

Mamata's Trinamool fails

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screenwriter.

Jayalalitha's AIADMK got a sweeping two-thirds majority with 187 of the 231 results declared for a 234-member house. The ruling DMK was left way behind with only 42 seats.

However, Jayalalitha cannot for the time being become chief minister of the state as she has been convicted in a corruption case. A local court had even barred her from contesting elections.

But Jayalalitha declared Sunday that she would fulfil the wishes of her voters.

"People have given their mandate for me to rule the state. This vote is for me to assume leadership of the state. Putting anyone else in that place would mean disrespect to the verdict of the people. We cannot afford to do this," she told the private Star TV network.

Another of Vajpayee's key allies at the national level, the Asom Gana

Parishad, was also set to lose badly, getting only 26 of the 95 declared results against 52 won by Sonia Gandhi's party.

The Congress was also seen returning to power in Pondicherry, a former French colony, getting 14 of the 30 seats in the provincial house.

Analysts and political leaders said that the outcome of the elections could mean trouble for premier Vajpayee in New Delhi.

"Ultimately, this will have a direct bearing on the ruling federal coalition," said political analyst Anand Ojha.

Communist leader Sitaram Yechury, whose party will form a government in West Bengal for the sixth consecutive term, said the defeat of Vajpayee's ally in Tamil Nadu and the resurgence of opposition parties in other states signal troubled times for Vajpayee in the near future.

"The ball is already rolling and it is gaining momentum," he said.

LDCs to press for more ODA

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countries with a total population of 630 million as officially "least-developed". The number of LDCs in late '70s was 25.

The criteria include a per-capita income of less than dls 900, low levels of health, nutrition and education development, and economic vulnerability.

WTO trade regime marginalises their economies, and many of them spend most of their incomes on debt servicing.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh, as a coordinator and mouthpiece for 49 least developed countries in international forums, has prepared two volumes of country documents to place in the conference. The Bangladesh papers will reflect the demands and aspirations of LDCs as a whole, officials said.

Bangladesh, on behalf of the group, will urge the rich nations for

debt relief to help LDCs mobilise more resources for social sector.

"Besides, Dhaka will appeal for more flow of official development aid from rich countries, as the LDCs are yet to get sufficient flow of FDI to compensate for diminishing flow of ODA," one official hinted.

LDC share in FDI inflow is still very negligible and reduced ODA has stranded their development agenda while they are largely marginalised in the WTO trade regime.

Bangladesh may also raise the issue of easing the WTO rules of origin to derive benefits from free market access, already offered by EU and would request other rich nations for the same.

Free flow of labor, as of capital, may also come up as a demand from the LDC camp.

Mamata resigns as Trinamool chief

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the public, I will accept it."

Her dramatics, however, continued. In the evening she resigned from the Trinamool Congress. One had to call it a resignation from the Trinamool, simply because she does not officially hold any position in the party.

Pankaj Bandoopadhaya, the party spokesperson, said, "She is resigning as a mark of protest against the rigging of the CPIM and the failure of the EC to provide a safe atmosphere for the voters."

When journalists asked Bandoopadhaya as to what was the position from which Mamata was resigning, he said, "She is the head of the party even though she does not have a post officially. She can do anything that she likes."

Pankaj, however, informed that efforts were to persuade her to withdraw her resignation. When asked whether Mamata had sent her resignation to Ajit Panja, who incidentally is the chairperson of the party in West Bengal, Pankaj left the room in a huff. And all heaved a sigh of relief.

Later on, when this correspondent tried to talk to Mamata by impersonating as a foreign reporter, she came on the phone. When asked what was the reason for such a poor show, she said, "You call this polling. Everywhere massive rigging has taken place."

When asked as to why she had put on a show of confidence from Thursday onwards after the polls

were over, she said, "At that time, I was still hopeful. People were talking about a change. Now it seems that most have not been able to cast their votes."

She also cited examples of Keshpur and Garbeta, the two constituencies prominent because of violence. "Do you know that in Garbeta our candidate lost by a margin of over 100,000 votes. The same has happened also at Keshpur. In Keshpur, our candidate has got a little over 5,000 votes. In one particular booth, the TMC candidate has got two votes, while the CPI (M) have got 845 votes. We are just accumulating information before we plan our next step."

