Minister's APS sent to jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narsingdi

Masudur Rahman Murad, an assistant personal secretary (APS) of the telecommunications minister, and another were sent to jail yesterday in connection with the Narsingdi municipal mayor Lokman Hossain murder

A Narsingdi court turned down the bail prayers of Murad and Miah Mohammad Manju, the convener of the district town Swechchhasebak League, and sent them to jail.

Narsingdi Chief Judicial Magistrate Nitai Chandra Saha also ordered the investigation officer to question the duo for fair investigation of the case.

Mamunur Rashid Mandal, investigation officer of the Lokman murder case, yesterday produced Murad and Manju before the court on completion of a two-day and a one-day remand respectively. Lokman, a two time gold

medallist for best mayor, was shot on November 1 last year. Hours later he succumbed to his injuries at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Jamaat men FROM PAGE 1

brought out processions in the capital's Motijheel, Purana Paltan and Ramna areas, witnesses said. Police chased after them

and foiled their demonstrations. Besides, 17 leaders and activists of Jamaat and Shibir were detained-- 10 by Ramna police, five by Paltan police and two by Motijheel police, Masudur Rahman, additional deputy commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, toldThe Daily Star. Our correspondent from

Chittagong reported that about 20 to 25 Shibir activists brought out a procession in the city's Probartak intersection at 1:00pm.

They were students of Chittagong Government College and Hazi Muhammad Mohsin College, said Ismail Hossain, officer-in-charge of Panchlaish Police Station.

Shibir men tried to bring out another procession at Naya Bazar intersection at about 1:30pm, but they dispersed as police chased them, said SM Tanvir Arafat, assistant commissioner o Chittagong Metropolitan

A sub-inspector of Halishahar Police Station sustained injuries when the Shibir men pelted the law enforcers with brick chips.

Meanwhile, pro-Jamaat lawyers demonstrated on the Supreme Court premises after the tribunal passed the order.

Also, Jamaat leaning lawyers of the High Court and the lower courts marched to the Supreme Court Bar Association and staged a protest rally in front of the association's building.

Prison cell

FROM PAGE 1 admission section at the jail entrance," said Golam Haider, deputy inspector general of prisons (DIGprisons) of Dhaka division. He, however, was taken to an adjacent room for some time for medical checkup which was conducted by doctors of the jail.

The Jamaat leader there sought admission to a hospital citing his old-age complications, said the DIGprisons. Also, his family members submitted a prayer in this regard to the International Crimes Tribunal that ordered his arrest in the morning.

He was then sent to the BSMMU hospital around 3:50pm at his request and his family's and also because the jail doctors suggested doing

so, said Golam Haider. BSMMU Director Brig Gen Abdul Majid Bhuiyan

said they had kept Ghulam Azam at a prison cell for a physical checkup. "We will conduct physical

tests tonight, and tomorrow senior doctors will decide whether it is necessary to keep him at the prison cell or should he be sent back to

Dhaka Central Jail. "He is now under our medical observation and in the protection of jail guards,' said the BSMMU director.

Brig Gen Abdul Majid Bhuiyan, a doctor of the medical corps of the Bangladesh Army, said, "He [Ghulam Azam] is now almost okay. The condition of his sugar level [in blood] and kidney is normal. However, his pressure is a little bit high.'

Ghulam Azam lands in jail

FROM PAGE 1 of arrest against Azam.

The courtroom was brimming with lawyers, observers and journalists yesterday. Several groups formed human chains and brought out processions outside the tribunal premises demanding Azam's arrest.

Several hundred lawyers and ordinary people were also eagerly waiting outside the courtroom to know of the tribunal's decision.

Ghulam Azam, one of the front men who actively helped the Pakistani occupation forces' attempt to foil the birth of Bangladesh in 1971, comes under the spotlight once again after yesterday's development.

The trial of individuals who committed crimes during the war under the leadership of Ghulam Azam and some other leaders has been a longstanding demand of the nation. The demand for Azam's arrest has become even more powerful since the tribunal was set up in March

Expectations of his arrest ran high after the prosecution submitted charges against him before the tribunal last December. Many considered the arrest to be a big challenge for the government given that Jamaat activists could let chaos loose over the issue.

