

MURDER OF CHILD  
Mother among  
two handed  
death penalty

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced two persons to death for killing six-year-old Khandaker Samiul Azim Wafi in June 2010.

One of the convicts is the child's mother, Humaira Akhter Ayesha, and the other is Shamsuzzaman Arif alias Bakku. Both are currently absconding.

Judge Shaikh Nazmul Alam of the Special Judge's Court-4 of Dhaka handed down the sentence in their absence.

The judge observed that the mother, along with her lover, had committed a heinous crime by killing her son and so she deserved the capital punishment.

The punishment of the fugitives will be effective from the day of their arrest or surrender, the judge added.

Earlier, the prosecution and the defence completed their arguments and the court recorded statements of 22 prosecution witnesses including complainant of

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Construction work tends to drag on for months on the roads of Dhaka, but this time, labourers are hard at work even at night to quickly reconstruct the drainage infrastructure in areas under Dhaka North City Corporation. This project is being implemented by the Bangladesh Army. The photo was taken at Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue recently.

PHOTO:  
RASHED SHUMON

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Awareness among  
citizens crucial to  
end border killing

Says BGB chief Shafeenul Islam

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The number of border killings would be reduced if people living in bordering areas were made aware and financially self-sufficient, Maj Gen Shafeenul Islam, director general (DG) of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) said yesterday.

He said they are trying to raise awareness among people so that they do not enter bordering areas illegally. Public representatives are working to this end, he said while speaking on the occasion of BGB day.

He inaugurated BGB day programmes around 9am by paying homage to martyrs of the Liberation War and hoisting the regimental flag.

In reply to a journalist's query about border killings, Maj Gen Shafeenul said BGB is trying its best to bring down the border killing into zero. "Now, we are trying to bring border killing to zero by holding talks diplomatically and from our sides," he said.

The BGB chief also said they were engaging local public representatives in bordering areas so that they could keep people away from the illegal border-crossing or criminal activities.

According to data from rights body Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK), 15 people were killed along the India-Bangladesh border in 2018. The number rose to 43 last year while 42 people have been killed till November this year.

Shafeenul further said they would discuss the border killing issue in the upcoming DG-level meeting with his counterpart in Indian Border Security Force (BSF).

Killing of Bangladeshis by BSF, smuggling drugs and illegal arms into the country from India, illegal trespassing by Indian nationals including BSF are among key issues to be discussed at the upcoming conference between bordering forces of the two countries, he said.

BGB and BSF will also discuss sharing information with each other timely, effective implementation of coordinated border management, and other transnational crimes during the five-day conference, starting tomorrow in India's Guwahati.

An 11-memebr Bangladesh delegation will be led by the BGB DG while BSF DG Rakesh Asthana will led the Indian side, according to a press release sent by BGB.

He said there are still some places ungaurded in hilly areas, and the distance between one border observation post (BOP) to another is around eight to 10 kilometers. New BOPs need to be built there to reduce the gap, which remains a challenge, the BGB chief said.

Shafeenul said that they have limited BGB day programmes due to Covid-19 this year.

The BGB chief said they have donated 100 boats to

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Corruption-free  
judiciary key  
to delivering  
justice: Anisul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Anisul Huq yesterday urged the lower courts' law officers across the country to abstain from any corruption and to give up all kinds of dishonest practices while dealing with cases in courts.

The government has adopted a zero tolerance policy against any corruption, and therefore, officers of the judiciary must conduct cases with honesty, sincerity, courage and speed remaining away from any corruption, he said.

He made the remark while speaking as chief guest at a virtual meeting organised on the occasion of inaugurating a training programme for government pleaders (GPs) and public prosecutors (PPs) at the Judicial Administration Training Institute (JATI).

Minister Anisul Huq said if judiciary personnel deal with the corruption cases with honesty, sincerity, courage and neutrality, justice will be delivered to the people.

The government has introduced the alternative dispute resolution system (ADR) for settlement of cases outside the court through compromise in order to reduce the backlog of pending cases, he said.

He said 90 percent of cases are disposed of outside the court in the developed countries and a similar system must be incorporated for the litigants and lawyers of Bangladesh.

The minister said

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ABRAR FAHAD MURDER  
22 accused appeal  
for case transfer

Express no confidence in judge

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Twenty-two accused of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) student Abrar Fahad murder case have filed a petition with the High Court for transferring the case from the Speedy Trial Tribunal-1 of Dhaka, apprehending that they "will not get justice" from the tribunal.

The accused, now in jail, submitted the petition recently to the HC through their lawyer, expressing no confidence in the judge of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-1 Abu Zafar Md Kamruzzaman.

Their lawyer Munsurul Hoque Chowdhury told The Daily Star yesterday the HC will hear on the petition today.

Citing the petition, he said Judge Kamruzzaman on November 30 recorded statement of the 39th prosecution witness and set December 3 for recording statement of the 40th witness. On December 3, the judge of the tribunal recalled the statement earlier given by the 33rd witness (a police officer) without issuing any prior notice.

Besides, the public prosecutor had earlier posted a status on the issue on Facebook, he said.

The accused petitioners apprehended that the judge may have an intention, and that is why, they submitted the petition to the HC seeking transfer of the case from the tribunal, the lawyer added.

Deputy Attorney General Abdullah Al Mahmud Bashir told this correspondent that the case is a sensational one. It has been sent to the Speedy Trial Tribunal-1 for finishing its trial proceedings quickly, he said.

