

LATE S. M. ALI **DHAKA MONDAY NOVEMBER 3, 2003** 

# Abduction handling failure

Businessmen feel more insecure

S the abduction tale concerning Chittagong business magnate Jamaluddin Ahmed spun into more-than-a-hundred-day saga, newer incidents of kidnapping have occurred in the port city. The mysterious failure to recover him or uncover his whereabouts -- precisely, whether he is still alive -- albeit raises the spectre of a higher incidence of kidnapping in the country. As part of the scenario, Abu Sayed, a top business executive of Dhaka was kidnapped in broad daylight on Friday as his car reached Tejgaon. His transport was hijacked along with him, a piece of well-plotted crime! Sayed's family members bought his freedom by paying ransom.

Jamaluddin Ahmed's near and dear ones had purportedly given Tk 25 lakh to former Chittagong Metropolitan Police commissioner and officer-incharge of Kotwali Police Station to secure Jamal's release from abductors. But the Chittagong magnate remains untraceable to this day.

Now, at the end of the tether, after more than three months of agonising wait, Jamaluddin's wife Nazma Chowdhury has seen the Home Minister accompanied by her two sons with a hope flickering in her that her husband is 'still alive'. She has implored the minister to resume the manhunt, now in comatose. Significantly, ill-fated Jamal's wife says, the family knows the identities of the abductors and their godfather, adding that she would disclose the names to the Prime Minister when she met her. One wonders why the Chittagong police failed to draw on the information the family had! After the abduction ordeal the family has been through, their own lives are now being endangered by death threats. What a terrible misfortune has befallen the family. They need physical protection and that's what they have sought from the government.

Nazma Chowdhury says her husband was kidnapped due to 'political rivalry, not for ransom'. And that is why obviously she is talking of godfather, whose name she wants to reveal to the prime minister. Whatever the truth, it's the government's duty to uncover the whole of it. Confusing signals about Jamaluddin's whereabouts, announcement overkill before undertaking a raid, mobile communication advantage tilting towards the kidnappers and botched up rescue operations -- all point to an unprecedented abduction handling debacle. Are we reaching the kidnapping incidence of a Columbian proportion?

# **Jail Killing Day**

# A burden on collective conscience

HE killings of four national leaders in Dhaka Central Jail on November 3, 1975, is a festering wound on our body politic which continues to baffle those who believe in the rule of law.

It is regrettable that even 28 years after national leaders Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajudddin Ahmed, Mansur Ali and AHM Kamruzzaman were killed, the trial of the assassins is still not over. The point is all the more pertinent because successive governments unequivocally committed themselves to the supremacy of law, which, in essence, meant that nobody would be

# Jail killing in retrospect

set in motion a 'bad precedent' in the annals of our tragic history

HE killing of four national As the nation passed through a leaders in Dhaka Central Jail series of tragedy since August 15, it on November 3, 1975 was became evident that the military the last ditch attempt to mop up the command was not only ruptured by military operation by the disgruntled the 'loose cannons' who undertook officers involved in the August 15 such a bonapartism, the loyalty of coup. It was designed to preempt any the forces was also torn between the move by forces loyal to Sheikh Mujib new Chief of Army Staff (CAS), Ziaur Rahman, and the Chief of General A strong school of thought pre-Staff, Khaled Mosharrof. This shook vails that the necessity to strike at the the confidence of the plotters and incarcerated leaders rose after the primed their focus on exterminating

and politics. They were politicians representing the grassroots sentiments and leapt upward in the national scene through dedication and diligence. They also have had important portfolios in the exiled Bangladesh government cabinet

that was formed on April 10, 1971, and later. Of the slain leaders, Syed Nazrul Islam replaced Mujib as the Acting President during the war while Tajuddin Ahmed, Capt. Monsur Ali and AHM Qamruzzaman were Prime, by Mujib's captivity in Pakistan

so vital a role in their national history as did those four valiant sons of the soil

Tajuddin steered the nation toward independence in Mujib's absence. A dedicated politician, economist and lawyer, he brought his political weight upon Indira Gandhi during the war and presented himself to the international

community as Mujib's rightful heir and deputy. His charisma and vision helped us weather the shortfall left

a lesson to a military junta that The right of any citizen, irrespective of his/her socio-political standrefused to heed reasons. The same ing, is ensured by the constitution. leaders also sought recognition for an The ironv of November 3 rests on the independent Bangladesh from the comity of nations while boys fought in brutality of the crime committed, battlefields to cripple the enemy's which nixed to deaths the lives of wherewithal that went into commitleaders deemed as 'safe' under the ting genocide against a people rendered helpless.

