

JMB operative confesses involvement

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

An operative of banned militant outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen of Bangladesh (JMB) yesterday confessed to his involvement in the December 10 attack on Iskcon temple in Kaharol upazila of Dinajpur.

Abdur Rahman, alias Pintu, 20, of Boleya Purbopara in the upazila, gave his confession before the court of Senior Judicial Magistrate Nazmul Haque last night, said Redwanur Rahim, officer-in-charge of Detective Branch of police in Dinajpur.

A DB team arrested him along with Sarwar Hossain, alias Sabu, 33, during a raid in Birampur of Dinajpur Saturday night.

Detectives said they conducted the raid after gleaning information from Shariful Islam and Mosabberul Alam, who are now in police remand.

Shariful was caught in possession of crude bombs by locals during the attack on the temple. He later confessed to have shot Italian national Piero Parolari in Dinajpur.

The next day of the temple attack, locals of Singra Salbagan area under Birganj upazila caught Shariful's accomplice Mosabberul with an AK-22 rifle. A villager was injured as Mosabberul fired gunshots on the villagers during a chase.

A gang of criminals attacked Iskcon temple on the night of December 10. Two people were injured in the attack.

On November 18, three unidentified criminals riding a motorcycle shot doctor Piero Parolari near the BRTC Bus Terminal in Dinajpur town.

Tweets too short?

FROM PAGE 16
Re/code reported Tuesday that Twitter has been studying how to allow users to say more, after restricting them to 140 characters for 10 years.

That limit was based on the capacity of the original messaging software used, and though frustrating for many, unleashed a tidal wave of ultra-concise commentary across the web.

Now more than 300 million regular Twitter users send hundreds of millions of messages every day -- news reports, personal updates, advertisements, political pitches, photos and videos and, most often, just witty and innocuous comments.

Re/code says the company already allows 10,000 characters in a commercial product called Direct Messages, so the technology is no longer a barrier.

The company is testing a version that would still only display 140 characters in a message, but carry much more, and a reader would have to click on the tweet to see the rest.

The move is a part of Twitter's efforts to expand its user base and advertising sales and other sources of income. Twitter continued to lose money over the first three quarters of last year. In October it reported a third quarter loss of \$132 million, on a disappointing 11 percent year-on-year increase in regular users to 320 million.

Users however were not entirely enthusiastic about the possible new limit, bashing the company in characteristically terse missives.

"140 characters is not NEARLY enough to express my outrage that Twitter is raising the character limit to 10,000," tweeted writer Brian Phillips, in 111 characters.

In his own tweet, Twitter chief executive Jack Dorsey did not confirm the plan for a 10,000 character capacity, but said the company is "not going to be shy about building more utility and power into Twitter."

Using himself a popular method for getting past the 140 character limit -- attaching a screen shot of a longer text to the tweet -- Dorsey called the current format "a beautiful constraint."

"It inspires creativity and brevity. And a sense of speed."

Nevertheless, he said, Twitter has taken note of how many people use such screenshots to surmount the text limit.

"What if that text was actually text? Text that could be searched. Text that could be highlighted. That's more utility and power," Dorsey said.

"As long as it's consistent with what people want to do, we're going to explore it."

Investors did not take to the idea, either: Twitter shares closed down 2.8 percent to \$21.92 after the report.

Saudis want 4 lakh

FROM PAGE 16

Male workers will be recruited as drivers, gardeners and home supervisors, said Expatriates' Welfare Secretary Iftekhar Haider.

Apart from the recruiting mechanism already in place, the government will train at Kurigram Technical Training Centre 100 female workers from 12 former enclaves of the district and arrange jobs for them in the garment sector in Jordan this year.

A joint group of Saudi and Bangladeshi governments will soon be formed to finalise salaries and other facilities of migrants, Iftekhar added.

Saudi Arabia last year signed an agreement with Bangladesh to recruit 10,000 female workers every month, but only 21,000 went to the Middle Eastern country for work that year.

The Arab country that has been hiring fewer male workers since 2008 expressed its dissatisfaction over the low inflow of female migrants from Bangladesh. The reason behind this, rights groups say, might be negative perception of female workers' situation there.

The top labour markets of Bangladeshi female workers include the United Arab Emirates, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Lebanon and Qatar that employ them mostly as domestic helps, said Joint Secretary Kazi Abul Kalam of the expatriates' welfare ministry.

The number of females flying overseas for work each year went up to more than a lakh in 2015 from only

30,000 four years earlier, with record 36 percent growth in the last one year, he added.

Female workers' migration from Bangladesh has been rising because of the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Ethiopia stopped sending female workers to some of those countries following allegations of abuses and low wages, said Shakirul Islam, executive director of Ovivashi Karmi Unnayan Programme, a community-based migrants' organisation.

