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Bangabandhu Murder Case HC Bench may dispose of 3 petitions today

"Were all the bodies dumped?" asked one judge about the August carnage, reports UNB. "Yes, my Lord," replied a defence counsel.

The question came from Justice A B M Khairul Haque as hearing of death reference in the Bangabandhu murder case resumed at a High Court Division Bench yesterday.

Apart from listening to the paper book on case records, the Bench is expected to dispose of three petitions today filed by the defence side. The petitions include one on validity of advocate Serajul Haque taking part in the hearing on behalf of the prosecution.

Two other petitions are on adding more papers and documents to the paper book.

The other judge of the Bench was Justice Mohammad Ruhul Amin.

Justice Haque asked about the bodies of close relations of Bangabandhu when a defence

counsel was reading out from depositions and cross-examinations of a prosecution witness made before the lower court on disposal of the bodies.

The bodies were disposed of as those were at the directive of the higher authorities without any kafan (shrouds), janaza and other rituals, the defence counsel quoted PW-10, Major General Abdur Rab.

Rab was assigned to dispose of all the dead bodies except that of Bangabandhu after the carnage on the fateful night of August 15, 1975.

Mujib was buried at his ancestral village at Tungipara in Gopalganj.

As the court resumed in the morning, the defence counsel also read out from depositions and cross-examinations of PW-9 Col M A Hamid, PW-11 Lance Dafadar Bashir Ahmed, PW-12 A L D Sirajul Haque, PW-13 Dafadar Shaifuddin Sardar and PW-14 Dafadar Abdul Jabbar Mridha.

The court was adjourned in the afternoon, keeping reading from depositions of PW-14 incomplete.

The bench is hearing the depositions and cross-examinations recorded at the Dhaka District and Sessions Judge's Court.

Yesterday was the third day of listening to the citations from paper book.

Serajul Haque was present at the court during yesterday's hearing. Among others was the prosecution witness Sham-suddin Chowdhury Manik, Anisul Haque, Sahara Khatun, Mosharrar Hossain Kajal, Nurul Islam Sujon and Syed Haider Ali.

Among the lawyers of the 15 condemned prisoners, Abdur Razzaq Khan, Khan Saifur Rahman and Mahabubur Rahman were present. All the condemned prisoners are former army officers.

Police camp loot Nasim's directive to arrest culprits

DATTAPARA, Shibchar, July 2: Home Minister Mohammad Nasim visited the Dattapara Police Investigation Centre yesterday, reports BSS.

The centre was looted by some armed miscreants who killed one policeman and took away 17 rifles and ammunition.

He directed the police to arrest the criminals within the shortest possible time. "I don't want to hear any excuse. I want to see the criminals arrested. If police is somehow found to be negligent in duties, stern actions are awaiting them," he said at a meeting at TN Academy here.

Inspector General of Police Mohammad Nurul Huda and Noor-E-Alam Titon Chowdhury, MP, also spoke on the occasion which was presided over by Shibchar thana Awami League president Rezaul Karim Talukder.

Nasim said persons responsible for the attack would not be spared under any excuse. "The criminals shall be arrested at any cost. If not, the entire families of them will be arrested to try the killers of the policeman," he said.

He described the incident as pre-planned and said persons who patronised the attack would also be identified and put on trial accordingly.

Referring to allegation of negligence of the camp police, the home minister said stern actions would be taken against the policemen if they found guilty.

"Those who can not ensure their own security, how they will provide security to the people," he asked. The cowards are no longer required in police, he said.

He said persons who have the courage and are aware of their duties will stay in police and the rest will have to go back to their respective homes. "The government can not spend people's money for the cowards," he said.

18 JCD, Jubo Dal leaders, workers arrested at Sirajganj

From Our Correspondent
SIRAJGANJ, July 2: Police arrested 18 leaders and workers of JCD and Jubo Dal yesterday on charge of bringing out a procession in the town during a visit of Home Minister Mohammad Nasim.

The home minister's motorcade was stuck in the procession on SB Fazul Haq Road for about 10 minutes.

