

HC judge to face

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The report, published by the daily Inqilab, terms slain Shahbagh activist Ahmed Rajib Haidar a murdat (non-believer), citing alleged blog posts by him. Rajib was hacked to death near his Palash Nagar residence in the capital's Pallabi on February 15.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday evening, SC Registrar AKM Shamsul Islam said his office had received the president's order and that he would place it before Chief Justice Md Muzammel Hossain today.

The Supreme Judicial Council comprising the

chief justice and two other senior most judges of the SC investigates allegations of misconduct of any judge and makes necessary recommendations to the president.

Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha and Justice MA Wahhab Miah are now the senior most judges, next to the CJ.

This will be the second such council to probe allegations against an HC judge.

Mizanur was appointed an additional HC judge on July 29, 2002, and his job was confirmed two years later during the last BNP-Jamaat rule.

Law ministry sources said

the ministry had sent a proposal to the president early yesterday for taking a decision about Justice Mizanur following media reports and discussions in parliament and at a meeting of the SC Bar Association about him on February 19.

Earlier in 2004, HC additional judge Syed Shahidur Rahman was removed from office on the basis of the first ever judicial council's probe into a judge's misconduct and its recommendations.

Shahidur was charged with receiving a Tk 50,000 bribe to fix bail for an accused in a women repression case.

Preparations

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Hridita Khisa (Class 10), Maisha Zannat (Class 9) and Mashiyat Mahjabin Prapty (Class 8).

The qualifiers for the school activation and the online rounds will compete against each other in the divisional round.

Anyone who did not qualify through the school can still participate in the online game on www.champs21.com until the end of this month.

The Spelling Bee finals are to be held in June.

Detailed information about the competition is available on www.champs21.com, the first e-learning portal of Bangladesh.



The spellers of Mymensingh Cadet College, in the front row, who moved on to the divisional round of The Daily Star Spelling Bee contest yesterday.

3 probe bodies formed

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37 book stalls of 25 publishers and caused a colossal loss of around Tk 2 crore, according to a primary estimate by publishers.

The probe committees comprised of government officials, law enforcers, Bangla Academy officials, publishers, fire service officials and experts were asked to submit their final report by February 27.

Cultural Affairs Minister Abul Kalam Azad made the disclosure while visiting the book fair yesterday afternoon.

One of the committees, led by Bangla Academy secretary Altaf Hossain, has been asked to find the reason behind the fire. This probe body is also comprised of members of police, fire department, Power Development Board, Rapid Action Battalion and Boi Mela committee.

Another five-member committee has been formed to assess the loss in the fire, while the third committee is to make recommendations and prepare a final report after scrutinising the reports submitted by the other two committees.

The Bangla Academy has also lodged a general diary with Shahbagh Police Station in connection with the fire incident.

On compensating the publishers, the cultural minister said it would be decided in an inter-ministerial meeting, which would be held after the submission of the final report.

The fire at book fair broke out around 12:58am

at the Dhirendranath Chattar [Square] and lasted for about 30 minutes.

Farid Ahmed, executive director of Bangladesh Gyan and Srijonshil Prokash Samity, said, "Fire can break out accidentally from ovens, or short-circuits, or from any flammable substances. But no ovens or flammable substances were found where the fire had started. Besides, there was no possibility of short-circuit, as the electricity supply had been centrally snapped around 9:30pm."

He said they had estimated the total cost at Tk 2 crore by assessing the number of books burnt and the cost of the stall and furniture.

Director of Bangla Academy Shamsuzzaman said, "The way the fire erupted several times makes me think that it could have been an act of sabotage. The fire broke out first at Dhirendranath Chattar which the fire fighters doused around 1:40am. But 15 minutes later, flames had been detected at Genius Prokashoni stall, located quite a far from Dhirendranath chatter. After another 15 minutes the fire reappeared in Bijoy Prokash stall which was not very far from the Genius Prokashoni stall."

Jamil Ahmed, station officer of fire brigade at the book fair, said, "We saw the blaze around 1:05am and rushed to the spot. Soon five units of fire service joined us. By 1:45am, we took control over the situation."

Sub-Inspector Anwarul Hossain of Shahbagh

Police Station said a total of 48 closed-circuit cameras had been set up on the fair premises, of which one was destroyed by the fire. We will hand the footage of that night over to the investigation committee.

Meanwhile, the Bangla Academy has prepared some temporary stalls for the victim publishers. But the publishers refused to continue with the stalls, saying that they did not have much books left and the stalls were not well decorated.

Monir Hossain, assistant director of Fire Service and Civil Defence, said, "The fire department has formed a three-member probe body headed by its Deputy Assistant Director Abdul Halim to investigate the fire incident."

The Ekushey Boi Mela witnessed a huge crowd yesterday, but the mood of the fair appeared to be quite gloomy.

