

'Butchers' of 1971 to face 18 charges

FROM PAGE 1
torture and killing of at least 18 intellectuals. Nine of them were Dhaka University teachers, six were journalists and three were physicians.

"We will submit the probe reports to the prosecution tomorrow [today]," said Hannan, adding that the prosecution had 45 witnesses each against Mueen and Ashrafuzzaman.

Hannan said that the Islami Chhatra Sangha, the then student wing of the Jamaat, had turned into Al-Badr and leaders of the Chhatra Sangha took part in the planned murders "to make the nation devoid of merit."

The agency in a handout said martyred journalist Serajuddin Hossain was their first victim of their plan to wipe out the country's intellectuals before the final victory.

Ataur Rahman, investigating officer for Mueen-Uddin's alleged crimes, told The Daily Star that the authorities had found a list "proving" the existence of a 19-member Al-Badr high command.

"Motiur Rahman Nizami was chief of the Al-Badr high command of the whole Pakistan while Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed was chief of East Pakistan Al-Badr," he said, adding that names of Ashrafuzzaman and Mueen-Uddin were in the ninth and seventeenth positions of the 19-member list.

It may be mentioned Jamaat-e-Islami chief Nizami and its Secretary General Mojaheed, who were also top leaders of the then Islami Chhatra Sangha, are now facing war crimes trial.

Briefing the media at the investigation agency's Bailey Road office in Dhaka, Hannan Khan said: "They [Mueen-Uddin and Ashrafuzzaman] used to

abduct intellectuals and take them to Mohammadpur Physical Training Centre, torture them there and kill them after taking them to the Mirpur and Rayerbazar killing grounds."

Mueen-Uddin, of Feni, has been living in London for decades while Ashrafuzzaman, of Gopalganj, is now in New York, USA, the agency said.

Replying to a question, Sanaul Huq told the briefing that after getting the formal charges, the tribunal may issue summons or arrest warrants for them and if they failed to appear before the court, the tribunal may start the trial in absentia.

Prosecutor Rana Dasgupta told The Daily Star that on getting the report, they would scrutinise it and then place formal charges before the court.

With these two, the investigation agency has so far completed investigation of 11 war crimes suspects. At the moment, nine war crimes suspects are facing trial.

The agency hopes to complete inquiries of six more war crimes suspects by December.

Hannan yesterday said that at the fag end of the nine-month war, the plan to eliminate the country's intellectuals was made on the Pakistani army's instructions.

Members of the Islami Chhatra Sangha directly helped the Pakistani forces to execute the plan, he added. "As active members of Islami Chhatra Sangha from their student life and afterwards as members of the [Al-Badr] high command, the two took a stance against Bangladesh's independence."

The agency handout said Serajuddin Hossain, the then executive editor of the Ittefaq, was abducted from his home on the night of

December 10. Syed Najmul Haque, the then chief reporter of Pakistan Press International, was also abducted from his home on that night.

It said ANM Golam Mostafa, the then chief reporter of daily Purbadesh, was picked up on the night of December 11 while Nizam Uddin Ahmed, BBC journalist and former general manager of Pakistan Press International, was kidnapped the following day.

Selina Pervin, the then editor of Daily Silalipi, was abducted on December 13 and her decomposed body was found at the Rayerbazar killing ground on December 18, according to the handout.

But the remains of the other abducted journalists were never found.

Joint editor of daily Sangbad and eminent literary Shahidullah Kaiser and nine Dhaka University professors -- Giasuddin Ahmed, Rashidul Hasan, Anwar Pasha, Abdul Khayer, Santosh Chandra Bhattacharyya, Sirajul Haque Khan, Faizul Mahi, Munier Chowdhury and Mofazzal Haidar Choudhury -- and the university physician Mohammad Martuza were abducted on December 14, 1971.

Except for Munier Chowdhury and Mofazzal Haidar Choudhury, the bodies of other university teachers and Golam Mostafa were found at the Mirpur killing fields.

Abdul Alim Chowdhury and Fazle Rabbi were abducted on December 15 and they were killed later. Their bodies were found at the Rayerbazar killing fields.

