

BUSTED RAJSHAHI DEN

Top militant Sohel supplied IEDs

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

The top militant suspect who played a key role in the Gulshan Café attack last year also supplied Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) to Benipur militants.

This was revealed in the first information report (FIR) published by police regarding the raid codenamed Sun Devil in Rajshahi last week.

Female militant suspect Sumaiya Begum, 25, who surrendered during the 36-hour raid on May 11, identified the top militant suspect as Md Abdus Sabur Khan, son of Rezaul Karim and Monwara Begum of Sadipur village of Kumarkhali in Kushtia district.

Khan used a codename 'Sohel Mahfuz', the FIR stated.

The 40-year-old militant supplied grenades for the July 1 Gulshan Café attack, also gave IEDs to militants and Sumaiya's brothers Al Amin, 20, who was killed, and Shoaib, 22, who escaped the raid.

Sohel trained them to manufacture and use IEDs by visiting them at Benipur den, police said in the FIR quoting female militant Sumaiya Begum.

Sub Inspector Naimul Haque filed

the FIR with Godagari police station on Saturday accusing eight militants including Sohel and 25 unnamed militants under the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2009 with charges of murder and attacking law enforcers under the Penal Code.

Five accused in the case were killed during the raid. Apart from Al Amin, the other dead accused in the case are Sumaiya's father Sazzad Ali alias Mistu, 50, her mother Lutfunnesa Bely, 40, sister Karima, 17, and BSc student Ashrafal Islam, 35.

The accused also include Sumaiya. She was injured during the raid and has received treatment for the same. Meanwhile, the court of Senior Judicial Magistrate Saiful Islam in Rajshahi granted 10-day remand against Sumaiya after police sought 15 days.

Investigation officer of the FIR, Inspector Altaf Hossain said interrogating Sumaiya was necessary as she told the police she knew 25 other top suspected militants.

He said, Sumaiya's six-year old son Jubayer was handed over to the custody of her family members while her one and a half month old daughter Afia would remain with her.

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Customs officials during a raid at the Mouchak Market outlet of Apan Jewellers yesterday. Several outlets of the jewellery brand in Dhaka were raided after the owner's son was accused in the Banani rape case.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

CHILD IN CHARGE SHEET

2 policemen withdrawn, 1 suspended

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two police officials in Dhaka's Mirpur zone were withdrawn and another was suspended for implicating a toddler and a dead man in a theft case.

Sazzad Hossain, officer-in-charge of Mirpur Model Police Station, and Mahbulul Alam, assistant commissioner of Mirpur zone, were withdrawn.

Sazzad has been attached to the Armed Police Battalion of Khagrachhari's Mohalchhari and Mahbulul has been transferred to the in-service training centre.

Maruful Islam, a sub-inspector of Mirpur model police and the IO of the case, has been suspended, said a press note issued by the police headquarters yesterday.

Inspector General of Police AKM Shahidul Haque issued the instruction in this regard, Saheli Ferdous, assistant inspector general of police, told The Daily Star.

The case of Mirpur police implicating an 11-month-old toddler and a dead man in a case filed on June 26 last year caused uproar after it had surfaced in the media.

Rubel, who is now 11 months old, was just a new born child in June last year when there was an incident of unlawful gathering and theft in his neighbourhood.

But on February 27 this year, Mirpur police, after an eight-month-long probe, saw it fit to charge him with vandalising a house and stealing Tk 25,000, two gold chains and a mobile phone.

As if this was not absurd enough, Sub-Inspector Maruful Islam, investigation officer of the case, also pressed charges against a dead man.

Arifur Rahman died in 2013, three years prior to the incident, but was named in the charge sheet along with 21 others.

The police in the charge sheet even said Rubel and Arifur were on the run and appealed to the court to issue arrest warrants and an order for confiscating their property.

The actions of Mirpur police came to light after Rubel's father Abul Kashem,

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Budget session starts May 30

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 10th parliament goes into its fourth budget session on May 30, says a parliament secretariat release.

President Abdul Hamid yesterday convened the session, exercising his power bestowed upon him by article 72 (1) of the constitution.

