



PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKH

Two accused in a case for '71 killings, Daud and Nur, being taken to jail on Saturday.

REMAND OF DAUD, NUR ENDS TODAY Families of victims, villagers narrate the role of 2 in '71

ANWAR ALI, RAJSHAHI

Families of the 15 victims of 1971 war and villagers narrated the role of two alleged killers arrested on Friday and demanded their speedy trial.

They also demanded arrest of rest of the collaborators involved in the killings.

Meanwhile, the two arrested accused disclosed 'important information' regarding activities of the collaborators in the district during interrogation by police yesterday.

Daud Hossain and Nur-e-Anwar who were taken on two-day remand on Saturday will be placed before the court today as the remand period ends in the morning, said Asaduzzaman Milon, officer-in-charge of Mohonpur police station.

"They (Daud and Nur) blamed each other for the killings. Our interrogation is still on", said Milon yesterday evening.

Talking to The Daily Star, M Shahabuddin Khan, superintendent of police in Rajshahi said, the arrestees gave important information about the activities of Razakar, Al Badr and Al Shams of the entire district.

"We don't want to give details at this moment for the sake of investigation", said Khan adding police came to know the role and operations by the arrestees during the war.

Merajul Islam Sheikh, son of Basir Uddin Sheikh, one of 15 victims lodged the case against 19 persons.

On November 30, 1971, the accused allegedly abducted 15 people of Berabari and Mugroil villages. All of them were killed later, said the case.

During a visit to Berabari and Mugroil villages yesterday, the martyrs' family members and neighbours recalled the activities of the arrested persons and their accomplices.

They also narrated their plight after losing their relatives and demanded arrest of all accused in the case and a speedy trial.

On Mugroil village road, about 28 km away from the city, a memorial was seen with the martyrs' names inscribed on it. Some 50 yards away, this correspondent met Momena Begum and her son Shahid Sheikh.

"I named my son Shaheed (meaning martyr) as I was carrying him when five of my family members were martyred".

Pakistani Army surrounded the entire village on the fateful day, she said.

Razakar Daud Hossain, Nur-e-Anwar, Motiur, Wahed and others led Pakistani army into the village. They picked up her brothers-in-law Idris Sheikh, Habibur Sheikh, Zaker Sheikh, Rashid Sheikh and uncle Nazer Sheikh from homes and shot them dead near the memorial, Momena recalled.

Her husband Yasin Ali was a freedom fighter (FF). "The day before, we bombed Dural bridge to cut the army supply line. As we (FFs) took shelter at Mugroil the Pakistani forces attacked the village. We managed to flee, but our innocent relatives could not. The attackers ravaged the village and torched every house", said Yasin.

"The forces took away Idris, a class nine student", said Momena.

At Berabari, 70 years old Yunus Ali Mirza said, Pakistani forces caught him and his neighbour Nahir Uddin Mondol together. Yunus was released later.

"On the previous night, we entertained a group of hungry freedom fighters at our houses", he said.

"I was abducted when I was going to Kesharhat market to sell molasses", said Abdul Matin who was at his 12 and driving a bullock cart of molasses.

"I saw Daud, Nur, Samsuddin, Sirajul and others at the camp. I begged to Samsuddin for life saying that we were classmates at a school. Later, I was set free".

This correspondent met Abdul Matin, the cart driver. "They released me as I was a boy. I can still recollect that Daud was identifying the captives in front of the Pakistani soldiers".

Nahir never returned. His body was also not found. Two farmers Mohir Khan and Kasim Uddin of the village too went missing after they were picked up from a cane field, Yunus said.

Nahir's son Ansar Ali Mondol was a student of class eight when the collaborators abducted his father.

"For absence of my father, I couldn't study. I had to bring up my brothers by working as a day labourer".

"When we were frantically looking for my father after independence, Daud once told me not to look for him any more", he said weeping.

Chhoytun Bibi, the 70-year-old widow of victim Kasim Uddin started working as domestic help at neighbours' houses since Kasim's departure. She still works as a maid for livelihood.

Verdict in Kazi Aref murder case not executed in 10 yrs

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Verdict in Jatya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) president and freedom fighter Kazi Aref Ahmed murder case could not be executed 10 years into the killing as the appeal hearing of the case remains pending with the Appellate Division.

Kazi Aref along with four leaders of JSD Kushtia district unit was killed by an armed gang at a rally at Kalidaspur village under Daulatpur upazila of Kushtia on February 16, 1999.

