

BURDWAN BLAST BJP leader hits back at Mamata

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee should be aware of the negative impacts of appeasing fundamentalists following the recent attacks of militants in Pakistan, BJP spokesperson M J Akbar said yesterday.

The remark came a few days after Mamata at a party meeting indicated that Indian intelligence agency RAW might be behind the Burdwan blast.

Two persons -- allegedly residents of Bangladesh -- were killed in an explosion on October 2 at a house in Burdwan, India while they were manufacturing improvised explosive devices meant to be transported to Bangladesh.

"Mamata Banerjee's statement blaming RAW for the Burdwan blast is against national interest. She has no understanding of the country's national interest. She has no understanding about the brave work that national security agencies are doing to ensure the security of our country," Akbar, a veteran journalist, told PTI in Kolkata.

Mamata is encouraging fundamentalism and is only interested in politics of votes -- a dangerous trend both for Bengal and for India, Akbar said. "Mamata Banerjee should understand the global phenomenon of this virulent form of terrorism. Pakistan is paying the price of appeasing fundamental elements, which were to be used against India and Afghanistan."

Militants

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research. Once completed, the drone could be flown up to around 25th floor of a building to launch an attack," claimed Joint Commissioner Monirul Islam of Detective Branch (DB) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) yesterday.

At a press briefing at DMP media centre, Monirul claimed that they were using the technology of toy planes to make the drone. "If they had more technological support, they could have made an operational drone soon," he added.

The DB official said since key establishments had tight security measures, the militant outfit had planned to blow them up with drone attacks.

A DB official seeking anonymity claimed that the designed drone was capable of carrying around 25kgs of explosives.

The DB officials said both the arrestees were followers of Jasimuddin Rahmani, the arrested spiritual leader of the outfit now in jail. They also had links with absconding leaders of the outfit. In 2010, law enforcement agencies arrested another Ansarullah Bangla Team operative who had been attempting to build drones.

Replying to a query, Monirul said the law enforcers had the capability to tackle such attacks but their aim was to foil the attempts beforehand. A Dhaka court yesterday granted a five-day remand for each of the two for interrogation.

Six held

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Jyotsna of Netrakona district, said Mazedur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Mymensingh DB police.

Jyotsna is the wife of Tanu, helper of the bus whose owner was Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal leader Rafiqul Islam Bachchu, who was murdered on Tuesday. Hosna is elder sister of Jyotsna.

"The detainees are now being interrogated," Mazedur said. "The interrogation, we hope, will give us important clues to the murder."

Bachchu, 35, general secretary of Habibar union unit of Sramik Dal, his wife Parul Akhtar, 28, and two daughters -- Jiniya Akhtar, 6, and one-year-old Riva Akhtar were found dead at their house in Lobonkotha village in Bhaluka.

Bachchu and Parul were stabbed to death while their two daughters were strangled, police and locals said.

On Tuesday night, Bachchu's father Wares Ali filed a case with Bhaluka Police Station, accusing four people. But police did not disclose the names of the accused in the interest of investigation.

Taj Uddin, elder brother of Bachchu, said they did not believe the killing had occurred over political rivalry or for committing a robbery as the murderers also strangled two minor girls.

Tanu was seen with Bachchu on the night of the killings, but Tanu went into hiding after the incident, said Taj Uddin, adding, "If Tanu is arrested, the whole incident will be revealed."

A conflict might have occurred between Bachchu and Tanu recently, said police, quoting family members and neighbours. But none could specify the reasons.

Pakistan mourns

FROM PAGE 1

Pakistanis waited to see what their government - long accused of not being tough enough on the Islamists - and the army would do to stem spiralling violence in a nation which has become a safe haven for al Qaeda-linked groups.

Seeking to appear decisive, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif announced he had lifted a moratorium on the death penalty in response to the massacre.

The focus was on Army Chief Raheel Sharif's visit to Afghanistan where the two sides, their relationship strained after decades of mistrust, were due to discuss how to crack down together on militants hiding on their common border.