Against such a backdrop, Azam seemed to have appeared before the tribunal prepared for going to jail, thinking ahead of time that his bail petition might get rejected. His private secretary brought a black suitcase containing his personal belongings. When security personnel

had the suitcase opened, Azam's towels, lungi, pink napkins, medicines, shaving kit, toothpaste and toothbrush were noticed among the contents in it. Meanwhile, security was

beefed up across the country, especially on and around the tribunal premises, hours before Azam was scheduled to appear before the court.

After yesterday's court proceedings, Azam was taken to a lockup on the ground

floor of the tribunal where he waited for a prison van to take him to Dhaka Central Jail.

Around noon, another Jamaat leader, Delwar Hossain Sayedee, was brought into that lockup where he waited before being produced at the tribunal for his trial in connection with similar war crimes charges.

Azam and Sayedee greeted each other in the lockup.

A few minutes later, Sayedee was taken to court while a prison van took Azam to jail. Azam's son, former Brig Gen Abdullahil Aman Azmi, boarded the guard chamber of the van to accompany his father to jail.

After a three-hour wait at the admission section of Dhaka Central Jail, Azam was sent to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University for a medical check-up.

COURTPROCEEDINGS

Ghulam Azam reached the tribunal set up in the old High Court building by a green SUV at 9:48am.

arrival, journalists and TV cameramen surrounded the SUV to get a shot of the 89year-old, who sat in the back seat with his son. He came in an off-white sherwani and trousers, sky blue cardigan, a light grey Jinnah cap (so named after the founder of Pakistan) and black shoes.

Azam had to wait in the car for about five minutes as police tried to clear the way for him to enter the courtroom. He was escorted inside on a wheelchair at 9:53am with dozens of cameras flashing all around him.

Over two dozen cameramen and other journalists almost followed Azam into the building. Police tried to clear the way and pushed them back, which prompted a light scuffle between the law enforcers and the newsmen. However, the situation soon calmed down.

At least 60 lawyers were waiting before of the tribunal building. The number of the lawyers overwhelmingly increased within a few minutes, as many joined the gathering from the High Court nearby. They were soon joined

by riot police, who were deployed to avoid possible violence.

The main gate of the tribunal was kept closed the whole time Azam was inside the

Azam entered the courtroom on the first floor of the building at 9:55am with the help of some of his lawyers and relatives. He was seated on a bench generally used by lawyers, observers, journalists and visitors.

A few minutes later, a security official requested Azam to sit in the dock, adding that it was an instruction from the tribunal registrar.

The lawyers then took him to the dock where his son Abdullahil Aman Azmi also sat beside him. They spoke to each other for a while until the judges entered the court.

Azmi came out of the dock after security officials asked him to. He told them that his father needed help to stand up and salute the judges.

Some defence lawyers, In the moments of his including Tajul Islam, then consulted with Ghulam Azam for some time. During that time, Azam looked calm and confident. At one point he brought out a small comb from his pocket and ran it through his beard.

When the three judges entered the court at 10:30am, a court official helped Azam stand up. As per his son's prompt advice, Azam greeted the court saying Assalamu Alaikum (Peace be upon you).

Interestingly, he stood up without any support when the judges left the courtroom at around 11:30am.

During the hearing, defence counsel Abdur Razzaq prayed to the tribunal to grant bail to the ex-ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami on medical and humanitarian grounds, as it had been done in the case of Abdul Alim, another accused in the war crimes trial and former BNP lawmaker from Joypurhat.

Razzaq told the court that Ghulam Azam, author of many books, left politics eleven years ago and had motor difficulties due to oldage complications such as diabetes and back pain. He

said Ghulam Azam should obtain bail as he would not flee the country and would face trial.

He said Ghulam Azam's doctors had advised him to take complete rest, restrict his movements, and take medicines regularly.

Chief Prosecutor Ghulam Arieff Tipoo then stood up and opposed the bail petition submitted by Ghulam Azam on January 10. He said Ghulam Azam had been the "pioneer of all atrocities committed during the Liberation Warin 1971".

The cases against Ghulam Azam and Abdul Alim are very different, said Tipoo.

