



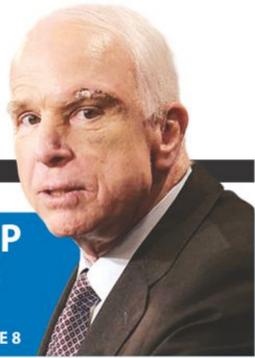
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Terror funding thru' IT firm

Rab claims a big chunk of money came from Spain, arrests 11

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Rapid Action Battalion has claimed to have detected a shady IT firm at the capital's Pallabi, which was set up early last year to bring money from abroad to fund militant activities in the country.

Details about the firm, Wahmi Technologies, and its employees could not be known immediately, but Rab officials said the company received a huge amount of foreign funds, especially from Spain.

The lion's share of the money was spent on militant activities such as recruitment and arms purchase, Rab claimed, but could not give any specific figure of the sum that the firm managed to bring to Bangladesh.

They said Wahmi was formed months after police unearthed iBacs Ltd in December 2015 and found evidence of terror funding in Bangladesh through the company.

At the time, police arrested five people and recovered Tk 38.86 lakh from their possession.

"Some employees of iBacs set up the new company," Mufi Mahmud Khan, Rab's Legal and Media Wing director, told reporters yesterday while briefing about the arrest of 11 people.

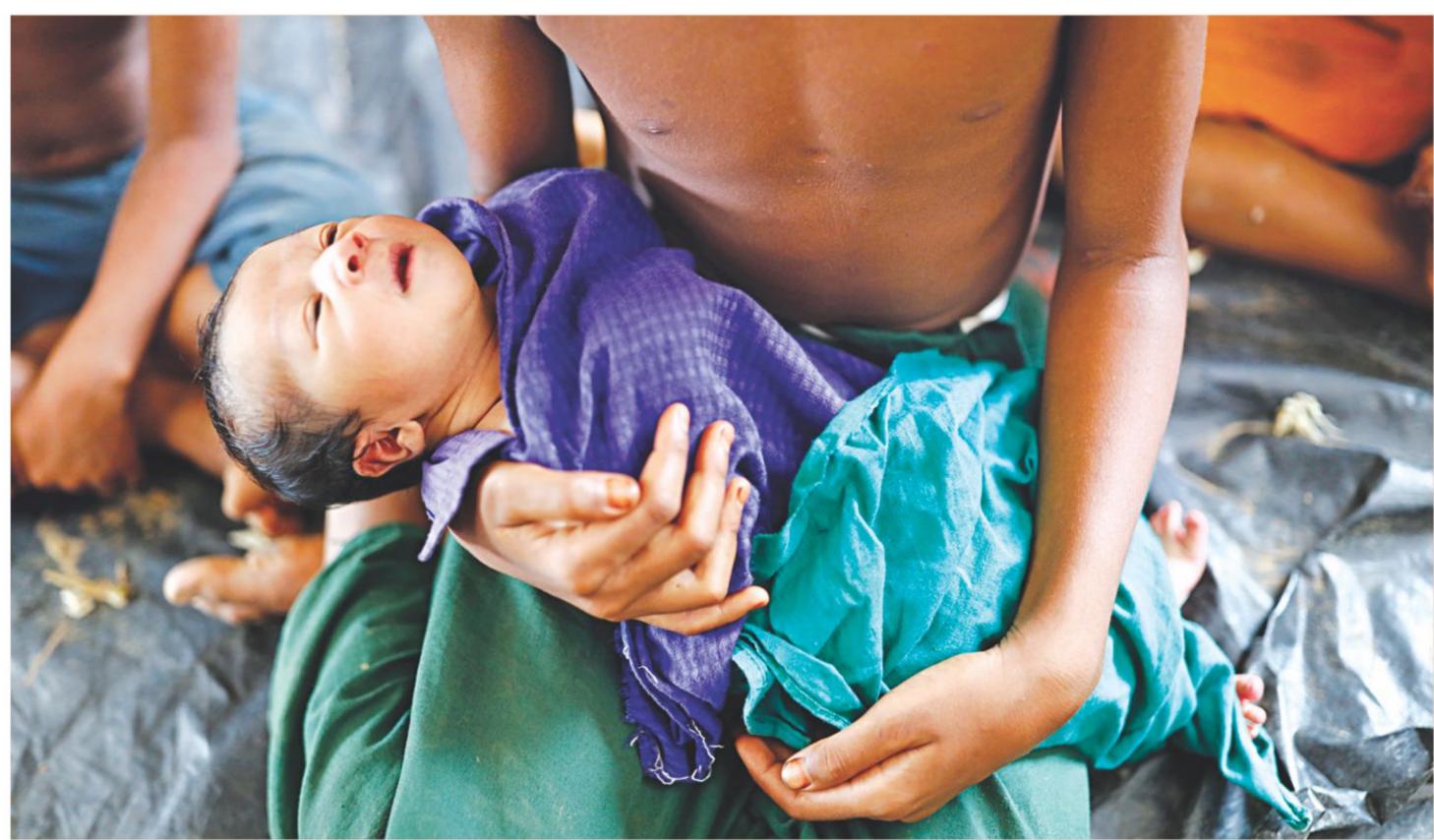
All of them were held on Friday on charges of terror financing.

