

Bushra murder case Naraji petition to be heard on Jan 19

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Special Court for Prevention of Women and Children Repression, Dhaka yesterday fixed January 19 for hearing on naraji petition in the Bushra Islam Phool murder case.

Judge M Shah Alam Miah adjourned the hearing following a 'time petition' by the prosecution lawyers.

The prosecution lawyers submitted a petition before the court stating that the complainant of the case could not appear in the court due to illness. So, they prayed for adjournment of hearing.

The defence lawyers were ready for hearing. After hearing both the sides, the court granted time.

Ms Laila Islam, the complainant of the case submitted a naraji petition on January 3 as name of

another accused Ms Runu Kader, wife of MA Kader, the main accused in the case, was dropped from the charge sheet by three investigation officers.

Accused M A Kader, Kaniz Fatema, Hena, Sheikh Shawkat Ahmed Ruhul and Sufia Begum were produced in the court during the hearing. Another accused Sheikh Kabir Ahmed has been absconding since the incident.

Advocate Abdur Razzak Khan appeared for the state while Advocate Mahub Ahmed and Moslemuddin for the accused.

Rushdania Bushra Islam alias Phool, 18, a college student and daughter of a retired police officer, was raped and murdered at her Hajipara residence in Rampura area of the city on the night of July 1 last year.

Border issues

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Another meeting between the two countries has been scheduled for November 24.

BDR and BSF forces have intermittently traded fire for the last two days, leaving several critically injured.

A five-hour long flag meeting was held at the battalion level at the Customs and Immigration point at Tamabil.

Both Dhaka and Delhi have, meanwhile, expressed concern over the border incidents.

Dhaka has verbally conveyed its concern to the Indian High Commission on Monday. None was, however, summoned, nor was any formal note of protest handed over, it was learnt yesterday.

Delhi is learnt to have also expressed its concern over the incidents through a note handed over to Bangladesh's deputy high commissioner to India on November 18, an official of the Indian High Commission in Dhaka said.

Our Sylhet Correspondent reports that following the flag meeting both the BDR and the BSF have agreed to stop further fighting. They have also decided to withdraw additional troops from along the Sripur border.

As both sides claimed ownership of a vast tract of agricultural lands

along the border pillar 1281 to 1284, it was decided that a joint body would examine relevant documents.

It was decided that the joint inspection of documents at a commander level meeting would be held on November 24. Commanders from both sides will also visit the lands in question on the same day.

PM urges EU

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to invest more in Bangladesh saying that the country offers excellent investment facilities.

During the meeting, emphasis was laid on capacity building for export expansion simultaneously with efforts for market access of Bangladesh. Technical assistance, standardisation, lab facilities and training figured prominently at the meeting.

Lamy assured all cooperation of the EC towards development of Bangladesh.

Commerce Minister Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister Dr Kamal Siddiqui and Bangladesh Ambassador to Belgium Mohammad Zamir were present during the meeting.

Army: Changes

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A few more changes at the level of major general and brigadier general are expected to be announced shortly.

Five postings at the rank of brigadier general were made yesterday.

Brigadier General Ziaur Rahman takes over as the director of military operations (DMO). He replaces Brigadier Ilyias Itekhkar Rasul.

Brigadier General Sinha Ibne Jamaal moves on to Khagrachari from the National Defence College.

Brigadier General John Gomes has been posted from a Savar brigade to the NCO Academy at Bogra.

Newly promoted Brigadier General Shaquie takes over charge of a Comilla brigade while Brigadier General Mahub ul Hasan, now posted at the DGF, joins the ASC School at the Jahanabad Cantonment on promotion.

Twelve colonels have been given postings. Of them three are going on promotion as brigadier generals. Two lieutenant colonels have been given postings as full colonels.

The Promotion Board had earlier approved all the promotions made yesterday.

Insecticide

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each.

Our Staff Correspondent from Chittagong adds: Three more sick policemen were shifted to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) ward No 14 at CMCH yesterday.

They are Shakhawat Hossain, Jahangir Alam and Barua, hospital sources said.

With them, the number of sick policemen being treated at the ICU rose to nine. Their condition is critical, hospital sources said.

Condition of the other policemen undergoing treatment in Ward No 14 and at the Combined Military Hospital are improving, according to hospital sources.

