

BDR MUTINY CASE 611 mutineers get imprisonment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A special court yesterday sentenced 611 out of 621 accused soldiers of 13 Rifle Battalion of erstwhile Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) to rigorous imprisonment, ranging from four months to seven years, in the Pilkhna mutiny case.

Each convict was also fined Tk 100. The remaining 10 sepoys, who had earlier pleaded guilty, were exonerated by the three-member special court-8 led by Brigadier General Abu Sayeed Khan.

However, these 10 sepoys and 135 of the convicted are accused in the BDR carnage case.

The mutineers mowed down 57 top and mid-ranking army officers alongside 17 other people at the BDR's Pilkhna headquarters on February 25-26, 2009.

The court framed charges against 623 accused on October 20, 2010 and afterwards two of the accused died.

The soldiers were accused of leaving the Darbar Hall defying the director general's order, showing solidarity with mutineers, revolting with firearms, staying inactive in preventing the mutiny, giving provocative speeches before the media and failing to control unruly colleagues and subordinates.

The verdict came in 55 working days after the case proceedings started from 2010.

A total 3,956 out of 4,044 soldiers of 53 units of BDR (now Border Guard Bangladesh) were convicted while 88 got acquittal. A total 1,998 BDR jawans are being tried in four special courts.



The Association for Law Research and Human Rights forms a human chain in front of Jatiya Press Club in the capital yesterday protesting the violence inflicted upon Rohingyas in Myanmar's Rakhine province.

Bangabandhu's autobiography to be published

UNB, Dhaka

An autobiography of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman will be published tomorrow.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said this while addressing a views exchange meeting with the grassroots leaders from Thakurgaon district at her official residence Gono Bhaban yesterday.

"This will be the unfinished autobiography of the Father of the Nation. The autobiography accommodates his writings from the diaries he wrote from time to time either in incarceration or outside till 1955," Hasina said.

The copies of the published diary will be handed over to Hasina and her younger sister Sheikh Rehana on June 19, the only surviving family members of Bangabandhu who was assassinated along with most members of his family by a military cabal on August 15, 1975.

Sheikh Hasina and Sheikh Rehana, daughters of Bangabandhu, survived the carnage as they were abroad.

Shop owners against scrapping of Package VAT

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Dokan Malik Samity, an association of shop owners, yesterday protested the proposal in the new budget to withdraw the 'Package VAT' system.

The association leaders made the protest at a press conference at Jatiya Press Club in the capital.

They said the proposal to implement 4 percent Value Added Tax (VAT) on sale instead of Package VAT will hamper the government's move to enhance its revenue collection.

Finance Minister AMA Muhith placed the proposal according to a prescription of the International Monetary Fund, said the association Chairman Amir Hossain Khan.

EVEREST CONQUERORS

Nishat, Mohit return national flag

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The stories of the adventurous expeditions of Bangladeshi mountaineers to the Mount Everest should be disseminated among the country's young generation to encourage them in outdoor activities and adventures, said eminent personalities yesterday.

They also proposed to publish books describing experiences and displaying photographs of the expeditions and to include such topics in the school level text books.

They said these while addressing a press conference and the Flag-In ceremony of Nishat Majumder and MA Mohit organised by the Bangla

Mountaineering and Trekking Club at Jatiya Press Club in the capital.

Nishat became the first Bangladeshi woman to conquer the Mount Everest on May 19 while MA Mohit, who accompanied her in the expedition, became the first Bangladeshi to scale up the peak twice from both sides.

Marking the success of their journey, the duo yesterday returned the national flag at the Flag-In ceremony.

They received the flag at a Flag-Off ceremony prior to their expedition with a vow to hoist it in the Mount Everest.

Noted Academician Prof Muhammed Zafar Iqbal suggested that Nishat and Mohit publish books in the

next Ekushey Book Fair describing their experiences.

He also announced to dedicate on of his books to their success.

At the programme, Nishat and Mohit described their terrible and breath-stopping expedition to the Everest.

Dedicating their success to the youth, they said this joint expedition will encourage the young boys and girls to work jointly for building a prosperous Bangladesh.

Former advisers to a caretaker government Rasheda K Chowdhury and Hossain Zillur Rahman and parents of Nishat and Mohit also attended the programme among others.

Most steel mills lack air pollution control system

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Most steel re-rolling mills in and around the capital have been running without necessary air pollution control system posing risk of air pollution and health hazard, according to findings of the Department of Environment (DoE).

The DoE recently conducted drives at 17 re-rolling mills in the capital's Demra area, and found that about 90 percent of the mills are running without mandatory "fume extraction system", said a DoE press release.

As per the environment conservation laws, the mill owners must inform the DoE about any malfunctioning of the system, and suspend operation of the mills until the system is installed but they do not comply with the rule, said Mohammad Munir Chowdhury, a director at the DoE.

Fumes containing metals like lead and chromium are emitted from steel mills, he said adding that the Demra area's air contains 735 microgram lethal particles in per cubic metre, while the tolerable level in Bangladesh is 200 micrograms.

Highly toxic fumes can cause respiratory problems among the locals and destroy biodiversity, he said.

REPRESSION OF ADIVASI WOMEN Judicial commission demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four women's rights organisations yesterday urged the government to form a judicial inquiry commission to investigate the recent incidents of repression on Adivasi women.

They also urged the National Human Rights Commission to probe the incidents of rape and murder of two minor indigenous girls in Rangamati and Naogaon this year.

The call was made at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU), jointly organised by Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, Bangladesh Nari Pragati Sangha, Karmojibi Nari, and Bangladesh Adivasi Nari Network.

Shahnaj Sumi of Bangladesh Nari Pragati Sangha said either local influential remained involved in rape, murder or support the accused, which prevented justice.

Nishi Dewan of Bangladesh Adivasi Nari Network said, "We protest almost every incident and submit memorandum to the prime minister, demanding trial but do not get proper responses."

They said most repression incidents involved land dispute with Bangalee settlers.

"Every land dispute is resulted in rape or abduction of Adivasi women," said Rokeya Rafique Baby, executive director of Karmojibi Nari.

Statistics shows that this year, two Adivasi children were killed after rape, 10 others raped, another 10 beaten up, and a



Everest conquerors MA Mohit, left, and Nishat Majumder, right, return the national flag to guests during a news conference at Jatiya Press Club in the capital yesterday. Writer Zafar Iqbal, centre, and former advisers to a caretaker government Rasheda K Chowdhury, second from left, and Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman, second from right, receive the flag.

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