

Mondol murder case verdict today

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Judgement in the Advocate Habibur Rahman Mondol murder case will be delivered today.

Shahed Noor Uddin, judge of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-1, Dhaka Division, will pronounce the verdict at 12:30pm, court sources said.

The prosecution and the defence completed hearing arguments in the case on Monday. The tribunal had earlier recorded the statements of 27 out of 46 prosecution witnesses.

The tribunal framed charges against Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) Ward Commissioner Saidur Rahman Shahid and 17 others on January 9 this year. The trial began on January 17 and was complete in 135 working days.

Advocate Mondol, 44, joint secretary of the city BNP and leader of the Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Parishad, was shot dead by a gang at Chandra Mohan Basak Lane at Banagram in old Dhaka on August 20, 2000.

Mondol came under attack

when he and his muhuri (clerk) were going to court by a motorbike.

Mohammed Abdul Hye Bhuiyan, a BNP activist, filed a murder case with the Sutrapur Police Station accusing four people the following day.

But Abu Hena Mostafa Kamal, the then officer-in-charge of the Sutrapur Police Station and investigation officer of the case, submitted a final report on June 6, 2001 as the allegations against the accused were not proved.

The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka on June 19, 2001 ordered further investigation by the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) upon a naraji petition (no-confidence) filed by the complainant of the case.

The CID submitted a charge sheet against Shahid and 17 others on November 4 last year.

Of the accused, Shahid, Kala Sharif, Abdul Malek, Alamgir and Akhter Hossain are now in custody while "Pichchi" Hannan and 11 others have been absconding.

9 US troops wounded in Iraq unrest

AFP, Baghdad

Nine more US soldiers were wounded in Iraq but none of their injuries was serious or life-threatening, a US ground forces spokesman told AFP yesterday.

The toll did not include the two killed and nine wounded in the flashpoint city of Fallujah west of Baghdad, where US troops were ambushed by attackers early Tuesday, Captain David Connolly said.

"There are still elements of the former regime who are trying to disrupt our efforts to rebuild Iraq, whether paramilitary or former members of the Baath party" of Saddam Hussein, he said.

"They are continuing to try to use fear as a weapon against the people of Iraq but it won't work," he said, adding the "incidents" had occurred in the country's central and northern regions.

There had been a "heavy toll on human rights and human lives", she said, with Iraq diverting attention to the market.

Kate Allen, Amnesty's UK director, said the "war on terror" had brought an "overwhelming impact" worldwide.

The report continues: "Governments have spent billions to strengthen national security and



PHOTO: STAR
A shop, left, lies vandalised as two Hindu groups clashed over a temple at Shankhari Bazar in Old Dhaka yesterday and police, right, stand guard amid mounting tension in the area.

AI on war on terror

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from problems in areas like Cote d'Ivoire, Colombia, Burundi, Chechnya and Nepal.

Launching the report, Amnesty secretary general Irene Khan criticised the UK's Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act.

The measure has allowed the UK to intern 11 foreign nationals without change in what Amnesty calls "inhuman and degrading conditions".

Irene said: "In the name of security, politics and profit, human rights were trampled the world over by governments, armed groups and corporate activity."

"What would have been unacceptable on September 10, 2001, is now becoming almost the norm."

"What would have been an outrage in Western countries during the Cold War - torture, detention without trial, truncated justice - is readily accepted in some countries today for some people."

HIDDEN CRIMES

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Allen said the definition of security had to encompass the safety of people as well as states, and that meant a commitment to human rights.

RISING FEARS

Millions of Afghans, including returning refugees, still face an uncertain future even 18 months after the war in their country ended, says the report.

And it warns that despite the attention given to human rights problems in Israel and its occupied territories, these are among the crises receiving the least action from the world community.

The report continues: "Governments have spent billions to strengthen national security and

the "war on terror".

"Yet for millions of people, the real sources of insecurity are corruption, repression, discrimination, extreme poverty and preventable diseases."

The report suggests divisions the last year have made people of different faiths and backgrounds more divided, with "genuine fears" prompted across all sections of society.

