

Jail Killing Case: 8th PW cross-examined

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Mohammad Abdul Zahir, the 8th prosecution witness in the Jail Killing Case, was cross-examined in the Special Court adjacent to the Dhaka Central Jail.

Judge Ahmed Jamil Mostafa adjourned the hearing till November 24.

Four national leaders Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed, Captain Mansur Ali and AHM Quamruzzaman, were murdered inside the Dhaka Central Jail on November 3, 1975.

During the four-hour cross-examination, Zahir, the prosecution witness, said he was deputy jailer at the Dhaka Central Jail from 1974 to 1977.

The witness told the court that on the night of November 3, 1975, one of the guards of the central jail woke him (Zahir) up and told him to go to the Inspector General's office room.

Zahir said as per a directive from the higher authorities, he went there. Then, he went to the jailer's office room and wanted to know why he (Zahir) was called at night.

The jailer said five army personnel came to talk to some arrested persons and he (jailer) told him (Zahir) to go to his office room. After a while he heard sound of gunshots and left the scene in fear, Zahir told the court.

Zahir further said he came to know from jailer that four leaders Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed, Captain Mansur Ali and AHM Quamruzzaman were shot dead.

The witness said, the bodies of

the four leaders were handed over to their relatives on November 5, 1975.

Metropolitan PP Abdullah Mahmud Hasan, Advocate Quamrul Islam and Mosarraf Hossain Kajol appeared for the state while Advocate Hazi Nazrul Islam, Mizanur Rahman, Arshadul Haque and Mohammad Hanif for the accused.

Of the 21 accused, Taheruddin Thakur, Shah Moazzem Hossain, Lt Col (dismissed) Syed Farookur Rahman, Lt Col (Retd) Sultan Shahrir Rashid Khan, Maj (Retd) Bazul Huda and Maj (Retd) Khairuzzaman are now detained in the Dhaka Central Jail. They were produced before the court during the hearing while two others KM Obaidur Rahman and Nurul Islam Manzoor were not produced in the court due to illness.

JS session resumes today

BSS, Dhaka

The Jatiya Sangsad resumes its sitting at 12 noon today.

The main opposition Awami League continues to boycott the Sangsad.

The first session, which begun on October 28, is due to continue till the end of the current month. It is expected to adopt a vote of thanks to President for his address to the opening session of the new House.

Tributes paid to Bhasani

REZAUL KARIM, back from Santosh in Tangail

Thousands of followers of Moulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani from across the country thronged his mazar at Santosh yesterday to pay tributes to the late leader on the 25th anniversary of his death.

They placed wreaths and offered *fateha* at the mazar and prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul as well as peace, progress and prosperity of the country in a democratic setup.

They recalled the contribution of the uncompromising political legend who struggled throughout his life against injustice, repression and for establishing rights of the downtrodden. He was the first visionary of independent Bangladesh.

Political parties, professional bodies and socio-cultural organisations organised *qurankhwani*, *milad mahfil* and discussion meetings at the mazar.

Ministers and leaders and workers of different political parties offered *fateha* and placed wreaths.

They included ministers Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Tarikul Islam, Shahjahan Siraj, Alamgir Kabir, Luffar Rahman Khan Azad, Goutam Chakrabarty and Abdus Salam Pintu, ruling party leader Major Gen (Retd) Mahmudul Hasan and Jatiya Party leaders Kazi Zafar Ahmed and Sunil Gupta.

Tangail district BNP organised a discussion meeting there with its president Maj Gen (Retd) Mahmudul Hasan MP in the chair.

Addressing the meeting as chief guest, BNP Secretary General and LGRD and Cooperatives minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said Bhasani was a non-communal politician and struggled throughout his life to establish democracy and an exploitation free society.

Ziaur Rahman floated BNP with the blessings of Bhasani to materialise his ideals through multi-party democracy.

BNP is struggling to materialise the dreams of Moulana Bashashani and Shaheed Zia, he added.

Responding to local people's demands, Mannan Bhuiyan said the present government will implement all programmes of Bhasani in phases to immortalise him.

He said there are four ministers from Tangail and urged the local people to prepare guidelines in consultation with them to implement the programmes.

