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## Bangabandhu Murder Case

# Aug 15 killing wasn't part of mutiny by entire army: IO

The killing of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his family members on August 15, 1975 was not part of a mutiny by the entire Army, said the prosecution witness No. 61 in the Bangabandhu Murder Case yesterday, reports UNB.

Abdul Kahar Akand, the investigation officer in the case, denying a defence suggestion in the District and Sessions Judge's Court, said, "It is not true that the August 15 incident was part of a mutiny by the Army."

Denying another suggestion by Advocate Saifur Rahman, the counsel for Lt Col Syed Farooq Rahman, the witness said the August 15 incident did not occur under the authority of the martial law.

"This is also not true that the law enforcing agencies didn't take lawful action as the incident took place under the martial law authority," the IO said.

He further said during the investigation of the case, he didn't find that an unrest was prevailing in the rank and file of the army at that time due to dismissal of Lt Col Ziauddin and Col Taher.

Advocate Khan Saifur Rahman who completed cross-ex-

amination of Akand yesterday made a number of suggestions all of which were denied by the witness. Advocate took 10 working days to complete the cross-examination.

Akand, an ASP of the Criminal Investigation Department, denied that police cooked up the prosecution story and called some 450 people to give false evidence in the case.

"This is also not true that only those, among the 450 people called, who agreed to give false evidence were selected as witnesses," he said.

The witness denied that Col Farooq was made an accused in the case as per directives from the government. "He (Farooq) was not tortured physically or mentally in the police custody," he said.

The IO informed the court that Farooq had been under police custody on remand for 32 days in connection with three cases. His confessional statement in the Bangabandhu Murder Case was not prepared by the police.

"Neither any combined interrogation cell comprising SB, NSI, CID and other intelligence agencies was set up for interrogation of Farooq nor anyone

from other agencies was present when he was being interrogated," said the witness.

Akand told the court that as investigation officer, he interrogated Farooq on police remand and the accused was not coerced or taught to make statement to the magistrate confessing his guilt.

Asked whether there was any bar to file the case in between June 23, 1996 when Sheikh Hasina was sworn-in and October 1, 1996 (a day before filing of the case), the IO said the plaintiff could say about it.

Quoting a report published in daily Ittefaq on September 7, 1996, Khan Saifur Rahman asked the witness if he knew that the Home Ministry was directed to file a case in connection with the murder. Akand replied in negative.

Before the court was adjourned, the defence lawyers sought the case diary of IO. Judge Kazi Golam Rasul assured them that it would be supplied to them as per rule.

State defence counsel, appointed for 14 absconding accused, will cross-examine the prosecution witness when the hearing resumes this morning.



FBCCI President Yusuf Abdullah Harun speaking at the meeting of owners of sick industries at the Jatiya Press Club auditorium in the city yesterday. —Star photo

## PCJSS 'satisfied'

From Page 1

In wordings, the semantics that created the confusion. We are going to remove those," the IO said on the outcome of the first review of the CHT peace accord.

This was also explained to Shantu Larma by Law Minister Abdul Matin Khasru, who placed the bills in parliament. The minister, along with Abdullah and Dipankar Talukder, MP, attended the final round of meeting which began at 2:40 pm yesterday and continued for two hours.

Shantu Larma and his entourage of top PCJSS leaders will leave Dhaka this morning by a military helicopter.

The bills, now being scrutinised by a Special Jatiya Sangsad Committee, are likely to be passed this month. The committee has been given one week's more time to complete its business, which was scheduled to be completed on April 13.

As soon as parliament approves the bills, the government will form the RC and Shantu Larma is likely to be nominated as its first chairman.

Earlier, on Wednesday, Shantu Larma had sought the meeting urgently, sending an open letter to the Prime Minister, accusing the government of 'deviating' from the peace accord on the authority of the RC and the district councils in framing rules and regulations and on chief executives in the three hill districts.

