

June 29, 2010

Sayedee arrested

July 11, 2011

Charges pressed

Oct 3, 2011

Indictment

Feb 28, 2013

Tribunal verdict

JAILED *until* DEATH

SC commutes war criminal Sayedee's death sentence in majority verdict

ASHUTOSH SARKAR and TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Spared the gallows, Jamaat-e-Islami leader Delawar Hossain Sayedee will now be in prison until his death for crimes against humanity during the Liberation War in 1971.

The Supreme Court yesterday commuted his death sentence handed down by International Crimes Tribunal-1 on February 28 last year on charges of killing, abduction, torture, rape and forced religious conversion.

A five-member bench of the apex court, headed by Chief Justice Md Muzammel Hossain, delivered the verdict based on majority views. In a packed courtroom, the chief justice pronounced the verdict in five minutes.

Of the judges, three gave Sayedee imprisonment until death, one acquitted him of all charges and the other upheld the capital punishment, according to reliable sources at the SC.

The grounds and reasons on which the verdict is based will be known once the full text

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GUILTY ON 5 CHARGES

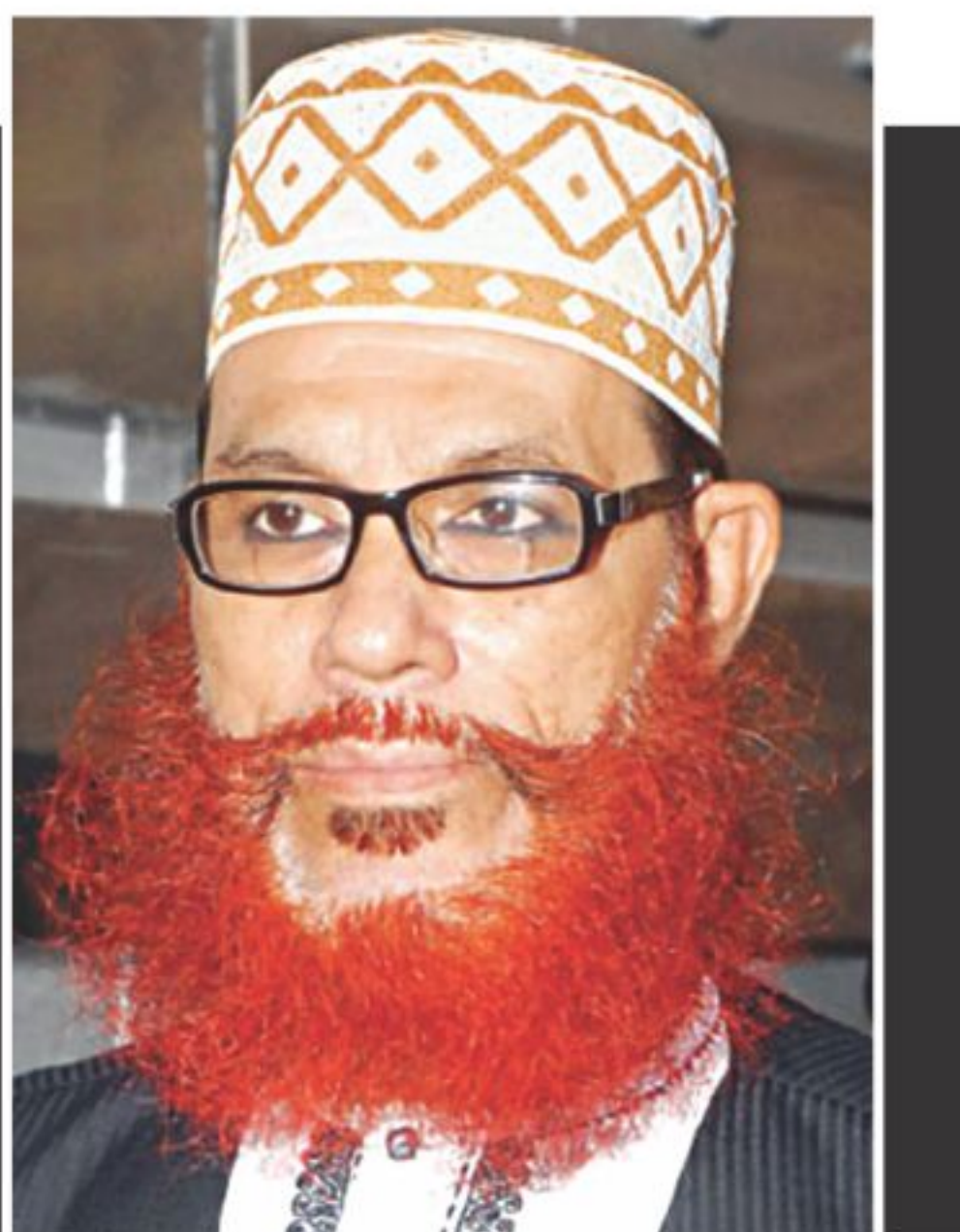
LOOTING, ARSON, TORTURE OF AL LEADER
(10-year rigorous imprisonment)

KILLING OF IBRAHIM, ARSON
(12-year rigorous imprisonment)

KILLING OF BISA BALI, ARSON
(Imprisonment until death)

ABDUCTION, RAPE OF 3 SISTERS
(Imprisonment until death)

FORCING 100-150 HINDUS TO CONVERT TO ISLAM
(Imprisonment until death)



Review or not?

SC yet to clarify; defence to submit plea, govt won't

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The Supreme Court is yet to make it clear whether a convicted war criminal has the right to seek a review of its verdict.

A debate over the issue arose in December last year when the now executed war criminal Abdul Quader Mollah had filed two review petitions against the SC judgment in his case.

The debate has cropped up again, as Delawar Hossain Sayedee, sentenced yesterday to imprisonment till death,

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Both prosecution, defence unhappy

MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN

The Supreme Court judgment on Jamaat-e-Islami leader Delawar Hossain Sayedee left the law minister and the attorney general unhappy. It did not satisfy the defence or the convict's family either.

Law Minister Anisul Huq said he was respectful of all apex court verdicts.

"But as a son of a freedom fighter, I am upset for the [death] sentence has been commuted

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Hartal called for today, Sunday

Jamaat, Shibir men clash with cops in districts

STAR REPORT

Appalled by the Supreme Court verdict against Delwar Hossain Sayedee, the Jamaat-e-Islami yesterday called two 24-hour hartals for today and Sunday demanding immediate release of the convict.

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JS regains power to impeach judges

Constitution's 16th amendment bill passed

SHAKHAWAT LITON and RASHIDUL HASAN

Parliament yesterday unanimously passed the 16th constitutional amendment bill, empowering itself to remove Supreme Court judges for misbehaviour and incapacity, rejecting all calls for soliciting public opinion and bringing some changes to the bill.

The passage was bizarre, though, in that the opposition and the ruling alliance MPs, who themselves had moved the motions for soliciting public view and incorporating some changes, also voted in favour of the bill.

Twenty-two lawmakers belonging to the Jatiya Party, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, Workers Party, Bangladesh Nationalist Front and the independent camp had moved those motions over the past few days. Fifteen of them had also placed motions for including some provisions in the bill.

But yesterday, Raushan Ershad, leader of the opposition, HM Ershad, chief of the main opposition JP, along with some of their party colleagues voted against their own proposals.

The proposals included formation of a judicial appointment commission to formulate guidelines for appointing SC judges and setting up an inquiry commission to investigate allegations against the apex court judges.

"The House must get back the power [to impeach SC judges]. But the bill should not be passed hurriedly. We are requesting the law minister to take back the bill and place it again after soliciting the public opinion," Raushan Ershad had told parliament earlier.

