

Chronology of Shazneen murder case

CHAITANYA CHANDRA HALDER
and SHAMIM ASHRAF

It took two years, 10 months and eight days to dispose of the sensational Shazneen murder case at the death reference bench.

The High Court Death Reference Bench confirmed yesterday that domestic help Shahid raped and killed with assistance from Badal, maids Estema Khatun Minu amd Parvin according to a plan of contractor Syed Sajjad Mainuddin Hasan alias Azad.

The Second Special Tribunal for Prevention of Women and Children Repression, Dhaka, convicted all the six accused for rape and killing of Shazneen on September 2, 2003.

Earlier on June 27, both the prosecution and the defence completed their arguments and made submissions for upholding the lower court verdict and acquitting the convicts of the charges.

TRIAL OF THE LOWER COURT
The much-talked about judgement of Shazneen rape case was delivered by the lower court on September 2, 2003 five years, four months and ten days after the brutal killing and rape of the victim.

In the verdict, the judge sentenced all the six accused to death for killing the victim after rape.

The convicts are victim's domestic help Shahidul Islam alias Shahid, contractor Syed Sajjad Mainuddin Hasan, his assistant Badal, carpenter Shaniram Mandal and two maids—Estema Khatun Minu and Parvin.

The trial of the case was completed in 127 workdays that began on July 9, 2000 with deposition of complainant Mojibur Rahman.

Shazneen Tasnim Rahman, 15, a student of class nine of Scholastica School and the youngest daughter of Latifur Rahman, chairman of Transcom Limited, was raped and killed at their Gulshan residence in Dhaka on April 23, 1998.

Rahman filed a murder case the following day with Gulshan Police Station, accusing Shahidul Islam alias Shahid, a domestic help at his residence.

In the FIR, Rahman said he had last talked to his daughter on her ground floor bedroom at about 8:00pm on April 23, 1998. Then he went to the first floor where a party was hosted for some of his friends. Shazneen stayed back in her room.

She had been stabbed at least 20 times. A three-inch-deep wound was found in her neck.

At about 10:15pm, Rahman came downstairs after hearing the scream of old domestic help Moslem Hawlader and found Shazneen lying on the floor in front of the bathroom, attached to her bedroom. The victim's father examined her pulse and found her dead.

As Rahman raised an alarm, the guests and other people in the house rushed to the spot. On inquiry, it was found that one of the servants, Shahid, son of Siddiq Mollah of village Danga Durgapur in Gopalganj district, was missing. One of the four kitchen knives was also missing, Rahman said in the FIR.

Businesses urge

FROM PAGE 1
Awami League and of the 14-party opposition combine.

When contacted, Mir Nasir Hossain told the news agency that the political deadlock and its consequences like various destructive political programmes have been seriously disrupting the private sector.

"We've conveyed our anxiety to the AL general secretary about the political programmes like hartal and siege that vitiate the business climate, he said.

The FBCCI chief said they will soon meet BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan to convey the similar request on the imperative of the government-opposition dialogue.

14-party plans

FROM PAGE 15
the government does amend the constitution, they will rethink their agitation programmes.

Besides the grand rally and the marches, the opposition will conduct mass contact in upazilas, thanas and districts across the country to mobilise a large number of people in favour of the electoral reforms. It will also exchange views with the international community to get their support for the electoral reforms.

Abdul Jalil, also general secretary of the AL, told newsmen that they would not allow any election in the country before implementation of the reform proposals.

Urging the Chief Election Commissioner and two 'politically appointed' commissioners to quit the EC right now, Jalil said otherwise the anti-government movements will turn into a mass movement. He said the revised voter listing would have to be done after reformation of the EC.

Chaired by the AL Presidium Member Abdur Razzak, the meeting was attended, among others, by Motia Chowdhury, Obaidul Quader, Hasanul Haque Inu, Bimal Biswas, Dilip Barua, Syed Zafor Sazzad, Moinuddin Khan Badal, Nurul Islam, A b d u s S h a m a d , P a n k a j Bhattacharya and Zakir Hossain.

CHRONOLOGY

As per the arguments from the prosecution side, at about 3:30pm on April 1, 1998 contractor Syed Sajjad Mainuddin Hasan had entered Shazneen's bedroom and asked her to show the defective mirror in the bathroom about which she had earlier complained.