Shantu Larma had complained that the bills were far short of what had been laid down in the accord signed on December 2.

He had also threatened that the bills, if passed without incorporating the "original provisions," would not be acceptable to his organisation and tribesmen.

"You will see when the bills are placed for approval," Shantu Larma told reporters who pressed him to disclose what amendments he had been able to achieve. He also said that he had pressed for early implementation of the accord.

"Are you dissatisfied. Your face shows that," another journalist asked. This made him

react sharply, retorting, "If you ask that kind of questions I will not speak further."

But he talked and trained his guns at his own dissidents, and firing the main salvos at the main opposition party, BNP. They are a minuscule group. You cannot expect cent per cent support on any accord. "His answer was meant for the PCJSS dissidents who are at loggerheads with him since signing of the CHT accord. The dissidents also ridiculed him even on Sunday, describing his talks with the government as a 'farce'."

"A lot of things are being said against the accord. I have been described as a terrorist. BNP is making a fuss on it, spinning fantasies. We have had meetings with them. The NCCHT was formed during their tenure. Why did you talk to 'terrorists' Shantu Larma? Actually he accepted the reality in the CHT and held meetings for 13 times. BNP also wanted to resolve it. But they fell from power before that," Shantu Larma said.

"Whatever they are saying on the 'will of the country,' they are saying for the sake of opposing it (the accord). Their arguments are illogical. I am protesting it on behalf of the PCJSS and the CHT people. But I hope they (BNP) will accept the treaty, which had been appreciated outside the country," Shantu Larma added.

## Samad Azad in Delhi

NEW DELHI, Apr 20: Foreign Minister Abdul Samad Azad arrived here tonight to hold talks with Indian Prime Minister A B Vajpayee as the special emissary of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, report agencies.

Sheikh Hasina is the first South Asian leader to despatch a special envoy to New Delhi to get acquainted with the new Vajpayee government.

During his four-day stay, Azad will also meet Home Minister LK Advani and Human Resource Development Minister Dr MR Joshi.

Prior to his departure from Dhaka, Azad told newsmen at the airport that he was carrying a letter for Vajpayee from the Prime Minister.

He said ever since the new government came to power in India, Sheikh Hasina was eager to send him to establish rapport with the leadership there.

"I will, on her behalf, exchange views with the Indian Prime Minister and other leaders to promote Dhaka-Delhi relations," he added.

## Gaibandha

From Page 1

condition of patients and later held a meeting at the circuit house.

The meeting was attended by the Rajshahi Divisional Commissioner, DIG of Police of Rajshahi range, DG Narcotics Control Department, local MPs, DC of Gaibandha and other high officials, local political leaders, lawyers, journalists and local elite attended the meeting.

At the meeting, local political leaders including those of Awami League, BNP and Jatiya Party accused the police for allowing such illegal sale of liquor and demanded punishment of person responsible for the incident.

The minister informed the meeting that a high powered CID team was already investigating the incident and trying to find out those responsible for it.

He said, "I will give reward for information about the main accused, Rabi Shankar."

Talking to The Daily Star Correspondents the minister said, "As per the CID investigation report, we will punish those who were involved in the incident."

Asked if the police had a hand in the illegal trade, the minister said, "We must wait till the investigation report is available."

A high level medical team is expected to arrive soon to review the treatment facilities at the 50-bed GSH.

## 3 newspapermen held

From Page 1

When contacted, Secretary of Chittagong Education Board Nur Hossain said this correspondent over telephone that two separate probe committees have been formed to investigate the question paper leakage.

The daily Karmafull has published question papers of the previous three days' SSC examinations in advance which is punishable under the Secrecy Act, according to UNB.

Board Chairman Prof Ahsan Ullah told the agency that it was the duty of the daily to inform the matter of leakage of the question papers to the Board authority maintaining secrecy, but instead of doing so, it encouraged the students to follow those by publishing question papers.