The offences committed on November 3 are constitutionally untenable. Nothing under the canopy of law can sustain the logic of killing in custody; let alone the

killings of people who'd endured the

Another way of looking at the

event is to dig into peoples' minds to

unearth what one might call the

'popular sentiment'. By voting the

AL in the 1970 election, people had

mandated the party to lead the

nation toward independence, espe-

cially after the Pakistani junta's

refusal to hand over power peace-

with courage and commitment.

birth pang of a nation.

custody of the law. If seeking justice was an elusion then, why should it be now Justice is the only remedy that can set those leaders' departed souls in peace. They grew in the torment of politics to win over the heart and mind of this nation. They risked their existence to snatch away from the Pakistani junta our democratic

rights and freedom. They are the true architects of a nation that now stands tall among others in the community of nations.

And, they had the gird to cobble together a government in exile; to build a provisional armed force from the scratch; to garner regional and international support for our war of liberation and to gift the nation with a flag and a map.

Almost three decades on, the trial of the jail killing is hostage to peripheral procedural complications. Can't we reciprocate their contributions by holding a trial of their killers?

fully and its brutal crack-Abu Noman is a free lance journalist and political down on the night of March 25. These leaders took the challenge

#### League at any cost, fearing a backthe remnants of the AL's political leadership. Whatever stratagem the coup

community of nations.

Killing in custody is tantamount to crime against humanity. One thus expected the captive leaders to remain under the protection of law during the captivity. But law had been thrown into oblivion on August 15 and the nation groaned under anarchy as the tragedy of November 3 hit the vacuum.

The agony of the day further multiplied with the passage of time due to the assassinated leaders being legends of our national history

#### Home Minister, respectively. They all formed a unique team of states-

men to pull the nation off the stagnation burgeoned by the ravages of a liberation war that left over 3 million dead and maimed millions of others. The economy too teetered with the scars of ravages needing urgent reconstruction and salvaging. That said, one must remember

that the credentials of the slain leaders transcended all political denominations, for a few in a nation are afforded the opportunity to play

Minister, Commerce Minister and during the war.

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Tajuddin's devotion toward organising the war of liberation, both militarily and politically, convinced the world to come in aid of a people left to groan under a cruel siege laid by Pakistani forces. The enemy was irrational and averse to the rule of law. They'd virtually slaughtered a constitution through intransigence and arrogance with respect to sharing power despite a popular mandate

The Bengali nation united under Mujib and those four leaders to teach

Lest we forget

## M A S MOLLA

ABU NOMAN

to stage a political comeback.

dividend of the August 15 putsch was

about to slip off the hands of the

junior officers who executed the

plot. The counter putsch by forces

loyal to Khaled Mosharrof, then

Chief of General Staff (CGS), pro-

pelled the plotters to exterminate the

leading elements of the Awami

plotters had devised, the legacy of

November 3 remains mired in a

national tragedy that is as yet un-

mitigated. The coup makers felt

jubilant and cheery that day because

Mujib and his heirs apparent were

no more and leading lieutenants of

him too were brutally murdered in

custody. But the act itself, from all

standpoints, failed to stand up to the

scrutiny of sanity. It was abhorrent

and unethical to say the least, and it

lash from within the military.

HE life-sketches of four national leaders -- Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed, Captain M Mansur Ali and A H M Kamruzzaman -- are given below:

## Sved Nazrul Islam



Syed Nazrul Islam was born in village Iamodal Dampara in Kishoreganj (then Mymensingh) District in 1925. He was lastly educated in Dhaka University where from he did his MA in History in 1947 and later in 1953 the LL.B. During student life, Sved Nazrul

was the senior Vice President of AL Central Committee in 1964 and hence had to act as the President of AL from 1966 to 1969 when Sheikh Mujib was in jail. In the 1970 Parliamentary Election, Syed Nazrul Islam was elected MP from Mymensingh-17 constituency

During the War of Liberation, Syed Nazrul Islam was the Vice President and the Acting President as the declared President Sheikh Muiib was detained in a Pakistani jail. He led the War of Liberation successfully on the advice of Prime Minister Tajuddin Ahmed. During his political career all through, Syed Nazrul was the most revered and most of the AL leaders used to address him as 'Sir'

Sved Nazrul Islam was the second member (first and the Chairman was Dr. Kamal Hossain) of the Bangladesh Constitution Drafting Committee in 1972. Just before his sad demise on November 3, 1975 this most revered Syed Nazrul Islam was the Vice President of Bangladesh.

