

# Tarique faces arrest order for defaming Bangabandhu

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday issued an arrest warrant for BNP Senior Vice Chairman Tarique Rahman in a sedition case filed for calling Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman "Pakbandhu" (friend of Pakistan).

Taking cognizance of the charges against Tarique, the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka passed the order.

On October 19 last year, advocate Moshir Rahman Malek, president of Bangabandhu Foundation, lodged the lawsuit with the court.

"Sheikh Mujibur Rahman cannot be the Father of the Nation. He returned to the country with a Pakistani passport," said Tarique while addressing a discussion at York Hall in East London on September 29 last year.

Someone who accepts Pakistani passport even after Bangladesh's independence is a citizen of that country according to law, he said, adding, "One day it will have to be explained how a Pakistani citizen became a president or prime minister of Bangladesh."

Tarique, now staying in London, faces over 18 criminal cases. Of the cases, the August 21, 2004 grenade attack and Zia Orphanage Trust graft cases are under trial at different courts.

# Hasina

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existence of IS in Bangladesh, what will be the situation of our country?" she asked, adding, "We don't want a situation in Bangladesh like Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria or Libya."

"International parties are involved with the conspiracy as well. Unfortunately, some of our local people too are linked with it. As a nation we will have to face dire consequences if we don't take care about it," she warned.

She also urged people to remain conscious about the issue.

Hasina said her government is under tremendous pressure to acknowledge that militants of Islamic State exist in Bangladesh.

"But, our observation is clear as we know the elements behind the recent killing of foreigners, bloggers and police personnel," she claimed.

The prime minister said, "many incidents" are taking place across the world and Bangladesh is also not out of that "common phenomenon".

Hasina held the BNP and Jamaat responsible for the recent killings in Bangladesh.

She alleged after failing to dislodge the government through subversive activities, arson, petrol bomb attacks and killings, they have now resorted to secret killings. "They want to create an unstable situation here," she said.

The prime minister said the people who were caught in connection with the killings are mostly members of a particular group. During their student days, they were involved with the politics of Islami Chhatra Shibir and BNP, she alleged.

Hasina lamented that the conspiracy is going against Bangladesh at a time when the country is progressing economically.

She claimed her government has information that a group of people is supplying money and another group is carrying out the killings and subversive incidents.

On the claim of some western countries about the insecurity of their citizens in Bangladesh, the premier said many Bangladeshi people were murdered in the USA over the years.

No one can ask the question to the US president why the US cities became unsafe for them, she pointed out.

Hasina said the government has taken the best possible and adequate security measures all over the country to ensure law and order.

**NO TALKS WITH KHALEDA**  
Ruling out any dialogue with BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, the prime minister said she (Khaleda) missed the opportunity when it came to reach a national consensus before January 5, 2014 elections.

Now Bangladesh is not in a situation or political crisis for what the government needs to sit with a "killer", Hasina said.

Also, the prime minister questioned the intension of Khaleda for the national dialogue, saying Khaleda is carrying out the killings and subversive activities to press home their demand for sitting in the dialogue and declare the national election.

**NETHERLANDS VISIT**  
Hasina said her just-concluded visit to the Netherlands has added a new dimension to the bilateral relations between Dhaka and Amsterdam and further brightened country's image on the world stage, particularly in Europe.

"I believe that the tour has further consolidated and widened the bilateral cooperation between the Netherlands and Bangladesh and made it visible," she said.



Family members of Samiul Alam Rajon on the premises of a Sylhet court that yesterday sentenced to death four people for killing Rajon. Right, relatives of Rakib at a Khulna court building after a verdict sentencing two to death for his killing.



PHOTO: STAR

# Four to die for killing

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the trial proceedings within 17 working days.

"I wanted an example to be set so that the sensational cases ... are disposed of quickly ... because justice delayed is justice denied," he said.

The cruelty of the four accused reminds us of barbarism and Bangladesh cannot go back to the age of barbarism, the judge said, reading out the summary of the 76-page judgment.

"I think capital punishment would suffice to stop the repetition of such occurrences," he said.

Immediately after the verdict, Rajon's mother Lubna Akter told journalists, "I am happy today. But I would get real justice when the killers of my son will be hanged."

The court handed the death penalty to the prime accused Quamrul Islam, Zakir Hossain alias Pavel, Saddique Ahmed alias Boro Moyna and Taz Uddin alias Badal. They were also fined Tk 10,000 each.

Boro Moyna was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment and fined Tk 11,000 on two more charges, in default of which he will have to serve three more months in jail.

