

Son narrates killing

FROM PAGE 20
worked with an advocate firm named BNR," said Abul Ahsan adding, "He was a believer in Bangalee nationalism and independence of Bangladesh."

His father had worked in Weekly Ittehad, Daily Azad, Daily Sangbad, Daily Ittefaq, The Morning News and The Pakistan Observer and as part time feature editor at the Paygam during the war, said Ahsan.

With tension brewing in Mirpur area ahead of the war, the family left the area on March 24 and moved in with his aunt in Shantinagar in the capital.

"On March 29, my father left my aunt's house to get money and the car from our Mirpur house," said Ahsan, adding, "But later we heard that on the way to his firm [BNR], he met the chief accountant of Daily Ittefaq Abdul Halim, a non-Bangalee."

"Abdul Halim handed my father over to Abdul Quader Mollah at Mirpur and my father was stabbed to death at Jalladkhana in Mirpur-10," said Ahsan, adding, "Akhter Gunda [a non-Bangalee of Bihar origin] and some other non-Bangalees accompanied Quader Mollah."

After his father's death, the family left Dhaka and took shelter in Beura, Pubail, until July 1971, said Ahsan. He noted, "We had none to earn for the family and my mother went mad."

In July 1971, Ahsan returned to Dhaka and used to sell tea for a living while the rest of his family went off to their ancestral home in Satkhira.

"One day, when I was on my way to Chawkbazar, I met Nizam, who was our family driver who lives in Mirpur-10, and he told me how my father was killed," said Ahsan.

On instructions from Quader Mollah, Biharis carried out mass killings in Mirpur. They used to bring Bangalees from Gabtoli Bus Terminal and Technical areas and kill them in Sialbari, Muslim Bazar and Jalladkhana killing fields in

Mirpur, Ahsan told the tribunal, quoting Nizam, who was non-Bangalee.

He said Quader Mollah had taken part in the election campaign for Ghulam Azam, the then ameer of East Pakistan Jamaat-e-Islami and a candidate from Mirpur area. Ghulam Azam is also facing crimes against humanity charges at the tribunal.

Ahsan said like other parts of the country, Bangalees in Mirpur area observed March 23 as Bangladesh Day protesting the killing of Bangalees. Actually March 23 was Pakistan Day, he added.

The Pakistan flag was brought down from the Bangla School in Mirpur and the Bangladesh flag was hoisted at half-mast. Syed Kayum was the headmaster of the school at that time.

For this reason, three to four people attacked Syed Kayum at his home on that night and stabbed him indiscriminately. Hearing his screams, a Bangalee rescued him and brought him to their home (Ahsan's home), Ahsan said.

He was given preliminary treatment there.

"My father admitted Kayum to Dhaka Medical College Hospital the next morning and afterwards he [my father] went to the home of Bangabandhu [Sheikh Mujibur Rahman] and apprised him of conditions in the Mirpur area," said Ahsan.

"But my mother became mentally weak after the incident of Kayum Sir and we left our home on March 24, said Ahsan.

"As a member of a martyred intellectual's family, I seek a trial of this wide-spread killing [committed during the war]," said emotion-choked Ahsan.

The three-member tribunal led by Justice ATM Fazle Kabir with members Justice Obaidul Hassan and Judge Md Shahinur Islam also recorded the cross-examination of the witness before adjourning the proceedings until today.

After his testimony, defence counsel Ekramul

Huqe cross-examined the witness for two hours and asked around 110 questions.

Replying to a question, Ahsan said in memory of his father Shaheed Abu Taleb High School was established in Mirpur, a separate gallery was set up at the National Museum after him. His father's name was mentioned in the nameplate of Jatiya Press Club and Dhaka Bar Association, which was built in memory of the martyred.

"Have you seen the atrocities committed during the war," asked Ekramul Haque.

"No, I did not see them myself and it was not possible for any Bangalee to witness the atrocities, except some people," replied Ahsan.

