

GAZIPUR BOMB ATTACK 2005

10 JMB men get death penalty

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A court yesterday sentenced 10 JMB men to death for carrying out a suicide bomb attack inside the Gazipur Bar Association office in 2005 that killed nine people and injured 80.

The nine include the suicide bomber of the banned Islamist outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) and four lawyers.

Interestingly, Judge Md Motahar Hossain of Speedy Trial Tribunal-4 in the verdict ordered each of the convicts to be hanged eight times. All the convicts are in jail.

On November 29, 2005, suicide bomber Md Nazir Hossain, also known as Sharif Ullah of Gaibandha, walked into the office after 9:30am and detonated the bomb he was strapped to. The bombing was apparently a part of JMB's attack on the judiciary.

Around 100 people, including 50 lawyers, their assistants and clients, were busy inside the office on the ground floor of Hall Building-2 at the Bhawal Rajbari court.

Three died on the spot while the others

died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital later. The deceased lawyers are: Amjad Hossain, Golam Farukh, Nurul Huda and Anwarul Azim.

The judge in his judgment yesterday said the charges of bombing and killing eight people were proved beyond reasonable doubt.

The convicts are Enayet Ullah alias Walid, Arifur Rahman, Moshidul Islam alias Masud, Saidur Munshi, Abdulllah Al Sohaini, Nizam Uddin Reza, Taibor Rahman alias Hassan, Ashraful Islam, Md Shafullah alias Tarek and Adnan Sami alias Jahangir.

The convicts can appeal challenging the legality of the judgment within 30 days from the date of receipt of the judgment copy, the judge said.

On that November day, the JMB also carried out another suicide bomb attack on the Chittagong court premises.

The bomber attempted to get into the court but as law enforcers tried to stop him, he detonated the bomb at the gate of the court. At least two people were killed in the attack.



The Gazipur Bar Association office soon after the bomb blast on November 29, 2005.

PHOTO: FILE

AL leader hacked

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Board office around 1:30am, Amin told The Daily Star.

The criminals took to their hills right away, leaving Sohel to bleed profusely. His screams brought locals to the scene, who rushed him to the upazila health complex.

Around 5:30am, he was shifted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital, where he was declared dead, said Nayeb Abul Bashar of CMCH police outpost.

The body was handed over to his family after an autopsy.

The inspector said the police were yet to find out the motive behind the assault.

Several hundred AL men marched on the highway. They put up a barricade near north Bypass Road at 11:00am, creating long tailbacks on either side, said Sohel Imtiaz, officer-in-charge of Baro Aowlia



Mohiuddin Sohel

Highway police outpost.

Police moved in and removed the blockade two hours later. They fired 20 rounds in the air to disperse the protesters who pelted the police with a barrage of brick chips.

Vehicular movement resumed around 2:30pm.

Police detained Mohammad Shakil, 31, of south Mohadebpur in connection with the killing. Preparations for filing a case were underway last night.

Grassroots blame Is it a govt or an individual?

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The ward level leaders and activists expressed discontent loudly and even created chaos when Qamrul, who is state minister for law, was delivering his speech at the meeting.

When Qamrul urged grassroots leaders to strengthen the party, thana and ward level leaders said they did not even get a chance to talk to the party high-ups.

BM Sirajul Islam, president of the now defunct Awami League ward-29, urged the top leaders to give the grassroots a voice. "You will talk and we will just listen ... the party cannot run this way. You have to listen to our words," he said.

Maya, calming people down, said there would be a meeting on June 26 to discuss the holding of the council. "If necessary, we will sit for three consecutive days," he said,

adding that if thana and ward level leaders were ready, then committees would be declared after the meeting.

Party sources said the council of Dhaka city unit Awami League was held on December 27, 2012, after nine years.

Party General Secretary Syed Ashraful Islam had asked the unit leaders to announce ward, union and thana level committees, which are under the unit, within two months of holding councils for them.

However, councils of 100 wards, 18 unions and 49 thana units are yet to be held.

Qamrul yesterday said the elections were a warning to the Awami League but there was nothing to be worried about. The party had to prepare for the future by taking lessons from the recent elections.

FROM PAGE 1
independent Anti-corruption Commission in its report audaciously maintained that inclusion of Abul's name would have caused political tumult!

A bulletrumaine untouched as a minister and Sheikh Hasina created a completely new ministry - ICT Ministry - for him. Not only that, she praised Abul as a 'patriot'.

But, as we know, because of this one man Padma has remained a distant dream and the World Bank has backed out from the project, leaving stigma on the country. Hasina's overwhelming affection for Abul remains a mystery.

"With Abul in communication (ministry), we knew this was going to happen today or tomorrow," an exasperated government adviser told us while narrating the whole episode. He had no answer why Hasina wanted to protect a person of such dubious repute.

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In other cases, innocent people and people of eminence were pursued and harried until they were pushed to the wall.

Take the case of Dr Yunus or Grameen Bank. The government is hell-bent on demolishing them both, no matter what consequence that brings. There is no reason why a perfectly well-functioning Grameen should be split up and nationalized. What Yunus' 'crime' was to invite the wrath of the prime minister is also inexplicable, except that he wished to float a party.

However, public perceptions are not changed by such actions. People have their own perception of who is innocent or who is not. And the actions looked so arbitrary and autocratic.

So why did the government time and again choose to indulge in such acts? A very curious answer comes

out if one asks the AL top brass.

All they say is these are not 'government' decisions or actions because government means a collective body. These are the decisions and orders of one single person, who is none other than Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

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thing even at fatal costs to her party and the nation. In other words, we see the rise of a an autocrat in Bangladesh's politics.

