BBC-British govt in bitter row over Iraq reporting

AFP, *London*

The British government was Sunday locked in an increasingly bitter dispute with the BBC over its reports that Prime Minister Tony Blair's office embellished intelligence reports to justify war on Iraq.

Allies of Alastair Campbell, the government's powerful director of communications and a key Blair aide, piled on pressure for the public broadcaster to apologise, accusing it of "unethical journalism" and lies.

BBC journalist-turned government minister Ben Bradshaw claimed the BBC broke its own guidelines in the way it handled its controversial story.

"There are quite clear BBC guidelines that you should not rely on a single anonymous source," Bradshaw told BBC radio's flagship Today programme on Saturday.

No attempt was made to test the truth of "the most serious accusation I can ever remember being levelled at any government", he said.

The argument centers on a BBC report in late May, in which an unidentified source said that Blair's inner circle last year "sexed up" a September dossier on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction to hype up the case for war on Baghdad.

London and Washington used Iraq's alleged weapons programme as a main justification for launching a war against Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq in March.

When John Humphreys, a star presenter for the Today programme, Saturday told Bradshaw the defence ministry had been told of the contentious BBC story the day before it was broadcast, that comment quickly became a new bone of contention.

"This is just another example of the BBC desperately trying to defend the indefensible -- namely poor and unethical journalism," Bradshaw said.

Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon then stepped into the row, saying in a statement: "I strongly support the request to the BBC to correct this morning's misleading comments. They are simply not true."

But BBC news director Richard Sambrook mounted a robust defence of the corporation's reports.

"In terms of Ben Bradshaw today, again, he has misrepresented our journalism and the way we conducted it," Sambrook said.

At the heart of the swirling accusations and counter-allegations is a one-sentence claim in the government's September dossier, which was compiled by intelligence services.

That sentence read: "Intelligence indicates that the Iraqi military are able to deploy chemical or biological weapons within 45 minutes of an order to do so."

On May 29, BBC radio's Today programme quoted an unidentified source as suggesting that the line was inserted under pressure from the prime minister's office.

On Saturday, in a further twist to the row, Today defence correspondent Andrew Gilligan, who originally reported the allegation about the September dossier, threatened legal action.

He accused Phil Woolas, Deputy House of Commons Leader for the ruling Labour party, of trying to "blacken my character" in remarks made earlier this week.

Meanwhile, Sunday newspapers reported that Campbell was set to be cleared in an inquiry by parliament's Foreign Affairs Select Committee of charges that he inserted the claim that Saddam Hussein could launch weapons of mass destruction in 45 minutes.

The committee delivers its verdict a week Monday after taking evidence from Campbell and Foreign Secretary Jack Straw.

The body had received an intelligence assessment not previously disclosed to deputies which supported the 45-minute claim, The Sunday Telegraph reported.

One member of the committee told the paper: "It raises questions about how good our intelligence was, but I don't see how we can find Campbell guilty after that."

The Observer reported that the committee would conclude that Campbell did not interfere to ensure the 45-minute claim went into the document.

PHOTO: STAR

Leaders and activists of Chittagong Mahanagar Jubo League yesterday evening burn an effigy of Prime Minister's Parliamentary Affairs Adviser Salauddin Quader Chowdhury, who was nominated for the secretary general of the Organisation of Islamic Conference.

Editor's comments

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About his invectives, suffice it to say that they are vicious lies, product of a mind given to insult, indignity and character assassination of others. My own sense of self-respect and dignity prevent me from stooping to his level and saying things about him that are public knowledge.

When newspaper reports begin to hurt a person like him, who have reasons to hide from public scrutiny, journalists and newspapers are accused of being partisan, serving the interest of this or that group, being in the payroll of foreign agencies or subjected to legal proceedings.

As for my Unesco job and receiving money from foreign agencies his comments are false, fabricated, defamatory, unconstitutional, insulting to the sanctity of the parliament and reflection of a mind where nothing honest can exist.

The aspirant 'leader' of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) should go back to the tenets the Holy Koran and the life of the Prophet (SM) and read the strict injunctions they lay before questioning the personal integrity and dignity of others.

