

# 'Local BCL men behind attack'

Feni BNP ranks claim to have identified Khaleda's motorcade attackers

STAR REPORT

Feni BNP leaders and activists claimed to have identified some of the men who attacked Khaleda Zia's motorcade on Saturday.

After analysing the video footage of the incident, they said three of the attackers were local leaders of Bangladesh Chhatra League. But the BNP leaders preferred not to be named fearing reprisals.

One of them, they identified, is Osman Goni Real, president of Feni's Sharshadi union Chhatra League.

The Daily Star attempted to contact Osman over the phone, but it was switched off. This newspaper could not verify the claim independently.

Local BNP leaders also claimed to have identified two other BCL men-- Sabuj of Feni Government College, and Farhad, general secretary of Millia Madrasa unit BCL.

However, BCL leaders outright denied the allegations and put the blame on the activists of Chhatra Dal, the pro-BNP student body.

Contacted, BCL President Saifur Rahman Sohag said, "There is no way Chhatra League was involved. Some

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A vehicle of Khaleda Zia's motorcade being vandalised by two young men on Saturday in Feni, top left. Local BNP leaders and activists claim that the two are Osman Goni Real, president of Sharshadi Chhatra League, marked 1, and Sabuj, BCL leader from Feni Government College, marked 2. The Daily Star could not independently verify the claims.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

# It's not me

Says BNP's Ctg unit chief about audio-tape voice instructing attack

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

BNP Chittagong city unit President Shahadat Hossain yesterday said he would sue an online news portal for publishing "a fake report" that he ordered the attack on Khaleda Zia's motorcade.



Shahadat Hossain

He said the report ran on doinikkhobor24.com was false and baseless, and he would sue the news portal under section 57 of the ICT Act and also file a defamation case.

In the press conference organised at Chittagong Press Club, Shahadat said the report also featured an audio-clip in which, a person is heard asking someone to carry out an attack on the BNP chairperson's motorcade.

"But the voice and accent of the caller are totally different from those of

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# Condemnation not enough

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repatriated through holding talks and making diplomatic efforts."

Drawing the attention of the international community to the Rohingya crisis, Khaleda said, "Your words won't work unless you translate it into action. You should also think of Bangladesh. Bangladesh is not a rich country; it's a poor and small country. People of Bangladesh have big hearts and that's why they extended support to Rohingyas. Now it is Myanmar's responsibility to take them back."

About the Saturday's attack on her motorcade and journalists, the former premier said, "It's a humanitarian programme. But my motorcade came under attack and many journalists were injured. The government knows who carried out the attack and their photographs have also been published [in media]."

"I want the government to stop it. These activities will not produce any benefit. Rather, you will be isolated from people. That's why I think steps should be taken so that everybody can work together for the sake of human-

ity." On her way to Chittagong, Khaleda's motorcade was attacked in Feni. The BNP and the ruling Awami League have been trading blame for the attack.

Recalling that the previous BNP governments had sent back Rohingyas to Myanmar in 1978 and 1992 through talks and continuous engagement, the BNP chief said strong diplomatic efforts and talks with Myanmar were crucial for sending Rohingyas back home.

Accusing the government of not standing by the Rohingyas with enough relief, Khaleda said the government was rather "obstructing" those who were trying to help Rohingyas with relief materials.

"We believe that it's not possible for Bangladesh to shelter Rohingyas for a long period for different reasons.... The government is yet to make any effort [to send them back]."

Fleeing a military crackdown in Myanmar's Rakhine State, over 600,000 Rohingyas have crossed into Bangladesh since August 25.

Khaleda said the early-arriving Rohingyas had been in a sorry state and the BNP had demanded deployment of the army to mitigate their suffering.

She lauded the army's role in distributing relief in a disciplined manner and said her party gave 110 tonnes of rice to the army for distribution.