Paying rich tributes to Bhasani, Food Minister Tarikul Islam said he was the political mentor and guide of all great politicians in this region.

JP leader Kazi Zafar Ahmed said Moulana Bhasani had launched movement for an independent Bangladesh in 1956 at the Kagmari

conference in Santosh. He said Bhasani should be called "grandfather" of the nation and urged the government to make an announcement to this respect immediately.

State Minister for Water Resources Goutam Chakrabarty said Bhasani was a voice against "injustice and oppression" and BNP was formed with his ideals.

State Minister for Science and Technology Luffar Rahman Khan Azad said people of the country will not believe us if we fail to evaluate Bhasani and do not try to materialise his ideals.

The meeting was also addressed by among others State Minister for Housing and Public Works Alamgir Kabir, Deputy Minister for Education Abdus Salam Pintu, Jatiyatabadi Krishak Dal leaders Shamsuzzaman Dudu and Mujibur Rahman, Dhaka University teacher Ferdous Ahmed, Jatiyatabadi Mohila Dal leader Rabeya Siraj and some local leaders.

At the meeting, the local leaders demanded nationalisation of all educational institutions established by Bhasani, completion of construction of Santosh Islamic University, setting up of a Bhasani museum, declaration of Bhasani as national leader and observance of his birth and death anniversary at state level.

5-member polls observation team off to Denmark

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A five-member polls observation team left for Copenhagen yesterday to see the parliamentary election in Denmark on November 20.

The election to the municipalities and county councils of Denmark also takes place on the same day.

The group invited by the Danish government, was originally supposed to comprise of two representatives from the Election Commission, one from BNP, one from Awami League and one from an NGO.

Sources said that a third EC nominee was inducted in the team after AL did not nominate anyone.

The members of the observation team now are EC Secretary Saiful Islam, Additional Secretary Khairuzzaman Chowdhury and Deputy Secretary Mohammad Zakaria. NGO representative Zuleya Rahman of Democracy Watch and BNP's National Executive Committee's Assistant Office Secretary Syed Emran Saleh Prince.

Royal Danish Embassy officials said that the government has invited a polls observer team from Bangladesh to further strengthen the relations between the two countries and contribute to the further development of democratic process here.

US mass quiz

FROM PAGE 1
men were involved in terrorism, which is very unlikely, then what Ashcroft is advocating is racial profiling at its most fundamental level," Ramzi Dakour, vice president of the Arab American Student Association at the University of Texas at Austin, said on Friday.

Attorney General John Ashcroft announced Tuesday that the Justice Department has distributed a list of 5,000 men it wanted to interview about the Sept. 11 attacks. The list comprises men ages 18 to 33 who entered the United States since Jan. 1, 2000, from certain countries.

The countries represented were linked to the hijackers in the Sept 11 attacks or were way stations for the terrorist organization, Al-Gaida. The department acknowledges the men are likely to be Arab and Muslim, but says the list wasn't based on ethnic origin.

"This is yet another example of the heavy-handedness that's being used without any rhyme or reason," said Sohail Mohammed, an immigration lawyer in New Jersey. He represents several men who were questioned shortly after the attacks and are now jailed on immigration charges.

Mohammed said he would advise people to cooperate with questioners "if there's a good, well-articulated reason other than just a general fishing around."

Earlier interviews seemed to be just that, he said. "Stupid questions like, 'What do you think of American civilization?' and 'why do you pray five times a day?' If that's what they're going to ask this time, people will say, 'No fishing in this house.'"

The American Civil Liberties Union of Texas is distributing hundreds of pamphlets, some in Arabic, explaining civil rights under federal and state law.

The Justice Department interview initiative is "formalized, black-and-white stated policy directing law officers to racially profile," said William Harrell, executive director of the state ACLU.

Hana Saleh, a member of the Muslim Student Association at the University of Texas at Dallas, said students are increasingly concerned about racial profiling.

President's directive

FROM PAGE 12
The DRU chief narrated to the President the way journalists were treated when they went to cover the swearing-in ceremony of the President on November 14.

President B Chowdhury directed the officials of Bangabhaban to take necessary steps to send invitation cards to the journalists as all other guests so that they can enter the house through the same entrance as others during state functions in future.

