

ANTI-MILITANCY OPERATIONS

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|--|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|--|--|---|---|
| JULY 1, 2016 NAME OPERATION THUNDERBOLT PLACE HOLEY ARTISAN (GULSHAN) |  | 5 MILITANTS, 1 CHEF, 20 HOSTAGES KILLED COPS KILLED 2 ARRESTED 0 | JULY 26, 2016 NAME OPERATION STORM 26 PLACE KALYANPUR |  | 9 MILITANTS KILLED COPS HURT 1 ARRESTED 1 | AUG 27, 2016 NAME OPERATION HIT STRONG 27 PLACE NARAYANGANJ |  | 3 MILITANTS KILLED COPS HURT 0 ARRESTED 0 | OCT 8, 2016 NAME OPERATION SPATE 8 PLACE GAZIPUR |  | 7 MILITANTS KILLED COPS HURT 2 ARRESTED 0 |
| DEC 24, 2016 NAME OPERATION RIPPLE 24 PLACE ASHKONA, UTTARA |  | 2 MILITANTS KILLED COPS HURT 1 ARRESTED 2 | MARCH 15, 2017 NAME OPERATION ASSAULT 16 PLACE SITAKUNDA CTG |  | 4 MILITANTS, 1 KID KILLED COPS HURT 4 ARRESTED 0 | MAR 25-29 2017 NAME OPERATION TWILIGHT PLACE ATIA MAHAL SYLHET |  | 4 MILITANTS KILLED COPS HURT 0 ARRESTED 0 | MAR 29-30 2017 NAME OPERATION HIT BACK PLACE NASIRPUR MOULVIBAZAR |  | 3 MILITANTS, 4 KIDS KILLED COPS HURT 0 ARRESTED 0 |
| MAR 29- APR 1 2017 NAME OPERATION MAXIMUS PLACE BOROHAT MOULVIBAZAR |  | 3 MILITANTS KILLED COPS HURT 1 ARRESTED 0 | APR 26-27, 2017 NAME OPERATION EAGLE HUNT PLACE SHIBGANJ CHAPAINAWABGANJ |  | 4 MILITANTS KILLED COPS HURT 0 ARRESTED 1 | MAY 7, 2017 NAME OPERATION SUBTLE SPLIT-2 PLACE MAHESHPUR JHENIDAH |  | 2 MILITANTS KILLED COPS HURT 3 ARRESTED 3 | MAY 10-11, 2017 NAME OPERATION SUN DEVIL PLACE BENIPUR RAJSHAHI |  | 5 MILITANTS, 1 FIREMAN KILLED COPS HURT 4 ARRESTED 1 |

5 militants, a fireman killed

FROM PAGE 1
five of his colleagues started spraying water into the den through a window, standing around 100 yards away.

Half an hour later, six adults with two children burst out of the house, and five of them rushed towards the firemen and police, witnesses said.

The policemen ran away leaving the firemen behind. Four of the six militants attacked Matin as he slipped while escaping, according to witnesses and police.

Police opened fire but Matin was already severely wounded.

In the shooting, Sazzad, 45, his wife Lutfunnesa Bely, 40, and Sazzad's daughter Karima, 18, were killed, witnesses and police told The Daily Star on Thursday.

Two other militants, Ashraful and Al Amin, both aged around 20, died in the two suicide blasts that took place almost at the same time of the firing, they added.

Sumaiya, another daughter of Sazzad, surrendered to police with her seven-year-old son Jubayer and one-and-a-half-month-old daughter Suraiya Akter Afia.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer of Godagari Jahid Newaz who was present at the scene said he saw two males blowing themselves up after they were shot.

Besides, a female was hacking the fireman even after she was bullet-hit,

he added.

However, Additional DIG Masudur Rahman Bhuiyan on Thursday night told journalists that all the militants got killed in suicide blasts. Additional DIG Nisharul Arif echoed the same yesterday afternoon.

Rajshahi SP Moazzem Hossain Bhuiyan said they arrested Sumaiya's husband Zahrul Islam five months ago and he is still in jail.

Zahrul was radicalised by his father-in-law, according to his brother Mainul Islam, a villager of Machhmara-Benipur.

"The militants were experts in making explosives and close associates of Neo JMB bomb expert Sohul Mahfuz," Md Moniruzzaman, assistant inspector general at the police headquarters, told this newspaper.

