

9 JMB militants jailed in two Nilphamari cases

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

A court in two separate cases yesterday sentenced nine militants of outlawed Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) to life term and 20 years' rigorous imprisonment under Arms Act and Explosive Substances Act.

The convicts are Abdur Rashid alias Ashik, 22, son of Lutfar Rahman of Chokhsagar village of Bogra district, Ohidul Islam alias Sayem alias Al-Mamun, 22, son of Afzal Hossain of Dharma Sagor village of Thakurgaon, Mahfuzur Rahman alias Ibrahim, 26, son of Jafar Ali of Chhit Kutub village of Rangpur, Md Moniruzzaman alias Iqbal alias Selim, 25,

son of Md Abdur Haque of Thakurgaon, Ehsanul Haque alias Mejbah, 18, son of Abdul Jabbar of Chhoto Sultanpur village of Dinajpur, Rabiul Islam alias Kamal Hossain, 19, son of Rahimuddin of Titpara village of Nilphamari, Abu Bakkar Siddique alias Nahid, 32, son of Azahar Ali of village Prannagar of Dinajpur, Shahabuddin alias Suja Ahmed Musa, 19, son of late Nazatullah of Kalomati village of Lalmonirhat and Fatook Hossain alias Amzad, 32, son of Waliur Rahman of Titpara village of Nilphamari.

One of the convicts, Mahfuzur Rahman alias Ibrahim, died a few months ago in Nilphamari jail.

According to sources, the convicts include high ranking JMB operatives of different northern districts of the banned Islamist organisation and Ehsar members. Of them, Abdur Rashid alias Ashik is divisional commander, they said.

The prosecution in brief is that Rab-10 received a secret information from Dhaka that the divisional commander of JMB along with other district commanders and Ehsar (full time activist) members assembled at certain places of Saidpur upazila of the district.

A team of Rab-10 led by Major Ershadul Haque raided the rail gate area near Saidpur rail station on 6 February 2006 at 9:00pm.

During the raid they arrested Nilphamari district commander of JMB Ohidul Islam alias Sayem alias Al-Mamun, Birampur organisational district commander Fatook Hossain alias Amzad and Ehsar member Rabiul Islam.

As per the information provided by the arrestees, Rab later arrested six others from the adjacent villages of Saidpur upazila town. The law enforcers also recovered one locally made pipe gun, a pipe gun firing pin, four bullets, power gel, detonators and different electronics and bomb making materials from them.

