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Militants given arms training in hills: Rab

Seven militants, three KNF members arrested in Bandarban, Rangamati

STAR REPORT

The Rab yesterday arrested seven members of newly found militant outfit Jama'atul Ansar Fil Hindal Sharqiya and three members of a "separatist" group from the remote hilly areas of Bandarban and Rangamati.

The "separatist" group, Kuki-Chin National Front (KNF), was providing training and shelter to the members of the militant outfit, a top Rab official said.

The elite force also seized nine SBBL guns, 50 bullets, 62 cartridge cases for SBBL guns, six improvised explosive devices (IEDs), two cartridge belts, a locally made pistol, a walkie-talkie and 10 maps of the proposed Kuki-Chin State.

Khandaker Al Moin, director of the Rab's Legal and Media Wing, disclosed this information at a media briefing at the Bandarban Zilla Parishad auditorium yesterday.

The Rab said Jama'atul Ansar members first took training on plain land and those who completed the training successfully were sent to remote mountainous regions for further training on arms and explosives.

The security force came to know about the organisational structure of the militant outfit and the names of its top leaders after quizzing the seven arrestee militants, Moin said.

At the briefing, the Rab disclosed a list of 17 missing

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A worried mother looking after her two kids who have recently been admitted to the capital's Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College and Hospital with dengue. The number of dengue patients has risen sharply in recent weeks, with the health directorate reporting 29,107 cases so far this year. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

RECRUITMENT TEST Question leak forces Biman to postpone it

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Biman Bangladesh Airlines yesterday postponed the written tests for recruitment to several posts including that of 100 drivers.

The decision was made after the question paper for the test got leaked, said Biman Managing Director and CEO Zahid Hossain.

Sources said detectives arrested five junior employees of Biman in Lalbagh on charges of being involved in the question leak.

Biman formed a committee headed by Chief Financial Officer Md Naoshad to investigate the incident, they added.

The committee was asked to submit its report in five days.

Additional Police Commissioner (DB) Muhammad Harun ar Rashid will hold a press conference today at the

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Imran barred from polls for five years

Ex-Pak PM accused of selling gifts from foreign dignitaries

AFP, Islamabad

Former Pakistan prime minister Imran Khan was disqualified yesterday from running for political office for five years, after the election commission ruled he misled officials about gifts he received from foreign leaders while in power.



The decision is the latest twist in political wrangling that began even before Khan's April ouster, and is one of several legal battles being fought by the former international cricket star and his Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party.

Dozens of his supporters attacked vehicles as they left the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) headquarters after the ruling, and police detained one of Khan's security guards after he fired a shot into the ground.

In the eastern city of Lahore, his supporters blocked some roads, while in Faisalabad, they burned tyres to stop traffic. On Twitter, Islamabad police said security in the capital was on "high alert".

"The ECP has declared Imran Khan was involved in corrupt practices," Gohar Khan, one of his lawyers, told AFP, adding he had been disqualified for five years. "We are going to challenge it in the Islamabad High Court right now."

Pakistan's courts are often used to tie up lawmakers in lengthy proceedings that rights monitors criticise for stalling political opposition. The commission's involvement in this case stems from the obligation of elected officials to declare all their assets.

The case centres on a government department known as "Toshakhana", which during the Mughal era referred to the "treasure houses" kept by the sub-continent's princely rulers to store and display gifts lavished on them.

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Supply crunch fuels sugar price

Refiners 'struggling to meet production targets due to gas shortage at factories'

SUKANTA HALDER and MOHAMMAD SUMAN

Sugar prices have increased again in Dhaka and Chattogram amid a supply crunch.

Private mill owners said imports were normal, but they see no way out of the price spiral as there is a lack of sufficient gas supply to refine sugar.

They added that a shortage of dollars and complexities in opening Letters of Credit (LCs) may result in import shortages in the future.

The government raised prices of sugar in the first week of October in an apparent move to catch up to the market as traders were already selling it at higher rates than previously fixed prices.

According to the new government rates, loose sugar should cost Tk 90 a kg and a packaged sugar Tk 95 a kg in the retail market.

But loose sugar is currently being sold at Tk 100-110 a kg in the retail market, while packaged sugar is currently hard to find.

The Tk 10-15 hike in price of sugar per kg has increased hardships for consumers already struggling to cope with spiralling prices of essentials.

Retailers and wholesalers in several areas of Dhaka said the supply of loose sugar is declining and that the packaged variety is not available

everywhere.

A trader in Moulvibazar, a wholesale market in Old Dhaka, said, "For the last one week, we have not been getting sugar from the mills as per the demand. So, the price has gone up. It is not possible to sell sugar at the price fixed by the government."

Monwar Hossain, owner of Yasin General Store in the capital's Karwan Bazar, said the situation is such that the price of sugar will rise again.

Traders of Khatunganj-Chaktai wholesale market in Chattogram said sugar prices have gone up by Tk 450 to Tk 500 per maund (37.32kg) in the local market in one month.

According to the traders there, sugar is now sold at Tk 3,480 to Tk 3,500 a maund, which was Tk 3,000-3,050 a month ago.

Sugar prices have increased by 19.5 percent in the past one year, according to the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh, although the international media reported freight cost for imports has almost halved.

Biswajit Saha, director for corporate and regulatory affairs at City Group, said, "Earlier, we could supply 3,000 tonnes of sugar daily. Now, it is 700-800 tonnes."

He said import is normal but production has come down significantly due to the decrease in the

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Essentials' prices have not gone up much

Commerce minister says pointing to the global situation

BSS, Rangpur

Prices of essentials have not increased much in the country considering the global situation, Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi has said.

"But the ordinary people are suffering from this too. We have to bear it considering the situation. At the same time, we all have to work to deal with the global recession," he told reporters at the Rangpur Circuit House yesterday.

The minister said the government is ready to face the global recession.

"Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has directed all to make sure that not even an inch of land is laid fallow in the country. Global recession will be mitigated by increasing food production in the country."

"Besides, the government is reducing or postponing spending in the sectors wherever it is possible. We may face problems due to the

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Five centuries old Swiss graffiti found in Jerusalem

AFP, Jerusalem



Graffiti with the name of a 15th-century Swiss knight has been discovered in Jerusalem, carved into the walls of a building where pilgrims stayed, according to the Israel Antiquities Authority.

The knight Adrian von Bubenberg is believed to have visited the

holy city in 1466, when researchers say he may have marked his name alongside his family emblem on a stone ceiling.

"The building served as a monastery and a hostel for the Western pilgrims, who left their mark on the walls," said the leaders of the research, Michael Chernin and Shai Halevi, in a statement on Thursday.

The team has uncovered more than 40 inscriptions on Mount Zion, adjacent to the Old City, which they attributed to Christian and Muslim pilgrims.

Von Bubenberg was renowned for his role in the 1476 Battle of Murten near the city of Bern, when the Swiss beat the Burgundian army led by Charles the Bold.

Doubt remains as to whether the knight himself was behind the graffiti, or if it is the work of his son who carried the same name.

Eli Escudido, director of the Israel Antiquities Authority, said the discovery creates a "fascinating picture" of the city's past.

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PHOTO: AFP

Activists of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party burn tyres and shout slogans along a street in Lahore of Pakistan yesterday after the party's founder, Imran Khan, was disqualified from running for political office for five years.

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