Police said the processionists chanted slogans against the government and hurled abuses at the minister.

Nasim went to a party leader's residence in the town and left for Dhaka at 8 pm.

Soon after his departure, police surrounded the BNP office and arrested the leaders and workers.

They were all shown arrested under Section 54 of CrPc. Of the arrested, four were granted bail while the rest was sent to jail. Hajat after a magistrate's court rejected their bail prayers today.

ASI Abdul Hye of Special Branch of police was closed to the police lines and Havildar Nasiruddin was suspended for their negligence of duty during the incident.

Indians will be on interim govt, says Fijian army

SUVA, July 2: Defying Fiji's hostage takers who are demanding that ethnic Indians be stripped of political power, the army said Sunday it would appoint a temporary government this week that would include Indians, reports AP.

The announcement appeared to raise the stakes in a political standoff that has seen 27 members of Fiji's ousted Indian-led government held hostage for the past 43 days.

There will be ethnic Indo-Fijians in the interim government lineup, although percentages I cannot say at this point in time," Lt Col Filippo Tarakinikini said.

The military said last week that it would appoint an interim government without input from the hostage takers, who had been demanding a role in naming such a government.

Last Thursday, Tarakinikini said that the temporary government would take office only once the hostages were released. But on Sunday he said the army would not wait.

"They will take office before the hostages are released," he said.

Responding to the military's latest statement, rebel spokesman Jo Neta told The Associated Press on Sunday that "we hope they are prepared for the implications of their actions."

He did not elaborate, but rebel leader George Speight has said in recent days that any military action perceived as anti-indigenous could result in violence by his supporters.

Speight and a group of gunmen stormed parliament on May 19 and took the government hostage in what they said was a battle for the trampled rights of indigenous Fijians.

Talks to free the hostages broke down last week over what the army said was an 11th hour demand by Speight's group that they be allowed to name a new president.

On Sunday, Tarakinikini said the army — which assumed power in the South Pacific nation 10 days after the parliament raid — was "determined to resolve the crisis in a peaceful manner."

"We continue to maintain that the door for negotiations is still open," he said.

Accused under PSA escapes from KMCH

From Staff Correspondent
KHULNA, July 2: An accused in a case filed under Public Safety Act (PSA) escaped with handcuff from Khulna Medical College Hospital (KMCH).

The accused Afzal Hossain was admitted to KMCH with severe injuries on June 18 after mass beating near Model High School.

Afzal was caught when he tried to commit a robbery near Model High School.

Three police constables were suspended for negligence of duty. The constables were guarding the accused.

The suspended police constables are Ranjan, Shawkat and Sarwar of special force. They were immediately closed to police lines.

Naik Imrul of KMP filed a case with Sonadanga thana as a complainant.

Foreign ship seized with rotten rice

CHITTAGONG, July 2: A foreign ship with rotten rice was seized at the port here today, reports UNB.

MV Apex was seized following an order of the Admiralty Court in Dhaka after importer of the rice GR Traders filed a case demanding Tk 60 lakh as compensation from the Vietnamese exporter.

GR Traders said more than 900 tons of rotten rice were mixed in a consignment of 7,000 tons of rice.

MV Apex anchored at the outer anchorage on June 6 and unloading began on June 18. The importer filed the case after unloading more than 50 per cent of the rice.

Police and witnesses said the accident took place at about 3:30 am when a truck carrying 15 passengers hit another stranded at Chandara and skidded off the road, leaving four dead on the spot.

The dead aged about 25-40 were not identified immediately. Three of them were day labourers. The bodies were sent to Sadar Hospital morgue.

The injured people were admitted to Kalia Upazila Health Complex in critical condition.

Sramik Dal to observe strike at Ctg port July 5

CHITTAGONG, July 2: Chattagram Bandar Jatiyatadabi Sramik Dal (CBJS) will observe an 8-hour strike at the port on July 5 to press home its demand for holding CBA election immediately, reports BSS.

CBJS has launched a mass contact programme in support of its strike.



