

FOCUS

BANGABANDHU MURDER CASE

Verbatim Text of Cross Examination of Ninth and Tenth Prosecution Witnesses

Cross-examination of Lt Col Abdul Hamid, the 9th prosecution witness in Bangabandhu murder case, was completed on Monday.

He was questioned by the defence counsels who mainly quoted from his book.

Following are the excerpts from his cross-examination by advocate Abdur Razzaq Khan in absence of Haji Nazrul Islam, defence counsel for accused Lt Col (retd) Sultan Shahriyar Rashid Khan:

Q: When did General Shafulah go to the Army Headquarters after the incident?

A: I can't say. I found him when I went there at about 8 to 8:30 in the morning.

Q: Other officers were also there.

A: Yes.

Q: When did Shafulah go to 46 Brigade?

A: At about 8:30 am.

Q: When did Naval Chief Rear Admiral MH Khan and Air Chief Air Vice Marshal AK Khandakar go to the 46 Brigade?

A: After General Shafulah informed them.

Q: The official residence of Naval Chief is at Eskaton in the city.

A: Yes.

Q: Did the three chiefs go to the radio station altogether?

A: Yes, but in separate cars.

Q: When the allegiance of them to the new government was broadcast in radio?

A: At about 10:30am.

Q: (Quoting the book) General Shafulah was informed about the movement of tank and artillery in the city by the Army Intelligence Chief Col Salahuddin at 5:15am.

A: I have written it in my book according to the statement of Shafulah.

Q: Brig Rauf was the Chief of the DGF at that time.

A: Yes.

Q: (Quoting the book) Rauf was informed about the movement of tanks and forces in between 2:30am to 3am.

A: It has been written as per the statement of Rauf.

Q: (Quoting the book) Shafulah at about 6am sent Brig Khaled Mosharraf to Shafat Jamil of 46 Brigade for immediate movement of troops.

A: It was the statement of Shafulah.

Q: Who is responsible for movement of troops?

A: In Dhaka, the Commander of 46 Brigade. I was not responsible.

Q: The 1st Bengal Lancers were directly under the command of the Commander-in-Chief. They were controlled by the CGS Brig Khaled Mosharraf.

A: Yes.

Q: (Quoting the book) After such big incident, the Army Headquarters was insecure till 8am on August 15, 1975. Shafulah should have closed the main gate of the Headquarters closing the intrusion of visitors keeping the forces alert after such coup. But all forgot to bring the Headquarters under alert — is it your opinion?

A: I have written it in the review chapter of my book.

Q: (Quoting the book) None of the 46 Brigade was moving troops. Rather, all were celebrating — whose statement was this?

A: Brig Khaled Mosharraf.

Q: (Quoting the book) Both Khaled Mosharraf and Shafat Jamil were seen in cheerful mood at the 46 Brigade at about 11am.

A: It's a comment from my book.

Q: You have also written Khaled Mosharraf was conducting operation at that time. He was also cooperating in keeping Rakkhi Bahini and others to remain calm.

A: Yes.

Q: (Quoting the book) On that day Khaled Mosharraf also directed to supply ammunition from Joydevpur for the empty tanks.

A: Yes.

Q: Khaled Mosharraf at about 11:45 am on that day by phone asked you to go to the 46 Brigade.

A: Yes.

Q: You reached there within five minutes.

A: Yes.

Q: You witnessed there (Quoting the book) "a rebellious situation. All officers were present. All were cheering. They were in a victorious mood. Khaled Mosharraf asked you what's the condition of the station? I told him that the latest situation is here.... Khaled Mosharraf asked you to make security plan. By phone, Khaled Mosharraf asked the Air Force to show forces by jet fighters on the camp of Rakkhi Bahini in Savar. At the same time, he also asked Major Ansar Ali (now Major General) and Captain Munir to go to the flying club and observe the movement of Rakkhi Bahini from flights. He also gave several other directives.

A: Yes.

Q: You saw about 100 officers at the 46 Brigade. All were cheering.

A: Yes, I saw them.

