

# Naushin murder Two more PWs cross-examined

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Two more prosecution witnesses in the baby Naushin murder case were cross-examined in the Second Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka, yesterday.

After the cross-examination for about an hour, Judge Hossain Shahid Ahmad adjourned the hearing till May 13.

Metropolitan Magistrate Jagannath Das Khokan, the 11th prosecution witness in the case, told the court that during the "Test of Identification Parade" (TIP) of the accused at the court hajat on May 22 last year, three prosecution witnesses identified accused Moslem alias Muslim Mia and Saiful Islam Ratan.

Marian Islam Naushin, 2, was shot in the head during indiscrimi-

nate firing by a gang of muggers at Uttar Badda in the city on May 9 last year. She was on the lap of her father Nazrul Islam.

Naushin was rushed to a local clinic and then shifted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where doctors declared her dead.

Later, a murder case was filed with Badda police station.

The Detective Branch (DB) of police submitted a chargesheet against four people on August 21 last year.

Of them, Moslem and Ratan are in the custody while Mamun alias 'Ragkata' Mamun and Sumon are still at large.

Assistant public prosecutor Ali Haider Kiran appeared for the state while advocates Mohammad Hanif, S M Zahid Hossain and Anwarul Kabir Babul defended the accused.

# Outlaw murdered by rivals in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

An outlaw belonging to 'Jabbar Bahini', a breakaway group of New Biplobi Communist Party (NBCP), was murdered by his rivals at Shajiarha village in Dumuria upazila at midnight on Wednesday.

According to police, a group of armed cadres of NBCP abducted Abdul Mannan Gazi, 35, from his house at gunpoint. They took Mamun to a nearby primary school and stabbed him. He died on the spot.

The same group swooped on the house of Omar Khaiyam, brother-in-law of Mannan and beat him mercilessly.

He was admitted to the Khulna Medical College Hospital (KMCH).

On May 4, this year, another cadre Ranjan Sarker of 'Jabbar Bahini' was shot and slaughtered by NBCP armed cadres at a fish farm at Bamandia in Dumuria upazila.

## CPJ

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journalists in Sitakunda.

The CPJ also asked the prime minister to make sure that those attempting to silence the press are brought to justice.

Atahar Siddiq Khosru, president of the Sitakunda Press Club and local correspondent of the Daily Ittefaq, was abducted on the night of April 30. Mahmudul Haq, editor and publisher of a local magazine, was arrested in Dhaka on May 6 on charge of extortion.

Sitakunda BNP General Secretary Nurul Islam allegedly threatened Khosru with dire consequences if he (Khosru) helped bail Mahmudul Haq out of the extortion charge. The threat came before Khosru was abducted.

His elder brother filed a case with the Double Mooring Police Station on May 6 against four persons, including Nurul Islam.

Mahmudul Haq was arrested after the local BNP leader filed the case of extortion against him following his reports on corruption of local politicians and police, said the CPJ.

A gang led by Baittya Rafiq and Ashraf, two alleged criminals, attacked a procession of local journalists who were demonstrat-ing for rescue of Khosru on May 6.

# Where does money go?

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The government took a miserly stance last year as the Awami League government 'left the economy in a mess'.

"We will get a lot of funds from the donors and the economy is now in a much better situation," Saifur told

Twenty-nine lawmakers including 27 from the government and two from the Jatiya Party Raushan Ershad and GM Kader took part in the meeting. None of the Awami League (AL) lawmakers attended it.

However, Kazi Zafarullah, presidium member of the AL, came to the venue before Saifur turned up and left it after some time.

Saifur was reportedly a bit annoyed with the thin presence of lawmakers. He told them to come up with their proposals, if any, before May 26 to be considered for the next year's budget.

The lawmakers said agriculture should get the highest priority in the budget and sought farm subsidy.

They also said the law and order should be strengthened and asked the finance ministry not to slap any new tax.

# 5 BNP-men injured in Jhalokathi factional fighting

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Five BNP activists were injured, one of them seriously, when rival factions of Jhalokathi unit of the party clashed over a tender dispute in the town yesterday, police and witnesses said.

They said the activists also ransacked the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) office where the submitted tenders for a Tk 47 lakh work order were scheduled to be opened.

The clash ensued when the Wares Khan group demanded distribution of work by lottery while its rival Ziauddin Mizan group argued for negotiated settle-ment.

The police were called out to bring the situation under control.

Seriously injured Azam Ali Khan, joint convener of Jhalokathi town BNP, was admitted to the Sadar hospital in a critical condi-tion.

# Two criminals held with arms in Demra

BSS, Dhaka

Police arrested two criminals with arms from the city's Demra area Wednesday night.