We have talked to many grassroots leaders who also expressed their sheer frustration at how their views were ignored about the ground reality. And the ground reality was once again proven through the city corporation elections.

A brief look back at Hasina's return to power in 2008 can illustrate how she has gradually concentrated power in her singularity.

At the 2008 elections, she had promised to foster courtesy and tolerance for a change in political culture.

But then she punished her most senior leaders because of their roles during the army-backed caretaker government. She left them out of the cabinet and picked some surprise candidates who could only serve as 'his master's voice'. So the cabinet was turned into a rubber stamp for Hasina's decisions.

She also dropped the senior leaders from party presidium, the highest policy making body. There was now no one to oppose her.

We may recall the arbitrary manner in which Hasina had proceeded towards canceling the caretaker government system. The parliamentary special committee on constitutional amendment in 2011 had recommended a continuation of the caretaker system in light of the Supreme Court verdict. But Hasina simply overturned the committee's suggestion, leading to the current political crisis.

And then they all say they feel helpless because it is the prime minister who makes all the decisions. Any dissension, if vented at all, is either harshly criticized or disregarded.

What we see now is the increasing intolerance, arrogance and despotism of Hasina. She is the high and mighty who decides everything.

One has to pay for one's arrogance. Sometimes, arrogance becomes too costly a posture.

POLITICAL ASYLUM

Chetia seeks to withdraw appeal

STAR REPORT

Detained since 1997, Anup Chetia, general secretary of the separatist group United Liberation Front of Assam (Ulfa), has sought withdrawal of his appeal for political asylum in Bangladesh.

"Earlier, I wanted to stay in this country. I have changed my mind and I have decided to live the rest of my life with my children in my country [India]," Anup was quoted as saying in a petition submitted on May 13 to Rajshahi Central Jail where he has been in detention.

The jail authorities forwarded the petition to the home ministry, jailor Ismail Hossain yesterday said.

The ministry received the petition but is yet to make any move regarding the matter, an official of the ministry said preferring anonymity.

"It is a political issue and so the government will decide the fate of Anup," he added.

India has long been demanding Anup's deportation but Bangladesh has been saying that the issue needs to be settled by the court as Anup sought political asylum.

The Ulfa leader was arrested in December 1997 at Mohammadpur in the capital. A Dhaka court sentenced him to seven-year imprisonment on charges of intrusion into Bangladesh territory with a fake passport and illegal possession of currencies of 16 countries.

Bad-mouthing

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The House rules of procedure prohibit anyone speaking against individuals not present in parliament.

In protest against Apu's remarks, the opposition MPs walked out of parliament at 9:00pm and did not return to the House.

On Wednesday, BNP lawmaker Shammi Akther made a blistering attack on the ruling party lawmakers using some offensive words, less than an hour after the Awami League and BNP lawmakers agreed not to use swear words in parliament.

Within three minutes of her speech on the budget, Apu yesterday told the House it was important for her to reply to the opposition lawmakers' "propaganda" against Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's son Sajeeb Wazed Joy and his wife.

"Sajeeb means fresh, Wazed is his noted father's name and Joy is the symbol of our victory in 1971. His wife is a renowned jurist who comes from a respected family," said Apu, who used to be a professor of Tejgaon College in the capital.

Deputy Speaker Col (retd) Shawkat Ali, who was presiding over the sitting at the time, requested Apu twice to speak on the budget.

But ignoring the request, Apu continued her attack and said Khaleda Zia's family came to Dinajpur in 1956 from India and took shelter with a farmer's family there.

Govt puts

FROM PAGE 1

After the payment of Tk 13.2 crore, the government will hold a stake of about 20.5 percent, said Shahjahan.

The government has paid only Tk 1.8 crore against its share of the paid-up capital since the bank's inception three decades ago.

The recent move came after the Grameen Bank Inquiry Commission wrote to the finance ministry, suggesting that the government make the payment against the paid-up capital of the bank.

In a recent meeting with the commission, Finance Minister AMA Muhiith directed officials to make the payment.

The government formed the commission last year to review the activities of Grameen Bank and 48 other legally independent organisations that bear Grameen's name, and make recommendations on how to run these organisations.

3 robbers killed

ers also fired in retaliation. After a 25-minute-long gunfight, the robbers fled the scene leaving three bodies lying on the ground, Sabir Rahman said.

The law enforcers also recovered five guns, two .303 rifles, two .22 bore rifles, two airguns, one 9mm pistol, one local pistol, 23 bullets, a box of bullets of airgun, and one magazine from the world.

Acting on a tip-off, police sources said, they conducted a drive in the early hours yesterday to nab Badal, leader of a robbery gang.

Sensing the presence of the law enforcers, the robbers fled on them. The police fired on them.

The bodies and recovered arms were handed over to Shyamnagar Police Station.

leader of a gang named Badal, 44, was killed in a gunfight with police in Mogonama Ghat embankment area of Pekua upazila around 1:00am.

Moin Uddin, officer-in-charge of Pekua Police Station, admitted the incident, and said Badal was killed by the shot fired by his fellow gang members.

OC Jahirul Islam Khan of Kutubdia Police Station said five robbery cases were lodged against Badal with the police station.

His body was sent to the district hospital morgue for an autopsy.

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ground. Two locally-made guns were also recovered from the scene.

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ing by misbehaviour during his arrest by the past caretaker government.

In reality, Burke in his "Speech on Conciliation with America" said: "The use of force alone is but temporary. It may subdue for a moment; but it does not remove the necessity of