

## A forgotten war hero

Death anniversary of Bir Shrestha Hamidur Rahman again passes off unnoticed: No memorial built

RAJAT KANTI GOSWAMI,  
Moulvibazar

As in the past, the 35th death anniversary of Bir Shrestha Sepoy Hamidur Rahman passed off unnoticed this year also, without any programme by any organisation.

There was none to recollect the galantry of the great freedom fighter at Dhalai in Moulvibazar, where he laid down his life on October 28, 1971, fighting for independence.

Even after 34 years of his death, there is no monument built to honour the hero.

Hamidur Rahman was born in Dumuria village in 24-Pargana district in West Bengal in 1944. His family later settled at Khalishpur



village in Khulna.

Hamidur joined the then East Pakistan Rifles (EPR) in late 1970. After the crackdown by the Pakistani occupation forces, the young man left EPR

and joined the Liberation War.

Hamidur Rahman was awarded the highest state honour Bir Shrestha for his gallantry during the Liberation War but nothing was done to preserve his memory after the war.

In 1992, Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) erected a memorial plaque at Dhalai BoP (border outpost).

The Ministry of Liberation War Affairs took up a project to build a monument at Dhalai in memory of Hamidur Rahman. Seventy-four decimal lands were acquired from Dhalai Tea Garden for the project. Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman laid the foundation of the monument on April 30, 2003.

But since then there has been no further step to implement the project.



Thousands of mourning people from all walks of life gathered at the crematorium when the body of Judge Jagannath Pandey was cremated in Barisal yesterday (left) and his grieved and dejected wife Rita Pandey with her two and a half year old son Srestha on her lap at home.



PHOTO: STAR

## Galib produced at Bogra court

Seeks acquittal in 2 cases

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Amir of Ahle Hadith Andolon Bangladesh (Ahab) Muhammad Asadullah Al Ghalib was produced before a Bogra Court for the hearing of his appeal for acquittal in two cases under explosive substances act.

The hearing of the cases were scheduled for the Special Tribunal but due to the absence of the judge, Ghalib was produced before the Additional District Judge's Court 3, Bogra under the tight security of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab).

The court issued an arrest warrant against another accused Shaikh Abdur Rahman and ordered the publication of ads in newspapers as he remains in hiding. A fresh date for the next hearing was set to January 8.

A murder case and another case under explosive act were filed with the Shajahanpur Police Station against Ghalib for the bomb blast that killed one at Lokkhikola village in Shajahanpur upazila on January 14. A charge sheet was also submitted under explosive act in the January 16 bomb making materials case for which he had also appealed.

Advocate Kaisaruzzaman defended Ghalib in court while Public Prosecutor Saiful Islam moved for the state.

## Punish culprits, ensure security

Rallies, processions, court boycott mark wave of protests against killing of Jhalakathi judges

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Political parties and lawyers brought out processions and held rallies in different district headquarters yesterday protesting Monday's bomb attack by Jamaatul Mujahideen, Bangladesh (JMB) in Jhalakathi that killed two judges and injured four other persons.

Security was tightened in court areas. Visitors were allowed to enter the compounds only after checking by metal detectors.

Our Rangpur Correspondent reports: The 14-party alliance led by Awami League brought out a procession and held a rally at Rangpur town yesterday morning in protest against the killings in Jhalakathi.

The procession was brought out from Rangpur Public

Library campus. The processionists paraded the main roads in the town.

At the rally held at the court square with Gonotanti Party Presidium

member Mohammed Afzal in the chair, speakers bitterly criticised the government for its failure to ensure security of life to judges. The BNP-Jamaat government have no right to cling to power as it failed to protect life

of citizens, they said.

The speakers included Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) leader Dr. Ekramul Hoque Swapan, Rangpur AL president Abdur Razzak and Gono Forum leader Anwar Hossain.

They said fundamentalist forces under the protection of the government are killings innocent citizens in the name of Islam. They are tarnishing the image of the country and defaming the greatest religion which never supports violence in any form, they said.

They urged the government to step down or to face tougher agitation.

Meanwhile, judges in Rangpur are passing days amid fear. Though most of them attended courts, they felt insecure, many of them said while talking to this correspondent.

Police official however said they have taken all out measures to ensure security to judges.

RU Correspondent reports: Rajshahi Advocate Bar Association yesterday took out a procession and held a rally to protest the killing of two judges.

The lawyers boycotted courts on Monday.

Yesterday's protest meeting held at the Bar Association auditorium with its president Zillur Rahman in the chair was addressed by, among others, Entajul Haque Babu, Abdus Samad, Masum Ahmad, Nowsad Ali, Israfil Hossain, Tajul Islam Faruk, Abu Raihan, Abdul wahab and Mustafizur Rahman.

They said that the BNP-led coalition government has to bear the responsibility for the murder of two judges and all bomb attacks in the country as it patronises fundamentalist forces.

Rajshahi Lawyers Association and officials of courts also held a meeting at the court building yesterday and strongly protested the bomb attacks.

They also demanded security of lawyers and court officials.

The Lawyers Interest Protect Association of Rajshahi held a protest meeting on the court compound with its president Abdul Motallab in the chair.

They said the attack is a threat to independent judiciary system.

The Progressive Teachers Association (PTA) of Rajshahi University in a statement strongly condemned the bomb attack by JMB in Jhalakathi.

It said such attacks and bomb blasts are taking place one after another as the BNP-led coalition government is protecting the Islamist militants who are doing violence in the name of religion.

They said the judicial system will collapse, giving rise to anarchy in the country, if such incidents are not checked and said politics in the name of religion should be banned.

