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Jail killing case starts at last

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Putting an end to all speculations, trial of the jail killing case began in the Special Court adjacent to Dhaka Central Jail yesterday.

The judge, Ahmed Jamil Mostafa, recorded the deposition of Kazi Abdul Awal, first prosecution witness and complainant in the case. It took about one and a half hours.

The court fixed April 22 for cross-examination by defence lawyers.

The case concerned the killing of four national leaders -- Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed, Captain Mansur Ali and A H M Qamruzzaman -- in Dhaka Central Jail on November 3, 1975.

In the statement, Awal said he was Deputy Inspector General (prison) in 1975 and retired as Inspector General (prison).

He told the court that the then IG (prison) Nuruzzaman Howlader asked him to come to the central jail on November 3, 1975. He went there in a car sent by the IG and found that telephone calls from different places were coming.

After a while, Captain Moshleuddin along with four sepoy came to the jail gate. The on duty officers asked them to sign the visitors' book but they refused. Under pressure from the on-duty officers, they identified them-

selves before entering the jail. They also came to know the identity of Nuruzzaman, the statement said.

Awal further said the killers asked the IG whether he shifted the people as per directives from the president. Then the IG asked them why they should be shifted. The 'killers' replied that they were directed to kill them (the four leaders). Then a telephone call from the then president Khandaker Mushtaq Ahmed came to the office of the jailor, asking for the IG. The IG said in reply that he was not directed to kill the leaders. Mushtaq directed Nuruzzaman to permit the 'killers' to do what they wanted.

The complainant said the IG along with him then went to where the leaders were confined. The killers also went there and said 'why did you take so long, we operated at the residence of Sheikh Mujib in three minutes.'

Awal said he was in tears when he came to know that the leaders would be killed. He never saw such heinous crime during his 32 years of service life. After the leaders were shifted, Moshleuddin along with the four others killed them. The killers then left the place.

At about 8 or 9 am on November 3, 1975, he (Awal) and the IG tried to communicate with Major Rashid over telephone about the dead bodies of the victims. Rashid asked them to remain silent. At about noon the same day, he and the IG went to the home secretary, who asked



Comptroller and Auditor General Syed Yusuf Hossain presents the audit report to President Shahabuddin Ahmad at the Bangabhaban yesterday.

CID nabs 'most wanted' in Arnab murder case

QUAZI AMANULLAH, Khulna

Shushil Dafadar, the most wanted man of the sensational Arnab murder case of Saikhira was arrested by CID Inspector SM Shajahan on Sunday midnight from his home at Kaliganj thana. CID is confident about finding out more important clues to the murder. Enayetullah Dewan, Additional DIG, Khulna Range, is personally supervising the case.

Arnab Das, 8, son of Bimal Das of Shaikhati village under Kaliganj thana was tortured to death on June 18 last year. His body was recovered on the same day from a bush 300 yards from his father's house.

A pall of gloom descended on the entire village after recovery of Arnab's dead body. His relatives caught Mukul Gazi, 23, and handed

him over to police suspecting his involvement in the murder. It was Mukul who had called Arnab out of the house and since then the little boy had gone missing.

Mukul made judicial confession to a first class magistrate naming three persons involved in the murder. But local people alleged that the IO forced Mukul to make false statements in order to save the real accused.

The public outcry caused by the gruesome murder of the innocent eight-year-old schoolboy was so intense that Home Minister Mohammad Nasim visited Shaikhati village on April 5 to take stock of the real situation. After talking to Arnab's parents, he found that the murder was a sequel to a land dispute and an act of revenge. It was

also found that the local thana OC had been very unkind in dealing with the bereaved parents and handled the case in such a way that the real accused went scot-free.

By order of the minister, OC Rabiul Islam was suspended and Additional DIG Enayetullah Dewan was assigned to carefully reinvestigate the case.

After examining the case docket and the recorded statement of 30 persons of Shaikhati village, it was proved that OC Rabiul Islam and IO Mamunur Rashid twisted the truth.

Arnab's kidnapper Mukul Gazi has been made the prime accused of the murder case as he acted upon the will of those who planned the most brutal murder of recent times, said a high official of Saikhira police.

Rapid assessment programme begins next week

Pipeline water in 100 municipalities to be tested

NAIMUL HAQ

Implementation of a 4.9 million dollar 'Rapid Assessment Programme' starts next week to test pipeline water in 100 municipalities in the country to detect presence of arsenic.

The Department of Public Health and Engineering (DPHE) will implement the programme within this year in cooperation with the Bangladesh Arsenic Mitigation Water Supply Project (BAMWSP).

The programme has been undertaken on an emergency basis following a Daily Star report on April

5 that high level arsenic-contaminated water was being supplied in Chapainawabganj municipality since long.

Presence of high level (0.2 mg/L) arsenic was detected in pipeline water in the municipality in 1998 but the authorities concerned kept it a secret, the report had said.

Under the programme, DPHE will collect water samples and test those in its zonal laboratories.