Amnesty also points to such concerns as the 600-plus suspects held without charge by the US in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Among other specific crisis the report highlights are:

Democratic Republic of Congo, where the "human rights situation remains bleak, with continuing fighting and attacks on civilians, particularly in the east" Burundi, where "government forces carried out extrajudicial killings and other serious violations ... while armed groups unlawfully killed, detained, abducted and tortured civilians in pursuit of their political aims Colombia, where "the security measures enacted by the new government exacerbated the spiralling cycle of political violence".

Meanwhile, the sellers of green coconut, watermelon and soft drinks did a brisk business. The selling of oral rehydration saline also picked up.

Weathermen said there was no immediate respite from the sultry weather as it was set to continue for a few more days.

The meteorological office said a severe heat wave might continue over Rajshahi and Khulna divisions and mild to moderate in Dhaka division.

They cyclone that died silently in the Arakan hills of Myanmar last week had delayed the advent of monsoon in Bangladesh, breeding a prolonged spell of hot weather, Akram Hossain, director of the Meteorological Department said.

Monsoon normally arrives in the first week of June, he said.

The meteorological office said rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty to squally winds is likely at a few places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions.

One or two places over Khulna, Barisal and Chittagong divisions are also likely to experience the same weather pattern till 6:00pm tomorrow.

Biometrics

FROM PAGE 12

US-Visit (United States Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology, Programme), but that would be applicable only to those countries that are included in the Visa Waiver Permanent Program Act of 2000 and Bangladesh does not fall under that category.

Twenty-seven countries are under Visa Waiver Program (VWP) whose citizens can travel to the United States for tourism or business for 90 days or less without obtaining a visa.

The countries include Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brunel, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg and Monaco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and United Kingdom.

There is a congressional mandate for these countries to introduce biometrics passport by October 26, 2004. Bangladesh does not fall in this category and as such the date of October 26, 2004 does not apply to Bangladesh, the handout said.

The Daily Star report was based on a briefing summary sent to the government from the Consulate General of Bangladesh in Los Angeles. The consul general of the mission in Los Angeles attended the briefing summary on May 16. In his briefing summary, he mentioned that from October 6, 2004 only machine-readable biometrics passports will be acceptable to the US authorities.

Summer sizzles

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Secondary Certificate (HSC) examinees went beyond limits.

Day-labourers, however, are the worst victims of the scorcher as it forced them to stay indoors and kept them from earning a living.

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Three get 7-yr in jail for filing false case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A complainant and his wife and daughter have been sentenced to seven years' rigorous imprisonment for filing a false case under the Acid Control Act.

The convicts are complainant Mohammad Safar Uddin, his wife Ayesha Khatun and daughter Joytuna.

Mohammad Mahbub-ul-Islam, judge of the Fifth Additional District and Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka, yesterday found the three guilty of bringing the false charges against two people and directed the law enforcers to arrest the convicts.

The judge acquitted the two accused of charges as the allegations brought against them were proved to be false.

The acquited are Mohammad Rubel and his sister-in-law (wife of his elder brother) Mosammam Salma Bhuiyan.

The judge also directed the inspector general of police (IGP) to take necessary steps for punishing the investigation officer (IO) of the case.

In the case filed with the Badda Police Station, it was alleged that Mohammad Safar Uddin of Dakhin Badda in the city sustained acid injuries at his residence at about 7:30pm on September 10, last year.

Credit card

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issued about 59,000 local and 2,000 international credit cards.

American Express Bank has issued about 5,000 international credit cards.

The rights watchdog said authorities have tortured both common criminals and members of the opposition.

Amnesty, which opposes the death penalty, said at least 87 people were sentenced to death in 2002 in Bangladesh, although no executions were reported.

Amnesty also noted that a

freedom-seeking face of religion, and on the other the seeking of hegemony and unilateralism have made a mockery of such respected concepts of freedom and democracy," Khatami said.

