Ex-Al Badr man testifies

FROM PAGE 1

During his two and a quarter hour testimony, Manowar said Kamaruzzaman had gunned down Shushil alias Mahiruddin in the Al-Badr camp in 1971.

He said one day during the war, Kamaruzzaman accompanied a group of 20-25 armed Razakars, an auxiliary force of the Pakistani occupation forces, and abducted Shushil from a Hindu-slum between Nurundi and Pearpur. Shushil was kept in the Al-Badr camp of Nayani Bari.

Kamaruzzaman, after talks with Pakistani Major Riaz, converted Shushil to Islam and named him Mahiruddin, said the witness, adding, "He [Shushil] offered prayers with them [the Muslims in the camp]."

Later, Shushil was taken to the Al-Badr camp at Surendra Saha's home and Kamaruzzaman instructed his men to force Shushil to swim in the pond of the house compound, said Monowar. He added that Shushil could not swim and was brought to the bank.

"Kamaruzzaman came to the camp in the evening and had an altercation with Nasir and Kamran [Al-Badr men]. At one stage of their altercation, Kamaruzzaman shot Shushil dead after taking the gun from Nasir," said Monowar.

The three-member tribunal, led by its Chairman, Justice ATM Fazle Kabir, with members Justice Obaidul Hassan and Judge Md Shahinur Islam, also recorded the crossexamination of the witness yesterday before adjourning the case proceedings until

The 63-year-old witness said he had worked with his maternal grandfather at a tailor shop and he had training to be a "volunteer" along with 40-50 people before the Liberation War. They were deployed as guards at offices and banks after Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's March 7 speech in 1971.

Monowar, now an employee of a school in Sherpur, said when "East Pakistan army" had gone to Belta School in Jamalpur, Kamaruzzaman, who was the leader of a student organisation in Sherpur, called a meeting in which local individuals Jamiruddin Mowlana, Mamtaj Mowlana and Samiul Doctor took

"During the meeting, Kamaruzzaman said they should invite the East Pakistan army to come [to Sherpur] from Jamalpur and 50-60 people went to Jamalpur the next morning to discuss the matter [with the Pakistan army officials]," said Monowar.

"After that, people of the area started to leave for India...Suresh Malakar, Surendra Saha and some others were going to India on 10-15 vehicles," said the witness, adding, "But on the way, Kamaruzzaman along with others stopped them and looted their vehicles. Kamaruzzaman was present

"I was also present there," said Monowar.

Surendra had returned home after the looting. Kamaruzzaman asked Surendra for talks at Surendra's home in the evening.

"I don't know what happened at the meeting but the next morning I did not see the family members of Surendra and a Pakistani flag was hoisted atop the house.

Members Kamaruzzaman's organisation were seen in the house," said Monowar.

Later, the Pakistan army went to the area. Kamaruzzaman had set up camps for them at Nayani Bari and GK School, said Monowar, adding that the received bullet injuries and camps were set up in was taken away by helicop- believed that much of disappearance of labour Jamalpur, Mymensingh, Nalitabari, Ahmednagar and

other places. "Major Riaz and Major Ayub Khan set up camps in where places Kamaruzzaman asked them to and the East Pakistan army and Al-Badr men

the Nayani Bari camp," said

Monowar, adding, "On the

resided there," said Monowar. "The camps nearest to my house were set up at Surendra Saha's house and

way to the tailor shop, I used to observe what the Pakistan army and Al-Badr men did at the camp."

One day, Suja, of the camp, asked him why he did not go to the camp and if he did not go, he would face problems, said Monowar, adding, "Suja told me, you have had training. Why don't you train the members of the camp?"

Monowar said he went into hiding after discussions with his family members about Suja's threats, but Raja, an Al-Badr man, threatened his father that he would burn their house down and kill Monowar's three brothers unless Monowar joined Al-Badr.

When Monowar did not return from hiding, Natu, another Al-Badr man, threatened Monowar's mother in similar fashion. He asked her to give him Tk 500 and Monowar, said the witness.

"The next morning, my mother gave them Tk 500 by selling her earring and a mango tree and Raja and Natu took me to Nayani Bari camp," said Monowar, adding that Natu and Raja had told his mother that they had gone to the house under Kamaruzzaman's directives.

Monowar said he used to conduct parades at the Nayani Bari camp but after 15-20 days he started calling in sick and he was relieved of the job.

"Kamaruzzaman told me that I would be the guard of the camp of Surendra Saha's house. I served there as a watchman for four or five months, not more than seven months," said Monowar.