People around Pakistan lit candles and staged vigils as parents buried their children during mass funerals in and around Peshawar - a volatile city on the edge of Pakistan's lawless tribal belt.

Pakistanis may be used to almost daily attacks on security forces but an outright assault on children stunned the country, prompting commentators to call for a tough military response.

The school's sprawling grounds were all but deserted yesterday, with a handful of snipers manning the roofs of its pink brick-and-stone buildings.

Army vehicles and soldiers wearing face masks and carrying automatic rifles were deployed by the entrance.

A Reuters tour of the school revealed a place shattered by hours of fighting, its floor slick with blood and walls pockmarked with bullet holes. Classrooms were filled with abandoned school bags, mobile phones and broken chairs.

One wall was smashed where a suicide bomber blew himself up, blood splattered across it. His body parts were piled nearby on a white cloth. The air was thick with the smell of explosives and flesh.

A day after the attack, Peshawar appeared subdued and many people were still in shock. More details of the well-organized attack emerged as witnesses came forward with accounts.

"The attackers came around 10:30 am on a pick-up van," said Issam Uddin, a 25-year-old school bus driver.

"They drove it around the back of the school and set it on fire to block the way. Then they went to Gate 1 and killed a soldier, a gatekeeper and a gardener. Firing began and the first suicide attack took place."

Sharif has announced three day of mourning but people's anxiety focused on what the authorities can do to protect them.

Sharif came power last year promising to negotiate peace with the Taliban - but those efforts failed this year, weakening his position and prompting the army to launch an air-and-ground operation against insurgents along the Afghan border.

The military staged more air strikes there late on Tuesday in response to the school attack, security sources said, but it was unclear what the target was.

GOOD AND BAD TALIBAN
Despite the well-publicised crack-down, the military itself has been accused of being too lenient towards militants who critics say are used to carry out the army's bidding in places like the disputed Kashmir region and Afghanistan.

The military denies the accusations. "People will have to stop equivocating and come together in the face of national tragedy," said Sherry Rehman, a former ambassador to the United States and an opposition politician.

"There have been national leaders who have been apologetic about the Taliban, who have not named the Taliban in their speeches."

The Pakistani Taliban, who are fighting to impose strict Islamic rule in Pakistan, are holed up in mountains straddling the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.

They are allied with the Afghan Taliban as well as al Qaeda and other foreign fighters, and Pakistan has long accused Afghanistan of not doing enough to crack down on their bases.

Afghanistan, for its part, blames Pakistan for allowing militant groups such as the Afghan Taliban and Haqqani Network to operate freely on its territory.

Pakistan's Dawn newspaper quoted a source as saying that the militants were acting on direct orders from their handlers in Afghanistan and that prominent Taliban commander Umar Naray was the ultimate mastermind of the attack.

College student

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him," he added. Doctors of Dhaka Medical College Hospital declared Chanchal dead when he was taken there around 9:30pm.

Sub-inspector Shyamal of Shahjahanpur Police Station, however, said the college student was murdered over a feud relating to drug peddling in the area.

No case was filed in this connection till 1:30am today.

MINISTRY SIEGE Police disperse dental students

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday foiled a programme of BSc Dental Students' Association of laying siege to the health ministry in order to press home their four-point demand.

The law enforcers charged batons and used water cannons to disperse the students when they tried to remove a barricade in front of the Jatiya Press Club in the capital.

Nineteen students were detained from the spot. Police put up the barricade as the students had gathered there to move to the secretariat around 11:00am, Shiblee Noman, assistant commissioner (Ramna zone) of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police, told The Daily Star yesterday.

At one point, the students started a procession where many of them were wearing shrouds. Shiblee said the agitating students threw stones at police, tried to remove the barricade and march on the secretariat.

He said they brought the situation under control around 11:30am.

Later, the students alleged that the police obstructed their "peaceful" movement. They also urged the authorities concerned to accept their demands.

The students' demands include issuing practice registrations to dental graduates, appointing dental graduates in government, semi-government and autonomous organisations through BCS examinations and on an ad hoc basis.