Moyna's convictions will run concurrently, the court said.

Noor Ahmed alias Noor Mia, who filmed the brutal incident, was sentenced to life term in prison and fined Tk 10,000, in default of which he will have to serve two more months in jail.

Quamrul's brother Muhiud Alam alias Muhit, Shamim Ahmed and Ali Haider were jailed for seven years' imprisonment and fined Tk 10,000 each, in default of which they will have to spend two more months in prison.

Ayaz Ali and Dulal Ahmed were jailed for one year and fined Tk 1,000 each. If they fail to pay, they will have to serve one more month in jail.

Among the convicts, Pavel and Shamim are on the run.

Firoz Ali, Azmat Ullah and Ruhul Amin alias Ruhel were acquitted as the charges against them could not be proved.

From the morning, a large crowd gathered on the court premises. The judge took seat at 11:15am in a packed courtroom. When police brought the 11 accused to the court in a prison van, the crowd chanted slogans demanding their capital punishment. The accused were produced in the dock at 11:22am amid tight security.

During the delivery of the 71-minute verdict, the judge said the way they had beaten up Rajon by fastening his hands behind him with a pillar

outraged public sentiment globally.

He said he had adjudicated the charges on the basis of confessional statements of the accused, testimonies of witnesses and the video footage.

**MURDER, NOT CULPABLE HOMICIDE**  
About the defence argument that the accused had no intention of killing Rajon and that it was a culpable homicide, the judge said infliction of as many as 64 bruises and swelling injuries to the minor boy's entire body, including those to the forehead and the head, clearly indicated that the accused had the intention of murdering the boy.

**RAJON WAS NOT A THIEF**  
The court also ruled out the allegation that Rajon attempted to steal a rickshaw van.

The judge said Rajon, in all likelihood, was playing with the said rickshaw van so that he was moving it forwards and backwards. He said Rajon was not stealing the van and it was rather the "misconception of the accused Saddique Ahmed alias Moyna Chowkidar."

After the verdict was delivered, Rajon's family members, his father's lawyers, public prosecutors and people of Sylhet in general expressed satisfaction. The crowd on the court premises chanted slogans hailing the verdict.

On the other hand, defence lawyers said they would go to the High Court to challenge the verdict.

Public prosecutor Mishbah Uddin Siraj said, "We're satisfied with the verdict."

**THE KILLING**  
On July 8, Sheikh Md Samiul Alam Rajon was tied to a pole and beaten to death by a group of people in Kumargaon Bus Stand area of Sylhet Sadar allegedly for trying to steal a rickshaw van. He screamed for help, cried for water and begged for his life. But they laughed and jeered at him till the boy went silent forever. One of them even filmed the horrendous incident and shared it on Facebook.

Police filed a murder case accusing Quamrul, his brother Muhit and others with Jalalabad Police Station.

But Quamrul fled to Saudi Arabia immediately after the incident. The Bangladeshi community in Saudi Arabia helped police catch Quamrul on July 13 and he was brought back to the country on October 15.

The trial started on October 1. The court recorded testimonies of 36 prosecution witnesses and cross-examined 11 accused persons.

# Death penalty for 2 killers of Rakib

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Magistrate's Court yesterday said in its verdict, sentencing the prime accused, Omar Sharif, and his accomplice and uncle Mintu Khan to death.

This type of incident must not happen again in the country, and that is why such a verdict has been given, Judge Dilruba Sultana said while announcing the judgment in a packed courtroom around 1:30pm.

The trial proceedings were completed in 11 working days, which is "unprecedented" in the country, said the prosecution.

The court, however, acquitted Sharif's mother Beauty Begum, as the charges against her could not be proved.

The victim's parents and relatives were unhappy with the acquittal of Beauty, and said they wanted all the three to walk the gallows.

They chanted slogans outside the courtroom, demanding capital punishment for Beauty.

"We are happy that Sharif and Mintu were given the death penalty. But it is painful for me to see that the woman, who was present when the barbaric killing was carried out, has been acquitted," said Rakib's father Nur Alam, who works in Satkhira.

The boy's mother, Lucky Begum, said she was shocked that Beauty was not handed down any punishment.

Terming her a "killer", Lucky said, "How could a mother tolerate her son torturing a minor boy merci-

lessly. She didn't even say anything, let alone stopping her son."

"She [Beauty] deserves to hang," said Lucky, who works as a domestic help.

