

A new mood is sweeping Europe as terror and immigration start to dominate

Worries about immigration and terrorism dominated people's minds, revealing how the agenda in Europe today is fundamentally different from earlier decade, a YouGov survey stated. This is not surprising. Since 2014, the EU has been struggling – some would say failing – to deal with the refugee crisis. This also coincided with a succession of major Islamist terror attacks which in the minds of many voters have linked worries over border security with more existential threats to physical security.

In his book *After Europe*, Ivan Krastev warned that the refugee crisis would be a game-changer for the EU; a watershed moment that would expose entrenched value divides between East and West. He also said it would leave majorities feeling intensely anxious about unprecedented and seemingly uncontrolled flows of newcomers and believing that the crisis is due to a conspiracy between cosmopolitan-minded elites and tribal-minded immigrants.

He was not wrong. Europe's new issue agenda is clearly now having profound political effects that are only just emerging into the light. Three trends are especially important.

The first has been rising support for an assortment of national populists –from the League in Italy to the Austrian Freedom Party. Elections in Sweden later this year may see another peak, with the formerly neo-

Nazi Sweden Democrats currently sitting on more than 20 per cent in the polls (at the last election they took 13 per cent). Crucially, the mainstream has also signalled its willingness to work with the party, a symbol of how the 'cordon sanitaire' that was once imposed on populists is breaking down across much of the continent. Second, many centre-right parties have sensed the changing winds and adjusted accordingly by shifting further right on migration and integration. In Germany, the meteoric rise of the Alternative



for Germany (AfD) and an impending state election in Bavaria contribute to Chancellor Angela Merkel coming under unprecedented pressure from her Christian Social Union (CSU) allies to change direction and start turning refugees away. With two-thirds of German voters telling pollsters they back a more restrictive stance the days of Merkel's more liberal stance are now over.

Third, the new mood is giving way to a new alliance of parties and states that are uniting to push back against what you might call 'liberal' Europe. Italy, Austria, Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovenia are all today led by figures who talk regularly and want to implement a more conservative approach to borders and security.

None of these trends look set to disappear in the short-term. On the contrary, it may be that we are witnessing the beginnings of a far more fundamental realignment in Europe. (Telegraph UK).

AL, Hasina are popular than BNP, Khaleda: US

The Washington DC-based ‘non-profit, nonpartisan’ International Republican Institute (IRI) found that most participants of its ‘qualitative’ study viewed the BNP and its ally Jamaat-e-Islami “negatively”. Participants were, however, divided about the return of the caretaker government. The qualitative study was based on a series of 16 focus group discussions [FGDs] conducted in Bangladesh’s eight divisions to better understand the citizens’ views on critical economic, political and security issues facing the country. The research report can be accessed on the website of the democracy-assistance organisation. The IRI says it used the FGDs to complement its public opinion surveys and understand how and why citizens hold their perceptions and beliefs. The poll results released last year showed that a majority of Bangladeshis positively view the direction of the country, its economy and level of security. The IRI said its Center for Insights in Survey Research’s study revealed that Bangladeshis are concerned about their economic situation and view corruption as a “significant problem” that pervades their daily lives.

“Despite the great economy has research indicates continue to suffer and report high said IRI Regional Luyten. He said indicate that to blame the economic critical of the democracy and “Despite concerns electoral fraud and participants intend general election,



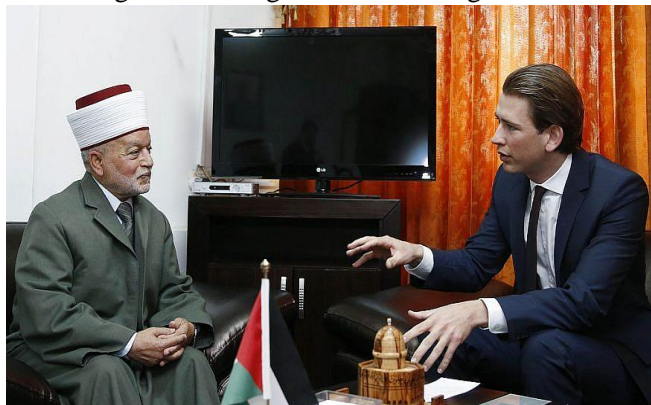
strides Bangladesh’s taken in recent years, our that many Bangladeshis from economic anxieties levels of corruption,” Director for Asia Derek the findings, however, participants do not seem government for their challenges, but are quality of Bangladesh’s democratic institutions. over issues such as violence, most to vote in the upcoming and participants