The President also asked officials concerned to construct a shed for use of journalists who come on the premises of the Bangabhaban to gather news, as requested by the Ury.

The President, in this regard, also recalled the sufferings of the reporters he had witnessed while in opposition as they collected news at Bangabhaban on a rainy day.

BSMMUH

FROM PAGE 12
one source.

At the meantime, the authorities formed a four-member committee headed by Professor Md Tahir to look into the matter. The probe body would submit its report shortly.

There is also debate over whether Nahar was on the nursing staff of the hospital. Recently transferred to another hospital, Nahar had challenged the transfer order and filed a case.

Meanwhile, Class III and IV employees continued demanding for administration of the hospital under state control.

Prior to Nahar's death, the SKSP had demanded reverting to the former status and been demonstrating since the new government took charge.

Many patients were said to have left the hospital in the face of the standstill in the hospital yesterday. However, activities at the emergency wing were not hampered by the strike.

Leaders of the SKSP and nursing staff said they would continue their strike until their two-point demand was met.

Bashar hits ton

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The right-hander had earlier scored five fifties in six Tests. He completed his first Test ton just before tea, taking a single off Zimbabwe pacerman Henry Olonga. Bashar laced his 209-ball innings with 15 sweetly timed boundaries.

However, his innings came to an abrupt end when he failed to cover his leg stump against a Grant Flower delivery that took a unexpected turn after hitting the rough.

Grant, younger of the Flower brothers, eventually returned with career-best four for 43. The occasion left-arm spinner had only ten wickets under his belt in his 55 previous Tests.

Bashar left the home side at 204 for five. But Bangladesh gifted away the last five wickets for only 47 runs in 40 minutes.

Only Mohammad Ashraf showed some commitment in his 104-ball innings that yielded half a dozen of fours and 33 runs.

Amnul Islam was looking good with his 21, but the experienced batsman offered a soft return catch to Marillier.

Akram Khan failed to cash in on his come back match in front of his home crowd managing only six runs.

Captain Naimur Rahman, also struggling both with the bat and ball, perished on 5.

"It's a continuing problem that he is not getting runs," said coach Trevor Chappell on Naimur after the day's play without further elaboration.

Naimur meanwhile, for the first time in this series, did not come out of the dressing room to face the press.

Chappell also criticised Akram Khan for the lack of his concentra-

tion saying that at this level he should not repeat the same mistake time and again.

Buddhadeb-Vajpayee

FROM PAGE 12

central government.

Bhattacharya's government has come under fire from the Trinamool Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for not taking effective steps to tackle the problem.

Meanwhile, the RSS, spiritual mentor of the BJP, criticised Bangladesh government for "failing" to protect Hindus in that country and flayed West Bengal and Indian governments for not prompting Dhaka to stop "persecution" of minorities.

RSS General Secretary Mohan Bhagwat said in a statement here yesterday that it "is sheer ingratitude and thanklessness on the part of Bangladesh government" that the Hindus have been treated this way, given India's role in Bangladesh liberation war.

"The conduct of Bangladesh government stands condemned before the civilised world," he said.

He said since the Khaleda Zia government came to power, Hindus had been subjected to "attacks on the pretext of being Awami League supporters." Bhagwat said West Bengal and Indian governments had not taken effective steps to stop the influx of people from Bangladesh.

He said refugees from Bangladesh should return with "full guarantee of their life, honour and property". He said the RSS is likely to hold demonstrations to express solidarity with those who crossed over to India following reported attacks in Bangladesh.

Northern Alliance

FROM PAGE 1
post-Taliban government.

"We have not come to Kabul to extend our government. We came to Kabul for peace. We are preparing the ground to invite peace groups and all Afghan intellectuals abroad who are working for the peace," Rabbani told a news conference.

"We welcome the formation of a broad-based government as soon as possible," he added.

But Alliance leaders said they did not want foreign troops on Afghan soil and said most of the British forces who landed at an airbase north of Kabul this week must leave.

Some 100 British special forces arrived on Friday for what British officials said was an operation to provide security for humanitarian operations in war-ravaged Afghanistan.

As British troops secured Bagram airbase, a spokesman for the Taliban's reclusive leader told Al-Jazeera television the militia would fight to retain control of Kandahar.

