



'Neo JMB' den busted in Ctg

29 grenades, big cache of bomb-making materials seized at rented house; weapons stashed there for subversive activities

STAR REPORT

Police yesterday seized a huge cache of grenades and explosive materials from the Chittagong house of two militant suspects, arrested over Tuesday's attack on a police checkpoint in Comilla.

On information gleaned from the two -- Mahmud Hasan, 24, and Jasim, 19 -- law enforcers raided the house on the ground floor of a two-storey building at Mirsharai municipality around 11:00pm on Tuesday.

The drive continued overnight and ended around 4:30pm yesterday, our Chittagong office said, citing police.

The seized items are 29 grenades, huge bomb-making materials, including 280 packets of metal balls (each pack contains 100 balls) and 40 packets of explosive gel, and nine machetes. Five black panjabis and a banner inscribed with the word "Allahu" in Arabic were also found.

The grenades were locally made with high explosives, Nur-e-Alam Mina, Chittagong superintendent of police, told The Daily Star.

The arrested are members of militant outfit "Neo JMB," said Mohibul Islam, deputy commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police's Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit.

"They are mid-level leaders of Neo JMB. They assembled the explosives and bomb-making materials for large-scale subversive activities," said another CTTC official who participated in the drive.

The recovery comes amid law enforcers' claims that the group is on back foot following some preemptive drives in which some of its top leaders

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Young girls say "NO" when a speaker from the podium asked them whether they would get married before turning 18. Shamajik Protirodh Committee, a platform of 70 women, rights and development organisations, organised a rally at the Central Shaheed Minar yesterday to mark the International Women's Day. Related stories and photos on page 3, 5.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN



SL in front after day of gift-giving

SAKEB SUBHAN from Galle

Much at odds with the aesthetics of the surroundings, the standard of cricket at the Galle International Stadium yesterday could not be described as high-class. The second day of the first Test between Bangladesh and Sri Lanka seemed more like a contest to see which side could give the other the advantage.

There was a Bangladeshi celebration for a catch that turned into a six as the fielder was standing on the ropes, two Sri Lankan dropped catches, and only two wickets that were actually earned among the eight that fell on the day. Then, of course, there was Tamim Iqbal's mad

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TOP QUOTE

"Before we face the world outside we need to face ourselves. If we know our strengths and weaknesses then facing the outside world becomes less hard."

SARWAT SIRAJ ANTARA
THE FIRST OFFICER OF YESTERDAY'S ALL WOMEN CREW BIMAN FLIGHT TO SYLHET

THOSE IN JAIL WITHOUT OFFENCE Victims can seek compensation: PM

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Those who have been detained despite committing no crimes can seek compensation from the authorities concerned, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina told parliament yesterday.

"There is also a legal provision that allows such people to seek compensation from the state," Hasina said in response to a query from Jatiya Party Lawmaker Nurul Islam Milon.

The question was tabled in the House during a question-answer session chaired by Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury.

The PM pointed out that cases against such detainees are now pending, and they might be either under investigation or trial. But if the judicial process lingers on, the judges concerned have the jurisdiction to consider their release on bail.

The premier also said she was informed during her detention in the last caretaker government's tenure that many people were detained without having committed any crime.

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IS attack kills 38 at Kabul hospital

Attackers dressed as doctors; victims are mostly patients, doctors, nurses; 70 injured

AFP, Kabul

Gunmen disguised as doctors stormed Afghanistan's largest military hospital yesterday, killing at least 38 people in a six-hour attack claimed by the Islamic State group as it makes inroads into the war-torn country.

More than 70 others were wounded in the assault on the Sardar Daud Khan hospital, with explosions and gunfire rattling Kabul's diplomatic district as dense clouds of smoke rose in the sky.

Medical staff hunkered down in the hospital wards posted desperate messages for help on social media, with television

footage showing some of them trapped on the ledge of a top-floor window.

"Attackers are inside the hospital. Pray for us," a hospital staff member wrote on Facebook.

Hospital administrators told AFP three gunmen wearing white laboratory coats began spraying bullets after a suicide bomber on foot blew himself up at the backdoor entrance, sparking chaos inside the 400-bed facility.

"I saw one of the attackers, armed with an AK-47 and dressed as a doctor, shooting at patients and guards on the third floor," hospital nurse Abdul Qadeer told AFP.

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Khadiza happy with verdict

Attacker Badrul gets life term

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Five months ago, the nation was shocked when a machete-wielding youth hacked Sylhet college student Khadiza Begum Nargis.

Khadiza's wait for justice ended yesterday as her attacker, Badrul Alam, was sentenced to life in prison by a Sylhet court.

The convict was also fined Tk 5,000, in default of which he would have to serve two more months in jail.

Sylhet Metropolitan Sessions Judge Akber Hossain Mridha delivered the verdict in the presence of Badrul in the courtroom, said Misbah Uddin Siraj, public prosecutor of the court.

Around 11:32am, the court started reading out the 30-page verdict, the PP added.

The court, in its observation, said Khadiza was a



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Rokeya Begum, a blind teacher taking a class at Tambulkhana Govt Primary School in Faridpur Sadar upazila recently. The very popular assistant teacher became blind at three.

PHOTO: STAR

Where there is a will...

Blindness no bar for Faridpur schoolteacher Rokeya

SUZIT KUMAR DAS with ANDREW EAGLE

Teaching is a profession that requires patience, skill and an enthusiasm for education. Teachers aim to inspire. Rokeya Begum, 27, an assistant teacher at Tambulkhana Government Primary School in Faridpur Sadar upazila is as dedicated as any, and through her example Rokeya's students take home an additional, extracurricular lesson: with persever-

ance, just about anything can be achieved. Rokeya is a successful teacher who is blind.

"Our Rokeya teacher is very good," says class-I student Sohana Akter. "She uses a lot of songs, clay models and hand movements to help us learn. Her classes are really interesting."

"It isn't possible to find any difference in quality between her classes and those of our other teachers," says Nadia Akter, a student of class-IV.

"She's a good teacher."

One of six siblings, five sisters and a brother, Rokeya lost her eyesight at the age of three. It's a disability that runs in the family. Two of her sisters are also blind.

"We consulted a doctor in Dhaka when I was eight years old and my sisters Shekha and Ashia were 10 and six," recalls Rokeya. "The doctor said our blindness was caused by our

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