Amid the growth of migration, workers' training, monitoring and protection mechanisms and their functioning are crucial, he told The Daily Star.

Of the Middle Eastern countries, only Jordan has a labour law that incorporates domestic migrant workers. Bangladesh has to talk others into including issues of domestic workers in their labour laws.

According to the official data, 5.55 lakh Bangladeshis secured jobs overseas in 2015, which is 30 percent higher than that of the previous year. The remittance from Bangladeshi overseas workers also increased -- to \$15.32 billion in 2014-15 fiscal from \$14.23 billion a year earlier.

Asked about the government measures to lower the cost of migration, which ranges from Tk 2 lakh to Tk 8 lakh, Expatriates' Welfare Secretary Iftekhar said the government would take legal actions against agents if they were found guilty of charging job seekers more.

'Drug peddler' killed in 'gunfight'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

An alleged drug peddler was killed in a "gunfight" with police in Gazipur Sadar upazila on Tuesday night.

The dead is Monir Khan, 35, son of Kabir Khan of Haldoba village under the upazila.

Acting on a tip-off, police raided Haldoba around 10:45pm and detained Monir along with 100 yaba tablets, said Harun-ur-Rashid, a sub-inspector of Joydebpur police.

Later, police took Monir to another place near the third gate of Rajendrapur National Park to arrest his accomplices.

Sensing presence of the law enforcers, the criminals opened fire on police. Police then returned fire, triggering the "gunfight".

Monir was shot dead while trying to flee from police custody, said the SI.

The body was sent to Gazipur Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed Medical College Hospital morgue for an autopsy.

Monir stood accused in 27 cases, including extortion and drug dealing, with Joydebpur Police Station and Gazipur court, according to police.

According to rights body Ain o Salish Kendra, 146 people were killed in such "gunfight" or "shootout" last year with different forces.

Big earthquake

FROM PAGE 16

India pose a bigger danger, and predicted a disaster of bigger magnitude that awaits hill states and parts of Bihar, UP and even Delhi which fall under the second worst seismic Zone IV classification. The North-East and other hill states fall under severe seismic Zone V.

Though some Indian scientists have reservations, but international experts, prominently Roger Bilham, the seismologist of University of Colorado and an authority on the subject, are of the opinion that "the current conditions might trigger at least four earthquakes greater than 8.0 in magnitude. And if they delay, the strain accumulated during the centuries provokes more catastrophic mega earthquakes."

Kumar said the Centre has taken measures to sensitise the governments of all the hill states to adopt a common

building code that is different from the rest of India. The recent Itanagar deliberations on sustainable development of mountain states were part of Centre's earthquake risk mitigation strategy to sensitise policy-makers about "the natural time bomb".

Stress has increased in the mountains of north-east since the Nepal earthquake. Monday's 6.7 magnitude earthquake in Manipur shows the stress has not been fully released, it has only become worse. "The collision between the Himalayan plate in the north and the Indo-Burmese plate in the east and the risk created as a result is the highest at this moment," according to NIDM experts.

India is divided into four seismic zones. The most active Zone V comprises of the whole of north-east, parts of north Bihar, Uttarakhand,

Himachal Pradesh, J&K, Gujarat and Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Delhi comes under Zone IV and is considered as one of the high-risk areas.

According to MHA's own assessment, the regulatory mechanism in Indian cities that prominently figure on the disaster map are weak and any disaster striking in any one of these populous cities would cause huge casualties.

The UN office for disaster risk reduction (UNISDR), which considers India a valuable partner and had even acknowledged the leadership of minister of state for home Kiren Rijiju and made him a disaster risk reduction champion for Asia two months ago, has emphasised India's need for compliance with building codes and the necessity for an "enhanced preparedness for effective response to earth-

A shiny day in politics

FROM PAGE 16

jubilant for the peaceful atmosphere. Talking to a number of private television channels, they spoke for a healthy political culture.

A senior official of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) told The Daily Star that law enforcers were very satisfied with peaceful completion of the political programmes though many violated the conditions police imposed on the parties about holding the rallies.

"As the programme was progressing in a peaceful manner, we did not care about violation of some conditions," explained the DMP official, wishing anonymity.

The peaceful completion of the programmes marking the second anniversary of the 2014 parliamentary election has given much relief also to city dwellers who feared violence around this time. Many of them reportedly limited their movement on Tuesday out of fear.

The way the shiny Tuesday finally made us all happy has become a glaring example of how political tolerance and compromise can achieve success.

The top leaders of the AL and the BNP should keep it in mind that it has been possible only for their goodwill to avoid confrontation.