Four sick policemen are being treated at CMH and three at Ward No 14 at CMCH.

Another three-member committee headed by Commanding Officer of BDR, Rangamati zone, in its preliminary investigation also found that the incident occurred due to callousness of the cook, who carelessly mixed some poisonous powder with bason (gram flour) while preparing Begunee (an Ifar item).

Meanwhile, another team of 28 APBN members have been deployed in the camp.

Armed Forces Day

FROM PAGE 1
Defence Ministry, will place wreaths at the Shikha Anirban at Dhaka Cantonment in the morning to pay homage to the martyred.

Chiefs of the three services will also place wreaths at the Shikha Anirban on behalf of their respective services.

The three chiefs will also make courtesy calls on the President at Bangabhaban and the Prime Minister at her Armed Forces Division office in Dhaka Cantonment.

The Prime Minister will host a reception for the gallantry award winning freedom fighters and members of the Shaheed families at her Armed Forces Division office at 8:40 am.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia will also host an Ifar party at Sena Kunja to commemorate the day.

Chiefs of three services will also host receptions for the members of the Bir Shrestha Shaheed families and selected freedom fighters belonging to the respective services.

Ministers, MPs, gallantry award holder freedom fighters and members of Shaheed families, high civil officials and heads of autonomous and semi-autonomous bodies,

representatives of foreign missions in Dhaka, editors and renowned journalists and civil and military retired officers of the three services will attend the Ifar.

Area commanders of Chittagong, Jessore, Bogra, Rangpur, Mymensingh, Comilla and Savar will host similar receptions at their respective cantonments.

Bangladesh Navy ships will remain open to visitors from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon at Dhaka, Chittagong and Khulna.

Bangladesh Betar will broadcast a special Durbar programme at 7:30 today.

Besides leading national dailies including two regional newspapers based in Chittagong and Bogra will bring out special supplements on the occasion.

Hasina

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caused huge damage to the gas well as well as to the ecology. Occidental transferred its assets and liabilities at Magurchara to another company, Unocal.

Sheikh Hasina, however, evaded a direct reply to another query on setting up of a private container terminal in Chittagong.

SEC

FROM PAGE 12
SEC chairman said.

The conditions will not be applicable for companies, which will be able to improve their operational and financial performance to be upgraded from Z to B or A category.

The provisional financial statements ending on June 30, 2002 will have to be furnished to the SEC before July 31, 2002.

Special force

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camping at different villages in the nine districts of the state bordering Bangladesh.

Bhattacharya said his administration had prepared a report on the Bangladeshi refugee influx, which it had tabled before the union government.

"West Bengal needs at least 34 battalions of Border Security Force guards to keep vigil on the 2,000-kilometre (1,240-mile) stretch of border we share with Bangladesh," he said.

The chief minister added that the special force was needed because India's "porous border" with Bangladesh was unfenced at most places.

Textbooks

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hurriedly decided to bring about some changes to the textbooks to incorporate some chapters on late President Ziaur Rahman and exclude some others, according to a source involved in the revision of the textbooks.

A Dhaka University teacher has been assigned to have a final look into the changes, sources said.

The Awami League government had changed some of the textbooks to pave the way for inclusion of some chapters. Deposed military ruler HM Ershad also had the textbooks changed during his reign.

Changes and additions will be made in 18 textbooks beginning from class I to class IX. However, there will not be much change considering the time constraint, the sources said.

The textbooks will be almost similar to the ones published during the previous tenure of the BNP government, another source said.

Meanwhile, an official at the NCTB said the last-minute changes in the textbooks will not delay the printing process. The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, added that matters regarding the changes will be given to printers soon.

He said the NCTB has asked the DESA to ensure uninterrupted power supply in areas, specially Motijheel, Kotwali, Naya Paltan and Sutrapur where the printing presses are concentrated, for prompt printing of books.

It has also asked the police to allow trucks to carry papers for the printing of textbooks during daytime.

This year, the NCTB will publish some 4.73 crore books for primary level and about 1.93 crore for secondary level classes.

PM orders

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committees on law and order at Para, Mahalla, town and village levels, investigating all complaints of corruption, identifying the corrupt and beginning their trial, and sending special teams abroad for increasing manpower export.

On October 17, a 100-day programme implementation committee was formed headed by the PM's Principal Secretary Dr Kamal Siddiqui.

