

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 Mohon Basak Lane at Banagram in old Dhaka on August 20, 2000.

Mondol came under attack

Tele network

FROM PAGE 12
Bangabahan through video conferencing.

The funds for the expansion project has been raised by floating telecom bonds, said telecom ministry officials.

The BTTB had awarded the \$19.5 million job to a Canada-Turkey joint venture, Nortel Networks Netas, M Sait Gozum, president of Netas, flew in from Turkey to attend the ceremony.

Khaleda however warned the BTTB officials against failure to ensure proper service to its subscribers. "The telephone, electricity, water and gas services are not complimentary. You have to satisfy the subscribers through prompt service and without any harassment."

Buriganga

FROM PAGE 1
BIWTA simply remained silent.

Last year, additional floors were built at some of these mosques without any intervention from the authorities. The mosque and madrasah at Sadarghat are now raising fund to build fourth floor.

Shipping Minister Akbar Hussain said he had already visited some of these areas and addressed rallies trying to create public awareness. He explained at the rallies that all illegal structures on the Buriganga, its shore and foreshore should be removed for the benefit of the city dwellers.

The members of the task force to free the city's lifeline from encroachment and pollution are now planning to involve religious leaders to convince the encroachers to remove the structures elsewhere and ease the river flow.

The shipping ministry has also written to local lawmakers to initiate dialogue with the encroachers.

SC lawyers

FROM PAGE 12
the government to confirming and appointing judges as per the chief justice's recommendations.

The meeting decided to hold a seminar with professionals and political leaders in late June on independence of the judiciary. They will also hold rallies of lawyers in various districts, including Chittagong, Khulna, Barisal, Mymensingh, Rajshahi, Sylhet, Rangpur and Jessore.

Barrister Shafiq Ahmed, Abdul Baset Majumder, Barrister Bokanuddin Mahmud, Advocate Sahara Khatun and Kazi Shahabuddin Ahmed were also present at the meeting, said a press release.

HSC exams today

FROM PAGE 1
the examination centres and rapid action force for vigilance in and around examination centres.

Besides the HSC examination candidates, there are also those sitting for the Alim examinations under Madrasah Education Board and the HSC Vocational and business administration under the Technical Education Board.

The examinations will be held at 1,586 centres under Dhaka, Comilla, Jessore, Rajshahi, Chittagong, Sylhet and Barisal Education Boards.

About 304 centres under the Madrasah Education Board are to accommodate 63,330 students sitting for Alim examinations.

Under the Technical Education Board, 320 centres will seat 38,352 students of business administration while 31 centres will seat 969 students of HSC Vocational examinations.

Examinations will also be held at five overseas centres at Doha in Qatar, Abu Dhabi in UAE, Jeddah and Riyadh in Saudi Arabia, and Tripoli in Libya.

The Ministry of Education has recently identified 167 centres as

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

Mohammad 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.

Ctg robbery

FROM PAGE 1
the market.

Police said the gang, one of the biggest operating in Satkania and Banskhalia areas, was to loot the entire market.

The incident is the latest in a wave of about 100 acts of robbery and terrorism in south Chittagong district since April 29.

Five people were killed in the incidents.

In Dhaka's Shewrapara, six robbers with machetes, knives and handmade bombs entered the house of Dewan Jahurul Haq at 8:15pm. They cut off the thumb of his left hand as he tried to resist.

Dewan told The Daily Star yesterday that the robbers took away Tk 50,000 in cash, 15 tola of gold ornaments and clothes. They carried out the plundering for half an hour.

As the family members recognised some of the gang members as local youths, they threatened them of dire consequences if they informed the police about the incident.

Jahurul was first taken to Al-Razi Hospital and then shifted to the Pangu Hospital.

A case was filed with the Kafrul Police Station yesterday, but none was arrested.

"copy prone", based on the recently concluded SSC examinations and information from previous years, ministry officials said.

Rapid Action Force (RAF), a vigilance team consisting of about 700 members, has been formed to check unfair means and to ensure congenial atmosphere.

The board officials have already launched a massive awareness campaign through newspaper advertisements and posters to diminish unfair means.

Stern action would be taken against teachers if found helping students cheat, ministry sources said.

The government would specially identify both cheating-free and trouble-prone centres, said Education Minister Dr. Osman Faruk.

Teachers of cheating-free centres will qualify for 100 per cent government benefits while those of copy-prone centres will be delisted from monthly pay order (MPO), the minister added.

Besides police, Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) personnel will also be deployed in trouble-prone centres during the examinations.



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

FROM PAGE 1
tional law and shielding governments from scrutiny."

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 CRISSES

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

There had been a "heavy toll on human rights and human lives", she said, with Iraq diverting atten-

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

"Drawing attention to 'hidden' crises, protecting the rights of the 'forgotten victims' is the biggest challenge we face today," said Allen.

