

BDR MASSACRE

Commission to uncover domestic, foreign conspiracies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The commission formed to reinvestigate the 2009 BDR (now Border Guard Bangladesh) massacre yesterday said it will identify local and foreign entities and conspiracies behind the carnage during its probe.

The commission chief and former director general of BGB Maj Gen (retd) ALM Fazlur Rahman made the remarks while briefing reporters following its first meeting at the BGB Headquarters.

He said, "We have been tasked with identifying the individuals and entities -- both domestic and foreign -- responsible for the BDR massacre."

When asked if the commission will identify any specific country, he said they will not single out any specific country; but will conduct an impartial investigation.

"If anyone is found responsible, we will provide our opinion accordingly," he added.

The commission aims to identify individuals, groups, organisations, institutions, departments, or associations responsible for the killings, those who aided the crimes, conspired, or tampered with evidence.

"We will remain impartial and uninfluenced by any external factors. I express my gratitude to the chief adviser for addressing this issue and attempting to resolve it," he said.

Seeking media cooperation, he said, "We request that you interpret our statements positively. Any misrepresentation may harm the national interest."

Fazlur stated that the commission's office will initially operate out of the BGB Dhaka Battalion office. It will soon write

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AL destroyed national unity, economic stability

Says Jamaat ameer

UNB, Dhaka

The fallen Awami League government had prioritised self-interest over the nation's progress during its 15 years in power, said Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Dr Shafiqur Rahman yesterday.

Speaking at a rally in Dumuria upazila's Atharo Mile area, he highlighted several issues, including rising unemployment, economic mismanagement, and the erosion of communal harmony under the previous administration.

"Our country has always been a land of peaceful coexistence, but the Awami League's 15 year rule has destroyed this unity, focusing on personal gain instead of national development," he said.

Dr Rahman accused the former government of failing to address economic challenges, leaving millions unemployed. "Rather than creating jobs, they exploited the nation's resources, leaving long queues of jobless people as a proof of their failure," he added.

He also criticised the state of education, claiming the government had armed criminals instead of empowering students. "Pens were replaced by weapons, and the wealth of ordinary citizens was smuggled abroad by Awami League leaders," he said.

The Jamaat leader condemned the previous

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Separate law ministry from parliament

Proposes BLAST for judicial independence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A separate "Law and Justice Affairs Ministry" can be established by replacing the existing "Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs" in order to better safeguard judicial independence and law officer accountability, proposed Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) yesterday.

They also proposed the creation of a Supreme Judicial Council, composed of retired judges and impartial lawyers, to oversee judicial work and ensure it meets expected standards. A separate committee under this council would review various aspects of the judiciary.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- » Establish supreme judicial council
- » Form judicial appointment committee
- » Formulate clear appointment guidelines
- » Expand Appellate Division, increase number of judges
- » Set up safety box" for harassment allegations
- » Introduce pre-action protocol, judicial activism



Additionally, BLAST suggested forming a Judicial Appointment Committee within the Supreme Judicial Council to ensure transparency and impartiality in the selection of Supreme Court judges. This committee would establish clear guidelines for judge appointments based on impartiality and competence.

Further recommendations include the establishment of a "Safety Box" on court premises to allow victims to report sexual harassment by court officials anonymously.

BLAST also stresses the importance of providing adequate facilities for women and children at court premises, including suitable seating, toilets, and baby feeding areas.

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judiciary remains free from political influence and corruption to deliver justice impartially.

Among the key points raised were the need for an increased number of judges and the protection of the fundamental and human rights of litigants, accused individuals, and witnesses.

Experts also highlighted the importance of a convenient and hygienic court environment, including proper seating and toilet facilities.

Barrister M Sarwar Hossain, a Supreme Court lawyer, raised concerns about the political involvement of some lawyers and law officers, which he argued hindered the appointment of competent professionals. He

Four more die of dengue

Experts call for early action

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least four dengue patients died and 153 were hospitalised in the last 24 hours till yesterday morning.

With the new deaths and cases, the total number of deaths rose to 569, while the total number of cases rose to 1,00,711, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Currently, 804

dengue patients are undergoing treatment, of which 486 are from outside Dhaka.

A total of 99,338 patients have been released till yesterday across the country.



As Bangladesh braces for another year with the threat of dengue looming, experts have urged the government to adopt comprehensive and year-round strategies to curb the spread of the mosquito-borne disease.

Experts emphasised the need to be proactive and said waiting until the monsoon season to combat dengue is no longer viable.

Entomologists like Manzur A Chowdhury stress initiating anti-mosquito drives as early as January to eliminate Aedes mosquito populations before they proliferate.

"Authorities must identify dengue hotspots and implement targeted interventions such as larviciding, adulticiding, and public awareness campaigns," said Manzur.

Entomologist Kabirul Bashar of Jahangirnagar University highlighted the urgent need to address issues like inadequate protection for hospitalised patients and the increasing number of cases outside Dhaka.

"The government must strengthen mosquito control efforts in districts like Barishal, Chandpur, Manikganj, and Gazipur, which are likely to see a rise in cases next year," he warned.

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'Police burnt one of them alive'

Finds ICT probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Investigation Agency of the International Crimes Tribunal has found proof suggesting that six young protesters were shot and subsequently burned on August 5 by the police.

Initially, the police opened fire on a group of protesters, resulting in the deaths of five individuals at the scene, while one survived for a short time.

The six bodies were then placed on a rickshaw van, wrapped in a carpet, and transported near a police vehicle.

The police subsequently poured petrol over the bodies and set them ablaze, and the surviving youth was burned alive while still suffering from gunshot wounds, as per the agency's findings.

ICT Chief Prosecutor Mohammad Tajul Islam said, "Eyewitnesses testified that when the bodies were burning, one boy was still alive. He was burned after the police poured petrol on him."

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Mohammad Tajul Islam

ICT Chief Prosecutor

"This is clear evidence of crimes against humanity carried out during the July-August mass uprising, ordered by then government and its higher officials," he added.

In connection with the incident, two police personnel have already been arrested. One of them is Constable Mukul Chokder.

Nearly a month after Sheikh Hasina fled, a video emerged on social media, showing several partially covered bloodstained bodies on a van with some policemen standing guard.

Bodies covered with bedsheets with hands stretched out could be seen in the nearly two-minute video, which The Daily Star verified was taken from near Ashulia Police Station in Savar.

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Family reunited after 18 years

Stranded in Malaysia, man finally comes back home

MD ABBAS

When Dollar Mahmud was 10, his father, Robiul Karim, left for Malaysia, hoping to secure a better future for his family.

Robiul, a resident of Bholahat upazila in Chapainawabganj, went on a visit visa. However, complications with his visa and passport left him stranded, unable to return home.

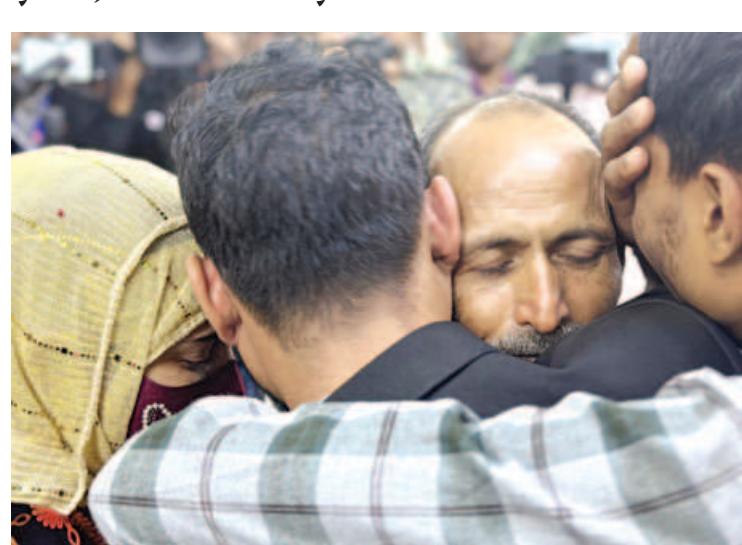
Over time, he lost his passport, and all attempts to reunite with his family failed.

For 18 long years, Robiul remained stuck in a foreign land, far from the family he had left behind.

Dollar, alongside his siblings Abdul Hanif and Dali Ara Khatoon, gradually lost hope, believing they would never see their father again.

But after nearly two decades, the siblings finally reunited with their father yesterday.

The long-awaited reunion



The three siblings hug their father tight at Dhaka airport yesterday as they got reunited with him after 18 long years.

PHOTO: COURTESY

took place when Robiul landed at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport on a US-Bangla flight at 5:45pm and Dollar and his siblings finally got to embrace their father

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Workers dismantling parts of old and abandoned vehicles to separate metals for recycling. The entire process takes place near a workshop, occupying the footpath and road. This photo of a truck being loaded with the materials was taken at Dholapar recently.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON



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