

# 4 journo murder cases in Khulna hang in balance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Fate of four cases for murder of journalists in Khulna now hangs in the balance due to submission of 'vague', sources claimed.

Complainants in the cases are also not satisfied with the investigations as masterminds behind the murders have been left out of charge sheets, they said.

The four journalists killed by allegedly extremists in Khulna city from March 2 in 2002 till February 11 this year are Dainik Purbanchal Staff Reporter Harun-ar-Rashid, Khulna Correspondent of the New Age Manik Saha, Dainik Janmabhum Editor Humayun Kabir Balu and Khulna Bureau Chief of Dainik Sangram Sheikh Belaluddin.

Unidentified extremists were accused in all the charge sheets submitted under the Explosive

Substances Act. But masterminds and financiers were left out of the charge sheets. The cases were filed by police as complainant.

However, Deputy Commissioner Akbar Ali of Khulna Metropolitan Police (KMP) refused to admit that fate of the murder cases has become uncertain.

Charge sheets of these cases were submitted after 'checking and rechecking' the role of investigating officers (IOs) by the Monitoring Cell of the home ministry, Akbar Ali said.

Fate of the murder cases now solely depends on deposition of prosecution witnesses during trial, he said.

Journalist Haroon was gunned down on the night of March 2 in 2002 at Mujgunni under Khalishpur thana in Khulna city. The IO of the case, ASP Mawla Bux of CID, submitted charge sheet on March 3

this year, accusing three persons of the murder.

Journalist Manik Saha was killed in a bomb attack at noon on January 15 last year in front of Khulna Press Club. The IO submitted charge sheet accusing 12 persons.

Dainik Janmabhum Editor Humayun Kabir Balu was killed in a bomb attack at noon on June 27 last year in front of his office-cum-residence at Haji Ismail Road in Khulna city. Inspector Abdul Hamid of DB of KMP submitted charge sheet on last April 26, accusing eight operatives of PBCP (Janajuddho).

Journalist Shaikh Belaluddin, severely injured in a bomb attack on the night of February 5 last year in front of Khulna Press Club, died at the Combined Military Hospital in Dhaka in the morning of February 11.

OC Iqbal Hossain of Khulna thana submitted charge sheet under the Explosive Substances Act on April 25, accusing four extremists and a local leader of Jamaat-e-Islami.

When asked, Advocate Abu Zafar, Public Prosecutor at Khulna Speedy Trial Tribunal, told this correspondent that fate of all the cases depend on deposition of prosecution witnesses and confession of the accused.

The PP said depositions of 23 prosecution witnesses have been recorded in Manik Saha murder case.

Journalist Belal murder case is still under investigation, while Humayun Kabir Balu murder case docket is yet to reach the trial court.

Trial of Haroon murder case is yet to begin, Abu Zafar said.

## Extortion in name of Bangla Bhai: 3 jailed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

The Speedy Trial Tribunal of three extortionists, one of them in absentia.

Tribunal judge Habibur Rahman pronounced the verdict.

Two of the convicts, Rezaul Islam, 24, hailing from Srirampur upazila in Jessore and Azad, 23, from Luxmipur district were sentenced to two years' rigorous imprisonment (RI) while absconding convict, Jahangir Alam was sentenced to five years' RI.

Each of them was fined Tk 1,000, in default, to suffer one month more imprisonment.

About seven weeks ago, one person identified himself as Siddikur Rahman Bangla Bhai and demanded Tk 4 lakh as illegal toll from the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) executive engineer AKM Mostafa Kamal on July 2.

He demanded the money over phone for what he said for treatment of their sick comrades.

However, the engineer played a trick and promised him Tk one lakh at his office in the morning on July 4. In the meantime, he informed the matter to police.

On the day, plainclothes policemen came to the office in guise of employees. As soon as a young man, named Rezaul, stepped into the executive engineer's office identifying himself as a Bangla Bhai activist with Code No-525 and handed over a letter to him, police caught him.

Police also asked him to call his accomplices. They nabbed another youth, Azad who entered the office on phone call.

The mastermind of the plot, Jahangir Alam, managed to escape.



PHOTO: STAR The Citizens Rights Movement formed a human chain in front of Aswani Kumar Hall in Barisal city yesterday demanding effective steps against food adulteration.

# From where the leaflets come?

বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের রাহমানের রাহীম

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

Three leaflets printed in offset papers have been distributed in Bandarban town and in some other areas in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) in the wake of the August 17 serial bombing in the country.