The four other slain leaders were JSD Kushtia unit president Lokman Hossain, general secretary Yakub Ali, local JSD leaders Shamsur Ali and Israil Hossain.

The then additional district and sessions judge Fajlur Rahman pronounced the

verdict in the case on August 30, 2004, sentencing 10 people to death and 12 others to life imprisonment.

Later, a high court bench upheld the lower court judgment, acquitting two of the murder charge.

After the High Court judgment, an appeal petition was filed with the Supreme Court, which is yet to fix the date for hearing on the petition.

Those awarded death penalty are Ilias Hossain and Sahir Uddin of Talbaria, Baker of Kishorinagar, Mannan Mollah of Pachavita, Anwar Hossain, Rasedul Islam Jhantu and Jahan Ali of Kursha, Jalal of Bailashisha, Safayat Hossain of Rajnagar, Kushtia, and Rowsan of Bhabanipur, Meherpur.

Of them, Mannan Mollah, Jahan, Jalal and Baker have been absconding while

Rowsan was killed in a 'shoot-out' with police on August 27, 2006.

The convicts with life imprisonment are Nuruzzaman Laltu of Kairadanga of Chuadanga district, Rofat, Asgar and Mohit of Talbaria, Faraz, Tashar and Garesh Sardar of Kalidaspur, Majid of Hridoypur, Mahtab of Rajnagar, Oliar of Pagla, Akubbar of Malihad and Tikka of Kursha, Kushtia.

Of them, Mahtab, Oliar and Akubbar are absconding while Mohit was killed in 'crossfire' with police on February 12, 2005.

Meanwhile, JSD Kushtia unit will pay homage to their slain leaders today by holding different programmes. The programmes include silent procession, rally and discussion meeting.

NOTHING CAN STOP AMINUL



PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKH

Physically challenged Aminul Islam of Monutala village in Khijirpur union under Monohardi upazila in Narsingdi district prepares to sit for SSC examinations that started yesterday. He first appeared at the SSC examinations in 2007 but failed in English. His could not appear last year. The underprivileged boy had to borrow to manage money for the purpose this year.



PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKH

Book stalls in Sathkira town remain with shutters down as book sellers yesterday started three-day strike in protest against lack of supply of textbooks one and a half months after the start of new academic session.

Nobody inquires about my welfare now

Says ailing language veteran

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Language Movement veteran septuagenarian Shafiar Rahman goes to the local Shaheed Minar on 21st February every year to place wreath on the altar.

However, the glorious son of the soil does so with difficulty, holding his grandson's hand, as he is suffering from diabetes, heart disease and glaucoma.

Recalling his local Language Movement comrades with whom he suffered imprisonment in Dhaka Central Jail in 1952, he said, "All of them have passed away one by one but Allah has kept me alive only to narrate the role of the district in the Language Movement to the new generations."

In 1952, Shafiar Rahman, then a matriculation examinee, was the general secretary of the then Nilphamari sub-division unit of Muslim Chhatra League.

On 21st February, strike was observed in all the educational institutions of the sub-



Shafiar Rahman

divisional town as a part of the central programme launched throughout the then East Pakistan and a rally was held on the premises of Muslim Hostel of Nilphamari High School.

The news of February 21 killing of Rafique, Shafique, Salam, Barkat, Jabbar and others by police firing in Dhaka reached the town on the night that day.

In protest of the killing, day long strike was called on 22 and 23 February.

Defying threat by the then non-Bengali sub-divisional officer (SDO) Monwar

Hossain, students and common people worked to make the programmes successful.

Next day police arrested Dabir Uddin Ahmed and Abu Nazem Mohammad Ali, two prominent political figures of the town, the then Muslim Chhatra League Secretary Shafiar Rahman, Jubo League convenor Shamsul Haque and four others for their role in Language Movement.

After stay for seven days in Rangpur Central Jail and then in Dhaka Central Jail for one-month, they were released.

During the detention, Shafiar Rahman and a few others appeared in the matriculation examination under police escort with special permission.

"Nobody inquires about my welfare. Government officials of the district look for me only on 21st February to make their official programmes ornamental. My last desire before death is to write down a detailed history of the role of the district in the Language Movement," he said.

Pro-AL staff again lock RU steward section

RU CORRESPONDENT

Pro-Awami League officials and employees of Rajshahi University (RU) yesterday again locked the steward section protesting controversial appointment of a fourth class employee at the section.