The tribunal had taken the formal charges against Ghulam Azam into cognisance for trial, he said, but it had granted bail to Abdul Alim as the investigation into the allegations against him were yet to be completed.

Citing the trials of John Demjanjuk, a Ukrainian-born US citizen in Germany, and Egypt's ex-president Hosni Mubarak, Ghulam Arieff Tipoo argued that the health and age related problems of Ghulam Azam did not justify granting him bail.

On May 12, 2011, John Demjanjuk at the age of 91 was convicted as an accessory to the murder of 27,900 Jews from March 27, 1943 to mid September 1943 and sentenced to five years in prison, he said, adding that throughout the course of his two year trial, John Demjanjuk was held in custody at the Stadelheim Prison in Munich, Germany.

Tipoo said Ghulam Azam spearheaded the formation of the Shanti Committee, Razakar, Al Badr and Al Shams as auxiliary forces of the then Pakistani occupation army and instigated them into committing atrocities and crimes against humanity.

Ghulam Azam was not incapable of movement and he even frequently talked to the media against the allegations brought against him, said Tipoo, adding that the scope for granting him bail was very limited.

After hearing the argu-

ments of the two sides, the tribunal comprising its chairman Justice Md Nizamul Huq, Justice ATM Fazle Kabir and AKM Zaheer Ahmed at around 11:20am ordered that Azam be sent to prison. The tribunal fixed

city

February 15 for hearing the charge framing against the ex-Jamaat chief. It directed the prosecution

to submit the copies of the formal charge and relevant documents to its registrar's office by today, and ordered the defence to collect those copies from the office by January 15. Following the order, Abdur

Razzaq repeatedly requested the judges to direct the jail authorities to provide division facilities to Ghulam Azam. The tribunal said it had no

jurisdiction to pass such an order. It said the tribunal believed that the jail authorities would

keep the health condition of Ghulam Azam in mind. After the proceedings, prosecution lawyer Tipoo told reporters at his office that the

tribunal's order against Ghulam Azam was absolutely correct and lawful. "The order has fulfilled the expectations and desire of the nation. We are happy with the order and also with the fact that we have discharged our

duties rightly. We have won, he said. Prosecutor Rana Dasgupta told The Daily Star that the trial of Ghulam Azam might end in three months if every-

thingwent well. Meanwhile, Abdur Razzaq told journalists that the tribunal's order was absolutely "incorrect" as it had rejected his client's bail petition.

"We still do not know the allegations brought against Ghulam Azam," Razzaq told reporters at the entrance of the tribunal

"He [Ghulam Azam] is innocent until proven guilty. It is unfortunate that we cannot move any appeal with the High Court and the Supreme Court against any order of the tribunal," he said.

(Rizanuzzaman Laska) and Tuhin Shubhra Adhikary also contributed to this report)



HARUN-AR-RASHID

A step forward

The process of establishing rule of law in the country has taken a step forward with the arrest of Ghulam Azam, said Harun-Ar-Rashid, general secretary of Sector Commanders' Forum.

ensured through a proper trial."

He said this is a special trial and therefore it should be completed as soon as possible to relieve the nation of a stigma.

Nation feels

FROM PAGE 1 of Ghulam Azam.

"We feel extremely relieved. The whole nation feels relieved," said the eminent journalist in his immediate reaction on the tribunal premises.

Shahriar said Ghulam Azam was the main perpetrator of the war crimes during the Liberation War of Bangladesh. It would not be possible to hold proper trials of war criminals, even the trial of Ghulam Azam, if he was kept outside the jail.

"Because he could have destroyed the evidence, threaten the witnesses of the case," he said adding, "They [Jamaat-e-Islami] have been hatching multidimensional conspiracies at home and abroad to foil the trial.'

"The conspiracies will be somewhat discouraged after his arrest," Shahriar said.

He said, "Although Ghulam Azam's arrest fulfilled a long-standing expectation, still we will wait to see the end of the trial." "We want the trial of top

war criminals including Ghulam Azam to be completed by 2013," he said adding, "The government has to provide all logistical support and the required manpower to the prosecution to complete this trial by that time."