Acting on a tip-off, Demra police arrested Jayedul Islam, 18, from Brammanchiran area.

On his confession, police raided the residence of Eman Uddin, an accomplice of Jayedul, and recovered a double-barrel gun and a single-barrel gun with 25 cartridges.

Later, police arrested Jayedul's another accomplice Azizul Haq and recovered a Pakistan-made single-barrel gun from his posses-sion.

Jayedul was released on bail recently in a criminal case, police said.

## Outlaws

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beyond the control of police and people have no option but to live at the mercy of the outlaws," one source said.

A top official of the Khulna district police admitted that armed PBPC cadres looted rifles and bullets at Daulatpur Jute mills and at Fakirhat and killed two constables, throwing a challenge to police. They did it because district police repeatedly raided their hideouts in Rupsha, Terokheda and Digholia upazilas in the last one year and police firing left one of their cadres, Sabuj (34), killed last month.

Officials of Khulna Metropolitan Police and District Police say their men are 'losing morale' in the face of a series of armed attacks and arms looting. Most of the police personnel do not try sincerely to nab the outlaws because their ringleaders are sheltered by some influential leaders of the ruling party. "We are not rewarded but rebuked for taking action against those elements," one official said, seeking anonymity.

But leaders of political parties and socio-cultural organisations say apart from getting protection from some ruling party leaders, the outlaws are also protected by their beneficiaries in police department.

However, people in the region feel that both politicians and police are responsible for the sharp deterioration in the law and order.

## BNP MP

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"Saju asked us to migrate to India and threatened to grab all the land we have," said a cobbler.

The lawmaker denied the allegation and claimed that he had rather given away part of his land for construction of a road in the area.

"I didn't occupy their land. They were polluting the environment spreading garbage on my land. It took me a lot of time to clean the garbage," Khaleque told The Daily Star.

"I have protected the minority people all along. The managers of my business organisations and the construction engineer are all Hindus," he said.

The lawmaker allegedly grabbed the land of Shukha Mohan (house No. 193), Sukhlal (house No. 192/1), Harun Miah, (house No. 185), Gour Das (house No. 184), Rakhal Das (house No.183), Labu Miah (house No. 182), Sumanta Das (house No. 181) and Sandhya Rajbangshi (house No. 179/1), among others.

The Muslims bought their land in 1964 and the Hindus have been living there for generations, said the locals.

The families did not complain to police station for fear of back-lash.

The residents also alleged that a reporter named Motiur Rahman of a Bangla daily took Tk 8,000 in the cobbler's with a promise of publishing reports on the land-grab.

# Corruption, lack of planning lead to urban mess

## REHAB, Prothom Alo roundtable told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Lack of coordination, commitment and proper planning, and corrup-tion are spurring unplanned urban growth, speakers at a roundtable said yesterday.

The Department of Urban and Regional Planning, the Real Estate and Housing Association of Bangladesh (REHAB) and the Prothom Alo organised the roundtable on "Contemporary Urban Development Issues in Bangladesh" at the BUET auditorium in the city.

Academics from the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), town planners, economists and senior government officials attended the roundtable, moderated by Motiur Rahman, editor of the Prothom Alo.

Economist Dr Atiur Rahman said there should be more participation of people in the process of urban development and all agencies concerned should be more dynamic and effective.

"Seventy per cent of Dhaka's land is in the hands of 20 per cent people of the city," he noted.

Chairman of Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (RAJUK) Iqbal Uddin Ahmed said more than 80 per cent of the buildings in the city have been built without RAJUK approval.

He admitted that there is wide-spread corruption in RAJUK.

# AL boycotts JS

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phone was also switched off.

"We cannot sit with the patrons of killers, rapists and criminals. We must know how a virtually dead person can get back his job," Hasina told newsmen after the walkout.

"What's the use attending parliament if we cannot speak on public issues and violation of the constitution?" she wondered.

Foreign Minister Morshed Khan told the House that Khairuzzaman got back his job following a verdict by a tribunal and the government had nothing to do with it.

Earlier, when the House met with Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar in the chair, the parliament witnessed chaos as an opposition lawmakers demanded inclusion of the killing of innocent Iraqi people during the recent war in the obituary refer-ence.

The treasury benchers including some from the front row shouted when Shajahan Khan of the AL repeatedly tried to draw the attention of the Chair to incorpo-rate the Iraq issue. He was ignored.

Earlier, a meeting of the Jatiya Sangsad's Business Advisory Committee (BAC) took a decision to complete the current session in four working days. There will be no sittings of the House today and tomorrow, and the session will end Tuesday next.

Representatives of both the ruling alliance and the opposition including the prime minister, finance minister and chief whips attended the meeting chaired by Sircar.

