

10 Jamaat men held in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested 10 Jamaat-e-Islami leaders from the capital on Saturday night on charge of planning subversive activities.

They are Jamaat's Uttara unit Ameer advocate Zakir Hossain, Mir Atikullah, Saleh Uddin, Mahbubur Rahman, Monirul Islam, Nur-e-Alam, Monir Hossain, Abu Saied, Firoz Alam, and Abul Khayer.

They gathered at an Uttara house by vehicles with stickers bearing the words "happy marriage" under the pretext of selecting a bride, said Khandaker Rezaul Hasan, officer-in-charge (OC) of Uttara Pashchim Police Station.

Police also seized a huge number of anti-government documents, leaflets and booklets, said the OC adding that the seized documents say the Jamaat leaders were planning to commit further sabotage in the capital.

A sedition case will be filed against them, he said.

Despite a Barisal City Corporation (BCC) ban, unauthorised festoons and banners greeting the new BCC mayor cover one section of Barisal Museum, right opposite the BCC Bhavan. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: ARIFUR RAHMAN



Ashraful Alam Khokan new deputy press secretary to PM

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ashraful Alam Khokan has been appointed the deputy press secretary to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Khokan, who was the chief executive of Channel i in the USA and a former senior reporter of the private television channel, was appointed yesterday.

He obtained a master's degree in Mass Communication and Journalism from Dhaka University.

State still dithering about equal rights for women

Says Sultana Kamal in Prof Bashira Mannan memorial lecture

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent human rights activist Sultana Kamal yesterday said the state is dithering about recognition of equal rights for women even after four decades of independence.

Delivering a memorial lecture in honour of Prof Bashira Mannan in the Dhaka University auditorium, she said the country's women are an example of what "poorest among poor" denote.

"Women of Bangladesh have been demanding equal rights since 1972 but this has not been recognised by the state even today," said the executive director of Ain o Salish Kendra.

"Although the constitution reads about equal rights for women, in personal lives, they are forced to live in a 'lawfully' unequal society," she added.

"Bangladesh has ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) but has reservations about article 2 and 16.1(C)," she said, adding that the first article is fundamental to the state's adaptation of other articles of the convention while the latter guarantees equality in areas like marriage and divorce.

"As a result, the lives of women are still male-dependent and undervalued," she said.

Her remarks came against the backdrop of increasing incidents of violence against women in a new form using information and communication technology.

She said although several bills ensuring rights of women have been enacted, those could not be implemented due to inequalities in society.

She said, "For their achievements, women had to fight fundamentalists, opportunity seekers and those who do not believe in freedom of women."

"In the RMG sector, 85 percent of the total employees are women. However, the most significant inequality in terms of wage structure is apparent in this sector," she said.

Sultana Kamal, also former adviser to a caretaker government, said women's participation in politics is directly related to their empowerment.

The number of women politicians in Bangladesh has increased in recent years, which is nearly equal to the global average of 18.6 percent and higher than that of India; nevertheless, economically and politically empowered women are still facing discrimination in their personal lives, she said.

AUG 21 GRENADE ATTACK CASE Huji leader was at Pintu's house days before attack Says prosecution witness

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A witness yesterday told a Dhaka court that he saw Huji leader Moulana Tajuddin and some of Tajuddin's accomplices at Abdus Salam Pintu's Dhanmondi residence one or two days before the grenade attack on an Awami League rally on August 21, 2004.

Constable Ahsan Habib, the 71st prosecution witness, said this yesterday while he was giving his deposition before the Speedy Trial Tribunal-1 of Dhaka.

But he did not know what they had discussed, Habib said.

Both Pintu and Tajuddin are accused in the August 21 grenade attack cases.

Pintu was arrested earlier and he is now in jail, while Tajuddin is on the run.

Habib said he was deployed at Pintu's Dhanmondi government residence as a security guard from February 2003 to October 2006.

Tajuddin, a leader of Harkat-ul-Jihad-Al Islami (Huji) and some of his accomplices, used to visit Pintu's residence with some of his accomplices, he added.

Habib was later cross-examined by the lawyers of 20 accused. Cross-examination of the witness will continue today.

The grenade attack was carried out when the then opposition leader Sheikh Hasina, now prime minister, was addressing a party rally on Bangabandhu Avenue.

Hasina narrowly escaped death. But 24 leaders and activists of her party were killed, including late president Zillur Rahman's wife Ivy Rahman, and 300 others injured.

ANSARULLAH BANGLA TEAM Geared up for armed Jihad Say detectives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ansarullah Bangla Team, an online-based network, recently geared up its campaign for armed Jihad which came to the lime-light following the murder of blogger Ahmed Rajib Haider in February, said detectives.

Those involved in the network used to listen to pro-Jihad sermons delivered by its spiritual leader and radical Islamist Saikhul Hadith Mufti Muhammad Jasimuddin Rahmani, Detective Branch of police Joint Commissioner Monirul Islam told The Daily Star yesterday.

The detectives learned that as many as 25 books were authored by Jasimuddin, arrested in Barguna, alongside 30 alleged militants, on August 12, he added.

In his books, Jasimuddin specifically mentioned columnists, writers and bloggers, including Daud Haider, Taslima Nasrin, Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, Ahmed Rajib Haider, Asif Mohiuddin, Arifur Rahman and Ibrahim Khalil, as people who should be thwarted.

Youths inspired by Jasimuddin to take part in armed Jihad include Quazi Mohammad Rezwanul Ahsan Nafis, a 22-year-old Bangladeshi jailed for 30 years in the US on August 9 for plotting to bomb the US Federal Reserve Bank in New York last year, he said.