3 labourers

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rod of the billboard structure, electrocuting the workers, said Mustafa Kamal, officer-in-charge of Savar Model Police Station.

"A labour contractor named Yunus Ali took the workers to Enam Medical College Hospital where doctors declared three of them dead," he added.

Later, police detained Yunus from the hospital for interrogation. A case was being filed, said the OC, adding, the bodies were sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital for autopsies.

Govt could not care less

FROM PAGE 1

One need not talk more to say how seriously the government is taking this horrendous disaster in the Sundarbans, the one and only such mangrove forest in the world.

And stranger still is that none of the NGOs which are supposedly working on environment have engaged themselves in this clean-up operation. We know about at least one NGO that has got about Tk 100 crore for its work in the Sundarbans.

In the end, as nature photographer Sirajul Hossain has written on the Facebook, it was the poor villagers and the underpaid foresters who had to undertake the clean-up of this mess caused by the rich.

From the beginning, the government's reaction to the disaster has been peculiar. The shipping minister, Shahjahan Khan, was quick to say, quoting some unnamed experts, that the spill would not have any adverse effect on the forest's biodiversity. Any damn fool would disagree with such experts' view.

As the spill spread and spread, all that the government did was to ask the forest department to do what it could think best -- engaging 200 men to do the job. Why was it not 200,000? Or 20,000 or even 2,000? Why, every litre of oil soaked out of the river would

have been every tree saved, every crab saved, every deer saved, every finfoot saved. (We are yet to see the dead animals because the effect would be long-term.)

There are some big oil companies like Chevron operating in Bangladesh. These companies are supposed to have the best equipment and knowledge to fight spill because in deep sea drilling that is the worst fear leading to millions of dollars' worth of law suits. The government could have approached them immediately for help.

Five days after the disaster, the UN has intended to help the government, not the other way round in a very Putinian way. But by this time, the oil has got stuck to the roots of the trees choking them slowly.

We all know the bureaucratic UN system and the time they take to respond (remember Rwanda?). By the time if anything starts happening at all, the trees would be dead. With them the biodiversity.

This is only the first of many more similar disasters expected to happen to the Sundarbans once the zone becomes active with power plants and industries. And if our response remains the same, we can as well say goodbye to the unique ecosystem of the world.

3 trampled to death

FROM PAGE 1

Hosain of Nalua union. Quoting eyewitnesses, police said a large number of people from neighbouring areas gathered near the field to watch the herd that roamed around the place.

The first victim, Mahbulul, died when he along with other villagers went close to the herd to take photos in their mobile phones and hurled brick chips at them.

Golam Kibria, sub-inspector of Satkania Police Station, said Mahbulul and other villagers took pictures and hurled brick chips at the herd. Infuriated, the elephants chased them and trampled Mahbulul who died on the spot around 11:00am.

Later, the villagers tried to drive the herd away with torches around 12:00 noon.

Shariful Islam, upazila nirbahi officer of Satkania, said he visited the spot and instructed forest department officials and law enforcers to prevent the villagers from engaging with the elephants.

After the first incident, the herd could not find their way to hills as curious villagers surrounded them. "We asked them to move away so that the herd could leave," he said.

Later, the villagers again surrounded the herd and started taking pictures. The enraged elephants chased them and trampled Shakil who died around 3:30pm. Shahadat died around 6:00pm, police and locals said.

"The villagers annoyed the wild elephants by approaching them and taking photos as well as hurling brick bats at them. We tried to disperse the villagers several times but they surrounded and irritated the herd time and again," said Khaled Hossain, officer-in-charge of Satkania Police Station.

Shakil and Shahadat died while they were trying to take photos going close to the herd, the OC said.

Khaled said the elephants were there in the beel in the evening and might go back to hills at night.

BCL men threaten

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Faisal claimed law enforcers were harassing their men. "Police filed cases against our leaders and activists though they were not involved in the clash," he said. "We also want punishment of the real killers of Tapash."