# Trial of Saddam

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toppled a month ago by a US-led military coalition, is still at large, and it is uncertain whether he is dead or alive. So far some 20 former officials have been captured by or surrendered to coalition forces.

One other trial in the Baghdad district of Al-Bayaa also opened Thursday under the supervision of Iraqi judges.

"In a week or two, we will be sending assessment teams in all regions of the country" to get the legal system up and running again, Williamson said.

"The basic law is the same, the 1969 criminal law.

"Since 1969, a number of amendments were made, they're inconsistent with international standards like the Geneva and the Hague conventions. Those will be suspended," such as the law banning the insulting of the president, he said.

"The law was a good system, but the manner in which it was applied was wrong."

Iraqi judge Ibrahim Malik al-Hindawi said, however, that the 1969 law will be applied with no amendment made to it because "legislative power is the sole way of introducing such amendments and we will therefore wait for a new power to be put in place" before changing the law.

Iraqi judges "refuse the interference of any party in their work," he said in reference to coalition forces, adding that "any foreigner who commits an act against Iraqi law will be judged conforming to Iraqi law."

Asked about the chances of trying former Iraqi officials at local courts, Hindawi said that "Iraqi law is applicable to all Iraqis, whatever their position."

Nine Iraqis, arrested by US forces or Iraqi police and accused of either robbery or murder, have appeared before four judges in a preliminary court hearing.

According to Hindawi, no case will be opened in the coming days because investigations into the alleged crimes were not yet complete.

# Indo-Pak peace effort

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nently ended the infiltrations.

The pledge brought concessions from India and Armitage returned in August to ensure tensions were easing.

On this trip he is also expected to press for tougher action by Pakistan against militant groups waging a 14-year-old insurgency against Indian rule in Kashmir, a Muslim-majority Himalayan state straddling Pakistan and India.

"They (US delegation) will also suggest action be taken against organisations they have put on the terror watch list, which now includes Hizbul Mujahedin," the official, who did not want to be identified, added.

Hizbul was one of three Kashmiri guerrilla groups placed on a new State Department watchlist of 38 terrorist organisations last week.

Pakistan will press Armitage on Pakistani prisoners held at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, the official said.

The war on terrorism and security along Pakistan's porous western border with Afghanistan would also be on the agenda, but the key issue would be relations with India.

"Obviously the focus is India-Pakistan relations," the official told AFP.

Washington's top foreign policy troubleshooter had scheduled his trip before recent ice-breaking peace overtures between the fractious neighbours, triggered by Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's April 18 offer to agree to Pakistan's long-held call for talks.

Jamali matched Vajpayee's olive branch with an unprecedented telephone call last week and a formal invitation to come to Pakistan for talks. He also offered to travel to New Delhi himself.

Both sides have since moved to normalise relations, pledging to reappoint ambassadors and resume transport links.

Prof Nazrul Islam emphasised good governance and effective role of the civil society. He asked Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) and RAJUK to coordinate with the utility service providers to keep the city roads, lanes and by-lanes free from unplanned digging.

The speakers included Prof Mahbub-Un-Nabi, dean of architecture and planning faculty, BUET; AZM Shafiqul Islam, chief executive officer of the DCC; Kazi Golam Hafiz, chief town planner of RAJUK; Abdus Salam, vice-president of Bangladesh Institute of Planners; Dr Toufiq M Seraj, president of REHAB, and Mahmudul Hassan, general secretary of the organisation

Sadeq Hossain Khoka, Dhaka mayor and fisheries and livestock minister, was scheduled to attend the roundtable as chief guest, but he could not.

# DMP rebuts seminar view on cops

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Police Association (BPA) yesterday in a statement protested the portraying of police as patrons of criminals.

The comment was made by the presenter of the keynote paper at a seminar entitled "The Role of Law Enforcing Agencies in Relation to the Protection of Human Rights in Bangladesh" on Tuesday.

The Daily Star carried a news item on it on Wednesday.

In the statement, Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Deputy Commissioner Khan Sayeed Hasan said the speaker made a haughty speech and chose to overlook praiseworthy activities of police.

"There are dishonest people in all professions. So it is not unusual that there might be some in the police department as well," the statements said.

The department is very much aware of dishonest activities of its members and takes punitive actions, including dismissal, it added.

Some vested quarters are trying to instigate anarchy by demeaning the police force's image, the statement alleged.

## Fat tummied

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managed, law and order is also well maintained. The OCs run the thana. But they have fat tummies. They commute on cycles. They cannot run or move guns. It is not possible for them to control the thana," the finance minister told the MPs.

"The OCs are second grade officials. But the ASPs are recruited through the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) examinations. They are younger. If they are given the responsibility of the thana, they can improve the situation," he added.

He mentioned that he had discussed these points with the prime minister on the day before.

After the meeting with the MPs, the finance minister told journalists, "I don't think an ASP could drastically improve the law and order all by himself. But the fact is the OCs lack dynamism. To ensure dynamism, we need to inject fresh blood."

# Death in police 'brutality' sparks debate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The alleged police brutality that killed a day labourer at Ekbarpur village in Mougachhi union of Mohonpur upazila on Tuesday and the police's role after the incident have touched off public debate.

According to the district police, no evidence was found in support of the allegation.

The villagers at Ekbarpur, however, strongly refuted the police statement and alleged that they were in league with Union Parishad Chairman Abul Hossain. They also demanded a proper probe by an independent body.

Police had said the victim had died of a heart attack.

But the fact that the victim's

# Two killed, 12 hurt in N'ganj road accident

UNB, Narayanganj

Two persons were killed and 12 others injured in a road accident on the Dhaka-Chittagong Highway in Siddhirganj upazila yesterday.

Police and witnesses said the accident took place when a Dhaka-bound bus hit the people waiting for a bus at Mauchak in the morning.

The deceased were identified as Helena, 35, wife of Abdul Hye of Homna upazila in Comilla district and 18-month-old Tisha, daughter of Amir Chan of Mauchak area.

Tisha's mother was also injured in the accident.

Five of the injured were sent to Dhaka in critical condition.

The bus driver and his helper fled the scene, leaving behind the vehicle, police said.

# Diplomatic fund

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spent an additional US\$3,118 for another.

Auditors found that mission officials also misused public fund to pay for their children's inflated educational expenditure and household damages and enjoyed additional allowances, incentive bonus and day and travel allowances beyond allocations.

They also foot puffed-up power, water and telephone bills and premiums for health insurance.

The audit reports pointed out the involvement of all sections of mission staff in the misappropriation and wastage of fund.

The embassies in Geneva and Rabat paid an additional Tk 5.40 lakh for disposing of garbage and the mission at Mascot wasted Tk 4.75 lakh on gifts.

The missions at Ankara, Mascot, Brasilia, Geneva and Kolkata took an additional Tk 3.43 lakh in air-fares.

In Geneva, Rome, New Delhi and Kolkata, Tk 3.24 lakh was sucked in the name of education allowances of staff's children.

The embassies in Riyadh and Bonn lavished an additional amount of Tk 34,061 to buy drinking-water.

To pay unlawfully health insurance premiums, the Geneva office inflicted a financial loss of Tk 32,373.

The missions in Riyadh, Islamabad, New Delhi and Kolkata bought furniture and a staff car without approval, the auditors said.

Foreign ministry officials declined to comment on the audit reports.

"As I have not seen the reports, I cannot make any comment," said Zahuril Huq, director general of the external publicity wing.

# Tripura rebels kill 10

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pushing to expel hundreds of thousands of migrants from Bangladesh and the neighboring state of West Bengal.

The attack on Tuesday night was blamed on the All Tripura Tiger Forces, an outlawed rebel group fighting for a separate tribal homeland.

The tribal groups accuse the Bengali settlers of exploiting Tripura's mineral and timber wealth and depriving its indigenous population of the economic benefits. It was not clear if the victims of the latest attack were also Bengalis.

The two-decade insurgency has killed at least 10,000 people.

Dozens of ethnic militant groups operate in India's seven northeastern states. Some have been fighting for more than 50 years for autonomy or independence.

PTI adds: The toll in Wednesday's attacks by militant groups in Tripura rose to 33 with two persons succumbing to their injuries at GB Hospital here in the wee hours on Thursday, police said.

The two - Suradhani and Sanjoy Sarkar - were among the six injured in the shootout yesterday by the banned All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF) at Satcharri, a border village of West Tripura district, which claimed the lives of 19 others.

Another 10 persons were killed by suspected insurgents of pro-scribed National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT) armed with automatic weapons opened fire at Mohacherra market and in a nearby village fair.

Eight persons were killed on the spot and two of the five injured died on way to the hospital last night.

In another incident, a couple was shot dead by the outfit at Radhanagar village under Kumarghat police station of North Tripura district in the wee hours yesterday. The ultras also kidnapped one person on their way back to Bangladesh.

Tripura State Rifles and Assam Rifles are patrolling the affected Satcharri and Mohacherra areas, where tension continued to prevail, official sources said.

An extensive search operation has been launched in different vulnerable areas of the state and BSF has tightened their vigil along the 840-km-long porous border so that the ultras could not sneak into Indian territory from their camps in Bangladesh, the sources added.