Dr Siddiqui yesterday apprised the Prime Minister of the outcome of the meeting on the 100-day programme held on November 11 with the secretaries concerned.

Political Secretaries to the PM, Haris Chowdhury and Mosaddeq Ali, and other officials concerned were present in the meeting.

60 ISP lines

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with servers, the sources said.

A high official of MOPT when contacted said, "The ministry is taking effective measures to resolve the problem." As soon as defaulting ISPs renew their licences, BTB will be asked to restore the connections, he added.

Many ISPs said the government can penalise them for delay in renewal of licence. A decision like cancellation of licence is an extreme measure, they said.

In other countries, licences are not cancelled for failure to pay license money because ISPs provide services to thousands of people.

Meanwhile, the ISP Association Bangladesh condemned the 'heinous' act of BTB and MOPT.

In a statement the association said BTB "unjustly" snapped the connections without prior notice.

This unusual situation occurred as the government failed to differentiate between ISPs and VSATs.

In some cases, access lines were snapped for non-renewal of licence for VSAT or ISP.

The association leaders urged the government to give some time to defaulting ISPs to renew their licences.



Sheikh Hasina yesterday visited the survivors of the food poisoning bout of Rangamati at the Chittagong Medical College Hospital yesterday.

AL will project incidents

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dence of Muhuri. As Hasina, flanked by party presidium member Sajeda Chowdhury and her political secretary Saber Hossain Chowdhury, went up to the first floor residence to meet the family, Muhuri's wife Uma Muhuri, only son Shaikat Muhuri, and two daughters Shudeepa and Shudipta broke into tears.

She found it difficult to comfort the bereaved family members who were all weeping and describing to her how cold-bloodedly the assailants, posing as detective policemen, shot Muhuri point blank and killed him.

She spent some time there and later declared at a protest rally that she would bear all educational expenses of the two daughters of Muhuri. Muhuri's eldest daughter is a master's final year student while the youngest one is now studying in class IX.

Several hundred people standing on either side of the road that leads to Muhuri's residence chanted slogans against the killers and demanded their punishment. Hasina expressed sympathy to the bereaved family members and announced that the AL would not tolerate any irregularities in the investigation into case regarding the killing.

She then went to the Chittagong Medical College Hospital where some ailing policemen were undergoing treatment for food poisoning. Hasina demanded an investigation into the incident in which 11 policemen died in Rangamati on Sunday night.

At the Chittagong Circuit House, the AL chief exchanged views with representatives from the Chittagong unit of Bangladesh Teachers Association.

Teachers gathered there recalled fond memory of Muhuri. They said the late principal was an ideal teacher who never compromised with social evils including terrorism and fought against the practice of cheating in examination.

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the killing. He might have links with the killers of Babul, police added.

The prosecution side opposed the bail and prayed for granting him remand. After hearing both the sides, the Magistrate Biman Bihari Barua rejected the bail petition and placed the accused on a two-day remand.

Detectives arrested Ratan, from his Katarur residence as suspect in the killing of BNP leader Babul Ahmed on Monday.

Babul Ahmed, secretary of 46 ward committee of the ruling party, was gunned down by armed miscreants on his second floor residence at Katarur in the city's Mohammadpur area on Sunday morning.

Meanwhile, on the first day of joint operation Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), police and detectives yesterday arrested two others Masud Reza Ahmed, 38, and Fazlul Haq, 35 from the city's BNP slum at Argargaon in connection with the killing. They also arrested 33 others for their alleged involvement in criminal activities in different parts of the city.

The joint operation started from Monday night to arrest criminals and terrorists from different parts of the capital, police sources said.

EC: Rules of origin

FROM PAGE 1
assistance worth nearly one billion euro from the EU over next five years up to 2006. About 560 million euro of the pledged financial assistance will come directly from the EC and the rest includes bilateral assistance from EU member-states.

"The assistance (grant) will cover different critical areas such as health, education, environment, trade-related technical assistance from 2002 to 2006," Fotiadis said.

The EC assurance came against the backdrop of a 25 per cent decline in its financial assistance last year.

The EC also elaborated a country strategy paper for Bangladesh for the next five years setting priorities in the fields of social, economic and trade development, as well as in areas of governance and human rights, according to a joint declaration.

