

FedEx
Federal Express
Bangladesh Express Co. Ltd.
Licensee Of Federal Express Corporation
Tel # 9565114; Fax # 9565112

CHITTAGONG
Hotel Hawaii Building
39, Agrabad C.A., Chittagong
Tel # 712127 Fax# 710106

CEPZ
Ctg. Export Processing Zone
Old Admin. Building
Halishahar, Chittagong
Tel # 740108 Fax# 710106

KHULNA
K.D.A Building
Khan A. Sahar Road, Khulna
Tel # 725008 Fax# 731932

Whirlpool
Home Appliances USA
Upright Freezer
Chest Freezer
Installment facility available
TRANSCOM ELECTRONICS LTD.
Authorized Distributor in Bangladesh for Whirlpool Appliances, USA
Dhaka: 815307-10 CTG: 716353, 725878 Khulna: 720304 Bogra: 8215

Bangabandhu Murder Case

Trial court's verdict faulty, unacceptable: Defence

A defence lawyer yesterday called the verdict of Bangabandhu Murder Case an "omnibus judgement" and insisted that it is faulty and unacceptable, reports UNB.

Continuing his argument before the High Court for the second day, Advocate Abdul Razzaque Khan said: The trial court in an omnibus way decided the accused guilty. It didn't consider separate witnesses' accounts about involvement of the accused.

"It's an omnibus judgement, that's why faulty and unacceptable," he submitted.

He also argued that the judgement didn't have any narration or decision on confirmation of conspiracy and participation of the accused in the plot.

"Even there was no witness account in support of the conspiracy in the judgement, except that of prof Khorshed Alam," said the counsel for condemned-accused Lt Col (ret'd) Sultan Shahriar Rashid Khan.

Razzaque Khan resumed his argument that he started Tuesday when the court of Justice Mohammad Ruhul Amin and Justice ABM Khairul Haque began its proceedings yesterday morning for the 15th day.

He particularly referred to the statements of four prosecution witnesses and termed those as hearsay and inadmissible and those were recorded with defence objections. Statements like "I came to know, I understood" etc suggest that those were hearsay, he said adding more such examples will be submitted.

The defence lawyer cited sections 157 and 8 of the Evidence Act when the court asked why the statements of a witness who was present in Bangabhaban and himself learnt from the accused about the occurrence should not be considered.

He also focused on how the trial court avoided cross-examinations of the witnesses and asked why the confessional statements of the accused in this case should not be considered as substantive evidence.

Defending Col Shahriar, the lawyer told the HC that there was room for something suspicious as four accused made confessional statements to magistrates after being held on police remand for a long time.

"This type of confessional statement should not be taken into consideration," he said referring to some examples in other cases of how the accused were compelled to make confessional statements under illegal pressure.

The court wanted to know from the prosecution how long Shahriar was on remand. "Twelve days," informed the prosecution.

The accused were sent not only on remand by judicial order, there is evidence that they were kept under CID custody also by the order of the government," the lawyer said.

The evidence, he said, shows Shahriar was kept under CID custody at the order of the government and Faruq by Home Ministry's order.

"It was unprecedented. Criminal Procedure Code doesn't allow sending an accused to police."

See page 11 col 8



Shanties along the embankment at Rayerbazar have appeared again, threatening the city's flood barrier. — Star photo

Rajuk for parking facilities on Elephant Road

By Staff Correspondent

Rajuk is taking measures to ensure parking facilities on the busy Elephant Road as per a recent directive from the Prime Minister's Secretariat, Rajuk sources said.

Rajuk Chairman M Azizul Haque told The Daily Star ground work has already started in the busy commercial area to 'extract' parking facilities.

He said commercial structures which got the building plans approved with adequate parking provisions but did not comply with the plans will have to make parking facilities on their premises.

But there are buildings the approved plans for which did not have parking provisions. For these, a parking lot would be built.

Rajuk source who is working on the scheme said a survey is now being conducted to assess the situation. He admitted that except one or two cases, the shopping centres have not complied with the legal provisions.

The owners of these would be asked to convert the ground floor of their structures into parking lots. The scheme would be completed in the next three months, he said.

"Similar schemes would be taken up for other areas of the city soon," he added.