Another is Rajib Karim, a 31-year-old computer expert working for British Airways, who was jailed for 30 years in the UK in March 2011 for plotting to blow up a plane after conspiring with radical US-Yemeni cleric Anwar al-Awlaki, said Monirul.

Mejhab Uddin of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology's civil engineering, who recently stabbed to death a fellow student and Gonojagoron Mancha activist Arif Rayhan Dwip, also used to listen to Jasimuddin's sermons, he added.

Jasimuddin left the job of Khatib at Hatembagh mosque in the capital's

Rayerbazar two years ago as the mosque authorities under political pressure had requested him to avoid "objectionable sermons".

Later, he joined as a Khatib at a Basila mosque in Mohammadpur.

Members of different outlawed militant outfits like Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh and Harkat-ul-Jihad-Al Islami used to come to Jasimuddin, Monirul added.

However, law enforcers are still unsure whether his followers had any connection to the global terror outfits like al-Qaeda.

Wishing anonymity, a detective told The Daily Star that Ansarullah Bangla Team geared up its campaign for armed Jihad allegedly to benefit from the political instability before the parliamentary election.

The Daily Star found a website of Ansarullah Bangla Team which is connected with Pakistan-based Ansarullah Urdu Team through Facebook and blogs and clearly dictates the path of armed Jihad.

Some of the team's websites are qitalmedia.wordpress.com, jumuarkhutba.wordpress.com and furqanmedia.wordpress.com.

The team members, who follow the idealism of Anwar al-Awlaki, "spiritual leader" of al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, uploaded to their website "qitalmedia.wordpress.com" the procedure to make ammunition by mixing chemicals.

The website, provided with contents in Bangla, also gives tips to make bombs with cheap and available materials with a call "make a bomb in your mother's kitchen".

It also shed light on Bangladeshis killed while taking part in Jihad in different countries.

The site also contains videos of speeches of global terror outfits including al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden with written interpretations in Bangla. Some contents outlined what the lifestyle of a Jihadist should be.



Rotting garbage litters the road before Baldha Garden, one of Dhaka's remaining expanses of greenery, in the capital's Wari. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

ACC sues RMG factory boss for dodging tax

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission yesterday sued the managing director and director of a garment factory for dodging government revenue of over Tk 88 lakh.

The accused are Managing Director Sheikh Niaz Ahmed and Director Farhad Hossain of MS Fashion Ltd at Hazipara in the capital's Rampura.

According to the case statement, the accused imported cloth from abroad between June and August in 2001 and dodged the tax by clearing the fabric from a port showing documents that those were meant for export.

But they sold the garments, made with the fabric, in local markets instead of exporting them even though the shipment was scheduled to begin in September 2011, the case statement added.

ELITE CITY'S HOUSING SCHEME IN HATHAZARI, CTG Project has no necessary clearance: High Court

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The High Court observed that Elite City, a private company in Chittagong, has no "necessary clearance certificate" to implement its housing project in Chittagong district's Hathazari upazila.

However, the court said the company could proceed with the project if it obtains the certificate.

The HC bench of Justice Naima Haider and Justice Zafar Ahmed made the observation in an April 29 verdict, the full text of which was released in the last phase of July.

The Daily Star obtained a copy of the verdict.

The bench passed the verdict after disposing of a writ petition filed by Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (Bela) last year challenging the legality of the project's operation, starting around five years back.

In the petition, Bela stated that Elite City has not obtained an environmental clearance certificate from the Department of Environment and permission from Chittagong Development Authority (CDA), which are relevant preconditions for implementing housing projects.

The company had been filling up agricultural land and water bodies, damaging the environment of Madrasa Sree Beel area, Bela claimed.

In its verdict, the HC said CDA did not grant Elite City the permission to use the land for the project, although the land belonged to the company.

On October 14, 2010, CDA rejected an application submitted by Elite City seeking the permission.

Later, the company filed an appeal with the appellate authority of CDA against the rejection order, which is still pending, as per the HC verdict.

Bela's lawyer Iqbal Kabir Lytton told The Daily Star that CDA can not permit Elite City to implement the project considering the land's character and location.

He said Bela would move an appeal before the Supreme Court against the HC verdict for declaring the project illegal.

Elite City Managing Director Md Mamun Chowdhury said his company submitted an appeal to the CDA around 10 months back for the clearance. He hoped that they would get the permission following the HC verdict. The project's activities have been halted following an earlier HC order, he added.

Youth dies as train hits him in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A youth died as a train hit him at Banani Rail Gate in the capital yesterday morning.

The deceased was Monir Hossain, 23, son of Mofizur Rahman and a master's student of Government Titumir College.

The accident occurred when Monir was crossing the rail tracks around 5:30am, said Assistant Sub-Inspector Sirajul Islam of Dhaka Railway Police Station, quoting the rail gatemanager.

Victim's brother Anwar Hossain said Monir yesterday morning went out for jogging as usual.

Expatriates' welfare ministry team leaves for Indonesia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A delegation of the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment left Dhaka last night to join a conference on "The Prevention of Illegal Migration Process" in the Indonesian capital of Jakarta tomorrow.

The conference has been organised by the Indonesian government to seek cooperation of the labour-sending countries to prevent the illegal migration which causes human trafficking, said Expatriates' Welfare Secretary Zafar Ahmed Khan yesterday.

The three-member delegation led by Expatriates' Welfare Minister Khandker Mosharraf Hossain will also visit Malaysia and Singapore to monitor the current scenario of the Bangladeshi workers, Zafar added.

He also mentioned that they will meet some ministers of the two major Bangladeshi labour receiving countries.

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