Meanwhile, International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday recorded the cross-examination of prosecution witness Mahbub Uddin Ahmad Bir Bikram in a case against former Jamaat chief Ghulam Azam.

During cross-examination, defence counsel Mizanul Islam asked Mahbub several questions about his activities during the Liberation War.

Ghulam Azam is facing five charges of crimes against humanity during the Liberation War.

The proceedings of the tribunal were adjourned until tomorrow.

In the case against another war crimes accused Jamaat leader Delawar Hossain Sayedee, the tribunal rejected four petitions of Sayedee.

The petitions were: demanding mobile phone call records of the duty officers at the prosecution witness safe house, seeking information of summons of 46 absentee witnesses and the investigation officer's report in this regard and dropping two out of 20 charges Sayedee is facing.

However, the tribunal decided to issue a ruling on another defence petition later on. In that petition, the defence urged the court to send 38 employees of the safe house for questioning.

Shahdeen Malik said any person who suffers loss or damage has rights to seek protection and redress from a court. No law can deny the rights.

Last time such indemnity was provided to the killers of Bangabandhu by the Indemnity Ordinance 1975, he said.

He argued that indemnity against any injustice cannot be part of a legal system.

Shahdeen noted that Bangladesh in October 1998 became a party to the United Nations Convention against Torture. Its article 14 puts an obligation upon every signatory state to compensate the victims of torture or other cruel and inhuman treatment by law enforcement agencies.

As an example, he said, the Indian Supreme Court ordered the government to pay compensations to victims of tortures and other maltreatments by law enforcers.

Asked about moving the petition after a long time, Shahdeen Malik told The Daily Star that certain actions cannot be immediately identified as wrong or right.

For example, he said, the Rapid Action Battalion's extrajudicial killings of criminals were appreciated by many in the beginning. But now, most people realise that what the Rab has been doing cannot be justified.

The Operation Clean Heart, too, was welcomed by many. Time has come for an objective assessment of the Operation Clean Heart, he said.

The noted lawyer also said filing any public interest litigation takes time, primarily because of lack of resources.

Shahdeen was quoted by The Daily Star in the 2009 report as saying that the Operation Clean Heart was a so-called drive and "The indemnity law can be chal-

NEXT JS POLLS EC to hold dialogue with parties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission will hold dialogues with members of civil society and political parties on redrawing boundaries of 300 parliamentary constituencies on the basis of the latest census.

The dialogue with the civil society members will begin after the Eid-ul-Fitr followed by discussion with the political parties.

"We will sit with them in phases to discuss the issue as well as to discuss roadmap of the next national polls," Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad said yesterday at a press briefing at the EC Secretariat.

Earlier on July 26, the CEC said the 10th parliamentary election would be held as per the delimitation of boundaries.

He also said the delimitation work would begin after completion of the ongoing task of updating the voter list.

"The election commission will prepare a draft proposal on redrawing the boundaries of parliamentary constituencies in light of the existing act on delimitation of boundaries for constituencies and a formula prepared by the former election commission," the CEC said.

He added that the dialogue would be held on the basis of the draft proposal.

Replying to a query, Kazi Rakib said the proposed dialogue would help build people's confidence on the EC.

3 held

FROM PAGE 20
Enamul Haque Mitul, 27, and SM Abu Hossain Sarowar, 32. A laptop, Tk 1.10 lakh and some bomb making materials were also seized from their possessions.

Sarowar is a mechanic and has expertise in making highly technological and sophisticated bombs activated by mobile phones.

Mashiur said that if the criminals had used a bomb with a higher destructive power, the damage would have been much more than that caused by the explosion in the handbag.

Criminals could use such bombs to carry out destructive activities, he said, expressing concern.

Following the blast on July 17, police detained Ayesha, her colleague Zubayer Ahmed and his friend Nurul Islam, and a case was filed with Agargaon Police Station.

Zubayer and Nurul had been taking part in Tablighi Jamaat activities, the DB official said, adding, however, that police had not found any militant or political connection with the detainees yet.