"There is a real risk that Iraq will go the way of Afghanistan if no genuine effort is made to heed the call of the Iraqi people for law and order and full respect of human rights."

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 has 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 being 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, maimed, 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".

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, Brunei, 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 hand-out 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

FROM PAGE 12
Secondary Certificate (HSC) examinees went beyond limits.

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

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.

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 Joytunnesa.

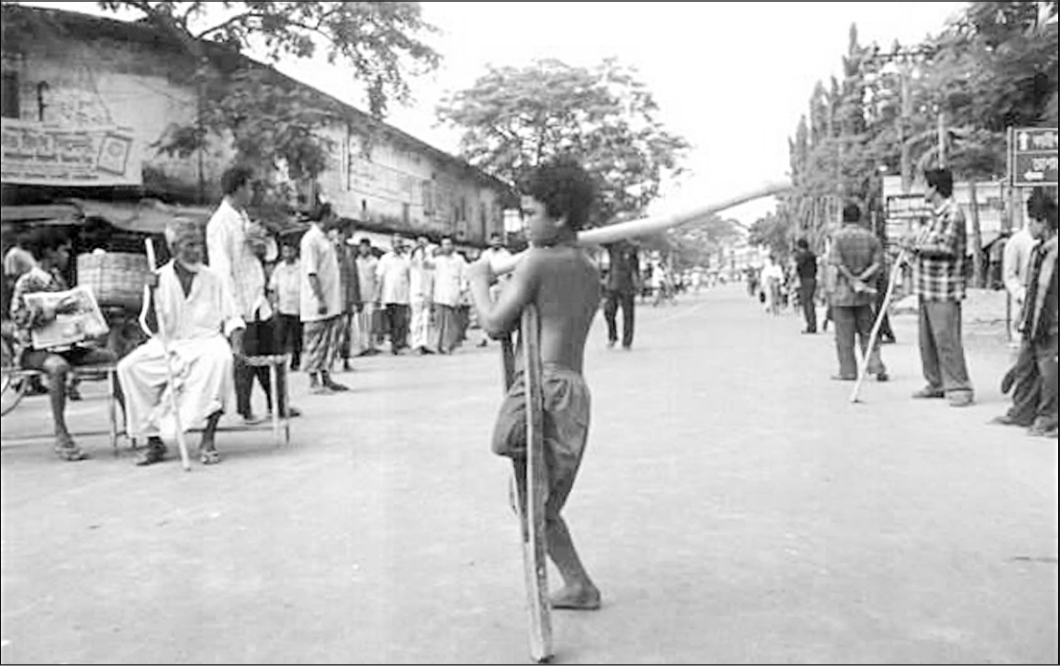
Mohammad Mahbub-ul-Islam, judge of the Fifth Additional District and Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka, yesterday found the three guilty of bringing the false charges against two people and directed the law enforcers to arrest the convicts.

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

The acquitted are Mohammad Rubel and his sister-in-law (wife of his elder brother) Mosammat 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.



A physically challenged picket crosses a road in Bhomra during a half-day hartal yesterday. The Sathkira unit of Greater Khulna Development Action Coordination Committee enforced the hartal to protest the government decision to close down the Bhomra land port from June 6.

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 cargos including 11 inland cargo ships and two oil tankers. In yet another drive, the CPA fined one ship for polluting environment.

Shazneen case

FROM PAGE 12
of occurrence (victim's residence) and sketched a map of it. Then I seized some evidences from the bedroom of victim Shazneen and made a seizure list," the witness said.

He continued, "At about 1:15pm on April 25, 1998 I went to the spot again and recovered a blood-stained knife from the western side of the house. It was recovered in presence of domestic help Moslem Howlader and cook Abdul Mannan (both prosecution witnesses)."

Replying to a question, the witness said he had tried to arrest accused Shahid from the house but he had fled earlier.

He had also interrogated two housemaids -- Minu and Parvin (both accused) -- and some invitees to a party at the house, he added.

All the six accused --Shahid Hasan, Badal, Shaniram, Minu and Parvin-- now in jail custody, were produced before the court yesterday.

Special public prosecutors (PPs) ABM Sharfuddin Khan Mukul and Arfan Uddin Khan appeared for the state. Advocates MA Kamrul Hasan Khan Aslam and Mizanur Rahman defended the accused.

Shazneen Tasnim Rahman, 15, the youngest daughter of Latifur Rahman, Chairman of Transcom, was raped and murdered at their Gulshan residence on April 23, 1998.

No rickshaws

FROM PAGE 12
The department has started installing new traffic signals to streamline traffic movement on the road.

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 Mobashwar Ali and labour-rights activist Mosharefa Mishu addressed the meeting, chaired by Ramizuddin, a leader 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.

