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PHILIPS

## Death in police custody

### The same team, a similar story

The police team which has been accused of killing Shamim Reza Rubel, allegedly tortured another person to death few months back, reports UNB.

The same team of the Detective Branch reportedly tortured one Arun Chakravarty, 27, to death and then dropped him from a five-storey building to show that he jumped from the rooftop either to avoid arrest or to commit suicide.

Sources said Arun was arrested in connection with a case of dacoity committed at 9, Padmanidhi Lane in the city on January 19. He was seriously tortured by the same DB team at its Minto Road office.

Later on January 23, he was taken to his house at 164, Lal-nahon Saha Street in the city to recover arms saying that during the police interrogation Arun confessed that he kept the arms there. And he jumped from the rooftop of the house.

But his family members and local people alleged that several plainclothes police who identified themselves as team members of AC Akram, carried the handcuffed Arun on their shoulders to the roof. So, it was not possible for him to jump from the rooftop onto the ground, they said.

They further alleged that the DB men tortured Arun to death in their custody and later dropped him from the rooftop to hush up the murder. A case was then filed with Sutrapur thana in this connection only saying that Arun was injured as he jumped from the roof in a bid to flee away and later succumbed to his injuries at the hospital.

The latest victim is Shamim, a final year student of Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) at the Independent University of Bangladesh (IUB).

In 1997, Biman crew Nuruz-zaman Sharif was tortured to death by police of Tejgaon thana in the city on June 13, a night guard Nurul Afzar in Fatichhari of Chittagong on August 9 and a young man Harun in Rupsha of Khulna on February 6.

Even Kalim Gazi, elderly father of an arrested person, was beaten to death at Keshabpur thana on November 13, last year as he could not pay the bribe demanded by the police, they added.

At least nine deaths in police custody were reported in the country last year and 13 in 1996. Officials of Coordination Council for Human Rights in Bangladesh (CCHRB) said.

In last 25 years of the independence, a total of 321 cases were filed across the country against police accusing them of killing arrested people in custody. Of those, trials of only three cases were held, according to official statistics.

During the period, 18,911 deaths were reported either in police or jail custody. However, most of those were natural deaths.

In addition to killing in custody, the official statistics said a total of 5,867 incidents of women repression by policemen were recorded. Official actions were taken in only 112 cases.

During the period, the total number of allegations of killing, repression, bribery and corruption against police was more than 90,000. Investigations were conducted in 11,923 cases, punishment given in 223 while 2,020 police personnel were dismissed.

CCHRB Director Muhammad Hilaluddin said it's a common allegation against police that they torture arrested persons in custody or while on remand and before producing them to the court.

Although torture in custody is a punishable offence, police resort to all sorts of brutal ways to interrogate an arrested person. These "inhuman" means include beating at joints of the body, pouring hot or cold water on the face, slapping, inserting boiled egg into the annul, kicking at chest or back, pouring powdered chili on eyes, hitting by the rifle butt, electric shock, uprooting nails, compelling to drink urine and hurling abuses.

Echoing the demands of different human rights bodies, the CCHRB has proposed a set of recommendations to end the "barbaric" attitude of police.

Confessional statement of an accused should be voluntary and only in front of magistrate and in presence of lawyer.

Enactment of law regarding repression in custody that police will have to prove that they didn't unleash any torture on the certain arrested persons.

Compensation to the victims for repression in police custody.

Forming high-powered judicial enquiry committee or national human rights commission or director of public prosecution to probe into the incidents of repression in police custody.

Forming a permanent human rights committee in Parliament.

Introducing behavioural science for police training.

Bringing change in the existing laws in view of human rights.



Students of the Independent University staged demonstration in the city yesterday demanding trial of the killers of Shamim Reza Rubel. — Star photo

## FM leaves for Colombo

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad left the capital yesterday for Bangkok en route to Colombo to attend the Council of Ministers (foreign ministers) meeting prior to the SAARC Summit in the Sri Lankan capital later this week.

The foreign minister will address the two-day meeting of the Council of Ministers beginning today. The meeting will finalise the agenda of the summit which starts on July 29.

Azad expressed his optimism that the coming summit will play a very important role in further strengthening the bonds of friendship and cooperation among the member states for their mutual benefit.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will leave here tomorrow to attend the summit.

Talking to BSS before boarding the aircraft, Azad said Bangladesh would push forward economic agenda which were earlier raised by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the last SAARC Summit in Male, the Maldives, in May 1997.

Empowerment of women, alleviation of poverty and checking trafficking of children and women and drug are the issues that Bangladesh would like to highlight at the summit, he said.