**Tajuddin Ahmed** 

(January 4) and helped formation of the Awami Muslim League on June 23, 1949. Tajuddin was elected the General Secretary of Dhaka District Awam League for the period1953-'59. Later, he was also elected to the post of the Cultural Secretary of AL Central Committee. Being the General Secretary of AL from March 1966, Tajuddin was the key personality to draft the famous Six-point Charter of demands. Thus the genius in Tajuddin was exposed to the party men, though the general public were mostly unaware of this because he had little capacity for delivering hot speeches. However, Tajuddin attended the Opposition Taiuddin Ahmed was born at village Parties' Conference in Lahore (1966) Dardaria in Kapasia of Gazipur (then where Sheikh Mujib (President of AL) Dhaka) District on July 23, 1925. His announced the Six-point Charter. institutional learning began in the The talent, diplomacy and boldness village Maktab and Tole. Then he was in Tajuddin were most exposed in educated at Targaon Primary School 1971. After the March 25 crackdown and Kapasia Minor School. Observing and Sheikh Mujib's arrest, Tajuddin Tajuddin's potentiality, the teachers of Ahmed left Dhaka and went into Minor High School advised his parents hiding with Barrister Amirul Islam. to send him to Nagari Christian They reached the Meherpur Border of Missionary High School (Now St. the then Kushtia District in about three Nicholas High School)- known to be days and were wandering in disguise as the best in the area. He studied here for farmers wearing Lungi and Guernsey

### some time and the teachers of this school also prescribed a better school for Tajuddin. Thus he was sent to St. Gregory's High School, Laksmi Bazaar, Dhaka. In this school Tajuddin started scouting being a member of the Boy Scout in 1941. However, Tajuddin matriculated in 1944 and stood third in the Intermediate Examination (now HSC) in 1948. He then did B. A. (Honours Course) in Economics from Dhaka University in 1953. But as his political career began (including his maiden imprisonment) in 1954, he

could not obtain the M. A. Degree in that discipline. However, he got the LL.B. Degree by appearing in the examination from jail in 1964. Tajuddin Ahmed memorised the entire Quran during his school days, i.e., he was a Hafez. Tajuddin Ahmed was an amiable and simple but bold

and serious personality As regards Tajuddin's political career, we may go through the events below. He became a member of Muslim League's Progressive Section in 1943, A Councilor of Bengal Muslim League in 1944, a Fundamental Member of Bangladesh Chhatra League in 1948 (Ganzi) but did not cross the border on their own accord. They had to be taken to the Indian Territory by Golok Mojumder-the then Inspector General of BSF (Eastern Wing) on March 31. Such was Tajuddin's sense of honour for his motherland and the maturity of diplomacy

After the formation of the Mujibnagar Government on April 10 and the taking oath on April 17, the first Prime Minister Tajuddin formed an all-party Advisory Committee headed by Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani-the Founder President of Awami Muslim League. Thus the otherwise suspected internal quarrel (within the Government in exile, and especially the Mujib Bahini and the general Mukti Bahini) could be minimized effectively.

Tajuddin Ahmed successfully led the War of Liberation. The Indian help from the first week of December, 1971 was useful for our earlier victory over the Pakistani occupation forces. Tajuddin's Government in exile returned to the Independent Bangladesh on December 22 and started the rehabilitation of war-torn Bangladesh. Sheikh Mujib-the supreme Organizer of the movement towards liberation, returned to

November 3 with the other three leaders (Mujib and Tajuddin). Tajuddin Ahmed was killed on national leaders November 3, 1975 with other three Abul Hasanat Md. national leaders in the Dhaka Central jail.

#### Captain Md. Mansur Ali Md. Mansur Ali was born in Kuripara, Kazipur, Sirajganj (then Pabna) District in 1919. He did his M A in



Economics from Aligarh Muslim University, India and also passed LL.B. Then he practised advocacy in Pabna from 1951.