The killers gouged the eyes of Alim, an eye specialist, and tore out the heart of Rabbi, a heart specialist.

Hannan Khan said the prosecution had learnt that

1,020 intellectuals were killed during the Liberation War.

Sanaul Huq said there was resentment among people as the trials of the killers of the intellectuals were not being held. "I think their resentment will go away a little after the submission of the two probe reports."

The agency began its investigation against them on September 25 last year.

On April 15, The Telegraph, a UK-based newspaper ran a report headlined "Leading British Muslim leader faces war crimes charges in Bangladesh" where the newspaper wrote that after moving to the UK in the early 1970s, Mueen-Uddin had taken British citizenship.

In 1989 Mueen-Uddin was a key leader of protests against Salman Rushdie's book, The Satanic Verses, and around the same time he helped established the extremist Islamic Forum of Europe (IFE), Jamaat-e-Islami's European wing, the report said.

Until 2010 Mueen-Uddin was vice-chairman of the controversial East London Mosque, controlled by the IFE, in which capacity he greeted Prince Charles when the heir to the throne opened an extension to the mosque.

He was also closely involved with the Muslim Council of Britain, which has been dominated by the IFE and he was chairman and remains a trustee of the IFE-linked charity, Muslim Aid, which has a budget of £20 million.

A previous report of The Daily Star said a Bangla daily Purbadesh report titled "Nab the butcher of intellectuals" published on January 13, 1972, had a photograph of Ashrafuzzaman Khan.



Two female students injured in BCL attack at Bangladesh Agricultural University yesterday are being taken to hospital.

BCL men attack BAU protesters

FROM PAGE 20
laying siege to the administrative office, protesting the hike in the admission fee to Tk 6,214 from Tk 1,825 for the 2012-13 session.

A group of BCL men swooped on the students with sticks and rods after police had failed to disperse the protesters around 12:30pm, said Kishore Ahmed, secretary of Chhatra Front.

Rafiquzzaman Emon, general secretary of BCL

BAU unit, however, claimed it was the general students who attacked the protesters after learning that the Jote activists had misbehaved with some teachers. No specific student organisation was involved in the incident.

Syed Ehsanur Rahman, assistant proctor of the university, also alleged that the Jote activists had behaved rudely with some teachers.

He also said the incident

might have been planned to spark unrest on the campus for spoiling the university's first ever alumni programme slated for December 29.

About the raised admission fee, the assistant proctor said it was half the fees that the other public universities charged.

Leaders of Chhatra Union and Front have denied the allegations. They said they would continue their protest to force the authorities to withdraw the extra fee.

No plan to deploy army

FROM PAGE 20
to arrest anybody without warrant for violation of electoral laws within a radius of 400 yards of the polling stations on polling day.

After the debacle in the 2001 polls, the Awami League blamed the role of some members of the armed forces and started vehemently opposing the authority. In middle of 2004 the party formally demanded cancellation of the provision.

Interestingly, during the past emergency regime the AL accepted it.

But assuming office through the parliamentary polls held on December 29, 2008, the AL-led government scrapped the provision.

The immediate past EC led by ATM Shamsul Huda proposed for restoration of the provision to provide armed forces with this authority again. But the fate of the proposal remains uncertain.

At yesterday's meeting the diplomats enquired about the EC's preparations

and challenges it is taking and facing for holding the next parliamentary polls.

They also assured the EC of providing all-out support including financial and logistics to hold the polls in a free and fair manner.

Talking to reporters after the meeting at the EC Secretariat, Robert W Gibson, UK high commissioner in Dhaka, said the EC informed them about its preparatory works for holding the next parliamentary polls.

In response to a query whether they discussed participation of all political parties in the next polls, Robert said they did not talk about political matters. The meeting, held for the first time in last four years, triggered speculations whether the diplomats would start working to break the political deadlock over the next parliamentary polls. The BNP-led opposition has announced not to contest the next polls without restoration of the caretaker government system.

A group of diplomats including the envoys of the

USA and the UK earlier engaged in hectic moves to resolve the political impasse at the end of 2006 and early 2007.

