

Some 25 JMB men active in Pabna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Most of around 25 Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) operatives in the district are absconding, said intelligence sources.

"Of the 20 to 25 active JMB operatives in the district, a few are in jail, some others got release on bail while most of them are hiding. Police is trying to nab all of them," said Ahsanul Haque, an official of the Detective Branch of police.

Police on June 25 detained Manik Hossain Babu, 30, of Dakkhin Ramchandrapur in Pabna Sadar upazila, on charge of organising a group of the banned outfit.

After interrogation for five days in remand, he was sent to jail last week.

"From him, we have got some vital information about the JMB activities in the district and we are conducting investigation," said Md Abdullah Al Hasan, officer in charge (OC) of Pabna Sadar Police Station.

He, however, declined to disclose the findings for the sake of investigation.

Police yesterday started inquiry about the missing people across the country, following the recent militant activities at different places.

"As the higher authorities asked for the information about the missing people under the jurisdiction of the police station, we have told all the union parishad chairmen and members to give information if anybody is found missing from his area," said the OC.



The Kuakata sea beach sees thinner presence of tourists during the Eid holidays, unlike other years. The photo was taken on Friday. PHOTO: STAR

Kuakata sees lean Eid tourism

Foreign tourists cancel booking, locals' presence falls too

SHORAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

The recent terror attacks have adversely affected the tourism business in Kuakata as foreigners and many domestic tourists have cancelled their booking in different hotels and motels.

Haji Iqbal Hossain, a businessman from Bhola, came to Kuakata with his family of four. He said, "I came here to enjoy the natural beauty, but I am afraid of terror attack."

Jotirmoy Mohonto, a government official of Khulna, came to Kuakata with his family of four, including his two daughters Redita, 8, and Arpita 3. "We came here to enjoy the holiday, but we are afraid of terror attacks as the minority people are also targets of the attackers."

Rubel, a professional photographer, said the number of tourists is about half of the previous

year.

Syed Mostafa Habib, manager of a hotel in Kuakata, said all of their 40 rooms were booked before Eid, but after the terror attacks in Dhaka and Sholakia, 15 bookings were cancelled.

Motaharul Islam, manager of the Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation-owned motel Parjatan Holiday Complex, said around 15 percent bookings were cancelled following the terror attacks. A couple from France came to Kuakata on July 1, but they left the next day after hearing of the terror attack in Gulshan, he added.

Eight Chinese visitors were staying at Hotel Graver Inn, but they left Kuakata after hearing about the Gulshan attack.

Five other Chinese nationals were staying at Hotel Sikder resort for several days, but they left on July 3 after hearing of the Gulshan attack, said Al-Amin, manager (operation), of the

hotel.

Motaleb Sharif, secretary of Kuakata Hotel-Motel Owners' Association, said they were very happy with the help of the law enforcers, but, unfortunately, no foreigners are spending the Eid vacation there. If the authorities concerned can maintain law and order, tourists will visit the beach, he added.

"We are very sincere about ensuring safety of the tourists, especially foreigners, said Billal Hossain, sub-inspector of Kuakata Tourist Police.

Many law enforcers are working round the clock in Kuakata to ensure safety of the tourists from both home and abroad, he added.

Md Foez Ahmed, additional superintendent of Police, said, "We have taken all measures to ensure security of the tourists, including foreigners."



Lawachhara Bon O Jibo Boichitro Rokkha Andolon launched a signature campaign on Friday to boost support to stop cutting trees in Lawachhara Reserve Forest. PHOTO: STAR

Save Lawachhara campaign begins

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

Lawachhara Bon O Jibo Boichitro Rokkha Andolon launched a signature campaign on Friday to boost support from the tourists and locals for persuading the authorities concerned to stop cutting trees in Lawachhara Reserve Forest.

The programme came against the backdrop of the authorities' decision to cut down 25 thousand trees along the Dhaka-Sylhet track running through the rain forest to facilitate smooth plying of trains there.

Musaddek Mela, general secretary of Communist Party of Bangladesh's Srimangal upazila unit and advisor of Lawachhara Bon O Jibo Boichitro Rokkha Andolon, inaugurated the weeklong programme at the main gate of Lawachhara National Park in Kamalganj upazila of Moulvibazar district.

The programme includes rally and discussions.