Some of the busiest shopping centres in the city are on Elephant Road. Too inadequate parking facilities cause frequent traffic congestions there.

Corruption case against Sharif: Judgement on Saturday

ATTOCK, Pakistan, July 19: The judge of a special court trying ousted Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on corruption charges said today he would announce a verdict on Saturday, reports Reuters.

Judge Farrukh Latif said at the conclusion of hearing the case that "the judgement will be on Saturday."

Sharif and his former top anti-corruption investigator, Saifur Rahman, are accused of failing to declare in their tax returns the money used to buy a Russian helicopter for an election campaign.

On Monday, Sharif, who was ousted in a bloodless army coup last October that brought army chief General Pervez Musharraf to power, refused to testify before what he called a hasty trial being conducted in an ancient riverside fort at Attock, northwest of the capital Islamabad.

In April, Sharif was sentenced to two life terms after being convicted of hijacking and terrorism charges related to the day of the coup when a passenger plane containing Musharraf was briefly forbidden to land in Karachi on a flight from Sri Lanka.

Sharif has appealed against his conviction.

3 more Shibir activists held at Rangpur

From Our Correspondent

RANGPUR, July 19: Kotwali police arrested three more Shibir activists from the local Shibir office yesterday.

With this, the total arrested Shibir activists stands at 14.

Police said the arrested belong to the armed cadre of Islami Chhatra Shibir.

Police acting upon secret information, raided Tetultala Shibir office and arrested them while they were escaping. A huge quantity of bamboo sticks were seized from the office.

Earlier two motorcycles were seized from the Carmichael College campus which belonged to Shibir activists, but none was arrested.

Rains paralyse life in Chittagong

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, July 19: Intermittent rain paralysed normal life in the port city and its surrounding areas today.

Met office recorded 94 mm rainfall in the past 24 hours ending at 3 pm today.

Met office said the rain was continuing for the past two days due to a depression over West Bengal and adjoining Orissa.

It advised hoisting of local cautionary signal no. 3 for Chittagong port, Mongla port and Cox's Bazar.

Cargo handling work at Chittagong port was hampered due to the rain, port sources said.

Rain also disrupted traffic movement in the city.

Most of the low-lying areas in the city and surrounding areas were waterlogged, causing suffering to the residents.

Opposition patronising killers, terrorists: PM

CHITTAGONG, July 19: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today urged the people to build up resistance against "the killers and conspirators trying to grab power," reports UNB.

"They want to shed blood again and again to create an anarchic situation and capture power... Let's build up resistance to foil their plot," she said.

Sheikh Hasina was addressing the grief-stricken relations of the eight victims of July 12 incident at the Circuit House here this afternoon.

On July 12, eight people, including six leaders and workers of Chhatra League were gunned down at Bahaddarhat allegedly by Islami Chhatra Shibir activists.

The Prime Minister said there would be no compromise with the killers whoever they are. The killers would be brought to book and punished.

Hasina said, "The killers of '71 and '75 launched attacks repeatedly. The root of these killers has gone deep. Now time has come to retaliate and resist."

She urged the people not to give shelter to the killers.

She also referred to the killing of journalist Shamsur Rahman in Jessore and said he was killed for writing against terrorism.

Accusing the opposition of patronising terrorists and killers to serve their political ends, Hasina said these quarters even threatened to stage another 15th August and nakedly supported the killers of Bangabandhu.

Consoling the members of the families who lost their kin

Humayun Zahir murder: Hearing of argument on July 25

By Court Correspondent

The 8th Additional District and Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka yesterday fixed July 25 for hearing of argument in the sensational Humayun Zahir Murder Case.

Judge Mir Mohammad Awlad Hossain adjourned the proceedings of the case as he was ill yesterday.

Humayun Zahir, a leading businessman and the then 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.

Zahurul Haq Khan, father-in-law of Zahir, filed a murder case with Dhanmondi thana the same day accusing seven people.

The investigation officer (IO) submitted a charge-sheet against the seven, including Akhteruzzaman Chowdhury Babu after investigation.

Udichi

From page 1

BDR Jawans were kept stand-by in the court area.

This sort of security measures had to be taken in view of the mounting tension following brutal murder of Shamsur Rahman, special correspondent of the Janakantha, the SP of Jessore said.