Expressing concern about the impact of the Rohingya influx on Bangladesh's environment and ecology, Khaleda said the country's environment and ecology were threatened due to habitation of Rohingyas and indiscriminate felling of trees in Cox's Bazar.

Later, she visited Rohingya camps at Hakim Para and Balukhali and a medical camp set up by Doctors Association of Bangladesh (DAB), a pro-BNP physicians' body, in Ukhaia.

The BNP chairperson talked to some Rohingya families at the camps. She was shocked to hear the harrowing tales of torture on the Rohingyas in Myanmar. She cradled some babies in her arms.

Khaleda distributed relief at the camps and also handed over food, medicine and other goods for Rohingya children and expecting mothers to the DAB medical team at its camp in Balukhali for distributing those among refugees.

Asked whether the BNP was satisfied with the government's diplomatic efforts, she said, "Earlier I said diplomatic efforts should be stepped up to end the crisis."

Around 9:00am, BNP standing committee members Mirza Abbas and Nazrul Islam Khan handed over relief materials, loaded in 45 trucks, to the army relief coordination cell in Ukhaia on behalf of the party chief.

Thousands of BNP leaders, activists and supporters, including a large number of women, stood along the Cox's Bazar-Teknaf road to greet Khaleda on her way to Ukhaia in the morning.

The BNP chief left Cox's Bazar for Chittagong last night. She will stay at Chittagong Circuit House at night and is expected to start for Dhaka today.

# Change of guards

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Anwarul Azim Arif, a former vice-chancellor of Chittagong University, was made the new chairman. Belal Ahmed, vice-chairman of NRB Global Bank, became the new executive committee chairman.

Belal is a son-in-law of S Alam Group Chairman Saiful. He will represent Unitek Steel Mills, which is also a concern of S Alam Group, on the bank's board.

Quazi Osman Ali, additional managing director of First Security Islami Bank, was appointed the managing director of the SIBL.

Saiful is the chairman of First Security Islami Bank.

He and his family members are on the board of directors of First Security Islami Bank, Al-Arafah Islami Bank, Union Bank, NRB Global Bank and Bangladesh Commerce Bank.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, Azim, the new chairman of SIBL, said he got a proposal for chairmanship of SIBL only two days ago. He said he will represent Hasan Abason Ltd, a concern of S Alam Group, on the bank's board.

"After getting the proposal, I came to Dhaka and attended the board meeting yesterday," he added.

S Alam Group has bought the shares of SIBL through 19 companies. Of those, 15 companies used the same office address: Al-Amin Centre, 12th floor, Dilkusha, Dhaka.

The 15 companies are Global Trading Corporation, Lion Securities & Investment, Portman Cements, Modern Properties, Prasad Paradise Resorts, Unique Investment & Securities, Hasan Abason Ltd, Platinum Endeavours, Dynamic Ventures, Reliable Entrepreneurs, Paradise International, Leader Business Enterprise, Pusti Vegetable Ghee, Unitek Steel Mills, and Unitek

Cement. The other four companies are Chittagong-based C&A Accessories, C&A Fabrics, Marine Empire Ltd and Shah Amanat Praktirik Gas Co Ltd.

Of the companies, six have direct link with Saiful of S Alam Group and his family members, according to the Office of Registrar of Joint Stock Companies and Firms.

The six companies are Global Trading Corporation, Portman Cements, Modern Properties, Prasad Paradise Resorts, Hasan Abason and Shah Amanat Praktirik Gas.

Rezaul, who was chairman of SIBL until yesterday, told this newspaper earlier this month that S Alam Group had bought shares, violating the Banking Company Act, 1991.

As per the act, an individual or a company cannot hold more than 5 percent shares of a bank by itself or jointly without the approval of the central bank.

Such holdings must not exceed 10 percent as per the law -- a provision the group has also breached, he said.

"We have not been officially informed of S Alam Group's share purchase in SIBL," SK Sur Chowdhury, deputy governor of Bangladesh Bank, told The Daily Star recently.

