

Justice kept in wait

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holding retrial of the jail killing case runs counter to AL's pledges during its campaign for the ninth parliamentary election on December 29, 2008.

In its election manifesto, which largely contributed to the overwhelming victory of AL-led grand alliance in the polls, promised to execute verdict of the Bangabandhu murder case, hold retrial of jail killings and punish people responsible for the grenade attack on AL chief Sheikh Hasina in a rally on August 21, 2004 after investigation.

Five convicted killers of Bangabandhu were hanged on January 27 this year following the apex court's verdict. Reinvestigation of the August 21 grenade attack case also began on August 3 last year.

Justice for the jail killing has not been served yet.

LGRD Minister Syed Ashraf Islam, son of Syed Nazrul Islam, yesterday said the government would soon take measures to ensure the retrial of jail killing case.

"We are examining the ways how a fresh trial can be started. People will see the progress within a few days," said Ashraf, also the AL general secretary.

Mohammad Nasim, son of Quamruzzaman, said they didn't get justice due to the farce of justice in the past.

"We rejected the verdict delivered by the trial court and High Court. We want a retrial during this government's tenure," Nasim, also a ruling AL leader, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Tanjim Ahmad Sohel Taj, son of Tajuddin Ahmad, said: "As family members we feel justice should be served for the well fare of the nation. We hope the retrial of the jail killing case will begin soon."

However, Attorney General Mahbub Alam on Monday told The Daily Star his office would very soon take initiatives for hearing of the appeals challenging the High Court verdict that acquitted the six.

The next target of this office is to have the HC verdict cancelled as it was flawed. So, he said, the trial can start afresh.

"The nation wants the killers of the four leaders to be punished. My office will approach the Appellate Division within a very short time for holding hearing on the appeals in the case," the attorney general said.

He said he could not move to dispose of this case, since he was busy with some other important issues including Bangabandhu murder case, the fifth amendment to the constitution and the allotment of Khaleda Zia's cantonment house.

On September 14 last year, the attorney general's office filed the leave-to-appeal petitions on behalf of the government with the apex court against the 2008 HC ruling.

An assistant attorney general recently said the appeals pointed out many grounds upon which the SC can rescind the HC verdict. There is evidence that the acquitted army men had plotted the killing of the four leaders, he added.

He said the HC delivered its verdict disbelieving the statements of almost all the witnesses who said the accused persons were directly involved in the killing of the four national leaders inside Dhaka Central Jail.

The HC judgment accepted the allegations against only one accused, Risalard (ret'd) Muslemuddin, who is still on the run, and upheld his death sentence, he said.

The acquitted army men include Lt Col (dismissed) Syed Farooq Rahman, Lt Col (ret'd) Sultan Shahrir Rashid Khan, Major (ret'd) AKM Mohiuddin Ahmed and Major (ret'd) Bazul

Huda.

Being held convicted, they have been executed on January 27 this year following the Supreme Court verdict in Bangabandhu killing case.

The HC in the verdict also acquitted Dafadar (dismissed) Marfat Ali Shah and Dafadar (dismissed) Abdul Hashem Mridha who were sentenced to death by a trial court. Farooq, Shahrir, Huda and Mohiuddin Ahmed were given life imprisonment.

Babar's remand

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same court on Monday, for staying the court's remand order, showing Babar as seriously ill.

The same court on Monday placed Babar on a 5-day remand in the sensational case of arms haul in Chittagong in 2004.

The court fixed yesterday for hearing on the petition filed by the defence lawyers.

The defence lawyers argued that Babar needed proper treatment before the remand as he was seriously ill and was bleeding from his nose when he was produced before the court for his remand hearing on Monday.

Defence lawyer Advocate Abul Kashem said to have urged the court for staying the remand order for 15 days needed for Babar's treatment.

However, the hearing was withheld for 10 minutes after some pro-BNP lawyers created a chaotic situation at the court when the state lawyer began placing his argument.

The court later heard the state lawyer's argument and passed his order.

Public Prosecutor Kamal Uddin Ahmed appeared as state lawyer.

Truck crash

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them after the plunge. Muslimuddin, who escaped unhurt, told The Daily Star the driver was recklessly driving the truck and at one stage, he lost control over the steering and the truck fell into the ditch.

Police and fire brigade personnel recovered the bodies in the morning and sent those to the hospital morgue for autopsy.

Jasimuddin Sarkar, officer-in-charge of Tangail Model Police Station, said the driver and helpers also escaped the accident unhurt and managed to flee.

A full meal

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young", she cannot tell how young, and her mother married another man soon after her father's demise and started to live somewhere she does not know.

She was left with her street beggar grandfather, who, unable to bring her up, sent her to work as a domestic help at Titu and Lima's house.

Ramna Police Station Officer-in-Charge Shiblee Noman said he thinks that the couple used to torture the girl thinking that she has no one to complain.

None has visited Shohagi at the DMCH so far.

Prime Minister's Office, however, is in close contact with police on the development about the girl, Noman said.

Meanwhile, the chief metropolitan magistrate's court yesterday recorded Shohagi's account of the torture by Titu and Lima.

Transit facility

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He said as per the international rules no duty can be imposed for giving transit but fees can be charged.

Jail killing day

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on November 3, 1975 -- 79 days after Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and most of his family members were killed on August 15, 1975.

Ruling Awami League (AL) and many other organisations are planning elaborate programmes including discussions, placing wreaths at the portrait of Bangabandhu at Bangabandhu Bhaban and graves of the four national leaders and 'milad mahfil' and feeding of the destitute to pay tribute to the national leaders.

AL President and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will attend as chief guest in the discussion meeting at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre at 3:30pm to mark the day.

President Zillur Rahman and the prime minister have conveyed separate messages to mark the day.

President Zillur Rahman in his message said, "The anti-liberation forces killed the four national leaders after they had killed Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on August 15 in 1975 to make the nation leader-free and put the

Keep Sayedee

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him detained for fair investigation into the allegations against him, the prosecutor said, adding that investigation will be hampered if he is released from jail.

Sayedee's lawyer Tajul Islam said his client is a very popular religious leader, and he was not involved in any offence during the Liberation War.

He further said the prosecution could not produce any document before this court on Sayedee's involvement in any crime against humanity. So, there is no necessity of keeping him in jail.

The tribunal also asked the prosecutor how long will it take to complete investigation into the charges against four other detained accused--Jamaat Ameer Motiur Rahman Nizami, Secretary General Ali Ahsan Muhammad Mojaheed and assistant secretaries general Muhammad Kamaruzzaman and Abdul Quader Molla.

Sayed Haider Ali replied that investigation is progressing but it cannot be specifically said when it will be completed.

Summit

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Board says the price offers in both these bids will now be evaluated to see if there was any mistake in the calculation.

"Our target is to forward within this week to the power ministry our recommendation to award the bids to the lowest bidder," the official adds.

If the ministry approves the recommendation, these would be forwarded to the cabinet's purchase committee for approval, preferably before the Eid vacation. The PDB wants to conclude signing of the agreements by December so that these power plants could come into operation in 2013.

Whether Summit-GE could actually handle two such major investments had been one question raised by industry insiders.

Chief of Summit group Muhammad Aziz Khan notes, "The Bangladesh Bank as well as international multilateral agencies such as IFC, ADB, IDB, all have provided us with letter of support to debt-finance these projects. The capital market in Bangladesh has full confidence in the Summit Group and will be supportive to raise part of the equity."

"Summit itself is sitting on substantial cash reserves to invest in these projects," he adds.

Summit is privileged and excited to be a part of solving the power crisis existing in Bangladesh. We believe the much needed electricity can be provided at low cost in an environmental friendly way by utilising the combined cycle technology," he said.

The PDB floated the tender for the two projects in May and initially drew interest of two dozen bidders.

The Bibiyana-2 and Bhola power projects would use gas from the Bibiyana and Shahbazpur gas fields, respectively.

The Bibiyana field that produces around 700 million cubic feet gas per day (mmcf/d) now is expected to be producing 1,000 mmcf/d by 2013, while the Shahbazpur gas field, situated in the island of Bhola, remains unutilised due to lack of pipeline infrastructure or any large power plant installation.

The Shibir chief reportedly told the discussion, "You (PM) relinquish power. Palkhana carnage and Paltan killings are waiting for you. You (PM) have committed the most crimes against humanity... One swallow doesn't make a summer."