Q: (Quoting the book) The exchange of greetings was ev-

erywhere.

A: Yes.

Q: Have you made the statements as a witness?

A: Yes.

(At this stage, prosecution lawyers raised objection that opinion in the book should not be treated as evidence. They also later submitted a petition to the court.)

Q: (Quoting the book) In the subtitle of "Mujib Killing" you have written that there were cross-fire thrice at Bangabandhu's house.

A: This is not my version. It was the version of Major Huda and others.

Q: (Quoting the book) The first cross-fire took place with Sheikh Kamal. The second when Bangabandhu came down on the ground floor and the last when Sheikh Jamal opened fire through the window of the upper floor. Several army personnel were injured in the firing. A grenade was also exploded in a room.

A: It was the statement of Huda.

Q: According to the statements of some people mentioned in your book that they had a plan to take Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to the cantonment after arresting him.

A: Some officers like Major Huda, Col Farooq, Major Mohiuddin (abscending) and Dr Faisal told me this.

Q: General Zia didn't allow Major Dalim and Major Noor at the tennis ground of the senior officers.

(The Judge rejected the suggestion as Razzak Khan was not defending Dalim nor Noor and said late Ziaur Rahman is not a party of the case. He also said

the denial suggestion had come during cross-examination by the state defence counsels of Dalim and Noor.)

Q: General Shafulah was not taken at gun point. He had gone to the radio station at his own desire. He also taken another two chiefs to release allegiance on the new government.

A: You are not correct.

Q: It was not a coup by some army officers. It was a successful coup by the entire army.

A: Not true.

Q: You have given false statement hiding the truths.

A: Not true.

Cross-examination by advocate TM Akbar, defence counsel for accused Col (LPR) Muihuddin:

Q: How many units were under the Director of Military Intelligence?

A: All units of the Field Intelligence Unit.

Q: What is the function of the army security intelligence?

A: To look after the security measures.

Q: Is its function to look after the security of army and the state for 24 hours?

A: Only in the army.

Q: Was there any time schedule for those who went for training on that night?

A: Yes.

Q: Was there no procedure to send the programme sheet?

A: The second artillery was under the 46 Brigade. They would send the programme to the brigade. The Lancers were under the Army Headquarters and they would send to the headquarters.

Q: Had the documents reached the respective authorities?

A: I am not supposed to know it.

Q: Who had passed the training order?

A: It was a routine training.

Q: The army intelligence was responsible to monitor whether the training was taking place properly or not.

A: They could and could not look after the matter.

Q: Was not the army intelligence supposed to look into the irregularities if took place?

A: They could and could not.

Q: Then what is the function of the intelligence?

A: The intelligence looks into the secret matters. The training, whether it's going on properly or not, is overseen by the superior authorities.

Q: Will not the intelligence look after it when the security is hampered?

A: They look after the overall security.

Q: What is the function of DGF?

A: Higher intelligence involving the army as well the state.

Q: NSI?

A: The security of the state.

Q: Did you investigate when Sheikh Jamal returned home on that night after August 14?

A: I mentioned the time what Dr Faisal told me.

Q: Did you get information that Jamal returned home in the late night?

A: I have to see the book.

Q: Had you been intercepted while entering the Bangabandhu's house on that day?

A: They intercepted me.

Q: They allowed you after you told them your identity.

Q: There is a mosque near the Banani graveyard and an Imam was also there.

A: I didn't find anyone except a choudkari (guard).

Q: Did you look for any person in Baitul Mukarram or any other mosques who could perform the rituals before the burial of those bodies?

A: There was no scope for that, because order was there to bury the bodies as early as possible.

Q: Can I say that the disposal of the bodies could have been done properly if there had been no such urgency.

A: There was no scope for that due to time, situation and order.

Q: The situation of curfew and martial law.

A: There was curfew. I don't know whether there was martial law at that time.

Q: There was a body of a military personal at the place of occurrence.

A: I didn't know it at that time whether any army personal died there.

Q: Col Jamil was there.

A: Yes. But I didn't know it at that time and you should then say about Sheikh Jamal, who was also a lieutenant.

