chowdhury, told The Daily Star he would submit charge sheet once charges are pressed in the carnage case after fresh investigation.

He said he has already talked to the three former CID investigators who allegedly misled the investigation to save the real culprits hiding the truth during the BNP-Jamaat-led alliance government.

During the last caretaker government rule, CID launched fresh investigation and pressed charges against Pintu, his brother and 20 others including Hujiboss Mufti Hannan.

On August 3 last year, the court ordered the government for more investigation to unearth the sources of grenades and persons who worked behind it and following the court order, CID arrested former BNP state minister for home Lutfozzaman Babar.

MUGGING BID 3 policemen suspended

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) authorities yesterday suspended three policemen including a sub-inspector (SI) and an assistant sub-inspector (ASI) on charge of attempting to snatch Tk 16.5 lakh from two employees of a mobile phone shop in the capital on Tuesday.

They are ASI Mainul Islam of Adabar Police Station, SI Rowshan Zamil of Kotwali Police Station and constable Saju of detective branch.

ASI Mainul who was caught red handed by the mob during the mugging attempt was placed on a one-day remand while police are looking for SI Rowshan Zamil and constable Saju as they went into hiding after the incident, police said.

Paltan police produced Mainul before the court seeking five days' remand and the court granted for one day.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) of police Khandaker Mahid Uddin of Motijheel zone told The Daily Star he has already sent a report to the DMP authorities with a recommendation for taking punitive actions against the three policemen. A case has been filed under the Speedy Trial Tribunal Act in this connection, he added.

Labagh zone DC Anwar Hossain said, "I have already suspended Kotwali Police Station SI Rowshan Zamil who is now on the run."

"SI Rowshan went on a sick leave two days before the incident," DC Anwar said adding, "He committed the crime when he was not on duty."

Paltan Police Station Officer-in-charge Mujibar Rahman said they are trying to arrest the fugitive policemen.

The three policemen along with another person attempted to snatch from the two employees at Culvert Road near Bijoynagar Water Tank on Tuesday afternoon when they were on the way to Kakrail by a rickshaw after withdrawing the money from Mutual Trust Bank at Motijheel.

Hearing their cry for help, pedestrians rushed in and caught ASI Mainul and gave him a thrashing. But other members of the gang managed to flee. Later, Mainul was handed over to police along with the money recovered from his possession.

Probe body

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the workers prior to closure of the factory. They were also supposed to assure the workers of paying all the dues in time," said the member wishing not to be named.

Quoting the probe committee report, he said the committee members questioned the 'police excess' during the violence in the garment factory.

"Several hundred rounds of bullets were fired. Why were so many bullets fired? Why did the police not have a sufficient number of rubber bullets? These points have been included in the report," added the member.

He observed that police should have used more rubber bullets and opted for other means like baton charges and using teargas canister to disperse the angry mob to reduce the number of casualty.

The committee, formed at a meeting at the home ministry on November 1, is now set to submit its report today after missing two deadlines—first on November 15 and the second on December 14.

"The report is ready... hopefully we are going to submit it on Thursday," said a deputy secretary of the home ministry who is also a member of the probe body.

A set of recommendations for government's consideration to check unrest in apparel industry has been made in the report, sources said.

Earlier on Sunday head of the committee and Labour Secretary Ataharul Islam said they had completed their investigation to submit report in a day or two.

The committee comprises representatives from the home ministry, Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters' Association (BGMEA), Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters' Association (BKMEA) and workers.

During their probe, the committee members visited the scene for several times and took interviews of several hundred witnesses, including garment workers and members of the law enforcement agencies.

No headway

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Meanwhile, President of the UN climate change conference in Copenhagen Connie Hedegaard resigned yesterday following clashes between demonstrators and police outside the summit venue Bella Centre. Hedegaard is to be replaced by the Danish premier.

"With so many heads of state and government having arrived, it's appropriate that the prime minister of Denmark presides," Hedegaard told the 192-nation meeting. "However, the prime minister has appointed me as his special representative and I will thus continue to negotiate the... outcome with my colleagues," she said in a statement.

But change of the COP president would not have any impact on the discussion, said an observer.

Speakers at the opening session of the high-level segment urged the two coalitions to compromise and seal a deal.

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who is holding bi-lateral meetings with world leaders, is scheduled to deliver her speech at the high-level segment session today between 9:00pm and midnight.

Now both the coalitions could propose new text and the discussion may resume. "Or the COP president could deploy two ministers—one from developed country and another one from developing—to resolve the problem and resume the text," said one of the negotiators.