The last year's horrific incidents are still vivid in our minds. We witnessed how confrontational politics could generate large-scale unrest, killing people and threatening to destroy the country's economy.

All of it was triggered by rows about holding rallies on January 5 last year, the first anniversary of the one-sided 2014 parliamentary election boycotted by the BNP-led 20-party alliance.

Both sides were arrogant and intolerant then. The government refused to grant BNP the permission to hold its planned rally to observe January 5 as the "democracy killing day." The BNP responded by defying the police ban while police kept Khaleda confined to her Gulshan office by blocking the roads in front of her office with sand-loaded trucks. Her party men were given no scope either to take to the streets as police went tough on them. Only the ruling AL men were in the streets, celebrating the day as "Victor Day for Democracy".

An angry Khaleda called for a countrywide non-stop blockade from January 6 to topple the government. The political programme which went on until the last week of March turned violent.

At least 95 people were killed and about 1,500 injured in arson attacks on public transports. Most of them were ordinary citizens. Another 45 got killed in "shootouts" with law enforcement agencies. About half of them were allegedly involved in arson attacks. The economic loss from the blockade and shutdown was enormous.

Finally, the BNP failed to achieve its goal as the movement lost direction due to violence. Its movement in 2013 and 2014 failed to realise its popular demand for restoration of an election time caretaker government for the same reason.

This year, however, good sense prevailed in both the camps.

The BNP was first denied permission by the police to hold its rally at Suhrawardy Udyan as its rival AL, too, sought permission to hold rally there. The party later asked for holding a rally in front of its central

office in Nayapaltan.

There was uncertainty over police permission. But then BNP's acting secretary general Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir in a press conference on Monday morning made it clear that they would not call any confrontational programme even if they were not allowed to hold a rally in the capital. The announcement contributed to finally getting permission. This announcement also showed their realisation that violent agitation never brings good results.

The government, on the other hand, seems to have changed its strategy to deal with the BNP by allowing it to hold the rally on Tuesday. In her speech, Khaleda Zia also refrained from calling any agitation programme against the government.

The AL policymakers should reassess its political strategy now that it is evident that allowing the BNP to stage demonstration against the January 5 election has not caused the fall of the government. They should give the BNP more space to carry its lawful political activities to uphold democracy. The effort to suppress the BNP will generate only instability and uncertainty in politics, weakening the democracy.

Both sides should keep in mind that arrogance in politics and failure to resolve differences through discussion have brought disaster in national life in 1994-1996, 2006 to early 2007, and in 2013, 2014 and the latest in 2015.

Despite massive deterioration of political culture, Tuesday's peaceful programme somehow generated a ray of hope for a change in our politics.

To keep the healthy vibes alive, the government policymakers and the AL should take the lead to put politics on right track for the sake of the country's

UNSC agree

FROM PAGE 16

international community, including from China and Washington, which said an initial analysis was "not consistent" with North Korea's claims of a successful hydrogen bomb test.

South Korean President Park Geun-Hye condemned what she described as a "grave provocation" and called for a strong international response.

"I demand the DPRK cease any further nuclear activities," UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said.

Skeptical experts suggested the apparent yield was far too low for a thermonuclear device.

North Korean state television announced "the republic's first hydrogen bomb test," which was "successfully performed at 10:00am (0130 GMT)."

"We have now joined the rank of advanced nuclear states," it said, adding that the test was of a miniaturized device.

State television showed North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un's signed order -- dated December 15 -- to go ahead with the test and begin 2016 with the "thrilling sound of the first hydrogen bomb explosion."

The UN Security Council met behind closed doors at the request of the United States and Japan, who led the push for fresh punitive measures.

"We will be working with others on a resolution on further sanctions," British Ambassador Matthew Rycroft told reporters.

In a unanimous statement, the council said it "strongly condemned" the underground test and described it as a "clear threat to international peace and security."

Signs of rare

FROM PAGE 16

Ruling party leaders, on the other hand, have said the government will give more space to the BNP for political activities, provided those are democratic.

Besides, they have found a "positive sign of tolerance" in politics as their party's archival have not come up with any destructive programmes on the second anniversary of 2013 January 5 national polls.

The AL leaders, however, ruled out any possibility of talks with the BNP yesterday, saying the situation does not demand it.

On Tuesday, BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, at a rally in front of her party's central office at Nayapaltan in the capital, urged the government to initiate talks with all political parties to find a solution to the "ongoing political crisis and restore democracy" in the country.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, BNP leaders said the public response to their "peaceful" rally that day had made it confident of going ahead with "positive politics" for reaching their goal.

Some of them said their party men had been demoralised since their movement early last year failed to realise their demand for an interim national election. Violence killed over 100 people, mostly innocents, across the country during the time.

