



Sajid, a key accused in Burdwan blast case and allegedly the chief of a JMB unit, is being taken to court from a prison van in Kolkata yesterday.

PHOTO: COURTESY

Key accused

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probing the case.

"We have secured his custody and his interrogation will help us unravel the entire conspiracy," Ghosh said.

He also said police recovered several fake voter identity cards and driving licences from Sajid who wanted to live in India as a citizen.

In a late night statement issued on Saturday, NIA gave the actual identity of Sajid and his address in Bangladesh.

SK Rahamatulla alias Sajid, son of Siddique Miyan, a retired lieutenant of Bangladesh army, was arrested by police from Jessore Road in North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal. He hails from Farajikanda village under Bandar police station in Narayanganj of Bangladesh, the statement said.

West Bengal police sources said Sajid was apprehended when he was probably headed for Jessore.

Sajid was one of the end links to supplying explosives to Rajshahi and other areas of Bangladesh from Murshidabad's border areas in West Bengal, they added.

Kausar, another accused in the Burdwan blast case, used to carry explosives from Shakil Ahmed, who had been killed in the blast, to places in Murshidabad district, according to police sources.

NIA in a press release said Zia-ul-Haque, who was arrested in Kolkata on Friday in connection with the Burdwan blast case, had disclosed that he was closely associated with top JMB leaders including Sajid.

Over the past three days, three key links in JMB network were arrested by West Bengal and Assam police. The arrestees are Sajid, Zia-ul-Haque, and Sujana Begum, wife of another accused in the case.

Several people including two women are behind bars in connection with the blast case.

On October 2, the blast took place inside a house at Khagragarh in Burdwan in which two suspected terrorists died.

Cops foil

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processions in any district.

In Gazipur, the procession led by Mayor Abdul Mannan started from the district BNP office on Rajbari Road around noon and was heading for Joydevpur rail gate area, reports our correspondent.

Scuffles broke out as police obstructed the procession, witnesses said, adding that BNP men at one stage started throwing bricks at police. Besides, several homemade bombs were blasted.

It prompted police to fire over 20 gunshots and a few teargas shells.

The injured were taken to local hospitals. The schoolboy was identified as Md Meraz, 14, who was on his way home during the clash.

Salauddin Sarker, president of Gazipur Sramik Dal, said police attacked them without any provocation. The allegation was rejected by Officer-in-Charge Khandaker Rezaul Karim of Joydevpur Police Station.

Police also dispersed BNP activists at Narsingdi, Munshiganj, Barisal and Bagerhat by using truncheons when the party tried to bring out processions.

Talking to The Daily Star, Barisal Metropolitan Police Commissioner Shaibal Kanti Chowdhury said police did not allow BNP men to hold processions considering public security as they feared intruders from Jamaat-Shibir might create anarchy.

Narsingdi Sadar Police OC Station Abul Khayer Fakir echoed Shaibal's view.

Police in different parts of the country also barred Jamaat-e-Islami and its student wing Islami Chhatra Shibir from holding demonstrations demanding release of arrested leaders of the party.

2 'criminals'

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Rabbi, Jony and two policemen received bullet wounds at that time.

The injured were taken to Comilla Medical College Hospital where doctors declared Rabbi dead while Jony succumbed to his injuries at the same hospital in the afternoon, said Manirul Islam, officer-in-charge of DB.

On Thursday, a gang of criminals had shot SI Firoz while snatching a pistol from him at Jhaultala in the city.

Later, SI Samsuddin Chowdhury, in-charge of city's Kandirpar police camp, filed a case against Jira Sumon, Rabbi, Jony and Sabuj with Kotwali Model Police Station in this connection.

Burkina Faso transition talks move forward

AFP, Ouagadougou

Burkina Faso's political parties and civil society groups were yesterday set to adopt a transition plan for the west African country after the ousting of veteran president Blaise Compaore.

Talks on forming a transition government began Saturday with the army at first declining to join, while Compaore accused his military and political opponents of jointly plotting his overthrow.

