

## Khaleda's plea

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whether allegations brought against the opposition leader in the case are true.

An HC bench of Justice Khandker Musa Khaled and Justice SH Nurul Huda Jaygirdar delivered the verdict after hearing arguments from counsels of the accused and the Anti-Corruption Commission, and Attorney General Mahbubey Alam.

Now, there is no legal bar to continuing the case's trial unless the Supreme Court stays the HC verdict, said Anisul Huq, counsel for the ACC, while talking to reporters after the court order.

Khaleda's lawyer barrister Mahbub Uddin Khokon said they would file an appeal with the SC challenging the HC rule.

On July 3, 2009, ACC Deputy Assistant Director Harun-ur-Rashid filed the case against Khaleda, her son Tarique Rahman and five others with Ramna Police Station accusing them of embezzling over Tk 2.10 crore by forming the "fake" organisation. The trial court took the charges into cognisance on September 7 that year.

## 'Cluster bomb'

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radiation from within the tumour.

Unlike conventional radiation therapy, which bombards the body with gamma rays from outside, the alpha particles "diffuse inside the tumour, spreading further and further before disintegrating," a university statement quoted Keisari as saying.

"It is like a cluster bomb -- instead of detonating at one point, the atoms continuously disperse and emit alpha particles at increasing distances."

The university said that the process takes about 10 days and leaves behind only non-radioactive and non-toxic amounts of lead.

"Not only are cancerous cells more reliably destroyed, but in the majority of cases the body develops immunity against the return of the tumour," the statement said.

The wire implant, inserted into the tumour by hypodermic needle, "decays harmlessly in the body," it added.

It went on to say that in pre-clinical trials on mice, one group had tumours removed surgically while another was treated with the radioactive wire.

"When cells from the tumour were reinserted into the subject, 100 percent of those treated surgically redeveloped their tumour, compared to only 50 percent of those treated with the radioactive wire," it said.

"The researchers have had excellent results with many types of cancer models, including lung, pancreatic, colon, breast, and brain tumours."

The statement added that the procedure would begin clinical trials at Beilinson Hospital, near Tel Aviv, "soon."

## DCC polls

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days because the tenure of Chief Election Commissioner ATM Shamsul Huda and Election Commissioner Sohul Hussein expires on February 4.

Brig Gen (ret'd) M Sakhawati Hossain, the other election commissioner, will retire on February 14, the EC said in its letter.

The commission said the electoral reforms brought about to hold free and fair election will suffer a blow if the EC holds the polls hurriedly.

Besides, the commission does not have enough manpower to hold the DCC polls as its officials have been sent to the upcoming Comilla City Corporation election, it said in the letter.

The EC on Monday decided not to hold polls to the split DCC.

According to the recent changes brought to the Local Government (City Corporation) Act 2009, polls to two city corporations -- DCC North and DCC South -- must be held within 90 days, a deadline that ends on February 29.

# Facebook

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intervention at times when it can be of most help. Second, it enables troubled people to start a chat over an instant messaging system that many find more comfortable than speaking on the phone with a counsellor.

"One of the big goals here is to get the person in distress into the right help as soon as possible," said Fred Wolens, Facebook's public policy manager.

"We have heard from many people who say they want to talk to someone but do not want to call. Instant message is perfect for that," said Lidia Bernik, associate project director of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline in USA.

In recent years, distressed people have posted their final words on Facebook.

Through email, Facebook directed users to the hotline or encouraged friends to call police if they perceived someone was

about to do harm.

The new service goes a step further.

If a user spots a suicidal comment on a friend's Facebook page, he then clicks on a "report" button next to the posting that leads to a series of questions about the nature of the post.

If harmful behaviour is clicked, then self-harm, Facebook's user safety team reviews it and sends it to Lifeline.

Once the comment is determined to be legitimate, Facebook sends an email to the user who originally posted the thoughts perceived as suicidal. The email includes Lifeline's phone number and a link to start a confidential chat session.

Facebook also sends an email to the person who reported the content to let the person know that the site responded.

The Lifeline currently responds to dozens of users on Facebook each day.

# Seven bodies

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administration, however, could not confirm the incident.

The coastguard yesterday launched a search in the Bay for the bodies.

"I saw three bodies floating at Dhalchar at about 8:00am on Sunday while fishing there," Sattar Majhee, a fisherman who works on fishing boat FB Taher, told The Daily Star over the phone.