After the verdict, advocate Mominul Islam, coordinator of Bangladesh Manabadhikar Bastabayan Sangstha's Khulna District Unit, told reporters that both sides have the option to file an appeal with the High Court if they wish.

Earlier, the accused were brought to the courtroom amid tight security around 10:00am.

The court sat around 1:00pm, and gave the judgment in the presence of Rakib's parents and relatives as well as many locals.

Rakib's nine-year-old sister Rima, who was at the court, was seen wiping tears from her eyes.

On August 3, Sharif, owner of "Sharif Motors", and his uncle Mintu Khan called Rakib, a former employee of Sharif, to his workshop in Tutpara Kabarkhana of Khulna when the boy went to a nearby store to buy some paint.

The duo stripped the boy, inserted a high-pressure air pump nozzle into his rectum and filled the body with air.

After Rakib became unconscious, Sharif and Mintu took him to a clinic and then to Khulna Medical College Hospital.

As the boy's condition deteriorated, his family decided to bring

him to the capital for better treatment.

They started for Dhaka in an ambulance and stopped at Ad-din Hospital in Baikali, hoping to bring Rakib to the capital by a helicopter as they heard the hospital had the facility. But doctors there declared him dead around 10:30pm.

Rakib's intestines tore apart and lungs burst as air filled the abdomen. He died from multiple organ failure, police said, quoting doctors.

Locals caught Sharif, Mintu and Beauty, and handed them over to the police later that night.

Rakib, a school dropout, worked at Sharif's garage for Tk 50 a day for around two years to support his family. His "fault" was that he left the job at the workshop and joined elsewhere.

Rakib's family said he left the garage about five months ago, as Sharif and Mintu would often beat him. He then started working at another garage, which annoyed Sharif.

The boy's brutal murder triggered a barrage of condemnation and protest on the social media.

On August 4, Rakib's father filed a murder case with Khulna Sadar Police Station against Sharif, Mintu and Beauty.

Investigating officer of the case Sub-Inspector Kazi Mostak Ahmed pressed charges against the three on September 25. They were indicted on October 5.

# Nitish, Lalu decimate BJP

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show in Delhi Assembly polls where Aam Aadmi Party secured 67 of the 70 seats, leaving only three to BJP.

The loss will galvanise opposition parties, embolden rivals in his own party and diminish his standing with foreign leaders amid concern he may not win a second term as prime minister, political analysts said.

The loss in Bihar will also hamper Modi's push to pass economic reforms, because he needs to win most state elections in the next three years to gain full control of parliament.

"The result of Bihar elections will have national impact," said Nitish Kumar and Lalu Prasad in their first press interaction after the resounding victory.

The two leaders spoke of plans for forging a strong national alternative as an "effective opposition" to the BJP.

Chief Minister Nitish Kumar said efforts to polarise the society have been rejected in the "milestone" polls and its results have reflected the mood of the nation that they wanted a strong alternative at the national level.

"A very aggressive campaign was run (by BJP) and attempts were made to create a certain situation. People have rejected it, rejected attempts to polarise and expressed their view. This is a huge mandate and we expect it with all the humility," Nitish Kumar said.

Modi tweeted that he had called to congratulate Kumar over his election triumph.

RJD chief Lalu Prasad said the

Grand Alliance will launch a nationwide stir against the "communal" Modi government. Lalu said he will tour the country to create a people's movement.

Surprising many pollsters, Lalu Prasad's RJD emerged as the single largest party in the state with 80 seats in its kitty.

It was a great comeback for Lalu, whose party had managed only 22 seats in the 2010 assembly election and 4 seats in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections.

Putting all speculations to rest, at least for now, Lalu declared that Nitish Kumar will continue as the chief minister.

It will be the third consecutive term for Nitish Kumar.

# 1,500 held in 2 days

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As many as 164 people were arrested yesterday in Mymensingh, 17 in Chittagong metropolitan areas, 45 in Pirojpur, 43 in Feni, 50 in Satkhira, 22 in Meherpur, 21 in Joypurhat, seven in Chapainawabganj, two each in Bogra and Sherpur and one in Moulvibazar.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal at a programme at the city's Institution of Engineers yesterday said the drive is not meant to arrest Jamaat and BNP men.

He said it is a measure that they undertake at times, on the basis of intelligence reports, to prevent those who have been trying to destabilise the country through bomb blasts and murders.

Mufti Mahmud Khan, director of Rab's legal and media wing, said they have already directed all battalions across the country to strengthen vigilance to maintain law and order and foil any plans of subversive activities.