"We have thousands of troops in Kandahar and in the provinces around it and we have decided to fight to retain control of them to maintain Islamic rule," Mohammad Tayeb al-Agha, spokesman for Mullah Mohammad Omar, said.

He dismissed as "lies" reports by the Pakistan-based Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) news agency that Omar had decided to withdraw from the city to avoid bloodshed and hand it over to two local Mujahideen commanders.

"The Prince of the Believers Mullah Omar and all the senior Taliban officials are in Kandahar and the provinces around it which are under our control. They have not left," he said.

Taliban Foreign Ministry spokesman Maulvi Najibullah told Reuters the movement had not handed over control of Kandahar to commanders Mullah Naqeebullah and Haji Bashar and "will not do so in future as well."

Aside from Kandahar, the only major Taliban bastion left is the northern province and city of Kunduz.

The opposition said thousands of Pakistani, Arab and Chechen fighters under siege in the enclave were fighting to the death, aware they had nowhere to run.

"We have surrounded the Kunduz province but unfortunately we have not captured it yet," said Zubai, a Northern Alliance Foreign Ministry official, speaking by telephone from Talozan about 60-km to the east of Kunduz.

"The mayor of Kunduz is negotiating with local Taliban and they say we will give up the city for you. But the foreign Taliban will never accept this."

As the end of Taliban rule nears in large parts of the country, the United Nations is scrambling to establish a broad-based government and distribute aid. But signs are that is going to be difficult.

Britain, France and Germany led European moves to send troops into Afghanistan to protect the distribution of food before winter arrives but there was confusion whether they would be welcome.

Afghanistan would not allow its soil to be used as a base for foreign forces and such action would be a very serious problem, Engineer Arif, deputy chief of intelligence for the Northern Alliance, told Reuters.

"Our decision is that 15 of them can stay and the others go," he said referring to the 100 British troops.

Shazneen case

FROM PAGE 12
During the cross-examination, Mojibur Rahman told the court that he realised the necessity of filing a case under the Act for Prevention of Women and Children Repression, 1995 during the investigation into the murder case following which he filed the case as per directive of the higher authority.

Shahid was shown arrested in the case filed under the Act for Prevention of Women and Children Repression 1995, the witness added.

A police officer may become a complainant as well as an investigation officer of same case as there is no bar in the law, Mojibur told the court.

The charges brought against the accused were primarily proved, and a charge sheet was submitted before the court, Mojibur further said.

Mojibur Rahman told the court that Shahid was put behind the bars before filing of the case under the Special Act.

The witness said he could not remember how many times Shahid was taken on remand.

Shahid was not tortured for giving confessional statements during the remand period, Mojibur added.

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 against Shahidul Islam alias Shahid, a domestic help at his house.

Mojibur Rahman filed a rape case with Gulshan thana after six months' investigation into the mur-

der case.

All the accused -- Shahid, Hasan, Badal, Shaniram, Minu and Parvin -- were produced in the court during the hearing.

Advocate ABM Sharfuddin Khan Mukul, Mahbub Ahmed, Saima Khanam and Sheikh Baharul Islam appeared for the state while Advocate 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.

Tagore

FROM PAGE 12
"The Mystic Masseur", a film based on a novel written by this year's Nobel Prize winning author V S Naipaul. The movie is currently showing in Calcutta.

Chatterjee has acted in several movies made by India's Oscar-winning filmmaker Satyajit Ray. In March this year Chatterjee created a stir when he declined to accept an award from India's information and broadcasting ministry for his role as a blind poet in the Bengali film "Dekha" (To See), alleging the prize-selection process was flawed.

He said that depicting Tagore would be one of the most challenging roles of his career, as the poet remains a literary icon in India sixty years after his death in 1941.

"I will give it my best shot," he said.

Tagore's collection of poems, "Gitanjali", won him the Nobel Prize for literature in 1913.

Asian Highway

FROM PAGE 1
tentative in a two-day ministerial conference of the Economic and Social Council for Asia and the Pacific at the Grand Intercontinental Hotel in Seoul yesterday.

ESCAP organised the conference on road and rail communications infrastructure development in the Asia-Pacific region of the globe.

The South Korean President inaugurated the meet on Friday.