Q: It was not your responsibility to dispose of the bodies of army personals.

A: I had been asked to dispose of the bodies of Bangabandhu's residence — civil or military was not mentioned.

Q: You were in the receiving end. Who delivered the bodies from the other end?

A: I don't know. The bodies had been brought by my battalion soldiers.

Q: The bodies had been brought with the clothes which were in wearing.

A: During burial I saw lungi and gamche. The bodies seemed brought with the clothes they wore.

Q: Many a graves were dug. In which grave which body was buried? Did you keep any marking of the clothes for identification.

A: I knew few of the bodies. There was no such situation to keep any marking for the unknown bodies.

Q: Did you change the clothes of the bodies which were known to you?

A: All the bodies were buried wrapped with the clothes which they had worn.

Q: You had disposed of the bodies ignoring religious sentiment.

A: The statement is not correct.

Q: You could preserve the evidences if you wished.

A: It's not true.

Q: There was a store in the cantonment and where long-cloth was available.

A: I was not aware whether the long-cloth was available or not.

Q: In your officer's mess and CMH long-cloth are used by the washers.

A: The long-cloth in the officer's mess is personal and there was cloths in the CMH.

Q: The CMH is in the cantonment area.

A: Yes.

Q: You could bury the bodies wrapping them in long-cloth from the CMH if you wished.

A: I required order. There was no such order for me.

Q: There was no time urgency.

A: Yes, the order was as such.

Q: None of the victims of this case was there whom you had buried at the Banani graveyard on August 16, 1975.

A: Your statement is not correct.

Following are the excerpts of the cross-examination of PW-10 Major General (retd) Abdur Rab by Shafulah Mukul, defence counsel for arrested accused Taheruddin Thakur.

Q: When did you get your next promotion after 1975?

A: I became colonel in 1980/81.

Q: When had you been promoted as Brigadier?

A: In 1987.

Q: Major General.

A: 1993.

Q: When did you retire?

A: On December 3, 1996.

Q: Your job was continuous till your retirement from August 15, 1975.

A: Yes.

Q: You are from a respectable Muslim family.

A: Yes.

Q: Did you personally attend the burial programmes.

A: Yes.

Q: There are some compulsory rituals to be performed during any burial.

A: Yes.

Q: On August 15 you were in cantonment area with your family.

A: Yes.

Q: Was there any mosque nearby your residence?

A: Yes.

Q: Dispose of means to perform the responsibilities. And you had been asked to bury those bodies completing all religious formalities and rituals.

A: It is not true.

Q: Who was Major Alauddin? Was he in Banani graveyard with you?

A: I can't remember whether he was in Banani graveyard. Probably, he was the staff officer in the station headquarters.

Q: He was under Lt Col (retd) Hamid.

A: Yes.

Q: You did not go to Banani and did not bury those bodies.

A: Your statement is not correct.