A long wait FROM PAGE 1

Teachers' Association. "The tribunal rejected the

bail petition of Ghulam Azam and sent him to prison the whole nation has been waiting for this moment, it has finally come," said Anwar who was also a freedom fighter.

It's another

FROM PAGE 1

of the 1971 war crimes, told The Daily Star that people were angry because Ghulam Azam was not being arrested. "We took to the streets

demanding his arrest," she said, "Even though late, that anger has been ameliorated

She said Ghulam was the 'mastermind" of the crimes committed during the war.

"As a representative of the four lakh women who were tortured during the Liberation War, I demand his quick trial and stringent punishment," said Priyabhashini, who is also a renowned sculptor.

"His arrest was needed for the Bangalees to rise as a civilised nation," she said, requesting the judges not to allow bail for the former Jamaat-e-Islami ameer.

MUNTASSIR MAMOON Trial should end quickly

Expressing satisfaction over Ghulam Azam's arrest Dhaka University's Prof Muntassir Mamoon said, "We have waited 40 years for this day. Children and wives of martyrs have been waiting for this day.'

"Now we feel relieved as the top Rajakar [collaborator of the Pakistani army] has been arrested, but it is far from over," said the eminent historian adding, "The trial should be completed quickly." "If the trial of Nuremberg

why can't this trial be completed within a year," said Mamoon. Claiming that Jamaat-e-Islami has been campaign-

ing across the world to save Ghulam Azam, he urged the government to immediately take actions to prevent such attempts.

Trial must

trial of war criminals. "This has been one of our most important and significant demands over the

Kendra. against humanity during the Liberation War of 1971 is well known to everyone, she said adding that even Ghulam himself did not shy away

She said now his trial should be held in a transparent manner.

It will ensure

FROM PAGE 1

Azam as the mastermind of the war crimes she said, "We had sadness and discomfort in our hearts thinking how the trial would be completed with Ghulam Azam outside

Ghulam Azam has been conspiring to foil the trial of war criminals, she said addreassured with the arrest as the trial proceedings will

for his arrest, and through his arrest today our demand has been fulfilled," said Nasrin, widow of martyred Dr Alim Chowdhury, an eminent physician, who was killed at the end of the

She hoped the present ment will not hold the trial.

Want to see

FROM PAGE 1

Crimes Facts Finding Committee (WCFFC). "This is only the begin-

ning. We want to see the end of the trial, and want to see the perpetrators get due punishment," he said. Stressing the need for

increasing the number of tribunals, he said, "At least one tribunal should be set up at every district to speed up the trial process."

improving the quality of prosecutors.

The interviews were taken by Tuhin Shubhra Adhikary, Rizanuzzaman Laskar, and Pankaj Karmakar

BCL-Shibir

brought the situation under control using tear gas, said Selim Hossain, officer-in-charge of Jalalabad Police Station. According to campus sources, BCL men held a rally

clashed. Sust Shibir general secretary Zakir Hossain, Shibir president Muzahidul Islam and Sust BCL joint convener Kamruzzaman Khan Sweet were among the injured. BCL activist Mostafa was admitted to Osmani Medical

College hospital, said campus sources. On information, police reached the scene and diffused

Sust BCL unit chief Shamsuzzaman claimed Shibir men

had attacked them while they were holding the rally.

Record speaks loud about his deeds On June 19, before Tikka Anticipating certain defeat,

alive if Pakistan disintegrates," said Azam in a speech to mobilise his party men and followers against Bangladesh and help the occupation forces. (Source: Jamaat's mouthpiece the daily Sangram, 1971).

Azam is one of the front men who actively helped the Pakistani forces' attempts to foil the birth of Bangladesh. He was hyperactive against the Liberation War and became a symbol of war crimes in Bangladesh.

He met Pakistani General Tikka Khan, who was known as the "Butcher of Baluchistan", 10 days after the war started and earned the same title "butcher" as an architect of the genocide launched on the night of

March 25, 1971 in Dhaka. During the nine-month bloody war, Azam and his party Jamaat, its student wing Islami Chhatra Sangha (later renamed Islami Chhatra Shibir) actively played a key role along with their other political partners in their joint attempts to foil Bangladesh's

independence struggle. According to newspapers, including the Jamaat mouthpiece the daily Sangram and books and documents on 1971, Jamaat and its student wing played a key role in forming 'Peace Committees' and some other auxiliary forces like 'Razakar', 'Al-

Badr' and 'Al-Shams'. Throughout the nine months of the war, Jamaat, its student wing and the auxiliary forces actively helped the Pakistani military in mass killing, rape and atrocities, as history has so faithfully recorded.