Asked about the discussion, CEC Rakibuddin said the diplomats enquired about their preparations for holding the next parliamentary polls. "They are ready to provide us with any sort of assistance," he added.

The EC secretary also enquired about the government's steps to make the EC independent.

He said one diplomat also drew the EC's attention to the conflicting situation among the political parties. "In response, the CEC said the political conflict should be settled by the political parties themselves," the secretary added.

Envoys and representatives of UNDP, EU delegation, the USA, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Canada, Denmark, Japan, Sweden, Switzerland, USAID, among others, were present at the meeting.

Promising girl now in peril

FROM PAGE 1
care, she has developed behaviour such as stuttering and twitching body parts.

Taiyaba, a class V student of Monipur Firoza Khatun Mahila Madrasa, a residential institute specialising in Islamic education, has been undergoing treatment at the National Institute of Mental Health for the last nine days.

"I took up a garment factory job two years after the death of her [Taiyaba] father. All I wanted was ensuring education for my two children," said Baby Khatun, her mother, at the health centre yesterday.

The three-member family includes a brother, who is one year younger than Taiyaba and studies in another madrasa in the city.

All was well in January as Baby Khatun shifted her daughter from a madrasa in Mohammadpur to the Monipur madrasa since the previous one lacked teachers. But matters started to get worse when Taiyaba stood first in the half-yearly examination.

Taiyaba's classmates,

especially the former first girl, started bullying her. Frustrated, she started enjoying the company of senior students, her mother said.

On September 20, as all students except Taiyaba failed to perform class lesson, their class teacher Rahela, a new recruit, asked all not to have their launch.

"As she [Taiyaba] was having some food in the afternoon, Rahela got infuriated and caned her," Baby alleged. Some students told her about the punishment.

Baby took her daughter home next day on holiday and brought her back on September 22, thinking that such incidents happened for the sake of a good future.

"Taiyaba called me over phone from the madrasa that day and said she was not feeling well. I rushed there and found her caught in fever with no strength in her left hand," Baby said. "I took her home and got her admitted in Ibne Sina hospital in Kalyanpur where she stayed for four days."

On doctors' advice, she

took her daughter to the mental health institute on September 30.

Dr Shafkat Wahid of the institute told The Daily Star that Taiyaba was suffering from conversion disorder.

"Usually, a child suffers from depression if he/she loses any of his/her parents before 11 years of age. She might have had this depression from childhood. And the bullying by classmates and the alleged torture might have made her mental condition worse."

He added it would take her six months to a year to recover.

Contacted, Sultana Razia, head of the madrasa, denied allegations of beating but said Rahela had scolded students and asked them not to have their lunch just to discipline them.

She claimed Taiyaba had fallen sick three months ago but recovered within a few hours. "Taiyaba sometimes expressed her frustration and loneliness to me. None but her mother came to visit her."

Army

FROM PAGE 20
the company had won the bidding by submitting a forged joint venture agreement with its Chinese partner Hebei Road and Bridge Group Company (HRBC).

As per the fresh tender floated in June, the project cost has been estimated at Tk 569 crore -- an increase by Tk 239 crore from the original contract.

Intraco, though, refuted the allegation and went to the tribunal, leaving the construction work suspended.

The construction of the remaining 57km (Mawna to Mymensingh) of the highway is underway on a Tk 904 crore government-funded project.

PROJECT BACKGROUND
The Awami League in its electoral manifesto had pledged to upgrade the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway into four lanes. Accordingly, the government undertook a project in 2010 and the RHD entered into a contract with Intraco on January 27 last year with a view to upgrading the Joydebpur-Mawna road.

The deal was signed following recommendations by a six-member tender evaluation committee (Tec) headed by RHD Chief Engineer Aminur Rahman Laskar.

During the evaluation, the Tec received a complaint against Intraco claiming that the firm had forged documents on its joint venture partnership with the HRBC.

The Tec found that the complainant used a fake name and address. Though there is no provision for the committee to entertain such complaints, the Tec considered it in order to make sure the evaluation was flawless and transparent.

Contacted by the committee, the HRBC head office in China confirmed that the joint venture with Intraco was genuine.

