

Abductors slash boy

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abduction after Shihab recognised one of his captors.

Shihab, a student of class seven at Motijheel Model High School, was abducted from in front of his school at about 5:15pm and killed the same night. He was a resident of 47B Eastern Housing, central Bashabo in Khilgaon.

Shihab's aunt had gone to the school to take him home. Shihab told her that he was going for an "important work" with his senior friend Monir Hossain Liton.

Since then Shihab could not be traced.

At night, Shihab's father Khandaker Dildar Ahmed got a phone call at his house demanding a ransom of Tk 20 lakh for his son's release.

Liton took him to a club at 287/2, North Goran, which was used as an election campaign office of Julekha Begum, a candidate of eleven-party alliance in the last parliamentary election.

Five more young men came to the club in the evening. One of them was Raju, who was known to Shihab as they resided in the same area.

Shihab had requested Raju to tell the other captors to release him, according to the statements of the culprits.

But as Shihab recognised Raju, he was killed, investigators said.

The innocent schoolboy was strangled at the club at about 7 pm.

The killers left the body in the locked room and left. They returned at about 12 at night and cut the body into six pieces, put those in three bags and concealed in three places.

The knives and a machete used were kept under earth at an under-construction building in North Goran. Police also recovered those, acting on the statement of the culprits.

Seven days later, the gang again called the victim's father and demanded Tk 15 lakh as ransom. They threatened him that a dose of Pethidine would be pushed into his son's body every day for delay in payment of the ransom.

The gang made several calls to the family later from different card phone booths.

At one stage, Shihab's father wanted a photo of his son from the captors or to allow his son to talk to him to ascertain that he was with them and alive.

The kidnappers told the father that they kept Shihab's shoes at the visitors' shoe rack at the National Museum.

The gang asked the victim's father to go to a place in Demra with the ransom. After contacting with detective police, Dildar told them to select a venue in the city.

Finally, they gang told Dildar to hand over the money to them at

Bill on polybag ban tabled in JS

UNB, Dhaka

A bill was introduced in parliament yesterday seeking a ban on production and use of polythene shopping bags and other materials as well as control of toxic exhausts of transport detrimental to environment and public health.

Environment Minister Shahjahan Siraj moved the Bangladesh Environment Preservation (Amendment) Bill 2002, saying, "The existing environment act was not adequate and required some amendments and incorporation of some new provisions for effective application of the law."

The bill provides for a minimum of six months' and a maximum of 10 years' rigorous imprisonment on different charges ranging from production and sale of polythene.

Shahjahan Siraj also introduced Environment Court (Amendment) Bill 2002 providing for establishment of environment courts in different divisions, and if necessary, in districts giving necessary powers to judges for quick disposal of environment-related cases.

Stay order on Nasim's remand extended till April 13

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Third Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka, yesterday extended the stay order on remand of Bahaudin Nasim till April 13 in connection with a case filed with Motijheel thana on February 7 after his son was missing. Later it was turned into a regular case on February 10.

The case was handed over to DB on February 13.

Shihab was the second of his two brothers and one sister.

It may be mentioned that Ammar Shamsi, an O-level student at Naiila Fleur Tutorial at Dhammandi was called out of his house by his friends on October 16, 2000. A ransom was later demanded for his release. He was strangled at the National Park in Gazipur and the body was left there.

Later, Shamsi's partially decomposed body was recovered from the park on October 26. DB arrested four youths in connection with the abduction and killing.

DB submitted charge sheet against four youths Ziaur Rahman Zia, Salauddin, Mostafa Almas and Alamgir November 14, 2000 in the case.

The defence lawyers filed a criminal revision with the Metropolitan Sessions Judges Court, Dhaka, seeking stay order on remand of Nasim on March 6.

The CMM's Court, Dhaka on February 28 placed AF M Bahauddin Nasim, special assistant to Awami League Chief Sheikh Hasina, on a 10-day remand in two separate cases one relating to foreign currency smuggling and the other filed with Motijheel thana on charge of firing gunshots on the motorcycle of the then opposition leader Khaleda Zia.

Nasim was arrested from ZIA on February 27 on charge of foreign currency smuggling.

Later, a sedition case against Nasim was filed with the CMM's Court, Dhaka on March 11.

Abolition of 10 pc regulatory duty on rice import recommended

BSS, Dhaka

A meeting of the Food Planning and Supporting Committee yesterday recommended abolition for the time being the 10 per cent regulatory duty imposed earlier on import of rice in the private sector to keep price of rice stable.