Zubayer had confessed to planting the explosive in Ayesha's bag "to teach her a lesson," Mashiur said.

He quoted Sarowar as saying that he had sold the bomb to Mitul for Tk 25,000 and then Zubayer bought it from Mitul a day before the explosion. Sarowar had made three more such bombs for purposes of experimentation and exploded them to test their power.

Zubayer had told DB police that he had a crush on Ayesha and proposed to her. As she had been refusing to accept his overture, he chalked out a plan to exact revenge on her. He had shared this thought with his friend Nurul, who promised to help him.

Later, Nurul contacted Ujjal and Mitul. They planned to kill Ayesha by exploding the bomb, the DB official said.

Mitul and Ujjal via Nurul negotiated an agreement with Zubayer to sell the bomb for Tk 3 lakh. Zubayer paid Tk 1.6 lakh in advance and promised to pay the rest after the job was done, Mashiur said.

Meanwhile, a Dhaka court yesterday remanded Ujjal, Mitul and Sarowar for four days and Zubayer and Nurul for two days.

Earlier, Zubayer and Nurul were on remand for seven days after their arrests.

Worker killed

FROM PAGE 20
in the ship-breaking yards this year in which five people have died.

At least 11 workers died in similar accidents in the yards last year, sources said.

Probe finds proof

FROM PAGE 20
was involved in 10 incidents of war crimes, including genocide, killing, rape and other crimes. He had also forced numerous people of Faridpur to leave the country during the Liberation War.

The investigation agency of International Crimes Tribunals yesterday handed over the probe report to the prosecution.

Sahidur Rahman, conducting prosecutor of the case, told The Daily Star that prosecution had received the report and would inform the tribunal of the matter today. He said they would prepare formal charges against Azad based on the report.

Former Islami Chhatra Sangha, the then student wing of the Jamaat-e-Islami, leader Azad went on the run around seven hours before International Crimes Tribunal-2 issued an arrest warrant against him on April 3. The prosecution has said in accordance with the law, the war crimes trial against Azad could start in his absence.

On July 26, the investigation agency completed its inquiry and said it had found "strong evidence" against Azad in connection with 10 kinds of crimes against humanity committed during the war.

Sources said after the crackdown on March 25, 1971, Pakistani soldiers led by Major Akram Koresh on April 21, 1971, went to Faridpur. On their way to Faridpur, local leaders of the Muslim League, Jamaat-e-

Islami, Convention Muslim League and other anti-liberation political parties received them at Goalchamat area, ahead of Faridpur town.

Azad, Afzal Hossain, and Chand Quazi were among others who received the army group. They killed eight priests of Prabhu Jagatbandhu Ashram as they entered Faridpur town with the Pakistani army, prosecution and investigation agency sources said.

Azad and his associates occupied Badri Narayan's home, Hira Lal Mukter's home and Charu Majumder's home in Faridpur town.

Azad himself trained local collaborators there, said the sources, adding that he and his cohorts used to abduct people and torture and kill them at Faridpur Stadium.

In the first half of May 1971, the Razakar Bahini (an auxiliary force of the Pakistan army) was formed under the leadership of Azad and later the Pakistan army appointed Azad the chief of Al-Badr Bahini (another auxiliary force of the Pakistan army) of Faridpur, sources said.

Sources said in the middle of May 1971, Azad and 10-15 of his cohorts abducted Sudhangshu Mohan Roy and his son from their home at Kalaran of Boalmari. Later, Azad killed Sudhangshu and his son was wounded.

In the same month, Azad and his cohorts abducted Madhab Biswas of Purua Namapara of Nagarkanda

and looted his home. Later, Azad killed him near his home and at the same spot killed one Gyanendra, said the sources, adding that after the killing, several hundred Hindus left for India.

In the third week of May 1971, Azad and some of his cohorts along with 30-35 Pakistani army personnel attacked Hasamdia Hindupara of Boalmari in Faridpur. They killed many people and looted their homes before torching them, said the sources. Later they went to Mayendia Bazar and looted 50-60 shops, mostly owned by the Hindus.