World leaders heading to Copenhagen are supposed to sign a deal on Friday if the negotiators can reach an agreement.

After the opening session the two coalitions talked for hours on the amendment of the Kyoto Protocol and demanded inclusion of developing nations into it since they do not need to curb any emission presently under the protocol.

But the developing countries' coalition G77 and China disagreed with it.

The developed nations bracketed the texts on curbing carbon emission and the portion on second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol Tuesday night, saying no progress was achieved as developing nations do not want to curb the emissions.

The meeting between G77 and China yesterday morning also decided to bracket the draft text in the chapter Longterm Coordinated Action on developing countries' emission curbing. The chapter will make a new agreement in Copenhagen.

"We do not want a bad deal. No deal is better than a bad deal," said the negotiator from Bangladesh.

The world leaders started arriving in Copenhagen to attend the last session of the UN climate talks where the world is expecting a new protocol to be signed on Friday.

The talks stalled and the plenary sessions adjourned last week several times as none of the coalitions are eager to move from their positions on reducing CO2 emission.

UN chief Ban Ki-moon expressed his concerns, saying the countries could sign a deal without a firm commitment of long-term financing for poorer countries to combat global warming.

The alliance of poorer nations has been demanding

Woman beaten

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Following the incident Shahana Begum was rushed to Mitford Hospital and then to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where she died yesterday at 6:00pm.

Rezaul said Selim gave Iqbal Tk 9.5 lakh in 2008 as he [Iqbal] convinced Selim that he [Iqbal] could make arrangements for sending him to Italy within 40 days of getting the contract money.

On failure, Iqbal returned Tk 3 lakh after repeated requests, he said. Later, a local arbitration on November 27 at Atibazar settled that Iqbal would refund the remaining amount of money to Selim's father. While the locals were mounting pressure on Iqbal's father in the arbitration, Iqbal and his gang went to Selim's house and attacked the mother and the son, added Rezaul.

A case was filed on that very day with Keraniganj Police Station in this connection but none was arrested yet, said police.

\$200 billion annually from the developed nations to battle climate change, but the developed nations have offered \$10 billion from next year and refused to make any commitment for a long-term mandatory financial mechanism.

The current big polluters like India and China are not ready to cut their emission level.

Asked how the negotiation process is going on, Indian Environment Minister Jai Ram Ramesh yesterday told The Daily Star that he does not know what is going to happen here.

OPENING SESSION OF HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT
Bangladesh was again mentioned in the speeches delivered at the opening session of the high-level segment.

COP 15 President Connie Hedegaard in her speech said, "We cannot carry the responsibility of failure as Bengali women in cyclone shelters, farmers from Mali and the scientists all have raised their voice demanding actions."

The aim of the climate change summit is not to celebrate one nation over another but to seal a deal to save the world, the speakers said.

After the opening session, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) at a press conference said the negotiations are now at a very critical stage but they are hopeful the world leaders will reach an agreement.

Danish Prime Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen delivered the opening speech at the session. The Danish crown prince was present at the event.

Connie Hedegaard said, "For years, the disagreement held us back. Let's get it done. Let's make the differences into decision."

UNFCCC Executive Secretary Yvo de Boer said, "The next three days is our chance... We have a chance, a real chance, to change the history."

The prince of Wales said, "The mankind had the power to push the world to the brink, so do we have the power to bring it back into the balance?"

Prof Wangari Maathai, the noble peace prize winner of 2004, in her speech urged world leaders to be responsible not to the present mankind but to the not-yet-born future generations.

Earlier, the UNFCCC executive secretary warned that negotiations were progressing very slowly and that there was still an "enormous amount of work to be done."

Delegates have been discussing details of a new draft text ahead of the start of the high-level segment.

On Friday, about 130 world leaders are set to attend the summit's final session.

Convicts

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Ahmed—who are now languishing in jail, had filed the petitions in October 2007 giving five different points to challenge the High Court verdict.

Of the seven other convicts, six have been absconding and one is dead.

The six absconders are Lt Col Khandaker Abdur Rashid, Lt Col Shariful Haque Dalim, Lt Col SHMB Nur Chowdhury, Lt Col AM Rashed Chowdhury, Capt Abdul Mazed and Risaldar Mosleuddin Khan. The other convict Lt Col Abdul Aziz Pasha died in Zimbabwe in June 2001 where he took political asylum.