As she entered the bathroom to show him the mirror, Hasan grabbed her with an ill motive. Shazneen pushed him aside and warned she would report it to her parents to punish him. Hasan became angry and left.

On April 2, Shazneen along with her two sisters—Simeen Hossain and Shahzreh Haq Shehzi — and their children went to visit Marina Tea garden at Kulaurain Sylhet.

On April 3, Shazneen's parents went on a visit to Shillong in India. Hasan, contractor for renovations to Rahman's residence, enticed Shahid with offer of money to rape and kill Shazneen as she humiliated him on April 1.

On April 4, Simeen's husband Waqar Hossain and Shehzi's husband Arshadul Haq also went to Kulaura. Shazneen narrated the April 1 incident to them. They decided to report it to Rahman and his wife after their return.

On April 5, Hasan showed Badal, his assistant, Shahid and Shaniram, a carpenter,

the bedroom of Shazneen. On the same day Hasan and Badal paid Tk 50,000 to Shahid, guard Humayun Kabir (now dead) and maids Minu and Parvin to commit the crime.

On April 16, Shazneen and her relatives returned to her elder sister's Baridhara residence concluding their Sylhet visit.

On April 18, Shazneen's parents returned home from Shillong and brought Shazneen from her sister's house. But as his wife fell sick and Rahman became busy taking care of her, the children decided to report the April 1 incident at a later date.

In the afternoon of April 21, Simeen along with Shazneen went to Gulshan market and in the evening Shazneen found Hasan and started shouting at him, saying how he dared to come before her. Simeen calmed her.

At 5:00pm on April 23, Shehzi went to her parents' Gulshan residence and she along with Shazneen went upstairs to see preparations for the party later that night. They saw Hasan standing in the verandah. Shazneen became agitated seeing Hasan there and asked him to leave the spot. At about 7:00pm Shehzi went to her elder sister's Baridhara residence.

At about 8:00pm on the same day, Rahman went to Shazneen's bedroom and found her reading and the TV on. He told her to take dinner and go to bed. That was the last time he saw her.

Rahman then went upstairs where guests for the party were gathering. Later in the night, he heard cries from downstairs, came down and found old domestic help Moslem Hawlader crying and saying what happened to Chhotia Baby (nickname of Shazneen). Rahman then rushed to Shazneen's room and found her lying on the floor in front of the bathroom.

Her body bore multiple injury marks and blood spilled all over the room. On the left side of her neck there was a deep wound. He then cried out saying Shazneen was killed.

Primary investigation showed that Shahid fled the house after raping and killing Shazneen between 8:00pm and 10:15pm. Rahman also suspected that some others were involved in it.

On April 25, Sub-Inspector Shamsul Haq, the first investigation officer of the case, recovered a blood-stained knife from the western side of the victim's residence in the presence of domestic help Moslem and cook Abdul Mannan. The knife was used to kill the victim.

On April 27, 1998, Shahid, the prime accused who had been absconding since the rape and murder, surrendered to the Kotwali police in Chittagong. Police brought him to Dhaka for interrogation on the same

DEPZ workers

FROM PAGE 16
of the factory began work abstention at 11:00am. Despite repeated requests by authorities at the factory and DEPZ, workers declined to resume production yesterday.

Till last Sunday the factory authorities terminated 35 workers after paying their due benefits.

The termination orders spell danger for thousands of workers who participated in the recent agitation, workers said.

"As laws permit factory authorities to terminate a worker (giving all benefits) without showing any cause, it would be our bad luck if the situation in the factories turns negative," said AZM Azizur Rahman, general manager of DEPZ.

Workers of Universe Sweaters Ltd, a factory at Zamgora outside the DEPZ, refrained from work demanding rise in their overtime rates. Termining the existing rate of overtime payment that ranges from Tk 11 to 12 an hour as inadequate, workers warned of not resuming duties until the overtime benefit is raised.

Workers of Intraco Sweaters Ltd, a factory adjacent to the DEPZ, also observed work abstention from 11:00am yesterday protesting the authorities' decision to reject the date of salary payment from 10th of the month to 16th, workers said.

Earlier on July 8, workers of the factory beat up five officers protesting the decision.

day.