The central bank cannot intervene in shareholding matters of a business group unless they apply for directorship in the respective bank, he added.

Salehuddin Ahmed, a former governor of Bangladesh Bank, said, "It is not a good sign that loans and shares of the banking industry are being concentrated in a single business group."

The regulatory bodies will have to deal with the issue strictly and inquire about the source of the funds the companies used for buying the shares, he added.

# UN RESOLUTION Dhaka seeks global support

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has asked the international community to extend its support for passing a special resolution at the UN against the "ethnic cleansing" of Rohingyas by the Myanmar government.

Diplomatic sources said Bangladesh has initiated fresh moves in this regard, including convening a special session of the UN Human Rights Council and passing the resolution by the United Nations Third Committee.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam, who met the OIC secretary general in Jeddah yesterday, said a resolution on the Rohingya issue has already been placed before the Third Committee of UN (Social, Humanitarian, Cultural Issues) on the situation of human rights in Myanmar.

The UN General Assembly allocates to its Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Affairs Committee, commonly referred to as the "Third Committee", agenda items relating to a range of social, humanitarian affairs and human rights issues that affect people all over the world.

The Bangladesh state minister sought support of the international community to pass the resolution, said a press release from the foreign ministry.

Earlier, a six-member Bangladesh delegation, led by Shipping Minister Shajahan Khan, met the secretary general of OIC in Jeddah and discussed the current Rohingya crisis.

Shahriar Alam, who was a member of the delegation, briefed the secretary general and other high officials of the OIC secretariat on the latest position of Bangladesh on the Rohingya crisis.

The state minister appreciated the role of the international community for its stance on the Rohingya issue. He focused on the five-point solution proposed by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina which was placed in the UNGA-2017.

The state minister said in the meeting that since August 25, some 620,000 forcefully displaced Myanmar people have already taken shelter in Bangladesh as per IOM statistics.

In response, the OIC secretary general, Yousef bin Ahmad Al-Othaimen, mentioned that OIC contact group fact finding team will visit Cox's Bazar this week. He assured that OIC is always with Bangladesh on the issue of Rohingyas.



A Rohingya child is in tears after crossing into Bangladesh from Myanmar along with other refugees at Shah Porir Dwip in Teknaf yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

# Almost everyone is survivor

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gender-based violence and discrimination, it said.

This is a frightening reminder that sexual and gender-based violence are among the most horrific weapons of war, instruments of terror most often used against women, the report said.

The recent influx has more than doubled the population living in refugee settlements and stretched the capacities of humanitarian agencies working to provide emergency shelter, access to clean water and sanitation, healthcare services, delivery of food, nutrition support for malnourished girls and boys, education, and protective services.

Increasing overcrowding and decreasing privacy at all refugee sites elevate safety and security risks, particularly for women and girls, it said.

Almost 400,000 refugees need immediate access to water and sanitation. Due to the increased population, women and men are forced to share toilets without basic protection measures including gender segregation, it said.

Twenty-four thousand pregnant and lactating women require maternal

healthcare support at the already overstretched healthcare facilities.

Many Rohingya refugee households are female headed. Households led by females or elderly people with no male relatives are exhibiting greater vulnerability than those with adult males, the report said.

Having fled extreme circumstances, these households are not only traumatised by the loss of their loved ones, but also the loss of their assets, livelihoods and all forms of financial security.

Women and children are also at heightened risk of becoming victims of human trafficking, sexual abuse or child and forced marriage for the same reasons.

The report said women and adolescent girls between the ages of 13 and 20 newly arriving from Myanmar typically have two to four children each.

**SANITATION ISSUE**  
The lack of toilets and well-maintained manual water pumps have complicated the crisis of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, where 30 percent of the 4,370 manual pumps installed were in poor condition and 36 percent of the 24,773 latrines were about to overflow,

the United Nations reported Sunday.