Azad shot Haripada Saha and Prabir Kumar Saha dead at Mayendia Bazar before leaving the area with the booty.

The sources said Azad and his accomplices raped two women in Natibadia of Boalmari upazila in Faridpur in June 1971.

Sources said in the first week of June 1971, Azad along with 20-25 collaborators attacked Fulbaria of Nagarkanda and looted Hindu homes. Chitta Ranjan Das was detained and Azad shot him dead later on.

Sources said many Hindus of Faridpur district had to leave the country during the war being victims of Azad or fearing his atrocities.

Through issuing threats, Azad and his armed cohorts also forced 15-20 Hindus of Sahapara of Nagarkanda upazila to convert to Islam in May 1971, the sources said.

Businessman found

FROM PAGE 1
first floor of his duplex house.

Police said the victim's wife, who slept in another room of the house, found Fazlul lying on the bed after she opened the door of the room with a duplicate key at about 9:30am.

The motive behind the killing could not be known immediately, said Khandaker Lutful Kabir, deputy commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (Gulshan division).

Fazlul did not have enmity with anyone, said MA Zakir, son-in-law of

Fazlul.

Police suspect that someone in the house was involved in the murder. They detained eight people, who work in the house, for interrogation.

Whenever Fazlul faced nasal and sinus problems, he slept alone in a separate room without air conditioning, said his family members.

The victim's mobile phone and wallet had been missing after the incident. The lock of a cupboard in the room was also found broken, but Fazlul's family members could not say what

had gone missing, said Rafiqul Islam, officer-in-charge of Gulshan Police Station.

Police found no sign of any tussle in the room. They suspect that the killer somehow entered the room and escaped after killing Fazlul while he was asleep. The murderer pressed the door-knob locking it from outside and left.

Police said they had found blood stains on the floor in and outside the room.

The body was sent to Dhaka Medical College morgue for autopsy.

Fierce battle for Aleppo

FROM PAGE 20
Assad's main ally in a region where other neighbours have forsaken him.

"So they moved on to Aleppo and I assure you, their plots will fail."

In an initial toll, the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported a total of nine killed Sunday across Syria: Four civilians and five rebels.

On Saturday, violence killed 168 people -- 94 civilians, 33 rebels and 41 soldiers, it said.

The conflict has also seen tens of thousands of people flee to Syria's neigh-

bours, and Jordan yesterday announced that it has opened its first official refugee camp.

Rebel fighters, patrolling opposition districts in flat-bed trucks flying green-white-and-black "independence" flags, said they were holding off Assad's forces in the south-western Aleppo district of Salaheddine, where clashes have gone on for days.

Opposition activists also reported fighting in other rebel-held districts of Aleppo, in what could herald the start of a decisive phase in the battle for Syria's commercial hub,

after the army sent tank columns and troop reinforcements last week.

Helicopter gunships hovered over the city shortly after dawn and the thud of artillery boomed across neighbourhoods. Syrian state television said soldiers were repelling "terrorists" in Salaheddine and had captured several of their leaders.

Some rebel-held areas visited by Reuters were empty of residents. Fighters were basing themselves in houses - some clearly abandoned in a hurry, with food still in the fridges.

Caesar bows out with grace

FROM PAGE 1
chance. We knew it, he knew it, but this is the Olympics. This is where stories are made. So we believed. As did he. But it wasn't meant to be.

"Sometimes in gymnastics, the best in the world makes mistakes and an underdog surprises everyone," said Caesar. "I was really hoping to be the underdog who came up big."

Wearing the red and green, Caesar did quite well, earning respectable scores of 15.116 on the vault, 14.766 on the parallel bars and 14.666 on the floor. He also was given a 13.700 on the high bar, despite pulling off what appeared to be a smooth routine. In fact, he said he was "pretty happy" with his high-bar performance, but evidently the judges did not agree. He also was thrilled with his floor-exercise routine. "I was very happy with the score," he said.