The SC goes into a two-week winter vacation from tomorrow.

Earlier on November 19, counsels for the condemned prisoners applied for the certified copy, and also informed the jail authorities about their move to file review petitions.

Barrister Abdullah-al Mamun, a counsel for Bazul Huda and AKM Mohiuddin, told The Daily Star yesterday that if the SC dismisses the review petitions, the jail authorities will ask the convicts whether they want to seek presidential mercy.

If they want, they have to submit mercy petitions to the president within seven days after the jail authorities inform them about the SC judgment.

The counsel said the jail authorities have to wait for 15 days for the presidential decision on mercy petitions.

In case the jail authorities do not get the decision within 15 days, they will ask the ministry concerned about it. They cannot execute the convicts until they get the decision.

He mentioned that if the condemned prisoners don't seek presidential mercy, the jail authorities will execute them after 21 days and within 28 days of dismissal of the review petitions by the apex court.

N Korea presses for lifting of UN sanctions

AP, Seoul

North Korea told a senior US envoy that UN sanctions imposed on the communist regime for its nuclear defiance must be lifted, a report said yesterday.

North Korean officials conveyed the message to Stephen Bosworth, President Barack Obama's envoy on North Korea, during the diplomat's trip to Pyongyang last week for high-level talks. South Korea's Yonhap news agency reported, citing an unidentified diplomatic source.

South Korean officials in charge of nuclear negotiations were not immediately available for comment.

Bosworth went to North Korea to try persuading the regime to return to disarmament talks also involving South Korea, Russia, China and Japan. The closely watched talks were the Obama administration's first with Pyongyang since the US president took office in January.

Bosworth said North Korea agreed on the need to resume the talks but did not make a firm commitment on when it would rejoin the negotiations.

The process had yielded pacts promising North Korea much-needed aid and other concessions in return for step-by-step disarmament.

However, Pyongyang walked away from the talks this year in anger over UN Security Council condemnation of a rocket launch widely seen as a test of its long-range missile technology.

The UN Security Council tightened sanctions in June after North Korea conducted an underground nuclear test, its second, in defiance of an earlier ban. The sanctions, aimed at derauling North Korea's nuclear weapons program, ban the country from developing its nuclear program and selling conventional arms.

During his three-day visit, Bosworth did not meet with North Korean leader Kim Jong Il. However, he relayed a personal letter from Obama to the reclusive Kim, a senior State Department official said Tuesday in Washington.

Nawaz Sharif

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Bangladesh, Sharif said there is a need to strengthen the democracy in the country, and added that the government should abandon its dictatorial policies and make policies in national interest.

"It is necessary we remain committed to the very basis to strengthen democratic traditions and establish law and order situation through good governance," The Daily Times quoted Sharif, as saying.

The former Prime Minister stressed on the need of establishing peace in the country by eliminating extremism from its soil.

"We should bring tolerance in our attitude and respect national sovereignty along with elimination of extremism. The dream of our forefathers is yet to be fulfilled and we would have to set up a peaceful society where everyone may get his due share from national progress," Sharif added.

Neonatal care

FROM PAGE 16

"How can I afford to pay the minimum fee of Tk 4,000 per day?"

Shirina's husband is a day labourer and she is currently living in a slum with one of her relatives at Begun Bari.

Staff at DMCH have to improvise the care given to approximately 40 premature babies in the absence of incubators.

The babies receive oxygen through cylinders and warmers are used to keep their body temperature up.

Physicians and nurses at DMCH told The Daily Star that the incubators must be fixed and that several new ones must be purchased.

Representatives from private hospitals can often be found waiting out the front of the DMCH to take desperate parents to private hospitals.

Confidential sources have alleged that a syndicate of hospital staff, including doctors, are using their links with the authorities to prevent the incubators at DMCH from being repaired.

It is alleged that the doctors receive a commission if a baby is referred to a private clinic.

Doctors at DMCH said this was a baseless allegation. The director of DMCH, Bazle Quader, told The Daily Star that he was unaware of the problems with the incubators.

He said "I will confirm this information and then I will take steps to repair the incubators immediately."

Indomitable spirit

FROM PAGE 1

memories of their heroic fights are still fresh.

Lutfar Rahman Arun, battalion commander of Palash Danga Jubo Shibir said, "It was the early hours of November 11, 1971. We were preparing on our boats to attack the Pakistani army since we had information of an impending attack. But before completing preparations we heard shots fired from automatic weapons."

