



A mob, frenzied by apparently a baseless claim that a Hindu boy disrespected Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), tore apart the corrugated iron sheet walls of a Hindu house, left, at Bonogram in Santhia of Pabna yesterday. They also vandalised the idol in a temple and gathered at the bazaar where law enforcer tried to control the mob.

PHOTO: STAR



Hindus attacked in Pabna

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took him to the bazaar. There, he was warned that he and his son would be tried for "defaming the prophet".

Despite protesting repeatedly that his son was innocent, Babul was mercilessly hit and kicked upon. At one stage, some locals intervened to save him and confined him to a shop.

In the meanwhile, another gang, more aggressive and violent, set fire to Babul's house. Later, more gangs joined in to attack the predominantly Hindu village and vandalised about 26 homesteads.

On information, over 150 Rab and police personnel arrived at the bazaar. As they brought Babul out of the shop, the mob started throwing brick chips and other objects at them.

It took the law enforcers over an hour to rescue Babul and take him into their custody at Ataikula Police Station.

Talking to The Daily Star at the police station, Babul claimed the men who attacked his house belong to local units of BNP and Jamaat.

Asked about his son, he said Rajib was on the run to save life.

"He was preparing for SSC examination. He can't do anything like what the people here are alleging," he said, adding the boy is a meritorious student.

Meanwhile, people from different villages blockaded the Pabna-Dhaka highway for over five hours till 5:00pm.

As police tried to remove the barricade, the violent crowds attacked them with brick chips and sticks. The cops had to charge batons and fire several teargas shells.

All the top police and district administration officials were on the spot trying to defuse the crisis.

The way the Hindu houses in Bonogram were attacked yesterday bore an eerie similarity with the communal violence against the Buddhist community in Ramu on September 29 last year. A Buddhist youth, Uttam Barua, was framed with a fake Facebook page carrying anti-Islamic contents to incite the communal violence.

Yesterday's incident also followed the trend of recent Jamaat-Shibir-BNP attacks on the Hindu minorities across the country.

Locals of Bonogram said some known faces of Jamaat, Shibir and BNP led the attacks throughout the day.

Rajib's classmate Rocky said, "We are sure the allegation against Rajib is cooked up by a vested quarter."

The Daily Star has found that the Facebook page whose photocopies were used to incite the attacks on the Bonogram Hindu community has no links with Rajib.

The name of this page, written in Bangla, denigrates the prophet and therefore it is unprintable in the newspaper.

Opened on September 14, the page got 420 "likes" as of yesterday evening.

It does contain hateful posts, majority of which was issued by the administrator. Some people gave negative reactions to these posts, asking others to refrain from liking this page.

In fact, there was no single comment supporting the posts.

Interestingly, the page itself gave 30 "likes" on other pages that include "Ami Gorbato, Ami Musalman", "Sammilito Islami Mancha", Hadith of the Day and several other Islamic pages.

Again, it likes Atheist Bangladesh Fans and Dhormockery, Gonojagoron Mancha and Imran H Sarkar and at the same time Amar Desh acting editor Mahmudur Rahman.

It also likes a page called Moulavibazar High School.

Additional District Magistrate Munshi Muniruzzaman said so far they did not find any substance in the claims made against the schoolboy.

He said steps would be taken against the culprits under information technology act after probe.

"We know who attacked and vandalised our houses," Paritosh Kumar, a resident of Bonogram Sahapara. But he would not mention any name.

Around 250 Hindu families live in Bonogram village, he said, adding that some 25 to 30 houses were completely ravaged. "Many other houses were also attacked."

Bishnu Saha, 80, said she had never imagined anybody would destroy her house this way.

Chandan Kumar Chakrabarti, president of Hindu Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council, said, "Conspirators are out to create a situation so that the Hindus can be attacked."

He said a party involved in communal politics might have been behind the Bonogram violence.

Germany, Brazil draft anti-spy resolution

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week following a story in the Sydney Morning Herald, which reported a top-secret map leaked by fugitive intelligence analyst Edward Snowden that showed 90 US surveillance facilities at diplomatic missions worldwide -- including in Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand.

The German-Brazilian draft would have the 193-nation assembly declare that it is "deeply concerned at human rights violations and abuses that may result from the conduct of any surveillance of communications, including extraterritorial surveillance of communications".

It would also call on UN member states "to take measures to put an end to violations of these rights and to create the conditions to prevent such violations, including by ensuring that relevant national legislation complies with their obligations under international human rights law".