A revealing historical replay is good to remember here. When this newspaper and Prothom Alo jointly launched a fund raising campaign for Tipu Sultan who was beaten almost to death by Joynal Hazari's men, the AL lawmaker launched a diatribe against the Prothom Alo editor on the floor of the parliament bringing against him viciously false and defamatory charges. Ruling party has changed, government has changed, leaders have changed but habits of some MPs to defame journalists on the floor of the parliament have not.

While the case filed by him awaits hearing, his personal attack on me from inside the parliament, where I have no means of defending myself, only indicates his lack of moral courage to wait for the verdict of the case to reveal the truth. He has violated my Constitutional rights by making a defamatory statement against me from the floor of the Parliament.

A question may be raised here: Does an MP have the right to use the floor of the parliament to denigrate and defame ordinary citizens?

JS stalemate unlikely to end soon

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diately unwind the stalemate.

Hamid said the deputy speaker's letter came too late and had no mention of a specific roadmap to break out of the crisis.

The AL walked out of the House on June 25 following a state minister's aspersion on its chief Sheikh Haina and decided the next day not to return until the ruling coalition met its three-point demand.

"We gave him (Deputy Speaker) a memorandum, demanding, among other things, expunction of State Minister for Housing Alamgir Kabir's derogative statement against the opposition leader," Hamid told a news conference at the Sangsad Bhaban after sending his letter to Akhtar.

Their other demands were Kabir's apology on the parliament floor and the chair's running of the House strictly following the Rules of Procedure and the constitution.

"But from that day onwards, other treasury benchers including Salauddin Quader Chowdhury, Fazlur Rahman Patal and Hafizuddin Ahmed were spitting venom in the same style, without any intervention from the chair," Hamid added.

At a separate press briefing in the evening, the deputy speaker acknowledged the receipt of Hamid's letter.

"After the passage of the budget, I'll reply to the letter at a convenient time," he said.

"Then if they (AL) and the ruling party express their willingness to sit for talks, a dialogue could be arranged," he added.

The proposed national budget for the fiscal 2003-04 is going to be passed today with the main opposition staying out of parliament like in the last year.

Uncertainty hangs over the ultimate holding of the dialogue and the AL's joining the House before the current budget session ends on July 15.

The budget was placed on June 12 without the presence of the AL deputies, who started attending the current session on June 16.

In his yesterday's letter to the deputy speaker, Hamid alleged that in the running of the House the Constitution and the Rules of Procedure were not being followed strictly.

Rather, a partisan outlook was in action, he said. He said even after his handing over of the memorandum, the use of invective by the ruling alliance was still continuing.

Hamid termed it a planned tactic by the ruling party to keep the AL away from the House and to deny them a voice on the budget.

Akhtar, however, said he would continue to pursue the issue so that all misunderstandings could be removed.

On Hamid's mention of non-existence of a roadmap, Akhtar said: "If the roadmap had been there in the letter, then the dialogue was not necessary."

On the remarks of Salauddin and Patal, he said none from the opposition benches raised an objection.

He said if he found something objectionable after careful examination of the proceedings, he would expunge them.

Monica Ali's comments

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Bangladesh High Commission in London is that three working days should be allowed for the issue of a visa. We began the visa application process in good time. I made my first visit to the BHC offices on December 3, my second on December 13.

"There were many subsequent telephone calls from my husband and me to try to progress our applications. We provided more information as required -- a letter from my British publishers, for example. We advised the HC staff of the urgency of the situation for us. Our flights were not flexible or refundable and my parents were able to look after our children for that two week period only, having cleared their diaries for that purpose.

"Unfortunately, visas were not issued to us. On 20th December we were told that the decision was now being 'referred to Dhaka'. On December 23 (the following Monday) we were told that 'Dhaka' had not replied and that it was 'probably too late.'

"The following day we were told that our main contact at the HC was 'in a meeting all day'. Nobody else was able to help. That was the final day before the general Christmas period office holidays.

"On 10th February of this year I went to a meeting at the HC to which I had been invited and was told that the reason that visas were not issued to me and my husband was because I had put 'writer' down as my occupation on the application form. The recent arrest and detention, in Dhaka, of two Channel 4 journalists from Britain was mentioned in that context. (I believe that it has been suggested recently by the HC that both my husband and I had, during the course of our visa applications, been invited to attend meetings and declined to do so. We were not invited to any such meetings. It was only in February long after our chance to go to Bangladesh had been missed that I was asked to attend a meeting, and this is the one which I describe above.)

