



2012 RAMU MAYHEM UP chairman detained for alleged links

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

Detectives yesterday detained an Upazila Parishad chairman of the district for his alleged link to the 2012 attacks on Buddhist temples in Ramu of Cox's Bazar.

Tofail Ahmed, chairman of Naikkhangchhari upazila, was detained on "specific allegations", said Sanjit Kumar Banik, superintendent of Bandarban police.

He was detained from Rajarmath area of the town around 2:00pm, he added.

Earlier, Tofail appeared before a local court and also met Bir Bahadur U Shwe Sing, state minister for Chittagong Hill Tracts affairs.

As he came out of the minister's house, a team of Detective Branch of police picked him up and took him to their office for interrogation, the DSP said.

Tofail stands accused in 11 cases. Sources said he was a leader of Islami Chhatra Shibir, student wing of Jamaat-e-Islami, when he was a student at Chittagong University. He had later got involved in Jamaat politics, they added.

Earlier in 2012, Tofail denied his involvement with Jamaat but admitted that he was a Shibir activist at CU.

He went into hiding following the mindless arson attacks on the Buddhist temples and Buddhist community in Ramu on September 29, 2012.

Earlier, members of the Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) arrested him at the Sundarban Hotel in the capital's Karwan Bazar on January 11.

He was also arrested in November 2013 but was elected upazila chairman for the second time as he contested the polls from jail.

He later obtained a bail from the High Court and was discharging his duties as the chairman.

However, the LGRD ministry suspended him on October 10 last year after a court took the charges against him into cognisance. But Tofail was reinstated on October 14 following an HC order that came in response to his writ petition.

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Awami League lawmaker Amanur Rahman Khan Rana being taken to jail yesterday after he had surrendered before a Tangail court in the freedom fighter Faruk Ahmed murder case.

PHOTO: STAR

MP Amanur denied bail, sent to jail

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surrendered before the court of First Additional District and Sessions Judge Abul Mansur Miah in the morning and pleaded for bail.

He later landed in Tangail district jail.

Amanur will now face trial in the murder case as the court had earlier fixed September 29 for hearing on the charge framing.

The lawmaker, however, was able to escape serious charges brought against him in 44 other cases.

These charges include murder, attempt to murder, extortion, grievous hurt, riot and unlawful assembly, according to his affidavit submitted to the Election Commission for the January 5, 2014 election.

Of the total 46 cases, eight to nine were withdrawn in 2013 after the AL government labelled those as "politically motivated", said local police and sources close to the lawmaker.

Final reports were submitted in another 20 to 25 cases as police claimed they did not find any merit in those.

A few other cases were withdrawn on "mutual understanding".

He is now only facing the Faruk murder case while the proceedings over another case were stayed by the High Court.

Faruk, former publicity secretary of

district AL, was found shot dead near his College Para house in Tangail town on the night of January 18, 2013.

A charge-sheet in the case submitted by Tangail Detective Branch (DB) in February this year says Amanur and his family opposed Faruk's vying for the post of Tangail AL general secretary in 2012.

Amanur's brother Shahidur Rahman Khan Mukti was a contestant for the position.

After failing to persuade Faruk to quit the race, Amanur and his brothers assigned their accomplices to kill him, it says.

Yesterday, advocate Monirul Islam Khan appeared for the state while Abdul Baki, Faizur Rahman and Khandakar Faikuzzaman Nazib defended the accused.

Sources said Rana reached the court around 7:30am, several hours before the start of the day's activities, amid tight security and in the presence of a huge number of police and Rab members.

Faruk's widow Nahar Ahmed, plaintiff in the case, was present in the court and strongly opposed the bail prayer, terming the accused a killer.

She also rebuked advocate Faikuzzaman, her brother, for defending Amanur.

Later Faruk's followers led by Nahar

brought out a procession and held a rally on the court premises. They chanted slogans against Amanur and demanded his punishment.

The involvement of Amanur and his three brothers in the killing came to light in August 2014 when investigators were interrogating two suspects - Anisur Rahman Raja and Mohammad Ali.

Amanur and his brothers went into hiding after police mentioned their names as suspects in the case.

On January 21, 2013, Nahar filed the murder case with Tangail Model Police Station against unidentified criminals. The case was later shifted to Tangail DB.

CHARGE-SHEET

On February 3 this year, Investigation Officer Mahfeejur Rahman of Tangail DB submitted the charge-sheet, naming 14 people, including Amanur and his three brothers, before the Judicial Magistrate's Court.

His three brothers are Shahidur, former mayor of Tangail municipality; Jahidur Rahman Khan Kakon, former president of Tangail Chamber of Commerce, and Saniyat Khan Bappa, former vice-president of Bangladesh Chhatra League.

Investigators said the other 10 accused are their accomplices who played various roles in the murder.

They are Amanur's close aides Kabir Hossain, Samir and Farid Ahmed, his brothers' bodyguards Anisur Rahman Raja and Mohammad Ali, security guard Babu, Jubo League leaders Alamgir Hossain, Nasir Uddin, Sanowar Hossain and ex-municipality commissioner Masudur Rahman.

