



Jamaitul Ulum Islamia Madrasa in Lal Khan Bazar of Chittagong. Inset, a policeman searching the hostel of the madrasa after a bomb exploded yesterday.

PHOTO:
ANURUP KANTI DAS

Over 30 'grenades' stored there

FROM PAGE 1

Earlier in the evening, law enforcers picked up four others for interrogation.

Jamiatul Ulum Al Islamia Madrasa in Lalkhan Bazar area was established by Hefajat Nayeb-e-Ameer Mufti Izharul Islam Chowdhury, also suspected activist of banned militant outfit Harkatul Jihad al Islami (Huji).

Visiting the hillside madrasa, this correspondent found that all furniture, books, shelves, dresses, dress stands, beds and lockers of the room, which is on the second-floor of four-storey dormitory, were burnt to ashes. The ceiling fan got twisted and the windows were thoroughly damaged.

Witnesses said they saw some blown off human fingers at the spot. One of the injured lost his wrist in the explosion around

11:30am.

The injured include Md Karim, Md Amanullah, Md Jabbar, Md Abdullah, Md Khalek, Nurun Nabi and an unidentified person, all students of fatwa department of the madrasa, sources say.

The madrasa authorities were not cooperating with the police about where the students were taken for treatment.

In the evening, two injured -- Nurun Nabi and Salman -- were picked up while undergoing treatment at the Chittagong Medical College Hospital, said Assistant Commissioner Abdur Rouf of CMP (Panchlaish zone).

The condition of Nurun Nabi was critical as 90 percent of his body was burnt, while Salman suffered 25-30 percent burns, doctors said.

Around 6:00pm, police

detained two others -- Md Habib and Jobayer Ahmed -- at Surgiscope Hospital.

The duo was taken to the burn unit of CMCH from Surgiscope Hospital around 7:00pm. Around 50 to 60 percent of their bodies were burnt, said CMCH sources.

Identities of the four were yet to be known.

Mufti Izharul, who is also the madrasa principal, told The Daily Star in the evening that he did not know how many students were injured in the incident.

Earlier in the afternoon, he claimed that the blast occurred from a laptop charger while students were cooking on a stove keeping the room's door shut.

But an explosion from any laptop charger was impossible, says Prof Latiful Haque, head of computer science and engineering of Buet.

A bomb disposal unit of

CMP was working at the spot in the evening to see if any unexploded grenade was left.

ADC Md Shahidullah said 100 to 150 shells of handmade bombs were recovered from the madrasa. Police also found three crude bombs and 18 bottles of picric acid.

THE EXPLOSION

Locals said they heard a huge bang around 11:30am from the madrasa.

"Hearing the sound, we ran to the madrasa but the students barred us from entering," said Russel, a college student living in the area.

He saw students taking several injured persons to hospitals. They were not allowing any outsider to help them.

Moulana Abu Saleh, a teacher at the madrasa, said hearing the bang, students

and teachers rushed to extinguish the fire by spraying silt and water.

Five students of fatwa department used to stay in the room, he said.

Soon, firefighters from Agrabad fire station rushed to the spot. Fire official Md Yahia said it was a big explosion.

MILITANT CONNECTION Mufti Izharul, 70, is also the president of Nezam-e-Islam and chairman of an Islami Oikya Jote (IOJ) faction.

The Rab detained him on December 16, 2010 for his alleged link with Huji. He was shown arrested for alleged involvement in the abduction of physician Azizur Rahman.

Abducted in the capital's Mirpur area in September 2003, Azizur had protested militant activities during his stay in Khulna.

Huji chief Mufti Abdul

Risky rickshaws

FROM PAGE 16

The erstwhile Dhaka City Corporation had issued licences to 86,000 rickshaws till 1982. No new licences have been issued since then, mentioned Fashiullah.

Talking to The Daily Star, rickshaw pullers in Dhanmondi, Mirpur, Pallabi, Karwan Bazar and Tejgaon said traffic police allow them to drive battery-run rickshaws on roads when they produce a "special" token.

Owner of a battery-run rickshaw, Faizur said, "I've to pay Tk 800 every month for this token. With this, I can drive in Dhanmondi, Hazaribagh, Mohammadpur and Adabor areas. If I go beyond these areas, the token won't work and the traffic police would seize my vehicle."

He was carrying a laminated plastic card, issued by Digital Rickshaw Owners' Association. It contained a mobile phone number, expiry date stamp and a signature of the issuer.

When The Daily Star called the phone number, one Anis

said they "manage the law enforcers" to run the battery-run rickshaws in the above four areas.