His coach Geoff Corrigan also agreed. "Considering the circumstances, Caesar did very well today. I really have no large complaints," said Corrigan.

The circumstance that he spoke of is the ruptured bicep that Caesar sustained while practicing for the Olympics just two weeks ago. The youngster ripped his muscle, right off the bone. Put into perspective, and it is a wonder he was even competing.

"This is my first competition since January, and I did everything here without a left bicep," he said. "Most guys wouldn't have even tried. But I worked so hard for so long to get this opportunity. It meant a lot to me to be here, to compete in the Olympics, something I had been dreaming about since I was a little kid."

"I'm an Olympian now," he said. "Not everyone can say that." No other gymnast from Bangladesh can, at least, as Caesar became the first Bangladeshi to represent the country in this discipline.

There is much more time for Caesar. As he himself said, at this Olympics, he at least managed to get his name out there. People now know who he is. His Twitter and Facebook feeds are exploding, partially due to the fact that the NBC cameras picked him out during the opening ceremony.

"I feel an amazing sense of pride, being able to represent Bangladesh on the international stage," he says.

For now though, the youngster plans to enjoy his moment in the sun. "I am here until August 8, so there is still plenty of time for me to immerse myself in the Olympics."

And maybe he can start on that pin-swapping now.

Tremor jolts

FROM PAGE 20
Geological Survey (USGS) measured the quake at 5.7 on the Richter scale.

The tremor originated at a depth of 68.4km, added the USGS report.

A Reuters report citing the USGS said a magnitude of 6.6 on Richter scale struck off the coast of Papua New Guinea early yesterday (local time).

The USGS said the strong quake was centred 81 miles (130km) east-southeast of Rabaul, New Britain, at a depth of 43.5 miles.

According to the Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre, the quake was not expected to generate a tsunami.

ADB, Jica

FROM PAGE 1
the project's co-financiers to extend the loan effectuation date that expires tomorrow.

The development partners have been considering extending the deadline following some recent developments including the resignation of a key minister allegedly involved in corruption in the project, said officials of the two donor agencies.

The two co-financiers may inform the government about their decisions tomorrow, they said.

An extension of loan effectuation deadline may come following the government's recent steps that have revived hopes of a positive breakthrough in negotiation between the WB and the government over the project's financing.

However, like the WB, both ADB and Jica voiced their concern over the corruption allegations in the project.

ADB and Jica extended the loan effectuation deadline thrice since the WB temporarily suspended the funding in August last year.

The global lender on June 29 finally cancelled its \$1.2 billion funding of the \$2.9 billion project upon the government's reluctance to meet two of its four conditions.

According to the co-financing arrangement led by the WB, the financial commitments from ADB and Jica were to become void following the WB's loan cancellation.

But neither ADB nor Jica has yet informed the government about their decisions on the matter, said a finance ministry official on condition of anonymity.

Following the WB's loan cancellation, ADB in a statement said the lender understands and respects the reasons that had led the Washington-based lender to take the decision.

It said ADB and the WB follow similar procedures on governance and fiduciary oversight.

The government last week said the Anti-Corruption Commission would investigate the WB's corruption allegations in line with the Bank's proposals.

Abul Hossain, former communications minister, stood down as ICT minister, paving the way for the government to revive the financial arrangements with the WB.

The government has not yet issued gazette notification on Abul's resignation even more than a week after the minister stood down.

Though Abul resigned and a former secretary was sent on leave for alleged involvement in corruption, the government has yet to decide on another individual who is on the WB's suspect list. The person in question enjoys the status of a minister, a finance ministry official said.

The official said the WB, ADB and Jica share the same views on the corruption allegations, hinting that the agencies clarified their stance to the government.

If the government does not completely fulfil the WB's conditions, the possibility of the other donor agencies financing the project is very thin, said the official.

The government has sought a review of the WB's loan cancellation but it has not yet made any formal proposal to the global lender, added the official.

He said ADB and Jica may extend the loan effectuation date and see whether the WB reconsiders its decision to