

Top Shibir man charged with Muhuri murder

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Detective Branch (DB) of police submitted charge sheet in the sensational Gopal Krishna Muhuri murder case to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) yesterday, only two days short of a year after the gruesome killing.

DB Inspector and Investigation Officer (IO) of the case Md Sirajul Islam submitted the four-page charge sheet, accusing 12 persons including top Shibir cadre and an accused in 35 cases Nasir alias Shibir Nasir and the main accused in the eight-murder case Habib Khan.

Gopal Krishna Muhuri, principal of Nazirhat College under Hathazari thana and a freedom fighter, was shot dead by the gang with an AK-56 rifle at his Jamal Khan residence in the city on November 16 last year.

The incident had sparked widespread resentment across the country.

In the charge sheet, five Shibir cadres were accused as the main 'killer group'. They are Gittu Nasir, Taslimuddin Montu, Baittya Alamgir, Azam and Chhoto Saiful.

Nasir, his brother Mohiuddin, accomplice Habib Khan, three teachers and an accountant of Nazirhat College -- Tofazzal Hossain, Md Idris, Jahurul Haq and Md Shahjahan -- were charged as the 'mastermind' and 'planner' of the killing.

Of the 12, Shibir Nasir, Baittya Alamgir and Taslimuddin Montu are now in jail and the three teachers are on bail. The others have been absconding.

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Fitra fixed at Tk 25

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fitra has been fixed this year at Tk 25.00 a person for the residents of Dhaka and its adjacent areas. It will be 1.65 kilogram of wheat or flour or its cash equivalent for people in the rest of the country, says a press release.

The decision came at a meeting, held at the hall room of the Islamic Foundation yesterday to fix the rate of *Sadakatul Fitra*. Director General of the foundation Syed Ashraf Ali chaired the meeting.

The meeting fixed this year's fitra at 1.65kg of wheat or flour or its cash equivalent.

Given the current market price, it comes about Tk 25.00 for residents of the capital and its adjoining areas.



PHOTO: STAR

A market built on the park opposite the now-defunct Gulistan Hall in the city during the tenure of Mayor Mohammad Hanif was demolished yesterday. Despite public outcry, the former mayor left the market untouched.

Deadline ends today Hasina, Altaf, Babar surrender weapons

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hundreds of people crowded different police stations across the country yesterday to surrender their weapons on the penultimate day of depositing licensed arms.

A number of prominent persons including former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury and State Minister for Home Lutfuzzaman Babar deposited their weapons yesterday.

Awami Leader President Sheikh Hasina deposited her licensed firearms with the office of the deputy commissioner (DC) in Dhaka yesterday.

Sources said a personal staff of Hasina went to the DC office in the morning and deposited three licensed arms a shotgun, 32 bore revolver and .22 bore rifle.

The Awami League applied to the home ministry, seeking permission not to deposit Hasina's arms on the

ground that this would jeopardise Hasina's security. But the home ministry rejected the appeal.

Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury deposited his licensed gun along with 40 rounds of bullets with the Patuakhali Sadar Hospital yesterday morning. The caretaker of his village home went to the Sadar Police Station at 10:30am and deposited the arms and ammunitions on behalf of the minister, our Patuakhali correspondent said.

State Minister for Home Lutfuzzaman Babar deposited his arms with the Ramna Police Station in the city yesterday. His personal secretary went to the police station with a licensed gun and a revolver of Babar at around noon and deposited them.

A ward commissioner of ward No. 65 of the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC), Shahidul Islam, surrendered

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NEW ORDER

UNB, Dhaka

The government yesterday slapped a ban on buying and selling of all types of firearms at dealer shops until further orders.

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Anti-crime drive neutral, to go on as long as required

Home minister tells JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury yesterday said that the ongoing joint drive against crime is being conducted neutrally and would continue as long as it is required.

The joint operation by the army, the paramilitary Bangladesh Rifles, the police and the ansars has resulted in substantial improvement of law and order across the country, he told the Jatiya Sangsad while making a statement under section 300 of the Rules of Procedure.

He also claimed that people from all walks of life have appreciated the ongoing anti-crime. It has also won acclaim abroad, the home minister added.

Altaf informed the House that some 1,000 illegal weapons and 30,000 rounds of ammunition have been recovered and as many as 5,500 people, including many wanted criminals, arrested during the drive.

Troops save police from villagers' ire

46 listed criminals nabbed, 15 firearms seized

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An army team yesterday rescued the officer-in-charge (OC) and other policemen of the Gowainghat Police Station in Sylhet, who were confined to a remote village by agitated people.

Six policemen, including the OC, Khurshid Alam, were injured and admitted to different hospitals in Sylhet.

And 28 villagers had been arrested on charge of assaulting the policemen and snatching an arrestee from them, reports our Sylhet correspondent.

On Wednesday midnight, a police team led by the OC went to Latur Khagra village to arrest some robbers. On the way back to their station, the policemen came under attack by some villagers.

When the villagers announced through loudspeakers of different mosques nearby 'an attack by armed robbers', other villagers rushed out of their houses and caught the policemen.

The OC informed the Jaintapur Police Station by his walkie-talkie, seeking immediate help.

Officer-in-Charge of the Jaintapur Police Station Anisur Rahman rushed to the village with a contingent of police only to come under attack by the villagers. Rahman escaped, leaving all policemen behind,

though. On information, an army team went to the village yesterday morning and rescued the policemen. Separate cases had been filed and a camp has been set up in the village.