The Pakistani forces and their Bangladeshi collaborators committed genocide and war crimes that left three million people dead and around a quarter million women violated, besides the planned elimination of some of the best of Bangali brains on December 14, 1971.

War records show that Jamaat formed 'Razakar' and 'Al-Badr' forces to counter the freedom fighters. 'Razakar' was established by former secretary general of Jamaat Moulana Abul Kalam Mohammad Yousuf, and 'Badr Bahini' included the Islami Chhatra Sangha activists.

the occupation forces and their collaborators -- mostly leaders of Jamaat and its student front -- picked up leading Bengali intellectuals and and killed them en masse with a view to intellectually crippling the emerging independ-

ent nation. Though Azam was the brain behind Jamaat's antiliberation efforts, present Ameer Motiur Rahman Nizami, president of Islami Chhatra Sangha in 1971, played a vital role in collabo-

rating with the Pakistani junta in committing genocide. Nizami, who is also behind bars on charges of war crimes, said, "Everyone of us should assume the role of a Muslim soldier of an Islamic state and through cooperation with the oppressed and by winning their confidence we must kill those who are hatching a conspiracy against Pakistan and Islam." (The Sangram

quoted Nizami on September 15, 1971) Azam and his party men and anti-liberation elements used to call the freedom fighters "miscreants", "Indian agents", "malaun" (a degrading, insulting term for

Hindus), "infiltrators", etc. On April 8, 1971, Azam issued a joint statement with

other Jamaat leaders. A book comprising an account of the killers and collaborators titled Genocide '71 quotes from that statement: "India is interfering in the internal affairs of East Pakistan. Wherever patriotic Pakistanis see Indian agents or anti-Pakistan elements and infiltrators, they will destroy

them.' Genocide '71 also reads: "On June 18, on arriving at Lahore airport, Ghulam Azam spoke with journalists, stating that, in order to further improve the conditions in East Pakistan, he was going to provide some additional advice to the President [GeneralYahya Khan].

elaborate any further on what sort of advice he was going to give. Regarding the situation in East Pakistan, he said: 'The miscreants are still engaged in destructive activities. Their main aim is to create terror and turbulence. These miscreants are being directed by Naxalities and left-wing forces."

Khan left for Dhaka, Azam met Yahya Khan. After his meeting with Yahya, he addressed a press conference in Lahore. He told journalists, "The miscreprofessionals on December 14 ants are still active in East Pakistan. People must be provided with arms to destroy them.

Addressing Jamaat workers prior to the press conference, Azam said, "In order to prevent the disintegration of Pakistan, the armed forces

had to be employed." He further noted, "The recent tumult in East Pakistan is ten times greater than the 1857 Revolution in Bengal.'

Speaking at a press conference in Peshawar on August 26, he said, "The armed forces have saved us from the treachery of our enemies and from the evil designs of India. The people of East Pakistan are lending full support to the

armed forces in destroying miscreants and infiltrators. On November 23, Yahya Khan declared a state of

national emergency. Azam welcomed this announcement. He told the press in Lahore, "The best way to defend ourselves is striking at our enemies." He stressed that in order to restore peace in East Pakistan, each patriotic citizen, each member of the Peace Committees, "Razakar", "Al-Badr", and "Al-

modern, automatic weapons. At a meeting in Rawalpindi on November 29, he said, "There is no example in the history of a nation at war surviving without retaliation. Aggression is the best form of defence." On December 3, he said in

Shams" must be armed with

should be in charge of the foreign office because it is only an East Pakistani who can cope with the 'Bangladesh tamasha', the Bangladesh farce." Immediately after victory on December 16, 1971, Azam and many others like him fled to Pakistan and returned only