The high authorities of Bangladesh Railway on April 9 sent a letter to forest department's Kamalganj range office with an entreaty to fell about 25,000 trees along five-kilometre rail track under

Srimongal-Bhanugachh section to make train journey safe.

Train communication in the area during summer turns risky as trees uprooted by storm sometimes fall on the track, the letter said.

Inter-district Upobon Express train got stuck as about 30 trees lay on the rail track after being uprooted by storm on April 21 in 2015, it mentioned.

"To make rail communication safe, we have to cut the trees," Mujibur Rahman, assistant executive engineer of Bangladesh Railway in Sylhet, said yesterday.

Joly Paul, convener of Lawachhara Bon O Jibo Boichitro Rokkha Andolon, said, "We are not against any development work but that should not be done at the cost of destroying forest, because forests sustain life."

Abdul Karim Kim, general secretary of BAPA's Sylhet unit, warned of a tough movement if the authorities do not revoke the authorization to cut trees in Lawachhara forest.

In 1996, part of the West Bhanugach Reserved Forest was declared "Lawachhara National Park", comprising 1250 hectares of land.

Collapsed bridge not yet repaired

Causes suffering to 50,000 villagers in Jhenidah

AZIBOR RAHMAN, Jhenidah

Communication between Jhenidah and Magura through Narikel Baria-Tikari road has remained suspended for one month due to collapse of the bridge on the river Sanchai in the district.

The collapse of the bridge caused much suffering to around 50,000 people of 20 villages and hundreds of commuters.

The bridge constructed over the Sanchai River 22 years ago collapsed on June 6.

At present, people are crossing the river by a wooden bridge, but no vehicles can cross it. Farmers are incurring huge loss because they cannot transport their products to different mar-

kets.

This correspondent found that the Sanchai river flows by the side of Tikari bazaar on Narikelbaria-Tikari road. People of Jitore, Miakundo, Kushobaria, Dhananjoypur, Muktarampur, Marninda, Narikelbaria, Tikari, Dahkhola, Dighirpar, Laxmipur, Malanchi, Bangsha, Beruel and other villages use the bridge.

Abdul Rashid of Tikari village said, "We are facing difficulties due to collapse of the bridge. Even light vehicles like rickshaw, van, CNG-run autorickshaw cannot ply over it, so we are not able to carry our products to the markets."

Farmer Zinnat Ali of Miakundo village said the bridge developed

cracks 7/8 months ago and they informed the authorities concerned, who hung a signboard forbidding heavy vehicles from plying over the bridge. The bridge collapsed suddenly on June 6, injuring Sajib Hossain and Dulal Mia of Tikari village.

Ashik Hossain, a student of Class VIII in Narikel Baria Secondary School, said, "We cross the wooden bridge risking our lives. Now the water has risen during the rainy season, and we are facing more trouble going to school."

Abdul Malek, engineer of the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) in Jhenidah, said the designing of the bridge has been completed. He hopes that it will be constructed soon.



A bridge over the River Sanchi under Jhenidah Sadar upazila collapsed in Jhenidah on June 6. PHOTO: AZIBOR RAHMAN

Tidal water washes away 4 children

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

At least four children were washed away by the tide at Kutubdia on Thursday as tidal water entered the area through the broken embankment in Ali Hazi Para under Uttar Dhurung union.

They are Misbah Uddin, 7, son of Akhter Hossain, Nayon Moni, 11, daughter of Abul Hossain, Sumi Akhter, 8, daughter of Kamal Hossain and Nayon Moni, 5, daughter of Kaiser Hamid.

"The four children went out together to a relative's house for an Eid visit on Thursday evening. The road was suddenly flooded as tidal water entered through the broken embankment, carrying away the four victims," said ASM Shahriar Chowdhury, chairman of the union.

Locals searched for the missing children for hours, and found the bodies in that area, he said, adding that the tragic death of the children on Eid day has created a sorrowful environment in the locality.

Locals said the embankment had been damaged by Cyclone Roanu, and water entered through the affected portion during high tide.

Inform police

FROM PAGE 16

students who remained absent from their classes for a long time. The guardians may keep their identity secret while disclosing the names of their children, she said.

The prime minister said this while talking to media after exchanging Eid greetings with a cross section of people, party leaders and workers and professionals at her official residence Gonobhaban here.

