

Kamal Murder Case Adel sent to jail as he surrenders to court

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Former Deputy Mayor of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) and JP central leader, Jahangir Mohammad Adel, principal accused in the Kamal Hossain Murder Case surrendered to court yesterday and was sent to the Dhaka Central Jail.

Adel appeared before the CMM's Court at about 12.30 pm and prayed for bail.

The CMM, Shailendra Kumar Adhikari, rejected his bail prayer and sent him to jail. The court also directed the jail authorities to give him first class division in the jail hazard after hearing on an another petition about the division.

Adel came to the court with his lawyer T M Akbar. Moving the bail petition, he said that the accused was implicated in the case as part of a conspiracy.

He has voluntarily appeared before the court showing respect to rule of law. He would not abscond if bail is granted to him," the lawyer added.

Court inspector Kanan Kumar Devnath opposed the bail petition.

After hearing both the sides, the court rejected the bail petition and ordered to send him to jail.

Kamal Hossain, 30, senior vice-president of ward 67 unit of

Jubo League

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He was wanted in two dacoity cases, police said.

He belonged to city AL president Manzurul Imam group and headed a squad of armed cadres of the party, police said.

The murder was a sequel to previous enmity, police said.

No case was filed till 6:00 pm and none was arrested.

Renewed appeal

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ud. "We are making efforts to have a direct contact with the abductors to free them. There has been some progress in this regard," he said without elaborating.

Islam dismissed an official BSS news agency report that there had been a secret meeting with five of the kidnappers and the officials. The BSS correspondent in Rangamati did not attend the briefing yesterday. Islam said that he did not make the comments quoted by the BSS Correspondent.

"We are hopeful that they would be freed soon," Islam said answering a question on the reports that freedom for the hostages are imminent.

He also said that authorities are investigating reports that the hostages have been shifted to new places in Kaokhali, 30 kilometres north-west of Rangamati.

There have been reports that a doctor had been taken secretly by the abductors to treat Hulgard, 68, who had reportedly fallen sick, and three dozen bottles of mineral water had been bought by the kidnappers from Kaokhali bazar for them.

"These could be diversionary tactics by the kidnappers who, we understand, are camping at a new location, shifting from Kalapahar hills of Nanniarchar area to somewhere between Kaokhali and Lakhichhari," Shaktiman Chakma, legal affairs secretary of the Parbatyia Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity, told reporters.

Legal adviser to PCJSS supreme and Regional Council for CHT Chairman Shantu Larma

Power crisis in city

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sources said. When contacted, a top DESA official said that in the face of protest from a real estate company, they could not complete the 'pole foundation work' of Tongi-Ulon-Bashudhara transmission line. He, however, hoped that installation of the line would be completed by next month.

Besides, DESA has so far completed only the pole foundation work of Siddhirganj-Maniknagar transmission line.

The Official further said, "DESA has been facing various problems in implementing the projects. We are addressing the problems and hope the delay in completing the projects will be very marginal".

As of now, the Vajpayee government has taken the view that it is

400 bales of jute gutted in N'ganj

BSS, Narayanganj

Four hundred bales of raw jute, ready for export, were reduced to ashes on a motor boat at Charargop point on the river Shitalakhya in the early hours of yesterday, police and firefighters said.

They said the boat laden with the jute of a purchasing agency from Narayanganj was bound for Janata Jute Mills Ltd at Polash under Narsingdi district.

Firefighters from Narayanganj extinguished the blaze by sinking the boat half an hour after the fire broke out.

Bangladesh alerted to impact of global warming

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ing...It predicts more extreme droughts, floods and storms, and significant changes in the functioning of critical ecological systems such as coral reefs and forests...

Warmer and wetter conditions would increase the spread of infectious diseases such as malaria and yellow fever. The inundation of low-lying islands and coastal areas could lead to displacement of hundreds of millions of people."

He continued: "The climate Panels's report says that sea-level could cause the disappearance of vast swaths of this region along with them such species as the famed Bengal Tiger. It suggests that crop production and aquaculture would be threatened, and with them the livelihood and food security of many of the delta's inhabitants."

He however said, "Bangladesh for its part, has taken steps to address threats such as air pollution and the contamination of ground

water by arsenic. UN agencies are doing their best to help. But such efforts will not be easy.

"...One thing we have learned over the years is that doom and gloom scenarios are not enough to inspire people and governments to act."

Stressing the need for development of energy needs, he said, "Two billion people lack access to electricity-cook with traditional fuels which contribute not only greenhouse gases to the atmosphere but also poisons to the household, which cause illness and several premature deaths each year."

"Helping these men, women and children to lift themselves out of poverty will necessarily require a bigger supply of energy."

