

## **2-day shutdown in Bangladesh against Jammāt chief's death sentence**

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**Dhaka:** A two-day nationwide shutdown called by the Jamaat-e-Islami began today in Bangladesh against a Supreme Court verdict upholding the death penalty for its chief for the 1971 war crimes.

*Motiur Rahman Nizami*

Hours after the court on Thursday dismissed the review petition of the party's Ameer (president) Motiur Rahman Nizami, the party called a 48-hour nationwide strike.

Nizami, the Jamaat chief since November 2000, now only has the option of seeking the President's mercy to stall his imminent execution.

Despite the strike, traffic in and around Dhaka was almost regular. In other parts of the country too, the shutdown had almost no impact on people's routine life.

Businesses in Dhaka and elsewhere in the country opened as per schedule on Sunday.

Nizami, 72, served as the agriculture and industries minister in Khaleda Zia's 2001-06 cabinet.

**Â Â Â Nizami's party said he was not given justice. But the government says the trial met proper standards.**

Nizami is among the top Jamaat leaders who have been tried in two war crimes tribunals which Prime Minister Sheikh Hasian's Bangladesh Awami League-led government formed in 2010 to bring the perpetrators of 1971 war to book.

Nizami was indicted in 2012 on 16 charges of crimes against humanity, including looting, mass killings, arson, rape and forcefully converting people to Islam.

The indictment order said Nizami was a key organiser of the Al-Badr, an auxiliary force of the Pakistani Army which planned and executed the killing of Bengali intellectuals during the war that led to the breaking away of East Pakistan and formation of an independent Bangladesh.

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