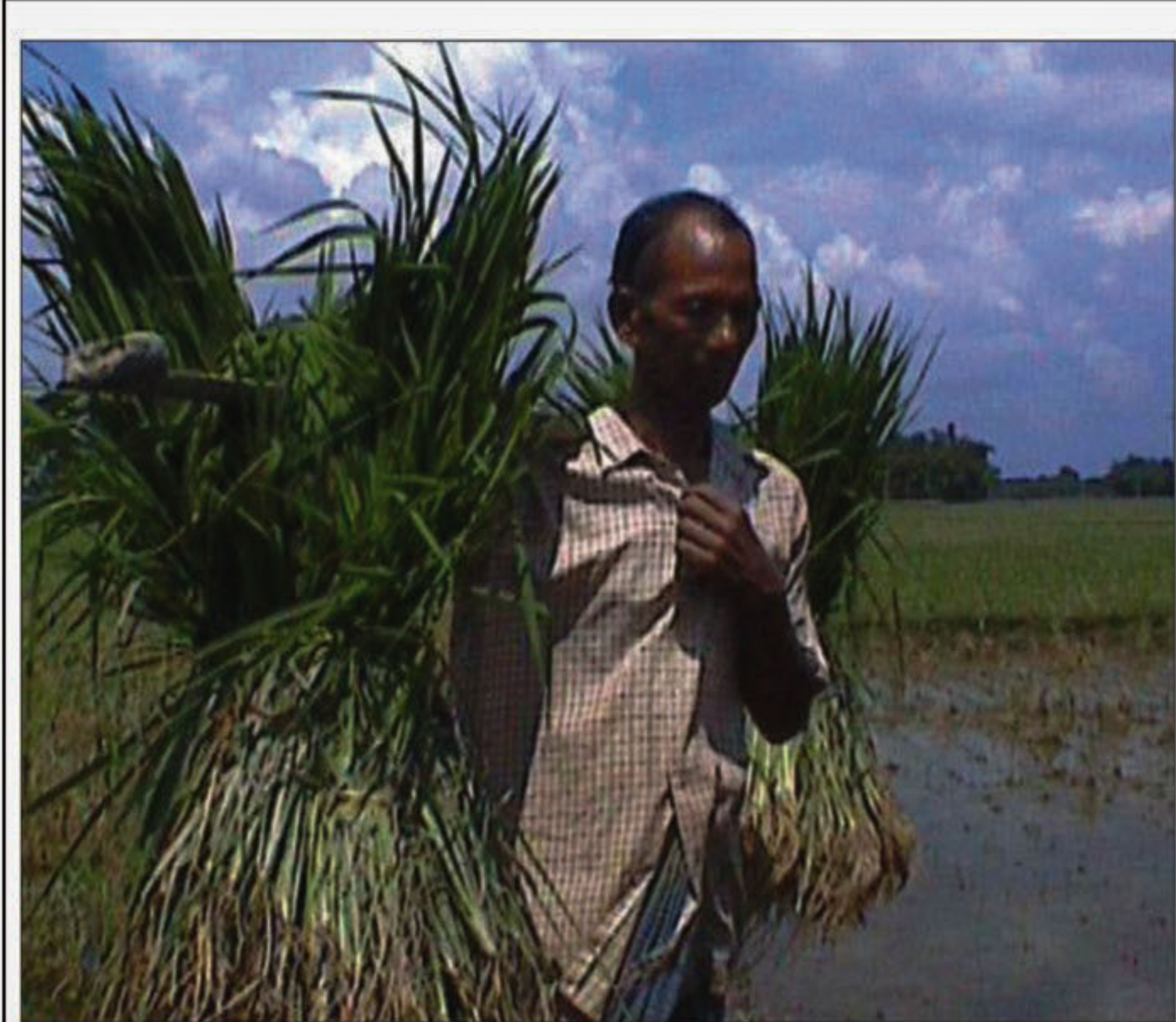
Later two cases were filed against them on 7 February, 2006, one under Arms Act and

the other under Explosive Substances Act.

Joint District and Sessions Judge Abdur Rashid Mia also the judge of Special Tribunal Court-3 after examining all witnesses and evidence yesterday afternoon sentenced all the nine accused to life term in Arms Case and 20 years rigorous imprisonment in Explosive Substances case.

The convicts were also fined Tk 25,000 each in default, to suffer one year more in jail.

JMB's Majlish-e-Shura member Khalid Saifullah was also an accused in the cases but he was exempted as he was hanged earlier in another case with top JMB kingpins Shaikh Abdur Rahman, Bangla Bhai and others.



A farmer of Mongolhat village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila takes aman plants to re-plant those in his crop field damaged by the recent flood.

Desperate bid to recoup loss

Farmers re-plant aman with recession of flood water in Lalmonirhat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

With recession of water in most flood affected areas of Teesta and Dharla basin areas, affected farmers in four upazilas of Lalmonirhat district are trying to overcome their loss through re-planting aman paddy on their damaged crop lands.

The affected people, however, have asked for government relief as well as help in their recovery initiative to avert food crisis in the monga-prone area.

"I have borrowed some aman plants from my father-in-law's house for re-planting it on my flood damaged field in Dharla River basin. I hope 60 to 70 percent loss will be overcome," said Mohon Chandro Dash, 48, of Mogholhat village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila.

Sitting beside his paddy field near Teesta River embankment at Gobordhan village yesterday morning, Akkas Mia, 55, a farmer of Gobordhan village under Aditmari upazila in Lalmonirhat was crying thinking about maintenance of his eight-member family as standing aman plants of his eight bighas of land were damaged in the recent flood.