He was the Vice President of Pabna Muslim League during 1946-1950. He Bangladesh on January 10, 1972 via was arrested in 1952 for his involve-London and Delhi. Mujib himself same organization during 1943-'45. ment in the Language Movement. He He served as the General Secretary of served as the Minister of Law and Awami League in 1970 and was elected Parliamentary Affairs in Ataur Rahman MP from Rajshahi that year. Khan's Cabinet in 1956 and was arrested again in 1958 when Martial Minister for Relief and Rehabilitation Law was promulgated by General Ayub in Tajuddin's Cabinet in exile during

Kamruzzaman A H M Kamruzzaman was born in Rajshahi in an aristocratic family (as



described by Mr. Muntasir Mamun in the Banglapedia) in 1926. He did his M A in Economics from Calcutta University in 1946. Later he passed LL.B. from Raishahi Universitvin 1956

A H M Kamruzzaman was the

1971. Later on, he also served as the

Home Minister in Sheikh Mujib's

Cabinet in the independent

Bangladesh. He was elected the

This rather younger and potential

leader of the country was killed in

Dhaka Central Jail on November 3 with

The contributions of the four

national leaders made an indelible

impression on the hearts and minds of

our people. We must pay homage to

their revered memories hoping that

the trial of their killers will be brought

the other three described above.

President of AL in 1974.

Kamruzzaman was also active in politics from his student life and was the Secretary of Rajshahi Branch Bengal Muslim Students League in 1942. He was elected the VP of the

allowed to get away with culpable crimes. There is little doubt that the jail killing was one such crime.

The leaders have to be given their due place in the history of politics in this country. They led the nation through the darkness of the excruciating days of 1971, and definitely deserved full recognition for the service that they had rendered to the nation.

But ruthless politics, or its ugly manifestation, cut short their lives. They fell victim to the assassins' bullets when the nation was passing through a grave crisis following the events of August 1975. That added a black chapter, an indelible one, to our political history.

There is no way to make amends for what happened on November 3, 1975, but that does not absolve the nation of its responsibility to uphold the law as the guiding force in dealing with all kinds of aberrations, including the ghoulish crime committed on that day.

The law should have taken its natural course long back. That would have served the cause of justice and, no less important, brought back a feeling of equanimity to our collective psyche which is essential for our onward march with a clear conscience.

Islam was elected the Vice President of Salimullah Muslim Hall, DU for the year 1946-'47. He was also the Secretary of Muslim Chhatra League for some time and he was a respected member of the All-party Action Committee of the Language Movement in 1952.

Syed Nazrul Islam was appointed a Taxation Officer through the Central Superior Service (CSS) examinations of Pakistan in 1949. This administrative service could not hold independ-

ent-minded Nazrul bevond 1951. He resigned his post and joined the teaching staff of Ananda Mohan College, Mymensingh. He obviously taught History that he studied in his Masters Course. Later, he joined advocacy in Mymensingh and that was his main profession.

As mentioned earlier, the active political life of Syed Nazrul Islam began in 1946. But as a national leader. he was elected the President of Mymensingh Awami League in 1957,

**OPINION** 

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became the Prime Minister while Tajuddin was given the portfolio of Planning and Finance Ministries. The first budget of Independent

Bangladesh was prepared and presented in the Parliament by Tajuddin. He prepared and presented the second and third budgets in 1973 and '74 also. Tajuddin's budget speeches have been regarded as models for our latter Finance Ministers, Tajuddin was also actively involved in drafting the Bangladesh Constitution as member number 3 (out of 34). But due to some misunderstanding between Mujib and Tajuddin, Tajuddin was dropped from the Cabinet in October 1974 when Mujib was forming the undemocratic BKSAL Government.

As ill luck would have it, Mustaque gong was successful in their conspiracy and could kill the entire family of Sheikh Mujib in the dawn of Friday-the 15th of August, 1975 in the backdrop of a cold relation in between the two

Khan. Captain Mansur Ali was elected MP in 1970 election from Pabna constituency. He was the Finance Minister in the first Bangladesh Government in exile in 1971. He served as the Prime Minister in Sheikh Mujib's BAKSAL Government up to 1975.

President Mustaque called Captain Mansur Ali to Bangabhaban from house arrest in the latter half of August, 1975. He scolded Mustaque for the latter's misdeed in front of all the present officials without fear of life. Such was Mansur Ali's love for the country and for legal and moral matters.

This heroic leader was jailed on M A S Mollah is a Member of Bangladesh Asso-ciation August 23, 1975 and brutally killed on for the Advancement of Science (BAAS), Dhaka

to a speedy end.

