

Pro-Hefajat speaker lands in jail

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and destabilise the society by making irresponsible statements and spreading it through social media.

Rab handed Rafiqul over to the police yesterday morning.

On April 3, Rafiqul appeared on Facebook and spoke in support of Hefajat-e-Islami leader Mamunul Haque, following an incident at a resort in Narayanganj's Sonargaon.

Rafiqul is also the director of Saoatul Hera Madrasha at Paschim Bilashpur in Netrakona district and assistant vice president of Jubo Jamiat, a wing of Jamiat-e-Ulama-Islam, of Netrakona.

Earlier on March 25, police detained Rafiqul from the capital's Motijheel area during a demonstration, protesting the visit of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the occasion of the golden jubilee of Bangladesh's independence.

He was later released.

Another case was filed against Rafiqul under the DSA with Motijheel Police Station yesterday, confirmed Yasin Arafat Khan, officer-in-charge of the police station.

Introducing him as a "conscious" citizen, a BCL leader Syed Adnan Shantu filed the case under sections 27, 28, 29, 31, and 35, alleging that Rafiqul has given provocative and anti-state speech against the prime minister, the president, and also against the administration and system of the country, through Youtube.

Later Rafiqul's speech was shared by some Facebook profiles and pages. Syed Adnan mentioned that those "likes and comments" under the shared posts are also "anti-government and anti-state."

He attached eight pages of screenshots with the case statement.

On Wednesday night, there was a rumour on social media that Hefajat-e-Islam Joint Secretary General Mamunul Haque could be arrested any time as he, along with 700 named and unnamed Hefajat men, were sued over vandalising a resort and attacking police in Narayanganj's Sonargaon on April 3.

Meanwhile, Delwar Hossain, officer-in-charge of Dharmapasha Police Station, was withdrawn and attached to police lines on Wednesday night, said Sujon Chandra Sarkar, assistant superintendent of Sunamganj police (Dharmapasha circle).

The OC was accused of harassing a Dhaka University BCL leader in Sunamganj, he added.

The BCL leader, Afzal Khan, international affairs deputy-secretary of DU unit, filed a case with Dharmapasha Police Station, accusing 29 named and 20-25 unnamed persons, reports our Sylhet correspondent.

On March 29, Afzal gave a post on his Facebook, criticising Hefajat-e-Islam for their recent vandalism all over the country.

After he posted on Facebook, Al Mujahid, son of local AL leader Abul Hashem Alam, gathered a mob and harassed Afzal at Jayasree Bazar.

Afzal was later confined into the union AL office in presence of the AL leaders.

Police reached there after two hours and handcuffed the BCL leader. They forced him to apologise to the crowd gathered there.

Following the incident, police also arrested AL Jayasree Union unit's General Secretary Abul Hashem Alam in connection with the harassment.

Alam was suspended from AL in an emergency meeting called by the upazila Awami League unit on Wednesday.

3 Swechchasebak League men

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Joardar was heard warning journalists about yellow journalism.

The leaders arrested are Imran Ahmed, 32, joint convener of Chuadanga Sadar upazila unit; Tourat Hossain, 28, president of Ward-5; and Dishan Ahmed, 24, organising secretary of Ward-3 unit of Sadar upazila.

The OC said the shortened version of the speech was uploaded not by the three arrestees but by another person named Rakibul Alam Nippon, who is a Chuadanga Bangladesh Chhatra League activist.

On August 16, 2020, Nippon had uploaded the video with a caption accusing Joardar of extremism, organised crime and intimidating the media, the OC said.

The video was then shared by the three accused in the case and 37 others, he added.

According to the case statement, the accused posted the video on Facebook in order to create unrest and chaos in the society and to tarnish the social status, dignity and reputation of the lawmaker.

The trio were arrested from Hasan Shahid Chattar in the town around 8:30pm on Wednesday, informed police.

On the day the Facebook post was made, Hossain filed the DSA case.

The OC said that after conducting a probe, the investigation officer (IO) of the case Bhabatosh Ghosh submitted the charge sheet to Chuadanga Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court on September 12.

Following a hearing on the charge sheet, the court issued warrants against the accused on January 20, 2021. Police said the arrestees were produced before the

court yesterday and were then sent to jail.

According to several sources of Chuadanga AL, the DSA case was a result of factional frictions between the district party.

One of the two factions is led by the parliamentarian Joardar, while the other by district Awami League General Secretary Azatul Islam Azad and Swechchasebak League district convener Obaidur Rahman Choudhury Zipu, who was the former mayor of Chuadanga municipality.

According to sources within the party, all the accused are loyalists of Obaidur Rahman Choudhury Zipu.

When contacted, Zipu said this case was meant to harass party leaders and activists. This correspondent repeatedly tried to contact Solaiman Joardar but to no avail.

In another incident, Lalmonirhat Detective Branch of Police arrested the principal of a local madrasa under the DSA.

Zahidul Islam, 33, the principal of Dawatul Quran Mahila Madrasa (Nurani Madrasa) from Bhelabari, had allegedly shared a distorted photo of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Facebook.

According to police, the arrestee had opened a Facebook account named "Zahid Chhatra" to promote extremist ideology and militancy. From that account, he shared a distorted photo of the PM caricaturing her as an animal. The police themselves filed the case on April 8 with Aditmari Police Station.

Zahidul was arrested from his house on Thursday morning. Lalmonirhat Superintendent of Police Abida Sultana confirmed the incident to The Daily Star.

Focus given on vaccines, economy

FROM PAGE 12

and Nigerian Foreign Minister Geoffrey Jidefor took part in the summit.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan handed over chairmanship of D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation to Hasina for the next two years. Foreign Minister Momen also became chairman of D-8 Council of Foreign Ministers.

The theme of the 10th D-8 Summit "Partnership for a Transformative World: Harnessing the Power of Youth and Technology", emphasised on the power of youths and technology.

Prime Minister Hasina said harnessing the power of youths could be done through skill development, utilising the full potential of ICT, creating necessary legal, institutional and infrastructural framework; and improving connectivity to facilitate trade and investment among the D-8 member states.

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"The youth in our countries can be encouraged to come together through the business initiatives at private and even government to private level. The D-8 Business Forum together with the 1st D-8 Youth Summit has created this rare opportunity," she added.

Momen said the D-8 countries have stressed on cooperation on trade and tourism by signing Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA). Six of the eight countries have already ratified PTA.

The trade among the D-8 countries is about \$100 billion, which is only 6 percent of the group's total trade, but the summit spoke of increasing the intra-trade among the countries to 10 percent by 2030.

"There are issues of trade facilitation and removing non-tariff trade barriers. The D-8 leaders emphasised on removing barriers and boosting trade," said Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen.

"All the countries also spoke of streamlining legal and institutional issues for increasing trade," he said.

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Momen said Bangladesh, as chair of the D-8 for the next two years, will do everything necessary to boost trade and investment among the member states.

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