Annan said key efforts are required in the energy sector which lies at the heart of development.

"What we do in the field of energy, we can and must do in other realms

as well." The humanity's biggest challenge in the new century is to discover and use new technologies, create an environment of awareness and change consumption and production patterns.

"Issues of sustainable development is also a political challenge," Annan noted.

Painting a grim picture of global warming due to greenhouse gases, the UN Secretary General called for leadership by the industrialised countries to engage in technology transfer and take help of the developing countries to create what he said, a "win-win situation" for having sustainable development.

"The burden of leadership at this juncture falls on industrialised countries, and in particular the United States, the European Union and Japan", he said.

"We are talking about a new ethics of global stewardship. And that of course is a political challenge."

Annan went on, "This stewardship must come from countries big and small, rich and poor. It would mean that the more industrialised countries re-examine their consumption and production patterns. It would mean that in our efforts to eradicate poverty, we look at democratic governance, institution building and community-based development. It would mean upholding international commitments to developing, financing and technology transfer."

"And it would mean placing the advancement of women and the education of girls at the very centre of these efforts."

He observed: "And it is said that developing countries should focus on development, saving the so-called luxury of environmental protection for later, when in fact the environment provides many of the precious resources and capital that societies need today to develop and sustain themselves."



UN Secretary General Kofi Annan called on President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban yesterday.

Dhaka to play key role

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more in this regard in the future, he said and hoped that the SAARC process would be reactivated. He described SAARC as a useful and constructive organisation for cooperation.

Annan was quoted as saying, "SAARC has my full support."

He praised Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's peace missions to two neighboring countries after they had detonated nuclear devices and her follow up initiatives at other levels.

"The Prime Minister of Bangladesh has shown considerable courage which has been appreciated by the world," Annan said at the official talks.

The visiting Secretary General said he was highly impressed by the quality and performance of Bangladesh peacekeepers wherever they were engaged. Bangladesh now has second place in peacekeeping efforts in the world

and will shortly become the number one, he mentioned.

About his visit to Rajendrapur Peacekeeping Institute, he said, "I was very impressed by their standard of soldiering. I saw. And after what I saw, I could understand why Bangladesh produced so many fine peacekeepers."

Responding to a question, Anwarul Karim said the UN has plans to turn the Institute into a regional centre where proposed peacekeepers from other countries could get training.

Annan praised Bangladesh for being the first South Asian country to sign the CTBT and hoped that other countries would follow Dhaka's example.

Anwarul Karim noted that the United Nation's presence in Bangladesh is 'formidable'. Bangladesh, he said, has the third largest programme of the UNDP, second largest of the UNICEF and

the biggest programme of the WFP. Annan referred to socio-economic activities of the UN and its work in the fields of poverty alleviation and micro-credit.

Dhaka participated in all major UN conferences and the UN is looking forward to its participation in five major conferences including those on small arms, racism and children this year, he said.

He shared Bangladesh's concern as coordinator of the LDCs in pressing for fair share of resources to improve conditions. This will be taken up at the third LDC Summit in Brussels in May, he mentioned.

Annan expressed his firm conviction that Dhaka would continue to play an all-encompassing role in the UN and its affiliated organs, and especially in shaping up the international peacekeeping process.

Achilles heel exposed

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got to see excerpts of the videotapes when they were aired on private satellite television channels on Tuesday as the expose set off a political storm that puts a big question mark over the future of BJP-led government.

The revelations have dealt a major blow to BJP's oft-claimed plank of probity and clean image and given the entire opposition led by Sonia Gandhi's Congress party a God-sent opportunity to go for the kill against the Vajpayee government.

The opposition parties had made their intentions clear soon after the web portal put up for public viewing Tuesday afternoon when they demanded resignation of Vajpayee and forced adjournment of both houses of Parliament. In the days and weeks to come, the opposition will undoubtedly mount a major offensive against the government on the videotape issue.

As of now, the Vajpayee government has taken the view that it is

ready for a probe into the whole issue. But already heads have started rolling. The first to go was Bangaru Laxman who admitted to reporters after screening of videotapes that he had accepted Rs one lakh from representatives of a London-registered arms company floated by the Indian internet media firm.

The videotape expose has ominous portents for BJP and Vajpayee as they came close on the heels of opposition attack on Prime Minister's Office accusing some people in it of "riding rough shod" over different ministries and "undermining" cabinet system of governance. The videotapes have dragged the names of two leading personalities of the Prime Minister's establishment.

What has come as an acute for Defence Minister George Fernandes is that his Samata Party chief Jaya Jaitly is showing sitting in his residence and redemanding money from the internet representatives

who masqueraded as middlemen of the arms company for arranging deals.