overwhelmingly favor greater cooperation between political parties. “Additionally, participants view corruption as a major problem and reported experiencing corruption on a regular basis,” Luyten added. “While participants were critical of the quality of Bangladesh’s democratic institutions, they remain strongly committed to democracy and key democratic norms. Nearly all participants consider voting to be their duty as citizens of a democracy. “It is vital that the government take steps to ensure that these elections are free and fair, and work across party lines and with citizens to strengthen Bangladesh’s democratic institutions,” the IRI regional director said.

The FGDs suggest that the Awami League’s incumbent government is in a “strong” political position entering the 2018 election cycle because of its development achievements and the popularity of its leader. But the BNP and Jamaat face “strong headwinds” “because of their association with violence, intransigence and religious extremism”, the IRI said. The participants of the study suggested that the government formulate policies to promote broad-based local government and employment opportunities as economic growth is not benefitting many segments of society. Corruption is perceived as pervasive, and they suggested the government should take steps to prevent corruption in both the public and private sectors. The IRI has conducted 10 national public opinion surveys in Bangladesh since 2008. (BDNews24.com)

Austria boots out Islamic imams to stem radicalization

Dozens of foreign-funded radical imams and seven mosques are on the chopping block in Austria, according to an announcement by Chancellor Sebastian Kurz on Friday. The decision was made after children were photographed at a Turkish-funded mosque playing dead, saluting Turkish flags and re-enacting the Battle of Gallipoli, the only major battle won by the Ottoman Empire in World War I, and the basis of the Turkish War of Independence. In addition, 60 imams employed by the Turkish-Islamic Cultural Association will have their residency permits revoked. "Parallel societies, political Islam and radicalization have no place in our country," said Kurz, who was just on a three-day visit to Israel that included visiting the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial museum in Jerusalem. Approximately 600,000 Muslims, most of them Turks or of Turkish descent, live in Austria, home to 8.8 million people. (Jewish New Syndicate)



Resource directory launched for activists

London: Book launch event of a resource directory, online & hard copy, for dealing with online & physical threats to assist secular Bengali activists was held on Thursday 21st June 2018, at Idea Store, Whitechapel, East London. The resource Directory is a response to increasing Islamist attacks on bloggers, secular activists, free thinkers and members of minority faith communities, according to a press release of the organisation.

The event was chaired by Julie Begum, Chairperson of the Swadhinata Trust and guest speakers were Prof Chetan Bhatt of London School of Economics, Gita Sahgal of Centre for Secular Space and Mojibur Doptori of Finland PEN. Speakers said, Islamist attacks on bloggers, secular activists, free thinkers, foreign nationals and members of minority faith communities have increased since the secular Awami League-led alliance came to power in 2008 in Bangladesh, and the formation of the International Crimes Tribunal in 2010. Hopefully this booklet will assist bloggers and activists seeking assistance. The event was organised by the UK Nirmul Committee in association with the Swadhinata Trust and supported by the Network for Social Change. (*Photo below: Prof Chetan Bhatt addressing the meeting*). For related news go to this link:

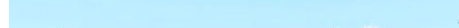
<https://www.swadhinata.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/BangladeshiFreethinkersUnderThreat.pdf>



Sydney man faces court over terrorism-related charges

A 26-year-old Sydney man will remain behind bars after being charged with terrorism-related offences. ABC News says, the man, Nowroz Amin, was arrested at his Ingleburn home in south-western Sydney in June 2018 for offences that allegedly occurred two years ago.

It is alleged the man was stopped from travelling to Bangladesh in February 2016 at Sydney Airport after Border Force officers found items in his luggage, indicating he may be going there to engage in terrorism. The items included clothing and extremist material found on an electronic device. He was charged with three offences, including making preparations for incursions into foreign countries for the purpose of engaging in hostile activities. He was also charged with exporting a commercial quantity of what is known as "tier one" goods. He was and training and weapons.