Moinuddin Miah, 50, another farmer of the same village, said, "After the Teesta devoured our eight bighas of land, I and three other members of my family had to depend on remaining two bigha land. But the recent flood damaged standing aman plants on the land. Now I am worried about our livelihood."

Several flood-hit farmers including

Delowar Hossain, 45, Muslim Uddin, 40, Nirmol Chandro, 50, of Sindurna village in Hatibandha upazila under Lalmonirhat district said as aman paddy is one of their main crops and affected farmers in the area will face monga in the coming months if they do not get government help to overcome their loss by the flood.

According to Department of Agriculture Extension AED in Lalmonirhat, 30 thousand farmers were affected and crops worth Tk 22 crore were damaged due to the recent flooding by Teesta and Dharla rivers.

The Lalmonirhat Deputy Director of Department of Agriculture Extension Sarowar Hossain Khan said his office has sent a letter to the ministry concerned seeking aid for the affected farmers in the district.

During visit to different flood hits areas in Lalmonirhat yesterday, this correspondent saw that most of the flood affected people are passing days amid sufferings due to scarcity of food as the are jobless now. They are in need of urgent relief.

Lalmonirhat Deputy Commissioner Mokhlesar Rahman Sarker said the district administration has already distributed 55 tonnes of rice as relief material among the flood affected people in last one week and his office has sent letter to the ministry concerned seeking more relief for the affected people.

Meanwhile, Teesta and Dharla rivers are now flowing below the danger marks.



PHOTO: STAR

Tired of waiting for long for a bus, a passenger takes a nap beside the ticket counter of a transport service as vehicular movement on 19 routes to and from Chittagong city remained suspended due to a strike called in protest against attack on the leaders of a workers' union.

8-hour bus strike in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Hundreds of passengers remained stranded at different bus stops in Chittagong city for eight hours from 6:00am yesterday as a transport workers' union enforced strike, protesting attack on one of their leaders by his rivals in Ukhaia upazila headquarters on Monday.

No bus on 19 routes could leave the port city during the strike, causing suffering to the passengers bound for Bandarban, Cox's Bazar, and other places of Chittagong district.

Arakan Road Transport Workers' Union enforced the strike for an indefinite period. They called off their programme at 2:00pm after Chittagong Police Superintendent (SP) ZA Morshed assured them of taking necessary actions against the attackers.

Amol Barua, General Secretary of the Ukhaia unit of Arakan Road Transport Workers' Union, came under attack by his rivals over illegal toll collection at the upazila headquarters on Monday. He received severe injuries and is now undergoing treatment at Cox's Bazar General Hospital.

Extortionists beat up trader in Meherpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Extortionists mercilessly beat up a businessman and ransacked his house and business establishment as he refused to pay illegal toll in Meherpur.

The incident took place on Monday night. According to police, a local gang demanded Tk 2 lakh from Anchal Bhattacharya, distributor of Sabij Corporation, several days ago. But Anchal decided not to pay the amount.

On Monday evening, the gang led by one Abdul Alim went to the business establishment of Anchal adjacent to his house in Hotel Bazar area at about 7:30pm. At that time, Anchal was supervising unloading of goods from a truck.

The gang suddenly attacked Anchal and beat him up mercilessly. Then they stormed into Anchal's office and house and ransacked those. Family members rushed Anchal to Meherpur General Hospital where he is now undergoing treatment.



People of Harijan community form a human chain in front of Dinajpur Deputy Commissioner's Office yesterday demanding cancellation of recent sweeper recruitment, done through alleged bribery, at Dinajpur Civil Surgeon's office.

Five more UPDF men, 3 of rival PCJSS faction held

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Army and police personnel in separate drives arrested five more members of United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) and three members of the reformist faction of Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) in Rangamati and Khagrachhari districts on Monday night and early yesterday.

According to our Rangamati correspondent, army personnel raided Karallachhari area in Longudu upazila of the district early yesterday and arrested three reformists of PCJSS.