Police say the dead militants include Ashraful from Chapainawabganj, who had been on the wanted list of police over the last one year.

Getting BSC engineering degree, Ashraful, who was not related to Sazzad's family, was the bomb and IT experts, said DIG Nisharul Arif.

Moments before the blast, Ashraful grabbed one leg of police constable Taijul Islam. The policeman, however, managed to escape by leaving his boot in Ashraful's hands but his right leg was hit by a number of splinters.



Three other cops -- Additional Superintendent of Police Sumit Chowdhury, ASI Utpal Kumar and ASI Ahsan Habib -- also suffered splinter injuries.

Police suspended the operation at 8:00pm. It resumed on Friday morning after bomb disposal unit reached the scene from the capital.

Hours before the operation ended at 1:00pm yesterday, the unit entered the den and recovered 11 live bombs, one pistol, two bullets, one magazine, 1.5kg gunpowder, four belts of suicide vests, a number of electronics devices, including circuits of suicide vests and batteries, and 20 jihadi books.

The unit also found broken pieces of mobile phones.

Police said they sent the bodies of the militants to Rajshahi Medical College morgue for autopsy. Relatives refused to accept the bodies and so, they would be buried through

Quantum Foundation, officials added. Earlier on May 7, militants tried to explode bombs grabbing policemen in a "Neo JMB" hideout in Jhenidah. Two suspected militants were killed then.

JAMAAT LINK
Talking to this correspondent, a number of villagers said Sazzad was a follower of the Jamaat-e-Islami and his father-in-law Lutfar Rahman was a former ameer of Matikata union unit of the Jamaat.

He used to sell towels, lungi and children's clothes in villages riding on a bicycle, said Al Amin of Harishankarpur village.

"Sazzad would often stop by gatherings of people and advise them to follow the path of Islam", he said, adding that Sazzad also used to contribute to Jamaat fund.

Sazzad lived in front of his father-in-law's house at Machhmara village and he left the place six months ago for "Godagari town", said her mother-in-law Sakhina Begum.

Nurul Huda, a villager of Benipur, said the den was on a piece of five-katha land owned by Sazzad's mother. The suspected militant started living there two months back.

Sazzad's mother Marjan Bewa said she refused to give him the land at first. But he kept claiming "his share".

SLOPPY DRIVE
Fire service officials say a sloppy

drive is to blame for the death of their colleague.

There should have been coordination between local police and specialised units like Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime unit and Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT), they say.

Abdus Sattar, station officer of Godagari fire service unit, said, "Police officials assured us of foolproof security when they called us for the special operation."

"We, however, saw policemen stepping back while militants were continuously hitting Matin and they opened fire only after Matin was badly wounded," Sattar told The Daily Star.

Maj AKM Shakil Newaj, director (operation) of Fire Service and Civil Defence, said this type of drive is supposed to be conducted by specialised units.

He said they want the authorities to find out the loopholes in Thursday's operation.

The fire service formed a five-member body to investigate the death of the fireman.

"Nobody wants any casualty. But it can happen in operations and we then take lessons from it so that no such incident recurs," Additional DIG of Rajshahi Masudur Rahman Bhuiyan told this newspaper.

About the decision to spray water, Masud said it was necessary for

defusing explosives.

AUTOPSY
Enamul Haque, assistant lecturer of forensic medicine department of Rajshahi Medical College, who performed the autopsy on the five, yesterday said that none of the militants were bullet-hit.

He said Al Amin's neck, chest, abdomen and legs were severely burnt. Ashraful had fatal splinter and burn injuries in the head, face, and abdomen while Sazzad had injuries in his abdomen and lower parts of the body.

Bely and Karima had splinter injuries in the face, chest and hands.

Enamul also performed the autopsy on Matin. He said the fireman had two deep stab injuries in the head.

Matin left behind wife Tanjila Begum and two school-going children.

Tanjila said Matin went to his duty on Wednesday afternoon and did not return home at night.

He called her Thursday morning to say that he would be late as he was taking part in the raid. She heard the news of his death on TV.

The fire service has decided to pay her Tk 10 lakh in compensation.

[Shariful Islam and Mohammad Jamil Khan contributed to this report]

PM to join world leaders in May 21 summit in Riyadh

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has accepted the invitation of Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud to a summit to be attended by US President Donald Trump and other world leaders in Riyadh on May 21.