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Ingleburn, where he was arrested, is the house he grew up in and still shares with behind the front screen door, Mr Amin's media he had few details. "I don't believe said. "If you're asking questions, I'm not any of your questions because I have no

answers." Police said there was no current threat to the community. Mr Amin did not apply for bail and was not present at Parramatta Court.

Rohingya Leader Killed in Bangladesh Refugee Camp

A Rohingya leader who had criticized ARSA insurgents and often interacted with Bangladeshi officials and visiting foreign dignitaries due to his language skills was slain in a refugee camp in southeastern Bangladesh, police and local sources said. Arifullah, a leader at the Balukhali-2 camp in Cox's Bazar district, was hacked to death on June 18, Mohammad Abul Khayer, officer-in-charge of the police station in Ukhia upazila (sub-district), told BenarNews, an RFA-affiliated online news service.

“Police are trying to nab Arifullah’s murderers,” Khayer said, adding that Arifullah had previously received death threats. Sources in the refugee camp said Arifullah was an outspoken critic of the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA), the insurgent group that launched attacks against government security outposts in Myanmar’s Rakhine state last August, killing at least 12 people. Myanmar’s security forces responded with a brutal counter-insurgency clampdown that forced more than 700,000 Rohingya to cross the border into Bangladesh. Arifullah frequently accompanied foreign delegations to the camps, local official Nikaruzzaman Chowdhury said. Arifullah’s killing has become common in the refugee camps, camp



The image shows a man in a dark shirt and pants standing on a raised platform made of wooden planks or logs. He is holding a megaphone to his mouth and shouting. In front of him, a group of people, including men, women, and children, are sitting on the ground. Some are looking towards the man with the megaphone. The background shows a hilly landscape with some buildings and a clear sky.



Just a day before his slaying, at least 10 Rohingya refugees were injured when two rival groups clashed in the same camp, according to Mohammad Atikullah, officer-in-charge of the police station in Teknaf, another sub-district of Cox's Bazar. Two were in critical condition, he said. (Radio Free Asia)

EBF to organise Seminar at House of Lords on "Parliamentary democracy and Radicalisation in Bangladesh: Challenges"

London: In end-December 2018 or early-January 2019 Bangladesh is set to hold its next general election but there is considerable political uncertainty with one of Bangladesh's main political party – the BNP (Bangladesh Nationalist Party) - failing to agree on an election process. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has proposed of forming a cross-party interim cabinet to supervise the election but BNP leader, Khaleda Zia, has threatened to boycott the elections if they are not held under a non-elected/non-party caretaker government. Another key issue causing tension between the two main parties is the appeasement of Islamists by the BNP. Jamaat-e-Islami is a partner of quarters including EU, BNP has community is aware of BNP Jamaat when they were in power.



BNP-led Alliance. Despite objections from all refused to sever ties with Jamaat. The world led violence against minority communities

To ensure Bangladesh remains a secular democratic politically stable state the European Bangladesh Forum (EBF), a network of European Bengali diaspora, plans to organise a Conference to foster and promote secular rule in Bangladesh at the House of Lords in London on 25 October 2018. The London Conference will bring together different stakeholders including secular forces, European politicians, activists, think tank and journalists and create strong public opinion in favour of secular forces and against the Islamist extremist groups. This will also strengthen European and global stake holders to address a phenomenon that is indeed and exchange good practices of prevention.

Secular Bangladesh Movement UK seminar at House of Parliament

Secular Bangladesh Movement UK (SBMUK) hosted a seminar at the UK House of Parliament in London on Wednesday June 13th 2018. The seminar titled “Secularism: Hope for Unity, Peace and Justice” was chaired by Jim Fitzpatrick MP who opened the deliberations with an apology for having to re-schedule the seminar a day after the original date due to the European Union debate held Tuesday 12th June.