The budget session, which will be the 16th session of this parliament, will begin at 11:00am.

Finance Minister AMA Muhith is scheduled to place the national budget for the next fiscal year 2017-18 on June 1 in parliament.

Before the House goes into the session, a meeting of the Business Advisory Committee will be held at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhavan with Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury in the chair to discuss duration and businesses of the session.

The last session of this parliament was prorogued on May 8.

63 jails have no doctors

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authority would transfer prisoners immediately to the hospital inside jail after they fell sick.

When their condition gets serious, they are transferred to different public hospitals since the jail does not have adequate medical facilities and doctors.

"That [delay in treatment] may result in deaths of some prisoners," the jail official said.

Looking into how insufficient the healthcare facilities are in prisons, the correspondents got staggering ratio of doctors to patients seeking treatment.

The Dhaka jail has a 172-bed hospital with only two doctors providing some sort of treatment to at least 350-400 patients on a regular basis. Some 140-150 patients remain admitted every day.

"It is too difficult to ensure treatment of the huge number of patients.... If any serious case appears at midnight, it becomes tough to deal with that," Jahangir said.

One of the jail doctors, Biplob Kanti Biswas said they referred 10 to 15 patients to different government hospitals daily for better treatment.

Regarding healthcare facilities, Inspector General of Prisons Brig Gen Syed Iftakhar Uddin said only six doctors were there in five out of 68 jails across the country. As many as 111 posts of doctors have remained vacant. Only nine ambulances are available to shift prisoners from different jails to hospitals.

The civil surgeon concerned, where the 63 jails without doctors are located, usually sends a medical officer to inspect the health of inmates. Some jails do not

get the doctor's visit on a regular basis. When an inmate becomes seriously ill, he or she is transferred to a public hospital.

The situation has become worse after diploma nurses submitted resignations to join jobs in higher positions offered by the health ministry, the prison chief said.

"We have already informed the ministries of finance and health about the shortage of doctors, nurses and ambulances but they are yet to respond," the IG prison said while briefing reporters on the four-day-long regional conference of Asia and Pacific Prison that will begin tomorrow.

He blamed the inadequate infrastructure and manpower for some inmates' staying in public hospitals for long because, he said, the jails did not have the capacity to determine their health condition and so the authorities would not take them back to prisons until the hospitals released them.

A couple of cases were reported recently of influential people staying in city hospitals at their expense on the pretext that they were sick. However, there are also cases of prisoners without power and wealth who died due to lack of medical facilities in prisons.

Amzad Hossain, jailer of Rangpur Central Jail, said that out of 1842 inmates, 50 to 60 sought treatment at the outdoor daily. Of them, 18-20 are admitted to the hospital in jail.

The jail does not have any doctor as such. One physician has been employed recently on temporary basis. The jail depends on a prison cell at Rangpur Medical College Hospital at times of emergency.

China opens

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MASSIVE FUNDING BOOST

Xi pledged a major funding boost to the new Silk Road, including an extra 100 billion yuan (\$14.5 billion) into the existing Silk Road Fund, 380 billion yuan in loans from two policy banks and 60 billion yuan in aid to developing countries and international bodies in countries along the new trade routes.

In addition, Xi said China would encourage financial institutions to expand their overseas yuan fund businesses to the tune of 300 billion yuan.

Xi did not give a time frame for the new loans, aid and funding pledged yesterday.

Leaders from 29 countries attended the forum, as well as the heads of the United Nations, International Monetary Fund and World Bank.

Britain's finance minister told the summit his country was a "natural partner" in the new Silk Road, while the prime minister of Pakistan, Nawaz Sharif, a close Chinese ally, praised China's "vision and ingenuity".

"Such a broad sweep and scale of interlocking economic partnerships and investments is unprecedented in history," Sharif said.

White House adviser Matt Pottinger said the United States welcomed efforts by China to promote infrastructure connectivity as part of its Belt and Road initiative, and US companies could offer top value services.