If even some of the charges leveled in the videotapes stick, BJP's coalition partners both in and outside the government may have a re-look at the nature of their association with the alliance. This is especially crucial for Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress in West Bengal and ruling DMK party in Tamil Nadu which face fresh assembly polls in their states in a couple of months. Already Trinamool and Bal Thackeray-led Shiv Sena have demanded probe into the issue and more allies of BJP are likely to echo the demand. Vajpayee government has said the problem confronts only two constituents of the coalition - BJP and Samata Party which have to sort it out.

But it remains to be seen if other allies will be willing to share the burden of the controversy and, if so, how long.

Early polls

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the prime minister returned from Saudi Arabia.

On the other hand, the ministers, who were placed in the groups scheduled to tour the designated districts on March 12 and 13, had to stay back in the city to attend the cabinet meeting on March 12 and the ECNEC meeting the next day.

Meanwhile, AL leaders told this correspondent despite the late start they were instructed by the high command to complete the tour before March 26.

Explaining the reason, one party stalwart said, AL leaders have to work hard to make a success the government-sponsored move to hold a series of rallies of freedom fighters from March 26 through 31.

Arrangements are being made to bring in thousands of freedom fighters to the city on March 31 to first converge at the National Parade Square and then proceed to the Suhrawardy Udyan where Hasina would deliver a speech following inauguration of 'Swadhinata Stambha.' The monument built to mark the site where Pakistani occupation forces surrendered to an Indo-Bangla joint command on December 16, 1971.

Hasina is also scheduled to address a "grand rally" on March 30 at the Paltan Maidan in the city, said AL leaders. AL would observe the day as the anniversary of the fall of Khaleda government in 1996

SSC exams

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administrations.

Meanwhile, Teachers-Employees United Front (TSUF) in a meeting yesterday urged the authorities concerned to take adequate measures to check cheating at examinations.

Our Staff Correspondent from Barisal reports: Despite repeated appeals and warnings by the board authorities against cheating at the SSC examinations, many candidates were seen purchasing mini books on different subjects in the town yesterday.

Some of them were found photocopying questions and answer scripts in miniature form.

As many as 56,533 candidates will sit for this year's SSC examinations under Barisal Education Board.

Bangladesh make

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Moududur Rahman Shuva struck the equalizer much to the delight of a few thousand home supporters.

Arjun Hallapa, who set Dhilon up for the first goal, sealed the fate of the match immediately after the lemon break.

In the other match of the day China managed a hard-fought 3-2 win against Egypt.

EC: Dialogue

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mentation."

Former Chief Election Commissioner Mohammad Abu Hena sent the reforms proposals to the Law Ministry for enactment of laws and constitutional amendments in 1999. But, the proposals remained on the Law Reforms Commission drawing board.

But it remains to be seen if other allies will be willing to share the burden of the controversy and, if so, how long.

JP city unit President Saifur Rahman is bargaining nomination from Dhaka-3 (Keraniganj) seat where in last election bagged 22,093 votes, AL nominee Mohammad Shahjahan got 52,662 votes and BNP leader Amanullah Aman 1,24,096.

Alliance sources said BNP, JP, Jamaat, IOJ and JSD (Rob) got 153 seats (BNP-116, JP-32, Jamaat-3, and one by IOJ and JSD each), while AL won 146 constituencies. Election in one seat of Bhola has not yet been held, although the tenure of the 7th parliament is nearing the end.

They said BNP was placed second against AL in 108 seats, JP in 30

Shazneen case

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case with Gulshan thana on April 24, 1998 accusing Shahidul Islam alias Shahid, a domestic help at his house.

Mojibur filed a rape case with Gulshan thana after six months' investigation into the murder case.

Shahidul Islam is the principal accused in the case while contractors Hasan is the alleged mastermind.

All the accused Shahid, Hasan, Badal, Shaniram, Minu and Parvin were present in the court during the cross-examination.

Special public prosecutors ABM Sharfuddin Khan Mukul and Mahubb Ahmed appeared for the state while Advocate Mosarrar Hossain Kajol, and MA Kamrul Haran Khan Aslam for the accused.

The murder case, pending with first Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka was earlier stayed by an order of the Supreme Court. The order will remain valid till disposal of the rape case.

Forest and Environment Minister Sajeda Chowdhury gave the vote of thanks at the function.

Mini answer guides

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clipped with pins.

Teachers are reportedly involved in publication of these books, also published for Degree (pass) examinations.

"I have opened my stall today only to sell the mini books," a bookseller in Puthia thana of Rajshahi said yesterday. "I earn a lot before SSC, HSC and Degree (pass) exams selling these."

Another bookseller in the same thana informed that although the practice began three years back, sales have peaked in recent times.