A similar system was in place at the Tejgaon Industrial Area. A rickshaw puller at Karwan Bazar said he rented the motorised rickshaw from Madhya Kunipara at Tejgaon Industrial Area.

Showing a sticker on the back of his vehicle, he said, "Though during daytime I can drive only at Tejgaon Industrial Area, after 10:00pm I can drive anywhere in the city."

"The owner of the rickshaw pays a monthly fee of Tk 1,000 to Nazrul, a rickshaw garage owner in Tejgaon, to manage the law enforcers," he added.

Now, there are about 3,00,000 rickshaws, including the battery-run ones, in the capital, according to Alam Khan, president of Dhaka City Corporation Rickshaw and Van Owners Oikya Parishad.

Of them, 20 percent are battery-run, with the highest number operating in Mirpur

and Pallabi areas.

Sramik League, the ruling Awami League's workers' wing, forms committees and make arrangements with police on a monthly basis to issue illegal tokens and save the battery-run rickshaws from being seized, mentioned Alam.

Seeking anonymity, a Sramik League leader said they have received complaints from different quarters about some Sramik League men managing the law enforcers for allowing battery-run rickshaws on city roads. "We've also found that some outsiders are also involved in managing the law enforcers. We're looking into the matter," he added.

Contacted, Mir Rezawul Alam, joint commissioner of DMP (traffic), denied the allegations that the law enforcers received bribes and issued token licence to allow battery-run rickshaws ply the city streets. "At times, battery-run rickshaws are seen in the alleys. Police seize those rickshaws if they see one," he noted.

Canada spied on Brazil energy ministry: Report

AFP, Brasilia

Canada spied on communications at Brazil's Mining and Energy Ministry, according to Canadian intelligence documents revealed late Sunday by Globo television.

Documents leaked by former US intelligence contractor Edward Snowden, purportedly from the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, show a detailed outline of the Brazilian ministry's communications including phone calls, email and Internet traffic.

Earlier disclosures by Snowden that the United States spied on the same ministry, as well as on President Dilma Rousseff and her aides, have strained US-Brazilian ties.

According to Globo, Snowden obtained the documents at a June 2012 meeting of intelligence analysts from the United States, Canada, Britain, Australia and New Zealand, a group said to be called the "Five Eyes."

A Canadian software spying program named Olympica "mapped" the ministry's phone communications and computers with the goal of studying contacts "made with other groups, within and outside of Brazil, aside from PETROBRAS," Globo said. PETROBRAS is the country's state-run energy giant.

One of the documents shows a registry of calls from the ministry to other countries, including to the Quito, Ecuador-based Latin American Energy Organization (OLADE) and the Brazilian embassy in Peru.

4 militants arrested

FROM PAGE 1

Habibur said a team of Rab-1 arrested Sharifuzzaman and Maksud at Abdullahpur bus stand and after quizzing them they came to know that Shahriar and Quader were coming to Dhaka on a bus with arms, ammunition and explosives.

He said they arrested the two by setting up a checkpoint near Ashulia Bridge. They searched the bus, from Tangail, they had been travelling on and found the arms and ammo in four bags. The arrests were made between 10:30pm and 11:30pm.

Rab claimed that Shahriar was the chief organiser of Tamiruddin, a militant outfit founded by now detained Huji military commander Maulana Abdur Rouf. It said Sharifuzzaman was the finance secretary, Quader an Arabic language teacher and Maksudur an activist of the organisation.

Maulana Abdur Rouf, along with some other top Huji leaders, including Mufti Abdul Hannan, are

accused in the August 21, 2004 grenade attack cases. On August 21, 2004, Huji as a mercenary force had carried out grenade attacks on an Awami League rally at Bangabandhu Avenue to assassinate Sheikh Hasina, then opposition leader.

In August, Jhalakathi police arrested nine alleged militants of Tanjim-e-Tamiruddin with an inactive grenade and some provocative publications.

The arrestees had told police that they had taken an initiative to reorganise Huji across the country in the name of conducting a "Quran learning course".

An interrogator, who quizzed eight of the nine arrested at Jhalakathi, told The Daily Star that one of them, Moshir Rahman, had taken the responsibility of reorganising Huji.

The arrestees also disclosed that they had held several meetings in Bhola and Jessore. Shahriar had arranged the meeting in Jessore.

The groups arrested in

Jhalakathi had been preaching Islamist radicalism to recruit members and expand its network, police claimed. It launched a campaign against Hasina and the ruling Awami League, saying that they were anti-Islam and supporters of atheists, police said.