Opposition leader Zephirin Diabre, who chaired the meeting, said "we are coming to the end" of the drafting procedure, amid expectations that the final version could be formally adopted on Sunday.

Around 60 representatives of political parties and civil society met in the capital Ouagadougou to hammer out a handover plan, after Compaore fled last week following a mass uprising against his bid to revise the constitution and extend his 27-year rule.

The army, who named Lieutenant Colonel Isaac Zida to head the west African country, had first refused to take part in the talks. They later sent a delegation led by Zida's right-hand man, Colonel August Denise Barry, who made only a brief appearance at the discussions.

Barry told the conference that the army has no intention of holding on to power, saying that "things can no

longer be like before", alluding to the country's history of military coups, according to several civilian delegates.

One participant, who requested anonymity, said the conference was seeking to convince the army to sign a joint declaration.

Earlier, Zida had told a delegation from the talks that members of Compaore's political party should also be included in the discussions, which the other parties have so far refused to allow.

"For the purpose of reconciliation and reconstruction, one cannot exclude a party of the people," Zida said, according to one of the delegates.

The army's power grab in the landlocked west African country has attracted international condemnation and threats of sanctions from the African Union unless it hands over power within two weeks.

Bisa Williams, US Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, reiterated calls for a democratic transition after talks Saturday with Zida in the capital.

"We're counting on respect for the (army's) promise to put in place a democratic transition government which is led by a civilian," said Williams.

Washington and Paris, Burkina Faso's two main allies and donors, have been pressuring the military to quickly carry out elections.

US diplomat

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Two years later, she returned to Washington and was working until last month in the Office of the US Special Representative to Afghanistan and Pakistan at the State Department.

Her hiring by the US embassy in Pakistan raised some eyebrows because after her retirement from the foreign service she had worked for Cassidy and Associates, which lobbied on behalf of the Pakistani government, reports AP.

According to The Times of India, Cassidy and Associates won a \$ 1.2 million contract to promote Pakistan as an "important strategic partner of the US".

This is the same firm with which Bangladesh's war crimes convict Mir Quasem Ali allegedly struck a deal for engaging with Washington to and Dhaka "to protect his interest". It is believed that the deal was part of Quasem's scheme to foil the war crimes trial.

Raphel, who tormented New Delhi in the 1990s with provocative remarks on Jammu & Kashmir's accession to India, was ambassador to Tunisia and then assistant secretary of state for South Asian affairs during the Clinton administration.

In one background briefing, she suggested that Washington did not recognize the instrument of accession that made Kashmir a part of India and effectively questioned the validity of the India Independence Act.

She was also dismissive of the

Shimla Agreement saying it was ineffective and outdated. Each of this positions validated Pakistan's viewpoint.

The remarks outraged New Delhi, but it got worse when she was seen as brazenly working to protect Pakistan from being declared a state sponsor of terrorism following the terrorist attack on Mumbai in 1993 -- in the face of evidence provided by India, including detonators used in the serial blasts that mysteriously disappeared when they were sent to Washington for forensic evaluation.

PM to visit

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Malaysia might dominate the agenda, meeting sources said.

Hasina has so far visited Myanmar, Japan, China, the UK, the USA, Italy and the UAE since assuming office in January this year.

She is scheduled to visit the United Kingdom, Italy and Nepal this month to attend various international and regional events.

The premier will deliver a speech at the Oxford Union, UK on 'Girls Education' on November 17.

The PM is scheduled to leave London for Rome on November 18 and is expected to return home on November 20.

Hasina will travel to Kathmandu to participate in the 18th South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) Summit to be held on November 26-27.

HC questions

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lawyers including Asaduzzaman Siddique, Aklas Uddin Bhuiyan and Sarwar Ahad Chowdhury.

The bench fixed November 26 to pass further orders in this regard, petitioners' counsel Manzill Murshid told The Daily Star yesterday.

The House led by ruling Awami League on September 17 unanimously passed the 16th amendment and regained the power available in the 1972 constitution to impeach judges.

