

JOURNOS MANIK SAHA, HUMAYUN KABIR MURDER CASES

Frequent change of IO, lack of monitoring delay trial

QUAZI AMANULLAH, *Khulna*

Frequent change of investigating officer (IO) and alleged lack of proper monitoring are delaying trial of journalists Manik Saha and Humayun Kabir Balu murder cases.

As a result, 'extended' investigation ordered by courts could not be completed even after 26 months of murder of Manik Saha and 17 months of murder of Humayun Kabir Balu.

According to a high officials of Khulna Metropolitan Police (KMP), a separate monitoring cell has been created to expedite investigation of the two sensitive murder cases and press charge sheets against the accused within the shortest possible time. But there has not been any progress in the investigation.

Manik Saha, Khulna correspondent of The New Age, was killed in a bomb attack on January 15, 2004 in front of Khulna Press Club.

Sub Inspector Ranjit Kumar Das of Khulna Sadar police station as complainant lodged an FIR on January 17 without naming any



MANIK SAHA

accused.

Former OCs of Khulna Sadar police station Ataur Rahman and Mosharef Hossain investigated the case and on June 20 in 2004 submitted charge sheet to court naming 12 outlaws as accused.

Three out of 12 chargesheeted accused were killed in crossfire incidents, three are in Khulna district Jail while six others are still at large. On April 18, 2005, Khulna Speedy Trial Tribunal ordered the IO for



HUMAYUN KABIR BALU

'extended' investigation of the case.

Inspector of KMP Detective Branch Chittya Ranjan Pal is now the fourth IO of the case. He took up the case on April 5 last year but is yet to submit charge sheet to ST Tribunal.

IO Chittya Ranjan Pal told this correspondent that he had applied to CMM court on June 17 to allow him to further interrogate three chargesheeted accused in Khulna Jail. The court is yet to give him

permission, he said.

Editor of Dainik Janmabhumi Humayun Kabir Balu was killed in a bomb attack allegedly by extremists on June 27, 2004 in front of his residence-cum-office at Haji Ismail Road in Khulna city.

SI Maruf as complainant lodged an FIR on the same night naming 10 extremists as accused.

The case was investigated by four Inspectors of KMP. Inspector Chittya Ranjan Pal of DB is the fifth IO, who took up the case on last April 5 for 'extended investigation'.

The tribunal ordered further investigation of this case following an allegation made by Special PP Abu Zafar that the charge sheet pressed by IO Inspector Abdul Hamid of DB on April 25, 2005 naming eight extremists as accused was 'weak' to put the case on trial.

The tribunal issued an order on January 22 last year for further investigation of Balu murder case.

JMB 'trainer' held in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Mymensingh*

Members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday arrested a close associate of executed Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) second-in-command Siddiqui Islam alias Bangla Bhai at Tangail bus stand, police said.

Arrested JMB leader Md Garibullah Akanda alias Munshi, 53, was a regional commander and trainer of JMB, police said.

Hailing from Binnakuri village under Dullah union in Muktagachha upazila, Garibullah was assistant superintendent of Bandha Chitalia Dakhil Madrassa in Jamalpur district. He absconded immediately after arrest of Bangla Bhai at Rampur village in Muktagachha, police said.

Garibullah was also a financier of JMB, police said.

BSF abducts 3 in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) abducted three Bangladeshi cattle traders from Zero Point at Laxmidari, a border village in Sadar upazila on Sunday night, police and BDR said.

BSF men abducted them at about 10:30 pm while they were returning to Bangladesh with cows. One of the cattle traders was identified as Amirul Islam, 35 son of Zamayet Ali of Laxmidari village while others are yet to be identified, police and BDR said.

BDR protested the incident and asked BSF to return the Bangladeshis, according to Maj. Kamrul Hasan of 41, Rifles Battalion.

Tk 1cr Viagra seized at Benapole

A CORRESPONDENT, *Benapole*

Customs officials yesterday seized 1,600 packets of Viagra worth about Tk1 crore at Benapole port, customs sources said.

A Customs team led by Assistant Commissioner Shawkat Ali Shadi seized the packets concealed in a consignment of silver thread during inspection, they said.

Rajib Enterprise, a Dhaka based import agency, ordered the consignment containing 280 packets of thread from a Calcutta based exporter named Govind Export on June 7.

Export value of the consignment was shown at US 18,578 dollar, they said.