"I urge the guardians to take steps to bring back their missing sons home. We will give them all cooperation to find their missing boys and for their treatment, if necessary," she said adding that "we want to say clearly that Bangladesh is not a place for militants and terrorists."

Pointing out the last week's Gulshan terror attack, the Prime Minister said they are

maligning Islam through conducting such heinous acts in the name of religion. Nothing could be more atrocious like killing people in the name of Islam, she said.

"What kind of Islamic virtues they belong to as they go to kill people instead of offering their prayers at prayers time, carry out suicidal bomb attack in the Masjid-un-nabi," she asked saying "actually they are foes of Islam."

Hasina said the bigots claimed to be devoted to executing the Sharia law and opposing all man-made laws. So why they are using man-made weapons, bombs, clothes and technologies for achieve their goal, she asked?

Termining Islam as a religion of peace and fraternity, the Prime Minister said Islam doesn't allow killing of any innocent people even they belong to other reli-

gions. The almighty is the final adjudicator and he never bestowed the responsibility on others.

Hasina said the militants have no faith in Allah. They consider them more powerful than Allah. So they can never go to the heaven, they will be thrown to the hell, she said adding that they have no right to harm the religious sentiment of others.

Urging for constituting committees in every village and wards to collect information about any missing persons, the Prime Minister said the government would give all support in this regard. However, she termed terrorism as a global phenomenon saying the international community has to shoulder the responsibility and work together to check the danger.

Hasina criticised some local and foreign human

rights agencies as they blamed only the government for missing of many youths over the last few years saying they didn't give correct information, rather played blame game accusing the government for those disappearances.

"Had they given us the correct information, we would have taken more tangible action for their rescue," she said.

The prime minister said her government is striving everyday to make a prosperous country, whereas a section of evil force is out to foil all successes of the nation. She urged the countrymen to remain vigilant about the conspiracy and keep confidence in her government.

The gate of the Gonobhaban opened for visitors at 9.30 am when people from all walks of life started coming after their Eid

prayers and waited in a long queue to meet the Prime Minister. On the occasion the big lawn of Gonobhaban was tastefully decorated.

At the beginning, senior Awami League leaders and cabinet members greeted the Prime Minister by presenting her with bouquets.

Leaders of different political parties, parliament members, freedom fighters, leaders of associate bodies of Awami League, different professional and trade bodies as well as a cross section of people including beggars and destitute exchanged Eid greetings with the prime minister.

Later, the PM exchanged Eid greetings with judges of the Supreme Court, senior civil and military officials and envoys of different friendly countries at a separate programme on Gonobhaban lawn.

FROM PAGE 16

"Those who carried out the attack are the enemies of the society and the country. Their patrons are bigger enemies. They want to destroy all institutions, achievements and future of the country," Sanaul, also the co-coordinator of International Crimes Tribunal's Investigation agency, wrote on his Facebook page at 4:00pm on Eid day.

"We united have to prevent them. I want to fight [against them] in the forefront even at this age," said the 66-year-old.

Many echoed him. They said criminals might launch an attack but they would never be able to destroy what Kishoreganj is known for.

Thursday's Eid congregation was the 189th on the

ground and no untoward incident had occurred before, locals said.

Ashrafuzzaman said like previous years, people began gathering in Kishoreganj two to three days before Eid so that they could offer their prayers along with tens of thousands of people.

He said Kishoreganj is a peaceful district and even during the countrywide violence between 2013 and 2015, the district was relatively calm. "It's beyond my understanding, how it [attack] could happen. We can't understand," he said, adding, "I never heard of any such incident here before."

On Friday evening, Humayun Kabir, a primary school teacher from Karimganj upazila of the district, went to the area, where the attack was carried

out by suspected militants, to see what had happened there.

"I have no words to condemn the attack," he said.

Besides farming, 29-year-old Tota Mia, of nearby Mohinanda Bhadrpara village, pulls rickshaw in the district town for living. "My only demand is to bring the killers to book so that such incidents never recur."

Kerala slaps

FROM PAGE 16

However, most high-fat snacks and other fast-food items in India are still sold by largely unregulated street vendors rather than branded chains.

While India has high rates of malnutrition, lifestyle-related health problems including diabetes and obesity are also major issues, particularly in cities.