Back to Pathorghata, he informed Abdul Mannan, president of the upazila fish traders' association, of the incident.

Faruq, a fisherman of FB Josna-1, said three bodies were trapped in his fishing net at a point in the west of Dhalchar.

"Hands of the victims were tied with ropes and they were in shorts and vests." The fishermen of the boat disentangled the bodies and left the place, Faruq added.

Meanwhile, Mostafa

Majhee, a fisherman of FB Josna-2, said he caught a body in his net in the deep sea Sunday morning.

Hearing the news of the floating bodies, Lt Commander Harunur Rashid, station commander at the Pathorghata Coastguard, sat with the fishermen Tuesday night.

He told The Daily Star, "I have sent a message to all coast guard stations, asking for confirmation."

He also sent a team yesterday morning to the deep sea to look for the bodies, Harun added.

Mojibur Rahman, Barguna deputy commissioner, said he was not informed of the matter until yesterday afternoon and would take necessary steps.

Local fishermen said gangs of pirates often kidnap fishermen from the deep sea demanding a ransom. The victims, whose bodies were seen floating, might have been killed by pirates.

# All she wanted

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and stayed there. Jui's husband Rafiqul, who studied up to class-VIII, unexpectedly turned up there on December 4.

He took her into a room in the house and locked her in. He said he had a surprise for her.

Rafiqul covered her eyes with a piece of cloth, taped her mouth shut and cut the hand with a machete.

"He [Rafique] said he is putting an end to my studies forever," said Jui, a second-year student of Narsingdi Government College, narrating the moments of horror.

Jui was whisked off to the Pangu Hospital. She later phoned her parents and told them about the incident. She was then taken to Narsingdi.

Jui and Rafiqul from Brahmanbaria got married on January 30, 2008 with the consent of their families. She had been continuing studies staying in her parents' house in Narsingdi.

Police arrested Rafiqul after Jui's father Yunus Mia filed a case with the Cantonment Police Station.

Jui told The Daily Star that she was eager to continue her studies. "My right hand has been cut off, but I can use my other hand," she said.

Mohammad Salauddin, officer-in-charge of Cantonment Police Station, said Rafiqul, who is in prison after a one-day remand, had admitted hacking off his wife's right hand to prevent her from studying.

"We recovered the machete he used," Salauddin said, adding that most of her right hand, with all the fingers, was lost.

Rafiqul's sister and brother-in-law had given statements, said the OC.

Doctors at the Pangu Hospital said Jui's severed hand could not be reattached. They said the hand was left detached for more than six hours and the cells had died.

Jui's father sought finan-

cial and legal help from the government and people, saying he doesn't have enough money to ensure proper treatment of his daughter.

## Don't try

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Meanwhile, Chairperson of BNP and former premier Khaleda recently demanded release of all those leaders of Jamaat-e-Islami and her party now facing trial on charges of crimes against humanity during the Liberation war. She also demanded an immediate halt to the trial proceedings, which she said were politically motivated and intended to eliminate the opposition parties.

The AL chief urged the people to get united against the war criminals and those trying to protect them.

Turning to other issues, Hasina came down heavily on Khaleda for "misappropriating" Zia Orphanage Trust Fund money and whitening black money when she was prime minister.

The prime minister criticised the opposition leader for her statement that none from the Bangabandhu family took part in Liberation War in 1971.

Hasina said founder of BNP Ziaur Rahman had rehabilitated the anti-liberation forces in politics and in the country, and released 11,000 identified war criminals from jail.

The premier paid rich tributes to the father of the nation, four national leaders killed in jail and those who sacrificed their lives for liberating the country.

Other speakers at the discussion, chaired by AL presidium member Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, included party General Secretary Syed Ashrafur Islam, Matia Chowdhury, Suranjit Sengupta, Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim and Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya.

## War crimes trial

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Kafil also asked Hawlader if he had read three books on the Liberation War, including "Sundarbaner Shei Ummatal Dinguli" (Those Heavy Days in Sundarbans) by Ziauddin.

Hawlader replied in the negative.

Kafil then pointed out that the books have names of many distinguished freedom fighters of Pirojpur but Hawlader's name was not there. He told Hawlader there are 62,000 fake freedom fighters in the country and "you are one of them".

Hawlader said it was not true, adding that his name was included in the freedom fighters' list during the Ershad regime and the list was later published in a gazette during the first BNP government's time.

