

Robber held for killing fishermen

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police yesterday arrested an alleged robber suspected of being involved in the last month's killing of at least 27 fishermen in the Bay of Bengal.

The arrestee, Ahmed Kabir, 36, is a resident of Shekherkhil area of Banshkhalı upazila of Chittagong.

Detectives in Cox's Bazar arrested him from Shekherkhil Bazar with the help of Banshkhalı police around 2:00pm.

Evidence of Ahmed's involvement in the incident was found from the primary investigation, said Additional Superintendent of Police of Chittagong (south) Md Elutumish.

"There are warrants for Ahmed in other robbery cases filed with Banskhali and Kutubdia police stations," he added.

Twenty-seven bodies of fishermen were recovered from the Kutubdia Channel on April 1, 2 and 3. These men were attacked and killed by pirates in the channel while they were returning home on March 26.

Press freedom

FROM PAGE 1 declaration of the newspaper. The publisher can publish the daily at a second press with permission from the district administration, said the minister, referring to the Printing Presses and Publications (Declarations and Registrations) Act-1973.

But neither the authorities of Al Falah Press, where the newspaper was published after the government sealed off the press of Amar Desh, nor its publisher submitted the required form for that.

Instead, the minister said, Mahmuda Rahman, mother of Mahmudur Rahman, had applied to the district magistrate as acting chairman of Amar Desh for publishing the newspaper from Al Falah Press on temporary basis.

But the documents of Amar Desh with the government do not acknowledge that Mahmuda Rahman was ever involved with the newspaper, the minister said.

Amar Desh was published, distributed, sold and exhibited illegally on April 12 and 13 since neither the authorities of the newspaper nor the owner of Al Falah had any permission to publish it.

Asked why only Mahmudur Rahman was arrested when some other newspapers had also published provocative contents like Amar Desh, the minister said the government was monitoring those.

On Thursday, police arrested Mahmudur Rahman in a case filed for publishing Skype conversations between Justice Md Nizamul Huq, ex-chairman of the International Crimes Tribunal-1, and Ahmed Ziauddin, an expatriate Bangladeshi legal expert.

The same day, a general diary was also filed against him for running a fictitious report in January involving the changing of the Gilaf (cover) of Holy Kaaba. Amar Desh published a photo of the event with a false news report with the caption, "A human chain led by the khatib of Holy Kaaba protests the war crimes trial in Bangladesh."

Meanwhile, journalists and employees of daily Amar Desh protested against the statements of the information minister.

In a statement issued in the evening, they said they had followed the 1973 act while seeking permission from the district magistrate for publishing the daily at an alternative press -- Al Falah -- as its press was locked by law enforcers.

Suu Kyi calls for Japanese investment

AFP, Tokyo

Myanmar opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi yesterday called for Japanese investment and economic aid that would create jobs in the Southeast Asian economy, news reports said.

The 67-year-old head of the National League for Democracy, now on her first visit to Japan in 27 years following more than 14 years of house arrest, made the request during her meeting with Japanese lawmakers in Tokyo.

Men hardly

FROM PAGE 20 found a scientific reason why men understand other men better than the female of the species.

Researchers at a German hospital discovered male volunteers looking at photographs of human eyes were better at guessing the 'mood' of the person in the picture, if the person in them was also male.

The study took 22 male volunteers - all single and all between the ages of 21 and 52.

Each was asked to look at photographs showing just the eyes of a person, while undergoing an MRI scan.

The gender of the people in the photographs was split 50/50 and each displayed an emotion that was considered to be positive, neutral, or negative.

As the volunteers viewed the pictures they were asked to choose between two words given to them that best described the mood of the person they were looking at.

So many people

FROM PAGE 20 The timing of the explosions - around 2:50pm - was especially devastating because they happened when a high concentration of runners in the main field were arriving at the finish line on Boylston Street.

This year, more than 23,000 people started the race in near-perfect conditions. Only about 17,580 finished.

Three people were killed and more than 100 were injured, officials said.

Deirdre Hatfield, 27, was steps away from the finish line when she heard a blast. She saw bodies flying out into the street. She saw a couple of children who appeared lifeless. She saw people without legs.