India refused to send an official delegation to Beijing, reflecting displeasure with China for developing a \$57 billion trade corridor through Pakistan that also crosses the disputed territory of Kashmir.

"No country can accept a project that ignores its core concerns on sovereignty and territorial integrity," said Indian foreign ministry spokesman Gopal

Baglay, adding that there were concerns about host countries taking on "unsustainable debt."

UNEASE OVER SUMMIT

But some Western diplomats have expressed unease about both the summit and the plan as a whole, seeing it as an attempt to promote Chinese influence globally. They are also concerned about transparency and access for foreign firms to the scheme.

"China is willing to share its development experience with all countries," Xi said. "We will not interfere in other countries' internal affairs. We will not export our system of society and development model, and even more will not impose our views on others."

"In advancing the Belt and Road, we will not re-treat the old path of games between foes. Instead we will create a new model of cooperation and mutual benefit," Xi said.

North Korea, which considers China its sole major diplomatic ally and economic benefactor, raised eyebrows when it decided to send a delegation to the summit.

The North Korean delegation largely kept a low profile at the summit, and there was no evidence that its presence had affected participation despite US misgivings.

FINANCIAL INCLUSIVENESS

Xi said the new Silk Road would be open to all, including Africa and the Americas, which are not situated on the traditional Silk Road.

"No matter if they are from Asia and Europe, or Africa or the Americas, they are all cooperative partners in building the Belt and Road."

The idea of cooperation and inclusiveness extends to funding projects and investments along the new trade routes, which are being developed both on land and at sea.

CIID goes after Apan Jewellers

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will be investigated later in presence of its staff, Moinul said.

Shafat and the others accused in the case also boasted about their wealth and claimed police would not touch them when the two girls warned that they would go to police, the victims said earlier.

The girls have been saying that they were forced to drink at gun point before being raped in two rooms of the hotel.

CIID officials assisted by Rapid Action Battalion members also searched The Raintree Dhaka in Banani and found 10 bottles of wine yesterday. The hotel doesn't have liquor selling licence.

Narcotics Control Department raided the hotel on Saturday, but found nothing.

"The hotel has so far collected Tk 8.37 lakh in VAT from customers, but paid only Tk 9,326," Moinul said.

The CIID will file three cases under

narcotics control act, customs act and vat law if the hotel authorities fail to give satisfactory answers about the VAT and liquor, the top official of CIID.

Law enforcers have also seized a server of the hotel that record CCTV footage and sent it for forensic analysis.

Earlier on Friday, the CIID formed a two-member committee to look into the sources of the wealth of Shafat and his father Dildar Ahmed Selim and wrote to Bangladesh Bank asking for the details of their bank accounts.

Moinul mentioned that there was no commercial gold import in the country in the last five years, and it seemed in primary investigation that there was a lack of transparency in Apan Jewellers' gold and diamond businesses.

Asked, Shafat's father Dildar said, "We are helping them [CIID] through providing all documents."

Meanwhile, investigators of the double rape case yesterday interro-

gated several employees of the hotel at victim support centres of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

An interrogator told this paper that Shafat was not giving much information about his friend Halim alias Nayem, the other alleged rapist who was still absconding.

Police sent some evidence to forensic laboratory for tests.

Invited to Ahmed Shafat's birthday party on March 28, the two girls went to The Raintree Dhaka around 9:00pm.

After the party ended around midnight, Shafat and Nayem raped them in two rooms, alleged the girl who filed the case with Banani Police Station.

Shadman Sakif, Shafat's driver Billal and bodyguard Abul Kalam Azad were accused of assisting the rapists.

A joint team of police arrested Shafat and Shadman Sakif raiding a house in Pathantula area of Sylhet city on Thursday night while the three other accused were still on the run.

Govt claims

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at the WB's Dhaka office.

Except for these areas, most of the indicators were better this year than those in the previous year, according to the WB.

Zahid declined to comment on the government's provisional GDP growth estimate (7.24 percent) without going through the data compiled by Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, a government agency.

He said it would be pointless to have a debate on whether the growth would be 7.24 percent or 6.8 percent.