At around 10:30am when the tribunal went into session, Kafil began cross-examining Hawlader by asking him how long it took him to get to Sundarbans Freedom Fighters' Camp from his home since he claimed that he went there at least 15-20 times.

Hawlader said the time varied since the journey was dangerous and depended on the situation of that particular day.

Kafil then went on to enquire about the details of the camp, its structure, whether there were portraits of any important personalities and so on.

The prosecution raised several objections regarding the defence's intent with this kind of questions and a brief commotion was created in the courtroom as the defence protested.

The three-member bench of the International Crimes Tribunal led by its Chairman Justice Nizamul Huq then ordered them to calm down.

Hawlader's cross-examination will resume today.

## Justice

**FROM PAGE 1**  
socio-political and cultural organisations made the call while paying deep homage to the deceased by placing wreaths at the killing grounds of Rayer Bazar and Mirpur of the city as well as other parts of the country.

Just two days ahead of the final victory on December 16, the Pakistani occupation forces with the help of their local collaborators including Al-Badr, Al-Shams and Razakars had killed the intellectuals and dumped the bodies at the two places.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad and cabinet members paid their tribute at Mirpur Martyred Intellectuals' Monument early yesterday.

Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain, Workers' Party of Bangladesh President Rashed Khan Menon, DU Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr AAMS Arefin Siddique and BNP acting secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir were among those paying tribute to the martyrs at the Mirpur monument.

Apartment from organisations, people including teachers, students, women, children and the elderly thronged with flowers and carrying banners both the grounds to pay their homage to the intellectuals.

Most of the banners had the call to speed up the ongoing trial of the war criminals. They also chanted slogans to conduct the trials quickly.

According to reports, in Dhaka alone some 1,100 persons including artists, writers, Dhaka University teachers, doctors, engineers, lawyers were killed on December 14 and 15 after they had been abducted from their houses.

Over 2,000 intellectuals had been killed across the country between March 25 and December 16, the Victory Day.

# Worker, environment

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"reflect what people want".

The bench directed the government to reframe the rules so people's hope is reflected in handling and managing hazardous materials and waste.

It passed the order during the hearing on a government plea on extending a High Court order that permitted conditional import of toxic ships.

The Ministry of Industries on December 12 issued a gazette notification on the rules titled The Ship Breaking and Ship Recycling Rules, 2011 for safe and environmentally sound ship breaking and recycling in Bangladesh in compliance with an SC order.

Attorney General Mahbubey Alam yesterday placed the gazette notification before the court saying that the government had framed the rules in line with HC directives.

Meanwhile, Industries Secretary SH Masud Siddique as per an earlier SC order appeared before the

bench yesterday with a copy of the gazette notification. The court exempted Masud Siddique from further personal appearance before it following his petition.

Advocate Iqbal Kabir Lytton, another lawyer from Bela, told The Daily Star that the toxic ships cannot be imported for breaking till further order, as the HC in October this year restricted import of toxic ships till rules are framed.

Following a writ petition filed by Bela, the High Court at different times since 2006 directed the government to frame rules to free the ship-breaking industry from pollution and ensure safety of workers.

On December 15 last year, this court for the last time asked the government to frame ship-breaking rules in three months in light of six existing laws. The laws restrict import of toxic ships until the rules framed.

The laws are: Basel Convention Act, 1989; Bangladesh Environment

# Hills tense

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officer-in-charge of Baghaichhari Police Station.

Sattar's family members and local people said he was seen alive last when he was giving two indigenous persons a ride to Marishya Bazar in Rangamati on Tuesday.

After Sattar's body was brought to Kobakhali, local Bangalee settlers burst out in anger and launched attacks on indigenous people on Dighinala-Rangamati road stopping vehicles.

Suspecting two indigenous persons as killers of Sattar, the settlers attacked indigenous people indiscriminately. Four other indigenous persons were also injured in the attack while at least six remained missing from Marishya Bazar till filing of this report at 7:00pm yesterday.

The settlers stopped a vehicle carrying Chigonmala Chakma and her husband Jiten Chakma, and started throwing brickbats at them. Chigonmala died on the spot

after a brickbat hit her in the head. Other passengers of the vehicle managed to run away.

Domna Chakma, manager of Baghaichhari Sonali Bank, was injured as the bank came under attack as well.

Two Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board (CHTDB) staff -- Shantipriyo Chakma, and Mukut Tripura -- were also injured as the settlers attacked them with sharp weapons at CHTDB Rest House, said the OC of Baghaichhari Police Station.