She looked inside a Starbucks to her left, where she thought a blast might have occurred. "What was so eerie, you looked in you knew there had to be 100 people in there, but there was no sign of movement," she said.

Amid the chaos, the authorities directed runners and onlookers to the area designated for family members meeting runners at the end of the race. It was traditionally a place of panting pride, sweaty hugs and exhausted relief.

But on Monday, it became a place of dread, as news of the attack spread through the crowd and people awaited word. One woman screamed over the din toward the streets roped off for runners: "Lisa! Lisa!"

Some saw the explosions as clouds of white smoke. To others, they looked orange - a fireball that nearly reached the top of a nearby traffic

No other information was given.

The researchers found that the volunteers were better at sensing the mood of the person in the picture if that person was male.

They also found that when looking at a pair of male eyes, the amygdala - a portion of the brain that has been found to be involved in emotion - was more active than when looking at the women's eyes.

Because scientists believe that emotional reading happens mostly through the eyes, the researchers suggest that their results show that men are better at reading the emotional state of their fellow men, than they are at doing the same with women.

It is not the first study to draw the conclusion.

One conducted at Indiana University found that men tend to misinterpret positive signals from women, often mistaking friendliness for sexual attraction.

light. Groups of runners, including a row of women in pink and neon tank tops and a man in a red windbreaker kept going a few paces at least, as if unsure of what they were seeing.

Some runners stopped in the middle of the street, confused and frightened. Others turned around and started running back the way they came.

Boston hospitals struggled to keep up with the flow of patients. Massachusetts General Hospital admitted 29 patients, 8 of them in critical condition; several of them needed amputations, a spokesman said.

Late Monday night, Brigham and Women's Hospital said it had seen 31 patients who were wounded in the explosions, ranging from a 3-year-old to patients in their 60s. As many as 10 were listed in serious condition, and 2 were in critical condition.

The Rev Brian Jordan, a Franciscan priest based in Brooklyn, said he was in Boston to say a pre-race Mass near the starting line for a group of about 100 friends who were running. The group included Boston firefighters, Massachusetts State Police officers and several Army soldiers recently returned from Iraq.

Father Jordan, a veteran runner of 21 Boston Marathons himself, was about a block away from the blasts when they occurred, heading toward the course to watch his friends finish the race.

"I never heard that type of sound before," he said by telephone. "It was like cannons."

Rally, not hartal

FROM PAGE 1 organising secretary who disappeared in April last year, and demanding release of its leaders.

BNP standing committee member Khandker Mosharraf Hossain yesterday briefed reporters after a meeting of secretary generals of the alliance's components.

Bangladesh Jatiya Hindu Mahajot meanwhile thanked Khaleda Zia for not calling hartals for today and tomorrow responding to its request. The Mahajot had made the request for smooth celebration of Langal Bandh Snan (Holy bath).

The meeting at BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's Gulshan office also decided in principle to enforce countrywide two-day hartal from April 22 or April 23, sources in the alliance told The Daily Star.

The date will be finalised in line with any possible changes to Hefajat-e Islam's rally in Khulna, which is scheduled for April 20.

As part of its strategy, the opposition will fix and observe its upcoming anti-government movements alongside Hefajat's programmes.

About the 18-party alliance's next course of action, a leader of an ally of the BNP, who was present in the meeting, said they had decided to enforce three-day nonstop

Power, transit 3-nation meet starts tomorrow

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Two working group meetings among Bangladesh, India and Bhutan on water, power, transit and connectivity will begin in Dhaka tomorrow to explore possibilities on sub-regional cooperation.

The first meeting of India-Bangladesh-Bhutan Working Group on Water and Power will be held tomorrow while the Working Group on Transit and Connectivity will sit on Friday.

The meetings will take place in pursuance of the "Framework Agreement" signed between India and Bangladesh on September 6, 2011, during the visit of Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to Dhaka.

Sources said the maiden meeting of the Working Group on Water and Power was expected to enhance cooperation amongst the participating countries in sharing waters of common rivers, exploring possibilities of common basin management of common rivers and harness the advantages of sub-regional cooperation in the hydroelectric power sector.

