

Cops close in on Hizb-ut Tahrir operations in Ctg

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN, Chattogram

Counter Terrorism (CT) unit of Chattogram Metropolitan Police (CMP) is getting a clear picture of the tricks and techniques used by banned militant outfit Hizb-ut Tahrir to carry out its activities in the port city, officials of the force told this newspaper.

The operatives were using special smartphone apps to communicate with each other to dodge eyes of law enforcing agencies, CT officials have found, after interrogating 15 operatives of the group -- including the chief of Chattogram metro unit -- who were arrested from different areas of the city on November 23.

Among the arrestees are three top leaders -- Abul Mohammed Arshadul Alam (39), Abdullah Al Mahfuz (30), and Md Azimul Huda -- who played vital roles to regroup the organisation in the port city, said CT officials.

Investigators said the operatives are now targeting English medium students in guise of teaching and other service-related professions with an aim to overcome funding crisis of the organisation, as these students typically have more money to spend than the average youth.

Apart from that, investigators also learned that posters, press releases and leaflets of the banned group were being sent from Dhaka via public transport.

Members of the outfit also used to send daily updates of their activities through designated charts through the app to their seniors, using code words.

CT officials said they found these daily reports from phones, laptops and other devices of the arrestees, where they saw all

15 arrestees used one specific smartphone app for internal communication.

"We found two of the arrestees were introduced to senior leaders while commuting through ridesharing services," he added.

Talking to The Daily Star, Md Moinal Islam, additional deputy commissioner (ADC) (Intelligence) of CT unit, said, "We are monitoring the overall situation of the organisation and trying to find out its goals in the port city," the ADC said.

Till now, two operatives have given confessional statements before the court under section 164 of CrPC.

Investigators found that the operatives used two different smartphone apps to set up their communication channels that were hard to trace for law enforcers.

CT officials told The Daily Star, "The men do not use their personnel phone numbers to install apps, in order to avoid being tracked."

Arrestee Abdullah Al Munim, told a court during his confessional statement that Hizb-ut leader Mahfuz installed the app in his phone and asked him to only communicate through it. He added that he used to share locations and photos through the app as per Mahfuz's directives, coordinate meeting spots and discussion materials through it.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Mohammed Shahidullah of CT unit said, "Police have gleaned significant information about the outfit during interrogation and are now verifying those."

(Details of the apps and techniques used by the group have been omitted for security reasons.)



PHOTO OF THE DAY

SHEIKH NASIR



10 PAISA PER THREAD... A little girl pulls a thread out of a cement bag. She will continue doing so until she gets tired; she has a target to reach. For every 100 bags, she gets Tk 10. At least a hundred children, from marginasiled families, are involved in this line of work in Sylhet city's Sheikhghat area. Some local traders collect these bags from Kalighat. The photo was taken on Wednesday morning.

TIB lauds govt move to use eco-friendly construction blocks

CITY DESK

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) has appreciated the government's declaration of producing eco-friendly blocks and its use in public projects.

TIB in a statement demanded effective implementation of the declaration, and urged steps to make the use of such blocks in private sector mandatory as well.

The government has made the use of eco-friendly blocks in public construction must from this fiscal, in a move to cut reliance on bricks in building structures, walls and roads. State-run agencies will use blocks made of sand, cement fly ash or materials other than clay, to build and repair walls, herringbone bond road, and rural passages instead of bricks -- which use valuable topsoil as raw material.

Agencies will have to use 10 percent blocks in the current fiscal and 20 percent the following year, said a notification of the ministry of environment on November 24.

TIB Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman termed the decision encouraging, but said the results will depend on its implementation. He urged concerted efforts to shut down all conventional brick kilns to protect the environment.

BRINGING BACK CORRUPT OFFICIALS

ACC seeks Aussie support

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has sought information from the Australian government on the corrupt Bangladeshi persons who have fled to and invested in the island continent.