"A representative from the High Commission has been quoted in a British newspaper to the effect that my husband had applied for a visa for 'research' purposes. This is not the case. Our applications were for tourist visas and this never changed during the course of our dealings with the HC. For my part, of course, anything can be 'research'.

"A walk down the road from my house can end up in a short story. A trip to my Janmosthan is likely to be inspiring. No amount of officialdom and paperwork can prevent a writer from drawing on her experience. My father's stories of Bangladesh have already inspired my work. No level of bureaucracy could prevent that.

"I had wanted to pursue my visa application and try again for a trip to Bangladesh. But the combination of launching the book in the UK and elsewhere around the world, and having a young family to look after has made this difficult. I have also been told that I should not need a visa since I was born in Dhaka. Although I took my passport (which states my place of birth) to the HC and mentioned many times that I wanted to take a holiday in the country in which I was born, this route was never pointed out to me as a possibility.

"I still dream of visiting Bangladesh. As a people, I know that Bangladeshis have a deep love of culture, learning and literature. One day I would like to go to Dhaka, and maybe even launch a Bangla edition of Brick Lane. I would like to take a boat trip, travel among the paddy fields and witness the beauty of the countryside and the nation that has at such a distance shaped the person that I am today."

Sony murder verdict

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Dhaka Division also handed down life imprisonment to Mokbul Hossain Mukul, Yar Mohammad Yaru, SM Masum Billah, Dulal and absconding Masum, who will have to serve out one year more in failure to pay a fine of Tk 5,000 each.

The convicts can appeal to the High Court against the judgement in seven days.

Seven others of the 15 accused -- Sheikh Solaiman alias Babul, Sirajul Islam alias Wasim, Zakir Hossain Patwari alias Munna, Rafiq alias Rafiq Chacha, Sujan, Aiyub and Mohiuddin -- have been cleared of charges.

Tagor, Mukul, Wasim, Munna, Yar Mohammad, Dulal and Ayub were on the dock during the announcement of the verdict by Judge Shahed Noor Uddin. The accused on bail, Masum Billah, Babul and Rafiq, were also present.

The judge took his seat at 12:25pm and read out the highlights of the 30-page verdict in 20 minutes, passing orders for sending the convicts to the Dhaka Central Jail and releasing the acquitted from custody, if not charged in other cases. The punishment will be effective from the day of arrest of the convicts, the court said.

Sony, 22, a second year student of level-2, term-2 of chemical engineering, was killed in crossfire between two factions of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, the student front of the ruling BNP.

BUET Security Officer Golam Kuddus Khan filed a murder case with the Lalbagh Police Station. Detectives submitted a chargesheet against 15 people on January 4.

The speedy trial tribunal framed charges against the main accused Muki and others on January 26. The court, beginning the trial on January 30, cross-examined 23 prosecution witnesses.

Special public prosecutors Mohammad Abdul Latif Talukder expressed satisfaction with the judgement, while Advocate Mizanur Rahman Mollah -- on behalf of the convicts -- said the judgement would be challenged in the High Court.

15 hurt in AL factional clash in Rangpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Rangpur*

At least 15 people were injured in a clash between two factions of local Awami League (AL) at Engineer Para in Rangpur town yesterday, sources said.

Police and eyewitnesses said a procession led by AL leader Abul Kalam Azad was parading the streets demanding withdrawal of a "false" case against Azad. The case had been lodged by Azad's rival Sharfuddin Ahmed Jhantoo, an ex-Jatiya Party MP, accusing Azad of attacking his house on Tuesday midnight.

At around 1:30pm, the procession was attacked by activists of a rival faction of local Awami League, demonstrators and local people alleged.

Seven of the injured were admitted to Rangpur Medical College Hospital.

A tense situation was prevailing in town. A large contingent of police was deployed to maintain law and order, a police official said.

Flood situation worsens

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both rise and fall in water level.

Our Chittagong correspondent reported that five people were killed and over 50,000 were marooned in the low-lying areas of Chittangong. Abul Kalam, 50, Md. Yunus, 45, of Daulatpur union and Abdul Mannan, 30, of Harunachhri drowned in Fatikchari. In Mirersarai, Abu Zafar, 70, and Nurul Afsar ,12, were washed away when an embankment collapsed.

Our Rangamati correspondent reports: Two tribal people were washed away and 10,000 people of 2200 families were affected by floods in Baghaichhori upazila of the district since the torrential rain began on Wednesday. The dead are Biharee Chakma, 28, and Ushamoy Chakma 25.

The communication on Chittagong- Rangamati, Chittagong-Khagrachhari and Chittagong - Nazirhat roads was disrupted yesterday as flood water was flowing over the roads.

BSS reports that the overall flood situation in four districts in the northern region reminded unchanged due to incessant rain and gushing waters from upstream.

The water level rose in 10 small and big rivers including Tista, Dharla, Brahmaputra, Ghaghot, Jamuneswari and Dudhkumar.

In Comilla, about 20 thousand people of 25 villages under Chowddaram and Laksam upazila in the district have been affected by floods.

In Sylhet, more low-lying areas in 11 upazila of the district were inundated Saturday due to incessant rain and onrush of water from the hills.

Flood water damaged standing crops in many places in the district.

At least 30 villages in Feni district have been submerged. And the flood situation in Netrokona also worsened.

Iraqi killed

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"We do not know if it intended to hit our position or to hit that little store that is down there. Both grenades exploded near that store," Sgt. John Kuzar, one of the soldiers guarding the museum, told Reuters Television.

A US military spokesman said the two wounded Americans from the convoy were evacuated to a military hospital. There were no details on exactly how the Iraqi civilian died.

Two military vehicles were damaged, the spokesman said.

US forces have been targeted repeatedly in recent days by what senior military officials consider to be die-hard loyalists of former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, whose 24-year rule was ended by the US-led invasion in April.

Graft charge

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BAC inspectors Md. Rafiquzzaman and Farid Ahmed Patwari in their cases filed with the Kafrul Police Station accused Customs Inspector Sohrab Hossain, Superintendent Sher Alam Khan, Deputy Director Obaidul Haq and former DG Shahjad Hossain. General manager of the SCBDFL Monsur Siddiqui was also accused.

The cases state that the SCBDFL in September last year applied thrice to the duty drawback department requesting a refund of the VAT against its gas bill. The applications, filed on the same date, included three PRCs.

The BAC investigators flipped through the PRCs and found them fake. The SCBDFL drew a VAT refund of Tk 7 lakh in the first PRC, Tk 14.30 lakh in the second and Tk 16.75 lakh in the third.

The BAC filed the cases on the basis of a ledger it seized on May 21 from Customs Inspector Sohrab Hossain. The ledger exposed names of representatives of 50 companies who gave kickbacks to the department.

This ledger also revealed that these officials took Tk 6.47 lakh in bribes from the SCBDFL.

The BAC filed another case on June 1 against Sohrab Hossain for collecting kickbacks methodically at 10-12 per cent from tax exemption of various companies.

Meanwhile, BAC Inspector Kazi Shamsul Islam yesterday filed two cases with the Tejgaon Police Station against Khandker Sirajul Islam, owner of a private firm Multi-Trade Enterprise, for submitting a fake bank guarantee worth Tk 22.53 lakh to the Department of Purchase.

Using this false bank guarantee, Multi-Trade Enterprise signed a contract with the Purchase Department for supplying 750 tonnes of pulse although the enterprise failed to supply more than 104 tonnes.

The government had to go to an alternative market and buy pulse at exorbitant price, spending an additional Tk 38 lakh. When the government tried to liquidate the bank guarantee, it found that Multi-Trade Enterprise had cheated it all along.

HIV infection

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these groups is not due to decrease in high-risk behaviours. The survey revealed a higher percentage of men buying sex in Bangladesh than elsewhere in Asia.

In his opening speech, Director of the ICDDR,B Dr David A Sack said, "We should care for the HIV positive patients and voluntary counselling and blood testing. For those who have tested positive, there should be a programme of care, treatment and, if necessary, rehabilitation instead of leaving them on their own."

The repot also showed that the majority of men still do not use condoms in commercial sex and female sex workers report the lowest condom use in the region. About two-thirds of rickshaw-pullers and truck drivers reported during the survey that they never touched condom and they had no idea of HIV exposure.

The survey pointed out that contrary to the common belief, injecting drug users are not isolated. They are linked with the rest of society. They buy sex from commercial sex workers, sell blood and move between cities.

Describing the findings as 'a matter of great concern', Director General of Health Services Dr Mizanur Rahman at the launch of the surveillance report on Wednesday, said, "This upsurge of HIV infection among a particular vulnerable group is quite a serious matter. It is also the most-cost effective option for a country like ours to halt the virus before the economic burden becomes too large to bear."

Dr Tasnim Azim, one of the researchers who helped prepare the report, presented the document at the press conference. Motiur Rahman, chairman of the National AIDS Committee's technical body, and Dr Ishtiaq A Zaman, head of the ICDDR,B's external relations and deputy programme manager of STD and AIDS programme, were also present.

Ambia murder

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The court also acquitted 24 others of murder charge.

On March 5, 1997, a gang of about 15 raided the house of Ismail Shaikh at Nonikhir village in Muksudpur upazila and stabbed his wife Ambia to death.

Ismail filed a murder case the following day.

The murder was a sequel to enmity with Samad Sheikh over local polls.

Barisal rape

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girl then left her mother at the mill and set out for home in a rickshaw van to inform her father about her mother's illness.

The girl got off the van at a place near her house when van driver Jalil and passengers Riaz and Sardar dragged her to a bush and raped her.

Aleya Begum filed a case and the police submitted chargesheet after investigation.

Special Public Prosecutor Mohsin Monty conducted the prosecution case, while Naziumuddin Panna defended the accused.

Hasina: Govt tries to hide facts

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after every incident, she added.

In support of her contention, she said police arrested her party leaders, including Obaidul Qader and Asim Kumar Ukil after the recovery of an M-16 rifle. But police investigation later showed that a Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) ward commissioner in Dhaka and a police officer were involved.

Similarly, she said, after the blasts in Mymensingh cinemas, the prime minister blamed the AL for it and got arrested its leaders, but the inquiry commission of the government said it was an act of some expert people.

"One can imagine that without the government patronage such a huge amount of ammunition cannot reach Bogra… It is known to all who controls Bogra where Al leaders and workers are being persecuted," she said.

It is futile to implicate a poor AL leader, she said.

In reply to a question about the PM's warning against the opposition, she said perhaps the prime minister was feeling shaky and losing the ground under her feet. The PM's warning would only encourage hoodlums to kill her (Hasina) and other AL leaders, she feared.

About AL's return to parliament, Hasina said despite "hostile attitude" of the ruling party and the chair, the AL members joined parliament to protest the "anti-people" budgetary measures.

But for the last few days, the BNP ministers and lawmakers were using "filthy and abusive words" against her creating an unhealthy atmosphere in the House, she added.

Hasina said the AL put forward a three-point demand to pave the way for their return to the House, but there was no specific response from the government. Even after the AL demands, ministers and legislators continued their "slanderous" remarks against the AL.

Asked if they would resign from parliament, she said they would have to wait and see before taking any extreme decision.

About the cancellation of her anticipated meetings with Indonesian President Megawati Soekarnoputri and US Secretary of State Colin Powell, Hasina said the government "played dirty tricks" in cancelling the meetings.

During her rule, Hasina said that her government arranged everything for meetings of foreign dignitaries with the opposition leader.

On economic issues, Hasina said the government borrowed loans from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) under harsh conditions what would make the nation dependent on donor agencies.

"The proposed budget for the fiscal 2003-2004 compromised the country's sovereignty for the World Bank and IMF credits," she said.

Criticising the proposed budget, Hasina demanded nine changes in the new tax proposals to give the poor an amount of relief.

If the changes are not brought in, the rich will enjoy tax relief at the cost of the poor.

Spelling out the demand, she said the lowest ceiling of taxable income should be taken to Tk 1,20,000 from Tk 90,000, tax on union parishad candidates and on fish, milk powder, fruits, sugar, soft drinks and salt should go.

She also demanded previous duty rates on liquor and alcoholic drinks and raised duty on finished and semi-finished gems, pearls and diamonds and a balanced duty on crude and refined edible oil.

Hasina said prices of essentials rose gradually since the four-party alliance government took office and the proposed budget failed to give any guidelines to rein in the trend.

She took a swipe at the government for importing about 30 lakh tonnes of grains in a normal situation.

The AL chief criticised the proposed revenue budget what is higher than last year's.

She said budget imposed additional taxes of Tk 5,100 crore on people, but slashed the size of the annual development programme.

She accused the government of misappropriating Tk 5,000 crore from the development budget of the fiscal 2002-03.

