

Death for 6 JMB

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let Qur'anic law be introduced. Laws framed by humans cannot continue and only the laws of Allah would prevail." The attack left two judges killed.

Suspected JMB men blasted bombs simultaneously in Chittagong, Chandpur and Laxmipur courts on October 3, 2005, killing two people and injuring 34 others.

Yesterday, the HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice JBM Hassan came up with the verdict after hearing the death references and appeals filed by the accused.

The grounds for the verdict could not be known as the full text of the judgment was not released.

Talking to The Daily Star, Deputy Attorney General Shaikh AKM Moniruzzaman Kabir said the government would move appeals before the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court challenging the portion of the HC verdict that commuted death sentences of two convicts and acquitted two others of the charges.

Helal Uddin Mollah, lawyer for death row convicts Saidur and Taibur, said his clients would file appeals with the SC after receiving the full text of the HC verdict.

The confessional statements of the two convicts were not true as those were not made voluntarily, he claimed.

Saifur Rashid Sabuj, lawyer for another death row convict Enayet Ullah, said the HC confirmed the death sentence of his client based on his confessional statement.

Enayet did not make the confessional statement voluntarily, Saifur told this correspondent, adding that there was not enough evidence against the accused.

The lawyer said his client would lodge an appeal against the HC verdict.

On June 20, 2013, Judge Md Motahar Hossain of Speedy Trial Tribunal-4 of Dhaka had sentenced all the 10 accused to death. The accused later filed separate appeals with the HC challenging the trial court's verdict.

Motiar came

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house in Tala upazila, where her three brothers live together. There they lived until the boy turned 12.

Khairunnessa with her son then moved to Dhaka to work at a garment factory, said Motiar's father Nasir Uddin Gazi.

She went to Saudi Arabia a couple of months ago for work. Her brothers said they could not contact her after the incident.

One and a half years ago, Motiar stopped communication with his mother, said his maternal uncle Abdus Sattar.

Around the same time he went back to his father's place and lived with him for five months. During the period, Motiar worked in the village as day labourer. On June 30 last year, he left the village, saying he would find a job in Dhaka and settle there, his father Nasir said.

Nasir, a fisherman, got married and divorced five times. Motiar was the first child from his first marriage.

Although his son was a voter, he never went to the village to cast his vote, Nasir said.

Motiar's father was terribly shocked when he saw in the media that Motiar was one of the militants killed in the operation "Storm26", and fainted repeatedly yesterday.

Rafiqul Islam, a neighbour of Nasir, said Motiar had a beard when he was living at his father's house and used to be quiet most of the time.

"He called me about a month ago and said he was working at a sweater factory and living at his aunt's house in Gazipur," Nasir said.

The district's Superintendent of Police, Altaf Hossain told journalists that Sathkhira police had no criminal record of Motiar.

Half of Turkish

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dishonourable discharge, according to the decree.

The council will decide on the personnel changes required after the coup, with lower-ranking officers expected to be fast-tracked to fill gaps in top positions.

In a symbol of the military's waning power, the meeting is being held at the Cankaya Palace of the Turkish premier in Ankara and not, as is customary, at military headquarters.

It is expected to last just one day, as opposed to up to three days in the past, a Turkish official said.

In the wake of the coup the military has already lost control of the coastguard and gendarmerie, which will now be the responsibility of the interior ministry.

The army said Wednesday that 8,651 of its military personnel had been involved in the rebellion -- 1.5 percent of its total number -- along with 35 planes, 37 helicopters, 74 tanks and three ships.

The military has insisted that only a tiny proportion of the total armed forces -- which number around three quarters of a million, the second-largest in Nato after the United States -- participated.

Stay alert to use of ICT

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Vision-2021 through different innovations.

The PM asked the government employees to think again to develop the country and generate new ideas. "I firmly believe together you all will build a modern, service-oriented and proactive civil service to meet the challenges of the 21st century."

"People won't come to us. Rather, we'll go to people with services and this would be our policy and thoughts," Hasina added.

She said modern, dynamic and innovative civil servants can take the country at the highest peak of development.

Reminding the public servants that they have been playing the main role to materialise the initiatives to make Digital Bangladesh, she said the government made Innovation Fund to patronise innovation.

"Some 103 projects have been implemented with the help of service innovation fund at a cost of Tk 200 million. An innovative platform named Idea Bank has also been introduced to accelerate innovative culture."

Highlighting various achievements and successes of her government in building Digital Bangladesh, the premier said Digital Bangladesh is not a dream now, but a reality as digital technology is being used almost everywhere in public life.

The government has increased the internet density and capacity of the

submarine cable. An IT-friendly policy has been enacted in the country and almost 99 percent area is now under mobile phone network, she added.

The government, said Hasina, has introduced agent banking in 400 union digital centres; some 200 types of services are being provided there; around 18 lakh citizens are using e-TIN; Postal Cash Card Service is being provided in 1,333 post offices; Electronic Money Order has been introduced in 2,750 post and sub post offices and the work on setting up 8,500 digital centres is underway.

Kabir bin Anwar, project director of Access to Information programme, delivered the welcome address at the event, chaired by Cabinet Secretary Mohammad Shafiqul Alam.

Public Administration Minister Syed Ashraf Islam, Science and Technology Minister Yeafesh Osman, PM's Principal Secretary Md Abul Kalam Azad and UNDP Country Director Pauline Tamesis spoke on the occasion.

A short documentary titled "A tale of transformation" was also screened.

Earlier, the premier distributed awards to three best districts -- Brahmanbaria, Jessore and Chittagong -- and the best division Dhaka for their efforts to establish Digital Bangladesh.

Deputy commissioners and the divisional commissioner concerned received the awards from the PM.

Feathered phantom

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moved on to discover more stories where humans had no part to play.

By then it was already clear outside and the boat crews had woken up. People on both sides of the river were on the move and a pond heron was out, looking for its morning snacks. The cook lit the stove to boil water as I returned to my place and flipped through the pages of my book. Coffee arrived and the boat sailed south taking advantage of the receding tide.

We entered the Sundarbans at midday -- the scorching sun at its peak and the wind not even blowing. The wall of vegetation on both sides of the river stood still.

The purpose of this trip was to find the most elusive bird called the Masked Finfoot that occurs in the Sundarbans in Bangladesh, a definite place in the world to find it with confidence. We have been studying this bird over the last five years in order to gather basic information on its ecology and biology that have never been fully studied before. Our aim is to understand and assess its population status in the Sundarbans, its threats, and hotspots to recommend conservation measures to the forest department and other interested parties.

Over the years, we have developed a method to observe the bird without disturbing it, which means the species accept your presence within the vicinity of its home. This allows developing a relationship with the species, which ultimately encourages the observer to speak on their behalf.

As the day slipped by, we travelled further south through the murky water of the Sundarbans. The monsoon sky changed its colour, the clouds changed their courses and the tide took its toll. At night with our

boat bathed in the moonlight, we stared at the stars, the moon and celestial bodies in the sky. There was no digital interference, no urge to attend calls, check emails or be absorbed in social media posts. We only communicated with our crew members, like a happy family.

As the search for the elusive bird continued the following days, our dingi would ride up and down the canals, with our tired bodies at times carrying nothing else but hope, enduring both the heat of July, and the monsoon rain of August. There were days when we came back with fuller spirits, having spotted Masked Finfoots foraging during low tide, and there were days when nothing, absolutely nothing was found, except for unravelling the other mysteries of the Sundarbans -- the common kingfishers, the calls of the Mangrove Pitta, the footprints of the spotted deer. We were overly delighted at finding an active nest once, as a beacon of our having overcome the shadows of uncertainties, dealing with the changes in the mighty tides, the mysterious jungle and our fading confidence.

Looking back at the last couple of summers and our quest in the Sundarbans, there are many memories that come to mind. Strangely, it's not the hardships that I see, but the positives and the unravelled mysteries -- the finding of the nest, the attachment to the Masked Finfoot families, the gradual understanding of their behaviour, and later, the steps to take to improve their condition. Like tigers in the Sundarbans, we want to raise the profile of the finfoots to help protect these magnificent symbols of our waterways.

The writer is a Conservation Biologist, currently working on threatened species conservation and research in Bangladesh and abroad.

Governance, anti-graft

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are pushing up the amount of defaulted loans, added Manzur.

Khushi Kabir, coordinator of non-governmental organisation Nijera Kori, said justice and accountability have to be there to make Bangladesh an inclusive society.

Former finance minister M Syeduzzaman reminded the Awami League-led government about its election pledges such as implementation of the CHT peace accord and creation of the post of an ombudsman.

Taking part in the discussion, Kamrul Hasan, deputy director of the Governance Innovation Unit at the Prime Minister's Office, said the government is going to formulate a National Governance Assessment Framework to encourage good governance in the public sector.

The framework would be prepared in consultation with government officials, civil society members and academicians.

Shamsul Alam, member of the planning commission, informed the audience of the government steps to implement the SDGs.

"On Wednesday, we have finalised which ministry will do what." They are now preparing action plans on the responsibilities of ministries

and financing needed to implement projects linked to SDGs, Alam said.

Responding to Hossain Zillur Rahman's comment on allocation for MPs, AHM Mustafa Kamal said half of the allocation for Test Relief and Food for Work goes to installation work of solar panels.

Kamal said corruption would reduce by half if the government decisions are implemented. He made mentions of the decisions to have only one project director for each project and not to approve any project on disputed land.

The minister also talked about the government's initiatives to create jobs and develop skills of manpower.

He said there are 29 million unemployed people who have to be brought to the mainstream economy. Some 100 SEZs, which are being built, will absorb this unemployed manpower in three years.

Presently, there are 6,500 technical institutes that educate 10 percent of the students. It would reach 20 percent by 2020, he added.

Prof Anisuzzaman said joint initiatives of the government, the civil society and the private sector are crucial for proper implementation of the SDGs.

Another kid

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accountable [for this] to Allah," said the 13-year-old boy, wailing.

However, the plea drew no attention. Shah Alam at the Khadya Gudam area in Habiganj sadar continued striking the boy, son of Bachchu Mia, with a bamboo stick for around five minutes until it broke.

People standing around seemed unmoved.

Apart from Rubel, two other children -- Rony, 12, son of Abdul Khalek, and Mahin, 12, of Jasherabda area, -- experienced the savagery of Shah Alam over allegations that they had been involved in stealing a mobile phone on Wednesday.

Mahin's family used to live at a rented house owned by Shah Alam.

Locals said Shah Alam, an accused in several cases of extortion and theft, had confined and then chained up the children.

As someone videotaped the incident that was later broadcast on television, the police rushed to the spot, but went back without taking any measure.

Rajkumar, a sub-inspector of Habiganj Model Police Station, was closed on Wednesday night for negligence in rescuing the children, said Raselur Rahman, assistant superintendent of Habiganj.

Rajkumar went to the Khadya Gudam area around 8:00pm on Wednesday but returned without doing anything about the children who were chained up and given no food since the morning.

Instructed by Habiganj Superintendent of Police Najim Uddin, the officer-in-charge of the police station went to the spot around 10:00pm and rescued them, Raselur added.

The children were taken to the Habiganj Sadar Adhunik Hospital and then to the police station and to the court for recording their statements.

Najim Uddin told The Daily Star the allegations made by locals go with the statements.

Sultana Rajia, mother of Rubel, filed a case accusing Shah Alam of torturing the children under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act yesterday.

In an overnight raid, police arrested Shah Alam and his aides -- Ripon Mia, 18, and his mother Shaheda Begum, 35, -- in Jasherabda area.

Locals said Shah Alam, from Patharia village of Baniachang upazila in Habiganj, grabbed land and set up a colony-type housing facility for low-income groups in Habiganj sadar.

There are cases against him of extortion and installing illegal electricity connections. He had to pay Tk 16 lakh fine in a case recently, locals said.

The incident comes amid a series of medieval-style abuse of children, which led to their death.

Sagar Barman, a 10-year-old boy, who used to work in Zobeda Textile and Spinning Mills in Rugganj, died after some workers pumped air into his body through the rectum on July 24.

Thirteen-year-old Samiul Alam Rajon was beaten to death in Sylhet in July last year; 12-year-old Rakib was tortured to death in Khulna on August 3 as two men inserted a high-pressure air pump nozzle into his rectum, and 10-year-old Rabiul was beaten to death for "stealing fish" in Barguna in August last year.

Syed Ashraf

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Responding to another query whether there is any lack of coordination between the deputy commissioners and the superintendents of police at the district level in maintaining law and order, Ashraf replied in the negative.

The SPs are dealing with law and order while the DCs are in leadership position, he added.

The minister said the DCs were asked to bring more dynamism to the local administration.

During a meeting between the DCs and the public administration ministry, its State Minister Ismat Ara Sadique asked the DCs to strictly monitor law and order so that militancy could not spread, sources said.

During DCs' meeting with the civil aviation and tourism ministry, they were asked to ensure adequate security measures for hotels and restaurants where foreigners stay.

The DCs were also asked to develop tourist-friendly special apps that can be attached to the Google Map and used in mobile phones.

Talking to reporters, Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister Rashed Khan Menon said Barisal Deputy Commissioner already developed such an app that can identify the potential tourism spots in Barisal.

"This is good news. Tourists, through the app, easily get to know about the tourism spots," he said.

The minister also said the inflow of tourists would not decline following the recent terror attacks in Bangladesh.

Dhaka, Delhi

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UNB adds: Modi reaffirmed that India is with Bangladesh in its fight against terrorism as it did during the Liberation War in 1971.

The Indian premier came up with the assurance when Kamal met him on the 2nd day of the 5th India-Bangladesh Home Ministerial meeting in India, said a home ministry release.

Kamal thanked Modi on behalf of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for India's support to Bangladesh in its fight against terrorism.

According to clause 10/3 of the extradition treaty, evidence alongside the warrant of arrest was needed to extradite such persons.

As per the amended proposal, extradition of the convicted and under-trial criminals will be possible if a court in any of the countries issues an arrest warrant for them.

Bangladesh cabinet approved the amendment on July 18. The extradition treaty between the two countries will take effect on October 23, 2016.

An official statement issued after yesterday's meeting said the MoU on an addendum to the bilateral extradition treaty was aimed at "further streamlining the treaty and making it more effective."

The two countries also agreed on the necessity of signing a repatriation treaty to simplify and expedite the procedure of repatriation of each other's nationals. Both sides also agreed to undertake an urgent action for the repatriation of released prisoners and victims of human trafficking, the statement said.

During yesterday's talks, Bangladesh and India recalled Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina's address in the wake of terrorist attacks in that country "emphasizing the need to be united in the fight against terrorism and to be vigilant against the nefarious designs of destabilising elements in society".

The meeting appreciated various counter-terrorism measures undertaken by the Bangladesh government to fight extremist and radical elements, said the statement.

The two sides consented to further strengthen the ongoing cooperation between the security and investigative agencies of the two countries through a programme of training, capacity-building, information exchanges, etc, it added.

Rajnath Singh condemned the horrific terrorist attacks in Dhaka in July, 2016, and assured Bangladesh of India's fullest support and cooperation in its fight against terrorism, fundamentalism and radicalism.

He said the two countries have to be vigilant at all times and channelize efforts to defeat terrorism and ensure peace, security and prosperity between the two countries.

Recalling the historic visit by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Bangladesh in June 2015, the two home ministers agreed that the visit had "infused a new dynamism in bilateral relations, widening the avenues for cooperation between the two countries".

India and Bangladesh also emphasised the need for speedy operationalisation of three bilateral

MoUs: MoU between Indian Coast Guard and Bangladesh Coast Guard for Establishment of Collaborative Relationship to Combat Transnational Illegal Activities at Sea and Develop Regional Cooperation, MoU to Prevent and Counter Smuggling and Circulation of Fake Currency Notes, and MoU on Bilateral Cooperation for Prevention of Human Trafficking, especially trafficking of women and children; rescue, recovery, repatriation and reintegration of victims of trafficking, signed during the visit of Modi.

Both sides emphasised the importance of effective implementation of the Coordinated Border Management Plan to enhance cooperation between the border guarding forces of the two countries.

Trace and punish

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"We do not support what he did. The authorities should bring the masterminds to book so that they could not misguide youths anymore," said another.

The demand for punishment of these masterminds is also being voiced by other families who lost their kids, brainwashed to take up arms in the name of jihad.

Going through the Facebook pages of Shazad's relatives, it was seen that he used to be a fun-loving by and used to participate in family programmes.

His LinkedIn profile shows he got top grades in schools and went on to work at a multinational company.

Shazad's family members are US citizens. His father is a "millionaire" who supplies crowd-control gadgets and defence products to security forces in Bangladesh. His grandfather was a top defence official, the Telegraph of India reported.

Nobody more

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for me. I ask you to carry her the same way you carried me," Obama said. When he finished, she joined him on stage where they hugged, clasped hands and waved to the crowd.

The two were rivals in the hard-fought 2008 campaign for the Democratic nomination. After winning that election to become America's first black president, Obama appointed Clinton his secretary of state, a position she held until 2013.

Republicans have painted Clinton as a Washington insider who would represent a "third term" for what they view as failed policies under Obama, elected to a second term in 2012.

Speaking to delegates, Obama offered an alternative to businessman Trump's vision of the United States as being under siege from illegal immigrants, crime and terrorism and losing influence in the world.

"I am more optimistic about the future of America than ever before," Obama said at the Wells Fargo Center, a basketball and hockey arena.

A former first lady and US senator, Clinton made history on Tuesday when she became the first woman to secure the presidential nomination of a major party. She promises to tackle income inequality, tighten gun control and rein in Wall Street if she becomes president.

Irked by Nayeem's

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delivered radical speeches on religion.

"Irked by his behaviour, locals at one stage drove him out of the area around two years ago. After that, we didn't see him in this locality," said Rafiqul Islam, chairman of Jhaoil union parishad in Tangail's Gopalpur upazila, where Nayeem's ancestral home is located.

Law enforcers yesterday raided his ancestral home and seized some documents that show Nayeem lived in Libya in 2009 and used to send money to his wife in Bangladesh.

The Daily Star correspondents talked to police, his relatives and colleagues, and locals to know about him.

According to his family members and police, he was born at his ancestral home.

His national identity card shows he was born in 1983. He mentioned a place in Patuakhali's Kalapara upazila as his permanent address.

Quoting Nayeem's relatives and locals, Gopalpur police said his father died when he was four. Later, his mother Halima Khatun left the village and went to his maternal grandfather's house in Jamalpur. Nayeem was then admitted to a madrasa there.

After completing education at the madrasa, he married his cousin Sakhina Khatun in 2000, according to police.

In 2003, he started working in Kuakata as a day labourer at "Sagor Nir Project" of a real estate company and worked there till 2007, said Altaf Hossain, the then assistant manager of the project.

"As far as I can recall, Nayeem was a pious man. He used to talk less and offer prayers regularly," Altaf told The Daily Star.

In Kuakata, Nayeem, along with his wife and two daughters, lived in a rented house owned by Anwar Hossain Sharif.

"He left my house in 2007," Anwar told this newspaper.

Sagor Mollah, councillor of Kuakata municipality, said Nayeem was listed as a voter of ward-4 in the municipality. His voter number was 781103000369 and national ID card number was 7816647592243.

According to information on the voters' database, Nayeem had completed higher secondary education, according to local election office.

In 2012, Nayeem returned to his ancestral village and set up a 'Maktab', said locals.

In 2014, he was driven away from the village as he used to speak and behave like a radical, said Solaiman Miah, an inhabitant in the area.

Talking to The Daily Star, Nayeem's uncle Mohammad Suruzzaman said they had no communication with him for the last few years and heard the news of his death from law enforcers on Thursday.

Wishing anonymity, a policeman in Gopalpur said he learnt that Nayeem had worked at a fish feed mill in Bhaluka upazila of Mymensingh about a year ago.

The Daily Star correspondent visited Nayeem's father-in-law's house at Chapaid village in Madhupur upazila yesterday noon and found the house empty.

One of Nayeem's relatives said Nayeem visited his house at Hironbazar village of Modhupur upazila around two months ago.

Contacted, Mahbub Alam, superintendent of police in Tangail, said law enforcers are yet to trace Nayeem's wife Sakina.

"We are investigating the matter and checking whether any of Nayeem's relatives or any other person in this area is involved in militancy," he added.