The resolution will likely undergo changes as it is debated in the general assembly's third committee, which focuses on human rights. It is expected to be put to a vote in the committee this month and then again in the general assembly next month, diplomats said.

Several diplomats said they would be surprised if the resolution did not receive the support of an overwhelming majority of UN member states.

The Brazilian president, Dilma Rousseff, and German chancellor, Angela Merkel, have both condemned the widespread snooping by the US National Security Agency. Charges that the NSA accessed tens of thousands of French phone records and monitored Merkel's mobile phone have caused outrage in Europe and recently, the row spilled over to Asia.

Malaysian Foreign Minister Anifah Aman said his country summoned the US and Australian mission heads on Friday to "hand over a protest note in response to the alleged spying activities carried out by the two embassies in Kuala Lumpur".

The US was represented by its deputy mission chief Lee McClenny, as the ambassador was out of town, the minister said in a statement, without giving details of what transpired.

Anifah on Friday also met his Australian counterpart Julie Bishop on the sidelines of a regional meeting in Perth, expressing "deep concern of such reports (of alleged Australian spying activities) which have caused considerable anger

amongst the Malaysian public".

US Secretary of State John Kerry this week admitted US spying has sometimes gone too far. US intelligence chiefs have said these reports are based on a misinterpretation of an NSA slide leaked to the media by Snowden.

Rather than siphoning off the records of tens of millions of calls in Europe, as the slide seems to suggest, they argue that the data was in many cases gathered and shared by European agencies.

Indonesia has also summoned both its Australian and US ambassadors, while China has called for "a clarification" from both sides.

Washington has been seeking to improve ties in Asia in recent years to counter growing Chinese dominance.

General assembly resolutions are non-binding, unlike resolutions of the 15-nation security council. But assembly resolutions that enjoy broad international support can carry significant moral and political weight.

The resolution would urge states "to establish independent national oversight mechanisms capable of ensuring transparency and accountability of state surveillance of communications, their interception and collection of personal data".

Convicted killers stay safe abroad

FROM PAGE 1

The nation observes today the Jail Killing Day to mourn the four liberation movement heroes -- Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmad, AHM Quamruzzaman and M Mansur Ali.

The four leaders were shot dead following repeated bayonet charges at the jail on this day in 1975.

They were sent to jail soon after the August 15, 1975 bloodbath that claimed the lives of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and most of his family members.

The four leaders had led the country's Liberation War while Bangabandhu was detained by the Pakistan army.

While talking to The Daily Star, Attorney General Mahbubey Alam said the killers of Bangabandhu and the four national leaders were living in the US, Canada, Pakistan, Libya and some Middle Eastern countries.