However, starting from Priyaranjan Damsunshi to Mamata, the common allegation was that free and fair voting had not taken place. Damsunshi, talking over phone from Raiganj, said, "This time, the EC has not played an impartial role. In most of the place, original voters have been terrorised and prevented from casting their votes. So, the public has not rejected us."

"On the other hand, the CPI (M) has utilised the state machinery to remain in power. If the EC had been fair, the results in 50 other constituencies would have been quite different from what they are at present"

Pranab Mukherjee, however, was not ready to make any remark. "We have to sit down and analyse where we went wrong."

BNP may write to Speaker

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Akhteruzzaman were cancelled after they were expelled from BNP and letters in this regard were sent to the Speaker. The EC after hearing the cases declared their seats vacant.

Our Chittagong Correspondent Shahidul Islam quoting sources adds: The expelled BNP lawmaker held another meeting on Saturday night with some selected members of 'now defunct' NDP at his hill-top bungalow at Goods Hill Road in the port city.

In the meeting, Chowdhury reportedly asked his men to take preparations for holding a 'huge' public meeting at Lalidighi Maidan in Chittagong within the next 15 days in a bid to regain his 'lost popularity'.

Meanwhile, about 50-60 armed men loyal to SQ Chowdhury were seen moving on board 7-8 microbuses with sophisticated arms in Roazerhat, Ghatachak, Lehkhali, Chandraghona Daboshibazar and some other areas in Rangunia on Saturday evening.

Besides, Chowdhury's supporters also brought out several processions and organised rallies led by notorious NDP terrorist Ezlas alias 'Ezlassya', who is accused in as many as 25 criminal cases including murder, abduction and robbery, sources said.

Meanwhile, court proceedings of a case filed in 1997, in which SQ Chowdhury was chargesheeted along with 22 more BNP stalwarts, 'halted for a while' at the Court Building in Chittagong yesterday morning as some supporters shouted slogans in favour of Chowdhury.

The incident took place at about 11:20 am in front of the room of First Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court. The judge drew the attention of SQ Chowdhury and asked him to 'remove' his men from the court premises.

PMO pushes

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the Roads and Railways Division.

Meantime, the next fiscal year's ADP has been fixed at Tk 18,500 crore. Strikingly, the share of local resource in next year's development programme has significantly shrunk.

According to sources, project aid for next year's ADP has been estimated at Tk 8,219 crore, up nearly ten per cent from this year's Tk 7,473 crore. On the other hand, local resource input has been fixed at Tk 10,281, down three per cent from this year's Tk 10,607 crore.

Figures show that although it went for an ambitious ADP this year, the government has suddenly scaled down its development outlay growth by around 5.7 per cent.

Meanwhile, pace of spending under the ADP has picked up and about Tk 8,210 crore was spent during the July-February period, accounting for 47 per cent of the budgeted ADP, nearly 14 per cent higher than the spending during the same time of the previous year.

The revised ADP and that for the next fiscal would be approved at the May 20 ECNEC meeting, to be presided over by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.



Representatives of the House of Lords led by Rt Hon. Peter Shore (L) called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Claridge's Hotel in London on Saturday. Sheikh Hasina is on a 6-day European tour.

Border disputes should be resolved

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gate that the BDR had acted on its own during the reclamation operation of Padua.

"No action is taken by the BDR without the 'connivance and clearance' of the government," he said. "As a former BDR chief I know how military decisions are cleared by the political leadership."

He suggested that the Bangladesh envoy to New Delhi be recalled for his "recent actions and indiscretions."

Both former BDR chiefs and several retired military officers present at the seminar said that the BDR acted valiantly during the recent clashes with the Indian forces.

The former officers and several other participants praised the leadership of BDR chief Major general Fazlur Rahman and brushed aside allegations by the Indians that General Rahman committed wrongdoing.

"India has no business to ask for investigation into the BDR activities or the actions of its chief. That is absolutely an internal affair (of Bangladesh)."

General Dasatagir said, "Our forces are second to none and they have withstood the test of being

challenged in a surprise attack."