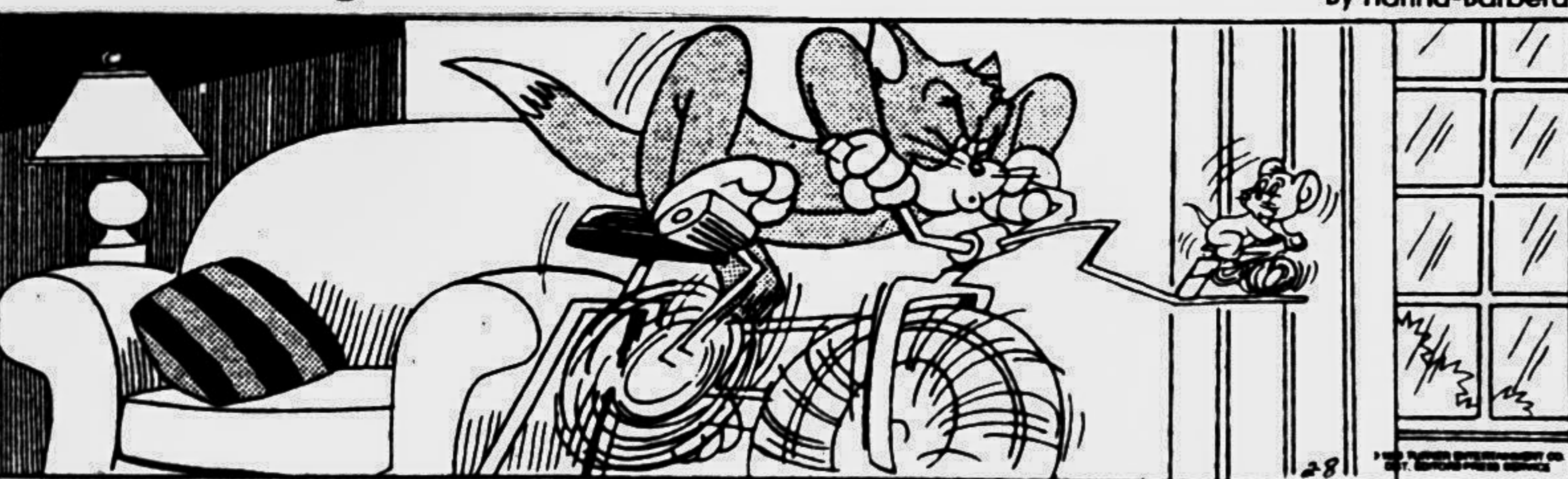
Defence counsels for Hon Capt (retd) Abdul Wahab Joardar and Lt Col (retd) Sultan Shahriyar Rashid Khan declined to cross-examine the witness.

Earlier, Gazi Ziaur Rahman, state defence counsel for absconding accused Col (dismissed) Khandaker Abdur Rashid questioned him while other defence counsels adopted it.

— UNB

Further texts of cross examination will be published as and when received.

Tom and Jerry



By Hanna-Barbera

James Bond



DRAWN BY JOHN McLUSKY



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina offering munajat after launching the landing craft tank (LCT) Bir Shrestha Jahangir at Postagola in the city yesterday. —PID photo

Visiting vice minister tells Kibria

Korean entrepreneurs interested in relocating to Bangladesh

Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria yesterday said the government has adopted the most liberal investment policy to attract foreign investors, reports UNB.

There is no restriction for the foreign investors on 100 per cent ownership of industries and transfer of capital as well as profit to their own countries, Kibria said when visiting Vice-Foreign Minister of Korea Lee Ki Cho called on him at his office yesterday.

He said the government has permitted the foreign banks to set up their branches here in order to facilitate modern banking services to the investors.

The Finance Minister informed the Korean Vice Minister about the reform programmes undertaken by the government in financial, banking, administrative and legal sectors.

Kibria said the government is committed to complete the reform programmes for better management and expediting privatisation process in order to maintain a macro-economic balance.

"At the export-processing zones, we are giving special facilities to the export oriented industries," he said, adding that infrastructure facilities are also being provided outside the EPZs for the industries of mixed nature, which will cater to demands of export as well as local consumption.

Referring to low wages of labour and its huge trainable manpower, the Minister said Bangladesh is now a proper place of investment.

Kibria assured Lee about the government's cooperation in solving any problems regarding investment and security.

The Korean Vice-Foreign Minister told the Finance Minister that a large number of Korean entrepreneurs are interested to relocate their industries to Bangladesh to avail the facilities being provided by the government for the investors.

Lee said many Korean companies have already established industries in Bangladesh and many investors will come in near future to avail the facilities.

He hoped that the economic cooperation between the two friendly countries will further be strengthened in the years to come.

Korean Ambassador to Bangladesh Tae Kyu Han was present on the occasion, said an official handout.

Metropolitan HERE and THERE

Lions Club of Dhaka Prominent

Mayor of Dhaka city Mohammad Hanif has urged the members of Lions Club to work for the welfare of the neglected people of society, reports BSS.

He was speaking at the installation ceremony of the newly elected office-bearers of Lions Club of Dhaka Prominent (district 315-B-3) at a city hotel on Monday.