"Takbiatul Iman", one of the books recovered in the raid, mentions that Muslims are tortured, assaulted and killed when Mujib's "digital daughter" comes to power.

Moshir also told police that they were arranging an eight-to-10 day motivation programmes to encourage young men to sacrifice their lives in Jihad.

Both Shahriar and Moshir were once members of the banned outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh.

Shahriar was the Nayeb-e-Ameer for Khulna divisional unit of JMB and an accused in 17 cases, several of which were filed in connection with the August 17, 2005, nationwide synchronised bomb blasts.



The seized ammo and the activists of Tanjim-e-Tamiruddin Rab arrested on Sunday night. The photo was taken at Rab Headquarters in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO:
RAB

Extradition treaty

FROM PAGE 1

India had already ratified the treaty which was signed in January this year, Musharraf said while talking to reporters after the cabinet meeting held with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair at the Secretariat.

The ratification of the treaty paves the way for Bangladesh to bring Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's killers back, if any of them was hiding in India, through due legal process, he added.

The Bangladesh government suspects that one or two killers might be hiding in India, and had requested the Indian authorities to conduct a search for them.

ernment shared with India more information about the whereabouts of some killers of Bangabandhu.

The issue of search for the killers of Bangabandhu was raised by the Bangladesh side at the home secretary-level talks held in New Delhi. The Indian side told the visiting team that it would step up hunt for the fugitives.

The cabinet meeting approved a proposal to sign an agreement titled 'The Bangladesh-US Counter Terrorism Cooperation Initiative'.

Under the agreement, the two governments would share technology and information on terrorism, terrorist financing and money laundering.

The meeting also approved a proposal for the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the home ministry of Bangladesh and Drug Enforcement Administration of the US.

The agreement and the MoU were not legally binding on any country, the cabinet secretary told the newsmen.

The cabinet meeting gave final approval to the draft of Payra River Port Act, 2013 for setting up the country's third seaport at Rabonadhi channel in Barguna district.

The meeting also approved an annual report that was prepared on the activities of different ministries and divisions in the 2012-13 fiscal year.

DA effective

FROM PAGE 1

minimum of Tk 1,500 and Tk 6,000 at the maximum under this allowance.

The announcement came a day after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's declaration that the government decided to provide public servants with 20 percent dearness allowance (DA) and form a permanent pay commission.

On Sunday, while addressing a programme of Peshajibi Samonnoy Parishad (professionals coordination council) at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre, the premier said the maximum pay rise for the government officials and employees would be around Tk 6,000.

The process of forming the permanent pay commission is on, she added.

Violence flares up in Egypt

FROM PAGE 16

Police, joined by civilians opposed to the Islamists, fired tear gas and shots at the protesters when they tried to reach Tahrir Square in central Cairo.

Police say the Islamist protesters used firearms in the clashes.

The renewed violence appeared aimed at frustrating plans by the military-installed government to move ahead three months after Morsi's overthrow by the military.

With its economy propped up by aid from Arab Gulf countries, the interim government has sought to persuade investors and tourists to return to the country.

Since Morsi's overthrow and detention, police have arrested more than 2,000 of

his Islamist supporters and the military has sought to quell a wave of militant attacks in north Sinai.

But following several weeks of relative calm, the violence in the past 48 hours in the capital and south Sinai, which is dotted with tourist resorts, has shattered the appearance of restored security.

The Islamist coalition behind Sunday's protests has called for further protests on Friday to converge on the same square, Tahrir, in central Cairo.

The square, where the military had held celebrations on Sunday to mark 40 years since the Arab-Israeli war, is highly symbolic for both supporters and opponents of Morsi.

Hundreds of thousands of people had filled the square in February 2011 to force president Hosni Mubarak to resign, and again last June and July to urge the army to depose his successor Morsi.

Taking the square, which is guarded by police and military now, would thrust Morsi's Islamist backers back in the spotlight, analysts said.

"There was a lot of pressure on the Muslim Brotherhood to say they are still here and they are a powerful force in society able to mobilise masses," said Shadi Hamid, director of research at the Brookings Doha Centre.

Western efforts at mediation between the military-installed government and Morsi's Muslim Brotherhood

movement had failed before the government decided to disperse their Cairo protest camps on August 14.

More than 1,000 people were killed in the operation and ensuing days of clashes, which also led to an unprecedented crackdown on the Islamists.

In her third trip to Egypt last week since Morsi's ouster, EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton called for political "inclusiveness", but appeared intent on reassuring the government of European support.

The government has accused the Brotherhood of involvement in militant attacks in Sinai that have killed dozens of soldiers and police, and attacks on churches across the country.