Meanwhile, the army netted 161 people, including 46 listed criminals, across the country in the last 24 hours ending at 8:00am yesterday.

Also seized were 15 firearms together with 55 rounds of ammunition. The seizure list includes three pistols, three revolvers, six shotguns and a pipe-gun.

The joint forces have so far arrested 5,618 people including 1,426 listed criminals and recovered 839 firearms across the country since the launch of an anticrime operation on October 17.

Our Khulna correspondent reports that the joint forces raided the Khulna Chamber Mansion once again yesterday and kept it under siege from 10:00am to 1:15pm.

The building that houses the office of the Khulna Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) was earlier raided on Tuesday. They searched all ten floors of the building for KCCI President Shaikh Nazrul Islam, who went into hiding after the launch of the army drive. Islam's younger brothers -- Shaikh Nurul Islam and

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Controversy clouds DAB project

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Swedish company operating in Bangladesh since 1999 has sought government intervention to save a medical project from the grasp of an association in BIRDEM Hospital run by the Diabetic Association of Bangladesh (DAB).

At a press conference yesterday at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday, the company, Swede Bengal Medicine Center (SBMC) accused the DAB of violating agreement and non-cooperation.

All operations of the cardiac centre that the company was supposed to establish in six years were suspended October 30 without notifying the SBMC director. "We were completely taken aback," said Anita Bell, director of the hospital.

She told reporters that DAB authorities were not facilitating and supporting the establishment of the cardiac centre.

"Back-up power and sterilisation facilities were not in place when installing the equipment. Patients' safety is of utmost importance but

we did not get any cooperation in time to rectify some of the major construction and repair works when we needed them," accused Anita.

In a letter to the prime minister, the health and family welfare minister and the foreign minister dated November 9, the SBMC urged for saving the Tk 2.5 crore medical installation from huge financial loss.

The SBMC has been working to establish the centre since 1999 at the BIRDEM Hospital under an agreement with the DAB. But its future is now at stake as the DAB 'forcibly' occupied the centre on the night of October 29.

The SBMC and the DAB signed an agreement in October 1999 to set up a modern cardiac centre. The objective of the project was to expose Bangladeshi doctors and technical staff to modern healthcare and to save foreign exchange by offering high quality cardiac treatment in the country.

The government sanctioned Tk

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Speedy Trial Tribunal Ordn placed in JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Moudud Ahmed placed the "Speedy Trial Tribunal Ordinance, 2002" in the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday.

The ordinance aims for quick disposal of cases related to five major criminal offences - murder, rape, illegal arms, explosives and drugs.

Article 93(2) of the constitution says an ordinance promulgated by the president shall be placed before parliament at its first meeting following the promulgation.

The ordinance provides for disposal of any case within 90 working days after its transfer to the tribunal.

If the case is not disposed of within the time limit due to unavoidable reasons, the tribunal would clear it off within the next 30 days, citing in writing the reasons for

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Illegal motorbikes run for cover

ROVING CORRESPONDENT

Thousands of motorbike workshop mechanics and spare parts traders are now finding themselves without job in the districts outside the capital with unlicensed motorbikes staying off the road in the wake of the ongoing nationwide anti-crime crackdown.

Over the last ten years these unauthorised motorcycles, mostly smuggled in from India, have flooded the country, providing employment opportunities to a new breed of young, self-trained mechanics.

Political activists, hoodlums and influential youths own most of these smuggled or stolen motorbikes, sold until recently at a very low price at different parts of the country. For hoodlums and political activists the bikes a motorcycle is a symbol of "power and prestige".

Before the crackdown, these motorcyclists enjoyed immunity from the law-enforcement agencies, no matter whether their bikes had registration or they themselves had valid drivers licence. Motorcycle gives them the mobility to commit crimes even in the remotest parts of the country. And when they ran into police checkpoints, the easy option was to bribe the policemen and get away. Most of these 'motorcyclists' are now either on the run or behind bars.

The motorcyclists usually plied the roads with number plates that read "Applied for Registration or AFR". The practice became so popular over the years that these AFRs replaced proper number plates in majority of the bikes in

districts outside Dhaka.

In Faridpur town, workshop mechanics said many motorcyclists who have valid documents have also impounded their bikes, as they do not have driver's license. Reports of 'dreadful treatment' after arrests by army are that even innocent people let alone owners of motorcycles without proper registration or driver's licence are scared to run into frequent military patrols and roadblocks, they said.

Zainal Abedin a 24-year old owner of a workshop on Dhaka-Faridpur highway, said he was thinking of closing down his workshop and wait in his village home for the crackdown to be over. Zainal has already sent two of his three employees home after the crackdown began.

"I have been a mechanic since I was 15 but never before have I experienced such a hard time in business. You are the first motorcyclist to come to my shop for repair

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	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Nov 15		5-13 pm
Nov 16	6-13 am	

Prayer Timings		
Nov 15		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-51	6-00
Juma	12-15	1-20
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-16	5-27
Esha	7-30	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation



PHOTO: STAR

Many in the concrete, high-rise life look for a whiff of nature and so, cage birds are in huge demand. Here, lovebirds huddle together at a Katabon pet shop, selling at Tk 200 a pair.