BSMMUH super assaulted by angry employees

By Staff Correspondent

The superintendent of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital (BSMMUH) was injured by the hospital employees yesterday.

The superintendent Dr Mujibur Rahman Bhuiyan came under attack at his office on the ground floor of Block-C building yesterday morning by at least ten employees of the hospital.

Sources said that one of the angry attackers threw an ash-tray and hit him at the back of his head.

It is learnt that the employees, earlier transferred to Mitford Hospital by an order by the Health Directorate, demanded that they be assigned work in the hospital and claimed that the directorate took a fresh decision in this regard recently.

But the superintendent reportedly denied receiving copy of the order and asked the employees, class III and IV, to leave his office.

Instead of complying, they attacked him, witnesses said. Bhuiyan is hospitalised in the same hospital. He filed a case yesterday against 15 people in this connection.

Case against Shad: Final report submitted

By Court Correspondent

The investigation officer (IO) submitted 'final report' of an abduction case filed against Shad Ershad, son of former president H M Ershad, to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka on Tuesday.

Sub-Inspector Sheikh Kamal, the IO of the case, submitted it after four months' investigation.

The CMM's Court directed the general recording officer (GRO) to send the file to the Special Court for Prevention of Women and Children Repression, Dhaka yesterday.

Shad was arrested on the basis of a case filed by the victim's father on March 4, 2000.

Shad was confined at the Cantonment police station for 10 days and granted ad-interim bail by the Special Court on March 14.

The IO in his report said that he did not find any allegation against Shad in connection with abduction of a teenage girl.

He further said that no eye-witnesses were found during the investigation.

G8 summit in Tokyo opens tomorrow

TOKYO, July 19: Japanese Foreign Minister Yohel Kono said today Tokyo hoped to issue a special statement to back dialogue between North and South Korean leaders during this week's Group of Eight summit in Okinawa.

The two leaders dared to hold talks and took a step toward a favorable direction," Kono told a television interview.

"The G8 members have agreed to back the move," Kono said. "If possible, we want to issue a special statement" at the July 21-23 summit in the southern Japanese island, he said.

At the end of last week's talks in Miyazaki, southern Japan, G8 foreign ministers welcomed last month's first-ever summit between North Korean supreme leader Kim Jong-il and South Korean President Kim Dae-Jung.

FBCCI goes to polls Oct 12

Aspirants seeking for 'blessings' from political camps

By Shahriar Karim

As the election of the country's apex trade body FBCCI nears, aspirants for the top posts are busy in behind-the-scenes parleys to get the much-needed blessings from political camps and power brokers in the business circle, sources said.

Meantime, Chief Election Commissioner of FBCCI or the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry Prof. Ali Ashraf has resigned also on a sudden Tuesday. Ashraf is also a ruling party lawmaker.

Sources close to Ali Ashraf, who is also the chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on finance ministry, said Ashraf resigned because he is going to run for the presidency. However, his candidature is subject to approval by the party high-ups, they said.

Meanwhile, the authorities finalised yesterday the schedule for the FBCCI election to be held on October 12. The last date for filing nomination papers is August 14 while publication of the voter list is August 17. The new executive committee is scheduled to take over at the annual general meeting on October 21.

Sources said Yusuf Abdullah Haroon and Salman Rahman, former FBCCI presidents, are also keen to vie again for the presidency. One of them will have to give way to the other as both of them are likely to seek blessings of the ruling party high-ups, they said. Both of them enjoyed ruling party support when during their previous stints.

Both Haroon and Rahman had a meeting in the presence of an influential business leader yesterday to decide who would run for the election. But the meeting was indecisive, the sources said.

Sources also said three influential business leaders had a meeting with ruling party high-ups on Monday night to decide whom the ruling party would support.

Haroon and Salman told the Daily Star yesterday that they have not decided on running for the presidency.

"I haven't decided anything. However, I want to see a new face at the top post of country's apex trade body," said Haroon. He will decide soon after discussing the matter with "like minded people."

Salman Rahman also said he is yet to decide whether to contest the upcoming FBCCI election.

MA Rouf Chowdhury, who ran for the presidency on the previous occasion, has already declared that he would run for the top post this time, too. He has already become a member of Gazipur Chamber.