Sources in BAMWSP said 'the most reliable' atomic absorption spectrophotometry method will be used in or the tests. Each test will cost between Tk 600 and 1000, they

said.

The tests will be done under the 'urban component' of BAMWSP's programme which will include collection of data about the sources of water in the municipalities.

Talking to this correspondent yesterday, BAMWSP Project Director Abdul Quader Choudhury said, 'If arsenic is found more than the permissible level (0.05 mg/L) in any well in the municipalities, those will be shut down at once and alternative steps including sinking deeper wells will be taken.'

A guideline for testing and miti

KNM stutters once again

Production suspended since April 6

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Production at the Khulna Newsprint Mills (KNM) has remained suspended since April 6 due to non-availability of furnace oil.

Sources say the oil companies have refused to supply furnace oil unless and until all outstanding bills are paid in full. As a result, the KNM authorities did not have other options but to stop the production activities.

Already crippled by economic crisis, the KNM does not have, at present, any ability to cope with the crisis due to sharp fall in production and loss of local customers. It does not have any capital to continue

Deadly violence rocks Gaza despite security talks

US, Russia issue joint appeal for calm

AFP, Jerusalem

Deadly violence rocked the Palestinian territories Thursday despite a US-hosted meeting of security chiefs aimed at ending the Palestinian revolt against Israeli occupation after a dramatic escalation in fit-for-tat attacks.

A Palestinian civilian was shot dead by Israeli troops and three Israeli soldiers were injured by Palestinian gunmen as fighting flared in several parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, sources on both sides said.

Israel, which has adopted a no-holds-barred approach to the violence in recent weeks, hit back strongly after the wounding of its soldiers, firing tank shells on the Rafah refugee camp on the border between the Gaza Strip and Egypt and on the village of Beit Jala near Bethlehem, Palestinians said.

Witnesses reported raging gun-fights at Rafah and in the Beit Jala area, while at a school in nearby al-Khader, medical sources said a seven-year-old schoolgirl was hit in the face with a rubber bullet when Israeli soldiers opened fire on demonstrators near a school.

Middle East peace process co-sponsors, the United States and Russia, issued a joint appeal for calm Thursday, the day after Israel launched a massive ground assault deep into Palestinian-ruled territory - the first such operation since the uprising began more than six months ago.

'To avoid a further deterioration, Russia and the US call on both sides to take parallel and reciprocal steps to reduce the violence, calm the situation and create an

PCJSS member shot dead in Khagrachhari

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A member of Parbatyia Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) was gunned down allegedly by the activists of anti-peace accord group at Anandamphani Karbaripara near Loughun Bazar under Panchhari thana of Khagrachhari hill district early yesterday morning, police sources said.

The victim was identified as Shwadhin Monghal Chakma, 35, police said. Shwadhin was killed when the assailants sprayed bullets on him at his house at 5 am. The assailants also abducted member of the same family Sumati Chakma, but later he was released, police said.

Police and army personnel rushed to the spot and began a hunt for the killers.

Tension mounted there after the killing.

One shot dead in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A young man was stabbed and shot dead by unidentified persons at Lutfor Rahman Lane in Tekerhat area of the city yesterday.

The victim was identified as Rawnak, 30.

The reason behind the killing could not be known immediately.

Police said the man was involved in criminal activities in the area.

The body of the victim was sent to Mitford Hospital morgue for autopsy.

A case was filed with Kotwali police station in this connection.

2 youths murdered in separate incidents

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two young men were murdered in separate incidents in the city yesterday.

Unidentified persons stabbed Masud Miah, 18, near their residence in the city's Kafur area in the early hours of yesterday.

Police and hospital sources said Masud came out of their residence at about midnight and did return.

Mother of the victim Kholimur

Begum was informed by some one in the morning that her son was lying with stab injuries on the nearby road.

Masud was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead.

He had a feud with some local people over playing carom at a local club, hospital sources said quoting relatives.

The victim's brother Kamal filed

Yunus underscores development of IT infrastructure

DU CORRESPONDENT

Chairman of Grameen Bank Prof Muhammad Yunus has said Information Technology (IT) will help build a prosperous Bangladesh and stressed expediting development of infrastructure for it.

He was inaugurating the Mirpur Centre of Grameen Star Education, a franchise of Grameen Software Ltd, yesterday.

The centre has been set up at Grameen IT Park with three Windows 2000-based computer laboratories having 50 computers.

Hi-Tech Communication Systems, an export-oriented IT firm, will conduct classes at the centre beginning on April 20.

Addressing the inaugural session, Chairman of Hi-Tech Nurul Quaium Khan said, 'IT does not have any short-cut way and it needs proper training.'

Managing Director of Grameen Star Education Manjurul Haq, among others, also addressed the function.

Grameen Star Education, launched on September 23 last year, has 22 centres across the country.

Meanwhile, a foreign entrepreneur involved in the Grameen IT Park said, 'IT possibilities have slowly been used in Bangladesh.'