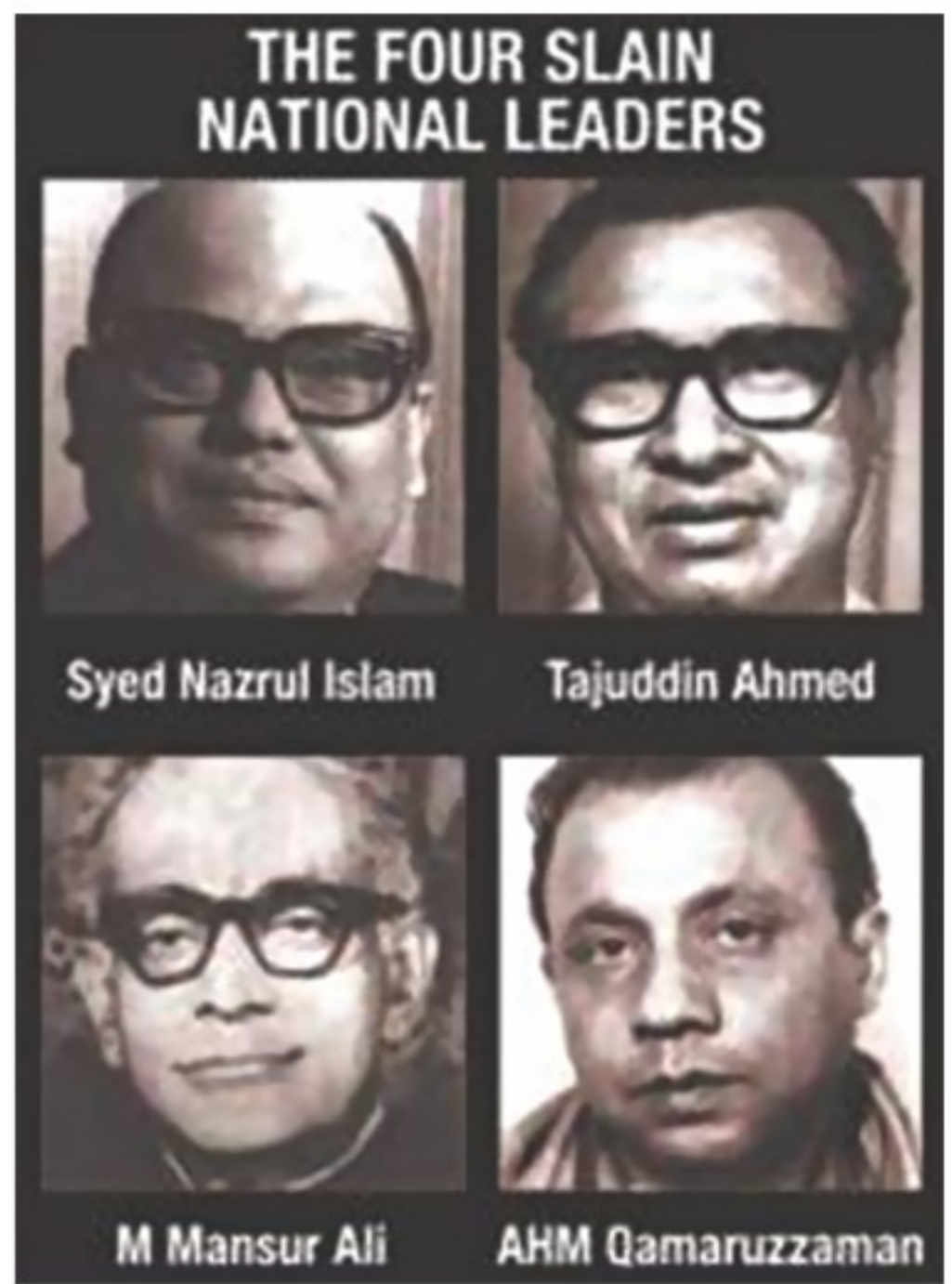
The attorney general, who is a member of the taskforce formed to bring the fugitive killers back, said the government had taken necessary steps to that end, but, unfortunately, those countries were not cooperating.

Maj (ret'd) Noor Chowdhury, one of the convicted killers, was in Canada and another convict Maj (ret'd) Rashed Chowdhury was in the USA, he said.

He added the USA and Canada had refused to extradite the killers saying their policy didn't support handover of a convict to a country where death sentence is executed.

Such policy did not reflect the reality in the acts of the USA, as that country sometimes launched attacks in another country to snatch its wanted criminals, Mahbubey Alam observed.

He said the countries, which were giving shelter to the killers of Bangabandhu and the four national leaders, could not feel that it was not impossible for them [the killers] to have connections with Islamist militancy.



ties with Islamist militancy.

The countries at least should have arrested them for the sake of justice and principle, he added.

Law Secretary ASSM Zahirul Haque Dulal told this correspondent that the Interpol issued warrants for arrest of the killers of Bangabandhu and the four national leaders, as they had been changing locations.

The government had sent letters to every country seeking their help in tracing and sending the fugitive convicts back home, he said, adding that the sub-registrar's offices across the country had been trying to trace their property for confiscation.

Contacted, Law Minister Shafique Ahmed,

who heads the taskforce, repeated his previous statement that the government was trying its best to bring back the fugitive killers through diplomatic channel.

The Supreme Court on April 30 this year upheld the death penalty of three former army personnel and life term imprisonment of eight others for killing the four national leaders.

The three convicts, who were awarded death penalty, are Risalder (ret'd) Muslemuddin Dafadar (dismissed) Marfat Ali Shah and Dafadar (dismissed) Abdul Hashem Mridha.

The eight convicts, who were handed down life term imprisonment, are Lt Col (dismissed) Khondaker Abdur Rashid, Lt Col (relieved) Shariful Haq Dalim, Lt Col (ret'd) SHMB Noor Chowdhury, Lt Col (ret'd) AM Rashed Chowdhury, Maj (relieved) Ahmed Shariful Hossain, Capt (ret'd) Abdul Majed, Capt (relieved) Kismat Hasem and Capt (relieved) Nazmul Hossain.

The apex court affirmed the judgment of a Dhaka court which in 2004 convicted and sentenced Muslemuddin, Marfat Ali Shah and Abdul Hashem Mridha to death and handed down life term imprisonment on 12 others.