Presided over by Lion Idris Mia, the function was addressed, among others, by Khan Taji Sultan MP, Lion Mohammad Farooq, Lion Ahsan Habib Khan and Lion Mobtuzzamman.

Hanif sought cooperation of the club members in implementing the pledges he has made to the city dwellers.

Bangla Academy

Bangla Academy yesterday paid tributes to Prof Muntazur Rahman Tarafdar for his outstanding contribution in the field of history and education, reports BSS.

Presided over by Prof Mufakkharul Islam, the memorial meeting was participated, among others, by academy Director General Dr Syed Anwar Hossain, Prof Muniruzzaman Miah, Prof Habiba Khatoon, Musharraf Hussain and Subrata Barua.

Prof Muntazur Rahman Mia said Prof Tarafdar was a historian of international repute. Prof Mufakkharul Islam said Prof Tarafdar's contributions to history, especially the history of medieval Bengal, would be remembered for ever.

Recalling his personal association with Prof Tarafdar, Musharraf Hussain said Tarafdar was a great human being. "Prof Tarafdar introduced the trend of writing of secular history in this country," he headed.

DUTS

An orientation programme for the new members of Dhaka University Tourist Society (DUTS) was held at the teachers' lounge of TSC on Monday, reports UNB.

Former chairman of Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation, Dr A K Mubin attended the programme as chief guest. DUTS president Mohiuddin Helal was in the chair.

Among others, DU Professor Dr Syed Rashidul Hasan of Marketing Department was present as special guest, said a press release.

Weather

Moderate rain likely

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers with temporary gusty wind may occur at many places over Chittagong, Rajshahi and Sylhet divisions and at a few places over Dhaka, Khulna and Barisal divisions in the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Weather may remain nearly unchanged during the period, Met office said.

The sun sets today at 6:15 pm and rises tomorrow at 5:41 am. Maximum and minimum temperatures and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	max	min	morning	evening
Dhaka	34.0	27.6	78	83
Chittagong	32.5	26.2	82	79
Rajshahi	32.6	27.2	92	92
Khulna	33.5	25.6	88	88
Barisal	33.2	26.2	87	100



A cultural function was organised by JASAS marking the 19th founding anniversary of BNP in front of the BNP central office yesterday. —Star photo

Lee calls on Samad Azad

Visiting South Korean Vice-Foreign Minister Lee Ki Cho called on Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad yesterday, reports UNB.

Lee, who had official talks with Foreign Secretary Farooq Sobhan on Monday, apprised the Foreign Minister of his country's policies to expand cooperation in different fields with Bangladesh.

Azad, who visited Seoul early this year, explained to the Korean Vice Minister about his government's measures to further strengthen cooperation with the peninsula.

He particularly focussed on the incentives offered by the government for foreign investors.

The Korean Vice Minister visited the Export Processing Zone (EPZ) and Bangladesh-Korea Friendship Hospital at Savar in the afternoon.

Progress of Nat'l Art Gallery, Nat'l Musical Centre reviewed

The 61st council meeting of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy was held yesterday at its conference room with State Minister for Cultural Affairs Obaidul Quader in the chair, reports UNB.

The meeting reviewed the progress of National Art Gallery and National Musical Centre establishment projects involving Tk 71 crore and Tk 15 crore respectively.

The council formed an administrative reform committee for the academy, headed by Enamul Haq, MP. Preparation for the SAARC Music Conference, to be held in Dhaka at the end of this year, was also discussed.

Big parties lack tolerance: ZP

Acting Secretary General of Zaker Party (ZP) Nurul Kader yesterday said the people have become frustrated at the activities of "so-called" major political parties, reports UNB.

"Their actions do not reflect the behaviour expected from democratic organisations," he said addressing a press conference at the party's central office.

Kader alleged that the big political parties lack tolerance, modesty, courtesy and democratic attitude. They are pushing the country into an anarchic situation," he said.

The present situation cannot be changed with the passing of laws or talking in the parliament, he said. "A moral revolution is essential to establish humanism in the country."