She said investment, both public and private, declined drastically due to the government's wrong policies.

How Sony was killed

FROM PAGE 1

Led by Central Joint Secretary Benazir Titu, a heavily armed JCD unit of the Dhaka University went to the BUET campus in an attempt to scare their rivals away and fetch the bidding papers. Titu was reportedly accompanied by Tagor, Masum Billah, Kaiser and Shamsu of the JCD's SM Hall unit.

Their rival group was led by Mokammel Hayat Muki, the central assistant organising secretary and former general secretary of the BUET JCD. Muki and his associates were too all prepared to fend off any attempt by Titu and his men.

Both groups scuffled when Titu and his cadres tried to enter the administrative building area. Obstructed, Titu and his men took position in front of the Ahsanullah Hall, opposite the Shaheed Minar, while Muki and his followers were manning the front side of cafeteria area.

At about 12:45pm, Titu and his men suddenly started firing gunshots. Muki group immediately fired back.

At least 30 gunshots were fired during the half-an-hour shootout and police, who were deployed at the Shaheed Minar, remained mere spectators.

Sony was the first female student to be killed in a fight between rival groups at any educational institution. The last killing on the BUET campus occurred in June 1995 when armed miscreants called Ahmedullah out of Ahsanullah Hall and shot him dead. None has so far been arrested in that killing.

Pallabi murder

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trader at Gauchia market.

Runa had been living with her maternal uncle for the last five years.

Anwar Hossain, a local shopkeeper, said he heard two gunshots inside the house at around 9:15 am and saw three youths rushing out of the house.

"They ran into a black microbus parked a few yards off the house," Hossain said.

Police detained the guard for interrogation. No case was filed till 6:30 pm yesterday.

Family members said a caller identifying himself as Kala Jahangir demanded toll from Tofazzal two months ago.

Sony's family

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alty," the mother said.

Sony's two younger brothers -- Shawkat Rahman Rony and Maksudur Rahman Rana were happy with the quick trial but they would be happier if the execution of the verdict was also done in the same manner.

Her friends who took to the street demanding punishment to the killers termed the verdict a victory for the students' movement for a violence free campus.

Students against violence and friends of Sony placed wreaths at Sony's memorial on the campus yesterday afternoon. They asked the authorities to withdraw the decision on Subrato Sharkar and Bishu, who were expelled from BUET for taking part in a protest procession against the murderers.

Meanwhile, additional police have been deployed on the BUET campus to tighten security.

Bushra murder

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the Awami League's city unit.

Judge Sarkar Mansor Ahmed completed hearing on June 17 in absence of the accused.

Meanwhile, the verdict in child Don murder case will be pronounced tomorrow.

Don was strangled allegedly by his brother-in-law Ripon following a scuffle with his wife on February 29, 2002.

The Speedy Trial Tribunal-1 fixed the date after examining 17 witnesses.

Jamaat, JP men held

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protest what they called the AL's involvement in anti-state activities.

Maksudul Hasan, the press and publication secretary of the district unit of Krishak League, a front organisation of the AL, showed documents to claim that Pintu was never a leader of the AL.

"There are two groups in the local AL and Pintu was the convenor of one group. The other faction was led by Advocate Helalur Rahman", Kahalu AL General Secretary Helaluddin Kabiraj said.

"It was a ruling party plot to tarnish the image of the AL for the misdeed of an individual," said district AL President Momtaz Uddin.

"There must be some bigwigs behind the incident and we are trying to find them out", said Deputy Inspector General of Police (headquarters) Shahadat Hossain who is leading a four-member investigation team from Dhaka.

"The miscreants surely had plans of carrying out subversive activities inside the country and we are now checking whether the ammunitions and explosives were to be distributed among the outlaws or smuggled out to India," he added.

The team, consisting of Special Superintendent of Verifications Mahbub Hossain, Special Superintendent of the Special Branch Humayun Kabir and Special Superintendent of the CID Akhtar Ali, will submit its report within three days.

Wahedul Islam, OC of the Kahalu PS, quoting army explosives experts told The Daily Star that the explosives were 'highly powerful plastic explosives' carrying RDX and water gel.

Islam, who is also the investigating officer of the cases, said the truck laden with ammunition and explosives was taken to Kahalu via the Aricha-Nagarbari ferry-ghat and Pintu was the 'middleman of a group of smugglers'.