Intriguingly, the then communications minister Syed Abul Hossain sent the RHD chief engineer and a deputy secretary of his ministry to China to verify the joint venture.

Upon their return home, the two reported that the joint venture was false.

Destiny dodged Tk 110cr

FROM PAGE 1
concerns and their top officials started in April and are still on, officials say, adding that their initial inquiry showed the group had evaded at least Tk 110 crore in taxes.

Of the amount, Destiny Tree Plantation had evaded Tk 78 crore and Destiny 2000 Ltd Tk 32 crore, an NBR official said, preferring to remain unnamed.

Upon detection, the NBR asked Destiny to pay the money, and the company issued a cheque of about half the amount but the money could not be realised due to the BB freeze.

Earlier, the revenue authority obtained a clearance from the Anti-Corruption Commission to realise the tax money from Destiny accounts. But the central bank did not agree to clear the cheque, according to an NBR official.

"We are going to sit with

the Bangladesh Bank to settle the matter," said MA Quader Sarker, member of NBR's tax administration and monitoring department.

The NBR started looking into Destiny's tax records after the BB in March this year found that Destiny Multipurpose Cooperative Society was involved in illegal banking.

According to the BB findings, the Cooperative collected about Tk 2,000 crore in deposits and share capital from investors as of December 31, 2011.

Meanwhile on Monday, a probe team, led by the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies and Firms, suggested that the government take over the MLM company's assets to ensure that its investors got back their capital.

The committee in its report submitted to the

Commerce Ministry said it had found evidence of money laundering by the Group. Its probe did not find accounts relating to Tk 3,800 crore.

Earlier on July 31, the ACC filed two money laundering cases against top Destiny officials for transferring Tk 3,285.26 crore in investors' money into their personal accounts.

The officials include Destiny Group Managing Director Rafiqul Amin, Destiny-2000 Ltd Chairman Mohammad Hossain, its Directors Lt Gen (ret) M Harun-Ar Rashid, Gofranul Huq and Sayed-Ur Rahman.

In connection with the case, a Dhaka court last week asked the anti-graft body to take steps to freeze 532 bank accounts of Destiny Group and its senior officials, including Rafiqul Amin, Mohammad Hossain and Harun-Ar Rashid.

Brain-eating

FROM PAGE 20
contaminated water enters the body through the nose and cannot be passed person-to-person.

The 10 confirmed cases have all occurred in the southern port city of Karachi, said Dr Musa Khan, head of the WHO's Disease Early Warning System in Pakistan.

It is unclear if all cases have been reported as residents may not be familiar with the disease and Pakistan's hospitals are severely overstretched.

The amoeba travels from the nasal membranes to the brain. Symptoms are initially very mild, including a headache, stiff neck, fever and stomach pain. Death usually occurs five to seven days after infection.

Authorities are planning a campaign to raise awareness among health workers and the public, Khan said. Most health centres had already been alerted, he said.

"People should avoid getting water too deep into their nostrils and make sure their water supply is properly treated," he said. "Those with symptoms should seek help immediately."

Victims commonly catch it through swimming in infected water, but Khan said most of those who died did not have a history of swimming. Authorities were testing water from various parts of the city, he said.

The disease first surfaced in Karachi, a city of 18 million people, in 2006. This year's outbreak has been the first since then and the most recent deaths occurred last week.

The US Centers for Disease Control said on its web site that in the 10 years from 2002 to 2011, 32 infections were reported in the United States.

Tanvir

FROM PAGE 20
Bank in connection with a Tk 1,568 crore swindle.

Tanvir and Tushar were arrested at Pallabi in the capital Sunday night and remanded for 24 days in three cases the following day.

Tanvir was also placed on an additional five days' remand in an arms case. The Rapid Action Battalion filed the arms case as he had been arrested with a gun, four bullets and a magazine.

According to an audit report, the Ruposhi Bangla Hotel branch of Sonali Bank had disbursed Tk 3,606 crore in loans to Hall-Mark and five other companies against fake documents.

Bangladesh Bank also revealed massive irregularities in sanctioning and disbursing the loans, especially to the little-known Hall-Mark.