According to a press release of Secular Bangladesh Movement UK, the A number of guests and keynote speakers including Dr. Gowher Rizvi (International Affairs Adviser to Prime Minister of Bangladesh) and Andrew Copson (Chief Executive Officer at Humanist UK) were unable to make the rescheduled date and time due to prior commitments. Contributions were made by SBMUK’s General Secretary, Jasmin Chowdhury, (‘Creating a Movement Not Moments’) with Keynote Speakers Professor Mesbah Kamal (Dhaka University) who provided historical facts and anecdotal stories reinforcing Bangla Culture as an inclusive society embracing all races. Mahjabeen Khaled MP representing the ruling party of Bangladesh, Awami League, showed many examples how the current government has improved minority rights and especially women, whilst trying to provide equal opportunities for all irrespective of religious. Bidduth Barua (International Secular Forum of Bangladesh - Denmark Chapter) and Shuvo Roy of Secular Bangladesh Movement USA also presented their speeches promoting unity and justice.

Question and answer session was led by Pushpita Gupta (President of SBMUK). Attendees included Mohd Monirul Islam Kabir (First Secretary for Bangladesh High Commission in London), Sayed Faruk (Awami League UK), Sushanta Das Gupta (Founder of AmarMP), Ashim Chakraborty (UK Press Club), Urmi

Mazher (ATN Bangla), Saad Miya (Shecchashebok League), Tuton Bhowmick (SBMUK) and Marisa (Christian Solidarity Worldwide).

The key points discussed included: concerns around the violent attacks on religious minorities particularly around election times in Bangladesh; law enforcement and social transformation are crucial for protecting the human rights

communities; and economic all important part engagement and society; political demonstrate how this issue in their want to be citizens of the the principle of commitment from political parties approach from all

including media; movements to protect and promote the value of secularism such as Secular Bangladesh Movement UK can help government and authorities by providing insights, strategies in the global context.



of all education, cultural developments are of civic creating a secular parties need to they will address manifesto if they inclusive to all country; upholding secularism requires government, all and a joint sections of society

Switzerland Welcomes Radicalization

Switzerland has just rejected a proposed law preventing mosques from accepting money from abroad and compelling them to declare where their financial backing comes from and for what purpose the money will be used. According to the proposal, imams also would have been obliged to preach in one of the Swiss national languages. The Federal Council, which constitutes the federal government of Switzerland, was also against the proposal, and claimed that it constituted 'discrimination': "We must not discriminate against Muslim communities and imams and put them under general suspicion," Justice Minister Simonetta Sommaruga said. The Federal Council noted that in Austria, Islam is officially recognized, whereas it is not

in the Swiss model applied to Switzerland, obligations the Federal that the risks Islamist communities existing law.



Switzerland. According to government, therefore, the in Austria does not apply as "One cannot demand without rights". Instead, Council evidently believes posed by extremist preachers and can be combated within

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them. The authorities have no jurisdiction to collect data on the financing of Muslim associations and mosques apart from exceptional cases in which internal security is threatened. By rejecting the proposal compelling mosques to disclose who finances them, the Swiss authorities can now remain willfully blind. The strong message that the Swiss government is sending to those Muslim states and organizations that are fuelling radicalization in Switzerland by funding Salafist, Turkish and other radical mosques, is that they are welcome to continue doing so; the Swiss government has no intention of stopping them, let alone asking any unpleasant questions. It might as well put up a sign, saying, "Radicalization Welcome".

(Gatestoneinstitute.org)

approximately 250 Switzerland, but the not know who finances

Possibility of poll-time government formation in October

Talking to the reporters, Road Transport and Bridges Minister said the poll-time government will be formed after the Election Commission announces the election schedule, reports UNB. Over BNP's movement he said "BNP does not have any preparation for launching movement, people will not respond to their call."

About BNP's participation in the next general election, Obaidul said "If BNP doesn't participate that doesn't mean it'll be unilateral polls. Many other parties will participate in the polls and it will be an inclusive one."

On the completion of four years of the current government on January this year, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in an address to the nation said the next parliamentary election will be held under a polls-time government in line with the constitution, meaning she will hold the office of the head of government during the election. With the next parliamentary election getting nearer, the issue of the mode of election-time government is dominating the political landscape as the BNP continues to demand a neutral polls-time administration. (Courtesy: The Daily Star)

US quits UN human rights body, citing anti-Israel bias

Standing with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo at the State Department, US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley slammed Russia, China, Cuba and Egypt for thwarting US efforts to reform the council. She also criticised countries which shared US values and encouraged Washington to remain, but "were unwilling to seriously challenge the status quo."