They then hurriedly got down from the boats on Chalan Beel and took positions on the bank of ponds, in aisles, and jungles of Handial Naogaon in Tarash.

Around 450 freedom fighters formed a crescent of around one kilometre in length from Hazrat Shahsharif Jindani (R) Shahi Masjid Mazar to the north. The Pakistani forces were firing on them from paddy fields.

"We were very fortunate that two Pakistani jets missed their targets. They bombed Mohakuma Naogaon instead of Handial Naogaon where we were," said Arun, who was once a corporal in the Pakistani Army. He deserted the army and became a freedom fighter.

Talking to The Daily Star at his home in Sirajganj, Arun said, as it was hard for the Pakistanis to position themselves in paddy fields due to water and mud, they were easy to beat. They stopped firing around 1:00pm. The battle was over by 2:00pm.

More than 200 Pakistani soldiers of two companies were killed and 11 Pakistani soldiers including captain Salim detained. Villagers also detained a soldier and killed 50 to 70 Razakars, said Sohrab Ali Sarkar, commander in chief of the guerrillas.

Villager Khademul Islam initially hid in a pond in Telipara during the battle but joined the freedom fighters with lethal weapons alongside many other villagers when they realised the freedom fighters were in a good position.

He said, "Along with some villagers I killed a Razakar and caught a Pakistani soldier who had hidden himself in a bush."

Arun said the villagers took the opportunity of Pakistani force's defeat that day and killed around 50 to 70 Razakars. The next day the Pakistani forces took revenge of this killing by torching several nearby villages.

At least 13 people were killed during the Pakistani Army's retaliation at Ambaria in Sirajganj.

Lutfar Rahman, son of Yaar Mohammad who was among the 13 dead, said his father was the headmaster of Dabila High School and used to help the freedom fighters. They torched the entire village.

Sohrab, now the convener of Sirajganj district command of Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Sangsad said, "This was our most successful battle after forming Palash Danga Jubo Shibir on May 10, 1971."

The Jubo Shibir members' camps were on 50 to 80 boats, said Arun, the main trainer of around 2,000 freedom fighters. They had a chain of command just like an organised armed force. The battalion had six companies, eight platoons, and 54 "sections". Two women—Eliza Shirazi and late Hamida Khatun—also participated with the Jubo Shibir indirectly.

"Our strategy was to collect weapons after attacking Pakistani forces, their collaborators and police stations," said Bimal Kumar Das, co-commander-in-chief of the battalion.

They had begun exercise with sticks in February, 1971 and around 500 students were trained in Sirajganj College ground, said Sohrab Ali Sarkar, who was the vice-president of Sirajganj College Students Union then and later became the commander-in-chief of the Jubo Shibir.

Asked why they started training before the Liberation War began, he said the situation back then led them to believe that a war might be imminent.

"We started training with firearms only after March 26," he said, adding that after failing to resist the Pakistani forces, they started mobilising themselves.

Five student leaders—Lutfar Rahamn Makhon, pro-VP of Sirajganj College Students Union, Monirul Kabir, Aziz Sarkar, Shafikul Islam and Sohrab met at Sonagachha in Sirajganj in mid-April. They took shelter at Bhadrighat and continued mobilising more freedom fighters.

After a few days Arun returned from India to join them, while villagers Ali Imam, Dulu, Yusuf Ali, Akhtar Hossain Mondol, Akhtar Pranmanik and many others also joined them. Abdul Aziz Sarkar, assistant director of (communication and collection) of Jubo Shibir, named the guerrilla force on May 10, Abdul Latif Mirza, a labour leader, joined them in the middle of May as a director.

"We faced the first attack on June 17 at Bhadrighat when we had 41 members and had only fifteen .303 rifles, one light machinegun and six other rifles.

With those small arms we tactfully shot 11 Pakistani soldiers dead," said Arun.

"Of the total 100 battles, the battles at Handial Naogaon in Sirajganj and Brahmagachha were the big ones," said Arun, adding that 31 Pakistani soldiers, 19 militias and 22 Razakars were killed in the fight at Brahmagachha in late August of 1971.

The other battles include the ones at Tarash, Faridpur, Ghatian Rail Bridge, Kochikata in Gurudaspur, Solonga in Sirajganj, Zool Bridge in Kamarkhanda, Kalia Haripur Bridge, Chagla Pagla Bridge and Dakshola Bridge in Ullapara of Sirajganj, Dilpasha Bridge in Bhanguara, Pabna and Koldanga Bridge in Naogaon.