They also urged lawyers and the people to resist the fundamentalist forces.

Anti Imperialism Teachers Forum of RU in a statement also condemned the bomb attack.

They said if August 17 bomb attackers were punished the incident would not have occurred.

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) took out a protest procession and held a rally on the RU campus protesting the bomb attack in Jhalakathi.

Jatayatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), Progotishil Chhatra Jote (PCJ), Udichi RU unit, Anushilon Drma group, Sammilito Sangkritik Jote and Bangabandhu Parishad separately condemned the killings in Jhalakathi.

Rajshahi Peshgibi Parishad yesterday formed a human chain at Shaheeb Bazar protesting the incident.

Rajshahi city Awami League took out a protest procession and held a rally at the Zero Point Monday evening.

Our Nilphamari Correspondent reports: Judges and lawyers observed a 'pen down strike' in all courts in Nilphamari yesterday in protest against the killing of two judges in Jhalakathi. The lawyers also boycotted



PHOTO: STAR

Wave of protests... People in their thousands joined a procession in Barisal city called by the 14-party opposition alliance yesterday to protest the killing of two judges in Jhalakathi (above) and lawyers marching streets in Nilphamari condemning the brutal act (Bottom).



PHOTO: STAR

Police checking visitors at the entrance to Nilphamari court compound yesterday.

courts on Monday soon after the news of killing of two judges in Jhalakathi reached Nilphamari.

Yesterday, the lawyers brought out a procession in the town and held a rally on the Judge Court premises, demanding immediate arrest and punishment of the killers.

Speakers at the rally said JMP activists are killing people as the government failed to take any action against them. They demanded security of life of judges.

The Judicial Service Association will hold a meeting today to discuss the situation.

Talking tom this correspondent, Additional District Judge GMS Farid said judges and their families in Nilphamari are leading a confined life at their residential houses because they cannot go out due to lack of security.

Meanwhile police were checking visitors to courts with metal detectors. Additional Police Superintendent Ali Azam said judges have been given police escort while coming to office and returning home.

Special police petrol has also been arranged in the residential area for judges and more steps would be taken, the ASP said.

Our Patuakhali Correspondent reports: The 14-party alliance brought out a procession and held a protest rally at the town yesterday in protest against the Jhalakathi bombing.

Speakers at the rally held in front of the Press Club demanded immediate steps to ensure security to judges and to nab the killers.

Our Moulvibazar Correspondent reports: Moulvibazar Advocate Bar Association at meeting yesterday

resolved to boycott courts on Thursday in protest against the bomb attack in Jhalakathi.

They bitterly criticised the government for its failure to protect judges from the attacks by fundamentalist forces.

Our Rangamati Correspondent reports: The Rangamati Zila Ainjibi Samity started a three-day court boycott from yesterday to protest the killings of two judges in Jhalakathi.

They will also bear black badges till tomorrow, said a press release.

Our Sirajganj Correspondent reports: Judges and lawyers abstained from work yesterday to protesting the killing of two Judges at Jhalakathi and demanding immediate arrest and punishment of the killers.

District and Sessions Judge Mazdar Hossain told newsmen yesterday that the judges and lawyers are passing day in panic. They are feeling insecure both at offices and residences, he said.

Members of Sirajganj Bar Association brought out a procession on the court premises wearing black badges and held a rally. They condemned the attack in Jhalakathi and demanded security of life.

Security has been tightened in the court area, with a large number of policemen deployed there.

Awami League brought out a procession and held a rally in the town yesterday afternoon, bitterly criticising the government for its failure to protect judges.

Political parties and lawyers also took to streets and held rallies in Bandarban, Jessore and Pabna, according to reports from our correspondents.

## 3 tea processing plants to be set up in CHT

BTB chairman says in Bandarban

MONIRUL ISLAM MONU, Bandarban

Three tea processing factories will be set up in Bandarban in the private sector soon to process tea produced in small tea holdings.

Land selection have already been started and the factories may start operation by the middle of next year, Bangladesh Tea Board (BTB) Chairman Brig. Gen (Rtd) Mosaraf Hossain told newsmen here on Monday. They will be set up with BTB assistance.

BTB Member (Research) Kamal Uddin, Krishi Bank General Manager in Chittagong Region Faiz Ahmed, Bandarban Deputy Commissioner Sheikh Alauddin, Bandarban District Small Tea Holding Owners Association President Prof. Mohammad Osman Goni, its secretary Mong Kew Ching Chowdhury also

spoke on the occasion.

The BTB Chairman also visited some newly raised small tea gardens and nurseries in Sualock, Pulpara and Dolupara in the district and inaugurated the Maitree Tea Nursery at Haludia in Sualock.

The BTB meantime held discussions with three investors in the sector, the BTB Chairman said.

He said BTB will set up an office at Sualock near Bandarban town to help new tea growers with necessary technical and financial assistance. The district administration has agreed to give eight acres of land for this, he added.

Tea cultivation started in Bandarban under private initiative in 2003.

BTB sources said that to encourage tea cultivation in the area, an investor

is given Tk 15,000 as grant to buy seedlings and Tk 1.26 lakh as loan per hectare, repayable in five installments.

They said initially 25,000 hectares will be brought under tea plantation in Bandarban.

Meanwhile, with the help and cooperation of the district administration, about 500 hectares have been prepared and out of it, 200 hectares have been brought under plantation.

BTB sources told this correspondent that about 46850 hectares in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) are suitable for tea plantation.

Initially, 6332 hectares in four upazilas in Khagrachari, 3475 hectares in three upazilas in Bandarban and 1250 hectares in three upazilas in Rangamati have been selected for tea plantation, they said.

# 10X5