Washington's withdrawal is the latest US rejection of multilateral engagement after it pulled out of the Paris climate agreement and the 2015 Iran nuclear deal. UN human rights chief Zeid Ra'ad al-Hussein on Monday called on Washington to halt its "unconscionable" policy.

"Look at the council membership, and you see an appalling disrespect for the most basic rights," said Haley, citing Venezuela, China, Cuba and Democratic Republic of Congo. She did not mention Saudi Arabia, which rights groups pushed to be suspended in 2016 over killings of civilians in the Yemen war. Haley also said the "disproportionate focus and unending hostility toward Israel is clear proof that the council is motivated by political bias, not by human rights." The United States has long shielded its ally Israel at the United Nations. In citing what it says is bias against Israel, the administration of President Donald Trump could further fuel Palestinian arguments that Washington cannot be a neutral mediator as it prepares to roll out a Middle East peace plan.



Rights groups have criticized the Trump administration for not making human rights a priority in its foreign policy. Critics say this sends a message that the administration turns a blind eye to human rights abuses in some parts of the world. "Given the state of human rights in today's world, the US should be stepping up, not stepping back," Zeid said after Haley announced the US withdrawal. Diplomats have said the US withdrawal

could bolster countries such as Cuba, Russia, Egypt and Pakistan, which resist what they see as UN interference in sovereign issues. Haley said the withdrawal "is not a retreat from our human rights commitments." Twelve rights and aid groups, including Human Rights First, Save the Children and CARE, warned Pompeo the US withdrawal would "make it more difficult to advance human rights priorities and aid victims of abuse around the world."

Jamil Dakwar, director of the American Civil Liberties Union's Human Rights Program, said Trump's "misguided policy of isolationism only harms American interests." The EU said Washington's decision "risks undermining the role of the US as a champion and supporter of democracy on the world stage." British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said it was regrettable and that the council was the "best tool the international community has to address impunity." (Reuters)

Bangladesh's success story shared with European Union

A conference on Bangladesh was held on 28 June at the European Parliament titled "Wonder Economy: Development and Challenges" organised by the Belgium Awami League and hosted by Richard Corbett MEP. The conference was divided into three sessions with opening session where Shahidul Hoque, President, Bangladesh Association & Jahangir Chowdhury, Conference Coordinator outlined the objective of the day. Richard Corbett MEP, Vice Chair, Delegation for Relations with South Asia, who hosted the conference said as Bangladesh graduates from a least developed country (LDC) to middle income country, it faces huge challenges and questions about its future trajectory.

Bangladesh's Ambassador to Belgium Shahadat Hussain in his keynote presentation said, Bangladesh is on the path of becoming a

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In the Economic Development session Neena Gill MEP & Baroness Mobarik MEP, both from U.K. stressed the need to close the gap on gender inequality to improve women empowerment and Sajjad Karim MEP, also from U.K. stressed the trade relationship with Bangladesh. Former MEP Paolo Casaca (Portugal), Director, South Asian Democratic Forum highlighted the challenges Bangladesh faces in the future. And in the final session of Human Development M A Gani, General Secretary, All European Awami League, M M Murshed, Coordinator of Brussels Dhaka Solidarity for Peace Committee, Dr Bidduth Barua, Demark Awami League General Secretary and Barrister Nadia Choudhury, Member of the Bangladesh Awami League International Affairs Sub-Committee responded to various questions raised during Q&A session. (Report by EBF)

Rohingya children of rape: forgotten victims

By- Ansar Ahmed Ullah



In early May, UN News published a special report highlighting the concerns being voiced by several leading UN officials over the legacy of what Andrew Gilmour, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, described as a “frenzy of sexual violence”.

Members of the mainly-Muslim minority community began fleeing Myanmar’s Rakhine state last August following a military crackdown targeting extremists, during which homes were destroyed, men and boys killed, and countless women and girls raped. On 19 June, the world marked the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict, and the UN been finding out how some of the survivors have been coping, now that dozens of children of rape have been born – and what UN agencies are doing to provide them with vital services and support.