Mobil-Jamuna expanded distribution network. Satellite depots and hotling centres for LPG will also be set up in Rajshahi, Khulna and Barisal divisions to serve a network of distributors throughout the northern and western parts of the country.

The lubricant plant will have a single shift production capacity of 16,000 metric tons per year and is expected to commence operation by late next year. The state-of-the-art plant will incorporate latest technology to allow most of Mobil's diversified product line to be manufactured and packaged in Bangladesh.

"Mobil's global strategy is to be number one in lubes, and our successful market entry into Bangladesh and new energy infrastructure development fit well in our goal," McDermott added.

The ceremony was also addressed by State Minister for Energy Prof Rafiqul Islam, Charge d'Affairs of the US Embassy Theodore A Nist, Energy Secretary Dr Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury, General Manager of Jamuna Oil ASM Giasuddin Ahmed, Mobil's Regional Executive Paul E Martin and Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation Chairman Anwar Hossain.

## Try Rubel's killers, IU students demand

By Staff Correspondent

The death of Shamim Reza Rubel in police custody on Thursday forced the students of the Independent University to take to the streets and demand trial of the killers of their "innocent" friend.

It was for the first time that the students of the university staged street protests yesterday since its inception in early '90s, said teachers, students and staff of the university.

The shocked students, now on a summer vacation, brought out a procession from in front of the Jatya Press Club carrying a black banner to carry their demand for justice.

Meanwhile, the Management Faculty members and students of the university in a joint resolution yesterday appealed to the Chancellor of the university President Shahabuddin Ahmed as well as to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to immediately institute a judicial enquiry into the alleged "brutal murder by one of the agencies of the government".

"They (police) are giving a wrong message to the society," said a teacher of the university, speaking on the role of police.

Rubel's Academic Advisor and Economics teacher of the university, Aminur Rahman, described Rubel as "a politic young man and a brilliant student".

Rahman said Rubel has been given 40 per cent waiver in tuition fees since his first semester as a reward for his academic performance. "It is not very usual in our university."

"There is no scope for organising any procession or rally as the students are always busy with their studies. Besides, there is no student politics," said another teacher of the university's School of Business.

About two hours before Rubel was picked up by the plainclothesmen, he was seen among friends on the campus happily talking over his getting a good grade in a paper, rated very difficult, said one of his classmates and a close friend.

Lecture rooms, computer laboratory and library were the places Rubel used to frequent, his friends said and added, he was a serious and good student.

A large number of students came to the university campus at Baridhara throughout the day yesterday to mourn Rubel's death.

The faculty students and management of the university at a condolence meeting in the campus yesterday noon strongly condemned the "killing" in police custody.



A section of students at the Dhaka University yesterday burning copies of a circular issued by the authorities raising tuition fees and other charges. — Star photo

## AC Akram closed

From Page 1  
haemorrhage. Marks of injury were also found in his body. Police sources, however, could not confirm it till last night.

The CID Investigation Officer ASP Munshi Atiqur Rahman raided the DB office at Minto Road yesterday afternoon and seized some items as evidence.

The seized items were a 28-inch wooden stick belonging to SI Thakur, registers of DB office and its custody and command certificate relating to Rubel's admission to the hospital.

Senior CID officials visited Rubel's house at Circular Road in Siddheshwari yesterday afternoon and talked with the family members.

UNB adds: A meeting of high officials of police at the DB office yesterday viewed that Akram, who was the supervisor of the DB team that had arrested Rubel, cannot avoid the responsibility of the killing, sources said.

During interrogation by the CID, the five arrested policemen also said that AC Akram Hos-

sain had sent them to pick up Rubel.

Earlier, when contacted, Akram, who was in the office on Thursday evening had said he did not know anything about the incident and that he was not even informed by the team before they left the office to arrest Rubel.

AC Akram is the number one accused in the murder case filed with Ramna thana by Rubel's father Abdur Rab.

Another UNB report said: The CID will seek answer to questions, like why police arrested Rubel, who was the source that allegedly informed police that Rubel possesses illegal arms, and what was the interest of the police team in arresting and torturing Rubel.

It will also try to find out if any other policemen were involved in the gruesome murder directly or indirectly, said ASP Munshi Atiqur Rahman.

Sources close to CID said the investigation team is trying to find out why the DB team went to arrest the youngman without an inspector.

According to rules, an assistant commissioner remains in charge of an "operation" that will be carried out by at least an inspector. But the DB team that arrested Rubel was led by a sub-inspector.

SI Hayatul Islam's room in the DB office is adjacent to that of AC Akram Hossain. But, when contacted, Akram, who was in the office on Thursday evening had said that he did not know anything about the incident.