The Gulf News online in a report said invitations were being sent to the leaders of the Saudi-led Islamic coalition members to participate in the Arab, Islamic and United States summit.

Bangladesh is one of the founding members of the 41-nation Islamic Military Alliance to Fight Terrorism (IMAFT), which was floated by Saudi

Arabia in December 2015.

Saudi Arabian Culture and Information Minister Awad bin Saleh Al-Awad, who visited Dhaka recently, handed the invitation letter to Hasina at the Gono Bhavan on Wednesday.

Officials said the PM would depart for Riyadh on May 20, but the itinerary of her tour was yet to be finalised.

According to the Saudi Press Agency (SPA), invitations were sent to the presidents of Algeria, Yemen, Turkey, Iraq, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, the premiers of Bangladesh and Pakistan and the kings of Bahrain,

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Father, son

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Sadar Hospital, said some 10-15 men, led by a local ward member, carried out the attack around 8:00pm.

"We were having dinner and the main door was open. Suddenly, they [attackers] came and beat my husband and son mercilessly. My daughter-in-law and I tried to intervene but we were beaten too," she said, adding Chironjit was killed on the spot.

Korna was critically injured. He died later.

On information, police recovered the bodies and sent them to the hospital for autopsy.

Bhavo Laxmi claimed the ward member has been running illegal activities in the area for long and the attack was carried out for protesting them.

Contacted, Tareq Mohammad Abdul Hannan, officer-in-charge of Khagrachhari Police Station, confirmed the incident.

No case was filed till yesterday afternoon, he said, adding that they were trying to arrest the killers.

Rape accused Shafat, Sakif remanded

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Meanwhile, the two girls, who were "raped" in a posh hotel in the capital's Banani on March 28, gave judicial statements before a magistrate at her chamber on Thursday.

A Dhaka court also permitted Inspector Ismot Ara Ame, investigation officer of the case, to send a dress of one of the girls for a forensic test.

The girl handed the gown, she was wearing during the night of the incident, to police. She said she kept the dress with her, thinking it would help her get justice.

In another development, Customs Intelligence yesterday formed a two-member committee, headed by Deputy Director Shariful Hasan, to look into the sources of the wealth of Shafat's father Dilder Ahmed Selim. Dilder is one of the owners of Apan Jewellers.

The DMP also formed a three-member probe team, led by additional commissioner (crime), to investigate whether there was any negligence by Banani police in dealing the case from the beginning.

Earlier, the plaintiff had alleged that top officials of the Banani Police Station tried to brand them as "bad girls" when they went there for filing the rape case on May 4 and May 5. The police officials also allegedly tried to pressure them into negotiating with the accused.

Police recorded the case on May 6 after dilly-dallying for around two days.

Another four-member team has been formed to assist in the investigation as the case was filed over a month after the incident. It is led by Joint Commissioner Krishna.

The team would help the investigators present the evidence before the court, Krishna said.

The other members of the team are: deputy commissioner (DC) of DB north division, DC Gulshan division and DC of Women Support and Investigation Division.

Invited to Shafat's birthday party on March 28, the two girls went to the Banani hotel around 9:00pm. After the party ended around midnight, Shafat and Nayeem raped them in two rooms, alleged the girl who filed the case. Sakif,

Billal and Azad assisted the rapists, she said, adding all the five accused were drunk that time.

HOW THE TWO GOT ARRESTED

Police said Shafat contacted his uncle Masum Ahmed, who lives in Sylhet city, several times after the case was filed. The law enforcers tracked down Masum and learnt from him that Shafat and Sakif were hiding in "Rashid Manzil", a house owned by Masum's London expatriate friend Mamunur Rashid, reports our Sylhet correspondent.

Around 9:00pm on Thursday, a joint team from the police headquarters and the detectives of the DMP carried out a raid there and arrested the two accused, said Sugyan Chakma, additional superintendent (media) of Sylhet police.

The law enforcers had been keeping an eye on Shafat's relatives in Sylhet after the prime accused was spotted at a hotel in the district, said Mohammad Moniruzzaman, assistant inspector general of police headquarters.

On Monday, Shafat and four of his companions went to Regent Park Resort in Dakshin Surma upazila and inquired about room for rent. They, however, were not given any room as they refused to show the hotel authorities their national ID cards.