Eight of them are employees of Wahmi who were arrested from their office.

Rab arrested the two others from Khulna and another from Rajshahi. They were responsible for carrying funds to different parts of the country.

Mufi said some of the arrestees used to work for iBacs Ltd.

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A newborn at Kutupalong camp in Ukha. She was born in the open last week, about 20 days after her mother came to Bangladesh fleeing Myanmar. PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Merkel eyes fourth term in Germany

Takes part in today's polls with double-digit lead, urges voters to reject right-wing AfD party

AFP, Berlin

Chancellor Angela Merkel and her rival Martin Schulz rallied voters on the eve of today's vote, urging Germans to shun the first hard-right party expected to enter parliament in force since the end of World War II.

Merkel, the clear frontrunner after 12 years in power with a double-digit lead, also told her conservative base not to get complacent and to cast their ballots, rousing them with a folksy call to "bring home the bacon".

Her Social Democratic (SPD) rival, Martin Schulz, in a passionate Berlin speech Friday told voters to reject the "sleeping-pill politics" of the famously cautious chancellor nicknamed "Mutti" (mummy) and vote against "another four years of stagnation and lethargy".

Both agree that voters must resist the right-wing populist

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Rohingya villages still burning, mines laid

Rights groups release new evidence; Kailash Satyarthi disappointed with Suu Kyi; seven nations seek UNSC meet on Myanmar violence

STAR REPORT

Rights bodies have come up with new evidence that fires are still torching Rohingya villages in Rakhine while Myanmar military have laid landmines during attacks on villages and along the Bangladesh border.

Amnesty International has assessed three new videos taken inside Rakhine as recently as Friday afternoon showing large plumes of smoke rising from Rohingya villages as well as satellite imagery with smoke visible over burnt-out structures.

Local sources in northern Rakhine claim the fires were started by members of Myanmar security forces and local vigilante mobs, Amnesty said in a report yesterday.

"This damning evidence from the ground and from space flies in the face of Aung San Suu Kyi's assertions to the world that what she called military 'clearance operations' in Rakhine State ended on September 5," said Tirana Hassan, crisis response director of the organisation.

"Almost three weeks later, we can see in real time how there is no let-up in the campaign of violence against Rohingyas in northern Rakhine State," she said.

"Not satisfied with simply forcing Rohingyas from their homes, authorities seem intent on ensuring they have no homes to return to."

On September 14, Amnesty published irrefutable evidence of a mass-scale scorched-earth campaign across northern Rakhine State, where

Myanmar troops and vigilante mobs have been burning down entire Rohingya villages and shooting people at random as they try to flee.