There were allegations against the team members of AC Akram that they had blackmailed people through threats and arrest. One victim alleged, the team arrested wealthy persons under Section 54 and released them taking handsome amounts of money.

## City flood

From Page 1  
ter is encroaching upon the roads.

Mayor Mohammad Hanif visited the flood hit south eastern suburbs of Mugda, Mandala, Ahmedbagh, Kadamtala, Madartek, Meradia and East Rampura. He told people to face the situation with courage and assured them of all help. He distributed some dry food, flattened rice, molasses and clothes, a DCC press release said.

It further said the DCC health department has taken up measures to help the flood victims, which include setting up of shelters and supply of medicine and drinking water.

Meanwhile, in a statement yesterday, the DCC apologised to the citizens for inconvenience due to rain-damaged roads. A number of roads have been damaged by heavy rains. But work for repairing those had already started. All the rain-damaged roads would be repaired and developed as soon as the monsoon season ends, it said.

7 drown  
From Page 1  
Angry people of area blocked traffic on Dhaka-Aricha highway, one km away from the spot, for an hour.

State Minister for Relief Abdul Khaleq who was passing by at the time faced the mob who took him to the spot for arranging immediate salvage operation of the bus.

## 9 cos to be invited

From Page 1  
Although the negotiations began amid discussions with Tullow on Block-9 and Block-11, the two most prospective blocks, the whole negotiation process was delayed.

Tullow was selected on the basis of its "ambitious" work proposal that includes drilling of 10 exploratory wells in each block in the first three years. However, as the company is financially very weak, the government tried to find a big partner for this company.

As a result of the government's effort, initially Mobil-Petronas was invited to negotiate with Tullow on partnership for blocks 9 and 11. Later, Chevron-Texaco was invited to negotiate a partnership with Tullow in Block-9 and Mobil-Petronas in Block-11.

The negotiations between Tullow and Chevron-Texaco, however, remained unresolved. The government tried to find a solution by suggesting a formula under which Tullow gets 45 per cent share of the block, Chevron-Texaco 45 per cent and BAPEX 10 per cent. Chevron-Texaco rejected this formula and suggested 30 per cent for Tullow, 30 per cent for Chevron, 30 per cent for Texaco and 10 per cent for BAPEX.

At the same time, Mobil-Petronas declined to negotiate for Block-11 only saying that they were earlier invited for both blocks 9 and 11 and they would only negotiate for both the blocks.

The whole negotiation process came to a halt in February-March although the government had drafted a decision allocating blocks 5, 10 for Shell-Cairn, Block-7 for Triton-Unocal, blocks 3 and 6 for Enron-Oklad, Block-8 for Pangaea-OMV, Block-9 for Tullow-Chevron-Texaco and Block-11 for Tullow-Mobil-Petronas. BAPEX was put in the bottom of the list as a 10 per cent shareholder in blocks 9 and 11.

However, in the last four months, the government gave an opportunity to a US company, having strong political lobby, to modify its bidding document for Block-10. In the end, the government decided to put this block out of the bidding to avoid controversy.

Yesterday's announcement came as a surprise to the foreign

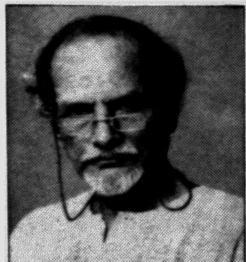
## Flood

From Page 1  
mensingh, Netrokona and Kurigram remained unchanged.

The district-wise break up of deaths are: 13 in Madaripur, 11 in Chittagong, six each in Cox's Bazar, Rangamati, Jamalpur and Dhaka, five each in Gaibandha, Kurigram, Sherpur, Comilla and Brahmanbaria, two each in Naogaon, Pabna and Mymensingh and one each in Bogra and Rangpur.

Another report adds: The Dhaka-Chittagong was flooded at places between Bhabar Char and Meghna bridge yesterday hampering traffic movement.

Workers were busy filling sands and brick chips to repair the broken road allowing one-way traffic movement. Traffic police were deployed to control the movement of transport vehicles resulting in traffic jam.



## MA Beg dead

Eminent photographer MA Beg died at a clinic in the city yesterday evening. He was 67, reports BSS.

Beg, fondly called 'Dad' by the country's photographer community for his outstanding contribution to promoting creative photography, was suffering from cancer.

He established and ran the Beg Art Institute of Photography (BAIP) for the last 30 years. Beg took part in different national and international photography exhibitions and received several awards.

He left behind two sons and a host of students and admirers to mourn his death.

## Faruk murder Nasrin Flora sent to jail

By Court Correspondent  
Nasrin Akter Flora, the arrested accused in the Kala Faruk murder case, was sent to Dhaka Central Jail by the CMM's Court yesterday.

