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## Four get life for killing Naushin



Marian Islam Naushin

CHAITYANYA CHANDRA HALDER

Four muggers accused of killing a two-year-old child in May last year received life sentence from a court in Dhaka yesterday.

Marian Islam Naushin was cradled in her father Nazrul Islam's arms when a stray bullet fired by the fleeing gang at Uttar Badda hit her in the head on May 9, 2002.

The Second Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court handed down 38 years of rigorous imprisonment (RI) to each of Mohammad Moslem, Mohammad Saiful Islam Ratan, Abdullah-al-Mamun alias 'Ragkata' Mamun and Sumon popularly known as Baitta Sumon.

Taking seat at 12:30pm, Judge Hossain Shahid Ahmed read out the 42-page verdict in presence of Moslem and Saiful in the packed courtroom. Two other convicts -- Mamun and Sumon -- have been absconding since the incident.

The four were found guilty of the offence punishable under the Section 302 (murder) of the Bangladesh Penal Code (BPC) and given rigorous imprisonment for life (31 years). Each of them was fined Tk 50,000 and will have to serve one more year behind bars in failure to pay the fines. The gang was also found guilty of robbery punishable under Section 394 of the BPC and given seven years RI.

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PHOTO: STAR

Police take Saiful Islam Ratan, left, and Mohammad Moslem, right, to the Dhaka Central Jail yesterday after a court sentenced them along with two fugitives to life in prison for killing a two-year-old child.

## Six killed in Cox's Bazar landslides

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Six people, including four sisters, were buried alive and nine others injured in two landslides on the outskirts of Cox's Bazar resort town early yesterday, police and witnesses said.

The district administration and locals believe that torrential monsoon rains and multiple cracks caused to hillocks by Sunday's earthquake triggered the mudslides at Kalatali and Purba Kalatali Adarsha Gram, two neighbouring villages.

Sadar police said huge chunks of mud crushed to death Rezia Begum, 16, Nurun Nahar, 14, Fatema Aktar Munni, 10 and Babli Aktar, 8, daughters of forest guard Muslem Uddin, at about 4:00am in Kalatali village, 3 km off the town.

Muslem, his wife Lalmati, 50, their daughter Merry, 3 and son Nurul Kabir, 10, survived the land-

slide, injured.

Muslem and the surviving members of his family were sleeping in a room of the staff quarter of the forest department where they resided and the dead in another room at the foothill of a hillock.

The mud and five big trees collapsed on the roof from 200 feet above, levelling part of the house instantly.

In Adarsha Gram, Sakina Khatun, 48, and Sabura Khatun, 30, wives of Md Siddique Ahmed, were killed in sleep under a giant pile of earth at around 4:30am.

Siddique, his sons Alamgir, 25, Rabi Alam, 7, Babul, 3, and daughter Banu Bibi, 5, were injured in the mud plunge.

They were admitted to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital.

"It was raining heavily and all were sleeping when the landslides hit," a witness said.

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## Wounds still fester

ABDUL KADER

The court verdict on the killing of a two-year-old child with a stray bullet in gangland fire was not enough to heal the wounds her parents suffered.

Marian Islam Naushin died cradled in her father's arms when a gang of muggers fired at will to make a getaway after a mob chase on May 9 last year.

Naushin's father Nazrul Islam left the court, eyes full of tears and unhappy with the verdict that sentenced four muggers to life imprisonment yesterday for killing the child.

"I thought the court would punish them with death. I cannot accept it," an ailing Nazrul said of the sentence handed down by

Judge Hossain Shahid Ahmed of the Second Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka.

"Would you accept it if you had suffered the same shock?" Naushin's father, a businessman, asked waiting reporters on the court premises. Nazrul will appeal to the High Court against the judgement.

The outrage created by the killing of Naushin in Uttar Badda got a new edge after Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury's comment on the incident that "Allah has taken back His creature".

Achhia Islam, mother of Naushin, could not show up on the court premises yesterday

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## Dhaka court hands down death to 16 in a month

STAR REPORT

The Speedy Trial Court in Dhaka handed down 16 death sentences in last one month.

The court, which was set up in October last, has so far awarded deaths to 46 persons for murders. Besides over a 100 have been given life.

However, it will take between six and seven years to execute the verdicts, lawyers say.

A lower court death sentence needs to be approved by the High Court Division before its implementation. The convict can also appeal

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## Boro growers gain little from govt grains purchase

REAZ AHMAD

Paddy growers are yet to get the price support the government's food grains procurement intended to give them in the current boro season.

The issue came up at an inter-ministerial meeting of the Food Planning and Monitoring Unit (FPMU) recently as the drive failed to procure boro paddy from the

growers but succeeded in procuring rice from the millers.

The cabinet had earlier decided that 5.5 lakh tonnes of rice and 1.54 lakh tonnes of paddy would be procured during the boro season from April 1 to August 31.

The meeting found that in the first three months of the season, food officials procured 5.6 lakh tonnes of rice from the rice millers but only 26,000 tonnes of paddy

from the farmers.

Meeting sources said State Minister for Finance and Planning Anwarul Kabir Talukdar, who was present at the meeting, suggested formation of an independent committee to investigate the poor procurement of paddy.

But the meeting decided that officials of the food directorate would be directed to gear up the

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## NBR grinds to halt as officials stop work over arrest of colleagues

STAR REPORT

Activities at the National Board of Revenue (NBR) and all customs commissionerates in Dhaka came to a halt yesterday as officials abstained from work protesting the arrest of their colleagues on corruption charges.

Three arrested NBR officials -- Shawkat Hossain, deputy commissioner of customs at the NBR and

Sayed Ali and Mofazzal Haq, superintendents at the customs house, Dhaka -- were sent to jail after the Metropolitan Magistrate Court, Dhaka rejected their bail.

The trio was arrested on Tuesday in connection with a Bureau of Anti-Corruption case that accused them of releasing a consignment of yarn without realising Tk 7,42,393 in customs duty in April 2001.

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