The accused was taken to the place where Shazneen was murdered. Shahid narrated to police, the victim's father and other family members how and at whose instigation she was raped and murdered. The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of police took over the charge of the investigation into Shazneen murder case on the same day.

On May 13, Shahid gave a confessional statement to a metropolitan magistrate in where he narrated the tragic incident and involvement of others.

On May 27, the CID took accused Humayun to Rahman's house and on the basis of information gathered from him recovered a chisel from the roof of a servants' toilet. Humayun said Shaniram gave the chisel to him and it was used in the killing.

On September 27, Shahid was taken to the house of Rahman again where he gave the chronology of the killing. Shahid said Hasan and Badal hired him, Humayun, Parvin, Minu and Shaniram to rape and kill Shazneen.

Shahid also told them that on April 3, Hasan asked him to rape and kill Shazneen. At about 10:00pm on April 23, he along with Parvin and Humayun entered her bedroom. Shahid was armed with a kitchen knife while Humayun with the chisel.

Shahid said he stabbed Shazneen with the knife, while Humayun hit her with the chisel. Parvin grabbed Shazneen by the hair. The three then pulled Shazneen down from the bed. Shahid raped her in this condition, then came out of the room with the bloodstained knife, threw it near the tin-shed where Shaniram used to stay and fled the house.

Shahid then met Hasan at Gulshan Avenue where Hasan was waiting in a white microbus and asked him if the job was properly done. Shahid told him that it was done as per his instruction.

Teachers' strike

FROM PAGE 16
declined to endorse it on grounds of fund constraint, education ministry sources said.

The pro-government Shikkhak Karmachari Oikya Jote and pro-Awami League Jatiya Shikkhak Karmachari Front yesterday also demanded the resignation of the education minister, finance minister and State Minister for Education Ehsanul Hoque Milon for the anomalies in the education sector, failure to meet their demands and creating rifts among the agitating teachers.

In addition, another faction of Oikya Jote declared to hold a grand rally at the Central Shaheed Minar today, following which they will march towards the Shikkha Bhaban.

Besides, teachers of government colleges under the banner of BCS General Education Association, yesterday held a rally in front of the Shikkha Bhaban demanding introduction of departmental promotion, creation and upgrade of posts and upgrade of the government colleges to universities.

They also announced to refrain from taking classes from July 23 to 25 and from August 5 to 10 and to go for an indefinite strike from August 11 if the government does not meet their demands by August 10.

A silent procession was brought out following the rally that marched different streets in the capital.

Match factory

FROM PAGE 16
control, said Deputy General Manager Mahbubul Hossain.

Panicked workers, employees and officials came out of their work places hearing sound of explosion in the machine room containing chemicals.

Production has been suspended due to extensive damage of chemicals and machines, the DGM said, adding that a three-member committee has been formed to probe the cause of fire.

There are 2,000 workers and employees in Dada Match factory that produces 10,000 gross matches a day.

PCJSS kills 3

FROM PAGE 1
by a meeting at Dewan Bazer presided over by UPDF leader Julius Chakma.

At the meeting, the speakers declared a daylong barricade programme on the Khagrachhari-Rangamati road today. Blaming the PCJSS for the killing, they also alleged that a section of the security force always shelters the PCJSS men.

UPDF District Coordinator Samari Chakma, Pahari Chattra Parishad (PCP) Vice President Ratan Chakma, Democratic Youth Forum (DYF) Office Secretary Michael Chakma spoke at the meeting among others.

Meanwhile, Khagrachhari PCJSS Secretary Sudhakar Tripura told The Daily Star over phone that their party men are not involved in that killing adding that the allegation is baseless and mere drama of the UPDF.

Death penalty

FROM PAGE 1
delivery of judgement at 3:25pm yesterday on the appeal of the six persons against the lower court verdict.

Apart from the relatives of the convicts, a number of lawyers thronged the court of the death reference bench at the annex building of the Supreme Court as they were eager to hear the judgement of this sensational case.

Hasan masterminded the conspiracy of raping and killing of Shazneen in a bid to stop her from disclosing to her family the incident of his grabbing her on April 1, 1998, and got his plan executed by his accomplices 22 days later, the court observed.

