

Triple car bomb

FROM PAGE 16

Abu Muntadhar echoed his anger. "The state is responsible for the bombings that hit civilians," the local resident said. The politicians "should all get out".

Shiite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, who spearheaded a protest movement demanding a cabinet reshuffle and other reforms, has a huge following in the working-class neighbourhood of Sadr City, which was named after his father.

Another suicide car bomb attack killed at least 17 people at the entrance to the northwestern neighbourhood of Kadhimiya, which is home to an important Shiite shrine. Access to the neighbourhood, which has also been repeatedly targeted over the years, is heavily controlled.

Several members of the security forces were among the victims, hospital sources said.

In the Jamea district of western Baghdad, another car bomb went off in the afternoon, killing at least 13 people, an interior ministry official and medics told AFP.

A total of around 150 people were wounded in the three bombings.

IS issued an online statement claiming responsibility for all three attacks. It said they were carried out by suicide bombers, giving their noms de guerre.

Jamaat against

FROM PAGE 16

episode" in Bangladesh's political history.

Like Nizami, other Jamaat leaders - Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed, Abdul Quader Mollah and Kamaruzzaman -- who were convicted and executed for their war crimes had enjoyed the same legal opportunities to defend themselves.

But they failed to even cast doubt over them being guilty.

During the trials, Jamaat leaders and other accused were given the right to appeal against the tribunal verdict by the amendment of the law -- the International Criminal (Special Tribunal) Act, 1973.

The original law under which they were tried did not have the provision for a convict to file an appeal with the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court.

In addition, the apex court through accepting a review petition filed by Jamaat leader Quader Mollah created the precedence which allowed other war crimes convicts to file such petitions against the court's own judgments on appeals.

But nothing could satisfy Jamaat.

It has already enforced at least 42 days of countrywide hartals since 2013 to denounce the verdicts delivered by courts and against Jamaat leaders' executions.

The hartal came in the same pattern. Whenever a tribunal delivered a verdict convicting any of its leaders, it enforced hartals.

Later, the party leader challenged the tribunal verdicts by filing appeals with the Appellate Division. When the apex court upheld the tribunal verdicts with some slight changes in a number of cases, Jamaat again called hartals.

After the conviction of Jamaat leader Delwar Hossain Sayedee, Jamaat-Shibir men waged violent street agitations and clashed with law enforcers in February 2013. At least 33 people, including four policemen, were dead the day the verdict was delivered.

The death toll rose further in the following days as Jamaat-Shibir men continued violent demonstrations and engaged in clashes with law enforcers.

What message Jamaat has been giving us by enforcing repeated hartals and indulging in violent protests?

If one is dissatisfied with a court's verdict, he can express his dissatisfaction. But the expression must be acceptable and rational and according to the law.

Enforcement of hartals is a clear manifestation of non-acceptance of the court's verdict whether it was delivered by the tribunal or the apex court exercising the judicial powers of the state.

The implication of non-acceptance of the legal system, in view of jurist Shahdeen Malik, is non-acceptance of the state.

Then can we not say that Jamaat has been denying the existence of independent Bangladesh by enforcing hartals to denounce the country's judicial power?

This reminds us of Jamaat's role in 1971 when the party not only opposed the Liberation War, its leaders and followers had taken up arms to prevent the birth of Bangladesh.

For the crimes the party had committed in 1971, it was banned in independent Bangladesh. But the political changeover in 1975 paved the way for its revival. It formally resumed its activities in 1979.

Since then it has been in politics. But it never apologised for its wrongdoings. It also did not have to face trial. Two of its leaders, Nizami and Mojaheed, even became ministers in 2001, thanks to our polluted political culture.

Do these raise a crucial question: Do Jamaat and its leaders want to be above the law?

SC verdict any day

FROM PAGE 16

A five-member Appellate Division bench of the SC, headed by Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha, heard the appeals for the final day yesterday.

Senior counsel Nozrul Islam Chowdhury argued for the plaintiffs. He was assisted by AM Aminuddin, ASM Abdul Mobin and Sarwar Ahmed. Khandker Mahbub Hossain and SM Shahjahan appeared for the accused, while Attorney General Mahbub Alam and Deputy Attorney General Khondker Diliruzzaman represented the government.

During yesterday's hearing, Nozrul told the SC citing the autopsy report that apart from various scars, 23 injury marks were found in Shazneen's body.

The size and the nature of the injury marks make it clear that Shazneen was attacked with two weapons. According to the seizure list, two weapons were used -- a white steel knife with black butt and an iron *batali* (a tool to make furniture) with wooden handle.

Through their testimonies, the witnesses have given proof of the recovery of the two weapons before the trial court, Nozrul said.

He argued that the use of two weapons and the 23 injury marks and scars proved the involvement of multiple accused in the incident of rape and killing.

The security light of Shazneen's house was switched off on the day of the incident. Accused Badal was responsible for the security light, he added.

Syed Sajjad Mainuddin Hasan, a contractor for renovating Shazneen's house, had engaged Badal for the renovation work, and Badal kept the security light switched off at the instructions of Hasan, the counsel said.

The fact of keeping the security light switched off has been proved before the trial court through the statements of 13th witness Moslem Hawlader, eighth witness Anisuzzaman Khan and 10th witness Ahmed Shafi Chowdhury.

The lawyer said accused Hasan had engaged accused Parvin as a maid of the house before the incident in presence of Shazneen's father Latifur Rahman.

Hasan had also appointed another accused Humayun (now dead) for renovation of the house, he said, adding that accused Estema Khatun Minu and Parvin are sisters.

It is therefore proved beyond doubt from the statements of witnesses, autopsy report, seizer list and circumstantial evidence that Shazneen was raped and then killed as part of a criminal conspiracy and at the instigation of Hasan, with indirect associations of other accused.

The six who were given the death penalty by the trial court are: contractor Hasan and his assistance Badal, domestic help Shahidul Islam Shahid, housemaids Estema and Parvin and carpenter Shaniram Mandal.

Eighteen years after the murder, a three-member bench of the Appellate Division, headed by the chief justice, started hearing the appeals of the four convicts together on March 29. Two other members of the bench were Justice Hasan Foz Siddique and Justice Mirza Hussain Haider.

On April 5, the chief justice reconstituted the bench, including Justice Nazmun Ara Sultana and Justice Md Imman Ali in it to make it a five-member bench. Yesterday, the bench kept the verdict waiting.

WAIT FOR JUSTICE FOR 18 YEARS
According to the case documents, Shazneen was brutally murdered at her

house in the capital's Gulshan area on April 23, 1998.

The following day, her father Latifur Rahman filed a murder case with Gulshan Police Station under section 302 of the Penal Code. On September 4 the same year, the CID filed a case under Women and Children Repression [Prevention] Act for rape and murder.

After investigations, police submitted a charge sheet in the first case to the Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court-1 in Dhaka and another charge sheet in the second case to the Special Tribunal for Prevention of Women and Children Repression.

The courts framed charges in both the cases.

The accused challenged the indictment orders in both the cases before the High Court.

On July 6, 1999, the HC bench of Justice Mohammad Abdul Karim and Justice ABM Khairul Haque (who later became chief justice) ruled that the murder case against the accused pending with the Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court would be stayed because the Special Tribunal for Prevention of Women and Children Repression had already indicted the accused for killing.

The bench also gave the go-ahead to continue the case at the tribunal for murder and rape. In its verdict, the HC bench said rape and murder were two distinct and separate offences. It may be mentioned that the autopsy report of Shazneen clearly stated that she was raped before murder.

The accused challenged the HC verdict before the Appellate Division.

On November 11, 1999, a four-member Appellate Division bench, comprising the then Chief Justice Mustafa Kamal, Justice Latifur Rahman (who later became CJ), Justice AM Mahmudur Rahman and Justice Mahmudul Amin Chowdhury (who later became CJ), rejected their appeal.

In its verdict, the SC said the HC rightly stayed all further proceedings of the case at the sessions judge's court and gave the go-ahead to proceed with the case at the tribunal.

It is such a case where murder was committed not during rape. "It is a clear case of rape and then murder. These are two distinct and separate offences. So the question of double jeopardy does not arise."

After getting the SC's approval, the tribunal went on with proceedings in the case.

After five years of court proceedings, Judge Kazi Rahmat Ullah of the Special Tribunal for Prevention of Women and Children Repression in Dhaka gave the verdict in the case on September 2, 2003.

The convicts then appealed to the HC against the tribunal verdict.

On July 10, 2006, the HC confirmed the death penalty of Hasan, Shahid, Badal, Minu and Parvin. It, however, acquitted Shaniram Mandal.

Later, four of the five accused -- Hasan, Badal, Minu and Parvin -- filed separate leave-to-appeal petitions, seeking permission for filing regular appeals against the HC verdict.

On April 26, 2009, the Appellate Division accepted their leave-to-appeal prayers.

Later, the four lodged appeals with the SC. Shahid also filed an appeal with the apex court through the jail authorities. Hearing of appeals ended yesterday.

Minority repression

FROM PAGE 1

high-ups to take measures to stop repression of religious minorities.

Sources also said the Indian foreign secretary would convey his government's message that it would stand by Bangladesh in the face of any attempts by terrorists and religious extremists to create instability.

The Indian diplomat will hold a meeting with his Bangladeshi counterpart Md Shahidul Haq this noon, said diplomatic sources.

Talking to this newspaper on condition of anonymity, a leader of Bangladesh Hindu-Bouddha-Christian Oikya Parishad yesterday said they had a meeting with the Indian high commissioner in Dhaka a few days ago.

During the meeting, the minority community leaders informed the Indian envoy about the repression on religious minorities.

"I believe he [high commissioner] would brief his foreign secretary about the situation the religious minorities in Bangladesh are faced with," the leader added.

Another leader of the Oikya Parishad hoped that Jaishankar would raise the issue before the government high-ups prominently.

On April 22, the rights body at a press conference in the city claimed that 10 religious minority people were killed, 366 injured and eight women were raped across the country in the first three months of this year.

In most of the cases, the perpetrators used political power and influence to oppress the religious minorities, said a report titled "Human Rights Situation of Minorities in Bangladesh-Jan-March 2016", which was launched at the press conference.

On March 5, the Oikya Parishad at another press conference claimed that around 24 religious minorities were killed and 1,562 families were affected

in 262 incidents of attack and repression last year.

Meanwhile, Indian Assam-based Bengali daily Dainik Jugasankha in a report on Tuesday said Jaishankar would convey a message to the Bangladesh government about the Indian government's concern over the recent minority repression in Bangladesh.

Besides, the Times of India in a report yesterday said the Indian foreign secretary would lay the ground for the joint consultative commission meeting in Bangladesh which is likely to be attended by Indian Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj in July.

There will be some discussions on starting bus and train services between Khulna and Kolkata, read the report.

Bangladesh, India

FROM PAGE 16

Hasina also expressed satisfaction over the progress in fulfilling the pledges made during the visit of Narendra Modi.

"The bilateral ties between the two neighbouring countries reached a new height following the visit of Narendra Modi...we're in fact enjoying the best of relations," she said.

Referring to the ratification of the Land Boundary Agreement (LBA) by Indian parliament, Hasina thanked the Indian government, particularly members of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, for passing the bill unanimously.

"It has set an example for others," she said.

Bangladesh High Commissioner to India Syed Moazzem Ali, PM's Principal Secretary Abul Kalam Azad, Foreign Secretary M Shahidul Haque and Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Harsha Bardhan Shringla and Deputy High Commissioner Adarsh Swaika were present on the occasion.

HSC exams

FROM PAGE 16

including killing of intellectuals and mass murders in Pabna during the Liberation War in 1971.

Jamaat called the hartal for what it said "protesting the state-sponsored killing of its leader".

Meanwhile, the 73-year-old Jamaat chief was buried at his family graveyard at Monmothpur village under Santhia upazila of Pabna yesterday morning amid tight security.

The Jamaat ameer's body reached his village home around 6:20am. His son Nazibur Rahman received the body.

He was buried shortly after a funeral prayer, led by Nazibur, on the Monmothpur Madrasa premises around 7:00am. His relatives, locals and Jamaat men joined the prayer, reports our Pabna correspondent.

GAIBANA NAMAZ-E-JANAZA

Jamaat men offered gaibana namaz-e-janaza (funeral prayers in absentia) for its chief in different areas of the country, including at Baitul Mukarram national mosque in the capital after Zuhr prayers yesterday. Some Jamaat activists were seen flashing the victory sign while coming out of the mosque through the North gate after the janaza. Police units were deployed there.

In Rajshahi, activists of Jamaat and Islami Chhatra Shibir, pro-Jamaat student front, clashed with police near Hetemkha graveyard in the city after holding a gaibana janaza for Nizami, reports our Rajshahi correspondent quoting Ifekhair Alam, assistant commissioner of Rajshahi Metropolitan Police.

Law enforcers opened fire on unruly Jamaat-Shibir men when they attacked police with brick chunks. Police picked up five people from the spot, the RMP official added.

I met Israeli

FROM PAGE 16

Although Aslam claimed he accidentally met Mendi N Safadi, a leader of Israel's Likud Party and chief of International Diplomacy and Public Relations in New Delhi, several photographs posted in the Facebook page of Mendi N Safadi Center - for International Diplomacy and Public Relations show the two taking reception and attending a programme in India.

Aslam could not be reached for comments on those photographs; his mobile phone was found switched off continuously yesterday.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam and ruling Awami League leaders have alleged that the BNP had been trying to come to power by using the Israeli intelligence agency.

Talking to reporters at his office on Tuesday, Shahriar said the government has information about it. In this connection, he referred to "meetings between BNP leaders and Mossad".

"The government can ban the BNP tomorrow if the information is placed together," he said.

In the face of strong criticism from the party's policymakers, Khaleda in the early hours of Tuesday warned Aslam that action would be taken against him if he repeated such acts in future, party insiders said.

At Monday's meeting at Khaleda's Gulshan office, several BNP policymakers expressed resentment over Aslam's meeting with Mendi N Safadi.

Some standing committee members demanded that the BNP chief take tough action against Aslam, added the sources.

"This is a very serious issue that a BNP leader has held a meeting with an Israeli leader. It goes against our national values as well as against our party policy as Bangladesh does not have any relations with Israel," a BNP standing committee member said.

"This type of meeting will send a wrong signal to our friendly Muslim countries, and it may also seriously damage the BNP's image at home and abroad," he added, wishing anonymity.

Asked, BNP standing committee member Lt Gen (ret'd) Mahbubur Rahman said such an incident may create another "Taiwan-like effect" for the BNP. Explaining the "Taiwan effect", the former army chief said Chinese government got seriously displeased with the BNP after a leader of the party opined in favour of opening up a Taiwanese trade centre in Bangladesh.

Party insiders said the BNP is yet to fully repair the damage caused by the incident.

Recently, a Bangla daily ran a series of reports where it was alleged that the BNP was involved in hatching a plot to topple the AL government by joining forces with Mossad. The reports mentioned that Aslam Chowdhury met Mendi N Safadi in New Delhi early this month. The newspaper also published two photographs of Aslam and the Israeli leader.

In one photograph, Aslam is seen standing next to Safadi who is sitting on a chair at a programme on India-Israel relations.

Asked by The Daily Star about his attending the programme, Aslam said he was not aware of the programme. "I just went to have a cup of tea there."

He claimed he went to New Delhi on a six-day visit from May 5 for business purposes and for sightseeing in Agra.

Aslam denied holding any meeting with Mossad officials.

Death strikes

FROM PAGE 1

results were published yesterday.

But instead of watching her 15-year-old son celebrating his success, the mother saw his body wrapped in a shroud.

Hridoy was killed after he was hit on the back of his head by a cricket bat following an altercation with some youths over a match in Mirpur-1 yesterday morning, said police, quoting locals.

A science group student at Adarsha High School at Mirpur-10, Hridoy secured CGPA-4.89 in the exam.

"I told him not to leave [home] as it was his results day. But he did not listen," said Tajera, sobbing uncontrollably.

"He promised me that he would be back by noon."

Quoting locals, the mother said a youth hit on the back of her son's head while playing near Dhankhet area around 11:30am.

She said a local boy went to their house at Bashati Housing at Mirpur-1 in the morning and asked Hridoy to go out with him to play cricket.

Tajera stopped her son but he went out after getting a phone call around 10:30am.

"Around noon, I received a phone call and was told that my son had an

accident," Tajera told The Daily Star.

Worried sick, she first rushed to a local garment factory, as directed by the caller, and then went to the National Heart Foundation Hospital but failed to find her son.

Later, she discovered Hridoy's corpse at the National Institute of Neurosciences Hospital at Agargaon.

The victim was taken to the hospital by locals, said police.

Mostafa Sikder, Hridoy's father who hails from Faridpur, runs an automobile workshop at Mirpur-6, said Rifat who is the lone sibling of the victim. He is in class IX at a local school.

Hridoy was a studious boy and hardly went out to play, said Sheuly Aktar, a neighbour.

Sub-inspector Shahjahan Ali of Mirpur Police Station said on information, they recovered the body from the hospital at Agargaon.

Later, they sent it to the Dhaka Medical College for autopsy.

Quoting locals, the SI said the victim was critically injured after a youth from his opponent team hit him on his head with a cricket bat.

Hridoy was rushed to the Agargaon hospital where duty doctors declared him dead.

Police detained three people for questioning, Ali added.

Khaleda, 26 other

FROM PAGE 16

other cases filed over the last year's blockade violence.

In the First Information Reports (FIR) of the two cases, Khaleda was not named as an accused. But the FIR mentioned that the attack was carried out on her instructions.

Of the 27 accused, the charge sheets showed Khaleda and 24 others as fugitives as they are not on bail in the cases. The investigation officers of the cases appealed to the court to issue arrest warrants for them. Only BNP leaders Amanullah Aman and Abul Kalam are now on bail in the cases.

According to the charge sheets, Khaleda masterminded the arson attacks on two buses on February 4 and March 3 last year.

In the first case, it was alleged that as per directives from the BNP chief, a group of BNP leaders and activists torched a minibus in the city's Shah Ali Mazar area around 6:00pm on February 4.

In the second case, it was alleged that on the BNP chief's instructions, some BNP-led 20-party combine activists set fire to a minibus at Gabtoli around 6:30pm on March 3.

N Korean, Pakistani

FROM PAGE 16

The investigators are delaying submitting the report as they are trying to identify the group behind the February 4 reserve heist, said another BB official.

Asked about the hacking groups, Finance Minister AMA Muhith told The Daily Star yesterday, "It is not solid information. So, I don't want to make comments on the issue."

Mohammad Shah Alam, additional deputy inspector general of the Criminal Investigation Department, said the police department's own investigation had not found involvement of such groups.

The twists and turns add to the mystery of who pulled off one of the largest cyber-heists in history.

The US Federal Bureau of Investigation suspects an insider with access to the computers at the BB played a role in the caper, according to the people briefed on the investigation.

Police here said they had found negligence within the bank but had not determined whether there was any criminal intent.

Spokesmen for Pakistan's interior and information technology ministries did not respond to requests for comments. Telephone and e-mailed requests for comment to North Korea's delegation to the United Nations went unanswered, said the Bloomberg.

Government officials in the Philippines and Sri Lanka are investigating where the purloined money may have gone. Members of the US Congress have asked for additional information about whether there were lapses in security by institutions duped in the scam.

"These guys started to lay the groundwork for their hack or their robbery a year ago. They set up their false accounts, with false IDs," said Leonard Schrank, who was Swift's chief executive officer for 15 years through 2007.

"It was really well thought through, and they found a very weak link, which they exploited," he told Bloomberg.

Hundreds of billions of dollars are moved internationally through the Swift system daily. The Brussels-based group warned users last month that it was aware of several similar attacks. It did not indicate whether it suspected the same hackers or whether more money was taken.

The Bangladesh forensic results,

provided to the bank in the last few days, highlight the challenges of identifying skilled perpetrators in cyberspace, where hackers can mimic others and route their actions around the world to confuse trackers.

FireEye was unable to determine how the thieves first entered the BB network, according to one of the people. One possibility is that malware was introduced into the network by someone inside the bank or a technician working with the bank.

Malware can be introduced quickly onto a network by someone inside with something as simple as a thumb drive in an open USB port. The forensic investigation has not found any evidence of this, the person said.

The potential role of any insider is still being investigated. The FBI has been assisting the inquiry at the request of the BB. Jillian Stickels, a spokeswoman for the FBI in Washington, declined to comment on the investigation.

The Bangladesh Bank has not yet been able to determine whether an employee was involved, according to a panel it appointed to review the incident. An official from Bangladesh police said it has not received information from the FBI about a possible insider and that no arrest has been made.

Bangladesh officials have sought to cast Swift as bearing some responsibility, releasing details about Swift technicians who made upgrades to the bank's system late last year.

The CID is suspecting whether hackers used an IP address in Egypt to steal the money.

"Soon after the CID launched its investigation, it found that a notification from the SWIFT platform with the BB was sent to an IP address based in Cairo," said Alam.

"Through INTERPOL [the International Criminal Police Organisation], we have sought information about the IP address. Bangladesh's ambassador in the country is pursuing the issue so we get cooperation from the Cairo administration."

The senior official said the CID has yet to receive any reply from Cairo side.

Another CID official said hackers sometimes use IP address located in other countries to camouflage their real identities.