The names of all injured persons could not be known immediately, who were rushed to Khagrachhari Adhunik Hospital.

Witnesses said Border Guard Bangladesh opened blank fire to disperse a mob of Bangalee settlers as they were moving towards Babupara, an indigenous village near Baghaichhari.

Armed with machetes and sticks, a few hundred settlers gathered at Jamtali area on Dighinala-Khagrachhari road. But an

# Mysterious disappearances

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whisked in minibuses by plain-clothes personnel.

Home Minister Shahara Khatun yesterday said she has directed law enforcers to investigate the "secret killings". She told reporters at her Secretariat office yesterday, "I came to know about such killings from the newspapers. I've directed the law enforcers to investigate."

Human rights groups have voiced concern over the growing incidents of secret killings after the victims were picked up by unidentified men. Law enforcement agencies have denied their involvement in such incidents.

The Human Rights Commission has asked the home ministry to provide it with a report on the missing people. HRC Chairman Mizanur Rahman told The Daily Star yesterday, "We have asked the home ministry to submit a report to us regarding some missing persons. Then we will consider what steps to take."

He added, "We will raise the issue in the HRC meeting scheduled for January 4 with due importance."

HRC sources said it asked the home ministry to submit its report on the eight recently disappeared people by December 26.

Munshiganj Superintendent of Police Shafiqul Islam claimed that over the last eight days five bodies, not seven, were recovered in the district. The victims' legs and hands were found tied. Cement bags were found to be tied to the bodies, he said, adding that police are investigating the matter.

Our Munshiganj correspondent adds: On Tuesday, three decomposed bodies of unidentified youths were found in the Dhaleshwari within a radius of around half a kilometre inside the Munshiganj municipality

where two other floating bodies of youths were recovered only five days ago.

On Tuesday, bodies of Akter Mia, 30, of Brahmanbaria, Manjur Munshi, 42, of Faridpur, and Mamun Mia, 33, of Barisal were recovered from the Dhaleshwari. They went missing on December 7 from the Toll Plaza of Daudkandi Bridge in Comilla. They were five of a group. Monjur's brother Yusuf and cousin Seken Matubbar, 25, are still missing.

On December 8, the body of Ismail Hossain Alamin, 33, former secretary of Ward-50 Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal unit in the capital was recovered. The other body recovered on that day could not be identified.

Ismail Hossain Alamin's uncle Abdul Khalek told The Daily Star Alamin and two other JCD activists were picked up by plain-clothes personnel in a microbus from Hatirpul Bazar in the capital on November 28.

On December 6, Munshiganj police recovered two bodies, Alid Bepari, 37, from a water body in Molakandi union and Shamim from a toilet of a mosque at Srinagar of Munshiganj, sources said.

Relatives of missing people from Narail, Narsingdi, Patuakhali, Faridpur, Barisal and Jessore thronged the morgue at Munshiganj Sadar Hospital to identify bodies of their missing loved ones.

Sources at the morgue in Gazipur Sadar Hospital and the police said at least 30 unidentified bodies were recovered from different parts of the districts, mostly from forests over the last one year.

Of the 30, three bodies of the youths, who were picked up from city's Dayaganj on the first day of Ramadan allegedly by the Detective Branch, were found at Pubail

Protection Act, 1995; Bangladesh Marine and Fisheries Ordinance, 1989; Bangladesh Labour Act, 2006; Bangladesh Territorial Water and Maritime Zone Act, 1974; and Environment Protection Rules, 1997.

Following a petition filed by Bangladesh Ship Breakers' Association, another HC bench headed by Justice AHM Shamsuddin Chowdhury Manik on March 7 this year permitted import of toxic ships for two months and directed the government to formulate the rules by that time.

On May 7, the court extended its March 7 order for another two months. The order was also extended on July 21 till October 12.

On October 27, during hearing of a writ petition filed by Bela, the HC said it would not extend the timeframe any further. It also issued some directives on the government to ensure safety of ship-breaking workers.

army unit stationed there dispersed them.

The settlers brought out processions at Baghaichhari upazila headquarters with Sattar's body and attacked indigenous people there.

The Ansars foiled an attempt of an attack on indigenous students and teachers of Kashalong High School in Baghaichhari, local sources said.

As tension was high in the area, section 144 was imposed by the upazila administration of Baghaichhari at 1:00pm banning gathering of more than 4 persons at public places, said Sajedul Islam, upazila nirbahi officer.

