

10 members of fraud gang held

Nine of them foreigners

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It's a unique style for a fraud gang to deceive people.

The gang, most of its members are foreigners, first paste chemicals on dollars to make those black to hide the real information.

The gang tells its target people that those black papers are actually dollars. They have brought those to Bangladesh from abroad, dodging the vigilance of law enforcement agencies.

They then wash some black notes by using chemicals in front of the people to show that those notes are original dollars. When the people are convinced, the fraudsters sell other bundles of those black notes and chemicals to them, according to Rapid Action Battalion (Rab).

But when the buyers apply the same method later, they find only white papers, and in some cases, fake dollars.

The gang of deceivers was busted as Rab detained its 10 members, including nine African nationals, from the capital's Bashundhara Residential Area on Sunday night.

"The gang sold 22,000 dollar in exchange for Tk 10 lakh," said Lt Col Mohiuddin Ahmed, commanding officer of Rab-2, at a press briefing at its headquarters yesterday.

"They deceived a good number of people and smuggled the money, collected by cheating people, into their respective countries," he added.

"On receiving a complaint from a victim, a team of Rab-2 raided different flats and nabbed the 10 fraudsters along with fake dollars and dollar-making equipment and chemicals," the Rab official said.

Rab also recovered a video clip of the technique the gang used for showing their target people.

The foreigners told their target

people that a huge amount of dollars remained unused in their countries, the Rab official added.

Seven of the foreigners are Cameroon nationals while two others are from Congo. The rest is Bangladeshi.

Five of them failed to show their passports to law enforcement agencies while the visa of four others had expired long ago, said the Rab official.

Seven Cameroon citizens are Abdou Nassara, Jean Claude, Gonou Desire, Mimba Serge, Kambiwa Dieu Nedort, Moguem Solo and Tiadeu Barnard while two Congo nationals are Ngonga Diasonama Merlin, and Mutombo Nzail Yousouf. The Bangladeshi is Mare Moyna Poroi Taylor.

Apart from counterfeiting notes, the gang was also involved in drug trading. Rab also seized around 100 active SIM cards registered biometrically from their possession.

The special force, however, did not go into detail about the Bangladeshi's role in the criminal activities.

HOW IT ATTRACTS PEOPLE

The gang members choose two ways to attract their target people.

Firstly, they lure the people, offering a huge amount of foreign currencies or making their business partner. Secondly, they offer them dollars at a cheap rate.

Rab officials said some Bangladeshis were assisting the foreigners but could not mention their names.

As security was beefed up at the airport, many of the African nationals were entering the country illegally from the neighbouring countries, said Mohiuddin.

Rab officials said deportation of the African nationals is very difficult as there is no embassy of many of the African countries in our country.



Counterfeit notes and fake currency making materials shown before the media at the Rab-2 office in the capital's Agargaon yesterday after the elite force detained 10 people, including nine foreigners, from Bashundhara Residential Area with those.

PHOTO: STAR

Tamim's dangerous Canada connection

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their Bashundhara flat to Gulshan and left the area after bidding them farewell just before the café siege began around 8:40pm on July 1.

And on July 7, the Eid day, he took the Sholakia attackers to a place near the police checkpoint in a CNG-run auto-rickshaw, briefed them and then left Kishoreganj, they add.

THE CALGARY CONNECTION

Calgary reserves a special spot in Canada's terrorism outlook. According to the National Post, a small group of young men left Calgary to fight in the Syrian conflict. Calgary is the home of some dangerous jihadists such as Damian Clairmont, Salman Ashrafi, Gregory and Collin Gordon and Farah Shirdon.

Salman Ashrafi, 22, has been identified by a jihadist group as a suicide bomber responsible for killing 46 people in Iraq in November 2013, according to a report by CBC on June 5, 2014.

The IS, according to the National Post of Canada, released in early June of 2014 photos of Ashrafi along with a eulogy saying he had carried out a car bombing in north of Baghdad.