The speakers were also of the opinion that not only the BDR troops who have been killed, but all those manning the Roumari Border Outpost and some civilians who helped the BDR during the intrusions should be decorated with gallantry awards, as well.

Major General (rtd.) Ibrahim said Bangladesh failed to take advantage of the "propaganda edge" following the uncalled for intrusion by the BSF.

"Bangladesh," he said, "succeeded in achieving military victory but failed to obtain diplomatic victory."

He said there is no crisis management mechanism in Bangladesh. The prime minister, he said, should have sat with a few political and military leaders to handle the border crisis.

Abul Hashim, a former secretary and ambassador, said Bangladesh must pursue a more pro-active foreign policy.

Other speakers criticised the manner in which the government handled the border situation and its failure to inform the public about its position regarding the crisis.

Faruk Aziz Khan, Member of the Parliament, lauded the BDR action

and said the government acted well to defuse the situation by taking proper diplomatic steps.

Ishtiaque Aziz Ulfat, a freedom fighter, said that the people of Bangladesh will never accept foreign aggression and that it would be wise to go for compulsory military training for all. Major (rtd.) Hafiz also stressed upon the need for compulsory military training.

Brigadier (rtd.) Miron Hamidur Rahman said the official and semi-official propaganda by the Indians was "very lopsided and presented a negative picture of Bangladesh."

"We have fought for Bangladesh in 1971 because it was in our interest. They have fought against Pakistan in 1971, because it was in their interest."

Other speakers included Barrister Moinul Hossein, Chairman of the Editorial Board of the Daily Ittefaq, Prof. Emazuddin Ahmed, former Vice-chancellor of Dhaka University, Ferdous Ahmed Qureshi, Prof. Aftab Ahmed, Prof. Dilara Chowdhury of Jahangirnagar University, Advocate Salma Islam, former MP Major (rtd.) Akhteruzzaman, columnist Zaglul Ahmed Chowdhury and journalist Mizanur Rahman Khan.

Board to meet ahead of schedule

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colonels to the rank of brigadier general. The Board is also due to 'approve' promotion of brigadier generals to the rank of major general.

Normally the Board meets in August or September for dealing with promotion cases.

Last year, it met on August 30 and 31 and promoted 31 Lt. Colonels and 16 Colonels.

In October last year, the government decided to re-designate brigadier as brigadier general and also changed some designations of other ranks (ORs), revising the British colonial system and adopting the US model. The change was made to make the designations more compatible with participation of Bangladesh Army officers and soldiers in UN peace keeping operations.

As regards promotion to the rank of major general, priority is likely to be given to those officers who are

holding officiating or acting positions while some others may be promoted considering vacancies.

Those likely to be promoted to the position of major general are: Brigadier General Tareq Siddiqui, now officiating as Adjutant General; Brigadier General Ishaq Ibrahim, now officiating as GOC of Bogra Division and Brigadier General Abdul Wadood, now serving as Acting Engineer-in-chief.

The others being considered for promotion are: Brigadier General Shahabuddin Sikder, head of the SSF; Brigadier General Mahboob Alam, Military Secretary to the PM and Brigadier General Shafeytul Islam, posted at Savar.

Two officers tipped for promotion to the rank of major general originally belonged to the now defunct Jatiya Rakshhi Bahini (JRB) while most others belong to the second Short Service Commission of BMA.

Some sources said that in 1996, at the initiative of the Prime Minister,

a full-fledged Army Promotion Board was formed and it followed proper procedures to look into cases of promotion. All senior army officers welcomed it. A similar board should be set up to consider competent ones for promotion this time also, they said.

In the past, there were complaints that due to absence of written criteria, many officers with commendable performance were deprived of promotion. Personal liking sometimes mattered more than professional competence, sources said.

Promotion of an army officer is normally held up if any major general in the Army Promotion Board raises objection. Similarly, if all generals in the Board agree to promote an officer, objection by the Chief of Army Staff who is Chairman of the Board, often overrules it.

HSC exams: 3630 more expelled

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expelled, 231 were from different centres in Chittagong district and 39 in Cox's Bazar. The complete breakdown was not available due to disruption in telephone communication between Dhaka and Chittagong last night.