“Sameera” (not her real name) is among the Rohingya refugees now sheltering in the crowded camps of the Cox’s Bazar region in south-eastern Bangladesh. The 17-year-old had only been married for a couple of months when her husband was killed. She was raped just days after his death, when three soldiers showed up at her door, together with two other Rohingya girls, who were also raped. “As I will give birth to the baby, he or she will be mine, no matter who the father is,” she told the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF).

Since August, more than 16,000 babies have been born in the refugee camps, according to the UN agency. It is difficult to determine exactly how many were conceived through rape, said Pramila Patten, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. “You also have the stigma of a pregnancy as a result of rape which makes it very hard for women to come out openly with the fact of their pregnancy,” she told UN News last month, shortly after returning from a mission to the Kutupalong camp, one of the largest refugee camps in the world. “And in fact, there are many reports from local Rohingyas that many girls, especially young adolescents, are actually hiding the fact of their pregnancy and will never seek medical care, for example, for the delivery.”

UNICEF has collected testimonies from several women and girls like “Sameera,” whose children are among what UN Secretary-General



António Guterres has called the “forgotten victims of war.” Conceived through conflict-related rape, these boys and girls grow up struggling with their identity or fall victim to stigma and shame. At the same time, their mothers are marginalized or even shunned by their communities. For the past three years, the UN has designated 19 June as the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict to promote solidarity with survivors. In Bangladesh, the arrival of the monsoon winds and rains just over a week ago is

making life even more difficult for the Rohingya refugees and the humanitarians assisting them. More than 720,000 Rohingya have arrived in Cox's Bazar as of the end of May, according to the UN refugee agency (UNHCR), joining some 200,000 others who had fled earlier waves of persecution and discrimination.

Since the start of the crisis, the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) has deployed 60 highly skilled midwives to the area who are also trained in clinical management of rape and family planning counselling. Nineteen women-friendly spaces have also been created in the camps. UNFPA said key among "protection challenges" is scaling up assistance to survivors of gender-based violence, and other vulnerable populations, including through psychosocial support and counselling, and psychological first aid. So far, 47,000 Rohingya mothers-to-be have received antenatal check-ups while 1,700 babies were safely delivered in clinics supported by the Fund.

Body of war crimes witness recovered

Bangladesh police today recovered the slit-throat body of Shumon Zahid, a witness of a war crimes case and son of martyred journalist Selina Parvin, in Khilgaon of Dhaka. Shumon Zahid, 52, a resident of Uttar Shahjahanpur, was one of the witnesses in a war crimes case filed in connection to the killing of intellectuals in December 1971, according to a report in Dhaka. A team of Kamalapur Railway Police Station recovered the body from near the tracks in Shahjahanpur area in Khilgaon 10:00am, Yasin officer-in-charge Dhaka Railway Station, told The Daily Star. They recovered the body based on the information from Shahjahanpur Police OC said. Zahid used to work at Farmers Bank, Kazi Md Bakhtiar, the victim's brother-in-law, said.

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from near the tracks in Shahjahanpur area in Khilgaon 10:00am, Yasin officer-in-charge Dhaka Railway Station, told The Daily Star. They recovered the body based on the information from Shahjahanpur Police OC said. Zahid used to work at Farmers Bank, Kazi Md Bakhtiar, the victim's brother-in-law, said.

People who threatened him with life earlier for being the witness in a war crimes case, might have killed him, Bakhtiar alleged. Touhid Reza Noor, another witness of the case also said the same over Zahid's death. On November 3, 2013, International Crimes Tribunal-2 handed down death penalty to Al-Badr leaders Chowdhury Mueen Uddin and Ashrafuzzaman Khan for carrying out "unheard of extermination committed in execution of designed murderous scheme". The court found them guilty on all 11 charges relating to the killing of 18 intellectuals -- nine teachers of Dhaka University, six journalists and three doctors -- on the cusp of the country's independence in 1971. The duo, both aged 65, were tried in absentia, as the tribunal's efforts to bring them back to face trial had failed. Mueen is now in the UK and Ashraf in the US. Namaz-e-Janaza of Zahid will be held tomorrow (Friday) after Zohr prayers at the Dhaka University central mosque. Then, he will be buried near her mother's grave at Azimpur graveyard in the capital, Mofidul Hoque, a trustee of Liberation War Museum, told The Daily Star.