Bangladesh requested for relaxing the rules of origin for the country's exportables, especially for the items that have prospects in the EU market including RMG. Dhaka's request also includes technical assistance for development of the most prospective agro-based industry.

Bangladesh also asked for fixing value addition criteria at 20 per cent for exports of electrical and electronic products, bicycle, spectacles,

soap, plastic and melamine products, and also market access for aromatic rice and poultry meats.

"The EC gave assurance that they would provide technical support for development of agro-based industry and diversification of export," Ahmed said.

When asked whether Bangladesh requested to the EU for balance of payment support under a new window, the commerce secretary said the issue was not discussed at this level. He did not, however, rule out the possibility of a discussion of this sort at a higher level.

Meanwhile, the meeting decided to set up four workgroups covering social, economic and trade development cooperation and cooperation on governance and human rights to follow up and intensify the ground-work for a comprehensive cooperation between the EU and Bangladesh.

These workgroups will maintain and strengthen dialogue on key issues of cooperation in the periods between meetings of joint commission.

Meanwhile, UNB adds, the EU will not change their policy decision on regional cumulation for Bangladesh's apparels but will look into Dhaka's proposal for slashing the value-addition prerequisite to 20 per cent for enjoying duty-free

Couple murder

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killings took place.

The prosecution side opposed the bail petition and prayed for the remand.

After hearing both the sides the magistrate Biman Bihari Barua rejected the bail petitions and placed them on a two-day remand.

Kamal Hossain, 54, an employee of Customs North and his wife Sultani Begum, 48, were killed in a crossfire between two local rival groups of terrorists - one led by Nabi and the other by Razzak - at about 8:30 pm on Sunday.

Chhoto Nasir

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Victim's wife Uma Muhuri told police that accountant Shahjahan, who was terminated from his job for misappropriation of college fund, came to their Jamal Khan residence along with three unidentified youths in the night before the murder and persuaded her husband to get back his job.

Shahjahan threatened the principal of dire consequences before leaving the residence as he could not convince him, Uma said.

Shahjahan was the person who has shown the residence of Principal Muhuri to the suspected killers, police said.

Chittagong in 1988, which has not been disposed of as yet and the Bangabandhu Murder Case.

Hasina also blasted the new government for its failure to maintain law and order in the country, adding that toll collections and illegal occupations of public properties became all pervasive.

She noted that after the October 1 polls, hundreds of women were violated and many of the victims, who were born to respectable families, did not even report the incidents because of social repercussion.

She also criticised the home minister's move to prepare a fresh list of terrorists in the country on the pretext that whoever the police were arresting now on charge of terrorism happened to be an activist or a leader of the four-party alliance.

"That means he (home minister) now intends to prepare a list of terrorists incorporating names of the political opponents and the innocent people into it."

Before catching a GMG flight back to the capital in the afternoon, Hasina addressed a rally at the Engineers' Institute to protest the killing of Muhuri. The rally, originally scheduled as a party workers' rally, was organised by Chittagong City Unit and South and North District Unit of the AL.

The AL chief told the rally said that like in 1971, residences of AL leaders and workers were torched throughout the country following the October 1 polls.

She called for re-organising the Awami League and inducting fresh members into the party.

Hasina urged people to compare incidents of persecution during the last one month with those during the five-year tenure of her government. She said her protocol officer was mugged recently and when he had gone to the police station concerned, the policemen there refused to register the case as an incident of mugging. She expressed doubt about whether even one in a thousand incidents was being registered in police stations. She assured her party men that the AL would render legal assistance to the victims of persecution. With Chittagong South District Unit AL president Abdus Salam in the chair, the protest rally was addressed, among others, by former ministers and AL leaders Sajeda Chowdhury, MA Mannan, Mosharraf Hossain, Chittagong City Corporation Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury, AL Finance Secretary Ataur Rahman Kaiser, Rafiqul Anwar, MP, and Moslehuddin

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The joint operation started from Monday night to arrest criminals and terrorists from different parts of the capital, police sources said.

The assurance came from visiting EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy at bilateral official talks yesterday evening as Bangladesh side made them understand that the SAARC cumulation arrangement to add value to the readymade garments would hardly benefit Bangladesh by only 1.2 per cent, meeting sources said.