Meanwhile, Chittagong city Jamaat-e-Islami held a protest rally and submitted a memorandum to Deputy Commissioner yesterday demanding unconditional release of Absar Uddin Chowdhury, who is the

## Sick units

From Page 1

month's time to the government was taken following Harun's appeal for giving it a "chance for preparation."

Referring to his meeting with the finance minister on Sunday, Harun said the minister sought one month's time to prepare a set of rules to begin the rehabilitation work.

"We do not want agitation but solution our problems," Harun said responding to demands from the participants for an action programme.

Harun, however, gave a gloomy picture of the country's economic condition particularly in the industrial sector.

"Let us swear not to set up any industry in the country and beg apology to the people that we did a great mistake," he said expressing his frustration over the poor condition of the industrial sector.

He said that 19 per cent growth in exports and 12 per cent growth in industrial production, as shown by the government, were achieved due to better performance in a few sectors. Otherwise the overall condition of most of the sectors would have been miserable, the FBCCI president said.

As per requests from two ministers, SAMS Kibria and Tofal Ahmed, the organisers curtailed their planned programme and did not open the floor for general participants, it was learnt.

## 7-party

From Page 1

The date of the simultaneous 'Dhaka Rally' and separate venues will be announced within one or two days, a press release sent from the central BNP office said mentioning the decision of the meeting.

BNP Standing Committee member Barrister Abdus Salam Talukder presided over the meeting which demanded release of the alliance leaders, including Shawkat Hossain Nilu of PNP and Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu of JCD.

Both were arrested in connection with the April 15 hartal.

The meeting condemned the attacks on the House of BNP leader Ziaul Haq Zia MP in Laxmipur on three occasions 'by Awami League terrorists' and demanded punishment to the culprits.

The 7-party alliance, which met at the 29 Minto Road official residence of Leader of the Opposition, also condemned the attack on a peaceful procession of BNP in Natore.

The meeting was attended by M Shamsul Islam and Anwar Zahid of BNP, Abdul Kader Molah of Jamaat, Shamim Al Mamun of Jatiya Party (Z-M), Anisur Rahman of Jagpa, Saifuddin Mont of Democratic League and Abdul Momin of NDA.

## Import policy

From Page 1

port policy has withdrawn the restriction on import of gold, silver, crude oil and palm oil.

On the other hand, the policy imposed restriction on the import of re-conditioned fax, phone, computer, photocopier, type-writer and telex machines.

It has allowed conditional import of ethanol oxide gas and detrameton of synthetic pyrethroid group that are in the import-restricted list.

The import policy has made insurance compulsory for local LCs with Sadharan Bima Corporation or any other Bangladesh insurance company.

The Cabinet meeting also approved the draft bills for amending the laws of the uncles, financed by the government.

Ministers, state ministers, cabinet secretary, principal secretary to the Prime Minister and secretaries concerned were present in the meeting, says an official handout.

## Noor Uddin's authority

From Page 1

Hamid, who was in the chair, interrupted the BNP MP to say that as per the Constitution the Cabinet was collectively accountable to parliament.

"There is nothing wrong with him (Khan) replying to questions in the House... As minister without portfolio, he can perform any duty if given by the PM or the cabinet," said the Deputy Speaker, adding that there was also prior notice in this regard.

Joining the debate, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina wondered as to how a three-time minister and a senior parliamentarian like Saifur Rahman could raise such a question.

Referring to her discretion as the PM, Sheikh Hasina pointed out that she could authorise any minister to represent in the parliament any ministry under her. It was entirely the PM's jurisdiction to give charges of different ministries, she noted.

In this regard, Hasina reminded Saifur Rahman that her predecessor Begum Khaleda Zia also practised in the same way.

Accepting the PM's clarification, Saifur Rahman then asked why Khan was given the responsibility while there was a state minister in the same ministry.