The group gave a 72-hour ultimatum to accept their demands, including withdrawal of the cases against the students who were not involved in the clash and suspension of the officer-in-charge of Hathazari Police Station for his "negligence in duty".

Police initially picked up 28 students for interrogation on Sunday and recovered one shotgun, five cartridges and 30 lethal weapons from different rooms of Shah Jalal Hall and Shah Amanat Hall.

Three of them were later released while the 25 others were sent to jail.

Police filed an arms case against five named and 60 unnamed leaders and activists of the Varsity Express group. They also filed a murder case against 30 named and 15 unnamed men of the group.

THE CONFLICT
The conflict between the two factions is nothing new.

Though both factions are followers of Chittagong city AL president ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury, they often fight each other to establish supremacy on the campus, said BCL sources.

Following repeated clashes, the BCL CU committee was dissolved on June 10.

Over the last one year, the two groups fought at least 12 times. On September 28, two students suffered bullet injuries during a clash.

CU Proctor Siraj-ud-Daula told The Daily Star that Tapash's death

was a result of infighting of the two groups.

"The two factions have been fighting each other for over a year now," he said.

At a programme on November 12 in the port city, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, also the AL chief, expressed her resentment over the dispute. She also ordered the AL leaders to resolve the conflict, party sources said.

Three days later, Chittagong city AL president ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury and general secretary AZM Nasir Uddin spoke with the leaders of the two factions and asked them to maintain peace on the campus.

They were also warned of "tough action" if they failed to do so. But Tapash lost his life less than a month after the warning.

Skylon gets

FROM PAGE 16

Because the engine uses atmospheric air, rather than putting carrying oxygen in tanks like a rocket does, it could use much less fuel and help it go faster. Reaction Engines hopes one day to build the engine into a special plane, named Skylon, which could carry passengers to anywhere in the world within four

hours. It could also carry space ships out of the atmosphere, removing the need for expensive and inefficient rockets.

The company now looks to raise about £250 million to fund a three-year development of a small version of the engine. It then hopes to have a full version ready for sale in 10 years.

Control your son

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Tarique Rahman's remarks at a programme in London that Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was a "great Razakar".

Without mentioning Tarique's name, Hasina said people across the world, let alone those of Bangladesh, will not believe what he is uttering.

"He's uttering heinous words. People won't tolerate this ... this can't be tolerated."

Bemoaning that she feels hatred in talking anything about Tarique, the PM said he is uttering indecent words constantly from London.

"He's deliberately distorting history to confuse people because Zia started this distortion, Khaleda Zia continued that and their son

following the same footsteps," she said.

Hasina said Tarique is making a terrible blunder as he is ignorant. "Had he been educated, had he read history, then he could have told the truth," she said.


Saying that Tarique turned beast because of his ignorance, the premier mentioned: "The people of Bangladesh know it very well how to teach a beast a good lesson. The human like animal should get its due lesson and the people of the country will do that."

Termining Yahya Khan another beast of history, Hasina said Tarique in his recent speeches talked like Yahya. "One will find the similarity if he or she goes through Yahya's speeches of March in 1971."

Pointing at Tarique and BNP's "involvement" in the August 21 grenade attacks on an AL rally at Bangabandhu Avenue, the prime minister said their hands are stained with Ivy Rahman and many other people's blood.

"Like the trial of war criminals, the trial of this killing will take place on Bangladesh's soil ... the killers will surely be punished," she asserted.

AL senior leaders Amir Hossain Amu, Tofail Ahmed, Suranjit Sengupta, Matia Chowdhury, Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, Mahbulul Alam Hanif, Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya, Dr Dipu Moni, Ahmed Hossain, AFM Bahauddin Nasim and advocate Kamrul Islam also spoke at the meeting.



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3.	Time for completion of the work	20 (Twenty) Calendar days for Sl. No.(i) and 40 (Forty) Calendar days for Sl. No. (ii) (who are not capable to do the works in the schedule time need not to participate)
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