Raja, Mohammad Ali and Samir are in jail while Farid was released on bail last month.

The rest are on the run, said police.

FAMILY CLAIM

Amanur's family, however, claims that he was in his constituency in Ghatail when Faruk was killed. And his two brothers Shahidur and Jahidur were abroad and another younger brother Bappa was in the district BCL office on that night.

The family alleged that a vested quarter in league with some unscrupulous law enforcers hatched a conspiracy to have the lawmaker and his brothers named in the case for personal gains and also to make Tangail AL weak.

THE CASE PROGRESS

On April 6 this year, the Senior Judicial Magistrate's Court in Tangail issued arrest warrants for Amanur and nine other fugitives. Judge Aminul Islam passed the order after accepting the charge-sheet.

On May 16, a senior judicial magis-

Accused killed in 'gunfight' with Rab

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushiya

The prime suspect in the murder case of school student Mahfuz Alam Sajib of Chuadanga was killed early yesterday in a 'gunfight' with Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) at Gobindapur village in Damurhuda upazila of Chuadanga district.

The deceased, Rakibul Islam alias Rakib Member, 28, was wanted for abduction and murder of fifteen-year-old school student Sajib. Rakib was son of Iman Ali from the same village in Damurhuda.

Maj Munir Ahmed, deputy director of Rab-6 in Jhenidah, said they raided a house at around 2:30am on information that Rakib had been staying there.

Rakib and his cohorts opened fire on the law enforcers during the raid, triggering a gun battle that lasted half an hour.

After the fight was over Rab found Rakib with bullet injuries while his gang members had already fled the scene, Maj Munir said.

Rakib succumbed to his injuries on way to Damurhuda Upazila Health Complex, the Rab official said, adding that they recovered a local shutter gun, two rounds of bullets and a sword from the scene.

On July 29, Sajib, son of late

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Militants kill 17 Indian soldiers

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response," Singh said in response to a reporter's question. He did not elaborate.

Earlier, Prime Minister Narendra Modi strongly condemned what he called the "cowardly terror attack".

"I assure the nation that those behind this despicable attack will not go unpunished," Modi said in a series of Twitter posts.

The raid came as tensions were already running high in India's only Muslim-majority region, which has faced more than two months of protests following the July 8 killing of the commander of another Pakistan-based separatist group.

At least 78 civilians have been killed and thousands injured in street clashes with Indian security forces, who have been criticised by human rights groups for using excessive force.

In an even stronger response, Indian Home Minister Rajnath Singh tweeted: "Pakistan is a terrorist state and should be identified and isolated as such."

Pakistan rejected allegations that it was involved. "India immediately puts blame on Pakistan without doing any investigation. We reject this," foreign ministry spokesman Nafees Zakaria told Reuters.

India and Pakistan have fought two of their three wars since independence from Britain in 1947 over Kashmir, which is divided between them. Both claim the former princely state in full.

CHOPPERS FLY IN, SMOKE RISES

Most of the fatalities happened in a tent that caught fire, Singh, the Indian army's director general of military operations, told the briefing in New Delhi.

He had informed his Pakistani counterpart of his findings, which linked the attack on Uri to a similar raid in January on an Indian Air Force base in Punjab that India also blames on Jaish-e-Mohammed.

Reuters television footage showed helicopters flying in to evacuate the injured as an operation continued to secure the area. Smoke rose from the

compound, set in mountainous terrain. The Defence Ministry earlier put the number of wounded at 35.

Singh, the home minister, chaired a crisis meeting in New Delhi and cancelled trips to Russia and the United States. Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar and the army chief of staff headed to Uri, roughly halfway between Indian Kashmir's summer capital Srinagar and Islamabad, to investigate the attack.

"There are definite and conclusive indications that the perpetrators of Uri attack were highly trained, heavily armed and specially equipped," Singh said in a series of strongly-worded tweets that were confirmed as genuine by his office.

US ambassador to India, Richard Verma, also "strongly condemned" the Uri attack, which comes weeks after Secretary of State John Kerry visited New Delhi.

After that meeting Kerry urged Pakistan to do more to combat terrorism, while also announcing the resumption of trilateral talks with India and Afghanistan this month in New York, leaving Islamabad looking isolated.

WORST BODY COUNT IN YEARS

The military death toll was one of the worst it has suffered in a single incident during years of conflict in Indian-ruled Kashmir.

Before this attack, 102 people had been killed in separatist attacks in India's part of the Himalayan region this year. Among them were 30 security personnel, 71 militants and one civilian, according to a tally by the New Delhi-based South Asia Terrorism Portal.

Modi recently raised the stakes in the neighbours' decades-old feud by expressing support for separatists in Pakistan's resource-rich Baluchistan province.

Pakistan has, meanwhile, called on the United Nations and the international community to investigate atrocities it alleges have been committed by Indian security forces in Kashmir.