Speaking of the PM's authority, Noor Uddin Khan told the House that the Prime Minister could take over charge of any sensitive or important ministry.

"The PM had to take over the energy ministry, left in a sorry state by the past BNP government," he observed.

Angered by Saifur Rahman's comment that he was a dismissed minister, Noor Uddin Khan urged the Chair to expunge it. Accordingly, the chair expunged the remark.

While replying to questions on the country's power sector, Khan blamed the BNP for the power crisis, triggering protests from the Opposition Bench.

## 10-yr-old girl raped

GAZIPUR, Apr 20: A minor girl was raped at Banjar Chala village in Joydevpur thana of the district on Sunday night, reports UNB.

Police said, one Ismail, 20, of the village allegedly entered into one of the two houses of Nurul Islam at about 9 pm and raped his 10-year-old daughter.

Ismail, who was staying at the other house, came out on hearing the girl's cry and grabbed the criminal. Later, relatives of Ismail stormed the house and snatched him away.

The girl was sent to the hospital for medical examination.

## Nor'westers

From Page 1

dwelling houses and standing crops.

The two others died during the nor'wester in the Lalmonirhat district. Forty others were also injured.

The dead were identified as Abdul Karim Mollah, 70, of village Amingan and Zahiruddin, 65, of village Vetomari in Kaliganj thana.

The nor'wester also damaged dwelling houses and standing crops. Some 50 villages in Kaliganj and Hatibandha thana are said to be the worst affected areas.

According to the district administration, 734 thatched houses in Goddumari union of Hatibandha thana were razed to the ground.

The Deputy Commissioner distributed Tk 2,000 for the families of each of the deceased and allotted two tons of wheat to distribute among the affected families.

## Land transit with Nepal

From Page 1

In fact, only three container trucks used the route on the day of its inauguration after which there was no transit traffic because of what officials concerned said "inhibiting and restricting factors."

It has been agreed at the review meeting in Delhi that movement of transit goods through the existing route via Siliguri town will be permitted on four days a week instead of two days early.

Earlier it was necessary that 'cargo-in-transit' should be transported in 'piller-proof' container trucks. As per the newly agreed modalities, trucks with tarpulin covers sealed by customs will be allowed to move.

This simplified procedures will enable free flow of all kinds of cargo trucks and vehicles, the Nepalese envoy hoped.

As per the old modalities, all Nepalese transit cargo required insurance coverage, which was both expensive and time consuming. This has now been waived.

It was also stated in the

## Kibria tells ESCAP session

# Concerted effort must to tackle regional economic crisis

Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria has called for concerted effort of the developing countries of ESCAP region to overcome the negative impact of financial and currency market crisis in the region, reports UNB.

He was addressing the 54th session of ESCAP in Bangkok yesterday, according to a message received in Dhaka.

The Minister said enormous growth potential of Asia-Pacific region was threatened by the turbulence in the financial markets, escalating foreign debt and economic downturn in some countries.

Increased inflationary pressures, reduced income, escalating unemployment and curtailment of public expenditure, particularly for social services were expected, said Kibria.

This illustrated the reality that the success and setbacks in any country could no longer be confined to the national borders but to spill over effects throughout the region, he mentioned.

Kibria said the crisis in the region warranted rethinking of some crucial policy matters including macro-economic management of the developing countries of the ESCAP region.

Speaking on the current

state of Bangladesh's economy, Kibria said the present government has taken pragmatic as well as bold steps to consolidate democratic governance and to improve the performance of the economy.

In rapid succession, he said, the country has established macro economic stability, deregulated the financial sector, restored discipline in banking sector, liberalised import procedures and strengthened institutions for export promotion, privatisation and investment.

Prudent fiscal and monetary policies have attracted favourable attention of investors from home and abroad resulting in a record GDP growth of 5.7 per cent in the last fiscal year.