The meeting was held at the conference room of the Food Ministry with its Minister Abdurrahman Al Noman in the Chair, an official release said.

Agriculture Minister Motiur Rahman Nizami, Disaster Management and Relief Minister Chowdhury Kamal ibne Yusuf and State Minister for Finance and Planning Anwarul Kabir Talukder and secretaries of ministries concerned were present.

The meeting discussed in detail the overall stock position of food, fixation of procurement prices of Boro paddy, rice, wheat and maize.

Telecom graft

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sheet of the Bureau of Anti-corruption refers to the Chinese and Canadian vendors' per line costs as \$256 and \$134 respectively.

According to the white paper's comparative figures, the BTTB overpaid \$80 per line to the CMEC. Therefore, the total overpayment made to the Chinese vendor is \$17.27 million for 2.16 lakh lines.

But the FIR claims the BTTB overpaid \$122 to CMEC for each line and the total amount of \$26.40 million have been embezzled in this 2.16 lakh line project.

If the white paper is right, the charge sheet is wrong and vice versa. Sources said such contradiction in the vital figures being claimed by two different wings of the Prime Minister's Office might be an embarrassing issue in the court of law.

Robbers die

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were killed and the other was wounded critically. A helper of the truck was also injured critically in the collision.

The deceased were identified as Mokammel Hossain, 30, Md. Idris Ali, 28, Bablu Miah, 26, and Idris Ali of Sirajganj district, and Ismail Hossain, 30, of Dhaka's Mirpur area.

The wounded helper of the Dhaka-bound truck from Bhuapur in Tangail and the passenger of the private car were admitted to hospital in critical condition.

Moreover, they observed that there is 'absolute freedom' for all

Motia, Nasim asked to appear before court on Apr 25

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Second Special Tribunal for prevention of Public Safety Disturbances and Crimes, Dhaka, yesterday directed former home minister Mohammad Nasim, former agriculture minister Motia Chowdhury and two others accused in a case filed under the Public Safety Act (PSA) to appear before it on April 25.

The tribunal also fixed the same date for hearing on charge-framing in the case.

The two other accused are Awami League central leader Dr Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin and city Sramik League general secretary Ismail Alam.

Judge Mohammad Abdur Razzak on Sunday accepted the documents of the case, sent by the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court earlier on the day.

The four were accused of obstructing traffic in the city during the AL - called a half-day hartal on January 9 protesting price hike of oil, gas and electricity.

Sub-Inspector (SI) Moinur Rahman filed the case with Motijheel thana.

SI Mohammad Abdul Matin, Investigation Officer (IO) of the case, submitted charge sheet to the CMM's Court on March 28. In it, 21 people were shown as prosecution witnesses.

Meanwhile, Nasim, Motia and Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin were granted anticipatory bail in the case by the High Court (HC) on January 12. The bail period was till submission of police report in the case.

As per the HC order, the bail

period expired on March 28 as the IO submitted charge sheet. Now the accused have to seek extension of bail to the HC or the trial court.

JCD men mug Iranian couple, clash with police at Cox's Bazar: 50 hurt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

At least 50 people were injured in a clash between police and JCD activists in the town on Sunday night.

Failing to snatch away 5 activists, arrested on charge of mugging and harassing an Iranian couple, JCD activists went on the rampage and clashed with police.

Injured JCD activist Jalal and constable Sheik Kamal were sent to the Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

Police said they were directed by the higher authorities to take stern action against the accused.

Police said the JCD men beat up the Iranian tourist couple after snatching US\$ 100 from them at a filling station at Cox's Bazar.

They kicketed the wife when she tried to save her husband from the hands of the goons.

Police later arrested 13 of the JCD men and lodged two cases under the public safety act.

Ahad Chy granted permanent bail in criminal case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka, yesterday granted permanent bail to Prof Abdul Ahad Chowdhury in a criminal case.

Judge Ahmed Jamil Mostafa granted bail to former Chairman of Bangladesh Muktijoddha Central Command Council upon a petition filed by the defence lawyers.

Ahad Chowdhury along with his lawyers Advocate Sahara Khatun, Abdullah Abu, Mohammad Ali and SM Altaf Hossain appeared before the court and prayed for permanent bail.