A gazette notification was issued on September 22 over the amendment.

On November 5, the nine lawyers filed the writ petition with the HC challenging legality of the law, saying the provision might curb independence of the judiciary.

The major constitutional change

might have been brought against the backdrop of HC verdicts that had cancelled provisions of the Anti-Corruption Commission law and contempt of court law giving protection for the government officials and the HC directive on the government to arrest three top Rab officials, who included a relative of a minister, in the gruesome Narayanganj seven-murder case, said Manzill Murshid, citing the petition.

The petitioners thought bringing the amendment might have been motivated from a "malafide" intention and the judges might feel at risk before passing an order against a lawmaker, he added.

Deputy Attorney General Motaher Hossain Saju vehemently opposed the petition.

Twitter to fight online

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"There are a lot of different ways that women are getting harassed and Twitter's current reporting system isn't catching all of them," said Jaclyn Friedman, executive director of Wam.

The organisation is aiming to cast a wider net when it comes to reporting harassment against women of colour and from the LGBT community.

The Wam form asks a more detailed set of questions than Twitter's own in such circumstances, including "Do you fear for your personal safety because of this harassment?" and "How many times have you reported this harassment to Twitter?"

It also allows a person to list multiple harassing accounts at once. As an authorised reporter, Wam has been granted the ability to "escalate" complaints it receives to Twitter in "24

hours max; hopefully much less than that".

"You might report one tweet, but that may not rise to the level of harassment," said Friedman. "But if you paint a picture of other harassment, you get a bigger story."

The form has another purpose: gathering data about how harassers behave online, in the hope of helping Twitter to better understand the way trolls behave and perhaps take more concrete steps to stop them.

In a statement, Twitter told the Guardian: "We're always trying to improve the way we handle abuse issues, and Wam is one of many organizations we work with around the world on best practices for user safety."

The responsibility of dealing with such complaints remains entirely in Twitter's hands.

Govt boasts of ICT success

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overseas job-seekers have had services from the digital centres.

Around 10,000 young ICT entrepreneurs have become self-reliant in the 4,547 union digital centres, Kabir said, adding that time and money of the people had been saved and the entrepreneurs earned Tk 140 crore.

Minister Palak said even Bill Gates praised Bangladesh in a global ICT forum recently saying that people of the country had been widely adopting new technology.

"But we are not satisfied as there is still a long way to go to achieve the vision of Digital Bangladesh," he added.

He said by 2016 all union digital centres would be connected via fibre optic cable with one mbps Internet connection. Besides, there was a plan to set up call centres at the village level, he added.

The government is now producing 500 mobile phone apps to deliver government services instantly to

FOUR YEARS of DIGITAL CENTERS

Application of over 4 lakh Parcha of lands

Computer training to over 1 lakh youths and girls

Registration of over 20 lakh people seeking to go abroad for work

Mobile banking services to 90,000 people

Regular health camp in over 500 UDCs

Around 14,500 digital centre blog members

people, he said, adding that the work to introduce e-office was about to be completed.

Within this month, digital signature facility would be introduced

down to the additional-secretary-level officials and this facility would be taken to the upazila level by next year, he added.

He said offices of the deputy commissioners and upazila nirbahi officers have already been digitalised and around one lakh WiFi zones would be set up across the country with the help of China.

Palak said Joy, also the prime minister's son, has a plan to set up village-based ICT clubs and language clubs in union digital centres by 2018.

"Though the prime minister set 2021 for building Digital Bangladesh and a middle income country, we will be able to achieve that much before the deadline," Palak said.

Naimuzzaman Mukta, people's perspective specialist of Access to Information Programme, said people were now opening facebook accounts at a much higher rate than the child birth rate, indicating Bangladesh has progressed a lot digitally.

Sad music is good for you

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It achieves this by providing the listener with four different rewards: imagination, emotion regulation, empathy and 'no real-life' implications.

Nostalgia rather than misery is most often triggered by sad music, with the study finding that "memory-related processes are central in music-evoked sadness".

In the US and in Europe, listeners

reported feelings of nostalgia when listening to sad music whereas in Asia they said they felt at "peace".

The study explained: "The average number of emotions that participants reported to have experienced in response to sad music was above three.

"This suggests that a multifaceted emotional experience elicited by sad music enhances its aesthetic appeal."

In their conclusion, published in the journal Plos One, Stefan Koelsch

and Liila Taruffi said: "The fact that people seek and appreciate sadness in music may appear paradoxical, given the strong popular and scientific emphasis on happiness as a source of personal well-being."

They also reported that "appreciation of sad music is enhanced when listeners are experiencing emotional distress, as well as among individuals with high empathy and low emotional stability."

Dhaka wants to join APEC

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economic blocs around the globe," said Hamid, adding, "APEC's trade facilitation efforts, especially in the form of the Trade

Facilitation Action Plan, is a commendable step to this end."

This was important for the APEC members as well as non-APEC countries in this region to formulate a framework of cooperation for our mutual benefits, he said.

Hamid, however, said a strong political will was needed for an effective fundamental reform as it was essential for lifting world economic growth on a sustained basis.

"Bangladesh, by all its means and willingness, stands ready to participate

with its friends in Asia-Pacific region and beyond in any effort to achieve progress in this regard, both bilaterally and multilaterally, through multiple but complementary efforts," the president told his audience.

He went on to say, "We believe attaining sustainable economic growth is of the benefits of the humanity, and the ultimate means of achieving a poverty and exclusion-free world."

Mentioning Bangladesh's plan to establish a deep-sea port and a third sea port, a new world-class international airport and of building extended road and rail connectivity with its neighbouring countries,

Hamid said, "We're hopeful that Bangladesh would emerge as a major transportation hub, containing an extensive rail, road, air and sea connectivity."

The president underscored the need for looking forward to improving the living standards and education levels through sustainable economic growth in the Asia-Pacific region.

"For that, we need to foster a sense of community and an appreciation of shared interests among nations in the region. The proposed Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP) will create a free trade zone that would considerably expand commerce and economic growth in the region," he added.

Monks warn Lanka president to reform or lose support

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's main party of Buddhist monks warned President Mahinda Rajapakse yesterday it would withdraw support if he refused to loosen his grip on power before a snap election.

The JHU, or National Heritage Party, said it wanted Rajapakse to honour a promise to rewrite the constitution and allow civil servants, judges, police and the elections chief to function independently.

"If the next election is held without carrying out the promised reforms, we will do our best to defeat President Mahinda Rajapakse," JHU legislator and Buddhist monk Athuraliye Ratana told reporters.

Rajapakse came to power in 2005 promising to revert to a Westminster-style parliamentary democracy. But he secured a second term in 2010 and rewrote the constitution, removing the

two-term limit on the top job.

Government ministers have said the president will seek election for a third term in January, two years ahead of schedule -- attempting to secure another term before his party's faltering popularity falls further.

The JHU has just three seats in the 225-member parliament but is considered influential among the country's majority Buddhist community.

The party said it would drum up support for constitutional reforms by holding a public rally in Colombo on Wednesday.

"If the president sees a lot of public support for us, he may change the idea of a snap election," Ratana said. "Our objective is to get him to deliver on the reforms he himself promised."

The monk said his talks with Rajapakse's Sri Lanka Freedom Party to remain in the ruling coalition ended in failure and the JHU had no option but

to press for reforms through public meetings.

Rajapakse's rivals have also raised doubts about whether he can legally seek a third term, arguing the amended constitution only applies to new presidents and cannot be used retroactively.

Rajapakse won popularity among Sri Lanka's majority Sinhalese community in 2009 by crushing rebels who had waged a 37-year war for a separate homeland for ethnic minority Tamils.

But his party's vote share plummeted at local elections in September, suffering its worst performance since Rajapakse first came to power nine years ago.

The president is also under intense international pressure to probe allegations that his troops killed up to 40,000 Tamil civilians while battling Tamil rebels in the final stages of the war.