Referring to the basic goal of growth with equity and social justice, Kibria said the government was firmly committed to a private sector-led growth strategy, under which the public sector was to play an important catalytic role in developing the social and economic infrastructure.

## 904 expelled on fourth day of SSC exams

Some 904 examinees were expelled from different centres for adopting unfair means in the on-going SSC examinations on the fourth day yesterday, reports UNB.

The break up is: Dhaka 206, Rajshahi 445, Jessore 113, Chittagong 91 and Comilla 39.

The students were expelled during the examination of Bengali second paper.

Under Dhaka Board, 9 examinees were expelled in Narayanganj, 53 in Tangail, 14 in Mymensingh, 25 in Sherpur, 68 in Netrakona, 12 in Faridpur, 14 in Gopalganj and 11 in Shariatpur.

Some 65 students were expelled in Rajshahi, 198 in Dinajpur, 52 in Kurigram, 59 in Gaibandha, 24 in Panchagarh, 19 in Pabna, 18 in Thakurgaon, 4 in Natore and 14 in Naogaon.

In Jessore Board, 59 were expelled in Kushtia, 3 in Patuakhali, 27 in Barisal, 2 in Perajpur, 8 in Chuadanga, 5 in Meherpur and one each in Jessore and Khulna.

Officials of Chittagong Board said, 55 examinees were expelled in the city while 12 were expelled in Rangamati and 24 in Cox's Bazar.

## Sufia Kamal advised rest

Physical condition of elderly poet Begum Sufia Kamal has deteriorated over the last few days, reports BSS.

According to family sources, a panel of doctors, treating her for various old-age complications for long, had advised her to take complete rest and requested all intending visitors not to make any call on her in person or over the telephone.

## Buta Singh

From Page 1

their support is crucial for the survival of Vajpayee's right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party's 18-party coalition government.

Vajpayee also spoke with Jayalalitha about his decision. Mahajan said the talk was cordial, but he did not give details.

Over the weekend, Jayalalitha wrote Vajpayee asking him either to fire three government ministers tainted by corruption or to take back one of her supporters who quit the cabinet earlier this month when he was formally charged in a corruption case.

Singh is being tried along with former Minister PV Narasimha Rao for allegedly bribing lawmakers to support Rao in a 1993 parliamentary vote of confidence. Rao won the vote, allowing him to retain control of the government.

## BNP stages walkout

From Page 1

ing paper missiles at the Speaker, the BNP lawmakers were accusing the Speaker of instigating the incident.

"Now, I can realise that the Speaker should have applied Article 15 and 16 of the Rules of Procedure on the very day of the incident. Instead, the Speaker had shown enough patience," she said.

Earlier, a number of lawmakers including the Leader of the House took the floor to speak on the killing of an Awami League leader in Laxmipur.

Sheikh Hasina alleged that terrorists belonging to the BNP attacked a local leader of her party, Nurul Amin Patwary, in Laxmipur. She criticised the Leader of the Opposition for issuing provocative statements and alleged that after Awami League came to power many leaders and workers of the party were attacked by terrorists belonging to the BNP.

Treasury Bench lawmaker Abdul Latif Mirza and BNP legislator Ziaul Haq Zia also referred to the Laxmipur incident while speaking on separate points of order.

Zia alleged that Awami League terrorists had attacked his residence following an incident over a relationship between the daughter of a widow and the son of a choudkdar recently.

In his press briefing the Deputy Leader of the Opposition alleged that the Speaker had violated the third schedule of Article 148 of the Constitution by showing sympathy to the ruling party and antipathy towards the opposition on April 15 last.

He said that Speaker had allowed the Home Minister to give a statement under Article 300 of

## Examination held

From Page 1

pers from different centres of the district.

An official of the district administration, on condition of anonymity, said the situation demands retaking of all the examinations whose question papers leaked. The matter has been intimated to the authorities concerned, he added.

Meanwhile, some 189 students were expelled for adopting unfair means on the fourth day of the examination today.