Khandaker Tanveer Islam alias Jay, son of Khandaker Nazrul Islam of Banaria village under Mirzapur thana in Tangail, address 43/8/16 Indira Road under Tejgaon thana;

Arman, son of SM Airul of 603, Baro Moghbazar under Ramna thana;

Moshirul Rahman Kochi, son of Moklesur Rahman of DMC-261, Malancha, 3rd floor, Ibrahimpur;

Shamim Ahmed alias Aga Shamim, son of Dr Shamsuddin, of 41 Abdul Hadi Lane under Kotwali thana;

Sources said both types of posters have already been distributed to all police stations in the city, and have also been sent to different

Top 23 terrorists

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village Krokerchar under Shibchar thana in Madaripur, address 14/C Mona Tower;

Liakat Hossain's younger brother Kamrul Hasan alias Hannan;

Aminur Rasul Sagar alias Tokai Sagar;

The other nine criminals listed under the second category are the following:

"This is part of the government's bid to arrest those responsible for criminal activities and consequent deterioration of the law and order situation," said a police official asking not to be named.

Many city-dwellers however think that sticking posters alone would not bring any positive change in improving law and order. "None of them could be arrested because they already had sufficient time to escape," said a resident of Green Road area.

He also said that no significant improvement took place in the country's crime scenario but the situation has gone from bad to worse. "We the city-dwellers see no ray of hope yet."

In a bid to improve city's law and order situation, the BNP-led four party government announced the list of 23 top criminals on December 24 last and ordered police to arrest them immediately.

The initial euphoria it created among people took almost no time to evaporate as the government's "war against terrorism" was hopelessly failing to produce any results with incidents of murder, mugging, extortion and plunder showing no signs of let-up, and even escalating in the city and elsewhere in the country.

Sources allege that due to their strong links with many top and influential political leaders, terrorists continue to operate with virtual impunity. Although a few were arrested, they were however released shortly on bail.

PM seeks Canadian investment

UNB, Dhaka

Expansion of trade and commerce, assistance in conversion of natural gas to CNG, IT, education, vocational and professional training and business and student visas of Canada came up for discussion during his meeting with the Prime Minister.

Khaleda Zia said Canada could invest under joint venture in gas-based industry in Bangladesh, which would generate employment opportunities besides benefiting both the countries in terms of financial returns.

She also sought Canadian investment and cooperation in IT education, particularly in female education, professional training and social sectors.

The PM hoped that Canada would import more items from Bangladesh, including jute and jute products, ceramic, tea, pharmaceutical products, leather and agro-based products.

Al seeks probe

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The London-based human rights watchdog body also urged the authorities to allow Bahauddin Nasim and Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir to be examined by an independent medical body.

His family has asked for Bahauddin Nasim to be allowed to receive medical attention from an independent medical authority, "so far without success."

The Amnesty said Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir was arrested on March 15 for investigation into allegations that he had instigated government officials and employees to join a rally against the then government of Khaleda Zia in early 1996.

On March 24, Dr Alamgir was brought to court when he testified that while he was in police custody, "three masked men beat him with lathi and bottles filled with water." He said he was "beaten severely on his buttocks, feet and other muscular parts of his body and not allowed to have his medicine for diabetes."

The copy of the Amnesty statement was sent to the Home Minister and the IG of police.

Free access for Dhaka

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the Canadian-made General Motors engines.

"Canada is a nation of innovation, eager for partnerships with companies in Bangladesh," Kilgour said. The Canadian Export Development Corporation is ready to finance business opportunities.

A Canada-Bangladesh Business Council was launched on Sunday and the Canadian minister hoped that the council would provide a new 'bi-national vehicle' for an increased partnership between private sectors.

The Canadian minister also mentioned the educational opportunities in Canada for Bangladeshi students. He also said the number of Bangladeshi students accepted by Canadian universities increased almost three folds.

Mac Harb said, "When we talk about trade we mean fair rules and also market access." He also mentioned the LDCs would require less aid than they are receiving now, if they are given market access to the developing countries.

Tapan Chowdhury quoted trade experts as saying that developing countries could have earned an additional US\$ 150 billion a year if the developed countries had implemented the market access commitments under the Uruguay Round.

The MCCI chief sought Canadian support in building the country's information technology (IT) capacity.

BRTA

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month of February. As per the BRTA records, there are around 30,000 registered two-stroke autorickshaws in the capital. But police estimate that nearly 100,000 such vehicles ply the city streets.