Placing the proposals at the meet the Communications Minister mentioned that Bangladesh has taken up special programmes, including development of road infrastructure and modernisation of rail communications system, aiming at developing transport networks linking to the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway.

Expressing interest of Bangladesh in setting up direct surface transport link with Myanmar through the southeastern region of the country, he focused on the contribution of Jamuna Bridge along the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway.

"The Jamuna Bridge has opened up scopes for reestablishment of communication links between South

JCD activities

FROM PAGE 1
Sagor Ahmed, Neuton, Mojnu and Habib also seized some tender schedules at the department's Uttara zonal office, Secretariat and the Commissioner's office at Segubaghia.

"Gunfight on the Dhaka University campus for capturing two residential halls and photographs of JCD men with firearms in newspapers also created an adverse reaction in the ruling party," said another JCD leader at DU.

Sources in JCD said a section of JCD leaders and workers are very happy with suspension of the central body.

Pintu could not be contacted for comments despite repeated attempts.

The central committee was formed on December 23 last year with Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu and Shahabuddin Laitu as its president and general secretary respectively.

This created a serious repercussion among JCD leaders and workers as both were non-students. Inclusion of an alleged terrorists in the central committee also angered JCD activists.

After announcement of the committee, a section of JCD activists also staged demonstrations on the DU campus and in some areas of the city demanding its cancellation. They however accepted the committee following a meeting with Khaleda Zia.

FM: Dhaka, Delhi ties

FROM PAGE 1
He observed, "I want to be a seller with the fullest satisfaction."

Responding to a question, the foreign minister said selling gas to India is not at all a sensitive issue. "We must see if it is in our economic benefit."

Regarding transit, he said, "We must see it both from a regional perspective and an economic perspective."

"We must see what economic benefits are there for us if transit is given. We must see if 60-tonne trucks can ply on our highways, what would be the economic cost of building and maintaining the roads and whether that is recoverable from transit (before any major decision is arrived)."

"The bottom line is what our people are getting for any economic deal that is made."

On the question of India not reducing tariff barriers on 25 categories of items, he said, "We have waited long enough. If India does not give tariff concessions, we may have to take counter measures."

Khan, who succeeded Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury, made it clear that Bangladesh cannot miss the train of opportunity." He noted that economic diplomacy will dominate the country's foreign policy where both the foreign ministry and all its diplomats will have to work ceaselessly to achieve the target of increasing the country's exports and investments, maintaining its policy of friendship.

The foreign ministry will look

Asia and Southeast Asia," he told the conference.

It has also created facility for installation of broad-gauge rails along the Mongla-Dhaka-Nepal route.

The Bangladesh minister also extended support to joint venture efforts of the United Nations and ESCAP for development of communications infrastructure in the region, especially in development of Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway communications in the present perspective of globalisation and regionalisation.

JCD activities

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2 camel jockeys

FROM PAGE 12
taking them to Abu Dhabi. The boys were named as Abul Kalam and Imran respectively in their passports. The couple are now living in Abu Dhabi, Dula said.

Abdullah Al-Noman, after handing over the boys to their parents, said that the authorities will take stern actions against the traffickers. He also underscored the need for necessary amendment in relevant laws and enacting tougher laws to stop child trafficking in the country.

He urged all concerned to create more awareness against human trafficking so that criminals cannot lure poor parents into sending their minor boys and girls abroad for money.

Two boys of Bhola were recovered from Dubai last month.

BNP men

FROM PAGE 1
in the areas ruled for 20 years by Ershad Shikder. Shikder's cadres are often found brandishing arms to create panic in these areas.

Ershad Shikder has been sentenced to death after found guilty in a number of cases.

"We have no other alternative but to leave Skid ghat for good not only to salvage our investment in business, but also to save ourselves from being assaulted by the BNP goons," said one of the businessmen.

A group of armed cadres of Ershad Shikder told The Daily Star that they had struck a deal with a top city BNP leader to get Shikder released from jail. An advance payment has been made and the rest of the money would be paid up once Shikder came back to Skid ghat.

These cadres were found roaming freely keeping their hands around the neck of the BNP activists and JCD leaders.

Ershad's sister Selina said moves are under way to have the death sentence on Shikder waived.