Damian Clairmont, who converted to Islam at the age of 17, was part of a circle of friends in Calgary that included Ashrafi. Clairmont, who took the name Mustafa al-Gharib, prayed at the same mosque and lived in the same

apartment building in downtown Calgary as Ashrafi. Clairmont left Calgary for Syria in November 2012 to fight with Jabhat al-Nusra, an al-Qaeda-affiliated rebel group consisting largely of foreign extremists. He was injured in battle and subsequently captured and killed by an unknown faction of the Free Syrian Army in the city of Aleppo.

Syed Soharwardy, a Calgary imam, told CBS television channel: "It is impossible for me to think the intelligence people do not know who is radicalising Muslim youth. It is going on undercover; it is going on openly sometimes."

Ashrafi, Clairmont and other Calgary radicals were all friends who dined at the same restaurants, prayed at the same mosque and lived in the same apartment building in downtown Calgary, CBS News said.

According to one source who knew all the men, they had meetings, sometimes in Ashrafi's apartment, where he reportedly instructed them that the only way to live with non-Muslims was to either convert them or subjugate them, and failing that migrate to a land of Islam.

They all left Canada at roughly the same time in late 2012.

It is among such dangerous clout in Calgary that Tamim was seen hanging around and got radicalised.

An intelligence brief for the Canada Border Services Agency has shown how jihadists have used Canada on a large

scale to join IS, according to Ottawacitizen.com.

It is estimated that some 180 Canadians have left the country to take part in jihadi war around the world, the director of Canadian Security Intelligence Service said in March, according to the National Post. About 60 have come back already, and Tamim was probably one of them.

According to Amarnath's article posted on jihadology.com, friends of these terrorists remembered Tamim in Calgary.

Tamim was born on July 25, 1986, and is a Canadian citizen.

According to Amarnath's findings, he probably attended JL Forster Secondary School in Windsor and was an active sportsman.

He completed his graduation in Chemistry from the University of Windsor in spring 2011 and then travelled to Calgary.

"It is unclear whether he moved to Calgary, or simply travelled back and forth several times," Amarnath wrote. "The latter seems more likely since those I spoke with in Calgary only remember him intermittently. Tamim seems to have stayed low-key perhaps, and did not mix too closely with the Muslim community there."

"One source told me that he remembers Tamim hanging out with Damian Clairmont at the 8th and 8th Musallah, where Damian, Salman

Ashrafi, Collin and Gregory Gordon, another individual named Waseem (last name unknown, but not Ahmad Waseem), and a few others held a private study circle. According to friends of theirs, Damian was likely the one who took a leadership role over the group, but it could be that Tamim was equally influential."

Tamim then went to Syria, either directly from Calgary or from Windsor, probably in late 2012. But another source of Amarnath claims he saw Tamim hanging around the University of Calgary in 2013.

From Syria, Tamim perhaps came to Bangladesh, but the time of his arrival is not clear.

But since then he has been operating in Bangladesh in various guises. Police think he frequently changes his appearance to avoid arrest.

Tamim is thought to have taken up the name of Shaykh Abu Ibrahim al-Hanif. In this name he has given a chilling interview in Dabiq, the so-called magazine of IS.

"Bengal [Bangladesh] is an important region for the Khalifah and the global jihad due to its strategic geographical position. Having a strong jihadi base in Bengal will facilitate performing guerrilla attacks inside India," he said.

As part of his assignment in Bangladesh, Tamim had been planning another big attack. He had set up a den in Kalyanpur which was busted

ACC arrests 19 cops

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through 32 forged cheques between 2010 and 2012, according to a case filed against her.

The ACC also arrested former district accounts officer of Brahmanbaria Mokhesur Rahman and former SAS superintendent of the office Billal Hossain Patwari in a case filed with Brahmanbaria Model Police Station in October last year.

According to the case statement, they in collaboration with 20 others embezzled Tk 16.06 crore of pensioners' money from state-run Sonali Bank with the help of bank officials.

The anti-graft body arrested two

persons -- Abdul Kader Mia and Shukur Mahmud -- of Induti Konabari of Tangail, for taking away ownership of 450 decimal land of one Makhan Lal Ghosh through frauds.

A case was filed in this regard against six people, including the arrestees, with Kalihati Police Station.

Another ACC team arrested former union social worker Ansar Uddin in Mymensingh for misappropriating Tk 7.29 lakh by forging the signature of Netrokona's Purbadhala social welfare officer Abdul Samad Mia.