"There is continuous new influx of refugees resulting in increase in population at multiple sites which is overloading existing WASH facilities (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) due to heavy use," said the Inter Sector Coordination Group, which coordinates agencies working in the refugee camps.

The number of refugees who have fled the armed conflict in Myanmar to Bangladesh since August 25 has risen to 607,000, as of October 28. The new influx of refugees brought the number of the ethnic group that sought refuge in Bangladesh to about 819,000.

**EU COMMISSIONER IN TOWN**  
Meanwhile, EU Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos Stylianides arrived in Dhaka last night for a two-day visit to the Rohingya refugees camps and see their plight.

Christos Stylianides will leave Dhaka this morning for visiting the Kutupalong camp in Cox's Bazar. He will back to Dhaka tomorrow and hold bilateral meeting with Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali and will depart Bangladesh.

# 'Neo JMB militant'

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18, 2015. The incident left 24 defence personnel and civilians injured. Ten of them were hospitalised.

The attackers were detained and taken in the custody of defence personnel, who launched a departmental investigation into the incident that sent chills down the spine of the nation.

Details of the attack were not available immediately. Some information was found nine months later from the statements of the case filed by Naval Provost Marshal Chittagong Commander M Abu Sayeed. He filed the case with EPZ Police Station on September 3 last year under the Anti-Terrorism Act 2009.

After a long probe, investigation officer Osman Goni (inspector investigation) of EPZ Police Station submitted two charge sheets on October 25 this year against former Navy man Md Shakhawat Hossain, Isha Kha Base's ball pickers Abdul Mannan and Ramjan Ali, and Abdul Gaffar, brother of Mannan, and Bablu Rahman alias Rony, a mess worker.

With the arrest of Bablu, four accused have been arrested so far. However, Shakhawat is still on the run.

IO Goni yesterday told The Daily Star that the militant outfit had planned to loot firearms from Shaheed Moazzem naval base at Rangamati's Kaptai but failed. Later, they carried out the bomb attacks on the two mosques in Chittagong to show off their strength.

According to the case statement and charge sheets, Chittagong "Neo JMB" chief Raisul Islam Khan alias Fardin alias Noman had supplied the explosives to the JMB members and coordinated the attacks. "Neo JMB" is an offshoot of Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh.

Fardin's name was dropped from the charge sheets as he was killed in a bomb explosion in Bogra on April 3

last year.

The IO said Ramjan, Bablu, and Mannan had taken jobs at the Rangamati naval base's officer's mess as civil employees with the help of Shakhawat. The trio fled the base when letters were sent to their permanent addresses for further verification.

"In the meantime, Shakhawat was transferred to Chittagong Naval Base. With Shakhawat's help, the trio also took jobs in Chittagong," said Goni.

The inspector said arrested Mannan and Ramjan confessed that Bablu, Ramjan and Shakhawat had held a secret meeting with Fardin in the city's Sholoshahar area before the attacks.

In the first attack at the BNS Patenga Mosque inside the Issa Kha Base, Abdul Mannan threw two grenades on the devotees around 1:35pm.

He was detained while trying to get mixed with the panic-stricken devotees, according to the case statement.

Noticing an electric switch in his left wrist, the devotees pulled off the jacket he wore and found a suicide vest inside. Mannan then tried to detonate the vest but failed, the statement added.

Within 10 minutes of the incident, the other attack was carried out on a temporary mosque in the same area. Ramjan, who exploded two grenades there, managed to flee but was caught by navy personnel later.

Navy men recovered a suicide vest and an unexploded grenade from a toilet of a barrack in the afternoon that day.

Merely nine days after the attacks, law enforcers raided a militant den that allegedly belonged to Fardin in Hathazari and recovered an MK-II semiautomatic sniper rifle, two magazines of the rifle, 5kg gel explosive, 13 army uniform, a pair of badges of army major rank, 252 bullets including 186 of sniper rifle, 25 detonators, bomb-making materials and documents of the outfit.