They also recovered a gun, eight cartridges, Tk 99 thousand, one radio and 15 receipt books of illegal toll collection

from the possession of the arrestees, said Mohammad Belayet Hossain, officer-in-charge of Longudu Police Station.

The arrestees are Nayan Jyoti Chakma, 42, of Longudu upazila and Kalabaran Chakma, 28, of Bagaichhari upazila under Rangamati district, and Gayanamoy Jyoti Chakma alias Rupel Chakma, 38, of Dighinala upazila under Khagrachhari district.

An arms case was filed against the three with Longudu Police Station. They were produced in Rangamati Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court that sent them to jail.

In Khagrachhari, police arrested five members of United People's Democratic front (UPDF) at

Khagrachhari Sadar upazila on Monday night on charge of creating anarchy in the area, reports our correspondent.

The arrested UPDF members are Mongrprue Marm, 22, Rajib Chakma, 19, Samar Jibon Chakma, 20, Rubel Chakma, 18, and Mithun Chakma, 19. Police said the five are members of UPDF Rangamati district unit.

Meanwhile, an army team on Sunday night arrested two leaders of Hill Women's Federation (HWF) and two activists of United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) with firearms at Naniachar upazila UPDF office, according to our Rangamati correspondent.

The arrestees are Juthika

Chakma, 24, HWF Rangamati district unit convenor, and Joysna Chakma, 23, a leader of the HWF district unit, and UPDF activists Titan Chakma, 22, and Binayan Chakma, 21.

Army men later handed over the four to Naniachar police. An arms case was filed against them with Naniachar Police Station.

An army team and members of Village Defence Party (VDP) led by Naniachar army zone commander Lt Col Minhaz raided the UPDF office at around 8:00pm and arrested the four with two pipe guns.

Police on Monday produced the arrestees in the Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court that sent them to jail.



PHOTO: STAR

Sellers pass a leisurely period beside the truck loaded with rice meant for open market sale at Alupatti More in Rajshahi city yesterday as the programme, aimed at selling rice at reasonable prices for the low-income people, failed to attract buyers in the area.

Robbers loot house, trader

One caught red-handed, killed in mob beating

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Robbers looted a house in Brahmanbaria yesterday and took away Tk 10 lakh from a trader in Joypurhat stabbing him seriously on Monday.

Besides, a robber was killed in mob beating in Narsingdi on Monday.

Robbers looted valuables and cash from the house of a retired government official at Madhyapara in Brahmanbaria town early yesterday, reports UNB.

Police said a gang of 7/8 robbers entered the house of Golam Zilani, a retired government officer, by breaking open the door and took the house members hostage at gun-

point.

Then they looted 12 tolas of gold ornament, Tk 40,000 in cash and three mobile phone sets.

Hearing hue and cry, locals rushed to the spot and caught two robbers while other gang members managed to flee away with the booty.

The robbers were handed over to police after a mob beating. Both were later admitted to Modern Hospital.

In Joypurhat, a gang took away Tk 10 lakh and a motorbike stabbing a fish trader at Parulia in Joypurhat-Hili Road in Sadar upazila on Monday morning.

The victim was identified as Mominul Islam, 38, of

Bhuidoba village in Panchbibi upazila.

Police said, Mominul was going to Adamdighi for buying fish by in a motorbike in the morning. When he reached near Parulia Primary School, a gang of robbers numbering 7/8 intercepted Mominul's motorbike.

They stabbed him indiscriminately and took away the motorbike, cash Tk 10 lakh and a mobile phone set from his possession.

Hearing his cry for help, locals rushed there and took him to Joypurhat District Modern Hospital in a critical condition.

In Narsingdi, a robber was killed in a mob beating at

Pirerpar village in Monohardi upazila early Monday.

The identity of the deceased, aged about 22, could not be known immediately.

Police said a gang of armed robbers numbering 10/12 stormed into the house of Nurul Islam of the village breaking the door open at about 3am.

Hearing the hue and cry of the house members, locals rushed to the spot and caught one of the robbers red-handed and gave him a good beating, leaving him dead on the spot.

On information, police recovered the body and sent it to Sadar hospital morgue for autopsy.