The leaflets published in Bangla language were distributed by street urchins at crowded places like bus terminals, markets and government office premises in Bandarban town yesterday and the day before. Similar leaflets were also distributed in Khulna on Friday.

Two of the leaflets headlined 'History of Jamatul Mujahideen, Bangladesh' and 'Appeal to Workers of Jamatul Mujahideen' were distributed in the name of Bangladesh Islam Rakha Parishad, printed at their bottom. The other leaflet headlined 'Why this allegation' bore the name of Sacheton Nagorik Parishad.

The leaflet headlined 'History of Jamatul Mujahideen, Bangladesh' (JMB) said 74 JMB activists were arrested from the southwest districts this year. All the arrested people are

members of the 'armed cadre of Ahle Hadis Jubo Sangha, a militant group of Ahle Hadis Movement, it said.

It claimed that Siddiquil Islam (Bangla Bhai), Mufti Hannan and Kawser Hussain Siddique started their activities with the help of Ahle Hadis.

The leaflet headlined 'Appeal to Workers of Jamatul Mujahideen' claimed that the United Kingdom, USA, Israel and India have been engaged in a conspiracy against Islam. They created Bin Laden to 'destroy Islam'.

On their behest, Bin Laden is doing terrorist activities while they are attacking Muslim countries in the name of 'war against terror,' it said.

It appealed members of Jamaatul Mujahideen to leave militant way and to follow 'actual Islam'.

The third leaflet published in the name of Sacheton Nagorik Parishad' termed 'irresponsible' the comments made by opposition leader and Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina on the August 17 bombing.

## জামা'আতুল মুজাহিদিন বাংলাদেশ এর ইতিহাস

বাংলাদেশের সকল নাগরিক, সকল ধর্মাবলম্বীদের দুঃখিত আবেদন করছি। মুসলিম জাতি-গোত্রদের জন্য আমসলামআলাহিকুম এবং অন্যান্য ধর্মাবলম্বীদের জন্য যার যার ধর্মমতে যথাযথ সজ্ঞাপন। গত ১৭ই আগস্ট ২০০৫ তারিখে জামা'আতুল মুজাহিদিন বাংলাদেশ নামক সংগঠনটি সমগ্র বাংলাদেশে একযোগে বোমা বিস্ফোরণ ঘটায় যে ভয়ঙ্কর মহড়া প্রদর্শন করলো তার প্রেক্ষিতে এ সংগঠনটি সম্পর্কে দেশবাসীকে জানানো একান্ত জরুরী বলে আমরা মনে করছি। জামা'আতুল মুজাহিদিন এর জনমের ইতিহাস থেকে বাংলাদেশে মুসলিম জাতিবাদের জন্ম এবং এর বিস্তার সম্পর্কে একটি পরিষ্কার ধারণা পাওয়া যাবে।

যাটের দশকে প্রতিবেশী রাষ্ট্র ভারত থেকে মাওলানা আব্দুল্লা হেল বাকী নামে একগো মাওলানা তত্ত্বাবধীন পূর্ব পাকিস্তানে আগমন করেন। এদেশে এসে তিনি পাবনায় স্থায়ী বসতি স্থাপন করেন এবং ধীরে ধীরে আহলে হাদীস মতবাদ প্রচার করতে থাকেন। ফলে দেশের উত্তরাঞ্চলের রেলসামূহে ক্রমান্বয়ে আহলে হাদীস সম্প্রদায় বিস্তৃতি লাভ করতে থাকে। পরবর্তীতে জমাব বাকী যাটের দশকের শেষ দিকে 'জমিয়তে আহলে হাদীস' নামে একটি সংগঠন গড়ে তুলেন। এই সংগঠনের মূল লক্ষ্য ছিল নাওগাতের মাধ্যমে আহলে হাদীস সম্প্রদায়ের ব্যাপক প্রসার ঘটানো এবং কোরআন ও হাদীসের অধ্যয়নে সমাজ ও রাষ্ট্র পরিচালনা করা। মাওলানা আব্দুল্লা হেল বাকীর মৃত্যুর পর তাঁর পুত্র রাজশাহী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের প্রাক্তন তিনি জমাব ডঃ আব্দুল বাকী উক্ত সংস্থার নেতৃত্ব গ্রহণ করেন এবং সংগঠনটি তাঁর পিতার প্রদত্ত রূপরেখা অনুযায়ী পরিচালনা করতে থাকেন। অল্প সময়েই সংগঠনটির আদর্শগত দৃঢ়তা ও নাওগাতী কার্যক্রম আকৃষ্ট হয়ে বিশুল সংখ্যক মুসলমান এতে সান্না দেয়।



PHOTO: STAR Every year a huge amount of money is spent for dredging the Jamuna near Paturia ferry terminal but the expenditure is of little use as the silt thus removed is dumped at a short distance in the river, which rolls back into the channel after some days.

