

HRW wants new trial for Mir Quasem

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Human Rights Watch (HRW) has urged the Bangladesh authorities to set aside the death penalty against Jamaat leader Mir Quasem Ali and order a new trial that it says would meet international fair trial standards.

"Convictions can only be upheld when there is proof beyond a reasonable doubt, yet in this case there are grave doubts about the evidence after the court so strongly criticised the prosecution," Brad Adams, Asia director at the HRW, said in a press release yesterday.

In death penalty cases, the authorities must adhere to the highest standards.

"Human Rights Watch has long supported justice and accountability for the horrific crimes committed during Bangladesh's 1971 war. But this must be done through trials which meet international standards, particularly since the death penalty is at stake," he said.

"Bangladesh owes the victims of 1971 a fair and proper accountability process."

Mir Quasem Ali was convicted and sentenced to death in November 2014, by the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) on charges of abduction, torture, and confinement as crimes against humanity during the Liberation War in 1971, said the release.

On March 8 this year, the Appellate Division of the Bangladesh Supreme Court set aside three of the abduction and torture convictions.

However, it upheld the conviction and death penalty sentence against Mir Quasem for the murder of Jashim Uddin during the war, it added.

The HRW reiterated its call for Bangladesh to impose an immediate moratorium on the death penalty and join the growing number of states that have abolished the use of capital punishment.

BNP won't quit

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Another BNP leader Abdullah Al Noman said the party's grassroots were asked not to leave the election field so that people could understand what the real face of the ruling party and the EC was.

Speaking at a programme, BNP leader Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said Tuesday's UP polls raised questions whether there was any government in the country.

Expressing satisfaction over the polls, AL Joint General Secretary Mahabubul Alam Hanif, meanwhile, said, "The elections [on Tuesday] were less violent than any other local government election in the past. There were some silly incidents during the elections.

"We got our expected results," Hanif, however, added that the government would try to contain incidents of violence in the next polls.

There are different views within the AL. Some leaders think Tuesday's violence stained the government's image and that it would have been better, had the AL concentrated more on security issues, rather than the results.

Talking to The Daily Star, Jatiya Party Co-chairman GM Quader said, "We want to see what steps the Election Commission and the government take to hold free and fair polls in the upcoming phases.

"Our future political measures will depend on it."

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) President Mujahidul Islam Selim said the elections were farcical.

"It was a mockery of an election, through which a ground was created to destroy the country," he said talking about his party's observation about the polls.

Workers Party, a component of the AL-led alliance, strongly condemned the widespread irregularities in the polls.

Party General Secretary Fazley Hossain Badsha said the elections saw gross violations of electoral codes of conduct.

Gonatantrik Party presidium member Nurur Rahman Selim said the government, EC and law enforcement agencies would have to take the responsibility for the polls violence.

He also urged them to be on the alert for such incidents in future.

Socialist Party of Bangladesh (Marxist) General Secretary Mubiniul Haider Chowdhury in a statement said the violence once again proved that no fair election was possible under the incumbent government.

Biplobi Workers Party General Secretary Saiful Haque in another statement said Tuesday's election results were declared on the instructions of the AL, causing people to lose confidence in the electoral system.

Desperation for win led

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but the situation was the worst at the Safa Degree College centre where the shooting took place. Voting was temporarily suspended after the AL men had stormed the centre and stuffed ballot boxes several times, they said.

Two other centres -- Gudighata Sorojani Adarsha Secondary School and Uttar Patakata Government Primary School-- also witnessed irregularities. Law enforcers fired shots in the air at the Uttar Patakata centre due to clashes. Eventually polling was suspended there in the afternoon.

Dhanisafa UP has 18,198 voters. After the primary counting, independent candidate Rafiqul Islam got 4,173 votes while AL's Harun bagged 4,045 votes. The centre where the voting was suspended has 1,554 votes.

The Safa college centre was the last one to announce the results. Due to deterioration of the situation, an executive magistrate along with BGB personnel was present at the time of announcement of the results around 8:30pm.

There were around 2,600 voters under the centre and 1,580 votes were cast. Harun got 438 votes and Rafiqul 322.

The presiding officer then declared void around 700 ballots, all of which reportedly had stamps on the AL's 'boat' symbol, saying the ballots did not have his signature on them, said locals present at that time.

Hearing the news, Mirjarul -- who had been around the centre since the afternoon -- rushed to the centre with more than 3,000 people, many armed with sticks and sharp weapons, and besieged the magistrate, the presiding officer and the BGB men from all sides of the college.

Many of them were activists of the pro-AL Chhatra League and Jubo League.

The magistrate and the polling officials were preparing to leave for the office of the Upazila Nirbahi Officer with election results, but Mirjarul and his men tried to force them to declare the void ballots valid.

"The situation turned dangerous at that time," said a witness.

"The officials repeatedly requested Mirjarul to let them go, saying they had no authority to do so," said another villager.

"But Mirjarul did not relent. Rather, he even hurled abusive words at the magistrate," he said.

At one stage, the magistrate ordered the BGB men to fire shots in the air. "But Mirjarul's men still did not let them go," said a local, who went there out of curiosity.

Two of his men, armed with sharp weapons, vandalised some light bulbs of the building. "When more people were about to join them, the magistrate ordered the BGB [men] to open fire," he said.

"Had the magistrate waited a few more minutes, there would have been serious trouble," said the man, who is a grocer.

Three people died on the spot and two more on way to a local hospital.

"No incident of firing would have

taken place if Mirjarul had not gone there with his men," said another local.

The district administration has formed a three-member committee to investigate the incident, reports UNB.

Contacted, Mirjarul denied his involvement in the incident.

"I was around 200 metres away from the polling centre at the time of the incident. I came to the spot after hearing that over 700 votes for 'boat' symbol were not included in the result sheets," he told The Daily Star.

Mirjarul claimed that the law enforcers opened fire "without any provocation".

He also alleged the executive magistrate worked in favour of independent candidate Rafiqul Islam, whose cousin is an additional secretary.

Rafiqul Islam, however, said though his cousin was in the village to attend a Qulqhwani, he had not done anything to influence the polling.

"Mirjarul and the Awami League candidate gathered people from other unions to rig the voting. They stuffed ballot boxes during the polling.

"The 700 illegal votes are the proof of those irregularities.

"Two of the deceased -- Kamrul and Shahadat -- hailed from another upazila and this shows that they were hired," Rafiqul added.

Saif M Sohel Laskar, organising secretary of Mathbari upazila Jubo League, admitted that the ruling party men indeed were creating pressure on the magistrate and the presiding officer to declare the void ballots valid.

"But the BGB men should not have opened fire like that," he told The Daily Star.

Our Pirojpur correspondent visited the UP yesterday and found a nery situation prevailing there.

Cries and sighs of the family members filled the houses of the deceased.

Manju Begum, mother of deceased Sohel, said, "I demand punishment to those who killed my son."

Shela ban

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of environment and biodiversity of the Sundarbans.

He said the original channel of the Buriganga river would be detected to decide on its boundaries.

After the recovery of the grabbed portions of the river, a project like Hatirjheel would be implemented with a view to increasing its riverside beauty.

He also said the government had taken short-, mid- and long-term plans to make the four rivers -- Buriganga, Shitalakhya, Balu and Turag -- surrounding the capital pollution free.

Bangladesh Navy would prepare a concept paper to implement the three plans, said the minister.

Some 4,063 pillars, out of some 6,883 pillars, had been set up on different points of the Buriganga river, while some 5,041 pillars would be installed in Narayanganj, he said.

Mobile courts would also work along the riversides to check the incidents of pillar uprooting, he

Missing IT

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deputy director general of the Bangladesh Television, told The Daily Star.

Neither the family nor the police could say where Tanveer had been since he was allegedly picked up by some plainclothes men from Dhaka Cantonment area in the early hours of March 17.

Contacted, Maruf Hossain Sorder, deputy commissioner (media) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), said Tanveer was found wandering around the Airport Railway Station around 12:30am yesterday.

Later, a team of detectives escorted him to his house, said the DMP official.

Asked if he quizzed Tanveer about his disappearance, Maruf replied in the negative, saying there was no complaint lodged in this connection.

Mahbubul said they did not ask Tanveer about his disappearance as they were relieved to see him back home. "We are hugely relieved. I want to thank the media for its support in finding him."

"He is distressed. His mental condition is not well and we cannot say whether he is physically ill unless a doctor examines him," Mahbubul added.

The family also refused to let the media see or talk to him, saying he has been resting at a "safe place" and that their only concern is to see him recovering soon.

Tanveer went missing a few days after he had talked to the media about the \$101 million cyber heist of Bangladesh Bank reserve. He had then identified himself as an official of the ICT division.

However, the ICT division on March 14 issued a statement, saying Tanveer had no affiliation with it.

An official of non-governmental organisation Insight Bangladesh Foundation, Tanveer worked with the ICT division of the Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology, said his family members.

The NGO had a project with the ICT division but its contract expired recently, they added.

The 32-year-old man was allegedly picked up from Dhaka Cantonment area by plainclothes men while he was returning to his house with his friend Yamir Ahmed by a CNG auto-rickshaw around 1:00am on March 17.

Talking to reporters later the same day, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal said Tanveer might have been picked up for the sake of the investigation in connection with the probe into the BB reserve heist.

Tanveer's family went to three police stations to file a general diary but law enforcers refused to accept it.

Conduct thorough probe

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Philippines and one to the account of a non-governmental organisation in Sri Lanka.

The Fed didn't carry out the remaining 30 transfer orders, involving a total of \$850 million, and instead sought reconfirmation from the BB.

The \$20 million transfer to the Sri Lanka account was halted when a correspondent bank questioned a misspelling in the transfer instructions.

However, four transfers, totalling \$81 million, to private accounts in the Philippines were successfully executed, and the criminals appear to have laundered the money through local Philippine casinos.

Maloney questioned why the New York Fed blocked 30 of the 35 fraudulent transfer orders, but not the first five transfer orders.

She also inquired why the Fed didn't wait till it received reconfirmation from the BB before executing the first five orders, as the Fed had already requested reconfirmation from the BB for all 35 transfer orders.

"Is it appropriate to rely solely on authentication from SWIFT for outgoing payments from the accounts of foreign central banks? Are additional authentication protocols necessary to prevent this kind of cyber theft in the future?" she asked.

"Why did the New York Fed block the last 30 transfer orders, but not the first five orders? What was it about the last 30 transfer orders that raised the New York Fed's suspicions?"

Maloney requested a confidential briefing from the Fed staff to get answers to the lingering questions.

The New York Fed provides banking services to approximately 250 foreign central banks and other official institutions.

Foreign central banks open accounts with the New York Fed to accommodate international monetary transactions, settle their US dollar obligations, and hold their foreign reserves.

Through these accounts, the Fed provides foreign central banks with payments services that allow them to send and receive US dollars through the Fedwire Funds Service.

According to the Fed, for outgoing payments, foreign official account holders send it payment instructions by authenticated SWIFT, and it executes payments through Fedwire.

In the case of the transfers from the BB account, the New York Fed stated that the payment instructions in question were fully authenticated by the SWIFT messaging system in accordance with standard authentication protocols.

Quoting press reports, the US politician said the New York Fed requested reconfirmation from the BB of all 35 transfer orders, but executed the first five transfer orders without receiving any reconfirmation.

"Why did the New York Fed request reconfirmation from Bangladesh Bank, but not wait until it received reconfirmation before executing the first five transfer orders?"

"What is the New York Fed's policy regarding reconfirmations of large transfers from the accounts of foreign central banks, and was that policy followed in this case?"

"Why did the New York Fed not question the apparent misspelling in the \$20 million transfer order to the Sri

Lankan account, as a correspondent bank did?"

In order to better understand these important issues, "I respectfully request a confidential briefing from the appropriate staff at the New York Fed", she said.

This incident highlights a number of issues that warrant careful attention, she added.

The BB has said it was denied prompt responses from the intermediary banks and due diligence from the New York Fed, and suggested there was a major lapse on the part of the Fed.

Besides, three New York-based intermediary banks -- Citibank, Bank of New York Mellon and Wells Fargo -- were sluggish in their responses to the central bank's desperate pleas to stop the fund transfers, according to central bank document.

The BB also plans to seek legal advice from lawyers in New York to ascertain the Fed's liabilities in the theft and establish grounds for claiming compensation.

No headway

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in the areas adjacent to the crime scene at Garijpara in Kurigram town, but refused to disclose their identities for the sake of investigation.

Police were interrogating them in connection with the killing, Tabarak Ullah, superintendent of police in Kurigram, said yesterday.

The police official said they were investigating the killing of the 68-year-old freedom fighter, who converted to Christianity in 1999, keeping a few things in their mind.

"We are not clear [about the reasons behind the killing] yet. It is too early to focus on one particular reason," the SP told The Daily Star over the phone.

Meanwhile, global terror outfit Islamic State (IS) on Tuesday claimed responsibility for the killing, says US-based SITE Intelligence Group that monitors terrorist activities.

However, The Daily Star could not independently verify the claim.

SP Tabarak claimed there was no presence of IS in Bangladesh and said a vested quarter might have uploaded such post to tarnish the country's image.

Unidentified assailants slit the throat of Hossain, a former inspector of Family Planning Department in Kurigram, while he was returning home at Garijpara from his routine morning walk on Tuesday.

Three men riding a motorcycle intercepted Hossain. Two of them got down from the bike and attacked him with sharp weapons, leaving him dead on the spot, said locals.

Hossain's son Ruhul Amin Azad filed a murder case with Kurigram Sadar Police Station yesterday, accusing some unknown people, according to the SP.

Meanwhile, Kurigram unit of Bangladesh Muktijoddha Sangsad formed a human chain on the Central Shaheed Minar premises yesterday, demanding immediate arrest and exemplary punishment to the killers.

Sirajul Islam Tuku, commander of the unit, said they would announce a tough agitation programme if the law enforcers failed to arrest the culprits within seven days.

Our Kurigram correspondent contributed to this report.

Power for bandwidth

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she pressed a button providing the bandwidth from Cox's Bazar to Tripura's capital Agartala.

Hasina spoke from the Gono Bhaban and Modi from his office in New Delhi.

Bangladesh is already importing 500MW electricity from India since 2009. Construction of a sub-station for bringing another 500MW is underway. In addition, India and Bangladesh have entered a deal for commissioning of the 1,320MW Rampal power project near the Sundarbans.

Diplomatic sources in Dhaka and New Delhi said the launching of yesterday's power supply was a goodwill gesture from India and was a return for allowing for free the transport of cargo through Bangladesh during the construction of the Palatana power plant in 2011.

The deal for the internet bandwidth was inked in June last year during Modi's Bangladesh visit.

Bangladesh will pay Tk 6.51 per kilowatt-hour of electricity under a no-electricity no-pay agreement. At present, Dhaka is buying the 500MW powers from India's public and private sources at Tk 4.5 a unit on an average.

The average retail price of electricity in Bangladesh is Tk 6.33 a unit.

For the 10GBps internet bandwidth, Bangladesh will earn \$1.2 million a year. In the next six months, the speed will increase fourfold, and so will the earnings, sources said.

Although the two premiers officially opened the internet connection yesterday, India started getting the bandwidth from February 8.

"Bangladesh will observe its National Day [Independence Day] on March 26 and I pay my respect to the memory of the Father of the Nation of Bangladesh. The era of good relations between the two countries began during the time of Bangabandhu which still continues," Modi said.

The eight northeastern states of India would be immensely benefited by the opening of the third International Internet gateway, he said, adding that Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Bhutan made considerable development in road links.

"Now, India and Bangladesh are connected via water, surface communications and air. We want to be connected with Bangladesh through space also," he said, adding that India sincerely wished to work with Bangladesh in launching the Bangabandhu Satellite, which the government plans to put in orbit in December next year.

"It's not only physical connectivity that we want to

achieve, rather connectivity of all types -- virtual connectivity, connectivity of minds, knowledge, ideas and peoples," Hasina said.

"Today is yet another important and happy occasion in Bangladesh-India relations with the setting of another milestone. The import of electricity will assist us in fulfilling our energy demand.

"On the other hand, sharing of our bandwidth will enhance digital connectivity of Tripura and India's northeast [region] and facilitate their socio-economic development and greater integration. So, this is a fine display of mutuality of our relationship," she said.

Hasina noted getting electricity from Tripura was the fulfilment of another political commitment.

"It has its genesis during my visit to Tripura in January 2012 ... The chief minister of Tripura must be very happy today as we all are," she said and thanked Modi for making this happen.

Putting emphasis on joint initiatives by the countries of this region to build a "poverty-free society," Hasina said, "I believe that we could improve the living standard of the people of the two countries who are living under the poverty line through joint efforts."

Modi extended greetings to Hasina and the people of Bangladesh on the occasion of the "Holi Utsav" -- a Hindu religious festival celebrated yesterday.

"The festival will colour the India-Bangladesh relations with new paint," he said.

For the most part, the two PMs spoke in their mother tongues. But Hasina turned to Hindi to greet the Indian people on the occasion of the Holi Utsav. Likewise, Modi spoke in Bangla while congratulating Hasina and the people of Bangladesh on the occasion of the 96th birth anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the upcoming Independence Day of Bangladesh.

"Bangabandhu's relationship with India remained intact and you always considered India as a partner during the bad time ... you also expressed gratitude to India and showed similar attitude today," he said.

Earlier, Bangladesh Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali spoke from the Gono Bhaban and Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj from Modi's office. Tripura Chief Minister Manik Sarkar joined the talks from Agartala.

Indian High Commissioner in Dhaka Harsh Vardhan Shringla and senior officials of the ministries concerned were present at the Gano Bhaban, among others.

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Ref. No. 36.01.014.05.25.0123.2012-2 Dated: 22.03.2016

Corrigendum-2 Notice for Invitation of Expression of Interest (EOI)

This is to notify that the Ref. No. 36.091.014.05.25.0123.2012, Date: 14/01/2016 is hereby amended as follows due to unavoidable circumstances.

Page No. & Para	As per corrigendum EOI of 01.03.2016	As per Corrigendum-2 EOI
Page-2 (Para-A)	---- shall be submitted together with other documents or on before 12 noon Bangladesh Standard Time, date 31/03/2016 to BCIC in the following address:	--- shall be submitted together with other documents or on before 12 noon Bangladesh Standard Time, date 18/04/2016 to BCIC in the following address:
Page-2 (Para-1.6)	The Request for Proposal (RFP) is expected to be issued to the short listed bidders by 31/05/2016	The Request for Proposal (RFP) is expected to be issued to the short listed bidders by 16/06/2016.
Page-4 (Para-D)	---- not later than 12 noon on 31/03/2016, Bangladesh time.	---- not later than 12 noon on 18/04/2016, Bangladesh time.
Page-6 (Para-1.5)	The deadline for submission of the prequalification proposal is: on or before, 12 noon Bangladesh time, Date: 31/03/2016.	The deadline for submission of the prequalification proposal is: on or before, 12 noon Bangladesh time, Date: 18/04/2016.
Page-8 (Para 2.1)	The General Contractor shall propose one combination of Process Licensors (one from each three categories) and shall be evaluated based on their experiences and capabilities.	The General Contractor shall propose one combination of Process Licensors (one from each four categories) and shall be evaluated based on their experiences and capabilities.

All other terms & conditions will remain unchanged and this Corrigendum-2 Notice will also be an integral part of the EOI.
The Revised EOI issued on 01.03.2016 revised as per above Corrigendum-2 and the EOI document now titled "EOI Revised Version 2".
All purchasers of EOI has been provided with electronic and hard copy of the EOI document accordingly.

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