Human Rights Watch in a new report yesterday said Myanmar forces have laid landmines during attacks on villages and along the Bangladesh border, posing a grave risk to Rohingyas fleeing atrocities.

"The dangers faced by thousands of Rohingyas fleeing atrocities in Burma [Myanmar] are deadly enough without adding landmines to the mix," said Meenakshi Ganguly, South Asia director, calling upon Myanmar to immediately stop the use of antipersonnel landmines and joining the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Hunger, diseases plague infants

PINAKI ROY and PORIMOL PALMA

On Friday noon, Asia Begum stood under the scorching sun, waiting by the roadside at Kutupalong for relief. She looked pale and tired. Her seven month old son, Yasin, tightly clung on to her arm.

Arriving after a three day trek from Maungdaw of Rakhine 13 days back, Asia has spent almost every day here getting soaked in the rain.

Now, she has to come out and wait under the sun for food. In the mean time, her son has been suffering from fever for the past three days.

"There is no food. My son is not eating properly. I can rarely breastfeed him," said Asia on Friday noon, a blank look across her face. She had gone to a medical camp the day before where doctors provided her with some medicine but Yasin's condition is not improving.

"I am concerned about my son," said Asia, 20, who managed to make a temporary home using plastic sheets and bamboo sticks in Kutupalong of Ukha. "The plastic cannot protect against the heavy rain," she added.

Yasin is one of 33,000 infants (aged less than a year) among the 429,000 Rohingyas who fled violence in Myanmar's Rakhine state since August 25, according to the Inter Sector Coordination Group, a coordinating body of

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Onlookers many, good Samaritan only one

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A woman died after she was run over by a speeding car in Jatrabari of the capital yesterday morning.

The accident happened when Achhia Begum, 35, and her four-year-old daughter, Nurunnahar, were going to a relative's house in the area from their in Dolaiipar, said the victim's husband Abul Kashem, a bus driver.

Achhia was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared her dead around 11:00am.

Police, quoting witnesses, said Nurunnahar kept crying for help after her mother had the accident while crossing a road. Many crucial minutes passed, but none of the several dozen people, who gathered at the scene, took the critically injured woman to a hospital.

While crossing the area, Zahirul Islam, a cook from Gazaria of Munshiganj, saw

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A 250-foot vessel being made at a dockyard by Sandha river in Pirojpur's Nesarabad. Inset, another vessel almost ready to leave. There are 25 dockyards in Nesarabad. The industry is flourishing here mainly due to cheap labour and easy access through the river.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

A haven for shipbuilders

Shipbuilding thrives in deltaic Nesarabad upazila of Pirojpur

HABIBUR RAHMAN with ANDREW EAGLE

A place of encircling rivers and canals, Pirojpur's Nesarabad upazila is nestled along the banks of the Sandha River. It's a deltaic landscape that has proven a natural haven for shipbuilders. Every day, at an ever-growing number of shipyards, Nesarabad bustles with activity as new ships, small and large, are brought to life.

"In villages from Shohagdal to Sutiakathi, right across the Nesarabad area there are at least 25 shipyards," says Md Salek, a shipbuilding businessman with around 30 years experience. "Shipbuilding has been an industry here for a long time but in the last five years or so it has really flourished."

"There used to be a handful of dockyards building small vessels," says local shipyard owner Md Mohiuddin. "Now large ships are also constructed here."

Around 10 types of vessels, from iron trawlers to cargo boats, are currently built there, varying in length from 30 to 250 feet. Aside from a rich endowment of navigable waterways, Nesarabad shipbuilders also benefit from favourable labour costs.

"Labour is cheaper here than in other parts of the country," says shipyard employee Md Abul Kalam. "It's a factor that has helped attract more than 100 businesspeople to choose this area as their base."

"We earn Tk 40 per hour," says Raihan Sardar, a worker at the same shipyard. "Around 3,000 workers are employed in the Nesarabad shipbuilding industry."

To construct an average ship, five categories of labourers are involved, including welders, grinding and fitting

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