Earlier in the day, Flora was produced before the court after expiry of a three-day remand.

Flora's lawyer filed a bail petition which was rejected by the court.

CID did not pray for further remand yesterday. Even they did not file any petition for recording, Flora's statement under Section 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

## '87 flood

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deluge in 1987," he said, citing the overall picture from the available data, weather charts, radar, echo and satellite imagery.

He said though the monsoon started arriving in Bangladesh from June 11, there had been 40 to 70 per cent less rainfall.

But there had been 'more than normal average of rainfall' by 52 per cent in Dhaka, 82 per cent in Chittagong, 78 per cent in Sylhet, 61 per cent in Rajshahi, six per cent in Khulna and 75 per cent in Barisal divisions in July. At the same time, there had been excess rainfall in the Ganges and the Brahmaputra basins outside Bangladesh, contributing to a rush of water down their systems in the country, triggering the floods, the meteorologist added.

## Kibria, Saifur

From Page 1  
ment must think whether support should be given in costly inputs like zinc phosphate for balanced use of fertiliser.

"We should have our own opinion about subsidy. Why should we be distracted by the donor representatives who come here to stay for a short period?" she said.

Reviewing the chapters on agriculture, former agriculture minister AZM Obaidullah Khan said investment in agriculture is declining over the years. He mentioned that 93 per cent of the funds for Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute goes for salary and only seven per cent for research.

Former finance minister M Syeduzzaman, reviewing the chapters on macro-economic issues, said the economy can not work with its full potential because of failure in governance.

He said a strong central bank is essential to bring discipline in the financial sector.

About the growing share of defense in the budget, Syeduzzaman said, a new opportunity to contain defense expenditure has come before Bangladesh because of the recent geopolitical development in the region.

## SAARC declaration

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chapter on nuclear disarmament is not in.

Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar, who assumed the chair of the SAARC Council of Ministers tomorrow, said the May tests will not be on the summit agenda but India and Pakistan would take it up bilaterally.

"They will not take it up as an agenda item, but the prime ministers (of India and Pakistan) have said they want to discuss it at their bilateral meetings" scheduled on Wednesday, Kadirgamar said.

But Pakistani foreign secretary Shamsad Ahmed said yesterday that the schedule for the meeting was still being finalised.

Diplomats said the meeting between India Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and Pakistan's Nawaz Sharif would overshadow the summit, where contentious bilateral issues cannot be taken up in line with its charter.

Pakistan has asked other SAARC members to pressure India to open talks with Islamabad on the nuclear issue, which has strained ties between the two neighbours.

Sri Lankan diplomat said they had made it clear that Colombo saw no mediating role in the dispute between India and Pakistan but could provide 'a favourable setting for talks' between Vajpayee and Sharif.

The 67-point draft declaration also makes no mention of a proposal by Maldives and Sri Lanka, made at last year's summit, to establish a system for members to hammer out thorny bilateral issues.

Kadirgamar said SAARC had failed to establish an institutional arrangement for the members to resolve their bilateral problems and hoped the coming summit would examine the issue.

## Partho murder JCD chief granted ad interim bail

By DU Correspondent

President of the BNP-backed Jatiyabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) Shahiduddin Chowdhury Annie has been granted ad interim bail in the Partho murder case, says a press release.

A Division Bench of the High Court granted the bail yesterday.

The bail petition for Annie was moved by Barrister Moudud Ahmed on behalf.

Moudud submitted that the allegations in the FIR against the JCD leader were false and fabricated. He also submitted that in the FIR, Annie was not accused of any criminal offence.

Moudud contended that the petitioner was shown arrested in 14 cases and enlarged on bail in 13 cases, except the Partho Murder case, the press release added.

## Strike at DU

From Page 1

sition BNP, also brought out a procession and later held a rally protesting the authorities' decision to raise tuition fees.

The JCD rally, held in front of the Arts Faculty building, was addressed by, among others, Nasiruddin Pintu, Habib-un-Nabi Shohel, Monzur-e-Elahi, and Monwar Hossain Rana.

JSD-backed Bangladesh Chhatra League (Chunnu-Karim) also brought out a procession and held a rally on the campus during the strike. It was addressed by, among others, Obidur Rahman Chunnu, Karim Shikder, Munir Ahmed Lanin and Monirul Kabir Milon.

A section of students alleged that activists of the BCL forced them to participate in its procession and rally.

Witnesses said that entrances of Mohsin and Surya Sen Halls were locked in the morning and those preparing to join the processions of 'general students' and the GCO were forced to join the BCL procession and rally.

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

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