"What is the benefit of making a conservative projection?" said Zahid.

Major indicators that matter in GDP calculation are: consumer spending, investment by businesses, government spending, remittance, exports and imports.

The WB said it had some valid reasons to set the GDP growth at 6.8 percent.

Bangladesh's export growth came down to only 3.9 percent in the first 10 months of the current fiscal from 9.2 percent for the same period a year ago.

Remittance, considered a strong lifeline for the country's economy for the last

several years, went down 16 percent between July and April this fiscal year. This sharp fall in inflow of remittance means a drop in domestic consumption.

Import growth of industrial raw materials was only 2 percent between July and February this fiscal year, down from 4.2 percent during the same period a year ago.

According to the WB, private sector investment would increase slightly this year from last year's 22.1 percent of the GDP. It has remained almost stagnant around 22 percent over the last five years.

However, government spending, a major component of the GDP, has been growing steadily over the last few years.

Zahid said crop losses due to flashflood in haor areas last month were not included in the calculation.

Coming out of a meeting of the National Economic Council a couple of hours later, Planning Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal told reporters that the WB and other development partners always make conservative growth forecast.

"We didn't do any engineering and the methodology for calculating the GDP

remains unchanged," said the minister.

Replying to a query on declining remittance, Kamal said inflow of remittance through authorised channels has fallen, but the overall inflow didn't slide.

"No matter whichever way remittance came in, it was used for domestic consumption."

He said the country's per capita income rose to \$1,602 this fiscal year from \$1,466 in the previous fiscal year.

Mobile courts

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Earlier in the day, the government filed a petition with the SC seeking a stay on the HC verdict.

Delivering a verdict on three writ petitions on May 11, the HC declared unconstitutional the rules under which executive magistrates run mobile courts.

It also observed that empowering executive magistrates with judicial powers is "a frontal attack on the independence of the judiciary and is violative of the theory of separation of powers".

North Korea test-fires new missile

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with his counterparts in Japan and South Korea to discuss the situation.

China, which has been under growing US pressure to help rein in the nuclear-armed North, called for restraint.

"All relevant parties should exercise restraint and refrain from further aggravating tensions in the region," the foreign ministry said.

Multiple sets of UN and US sanctions against North Korea have done little to deter it from pursuing its nuclear and missile ambitions.

Before the missile test, the US Treasury said it was considering "every tool in our arsenal" to cut off sources of international financing for illegal activities in the North.

Trump has threatened military action but recently appeared to have softened his stance, saying he would be "honoured" to meet leader Kim Jong-Un under the right conditions.

New South Korean President Moon Jae-In, who was inaugurated on Wednesday, has also been conciliatory.

But he slammed the missile test as a "reckless provocation" after holding an emergency meeting with national security advisers.

SEEKING LEVERAGE

Moon, unlike his conservative predecessors, advocates reconciliation with Pyongyang but warned yesterday that dialogue would be possible "only if the North changes its attitude".

Moon had said in his inauguration speech that he was willing to visit Pyongyang "in the right circumstances" to ease tensions.

The North itself would be willing to hold talks with the US if the conditions are right, according to Choe Son-Hui, a senior official at the North's foreign ministry, on Saturday.

"The North is apparently trying to test Moon and see how his North Korea policy as well as policy coordination between the South and the US will take shape," said Yang Moo-Jin, professor at the University of North Korea Studies in Seoul.

The launch was also aimed at "maximising the North's political

leverage" ahead of possible negotiations with the US, as Pyongyang and Washington both recently signalled they were open to talks, he added.

"The North wants to show before negotiations that their precious, powerful weapon is not something they would give up so easily," Yang said.

The missile test is likely to embarrass Beijing, which was hosting an international summit yesterday to promote its ambitious global trade infrastructure project.

Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping discussed the Korean situation on the sidelines of the meeting and "both parties expressed their concern over the escalation of tensions", Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe slammed the latest launch as "totally unacceptable" and a "grave threat" to Tokyo.

The European Union, in a statement in Brussels, called the test-launch a "threat to international peace and security".