Ansar used to work in the social welfare office in Netrokona.

Militants spinning their web from jail

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of Jasimuddin Rahmani, was visited by three persons claiming to be his wife, brother and father on multiple occasions within a month last year, the report said.

Two of the visits took place on consecutive days violating the jail code.

Terming the practice unusual, the report observed, "The same is happening often in all prisons of the country."

Noki, who had even chalked out a blueprint on how to attack VVIPs by breaking through the security chain, was released on bail on June 2 this year. He is accused in two cases under Anti-Terrorism Act and Explosive Substances Act.

On September 26 and 27 last year, Fatema Ishrat Jahan and Zulqarnine Noki, who claimed to be his wife and brother, met him twice in violation of the jail code.

Fatema met Noki also on August 29

and September 12 the same year.

"Since the accused [Noki] is linked with the militant high-ups, information should be gathered about his wife and brother through investigation," read the report.

There are over a hundred accused militants in Kashimpur jail. Of them, more than 50 remain in the high-security unit.

Seven top militants, including Noki, were arrested on September 19, 2014 on charges of planning to assassinate VVIPs and snatch away ABT chief Jasimuddin Rahmani.

Police recovered from them 10kg chemicals mixed with gel, some jihadi books and leaflets propagating militancy.

With Noki released on bail, the remaining six, including acting JMB chief Abdullah Al Tasnim alias Nahid, "are often holding meetings" inside the high security unit of Kashimpur jail, the report mentioned.

"Before his arrest," the report read, "Noki was an active member of Ansarullah Bangla Team and JMB. After two years of imprisonment, no change of his mindset could be perceived."

There was information from secret sources that he would again coordinate activities of extremists and militants, it added.

Contacted, Mijanur Rahman, senior jail superintendent of Kashimpur High Security Prison, said anybody seeking to meet militants is required to submit a copy of national identity card, mobile phone number, and details of relationship with the inmate.

The intelligence report termed the measure insufficient.

"It is not being verified in any jail whether some other people are pretending to be relatives for visiting detained militants and it is not possible to verify visitors' relations with militants only through copies of

identity cards," it reads.

Stating that the militants' meetings with visitors take place in the presence of intelligence officials, Mijanur Rahman added that an inmate's meetings with visitors are allowed at least at 15-day intervals.

Since the accused militants are kept together, they can sometimes talk among themselves, but they are always strictly monitored, he claimed.

AFTER BAIL

The report apprehends that the militants released from prison are becoming more alert than before and coming up with new techniques to develop and coordinate secret networks.

Noki already had intimacy with absconding blogger killers, active ABT members, militant outfits based in Pakistan and planners of an attempted army coup in the country in 2012.

"As a result, while on bail now, he is likely to get involved in planning and

coordinating them again," the report observed.

"It is learnt from Noki's relatives that even before the order of his bail arrived [at the jail], a lot of cash was exchanged in the police station concerned so that he is not arrested again in cases filed against him," it said.

Between February and May this year, at least 28 inmates belonging to banned militant outfits JMB and Hizb ut-Tahrir and involved in anti-state activities were released on bail from Kashimpur jail, says the report, which contained a list of 15 militants on bail.

There is almost no monitoring of their whereabouts and activities, the report said, citing different sources.

"The possibility that many of them were involved in recent secret killings and subversive activities cannot be dismissed."

RECOMMENDATION

The report said it is very important to

take effective steps and verify whether the released militants have been directly or indirectly spreading the network of militancy, collecting funds, making plans, training new members, recruiting and arranging bails for imprisoned militants.

Besides, the issue of granting bails to militant leaders should be thought afresh since it is heard from different sources that they spend huge amount of money to get bails, it read.

Strong directives should be given to the authorities concerned to increase surveillance and restrictions regarding bails granted to militants, top terrorists, Jamaat-Shibir activists and those accused in anti-state activities, the report added.

It also recommended increasing surveillance and imposing restrictions on sending militant inmates to courts, their meetings with outsiders and their treatment at hospitals.