A policeman cautiously dismantles a bomb found on Dhaka University campus yesterday. —Star photo

'Seven Sisters' moved by Kashmir's autonomy bid

GUWAHATI, India, July 2: A controversial push for autonomy in Kashmir is fanning similar sentiments in India's separatist-riven northeast region, reports AFP.

The Kashmir state assembly adopted a resolution calling for greater autonomy last week, and now some of India's seven northeastern states — "the Seven Sisters" — are seriously thinking of following suit.

Any such move would throw down a further challenge to the central government in New Delhi, which has voiced its bitter opposition to the Kashmir resolution, even while agreeing to take it under consideration.

The chief minister of Assam state, Prafulla Kumar Mahanta, said the aspirations of people in small states could only be fulfilled with a degree of self-rule rather than continuing with the present quasi-federal framework.

"The central government should hold a debate on the autonomy bill moved by Kashmir and should try and work out a meaningful package instead of just rejecting it outright," Mahanta told AFP.

"Autonomy is a must for the all round development of states, besides catering to the needs of the common masses, their identity, and other aspirations."

The state's ruling Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) moved a resolution seeking greater autonomy in its party forum in 1998, although the idea was never seriously discussed.

"Now we are very serious about the idea of autonomy," Mahanta said.

"For example, we now have to request the central government to take up matters like shelter in neighbouring countries with their counterparts."

"If the necessary powers were vested in us by way of autonomy, we could deal with such matters directly," he said.

Assam, like Kashmir and several other members of the Seven Sisters family, has lived with a long-running separatist insurgency.

And like their Kashmiri counterparts, many Assamese politicians argue that genuine autonomy is the way forward to finally ending the militant violence.

"I firmly believe the small nationalities could prosper only when powers are decentralised and greater autonomy is given to the states," said Assam Tourist Minister Jagadish Bhuyan.

"There have always been demands for autonomy in the northeast. If these demands are denied, there is sure to be social tension and convulsion leading to a sense of alienation, deprivation, and denial of basic human rights."

Bhuyan's remarks are echoed by senior legislators in the neighbouring state of Arunachal Pradesh.

"Leaving aside key departments like external affairs, currency, communications, and defence, the central government should vest all other sectors to the states so that common people enjoy their basic rights," said state Information and Public Relations Minister Takam Sanjay.

Manipur and Mizoram states are also considering jumping on the autonomy bandwagon.

"Autonomy is our birthright," said a senior cabinet minister of the Manipur State Congress, who asked not to be identified.

"We should be given more powers to dispel what amounts to an identity crisis among the various tribal groups in our state," he said.

BJP hardens stand on autonomy issue

NEW DELHI, July 2: BJP yesterday further hardened its stand on the autonomy resolution in Jammu and Kashmir when Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee reviewed the issue with his top party brass even as Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah dismissed criticism as propaganda, reports PTI.

Back from a five-day trip abroad when the autonomy resolution was passed by the Jammu and Kashmir assembly, Vajpayee met Home Minister L K Advani and BJP president Kushabhau Thakre who said his party strongly opposed the resolution which was an invitation to disintegration.

BJP's views assume significance in the context of the Prime Minister's statement on Friday that the resolution was within the constitutional framework and that it would be considered within the ambit of the statute.

Thakre told reporters after the two-hour meeting that BJP was clear that there was no question of going back to the pre-1953 status any autonomy move would encourage other states to raise similar demands giving rise to instability, he said.

Meanwhile, the J and K government rejected as illegal the resolution adopted by the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC).

"The very fact that the resolution kept away subjects like defence, external affairs and currency amounted to acceptance of accession with India and this was something great."

Humayun Zahir murder: Hearing of argument on July 10

By Court Correspondent
The 8th Additional District and Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka yesterday fixed July 10 for hearing of argument in the Humayun Zahir Murder Case.

The Judge Mir Mohammad Awlad Hossain adjourned the proceedings of the case on the basis of a petition submitted by the prosecution lawyers on grounds that the Public Prosecutor Quamrul Islam could not appear in the court yesterday due to his illness.

Humayun Zahir, a leading businessman and then the chairman of United Commercial Bank Limited (UCBL) was shot dead by a group of assailants on the premises of his Dhanmondi residence on April 8, 1993.