Counsels and relatives of the convicts rejected the judgement and said they would appeal against it with the Supreme Court.

The prosecution and Shazneen's family expressed their satisfaction, saying the judgement rightly upheld the lower court order, which proves the five were truly involved in the crime.

The state counsels however refrained from taking any immediate decision about appealing against the acquittal of Shaniram and said they would decide it after a couple of days.

Fifteen-year-old Shazneen, the youngest daughter of leading businessman Latifur Rahman, was raped and killed at their Gulshan residence sometime between 8:00 pm and 10:15pm on April 23, 1998, the day a party was hosted by Rahman. Her body bore 25 marks of injury and there were bruises on her private parts.

After the incident that remained the talk of the country for several weeks, Shahid was arrested and he revealed that at the instigation of Hasan, he raped Shazneen with the help of Humayun, Shaniram, Badal, Minu and Parvin. But during the trial, he confessed to have killed Shazneen but denied raping her.

Humayun, a guard at Rahman's house who died later in custody, Minu and Parvin gave confessional statements before magistrates at different dates.

While passing the judgment on September 2, 2003, five years, four months and 10 days after the brutal killing, Kazi Rahamat Ullah, judge of the Second Special Tribunal for Prevention of Women and Children Repression, Dhaka, said that Shahid raped Shazneen not only out of lust but also out of greed for financial benefits and on Hasan's instructions. Hasan instigated him and four others to rape and kill her, he added.

Saying that the killing went beyond the realm of beliefs, the court ordered hanging all the six accused until death.

The convicts later appealed to the HC against the lower court

RMG workers

FROM PAGE 16
upazila in the morning.

The agitated garment workers put up barricades on the highway, clashed with police, torched three buses and vandalised 12 vehicles.

After the incident, Assistant Sub-Inspector Mizanur Rahman filed the case against the garment workers with Joydevpur Police Station.

Three garment workers—Kamal Hossain, Sarker, and Yakub Ali—were injured when a Chandanabound bus from Sadarghat in Dhaka hit them at about 8:00am.

They were rushed to Tongi Hospital, from where Kamal was shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Trial of JMB men

FROM PAGE 16
AMM Afsar Uddin, additional deputy commissioner (prosecution) of the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court (CMM), directed the IO of the case to take necessary steps for producing Sunny before the court on January 31. But the order was not complied with.

The same court framed charges against Sunny and six others in two cases on April 20 and the trial of the cases began on June 5. The depositions ended in two days. But the hearings of arguments in the cases could not begin on the scheduled date of June 21, as the authorities concerned did not produce Sunny on that day. He (Sunny) was, however, produced before the CMM's court on completion of his four-day remand in connection with a sedition case filed with Kotwali police station.

CASE AGAINST JMB CHIEF'S SON
Another Dhaka court could not frame charges against JMB chief's son Nabil Bin Abdur Rahman, his brother Sunny and six others, as the jail authorities did not produce Sunny and Nabil before the court on nine consecutive dates.

The case was filed with Paltan police station under the Explosive Substances Act accusing Sunny, Nabil and six others of causing an explosion near Rajarbagh Police Lines in the capital on August 17 last year.

The court directed the authorities concerned to produce them on the scheduled dates for hearings but the authorities did not even inform the court whether the accused were on remand or in jail.

verdict.

The death reference bench began hearing the submission of the defence and prosecution on March 30 this year after preparation of the paper-book of the case.

Presenting statements of the prosecution witnesses (PWs), documents of the case and different references of the higher court, the prosecution appealed to the bench to uphold the lower court judgement of death sentence for all the six.

But counsel for the accused, presenting their arguments, appealed for acquitting their clients.

After a 31-workday hearing that ended on June 27, the bench fixed July 4 for delivering its verdict. But it could not do so due to hartal on that day.

Starting delivery of its judgement on July 5, the bench analysed the first information report (FIR) filed under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act on September 4, 1998 and statements of PWs Assistant Superintendent of Police (Criminal Investigation Department) Mojibur Rahman, the complainant and investigation officer of the case, Shazneen's father Latifur Rahman and elder sister Simeen Hossain.