"It is incumbent on us, in the name of Islam, to keep a distance from these two frightening faces," he added, asserting that "discrimination, hatred, violence and repression are alien to the spirit of and truth of Islam."

"We need to ponder, more than ever before, on the dynamism, innovation and efficacy of the OIC," Khatami said.

The ministers will also discuss the situation in Afghanistan, and the difficulties facing Muslims around the world, especially in troubled spots like Kashmir and Chechnya.

Bangladesh foreign minister Mosharraf Khan is expected to make his statement.

Philippine Foreign Secretary Blas Ople has been invited to attend the meeting as a "guest" of the conference, and there will also be special talks on the southern Philippines Muslim insurgency.

Bangladesh's last week put forward senior politician Salauddin Quader Chowdhury for the post of OIC secretary general, occupied since 2001 by Abdulwahed Belkeziz.

In his speech, Khatami implicitly referred to the danger of the group, but also to the conduct of the United States in its war against terrorism.

"Our world has been buffeted from two sides by violent dogmatists and arrogant powers. On the one side terrorism and fanaticism have distorted the humane and

Fine slapped on 17 cargo ships

CU CORRESPONDENT

The Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) fined 17 cargo ships Tk 1.5 lakh on charges of deceiving customs and polluting environment. The two-day drive began on Tuesday from Karnaphuli bridge to Potenga sea beach.

The CPA led by Magistrate Mohammad Munir Chowdhury fined 16 cargo ships including 11 inland cargo ships and two oil tankers. In yet another drive, the CPA fined one ship for polluting environment over bus fare.

The injured are first-year students of management department. The driver and the helper of the bus were also injured.

The seriously injured student, Selim, was admitted to the Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH), while others took first aid at the CU medical centre, sources said. The injured were identified as Sumon, Masud, Babu, Shanto, Kafil, Lipu, Mamun and Siraj.

Sources said the helper of the bus claimed full fare from Selim, a student of management department of the university, as he was going to the campus on Monday morning.

But Selim gave him 50 per cent of the fare as the university authorities had reached an understanding with the bus owners that students would be charged half the normal fare.

But the helper of the bus refused to receive the fare and forcibly pushed him down from the bus.

On hearing the news the angry classmate of Selim stopped the bus and beat up the helper and the driver, sources said. The transport workers retaliated by attacking the students with lethal weapons.

Vice chancellor of the university Professor AJM Nuruddin Chowdhury said that it was very unfortunate that transport workers attacked the students.

"We will take up the matter with the bus owners," he added.

Morocco blasts 'mastermind' dies in custody

AFP, Casablanca

case where about Tk 45 lakh in cash and 12 tola gold ornaments were stolen.

Unidentified burglars broke into the office of SA Paribahan at Kairali in the early hours of Tuesday to loot the money and ornaments.

Police picked up guard Moklesur Rahman and two employees, Jahangir Hossain and Abdul Jalil, for questioning.

However, till yesterday, they were not shown arrested.

No one held

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The suspected mastermind of this month's devastating suicide blasts in Casablanca has died of heart and liver problems while in detention, the city's prosecutor said yesterday.

Meanwhile, a committee to spearhead a movement against the rickshaw ban yesterday blamed the government for the decision. At a meeting, the committee accused the government of depriving the rickshaw-pullers of their right to work.

Professor Serajul Islam Chowdhury, Professor Abul Barakat, social worker Moshabwar Ali and labour-rights activist Mosharefa Mishu addressed the meeting, chaired by Ramizuddin, alader of rickshaw-pullers.

All governments are anti-poor, said Professor Chowdhury.

Professor Abul Barakat said the World Bank is not working for the poor and its suggestion always goes against them.

"Despite international calls for independent inquiries into these deaths, no investigations were carried out," Amnesty said.

The government contends the army drive reduced Bangladesh's rampant street violence, but the United States and the European parliament both said they had seen evidence of human rights abuses.

Amnesty said more than 10,000 people were arrested in the crackdown, although many were later released.

The rights watchdog said authorities have tortured both common criminals and members of the opposition.