Attorney General AM Amin Uddin will place arguments on behalf of the state before the HC during hearing of the case transfer related petition.

Judge Kamruzzaman on September 15 framed charges against all 25 accused. Of them, three have been absconding.

Forty out of 60 prosecution witnesses, including the case's complainant, so far gave depositions.

On October 7 last year, Abrar, a second-year student of Buet, was beaten to death by a group of Buet unit Chhatra League activists in a dormitory. Abrar's father filed a murder case in this regard with Chawkbazar Police Station.

The incident triggered a firestorm of protests on campuses across the country. Many took to social media to demand justice for Abrar. Amid protests, Buet authorities on October 11 banned all political activities on the campus and suspended 19 students, mostly leaders of the university's BCL unit who have been made accused in the case.

Eight of the accused gave their confessional statements before magistrates on different days last year.

Inspector Md Wahiduzaman of police's Detective Branch submitted the charge sheet to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court in Dhaka against 25 Buet students on November 13 last year.

A different shade of Mujib  
Bangabandhu's walk at Heathrow modeled for  
sculpture in Barishal awaiting inauguration

SUSHANTA GHOSH, Barishal

The iconic raised index finger during his historic March 7, 1971 speech has become somewhat of a template for artistic depictions of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, particularly for sculptures. In a break from the norm, portrayal of another instantly recognisable portrait of the great leader awaits inauguration at Barishal's Wazirpur.

The portrait captures the time of Bangabandhu's first entry to the United Kingdom, through the port of Heathrow, after being released from Pakistan jail.

Sculptor Tejosh Halder Josh tries to depict him in the stance depicted in the portrait -- in motion, with strong footsteps.

The sculpture is expected to be unveiled at the Wazirpur Upazila Parishad Hall room auditorium on March 26 next year, marking Independence Day.

Shah-E-Alam, member of parliament of Barishal-2 and initiator of the sculpture, said, "As a member of the Parliamentary Standing Committee of the Ministry of Local Government, I received an allocation of Tk 25 lakh for the sculpture. Later, construction began under the supervision of Wazirpur Municipality."

The sculpture is yet to have a name. The MP said he has not thought of a name yet, and in the end, it might not have one.

Municipality Assistant Engineer Masum Billah told this correspondent that work on the sculpture started on September 10. While the sculpture's form has been completed, its base and some other work is not finished yet.

Wazirpur Upazila Chairman Abdul Majid Bachchu said, "Although the construction of the sculpture is not complete, we still went there on Victory Day and paid tributes with flower wreaths."

The place is already a local attraction. Hundreds of people come to see it everyday, although this can be a cause for concern during the pandemic.

Local entrepreneur Zakir Talukder said, "When you look at it from a distance, it seems to be alive."

Tejosh Halder Josh, the sculptor, said he has taken a different take on the sculpture's design to alter the popular depiction of Bangabandhu and add dimension to his



PHOTO: TITU DAS

character. "The sculpture with his fingers raised can be seen everywhere. It almost feels like his form can be expressed no other way," he said.

The original sculpture was 12 feet high without base, which is another six feet, the artist said. If done with concrete, the base will have black granite marble. He told The Daily Star he proposed the name "Bangabandhu at Heathrow Airport" to the authorities.

Other team members include sculptors Shyamal Sarkar and Subha Barai, he added.



If the purpose of a city gate is to set the mood for one's time inside the city, then Chattogram's one betrays the vibrance and elegance of the port city. A victim of neglect, the entrance point has turned an eyesore of decaying paint, rusted metal and posters plastered all along its pillars. The photos were taken on Thursday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RATHAN

Road crashes kill 4

STAR REPORT

Four people were killed and another was injured in road accidents in three districts in the last two days, according to reports from our correspondents.

Our Sylhet correspondent reports, two youths were killed and another was injured as a bus hit their motorcycle on Dhaka-Sylhet highway in Rashidpur area of Bishwanath upazila yesterday afternoon.

The deceased were identified as Masum Ahmed (28); and Taher Ahmed (30). The injured -- Abdus Salam (30) -- was undergoing treatment at Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital, said police.

The bus of Habiganj Express hit the motorcycle while the three were getting on the highway from a link road, Dakshin Surma Police Station Officer-in-Charge Akhter Hossain quoted witnesses as saying.

The bodies were sent to the hospital morgue for autopsies. Police seized both the vehicles, said the OC.

Our Patuakhali correspondent adds, a journalist was killed after being hit by a pickup on Barguna-Patharghata road at Bainchatki in Patharghata upazila of Barguna.

Police said KM Mostafizur Rahman Jitu (28), the upazila correspondent of Dhaka Pratidin, was killed on the spot.

Patharghata Police Station OC Sayeed Ahmed said the body was sent to Barguna General Hospital for autopsy.

Locals said the pickup that hit the bike from the opposite direction belonged to Ansar Battalion.

A policeman died as his bike fell on Patuakhali-Dashmina road in Patuakhali on Friday. Md Enayet Hossain (45) was assistant sub-inspector at Nalchhity Police Station in Jhalakati, said Baufal Police Station OC Mostafizur Rahman.

He was returning home at Gachani village in Dashmina upazila from his workplace, he said, adding that the accident happened as he lost control over the motorcycle.