

Ghulam Azam

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governor and martial law administrator, Gen Tikka Khan, the infamous "Butcher of Beluchistan", at Dhaka cantonment a few days after the March 25 carnage.

And he told the Pakistani general that Operation Search Light had been successful, said the prosecutor, citing the probe body report on the ex-Jamaat chief.

The prosecutors yesterday informed the International Crimes Tribunal that they had received five final reports from investigators on war crimes allegations against Azam and the four Jamaat leaders now in detention.

The three-member tribunal, headed by its Chairman Justice Nizamul Huq, then directed the prosecution to submit formal charges against the four -- Jamaat Ameer Motiur Rahman Nizami, Secretary General Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed and assistant secretaries general Muhammad Kamaruzzaman and Abdul Quader Molla -- by December 5.

The prosecution, however, did not go into details of the probe body's findings regarding the war crimes of Azam or the others.

The quartet was produced before the tribunal in the morning as per its August 1 order.

Prosecutor Syed Haider Ali told the tribunal that at least one month was needed to scrutinise the investigation reports for preparing formal charges against the accused.

Also yesterday, the tribunal rejected the bail petitions filed by the Jamaat leaders in connection with the war crimes charges, and fixed December 5 for the next hearing.

At one stage of the day's proceedings, Prosecutor Zead-Al-Malum informed the tribunal of the report on Azam.

The prosecutors will place a formal charge against the former Jamaat ameer after two weeks and also pray to the tribunal to issue a warrant of arrest against him, prosecution sources said.

The probe report says Azam, ameer of then East Pakistan Jamaat-e-Islami, was responsible for genocide, murder, atrocities, war crimes and other crimes against humanity all over the country in 1971, said the prosecutor while speaking to The Daily Star yesterday.

As a civilian superior commander, Azam was involved in the crimes committed by anti-liberation outfits under the banners of Razakar Bahini, Al Badr, Al Shams and Peace Committees.

He led the Razakar Bahini that occupied a part of Mirpur in Dhaka till January 31, 1972 although the Pakistan occupation forces had surrendered to the allied forces on December 16, 1971.

The area was freed after the razakars were routed in deadly fighting.

Azam was responsible for several million Hindus' being forced to convert to Islam during the war. The court considers the act as a crime against humanity, the prosecutors said.

Offences perpetrated by Nizami, president of All Pakistan Islami Chhatra Sangha in 1971, cover imprisonment; abduction; confinement; torture; rape; genocide in Pabna and other regions, and abetment of and attempt or conspiracy to perform such acts.

Mojaheed committed similar crimes in greater Faridpur; Kamaruzzaman, then chief coordinator of Al Badr, in greater Mymensingh, Jamalpur, Tangail and Sherpur areas while Abdul Quader Molla, a leader of then Jamaat's student front Islami Chhatra Sangha, in Mirpur and Keraniganj area.

SC Bar

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According to Mahub, the country's judiciary is still controlled by the executive, although it (judiciary) has been officially separated from the executive arm of the government.

He also accused the incumbent government of appointing 52 judges to the HC on political considerations, although many of them are incompetent.

The Supreme Judicial Council is comprised of the chief justice and two senior judges of the Appellate Division. The council may start proceedings against a judge either on its own initiative or by reference from the president.

Shamim Osman

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racket, dubious involvement in real estate business and other illegal trades continue to prosper with the help of a 100-man squad he so assiduously is believed to be nurturing.

In the past Shamim has survived several defeats. For instance, in the 2001 general polls, as soon as he sensed defeat, he disappeared from Narayanganj. For five years his whereabouts could not be ascertained. But in Narayanganj people who know him say that his extortion racket never stopped operating despite his absence.

"When Shamim was away during those five years his men continued to extort money from sand traders, the general business community and the transport sector with increased ferocity," said a local Awami League leader requesting not to be named.

"When Shamim is in trouble politically or socially, his men intensify their extortion, always with the excuse that they need more money to face the crisis before them," he added.

In Narayanganj, Shamim Osman is an ordinary AL member without any position in the district branch of the party, but his influence nevertheless goes far. When some central committee leaders, including Mirza Azam, Bahauddin Nasim, Abul Hasnat Abdullah Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya turned up in Narayanganj to drum up support for him, it became clear that Shamim's influence in the party was based on very solid foundations.

"This defeat will not deter him from pursuing his dubious intentions. He will first extend his support to

Ivy and try to negotiate his way into smooth criminal operations in the district," said another local AL leader.

"Now that he has lost face before the people and also before the local administration, he will concentrate on licking his wounds with the administration whose help he so desperately needs to keep his followers busy in their lucrative activities," said a local journalist who too requested anonymity.