Earlier, Assistant Registrar Zakirul Islam appointed Jamaluddin, reportedly a BNP supporter, at steward section on verbal order of Pro-Vice chancellor Prof Mammunul Keramat.

As the news spread on the campus on Saturday, the pro-Awami League officials and employees assaulted steward section Deputy Registrar Gyanendra Narayan Roy and Assistant Registrar Zakirul Islam. They also forced them to leave their offices.

They also locked the rooms and cut off telephone and power connections.

Trial of 'corrupt' woman ward councillor demanded

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

Hundreds of people in Sirajganj Poursabha yesterday brought out a procession in the town protesting alleged corruption, irregularities and land grabbing by a woman ward councillor.

They paraded the main streets of the town chanting slogans against her and demanding her immediate trial.

Later, they submitted a memorandum to Sirajganj DC Humayun Kabir. A rally was held on the office premises of the DC where speakers declared her "unwanted" in the town. They said the woman ward councillor used to collect illegal toll in exchange for cards for elderly allowance and vulnerable group development (VGD).

She also illegally grabbed land of a businessman at Dhandbandhi, they said. Contacted, the woman ward councillor refuted all the allegations.

DHUNAT UPAZILA IN BOGRA

Half of TR project fund gobbled up

Fake projects, documents used, allege officials

HASIBUR RAHAMAN, BILU, Bogra

About half of over Tk 1 crore allocated for several development works under 'Test Relief' (TR) programme in Dhunat upazila under Bogra district has been allegedly misappropriated.

Fake documents were prepared about completion of development works including earth filling on Dhunat-Sariakandi bituminous pavement under the programme, say preliminary findings by TR officials.

The TR officials were carrying out the probe on their own getting several complaints.

At least 50 lakh taka has been misappropriated out of a total 106,33,245 taka through submitting false papers on master roll employment," said Mohammed Faridul Haque, project implementation officer (PIO) in Dhunat upazila under Bogra district.

"After completion of a development project near my office, I visited it but found implementation of only 50 percent of the work. Four tonnes of wheat worth Tk 108,780 was allocated for the earth-filling project. But hardly 50,000 taka has been spent to complete the project," he said.

"Several master roll papers on recently completed TR projects bear the same handwriting, showing the indication of preparing false documents," said the PIO replying to a question.

Bogra District Relief and Rehabilitation Officer (DRRO) AKM Zillur Rahman said, "The government allocated 4,112

tonne wheat worth Tk 11,17,17,060 to implement 2,265 development projects under TR programme for 12 upazilas in the district."

The TR project works started on December 12 last year and were 'completed' within January 15 this year.

"I have received a written complaint from Kahalu upazila that a chairman of a road maintenance project withdrew four tonne wheat worth Tk 1,08,780 but he spent only two tonne of wheat to complete the maintenance project," Zillur Rahman said.

"A large sum of money had been misappropriated in the district through submitting false projects and preparing fake project completion documents as per preliminary probe. A large number of development projects in Dhunat are fake," said a senior official of TR projects in the district seeking anonymity.

"I did not see any earth filling work in my area during the last three months although three tonne of wheat was allocated for a project on the maintenance work of existing bituminous pavement under TR programme," said doctor Anil of Dhunat poursava area.

An earth-filling project was taken for 'Chalar Bhitu Natun Jame Masjid' but the work is yet to start, said Mohammad Jahangir Alam of Alangi union in Dhunat.

Admitting the matter, project committee Chairman Habibur Rahman said the work will start within a short time.

PABNA CHAR CLASH

Fresh case filed accusing 42

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Forty-two more people, including the brother of AL lawmaker Shamsur Rahman Dilu, have been sued in a fresh case filed in connection with Kamalpur char clash that left five people dead.

Nazir Pramanik, father of slain Amin Uddin, filed the case with Chief Judicial Magistrate Court, Pabna, on Thursday accusing 42 people, including former UP chairman Anisur Rahman Sarif, also the brother of AL lawmaker Shamsur Rahman Sarif from Pabna-4 constituency, court sources said.

At least five people were killed and 20 others injured in a violent clash between two groups of villagers over capturing char (shoal) in the Padma at Char Kamalpur village in Ishwardi upazila on February 9.

The dead were identified as

Ayub Hossain alias Ayet Pramanik, Rashid Pramanik, Moslem Uddin, Shirjan and Amin Uddin.

Two cases--one by Sattar Pramanik and another by Najir Pramanik of Kamalpur village--were filed with Ishwardi Police Station the following day, accusing about 600 people. Of them, 91 were identified while the rest unidentified.