Of the 12 convicts, four -- Lt Col (dismissed) Syed Farooq-ur Rahman, Lt Col (ret'd) Sultan Shahriar Rashid Khan, Maj (ret'd) Bazlul Huda and Maj (ret'd) AKM Mohiuddin Ahmed -- have already been executed in the Bangabandhu assassination case.

In August 2008, the High Court upheld the capital punishment of Muslemuddin and acquitted Marfat and Hashem. It also acquitted Farooq, Shahriar, Mohiuddin and Bazlul Huda.

The HC did not say anything about the eight others who got life term imprisonment from the SC on April 30 this year.

In 2011, the SC exempted Farooq, Shahriar, Mohiuddin and Bazlul Huda from the jail killing case as they were already executed.

Petition filed with HC

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people responsible for recording and publishing the conversation, and take legal action.

He also prayed to the court for directing the media to stop publication of the conversation.

The petitioner said the conversation was published without permission and in violation of article 43 of the constitution, which protects the people's right to privacy of communications.

Citing the Information and Communication Technology Act 2006, the petitioner said those responsible for recording and publishing the conversation have committed criminal offence,

and the highest punishment for such offence is two years' imprisonment.

The hearing of the petition might be held today, he added.

Secretaries to the ministries of information, home affairs, and information and communication technology; representatives of different media houses; and journalists' organisations have been made respondents to the petition.

On October 26, Hasina phoned Khaleda and invited her to the Gono Bhaban, the official residence of the premier, for a dialogue over polls-time government.

Later, the conversation of the two leaders was published and aired by different news media.

Exams, business in tatters

FROM PAGE 1

After holding a meeting at his Minto Road residence with some officials concerned, the minister blasted the opposition for their hartal programme, saying that such a political programme is against education, which he thought is "tantamount to crimes against humanity."

"The hartal will severely affect 20 lakh children, who are all set to take the junior certificate and Dakhil exams," mentioned Nahid. He urged the opposition alliance to withdraw the hartal.

Following widespread criticism from different quarters about hartals coinciding with exams, it was expected that the opposition would keep all the examinations out of the purview of its shutdown.

But yesterday, at the general secretary-level meeting of the 18-party combine at BNP chairperson's Gulshan office, none of the opposition leaders raised the issue, meeting sources said.

At a press conference there after the meeting, BNP acting secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir announced the hartal programme.

Vehicles carrying media personnel, hajjis and emergency service providers will remain out of the purview of the shutdown, he mentioned.

Asked if the JSC and JDC exams will remain out of the purview of the hartal, Fakhrul said, "We've clearly stated about what will remain out of the purview of the shutdown. We'll inform you later if there is any change to it."

The government will have to take the responsibility for any bad consequences arising from obstacles to peaceful observance of the three-day shutdown, he warned.

Delayed announcement by hartal enforcers of keeping exams out of the purview of shutdowns often brings no benefit for the students as it was in the case of O and A-level examinees last week.

The 18-party alliance on October 27 announced that all exams will remain out of the purview of its 60-hour hartal (October 27-29).

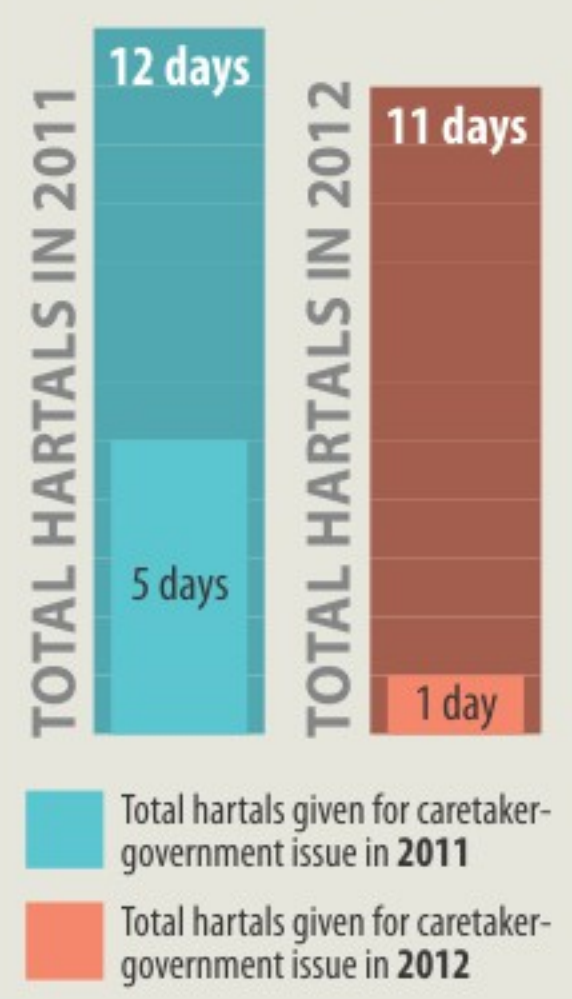
But the authorities, however, had already postponed the O and A-level tests on six subjects scheduled for October 28 in two shifts.