About 603 examinees were expelled from different examination centres under Comilla Education Board (CEB) yesterday. Of the expelled, 94 were expelled in Noakhali, 32 in Laxshmipur and 54 in Feni. The number of expelled in Brahmanbaria, Chandpur and Comilla was not available.

A total of 577 examinees were expelled from different examination centres under Dhaka Education Board yesterday - 2 in Dhaka, 4 in Manikganj, 7 in Munshinganj, 14 in Narayanganj, 98 in Narshingdi, 21 in Gazipur, 83 in Mymensingh, 6 in Kishoreganj, 117 in Netrokona, 168 in Jamalpur, 24 in Tangail, 6 in Faridpur, 11 in Madaripur, 8 in Shariatpur, 6 in Gopalganj and 2 in Rajbari. The figure for Sherpur was not available.

Our Correspondent from Rajshahi adds: 1551 examinees were expelled in different districts under Rajshahi Education Board yesterday 163 in Rajshahi, 19 in Natore, 44 in Chapainawabganj, 47 in Pabna, 179 in Sirajganj, 87 in Bogra, 131 in Rangpur, 253 in

Lalmonirhat, 84 in Kurigram, 253 in Gaibandha, 104 in Nilphamari and 187 in Thakurgaon.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh College Teachers Association (BCTA) urged the government to immediately form a task force to review the existing public examination system.

BCTA President Prof. Quazi Faruque Ahmed and General Secretary Principal Asadul Haque in a statement also expressed concern over assault on teachers on duty at different examination centres.

The teacher leaders demanded exemplary punishment to miscreants and proper treatment and compensation for the injured teachers.

Three muggers held in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A team of detectives yesterday foiled an attempt to mug and arrested three muggers and recovered a gun from their possession at Zikatola in the city.

Sources said that Detective Branch of police came to know about a gang attempting a mugging incident near Janata Bank on Satmasjid Road at Zikatola bus stand.

The plain-clothes team, headed by inspector Ahiduzzaman, immediately rushed to the spot at about 12.45 pm yesterday. The gang tried to fire at the police team but the police arrested three muggers in the clash that followed. They also held a

three-wheeler that was being used by the gang.

The arrested were Dulal Bepari, 26, Mohammad Titu, 22, Mirja Rahman, 24.

Court receives

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condemned the statement in the name of the ward commissioners of Chittagong City Corporation published in the Dainik Ittefaq as an advertisement on May 9.

The statement signed by Chittagong Union of Journalist (CUJ) president Muhammad Idris criticised the CCC commissioners for issuing statement in favour of a terrorist.

They urged the CCC commissioners not to take side of any terrorist or patronise any terrorist activities.

Seminar on Khulna City Master Plan

BSS, Khulna
A day-long seminar on "Khulna City Structural Plan, Master Plan and Detailed Area Plan (2001-2020)" was held in Khulna yesterday to help develop the city in a planned way.

State Minister for Disaster Management and Relief Talukder Abdul Khaleque inaugurated the seminar, organised by Khulna Development Authority (KDA).

Presided over by KDA Chairman Brigadier General SAHS Tauhid, the inaugural function was addressed by secretary of the Ministry of Housing and Public Works Qamrul Islam Siddique, team leader of the KDA Master Plan Project Dr Nurul Islam and Planning Officer Khalilur Rahman.

House of Lords representatives call on Hasina

UNB, London

Representatives of the House of Lords led by Peter Shore MP called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Claridge's Hotel on Saturday and discussed matters of common interest of the two countries.

Other members of the delegation were Lord McNally, member of the House of Lords, Baroness Paula Uddin and Dobson, former secretary of Health.

The lawmakers from the upper-chamber of British parliament lauded the progress made by Bangladesh government under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

They expressed the hope that existing relations between Bangladesh and Britain would be expanded further.

Earlier, British MP Simon Hughes also made a courtesy call on the Prime Minister at her hotel suite.

Mystery shrouds deaths of two prisoners in Rajshahi jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Mystery shrouds the deaths of two prisoners one convicted and another under-trial in Rajshahi jail yesterday.