According to local people, Shamim Osman is not worried about his political existence, for he has been reassured about his future by the party leadership in Dhaka.

SM Wazed Ali Khokan, vice president of Narayanganj city AL and an ardent Shamim follower, said that his leader would first try to repair his image which had been badly dented by the national media during the election. "We want to emphasise taking up activities geared to serving the people and regaining their support. And once Shamim restores his image in Narayanganj, he will return as the true leader of the area with the people's mandate," Khokan said.

A close aide to Shamim, Chandan Shil, also expressed his optimism about a bright political future for Shamim. He, however, acknowledged that the defeat in the mayoral election had been indeed a major blow to Shamim but said it was a matter of time before he bounced back.

Shamim yesterday told reporters that he had been a political activist and would remain one for good.

Talking about his political future, he said that he was there to stay mainly to "serve the people."

Govt to move

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office after a meeting with a five-member delegation from the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) and the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID).

At the WB and IMF annual meeting in Washington in September, the WB gave Muhith a letter on its allegations of corruption against the communications minister and informed him about a temporary suspension of the WB's \$1.2 billion funding for the Padma bridge project.

On his return home, the finance minister sent a letter to the WB in response to its allegations.

Asked whether the government was considering the option of detaching the project from the communications ministry and bringing it under the Prime Minister's Office, the finance minister said, "I have no comment to make."

Muhith also declined to comment on another query on the stock market, save only to say that the Securities and Exchange Commission would look into issues involving the share market.

The finance minister said he had discussed with the delegation how social safety net programmes in the country could be improved to reduce extreme poverty.

Ecneec okays

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come in the form of project assistance," said Planning Division Secretary Bhuiyan Shafiqul Islam.

For the power plant project, Tk 3,000 crore will come in the form of project assistance, Shafiqul said.

The Asian Development Bank will provide \$228 million while the Islamic Development Bank \$200 million for the power plant project, he said.

The Ecneec approved another major project of Tk 163 crore for duck rearing.

Under the project, regional duck reproductive farms and hatcheries will be constructed in 13 districts to produce over 31 lakh ducklings every year. The project would create more jobs in the rural areas.

The other projects approved in the meeting are Integrated Development of Fisheries and Livestock in flood control, irrigated area and in other wetlands project- 4th phase (Tk 115 crore), Institutional Development and strengthening of Bangladesh Marine Fisheries Academy Project (Tk 40 crore), Construction of Khulna District Jail (Tk 144 crore) and Construction of BGB's 85 BOPs (border outposts) in the bordering areas (Tk 45 crore).

SC judge

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Justice M Imman Ali, chamber judge of the Appellate Division, did not mention the cause of his embarrassment, Khandaker Reza-e Raquib, a lawyer for BTRC, told The Daily Star. The petition will now be sent to the chief justice for his decision.

The BTRC on October 17 issued the notice asking Grameenphone to pay additional Tk 236.8 crore for 1800MHz band radio frequency, which the operator purchased for 18 years in 2008.

Following a writ petition filed by Grameenphone, the High Court on October 26 stayed the notice for four months and also issued a rule upon the BTRC to explain within four weeks as to why the notice should not be declared illegal.

The BTRC on October 31 filed a petition with the Supreme Court seeking a stay on the High Court order.

Justice Imman Ali yesterday felt embarrassed after the petition was placed before him for hearing.

Attorney General Mahubey Alam appeared for BTRC while Anisul Huq and Sheikh Fazle Noor Tapash stood for Grameenphone.

Happy reunion

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party backing, arrived at Gono Bhaban before Ivly.

A source said Hasina first held a closed-door meeting with the two for about 30 minutes. Later, the prime minister along with them entered another room, where party leaders from Narayanganj and close aides to Ivly had been waiting.

Attired in an off-white and pink sari, Ivly in a jovial mood sat to the right of the prime minister with an obviously dejected Shamim on Hasina's left.

The prime minister congratulated the people of Narayanganj on a free, fair and peaceful city corporation election.

"This is the policy and ideology of the Awami League. We always believe in fair elections and empowerment of the people," said the AL president.

A local leader said they, at one stage, were doubtful whether the polls would be fair and free from violence.

In response, Hasina said, "It is the style of the BNP, not of the Awami League."

She said all elections held in the country since the AL assumed power had been free and fair.

"A democratic atmosphere prevails in the country and the people's right to vote has been ensured."

Hasina said she always believed that people were the source of power, and they would determine the outcome of every election. She had always wanted the Narayanganj city corporation polls to be held peacefully.

"The Narayanganj city corporation election was held amid festivity. It has never happened in the past in a local body election in the country."

It has happened now because the Awami League is in power, said the prime minister.

"It has been my dream all my life to establish a democratic environment in Bangladesh, where people will be the source of ultimate power."

The most important lesson from the Narayanganj polls, she noted, was the empowerment of women.

"We always talk about empowerment of women, and a woman has come out victorious in the election."

On the BNP-backed candidate's last minute pull-out of the election on grounds of non-deployment of the army, she said, "Historically, it has not been proved that an election will be free and fair with the deployment of the army."

She said the BNP had superseded nine army officers to appoint Moin U Ahmed as army chief in the hope that the army would help it stay in power. "But, eventually, it did not work."

After the meeting, a beaming Ivly told reporters that she had contested the election with the blessings of the prime minister, and went to Gono Bhaban yesterday to get Hasina's blessings for performing her duties properly.

"My leader [Hasina] advised me to work for the people of Narayanganj," said Ivly.

Regardless of what had happened in the party during the polls in Narayanganj, all local AL leaders would now work in unison, said the mayor-elect.

Shamim told reporters after the meeting that he was defeated in the polls but his party won the election. "We both followed the directives of our leader [Hasina], and she was very happy with it."

He said the election was so peaceful and fair that not even a single general diary over the polls had been lodged with any police station.

"I think the BNP has lost its

ground for demanding a mid-term general election after such fair polls."

Both Ivly, vice president of Narayanganj city AL, and Shamim, former AL lawmaker from Narayanganj, lobbied for party backing to vie for the mayoral post. After weeks of drama and confusion, the AL finally decided to back Shamim.

Ivly, who earlier served as mayor of Narayanganj municipality for eight years, has been popular among voters for implementing massive development projects in Narayanganj during her period in office.

Abed gets

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In his immediate reaction, Abed, who also spoke at the summit, told UNB, "I am very happy getting the WISE prize. I am also happy for all the Brac employees who have been recognised by the award."

The efforts of all Brac employees will increase with this recognition, he added.

With the theme of "Changing Societies, Changing Education", this year's WISE summit is discussing how education can become more effective in tackling social, economic and political challenges, and promoting sustainable development in a rapidly evolving world.

A total of 1,300 representatives and 48 speakers from 104 countries across the world are taking part in the summit, organised by the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development.

Academics, policymakers, private sectors' representatives, heads of NGOs and associations from across the world have assembled for the Doha summit.

Good Muslim

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Writers Festival. The short-list will be announced on January 10 and the winner's name on March 15 in Hong Kong, the home of the Prize, says a press release on www.manasianliteraryprize.org.

The Man Asian Literary Prize was founded in 2007. It is an annual literary award given to the best novel by an Asian writer, either written in English or translated into English, and published in the previous calendar year.

Eleven other books that have made it to this year's long-list are *Wandering Falcon* by Jamil Ahmad, *Rebirth* by Jahnavi Barua, *The Sly Company of People Who Care* by Rahul Bhattacharya, *The Colonel* by Mahmood Dowlatabadi, *River of Smoke* by Amitav Ghosh, *1Q84* by Haruki Murakami, *The Folded Earth* by Anuradha Roy, *Please Look After Mom* by Kyung-Sook Shin, *The Valley of Masks* by Tarun J Tejpal, *Dream of Ding Village* by Yan Lianke and *The Lake* by Banana Yoshimoto.

Tahmina Anam's debut novel, *A Golden Age*, won the Commonwealth Writers' Award for Best First Book and was short-listed for The Guardian First Book Award and the Costa First Novel Award. She lives in London and Dhaka.

Set in the dusty streets of Dhaka and the villages and river-islands of rural Bangladesh, at a time when the rise of religious fundamentalism was a whisper in the wind, *The Good Muslim* is an epic, unforgettable story of the challenges of peace in the long shadow of war. It is a novel that cleaves to the simple truths that shape all of our lives: that the bonds of family and love often strain to bear the weight of history.

Keib elected

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Monday night.
Keib told a news conference shortly after beating four other candidates in the vote that he would set human rights as a priority.

"We guarantee that we are going to build a nation that respects human rights and does not accept the abuse of human rights. But we need time," he said.

Keib spent decades abroad as an opponent of Gaddafi before joining the pro-democracy revolution that overthrew him.

He replaces Mahmud Jibril, who resigned three days after Gaddafi was captured and killed when NTC fighters overran his hometown Sirte on October 20.

"This vote proves that Libyans are able to build their future," NTC chairman Mustafa Abdel Jalil said after Monday's vote.