Printing of the mini books might have started from Pabna or Bogra, he said. He, however, declined to reveal from where he collects these.

"Some unscrupulous people of the locality are behind the dishonest business," he said.

Terming the system as disastrous for the country's education, a

college teacher at Puthia said examinees nowadays were more interested in collecting the special editions and computer composed copies rather than buying or reading textbooks.

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Govt quitting power

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after AL came to power, BNP started to issue ultimatums, one after another, threatening to pull down her government. "Despite all these, we have run the administration for four years and nine months with striking success," she said.

"All the indicators of development showed positive and upward trend, especially in per capita income and people's calorie intake," she said.

She said her government had steered the nation out of all major problems and achieved self-sufficiency in food production, reaping bumper crop output for four successive years. She said her government began its journey with a food deficit of 40 lakh tonnes.

About education, the prime minister said her government wanted to free the campuses from terrorism. Meritorious students now lead her student wing, while gun-

toting elements head the student wing of the opposition party, she said.

Terming agriculture as the lifeline of the country's economy, she called for utilising every bit of fertile land for boosting agricultural output. She said agriculture was playing a major role in the national economy and giving impetus to national growth.

Sheikh Hasina thanked the university authorities for conferring on her the honorary degree, that reaffirmed her commitment to the nation particularly to the upliftment of farmers.

The function was also addressed by Education Minister ASHK Sadique and Vice Chancellor of the University Prof Dr AM Ashraf Kamal, Dr Kazi M Badruddoza, emeritus scientist, National Agricultural Research Institute, presented the convocation speech.

BJP: Arms scandal

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Police used tear gas to disperse a noisy street protest crowd of Congress Youth activists, who paraded two donkeys with placards identifying them as Laxman and Defence Minister Fernandes.

Fernandes was also reported to have offered his resignation over the scandal, but it was rejected by the cabinet.

Observers said the chances of the government collapsing were minimal.

"But it does mean a considerable loss of stature for the government, and this could weaken the electoral prospects of the BJP allies in the coming state elections," said political analyst Pran Chopra.

The BJP and its coalition partners were holding a crucial meeting yesterday afternoon, amid threats by at least one ally that it might withdraw if Fernandes failed to step down.

Most of the partners have indicated they will stand by the government, while calling for an independent inquiry into the allegations.

BJP president Laxman was the most senior politician implicated in

the sting operation run by news and entertainment portal, tehelka.com.

Senior politicians, defence ministry officials and army officers were captured on hidden cameras, allegedly taking bribes to facilitate the prospects of a fake company "West End" seeking to sell equipment to the Indian military.

The BJP, which dominates the multiparty coalition government, questioned the authenticity of the tehelka video and stressed that there had been no corrupt defence deals and no ministers had been implicated.

"This government's biggest asset is its honesty and a conspiracy - has been hatched to destroy it," said BJP spokesman VK Malhotra.

"It is not only a political attack but a sinister plot to destroy the nation's economy which was promising to look up after our latest budget," he added.

Indian newspapers on Wednesday were overwhelmingly hostile to the government.

"Guns, graft and videotape," ran the front-page headline in the Hindustan Times.

Opposition opens informal talks on seat sharing

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the leader: "It needs to contest in at least 230 seats to confirm a single majority."

Another senior BNP leader said the parties are yet to find any new modality, apart from the formula given by BNP Vice Chairman Col. (Retd) Akbar Hossain MP about a year ago.

The leader said a few JP leaders, who have no footing in their constituencies and have marginal chance of winning, are responsible for creating rifts and conflicts. He said these JP leaders have made secret proposals to the BNP leadership that they are even ready to accept only 30 seats, if

parliamentary polls, while BNP candidate Mir Shawkat Ali got 75,855 votes and AL nominee Mokbul Hossain 84,150. In Gopalganj-3 seat, Firoz bagged 453 votes against Sheikh Hasina.

Ruhul Amin Hawlader wants to contest in Barisal-6 seat from where he bagged 15,661 votes, BNP candidate Principal Abdur Rashid Khan 34,038 and AL candidate Syed Masud Reza 41, 864.

Zafar Imam expressed his desire to get nomination from Feni-1 constituency where he got 15,497 votes, AL nominee Wazliullah Bhuiyan bagged 24,138 votes and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia 65,086.

President

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prime minister for her sincere efforts to promote agriculture and welfare of the farmers, saying Sheikh Hasina was duly awarded the International Ceres Award by the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

"I congratulate Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina...for her ceaseless efforts, the country has today achieved self-sufficiency in food."

The President also thanked the Bangladesh Agricultural University for conferring the honorary DSc degree on Sheikh Hasina.

President Shahabuddin Ahmed also congratulated the students who received MS and PhD degrees for their studies in agriculture.