The dead were identified as Vandu Pahan, 28, son of Baran Pahan of Chowhat Khashipukur in Dhamoirhat upazila of Naogaon district and Jahangir Alam, 38, son of Jamaluddin of Shiroil in Boalia thana in the Rajshahi city.

Rajshahi jail authorities said, Tandu was sick while Jahangir drug addict. They were recently admitted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH). But the relatives of the dead alleged that they were tortured to death.

The bodies were sent to RMCH morgue for autopsy amid tight security. Journalists were not allowed to see the bodies.

WASA urged to remove waterlogging

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Residents of Kayettuli in the old part of the city have urged the WASA authorities to take immediate steps to remove frequent waterlogging in the area.

In an application to the WASA Managing Director yesterday, they said that waterlogging had become a common phenomena in Kayettuli areas and the roads of the area usually go under water even in case of slightest rains.

People in the area could not even move for waterlogging during rain. The worst sufferers are women and school-going children. They alleged in the application that despite repeated complaints, no step had been taken to reduce their sufferings.

Residents of Kayettuli requested the WASA authorities to reconstruct the drainage system in the area so that water could easily pass through.

Laltu arrested

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BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia condemned the re-arrest of Laltu. In a statement yesterday, she said the re-arrest of Laltu from the jail gate after the High Court order to release him has proved that the government has no respect for the rule of law.

Khaleda demanded immediate and unconditional release of Laltu and withdrawal of 'false cases' against him.

Meanwhile, Comilla district unit of JCD activists staged demonstrations in the city to protest the new case.

Earlier, a good number of JCD activists from Dhaka and of Comilla gathered at the Comilla Jail gate to receive the JCD general secretary yesterday.

On March 28, the plainclothes police arrested Laltu under the section 54 from in front of the Kasturi restaurant in Bijoynagar area in the city when he was on his way from the party office suspecting him to be involved in the hartal. Laltu was then sent to the Dhaka Central Jail with one-month detention.

Detective Branch (DB) of Police then filed two separate cases against him including one under the Public Safety Act. And he was transferred to the Comilla Jail. The court granted him bail in both the cases, the JCD leaders said.

DU refutes report

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authorities did not get any complaint of forcing resident students to participate in processions and rallies of any student organisation.

"Of the two incidents mentioned in the news, one was a consequence of internal feud of a student organisation and the other concerned personal matters of two students....," the rejoinder said.

Convenor of the Provosts' Standing Committee of the university Prof Harunur Rashid in the rejoinder claimed that Prof Al Mahbub Uddin Ahmed, Provost of Ziaur Rahman Hall, was misquoted in the news item.

Our reply: We stand by our report.

Uttara plots Landowners stage sit-in on road in front of Rajuk office

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Members of the Rajuk Uttara Khatigrastha Kalyan Samity (RUKKS) staged a sit-in on the road in front of Rajuk building yesterday demanding present market price of their lands as well as allotment of one plot to each of them.

They will be affected due to land acquisition process for the Rajuk's project in Uttara (third phase). The acquisition process has started.

RUKKS also submitted a memorandum to the chairman of Rajuk alleging that percentage of the affected landowners getting plots in this project is much lower than in Rajuk's other projects.

Rajuk has allocated plots to only 31 of the affected landowners out of

120 applicants, they said in the memorandum.

In the memorandum, RUKKS also alleged that the price offered to the affected landowners for their lands is much lower in this project than in Rajuk's other projects earlier.

More than 500 people under the banner of RUKKS went to Rajuk building at about 11:30 am from the National Press Club to lay a siege.

But following police intervention, the affected landowners staged a sit-in on the road in front of Rajuk building for more than one and half hours, witnesses said.

Rajuk allocated a total of 2,678 plots without completing the land acquisition process.

Plane skids off runway

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tower that they were having problems and were making a "full stop landing".

It made a crash landing, about ten feet off the runway. Its landing gears and wheels were damaged and stuck in the mud, which saved the persons on board from serious injury. The pilots suffered bruises on their faces. Nur Mohammad suffered shock and was being checked for any internal injury, sources said.

