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Create awareness to resist terror

PM directs ministers to take measures to tackle militancy, prevent misuse of religion



- Form countrywide anti-militancy committees
- Build public opinion against terrorism
- Engage people from all walks of life to counter terrorism
- Inform police about missing youths

HASAN JAHID TUSHER

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked her cabinet colleagues to take measures to create social awareness for resisting terrorism in the country.

At the weekly cabinet meeting, she advised them to engage people from all walks of life in the campaign against militancy and misinterpretation of religion.

She told the ministers to give instructions to all officials and staff at the secretariat so that they can play due role in tackling terrorism and preventing the misuse of Islam.

Hasina, also president of the ruling Awami League, directed them to form anti-militancy committees from district to grassroots levels, several ministers present at the meeting told The Daily Star.

The premier said all lawmakers must tell people in their constituencies to keep a close watch on strangers in their localities and inform police about the missing people, especially youths.

The ministers have to be vocal about the misinterpretation of religion and the evils of terrorism, she added.

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People cram onto the deck of a launch heading for Dhaka from Jhalakathi as they return to the capital after spending the Eid holidays with their loved ones. The vessel is apparently carrying more passengers than its capacity. The photo was taken from the Gabkhan Bridge in Jhalakathi on Sunday.

PHOTO: M JAHRUL ISLAM JEWEL

Where are they? Sholakia was not his first mission

Police claim they've released 2 café siege survivors from custody; families say they are yet to return

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two Gulshan attack survivors, who were taken into custody after the 11-hour café siege, have yet to return home, family members say while police claim they were "released" after questioning.

Tahmid Hasib Khan, 22, and Hasnat Karim, 47, along with all the other survivors, were taken by the Detective Branch of police for interrogation after the Holey Artisan Bakery standoff ended on July 2.

"We released them after questioning," Masudur Rahman, deputy commissioner (media) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), told this newspaper yesterday.

However, families say they could not yet contact Tahmid and Hasnat and that the two seem to have just vanished.

The duo was not shown arrested in a case or produced before court.

"I am anxious about his safety," Hasnat Karim's father Rezaul Karim told The Daily Star yesterday.

He added that he wrote to the DMP commissioner and the IGP in the last couple of days and wanted to know where his son is and if it is possible to talk to him over the phone at least for once.

Tahmid's brother Talha Khan, who lives in Toronto, told Canadian TV channel CIV News on Sunday that Tahmid was "officially taken in as a witness".

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Arrested Shafiul 'involved in two target killings in Kurigram, Panchagarh'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shafiul Islam, who was caught at the attack scene near Sholakia Eidgah on Thursday, was involved in at least two other targeted killings in Kurigram and Panchagarh, police said yesterday.

He is a charge-sheeted accused in the killing of Hindu priest Jogeswar Dasadhikari in Panchagarh and was involved in the killing of Hossain Ali, a Christian convert in Kurigram, they added.

Benazir Ahmed, director general of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), said Shafiul stood accused in four murder cases, but he gave little details.

Suspected militants slit the throat of Jogeswar, 50, at Sri Sri Shonto Gaurio temple of Shonapota in Debiganj on February 21 and fled the spot firing shots and exploding homemade bombs, which injured two devotees.

On March 22, three bike-riding assailants slit the throat of Hossain Ali, 68, a freedom fighter who had converted to Christianity from Islam in the 1990s.

According to US-based SITE Intelligence which monitors jihadist activities, Islamic State took credit for both the attacks, but the government dismissed the reports saying IS had no presence in Bangladesh.

Police detained bullet-hit Shafiul, also known as Shariful as well as Saiful, 22, from Char Sholakia area, where suspected militants attacked policemen with sharp weapons, guns and bombs on the Eid day. He is from of Raniganj Bazar in Dinajpur.

Another suspect, Jahidul Haque Tanim, 24, of Pashim Tarapasha village

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4 'ABT men' held in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police in drives on Sunday night in Sitakunda upazila held four suspected activists of banned militant outfit Ansarullah Bangla Team (ABT).

The arrests were made on the basis of intelligence reports that the ABT men were planning to carry out attacks on members of law enforcement agencies and different important establishments in the upazila, said police.

The four are identified as Musa Ebne Omayer, 25, of Patiya; Shipon alias Foysal, 25, of Brahmanbaria; Khorshed Alam, 31, of Anwara; and Russell Md Islam, 40, of Kumira in Sitakunda.

Mostafizur Rahman, additional superintendent of police (north), said the four were detained during drives at Barabkunda and adjacent areas in Sitakunda.

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'Strong US support in fighting terror'

Assures Biswal; PM says she would get to the root of militancy

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The US has "strong support" for Bangladesh in its battle against terrorism and extremism, said American diplomat Nisha Desai Biswal yesterday.

Following the July-1 terrorist attack at a Gulshan café, US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Biswal arrived in Bangladesh on Saturday to discuss "shared concerns" and offer US support to tackle terrorism and extremism.

She met Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday afternoon at the Gono Bhaban.

During the meeting, Biswal offered US expertise in building Bangladesh's counterterrorism capabilities, and better training of law enforcers on tech-intelligence and cyber security, sources said.

The prime minister emphasised the need for sharing information to tackle terrorism.

Renewing her government's strong stance against terrorism, Hasina on Monday vowed to find the root causes of the recent terror attacks in Bangladesh.

"Children of rich families were involved in the Gulshan terror attack. We'll find out the people behind this... who're recruiting these youths," she said, reports UNB.

Biswal said the youths were from well-to-do families and one of the things to look into was that they had acted out of adventurism and not out of religious spirit.



Nisha Desai Biswal

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Vehicles negotiate large potholes filled with rainwater on the Steel Mill Road in Chittagong city. Many of the vehicles break down on the way because of the appalling state of the road, resulting in long tailbacks. The photos were taken yesterday.



PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

Theresa May to be UK's next PM

Cameron says he will step down tomorrow

AFP, London

Theresa May is to become the UK's prime minister tomorrow evening after David Cameron announced he would quit.

May was left as the only contender standing after the withdrawal from the leadership race of Andrea Leadsom, who faced criticism for suggesting she was more qualified to be premier because she had children.

Cameron later announced she would take over from him tomorrow, when he is expected to go and see Queen Elizabeth II to tender his resignation and recommend Home Secretary May as his successor.

"On Wednesday, I will attend the House of Commons for Prime Minister's Questions and then after that I expect to go to the palace and offer my resignation so we'll have a new prime minister in that building behind me by Wednesday evening," he said in a statement delivered outside 10 Downing Street.

Britain has faced the worst political turmoil in generations following June 23's shock vote to leave the European Union, which prompted Cameron to step down.

His Conservatives have endured a bitter leadership race while the leader of the main opposition Labour party



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