Under a political roadmap, Keib now has until November 23 to form an interim government that, parallel to the NTC, will run Libya for eight months after which elections for a constituent assembly will be held.

At that point the interim government and NTC will disband, giving way to a "general national congress" that the constituent assembly will form to run the country until parliamentary and presidential elections are held.

The appointment of a new prime minister came as the UN Security Council on Monday called on Libya's interim authorities and neighbouring countries to stamp out the spread of weapons from Gaddafi's stockpiles.

Amid mounting fears that militant groups in Africa and beyond could get shoulder-fired rockets and other weapons from the Gaddafi cache, the 15-member council unanimously passed a resolution demanding the clamp-down.

Resolution 2017, drawn up by Russia, stressed international fears that the stockpile could cause unrest through Africa's Sahel region and fall into the hands of groups such as Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb.

The resolution called on Libya "to take all necessary steps to prevent the proliferation of all arms," especially man-portable surface-to-air missiles, MANPADS.

Narsingdi mayor

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station in the town, said Maran Chandra Das, station master of Narsingdi Railway Station.

A masked miscreant opened fire on Lokman in a room of the AL office around 7:30pm while he was talking to party men, Sudipto Saha, a contractor of the municipality, told newsmen at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Sudipto was in the room when the attack was carried out.

As the others in the room dispersed, the assailant got closer to the mayor and fired again, he added.

The attacker managed to flee the scene soon after the incident.

Party men whisked the victim away to Narsingdi Sadar Hospital. Later he was shifted to DMCH as his condition worsened.

Attending doctors at DMCH detected four bullet marks in different parts of his body.

Protesters brought out processions across the city, said SM Anwar Hossain, officer-in-charge of Narsingdi Police Station.

The deceased was a gold medal awardee as the best mayor of the country.

A tense situation was prevailing in the town. Strong contingents of police have been deployed to avoid any untoward incident, added the OC.

Jubo League activist gunned down in Tangail

Armed miscreants shot a Jubo League activist to death and injured two others in the town last night.

The dead is Sadekur Rahman Dipu, 28, a member of district unit Jubo League.

The injured are his younger brother Sayem, 25, and shop employee Rubel, 22. They have been undergoing treatment at a local hospital.

About five miscreants on motorcycles arrived at the electronic goods store of Dipu on Victoria Road around 9:00pm, reports our Tangail correspondent quoting witnesses.

They sprayed bullets into the shop, leaving Dipu dead on the spot and the two injured.

Following the incident, Jubo League activists brought out a procession in the town protesting the death of their fellow activist.

Police could not confirm the motive behind the killing.

Submitted by the request for membership of the United Nations in September, and the UN Security Council is to meet on November 11 to decide whether to hold a formal vote on the application.

As a permanent Security Council member the United States says it will veto any resolution granting full UN membership to the Palestinians, but no one can veto measures at UNESCO and several other UN agencies.

The Palestinians previously had observer status at UNESCO.

Washington boycotted Unesco from 1984 to 2003 over what the State Department called "growing disparity between US foreign policy and Unesco goals."

Despite the 20-year US boycott, Obama now considers Unesco a strategic interest and Washington sees it as a useful multilateral way to spread certain Western values.

Nuland said the United States would continue its membership and participation in the cultural body, which depends on the United States for some \$80 million a year, about 22 percent of its annual funding.

If the United States is in arrears in its payments for two years it will lose its vote.

Besides Israel and the United States, Canada,

Palestinian leader Abbas

Australia and Germany

voted against it, while Japan and Britain abstained.

Israel's ambassador Nimrod Barkan slammed countries that "have adopted a science fiction version of reality by admitting a non-existent state to the science organization.... Unesco should deal in science not science fiction."

He admitted that the vote, while symbolic, could have a knock-on effect: "There is potential for a cascading effect of this resolution on many other UN specialized agencies and in New York."

The Palestinians could now seek full membership of other UN organizations like the World Intellectual Property Organization, the World Health Organization, the International Civil Aviation Organization, or the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Such moves would place the United States in an increasing diplomatic bind as in the 1990s it banned the financing of any UN organization that accepts Palestine as a full member.

"Not paying our dues into these organizations could severely restrict and reduce our ability to influence them, our ability to act within them, and we think this affects US interests," Nuland admitted.

France, which had voiced serious doubts about the motion, in the end approved it along with almost all Arab, African, Latin American and Asian nations, including China and India.

Palastinian foreign minister Riyad al-Malki, who was in Paris for the vote, hailed "a historic moment that gives Palestine back some of its rights."

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