"After the November 11 battle, a large group of us went to India on November 18 to get ammunition," said Sohrab, adding that four groups led by section commander Abdul Khaleque, section commander Rafikul Islam, company commander Khorsheed Alam and platoon commander SM Amir continued battles in Sirajganj.

"We attacked Shahjapur Police Station during the Indian air strike, captured the police station and raised the flag of independent Bangladesh on December 14," said Khaleque, now convener of Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Sangsad in Shahjapur.

He said, "On December 15, I led around 50 freedom fighters to attack a Pakistani camp in Baghabari from Nokali in Shahjapur, while another group led by former lawmaker Arangajeb of Abdur Razzak Mukul's force attacked the Pakistani forces from Alodkia."

The Pakistani forces fled Baghabari towards Dhaka after about eight hours of battle, he said.

Another group led by SM Amir and some other groups of freedom fighters fought against the occupying forces on December 15 and 16 at Dhitpur in Shahjapur, Khaleque said, adding that the entire Sirajganj became free from Pakistani forces on December 16.

Lutfar Rahman Arun lamented, "Although our battalion made significant contributions in the Liberation War, none of our leaders got any gallantry awards from the government."

Even the name of this guerrilla force was not found in the 15-part Swadhinata Juddho Dalipatra published by the government, he noted.

43 killed

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Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Fata).

On Tuesday, at least 43 militants were killed in air and ground operations in the Orakzai and Kurram districts in the centre of the tribal belt, Pakistani officials said.

"At least 18 militants were killed when helicopters pounded Torikhel town of Orakzai when militants were holding an important meeting," paramilitary spokesman Major Fazlur Rahman said.

Local administration official Riaz Khan confirmed the toll and said four more people were killed in air strikes in the town of Sultanzai in Orakzai.

The military also mounted a ground and air offensive on Tuesday in Dagar, a town in the Kurram region, killing 21 militants, Rehman said.

Such death tolls supplied by the military are impossible to independently confirm, with the region out of bounds to media and most aid groups.

While a full-scale military onslaught is underway in South Waziristan, targeted air strikes and limited paramilitary operations are used in other areas of the tribal belt, where the United States also launches drone missile strikes.

Islamabad is primarily targeting the Pakistani Taliban, behind most of a wave of attacks that have killed more than 2,700 people since July 2007.

Top US officials, however, want Pakistan to also concentrate on dismantling militant groups with their eye over the border.

The Haqqani network, a powerful Afghan group with bases in North Waziristan, has links to al-Qaeda and is known for attacks in Afghanistan, but so far has not been the target of a major offensive by Pakistan's military.

Another deeply controversial issue is the alleged presence of Afghan Taliban including supreme Taliban leader Mullah Omar in Pakistan's southwestern city of Quetta—accusations Islamabad repeatedly denies.

Visiting Afghanistan earlier this week, Mullen expressed concern about "growing" collusion between Afghan Taliban and al-Qaeda and other extremist groups sheltering in nuclear-armed Pakistan.

Mullen arrived in Pakistan Tuesday and met General Tariq Majid, ceremonial head of the armed forces, with US President Barack Obama's plan for turning around the unpopular Afghan war topping the agenda.

Victory Day

FROM PAGE 1

homage to three million martyrs in the War of Independence.

On this day in 1971, the nation under the leadership of Father of the Nation Sheikh Mujibur Rahman won victory over Pakistani occupation forces after nine months of bloodshed.

General AAK Niazi, chief of the Pakistani occupation forces, surrendered to the allied forces of Bangladesh and India at Suhrawardy Udyan in Dhaka on December 16 with 93,000 soldiers following their defeat in the war that broke out in March, 1971.

The day was a public holiday. The national flag was hoisted atop all government, semi-government and other important establishments. The day was heralded by a 31-gun salute at dawn.

The whole country was in a festive mood yesterday. The National Mausoleum at Savar drew people of all ages and religions.

Thoroughfares and road dividers were decorated with miniature flags and bunting while some government buildings were illuminated. Many vehicle owners also sported the flag on their automobiles.

President Zillur Rahman laid a wreath at the National Mausoleum to pay homage to the Liberation War martyrs. He stood there for a few moments in silence.

Ministers, advisers, deputy speaker, state ministers, chiefs of three services, diplomats, freedom fighters and senior civil and military officials, among others, were present on the occasion.

Leaders of different political parties including the ruling Awami League and main opposition BNP, different socio-cultural organisations, rights groups, professionals'