"We approached them to relax rules of origin basically for apparel items slashing value addition requirement to 20 per cent," Khasru told waiting newsmen after the meeting at state guesthouse Padma. "They assured us the issue would be considered," he said.

He said the EU also showed interest to provide Bangladesh technical support in its effort to diversify exports as the basket remains scanty to offer the European consumers.

As they wanted to know possible areas to put light on, Bangladesh appraised them prospects for agro-processing industry, information technology, leather and leather products, frozen foods, packaging and light engineering.

However, Lamy preferred to start with two to three items that would be finalised during their next visit sometime next month, said the commerce minister.

MP hostel suites, seats allocated

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The House Committee of the Jatiya Sangsad at a meeting yesterday allocated suites and rooms of the MP hostels proportionally among the political parties.

According to official sources the political parties will now distribute the suites and rooms to accommodate their members in the two dormitories of the hostel located in the city's Sher-e-Bangla Nagar and Nakhhalapara. The suites are housed in the Sher-e-Bangla Nagar hostel.

Chaired by Chief Whip Khandaker Delwar Hossain, the meeting decided that the ruling BNP, which bagged more than two-third majority in the 300-strong parliament, were given 22 suites and 120 rooms.

The main opposition Awami League, which bagged only 62 seats, was given six suites and 37 rooms. Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh, one of the component

of the BNP-led coalition was given two suites and 11 rooms while the other components of the coalition Jatiya Party (Nazir) and Islamic Okiya Jote were allocated three and one rooms respectively.

With 14 seats in parliament the Ershad-led faction of the Jatiya Party got two suites and nine rooms for its members.

Among the seven independent MPs, only one was given a suite while three others were given three rooms in the hostels.

The meeting attended among others by Wahidul Alam, Majibur Rahman Sarwar, Mashiur Rahman and Fazlul Haq Aspia also decided that government officials other than members of the parliament secretariat, occupying the residential quarters in the parliament complex will be asked to vacate them immediately.

Opposition Chief Whip Abus Shahid did not attend the meeting.

Northern Alliance

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because of divisions between London and Washington over their precise role, according to newspaper reports in London, quoting defence and diplomatic sources.

The Times and The Independent said Washington was more concerned with hunting down prime terror suspect Osama bin Laden and deposing of the Taliban regime than with setting up a force to aid humanitarian activity.

"It's desperately frustrating all round and it's also very awkward," The Times quoted a defence source as saying.

"The US is focused on going after bin Laden and is far less inclined to engage in longer-term stabilisation."

A total 6,000 British troops are on 48-hour standby for deployment in Afghanistan following the arrival last week of some 100 British marine commandos at Bagram air base north of Kabul.

British Prime Minister Tony Blair has said any troops deployed would focus on protecting humanitarian supply routes, securing airfields, ensuring the safe return of UN and aid agency staff and bomb disposal.

He has added that troops could be used in "offensive frontline operations."

It had been suggested that the impasse over further troop deployment was due to deep mistrust shown by the anti-Taliban Northern Alliance towards the presence of British marines.

But defence sources, quoted by The Times, said it "had more to do with Washington than Kabul."

Another report says, the Northern Alliance said yesterday it had given the Taliban three days to surrender or face an all-out assault.

Alliance spokesman Attiq Ullah, speaking from the northern city of Mazar-e-Sharif, said fighters loyal to Laden mainly Arabs, Chechens and Pakistanis had been preventing the Taliban from giving up the besieged city of Kunduz.

"If there is a fight in Kunduz, it will be a bloody one because there are three thousand foreign fighters and they have nowhere to go," he said.

Northern Alliance troops have encircled the city, and US warplanes have been conducting intensive bombardment of Taliban front-line positions. They swooped in yesterday for more bombing runs.

US airstrikes were also reported yesterday in the Taliban's home base, the southern city of Kandahar. Pashtun tribal leaders have been trying to persuade Taliban leaders who are ethnic brethren to give up the city.

Pakistan ordered the Taliban yesterday to close its last two consulates, saying they were unnecessary after the collapse of Taliban rule in most of Afghanistan.

Pakistan summoned the Taliban Ambassador Abdul Salam Zaeef yesterday at the Foreign Ministry and ordered him to close consulates in the northern city of Peshawar and in Quetta in southwestern Pakistan, Foreign Ministry spokesman Aziz

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