Publishers incurred heavy loss as most of their new books hit the fair on 21st February. Lack of books will now force them to sit idle at the bag end of the fair when the sale is the highest.

"Our publication has brought out eight books this season of which five books hit the fair on February 21. The fire caused us a loss of more than Tk 3.20 lakh," said Abul Bashar, manager of Kishor Bhuvan Publication.

Different organisations across the country expressed deep shock over the fire incident at the book fair.

Criminals

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snatched him from in front of his house around 7:30am, witnesses said.

Kafrul police recovered his body from a nearby lane and sent it to Dhaka Medical College morgue for an autopsy.

Morgue sources said the body had nine stab wounds.

Officer-in-Charge Kazi Wazed Ali of Kafrul Police Station told The Daily Star that the victim was an informer for his police station.

Imran reiterated that Jamaat and its student organisation Islami Chhatra Shibir are terrorist outfits and everyone has to build up a resistance against them.

Alluding to Zahir Raihan's journey to remote areas to shoot documentary "Stop Genocide", Imran said the Shahbagh protesters will also go to every household to create a movement for banning Jamaat-Shibir.

"We have chosen a path of non-violence, but that doesn't mean we are weak," he added.

The protesters took an

Mirpur roars with youths

FROM PAGE 1
vandalised Shaheed Minar and desecrated the national flag across the country, torched Ekushey Boi Mela yesterday."

The programme began with the National Anthem. The crowd also observed one minute's silence commemorating the Liberation War martyrs and those killed in the Palkhona massacre.

Siddique Nazmul Alam, general secretary of Bangladesh Chhatra League, highlighted the involvement of Jamaat and its allies in genocide in Mirpur during the Liberation War.

Addressing the Jamaat, he said, "In 1971, you failed to confuse the people of Bangladesh; you cannot confuse us in 2013 either."

Hasan Tareq, general secretary of Students Union, said, "For their crimes against humanity, Jamaat and Shibir have become swear words now."

After insulting the national flag and Shaheed Minar, they have lost all rights to continue

oath to continue the movement until the war criminals are hanged and Jamaat-Islami and pro-Jamaat financial institutions are banned.

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Islamist parties blame

FROM PAGE 1
He, however, declined to elaborate.

Khelafat Majlish, another major component of the eight-party combine, at a press briefing yesterday claimed conspirators in disguise attacked journalists and desecrated the national flag on Friday and put the blame on Ulema (Islamic scholars).

Leaders of both Khelafat Andolon and Khelafat Majlish claimed the eight Islamist parties have no links with Jamaat-e-Islami in their movement against "anti-Islamic bloggers".

Earlier, leaders of an Islami Oikya Jote faction, Nejami Islam Bangladesh and Khelafat-e-Islami -- components of the eight-party -- told The Daily Star that their activists were not involved in violence during Friday's protest against the Shahbagh movement.

The mass demonstration at Shahbagh has been calling for capital punishment to 1971 war criminals and a ban on Jamaat and its student front Islami Chhatra Shibir.

Jamaat and like-minded parties dismiss the demand by labelling the movement as one "run by atheists".

However, the Shahbagh protesters have all along maintained respect for all religions and made no comments that might hurt people's religious sentiment.

BNP'S TAKE ON MAYHEM
BNP leader Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain yesterday

day said devotees voluntarily took to the streets to protest against "the atheist Shahbagh bloggers" after the Juma prayers on Friday.

He was speaking at a book launching ceremony at the Jatiya Press Club.

He also said Friday's protesters did not belong to any political party and that there had been no instigation.

Mosharraf, a standing committee member of the BNP, a key ally of Jamaat in the 18-party opposition alliance, also warned that the government would not be able to resist the devotees if they started coming out of every village in protest.

Meanwhile, Hefazat-e-Islam, a radical Islamist organisation based in Hathazari upazila of Chittagong, announced it would hold mass gatherings in all upazila headquarters on March 1 if the government did not stop the Shahbagh movement and free by this month its leaders and activists detained on Friday.

The announcement came from a rally at Parbati High School in Hathazari yesterday.

The organisation also threatened to organise a long march towards Dhaka from different parts of the country and to hold a rally of imams in the capital next month to press home its demand.

Hefazat-e-Islam has recently taken out a half-page advertisement in three newspapers, showing anti-Islamic contents it

claims were posted on the internet.

THREAT TO IMAM
Farabi brought to Dhaka
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detectives early today brought detained Farabi, who on facebook threatened to kill the imam who had led the namaz-e-janaza of blogger Rajib, to Dhaka from Hathazari of Chittagong.

A source in the Detective Branch of Dhaka Metropolitan Police said they would produce Farabi before a court today.

Farabi Shafiqur Rahman, fourth-year Physics student of Chittagong University, was arrested at Gate No-2 area on the campus Sunday around 7:30pm. Police had also recovered his laptop and some books from his room in a cottage on the campus, said Officer-in-Charge of Hathazari Police Station AKM Liakat Ali.

Assistant Superintendent of Police (Hathazari circle) AFM Nizam Uddin told The Daily Star that Farabi in primary interrogation had claimed himself to be an activist of Hizbut Tahrir.

Blogger Ahmed Rajib Haidar, one of the organisers of the Shahbagh movement, was brutally killed in the capital's Mirpur area on February 15. One of his namaz-e-janazas was held at the Projonmo Chattar in Shahbagh the next afternoon.

Birds

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contemplating how humans learned to speak.

Language, he speculated, might have had its origins in singing, which "might have given rise to words expressive of various complex emotions".

Now researchers from MIT, along with a scholar from the University of Tokyo, say that Darwin was on the right path.

The balance of evidence, they believe, suggests that human language is a grafting of two communication forms found elsewhere in the animal kingdom.

The forms are: the elaborate songs of birds, and the more utilitarian, information-bearing types of expression seen in a diversity of other animals.

"It's this adventitious combination that triggered human language," said Shigeru Miyagawa, a professor of linguistics in MIT's Department of Linguistics and Philosophy.

The idea builds upon Prof Miyagawa's conclusion that there are two 'layers' in all human languages: an 'expression' layer, which involves the changeable organisation of sentences, and a 'lexical' layer, which relates to the core content of a sentence.

His conclusion is based on earlier work by linguists including Noam Chomsky, Kenneth Hale and Samuel Jay Keyser.

Based on an analysis of animal communication, and using Prof Miyagawa's framework, the authors say birdsong closely resembles the expression layer of human sentences.

The communicative waggles of bees, or the short, audible messages of primates, on the other hand, are more like the lexical layer.

At some point, between 50,000 and 80,000 years ago, humans may have merged these two types of expression into a uniquely sophisticated form of language.

These kinds of adaptations of existing structures are common in natural history, notes Robert Berwick, a professor of computational linguistics at MIT, who also contributed to the research.

The researchers suggest that humans first had the ability to sing, as Darwin conjectured, and then managed to integrate specific lexical elements into those songs.

They acknowledge that further empirical studies on the subject would be desirable.

Alert people to instigation

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At the cabinet meeting, Rail Minister Mujibul Haque sought to know what action the government took against the people, including those from the news media, responsible for inciting Friday's violence.

In response, Information Minister Hasanul Haque Inu said he had nothing to do in this regard, as taking action against the media persons was a lengthy, legal process. He then went on to add that the home ministry could take immediate action, meeting sources said.

At this, the prime minister asked Home Minister Muihuddin Khan Alamgir to act against those who exploited people's religious sentiments, and the minister might accordingly act today, added the sources.

Taking part in the discussion, most of the ministers said the reports published in Amar Desh, Naya Diganta, Inqilab, and Dinkal were totally false and their contents provocative. They then opined that the government must review the Press Council Act for it to take immediate action against those running false and baseless reports.

In this regard, the cabinet assigned the information minister to take immediate measures for bringing about necessary changes to the law.

Referring to the contents in the social media like blogs and Facebook, the meeting said Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission should do more to checking contents that threaten national harmony and security.

Meeting sources said

Hasina advised her deputies to make it clear to imams across the country that the government was only for bringing to book the war criminals of 1971 and that it held nothing against any religion or religion-based parties.

Besides, the sources quoted the PM as saying, the government would not ban any religion-based political parties if they followed the law of the land.

Forest and Environment Minister Hasan Mahmud will talk to the religion-based parties and explain to them the government's position while State Minister for Religion Affairs M Shahjahan Mia will speak to the imams of all mosques across the country.

On Friday's violence, cabinet sources said the government had already identified some of the attackers and they would be arrested in time.

In a countrywide reign of terror, Jamaat-Shibir and its sympathisers under the banner of some religion-based parties on that day attacked law enforcers and journalists, burned and tore the national flag and vandalised Shaheed Minars, reacting to the mass movement for capital punishment to 1971 war criminals.

Activists of Jamaat and like-minded parties also chanted slogans against the organisers of the Shahbagh movement, which has been calling for death penalty to all war criminals and a ban on Jamaat-Shibir.

Gonojagoron Manchas, set up across the country to express solidarity with the Shahbagh movement, were also vandalised.

ABOUT JAMAAT
At the meeting, Hasina said that some ministers and party leaders had been publicly speaking about banning Jamaat.

The PM asked them all to refrain from making such statements, saying neither the government nor the Awami League made any decision in this regard.