Karachi, "An East Pakistani

his family members in 1975. nation carried the govern-

after the brutal assassination

The banned parties were given the green light to do politics during the regime of late president Ziaur Rahman after the assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib. Genocide '71 said, Soon

after Ghulam Azam with a few of his followers went to Saudi Arabia, an advertisement, in the name of a false organization, appeared in several Middle Eastern papers. This advertisement proclaimed that "mosques are being burnt East Pakistan," Hindus are killing Muslims and destroying their property,' etc. On the plea that Islam had to be saved, the advertise-

ment appealed for contribu-It also said, Ghulam Azam, in order to collect funds and to continue his campaign against Bangladesh, visited several countries of the region at this time, including Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Kuwait, Beirut, etc. After completing his tour of these areas, he left for

London in April 1973. Pakistani passport-holder Ghulam Azam returned to Bangladesh after 1975 in the name of visiting his ailing mother and became Jamaat's undeclared ameer. Another alleged war criminal late Abbas Ali Khan served for many years as the acting ameer.

on a three months Bangladeshi visa during the time of President Ziaur Rahman in 1978, he never left Bangladesh. In early1990s Azam was officially declared ameer of Jamaat, while Shaheed Janani

Jahanara Imam launched a

unique mass movement

demanding the trial of the war

criminals.

ment.

Though he came to Dhaka

She held an unprecedented People's Court as a symbolic trial of Ghulam Azam where thousands of people gathered and the court pronounced a verdict to the effect that his offences committed during the Liberation War deserve capital punish-

Pakistani national.

In 1991, the BNP formed the government with support him and put him in jail. Benazir Bhutto.

However, after Azam acquired Bangladeshi citizenship through a court order in 1994, the government released him from prison. In 1998 BNP and Jamaat

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Azam, who was the brain behind Jamaat's antiliberation efforts, left the party's top post in 2000 and

Ghulam Azam has stayed

out of focus since he disap-

peared from the open politics

of Jamaat 11 years ago. He has

was succeeded by Nizami.

formed the four-party alli-

ance and Azam appeared at a

grand public meeting with

been brought into the spotlight once again after yesterday's court order. Pak army

FROM PAGE 20 Gilani earlier this week accused the army and intelligence chiefs of failing to make their submissions to the commission through government channels, in an unusually bold interview

with Chinese media. The army issued a statement yesterday vociferously denying Gilani's accusation and saying it had passed its response through the defence ministry to the court in accordance with the law.

"There can be no allegation more serious than what the honourable prime minister has leveled against COAS (army chief General Ashfaq Kayani) and DG ISI (spy chief Lieutenant General Ahmad Shuja Pasha) and has unfortunately charged the officers for violation of the constitution of the country," said the army's statement. "This has very serious

ramifications with potentially grievous consequences for the country." Pakistan has seen three military coups since inde-

pendence in 1947. It has

spent about half of its life

under military dictatorships.

"The nation has waited for 40 years for this day," he told The Daily Star, "I hope his deserved punishment is

could be held within a year,

FROM PAGE 1

She said the arrest has been a long-standing demand of everyone working for the

vears," said the executive director of Ain O Salish The fact that Ghulam Azam committed crimes

from admitting to the crimes.

the prison." ing that people are feeling

face less hindrance now. "We waged a movement

Liberation War. government will complete the trial within its tenure, as she thinks the next govern-

Hasan, convener of War

Dr Hasan also emphasised on enriching the prosecution team, and

FROM PAGE 20

around 5:00pm and announced that they would force Jamaat-backed student front Shibir out of the campus. The members of BCL then went on to vandalise halls of residence of Shibir activists, where the two student fronts

the situation.

However, refuting the allegation, Shibir said BCL men made a planned attack on them and set their furniture on fire.

power in 2008 following ment's decision to ban five from Jamaat and in 1992 Azam elections held a month after communal parties, including filed a case with the High Court the assassination of his wife, to get Bangladeshi citizenship. Jamaat-e-Islami, on former Prime Minister The then government arrested December 18 with immediate effect.

"However, he refused to of Bangabandhu Sheikh Azam's citizenship issue Mujibur Rahman and most of came into focus when he The current civilian came to Bangladesh as a administration headed by After victory the first issues Zardari has lurched from of newspapers of the new crisis to crisis since coming to