Father-in-law of Zahir filed a case with Dhanmondi thana the same day accusing seven persons.

The investigation officer submitted a chargesheet against seven persons including Akhteruzzaman Chowdhury Babu,

'BCL obstructing activities of other organisations at JU'

By JU Correspondent
Recent activities of ruling party's student wing Bangladesh Chhatra League to establish its dominance over other student organisations have sparked protests from other organisations at Jahangirnagar University.

The BCL is not letting other organisations hold programmes on the campus, campus sources alleged.

"We've repeatedly informed the university authorities (about it), but they did not take any action against them, let alone stopping them from doing these crimes," said Meer Ahsan Habib Ryad, General Secretary of Bangladesh Chhatra Union, JU unit.

Sources said, the central committee of BCL banned the JU chapter after reports of incidents of rape allegedly by BCL activists were published in newspapers in 1998.

The committee also expelled the BCL leaders who were involved in the incidents and refused to recognise the rest of the BCL activists of the university, saying there were no activists of BCL at the university.

No BCL programmes were held on the campus for about one and a half years after the expulsion and ban. But things changed after a 31-member convenor committee of the JU unit was formed this May and the BCL leaders started obstructing other organisations' activists from holding programmes.

Sources said the BCL stopped a procession of Gonotantrik Chhatra Oikya (GCO) on the campus, which was brought out to protest against an activist of Samajtantrik Chhatra Front (SCF) in Moulana Bhasani Hall on May 25.

It also intercepted a procession of the 'Rapist-Killer Prevention Platform' on the same day in the same hall. The BCL said its permission has to be obtained before bringing out any procession on the campus. Later on, it made the Platform activists to leave the hall.

The activists allegedly beat up a Jatayatadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activist of Al Beruni Hall (Extension Building) on June 4 as he refused to join a BCL procession.

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Woman arrested in Masud Parvez Murder Case

From Staff Correspondent
KHULNA, July 2: A woman was arrested in Masud Parvez Murder Case from a residential hotel in Pabna town on Thursday night.

Lovely Begum, 25, was arrested along with a young man of Lohagara of Narail district, police said.

Masud Parvez, 30, leader of Khulna city Jubo League, was found dead on the bank of Bhairab river near Ajax Jute Mills at Mirerdanga on April 3. His elder brother filed a case accusing eight people. Lovely, mother of two children, was one of the accused.

The third I.O. of the case, O.C. Kamruzzaman said the woman, a call girl by nature, played a key role in the murder committed by her sex partners.

One of the two FIR-named accused Ikhitar, 28, confessed to police that he had slaughtered her.

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15 hurt in clash over land in Rajshahi

From Our Correspondent
RAJSHAHI, July 2: At least 15 people were injured, five of them seriously, in a clash between two rival groups at Kalna village in Tanore upazila this noon.

Both the groups clashed over possession of a land.

Seriously injured Fazlur Rahman, Bablu, Sirajul Islam, Sharif and Harun were admitted Tanore Upazila Health Complex.

Two separate cases were filed with Tanore thana.

PM: Malaysia Khaleda

From page 1
A clash between two factions of JCD left one person dead and six people injured on DU campus yesterday.

BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Tariqul Islam, Abdullah Al Noman and City BNP President Saadek Hossain Khoka were present at the meeting.

Earlier, JCD general secretary Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu along with a number of supporters had assembled at 29 Minto Road and tried to meet Khaleda but failed.

JCD president Habibun Nabi Khan Sohel and other central leaders were not seen there.

Hasina was scheduled to visit Kuala Lumpur in 1998, but cancelled the tour in the wake of severe floods in the country.

Asked whether the prime minister would also go to Brunei on this trip, Azad said that was still under consideration.

The foreign minister said Hasina might attend the millennium session of UN General Assembly in September and OIC Summit in Qatar in November.

About her visit to Washington at the invitation of US President Bill Clinton in October, Azad said details of the October tour are being worked out.

Foreign Secretary C M Shafi Sami was present.

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