"We've information that some corrupt Bangladeshis have fled to Australia. They invested their ill-earned money in real estate and other businesses," ACC Chairman Iqbal Mahmood said at a bilateral meeting with Australian government high-ups in the UAE.

He sought cooperation from Australian government to bring back the culprits and their laundered money.

The meeting was held with Executive Director Secretariat of Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity Craig Fury and Assistant Director of Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and

Trade Dr Stephen McElhinney, said a press release.

Iqbal said corruption is a global problem. "The problem [for Bangladesh] is that they [corruptors] launder their ill-gotten money to other countries. A coordinated effort is needed to curb corruption," he said.

Bangladesh has sought information of laundered money from some countries through "mutual legal assistance request".

"If they response quickly, case proceedings will be expedited," the ACC chief added.

In June, ACC filed a case against a suspended Directorate General of Health Services employee Abzal Hossain and his wife Rubina Khanam for amassing about Tk 36 crore beyond known source of income and concealed information of about Tk 7 crore in their wealth statement.

ACC also found Abzal, who fled the

country, bought a house in Sydney, spending more than US\$ 200,000.

An ACC team led by Iqbal participated in the 8th Session of the Conference of the State Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), taking place in the UAE from December 16.

On December 17, at a session, the ACC chairman said they have seized wealth worth about Tk 24.8 crore between January and October this year.

At the same time, about Tk 4.6 crore from five foreign bank accounts were seized.

Besides, about 12.44-acre land, 10 houses, four luxury apartments and six cars have also been seized.

Pointing out importance of mutual cooperation, Iqbal said the anti-graft watchdog has brought back about Tk 18.7 crore from Singapore in money laundering cases and helped the UK to recover another Tk 1.8 crore.

30 illegal vegetable shops demolished

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cumilla

Local authorities demolished at least 30 illegal shops beside Dhaka-Chattogram highway at Nimshar vegetable market in Cumilla yesterday.

Burichang upazila administration conducted the drive led by Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Imrul Ahsan.

AC (land) Executive Magistrate Tahmida Akter and Roads and Highways Department Executive Engineer Dr Ahad Ullah were also present during the drive, which started at 10am and continued till noon.

A police team led by Burichang Police Station Officer-in-Charge Akul Chandra Bishwas assisted them to maintain law and order.

The shops had been set up in front of Nimshar Junab Ali Degree College.

Appreciating the move, college Principal Mamun Mia Mazumder alleged that some influential locals were behind establishing the shops in front of the college.

After the shops were dismantled and the space was freed up, the upazila administration planted around 100 trees there, said the principal.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer Imrul Ahsan said, "We will monitor the situation further."

Road crashes claim nine lives

Truck runs over third-grader in Madaripur; 10 injured in bus accident in Sirajganj

STAR REPORT

A third-grader was killed after a truck ran him over in Digholpara area of Rajoir upazila of Madaripur yesterday. The deceased is Ratul Kazi (7), son of Ferdous Kazi. He was a student of Lundi Govt Primary School.

Quoting locals, Khandakar Shawkat Jahan, officer-in-charge of Rajoir Police Station, said the accident occurred while Ratul was crossing the road at noon.

Locals rushed him to the upazila health complex where the doctor declared him dead.

Later, police seized the truck but its driver fled the scene, the OC added.

Meanwhile, at least eight people were killed and 10 injured in other accidents across the country in the last two days, our correspondents and

news agencies report.

In Mymensingh, three people were killed on the spot after a truck collided with the CNG-run auto-rickshaw carrying them at Goatola Shashar Bazar in Tarakanda upazila around 9am yesterday, said police.

The deceased were identified as auto-rickshaw driver Rubel Mia (23), Aminul Islam (30) and Sayeem Mia (29).

Police seized the truck, but its driver managed to flee. A case was lodged in connection with the incident.

Meanwhile in Sirajganj, at least two people were killed and 10 injured after a bus collided with a truck in Harinchara area of Ullapara upazila yesterday.