The UN is preparing to hold its

annual general assembly in New York, where Kashmir is likely to come onto the agenda amid concerns that India's tough rhetoric could herald a military escalation between the old foes.

Senior Indian journalist and commentator Shekhar Gupta said Pakistan would be "delusional" to think that India would not respond. "This India has moved on from old strategic restraint," he said.

Relations between India and Pakistan have been on edge since the New-Year attack on the Pathankot air force base in Punjab, near the border with Pakistan, that killed seven uniformed men.

India has blamed Pakistan-based militant groups for that and a string of other attacks - including one on Mumbai in 2008 that killed 166 people. After initial progress, an attempt to conduct a joint investigation into the air base attack lost momentum and a tentative peace dialogue has stalled.

Tutor stabs

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being taken to Madaripur Sadar Hospital.

Villagers caught Milon, of Isharkandi village, when he was trying to flee after the incident. They also beat him up badly before handing him over to the police.

Sohodev Chandra Baroy, headmaster of Nabogram High School, said Nitu was a brilliant student. She achieved GPA-5 in last year's JSC examinations. The teacher demanded an exemplary punishment to Milon.

Milon had been Nitu's tutor since she was a student of class four. A love affair developed between them, but Nitu's father told Milon to discontinue the affair. For this reason, he killed the girl, he said.

They would form a human chain at the school today, protesting the murder, the headmaster added.

Delwar Hossain, sub-inspector of Dashed Police Station in Kalkini, said they arrested Milon. He was admitted to Madaripur Sadar Hospital as he was injured from the beating.

Blast rocks New York

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apartment buildings, late Saturday at around 8:30 pm local time.

Police later discovered a second bomb four blocks away, which was safely defused and taken away for analysis.

The attack put New York on full alert, just one day before world leaders are due to gather in the city for the UN General Assembly.

It came as a jihadist-linked news agency claimed that an Islamic State group "soldier" carried out a stabbing attack in a shopping mall in Minnesota that left eight people injured also late Saturday.

Local police said the attack "made some references to Allah," but the motivation of the attack was unclear. The attacker was shot dead by an off-duty police officer.

In New York, police and law enforcement have sealed off the traffic for five blocks around the scene and dozens of officers were out in force yesterday.

An AFP photographer said there was lots of debris, including rubble and glass on 23rd Street, where the explosion happened.

"Whoever placed these bombs, we will find and they will be brought to justice," New York Governor Andrew Cuomo told reporters at the scene.

"A bomb exploding in New York is obviously an act of terrorism, but it's not linked to international terrorism. In other words, we find no ISIS connection, et cetera," said Cuomo in reference to the Islamic State extremist group based in Iraq and Syria.

NO FURTHER THREAT

"But a bomb going off is generically a terrorist activity. That's how we'll consider it. And that's how we will prosecute it," he added.

An extra 1,000 state police and National Guard will deploy to airports, bus terminals and subway stations to reassure New Yorkers returning to work, he said.

"We have no reason to believe at this time that there is any further immediate threat," Cuomo said.

He said that while there was no evidence of an international terror link "at this time," it was still "very early in the investigation."



Fire fighters respond to an explosion on 23rd and 6th in New York Saturday. The explosion in New York's upscale and bustling Chelsea neighborhood injured at least 29 people.

PHOTO: AFP

The explosion outside a building on 23rd Street, between Sixth and Seventh Avenues, caused "significant" property damage with glass and shrapnel "everywhere," the governor said.

While the two devices planted in Manhattan appear to be similar, at this stage they seem to be different than a pipe bomb that exploded in the neighbouring state of New Jersey on Saturday, he said.

The New Jersey blast occurred in Seaside Park during a Marine Corps charity run and caused no injuries. Investigators were treating it as a possible act of terrorism, reports Reuters.

There were up to four timed explosives but only one detonated. Al Della Fave, a spokesman for the Ocean County prosecutor, told CNN.

TRUMP, CLINTON WADE IN

Of the 29 people who sustained injuries in New York, 24 were taken to hospital with various degrees of scrapes and abrasions from glass and metal, said Fire Department commissioner Daniel Nigro.

Witnesses living three blocks away told AFP they heard a large boom from

their fifth floor apartment, followed by the sound of sirens.

New York lauds itself as the safest big city in the United States. Violent crime has become rare in Manhattan and stringent security checks the norm in many areas since the 2001 al-Qaeda hijackings destroyed the Twin Towers.

The explosion in New York, the country's largest city, its financial and entertainment capital as well as home to the two presidential candidates, could impact America's divisive presidential election.

"I would like to express my warmest regards, best wishes and condolences to all of the families and victims of the horrible bombing in NYC," Republican nominee Donald Trump tweeted yesterday.

On Saturday, way before officials confirmed the cause of the explosion, Trump said it had been a bomb.

His Democratic rival Hillary Clinton immediately took swipe at her opponent, although later also used the word "bombings" to refer to what had happened in New York and New Jersey