So speaking about banning Jamaat would not do any good, as the anti-liberation party would use it against the government and instigate violence, a minister quoted Hasina as saying.

Referring to a writ petition pending at the High Court about Jamaat's political fate, Sheikh Hasina said if the court made a decision in this regard, the government would implement it, sources said.

Asked to comment, Communications Minister Obaidul Quader told The Daily Star that the prime minister advised them to tackle the situation patiently.

"Emotions should not run so high on the issue," he said, adding that lawmakers and AL leaders would keep contacts with the imams and tackle any anti-Islam propaganda by any vested quarter.

SHAHBAGH PROTESTS
About the Shahbagh movement, the cabinet observed the demonstrators should consider limiting their programmes within a certain timeframe considering security aspects and also the sufferings of the patients at BSMMU and Birdem.

Some cabinet members hoped that the organisers would hold programmes from 3:00pm to 10:00pm on every Friday.

Bomb attack on UNO in Kushtia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia
The upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) of Bheramara in Kushtia was injured when unidentified criminals hurled bombs at him last night.

UNO Rajibul Islam is now undergoing treatment at Kushtia General Hospital.

Chokdar Abdul Halim ASP (Bheramara circle), told The Daily Star that a gang of unidentified criminals hurled two bombs targeting Rajibul when he was returning to his quarter around 10:00pm.

The gang fled immediately after the incident inside the upazila complex.

Rajibul suffered injuries to his head and hands from splinters of the bombs, the ASP added.

Tohidul Islam, upazila officer of One Farm, One House project, also suffered injuries as he was accompanying the UNO on his way back to the quarter.

Residents of the upazila complex rushed Rajibul and Tohidul to Bheramara Upazila Health Complex.

Moshiul Islam, resident medical officer of the health complex, said both of them were out of danger. They were later shifted to Kushtia General Hospital for better treatment.

Deputy Commissioner of Kushtia Syed Belal Hossain and Police Super Mofiz Uddin Ahmed visited the spot last night.

A drive has already been launched to nab the criminals, the SP said.

'Qatari poet's sentence reduced'

AFP, Doha
A Qatari appeals court yesterday reduced to 15 years the prison sentence handed to a poet accused of incitement against the regime after a lower court had jailed him for life, his lawyer said.

"My client was sentenced today to 15 years in prison," Mohammed Nejjib al-Naimi told AFP, adding that the case will now be taken to the court of cassation for the final decision.

Mohammed al-Ajami was arrested after the publication of his "Jasmine poem," which criticised governments across the Gulf region in the wake of crackdowns on the Arab Spring uprisings, with the line "we are all Tunisia in the face of the repressive elite."

In a clear reference to Qatar, home to a major US base, he wrote: "I hope that change would come in countries whose ignorant leaders believe that glory belies in US forces."

Naimi charged that "the appeals court was apparently politicised and does not differ much from the court of first instance."

Throughout the trial, the lawyer has insisted that "there was no evidence Ajami had recited the poem he is being tried for in public," a key claim for the prosecution, and that he only read it "at his apartment in Cairo."

Migration

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recruiting workers under special requirements, said leader of the Bahrain delegation Ausamah Bin Abdulla Al-Absi.

"We have agreed to pursue an agreement on the issues that the workers have to be protected and not to be exploited," Absi, also chief executive of Bahrain Labour Market Regulatory Authority, told reporters.

He also added that the G-to-G process would start very soon.

Director General of Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training Begum Shamsun Nahar told The Daily Star that Bahrain had proposed the process to Bangladesh government to avoid frequent malpractices.

She also added that the Bahrain government had become serious about ensuring workers' safety following some frequent incidents in their country in which many migrant workers including Bangladeshis had died.

Speed up carnage trial

FROM PAGE 1
the BRD mutiny cases.

Seventy-four people including the army officers were killed in the mutiny at the Palkhona headquarters of the erstwhile Border Security Force (BRD) on February 25-26, 2009.

Representatives of the president and prime minister, ministers, chiefs of three defence services, director general of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) and top government officials also placed floral wreaths at the graveyard.

After placing wreaths, they

observed a minute's silence and prayed for the salvation of the departed souls.

The BGB organised a milad mahfil and recitations from the Holy Quran.

Prayers were also held at the central mosques of all the cantonments across the country.

Besides, leaders of the ruling Awami League placed wreaths and offered Fateha at the graveyard and organised a discussion at the party headquarters.

To mark the day, different socio-cultural and political

organisations hold programmes.

Special prayers will be held today at Palkhona at 4:00pm.

Hours into the dawn of February 25 in 2009, rebel BDR soldiers looted the armoury at Palkhona and shot dead the officers and others.

The mutineers also took hostage some army officers and their family members, prompting the government to call out the army.

The mutiny eventually ended with the surrender of the rebels.