After filing of the cases, police arrested 26 people in connection with the incident and produced them in the court. The court rejected the bail prayers of the arrestees and sent them to jail.

Normalcy is yet to returned to Kamalpur village as most of the people of the village are still on the run.

"We are not harassing any innocent people. We are looking for the culprits involved in the clash." Said OC of Ishwardi Police Station.



Left abandoned for seven years on the Andharmanik River in Kalapara upazila, valuable parts of this ferryboat have gone missing while the authorities are apparently reluctant to save the remaining parts.

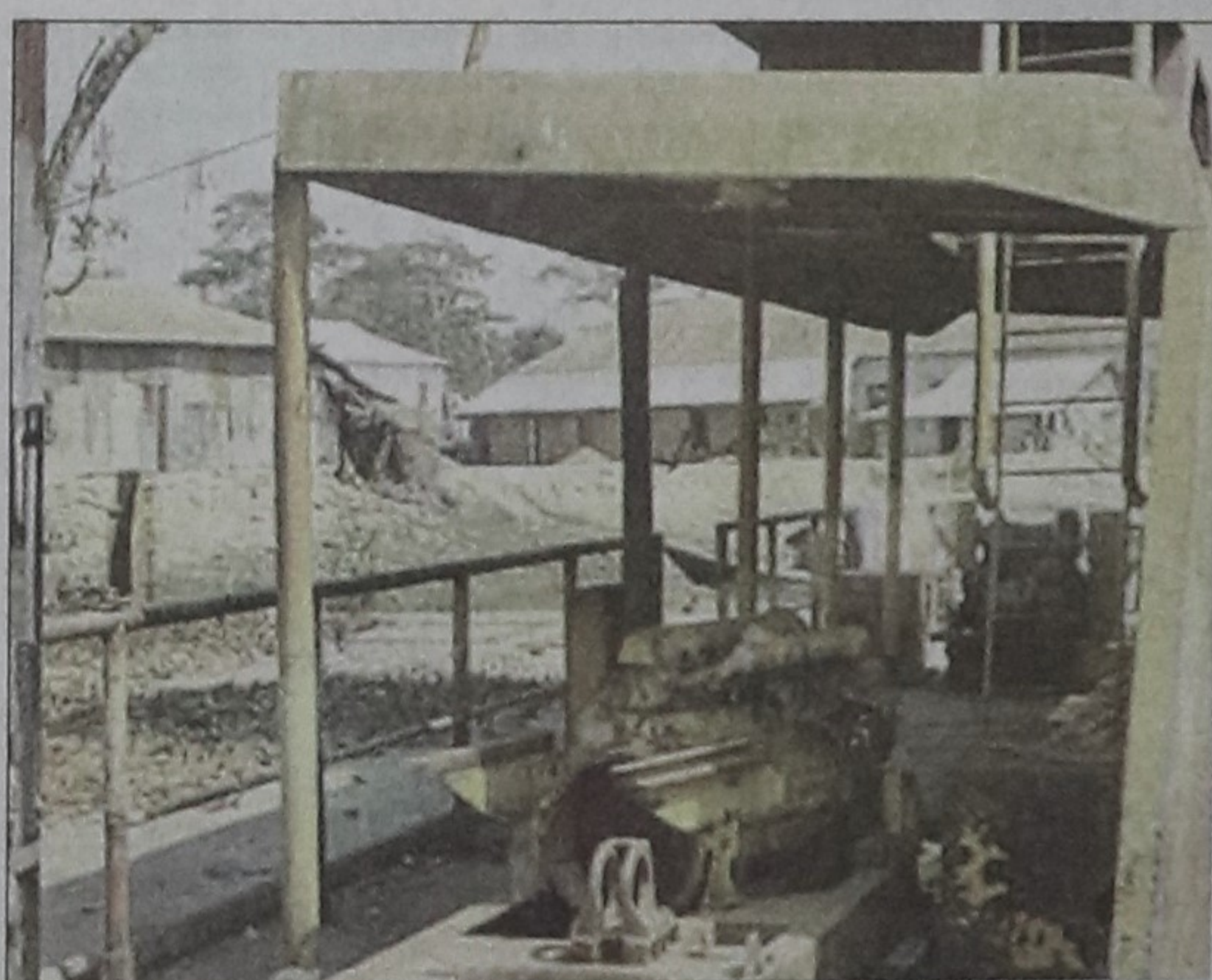


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