Social paths of economic development Reflections on Vietnam vis-à-vis Bangladesh

#### MONIRUL I KHAN

CHIEVING respectable living is a goal universally acclaimed. This is truer for a country like Bangladesh beset with chronic poverty. The question is how to go about it. Certainly the smart economists have never shied away from grappling this question and come up with some brilliant ideas. We are familiar with the names of theories and models that prescribe different paths and strategies to reach the goal of desirable economic development. In my mind the inclination in the given models is towards highlighting the parameters that are exclusively 'economic' in their constitution. Let us assume the ideas of Keynes who dominated the parleys of the American econo

mists for a long period where he exclution of unknown degree

sively laid emphasis on creating nand in economy to propel the wheel of growth. In course of time it was achieve economic uplift. Different also found that the Kevnesian recipe economic strategies and policies have also stumbled with stagflation hitting been tried and tested towards the goal the American economy critically. but the success has not been of signifi-In this respect the situation of cant order. We tested immediately

backward economies is more complicated where the economic tools do not operate in an autonomous manner. By autonomous manner I mean a process where the non-economic factors interfere with the economic process in a minimum scale and the 'economic system' has a status of disciplined subsequent year. mechanism. However, the disciplined economies are also not inured to the effect of non-disciplined factors. Think of the aftermath of power failure in New

York city -- looting spree and devasta-

course such a short period of stay is It is now a long history that hardly adequate to make justifiable Bangladesh has been struggling to comments on the issue like the process of economic development, but it will at

least identify some key factors. The very first thing that will catch your sight is the discipline in the movement of the people and the after the liberation the policy of vehicles. We landed at Hanoi airport in the evening and while moving to the nationalisation and later on the princicity streaming through hundreds of ples of free market economy. Still we have not crossed five-percentage motorbikes and paddled-cycles, we point in economic development in a watched the condition. It is about an sustainable manner. It means if it is hour's drive but we did not come achieved in one year, it falters the across the batches after batches of traffic police visible in Dhaka roads In this piece I would report some of

sweating enormously to bring under my reflections gathered through my control the unruly traffic (think of the recent visit to Hanoi by way of particirevenue saved through a small continpating in a workshop for two days. In gent of traffic police). You would not total I stayed there for four days. Of

speeding bus defiantly ignoring the traffic signal. More interestingly, traffic signal posts exist in a selected manner. For example, we stayed in a hotel overlooking the Hanoi Lake. In front of the hotel there was a busy crossing through which roads pass to five directions. There is no traffic signal on the intersection, but there occurs no jam nor any accident. Most vehicles are moving at a moderate speed and allowing others to move safely. You can cross a road without taking a big amount of risk. Motorbike is the main transport of the middle class irrespective of sex segregation. Girls are riding at ease increasing my level of awe. Perhaps one would only dream that Dhaka girls would move by

motorbikes in hundreds on the roads!

should

movement of women at late night. Certainly you would not be contemplating a gun pointed to snatch your mobile and purse. Another important event that pinned my attention is the cleaning exercise of the municipal workers. Once it is eleven at night big trucks

ward.

begin moving slowly in different directions. You find uniformed workers piling the waste bags onto the truck. Thus cleaning is completely done at nighttime. All these are happening in a society, which the other day was branded as poverty stricken and back-

I went to visit the mausoleum where the body of Ho Chi Minh is kept preserved for the posterity. It is another feat of disciplined respect. You might

also notice the scale of security in the mistake the standing sentries for statues. In a very large square people throng everyday to spend some time. In the morning there is service ritual. I met a young boy studying at school final level, whom I asked about the great leader. His eyes glowed to explain the history, replete with the resistance against the two Western powers, the French and the Americans. It was perfectly conveyed to my mind how much proud the Vietnamese are about the history and the present time. Now what are there that is special

about the Vietnamese and their social paths of advancement? It is their patrio tism and dedication. Who says that social solidarity is not possible in a short spell of time? It is belied in

Vietnam. What you need for making

less of big loans from the multilateral agencies and more of sincere committed leadership and disciplined popula tion. Talking to the academics assembled in the workshop one came to know about the educational achievement in the rural areas. Certainly it is a trying time for Vietnam where they are mingling the forces of market with the infrastructure of socialist party, but do not forget that they are expecting double digit growth in near future. There the people and the entrepreneurs are not grilled with the fear that some notorious extortionists blessed by the leaders of the political parties would soon swoop on them!

great economic strides is

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