On the second day of delivery of the verdict on July 6, the court scrutinised the statements of 15 other PWs including Shazneen's sister Shehzi and brother-in-law Arshadul Haq, her uncle Atiqur Rahman, Shamsul Haq, the investigation officer of the case filed for Shazneen murder, and domestic helps Sufia and Moslem who had given significant information about the heinous murder.

Resuming delivery of the verdict yesterday, the bench analysed the statements of Fakhruzzaman, head of law section at Transcom Group, Metropolitan Magistrate Maksudur Rahman Patwari, recording officer Enamul Haq and Shahidur Rahman, and the lower court judgement before passing its judgement.

The death reference bench took into confidence the confessional statements of Shahid, Parvin and Minu and statements of the witnesses for reaching the conclusion.

On whether the state will appeal against Shaniram's acquittal, Deputy Attorney General ABM Waliur Rahman Khan, who moved for the prosecution, told The Daily Star, "We'll take the decision after discussion with additional attorney general 2/3 days later."

Assistant Attorney General Zinat Akhtar Nazmi Begum and Mohammad Nazmul Haq were also present for the state while advocates Anisul Haque, Khalilur Rahman, Mosharrar Hossain Kajal and Khondoker Mahbub Hossain for the defence.

Bhuiyan threatens

FROM PAGE 1
most successful, Mannan Bhuiyan said, "The report is baseless, untrue and misleading and so we refuse to accept it."

Held at the ministry auditorium, the press conference was attended among others by State Minister Ziaul Haq Zia and TIB Research Director SI Lasker.

The minister said he wonders how come they came to the conclusion on such a sensitive issue like corruption, basing only on newspaper reports.

"We successfully completed 98 per cent of the total development projects last year. Of all the ministries, we top the project implementation index," he observed.

"They have published the report just to belittle our achievements," Bhuiyan said adding that by preparing a baseless corruption index the TIB has in fact humiliated the entire nation.

Referring to the honorary chairman of TIB, the minister said, "Who is Mozaffar Ahmed? He was a minister during the military regime of late president Ziaur Rahman. Allegations of corruption had been there against him as well."

The TIB representative faced a volley of questions from the ministers and some reporters at the press conference.

At one stage, Ziaul Haq Zia called the TIB official a moron as he was struggling to reply to the questions regarding method of their research, source of the TIB funding and motive for the report.

In his speech, Mannan Bhuiyan said the TIB in its report has ignorantly described institutions including district administration office, UNO, Unnayan Kartipakkha as belonging to the LGRD ministry.

"Union Parishad has been one of the most dedicated institutions since independence. Just when it needs to be encouraged the most, TIB has branded them corrupt," said the minister.

He said the motive behind the TIB report was nothing but to taint the country and present it as a failed state.

"We want to know the source of their funding and whom they are accountable to for their works," he added.

Describing the newspaper reports on corruption as baseless, he said they have formed a monitoring cell to investigate corruption allegations against different officials of the ministry.

Tata suspends

FROM PAGE 1
same responses from all of them.

"We now understand that the government is only likely to take matters forward after the general elections, scheduled for January 2007," Rosling said.

He said everyone he met personally said it is a good proposal and he did not receive any criticism from any of them. They said they are not in a position to restart the negotiation at this moment, Rosling pointed out.

"We still believe the proposal is extremely good for the country, for the economy, for employment, and for balance of payment, and we also believe it is a good business centre for us," he said. "You can't play football with only one team. If the government is not in a position to negotiate, we can't negotiate."

"We have other businesses in this country. We have successful and growing truck motor business and other businesses. So, we will remain in Bangladesh. If there are major projects in Bangladesh that we can take up or if the government wishes us to examine any project, we will be open to those," he said.

Tata Group submitted its revised offer on 30 April 2006 after some nine months of detailed negotiation on a proposed steel plant with 2.4 metric ton per annum (mtpa) capacity, captive and IPP power plants, an open cast coalmine, and a urea fertiliser plant with one mtpa capacity. In October 2004 in presence of Ratan Tata an expression of interest was signed between the Bangladesh government and the industrial conglomerate.

Mahmudur Rahman said Tata told him that the negotiation could have been finished much earlier. "But we wanted to take a decision in a very transparent manner," he added.