The aircraft earlier completed checking instrument landing system, non-directional beacon, very high omni directional radio and precision approach path indicator at

Zia International Airport in Dhaka and Osmany International Airport in Sylhet. Survey of Cox's Bazar airport was almost complete.

A BSS report from Chittagong adds: Though the persons on board the aircraft were apparently out of danger, they suffered "critical internal injuries", according to a spokesman of the Indian High Commission in Chittagong.

A four-member committee headed by Air Worthiness Consultant P K Biswas has been constituted to probe the incident, Chairman of Civil Aviation Authority Commodore M Iqbal Hossain told BSS over telephone.

5 brokerage houses

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found traces of a software meant only for the bourse authorities for monitoring and surveillance, a SEC source said.

The software was found in a folder and not in installed position. "It was due to negligence of the DSE's IT department which loaded all the programmes of a CD while installing the TESA software for trading purposes of the broker," he said.

The finding reflects the loopholes in the DSE's IT department, he said. "They installed the surveillance software along with the trading software. We may come across more such findings."

The source, however, said that the software was of no use to a broker as it was not technically possible to use the software without other supportive programmes.

The SEC directive to DSE came following detection of a computer

possessing the stolen software called "outside view".

The IT officials of the DSE on March 30 saw a log-off error message on their computer screen where no one other than the DSE system administrator had access.

They detected unauthorised entry to a secondary server called "fireball server" through a wide area network (WAN) connection, which stores valuable data.

DSE officials then informed their authorities about the hacking which had restricted entry to the servers by changing passwords.

The news created panic in stock market and the SEC later formed a three-member investigation committee which traced the computer on Wednesday last.

Although the SEC officials seized the computer with stolen software, there is widespread apprehension in stock market about more such hackings.

Shazneen case

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He said news of investigation into Shazneen murder case was published in the national dailies, but he did not report regarding the development of investigation.

Mojibur Rahman said he did not visit the village homes of accused Minu and Parvin, but other officials went there. He did not know whether a report regarding the arrest of Minu and Parvin was published in the Daily Janakantha on May 12, '98.

He told the court, he does not know how many brothers and sisters Latifur Rahman has, but he knows one of his brothers.

Mojibur Rahman said he recorded statement of Latifur Rahman on September 5, 1998 in the rape case.

He further told the court that at the end of investigation into the murder case, he realised the necessity of filing the rape case and did so.

Shazneen Tasnim Rahman, 15, youngest daughter of Latifur Rahman, Chairman of Transcom Group was raped and murdered at

their Gulshan residence on April 23, 1998.

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

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

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

Special public prosecutor Mahbub Ahmed appeared for the state while Advocate Monzur Alam and M A Kamrul Hasan Khan Aslam for the accused.

The murder case, pending with the 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.

The trial of the rape case began at the Special Court on July 9 last year.

Terrorist Ayub held

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said.

Ayub Ali killed six out of 15 named in the hit-list. He planned to kill the nine other before the upcoming general elections, OC of Tala thana said quoting confessional statement of Ayub.

An armed cadre of Satkhira-Tala unit of Pubca Banglar Communist Party (PBCB), Ayub Ali was wanted in 24 murder cases recorded with different police stations of the southwestern zone.

OC Sirajul Islam of Tala thana said Ayub himself killed six persons named in the list within a span of four years. Four of them belonged to the same family of Ksheshra union under Tala upazila of Satkhira.

The victims were Gowhar Ali Sardar, 75, his four sons and only son-in-law. They all were murdered from October 5, 1995 to May 19,

1999. He also killed Ganesh Das in 1998 and Ahmad Ali Kagaji in 1999, OC of Tala thana said yesterday quoting FIRs.

We have got sensational information of how this terrorist managed to evade arrest so long with the help of a group of police officials and some leaders of the ruling party, OC Sirajul Islam said.

He said Ayub was helped to go to India several times by his godfathers in Awami League and BNP.

I have given standing order to my fellow armed cadres to finish nine others of the hit-list without waiting for my release, Ayub told police yesterday morning, one hour before he was taken to Satkhira in unprecedented tight security.

Police could not recover any firearms from his possession till filing of this report at 5 pm yesterday.