Monowar said two days after he joined the camp, Kamaruzzaman instructed Kamran, an Al-Badr leader, and others to force Syed Abdul Hannan, the then principal of Sherpur College, to walk through the town with lime and ink on his face and his head shaved, something considered very humiliating.

"Principal Hannan was compelled to walk through the town and I observed the scene from the gate of the Al-Badr camp," said Monowar, adding that Hannan was released later under Major Riaz's instructions.

On the day of Hannan's release, Al-Badr men brought civil surgeon Askar to the Al-Badr camp but subsequently he too was released Kamaruzzaman's directive, said Monowar.

Later, Awami Leaguer Golam Mostafa was brought to the camp, blindfolded and tied up.

"He [Golam Mostafa] was kept beside me and he was screaming and asking for water but was not given any," said Monowar. He added that afterwards one Nasir took Mostafa, still blindfolded, to Sheri Bridge from the camp on a rickshaw.

Nasir also took a Chinesemade gun from the office. Kamaruzzaman had left the camp five minutes earlier.

"After half an hour, Kamaruzzaman and Nasir returned to the camp together and Nasir was telling [others in the camp] that sir [Kamaruzzaman] could now aim well, that he had courage and he could operate a gun," said Monowar.

Al-Badr men also caught and released football player Kajal with an instruction that he leave Sherpur town.

"Kamaruzzaman Saheb instructed Nasir, Mahmud and Kamran to follow him and told them to kill Kajal if he tried to go to Jamalpur by crossing the river. Later I heard that Kajal had been gunned down and his body could not be recovered," said Monowar.

On that day, Major Riaz ter and Kamaruzzaman gave a letter to Kamran, who accompanied the major, to give to his "sir".

"When Al-Badr man Joynal asked who is this 'sir', Kamaruzzaman answered can't you remember. This is Ghulam Azam who had sent a telegram," said Monowar.

Former Jamaat chief Ghulam Azam is also facing trial at Tribunal-1 in connection with crimes against humanity.

Monowar said one day

during the war he saw Kamaruzzaman holding a meeting at the upper floor of the camp and Kamaruzzaman said free-

had to lay siege to the village. "Later, they went to lay siege to the village and Al-Badr commander Kamaruzzaman also went there," said Monowar, adding, "The next morning, we saw that many bodies were brought to the Municipality

dom fighters had reached

Sohagpur village and they

Park on trucks." "Then Kamaruzzaman said they had killed them during the operation and Razakars had also taken part in the operation," said Monowar.

Monowar said freedom fighter Kashem and two others were captured when they were planning an operation. Kamaruzzaman shot them after making them stand in a line.

Even though Kashem survived as he had jumped into the river, the other two were killed, said Monowar, adding, "I did not see the incident but heard about it from Kashem after the LiberationWar.

"I do not want anything but a trial," said the witness.

He said threats had been made against him recently and that he had filed a general diary in this regard.

Afterwards, defence counsel Kafil Uddin Chowdhury cross-examined the witness for two hours and asked around 50 questions.

Satellites

FROM PAGE 20

three decades of satellite observation.

Melting even occurred at Greenland's coldest and highest place, Summit sta-

The thawed ice area jumped from 40 percent of the ice sheet to 97pc in just four days from 8 July.

Although about half of Greenland's ice sheet normally sees surface melting over the summer months, the speed and scale of this year's thaw surprised scientists, who described the phenomenon as "extraordi-Nasa said nearly the

entire ice cover of Greenland, from its thin, low-lying coastal edges to its centre, which is 3km (two miles) thick, experienced some degree of melting at its surface. Until now, the most

extensive melting seen by satellites in the past three decades was about 55 percent of the area.

According to ice core records, such pronounced melting at Summit station and across the ice sheet has not occurred since 1889.

"When we see melt in places that we haven't seen before, at least in a long period of time, it makes you sit up and ask what's happening," Nasa chief scientist Waleed Abdalati said.

"It's a big signal, the mean ing of which we're going to sort out for years to come."

WATCH THIS SPACE Because this Greenland wide melting has happened before -- in 1889 -- scientists are not yet able to determine whether this is a natural but rare event, or if it has been sparked by man-made climate change, he said.

"Ice cores from Summit show that melting events of this type occur about once every 150 years on average. With the last one happening in 1889, this event is right on time," said Lora Koenig, a glaciologist from Nasa's Goddard Space Flight Center in Maryland and a member of the research team analysing the satellite

"But if we continue to observe melting events like this in upcoming years, it will be worrisome.

Greenland's ice was already freezing again.

The news comes just days after Nasa satellite imagery revealed that a massive iceberg, twice the size of Manhattan, had broken off a glacier in Greenland.