The deceased are truck driver Raju Ahmed and his helper Hanzala Rony. OC Md Akhtaruzzaman of

Hatikumrul Highway Police Station said the driver and helper died on the spot while 10 bus passengers were injured and hospitalised.

In another accident in the district, Sanowar Hossain (50) was killed after a bus ran him over in front of Nimgachi Degree College of Raiganj upazila yesterday, reports BSS.

In Thakurgaon, one Hridoy (20) was killed after the three-wheeler carrying him overturned at Mirdangi village of Ranishankoil upazila on Wednesday.

Police said the accident occurred after the driver lost control over the vehicle and it skidded off a road.

In Magura, Yeasin Molla (21) was killed and a person was injured after a truck hit the motorbike carrying them on Magura-Boalmari road on Wednesday, reports UNB.



DPS STS School Dhaka organised Victory Day programmes on December 12, 16 and 17 to pay tribute to martyrs of the Liberation War. PHOTO: COLLECTED

DUST POLLUTION DoE fines construction firm Tk 1 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Department of Environment (DoE) yesterday fined a construction firm in port city for dust pollution.

The firm T&EB, which was engaged in constructing a road from city's Chandgaon to Kalurghat, was fined Tk 1 lakh for not taking necessary steps to control the dust from construction work, said a DoE press release.

The under construction road was left in a dilapidated state, causing severe dust pollution in surrounding areas whenever vehicles plied the road, hence the office was prompted to slap the firm with a fine, it said.



This Bede family -- a man, woman and a cat -- does not have much other than few utensils and a boat they call home. But to row all day is quite a strenuous task, so the woman uses her leg as support. Also known as river gypsies, they mostly live by the river and travel from town to town on boat. This photo was taken from the Kirtonkhola river in Barishal yesterday morning. PHOTO: TITU DAS

C&F agent denied bail in 4 smuggling cases

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court has rejected four bail petitions of a clearing and forwarding (C&F) agent in Chattogram in four cases filed over smuggling.

Following the order, Mizanur Rahman Chaklader -- an accused in 22 cases involving around Tk 2,000 crore -- cannot get released from jail, Deputy Attorney General (DAG) AKM Amin Uddin Manik told The Daily Star.

The bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice KM Hafizul Alam passed the orders on Wednesday, saying the bail petitions were not submitted properly.

Amin Uddin said an investigation of Customs Intelligence and Investigation Directorate (CIID) found Mizanur Rahman misappropriated around Tk 2,000 crore by dodging duty, smuggling and forging 3,777 bills of entry in the name of releasing products through user IDs of two former customs officials, over the last two years.

CIID filed a case with Ramna Police Station on January 16 against Chaklader for duty dodging, smuggling and forgery. Later, 21 other cases were filed on similar charges.

The HC on July 14 granted six months' ad-interim bail to Chaklader in the first case, and issued a rule asking the government and Anti-Corruption Commission to explain why he should not be granted permanent bail, he said.

On October 27, the Supreme Court scrapped the HC order, and ordered him to surrender to the trial court.

On November 3, Chaklader surrendered to a Dhaka court that sent him to jail.

Chaklader then filed four separate petitions with the HC seeking bail in four cases, DAG Manik said.

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Memo No. 259(12)-2/Engg. Dated: 17/12/2019

Invitation for Online Tender
(Open Tender)

1	Name of work	Supplying, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of 14 Nos. 5 Ton capacity Split type Air Cooler for newly constructed different Exam Hall of Faculty of Social Sciences Building, University of Dhaka. Price of Tender Document- 5,500/=
3	Tender closing date & time	02/01/2020; Time: Up to 12.00 Noon.
4	Tender opening date & time	02/01/2020; Time: 12.30pm.
5	Tender opening place	E-Tender Room, 1st Floor, Administrative Bldg, University of Dhaka.
6	Tender published on website	http://e-tender.univdhaka.edu

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