The accused were involved in creating hatred against the PM and home minister in a pre-planned way, read the complaint, only to oust a democratic government. The other accused were sued as they were present at the discussion as speakers and involved in the conspiracy, stated the plaintiff.

Khaleda

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Quader Chowdhury.

Around 25 lawmakers, including standing committee member Nazrul Islam Khan and former speaker Jamiruddin Sircar, were present at the office at the time.

The demonstration continued till 2:30am.

A huge contingent of police and Rapid Action Battalion personnel went near the office around 11:00pm yesterday and removed some roadside makeshift shops.

Khaleda's security official Md Enam told The Daily Star that around 10 vehicles with Rab and Armed Police Battalion members and other police personnel, and three minibuses carrying plainclothes policemen went to the area and stayed in front of the office.

Salauddin had gone to the office around 9:30pm.

Officer-in-Charge of Gulshan Police Station and other officials of police and Rab told journalists that they went to the area to ensure security, as VIPs would be going to Banani graveyard through the area on the occasion of Jail Killing Day today. They left half an hour later.

Zainal Abidin Faroque, chief whip of the opposition, alleged that police and Rab personnel went there to harass and undermine the BNP Chairperson.

Around 2:30am, Nazrul Islam Khan flanked by other BNP leaders at a press conference at the office strongly criticised the law enforcement agencies' "unprovoked aggression".

They said the move was undemocratic, unexpected, unfair, and provocative and demanded an explanation from the government.

Khaleda left the office at about 3:00am.

PM suggests

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She gave the directives while passing "Sher-e-Bangla Agriculture University's further development project" at the Executive Committee of National Economic Council (Ecnc) meeting held at the National Economic Council (NEC).

It would reduce the hassle of students having to endure traffic, lessen the pressure on parents who take their children to school and help reduce congestion, she said.

She asked the ministry to chalk out a work plan on the system.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid told The Daily Star the premier mentioned the system while talking about developing infrastructure and standardising education.

"She had discussed the issue earlier," he said.

He said introducing the system will require time because the system cannot be introduced until all schools have become of the same standard and quality.

There are 24 public high schools, around 372 private schools and colleges, and numerous kindergartens in Dhaka.

Top Jamaat

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League Chittagong (north) unit, filed the case against ICS President Rezaul Karim, Jamaat Acting Ameer Maqbul Ahmad and Acting Secretary General ATM Azharul Islam.

Kalim Sharafi

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He was laid to eternal rest at Mirpur Martyred Intellectuals' Graveyard around 10:00pm.

Earlier, as his body was taken to Central Shaheed Minar around 6:00pm, several thousand people irrespective of their class, profession and political affiliation gathered there and froze into condoling silence.

A 14-member team of Bangladesh police gave him gun salutes. People including representatives from President Zillur Rahman and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina paid their last tribute to the lifelong fighter by placing wreath.

Both the premier and the president gave special message paying tribute to Sharafi, a freedom fighter and one of the founding members of Bangladesh Television (BTV) and Bangladesh Betar.

Born at Birbhum in West Bengal in 1924 in a Pir (spiritual leader) family, where practice of music was forbidden, Kalim Sharafi began developing revolutionary characteristics since early childhood with his love for music, defying his family tradition of treading along the path of religious rituals.

Instead, Kalim trod along the cultural way for making people politically conscious, especially during the struggle against British colonial rule, the liberation war of Bangladesh in 1971 and movement launched in independent Bangladesh in 1991 against the war criminals.

Naturally, Gono Sangeet was the life of Kalim Sharafi to achieve his goal. He, however, attained prominence among Rabindra Sangeet singers of the Indian subcontinent introducing a new style of rendition.

Sharafi's pro-mass activism, his lifelong pursuit, actually began in 1940 with his participation in "Hallwell Movement". Police arrested him in 1942 for participating in 'Quit India' movement. It was in jail where Sharafi's attention was drawn to Tagore's song.

He got his first lesson of politics from comrade Muzaffar Ahmed, revolutionary and pioneer of communist movement in India, in 1943, the time of famine when Sharafi sang Nabajiboner Gan (song of new life) traveling

Bring no-trust

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backdrop of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's call for resignation of the present government and other BNP leaders' demand for interim election.