Michael Rangstrup, Business Development Director of Metrocomia based in US and Europe, said Bangladesh has a lot of qualified IT professionals but they are not being used.

Metrocomia is doing business at the Grameen IT Park using local programmers. It builds web sites both for local and international markets.

Rangstrup said they would invest more in the country.



Khaleda Zia pays last respect to Shahidul Islam, Dhaka city president of Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal in front of BNP's Naya Paltan office yesterday.

Madrassah teacher kills wife for dowry in Satkhira

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Mohammad Sabed Ali, a teacher of Tallakbarhi Dakhil Madrassah under Tala upazila in Satkhira district, allegedly slaughtered his wife Tahmina Khatoun, 24, for dowry.

The murder was committed in the early hours of Wednesday at Gogrostampur village in Tala upazila.

Police said Sabed Ali started putting pressure on his wife for dowry since their marriage in 1997.

Sabed tied his wife with cloth and rope and slaughtered her in the bed when she was asleep. Tahmina died on the spot.

A Jamaat activist, Sabed also killed his first wife by feeding poisonous food, police said. Sabed is now absconding.

A case was recorded with Tala thana yesterday.

Will journalist Tipu remain disabled?

The Daily Star - প্রথম আলো

Tipu Treatment Fund

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Save Tipu from Disability

Send donations to: Savings Account No. 25002111
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Scorching pre-summer heat has put hand fans made of palm leaves on high demand in the city.

BASA dismisses BPSA criticism

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Administrative Service Association (BASA) yesterday rejected a castigating statement given by the Bangladesh Police Service Association (BPSA) on the Deputy Commissioners' alleged demand for supervision over police at a recent conference.

In a statement, Secretary General of BASA and DC (Dhaka) Abdus Sattar Khan termed the BPSA statement unfortunate. He also said it was not desirable from a disciplined force. Rather it would frustrate the peace-loving people when the law and order situation was improving.

'There was no agenda at the conference for supervision or control over police, nor did it come up for discussion. Because of it the police representative who attended the conference did not raise any objection. If they had had any thing to say even after that, they could have brought it before the Cabinet Division as per administrative rules', he said.

Khan said there were detailed discussions on the 24 points raised by the DCs. The points mainly undermined the shortage of police and lack of transports and modern equipment.

Bangabandhu Murder Case Defence questions jurisdiction of third-judge bench

UNB, Dhaka

The defence yesterday questioned the jurisdiction of third-judge bench of the High Court over disposing of the appeal of Colonel Mohiuddin Ahmed, who was acquitted of the charge of killing Bangabandhu in a split judgement.

'Chief Justice constituted the single bench just to hear the death references not to empower it for disposal of the appeal under section 429 of the code of criminal procedure,' advocate Khan Saifur Rahman said concluding his arguments on the death reference to Lt Col (Ret) Mohiuddin Ahmed.

The empowerment by the Chief Justice of the third judge is confined only to disposal of the death reference under section 378 of the CrPC, he clarified with reference to the order of the CJ.

Citing the law he said verdict regarding the death reference of Bangabandhu murder case was not signed jointly by the two judges of the HC bench that heard the death references and appeals in the Bangabandhu murder case.

Moreover, the lawyer argued, following the split judgement by the two-judge bench now the right to appeal of the 9 other convicts sentenced to death remained pending.

A total of 15 former army personnel were sentenced

to death in the Bangabandhu murder case. Five of them were acquitted by one judge of the previous bench who also modified the charge against another although both the defences upheld his capital punishment.

Describing the whole process of the case as dead-locked, Khan Saifur yesterday suggested constitution of a larger bench for overcoming the deadlock.

'Judgement on the 9 convicts was not made subject of hearing before the third-judge ... for the impugned split judgement they cannot go for appeal to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court,' he submitted before the court pointing out the dilemmas.

The lawyer raised the point in the third-judge bench of the High Court that is reviewing judgements on confirmation of death references in the Bangabandhu murder case.

Meanwhile, another petition is pending for hearing, which was moved earlier before the court raising a constitutional question whether or not the proceedings of the case militate against the constitutional provisions.

The petition will be heard in the next opening day of the court and the attorney general has already been intimated to represent the government at the hearing on that question.

Ending his arguments on the death reference to Col Mohiuddin of artillery, Khan Saifur Rahman said his

reason behind the killing could not be known immediately.

Jubo League leader murdered in Pabna

UNB, Pabna

Armed terrorists murdered a local Jubo League leader in broad daylight at Nagar Chackia village in Aatgharia upazila in Pabna yesterday.

Police said members of an extremist group numbering 7/8 swooped on Abdul Malek, 30, of Baukofa village in the same upazila at noon while he was playing cards with his friends. They first shot at Malek and then beheaded the body.

Reason behind the killing could not be known immediately.

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
April 13		6-20 pm
April 14	5-38 am	

Prayer Timings		
April 13		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fazr	4-50	5-20
Juma	12-15	12-45
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-20	6-25
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation