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Notification

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No. 44.00.0000.056.05.011.09-94 – A report prepared by the Judicial Investigation Committee, led by retired Justice Md. Shahabuddin and two other members, regarding the violence during and after the Jatiya Sangsad election of 2001, is presented here.

By Presidential Order

Md. Kairul Kabir Menon,

Deputy Secretary

The inquiry report filed by the two-member Judicial Inquiry Commission is public

Published for informational purposes only.

By order of the President

Md. Khairul Kabir Menon

Deputy Secretary (10985)

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10986 Bangladesh Gazette, Extra, April 1, 2014

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Investigation Report Part-1

Judicial Inquiry Commission

Violence after the 8th National Assembly Election-2001.

10987 Bangladesh Gazette, Extra, April 1, 2014

Bangladesh Gazette, Extra, April 1, 2014

8th Jatiya Sangsad 2001 post-election violence

After the 8th National Assembly elections, incidents of murder, rape, looting, physical and mental torture, and other abuses brought immense grief and sorrow to the innocent people and families affected by such inhumane violence. The Judicial Inquiry Commission expresses solidarity with their pain and suffering.

Investigation report

Judicial Inquiry Commission

Violence after the 8th National Assembly Election-2001

Commission member:

1. Muhammad Sahabuddin, Former District and Sessions Judge, President, Commission of Inquiry.
2. Manowar Hossain Akhand, Member, Commission of Inquiry, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs.
3. Mir Shahidul Islam, Member, Commission of Inquiry and Joint Commissioner of Police, DB, DMP (Former SS CID, Dhaka).

Date of Submission: 24-04-2011

Expression of the Commission of Inquiry into the Violent Incident

(a) Determination of the period of violence after the 8th National Assembly Election 2001:

Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh, a human rights organization, highlighted the violence that occurred "immediately after the 2001 elections." Judicial review of 191 incidents of violence, as published in writ petitions and attached newspaper reports in Writ Suit No. 749/09 filed in the public interest, called for an inquiry.

According to the judgment of the High Court Division of the Hon'ble Supreme Court, all organized political parties in Bangladesh were implicated in incidents of **communal violence** following the 2001 elections. The court ordered the formation of a judicial inquiry commission to investigate these incidents. However, the Hon'ble High Court did not specify the exact duration of the "post-election" period in its order. Instead, the judgment, along with the content and core purpose of the writ petition, suggested that the investigation should focus on the limited period starting from the moment after the 2001 parliamentary elections.

The inquiry commission was tasked with investigating both political and communal violence. During discussions with former judges, human rights leaders, representatives of voluntary organizations, and eminent senior lawyers, it was noted that the violence after the 8th National Assembly elections in 2001 was both politically and **communally** organized across Bangladesh. This organized violence reportedly lasted for 5–6 months and was followed by sporadic incidents of violence for another 5–6 months.

Research conducted by BRAC on the subject also supports this time frame. (Source: *Chance of Friendship* [Book]).

Case 749/09: Chief Advocate Manzil Morshed, representing the human rights organization that filed the writ, submitted several statements to the Commission. He expressed the view that addressing political and communal violence, including identifying its causes, apprehending the culprits, and ensuring appropriate punishment for the perpetrators, is essential.

He emphasized that it is everyone's responsibility to devise effective measures to prevent such violent incidents from recurring, particularly to safeguard the exercise of voting rights. The organization that filed the writ aims to establish a consensus, and Advocate Morshed highlighted that the Commission must work with that purpose in mind. He cautioned that any deviation from this objective would undermine the noble purpose of filing the writ.

In order to prepare an impartial and objective inquiry report, the Judicial Inquiry Commission decided to investigate incidents of political and communal violence that occurred throughout Bangladesh between October 1, 2001, and December 31, 2002—an extended period of 1 year and 3 months following the 8th National Parliament election. However, it was acknowledged that such an investigation is not only impractical for a single commission but almost unimaginable given the magnitude of the task.

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(b) This Judicial Inquiry Commission is not constituted in the customary manner. Observing the long history of such commissions in Bangladesh and the subcontinent, it is evident that commissions are typically established to investigate a particular incident of public importance occurring in a single location. Such inquiries usually take between 1 to 6 months to complete. However, the post-8th National Assembly election period saw thousands of violent incidents across Bangladesh, involving individuals and families who became victims of violence targeting their bodies and property.

The scale of the violence, affecting nearly every upazila across multiple districts, makes a single judicial inquiry commission for all incidents unprecedented. Despite limited capacity and resources, the Commission has attempted to undertake this vast and difficult task out of a sense of national responsibility and conscience.

(c) The investigation has revealed, based on field inquiries and news reports, that between 2003 and 2006, approximately 14,000 incidents of murder, rape, robbery, gang rape, physical abuse, property damage, and grievous injury occurred across Bangladesh. Proper investigation of these violent incidents is necessary. To carry out these investigations effectively, the government may consider forming short-term inquiry committees or commissions in each district, comprising an Additional District Magistrate, an Assistant Superintendent of Police, and an Executive Magistrate. A monitoring cell under the Ministry of Home Affairs could also be established to oversee this process.

(Detailed Report-I, “Note on Other Relevant Views and Recommendations,” Page No. 55)

(d) The Public Notice issued by the Commission did not specify a time limit for reporting crimes or violence, leading to complaints spanning an entire 5-year period. The Commission received a total of 5,571 complaints for incidents occurring between 2003 and 2006. However, complaints referencing incidents as far back as 1946 were also submitted, many of which were vague, indeterminate, and inconsistent. For the period between October 1, 2001, and December 31, 2002, 3,625 complaints of violence were reported. These complaints were duly investigated by the Commission and included in the report.

(e) It is notable that during the rule of the then government, there was a significant rise in religious fundamentalism and militancy. Data reviewed by the Commission revealed that, in the 5 years following the 8th National Parliament election in 2001, militant groups carried out hundreds of grenade and bomb attacks across Bangladesh. These attacks targeted political leaders, diplomats, poets, writers, judges, lawyers, police officers, and other professionals, as well as innocent civilians. Hundreds of people were killed, injured, or permanently disabled. This report includes accounts of several important and sensitive incidents to provide continuity and context to the violent events.

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Violence after the 8th National Assembly Election-2001

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Context:

The right to vote is a fundamental right of citizens in a democratic system of governance. By exercising this right, people express their support for their desired ideals. In the peaceful journey of democracy, some parties win while others lose. However, following the 2001 National Election, unprecedented and impossible events unfolded. The winning party or group, driven by ideological indulgence and aggression, fell prey to the influence of malevolent forces.

This dark and barbaric chapter of history began on October 1, 2001. Humanity was tarnished by the politics of revenge, and social harmony became a façade. Against the indomitable spirit of the Great War of Liberation, destructive forces unleashed a hellish rampage across Bangladesh. The country witnessed organized killings, rapes, property evictions, looting, coercion, extortion, physical torture, and gang rapes on a massive scale.

The brutality tore through the social fabric, with each act of violence a stark reminder of the cries and anguish of the victims. The land echoed with the voices of the helpless, crying out, “This is our home!” These heart-wrenching events remain etched in the nation’s conscience, bearing witness to the pain and loss endured during this period.

Chronology of Ruddhakal: A report documenting this grim era.

10993 Bangladesh Gazette, Extra, April 1, 2014

Summary of Writ Petition

- **Applicant**
- **Opponent**
- **Content and Remedy Sought**

(Details to be filled as per the specifics of the case documentation.)

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH

HIGH COURT DIVISION
(SPECIAL ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)

WRIT PETITION NO. 749 OF 2009

IN THE MATTER OF:

- **Petitioners:**
Advocate Asaduzzaman Siddique and others.
 - **Respondents:**
 1. Bangladesh, Represented by the Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, Bangladesh Secretariat, Ramna, Dhaka, and others.
-

10994 Bangladesh Gazette, Extra, April 1, 2014

**APPLICATION UNDER ARTICLE 102(2)(a)(i) OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH**

AND

IN THE MATTER OF:
Public Interest Litigation (PIL)

AND

IN THE MATTER OF:

1. Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB), represented by its Secretary of the Executive Committee, Advocate Asaduzzaman Siddique, Hall No. 2, Supreme Court Bar Association Bhaban, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
2. Advocate Sarwar Ahad Chowdhury, Hall No. 2, Supreme Court Bar Association Bhaban, Dhaka, and 3/14 Bashbari Bosila Road, Mohammadpur, Dhaka.
3. Advocate Md. Aklas Uddin Bhuiyan, Hall No. 2, Supreme Court Bar Association Bhaban, Dhaka, and 3 Agamashi Lane, Kotwali, Dhaka.

4. Advocate Tapan Kanti Das, Hall No. 2, Supreme Court Bar Association Bhaban, Dhaka, and 89 Lutfor Rahman Lane (2nd Floor), Suiritola, Dhaka-1100.
 5. Advocate Forhad Ahmed, Room No. 342, Supreme Court Bar Association Annex Bhaban, Dhaka, and 40 Malibagh Choudhurypara, DIT Road, Dhaka-1217.
 6. Advocate Sheikh Atiar Rahman, Hall No. 2, Supreme Court Bar Association Bhaban, Dhaka, and House No. 6, Road No. 21, Block-C, Section 10, Mirpur, Dhaka.
 7. Advocate Swapan Kumar Das, Hall No. 2, Supreme Court Bar Association Bhaban, Dhaka, and Room No. 306 Annex Building, Supreme Court Bar Association Bhaban, Dhaka.
-

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RESPONDENTS:

1. Bangladesh, represented by the Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, Bangladesh Secretariat, Ramna, Dhaka.
 2. The Secretary, Prime Minister's Office, Tejgaon, Dhaka.
 3. The Secretary (Cabinet Division), Government of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Secretariat, Ramna, Dhaka.
 4. Inspector General of Police (IGP), Police Bhaban, Phulbaria, Ramna, Dhaka.
 5. The Additional Inspector General of Police (Headquarters), Police Bhaban, Phulbaria, Ramna, Dhaka.
 6. The Deputy Inspector General (DIG), Bangladesh Police, Dhaka Range, Dhaka.
 7. The Deputy Inspector General (DIG), Bangladesh Police, Chittagong Range, Chittagong.
 8. The Deputy Inspector General (DIG), Bangladesh Police, Rajshahi Range, Rajshahi.
 9. The Deputy Inspector General (DIG), Bangladesh Police, Khulna Range, Khulna.
 10. The Deputy Inspector General (DIG), Bangladesh Police, Barishal Range, Barishal.
-

IN THE MATTER OF:

1. The inaction of the Respondents to protect the persons and properties of citizens and their failure to perform their constitutional duties by taking legal action against miscreants/terrorists involved in incidents that occurred immediately after the 8th National Parliament Election in 2001.
2. A direction upon the Respondents to form a Judicial Commission to investigate the reasons behind the failure of law enforcement agencies to protect lives and property after the 8th National Parliament Election.
3. A direction upon the Respondents to take legal steps against those responsible for ignoring their constitutional responsibilities.

4. A direction upon the Respondents to take legal steps against miscreants and terrorists involved in reported offenses, as detailed in the annexures and paragraphs 9-12 of the writ petition.

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TO

The Honorable Chief Justice M.M. Ruhul Amin and His Companion Judges of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF THE PETITIONERS ABOVE-NAMED MOST RESPECTFULLY SHOWETH:

1. That your Lordships may graciously be pleased to:
 - (a) Issue a Rule Nisi calling upon the Respondents to show cause as to why:
 - Their inaction in protecting persons and properties of citizens and their failure to take legal action against miscreants/terrorists involved in incidents after the 8th National Parliament Election should not be declared illegal and unconstitutional.
 - Directions should not be issued upon the Respondents to take legal steps against those who ignored their constitutional duties.
 - Directions should not be issued upon the Respondents to take legal steps against the miscreants and terrorists involved in the said incidents.
 - (b) Pending the hearing of the Rule, direct the Respondents to form a Judicial Commission to investigate the incidents mentioned in paragraphs 9-12 of the writ petition and reported in newspapers (as per Annexure-A), and to submit a detailed report within three months to this Honorable Court.
 - (c) Upon hearing the parties and perusing the cause shown, if any, make the Rule absolute.
 - (d) Pass such further or other orders as your Lordships may deem fit and proper. And for this act of kindness, the Petitioners, as in duty bound, shall ever pray.
-

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH

HIGH COURT DIVISION
(SPECIAL ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)

Writ Petition No. 749 of 2009

IN THE MATTER OF:

An application under Article 102 of the Constitution of Bangladesh.

AND

IN THE MATTER OF:

Advocate Asaduzzaman and others.

... Petitioners

VERSUS

Bangladesh, represented by the Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, and others.

... Respondents

Present:

- Justice Mr. A. B. M. Khairul Haque
- Justice Mr. Mumtaz Uddin Ahmed

Hearing Date: May 5, 2009

Judgment Date: May 6, 2009

Counsel for the Petitioners:

- Mr. Manzil Morshed, Advocate

Counsel for the Respondents:

- Mr. Karunamay Chakma
- Mr. Mustafa Zaman Islam, Deputy Attorney General (for Respondent No. 1)

Judgment Delivered by Justice Mr. A. B. M. Khairul Haque

The 8th National Parliament Elections in Bangladesh, held in 2001, were followed by numerous violent incidents. These events challenged the leadership of the government and prompted public interest litigation filed by the Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB) organization, along with six advocates of the Bangladesh Supreme Court.

The petitioners stated that HRPB is a prominent organization committed to protecting human rights in Bangladesh. Over the years, HRPB has filed cases addressing human rights violations and has sought legal remedies.

Background:

Petitioner No. 1, on January 29, 2009, issued a **Demand for Justice Notice** to the respondents, requesting the formation of a judicial commission to investigate the heinous events that occurred after the 8th National Assembly elections in 2001 (Annexure-B). These events included widespread violence, targeted killings, rapes, looting, and destruction of property, primarily affecting minority communities.

Petitioners Nos. 2-7 are learned advocates of the Bangladesh Supreme Court and are actively involved with the Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB) organization. They joined Petitioner No. 1 in filing the present writ petition as part of their collective effort to address human rights violations and ensure justice for the victims of the post-election atrocities.

The petitioners emphasized that HRPB, as a prominent human rights organization, has consistently taken legal action to address human rights violations in Bangladesh. The filing of this petition under Article 102 of the Constitution reflects the organization's commitment to seeking judicial remedies for victims and holding the perpetrators accountable.

Rule Nisi Issued:

The Court issued the following order:

****"Let a Rule Nisi be issued calling upon the respondents to show cause as to why a direction should not be given to form a Judicial Commission regarding the incidents that occurred after the 8th Parliamentary Election as stated in paragraphs 9 to 12 of the writ petition and reported in the daily newspapers (Annexure-A), and/or pass such other or further order(s) as to this Court may seem fit and proper.**

The Rule is made returnable within four weeks from the date. Let this Rule come up in the list for hearing on March 4, 2009. Requisites to be put in at once."**

Opposition by the Government:

On April 15, 2009, the Government of Bangladesh (Respondent No. 1) filed an affidavit in opposition. However, the affidavit did not raise any specific objections or provide substantial information to counter the allegations stated in the writ petition.

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Petitioners' Argument:

The petitioners, led by Advocate Manzil Morshed, presented compelling arguments supported by extensive evidence, including newspaper clippings, reports from human rights organizations, and firsthand accounts of victims. The petition highlighted the widespread and systematic violence that followed the 8th National Assembly elections held on October 1, 2001. This violence, particularly targeting minority communities, included heinous acts such as organized killings, rapes, looting, and destruction of property.

Key Points of the Petitioners' Argument:

1. **Atrocities Committed Post-Election:**

The petitioners argued that the aftermath of the election witnessed a wave of oppression, especially **against minority communities**. They detailed incidents of murder, physical assault, rape (including gang rapes), forced evictions, and large-scale property destruction. These acts, they asserted, were perpetrated with impunity, reflecting a severe failure of the state and its law enforcement agencies.

2. **Reference to Bhola Incident:**

A particularly harrowing incident from Bhola district, published in a newspaper, was cited during the arguments. The report described how a helpless mother, unable to save her underage daughter from being raped by attackers, pleaded desperately, "Take her one by one; she is still a child." Advocate Morshed passionately recounted this incident, stating that it epitomized the inhumane and barbaric conditions that prevailed during this period. He argued that such atrocities not only shattered the lives of individuals and families but also brought dishonor to the nation's conscience.

3. **Evidence from Newspaper Reports and Human Rights Organizations:**

The petitioners submitted numerous newspaper articles and reports from human rights organizations, which documented the events between October 3 and December 31, 2001. These documents described the atrocities committed, particularly against minority communities, and demonstrated the inaction of the state in preventing or addressing these violations.

4. **Comparison to Global Atrocities:**

Advocate Morshed emphasized that the scale and nature of the violence were unparalleled, likening the atrocities to events of historical infamy, such as those in Poland

during World War II. The petitioners argued that such acts tarnished the nation's moral fabric and risked labeling Bangladesh as a barbaric nation in the eyes of the global community.

5. **Constitutional Obligations and Human Rights Violations:**

The petitioners contended that the failure of the government and law enforcement agencies to act amounted to a gross violation of constitutional obligations to protect the lives and property of citizens. The petitioners emphasized that the principles and ideals enshrined in the Constitution, particularly in its second and third parts, were fundamentally violated during this period.

6. **Demand for a Judicial Commission:**

The petitioners requested the formation of a judicial commission under the **Commission of Inquiry Act, 1956 (Act No. VI of 1956)** to investigate the incidents thoroughly. They argued that an independent investigation would help restore justice, hold perpetrators accountable, and rebuild public confidence in the rule of law.

7. **Restoration of Justice and Accountability:**

Advocate Morshed asserted that failure to address these crimes would not only perpetuate injustice but also violate the nation's commitment to upholding human rights and constitutional values. He prayed for swift and decisive action to hold the perpetrators accountable and restore public confidence in the rule of law.

Court Observations and Judgment:

1. **Government's Affidavit and Position:**

The Court acknowledged the affidavit in opposition filed by the Government of Bangladesh. The affidavit expressed the government's concern regarding the violent incidents and torture following the 8th National Assembly elections in 2001. The government stated its willingness to consider forming a commission of inquiry to investigate these events and hold the perpetrators accountable. The Deputy Attorney General (DAG) explicitly confirmed that the government had no objection to the petitioners' prayer for such a commission.

2. **Evidence of Atrocities:**

The Court reviewed the documents submitted by the petitioners, including newspaper clippings, human rights reports, and other annexures. These described the violent and inhumane incidents of the time. If the details presented in these documents were accurate, the Court noted, they represented a serious breach of the constitutional commitment to protect human rights as guaranteed in the second and third parts of the Constitution of Bangladesh.

3. **Recognition of Human Rights Violations:**

The Court observed that the violent events highlighted in the petition—including killings, torture, rapes, and destruction of property—violated fundamental human rights. It emphasized that during the relevant period, the pledge to uphold human rights had been significantly compromised.

4. **Need for Accountability:**

The Court remarked that the atrocities of this magnitude, if left unaddressed, would undermine the principles of the Constitution and the global standing of Bangladesh as a

just and civilized nation. It warned that failure to act would brand the nation as barbaric in the eyes of the world.

5. **Directive to Form a Commission of Inquiry:**

The Court concluded that a delay in forming an investigation commission would further erode justice. It directed the government to form a judicial commission under the **Commission of Inquiry Act, 1956** within **two months** of receiving the judgment. The commission was mandated to investigate every incident of human rights violations properly and submit a report to the government within **six months**.

6. **Follow-Up Action:**

The Court instructed the government to take appropriate legal action against the perpetrators based on the commission's findings. It also allowed both the petitioners and respondents to seek further guidance from the Court if necessary during the process.

Conclusion:

1. **Formation of a Judicial Commission:**

The Court directed the government to establish a commission of inquiry within two months under the **Commission of Inquiry Act, 1956**, to investigate the atrocities following the 8th National Assembly elections.

2. **Investigation and Reporting:**

The commission was tasked to conduct a thorough and impartial investigation into each incident of human rights violations and to submit its findings to the government within six months.

3. **Government's Responsibility:**

After receiving the commission's report, the government was obligated to take necessary legal actions against the identified perpetrators in accordance with the law.

4. **Constitutional Principles and Global Perception:**

The Court highlighted that ignoring such atrocities would not only violate constitutional principles but also damage the nation's reputation on the global stage. Justice, humanity, and constitutional guarantees must be preserved to uphold the nation's dignity.

5. **Guidance from the Court:**

The Court permitted the parties to approach it for additional guidance during the implementation of the judgment if necessary.

6. **Final Order:**

The **Rule Nisi** was made **absolute**, reinforcing the directives for the formation of the judicial commission and further action by the government.

In the Case:

Under **The Commission of Inquiry Act, 1956 (Act No. VI of 1956)**, the Court addressed allegations of brutal, barbaric, and demonic incidents, particularly targeting minority communities, following the 8th National Assembly elections held on October 1, 2001. These included oppression, torture, murder, and rape, as well as acts of violence against opposition party members.

The Court directed a thorough investigation into these allegations under the provisions of the said Act. Specifically, the Court ordered the formation of a **commission of inquiry** as follows:

1. **Formation of the Commission:**
 - The government was instructed to establish the commission within **two months** of receiving the judgment.
2. **Responsibilities of the Commission:**
 - The commission shall conduct a comprehensive investigation into the allegations.
 - It must operate impartially and carry out its duties without bias.
3. **Submission of the Report:**
 - The commission was directed to submit its report to the government within **six months** of its formation.
4. **Legal Action by the Respondents:**
 - Upon receiving the investigation report, the respondents are obligated to take appropriate action in accordance with prevailing laws.
5. **Further Guidance:**
 - If necessary, the respondents or the petitioners may approach the Court for additional guidance.

The Court emphasized that **criminals have no identity other than 'criminals,'** and justice must be served impartially to uphold the principles of the Constitution and the rule of law.

In light of these observations, the **writ petition** was considered under the framework of **continuing mandamus**, and the **Rule Nisi was made absolute**.

Additional Remarks:

The Court acknowledged the commendable efforts of the legal representatives involved in the case:

- **Mr. Manzil Morsed**, learned advocate for the petitioner.
- **Mr. Karunamoy Chakma** and **Mr. Mustafa Zaman Islam**, Deputy Attorney General, for the respondent.

The Court noted their tireless dedication to the proceedings, describing their efforts as highly commendable.

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Administrative Details:

- **Justice Md. Mumtaz Uddin Ahmed**
 - Typed by: [Signature Illegible], dated **07-10-2009**
 - Read by: [Signature Illegible], dated **07-10-2009**

- Examined by: [Signature Illegible], dated 07-10-2009

Gazette Notice and Documentation:

- **Trial and Departmental Investigation Details:**
 - Relevant instructions on the constitution of the commission were published in the **Bangladesh Gazette, Extra, April 1, 2014.**
 - A photocopy of the Gazette is to be appended on this page for official reference.

11001 Bangladesh Gazette, Extra, April 1, 2014

Judicial Commission History

The independence of Bangladesh is the greatest achievement of the Bengali nation, realized under the visionary leadership of the Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Following independence, on **November 4, 1972**, the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh was adopted, enshrining the principle that "**the people are the source of all power.**" This foundational philosophy reflects the governance principles of the state, emphasizing the state's responsibilities to its citizens and the citizens' duties to the state.

The 1972 Constitution is widely regarded as one of the most exemplary constitutions globally. Its preamble reflects the ideals of democracy, socialism, secularism, and nationalism, which were central to the liberation war. This document, rich in the spirit of freedom, remains a landmark in constitutional history.

However, the assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman marked one of the darkest chapters in Bangladesh's political history. This heinous and conspiratorial act, driven by the revenge of the defeated forces of the liberation war, distorted and undermined the principles of freedom. It ushered in a **military system of governance** that derailed the democratic progress of the newly independent nation.

These regressive policies sought to create a "new Pakistan," undermining the essence of Bangladesh's independence. To counter this, the restoration of **constitutional rule** and the establishment of governance aligned with the people's aspirations became paramount. This was achieved through the introduction of **free, fair, and impartial elections**, respecting the spirit of the Constitution.

In a bid to uphold democratic governance, political parties committed to the spirit of the liberation war introduced the **non-partisan caretaker government system**. This system was institutionalized through amendments to the Constitution, particularly **Articles 58 and 58B**, which mandated a neutral caretaker government to ensure fair elections.

The caretaker government, comprising **no more than 10 advisers** led by a **Chief Adviser**, was tasked with overseeing the daily administration of the state and conducting **parliamentary**

elections within 90 days. This system facilitated the **6th, 7th, and 8th National Parliament elections.**

The **8th National Assembly Election**, held on **October 1, 2001**, was conducted under the caretaker government led by Justice Latifur Rahman. This government was in power from **July 16, 2001, to October 9, 2001**, covering **two months and 15 days before the election** and **nine days after the election.**

During this period, political instability gripped the nation. Violence, particularly in remote areas, surged, creating a volatile environment. The outgoing ruling political party contributed to the unrest, exacerbating political tensions and instability across Bangladesh.

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Various types of torture inflicted on political party leaders, workers, minority communities, and tribal groups were widely reported in newspapers of the time. The **mysterious silence of the caretaker government** in addressing this political violence significantly hindered efforts to ensure free, fair, and impartial elections.

The 8th National Assembly elections were conducted amidst such persistent political violence. Immediately after the elections, the leaders and armed cadres of the ruling BNP-Jamaat alliance, or other pro-alliance political parties, launched attacks across Bangladesh. These targeted political violence episodes escalated to a new level, focusing on leaders and workers of the defeated Awami League party and especially minority communities.

National and International Concerns:

Reports of the violence published in both national and international media shocked the nation. The depravity of humanity and the scale of the incidents left the public both surprised and deeply disheartened, raising fears that the progress of democracy in Bangladesh was under severe threat.

The democratic governance system, as enshrined in **Articles 8 and 11 of Part II of the Constitution of Bangladesh**, emphasizes the administration of state and government through representatives elected by direct participation of the people. Central to this governance is the exercise of the **right to vote**, which allows citizens to freely choose their representatives. However, the intimidation, harassment, and oppression of voters, political leaders, and workers—particularly those associated with rival parties or coalitions—goes against the very essence of democracy. Such acts are not only reprehensible but are also antithetical to the principles of a civilized society.

Reports and Protests Against Post-Election Violence:

After the 8th National Assembly elections, widespread political violence against leaders, activists, and minorities was extensively documented in national newspapers and international media. The global community, including progressive political parties, civil society, and human rights organizations, condemned these incidents and called for accountability.

- **Protests:** People from all walks of life—including human rights organizations, voluntary groups, and professional associations—voiced their protests against the violence. Demonstrations were held across the country, and the protests continued over an extended period.
- **Amnesty International:** In its report, Amnesty International expressed deep concern about the political violence in Bangladesh.
- **South Asian Coalition Against Fundamentalism:** This human rights organization also highlighted the alarming post-election violence in its assessments.
- **U.S. Human Rights Report:** The United States' annual human rights report emphasized the severity of the violence in Bangladesh following the elections.

Media Coverage:

Renowned international media outlets, including *The Guardian*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Time*, and *The Nation*, published detailed accounts of the post-election violence in Bangladesh. These reports covered the rise of political violence, communal tensions, and human rights abuses. Periodicals such as the *Far Eastern Economic Review* also ran in-depth features on the political and social upheaval in the country, reflecting on the broader implications for democracy and governance.

National Convention on Crimes Against Humanity:

On **February 14-15, 2001**, a **National Convention** titled "**Crimes Against Humanity**" was held in Dhaka under the banner of conscious civil society, in support of progressive political parties advocating for democratic ideals. This convention brought together national and international participants to deliberate on the post-election violence, raise awareness about the human rights violations, and call for accountability.

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Prominent human rights activists and leaders strongly condemned the post-election violence and called for an immediate end to the reprehensible and barbaric acts under the ruling BNP-Jamaat alliance government. The incidents were tragic and disgraceful, drawing widespread national and international criticism.

Global Support for Human Rights:

The United Nations, recognized for its exemplary role in promoting and preserving human rights, witnessed notable support for addressing the violence in Bangladesh. **Asma Jahangir**, Chairperson of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan and a globally acclaimed human rights activist, came to Dhaka to support the National Convention. Her involvement was a significant endorsement of the collective social movement against violence.

Organizations such as the **Law and Justice Center, Bangladesh Hindu, Buddhist Christian Unity Parishad, Prep Trust, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, Khatak Dalal Nirmul Committee**, and the **Lawyers Coordinating Council**—alongside other national and international human rights organizations—documented the torture inflicted on political dissenters and minority communities following the 8th National Assembly elections. These organizations gathered statistics on the violence at various stages and published comprehensive reports to raise awareness and demand accountability.

Legal Efforts Against Violence:

In continuation of these efforts, Writ Petition No. **6556/2001** was filed in the High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh by concerned parties. The petition sought prevention and remedies for the political violence. The Court directed the government to explain the post-election violence, but the **then-government's reluctance** rendered the petition inconclusive.

Later, the human rights organization **Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB)** filed **Writ Petition No. 749/2009** on **February 1, 2009**, in the High Court Division of the Supreme Court. The petition provided a **legal framework to address the violent incidents following the 8th National Parliament Elections in 2001** and sought specific directives to prevent future violence and ensure accountability.

Prayers in the Writ Petition:

The writ petition prayed for:

1. **Prevention of Violence:** Directions to prevent violence and ensure the safety of the lives and property of ordinary citizens following the 2001 8th National Assembly elections.
2. **Accountability of Law Enforcement and Administration:**
 - To hold the administration and law enforcement agencies accountable for their constitutional responsibility to protect citizens.
 - To uncover the reasons behind the failure to prevent violence and take legal action against terrorists and criminals involved in the incidents.

3. **Issuance of a Rule Nisi:** A rule to be issued against the state party or respondents for neglecting their constitutional obligations, seeking explanations for the failures, and declaring these acts as illegal and unconstitutional.
4. **Action Against Perpetrators:** Legal action against the terrorists and criminals involved in organized violence and crimes.
5. **Formation of an Investigation Commission:**
 - The formation of a judicial inquiry commission to investigate the violent incidents nationwide during the elections.
 - Departmental investigation and trial of those responsible for the incidents, based on reports published in the Gazette and by various organizations.

Respondents Identified in the Writ Petition:

The petition named the following as respondents:

- The **Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs.**
- The **Secretary, Prime Minister’s Office.**
- The **Secretaries of the Cabinet Division.**
- The **Heads of Police Departments.**
- Other relevant state officials.

The **State Party** was classified as the **primary opponent** in the case, holding them responsible for the failure to prevent the violence and fulfill constitutional obligations.

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Writ Petition No. **749/09** was filed on **February 1, 2009**, in the High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh. The hearing of the case took place on **May 5, 2009**, with arguments presented by both the **State side** and the **petitioners’ side**.

On **May 6, 2009**, during the continuation of the writ litigation (classified as **continuous mandamus**), a **double bench order** comprising Honorable Justice **Mr. A. B. M. Khairul Haque** and Honorable Justice **Mr. Momtaz Uddin Ahmed** issued their judgment. The bench observed that the violent incidents perpetrated during the tenure of the then ruling government were alarming and represented a grave violation of human rights.

Court Observations:

1. **Failure to Protect Human Rights:**

The Court noted that had a **judicial inquiry commission** been formed earlier, it could have mitigated the extent of human rights violations. The incidents described in the writ

petition—if proven true—were extremely sensitive, shocking, and represented a violation of both **fundamental rights** and **human rights** as enshrined in the Constitution.

2. **Political Violence and Crimes Against Minorities:**

The Court remarked that the political violence following the **8th National Assembly elections** included torture, rape, murder, and the illegal seizure of property, particularly targeting **minority communities**.

3. **Necessity for a Judicial Inquiry Commission:**

The judgment emphasized the need for a **judicial inquiry commission** to investigate incidents of political violence, gang-related crimes, and other forms of human rights violations. The formation of such a commission was seen as essential to uncovering the truth and ensuring accountability.

4. **Final Order to Form a Commission:**

In light of these observations, the Court issued a **final order** directing the government to establish a judicial inquiry commission tasked with conducting a fair investigation into each incident of human rights violations.

Implementation of the Order:

In compliance with the directive, the **Ministry of Home Affairs** and the **Ministry of Law, Justice, and Parliamentary Affairs** worked in consultation to form the commission within the stipulated timeframe. Under the **Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1956**, a **three-member judicial inquiry commission** was constituted on **December 27, 2009**.

A notification (Reference No. **Law-2/Commission of Inquiry/1-5/2009/717**) was issued in Gazette No. **Gazette**, defining the commission's scope and procedures.

Scope of the Investigation:

The **judicial inquiry commission** was tasked with:

1. **Background of Events:**

- To document and analyze the background of the violent incidents.

2. **Identification of Perpetrators:**

- To investigate the causes of the incidents and identify those responsible.

3. **Opinions and Recommendations:**

- To provide recommendations and opinions on other relevant matters to ensure justice and prevent recurrence.

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Judicial Commission Investigation

Summary of the Commission’s Work

After approximately five weeks from the publication of the Government Gazette notification, the office for the Commission was finally allotted. However, the process of starting its operations was delayed due to the late installation of a telephone connection, recruitment of manpower, and necessary renovations. Although the Commission officially began its work on **February 8, 2010**, there were significant delays in procuring essential resources such as computers, furniture, vehicles, and stationery items. These unnecessary delays interrupted the Commission’s operations.

1. Publication of Public Notices, Data Collection, and Engagement:

The **Commission of Inquiry** was constituted under the **Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1956 (Act VI of 1956)**, specifically empowered by **Section 3** of the Act. According to **Section 5, Sub-sections (2), (3), (4), (5), and (6)** of the Act, the Commission issued a public notice on **February 2, 2010**, which was widely disseminated through **Bangladesh Television, Bangladesh Betar**, and all major national newspapers.

The public notice called on individuals, ethnic groups, communities, and political parties who were victims of post-election violence in **2001**—including murder, looting, gang rape, rape, forced eviction, land grabbing, torture, and other crimes against humanity—to submit their complaints. The notice also invited submissions of evidence such as photographs, CDs, and other relevant data.

Actions Taken to Disseminate the Public Notice:

- Letters were sent to Divisional Commissioners, DIGs, Police Commissioners, Deputy Commissioners, Superintendents of Police, the Directorate of Information, and editors of national daily newspapers to ensure the wide circulation of the notice.
- Political parties, including the **Awami League**, as well as voluntary, professional, and human rights organizations, were requested to share data, reports, and archives detailing the violent incidents.

Challenges and Deadline Extension:

Despite extensive publicity, the Commission received fewer complaints than expected, especially given the scale of the violence. Recognizing this disproportionate response, the Commission decided to extend the deadline for complaint submissions to **March 15, 2010**, which was also publicized widely through notifications.

In remote areas of the country, where access to communication was limited, local administrations utilized traditional methods, such as beating drums in marketplaces and villages, to spread awareness about the public notice.

Practical and Logical Considerations for Time Extensions:

Given the events took place approximately **nine years ago** and many incidents occurred in **remote rural areas**, the Commission acknowledged several challenges:

1. The prevalence of violence during the period made it difficult for victims to recall and document details accurately.
2. Many incidents went unreported, particularly in isolated areas with limited access to communication.
3. Victims needed motivation and assistance to come forward and provide evidence.

Considering these factors, the Commission decided to extend the timeline for filing complaints and gathering evidence, ensuring victims had a fair opportunity to participate in the inquiry process.

Engagement with Human Rights Organizations:

The Commission worked closely with human rights organizations, professionals, and volunteers to gather data and ensure widespread participation. Organizations such as **Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB)**, the **Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK)**, and the **Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Parishad** played a vital role in providing information, evidence, and reports on the incidents.

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The Lawyers Coordinating Council, the 71's Ghatk Dalal Eradication Committee, Combined Social Movements, Civil Rights Organizations, and the Communalism Prevention Committee provided recommendations and suggestions for the conduct of the Commission's work through exchanges of views with various organizations. These organizations supported the Commission by sharing data on incidents of violence that they had documented.

Prominent intellectual Dr. Anisuzzaman, eminent advocate Barrister Amirul Islam, Mr. Yusuf Hossain Humayun (learned advocate of the Supreme Court), former General Secretary of the Lawyers Association Mr. Rezaul Karim, and leaders of the Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council, Advocate Rana Das Gupta and Advocate Subrata Chowdhury, contributed significantly to the Commission. Additionally, prominent journalist and writer Shahriar Kabir, Dr. Muntasir Mamun, and Dr. Rafi, author of *Chance of Friendship*, assisted the Commission with their thoughtful comments and research.

At the request of the Commission, Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh provided context on Writ Petition No. 749/09, which was filed in the public interest by its principal advocate, Manzil

Morshed. Advocate Morshed offered sincere assistance to the Commission, highlighting key aspects of the case.

The Commission believes that this case, filed by a human rights organization, played a crucial role in unmasking a dark chapter of post-election violence in 2001 and in fulfilling the nation's expectations. It also provided victims with an opportunity to seek justice and take legal action against the perpetrators through the courts.

Bangladesh Television and *Dainik Janakantha* contributed by submitting archived information, images, and news reports. The Commission also received reports on violence published by Bangladesh Awami League, the largest political party in the country, along with various books and documentaries. Furthermore, incidents of violence raised and published during the 2001 National Convention on Crimes Against Humanity were collected by the Commission on its own initiative.

2. Determination of the Period of Post-Election Violence

The first consideration before the Commission, formed to investigate violent incidents following the 8th National Assembly elections, was to determine the scope of the term "post-election."

In Writ Petition No. 749/09, the term "immediate after election" was used in the column of petitions and prayers. In Bengali, this phrase refers to the period immediately following the conclusion of the election. During the hearing of the writ suit in the Hon'ble High Court, learned counsel Advocate Manzil Morshed drew the court's attention to the violent events that occurred between October 3, 2001, and December 31, 2001.

This timeline was referenced in the court's verdict. Reports related to "Post-Election 2001" and the *National Gazette 2002* were also attached to the writ petition for consideration.

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Under the initiative of Civil Society, namely the Conscious Citizen Society, a National Convention titled "*Crime Against Humanity*" was held on February 14-15, 2002. This convention presented a detailed account of organized violence occurring after October 1, 2001, leading up to the convention.

A study on post-election political and communal violence was initiated by the voluntary organization BRAC, with Dr. Mohammad Rafi serving as the research coordinator. Following the study, Dr. Rafi published a book titled "*Sampriti Samshyam*" (Harmony Problems), which unequivocally stated that communal and political violence persisted across the country for six months following the October 1 elections.

The Commission carefully analyzed this information, including the capacity, resources, and fixed timeframe of its mandate. To ensure objectivity and impartiality, the Commission unanimously decided to define the post-election period as extending from October 1, 2001, to December 31, 2002—a span of one year and three months. This decision was supported by all participants during subsequent discussions.

3. On-Site Inspections, Verification of Information, and Initiation of Preliminary Investigations

As a result of nationwide publicity following the Commission's public notice, victims of violence came forward to the Commission's office and submitted written complaints, including by post. These complaints, along with data and reports received, were carefully scrutinized. To gather additional information and conduct extensive research, the Commission visited various districts and rural areas of the country.

Preliminary investigations were carried out by receiving complaints, collecting victim testimonies, and verifying the authenticity of incidents. Complaints with vague details or unidentified perpetrators were excluded from consideration. Similarly, disputes of a civil nature, such as family property conflicts, were not investigated.

Following its decision, the Commission prepared two separate lists of complaints:

- 1. Incidents of violence during the period from October 1, 2001, to December 31, 2002 (one year and three months).**
- 2. Incidents of violence occurring after January 1, 2003.**

The Commission conducted inquiries and investigations based on the first list, while the second list was registered for record-keeping. Information was also collected from national newspapers, political parties, voluntary organizations, and human rights groups. The veracity of the recorded incidents of violence was established.

During on-site inspections, the Commission involved local stakeholders to validate the facts of the reported incidents.

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With the help of the administration, local political leaders, journalists, lawyers, freedom fighters, volunteers, and human rights organizations, the Commission conducted brainstorming sessions with leaders and various professionals. These sessions gathered their experiences, recommendations, and opinions, which proved valuable in the investigation. The practical experiences shared by these individuals and their insights into violent incidents were instrumental in shaping the Commission's approach.

The Commission has noted with deep concern that the individuals affected by violence—both male and female—were deeply apprehensive about coming forward. Fear and intimidation seemed to haunt them constantly. Many complainants sought financial assistance from the Commission, believing that filing a complaint with the government-formed investigation commission would pave the way for such help. Due to these fears and uncertainties, many victims either refrained from filing complaints or stopped short of providing detailed testimonies or identifying the accused.

Reasons Victims Refrained from Filing or Supporting Complaints

During field visits and reviews of statements from victims and the general public, the Commission identified several reasons why many victims either did not file complaints or failed to provide evidence in support of their claims:

1. **Doubt about the benefit of complaining after nine years:** Many victims expressed skepticism about whether filing a complaint would bring any resolution after such a long time. This doubt created reluctance and uncertainty.
2. **Lack of security:** Victims feared that filing complaints could expose them to renewed violence or retaliation.
3. **Social shame and family concerns:** Fear of social stigma and the potential adverse impact on their family's well-being led many victims to remain silent. Some victims who had rebuilt their lives after marriage or other changes hesitated to bring forth complaints that could disrupt their happiness.
4. **Loss of evidence and lack of courage:** Many victims no longer had evidence to support their claims and felt hopeless about achieving justice. Others lacked the courage to engage with the Commission due to their current mental and emotional state.
5. **Fear of political retaliation:** Many victims believed that future political changes could result in renewed persecution. This fear discouraged them from speaking out.
6. **Influence of the accused:** Most of the accused were highly influential individuals. Some had switched allegiances or ideologies and aligned themselves with the ruling party, creating a political environment where victims felt powerless to act against them.
7. **Harassment and intimidation:** Victims feared being silenced through threats, false cases, and other forms of harassment, particularly in adverse political conditions.
8. **Poverty and logistical challenges:** Many victims, particularly those from minority and marginalized communities living in rural areas, were unable to travel to Dhaka or district headquarters to file complaints or provide evidence. Many had lost their household assets and were living in abject poverty, further limiting their ability to participate in the process.

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In this situation, it was nearly impossible to ascertain the complete truth of the violent incidents described in the complaints or to obtain an accurate overall picture. To address this, the

complaints received were classified, verified, and reviewed to identify the responsible parties. The Commission forwarded these complaints to officials in charge of the police (Special Branch) and local police stations in the respective districts under its close supervision and oversight.

Intelligence officers from the Special Branch of the police and police inspectors conducted inquiries at the grassroots level. Their evaluations were based on the merits of each allegation. In some cases, the Commission's officials, in coordination with the Joint Intelligence Bureau, visited the field to gather statements from local people and verify the accuracy of the complaints. Reports were then submitted to the Commission. Given the sheer volume of complaints and the widespread violence, such assistance was essential to the Commission's work.

The Commission strictly adhered to the provisions of the **Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1956 (Act VI of 1956)** during its pre-investigations. As a result, it was able to identify the individuals involved and responsible for each violent incident.

This judicial inquiry commission was not established in the traditional manner. A review of the subcontinent's history reveals that commissions of inquiry are typically constituted to investigate specific sensitive incidents of public importance, often focusing on a single event at a specific location. It is not uncommon for such commissions to take 1-6 months to produce a report on a single incident. However, the Commission in question was tasked with investigating **thousands of organized violent incidents** across the entirety of Bangladesh after the 8th National Assembly elections.

Each incident involved individual victims or families, whose bodies and properties became targets of violence. Investigating such widespread violence across all districts and upazilas in Bangladesh was an unprecedented challenge for a single judicial inquiry commission. Considering these factors, this Commission cannot be categorized as a "special commission" but rather a unique and extraordinary body tasked with an unparalleled responsibility.

If a continuous investigation lasting at least one month in each district had been conducted to address the widespread post-election violence, a more comprehensive picture of the incidents might have emerged. Encouraging victims to file complaints through media outreach could have also shed additional light on the scope of violence. However, it raises the question: **Was it realistically possible to complete this enormous task within just 11 months?**

Despite these challenges, the judicial inquiry commission worked tirelessly to fulfill its responsibility to the nation. Through relentless effort and dedication, it managed to create a holistic picture of post-election violence. The Commission's vigorous actions and voluntary mobilization efforts awakened a response among victims and encouraged them to come forward.

The wholehearted cooperation of local neutral administrations, civil society, social, cultural, political, legal, and human rights organizations played a crucial role in the Commission's work. The Commission also acknowledges the significant and commendable role played by the mass media, both print and electronic, in accelerating its activities.

The Commission hopes that the conscious citizens of the country will deeply understand and appreciate the inherent limitations faced by the investigation committee. All members of the Commission approached their work with sincerity and impartiality, setting a unique precedent in the field of judicial inquiry.

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Background of Violent Events

The violent incidents following the 8th National Assembly elections in 2001 were multi-dimensional, with complex socio-political and historical correlations. The **Judicial Commission of Inquiry** has included the contextualization of these violent incidents in its proceedings and reviews.

A critical question arises: Is political and communal violence a brutal legacy of history, or is it intertwined with the socio-economic and political structures, state dynamics, ruling class intentions, and religio-cultural elements of the time? Political violence in this subcontinent has occurred in various contexts over the centuries. Historically, the roots of such violence can be traced to imperialism, hegemonic rule, exploitation, economic inequality, individualism, the fight for self-determination, and communalism.

While some of these elements still persist in contemporary times, communalism has taken on a distinct guise. Understanding the evolving relationship between politics, diverse communities, and ethnic groups in the region is essential to analyzing the character and nature of political and communal violence, especially following the 8th National Assembly elections of 2001.

From this perspective, the fundamental characteristics of post-election violence must be examined in light of the evolving political trends. Political violence in the subcontinent culminated in major historical events, such as the anti-British movement and the partition of the subcontinent in 1947, which introduced the concept of binationalism. Bengal, in particular, was divided along communal lines under the state of Pakistan, with East Bengal becoming East Pakistan.

The first constitution of Pakistan, adopted in March 1956, declared that the country would be governed based on Islamic principles, as Pakistan was created primarily for Muslims. This inherently biased framework left minority communities, including Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, and various tribal groups, marginalized and deprived of equal rights in East Pakistan.

Pakistani nationalism was inherently discriminatory, rejecting secularism and embracing religious identity as the foundation of the state. This anti-democratic nature of governance created bleak prospects for minorities in East Pakistan. However, the situation began to shift as the people of East Pakistan increasingly demanded their rights.

While East Pakistan was home to the majority of Pakistan's population, it faced significant cultural, linguistic, and political marginalization. The tensions between the state's Islamic identity and the aspirations of East Pakistan's diverse population, coupled with the socio-political inequalities, laid the groundwork for recurring political and communal violence, which continued to manifest in various forms, including the events following the 8th National Assembly elections in 2001.

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The people of East Pakistan were severely neglected and deprived in the realms of culture, trade, society, politics, and the economy. The region suffered from gross discrimination in all areas, including national administration. Long-term deprivation, humiliation, and systemic discrimination compelled the people to take a stand against such radical behavior.

The majority of Pakistan's population, primarily the people of East Pakistan, began to voice their demands for independence and claim their rights. This movement gained momentum with the **Language Movement of 1952**, which was initiated to secure the recognition of Bengali as a national language. What began as a demand for linguistic rights turned into a broader political movement through the sacrifice and bloodshed of the Bengali people.

The Language Movement ushered in a new era of cultural, economic, and political activism for the people of East Pakistan. Unlike prior struggles, this movement was not rooted in religion; instead, it was a secular movement that derived its strength from language and cultural identity. It marked the first **non-communal struggle for self-determination** by Bengali Muslims.

As the movement grew stronger, it bolstered the regional and linguistic identity of the people of East Pakistan, rejecting Pakistani nationalism and laying the groundwork for the **freedom struggle**. Farmers, workers, students, and the masses, along with political leaders, became integral parts of this movement despite the brutal suppression they faced. The freedom struggle culminated in the **Liberation War of 1971**, where the entire nation united for independence.

During the Liberation War, the condition of minorities, especially Hindus, became extremely precarious. The Pakistani military junta targeted freedom fighters and Hindus in East Pakistan, perpetrating massacres to reduce the Bengali population or force them to flee the country. Despite these atrocities, the majority of Bengali Muslims supported the freedom movement and often showed compassion towards the suffering of minorities, even risking their lives to protect them in many instances.

The liberation struggle ended with the defeat of the Pakistani junta, and on **December 16, 1971**, Bangladesh achieved independence. The Pakistan Armed Forces surrendered to the joint command of the **Muktijoddhas** (freedom fighters) and the Indian Army.

Bangladesh emerged as an independent nation through a long struggle for freedom under the leadership of **Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman**. Following independence, in 1972, a

new constitution was drafted, founded on the principles of **Bengali nationalism, democracy, socialism, and secularism**. Secularism, one of the four fundamental principles of the constitution, marked the beginning of a bright and non-sectarian era in the nation's history.

This achievement was particularly significant for secular forces and minorities, as it established fundamental rights and promised equality for all citizens. With the independence of Bangladesh, it was widely hoped that **communalism would come to an end**.

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As long as former President **Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman** was alive, Bangladesh remained constitutionally secular. However, this era of secularism ended on **August 15, 1975**, when the Father of the Nation, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, was tragically assassinated in one of the most brutal incidents in the nation's history.

In Bangabandhu's absence, the four national leaders who had played pivotal roles during the Liberation War—**Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmad, M. Mansur Ali, and A.H.M. Qamruzzaman**—were brutally murdered in jail. The anti-independence forces of 1971 avenged their defeat by orchestrating these assassinations, targeting both Bangabandhu and his family. After these heinous acts, the country entered a period of reactionary sectarianism rather than progressing along secular and democratic lines.

Khandaker Mushtaq Ahmed, who illegally seized power, declared in 1975 that secularism had no place in Bangladesh and that the country would be governed based on Islamic values. Through this declaration, communalism was reintroduced and institutionalized at the state level.

Following Mushtaq, **General Ziaur Rahman** assumed power as the then commander-in-chief. He later formed the **Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP)**, a political party that claimed nationalism as its core principle. However, based on various statements by Ziaur Rahman, it can be inferred that **Bangladeshi nationalism** was defined not by language or secularism but rather by faith in Islam as its central tenet.

Historically, the people of Bengal were known as **Bengalis**, encompassing all ethnic and religious communities. However, after Ziaur Rahman took power, the national identity shifted, and they were required to identify as **Bangladeshis**. This change drew a distinct dividing line between the **Muslim Bengalis of Bangladesh** and the **Hindu Bengalis of West Bengal**, despite the fact that both regions have populations comprising Muslims and Hindus.

The transition from **Bengali nationalism** to **Bangladeshi nationalism** marginalized religious minorities in Bangladesh. While some argued that this shift had positive aspects—emphasizing territorial identity rather than cultural or linguistic identity—it was widely rejected by minority communities, who felt excluded and alienated.

This shift also marked the removal of **secularism** as one of the core principles of the constitution. Another significant change was replacing **socialism** with **social justice** in the constitution, which served the interests of those in power. These amendments eroded the fundamental character of the constitution and represented a calculated attempt to gain favor with domestic and international reactionary forces opposed to the Liberation War.

After Ziaur Rahman's assassination, another military ruler, **Hussain Muhammad Ershad**, seized power and became President. Like his predecessors, Ershad made further changes to the state's policies, consolidating his power by pandering to fundamentalist sentiments. In **1988**, during his regime, the **8th Amendment to the Constitution** was enacted, declaring **Islam as the state religion** of Bangladesh. This amendment deepened sectarian divisions and institutionalized communalism at the constitutional level.

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General **Hussain Muhammad Ershad** further entrenched communalism during his regime. To consolidate his power, he awakened fundamentalist sentiments. Under his leadership, the **Jatiya Party** was formed, pursuing similar objectives as his predecessors. Through the **8th Amendment to the Constitution on July 7, 1988**, Ershad declared **Islam as the state religion** of Bangladesh. These policy and constitutional changes deepened sectarian divisions and institutionalized communalism at the state level.

After Ershad's fall, **Begum Khaleda Zia** became the Prime Minister of Bangladesh. Leading the **Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP)**, she closely followed the principles of her late husband, Ziaur Rahman. Khaleda Zia's government allied with the communal political party **Jamaat-e-Islami**, making it a partner in power. In foreign policy, she adopted the **anti-India stance** of Ziaur Rahman, which further fueled anti-Hindu sentiment among the minority communities in Bangladesh.

Following the political shift in 1975, communal consciousness grew stronger. The **anti-liberation forces** were gradually rehabilitated into mainstream politics, reaching positions of significant power and authority. This consolidation of reactionary forces led to the erosion of the spirit of the Liberation War, replacing it with a denial of its legacy.

As a result of this political evolution, radicalism spread across independent Bangladesh. Islamist groups sought to create a communal state, not through legitimate means but by distorting the country's secular foundations. During this period, supporters of the Liberation War—political parties, intellectuals, writers, journalists, poets, lawyers, and other progressive thinkers—faced severe torture and oppression, marking one of the most scandalous episodes in the nation's history.

In **1996**, under the leadership of **Sheikh Hasina**, daughter of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the **Awami League** came to power with a single majority in the **7th National**

Assembly Elections. Guided by the party's political philosophy, the government made significant efforts to promote harmony among religious communities. However, the lack of a parliamentary majority limited its ability to amend the constitution and fully restore the principles of secularism and the spirit of the Liberation War.

Despite these limitations, the government took several initiatives to protect minority rights and improve interfaith relations. Among these efforts was the historic **1997 Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord**, signed between the Government of Bangladesh and the **Chittagong Hill Tracts People's Solidarity Association**. This agreement aimed to safeguard the rights of the tribal communities and facilitate the return and rehabilitation of **Chakma refugees**, who had fled to India. It also included provisions for the restitution of tribal lands that had been occupied by Bengali settlers in the region.

In addition, just before the **2001 elections**, Parliament passed a bill amending the **Vested Assets Act**. This amendment sought to facilitate the return of properties confiscated from minority communities, particularly Hindus, during previous regimes.

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The amendment to the **Vested Assets Act** was believed to have finally paved the way for minority-owned businesses and properties to be returned in principle. However, despite nurturing the spirit of the Liberation War, the ruling party at the time lacked the parliamentary majority needed to amend the constitution and fully restore its foundational principles in line with the Liberation War's ideals. Although this restoration was central to the **Awami League's** political philosophy, the opportunity to integrate these principles into the mainstream remained unrealized.

Between **1996 and 2001**, Bangladesh experienced notable communal harmony. Under the spirit of **Bengali nationalism**, people of all communities enjoyed their rightful participation in every sphere of life without significant opposition.

As per constitutional provisions, after the Awami League's term ended, a **caretaker government** was formed on **July 16, 2001**, to oversee the **8th National Parliament elections**. Historically, Bangladesh faced allegations of election malpractices, including ballot-box stuffing, barring specific communities or groups from accessing polling stations, undercounting opposition votes, falsifying records, and announcing fabricated results through media channels. To address these longstanding issues and ensure free, fair, and impartial elections, the **caretaker government system** was introduced.

The primary role of the non-political caretaker government was to facilitate the electoral process for the next government. This government was restricted to managing routine administrative activities, avoiding policy-making decisions, to maintain continuity. Advisors were appointed in the hope that their impartiality would remain intact during their tenure.

From the moment the caretaker government was sworn in, it attempted to create the impression that it would responsibly oversee all aspects of governance, including foreign policy, social and economic development, and improvements in people's living standards. However, instead of reassuring the public, the caretaker government's behavior raised **anxiety and mistrust**.

Over **1,400 government officials** were transferred during the tenure of the caretaker government. On the night of **July 15, 2001**, immediately after the chief counsel was sworn in, 13 senior secretaries were transferred with unprecedented speed. This was followed by the **arbitrary transfer** of key officials, including department heads, commissioners, deputy commissioners, police superintendents, **Upazila Nirbahi Officers**, and station officers who were directly or indirectly involved in election-related and law enforcement activities.

These sudden transfers created panic among minority communities and the leaders and activists of progressive political parties. The administrative reshuffling, especially at the field level, fostered fears that the caretaker government might not act impartially.

The impartiality and credibility of the caretaker government were further questioned as its actions increasingly appeared to destabilize both the **state and society**. This heightened political division and created an atmosphere of uncertainty, particularly among minority groups and progressive forces.

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The principles and ideals of governance were deeply impacted during this period, reflecting significant shifts in the fundamental character and philosophy of power. The **minority communities** and **Awami League** leaders, particularly those aligned with the spirit of the Liberation War, faced **systematic persecution and intimidation**. This strategic oppression disrupted their ability to organize at the local level, especially for elections.

Minority **Awami League leaders**, workers, and supporter groups were subjected to threats and violence. Many were forced to leave their areas due to their involvement in election campaigning and organizing activities, rendering them unable to play an effective role. The lack of **accountability and transparency** in the state administration further exacerbated the situation, creating an environment of chaos.

The actions of the **caretaker government** destabilized the state and society, plunging the country into **anarchy** and deepening political divisions. This disorder created opportunities for political opponents to launch **planned violence** with far-reaching consequences, particularly targeting minority communities. The pre-election period witnessed a significant deterioration in the law and order situation, marked by **murders, injuries, rapes, lootings**, and attacks on public transport. This pattern of violence intensified **in the post-election period**.

After the **8th National Assembly elections**, violence was systematically organized against the **minority population**, often orchestrated from political positions of power. The perpetrators

targeted the **Hindu minority** for supporting the Awami League and forces aligned with the Liberation War. Violence was used to reduce the Hindu vote bank, attempting to **suppress voter turnout** by **threats** and **intimidation**, effectively altering the political balance.

During such oppression, the balance of power between minorities and their oppressors became heavily skewed. Political parties failed to offer sufficient support to minority communities. The **four-party alliance**, led by the victorious political party, the **BNP**, took advantage of administrative complicity to target minority communities and Awami League leaders. These attacks created a **leadership vacuum** for the Awami League at the local level, further weakening its position compared to its political opponents. As a result, **BNP-aligned attackers** faced little to no resistance at the local level during these violent incidents.

The **commission's field investigations** revealed a grim picture of **communal terrorism** and **political vendetta**. This terrorism manifested in four key forms:

1. **Terrorism**: Systematic violence and intimidation.
2. **Mental torture**: Including threats and psychological abuse.
3. **Expropriation of property**: Looting and seizure of minority-owned assets.
4. **Physical torture**: Culminating in **rape** and **murder**.

The right to vote, a fundamental component of democratic governance, was severely undermined. The commission noted that after the 8th National Assembly elections, the widespread incidents of **murder, rape, looting, and tyranny** represented a regression into **medieval barbarism**. The **expropriation of property** further entrenched this barbaric state of violence.

Public leader **Sheikh Fazlul Karim** strongly protested against and resisted this wave of post-election violence after witnessing its devastating impact.

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Prominent figures, including **Salim, Dr. Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, Saber Hossain Chowdhury, Bahauddin Nasim, and Colonel (Retd) Shaukat Ali**, as well as writer and journalist **Shahriar Kabir** and **Dr. Muntasir Mamun**, faced significant torture and detention. These incidents were widely reported in newspapers. Additionally, notable leaders like **Matia Chowdhury** and theater personality **Asaduzzaman Noor** were targeted.

Previous observations have firmly established that the assassination of **Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman** and his family was a **well-planned and comprehensive operation**. The military rulers who came to power after Bangabandhu's assassination, along with their successors, represented an extreme right-wing ideology, both in governance and within their political parties.

During this period, **Jamaat-e-Islami** and the **Muslim League**, which had been defeated in the Liberation War, actively participated in the **anti-secular movement** and played key roles in shaping state policies. This alliance, particularly under the **BNP-Jamaat coalition regime**, undermined the **spirit of the Liberation War** and sought to destroy the fundamental secular character of the constitution. Instead of fostering the values of liberation, these forces indulged in creating a **communal state** under the guise of religious nationalism.

This resurgence of **fanatical fundamentalist forces** and their increasing influence in politics led to the **development of militancy** in Bangladesh. With the participation and encouragement of these elements, militancy spread rapidly, supported by connections with **international terrorist networks**.

In its **April 4, 2002**, issue, the **Far Eastern Economic Review**, a weekly publication from Hong Kong, featured a report titled "**Silk of Terror**" and "**A Recipe for Trouble**", detailing the activities of radical terrorist groups in Bangladesh. The report highlighted concerns about the growing militancy, which were later validated through real-life events witnessed by the citizens of Bangladesh.

Militants, with the direct backing of **Jamaat-e-Islami** and allied political forces, carried out a series of heinous bomb attacks. One such attack targeted the **Udichi artist group** and the **Ramna Botmool traditional New Year celebrations**, leaving several innocent people dead or injured. Another bombing at **Baniachar Church in Muksudpur, Gopalganj**, claimed 10 lives.

These militant groups, operating under the **patronage of government parties and alliances**, carried out numerous bomb attacks across the country. Victims included prominent figures such as **Judge Sohail Ahmed, Shah A.M.S. Kibria (former Finance Minister)**, and several Awami League leaders. Others injured or killed in these attacks included **Sylhet Mayor Badruddin Kamran Chowdhury, Suranjit Sengupta**, and former Member of Parliament **Jebunnesa Afroz**. The attacks also targeted **Bangladeshi-British diplomat Anwar Chowdhury**, along with many lawyers, cultural figures, poets, writers, and innocent citizens.

Bombs were detonated in key districts, including **Sylhet, Sunamganj, Habiganj, Jhalkathi, Gazipur, Mymensingh, and Chittagong**, resulting in widespread destruction and loss of life. Terrorist acts also claimed the lives of prominent figures such as **labor leader Ahsanullah Master**, public leader **Manjurul Imam, Mumtaz Uddin**, and journalist **Manik Saha**.

An attempt was made to assassinate **Sheikh Hasina**, Bangabandhu's daughter and leader of the Awami League, during a public meeting in front of the Awami League office on **Bangabandhu Avenue**.

On **August 21, 2004**, the most heinous and brutal grenade attack in the history of Bangladesh was carried out with the intent to assassinate **Sheikh Hasina** and local Awami League leaders. Although Sheikh Hasina survived the attack, 22 leaders and activists, including Awami League leader **Ivy Rahman**, were killed. Many others, including innocent civilians, were severely injured.

The assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his family, the murder of the four national leaders, and the **August 21 assassination attempt on Sheikh Hasina** are undeniably linked to the same source of ideological hatred and extremism. The scale and organization of militant networks were further demonstrated on **August 17, 2005**, when a militant group orchestrated the simultaneous detonation of over **500 bombs** in all 64 districts of Bangladesh. This event exposed the **vast reach** and **deep roots** of these extremist groups.

These **communal militant groups** have identified the executive, judiciary, and parliament—the three core organs of the modern state—as their targets for destruction. Their ultimate aim is to establish a **communal state modeled after Pakistan**, erasing the spirit and values of the Liberation War. They seek to eliminate the leadership of secular and progressive political parties, create divisions and hatred through communal polarization, and destroy **Bengali culture and traditions**.

The **post-election violence** and **terrorist incidents** orchestrated by radicalized militants, often backed by the ruling elite, cannot be overlooked. The systematic and **organized bloodshed** of this period must be recognized as part of the broader history of political violence in Bangladesh. Excluding this chapter from the discussion would leave the narrative incomplete.

The **communal and political terrorism** surrounding the **2001 8th National Assembly election**, both before and after the polls, stems from a rejection of the **spirit and philosophy of the Liberation War**. The rise of fundamentalism, fueled by extremist interpretations of religious education, was aimed at preventing the development of Bangladesh as a **non-communal state**. Efforts to undermine the constitution's embrace of the Liberation War's ideals gave rise to militancy and sought to perpetuate absolute state power through terror and violence.

The main objective of these violent and terrorist acts was to destabilize and weaken progressive forces while consolidating the power of reactionary groups. Through **extortion, terror, and political violence**, these groups worked to eliminate their opposition and suppress democratic values.

The **post-election violence** was deeply rooted in the **ideological conflicts** between the progressive forces of the Liberation War and the fundamentalist factions. Leaders and activists of the **Awami League**, a non-communal political party rooted in the values of the Liberation War, along with **minority Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, and tribal communities**, were repeatedly targeted by the **BNP-Jamaat coalition**, which won the 2001 election.

In order to preserve the integrity of this discussion, it was crucial to address the **causes and consequences of post-election violence**, as detailed above. These observations highlight the ongoing struggle between secularism and extremism in Bangladesh's political landscape.

Nature and Types of Torture

The Commission observes that, after the **8th National Parliament Election in 2001**, terrorists affiliated with the victorious political party adopted various methods of torture against dissidents. The types of torture and violence identified are as follows:

1. Physical Abuse

Examples include:

- Murder.
- Grievous bodily harm.
- Beating and slapping.
- Assault on women, including sexual harassment and rape.

2. Economic Violence or Abuse

Examples include:

- a) Vandalism of houses, shops, and business establishments; looting and robbery.
- b) Illegal possession of property and land.
- c) Destruction of crops and vegetation, looting of livestock and poultry, capturing fish ponds, and in some cases, poisoning ponds to kill fish.
- d) Forced collection of donations or extortion.
- e) Encroachment on temple properties, vandalism of idols, and desecration of religious artifacts.

3. Mental or Emotional Torture

Examples include:

- a) Threats to leave the country or relocate from one's home or territory.
- b) Verbal intimidation, extortion, and abuse.
- c) Using offensive slurs, such as calling Hindu community members "**Maloon kids**" (derogatory term).
- d) Offensive and indecent behavior toward women.
- e) Desecration of religious sites, such as **puja mandaps** and temples.

Obstruction of Religion

This type of persecution specifically targeted the minority community. Villages with significant minority populations, which naturally had more temples and churches, faced higher incidents of religious violence. Worship places, idols, and other religious materials were destroyed, and access to places of worship was obstructed.

In many rural areas, especially in **Barisal, Khulna, and Chittagong divisions**, there were numerous instances of **religious violence** against minorities. These regions were found to have suffered more religious persecution than other parts of the country.

Extortion

A review of data from various sources shows that extortion incidents occurred in approximately **180–190 upazilas** across the country. Among them, **Barisal, Khulna**, and certain upazilas in the **Chittagong division** had the highest number of reported extortion cases.

The Committee's investigation revealed that extortion targeting minorities was more frequent in specific areas. According to statistics from a **BRAC (Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee)** study, incidents of extortion were reported from approximately **1,800 villages** across the country.

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During the investigation, the Commission received reports from **502 villages in Chittagong Division, 496 villages in Khulna Division, 417 villages in Barisal Division, 292 villages in Dhaka Division, 75 villages in Rajshahi Division, and 18 villages in Sylhet Division.**

In most cases, demands for **contributions** were made verbally and in person. However, in some instances, these demands were made through written letters. Members of terrorist groups and certain factions of the ruling coalition also took advantage of this situation to further exploit the victims.

Destruction, Looting, and Land Grabbing

The investigation revealed widespread destruction and looting of properties belonging to **defeated party leaders** and their supporters. Properties such as businesses, shops, industries, agricultural land, livestock, gardens, and fish ponds were targeted and plundered. Beyond looting, many houses, shops, and pieces of land were forcibly occupied. In some cases, water bodies and leased properties were also seized.

Looting incidents were most prevalent in the **southern and southeastern regions of Khulna Division**, throughout **Barisal Division**, and in the **southern areas of Chittagong Division**. Properties belonging to Awami League supporters were also systematically destroyed or damaged. These incidents occurred in homes, business establishments, industries, and agricultural lands. In extreme cases, entire establishments, along with their contents, were set on fire and completely incinerated.

Physical Torture and Violence

Extreme chaos erupted in various rural areas of the country, primarily after the elections, although in some cases, incidents began during the electoral process. **Minorities experienced fear of physical abuse even before the election results were announced**, and the situation deteriorated once the results became public.

Persecution of **non-Muslims** intensified immediately after the election results were declared. Terrorists associated with the ruling coalition often went to victims' homes to inquire about specific family members. Victims were stalked on the streets or publicly accused of having voted for the **Awami League**. Many Awami League supporters went into hiding due to **threats of violence**, and some families relocated their unmarried daughters to safe places to avoid **rape and other forms of abuse**.

Minority families were particularly vulnerable, with many men choosing to stay away from their homes at night to avoid being attacked. The Commission found that in most cases, the attacks were **premeditated**. However, in some instances, they appeared **opportunistic**.

The attackers used weapons such as **strickers, iron rods, machetes, knives, bolts, sticks, and hammers**. Victims were subjected to severe abuse, including being grabbed by their shirts, pushed, slapped, kicked, and beaten. Many suffered **serious injuries** or were left permanently disabled due to the assaults.

In many instances, **women and girls, both married and unmarried**, were subjected to **rape and other forms of sexual violence**. Minority women were the most severely affected. However, due to **social stigma, fear of public shame**, and concern for their reputation, many victims did not report these crimes or seek legal recourse.

Forced Displacement and Migration

In almost all cases where minorities abandoned their homes, the decision to leave was not entirely voluntary. Many families fled their homes due to **threats and intimidation**. This displacement often stemmed from a fear for their lives, as well as the risk of further violence, including sexual assault.

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Minorities were often **threatened with weapons** and coerced into leaving their homes. Different trends were observed in the displacement patterns of minority communities (see Table-1).

Many minorities were told they would be **killed if they did not leave**. In some cases, family members did not know the whereabouts of their loved ones after they fled. Some displaced individuals moved to **nearby villages or towns/cities** within the country, while others crossed the border to **West Bengal, India**. Those who relocated to India often had relatives there and crossed the border **illegally**, avoiding detection by border guards. Most of these refugees stayed

near the border to facilitate an easy return, though a few stated that their relatives who fled to India had no intention of coming back.

Table 1: An Example of Communal Violence in Hoglearchak

Background: Hoglearchak was a village where Hindus and Muslims had lived peacefully for many years. However, during the last election, certain individuals sought to **disrupt the peace** of the village.

As part of the preparations for Durga Puja, potters were crafting Durga and other idols in the courtyard of the village temple. One day, under the leadership of the chairman of the neighboring **Paikgacha Union Parishad, Mustafa Kamal**, a **large procession** entered Hoglearchak. The procession, celebrating the victory of the **four-party alliance** in the elections, appeared intoxicated.

As the procession passed the temple, the group suddenly began to **attack the idols**. At that time, the potters were working on the statues. When the potters tried to stop the attackers, some were verbally and physically assaulted. One person was severely beaten and had to be admitted to a **local hospital for head injuries**.

The attackers went on a rampage, destroying all the idols inside and outside the temple. After the attack, the procession resumed as though nothing had happened. While passing through the **Hindu-inhabited area**, some members of the procession **picked fruits from trees** and verbally abused the householders.

Response: The villagers reported the incident to local authorities, who sent an **investigation team** to Hoglearchak. Upon learning of the investigation, the chairman threatened members of the Hindu community, warning them not to accuse him of involvement in the incident or attempt to enter the temple.

This attack, especially the **vandalism of the Durga idols**, deeply wounded the **religious sentiments of the Hindu community** in Hoglearchak.

Location:

- **Village:** Hoglearchak
- **Union:** Goroikhali
- **Upazila:** Paikgacha
- **District:** Khulna

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Reasons Behind Forcing Minority Populations to Leave Their Homes

Several reasons contributed to the **displacement of minority populations** from their homes. A common perception was that **minority communities overwhelmingly voted for the Awami League**. As a result, many minorities were explicitly instructed not to vote for the Awami League. After the election, segments of the majority community exhibited **aggressive behavior** towards minorities, threatening them for various reasons, including allegations that they had voted for the Awami League.

In many cases, attackers justified their crimes by claiming they were **punishing minorities** for voting for the Awami League. At the same time, they argued that minorities deserved to be penalized simply for **not being Muslims**. Even those minorities who had not yet been attacked began to fear for their safety, realizing they too could be targeted at any moment. Consequently, many decided to flee to safer locations.

Minority individuals who had actively worked for the Awami League before the election believed they were at the **highest risk** of being attacked. Fearing for their lives, many of them quietly left their areas after the election. Similarly, those who faced **threats or attempted attacks** believed that remaining in their villages made them vulnerable to future violence (see Table-2).

In the months following the election, **members of minority communities** experienced repeated harassment. They felt that staying in the area would make them **targets of violence again**, prompting many to leave their villages. In some cases, **influential members of the majority community** exploited the post-election chaos to harass and threaten minorities, forcing them to leave.

Extortion and Economic Exploitation

In several instances, **extortionists demanded monthly payments** from minority community members. The amounts demanded were often beyond their means, but they were pressured to comply. When they refused or were unable to pay, they faced the threat of violence. Fearing punishment, many minorities decided to leave their villages temporarily to escape this **economic and physical harassment**.

Impact on Families and Livelihoods

Elderly individuals, particularly **elderly men and women**, were also forced to leave their homes due to fears of attacks. In some cases, **elderly family members were left behind** when the rest of the family fled to safer areas (see Table-3). Many minority families decided to leave after witnessing **attacks on nearby minority villages**, realizing they could be next.

The displacement of entire families caused significant disruptions to their **livelihoods and income-generating activities**. In many cases, families were forced to abandon their crops, which went to waste as there was no one left to harvest them. This not only resulted in financial loss but also compounded the emotional and social distress faced by the displaced families.

Minorities Fleeing to Escape Torture

Some members of minority communities attempted to leave their homes to escape **torture and harassment**. Among them were several **young women who had been raped**, which deeply affected their **self-esteem**, personal lives, and family dynamics. These incidents caused profound emotional trauma. Many left their homes **silently**, without even informing their neighbors.

Table-2: Case of Forced Displacement in Kushiya

A couple lived in a **Muslim-majority neighborhood** in the village of **Bahirkushia**. Their two sons worked in Dhaka, with one employed in a life insurance company. The couple owned **homestead and agricultural land**, which had drawn the attention of **influential villagers** who sought to acquire the property either **cheaply or unlawfully**.

To force the couple to leave, the influential individuals resorted to **various forms of harassment**. One night after the election, a group of **goons** broke into the couple's house and **severely beat the husband**, leaving him gravely injured. The wife and daughter managed to escape and sought refuge at a **neighboring Muslim household**.

The attackers **threatened to kill the couple** if they did not vacate the neighborhood. Out of fear for their lives, the couple constructed a small house on a **friend's property** in a Hindu neighborhood within the same village and moved there.

Upon learning about the attack, their two sons rushed to the village. However, the **goons prevented the sons from entering**, threatening them with death if they tried to return. The attackers ultimately **took over the couple's house and land** in the Muslim-majority neighborhood.

The couple filed a **case in court**, determined to pursue justice. However, they recognized they were **fighting against overwhelming odds**.

Location:

- **Village:** Bahirkushia
- **Union:** Mare
- **Upazila:** Naria
- **District:** Shariatpur

Table-3: A Tragic Incident of Sexual Violence

On the night of **October 5, 2001**, **Suniti Malakar** and her **16-year-old daughter** were **gang-raped by 20–30 armed terrorists**.

This horrifying event caused **widespread fear among elderly women** in the village, prompting many of them to flee their homes for safety.

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Post-Election Persecution and Displacement of Minorities

After the elections, cases were filed against minorities, accusing them of various offenses. Workers of the **Quadripartite Alliance** lodged these cases to **silence the minorities**, especially those who had been active during the election campaigns. To avoid arrest, the accused individuals fled their homes and went into hiding, fearing persecution.

Patterns of Leaving the Area

Minority communities adopted different strategies to leave their areas, depending on their convenience and the level of danger they faced.

- In most cases, the **terrified minority populations left silently**, so that the villagers and even some neighbors would not notice their departure.
- Sometimes, **entire families left together**, locking their homes as they fled. In other cases, only the **victims or those under immediate threat** left, while others stayed behind.
- Families often sought refuge with **relatives**, preferring places where they would encounter minimal difficulty or risk.
- Some **split up**, with family members staying at different relatives' homes to avoid suspicion. **Young girls**, in particular, were sent to **closer relatives** or **safer environments** to ensure their protection.

Places of Refuge

Victims of communal violence typically sought refuge in **neighboring villages**, especially in **minority-dominated areas**, where they felt relatively safer.

- **Relatives' homes** were the primary refuge for most victims. However, in some cases, victims found shelter in the homes of **influential Muslims**, such as chairmen or union council members. These individuals provided protection to oppressed minorities out of **humanitarian concerns** or a sense of duty.
- Those who took refuge in relatives' homes sometimes stayed **hidden during the day** to avoid being seen by other villagers.

Among the refugees:

- **Young men faced threats of death**, while **young women feared rape**, making nearby villages unsafe for them.
- As a result, many victims **moved to urban areas**, where they could live anonymously and feel safer, away from the eyes of their oppressors.

Duration and Conditions of Refuge

The time and place of refuge varied for each victim, depending on the level of **safety and opportunity** available to them.

- In some cases, victims **stayed away from home for a few days** until the situation improved, while others remained in hiding for **months**.
- **Young women often stayed indoors at night** to avoid being found by potential attackers.
- Families returned home only when they were confident of their safety, either through **personal inspection** or after receiving confirmation from a **trusted source**.

For many, the uncertainty of **when—or if—they could safely return home** persisted for long periods. Only after the situation was deemed secure did these persecuted minorities feel confident enough to resume their lives in their original homes.

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Observations from Post-Election Violence Reports

From the **narrations of victims of torture**, the **opinions of intellectuals in the area**, inquiries by various organizations, and reviews of reports and newspaper articles, several points regarding the post-election violence following the **8th Jatiya Sangsad election** have emerged:

1. The **administration failed to control the violence** effectively.
2. **Awami League supporters** or individuals who voted for the **boat symbol** became primary targets of the violence.
3. There was a **failure across all political parties**, large and small, progressive and conservative, to take effective action against the violence.
4. Violence and harassment were perpetrated in almost all cases by **representatives of the affected areas**, particularly **supporters of the winning party**, who aimed to suppress dissent.
5. No **effective effort** was made by any political or social organization to stand by the **helpless, oppressed victims** and resist the perpetrators, apart from issuing **statements or speeches**.
6. **Low-income groups**—urban and rural lower-middle-class and impoverished individuals, including **small-scale farmers, landless cultivators, day laborers, workers, fishermen, and small shopkeepers**—who identified with a specific political ideology (primarily

Awami League activists and supporters) became the primary victims of post-election violence.

7. **Political opponents** were subjected to torture, irrespective of their **gender, age, religion, or caste**.
8. **Women were abused** regardless of their **age or marital status**, with victims ranging from **children as young as 8–9 years old to elderly women**. Sexual violence was a prominent form of abuse.
9. With few exceptions, post-election violence did not occur in **urban areas**.
10. The **extent of persecution against minority communities**, particularly the **Hindu community**, was alarming. However, the number of **complaints received from minorities** was vastly insufficient compared to the actual number of victims who suffered persecution.

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Table 1. 2001 Post-Election Violence Complaints

Division of Bangladesh	Date: Jan10,2001 to December 31, 2002	Incomplete/Unspecified/Rejected Applications	Total Complaints
Dhaka	276	182	458
Chittagong	457	157	614
Rajshahi	170	182	352
Khulna	478	416	894
Barisal	2227	997	3224
Sylhet	17	12	29
Total	3625	1946	5571

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Table 2. 2001 Post-Election Violence Accepted Cases

Region	Political Killings	Rape/ Gang Rape	Aggression/Robbery/ Other Serious Crimes	Total Cases Registered	Charge Sheet	Final Report
Dhaka	92	184	276	52	45	7
Chittagong	97	360	457	49	41	8

Rajshahi	53	117	170	37	33	4
Khulna	73	405	478	44	40	4
Barisal	38	2189	2227	39	35	4
Sylhet	2	15	17	0	0	0
Total	355	3270	3625	221	194	27

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Overview of Violent Incidents Reported from 2003 to 2006

From 2003 to 2006, various types of violent incidents, including political assassinations, were reported. According to reports and information obtained from newspapers, organizations, and political sources, approximately **14,300 violent incidents** of various types were reported to the commission during this period. However, as these crimes do not fall under the jurisdiction of the Judicial Investigation Commission, they were excluded from the scope of the investigation.

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A Snapshot of Post-Election Violence at a Glance

Post-Election Violence by Division/District/Station

Post-election violence spread across various parts of the country. Reports from national dailies, various organizations, and complaints filed with the Commission revealed that certain divisions, districts, and stations experienced more significant damage. Below is a detailed breakdown:

(A) Barisal Division

1. **Bhola District:** Lalmohan, Bhola Sadar, Tajumuddin, Charfashan, Borhan Uddin, Daulatkhan Police Stations.
2. **Barisal District:** Sadar, Gournadi, Agailjhara, Uzirpur, Babuganj, Banaripara Police Stations.

3. **Patuakhali District:** Sadar, Dumki, Mirzaganj, Baufal Police Stations.
 4. **Pirojpur District:** Pirojpur Sadar, Nasirabad, Swarupkathi, Nazirpur Police Stations.
 5. **Jhalkathi District:** Nalcity, Rajapur, Kathalia Police Stations.
-

(B) Khulna Division

1. **Bagerhat District:** Sadar, Rampal, Mollahat, Swarankhola, Kachua Police Stations.
 2. **Jhenaidah District:** Kaliganj, Harinakundu Police Stations.
 3. **Jessore District:** Jhikargacha, Chowgacha, Keshabpur Police Stations.
 4. **Kushtia District:** Gaulatpur Police Station.
-

(C) Chittagong Division

1. **Chittagong District:** Banskhal, Mireswarai, Rajan, Sandwip, Satkania Police Stations.
 2. **Feni District:** Sonagazi, Daganbhuia Police Stations.
 3. **Comilla District:** Nangal Court, Chaudagram Police Stations.
 4. **Khagrachari District:** Ramgarh Police Station.
-

(D) Rajshahi Division

1. **Sirajganj District:** Sadar, Kazipur, Ullapara Police Stations.
 2. **Pabna District:** Sujanagar, Chatmohar Police Stations.
 3. **Rajshahi District:** Baghmara, Puthia Police Stations.
 4. **Natore District:** Baraigram, Bagatipara Police Stations.
-

Medium-Level Affected Areas

The **Dhaka Division** experienced a medium level of post-election violence. The affected districts within this division were:

- **Rajbari District**
 - **Gazipur District**
 - **Kishoreganj District**
 - **Netrakona District**
 - **Mymensingh District**
-

Other Relevant Opinions and Recommendations

In the view of the Commission, the following suggestions and recommendations are proposed to prevent political and communal violence:

1. **Freedom as the Foundation of Democracy:**

Freedom is a cornerstone of democracy and requires constant vigilance, especially when expansive state power threatens to marginalize certain groups. A democratic society must uphold the ideals of **social and economic equality** and highlight the values of **communal brotherhood**.

The denial of democratic rights—whether political, social, or economic—undermines the foundational principles of democracy. History shows that when **equality of opportunity and fairness** are not preserved, political democracy becomes a painful and difficult process to institutionalize.

2. **Democracy as a Culture:**

While democracy is a system of governance, it must also be understood as a **culture of tolerance**. Respect for diverse perspectives, the tolerance of opposing viewpoints, and equal opportunities for expression are vital to the success of democratic institutions.

The **post-election violence of 2001**—where individuals of different political affiliations, minorities, and communities became victims—posed a significant challenge to the democratic values of our homeland. These events highlight the fragility of democratic practices when power structures change after elections.

3. **Historical Context of Violence:**

For centuries, Bengal has experienced both harmonious coexistence and violent conflicts between communities. In some areas, **violence and property seizures**—driven by threats to life and liberty—undermined the notion of free and fair elections.

The historical trajectory of Bangladesh's social and political progress reveals a tendency toward **communal governance**, failing to foster tolerance, coexistence, and acceptance of differences in a democratic framework.

4. **Impact of Social and Economic Disparities:**

Empirical evidence suggests that greater **disparities in political, social, and economic opportunities** between groups increase social distance and weaken the foundations of democracy. A truly democratic society enriches humanity by promoting **mutual understanding and coexistence**.

5. **Responsibility of Majority Communities:**

Both majority and minority communities share responsibility for upholding democratic

values. However, the **majority bears a greater responsibility** to ensure justice and fairness for all.

6. **Good Governance:**

Good governance must go beyond socio-economic growth indicators. It must prioritize the **culture of civilization, tolerance, and human values**, paving the way for a more inclusive and prosperous future for everyone.

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Maintaining Political Stability and Honoring National Legacy

Our country has exemplary practices of multi-party democracy. For the integrity, independence, and sovereignty of the state, a **strong consensus and cooperation among major political parties** is essential, reflecting the true spirit of independence and its values. Any deviation from these ideals or the adoption of negative principles must be **firmly rejected** by the nation.

The **political ideals and philosophies** of political parties—along with their approaches to economic development, socialization, and ensuring constitutional rights for **Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, tribal, and indigenous peoples**—are central elements of political culture. The people of Bangladesh assess these elements during elections, reflecting their acceptance or rejection through the **exercise of their suffrage**.

Communal violence undermines democracy by obstructing its smooth functioning and paving the way for undemocratic forces to rise. A **relationship of trust and confidence between the ruling political party and the opposition** is crucial for political stability. Opposing forces must be addressed through political means while maintaining the **unity of those aligned with the Liberation War's ideals**.

Reviving the Spirit of the Liberation War

Reviving the **spirit of the Liberation War** and raising awareness among the new generation about its goals and the actions of opposing forces is essential. Efforts to **maintain communal harmony** must be prioritized alongside these initiatives. The ruling political parties and the government must:

- Demonstrate **patience and tolerance** while welcoming **constructive criticism** from the opposition.
- Encourage the **opposition party** to avoid violence and hostility, actively participate in legislation, and contribute to policy-making decisions in Parliament.
- Foster cooperation in Parliament by proposing constructive suggestions and engaging in meaningful discussions, supporting the government's efforts to ensure good governance.

By avoiding **lies and apolitical activities**, the **practice of democracy** will strengthen, promoting **tolerance and mutual trust**.

Honoring Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the great hero of the Liberation War, successfully led the **long struggle for freedom**, resulting in the creation of an independent Bangladesh. Denying this acknowledged truth or creating controversy around it reflects a **distortion of history** and dishonors the sacrifices of millions of martyrs.

Bangabandhu and his family were tragically murdered on **August 15, 1975**. His daughter, **Sheikh Hasina**, along with her party, the Awami League, and the entire Bengali nation, observes this day as one of **mourning and solemn reflection**. However, certain political parties and their leaders have chosen to **celebrate this day with joy**, despite its profound significance. This contradiction in political reality has caused **great concern and anxiety** for the nation.

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman holds a **sacred place in the hearts of millions of Bengalis** as the Father of the Nation. Recognizing his role in the Liberation War and expressing solidarity with the grieving hearts of countless Bengalis, particularly on this **Day of Mourning**, would promote **unity and understanding**. Demonstrating sensitivity to this national tragedy can help ease the tensions of divisive politics and pave the way for a **more harmonious political environment**.

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Promoting Communal Harmony and Inclusive Development

Communal harmony is an indispensable element for maintaining the unity and integrity of society. Religion plays a fundamental role in fostering **consensus and understanding** within communities. Despite differences in religious beliefs, Bangladesh's history of **nationalism, shared cultural practices, and linguistic similarities** demonstrates the possibility of unity. This unity was exemplified during the Great War of Liberation, where people from all faiths, religions, and ethnicities gathered under one flag.

In shaping the future of Bangladesh, individuals from all backgrounds—regardless of religion, caste, or race—must **work together**. Everyone's **opinions and rights** should be respected and prioritized. Policies must reflect true state interests, including:

- The **adoption of the Vested Property (Restoration) Act** to protect the Hindu community's property rights.

- Granting a **public holiday for the Christian community** on "Star Sunday," one of their key religious festivals.
-

Fostering Religious Tolerance and Education

The nature of relationships between religious communities, whether peaceful or conflict-driven, often depends on **perspective and understanding**.

- **Islam promotes respect and tolerance** toward other faiths and emphasizes religious freedom for all. This principle fosters **mutual respect** and helps form a positive societal outlook.
- Educational initiatives should be designed to **instill respect for minorities** among students and cultivate positive attitudes toward diverse populations.

A **secular culture** should be developed and embraced in Bangladesh to reflect the nation's diversity. Increased **awareness of human rights**, respect for humanity, and recognition of others' beliefs and behaviors can prevent violence against minority communities.

Language-Based Nationalism and Secularism

Language-based nationalism does not conflict with religion; instead, it promotes **inclusive practices and respect for diverse religious values within the state**. Such nationalism, centered on linguistic unity, should be **further encouraged**.

Secularism, as a key principle of democracy in a multi-party nation, is essential for **protecting human rights**. For the integrated development of Bangladesh, it is vital to uphold policies of secularism.

Strengthening Social Bonds

Stronger **social bonds** between groups reduce the likelihood of conflict. It is essential to:

- Strengthen **social connections** among religious communities.
- Bridge **social and economic divides** between groups to promote understanding and solidarity.
- Encourage **self-confidence** among minority communities, empowering them to participate fully in national development.

The **constitution of Bangladesh** prohibits discrimination based on gender, religion, caste, or language. Eliminating any form of discrimination is crucial for upholding the **rule of law**.

Engaging Indigenous Communities

Indigenous peoples are vital contributors to national development and should be encouraged to engage more in mainstream activities. To support their cultural and linguistic heritage:

- **Multilingualism** should be promoted by including indigenous languages in the curriculum, allowing them to be practiced as **mother tongues**.
- Indigenous communities should receive **constitutional recognition**, ensuring their rights and contributions are valued.
- The **Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Agreement** and the **Land Dispute Settlement Commission Act** should be reviewed to address conflicting clauses and ensure fair implementation.

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Recommendations for the Chittagong Hill Tracts and Beyond

The people living in the **Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT)** seek a resolution to the ongoing land disputes in accordance with the provisions of the peace agreement. As the region is predominantly inhabited by tribal communities, it is recommended that measures be taken to preserve the **special regional characteristics** of the area while promoting its overall development.

Efforts should focus on:

- Ensuring **universal constitutional rights** for religious minorities and tribal communities.
- Recognizing their **administrative and political rights**.
- Modernizing and mainstreaming the **religious education curriculum** while promoting **mutual sympathy** among followers of different religions.

Creating an environment where both religious and non-religious festivals can be observed peacefully will establish Bangladesh as a **model of religious freedom** and significantly enhance communal harmony.

Reviving the Spirit of the Liberation War

Restoring the **spirit of the Liberation War** in the Constitution, instead of maintaining its communal characteristics, is critical for addressing the rise of fundamentalist forces and militancy. The Hon'ble Supreme Court's recent declaration invalidating the **5th Amendment** has

partially revived the Liberation War's ethos in the Constitution. Further efforts are needed to fully **reconcile the Constitution with the values of the Liberation War**, thereby eliminating visible and invisible obstacles to communal harmony.

Caretaker Government System: Challenges and Concerns

Based on practical experience, the **caretaker government system** shows limited promise for the future. There is growing public frustration and apprehension about the **administration and election process** under this system.

- **Democracy** is the foundational principle of the Constitution, and the **caretaker government system**—lacking responsibility and accountability to the people—contradicts the core democratic values of the state.
- This system risks evolving into **autocratic rule**, as it centralizes authority without democratic checks and balances.
- The system originated during a critical juncture to restore democracy under the **doctrine of necessity**. However, its **mixed performance** in previous administrations has created doubts about its effectiveness.

The **8th and 9th National Assembly elections** highlighted the opacity and controversies surrounding the caretaker government's functioning. Citizens witnessed the political turmoil caused by attempts to form such a government before parliamentary elections. The **concentration of power in a single individual** during these times indicated tendencies toward **authoritarianism**.

Impact of Weak Administration

When a caretaker government assumes power, significant administrative reshuffles occur, including the transfer of:

- Secretaries in key ministries.
- District-level officials in the administration and police.

These changes often result in **inexperienced officials** being assigned critical roles, weakening the overall administration. For example, **Upazila Executive Officers, Deputy Commissioners, Superintendents of Police, and Officers-in-Charge of police stations**—who play pivotal roles during elections—may struggle to maintain order due to their lack of experience. This **weakened administrative framework** creates a power vacuum, leading to the **rise of anarchy** and instability.

Addressing Political and Communal Violence

The inability to play a proactive role in preventing political and communal violence stems from the tendency to curry favor with potential rulers. This attitude often **encourages terrorists** to resort to violence during critical situations, as they benefit from **employment and special patronage**. This represents a significant **negative aspect** of the caretaker government system.

Short-term governments, unelected by the people, disrupt the **continuity of popularly elected governments**, undermining democracy. These governments often portray themselves as **national saviors**, but the absence of clear guidelines regarding the appointment of advisers—where **kinship, friendship, and family relations** play a role—creates difficulties in ensuring public acceptance.

While the purpose of the caretaker government is to oversee elections to the **National Assembly** within the democratic system, the **Commission suggests** that there is room for debate on whether this **unaccountable system** should continue in the future. The **Election Commission** must be responsible for conducting **fair, free, and impartial parliamentary elections**, and it is essential to establish an **independent and autonomous Election Commission**, free from interference. Examples from other democratic countries in the subcontinent, such as India, can serve as models.

Preventing Post-Election Violence

The post-election violence following the **8th Jatiya Sangsad election** was characterized by **deep-seated conspiracies, targeted actions**, and organized brutality. While some degree of emotional outburst following election results—such as **excitement over victory or defeat**—may be common, the lack of overarching goals or positive attitudes exacerbates violent tendencies. However, **mutual respect, goodwill, and a positive political mindset** are key to preventing such violence.

The **9th National Assembly elections** also saw organized political and communal violence, though the nation witnessed a **more restrained approach** from political leaders and their workers. The **magnanimity, tolerance, and leadership of the top political leaders** after the elections provided a **hopeful example** of how democracy could progress without violence. This **cordial behavior** among opposing political factions set a precedent for preventing future post-election violence and aligned with the nation's expectations.

Impact of Violence on Victims

The targets of post-election violence were the **bodies and properties** of individuals and families. The incidents included:

- **Murder, rape, and looting**
- **Coercion, extortion, defamation, and physical abuse**
- **Sexual harassment, illegal property seizures, and false accusations**

The majority of those affected—physically, mentally, and economically—were **poor and destitute**. These **helpless and innocent people**, desperate for relief, filed complaints with the Commission in the hope of receiving **financial assistance**. Most of the victims sought justice and compensation for the severe impact on their lives.

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Findings and Recommendations on Post-Election Violence

The complaints filed by victims described the nature and extent of damages they suffered. During the Commission's on-site inspections, instances of **physical and property damage** were directly observed. The victims expressed **deep gratitude** to then-opposition leader **Sheikh Hasina**, daughter of Bangabandhu, for her support and **financial assistance** to those affected.

In the investigation, it was noted that **all aggrieved and oppressed persons appealed to the Commission for financial assistance**. The Commission recommends that it is **appropriate for the government to provide district-wise financial support** to the affected individuals in line with their reasonable expectations.

Extent of Violence and Investigative Challenges

According to data obtained from various sources, the number of violent incidents during the government following the **8th National Assembly election in 2001** exceeded **18,000**. Despite this, only **5,571 complaints** were officially filed, as the **Judicial Commission of Inquiry** was constituted nearly **nine years after the violence occurred**.

Historically, judicial commissions of inquiry tend to focus on **tangential or localized incidents** of public importance rather than conducting nationwide investigations. The Commission acknowledged that its capacity, limited manpower, and fixed investigation period allowed it to effectively address **3,625 incidents**. However, **many violent incidents remain unexamined**, primarily due to practical constraints.

The Commission believes that a **comprehensive and fair investigation** into incidents of violence that were overlooked is essential. To achieve this:

1. **Short-term inquiry committees/commissions** could be established in each district, comprising Additional District Magistrates, Assistant Superintendents of Police, and Executive Magistrates.
2. These committees would collect complaints, investigate incidents, and report to the government within **three months**.
3. A **monitoring cell** could be set up within the Ministry of Home Affairs to oversee and ensure proper investigations.

By consolidating reports from district-level inquiries and cross-referencing them with the Judicial Commission's findings, it would be possible to **reconstruct a comprehensive picture of post-election violence**.

Barriers to Legal Recourse for Victims

Despite the widespread occurrence of violence, **victims often failed to obtain legal recourse** due to **political influence**:

- In many cases, victims were unable to file complaints against identified party terrorists, as **police stations refused to accept cases** under pressure from the ruling political party.
- In instances where complaints were filed, **investigations were often incomplete or biased**, leading to **final reports recommending acquittal of the accused**.
- In rare cases where complaints proceeded to court, **party terrorists were acquitted** due to insufficient evidence, often resulting from a lack of proper investigation.

These systemic failures highlight the **urgent need for unbiased investigations and legal protections for victims**, ensuring justice and accountability.

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Legal and Judicial Challenges Post-2001 Election Violence

In several instances, **evidence was not permitted to be presented during trials**, or complainants/plaintiffs were coerced into withdrawing their cases under threat. The then-government reportedly **dismissed 5,890 alleged political cases**, effectively releasing **identified party terrorists**. Additionally, the names of **BNP party cadre defendants** were selectively removed from **945 cases**. The **unethical political influence** of the ruling **BNP-Jamaat alliance** blocked victims of post-election violence from obtaining legal recourse or justice in courts.

However, **media pressure**, advocacy by **opposition political parties, national and international human rights organizations**, and public opinion forced prosecution in **two sensational cases**. A few other cases related to post-election violence remain pending, primarily due to **failures in oversight and supervision**.

Systemic Barriers to Justice

Victims of the **2001 post-election violence** were often unable to file complaints at the time due to **illegitimate political influence**. Even in cases where complaints were filed, the **absence of proper justice mechanisms** within the existing legal system obstructed fair outcomes. The **politicization of law enforcement and judicial systems** perpetuated a cycle of **political vendettas** and **adversary-driven violence**.

The Commission **sincerely hopes** for a break from this pattern of repeated humanitarian disasters, fostering **mutual respect** and **recognition among political factions** to prevent future violence.

Recommendations for Legal Action

To address the complaints received and preliminary findings of the Judicial Inquiry Commission, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Filing Charges Against Criminals

- For violent incidents where cases were not filed, the Commission recommends filing charges against the accused mentioned in the complaints, even with a **satisfactory explanation for delays** in filing. Notably, under **criminal law**, there is **no statute of limitations** for filing such cases.

2. Investigating Politically Influenced Final Reports

- For cases where final reports were submitted without proper investigation due to **political interference**, the police administration should:
 - Conduct **additional investigations** under **Section 173(3B) of the Code of Criminal Procedure** to file fresh charge sheets.
 - This is supported by case law such as **Samsundabahr alias Maina v. State, 1984 BLD (AD) 206**.

3. Complaints Against Final Reports

- Victims or plaintiffs can file **petition complaints** objecting to the final report, as such reports are **not binding** on a magistrate or judge.
 - Upon receiving such applications, magistrates should record the complainant's statements and proceed accordingly.
-

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Recommendations and Guidelines for Legal Action

1. Trial or Further Investigation

- If material evidence exists, the case can be taken to trial or further investigation can be directed (**Shajahan Ali Mondal v. Belayet Hossain**, 47 DLR (1995) 478).
 - The grievance petition should include detailed information about the original complaint and investigation team.
2. **Acquittal Due to Political Influence During Testimony**
- If a chargesheet is filed after the investigation but political influence results in exculpation during testimony:
 - The declarant/plaintiff can file a **revision petition** against the judgment or order of acquittal under Sections 439 and 439(a) of the Code of Criminal Procedure.
 - **Tamadi (time-bar)** will not apply if a satisfactory explanation for the delay is provided (**Md. Zia Uddin Ahmed v. State**, 17 BLD (AD) 1997, 123).
3. **Discharge by Magistrate or Sessions Judge**
- If the Magistrate orders discharge during the framing of charges, a **revision petition** can be filed with the Sessions Judge under Section 439 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.
 - If the Sessions Judge orders discharge, a revision petition can be filed in the **High Court Division** under Section 439(a).
 - Tamadi is not applicable if a valid explanation is given, as established in **17 BLD (AD) 1997**.
4. **Case Dismissal Without Examining Witnesses**
- If witnesses are present but the case is discharged due to the failure to examine them over 2-3 consecutive trial dates:
 - A **revision petition** against the discharge order can be filed.
 - If the case is dismissed and the accused is acquitted, an **appeal** must be filed.
5. **Withdrawal of Cases by the Government**
- The government may withdraw prosecution under Section 494 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, subject to the consent of the trial court.
 - **Before the Framing of Charges:** The accused is ordinarily "discharged."
 - **After the Framing of Charges:** The accused is "acquitted."
 - Revisions can be sought against the order of discharge or acquittal before the Sessions Judge or the High Court Division.
 - If the government's withdrawal order does not state a valid cause or reason, it may be challenged as part of the court's consent order.

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If the context or reason for consideration is not mentioned, the withdrawal order may be canceled.

{**Smt. Pratibha Rani De v. Dr. Md. Yusuf**, 20 BLD (AD) 2000, p. 54}.

The precedent set in the case **17 BLD (AD) 123** regarding Tamadi's application applies here.

For cases under the **Special Tribunal (Special Powers Act)** or **Women and Child Abuse Prevention Tribunal**, where there is a provision for appeal, revisions will not proceed. Appeals must be filed within the specified time limit, and the provisions of **Section 5 of the Tamadi Act** cannot be applied in such cases. However, a remedy can still be sought under **Section 561(a) of the Code of Criminal Procedure** before the High Court Division.

Relevant Cases:

- **Sohail Ahmed Chowdhury v. State, 15 BLD (1995) 239 H.C.**
- **47 DLR (1995) 348 H.C.**
- **Samshul Haque v. State, 43 DLR (1991) 247 H.C.**
- **Vasi v. State, 43 DLR (1991) 209 H.C.**

Commission's Opinion

The Commission opines that the provisions of the law mentioned above are open to multiple interpretations. Therefore, any legal actions taken should be in line with well-considered judgments and opinions from legal experts.

To ensure proper application and monitoring, the Commission recommends the following:

1. **Formation of a Coordination Cell**
 - A coordination cell should be established under the **Legal Adviser/Legal Wing** of the Ministry of Home Affairs to monitor and manage cases effectively.
2. **District-Level Committees**
 - At the district level, a committee should be formed, comprising:
 - **The Public Prosecutor (PP).**
 - **A Representative of the District Magistrate (Executive Magistrate).**
 - This committee will be responsible for addressing cases related to post-election violence in their respective districts.

The Commission believes that with these measures in place, appropriate legal action can be taken to address post-election violence cases effectively.

A Sample of Some of the Sensitive Incidents of Post-Election Violence

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A Victim of Medieval Barbarism and Hellish Demonization: "Lalmohan's Venderbari"

More than 60-70 women were raped by BNP terrorists over two nights.

Place of occurrence: Venderbari, Annadaprasad village, Lord Hardinge Union, Lalmohan Upazila, Bhola District.

After the 8th National Parliament Election in 2001, violent incidents erupted across the country. One of the most horrifying incidents occurred at the "Venderbari" in Annadaprasad village, Lord Hardinge Union, under Lalmohan Police Station in Bhola District. This became globally infamous for the horrific acts of barbarism inflicted there.

Immediately following the elections, Awami League activists and supporters, especially minority communities, faced severe torture and oppression throughout the country. Due to the poor communication system and the 25 km distance between Venderbari and the police station, neither the administration nor journalists could initially gather accurate information about the events. There were widespread incidents of house looting, extortion demands, and the rape of women. Most of these atrocities went unrecorded by the police.

The Judicial Inquiry Commission conducted extensive investigations in the area to uncover the truth about the events at Venderbari. Interviews with local residents revealed the gruesome and brutal nature of the torture inflicted. Many victims confirmed the incidents but refrained from providing written statements or testimony, fearing reprisals. Several victims even requested the commission not to disclose their names and addresses.

According to local accounts, fear gripped minorities in Lalmohan following the 2001 elections. On October 2, minority women from neighboring villages sought refuge at Venderbari in Annadaprasad village, considering it a safe haven. Surrounded by paddy fields and ponds, the house became a sanctuary for over 50 women trying to protect their dignity.

However, the sanctuary did not escape the attention of the terrorists. Hundreds of BNP terrorists, divided into 8-10 groups, carried out a highly organized attack on Venderbari around 10:00 PM. The women were unable to protect their dignity. Some, desperate to avoid humiliation, fled into nearby paddy fields and ponds under cover of darkness. The attackers, threatening to drown their children, forced the women to emerge from hiding.

Among the victims were an eight-year-old child and a 65-year-old woman. Mothers, daughters, mothers-in-law, and daughters-in-law were raped together. A woman old enough to be the attacker's mother was assaulted by someone younger than her son. Even Shefali Rani Das, a disabled woman, could not escape their cruelty. While attempting to flee, she was caught by two

assailants and became unconscious due to their abuse. She later received treatment at Charfashion Hospital.

Many of the victims, fearing disgrace, left the country and sought refuge in India. The scars of this horrific incident continue to haunt the victims and their families.

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Testimonies from Venderbari: A Gruesome Account of Post-Election Violence

Pranod Chandra Das (40), son of Yogendra Kumar Das, from Anravada Prasad village, appeared before the commission of inquiry. In his statement, he wrote that after the 2001 elections, an estimated 200 people, including men, women, and children, sought refuge in his house. Among them, 70-80 were women and children. On October 2, 2001, approximately 60-70 individuals were brutally raped by BNP terrorists at his house. The attackers included Abu, Salim, Dulal from Chandpur, Zakir, and Ping Khalek from Anravadaprasad village.

The commission accepted his written complaint and conducted a thorough investigation, questioning people in the vicinity to verify the truth of the incident.

Another victim, Gangacharan Das, son of the late Kundu Kumar Das, also from Anravada Prasad, Lalmohan, Bhola, submitted a written complaint to the commission. He alleged that on October 3, 2001, around 9:00-10:00 PM, 6-7 terrorists forcibly entered his house. The attackers included:

1. Dulal, son of Kabbar Ali from Chandpur.
2. Alamgir, son of A. Mundbaf from Anravadaprasad.
3. Sohag Mia from Anravadaprasad.
4. Nazrul, son of the late Badiuzzaman from Chandpur.
5. Md. Akhtar, son of A. Hai from Fatemabad.

These individuals looted various belongings and raped his wife, Shefali Bala Das, and his daughter, Sushma Rani Das.

Gangacharan also testified that several women from the area, who were known to him, had fled to India after the violence, including:

1. Archana Rani Das (husband Nitai Lal Das).
2. Babita Rani Das (father Sudhaniya Kumar Das).
3. Nihari Rani Das (husband Milan Kund Das).
4. Charu Bala Das (husband Umesh Chandra Das).
5. Sadhana Rani Das (husband Becharam Das).
6. Usha Rani Das (husband Hira Lal Das).
7. Madhavi Bala Das (husband Main Chandra Das).

8. Madhuri Bala Das (husband Kshetra Mohan Das).
9. Geeta Rani Das (husband Sameeran Das).
10. Priyanka Bala Das (father Becharam Das).
11. Swarodhani Bala Das (husband Brajbashi Das).
12. Kusam Bala Das (husband Parimal Kumar).
13. Vishnu Rani Das (husband Ramani Kumar Das).
14. Sulta Rani Das (husband Yadav Chandra Das).
15. Savita Rani Das (husband Sri Das Chandra).
16. Shefali Rani Das (husband Subash Chandra Das).
17. Rita Bala Das (father Gafur Chandra Das).
18. Shefali Bala (husband Subhash Das).
19. Rinku Rani (husband Goranga Das).
20. Pushpa Rani (husband Rajalal Das).

Approximately 60-70 women from Char Anravada Prasad, Lalmohan, Bhola, were subjected to rape. In nearly all cases, the victims were unable or unwilling to file complaints with the police.

During its investigation, the commission verified the truth of these allegations by questioning locals and gathering additional evidence from the field.

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Names of Terrorists Involved in the Incident

The following names of individuals identified as terrorists involved in the incident have been obtained from various media sources:

1. **Dulal**
 - Father: Ali Akbar
 - Village: Chandpur
 - Police Station: Lalmohan, Bhola
2. **Ibrahim Khalil**
 - Father: Late Maulvi Mohammad
 - Village: Annadaprasad
 - Police Station: Lalmohan, Bhola
3. **Aktar (35)**
 - Father: Zafar Uliah
 - Village: Chandpur
 - Police Station: Lalmohan
4. **Saiful (40)**
 - Father: Osman Gani
 - Village: Anadaprasad
5. **Shahabuddin**
 - Father: Ah Hai

- Village: Chandpur
- 6. **Motahar (35)**
 - Father: Samchul Haque
 - Village: Fatemabad
- 7. **Bhutro**
 - Father: Moṭfa
 - Village: Anravada Prasad
- 8. **Nanarbu (37)**
 - Father: Lutfar Rahman
 - Village: Fatemabad
- 9. **Alamgir**
 - Father: Abul Hashem
 - Village: Syedabad
- 10. **Salim**
 - Father: Yasin Master
 - Village: Anavarda Prasad
- 11. **Zakir**
 - Father: Ah Malek
 - Village: Sarba
 - Police Station: Lalmohan, Bhola
- 12. **Nazrul**
 - Father: Badiuzzaman
- 13. **Abu**
 - Father: Jalil
- 14. **Mizan**
 - Father: Ishaq
- 15. **Idris**
 - Father: Ah Kader
- 16. **Mosharraf**
 - Father: Shahabuddin Mia
- 17. **Bablu**
 - Father: Nuruzzaman
- 18. **Kamrul**
 - Father: Nuruzzaman

Additionally, 20-25 other individuals whose names and addresses are still unknown were also reportedly involved in the incident.

Attack on Awami League Supporters in Muktarpur Village: Terrorists Sever Two Legs

Location: Chowagacha Upazila, Jessore

In the 1996 election, Awami League candidate Rafiqul Islam won the Chougacha-Jhikargacha constituency. To celebrate this victory, local Awami League supporter Abdul Barik Mandal (Father: Zeenat Ullah Mandal, Village: Bhadra, Post Office: Muktarpur, Chougacha, Jessore) slaughtered cows at his home and organized a feast.

Following the defeat of the Awami League candidate in the 2001 election, BNP and coalition terrorists targeted Abdul Barik Mandal. The attackers included:

1. **Md. Salim** (Father: Md. Shamchur Rahman)
2. **Md. Manik** (Father: Shah Jahan)
3. **Md. Tariqul Islam** (Father: Abdul Biswas)
4. **Md. Obaidul Islam** (Father: Waheed Ali)
5. **Md. Moral** (Father: Waheed Ali)
6. **Ahmed Ali** (Father: Hatim Biswas)
7. **Abdul Aziz** (Father: Bakht Jamal)
8. **Md. Abu Mandal** (Father: Md. Khalek)
9. **Md. Ibrahim** (Father: Javed Ali Mondal)
10. **Md. Rashid** (Father: Masud Ali)

These individuals, armed with deadly weapons, formed a gang, stormed Abdul Barik Mandal's house, and abducted him. They gruesomely severed both of his legs using sharp weapons. Believing him to be dead, the attackers left him behind.

Abdul Barik Mandal was rushed to the hospital in a coma. Despite prolonged treatment, he survived but was left permanently disabled.

The investigation commission visited Jessore to investigate the incident. The victim appeared before the commission and recounted the horrific details of the attack. His testimony was recorded by the commission's chairman.

During his deposition, the victim alleged that the attack was instigated by former BNP minister Tariqul Islam.

Rape of Rajufa (Kajli), Baghmara

Location: Baghmara, Rajshahi.

On the night of March 21, 2002, after everyone in the house had finished dinner, the plaintiff, Md. Rajab Ali, the son of the deceased Amir Sikdar, and his three sons, Alakjan, Jewel, and his daughter, Rajufa (Kajli) (8 years old), were sleeping in the house.

Around 3:00 AM, the following accused, supported by the BNP:

1. Ashraful Alam
2. Israfil
3. Rahim Uddin
4. Moke (Mokleshur)
5. Zakirul (Santu)
6. Askan (Aminul)
7. Amjad Hossain all residents of Sang Konda Thana, Baghmara, District Rajshahi, broke into the house by breaking the lock. They attempted to rape the plaintiff's minor daughter, Rajufa (Kajli).

During the attack, Jewel, Rajufa's brother, was threatened with a knife. Some of the accused held Rajufa's hands and feet while the accused Ashraful stabbed Rajufa with a knife. Accused Ashraful then raped her after cutting her pajama near her genitals.

It appears that the pajama was cut with a knife, and Rajufa's genital area was injured and bleeding.

Rajufa's parents were awakened by her screams and came to her aid. The accused then fled the scene.

Later, Rajufa was taken to a local doctor in a critical condition. Following the doctor's advice, she was treated at a service clinic in Rajshahi.

Subsequently, a case was filed in the learned court. As per the instructions of the learned court, the case was registered at Baghmara Police Station under Case No. 4 dated April 5, 2002, under Section 9(1)/30 of the Women and Child Abuse Prevention Act, 2000.

After investigation, a charge sheet was filed against all the accused.

Upon trial, the learned judge found the following juvenile offenders guilty:

1. Md. Ashraful Alam
2. Md. Israfil
3. Md. Rahim Uddin
4. Moke (Mokleshur) Rahman

They were each sentenced to life imprisonment and fined 10,000/-. The other accused were acquitted.

The victim, Rajufa (Kajli), is currently residing at Sagar Para in Rajshahi city and is studying at Bholanath High School under the care of A.C.D. (Association for Community Development).

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Suicide of Teenager Mahima After Gang Rape

Place of Occurrence: Puthia Police Station, Rajshahi.

Date of Incident: February 15, 2002, at approximately 5:00 PM.

Victim: Mahima Khatun (14 years old), daughter of Md. A. Handban, resident of Kathal Baria, Thana Puthia, District Rajshahi.

Accused:

1. Farid, son of Sekender
2. Farooq, son of Motaleb
3. Salim, son of Khalil
4. Ujjal, son of Mosharraf
5. Mosharraf Hossain, son of Javed Ali
6. Sekender Ali, son of Mahatab
7. Ah Motaleb, son of the deceased Syed Ali
8. Khalil, son of Lokman All residents of Kathal Baria, Senbhag, and Bara Senbhag, Thana Puthia, District Rajshahi.

On February 15, 2002, the accused, supported by the BNP, forcibly took Mahima Khatun to the nearby house of Abu Bakka and gang-raped her. They also took photographs of Mahima Khatun during the assault.

Efforts were made to settle the matter locally, but due to the lack of a successful compromise, Mahima Khatun, unable to bear the humiliation of the rape, consumed poison at around 11:30 AM on February 19, 2002. She was taken to a local hospital but was declared dead by the doctor on duty.

Mahima Khatun's father, Md. A. Handban, filed a complaint with the Puthia Police Station.

- **Case No. 21 dated February 19, 2002:** Filed under Sections 7/9(3)/10 of the Women and Child Repression Prevention Act, 2000.
- **Case No. 22 dated February 19, 2002:** Filed under Section 306 of the Penal Code (abetment to suicide).

This incident created a significant stir in the area. The then Leader of the Opposition (the current Prime Minister) and the then Home Minister visited the spot.

Court Verdict:

- **Case No. 21:** All accused were sentenced to death under Sections 7/9(3)/10 of the Women and Child Repression Prevention Act, 2000.
- **Case No. 22:** All accused were sentenced to imprisonment for 2 to 7 years under Section 306 of the Penal Code.

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Rani Mandal Narrated the Story of Brutal Torture

Place of Occurrence: Rampal Upazila, Bagerhat District

During the commission's on-site investigation, members arrived at Bagerhat Circuit House from Pirojpur on the night of April 15, 2010 (Thursday). On April 16, 2010, from 10:00 AM, the commission began recording testimonies from victims of abuse. Present at the Circuit House were the President of the Bagerhat District Awami League and Member of Parliament for Bagerhat-4 Constituency, Mozammel Hossain, and Member of Parliament for Bagerhat-3 Constituency, Syed Habibun Nahar.

At that time, **Rani Mondal**, a victim of gang rape, testified before the commission. At the time of the incident, she was 20 years old and is now 30 years old. While recounting the horrific story of her torture, she stated that on August 21, 2002, following the orders of BNP leader Mallik Mizanur Rahman alias Majnu and Bashir Kazi, the following individuals committed atrocities against her:

1. Majnur Rahman (BNP Police Station Convener)
2. Abul Basar
3. Taib Noor
4. Kamal Hunter
5. Kamal Lessee
6. Bazlur Rahman
7. Palash
8. Between Shikdar
9. Il Farazi
10. Himu Kazi
11. Guard of Jindba Noor
12. Imdad
13. MA Mandban
14. Haroon Mallick
15. Mostafizur Rahman
16. Hafiz Uddin

17. Altabagon

On the evening of August 21, 2002, at approximately 7:00–7:30 PM, she was called to the BNP office. There, her hair was forcibly cut, she was stripped naked, and beaten with hammers. They took photographs of her, forced her to urinate when she asked for water, and subjected her to rape. They also inserted sand and glass powder into her genitals.

During her deposition, Rani broke down in tears. She showed some of the torture marks on her body to the members of the commission.

Rani Mandal informed the commission that during the trial of the case, the then-President of the District BNP and former MP of Bagerhat-2, Asan MAH Salim, called her to his house in Bagerhat and tried to coerce her into signing a settlement letter for the case. Due to threats from the terrorists and her inability to produce witnesses, Rani was forced to transfer her case to Dhaka and later to the Khulna Women and Children Torture Prevention Tribunal.

11051 Bangladesh Gazette, Extra, April 1, 2014

Gang Rape of Teenager Poornima¹

Place of Occurrence: Ullapara, Sirajganj.

Poornima, a fifteen-year-old Class 10 student, was gang-raped in October 2001, leaving her traumatized.

On the night of October 8, 2001, a horrific incident occurred at the home of Anil Kumar Sheel in Delua village, Ullapara Police Station, Sirajganj. A group of 25-30 terrorists, including:

1. Md. Khalil Mia
2. Md. Ah Jalil Mia
3. Md Liton Mia
4. Md Altaf Hossain
5. Md Anwar Hossain
6. Md Rezaul Haque
7. Md. A. Malek
8. Md. Hussain Ali
9. Md. Chabed Ali
10. Md. A. Rauf
11. Md. A. Mandban
12. Md. Majnu Mia
13. Md. Yusuf Ali

¹ Rape of Purnima Rani Shil – Wikipedia. Available at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rape_of_Purnima_Rani_Shil

14. Md. Momin Hossain
15. Md. Mansoor Ali
16. Md. Zahurul Islam
17. Md. Heaven Mia
18. Md. Yasin Ali
19. Md. Abdul Mian
20. Md. Babul Mian

stormed Anil Sheel's house. They brutally assaulted Anil's wife, Basana Rani, who tried to protect her daughter, rendering her unconscious. They then abducted Poornima and gang-raped her.

This heinous act was allegedly carried out by BNP-affiliated terrorists in retaliation for Poornima's family's support for the Awami League during the previous parliamentary elections. Poornima's father, Anil Sheel, had served as an election agent for the Awami League candidate, Abdul Latif Mirza, at the Delua Vidyalaya polling station. Furthermore, Poornima's mother had served as an Ansar (volunteer) at another polling station.

Despite the severity of the crime, the police, under pressure from the BNP-led alliance, only filed a case under Sections 143/448/323/324/325/379/354 of the Penal Code, failing to include charges related to rape. The case was filed by the then Officer-in-Charge of Ullapara Police Station, Mr. Md. Abul Hossain, and assigned to SI, Md. Sirajul Islam Khan.

On October 16, 2001, the victim, Purnima Rani Sheel, gave a statement under Section 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure in the learned court, detailing the horrific ordeal.

On October 14, 2001, a medical examination of Purnima Rani Sheel was conducted. The medical report, dated October 20, 2001, confirmed evidence of rape.

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"On the basis of the physical examination and findings correlated with those of the pathological examination, we, the doctors of the board, are of the opinion that the findings on her body are consistent with recent sexual intercourse."

In light of the statement given by the victim, Purnima Rani Sheel, to the learned court and the medical report related to the rape, on 24/10/2001, based on the advice of the concerned Magistrate Court and the recommendation of the learned PP (Public Prosecutor), an application was made to the learned Special Court for the Prevention of Torture Against Women and Children. This application sought the addition of Section 7/9(3)/10(1) of the Women and Child Torture Suppression Act/2000 to the sections already cited in the case registered in Sirajganj.

Later, under the verbal instructions of senior police officers, the former Officer-in-Charge (OC), Police Inspector Sheikh Ataur Rahman, took over the investigation of the case on 03/11/2001. After investigating the case, the complaint was filed under Complaint Letter No. 115, dated 9/4/2002, citing Section 7/9(3)/30 of the Women and Child Torture Prevention Act/2000. Additionally, another complaint was filed under Complaint No. 116, dated 9/4/2002, citing Sections 143/448/323/324/379 of the Penal Code. Both complaints were submitted to the learned court, and the case is currently pending.

The then OC of Ullapara Police Station, Abul Hossain Moral, was suspended for failing to properly register Purnima's rape case in accordance with the law and for dereliction of duty. This gruesome, heart-wrenching incident occurred under the watch of the four-party coalition government of the time. However, Hon. MP M. Akbar Ali, in a crowded press conference, dismissed reports of torture on minorities in Ullapara as fabricated, fictitious, and politically motivated. He further alleged that the rape incident in Ullapara was part of a political conspiracy orchestrated by Latif Mirza.

11053 Bangladesh Gazette, Extra, April 1, 2014

Talented Student Imrul Kayes Kanak Dies Prematurely

Place of occurrence: Chauladanga Village, Kazipur Upazila, Sirajganj

Imrul Kayes Kanak, a brilliant student and the son of Abdur Rashid Talukdar of Chauladanga Village, Kazipur Upazila, Sirajganj, was fatally attacked while returning home from the nearby Sonamukhi Mela. Local Chhatra Dal terrorists, including:

1. Prince, father- Mozammel Haque
2. Khalek, father- the late Chutka Mandal
3. Shamim, father- Solaiman
4. Shamim, father- Zahirul (Khoka)
5. Shahjamal (Shaha), father- Parbat Talukdar

and a total of 17 others, brutally assaulted Imrul Kayes Kanak with weapons including Chinese axes, iron rods, pickaxes, and randa. Despite Kanak's cries for help, no one dared to intervene out of fear for their own lives.

Kanak was later taken to DMK Hospital for emergency treatment in critical condition but succumbed to his injuries later that afternoon.

Kanak's uncle, Anwar Hossain Thandu, filed a case against the accused. Initially, the police were active in pursuing the case and arresting the accused, but within a week, their efforts mysteriously slowed. The defendants and their accomplices began threatening the plaintiff and

witnesses, making their safety uncertain. Eventually, the plaintiff and witnesses were forced to leave their homes for their safety.

Due to political influence, a proper investigation of the case was delayed for a long time. However, following media coverage and public demand, the investigating officer was changed, and after the third round of investigation, the CID filed charges in 2005 against 17 leaders and activists of Juba Dal and Chhatra Dal.

The trial of this gruesome murder case has not been concluded. The case (SC 28/2007) is currently under trial in the Sirajganj District Judge's Court.

11054 Bangladesh Gazette, Extra, April 1, 2014

Nazirhat College Principal Gopal Krishna Muhuri's Violent Murder

Place of Occurrence: Chittagong

On Friday, November 16, 2001, at approximately 7:30 a.m., four armed unidentified youths, posing as members of the DB Police, fatally shot Gopal Krishna Muhuri (60), the principal of Nazirhat Degree College, at his residence on Jamal Khan Road, Chattogram city. The murder was carried out using an automatic weapon, with Muhuri being shot in the head.

This heinous act was executed by armed cadres of Jamaat Shibir in a well-planned manner. Following the murder, an undeclared hartal (strike) was observed on November 16 in the Jamal Khan and Momin Road areas of Chattogram, with protests and street processions erupting across the city.

Principal Muhuri's wife, Uma Muhuri, a Railway Audit Officer, filed a murder case at Kotyali Police Station in Chittagong. The case was registered as **Kotyali Police Station Case No. 42, dated 16/11/2001, under Sections 302/120(b)/34 of the Penal Code**. Following an investigation, the police submitted a complaint letter (No. 635, dated 13/11/2002) to the learned court.

A total of 11 individuals were charged. After the trial, the court sentenced the following individuals to death:

1. Gitru Nasir
2. Taslim Uddin alias Montu
3. Azam
4. Alamgir Kabir alias Baija Alamgir

Gitru Nasir later died in prison under suspicious circumstances.

The court also sentenced four individuals to life imprisonment:

1. Mohiuddin alias Main Uddin
2. Habib Khan
3. Shajahan
4. Saiful alias Chhota Saiful

However, three accused—Idris Mia (a college teacher), Tafazzal Ahmed, and Zahirul Haque—were acquitted by the court.

The murder of Principal Gopal Krishna Muhuri was a result of his bold stance against wrongdoing, irregularities, and illegal pressures in the management of Nazirhat Degree College. His refusal to yield to the self-serving interests of Jamaat Shibir cadres made him a target for this premeditated murder. The terrorists strategically chose Friday, a day off, to carry out their plan.

The brutal killing sparked outrage across Chattogram. Protests and black-flag processions swept through the city, with Jamal Khan Road becoming the epicenter of public demonstrations. Since the murder, Jamal Khan Road remained closed to traffic as it turned into a hub of protests and processions against this act of violence.

11055 Bangladesh Gazette, Extra, April 1, 2014

Post-Election Violence in Kaliganj, Jhenaidah District: Hellish Destruction, Looting, and Tyranny (2–6 October and 17 October 2001)

After the four-party coalition government came to power on October 1, 2001, BNP-Jamaat terrorists engaged in widespread looting and destruction in Kaliganj. Between October 2 and October 6, and again on October 17, 2001, the area, including Shamsar Nagar Bazar, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Memorial College, and Shamsar Nagar Secondary School, witnessed violent atrocities.

Summary of Events:

- **Targeted Looting and Destruction:**
Goods from businesses, as well as furniture from schools and colleges, were looted and transported using rickshaws, vans, and Nachimans.
- **Disruption of Communication:**
The wooden bridge over the Buri-Bhairav River was destroyed to prevent resistance from other areas.
- **Terrorist Actions:**
Terrorists led by Wazed Ali (father: Mohammad Waheed Ali) looted shops, including a grocery store, a fertilizer and pesticide shop, and a decorator's shop. They also looted Shahjahan's cycle parts shop.

- **Weapons Used:**

The terrorists carried ramadas, Chinese axes, machetes, hammers, sticks, and iron rods, which they used to vandalize shops and infrastructure.

Notable Acts of Destruction and Looting:

1. **Dr. Rashed Shamsar (Father: Late Dr. Shamsar Ali):**
 - Looted a medicine shop in the Paka market and cut down mahogany trees.
2. **Md. Tariqul Islam (Father: Late Dr. Shamsar Ali):**
 - Vandalized the Paka market and looted a grocery shop.
3. **Md. Shahidul Islam (Father: Late Dr. Shamsar Ali):**
 - Stole the rice mill engine, vandalized buildings, and looted paddy and rice.
4. **Md. Lovelu (Father: Late Dr. Shamsar Ali):**
 - Vandalized and looted a grocery store.
5. **Dr. Babul Akhtar (Father: Late Dr. Shamsar Ali):**
 - Looted and vandalized a medicine shop.
6. **Dr. Aziz (Father: Late Babar Ali Biswas):**
 - Vandalized the Paka market and looted fertilizers and pesticides.
7. **Md. Tipu Sultan (Father: Md. Samchuddin):**
 - Vandalized a shop and looted fertilizers and pesticides.
8. **Md. Shariful Islam (Father: Late Dr. Shamsar Ali):**
 - Vandalized a shop.
9. **Mr. Paritosh Ghosh (Father: Purna Ghosh):**
 - Tenant of Tariqul Islam, lost paddy, rice, chala, and lentils to looters.
10. **Shahidul and His Eight Brothers (Father: Late Dr. Shamsar Ali):**
 - Field crops were looted.
11. **Shamsar Nagar Secondary School:**
 - Furniture was vandalized and looted.
12. **Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Memorial College:**
 - Infrastructure and furniture were vandalized and looted.

These acts of violence not only caused immense physical and economic harm but also targeted institutions named after the Father of the Nation, symbolizing an attack on the legacy of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

11056 Bangladesh Gazette, Extra, April 1, 2014

The Story of Jayanti: Struggling to Give Birth in Fear of Terrorists in West Charoumed Union, Lalmohan Upazila Giving Birth in Paddy Fields While Fleeing BNP Terrorists

After the 8th National Assembly elections on October 2, 2001, a horrific incident occurred in Jahazamara village of Ward No. 7, West Charoumed Union, Lalmohan Upazila, Bhola District.

Jayanti, a village housewife, was enduring labor pains, awaiting the birth of her first child. Around 3:00 PM, a group of over fifty armed terrorists, led by local BNP leader Jahangir Matbar from Ilisha Kandi village, attacked the village. Armed with knives, sticks, and bolts, they stormed the huts, causing panic among the villagers, who fled in fear.

Jayanti's mother-in-law, Mukti Rani, was assisting a local midwife in delivering the baby. However, the terrorists began attacking the house, cutting through the bamboo fence and attempting to break in. Fearing for their lives, the midwife fled, leaving only Mukti Rani, Jayanti, and the imminent arrival of the baby. Amid the chaos, Jayanti gave birth to a baby boy.

Desperate to save Jayanti and the newborn, Mukti Rani wrapped the baby in her sari and broke through another section of the fence to escape. Dragging the exhausted new mother, she headed towards the nearby paddy fields in search of safety. Despite Jayanti's frail condition, Mukti Rani forced her to move, fearing for their lives. In the paddy field, Mukti Rani borrowed a blade from a fellow villager to cut the umbilical cord of the newborn.

The group of villagers, including Mukti Rani and Jayanti, huddled together under a tree in the middle of the paddy field, anxiously waiting until 9:00 PM when they heard that the terrorists had left the village. Only then did they dare return to their devastated homes.

The newborn child was fittingly named *Sangram* (meaning "struggle") in honor of the harrowing circumstances surrounding his birth.

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Gournadi College Chhatra League Leader Shafiqur Rahman Succumbs to Brutal Attack Place of Occurrence: Gournadi, Barisal

After the 8th National Assembly elections on October 1, 2001, fear spread among the minority men and women in Gournadi and Agailjhara upazilas, forcing many to flee. Shafiqur Rahman, a Chhatra League leader from Gournadi College, managed to escape for several days. However, upon returning home to care for his sick mother, he left the house to buy medicine.

While on his way, BNP cadre members—Kalu, Salim, Masud, Suman, Rubel, Swapan, and Babu, along with 10–12 others—dragged him from Gopal Sheel's saloon. They took him near the town's food warehouse, where he was brutally tortured. At one point, Shafiqur managed to escape but fell into a nearby canal. The attackers tried to drown him in the water to kill him.

Shafiqur Rahman managed to return home, where he underwent treatment for two days. As his condition worsened, he was admitted to Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital, but despite receiving medical care, he succumbed to his injuries.

Following this brutal murder, a case (Gournadi Police Station Case No-06, dated 26-11-2001, Section-302/34) was filed. After completing the investigation, the following individuals were charged:

1. **Masud alias Hakar Masud**, Father- Madhu Mia Howladar, Sang- Chargadhatli
2. **Rubel**, Father- Abdur Rahim
3. **Swapan alias Chhota Swapan**, Father- Sekandar Coolie alias Kudda alias Sekandar Ali Bayati, Sang- Chargadhatli
4. **Sajal**, Father- Madhu Mia Howladar, Sang- Chargadhatli
5. **Suman Karmakar**, Father- Unknown, Sang- Chargadhatli
6. **Babu alias Shamim Mollah**, Father- Deceased Hatim Mollah, Sang- Tikasar
7. **Jewell**, Father- Deceased Badiqul Islam Khalifa, Sang- Kashmabad

The complaint was officially filed with Gournadi Police Station under Complaint Letter No. 15, dated 26/01/2002.

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Electoral Violence in CharFashion, Bhola's Image

In this police station of Dwip District Bhola, since the election of the 8th National Assembly, Awami League workers and supporters, especially minority families, were subjected to nearly two months of torture. Due to poor communication systems, in many cases, administrative personnel and even journalists could not collect accurate information about the incidents. Numerous cases of house robbery, extortion, and even rape of women occurred, with most not recorded by the police. Victims often refrained from filing complaints out of fear.

In almost every case, women in the affected families did not resort to legal action due to fear of shame and social humiliation, often keeping these incidents secret. Even when neighbors or locals were aware of or suspected the violence, affected families frequently denied the events or remained silent. After nine years, the investigation commission uncovered some stories of torture by speaking with local residents. Many victims admitted to the incidents but refused to provide written statements or testimony, fearing social disgrace. They also requested that their names and addresses be kept confidential. The following describes some incidents of brutality in Charfashion Thana:

1. **Amiya Rani Das**
 - o **Husband:** Tekendra Chandra Das alias Aicha Ram Das
 - o **Address:** North Charfashion, U.P.-Osmanganj, Thana-Charfashion (currently residing in Dhaka; address not available).
 - o About a month after the election, some terrorists from the four-party alliance entered their house at night. The terrorists demanded her 10th-grade daughter, Shilpi. However, Shilpi had been sent to her uncle's house in Daskandi village

after the post-election violence began. Unable to find her, the terrorists looted their house and took valuables. The family remained homeless for about two months.

2. **Shobha Rani Das**

- **Husband:** Ranjan Kumar Das
- **Address:** Uttar Charfashion, Thana-Charfashion
- Shortly after the elections, some terrorists entered their house, looted cash amounting to Tk. 17,000/- and other goods, and beat her, breaking her right hand. Although physically assaulted, she denied being raped. She did not file any complaints and was unwilling to do so. In her account, she indicated that she recognized some of the terrorists but refused to name them. She also mentioned that nearly all Hindu households in the community were looted, and many women were raped.

3. **Aarti Bala Roy**

- **Husband:** Sunil Kumar Roy
- **Address:** Uttar Charfashion, Thana-Charfashion
- After looting and torture began post-election, her family fled their home. While their house was not damaged, 35 ducks were stolen by the terrorists. Aarti Rani mentioned returning to the area once the situation had calmed down, only to learn from others that Shobha Rani had been subjected to further abuse.

4. **Sujala Rani Das**

- **Husband:** Avinash Kumar Das
- Terrorists harassed her family for months after the elections, prompting them to leave their home and migrate to India, where they currently reside. They returned to their house twice and observed that terrorists had looted every home, taking valuables, including gold ornaments, poultry, cows, and goats.

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Locals said that the act of taking a woman's nose signified the loss of her dignity. Many family members took shelter in the paddy fields out of fear, becoming victims of mockery and shame. Terrorists typically attacked homes after dusk. One family, overwhelmed by anger and humiliation, left for India and has yet to return. Notably, after one such incident, nearby Muslim neighbors, hearing the screams and commotion, intervened, causing the terrorists to flee.

1. **Kanika Rani Das**

- **Husband:** Balram Rani Das
- **Address:** North Charfashion, UP-Osmanganj (Ward No.-2), Thana-Charfashion
- On 03/10/2001, a group of terrorists armed with indigenous weapons attacked their house, looting goods, including earrings. They also assaulted her husband. No complaints were filed with the police, and the family did not name the perpetrators.

2. **Kalyani Das (30)**

- **Husband:** Amar Chandra Das
 - **Address:** Uttar Charfashion
 - Terrorists looted paddy, rice, clothes, and other household valuables. They demanded her daughter be handed over, but Kalyani claimed her daughter was married and not at home. Enraged, the terrorists raped her in front of her husband, who was beaten when he tried to intervene. During the local investigation, Kalyani admitted her house was looted and she and her husband were beaten but denied the rape occurred. They did not file any complaints or name the perpetrators.
3. **Shefali Rani Das (35)**
- **Husband:** Santosh Kumar Das
 - **Address:** North Charfashion
 - On the night of 03/10/2001, a group of 20-25 terrorists entered their home. Hearing about the attack, the family hid in the nearby bazaar. The terrorists looted valuables, and after they left, the family returned home. However, the same night, another group of terrorists returned, masked, and looted the remaining goods while severely beating the couple. The family did not file any case and moved to India a few months later.
4. **Other Victims:**
- **Prakriti Rani Das** (Husband: Liton Das)
 - **Rita Rani Das** (Husband: Subrata Das)
 - **Shobha Rani Das** (Husband: Niranjan Das)
 - **Shefali Rani Das** (Husband: Santosh Kumar Das)
 - **Address:** Dashnath Aligaon, North Charfashion, Kartarhat

These families fled to India after the 2001 elections due to torture, anger, fear, and shame. Currently, they reside in India.

5. **Jharna Rani Das**
- **Husband:** Sunil Kumar Das
 - **Address:** Dashnath Aligaon
 - Left her home and is currently living in Dhaka.

Locals reported that no one lives in these houses now. After the elections, multi-party coalition terrorists extensively looted and beat residents in the area. Women from these households were subjected to severe torture, forcing them to flee their homes and take refuge in India. None of these victims filed complaints with the police. Many families admitted to being victims of political vendettas but avoided complaining due to fear or political retaliation, both past and potential future.

**Two Minority Housewives Raped, 50 Families Lost Everything Except the Village
Place of Occurrence: Dagon Bhuiyan, Feni**

On 15/02/2002, at around midnight, an armed group of 15-20 terrorists, led by accused Haroon (son of Abul Hossain) from North Chanpur village of Matubhuiya Union, attacked Daspara in Maheshpur village. The terrorists looted houses, assaulted residents, and unleashed terror until 4 a.m.

In this brutal attack, **Putul Rani Das (32)**, a mother of three, was gang-raped behind closed doors in front of her husband and son. She said, *"I could not protect my honor even after offering 1,000 taka to Haroon to spare me."*

Additionally, **Alo Rani**, the wife of Hemant Kumar Das, was also raped by terrorists identified as **Farooq, Shah Alam, and Md. Yunus**, from Chanpur village.

**Vandalism of Sreepur Police Station, Awami League Office, and State Minister's Residence
by BNP Terrorists
Place of Occurrence: Gazipur**

Following the repeal of the Public Safety Act on 1st December 2001, after the Parliamentary Elections of 2001, fears were expressed regarding the safety of the then Prime Minister (current Leader of the Opposition) **Begum Khaleda Zia** and her sister **Sheikh Rehana**. Consequently, two general diaries were filed by **Ahmed Sohail Taj, MP** and **Rahmat Ali (Former Minister of State, MP)** in **Kapasias Police Station** and **Sreepur Police Station**.

When the matter became public, a group of BNP-supported terrorists, led by local BNP leader **Maulana Ruhul Amin**, attacked and vandalized the following locations:

1. **Local Awami League Office**
2. **The residence of Mr. Rahmat Ali** (former State Minister and current Member of Parliament)
3. **Sreepur Police Station office**

The terrorists even stormed the Sreepur police station, vandalizing it. Helpless, the police fled the scene to protect themselves.

In response to this incident, the local Awami League called for a half-day strike and blockaded the **Dhaka-Mymensingh Road** from **8:00 AM to 2:00 PM** in protest.

Six Victims of Gang Rape in Gopalpur Village, Kachua Upazila, Bagerhat District

On **16/11/2001**, in Gopalpur village of Kachua upazila, Bagerhat district, five women, including one 11-year-old girl belonging to the Hindu minority community, were gang-raped. The victims stated that they did not disclose the incident out of fear, as the terrorists had threatened to kill them if they informed the police or leaked the incident.

The terrorists invaded **five houses** at midnight, gang-raping five women, including a pregnant woman. Despite her husband offering **6,000 taka** to prevent the rape of his pregnant wife, the terrorists ignored his pleas. In addition to the rapes, the attackers looted gold ornaments and valuables from the houses.

The Value of Honor for Two Minority Girls in Magura District Set at 19,500 Taka Place of Occurrence: Nahata Village, Sreepur Upazila, Magura District

On the night of **October 9, 2001**, following the election, a group of **20-25 BNP-supported terrorists**, led by:

1. **Mizanur Rahman**
2. **Jahangir**
3. **Bablu**
4. **Abu Said**
5. **Kenal**

attacked **Palpara** in Nahata village, Sreepur upazila of Magura district. The terrorists vandalized the homes of **Anil Pal, Nikhil Pal**, and others. At gunpoint, they abducted college and school-going girls, brutally torturing them in neighboring fields throughout the night.

The next day, a case was filed under the **Women and Children Repression Prevention Act**. After the investigation, a charge sheet was filed against the accused.

However, on **April 12, 2002**, local leaders convened an arbitration meeting at the neighboring **Amatoil Dakhil Madrasa** to resolve the incident. The arbitrators determined the "value of honor" of the two abused girls at **19,500 taka**.

11 Helpless Lives of the Same Family Burnt to Death

Place of Occurrence: Banskhali, Chittagong

Sadhanpur is a quiet village in Sirbagh, where the Hindu community resides in Shilpara. The local chairman, **BNP leader Aminur Rahman Chowdhury**, is widely known as "**Amin Chairman**". His cousin, **Zafrul Islam Chowdhury**, is a state minister in the government. Amin Chairman is infamous for fostering communal sentiment and land occupation.

On **November 18, 2003**, at **12:30 a.m.**, under Amin Chairman's orders, terrorists poured inflammable substances and set fire to the residence of **Dr. Bimal Sheel**. As a result, **11 members of the Sheel family** were burned alive in the flames. The victims included:

1. **Anil Sheel**
2. **Rumi Sheel**
3. **Sonia Sheel**
4. **Bakul Bala Sheel**
5. **Tejendra Sheel**
6. **Devendra Sheel**
7. **Babu Sheel**
8. **Prasad Sheel**
9. **Eni Sheel**
10. **Karthik Sheel** (a four-day-old baby).

This heinous and brutal act was clearly aimed at destroying communal harmony and intimidating minorities into abandoning their properties for forced migration.

Despite the gravity of the incident, **Amin Chairman**, the main accused, remained out of reach due to political influence. After multiple changes of investigating officers and authorities, the **CID filed a charge sheet** against **39 individuals**, including Amin Chairman. Dr. Bimal Sheel, the plaintiff, remains hopeful and continues to wait for justice.

Three Women, Including Mother and Daughter, Gang-Raped; One Killed in Bagerhat

Place of Occurrence: Bagerhat Sadar Upazila

On **08/03/2003**, local BNP party cadre **Kamrul** led a group of terrorists into **Karampur village, Jatrapur Union**. Their target was **Niranjana Bhattacharya**, a local Hindu community leader. The terrorists broke into the house through the rear entrance while Niranjana's brother Tapan's wife, **Anima**, was awake.

Hearing the commotion, Anima alerted her husband **Tapan Bhattacharya**, who approached the attackers. The terrorists brutally attacked Tapan with sharp weapons, killing him on the spot with multiple wounds. Another brother, **Swapan Bhattacharya**, was also seriously injured.

The terrorists then locked **Anima**, Swapan's wife **Shyamoli**, and their mother **Namita Roy** in a room, where they gang-raped all three women. **Niranjana Bhattacharya** and his wife survived as they were staying at his father-in-law's house during the attack.

In addition to the brutal assault, the terrorists looted valuables, ornaments, and cash from the house. Niranjana and his wife reported that the terrorists had been threatening their family for voting for the **Awami League candidate** in the **8th National Assembly elections**.

The incident was reported, and a case was registered at the **Bagerhat Sadar Police Station**.

Commission Findings

When the members of the Judicial Commission visited the site in Bagerhat, the local people corroborated the details of the horrific incident.

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Loss of Dignity of Three Minority Women from One Family

Place of Occurrence: Rajarachar village, Charmonai Union, Barisal Sadar Upazila

Three women were raped in **Rajarachar village of Charmonai Union under Barisal Sadar police station**. During the investigation, it was revealed that **Pavitra Kumar Mistry**, son of the late **Rajni Kant Mistry**, lived in Rajarachar with his two sons, two daughters, sister, and wife. Pavitra Kumar traded in **Hogla leaves**.

Following the elections, as the influence of terrorists grew in the village, Pavitra Kumar sent his elder daughter **Gauri** to the city for safety. Despite these precautions, Pavitra Kumar could not save his family's dignity or belongings from the terrorists.

On **October 10, 2001**, at approximately **11:00 a.m.**, a group of BNP-backed terrorists, including:

1. **Bajlu**, Father – Maqbool Howladar
2. **Atahar Talukdar**, Father – Unknown
(Both from Rajarachar, Thana – Kotwali, Barisal)
along with **10-12 unidentified terrorists**, entered Pavitra Kumar's house. Finding Pavitra Kumar absent, the terrorists looted everything except the family's clothes.

On **October 13, 2001**, at approximately **1:10 a.m.**, the same group of terrorists broke into Pavitra Kumar's house again. This time, they **gang-raped**:

- **Parul Bala Rani** (40), wife of Pavitra Kumar
- **Priyanka Rani Mistry** (Pushp) (14), daughter of Pavitra Kumar
- **Soma Rani Mistry**, cousin of Pavitra Kumar, daughter of Rakhhal Chandra Mistry.

In response, Pavitra Kumar Mistry filed a case at **Kotwali police station**:

- **Case No-25, Date-14/10/2001**, under **Section 9(1)3/30 of the Women and Child Torture Prevention Act 2000**.

The accused listed included **Bajlu**, Father – Maqbool Howladar (Rajarchar, Kotwali, Barisal). However, Pavitra Kumar could not immediately provide the names or addresses of the other accused.

The police arrested **Accused No. 1** and handed him over to the court. In a counter-attempt to prove the incident was not persecution of minorities, the accused group pressured the plaintiff. With intimidation, they accused individuals **Anukul Bhaiyya**, Father – Raman Kant Bhaiyya, and **Gopi Shikder alias Tapas**, Father – Tapan Shikder (both from Rajarchar, Kotwali, Barisal), and forced their arrest.

A few days after the case was filed, the accused returned to the plaintiff's house and coerced them into signing a **stamp paper**, acknowledging that they would no longer pursue the case. Due to fear, reluctance, and lack of cooperation from the plaintiffs and victims, the police failed to substantiate the charges. The case was ultimately closed with **FRT No-45 dated 11/02/2002** submitted to the learned court of Kotwali police station.

Nearly **nine years after the incident**, the victims narrated the events to the **Commission of Inquiry**, expressing their pain and anguish through tears. Even today, they wait for justice.

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Bazlur Rahman of Char Anand Village Blinded by BNP Terrorists on the Instructions of Local MP Hafiz Ibrahim

Place of Occurrence: Bhola Sadar Upazila

Bazlur Rahman, son of Asmat Ari Fakir (now blind), was targeted because an **Awami League election office** was set up at his house during the **2001 8th National Parliament election**.

On **January 14, 2002**, at approximately **9:00 a.m.**, while Bazlur Rahman was sitting in his shop, **Siraj Chairman** suddenly approached him and started hurling verbal abuse. Accompanying Siraj Chairman were BNP terrorists:

1. **Mushu**, Father – Hafez
2. **Malek**, Father – Late Abdul Hashem
3. **Sharif**, Father – Mofazzal
4. **Md. Nizam Munshi**, Father – Mofazzal
5. **Tulu**, Father – Sofie Howladar
6. **Salim**, Father – Estekhar
7. **Nur Alam**, Father – Abdur Rashid Master

8. **Nazrul Islam**, Father – Unknown
9. **Siraj Bepari**, Father – Late Nazeer Bepari
(all from **Char Anand-3, Ward No. 6**).

Along with 40-45 other individuals, the terrorists dragged Bazlur Rahman out of his shop, armed with **indigenous weapons**, and began beating him mercilessly. Upon hearing the news, Bazlur Rahman's mother rushed to the scene, grabbed **Siraj Chairman's legs**, and **begged for her son's life**. Despite her pleas, the terrorists **thrust a pistol into Bazlur's eyes** repeatedly, blinding him.

Bazlur Rahman was admitted to the **local hospital**, but due to the lack of proper medical care, he was later sent to **Dhaka for urgent treatment**. However, both his eyes had deteriorated beyond repair, leaving him permanently **blind**.

On the same day, the terrorists looted his shop and ransacked his house. Prior to this incident, the same group of terrorists had **demanding a ransom of 20,000 rupees** from Bazlur Rahman, threatening to **kill him** if he refused to pay.

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The Victim's Family Did Not File a Case in Fear of Terrorists Raping the Daughter in Front of the Mother

Place of Occurrence: Bhanga Police Station, Faridpur

A minority family in **Azimnagar village**, under Bhanga Upazila of Faridpur district, faced brutal violence for voting for the boat symbol in the **2001 elections**. BNP fundamentalist supporters attacked the family's house, looting valuables and committing unspeakable acts of violence.

On the **night of October 6, 2001**, at approximately **9:00 p.m.**, seven BNP supporters and terrorists, including **Palash** (brother of the former Upazila Chairman Mosharraf Hossain), **Md. Seken, Jamal, Esken, Kamal, and Tekka**, broke into the minority family's house. They sought the head of the family, accusing him of voting for the boat symbol. Fearing for his life, he escaped through the back door.

The terrorists, in a drunken state, began their demonic acts by **raping the family's college-going daughter** in front of her **mother**. Despite the mother's desperate pleas to spare her daughter, the terrorists also **beat her brutally**. The horrific torture continued until **1:00 a.m.**, after which the terrorists looted the valuables from the house.

The ordeal did not end there. The terrorists abducted the **college student**, raped her again, and left her severely injured in front of her house in the early morning. Out of fear and humiliation, the family fled to **Tungi Para** in Gopalganj district, taking the victim with them.

The **Gopalganj police**, upon learning about the incident, arranged for the minority family to return to their home. However, to avoid public shame, the girl was sent to a relative's house. The terrorists continued to **threaten the family**, warning them and other minority families of dire consequences if they reported the incident to the police.

The local police offered to register a case, but the family, fearing repeated attacks and public disgrace, refused to proceed. **Rezaul Karim**, the then ASP of Bhanga Circle, visited the scene and advised the family to file a case. Since the family did not file a complaint, the **police recorded the matter in the general diary (GD)**. However, as the incident occurred over ten years ago, the **Commission of Inquiry** could not obtain the GD number or a copy of the entry despite the cooperation of the current officer-in-charge of Bhanga Police Station.

Note: At the request of the victim's family, the name of the victim has been withheld.

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“Ramsheel Had Become the Last Refuge of the Oppressed and Homeless People”

Ramsheel is a remote village under Kotalipara Police Station in Gopalganj district, located about 15 kilometers from Kotalipara. Approximately **95% of the population in Ramsheel are Hindus**, and after the **1st October 2001 election**, aggrieved minorities from neighboring police stations and areas sought refuge in Ramsheel.

Due to its predominantly Hindu population, Ramsheel became a **safe haven** for the persecuted. Hundreds of men, women, and children who were evicted from their homes and subjected to torture found shelter in this area. Among the victims were individuals from **Rajihar Union of Agailjhara, Barisal**, including **Kamala Rani Roy, Shefali Rani Sarkar, Babulal Munshi, Harihar Roy, Riaz Mohan Roy, Mahendranath Roy, Vasudev Roy, Devuraj Roy, Shanti Ranjan Roy, Vijay Krishna Roy, and Sachindranath Roy**.

Thousands of families from **Chandsi, Kapali, Ashok Kathi, and Kodaldah villages of Agailjhara**, as well as from **Wazirpur Police Station**, sought refuge in Ramsheel. Additionally, families from **Jaigha, Chanderhat, Madartali, Burigagni, Bargawla, and Chaghda villages of Mollarhat Police Station, Bagerhat district**, also found shelter there, as reported by local sources. These victims took shelter in local schools, colleges, and private homes.

The **Ramsheel College building and its front field** turned into a **refugee camp**. Among the refugees were **minorities** and supporters of the **Awami League**, including leaders and supporters of the **Chhatra League, Jubo League, and Awami League** who had fled from Agailjhara, Uzirpur, and Bagerhat.

Life in Ramsheel for the asylum seekers was marked by extreme hardship. Many victims fled their homes without essential money, food, or clothes, fearing for their lives. Severe **food shortages** were evident among the refugees. The local villagers, to the best of their ability,

prepared food and shared it with the refugees, though many had to fast **for half a day almost every day**. There was **no access to medical care** for the oppressed, and neither government nor private assistance was provided.

As part of their investigation, the **Commission of Inquiry visited Ramsheel**, a widely discussed site. During the visit, the Commission held discussions with local dignitaries, including:

- **Mr. Bimal Biswas** (Upazila Chairman)
- **Babu Karthik Chandra Barai** (Former Member)
- **Babu Nityalal Bala** (Headmaster, Douglas School)
- **Naveen Chandra Roy** (Temple Service Representative)
- **Mrinal Kanti Haladar** (Former UP Chairman)
- **Asim Biswas** (Current UP Chairman)
- **Babu Sachindra Nath** (Former UP Chairman)
- **Prof. Jaydev Bala** (Principal of Ramsheel College).

During the discussion, **Babu Biswadev Roy**, father of the deceased **Bhapan Chandra Roy**, shared that about **30 people** had taken shelter in his house. He gave up his two-story home to accommodate the dependents and provided food as much as he could. Similarly, **Babu Nihar Ranjan Barai**, father of **Bumud Ranjan Barai**, recounted that from the day before the election, persecuted people began arriving from the Agailjhara area. By **October 4**, the influx of tortured and homeless individuals had increased at an **alarming rate**.

He specifically mentioned **Kamala Devi** of Rajihar Union, who took refuge in his house, and narrated to the Commission the **gruesome story of looting and torture** that she had experienced.

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Ex-Member Babu Karthik Chandra Roy, Ex-Chairman Babu Sachindra, and Others Took Care of the Shelter, Food, and Security of the Refugees

A **21-member committee** was formed for this purpose. Naveen Chandra Roy, who served the temple in Gournadi, Agailjhara, Uzirpur, and Bagerhat, reported that **thousands of oppressed people** from the Mollarhat area—irrespective of being Hindus or Muslims—took refuge in Ramsheel. He confirmed that many mothers and sisters among the refugees were **raped**. Almost everyone in the area helped as much as they could. The **Awami League** also extended support to the Ramsheel asylum seekers.

At one stage, the refugees consumed about **15/16 maunds of rice per day**. The current honorable Prime Minister **Sheikh Hasina** also personally provided financial assistance at that time. According to local residents, approximately **18,000 to 20,000 people** took refuge in Ramsheel. At that time, Ramsheel became the **last hope** for Awami League leaders, activists, supporters, and oppressed minorities who were left homeless in the area.

Mr. **Ashok Vaidya**, son of **Indra Bhashan Vaidya**, described the experience of that time before the Commission as follows:

"I did not see the Liberation War of 1971, but I have heard the stories of the torture by the Pakistani invaders. Even though I didn't witness the atrocities of 1971, the violence after the October 1st election by the terrorists of the coalition government seemed to surpass the brutality of 1971 in many ways. In Ramsheel, I saw many mothers and sisters in a state of extreme torture, and many children who could not get food to eat. About 200 injured people received first aid in our house. Many abused mothers and sisters wanted to commit suicide, and we had to counsel them against it. The helpless faces of the oppressed and the silent cries of the tortured still echo in the skies of Ramsheel."

The **Ramsheel refugees** were directly and indirectly pressured by the local administration to return to their respective areas. Even **news workers** were asked to suppress reports of the torture. Locals mentioned that the then **Home Minister, Mr. Altaf Hossain Chowdhury**, was supposed to visit the Ramsheel shelter but **never came**.

On **October 12, 2001**, the then Deputy Commissioners (DCs) of **Gopalganj** and **Barisal**, along with the Superintendent of Police (SP), visited Ramsheel to inquire about the refugees. They requested the asylum seekers to return to their villages, but the situation remained so dire that **no one agreed to leave**. Those who dared to return were either beaten up on the way or chased by terrorists, forcing them to flee once again. Despite the assurances of the authorities, **no one felt safe enough to return home**.

Mujibur Rahman of Gupinpur Village in Sujanagar, Pabna, Was Denied Burial in the Graveyard for Supporting the Awami League

On **October 4, 2001**, after the 8th National Assembly elections, BNP-alliance terrorists attacked **Gupinpur village** in Sujanagar Upazila. The residence of **Engineer Md. Ziaur Rahman**, son of the deceased **Mujibur Rahman**, was **vandalized**, and the terrorists looted gold, fish from the pond, and various household goods. They then set fire to the two tin-roofed houses, burning them to ashes.

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Due to Physical and Inhuman Torture, Stroke Leads to Death; Burial Denied Over Political Vendetta

The father of Engineer Md. Ziaur Rahman fell seriously ill from a stroke after enduring physical and inhuman torture. He was admitted to **Rajshahi Medical College Hospital** on the same day with a severe heart attack. Despite treatment, he **passed away on 14/10/2001**.

The family arranged to bury the body in the **Gupinpur village graveyard** the following day, but the then **Chairman of Satbaria Union of Sujanagar Upazila**, BNP leader **Tofazzal Hossain**,

and his forces **prevented the burial** due to political vendetta. Left with no alternative, the family buried the body in the **courtyard of their home**.

On **22/10/2001** at 3:00 PM, preparations were made for the **Kulkhani ceremony**. The event was attended by hundreds, including **Dr. Mirza Abdul Jalil**, the central president of Krishak League. However, party forces led by Tofazzal Hossain's son-in-law **Md. Ravi** attacked the ceremony, **snatched the food**, and **urinated on the grave** in front of the gathered crowd.

The terrorists also severely **beat and injured Rasheda Banu**, the wife of the deceased Mujibur Rahman. When the family tried to file a case at the police station, the **officer-in-charge refused to accept the case**. During the Commission's investigation on the ground, it was found that the incident had been **fuelled by local MP Salim Reza Habib**, and his political influence prevented the case from being taken up by the police.

Mother Gang-Raped in Front of Her Children

Place of occurrence: Asashuni Upazila, Satkhira District.

In **Khalia village**, **Taraman Bibi** (also known as Taraman Gain, 34) lived with her mentally challenged husband, one son, and one daughter. She had actively campaigned for the Awami League candidate during the **2001 National Parliamentary elections**.

On the night of **15/02/2002**, BNP cadres:

1. **Shahjahan,**
2. **Batu,**
3. **Ismail,** and
4. **Sobahan**

attacked her home. In front of her **two children**, Taraman Bibi was **brutally gang-raped**.

Taraman Bibi later gave a **poignant account** of the incident at the **Satkhira Press Club**. However, the **Asashuni police station** refused to accept the case due to threats from the perpetrators. Public outrage forced the case to be filed, but the terrorists **threatened to kill her school-going children** if the case was not withdrawn.

Taraman Bibi stated, *“If justice is not ensured, I will commit suicide.”*

Terror in Haridebpur, Galachipa, by Mohiuddin’s Forces

Immediately after the **2001 elections**, **Galachipa** turned into a **town of terror**. Awami League activists and minority communities became the primary targets of **BNP terrorists**. Many residents, fearing for their lives, **fled their homes** and took refuge with relatives or acquaintances.

Reports from traders, professionals, political workers, teachers, and journalists revealed that BNP nominees led the **wave of post-election terror** in Galachipa.

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Mohiuddin's Forces and Terror in Haridebpur, Galachipa

Various violent forces were formed following the **8th National Assembly Elections of 2001**. In **Golkhali Union**, a group called **Mohiuddin Army** was formed. This force **demanding 10,000 taka** from **Madhav Doctor** of Harideb Bazar. Fearing for his safety, Dr. Madhav fled the village and took shelter at the **upazila headquarters**.

About **6-7 days after the election**, terrorist **Mohiuddin** beat up a local grocer named **Haren Sheel**. On the night of **October 9, 2001**, **Bhavesh Roy**, a senior teacher of the Union, was **severely beaten** with a towel over his face in front of his house and insulted as "*Maloon's child*." Locals alleged that **many other minorities** were subjected to **torture** by this group.

The **Superintendent of Police, Mainur Rahman**, ordered the arrest of **Mohiuddin**, but due to political intervention, he was **released on bail** shortly after.

BNP cadres also attacked and **vandalized** the house of **Santosh Kumar**, then an assistant professor at **Galachipa College**. Further violence included attacks on the homes of prominent local Awami League leaders:

- **Golam Mostafa Tito** (Acting General Secretary),
- **Salahuddin Ahmed** (Joint Secretary),
- **Gazi Md Yusuf** (UP Chairman),
- **Noor Islam Maker** (Freedom Fighter), and
- **Abdul Halim** (Awami League leader).

These houses were **attacked, vandalized, and looted**, and there were also reports of **extortion** in the name of the *proletariat*.

Although the **Awami League** won the parliamentary seat, the **MP** was in **Dhaka** immediately after the election and was **unaware** of the torture inflicted on local leaders and activists. **Grassroots Awami League leaders and activists** themselves alleged that they received **no support** during this time of crisis.

Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury's Reign of Terror in Gahira Village, Raujan
Place of Occurrence: Raujan Upazila, Chittagong.

Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury won the **8th National Assembly Election** and was appointed as **Parliamentary Affairs Adviser**. Shortly after his arrival in his native village **Gahira**, he directed his terrorist cadres—**Fazal Haque**, **Abu Taher**, and **Bidhan Baraya**—to retaliate against those who had campaigned against him.

On his orders, the terrorists attacked and **set fire** to the house of **Ratarba Ghosh**, a female member who had opposed him in the elections. The fire quickly spread, destroying the homes of:

1. **Ratarba Ghosh**,
2. **Chandan Ghosh**,
3. **Sanjit Ghosh**, and
4. **Ajit Ghosh**.

In total, **37 structures** were **destroyed** in the attacks carried out by Salahuddin’s cadres.

Additionally, **Shatakatul Islam**’s business enterprise, **Golden Furniture**, was forcibly **shut down** under direct threats from **Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury** for the *crime of working against him during the elections*.

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The then **Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury** boasted, “Evil forces are spreading false propaganda. There was no political or communal violence. The news published in newspapers is baseless.”

However, post-election violence was raging across the country in a terrifying form. **BNP-Jamaat armed cadres** were engaged in various terrorist activities, including **murder, rape, extortion, looting, and intimidation**.

Under pressure from **news reports** and **public opinion**, the Home Minister, accompanied by government officials and party workers, visited **Agailjhara** in Barisal. During this visit, the **local Member of Parliament, Mr. Zahir Uddin Ahmed Swapan**, echoed the Home Minister’s claims, stating, “*There is no torture on the minority community. The government is being humiliated by false reports in the newspapers.*”

At this point, **Kamala Rani**, also known as **Kala Bou**, a **Rajihar UP member** and a **polling agent** for the local Awami League candidate, boldly stepped onto the stage. In front of the **Home Minister** and the gathered crowd, Kamala Rani **removed her saree** to reveal the marks of the torture inflicted on her by **BNP terrorists**.

Amid her **heart-wrenching testimony**, the **shocked crowd** broke their silence, protesting and expressing their anger with cries of scorn.

It should be noted that Kamala Rani's **entire house** had been **burnt to the ground**. Local BNP terrorists had attempted to **intimidate and bribe** her to deny the violence and falsify the incidents in public meetings. However, Kamala Rani **refused to bow to fear or temptation** and bravely stood up to expose the truth.

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The Perverse Joy of the Then Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury

Two Chhatra League workers were dragged to the market and tortured for being polling agents of the Awami League candidate.

Altaf Hossain Chowdhury, after taking oath as **Home Minister**, visited **Patuakhali** and stayed at the Circuit House. During his stay, he pulled out two names from his pocket: **Monir** and **Basar**, both workers of the local **Chhatra League**.

Acting on his orders, the two individuals were arrested in the **Newmarket area of Mirzaganj Upazila**. The **BNP Chhatra Dal cadres** tied them together, stripped them naked, and brutally beat them. They were forced to wander the main roads of the market, **naked**, for an entire day. The next day, the cadres tied them to trees and later **threw them naked into a pond**.

Their **only crime** was being Chhatra League workers and polling agents for the **local Awami League candidate**.

The Brutality of Local BNP Leader Hafiz Ibrahim

Awami League worker Naqib was shot dead.

Place of Occurrence: **Kutuba village**, Borhan Uddin Upazila.

On **01/10/2001**, polling was underway at the **Aliya Madrasah Centre**. By the afternoon, armed cadres of BNP, acting on orders from local BNP leader **Hafiz Ibrahim**, reported that Awami League workers were **preventing fake votes** from being cast for the BNP candidate.

Local Awami League activist **Naqib** played a pivotal role in organizing resistance to this electoral fraud. Upon arriving at the scene, **Hafiz Ibrahim** personally **ordered his cadres to shoot Naqib**.

The armed cadres opened fire, and **Naqib was fatally injured**. He died on the spot.

Although a case was initially filed regarding the murder, **it was later withdrawn** under political pressure.

Major (Retd) Hafiz Shoots Awami League Worker

Place of Occurrence: Charchkina village, Kalma union, Lalmohan upazila, Bhola district.

On January 1, 2001, after the completion of voting at the Alam Bazar Azhar Uddin Free Primary School polling station, BNP cadres attempted to steal the ballot box. A crowd gathered to prevent them. Major (Retd) Hafeez arrived at the scene and tried to force entry into the polling center. Unable to control the crowd, he began firing indiscriminately from his pistol.

As a result of the shooting, two local Awami League workers were killed. One of the victims, Khorsed Alam, succumbed to his bullet wounds. Despite being implicated in this crime, Major (Retd) Hafeez was not prosecuted.

Brutal Torture in Banaripara, Barisal

Villages Affected: Madarkathi, Brahmanbari, Alta, Narerkathi, Bisharkandi, Baishari, Dattapara, Kalibari, Brahmanbari, and Kalirabazar in Banaripara upazila.

These villages, predominantly inhabited by minorities, were held hostage by terrorists during the caretaker government. During the 8th National Assembly elections, BNP-affiliated terrorists and extortionists established a reign of terror in these areas.

Numerous incidents of gang rape were reported, involving teenagers, young women, and elderly women. In one such incident, a teenage girl was gang-raped while her father was held hostage at gunpoint. Despite the father's desperate pleas to spare his daughter, the terrorists continued with the assault. The traumatized girl is now struggling to cope with the aftermath of the horrific incident.

Due to fear of reprisal, the family of the victim has requested that their names be withheld. The incident was reported to a local people's commission during an on-site inspection.

The Murder of Awami League's Popular Leader Ahsan Ullah Master

On May 7, 2004, at approximately 12:30 PM, an event was held at the premises of Nayagaon MA Majid High School, situated behind Tongi Railway Station in Gazipur District. The event was a conference organized by the local ward Volunteer League, with honorable local Member of Parliament Ahsan Ullah Master as the chief guest.

The conference began as scheduled at 10:00 AM. MP Ahsan Ullah Master, residing in a rented house near the school, left his home dressed casually in a lungi and walked to the event with some party leaders and workers. The event proceeded smoothly, and at the conclusion, the MP announced the committee.

As MP Ahsan Ullah Master, along with a few others, exited the pandal set up for the conference, 7–8 armed individuals entered the school grounds, opening fire from behind the pandal. The gunfire caused chaos as everyone, including the MP, fell to the ground in shock.

The attackers moved closer to the MP and started shooting directly at him. Some of the assailants were seen holding weapons in both hands. Jubo League leader Hafizur Rahman Mahal tried to shield the MP by hugging him, but the attackers continued firing and fled through the front gate after randomly shooting at the area near an under-construction house belonging to Mr. Ahsan Ullah Master.

In the random shooting, five individuals, including school students Ratan (10) and Babul (12), were fatally wounded. The entire area was engulfed in panic following the attack.

MP Ahsan Ullah Master was rushed to Tongi Hospital and then to the Chest Disease Hospital, but there were no doctors available at either facility. He remained untreated for about an hour before being transferred to the Combined Military Hospital, where the attending doctor declared him dead at 3:10 PM.

Other victims, including Jubo League leader Mahal, school students Babul, Ratan, Sharif Uddin, Jamal Uddin, and Hashem Mallick, were taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Unfortunately, Ratan was also pronounced dead upon arrival.

Case Details:

In connection with the murder of MP Ahsan Ullah Master, a case was registered at Tongi Police Station under Case No-7, dated May 8, 2004, citing Sections 120-B/324/326/307/302/34/109/212. The CID conducted the investigation and submitted a charge sheet naming 30 individuals as accused.

Verdict:

On April 16, 2005, the Fast Track Tribunal in Dhaka delivered its verdict. Out of the 30 accused, 22 were sentenced to death, 6 received life imprisonment along with a fine of Tk. 50,000 each (with an additional 1-year imprisonment for failure to pay the fine), and 2 were acquitted.

Accused Sentenced to Death:

1. Nurul Islam Sarkar
2. Nurul Islam Dipu
3. Mohammad Ali
4. Mahabub
5. Amir
6. Majnu

7. Shahidul Islam Dipu
8. Kana Hafiz
9. Anwar Hossain Anu
10. Faisal
11. Sohag alias Saru
12. Jahangir of Mymensingh
13. Lokman alias Bulu
14. Al-Amin
15. Ratan Mia alias Big Ratan
16. Rani alias Rani Fakir
17. Jahangir
18. Ratar alias Chhota Ratan
19. Abu Salam
20. Dulal
21. Khokon
22. Mashiur Rahman alias Mushu

Accused Sentenced to Life Imprisonment:

1. Rakib Uddin Sarkar alias Pappu
2. Ayub Ali
3. Jahangir
4. Nurul Amin alias Amin
5. Monir
6. Ohidul Islam alias Tipu

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Former Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria was brutally killed

On **January 27, 2005, at approximately 16:00 hours**, a public meeting of the local Union Awami League was held at the **Bazar Government Primary School grounds in Lashkarpur Union, Habiganj District** under Sadar Police Station. The chief guest of the meeting was **Shah AMS Kibria**, the former Finance Minister and Member of Parliament.

At the end of the meeting, as Mr. Kibria and other Awami League leaders and activists were leaving, at around **19:10 in the evening**, the electricity suddenly went off near the school gate. Seizing the opportunity, members of the "**prohibited militant organization Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami Bangladesh (HuJI-B)**" carried out a premeditated grenade attack, targeting Mr. Kibria and the Awami League activists.

The grenade exploded instantly, killing the following individuals on the spot:

1. Shah Manzoor Huda

2. Md. Siddique Ali (alias Chayer Ali)
3. Abdur Rahim

Later, due to severe injuries, the following individuals also succumbed to their injuries:

4. **Shah AMS Kibria**
5. Abul Hossain

Case and Investigation:

Following the incident, **Habiganj Police Station Case No-27**, dated **28/01/2005**, was filed under Sections **324/326/307/302** of the **Penal Code** and the **Explosives Act**.

After a thorough investigation, specific evidence established the involvement of the following accused:

1. Mufti Abdul Hannan
2. Sharif Shahedul Alam (alias Bipul)
3. Munshi Mahibullah (alias Mofiz Uddin alias Abhi)
4. Naimur Rahman (alias Hafez Syed Naeem Ahmed Arif alias Nimu)
5. Moin Uddin Sheikh (alias Mufti Moin alias Khawaja alias Abu Jandal alias Masum Billah)
6. Badrul Alam Mizan
7. Alhaj Maulana Md. Tajuddin
8. Mizanur Rahman (alias Mizan)

During the investigation, the accused **confessed to their involvement**, and their confessional statements were **judicially recorded** in court. Additionally, important evidence related to the incident was recovered, which aided in identifying and arresting the actual perpetrators.

Shortcomings of the Initial Investigation:

It is noteworthy that the investigation under the previous coalition government was not conducted properly. The earlier charge sheet implicated individuals who had no connection to the crime. The grenade attack was part of **a far-reaching plan orchestrated by Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami** to eliminate prominent Awami League leaders.

The reinvestigation revealed the true culprits and brought them to justice, exposing the evil conspiracy behind the assassination of this veteran and widely respected leader.

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Grenade attack on the residence of former woman MP Jebunnessa Haque

On **24/12/2004**, at approximately **16:15 hours**, the residence of the Honorable former female Member of Parliament, **Jebunnessa Haque**, located at **22(a) Tatpara, Kotwali, Sylhet**, was targeted. Members of the **proscribed militant organization Harkat-ul-Jihad al-Islami Bangladesh (HuJI-B)**, as part of a premeditated plan to eliminate leaders and activists of the Bangladesh Awami League, launched a grenade attack on the residence.

The attack left **8 Awami League leaders**, including the former MP, **seriously injured**.

A case was filed at **Kotwali (Sylhet) Police Station**, registered as **Case No-74, dated 24/12/2004**, under **Section 3 of the Explosives Act**.

Investigation and Accused

During the investigation, the following individuals were identified as the accused with **specific evidence of involvement**:

1. **Mufti Abdul Hannan**
2. **Mofizul Islam alias Abhi**
3. **Sharif Shahedul Alam Bipul**
4. **Md. Delwar Hossain Ripon**
5. **Mufti Mohiuddin Sheikh alias Abu Jandal alias Khaja alias Masum Billah**
6. **Humayun Kabir alias Himu (absconder)**

The accused **admitted their involvement** during the judicial recording of their **confessional statements** in court. The case is currently pending for **charge sheet submission**.

Bomb attack on Member of Parliament Mr. Suranjit Sengupta

On **21/06/2004**, **Suranjit Sengupta**, the Honorable Member of Parliament from the Bangladesh Awami League, was attacked after addressing a public meeting in the **Dirai Thana area of Sunamganj District**.

At approximately **16:55 hours**, as Mr. Suranjit Sengupta and party leaders and activists were passing by **Jagannath Jiur Mandir** in **Dirai Bazar**, militants of the **proscribed militant organization Harkat-ul-Jihad al-Islami Bangladesh (HuJI-B)** threw **two grenades** targeting him.

One grenade exploded with a **loud noise**, causing the death of **one worker on the spot** and leaving **30-32 individuals seriously injured**. Fortunately, the Honorable Member of Parliament narrowly escaped the attack.

Case Details and Investigation

A case was filed at **Dirai (Sunamganj) Police Station**, registered as **Case No-6**, dated **22/06/2004**, under the following sections:

- **Sections 324/326/307/302/34 of the Penal Code**
- **Section 3 of the Explosives Act**

Following the investigation, the following individuals were identified as the accused:

1. **Hafez Maulana Mufti Abdul Hannan Munshi**
2. **Md. Sharif Shahedul Alam Bipul**
3. **Mufti Moinuddin Sheikh**
4. **Md. Mofizul Islam**
5. **Md. Delwar Hossain**
6. **Hafiz Syed Naeem Ahmed Arif**
7. **Naziur Rahman**

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Dirai Police Station Case Details

At **Dirai Police Station (Sunamganj)**, the following complaints were registered:

1. **Complaint No-99**, dated **14/12/2008**, under Sections **120(b)/324/326/307/302/34/109/114/427 of the Penal Code**.
2. **Complaint No-100**, dated **14/12/2008**, under Sections **3/4/5/6 of the Explosive Substances Act**.

During the investigation, it was revealed through the statement of the arrested **Harkat-ul-Jihad al-Islami Bangladesh (HuJI-B)** member **Hafeez Syed Naeem Ahmed Arif** alias **Nimu** that two grenades were thrown during the incident. Of these, one grenade exploded, but the second grenade was **not mentioned** in the charge sheet.

The learned court directed further investigation into the case. Following the court order, the case is **currently being investigated by the CID**. This bombing was part of a **sinister plan** to assassinate senior Awami League leaders.

Attempt to Kill Sylhet City Corporation Mayor Mr. Badruddin Ahmed Kamran

On **07/08/2004**, at approximately **19:55 hours**, at the **Gulshan Hotel car parking area** in Sylhet district, militants of the **banned organization Harkat-ul-Jihad al-Islami Bangladesh (HuJI-B)** carried out a grenade attack. The target was **Mr. Badruddin Ahmed Kamran**, Mayor of

Sylhet City Corporation, as part of a plan to kill **Bangladesh Awami League leaders and activists**.

The grenade explosion left **Md. Ibrahim**, the **Propaganda Secretary of Sylhet District Awami League**, and **Mejba Uddin Siraj**, along with **35 others**, seriously injured. Md. Ibrahim later succumbed to his injuries while under treatment.

A case was filed at **Kotyali (Sylhet) Police Station**, registered as:

- **Case No-36**, dated **08/08/2004**, under Sections **324/326/307/427/34 of the Penal Code** and **Section 3 of the Explosive Substances Act**.

Following the investigation, a **charge sheet** was filed against **six accused individuals** in the learned court.

Second Assassination Attempt on Mayor Badruddin Ahmed Kamran

On **02/12/2005**, at approximately **19:30 hours**, **Mayor Badruddin Ahmed Kamran** attended the **Sajjadur Rahman Memorial Badminton Competition** organized by the **Tilagarh Club/2005** at **Tilagarh**, Sylhet. The event was held at a small open field south of the **Tilagarh Jame Masjid** near **Tamabil Road**, Sylhet.

Mayor Kamran, as the **chief guest**, inaugurated the prize distribution ceremony held at a small vacant lot near **Kutur Colony**. At approximately **20:20 hours**, while delivering a speech on a small stage set up at the field, members of **Harkat-ul-Jihad al-Islami Bangladesh (HuJI-B)** threw a grenade as part of their plan to assassinate him and other Awami League leaders.

However, the grenade **failed to explode**. Awami League leaders and activists promptly alerted the **law enforcement agencies**, and the police arrived at the scene to investigate the matter.

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Police Took the Grenade into Custody

After the incident, the police took custody of the unexploded grenade. Subsequently, a complaint was filed at **Kotyali (Sylhet) Police Station** under:

- **Case No-7**, dated **03/12/2005**, registered under Sections **120-B/307/309/114/34 of the Penal Code**.

After the investigation, the following individuals were charged:

1. **Delwar Hossain Ripon**
2. **Mufti Abdul Handban Munshi**
3. **Md Mofizul Islam**
4. **Mufti Moinuddin**
5. **Humayun Kabir Himu**
6. **Sharif Shahedul Alam Bipul**

A charge sheet was filed against the accused in the learned court.

British High Commissioner Anwar Chowdhury Victim of Grenade Attack

The **Honorable British High Commissioner to Bangladesh, Mr. Anwar Chowdhury**, also fell victim to a **grenade attack** by terrorists.

On **21/05/2004**, during a visit to the **shrine of Hazrat Shahjalal (RA)** in Sylhet, the High Commissioner exchanged greetings with worshipers after completing Friday prayers. At that moment, militants of the **prohibited organization Harkat-ul-Jihad al-Islami Bangladesh (HuJI-B)** launched a powerful grenade attack targeting the **British High Commissioner**.

As a result of the grenade attack:

- **Mr. Anwar Chowdhury** and the **then Deputy Commissioner of Sylhet** were **seriously injured**.
- **ASI Md. Kamal Hossain**, who was assigned to their security, **was killed**.

Following the incident, **SI Pradip Kumar Das** of Kotyali Police Station filed a case as the plaintiff:

- **Kotyali (Sylhet) Police Station Case No-64**, dated **21/05/2004**, under Sections **324/326/307/302/34** of the Penal Code.

The investigation was led by **ASP Munshi Atiqur Rahman**, and the following individuals were identified and charged:

1. **Md. Delwar Hossain Ripon**
2. **Sharif Shahedul Alam Bipul**
3. **Mufti Abdul Handban Munshi alias Abul Kalam**
4. **Mahibullah alias Mofizur Rahman alias Mofiz alias Abhi**
5. **Mufti Moin alias Abu Jandal alias Khaja alias Masum Billah**

Since **Accused No. 6, Ahsan Ullah Kajal**, was **deceased**, he was excluded from the charge sheet.

Charge Sheet and Additional Complaints

1. **Kotyali (Sylhet) Police Station Charge Sheet No-600**, dated **07/06/2007**, under Sections **120-B/326/302/34/109/114/111 of the Penal Code**.
2. **Complaint No-601**, dated **07/06/2007**, filed under Sections **3/4/5/6 of the Explosive Substances Act**.
3. Additional investigation resulted in:
 - **Complaint No-184**, dated **11/03/2008**
 - **Complaint No-185**, under Sections **3/4/5/6 of the Explosive Substances Act**.

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Sylhet Speedy Trial Tribunal's Judgment

After the trial of the case by the **Sylhet Speedy Trial Tribunal**, in the judgment announced on **23/12/2008**, the Tribunal sentenced the following accused to **death** and fined each **Tk 10,000**:

1. **Mufti Abdul Handban Munshi alias Abul Kalam**
2. **Mahibullah alias Mofizur Rahman alias Mofiz alias Abhi**
3. **Mufti Moin alias Abu Jandal alias Khaja alias Masum Billah**
4. **Md. Delwar Hossain Ripon**
5. **Sharif Shahedul Alam**

August 17, 2005: Simultaneous Militant Bomb Attacks by JMB Across the Country

On **17/08/2005**, during the BNP-Jamaat coalition government, the militant organization **Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB)** carried out **simultaneous bomb attacks** across the country. These attacks occurred in **63 districts** of Bangladesh, excluding **Munshiganj** district.

While no one was killed in the attacks, they caused widespread shock, panic, and fear throughout the country. The incident significantly damaged Bangladesh's image in the international arena. Through this bombing, the militant group **JMB** demonstrated its organizational strength and presence nationwide.

Initially, the government attempted to blame the opposition party for the attacks. However, due to pressure from various domestic and international organizations, including intense global scrutiny, the government was forced to investigate the incident. Law enforcement forces, including the **police** and **RAB**, began extensive operations to uncover the identities of the **JMB** militants and their leaders.

During interrogations, the law enforcement forces revealed that the main leaders of this militant organization were:

- **Shaikh Abdur Rahman**
 - **Siddiqur Rahman alias Bangla Bhai**
-

The Rise of Bangla Bhai

Who is **Bangla Bhai**? After the **four-party alliance** came to power in **2001**, Bangla Bhai operated under the **umbrella of local BNP leaders** in the districts of **Rajshahi, Naogaon, and Natore** within the Rajshahi division. Initially, he gained public support by arresting and eliminating some local outlaws and proletarian leaders in the name of **restoring law and order**.

However, over time, Bangla Bhai and his followers disregarded the **laws of the country**, engaging in extrajudicial killings, extortion, and brutal violence. Under the **JMB's leadership**, they executed people through illegal means, conducted "local arbitrations," and extorted money from residents.

Prominent politicians who allegedly supported **Bangla Bhai** and the JMB either **directly or indirectly** include:

- **Alamgir Kabir**, former State Minister from Naogaon
- **Barrister Aminul Haque**, former Minister from Rajshahi
- **Nadeem Mostafa**, former MP
- **Ruhul Quddus Talukdar Dulu**, former Deputy Minister

Due to the **direct involvement** of influential Ministers and MPs from the coalition government, the **local administration** refrained from taking action against the JMB's activities. As a result, the affected regions descended into a state of **terror** under the control of militant forces.

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After the **JMB atrocities** began to surface, various **print and electronic media** and political organizations started publishing reports on their activities. However, the surprising fact is that the **government's responsible quarters** continued to deny the existence of the JMB. The government propagated that **Bangla Bhai** was merely a "**media creation**", fueling further impunity for the militants. With such **overt government support**, the JMB became more emboldened and focused on achieving its objectives by building a **strong organizational structure** across the country.

The full extent of their **organizational strength** was revealed during the **August 17, 2005**, simultaneous bomb attacks. After three years of clandestine activity, the JMB carried out a **series of bomb attacks** across **63 districts**, excluding Munshiganj. Following the attacks, **156 cases** were filed across various police stations.

As the investigation progressed and names of **JMB leaders** began to emerge, the organization became **more desperate**. They escalated their activities, carrying out **suicide bombings** in areas such as **Chittagong, Noakhali, Jhalakathi, and Gazipur**, among others. These attacks resulted in the deaths of **judges, lawyers, police officers, and many innocent people**.

Under **intense domestic and international pressure**, the government was eventually forced to take action against the JMB. One by one, their leaders were arrested, including:

- **Shaikh Abdur Rahman**
- **Siddiqur Rahman alias Bangla Bhai**
- **Md. Ataur Rahman alias Tarek Sani Ibn Abdullah**
- **Abdul Awal alias Arafat alias Samad**
- **Iftexhar Hasan alias Mamun**
- **Amjad alias Khaled Saifullah alias Farooq**
- **Hafez Md. Minhajul Islam alias Sohail Rana alias Sarwar Hussain**
- **Salauddin alias Saleheen alias Sajid**
- **Tauhid (Shura Member)**
- **Zahurul Haque alias Azizul Haque**
- **Nurul Islam alias Saheen alias Tapas Amar**
- **Md. Safiqul Islam**
- **Abu Bakr Siddique**

The police filed **charge sheets** after investigating various attacks, and so far, **223 individuals** have been convicted. Of these:

- **114** have been sentenced to **death**,
- **85** have been sentenced to **life imprisonment**,
- **24** have received various prison terms.

During the **caretaker government** after 1/11, six top JMB leaders were executed on **29/03/2007**:

1. **Maulana Abdur Rahman Ibn Abdullah alias Ehsan alias Shaikh Abdur Rahman**
2. **Md. Siddiqul Islam alias Azizul Islam alias Litoo alias Bangla Bhai**
3. **Md. Ataur Rahman alias Tarek Sani Ibn Abdullah**
4. **Abdul Awal alias Arafat alias Samad**
5. **Iftexhar Hasan alias Mamun**
6. **Amjad alias Khaled Saifullah alias Farooq**

At present, **25 cases** remain under investigation, and **66 cases** are under trial.

Despite the executions and various sentences handed down, many people in the country believe that the **true patrons** of the JMB were never fully exposed. The **political leaders, ministers, and influential figures** who **supported and enabled the rise** of the JMB remained outside the purview of justice. Before their execution, both **Shaikh Abdur Rahman and Bangla Bhai** expressed a desire to **reveal critical information** regarding their political patrons. If they had

been given the opportunity to speak, it is widely believed that many **influential ministers, MPs, and leaders** of the then government would have been exposed.

While the **series of bombings** and subsequent actions against the JMB are seen as **resolved** on the surface, many **untold stories** and **unanswered questions** remain unknown to the people of the country.

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Alhaj Advocate Manzoorul Imam (Awami League Leader) Killed

On **25/08/2003**, at approximately **10:10 AM**, near Chhota Mirzapur on Shamsur Rahman Road under Khulna Thana of Khulna Metropolitan, **members of the proscribed East Bengal Communist Party** attacked Alhaj Advocate Manzoorul Imam, President of the Metropolitan Awami League, and his companion Advocate Bijan Bihari.

The two were traveling to court on a rickshaw when the terrorists targeted them with firearms and bombs. Advocate Manzoorul Imam was struck by **two bullets in his chest**, while Advocate Bijan Bihari also sustained gunshot injuries. Additionally, **rickshaw driver Saidul Akand's leg was severed** by a bomb explosion.

Advocate Manzoorul Imam was taken to the local **Garibal Nawaz Clinic**, where the doctor on duty declared him dead.

In response, **Khulna Thana Case No-27**, dated **25/08/2003**, was registered under **Section 3/6 of the Explosives Act** along with Sections **341/302/326/307/34** of the Penal Code.

Following the investigation, the **charge sheet** filed in the learned court accused the following individuals:

1. **Shukur Ghazi**
2. **Abdur Rabbi alias Ripon**
3. **Ganesh Banerjee**
4. **Imam Sardar alias Imam**

Additionally, a **supplementary charge sheet** (No-36) was filed on **24/01/2008**, which included an additional accused: **Shahadat Hossain alias Raju**. The case remains **pending**.

An **honest and popular leader**, Alhaj Advocate Manzoorul Imam, was brutally **murdered in broad daylight** during the coalition government's tenure.

Murder of Journalist Manik Saha

On **15/01/2004**, at approximately **1:25 PM**, journalist and advocate **Manik Saha** was on professional duty, traveling from the **Press Club** to Sir Iqbal Road and Chhota Mirzapur Road intersection.

At that location, **members of the proscribed East Bengal Communist Party** targeted him with a **bomb**. The explosion **shattered his head**, and he died on the spot.

In response to the incident:

1. **Case No-28**, dated **17/01/2004**, was filed under **Section 302/34** of the Penal Code.
2. **Case No-29**, dated **15/01/2004**, was filed under **Section 3/6 of the Explosives Act**.

Following the investigation, the charge sheet named the following individuals:

1. **Suman alias Nuruzzaman**
2. **Bulbul Hossain alias Bulu**
3. **Sattar alias Disco Sattar**
4. **Belal**
5. **Mithul**
6. **Saka alias Shawkat Hossain**
7. **Akram Hossain alias Akram Howlader alias Bombaru Akram** (member of the East Bengal Communist ML Party).

Manik Saha's brutal murder shocked the **journalist community** and the **nation**, highlighting the deteriorating law and order situation during that time.

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Murder of Journalist Manik Saha (contd.)

8. **Ali Akbar Sikder alias Shaon**
9. **Kochi alias Omar Farooq**
10. **Altaf alias BDR Altaf alias BDR Siddique**
11. **Saro alias Saroar Hossain**
12. **Mahfuz alias Mafiz alias Nasir alias Safiqul Islam**

A **charge sheet (No-192)** dated **24/06/2004** was filed under **Section 302/34** of the Penal Code at **Khulna Sadar Police Station**. The case is **currently pending** before the learned court.

Journalist **Manik Saha** was an honest, fearless, and courageous journalist. At various times, he sought to expose the causes of terrorism and unveil the identities of terrorists through his writings. Particularly in the **southwestern region**, his pen was active against various banned extremist groups and their patrons. Enraged by his efforts, the terrorists, with the backing of their **influential godfathers**, brutally killed this fearless journalist.

Murder of Journalist Humayun Kabir Balu

On **27/06/2004**, at approximately **12:50 PM**, members of the **proscribed East Bengal Communist Party** carried out a bomb attack at the gate of the **Daily Janmabhumi** newspaper building on Islampur Road. The attack **severely injured** Mr. **Humayun Kabir Balu**, the editor of the newspaper. He was immediately taken to **Khulna Medical College Hospital** for treatment but succumbed to his injuries at approximately **1:30 PM**.

In response to the incident:

1. **Khulna Sadar Police Station Case No-40**, dated **28/06/2004**, was filed under **Section 302/34** of the Penal Code.
2. **Case No-41**, dated **28/06/2004**, was filed under **Section 3/6 of the Explosive Substances Act**.

Following the investigation, the police charge sheeted the following individuals associated with the **East Bengal Communist ML Party**:

1. **M Zahidur Rahman alias Zahid**
2. **Nazrul Islam Naju alias Khora Naju**
3. **Sadiqur Rahman alias Rimon**
4. **Independent alias Iqbal**
5. **Ripon Ahmed alias Soeb alias Saiduzzaman**
6. **Suman alias Sharifuzzaman**
7. **Abdur Rashid Tapan alias Dada Tapan**
8. **Innocent alias Jahangir**

A **charge sheet (No-97)** was filed at the **learned court** on **25/04/2004** under **Section 302/34** of the Penal Code. Subsequently, based on the **plaintiff's complaint**, the learned court ordered the case to be **transferred to CID police** for further investigation.

Journalist **Humayun Kabir Balu** was known as an **honest, fearless, and courageous journalist**. Through his writings, he relentlessly exposed terrorism and sought to **unmask the identities of terrorists**. His pen was particularly active against the **banned extremist groups and their supporters** in the southwestern region. Infuriated by his courage and fueled by their **godfathers**, the terrorists brutally murdered this valiant journalist.

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Terrorists Targeted Minority Women in the Southwestern Region

From **October 2, 2001**, the peaceful lives of minority women in the southwestern region turned into a nightmare. Women who supported the **Awami League** also faced inhumane conditions. They could not leave their homes at night, even to answer the call of nature. Female students from minority communities were unable to attend school or college due to safety concerns. To protect their dignity, many women sought shelter in others' houses during the night.

The silence of the region was frequently shattered by the agonized screams of women. Since the election, **at least 50 women** confessed to being raped, with **two women killed after being raped**. These continued incidents of torture created widespread panic among thousands of women in the region.

From the day after the election, terrorists expanded their reign of terror. Initially, Awami League supporters and minorities were beaten. However, the **deteriorating law and order situation** emboldened the perpetrators to escalate their crimes to looting and sexual violence. Taking advantage of the prevailing panic, the criminals targeted not only minority women but also women from Awami League-supporting households. Under the cover of darkness, the perpetrators roamed villages, preying on women like **hyenas in the night**.

- **Anwara Begum**, a housewife from Gurarpara village in **Daulatpur Upazila of Kushtia**, was abducted from her home on **October 6, 2001**. She was gang-raped and later killed. Her body was recovered from a sugarcane field on **October 8, 2001**.
- On **October 11, 2001**, **Anjuara**, a mother of two children from **Gatipara village of Sharsha Police Station in Jessore**, was attacked when she went outside to answer the call of nature. Her body was found in a village pond on **October 13, 2001**. She was known to be a supporter of the **boat (Awami League)** and was also killed after being raped.

Series of Bomb Attacks on Cinema Halls in Mymensingh City

On **December 7, 2002**, the banned militant organization **Harkatul Jihad al-Islami Bangladesh** carried out a **series of bomb attacks** on cinema halls in **Mymensingh City**, killing **16 people** and injuring many others.

1. Ajanta Cinema Hall Bomb Attack

During the **evening show** of the film "*Priyatumi Kair*", at approximately **17:25 hours**, militants bombed the second floor of **Ajanta Cinema Hall**. The explosion caused the deaths of **two people** and left **13-14 others seriously injured**.

- **Kotyali (Mymensingh) Police Station Case No-12**, dated **07/12/2002**, was filed under **Sections 3 and 6 of the Explosive Substances Act and Section 15(1)(a) of the Special Powers Act 1974**.
- After the investigation, a **charge sheet** was filed in the learned court. The case is currently pending.

2. Alka Cinema Hall Bomb Attack

At approximately **18:45 hours**, during the **evening show** of the film "*Dhwans*", militants bombed the **second floor** of **Alka Cinema Hall**. The attack resulted in the deaths of **eight people**, including **one woman and one child**, and left **20-21 others seriously injured**.

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The blast caused **serious injuries** to many people. Approximately **20-22 seats** of the cinema hall collapsed, and parts of the ceiling were torn apart.

1. Ajanta Cinema Hall Bomb Attack

- **Case Details:** Kotyali (Mymensingh) Police Station Case No-13, dated **07/12/2002**, under **Sections 3 and 6** of the **Explosive Substances Act** and **Section 15(1)(a)** of the **Special Powers Act, 1974**.
- **Status:** After the investigation, a charge sheet was filed in the learned court. The case is pending.

2. Purvi Cinema Hall Bomb Attack

On **07/12/2002**, during the evening show of "*Sundari Badhu*" at **Purvi Cinema Hall**, at approximately **17:15 hours**, members of the banned militant organization **Harkatul Jihad al-Islami Bangladesh** carried out a bomb attack on the **second floor** of the hall.

- **Casualties:** **4 people** were killed, and **15-20** others were seriously injured.
- **Case Details:** Kotyali (Mymensingh) Police Station Case No-14, dated **07/12/2002**, under **Sections 3 and 6** of the **Explosive Substances Act** and **Section 15(1)(a)** of the **Special Powers Act, 1974**.
- **Status:** After the investigation, a charge sheet was filed in the learned court. The case is pending.

3. Chayabani Cinema Hall Bomb Attack

On **07/12/2002**, during the evening show of the film "*Where is Your Beloved*" at **Chayabani Cinema Hall**, at approximately **17:25 hours**, militants bombed the **second floor** of the hall.

- **Casualties:** **2 people** were killed, and **13-14 others** were seriously injured.
- **Case Details:** Kotyali (Mymensingh) Police Station Case No-15, dated **07/12/2002**, under **Sections 3 and 6** of the **Explosive Substances Act** and **Section 15(1)(a)** of the **Special Powers Act, 1974**.
- **Status:** After the investigation, a charge sheet was filed in the learned court. The case is pending.

Summary of the Mymensingh Cinema Hall Bomb Attacks:

A total of **16 people** were killed and **60-65 others** were seriously injured in a series of coordinated bomb attacks on multiple cinema halls in Mymensingh district.

Brutal Grenade Attack on Awami League Public Meeting at Bangabandhu Avenue on 21 August 2004

In protest of the grenade attack on **Mr. Anwar Chowdhury**, the British High Commissioner in Bangladesh, and the killing of **Awami League activist Tushar in Gopalganj**, the **Bangladesh Awami League** organized a protest rally on **Bangabandhu Avenue in Dhaka** on **21 August 2004**.

Central leaders, including **Awami League President and current Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina**, addressed the rally. At the conclusion of Sheikh Hasina's speech, unidentified terrorists hurled grenades and bombs at the rally with the intent to assassinate Sheikh Hasina.

Casualties:

1. **Begum Ivy Rahman**, Women Affairs Editor of Bangladesh Awami League.
 2. **Mostak Ahmed Sentu (40)**, Joint Secretary of the Central Sub-Committee of Bangladesh Awami League.
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Brutal Grenade Attack on Awami League Leaders and Activists

Casualties:

1. Rafiqul Islam Ada Chacha (68), Advisor, Dhaka Metropolitan Awami League
2. Sufia Begum (40), Editor, Dhaka Metropolitan Women's Awami League
3. Hasina Mumtaz Reena (45), President, 15th Ward Mahila Awami League
4. Liton Munshi alias Leetu, President, Union Jubo League
5. Md. Belal Hossain, Co-Organizing Secretary, Ward No. 69, Jubo League
6. Lance Corporal (Retd) Md. Mahbub Rashid, the leader's personal security guard
7. Abdul Quddus Patwari (40), Volunteer League worker
8. Atiq Sarkar (21), Jubo League Leader, Ward No. 84
9. Nasiruddin (40), Shramik League Worker, Hazaribagh
10. Ratan Sikder (40)
11. Md. Hanif alias Muktijoddha Hanif (50), Rickshaw Sramik League Leader, Ward No. 30
12. Mamun Mridha (21), 2nd Year Student, Govt. Kavi Nazrul College
13. Abul Kasem (50)
14. Jahed Ali (35)

15. Moazzem Hossain (25)
16. Momin Ali (35)
17. Shamsuddin (55)
18. Rezia Begum (45)
19. Ishahak Mia, Nagarpur, Awami League Worker
20. Abul Kalam Azad

In total, **24 leaders and activists** were killed, including **Ward 15 Executive Council members, Awami League leaders, Balughat Unit Jubo League leaders,** and **02 unidentified individuals.** About **137 leaders and activists,** including **Awami League President Sheikh Hasina,** were seriously injured, and many were permanently disabled.

Case Details:

- **Motijheel (DMP) Police Station Case No-97, dated 22/08/2004:** Filed under **Sections 324/326/307/302/34** of the Penal Code and **Sections 3, 4, and 6** of the **Explosive Substances Act.**

Initially, the investigation was mishandled to protect the attackers and main accused. The drama of "**Judge Mia**" was staged to mislead the public and hide the true perpetrators.

New Investigation:

During the caretaker government, the investigation was handed over to **Assistant Superintendent of Police Mr. Fazlul Kabir.** His investigation revealed that "**activists of the banned militant organization Harkatul Jihad al-Islami Bangladesh (HuJI)**" were responsible for the attack. Key figures arrested include:

1. Mufti Abdul Hannan Munshi
 2. Sharif Shahedul Alam alias Bipul
 3. Munshi Mahibullah alias Mofiz Uddin alias Abhi
 4. Maulana Abu Saeed alias Dr. Abu Zafar
 5. Abul Kalam Azad alias Bulbul
 6. Jahangir Alam
 7. Rafiqul Islam alias Sabuj alias Khalid Saifullah alias Shamim alias Russell
 8. Md. Arif Hasan alias Sumon alias Abdur Razzaq
-

Confessions and Charge Sheets:

The arrested individuals provided confessional statements revealing the names of **28 individuals** involved in the attack. Two charge sheets were subsequently filed against **22 accused**:

1. **Motijheel (DMP) Police Station Complaint No-500**, dated **09/06/2008**: Filed under **Sections 324/326/120-B/307/302/109/34** of the Penal Code.
2. **Motijheel (DMP) Police Station Complaint No-501**, dated **09/06/2008**: Filed under **Sections 3/4/6** of the **Explosive Substances Act, 1908 (Amended 2002)**.

Of the accused, **8 individuals** remain fugitives, including **Maulana Taj Uddin**, the brother of **Abdus Salam Pintu**, then Deputy Minister of the BNP-led coalition government.

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Further Investigation in the Grenade Attack Case

During the trial in the fast-track court, the learned court ordered further investigation to trace the source of the grenades. Pursuant to this order, **Mr. Abdul Kahar Akand, Special Superintendent of Police, CID, Dhaka**, was entrusted with the extended investigation.

During the further investigation, the following accused were arrested:

1. **Md. Lutfuzzaman Babar** (Former Minister of State for Home Affairs)
2. **Md. Ariful Islam alias Arif**
3. **Abdul Majed Bhat alias Md. Yusuf Bhat**
4. **Maulana Sheikh Abdus Salam**
5. **Lt. Commander (Retd) Saiful Islam Duke** (relative of Begum Khaleda Zia)
6. **Abdul Malek alias Golam Mohammad alias GM**
7. **Maulana Abdur Rauf**

Among these, the following individuals admitted their involvement and gave confessional statements, which were judicially recorded in court:

1. **Maulana Sheikh Abdus Salam**
2. **Abdul Majed Bhat alias Md. Yusuf Bhat**
3. **Abdul Malek alias Golam Mohammad alias GM**
4. **Mufti Moinuddin Sheikh alias Khaja alias Abu Jandal alias Masum Billah**

The CID's investigation has revealed evidence that this grenade attack was orchestrated to kill key leaders of the **Awami League**, including **Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina**. The case remains under investigation.

Brutal Grenade Attack on Judges in Jhalkathi

On **14/11/2005**, at approximately **8:30 AM**, the plaintiff, car driver **Md. Sultan Ahmed Khan**, went to **Jhalkathi Sadar Court Officers' Colony** in a minibus to pick up judges for court duty.

1. **Senior Assistant Judge Mr. Sohel Ahmed** and
2. **Senior Assistant Judge Mr. Jagannath Pare**

were picked up and dropped in front of their houses. At **8:57 AM**, while on the way to collect **Senior Assistant Judge Abdul Awal**, "activists of the banned militant organization Harkatul Jihad al-Islami Bangladesh" lobbed grenades at the bus.

Casualties:

- **Senior Assistant Judge Sohel Ahmed** was killed on the spot.
- **Senior Assistant Judge Jagannath Pare** was critically injured and later succumbed to his injuries on the way to the hospital.
- Peon **Abdul Mannan** and an unidentified youth were also seriously injured.

Legal Proceedings:

Following the incident, two cases were registered:

1. **Jhalkathi Police Station Case No-11**, dated **14/11/2005**: Filed under **Sections 3/4/5/6** of the **Explosives Act, 1908**.
2. **Jhalkathi Police Station Case No-12**, dated **14/11/2005**: Filed under **Sections 302/34** of the Penal Code.

The **CID** conducted the investigation and subsequently filed a complaint against **8 accused** in the learned court.

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Verdict in the Jhalkathi Case

The learned Speedy Trial Tribunal, Barisal, delivered its judgment on **09/02/2006** for:

1. **Jhalkathi Police Station Case No-11**, dated **14/11/2005**, filed under **Sections 3/4/5/6** of the **Explosives Act, 1908**.
 - The court sentenced the following defendants to **life imprisonment**:
 1. **Ataur Rahman Sani**
 2. **Abdul Awal**

3. **Iftekhar Hasan alias Al Mamun**
 4. **Shaikh Abdur Rahman**
 5. **Siddiquil Islam Bangla Bhai**
 6. **Mullah Omar**
 7. **Khaled Saifullah**
2. For **Case No-12**, dated **14/11/2005**, filed under **Sections 302/34** of the Penal Code, the judgment remains in effect.
-

Heroic Freedom Fighter and Former Member of Parliament Momtaz Uddin Killed

On **06/06/2003**, at approximately **22:10 hours**, **former Member of Parliament Momtaz Uddin** was returning home from Gopalpur by bicycle. On reaching **Nengupara** under **Lalpur Police Station** in Natore district, unidentified assailants ambushed him. They fatally stabbed the Honorable Member of Parliament and wounded his colleague.

Following the incident, Momtaz Uddin's brother **Advocate Abul Kalam Azad** filed a statement, leading to the registration of:

- **Lalpur Police Station Case No-6**, dated **07/06/2003**, under **Sections 341/326/302** of the Penal Code.
-

Investigation and Legal Proceedings

After the investigation conducted by the **CID**, the following individuals were named as accused:

1. **Md. Ariful Islam Arif**
2. **Babu alias Babar alias Shukur**
3. **Farooq**
4. **Md. Anichur Rahman alias Anis**
5. **Alam**
6. **Montu**
7. **Shukur Babu**
8. **Shamim**
9. **Sujan**
10. **Aynal**
11. **Mithu**
12. **Aslam**
13. **Abdur Rashid**

The **CID** filed charges under:

- **Lalpur Police Station Complaint No-7**, dated **21/01/2004**, under **Sections 341/324/302/34/109** of the Penal Code.

The case is currently pending trial in the **Fast Track Tribunal in Rajshahi**.

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Brutal Torture of Awami League Activists, Tribals, and Minorities Throughout Rajshahi District

On the night following the elections, a brutal attack was carried out in **Gopalpur**, a tribal village in **Godagari Upazila**. The violence spread to **Puthia** and **Durgapur Upazilas**, where Awami League activists and supporters were subjected to continued attacks and torture in various villages.

In **Jhaluka village of Durgapur**, minorities were threatened, and livestock, including cows, were looted. Villages such as **Sukhandi, Harirampur, Anolia, and Brajpur** were also attacked. Many villagers were forced to pay extortion money, while others had their properties looted. Ponds were raided, and fish were looted. In some areas, water barges were deliberately destroyed.

Residents such as **Samchul Haq, Monir Uddin, Alimuddin, Noor**, and others from **Sukhandi village** had their homes vandalized and looted. Hundreds of villagers were forced to flee their homes in fear.

Awami League supporters faced torture in several villages, including **Hariapara, Gaurihar, Jhaluka, Shaibari, and Kathanalbaria**. High amounts of extortion money were demanded, and those who refused to comply were threatened with death.

On **13/10/2001**, terrorists entered the office of **Daudkandi College Principal, Mr. Matiur Rahman**, and took away his mobile phone. They also demanded several lakhs of taka from him.

On **12/10/2001**, in **Puthia Upazila**, the **Kalimandir of Satbaria Vaishnav Para** was destroyed by the terrorists.

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Complaints of Post-Election Violence with Detailed Reports

Reports have been received detailing incidents of post-election violence. The responsible individuals involved have been identified in sections **Part 2, Part 3, Part4, and Part 5**. These reports have been categorized and compiled on a **district and upazila-wise** basis.

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