The O and A-level examinees for the October-November session under the CIE Board are also worried if any of their exams coincide with any future hartal in this month as the exams will end on November 29.

Following suggestions by some top alliance leaders, BNP chief Khaleda Zia changed her party's earlier decision to enforce a three-day countrywide blockade from tomorrow. But the main opposition party did not accept the suggestion of its allies to keep the JSC and JDC exams out of the purview of the hartal, said BNP sources.

The last countrywide hartal (October 27-29) claimed 14 lives, raising the number of deaths to 259 so far in 2013 from political violence, according to statistics of The Daily Star.

HARTALS IN 2011 AND 2012



Besides, miscreants attacked 19 newsmen before and during the 60-hour hartal. They also exploded crude bombs in front of at least four media houses in the capital.

KHALEDA AGREES TO TALKS
BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia last night agreed to a secretary general-level dialogue on polls-time government with the ruling Awami League without any precondition, said FBCCI President Kazi Akram Uddin Ahmed.

He was briefing reporters after a meeting with the BNP chief for about three hours at the latter's Gulshan office in the city.

"They [BNP-led 18-party alliance] have proposed a neutral caretaker government, while the government has suggested an all-party polls-time government. Given the situation, we have suggested the BNP chief open a dialogue between the two secretary generals without any precondition, which she [Khaleda] has welcomed," mentioned Akram.

"We've got a positive response from the BNP. Now we will convey this message to the prime minister [Sheikh Hasina] for holding talks to resolve the present political stalemate," he added.

Akram led a 50-member delegation of businessmen to the meeting, which included chiefs of BGMEA, BKMEA, BTMA, DCCI, MCCI, WCCI

and former chiefs of FBCCI, among others.

BNP chairperson's adviser Amir Khashru Mahmud Chowdhury, who was present at the meeting, said his party hoped that the FBCCI initiative would create a favourable atmosphere for opening the dialogue.

Asked if the BNP chief had agreed to unconditional talks, Khashru said the opposition was optimistic that the two sides would discuss the caretaker government issue in any probable dialogue as it is the expectation of 90 percent people.

Requested by business leaders for withdrawing the 60-hour hartal from Monday, Khaleda said she had no alternative to hartal as the government was resorting to wholesale arrests of BNP leaders.

NO HARTAL DURING EXAMS

Eminent educationists and former advisers to caretaker governments yesterday urged BNP leaders not to enforce hartal during the JSC and JDC exams.

In a statement issued under the banner of Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE), they expressed concern over the repeated hartals being enforced by opposition parties during different examinations.

The examinees are passing their days in extreme anxiety due to the prevailing uncertain situation in the country, read the statement.

Among the signatories to the statement are educationists Prof Anisuzzaman, Prof Jamilur Reza Chowdhury, Prof Syed Manzoarul Islam, Prof Nazrul Islam, former advisers to caretaker governments M Hafiz Uddin and Rasheda K Chowdhury, and Shaheen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation.

Dog gets

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London (AUOL). After paying £4,500, the furry "management consultant" actually received his degree.

AUOL is a bogus university which prays on the naivete of people who want to bulk up their resume in preparation for that executive dream-job interview. The so-called educational institution offers distance learning courses that, according to their website, "have been designed to the most exacting standards, in accordance with the most stringent criteria, in order to provide outstanding education at an affordable price."

AUOL then issues corresponding degrees and post-graduate qualifications in business, IT, law, education and liberal arts, humanities and English. Newsnight managed to uncover AUOL's fraudulent money-making business by setting up a fake identity and CV for the lovely hound Pete. Thus, Peter Smith was born, a management consultant from South London with an undergraduate degree from a real UK University.

After e-mailing them his CV and paying £50 – the mandatory application fee, Peter was asked to provide the institution photocopies of his previous qualifications and a photograph of himself. Of course, Pete did not oblige as his resume was made-up and his long dog face could not pass as a real man. Nonetheless, four days later, Pete received a message from AUOL stating that his application for a degree had been processed and that in two weeks he was going to be registered as an MBA graduate. All he had to do was to provide them with £4,500.