However, on December 30 last year, Khaleda held a meeting with her senior colleagues and advisers where they decided to go for "positive politics" this year, a meeting participant told The Daily Star later.

Another BNP leader said they were busy in reorganising the party and its different front organisations. He also said his party is now completely against programmes that could become violent.

Yesterday, at a meeting with BNP's central municipality election monitoring team, party acting secretary general Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir said government cooperation in holding Tuesday's "peaceful" rally in the capital has encouraged his party to go ahead with "positive politics".

"As the government didn't create any obstacle to holding the huge rally, we think that the government will continue not to disrupt opposition programmes in future," Emran

Saleh Prince, a BNP assistant publicity secretary, said.

AL RESPONSE

Although it welcomes the BNP for not announcing any "violent programme" on Tuesday, the AL yesterday turned down any possibility of holding talks with it.

"The BNP showed a positive sign by changing its previous position involving confrontation. There will be no political confrontation in the country, if the party [BNP] does politics following democratic norms," AL senior leader Suranjit Sengupta said.

Talking to The Daily Star, he said the BNP would get space for their political activities in exchange for its cooperation.

Other AL leaders echoed him. AL presidium member Nooh-Ul Alam Lenin said, "Of course, the BNP showed a positive sign and it's a good signal for politics."

On holding talks with the BNP, Lenin said, "I don't see any possibility of talks right now. But, there might be talks with the BNP on holding the next national election in 2019 in a free and fair manner."

Talking to reporters after an AL meeting at the party president's Dhanmondi office, joint general secretary Mahbubul Alam Hanif yesterday also rejected BNP's call for a dialogue. Instead, he urged Khaleda to apologise to the nation for "killing" innocent people in the name of movement last year.

The meeting also decided to hold a rally, marking Bangabandhu's homecoming, on January 11 at Suhrawardy Udyan instead of on January 10 due to Biswa Ijtema's Akheri Munajat.

Execution

FROM PAGE 16

Kalidaspur of Daulatpur on February 16, 1999.

The convicts sprayed him with bullets as he was about to leave the podium after his speech.

Kushtia district JSD unit President Lokman Hossain, its General Secretary Yakub Ali, and activists Israil Hossain and Shamser Mandal were killed while attempting to protect Aref.

On August 30, 2004, the additional sessions judge of Kushtia gave the death penalty to 10 accused and sentenced 11 to life imprisonment in the case.



Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority

BEPZA Complex

House # 19/D, Road # 06, Dhanmondi, Dhaka-1205

(www.epzbangladesh.org.bd)

No. 03.307.011.00.00.076.2006-07

Dated: 06 January, 2016

Request for Expression of Interest (EOI) for Selection of Consultants (Fire Fighting) for Export Processing Zones (EPZ) under BEPZA

- Background Information**
Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (BEPZA) is seeking few no. of Consultants (Fire Fighting) with a view to modernizing and strengthening of fire fighting and security system in different EPZs under BEPZA.
- The main task of the Consultant (Fire Fighting)**
The main task of the Consultant (Fire Fighting) is available at BEPZA Head Office and BEPZA website. Interested candidate may collect it for better understanding.
- Qualification and Experience**
The Consultant (Fire-Fighting) may be-
(a) retired personnel of the Fire Service and Civil Defence Department not below the rank of Deputy Director and equivalent.
(b) retired officers of armed forces who have worked in fire service department on deputation.
(c) the persons who have served on fire fighting issues at any national and multi-national organization/company in home and abroad.
- Remuneration**
The monthly fees to be paid to the Consultant shall be decided upon negotiation.
- Age Limit**
No person below the age of 45 shall be eligible to apply.
- Place of work**
Export Processing Zones (EPZ) under BEPZA.
- All applications must be accompanied by**
a) Attested copies of the academic certificates.
b) Character and nationality certificate from first class gazetted officer.
c) 02 (two) copies of attested passport size photographs.
d) Experience certificate (if any).
- The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all application without assigning any reason whatsoever.
- Any persuasion by the applicant will be treated as disqualification.
- Consultant (Fire Fighting) will be selected in accordance with the Procedures set out in the Public Procurement Regulation-2008. Initially the Consultant (Fire Fighting) will be appointed for 01 (one) year. After completion of 01 (one) year his service may be extended for his satisfactory performance.
- Interested applicants shall obtain Standard Request for Application (SRFA) for TOR & further information from the Office of Secretary, BEPZA from 0900 to 1600 hours on working days or it may be downloaded from BEPZA website www.epzbangladesh.org.bd.
- Application must be delivered to the address below by 4.00pm on January 31, 2016.

Md. Shawkat Nabi
Secretary
Phone: 9664154
E-mail:
secretary@bepza.org

GD-76