

## INDIA GANG-RAPE VICTIM'S DEATH

## Murder charges filed against accused

PTI, New Delhi

Delhi Police yesterday invoked murder charges against the six men allegedly involved in the gang-rape of a 23-year-old girl in a moving bus after she died in a Singapore hospital and decided to file the chargesheet in court on January 3.

Police said it will be their endeavour to ensure the "harshest punishment in the book" to the culprits.

"We hope to file the charge sheet by the 3rd of January, 2013. Section 302 of IPC, which is the penal section for murder, has been added in the case," Dharmendra Kumar, special commissioner of police (law and order), said.

He said a special public prosecutor of eminence has been appointed to conduct the trial in a fast track court on a day-to-day basis. "It will be our endeavour to ensure the harshest punishment in the book to the culprits," he said.

The autopsy of the victim was done by a

Singaporean medical team and the report will be made available to investigators at the earliest.

"In this moment of national grief following the loss of a young and innocent life to a barbaric crime, we appeal to members of public to stay calm and maintain peace.

"We, in Delhi Police, as citizens of this country are equally saddened, if not more. Our sympathy goes out to the bereaved family," he said.

Police had initially booked the six men under sections 307 (attempt to murder), 201 (destruction of evidence), 365 (kidnapping or abducting), 376 (2)(g) (gang rape), 377 (unnatural offences), 394 (hurting in committing robbery) and 34 (common intention) of the Indian Penal Code.

The girl had boarded the bus, thinking it to be a legitimate public carriage, from Munirka but was attacked and gang-raped even as her male friend accompanying her tried to protect her. He was also injured in the incident.

Your voice has been heard: Sonia  
Says gang-rape victim's fight will not go in vain

PTI, New Delhi

Congress president Sonia Gandhi yesterday said the government had heard the people's voice demanding an end to crime against women after the death of the 23-year-old gang-rape victim died in a Singapore hospital.

As people hit the streets expressing their outrage over the tragedy, Gandhi said "to all of you who have expressed their anger and anguish publicly, who have poured out in her support, I want to assure you that your voice has been heard.

Promising swift and fitting punishment for the Delhi gang-rape accused, Congress president Sonia Gandhi said the nation's "beloved daughter" will get justice and her fight will not go in vain.

"As a woman and mother, I understand how you feel. I appeal to you to remain calm and help strengthen our collective resolve to fight the menace of violence against women," Gandhi, who is also the UPA chairperson, said in a televised address.

"Today all Indians feel as they have lost their own



beloved daughter, their cherished sister, a young woman of 23 whose life full of hope, dream and promise was ahead of her. Our hearts go out to her parents, family, the whole country shares their pain," she said.

Appealing for peace and calm in wake of the tragic incident, Gandhi said, "Today we pledge that she will get justice and that her fight will not go in vain".

The Congress president said that the tragedy "strengthens our resolve to fight with all our might and with all the powers of our laws and our administration for the safety and protection of all women of our country and to ensure swift and fitting punishment for the perpetrators of such acts.

She urged the people to remain calm and "help strengthen our collective resolve" to stop such crimes.

Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh also said he was deeply saddened by the death of a gang-rape victim and that the protests which erupted in the aftermath of her assault were "understandable".

## AL to accept people's verdict

FROM PAGE 1 programme sounded somewhat like an election campaign.

She said democracy would continue to prevail and none would be allowed to play with it since the country had to sacrifice much blood to restore democracy.

"It is the principle and responsibility of Awami League to protect people's democratic and constitutional rights. Awami League will continue to carry out the responsibilities," she added.

She urged her party's grassroots-level leaders present in the council to make people aware of their rights and responsibilities.

Hasina said some people want to grab state power without having the courage to seek people's mandate through forming organisation. "They want to assume power through the backdoor."

She also pledged that the next parliamentary polls under her government would be free and fair. In her defence, she cited the holding of a number of polls to local government bodies during her government's present tenure.

"Not a single complaint was raised about the fairness of the polls. We did not interfere in the functions of the Election Commission," she said.

Emphasising the need for strengthening the party, the AL chief said it was not possible to fulfil people's expectation without a strong organisation. She urged grassroots-level leaders to complete holding due councils of all units of the party in next two months.

She also asked her party leaders and workers to dedicate themselves to the

service of people. "The trust and confidence of people are our assets," she said.

Countering the criticism of holding this council "for the sake of the rules", she said the national council was not held only to comply with the Election Commission rules but also to create new leadership. Organisational activities would be geared up and strengthened across the country through creating the new leadership.

As a note of warning, Hasina said her party would not take the responsibility for any leader's greed and unjust behaviour. She asked her party men not to recruit dubious elements in AL when the election was just a year away.

"There are those who always stay in ruling party. These people change colours and faces and commit wrongs which taint the party's image. I am always against recruiting these people in our party," said Hasina.

On the ongoing trials of war criminals, she said the trials must be completed. She warned those who intend to foil the trials to keep a fair.

In her 30-minute speech, she also dwelt on her government's various development activities.

She inaugurated the council around 11:30am.

In his speech, AL General Secretary Syed Ashraful Islam urged the party men to work together to ensure victory in the next parliamentary polls.

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Portraits of former AL legends Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani, Hussain Shah, Suhrawardy and Maulana Abdur Rashid Tarkabagish, and four national leaders Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed, Capt Mansur Ali, and AHM Qamruzzaman were placed high on two sides of the dais in the shape of a huge boat, the electoral symbol of AL. The portraits of the country's supreme leader Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and AL chief Sheikh Hasina were also placed on a symbolic mast on the stage.

All the AL leaders and workers from across the country gave a standing welcome and chanted slogans when Hasina stepped on to the stage. The AL president hoisted the national flag while its general secretary, and presidents and general secretaries of the party's 73 district units hoisted party flags.

During the meeting, Sohel and other members had heated arguments.

Sohel left the meeting at one stage and came back minutes later with eight to ten people, including his uncles Saidur and Mainul. They attacked the members.

Hearing yells, villagers came hurrying in and beat with sticks the two brothers, who could not make a getaway unlike Jahangir, Sohel and the other attackers, said the OC.

On information, police came around 9:30pm and brought the two siblings to Niamatpur Health Complex.

Saidur died around midnight and Mainul at 7:30pm over the matter on Friday, said the OC.

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Police have sent the bodies to Naogaon Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsies.

Amu, Tofail Ahmed, Suranjit Sengupta and Abdul Jalil, among others, had no place on the dais yesterday.

They were seen sitting around 40 feet away from the stage in a row for invited guests. However, all the AL Central Working Committee leaders were on the dais.

Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Matia Chowdhury, Obaidul Quader, among others, sat on the left of the AL chief on the stage while Syed Ashraful Islam, Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, Kazi Zafarullah, among others, on the right side.

The start of commercial services comes a year after Beidou -- which literally means the Big Dipper in Chinese -- began a limited positioning service for China and adjacent areas.

China began building the network in 2000 to avoid relying on GPS.

China has launched commercial and public services across the Asia-Pacific region on its domestic satellite navigation network built to rival the US global positioning system.

The Beidou, or Compass, system started providing services to civilians in the region on Thursday and is expected to provide global coverage by 2020.

Ran Chengqi, spokesman for the China Satellite Navigation Office, said the system's performance was "comparable" to GPS, the China Daily said.

It is the latest accomplishment in space technology for China, which aims to build a space station by the end of the decade and eventually send a manned mission to the moon.

The Beidou system comprises 16 navigation satellites and four experimental satellites, the paper said. Ran added that the system would ultimately provide global navigation, positioning and timing services.

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