"People have mandated us for a five-year term and I can assure you [BNP] that the government won't stay in power more than a day of the tenure," he added.

The governing AL enjoys an absolute majority in the parliament.

Ashraf, also the LGRD and cooperatives minister, said BNP's main political objective right now is to save war criminals, Khaleda's cantonment residence and her two 'corrupt' sons. "The BNP leaders and workers will have to understand whether interests of the country and its people are important than that of a family."

He also mentioned that the opposition leader has occupied the cantonment residence without obeying any rules and regulations. As a former prime minister and present opposition leader, she should have vacated the house much earlier, observed the AL leader.

Accusing the BNP-Jamaat leaders of making provocative statements against the armed forces for mere political interests, he urged them to refrain from such act.

Replying to a query the minister said BNP and Jamaat have been issuing direct and indirect death threats to the prime minister.

He also informed that AL would organise a two-day workshop from November 5 for its district level information and research secretaries and publicity affairs secretaries to update them about the party's publications.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will lead off the programme at her official residence Gono Bhaban.

On November 7, she is scheduled to inaugurate a 50 MW power plant in Titas upazila of Comilla.

Across the country

Later he joined Indian Popular Theatre Association (IPTA), also known as Bharatiyo Gonoratya Shanga, a cultural platform, and continued organising music and drama programmes against imperialism and communal riot.

His dedication to IPTA allowed so little time for his personal life that he had to leave his medical study half way.

During the Calcutta (now Kolkata) riot he had to take refuge with Debabrata Biswas in 1946. Sharafi migrated to Dhaka in 1950 and joined Bangladesh Betar. Pakistan detective branch blacklisted him for singing pro-mass songs and banned him from the radio after martial law was imposed by Ayub Khan.

During liberation war, he participated in different programmes in the UK and US to drum up support for the war. In 1983 he established music academy 'Shangeet Bhaban,' a Gano Sangeet organisation. He served as its Principal till death.

He also organised and established different theatre groups, namely 'Bahurupi' and 'Prantik' and performed as a playback singer, Adhunik (modern) singer and music director. He also directed an autobiographical documentary and a film named "Sonar Kajol."

Sharafi, an adviser to Ekattorer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee, a body that champions the demand for the war crimes trial, received numerous awards including the national award Ekushey Padak in 1986.

Sharafi's life is a sketch drawn out of the ink of love for mass people and it can be summarised from Sharafi's own book Smriti Amrito, where he wrote, "I have received so much love from people all over. It is this love that has kept me breathing till now."

CCC mayor

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Sholoshahar. The drive created a misunderstanding among the related persons involved in billboard business. I talked with them and removed the misunderstanding," the mayor said.

The association adviser Mohiuddin Bachchu, also a Jubo League leader, told the reporters that all the billboards were erected on public lands and billboard owners were paying model tax to the city corporation.

"City Corporation illegally removed the billboards. We came here Nagor Bhaban to bring the matter to the notice of the mayor," he added.

No promises

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conducted by Pakistani agencies before 1971 in Mainamati, Chittagong, etc.

Mijarul led a seven-member Bangladesh delegation at the foreign secretary level consultations, which covered the entire range of bilateral relations.

Bangladesh High Commission in Islamabad which issued a media release yesterday about the outcome of the consultations, however said the two sides agreed to give fresh thrust to promoting bilateral relations, and Pakistan suggested moving towards a comprehensive partnership.

Both sides recognised that there is an abundance of goodwill and potential for further development of relations. Pakistan agreed to the proposal of the Bangladesh foreign secretary for holding regular directors general level bi-annual meetings of the two foreign ministries.

They agreed to redouble efforts to achieve US\$1 billion target set for bilateral trade, and to address the issues of market access, trade facilitation, and removal of tariff barriers for export of Bangladeshi products to Pakistan.

Bangladesh specifically sought duty free market access for value added jute products, and urged Pakistan to review its sensitive list. But there was no specific word from Pakistan regarding duty free access.

Both sides agreed on the need for easing visa procedures, and for enhancing connectivity through direct shipping and increasing the number of flights between the two countries.

Pakistan foreign secretary welcomed Bangladesh's proposal for undertaking joint initiatives to celebrate the 150th birth anniversary of Bangla poet Rabindranath Tagore, and the 100th birth anniversary of Urdu poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz.