



## **Bangladesh - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on Friday 20 November 2015**

### **Treatment of Jamaat-e-Islami/Shibir(student wing) by state/authorities**

In June 2015 a report published by the *United States Department of State* commenting on events of 2014 states:

“ICT prosecutions of accused 1971 war criminals continued. No verdicts were announced until November, when the ICT issued death sentences in separate cases against Motiur Rahman Nizami and Mir Quasem Ali. At the same time, the Supreme Court Appellate Division upheld one of two death sentences against Mohammad Kamaruzzaman. All three men were prominent Jamaat leaders, and Jamaat called nationwide strikes in protest” (United States Department of State (25 June 2015) *2014 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – Bangladesh*).

This report also states:

“On August 10, Shafiqul Islam Masud, assistant secretary of the Jamaat-e-Islami Dhaka City Unit, was arrested, charged, and held in police custody with 154 others for arson attacks and vandalism in 2013. He was arrested and held four additional times in August and September 2014. According to a prominent human rights lawyer, Masud's whereabouts during his detentions were unknown, and lawyers were not allowed to speak with him. Defense lawyers were not allowed to speak before the court during his September 23 and 25 court appearances” (ibid).

This document also points out that:

“In some instances the government interfered with the right of opposition parties to organize public functions and restricted the broadcasting of opposition political events. Jamaat's appeal of a 2012 Supreme Court decision cancelling the party's registration continued” (ibid).

In January 2015 a *Human Rights Watch* report noted that:

“Hundreds of opposition activists, including from the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and the Jamaat-e-Islami Party, have been rounded up and arrested across the country in recent days” (Human Rights Watch (8 January 2015) *Crackdown on Opposition, Media*).

*Human Rights Watch* in February 2015 states:

“With no end in sight to politically motivated violence and other abuses in Bangladesh, state authorities need to ensure their response respects the rights of all and avoids arbitrary use of force, arrests, and disappearances, Human Rights Watch said today. Over the past month, nearly 60 people have been killed, hundreds injured, and thousands arrested across the country” (Human Rights Watch (6 February 2015) *Bangladesh: End Deadly Cycle of Crimes*).

This document also notes that:

“An estimated 17 other people have died at the hands of security forces, with the majority belonging to the BNP and the Jamaat-e-Islami parties or their student wings” (ibid).

A report issued in February 2015 by the *International Crisis Group* notes that:

“Election-related violence made the 2014 polls the most violent in the country’s history. Countrywide hartals (strikes), demonstrations and traffic blockades that stalled economic activity and travel outside the urban centres were accompanied by attacks on AL supporters and officials in the run-up to and on election day...The High Court banned Jamaat from contesting the polls on the grounds that it violated the secular constitution; its activists reportedly committed some of the worst attacks” (International Crisis Group (9 February 2015) *Mapping Bangladesh’s Political Crisis*, p.6).

This report also states:

“Yet, the government’s response was equally extreme, as the elite paramilitary Rapid Action Battalion...regular police and the Border Guard cracked down on the opposition in BNP and Jamaat strongholds, reportedly resorting to torture, illegal detentions and extrajudicial killings of leaders and activists” (ibid, pp.6-7).

In July 2015 a paper published by *Odhikar* notes:

“Between January and June 2015, the political situation of the country was extremely confrontational until March. The country-wide blockade and strike called by the BNP led 20-Party Alliance (former 18-Party Alliance) on January 5, 2015, over the controversial January 5, 2014 Parliamentary Elections... created a huge political crisis. During this period the government randomly arrested and used various forms of repression on many leaders and activists of the opposition; in order to quell the opposition activities. As a result, incidents of enforced disappearance, extrajudicial killings, shooting in the legs and torture in remand occurred; and reports show that most of the victims of such incidents were activists of the BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami” (Odhikar (1 July 2015) *Human rights monitoring report: January – June 2015*, pp.2-3).

This document also notes that:

“Of the 104 persons who were killed extra-judicially, 19 were leaders-activists of BNP, 14 were activists of Jamaat-Shibir...” (ibid, p.7).

A document published in October 2015 by the *Financial Express* notes that:

“Police have detained 39 leaders and activists of Islami Chhatra Shibir, student wing of Jamaat-e-Islami, while they were holding a secret meeting in Bandarban Sadar upazila” (Financial Express (24 October 2015) *39 Shibir men held in Bandarban*).

In October 2015 the *Associated Press* points out that:

“The government has...blamed domestic Islamist militants along with Islamist political parties — specifically the opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party and its main ally, Jamaat-e-Islami — for orchestrating the violence to destabilize the already fractious

nation" (Associated Press (31 October 2015) *Publisher of secular books killed, 3 wounded in Bangladesh*).

In October 2015 *BDNews24* states:

"Police have arrested two activists of Jamaat-e-Islami's student wing with bombs and firearms on them from Sylhet" (*BDNews24* (31 October 2015) *Police arrest two Jamaat activists in Sylhet*).

A report issued by *Reuters* in November 2015 states:

"On Friday, police detained five activists of Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Chhatra Shibir, the party's student wing, a police official said" (*Reuters* (6 November 2015) *Bangladesh says police can fire in self defense if attacked*).

A document published by the *Independent* in November 2015 notes:

"Law enforcers in their separate drives have arrested 83 leaders and activists of BNP, Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Chhatra Shibir in the capital, and Jhenidah, Faridpur, Sunamganj and Rangpur districts, reports UNB" (*The Independent* (7 November 2015) *83 BNP-Jamaat men held in capital, 4 dists*).

In November 2015 the *Daily Star* notes that:

"At least 176 BNP and Jamaat-Shibir men were held in Rangpur, Chapainawabganj, Bogra, Jhenidah, Satkhira and Faridpur districts yesterday and the day before. In Rangpur, police in separate drives arrested 12 activists of Jamaat-e-Islami and its student wing Islami Chhatra Shibir in Mithapukur upazila and the city in the last two days, reports our correspondent" (*The Daily Star* (8 November 2015) *176 BNP-Jamaat men held in five districts*).

In November 2015 the *Financial Express* states:

"A total of 76 leaders and activists of Bangladesh National Party (BNP), Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh and Islami Chhatra Shibir were arrested on charges of different subversive activities in Dhaka till Monday noon, police sources said" (*The Financial Express* (9 November 2015) *76 BNP, Jamaat-Shibir men arrested in Dinajpur*).

The *New Nation* in November 2015 points out that:

"In a massive drive, many people belonging to BNP and Jamaat are being harassed and arrested across the country, according to reports from our correspondents" (*The New Nation* (10 November 2015) *Police claims regular hunts against criminals, suspect*).

The *New Nation* states in a report issued in November 2015 that:

"Insecurity and panic have been growing among the people due to the 'countrywide special drive' by the law enforcers in the past several days. The leaders and the activists of the BNP and Jamaat-e-Islam and the accused in different cases have gone into hiding to avert the arrest. The drive began on Friday and will be continued till further instruction to the law enforcers by the authorities concerned. So far, over 6000 people, including BNP-Jamaat men, were arrested in last six days across the

country” (The New Nation (12 November 2015) *Over 6000 nabbed in name of anarchy*).

In November 2015 the *United News of Bangladesh* states:

“Law enforcers in separate drives from Friday night to Saturday morning arrested 337 people, including 87 BNP and Jamaat-Shibir activists, on different charges from Satkhira, Jhenidah, Chittagong, Chuadanga and Moulvibazar districts” (United News of Bangladesh (14 November 2015) *87 BNP, Jamaat-Shibir men among 337 held in 4 dists*).

A document published by the *Daily Star* in November 2015 notes:

“Hundred BNP and Jamaat-Shibir men among 143 people were held in Chittagong, Chapainawabganj, Jhenidah and Satkhira districts yesterday and the day before. Police in separate drives arrested 60 activists of Jamaat-e-Islami and its student wing Islami Chhatra Shibir in two upazilas of Chittagong early yesterday, reports our correspondent” (The Daily Star (15 November 2015) *100 BNP-Jamaat men among 143 arrested*).

A database compiled in November 2015 by the *South Asia Terrorism Portal* on the Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) includes the following entry for 14 November, noting that:

“In Satkhira District, 12 cadres of Jel-ICS were arrested from different parts of the District” (South Asia Terrorism Portal (November 2015) *Incidents and Statements involving Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS): 2015*).

A report released by *Jane’s* in November 2015 notes that:

“TWENTY-SIX members of Jamaat-e-Islami (Jel) and its student wing Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) were detained by police during operations in Bangladesh’s Satkhira district on 12 November, New Nation reported” (Jane’s (17 November 2015) *Police detain 26 Jel and ICS members in Bangladesh’s Satkhira*).

*Agence France Presse* in November 2015 states that:

“Thousands of Jamaat activists have been rounded up, along with supporters of the main opposition party, whom the government accuses of trying to destabilise the country” (Agence France Presse (17 November 2015) *Bangladesh tightens security for key verdict*).

In November 2015 the *Daily Star* notes:

“At least 59 BNP-Jamaat men were arrested during special drives by law enforcers in Gaibandha, Chapainawabganj, Jhenidah, Bogra and Jessore districts on Monday night and early yesterday, report our correspondents. In Gaibandha, police arrested 29 BNP and Jamaat-Shibir men, raiding different upazilas of the district. Of them, 14 belong to BNP, 11 to Jamaat and the rest to Chhatra Shibir. Police yesterday produced the arrestees in a court that sent them to jail. In Chapainawabganj, law enforcers arrested seven BNP and three Jamaat-Shibir men from different upazilas of the district early yesterday” (The Daily Star (18 November 2015) *59 BNP-Jamaat men arrested in 5 districts*).

This article also notes that:

“Police arrested three Shibir leader and activists from a students' mess in Thinmatha area of Bogra town early yesterday” (ibid).

The *Associated Press* in November 2015 points out that:

“More than 15 people, mostly leaders of Jamaat-e-Islami, have been convicted of war crimes as part of a series of decisions by two separate tribunals set up by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in 2010” (Associated Press (18 November 2015) *Bangladesh court upholds death sentences of 2 politicians*).

In November 2015 the *Daily Star* states:

“At least 72 BNP and Jamaat-Shibir men were arrested during special drives by law enforcers in Chittagong, Pirojpur, Jhenidah, and Chapainawabganj on Tuesday night and early yesterday, report our correspondents. In Chittagong, police arrested 20 leaders and activists of BNP, Jamaat and its student wing Islami Chhatra Shibir on Tuesday night” (The Daily Star (19 November 2015) *72 BNP-Jamaat men held in 4 districts*).

In November 2015 the *Financial Express* notes that:

“Police arrested a local leader of Jamaat-e-Islami from Arpara Bazar at Shalikha upazila of Magura district on Wednesday afternoon, reports UNB” (The Financial Express (20 November 2015) *22 Jamaat men held in two districts*).

An article published by the *Daily Star* in November 2015 points out that:

“Awami League (AL) Joint General Secretary Mahbubul Alam Hanif yesterday hoped that the decision over banning Jamaat-e-Islami would be finalised by March next year. “The High Court ordered a ban on Jamaat while the party's registration has already been cancelled. The case in this regard is in the Appellate Division now. Legal proceedings have been continuing. I hope the matter would be resolved within March next year,” he said at a press briefing at the Dhanmondi office of AL President Sheikh Hasina” (The Daily Star (20 November 2015) *Hanif hopes for ban on Jamaat by next March*).

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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