"This event, combined with other natural but uncommon phenomena, such as the large calving event last week on Petermann Glacier, are part of a complex story," said Nasa's Tom Wagner.

Buyers want

FROM PAGE 1

their deep concern about worker unrest over pay raise and prospects for their businesses in Bangladesh.

The brand companies, which are compliant to workers' rights, pressed the minister for initiating a transparent and reliable wage review process soon at a meeting where journalists were not allowed at the request of the buyers.

The minimum wage for garment workers was first set in 2006 and revised again in November 2010, when the monthly pay of an entry level worker was increased from Tk 1,662 to Tk 3,000.

The minister, on the other hand, played down the concerns of the buyers. "There is no reason to be worried," he told the press after the meeting.

The country's situation has not reached a point where international buyers will cancel orders and go for other destinations, he argued. Sitting beside him were the buyers, who appeared grim-faced and remained tight-lipped. There is no plan to review

the wage structure at the moment. Rather the government will offer some basic food items at subsidised prices. "We are planning to intro-

duce rations so that the garment workers can buy food items at lower prices", the minister said at his secretariat office.

He observed that the intermittent rise in house rents was eating up the bulk of the income of garment workers. The government will review the rent control act soon and implement it strictly so that house rents cannot be hiked frequently, he said.

The buyers are, however, far from being happy with these assurances, confided sources close to them. All they want is a permanent solution to this wage issue, they say. Earlier this month, brand

companies were very critical of violent protests, acknowledging at the same time workers' frustrations, heightened by inflation. Government statistics

show that overall inflation stood at 8.56 percent last month. Food inflation in June came down to 7.08 percent from 7.46 percent a month ago. It was 13.75 percent in last September. Non-food inflation hit a record 13.96 percent in March, but stood at 11.72 percent last month.

Against this backdrop, the garment buyers urged the government to conduct at least one annual review of minimum wages in line with the inflation and consumer price index.

At the meeting yesterday, the buyers pointed out that the pattern of unrest had led to a lack of confidence in the long term stability and sustainability of the industry. All the violence between 2010 and 2012 has been driven by demands for wage increase.

The closure of (about 350) factories for 10 days in Ashulia had created a negative impact on on-time delivery of orders, said the buyers, asking the minister to take realistic steps so that the garment and textile sector could resolve the issue permanently and move on.

If an acceptable wage formula was agreed upon and reviewed in every one or two years, the workers' unrest could be minimised to a great extent, they observed. The minister invited the

buyers to raise their purchase prices. "If you can increase Tk 25, I will give Tk 20 to workers and Tk 5 to manufacturers," said the minister in a lighter vein. The buyers remained silent in response. The brand leaders decided to take a united step soon after the latest spat of

violence in Ashulia last month, two and a half Scientists said they | months after the forced leader Aminul Islam, said a source close to the buyers. The buyers are due to meet Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina by the middle of next month, and hold a series of

> meetings with ministries as well as with two garment exporters associations to have their concerns addressed. The other buyers who attended the meeting were Lindex, G-Star, Gap, C&A, M&Q, Primark, New Look,

> Marks & Spencer, New Wave,

Nike Inc and Kwintet.



"The embassy officer was hit

by a bullet from a .22 bore

revolver of a mugger during a

brawl with the gang who

stopped him near his

Gulshan house on March 6,"

Deputy Commissioner of DB

(north) Mollah Nazrul Islam

said at a press briefing at the

Media and Community

The arrestees, however,

After the briefing, only the

were not produced before the

photojournalists were

allowed to take photos of the

brought before the journal-

ists, the DB official said "in

fear of contempt of court", as

the four were already into the

first day of an eight-day

the consular section of the

Saudi embassy in Dhaka, was

shot dead near his house in

the diplomatic enclave in the

police nabbed Saiful on June

4 from Uttar Gaowaer of

Dakkhinkhan in a robbery

sion, his aide Al-Amin was

According to his confes-

Of the arrestees, the DB

Khalaf, 45, an official with

Asked why they were not

Service Centre in the city.

journalists at the briefing.

four from a distance.

remand in the case.

wee hours of March 6.



others.

mugging.

arrested. The detectives

found the revolver at a house

in Dakkhinkhan as per infor-

mation of the two arrestees.

The DB then arrested the two

ment, police also seized a

private car from Manikdi of

Dhaka Cantonment area on

ing that the car was used by

the criminals during the

firearm to Forensic

Department of the Criminal

Investigation Department

(CID) as they suspected that

the muggers may have a link

with the killing of Saudi

firmed that the bullet which

hit the Saudi official was fired

from the same revolver, DB

showed them arrested in the

murder case and took them

on an eight-day remand on

interrogation, the four crimi-

nals admitted their involve-

ment with the killing of the

Saudi official. But they did

not give detail of the incident,

Being confirmed, police

During the first day's

On Sunday, the CID con-

Embassy official.

officer Nazrul said.

Tuesday, he added.

he said.

The detectives sent the

Tuesday night, he said claim-

As per the arrestees' state-





sively, so we are not very clear

in some matters," Nazrul

snatchers waylaid Khalaf for

mugging while he went out

from his residence for jog-

muggers engaged in a brawl

while the official was trying to

resist the criminals, the DC

went on saying that at one

stage, a bullet went off and hit

Khalaf. The muggers then

killing, witnesses said that

some youths left the spot on a

white private car at a very

However, on the day of

fled the scene on the car.

high speed.

On the fateful night, the

The Saudi official and the

on at Buet STAFF CORRESPONDENT Agitating teachers of

Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) yesterday continued their demonstration demanding the removal of the university VC and his deputy. "We did not get enough time to question them inten-

Agitation goes

They staged a two-hour sit-in programme in front of the Buet Council Building which began at 11:00am. The Buet Teachers'

Association began their demonstration on April 7 demanding removal of Vice-Chancellor (VC) Prof SM Nazrul Islam and Pro VC Prof M Habibur Rahman over 16 allegations against them. Talking to The Daily Star,

Prof Ashraful Islam, general secretary of the association said, "We have been waiting eagerly for the government to take steps to resolve this crisis but no progress has been made so far." He urged the government

to remove the VC and his Asked, a DB high official seeking anonymity said deputy and bring the teachprobably the witnesses could ers and students back to not identify the exact color of academic activities. the car under sodium light. On July 21, the teachers Nazrul said, "Basically the

threatened to resign en arrestees are professional masse if their demand was robbers. They killed the Saudi not met by July 30. They had official coincidentally. The issued a similar ultimatum revolver they used in the on July 16 which they postkilling was also a mugged poned later. They decided to continue The criminals robbed the

a two-hour agitation every day, except Friday, from 11:00am to 1:00pm till July 30.

Rizwana gets Magsaysay FROM PAGE 1

impassioned leadership in a campaign of judicial activism in Bangladesh that affirms the people's right to a good environment as nothing less than their right to dignity and life", according to an announcement made by the RMAF Board of Trustees yesterday. Five other Asians -- Chen

Shu-Chu of Taiwan, Romulo Davide of the Philippines, Kulandei Francis of India, Yang Saing Koma of Cambodia, Ambrosius Ruwindrijarto of Indonesia -- have also received the prestigious award this year for their contributions in different fields.

The six winners now join the 290 laureates, who have received Asia's highest honour to date. They each will receive a certificate, a environmental justice." medallion and cash prize.

The awardees will be RMAF celebrates the memformally conferred the Magsaysay Award at a pre-third president of the ously won the prestigious

sentation ceremony to be held on August 31 in the Philippine International Convention Centre.

Rizwana is the 11th Bangladeshi to win the award considered as the Noble Prize of Asia. Earlier, she won the international Goldman Award for her contribution to environmental campaign. In her reaction to winning

the award, Rizwana told The Daily Star that the award was arecognition for her overall work and achievement. "I am overwhelmed with

joy. To me, it is a great achievement. Now my obligation to my duties has increased significantly," she said, adding, "My duty now is to advance my work area with people's support and popularise the notion of

Established in 1957, the ory and leadership of the

Philippines. The award is given every year to individuals or organisations in Asia that manifest the sense of selfless service that ruled the life of the Filipino leader.

revolver from the house of a

clinic owner at Khilkhet on

September 29, he added.

Nobel Laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus, Brac founder and Chairperson Sir Fazle Hasan Abed, Bishwa Sahitya Kendra founder Abdullah Abu Saveed, Prothom Alo Editor and Publisher Matiur Rahman, CDD founder and its Executive Director AHM Khan, Noman Gonoshasthaya Kendra founder Zafrullah Chowdhury, Social activist Taharunnesa Abdullah, Banchte Shekha founder Angela Gomes, social development worker Rev Fr Richard William Timm and Deedar Comprehensive Village Development Cooperative Society founder Mohammad Yeasin are the Bangladeshis who previ-

World Bank had proposed

forming a three-member

panel with experts in inter-

national probe and prose-

cution to help the ACC in its

investigation into the cor-

ruption allegations in the

this proposal, albeit after a

between the ACC and the

World Bank will include

continuous sharing of

information during the

enquiry, investigation and

prosecution phases if the

probe establishes a prima

to the proposal earlier, say-

ing the law did not permit an

agreement with such a

day said that through ana-

lysing the relevant laws, the

ACC had found five areas

where it could cooperate

with the WB and fulfil the

would give the panel full

ACC's enquiry team.

Rahman said the ACC

The ACC had not agreed

But the ACC chief yester-

facie case," Rahman said.

The ACC finally agreed to

"The area of cooperation

project."

month's delay.

OTHER RECIPIENTS

Chen Shu-Chu has won this year's Magsaysay award for "the pure altruism of her personal giving, which reflects a deep, consistent, quiet compassion, and has transformed the lives of the numerous Taiwanese she has helped" while Romulo Davide for turning farmers into scientist-producer.

Kulandei Francis of India won the award for "his visionary zeal, his profound faith in community energies, and his sustained programs in pursuing the holistic economic empowerment of thousands of women and their families in rural India.'

The foundation recognised Yang Saing Koma for putting science at the service of farmers in Cambodia while Ambrosius Ruwindrijarto was awarded for creating entrepreneurial ways for community-based natural resource management.

Govt writes to WB terday told the press, "The

Meanwhile, to comply with the WB's other condition, the Anti-Corruption Commission agreed to the WB proposal for forming a three-member panel to ensure a transparent and fair probe into the corruption allegations in the

Padma bridge project. Talking to journalists at his office, ACC Chairman Ghulam Rahman said apart from forming the panel, the government was also willing to sign a memorandum of understanding with the

The WB on June 29 cancelled its \$1.2 billion project funding that it had kept suspended since last September on allegations that ex-communication minister Abul Hossain and some public officials were involved in corruption in selecting the Canadian company SNC-Lavalin for the bridge's supervisory work.

The global lender called for certain government actions, including the removal of Abul and some officials, and also signing of a MoU with the ACC. But the government was reluctant Development Bank said it to meet the two conditions. Following the WB's loan cancellation, the govern-

ment announced that it construction as soon as would implement the propossible, Muhith said. ject with it own resources. However, the government gradually changed its position in the last few days and took steps to win back the ernment, he said. WB's confidence and fulfil The government has its conditions. Muhith's statement

In a written statement,

tions set by the global lender on June 5. Finance Minister AMA ACC chief's briefing Muhith yesterday held out the assurance that there The ACC chairman yes-

would be no corruption in

the Padma bridge project. "We want to assure you that there will not be any corruption in the Padma bridge project." And the bridge's initial work will start within this year, said Muhith.

He said the work was hampered when the WB raised corruption allegations in the project.

Following the WB's allegations, the ACC initiated a probe into the allegations in August 2011 but did not find any corruption in the project. The ACC continued its probe as the WB reaffirmed its allegations, the minister

"Right from the moment the WB cancelled the loan, we have been saying that the decision needs to be reconsidered. We are still hopeful that the WB will reconsider its decision and clear us of the humiliation." Bangladesh had been

lobbying with the other

three development part-

ners long before the global

lender cancelled its loan agreement, he said. Of the three development partners, the Islamic was eagerly waiting to fund the project, and also urged the government to remove all barriers to the bridge's

Jica is keeping constant contact with the government, and the ADB is also in discussions with the gov-

interview individuals if they do not object to it, he said. According to the informaalready fulfilled two condi-

interest.

condition.

tion and evidence that the ACC investigation team has gathered, so far no allegation of corruption has been established in the project. "If the corruption allegation is proved, it will be placed at the prosecution level," he

The ACC chief said the team would quiz Abul if necessary.

"I don't want to influence the investigation process. The probe team has already talked to many people and it

will make decisions." Elephant

kills man OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A man was trampled to death while his son was injured by two wild elephants in Chittagong city early yesterday.

The victims were

Mohammad Hashem, 55,

before disappearing into the

he had requested the local

forest department to drive

away the elephants, but in

and his son Joynal Abedin, 17. They hailed from Daltali village of No-1 Pukuria union in Banshkhali upazila. Two elephants suddenly appeared from a nearby forest and attacked them

forest right away when access to all files, materials, Hashem and his son were documents and other inforworking in a guava orchard mation gathered by the around 6:00am, Md Akhter Hossain, chairman of the It will also provide the union, quoted Hashem's background information neighbours as saying. and credentials of the mem-Sabbir Iqbal, Banshkhali bers conducting the enquiry upazila nirbahi officer, said

and a statement, if necessary, of any other conflict of The ACC will allow the panel, upon its request, to

The chairman said an auto-rickshaw driver was killed while two others were injured in the last 12 months by wild elephants in the area.

No official from the local forest department could be reached by phone.