"Situation is now under control," said Masood Ull-Hasan, superintendent of police in Rangamati.

"The overall situation is almost calm," said Md Nurul Alam Chowdhury, additional deputy magistrate of Khagrachhari. The section 144 will be lifted after normalcy returns to the area, he said.

in Gazipur five days after they went missing.

One of the three victims was Mizan and his father Faruque Hossain yesterday said, "We don't know who picked up my son and killed him even though we went to the doors of government agencies."

Quoting locals he said, "While my sons and two others were forcefully taken away, locals thronged the spot and came to know that Detective Branch personnel were picking them up."

Officer-in-Charge Zakir Hossain Mollah of Sher-e-Banglanagar Police Station said one Iqbal and Abdul Mannan have been missing since December 3. Mannan's father-in-law Hajji Nur Mohammad, president of DCC Ward-41 Awami League unit, also disappeared on October 20 in Savar and he has been missing since then.

Police are yet to trace BNP leader and former councillor of Dhaka City Corporation ward-56 Chowdhury Alam. He has been missing since June 25, 2010.

The High Court on July 19, 2010, directed the inspector general of police and director general of Rapid Action Battalion to take effective measures immediately to find Alam.

Meanwhile, Adhikar, a local rights group, in a report said a total of 22 people were reported missing this year. It said 11 of them were allegedly picked up by Rab, two by police, six by detective police and three by unidentified people.

The Adhikar report said 18 people disappeared in 2010 and of them 14 were allegedly picked up by Rab, two by police and two by the Detective Branch.

The law enforcement agencies have denied all allegations that they picked up those people.

## 10 pirates

**FROM PAGE 1**  
policemen, were injured during the raid that started around 2:00pm.

Police recovered two firearms and eight sharp weapons, and five trawlers, including two snatched from the fishermen, from the pirates' den. The pirates threw their guns into the sea after they ran out of bullets, police said.

The bodies were kept at Monpura Police Station.

Yesterday's incident took place against the backdrop of an increasing number of attacks on trawlers in Meghna's estuary. According to Monpura police and witnesses, bandits attacked more than 100 trawlers this month.

Abdur Rahim, deputy inspector general of police (Barisal range), Md Bashir Ahmed, Bhola superintendent of police, and Monpura Officer-in-Charge Mizanur Rahman, visited the scene later in the evening.

The Bhola SP said the pirate gang, Zakir Bahini, opened fire on two fishing trawlers at about 10:00am in the area. They captured the trawlers and abducted Bellal and Kasem, both fishermen.

Hearing this, a team of 14 policemen led by Sub-inspector Nurul Alam of Monpura Police Station and Sub-inspector Kamal, in-charge of Char Nizam Police Camp, chased the pirates by patrol boat.

When police reached Bhashan Char area around 2:00pm and asked the pirates to give themselves up, they opened fire on the policemen. Police fired back, SP Bashir told The Daily Star.

At one stage of the gunfight, more forces came in. Around 600 rounds were fired from both sides, of which police shot 80, he added.

"We had around 60 law enforcers in the operation," Bashir said.

He, however, could not confirm whether the injured pirates died after being "beaten by the angry fishermen" or in the gunfight. But SI Nurul said the angry fishermen beat them dead.

Another policeman, seeking anonymity, said the law enforcers had no choice but stand inactive in the face of agitated fishermen, who far outnumbered them.

Barisal range DIG Abdur Rahim said police found four pirates and an abducted fisherman dead, when they searched the area after the gunfight. "The six others were beaten to death by locals as they tried to take shelter on a shoal," he said.

On Tuesday, police raided a hideout of pirates at Shahjalal Char on the estuary of Meghna and recovered a huge cache of arms and weapon-making materials.

## Clarification

**FROM PAGE 20**  
Member Planning Sk Abdul Mannan was quoted in the report to have said Rajuk cannot play desired role as it has to appease the influential quarters including politicians and government high officials, who own lucrative plots in Gulshan and Banani.

The clarification said he meant it had happened in the past, adding, "We are trying to change that practice now."

## Toxic liquor

**FROM PAGE 20**  
Labourers, rickshaw-pullers and hawkers were among the dead.

The condition of over 100 people, admitted to hospitals with severe stomach ache, vomiting and loose motion, was serious, the sources added.

The state administration was rushing medicines and doctors to the government-run Diamond Harbour hospital, located near the village, other officials said.

Police said they have arrested four alleged bootleggers so far.