Taliban kill 70 in Pak hospital

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Video footage showed bodies strewn on the ground, some still smoking, among pools of blood and shattered glass as shocked survivors cried and comforted one another.

Many of the victims were clad in the black suits and ties traditionally worn by Pakistani lawyers.

An AFP journalist was about 20 metres away when the bomb went off.

"I ran back to the place and saw dead bodies scattered everywhere and many injured people crying. There were pools and pools of blood around and pieces of human bodies and flesh."

Nurses and lawyers wept as medics from inside the hospital rushed out to help dozens of injured, he said.

"People were beating their heads, crying and mourning. They were in shock and grief."

Pervez Masi, who was injured by pieces of flying glass, said the blast was

so powerful that "we didn't know what had happened".

"So many friends were martyred," he said. "Whoever is doing this is not human, he is a beast and has no humanity."

Police confirmed the attack was a suicide blast.

"The bomber had strapped some eight kilograms (18 pounds) of explosives packed with ball bearings and shrapnel on his body," bomb disposal unit chief Abdul Razzaq told AFP.

A faction of the Pakistani Taliban, Jamaat-ul-Ahrar, claimed responsibility for the attack in an email to journalists.

Jamaat-ul-Ahrar has also said it was behind the deadliest attack in Pakistan so far this year, a bombing in a crowded Lahore park that killed 75 people on Easter Sunday.

A spokesman vowed more attacks "until the imposition of an Islamic system in Pakistan".

"The death toll has risen to 70 and

there are 112 injured," the head of the provincial health department, Dr Masood Nausherwani, told reporters.

Officials said mobile phone jammers had been activated around hospitals in the area -- a regular precaution after an attack -- making it hard to contact officers on the ground to get updated information.

LAWYER'S DEATH MOURNED

The crowd, mainly lawyers and journalists, had gone to the hospital after the death of the president of the Balochistan Bar Association in a shooting earlier yesterday, said provincial home secretary Akbar Harifal.

Bilal Anwar Kasi was targeted by two unidentified gunmen as he left his home for work.

Pakistan is grimly accustomed to atrocities after a nearly decade-long insurgency. But security had markedly improved in 2015, when the death toll from militant attacks fell to its lowest since 2007, when the TTP was formed.

Restoration to take

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sand bags at landing station number 2 and 4 are going on at the moment.

However, according to Golam Mostafa, executive engineer of Roads and Highways Department at Rajbari, his department might not be able to complete repairing the damaged approach roads of landing stages 2 and 4 before Thursday.

In the meantime, the terminal authorities have been directing incoming vehicles to take a detour through either the Bangabandhu Bridge or Mawa ferry terminal routes.

During a visit to the Daulatdia ferry terminal yesterday, this correspondent found around 500 trucks waiting for the ferry services to resume.

Workers of Rajbari RHD were also seen dumping sand bags and piling bamboo posts at landing stage number 1 and 4.

Locals, however, see this work as a

waist of public funds as well as eyewash because the makeshift nature of the work will not withstand the immense force of strong currents of the Jamuna.

Sheikh Mohammad Nasim, deputy general manager of BIWTC, told this correspondent three small ferries have started to operate with passengers and private cars around 1:30pm, using landing stage 3, which is also partially damaged.

According to BIWTC officials, strong currents of the Jamuna caused damage to landing stage 4 on July 27 and landing stages 1 and 2 on August 6. Approach roads to landing stages 2 and 4 had also been damaged due to the same reason.

The fleet of Paturia-Daulatdia ferry services consist of eighteen ferries, but the service has gone unstable since July 20, due to ferry shortage and strong currents in the river.

Our Madaripur Correspondent adds:

The Shimulia-Kaorakandi ferry route on the River Padma is witnessing a heavier traffic as the Paturia-Daulatdia ferry services on the Jamuna remain unstable over the last few weeks.

Adding to the crisis, receding water level in the Padma has been causing poor navigability for the ferries on the route.

The operators are being forced to load fewer vehicles onto the ferries while reducing speed to avoid hitting underwater shoals (char) as well as damaging the vessels, resulting in longer queues of vehicles at the terminal.

Ahmed Ali, marine officer at Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation, said, two dredgers are operational for ensuring navigability of the route, but the work is stalling