Later, the five left the hotel in a microbus.

Visiting "Rashid Manzil" on Thursday night, this correspondent saw that the house was almost empty. He, however, found one of the caretakers, Nur Nabi, who said Masum went there along with two unknown men on the night of May 10.

Earlier in the day, Mamun's mother went to her village home. Usually, she lives in that house alone.

Masum asked Nur and the other caretaker, Kacha Miah, to clean up one of the rooms for the "guests". "We did that without asking him anything as he is a close friend of the house owner."

He said, "The two men stayed inside throughout the next day and later that night, police raided the house and arrested them."

Talking to this correspondent last night, DC Shaikh Nazmul Alam of DB (north division), said all the accused, except Nayeem, fled to Gazipur

together after the case was filed with Banani Police Station.

Later, they somehow went to Narsingdi and then to Sylhet, where they changed their position frequently, he said, based on the primary interrogation of Shafat and Sakif.

After being denied the hotel room on Monday, driver Billal and bodyguard Azad got separated from the others. The two arrestees then moved in to "Rashid Manzil", he said.

It was not clear where Billal, Azad and Nayeem were staying and who was that other person among five who went to that hotel.

THE BRIEFING
In the briefing, Joint Commissioner Krishna said the three other accused would be arrested soon as several police teams were continuing their raids.

Asked whether the delay in filing the case might hamper the investigation, the police official said, "We are trying so that the evidence is not damaged and investigation is not hampered."

"We are trying to collect circumstantial, physical and oral evidence to prove the incident," he said, adding they already collected "sufficient evidence" in this regard.

The investigation team was working professionally. There is no scope for misunderstanding police over the incident, he added.

Krishna said they were also trying to find out whether anyone other than the five accused had a hand in the incident.

Replying to a query, he said police found no firearms from the arrestees. According to the girl who filed the case, they were raped at gunpoint.

CUSTOMS TO INVESTIGATE WEALTH OF SHAFAT'S FATHER

Moinul Khan, director general of Customs Intelligence and Investigation Directorate, told The Daily Star they issued a letter to Bangladesh Bank, seeking information of the bank accounts of Shafat's father Dilder Ahmed.

"It was learnt that Dilder Ahmed earned a huge amount of money through gold business. But in the last five years, no gold was imported into the country through proper channels. So, we want to know how he made the money," he said.

Stop sectarian war among

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The prime minister made the remarks when visiting Saudi Majlis Ash-Shura Speaker Abdullah bin Mohammed bin Ibrahim Ale-Al-Sheikh called on her at her office in the capital on Thursday afternoon.

After the meeting, PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim briefed reporters.

Referring to violence among various sects of the Muslims, the prime minister lamented that hundreds of people were being killed, and the Muslims were taking refuge in other countries. "It's a matter of shame, and we've to convince the misguided people to end this conflict."

Hasina said almighty Allah would deliver the last judgment. "So, why this division is among the Muslims, like Shia and Sunni... this [division] must be stopped," she said.

thought that they would go to heaven by carrying out suicide attacks would go to hell.

The Saudi speaker said some people were being misguided in exchange for money, and such problems existed among the youths in all countries. "Division is being created by taking this advantage."

In this regard, Abdullah said ulema (religious scholars) would have to play a role in convincing the misguided people about the true spirit of Islam.

Referring to the Arabic Islamic American Historical Summit to be held in Riyadh on May 21, he said the problems of the Muslims would be discussed at the summit.

The Saudi Majlis Ash-Shura speaker conveyed the greetings of Saudi King and Custodian of the two holy mosques Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud to the prime minister.

He said the Saudi king hoped that the brotherly relations between Saudi Arabia and Bangladesh would be strengthened further.

The Saudi speaker said the upcoming visit of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to Saudi Arabia and his current tour to Bangladesh would further deepen the bilateral ties.

Hasina said Saudi Arabia had a special place in the hearts of all Bangladeshis, and they had an emotional attachment as the two holy mosques are there.

The Saudi speaker also briefed the PM on structure of Saudi Majlis Ash-Shura and informed her that the parliament has 30 women lawmakers, who are highly educated with PhD degrees.

Bazlul Haque Harun, MP, Senior PMO Secretary Suraiya Begum and Saudi Ambassador in Dhaka Abdullah Al-Mutairi were present on the occasion.