The government is working for the capitalist and rich people by forcing rickshaws out of roads, said Mobashwar Ali.

Credit card

FROM PAGE 1
issued about 59,000 local and 2,000 international credit cards.

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

Vanik, a Sri-Lanka-Bangladesh joint venture non-bank financial institution, has issued 16,000 cards.

Among the local banks, National Bank limited and Prime Bank Limited have issued about 15,000 cards each.

Pubali, NCCBL and City Bank are also set to introduce their credit cards shortly, sources said.

Civil society

FROM PAGE 12
ference, hosted by the government of South Korea, underscored prevention of corruption, since prosecutions were frequently the consequence of failures in prevention.

Corruption in the private sector is of increasing importance to the public as essential utilities and services are privatised, noted the conference, also joined by South Korean Prime Minister Goh Kun yesterday.

To combat international corruption cases, it urged the international community to examine the establishment of a trust fund to provide legal aid and to create a network of legal and forensic accounting experts.

Corruption is endemic in the health and pharmaceuticals sector from which no country is free, said the participants.

Research is manipulated, undue influence distorts licensing and listing, bribery is strong in promotional activities, medicines are counterfeit and expired -- all having a devastating impact on patients and the costs of health services alike, the conference observed.

Governments must ensure that patients, not suppliers, are the focus and beneficiary of health care provision and that doctors adopt codes of conduct requiring them to disclose gifts and benefits received from pharmaceuticals, it said.

10 CU students hurt in clash with transport workers

CU CORRESPONDENT

At least ten students of Chittagong University (CU) were injured, one of them seriously, when the students clashed with transport workers at the university gate-1 yesterday 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 classmates 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 AIM 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

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.

A total of 43 people including 12 suicide bombers were killed in the May 16 attacks in Morocco's largest city.

AI: Torture frequent

FROM PAGE 1
The reported deaths in army custody came after Prime Minister Khaleda Zia ordered tens of thousands of troops onto the streets in October in a three-month crackdown on crime.

"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.

It alleged Bahauddin Nasim, a senior official of the main opposition Awami League party, was tortured for five days, during which he was reportedly hung upside down and beaten with glass bottles on his buttocks, knees, elbows, hips and genitals, and given electric shocks.

Amnesty also noted that a

College student crushed under train in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A student of Titumir College was crushed by a train at Mohakhali rail-crossing on Tuesday.

The victim, Tahera Begum, 24, was an honours final year student of political science. She was returning home after buying books from Farmgate.

Although the accident occurred on Tuesday night, railway police recovered the body yesterday morning.

The body was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

Tahera was the wife of Monirul Haq, inspector of Water Development Board.

She left behind twin sons, Rohit and Rohan.

Schoolteacher held in abduction case sent to jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Schoolteacher Marjina, an accused in a case for abduction of four children, was sent to the Dhaka Central Jail yesterday.

The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka, rejected her bail petition when she was produced before it on expiry of a two-day remand.

The investigation officer (IO) of the case said yesterday there are evidences that the schoolteacher was involved in anti-social activities at her residence at Shantinagar. Some women who worked as her domestic help had earlier told police she used to force them to engage in immoral activities, he added.

The IO however said he was yet to get any evidence that Marjina had links with any trafficking syndicate.

No one held

FROM PAGE 1
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 Kakrail 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.

number of journalists were arrested, including five people who were filming a documentary for Britain's Channel Four television and Shahriar Kabir, who was reporting on attacks against the Muslim country's Hindu minority.

The rights group criticized Bangladesh for not releasing details of a promised investigation into reported anti-Hindu violence that erupted after Zia's Islamist-allied government came to power in October 2001 elections.

But Amnesty noted that authorities "took action to protect Hindus during their festivities" in October 2002.

Reports of violence against women were also common in 2002, according to Amnesty, which said at least six women committed suicide after being raped.

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

Bangladesh is torn by a bitter rivalry between Khaleda's Bangladesh Nationalist Party and the Awami League, which has repeatedly brought the parliament to a standstill.

Tehran confce opens

FROM PAGE 12
tion was sent to Baghdad because there is no legitimate authority running Iraq's affairs.

The OIC, based in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, has repeatedly called on the US-led forces that overthrew Saddam to leave Iraq as soon as possible.

On the Israeli-Palestinian front, the talks are expected to focus on the internationally drafted "roadmap" for peace.

Terrorism and dialogue between civilisations, a pet topic of Khatami, will be discussed in light of an OIC anti-terrorism document issued before the September 11, 2001 attacks and the latest suicide bombings in Riyadh and Casablanca.

The fight against Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda is also set to figure prominently in the talks in the light of US allegations that members of the network based in Iran were behind the Riyadh attacks.

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