

COP MURDER CASE
Next hearing on Feb 23

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday adjourned the hearing of the police constable Abu Naser murder case following a time petition by the defence lawyers of the Public Works Minister Mirza Abbas and four others.

Judge Mohammad Momin Ullah of the Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court fixed February 23 for next hearing of the case and directed Mirza Abbas, his brother Mirza Khokon and three others to appear before the court on that day.

The petition filed by the defence lawyers mentioned that Abbas could not appear before the court due to his business with state work. But the petition did not mention the reasons for why four others could not appear before the court.

The petition only mentioned if the court did not uphold the bail they would fall victim to an irreparable loss.

Earlier, the same court on January 26 directed Abbas and four others to appear before it yesterday.

Five other accused are his (Abbas) brother Mirza Khokon, Shahab Uddin Laltu, former president of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, student wing of ruling BNP, Yusuf Bin Jalil, Abu Iqbal and Sumon.

According to the prosecution, over 150 activists led by former Dhaka City Corporation Mayor Mirza Abbas brought out a procession during a dawn-dusk hartal called by the (then) opposition BNP at about 11:30am on February 13, 2001.

They attacked a procession of the (then) ruling Awami League near Razarbagh Police Lines.

Constable Abu Naser, 27, was shot dead as the BNP cadres from the procession fired at the police barracks at Razarbagh police lines in Malibagh.



Winners of Ekushey Padak-2006 pose for photograph with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at the Osmani Memorial auditorium in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

Farmers urged to be united

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) in a joint statement yesterday urged the peasants and field labourers to be united to fight the electricity, fertiliser and diesel crisis in the country.

CPB President Manjurul Ahsan Khan and General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim said with an ill motive of moneymaking for a vested interest, the government created an artificial fertiliser and diesel crisis in the country at the pick season of Boro paddy.

Though there is proven shortage of power generation and supply, the government is not taking any long-term and effective policy in this regard, they said. Moreover, they are out to sell gas and coal, the primary inputs for electricity generation, to the foreign countries.

DEFAMATION CASE

Prothom Alo editor, publisher get bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted bail to the editor of the Prothom Alo and its publisher in a defamation case filed by Public Works Minister Mirza Abbas.

The daily's Editor Matiur Rahman and Publisher Mahfuz Anam along with their lawyers appeared before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) Court at 12:15pm and prayed for bail.

After the hearing, Metropolitan Magistrate Mizanur Rahman granted them bail upon a bond of Tk 5,000 with two guarantors.

Moving the bail petition, their counsels told the court that the case was filed as part of conspiracy to harass them.

Moreover, the charges brought in the complaint against the two were baseless and concocted, the counsels added.

Advocates Syed Ahmed Gazi, Mahbulul Haq, Anwarul Kabir Babul, Ashraf Ul Alam, Prosanta Kumer Karmaker, Shahidullah Miah and Chaitanya Chandra Halder appeared for the editor and the publisher.

The minister filed the case against the two on February 2 for running a news item on January 5.

Following the hearing, the court took the case into cognisance and issued summons against the two to appear

before the court on February 16.

But the editor and the publisher did not appear before the court on February 16, as they did not receive summons issued by the court.

The court fixed March 19 for its next date for the first hearing as the summons was served.

Meanwhile, the same court issued warrant of arrest against the two for the second hearing though the complainant was absent from the court on February 16.

In his plaint, Abbas said the news item headlined "Public works minister has objection to a police complex being built at Razarbagh", which was run by the national daily, was false, baseless and concocted.

The news has tarnished the minister's image and status in the society and created a bad impression of him among the people of the country as well as of his constituency, Abbas said, adding that the news also led to a misunderstanding between him and the police department.

Besides, the daily did not publish properly the rejoinder sent by the complainant.

The defendants appear to have connived to publish the report with an intention of bringing him into disrepute, Abbas said.

25 outsiders arrested from DU halls released

DU CORRESPONDENT

Police picked up 25 outsiders during a raid on four dormitories of Dhaka University in the early hours of yesterday, but they were released 12 hours later.

All of them were released after they were produced before the court yesterday noon, Ramna police said.

A team of policemen led by Officer-in-Charge Mahbubur Rahman of Ramna Police Station conducted the raid on Jagannath Hall, Amar Ekushey Hall, Zahurul Haq Hall and Salimullah Hall at around 2:00am.

Nineteen outsiders were arrested from Jagannath Hall while six others from three other halls, sources said.

However, no firearms or ammunition were recovered during the three-hour raid.

DU Proctor Prof AK Firoz Ahmed told The Daily Star that the raid was conducted as part of security measures for the observance of Amar Ekushey.

Hasina seeks continued British aid for dev

UNB, Dhaka

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina yesterday hoped continued assistance from the UK for development of Bangladesh as British State Minister for Pensions Reform

Stephen Timms MP met with her at her Sudha Sadan residence.

They discussed issues of militancy, price-hike and law and order situation as well as the opposition's return to parliament after a prolonged boycott.

Hasina thanked the British

government for their development programmes in Bangladesh and hoped continued assistance for the country.

Former Ambassador Mohammad Ziauddin, Mamtaz Hossain and Dr Hassan Mahmud were present at the meeting.