Raivy Trade International, a clearing and forwarding (C&F) agent submitted necessary documents at Customs House to clear the consignment on behalf of Rajib Enterprise, theysaid.

It has been alleged that Raivy Trade International cleared several consignments of similar products for Rajib Enterprise earlier. Detective agents will investigate the matter, Customs sources said.

A divisional case was filed in this connection.

Banglabandha land port dead for nine days

Bridge collapse cuts links but no move to restore them

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Dinajpur*

Export and import through Banglabandha land port in Tetulia upazila of Panchagarh district remained suspended for the last nine days following collapse of two bridges on the Banglabandha Panchagarh Highway after heavy rain, port sources said.

Port activities have come to a halt as the Roads and Highway Department (RHD) is yet to restore the road communications, port sources said.

Locals said a bridge collapsed on Monday due to incessant rain at Jalpaitola in Majhipara union. However, none was injured in the incident. The other bridge collapsed at Chowdhurygochh vil-

lage Saturday afternoon.

Panchagarh RHD official sources said the bridges collapsed as those were too old.

Earlier, RH D identified the bridges as vulnerable for plying loaded trucks.

Locals said RHD took an initiative to build two diversion roads beside the bridges for resumption of road communication. But traders alleged that RHD failed to take prompt action to restore the road link between Panchagarh and Banglabandha even after nine days of bridge collapse.

On contact, two residents of Tetulia, Md Idris Ali and Md Abdur Rahman said the 20 kilometre long road links Tetulia with Panchagarh. Sufferings of local

people multiplied due to collapse of the bridges, they said. Importers and exporters also alleged that at least 60 to 70 goods laden tracks have been stranded on the highway since collapse of the bridges.

Md Shafiqur Rahman, a clearing and forwarding agent, alleged that at least six trucks of his agency remained stranded for nine days.

When contacted, executive engineer of Panchagarh RHD Sabuj Baran Dutta said efforts are underway to restore road communication through diversion roads within next 48 hours.



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Police yesterday recovered three mortar shells from near Malnichhara tea garden on the outskirts of Sylhet city. The shells, dug out from under soil, are believed to have been abandoned by Pakistan army during Liberation War.



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

The queue in front of Comilla regional passport office stretched about two kilometers yesterday as brokers disappeared shutting businesses (right) following a raid by joint forces.

Former Shibir leader, BNP man held in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

Joint forces yesterday arrested a BNP leader and Union Parishad (UP) chairman and a former central leader of Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS), student front of Jamaat-e-Islami.

The arrestees are BNP leader Md. Sadek Ali, who is chairman of Iswaripur Union Parishad and former Shibir leader Shafiqul Islam Milon of Parmesan village in Shyamanagar upazila.

Police said Sadek Ali was picked up from the UP office at Iswaripur and Shafiqul Islam Milon from Satkhira Zila Parishad premises. They were handed over to police.

Shyamnagar police station Officer-in-Charge Kazi Mizanur Rahman said, Sadek Ali was picked up for alleged involvement in criminal activities while Mioln was wanted in several cases including some for extortion and land grabbing.

CASE AGAINST TALUKDER ABDUL KHALEQUE

Deposition by prosecution witnesses begins tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

Recording of statements of prosecution witnesses in the corruption case against Khulna city Awami League president Talukder Abdul Khaleque will begin tomorrow.

The case is now under trial in Khulna Divisional Special Judge Court.

Bagerhat district Anti Corruption officer Md Nazrul Islam lodged FIR with Rampal police station as complainant on January 11, 2003 accusing Abdul Khaleque and five others of causing financial loss to the state by abusing power and indulging in corruption.

The prosecution story is that the facilities department of education ministry allocated Tk 39 lakh for construction of academic building of Sundarban Mahila College in Rampal in Bagerhat district.

Tenders for the construction

work were invited on April 1, 1998 while Talukder Khaleque was state minister for relief and rehabilitation and disaster management.

It was stated in the FIR that Talukder Khaleque as the then state minister influenced the authorities to issue work order in favour of his own construction firm Messers Nahar Trading by violating terms and conditions of

tender documents.

After 17 months' investigation, Khulna district anti corruption officer Md Abdul Karim submitted charge sheet to court.

There are five prosecution witnesses in the case. Three out of six FIR-named accused have been left out of the charge sheet, sources said.

5x2

7x3

12x3