Yesterday, they all defended the bill, contradicting their previous positions.

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Witnesses still not feeling safe

STAR REPORT

"What can I say about the verdict? We had fought a war in 1971 and now we are fighting a second war."

This is how Manik Posari, who once fought for the liberation of his motherland, reacted to the Supreme Court judgment in Delawar Hossain Sayedee's war crimes cases. He spoke to The Daily Star over the phone from a location he did not disclose for security reasons.

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DISAPPOINTING

War crimes trial campaigners were angry and frustrated after the Supreme Court yesterday commuted the death sentence of Delawar Hossain Sayedee. They said the verdict had failed to live up to people's expectations. Tamanna Khan and Wasim Bin Habib spoke to a few of them.


MUNTASSIR MAMOON

"Everyone had anticipated that such a verdict would be delivered," said historian Muntassir Mamoon, adding that he could not give a reason for such apprehension.

"Though it is true that this verdict did not come as a surprise, it has saddened, frustrated and angered people," he said.

"We are accepting this verdict but at the same time we condemn it. This verdict will have an impact like that of 1975 and this government cannot realise it yet," said the vice-president of Ekatturer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee.


NASIRUDDIN YUSUFF

The verdict is unfortunate and unacceptable, said eminent cultural activist and freedom fighter Nasiruddin Yusuff Bachchu.

"Though I respect the court's order, I'm a freedom fighter and my emotions and beliefs are different. There cannot be any equation with the Liberation War.

"We sought the highest punishment for those who committed heinous crimes during the Liberation War in 1971. But we did not get it. We are upset," said Nasiruddin, president of Sammilita Sangskritik Jote.

He blamed the prosecution

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MA HASAN

War crimes researcher Ma Hasan blamed weak investigation and the prosecution for a verdict that did not meet people's expectation.

"We have to show respect to the judgment of the Supreme Court. But people have their own perception about issues and accordingly they expected a certain verdict," he said, adding that the verdict would create anger and sadness.

Hasan believes that the judges of the Appellate Division had tried their best to mete out fair justice, but the investigation of this case was done in a

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14-party accepts verdict

BNP yet to react

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ruling Awami League-led 14-party alliance has accepted the Supreme Court verdict commuting Jamaat leader Delwar Hossain Sayedee's death sentence to jail until death for war crimes, the party leadership said.

"We are accepting it showing respect for the court, and we have no alternative to accepting the judgment," said party spokesperson Mohammad Nasim. "Though people's expectation has not been reflected in the verdict, and we also wanted capital

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KAMARUZZAMAN'S APPEAL AGAINST CONVICTION

Judgment any day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court could deliver its verdict on the appeal filed by condemned war criminal Jamaat-e-Islami leader Muhammad Kamaruzzaman any day.

A four-member bench of the Appellate Division led by Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha yesterday kept the appeal waiting for verdict after hearing arguments on it for 16 days.

Three other judges of the bench are Justice Md Abdul Wahhab Miah, Justice Hasan Foez Siddique and Justice AHM Shamsuddin Choudhury Manik.

On May 9 last year, International Crimes Tribunal-2 had sentenced Kamaruzzaman, one of the key organisers of the infamous Al Badr force, to death for committing crimes against humanity during the country's



Liberation War.

The Jamaat-e-Islami senior assistant secretary general was found guilty of mass killing, murder, abduction, torture, rape, persecution, and abetment of torture in greater Mymensingh district during the Liberation War in 1971.

Kamaruzzaman submitted his appeal to the apex court on June 6 last year challenging the

tribunal judgment, and also seeking acquittal on the charges brought against him.

During the hearing, defence counsel SM Shahjahan told the apex court that the Tribunal-2 had convicted and sentenced Kamaruzzaman on false and baseless documents and evidence, and that he should be acquitted of all charges.

The Tribunal-2 had convicted Kamaruzzaman relying upon hearsay

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