# Aricha ghat may soon buzz with life again

## Ferry terminal to be shifted from Paturia due to silt deposit

JAHANGIR ALAM BISWAS, Manikganj

Once busy Aricha Ghat may regain its glory and vivacity. The ferry terminal shifted from Aricha to Paturia due to deposit of silt there in 2002 may be restored to its original site.

Paturia-Daulatdia and Paturia Nagarbari (Kazirhat) routes in the Padma have become risky for vessels near Paturia ferry terminal due to massive underwater shoals even in the current rainy season, Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) officials said while talking to this correspondent yesterday. They said they are thinking to shift the terminal from Paturia to Aricha soon, possibly within a week.

They said a three-kilometer shoal has emerged in front of Paturia ferry terminal. Ferry vessels are plying in the Paturia-Daulatdia route with considerable risk. At times, their propellers touch sand

under water.

Two ferries ran aground on shoals near Paturia terminal in last one week. Moreover, ferry can harbour at the fourth ferry pontoon.

Even the channel dredged last year has also become silted.

A team of high officials of BIWTA and BIWTC (Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation) visited Paturia, Daulatdia and Aricha ferry terminals last week to assess the situation. They included BIWTA Member Engineer Firoz Ahmed, Director (CMP) Ibrahim Hossain, Additional Chief Engineer Abdul Motin and Executive Engineer (dredging unit) Saiful Islam; and BIWTC General Manager (commercial) Mohammad Ali and General Manager (Marine) Capt. Shawkat Sardar.

After visiting the three terminals, they told newsmen at Aricha that the ferry terminal will be shifted there from Paturia as Aricha-Daulatdia and Aricha Nagarbari (Kazirhat) routes are now not safe for vessels.

There is no navigability problem at Aricha as 30-35 feet water remains in the channel.

Shifting of the terminal to Paturia had cut the cost for running ferry vessels and saved time as the distance from Paturia to Daulatdia is less than half of the distance from Aricha to Daulatdia.

Huge amounts were spent to keep the Paturia ferry terminal navigable. BIWTA sources said Tk 6 crore was spent for dredging the channel from August last year to January this year. Six dredgers had removed 7.66 lakh cubic metres of silt from the paturia channel area during the period. They said over Tk 100 crore was spent for dredging channels in Aricha and Paturia terminal areas in last 13 years.

Other sources said dredging is done every year because the silt removed from the channel is dumped at a short distance in the river, which rolls back into the channel after some time.

# Govt action against fanatics an eyewash

## Inu says at Bheramara party meeting

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) president Hasanul Haq Inu has alleged that the government's action against fundamentalists is nothing but an eye-wash.

"The BNP-Jamaat government will never take meaningful action against fundamentalists as they are sheltered by the ruling party men. Their talk talks are only a ploy to cover up their activities".

Inu said the August 17 serial bombing is not an incident to be ignored by any political party. It is a wake up call for all. If the parties both in power and in opposition fail to realise this, the country will plunge into a great crisis.

Democracy will be shattered, human rights will be grossly violated and fanaticism and superstitions

element in the country but now its leaders have admitted that JMB is an Islamist militant group.

"What BNP will say when its coalition partner Jamaat-e-Islami will be proved as the main fundamentalist party in the country?", Inu posed the question.

Inu said the August 17 serial bombing is not an incident to be ignored by any political party. It is a wake up call for all. If the parties both in power and in opposition fail to realise this, the country will plunge into a great crisis.

Democracy will be shattered, human rights will be grossly violated and fanaticism and superstitions

will blur the good teachings of religion, he warned.

He said the so called Islamist militants do not actually preach the real spirit of Islam and even do not want to establish Islam. They only want to capture state power in the name of religion, Inu said.

The meeting was also addressed by Kushtia JSD President Abdul Alim Sawpan, Emdadul Islam Ata, Golam Mohsin, Asit Kumar Roy, Bulbul Kabir and Safiul Alam.

Inu urged the party men and the people to unite to resist the people who are propagating violence in the name of religion.

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11x3