Mohammad Ali, a Narayan-ganj-based businessman representing the Edible Oil Association, will fight for the vice-president slot. Three others including Shafiqullah Chowdhury of the Corrugated Sheet and Packaging Association and Dastagir Gazi of Plastic and Rubber Product Manufacturing Association have already declared their candidature for the post.

Tannery workers exposed to serious diseases

6pc suffer from five diseases at a time

Star Report

The workers of leather industry in the city are exposed to a number of serious ailments health hazards, according to a survey conducted by the Society for Environment and Human Development (SEHD), an NGO.

About three per cent of the workers are suffering from six diseases at a time and six per cent from five diseases, the survey report revealed.

The tannery workers are suffering from gastric ulcer, asthma, skin diseases, rheumatic fever, kidney problem, jaundice, tuberculosis, dysentery and other physical problems in various degrees. The incidence of gastric ulcer and skin diseases is higher than that of other diseases.

The report said morbidity rate of tannery workers in Dhaka is 893.85 per 1,000 whereas this rate is 150.85 per 1,000 people in the country.

Of the 270 registered leather factories in the country, 90 per cent are located in a small area of 25 hectares in the city's Hazaribagh area. During the peak season, 12,000 to 15,000 workers are engaged in those factories. Most of the factories are non-mechanised and semi-mechanised.

SEHD conducted a sample survey of workers from six factories at Hazaribagh. It revealed that about 58 per cent of the tannery workers were suffering from gastric ulcer and about 82 per cent of them said they were attacked with the disease after joining the tanneries.

Around 31 per cent of the workers were suffering from various skin diseases, about 11.7 per cent from low or high blood pressure, about 10.6 per cent from rheumatic fever, 3.35 per cent from asthma, .55 per cent from tuberculosis and 19 per cent were suffering from jaundice time and again.

Besides, about 38 per cent of the workers met with accidents like cutting of their hands or fingers, burns and falling from roof while on duty. Many of them become unconscious due to direct exposure to toxic gas formed in drums during different phases of leather processing.

The survey report said the technologies used in the tanneries are considerably old and inferior. On the other hand, almost all the solid and liquid waste generated in the factories are dumped untreated in violation of environmental laws.

The worst affected are the workers who are directly and constantly exposed to these waste, it said.

Labour unrest

Production at towel factory in CEPZ suspended

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, July 19: Labour unrest forced suspension of production for the last three days in a joint venture towel factory at Chittagong Export Processing Zone (CEPZ), CEPZ sources said.

Dismissal of a worker in Al Hamidi Textile triggered the labour unrest.

About 200 workers of the factory jointly owned by an American company and a Bangladeshi entrepreneur, abstained from their duties protesting the dismissal.

They also demanded wages as per 1993 circular which was kept in abeyance by BEPZA. The workers in CEPZ were being paid as per 1989 circular.

Ctg killings

Microbus driver yet to be arrested

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, July 19: CID police could not trace the driver of the seized microbus used in the Bahaddarhat incident that left eight people including six BCL activists killed on July 12.

CID team investigating the incident raided the residence of driver Babul last night.

The driver remained absconding since the incident. Earlier, CID team picked up the owner of the microbus, Nizamuddin.

Meanwhile, hunt for the Shibir activists accused of the killing of eight people is going on, CID officials said.

Chittagong district police raided some strongholds of Shibir activists at Raosan last night. But none was arrested during the raid, police said.

Transport strike in Bagerhat today

BAGERHAT, July 19: The Inter-district Transport Owners Association will observe a half-day strike tomorrow demanding ban of shallow engine propelled temple, reports UNB.

They claimed over 500 such environment unfriendly tempos are plying on eight routes of the district defying ban.

Mati Mia, general secretary of the association said they would go for a day-long strike on July 24 if their demand was not met by July 23.

Liaison committee leaders meet

Jamaat chief today

The liaison committee leaders of opposition 4-party alliance will meet Jamaat chief Golam Azam today, reports UNB.

They will meet Azam probably at his residence at 7:15 pm.

A R M Abdul Matin, who represents IOJ on the central liaison committee, told UNB that their current move is to consolidate their unity in their fight against the government.