He said a secretarial committee report on Tata's investment proposal is now at the final stage of scrutiny. The committee will review the report on July 16 and will submit the report to a cabinet committee headed by the industries minister by July 31. The cabinet committee will decide whether the proposal should be sent to the cabinet.

However, the Bol chairman said Tata may still go ahead with its investment proposal in Bangladesh if the main opposition political parties and the government come up with decisions in the next three months that they do not have any reservation about the proposal.

Draft bill

FROM PAGE 1
constitution provides for holding bye-election in a constituency within 90 days of its becoming vacant due to any reason.

However, if it is not possible due to 'any act of God,' 90 more days are allowed.

"In the amendment, we will propose not to hold bye-election in any vacant seat if the tenure of a parliament remains for only 180 days or less," Moudud said.

The law minister presented examples of a few countries including Malaysia, where the approved period for holding bye-election is two years.

In some countries, the party concerned nominates another as MP following the death of a sitting lawmaker, he added.

Besides, the cabinet also endorsed 'Commercially Important Person (expatriate Bangladeshis) Selection Policy 2006' setting the criteria for selection of expatriate CIPs.

45 killed

FROM PAGE 1
an orchard," said Mohammad Akram, a farmer who was working his fields. He said the plane burst into flames after impact.

President Perviz Musharraf and Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz both expressed grief over the crash, according to state-run Pakistan Television. Aziz also ordered an inquiry.

Senior ranking members of the military and judiciary were among the passengers, according to officials in Multan.

In February, 2003, a Fokker F-27 turboprop crashed in northwestern Pakistan killing Pakistan Air Force Air Chief Marshal Mushaf Ali Mir, his wife and 15 others.

Jaffery said PIA was still gathering information to help find out why the plane crashed.

PIA has seven other Fokkers in its fleet. The aircraft that crashed was bought four decades ago. Airworthiness certificates for aircraft are issued following pre-flight checks.

10kg heroin

FROM PAGE 16
upazila, BDR sources said.

While conducting a search of the bus, the BDR personnel found the drugs in an abandoned shopping bag laden with vegetables, said a BDR official.

The heroin, estimated to be worth Tk 7 crore, was deposited with the local customs, the sources said.

However, no arrest was made in the heroin haul.

Meanwhile, on information that a group of drug peddlers had been selling heroin at Mamut Filling Station and Technical Bus Stand at Mirpur in the capital, a Rab-3 team in plainclothes conducted a raid on Thursday and captured three from the area.

Around three kilograms of heroin was recovered from their possession.

The arrestees are Swapan Kumar Ghosh, 42, Hazrat Ali, 28, and Ekramul, 24.

They admitted their involvement with drug peddling during interrogation in the Rab custody, a Rab press release said.

Family hails verdict

FROM PAGE 1

He expressed gratitude to all those who were involved in the judicial work and those who showed sympathy for his family after Shazneen's killing.

He hoped that the Supreme Court would also uphold the death sentence.

Fakhruzzaman, head of law section at Transcom Group, said, "We've got justice from the High Court."

As the Death Reference Bench on Shazneen murder case pronounced its verdict, Deputy Attorney General AMB Waliur Rahman, who moved for the prosecution, said, "Justice is done."

He later said, "I am satisfied with this verdict."

Israel

FROM PAGE 16
and air assaults, Olmert said the bloc should have focused instead on daily rocket fire by militants in Gaza against the Jewish state.

"When was the last time that the European Union condemned this shooting and suggested effective measures to stop it?" Olmert said. "At some point, Israel had no choice but to take some measures in order to stop this thing."

He said Israel had "no particular desire to topple" the Hamas-led Palestinian government despite the arrest by the Israeli military of dozens of Hamas officials and its Gaza raids.

The European Union has accused Israel of disproportionate use of force against Palestinians in Gaza and of making a humanitarian crisis there worse.

Some 50 Palestinians, including about 20 civilians, have been killed since the Israeli offensive began, Gaza residents said.

In the latest violence, Israeli air strikes in the Gaza Strip killed one militant and wounded five others.

"We haven't set a particular timetable for this operation (in Gaza). It will continue in places, in times, in different measures that will suit the purposes that were outlined," Olmert said, repeating what he told his cabinet on Sunday.

"I will stop when I will feel that I can provide security for the people of Israel. I will not stop until then," he said.