MKA names 7 suspects

FROM PAGE 1
The seven are Rafiqul Islam, Bakul Miah, Masum Mintu, Sayeed, two security guards of the couple's residence Palash Rudra Paul, and Humayun Kabir alias Enamul and the couple's "family friend" Tanvir, an official of an English medium school in the city.

Of them, the first four are now in jail in Dr Nitai murder case, while Palash and Tanvir under Rab custody and Humayun has been on the run.

Investigators of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) identified the suspects, mentioned Alamgir. "The four were professional killers."

He announced a Tk 10 lakh bounty on absconding Humayun, but did not disclose the motive behind the double murder for the sake of the investigation.

The Detective Branch (DB) had picked up Humayun, but freed him later as it did not find his involvement in the crime.

The minister also said driver Kamrul of slain physician Nitai was an accomplice of the suspected killers of the journalist couple.

Sagar, news editor at the private TV station Maasranga, and his wife Runi, senior reporter at another TV channel ATN Bangla, were killed in the wee hours of February 11 at their rented apartment in the capital's West Rajabazar.

Sources in Rab said they had collected the DNA samples of the four suspected killers of Dr Nitai and sent them to the USA to verify if

their DNA profiles matched with the ones collected earlier from the crime scene of the Sagar-Runi murder.

An assistant professor at the National Institute of Diseases of the Chest and Hospital (NIDCH), Dr Narayan Chandra Dutta Nitai was stabbed to death by unknown assailants at his residence in the hospital compound in the capital's Mohakhali on August 23.

Asked whether the killers of the journalist couple had been hired, the home minister said, "We do not exclude the possibility, but we are looking at both the options."

He, however, did not elaborate on the other option.

Regarding the time frame for completing the investigation, the minister said the probe would end as soon as possible.

Earlier on September 25, Alamgir had expressed optimism about identifying the killers of the journalist couple by October 10.

Tanvir and Palash were arrested yesterday noon, Lt Col Ziaul Ahsan, director of the Intelligence Wing of the Rab, told this newspaper last night.

Tanvir was picked up from the capital's Sher-e-Bangla Nagar.

the home minister's disclosure about the Sagar-Runi murder probe, family members of the victims rejected outright the outcome of the investigation.

Talking to The Daily Star, Runi's younger brother Nawsher Alam Roman said, "We are not clear about the minister's claims. We don't believe the findings of the probe are true."

Asked about Tanvir, who is claimed to be a family friend of the journalist couple, Nawsher said, "We never knew anyone named Tanvir. How could he be a friend of our family? We first came to know about him from the Rab men and later from a few newspaper reports."

Nawsher is the plaintiff in the sensational double murder case.

Contacted, Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, president of a faction of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ), said, "No arrests have been reported so far. But now the home ministry has said they have made progress in the investigation through arrest of some people."

He mentioned that the journalist community wanted to know the motive behind the killing. "The minister said four of the suspects were professional killers and they were hired for committing the crime. Therefore, we want to know who had hired them and why,"

He demanded the government send the case to a speedy trial tribunal for its quick disposal.

Rejecting the home minis-

ter's briefing about the Sagar-Runi murder probe, the BNP yesterday said the government has staged a new drama to hide the real criminals.

"The government wants to conceal the real reason and hide the culprits by arresting a few thieves. We have heard that some big fishes are behind the murder and reporting on corruption by some influential persons led to the homicide. But after a long time since the incident occurred, the government has caught a few thieves," senior BNP leader Khondaker Mosharraf Hossain told a rally in the city.

Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal organised the rally protesting the arrest of its President Syed Moazzem Hossain Alal.

The Sagar-Runi murder case was first transferred to the DB from the Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station.

During the DB's investigation, the detectives had detained Mahfizur Rahman, Enamul Huq, Fazlul Huq, Md Halim and Abu Hanif on suspicion of their involvement in the homicide.

But the five were freed later when their DNAs did not match the ones collected from the crime scene.

The High Court on April 18 expressed its frustration over the DB's failure in identifying the killers and ordered the transfer of the case to the Rab.

On April 26, the elite force exhumed the remains of the journalist couple from Azimpur graveyard and collected viscera for forensic examinations.