The arrestees in Mymensingh include Khandaker Masudul Alam, secretary of Jubo Dal district unit, as confirmed by Md Kamrul Islam, officer-in-charge of Kotwali police.

Masud is an accused in eight cases in connection with arms and explosives, arson and police assault, among others, the OCSaid.

The police said other arrestees are also accused in different cases filed with the respective police stations. They were produced before separate Mymensingh courts, which sent them to jail.

Around 300 members of a joint force conducted a special drive on different slum areas under Bakalia Police Station in Chittagong and arrested 17 people.

Additional Commissioner (crime and operation) Debdas Bhattacharya of CMP told The Daily Star that the special drive was started to arrest criminals in the country's present context and with a view to maintaining law and order.

In the last three days, around 50 people were arrested in Motijhorna, Agrabad and Halishahar areas, said the additional commissioner.

Among the 45 people arrested in Pirojpur, six are BNP men and eight Jamaat men, including Md Mofazzel Hossain, secretary of Nadmula union under Bhandaria upazila.

Md Motiar Rahman, organising secretary of Joypurhat district BNP, Lokman Hakim, Jamaat ameer, and Younus Ali, organising secretary of Mohammadabad union of Joypurhat Sadar, are among 21 BNP, Jamaat and Shibir men arrested in Joypurhat.

Jakiganj upazila vice-chairman and upazila Jamaat Secretary Gulam

Rabbani Javed was arrested yesterday during the drive.

Among the 50 people arrested in Satkhira, 37 belong to Jamaat-Shibir, while one is a BNP activist. The arrestees include Nayeab-e-Ameer of Kalaroa upazila unit Jamaat Abdul Matin Khan, Jamaat activist and No 6 Ward councillor of Satkhira municipality Shahidul Islam, and Jhaodanga union Jamaat president and Jamaat Rakan Anwarul Islam.

Those arrested in Feni include district Jamaat Assistant Secretary Mahmudul Hasan, Finance Secretary Shafiqul Islam and Assistant Finance Secretary Maksudur Rahman.

Rab Director General Benazir Ahmed has meanwhile said law-enforcement and intelligence agencies have been put on alert so that banned Islamist outfit Jama'atul Mujahidin Bangladesh (JMB) cannot regroup again in the northern districts.

Identified JMB men who are on bail are under intelligence watch, the DG said after holding a special law-enforcement meeting along with police, Rab, BCB and intelligence forces at the office of the superintendent of police in Pabna yesterday.

(Our district correspondents concerned have contributed to this report)

# Hail, people!

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from time to time, demanding justice for the barbaric murder.

And yesterday, hundreds of people gathered on the premises of Sylhet Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court to hear the verdict in this chilling case of murder that shook the nation to its core.

They were chanting slogans demanding capital punishment for the killers. When the prison van carrying 11 accused entered the court premises, they even threw sand at them, in a gesture of hatred for what the culprits had done.

Akhter-uz-Zaman had come to the court from Nipaban area in Sylhet city to hear the verdict.

"I have seen the video footage. I've come here to see whether they [the culprits] are men or beasts," he said.

Ripon Mia, a neighbour of Rajon, was more aggressive. "The killers should be hanged immediately. They don't deserve to live even a single more day."

Rajon's grandmother Anwara Begum was there as well.

"He [Rajon] was born at my house and brought up at my house ... In fact, it was I who named him Rajon.

Bus Stand area of Sylhet Sadar allegedly for trying to steal a rickshaw van.

After the killing, the culprits were taking his body on a microbus to dump it in a secluded place but some locals spotted them and managed to catch one from the group.

A sub-inspector of Jalalabad Police Station was withdrawn allegedly for taking bribe and helping Quamrul Islam flee to Saudi Arabia after the killing.

Alamgir Hossain, the then officer-in-charge, and Zakir Hossain, a sub-inspector of the same police station, were also suspended for negligence in arresting the killers, illicit financial transaction and misconduct with Rajon's father.

People brought out a procession hailing the verdict.

"We are happy with the verdict. Now we want quick execution of the judgment," said rickshaw-puller Delwar Hossain.

Also yesterday, a Khulna court sentenced two people to death for the barbaric killing of another teenage boy named Rakib on August 3.

Child Rights Advocacy Coalition in Bangladesh -- a platform of 10 non-government, international and civil society organisations working to ensure child rights -- lauded the government, law enforcers and the judiciary for the quick trials.

Wasim Bin Habib contributed to this report.