The first meeting of the Working Group on Transit and Connectivity will focus on the implementation of measures for upgrading road and railway networks among the participating countries for enhanced connectivity, trade, movement of goods and services as well as people to people contacts.

Non-students

FROM PAGE 20 different cases.

Also, 30 to 40 of the leaders have kept their "studentship" by enrolling in different educational institutions that operate in name only.

None of the 32 vice-presidents in the new committee are students in any way. All of them are over 40 years of age and at least 24 of them are married, said a JCD leader, who also is married.

Two of the VPs -- Saiful Islam Firoz and ABM Parvez Reza -- completed their education at least a decade ago, JCD insiders told The Daily Star yesterday.

On September 3 last year, the BNP chief approved a five-member JCD central committee, with Abdul Quader Bhuiyan Jewel and Habibur Rashid as its president and general secretary.

Jewel, whose academic life ended over two decades ago, is now 45 years old while Habibur Rashid, 40, is a father of two school-going children.

"Dedicated Chhatra Dal activists who are still students or completed their education in recent years were not evaluated duly," said a mid-level JCD leader, a student, last night.

"Instead, older leaders who have close contact with the president [Abdul Quader Bhuiyan Jewel] got priority in the new committee."

Talking to The Daily Star, some other mid- and lower-level JCD leaders said field level JCD activists are dissatisfied as many qualified leaders were not included in the committee due to "grouping politics".

This committee was formed considering tougher anti-government movement in the coming days, the committee sources said.

Drawn attention to the older leaders on the new committee, the JCD president said, "The leaders were selected considering their experience, dedication, merit, and competence."

GDP growth

FROM PAGE 1 Report said a 50 percent chance of a recession in the Euro region was the most immediate threat to global growth.

Releasing the report in Washington around 7:00pm Bangladesh time, IMF Chief Economist Olivier Blanchard said the main challenge was still very much in Europe.

According to the report, the global economy will expand 3.3 percent this year, down from the 3.5 percent forecast in January. The growth was 3.2 percent last year.

Legal bar goes

FROM PAGE 1 legalise illegal connections obtained by some people.

"The committee is also reviewing whether gas connections could be given to industrial and commercial users."

In 2010, the government imposed the restrictions as an acute gas crisis was affecting industrial units, including fertiliser factories and power plants, and CNG stations. Also, low gas pressure hit domestic consumers, forcing them to cook at odd times like 5:00am or late at night.

However, it was assumed that by 2012-13, Petrobangla would be able to significantly improve gas supply so that the restrictions could be lifted.

The crisis remained unchanged.

Many gas-fired power plants capable of generating around 700-900 megawatts still remain idle just as before. Fertiliser factories need to be shut down for months to feed power plants with gas to reduce load shedding.

Petrobangla Chairman Husain Monsur has told The Daily Star that despite increase of supplies since

2009, the gas crisis remained unchanged at 500 million cubic feet per day (mmcf), which is equivalent to one fourth of the present supply.

He said the country's gas production was 1,713 mmcf of gas four years ago. Now the country produces on an average 2,287 mmcf of gas. But the steady increasing demand outpaced the supply.

Gas production could have been much higher if production at some of the gas fields such as Semutang and Titas had not gone down, Husain said.

Yet, he sees no reason why new gas connections could not be given to households.

"About 57,400 households obtained illegal connections from Titas [since the July 2010 restrictions]," the chairman claimed.

"But they consume gas and deposit the bills with Titas accounts," he said, adding 55,000 to 60,000 households are using gas but not paying bills.

"About 147,000 households have applied for new gas connections and have paid the due fees," he noted.

"We will need about 30-35 mmcf of gas if we give new gas connections," he said,

Verdict any day

FROM PAGE 1 Justice Obaidul Hassan with members Justice Md Mozibur Rahman Miah and Judge M Shahinur Islam kept Kamaruzzaman's case waiting for verdict as both the prosecution and the defence concluded their arguments yesterday.

The tribunal has taken 25 days for delivering verdict in Azad's case after the proceedings were completed and 18 days in Quader Mollah's case.

"The proceeding of the case is completed and it's time for delivering verdict. We are keeping the case as CAV [Curia Advisari Vult, a Latin legal term meaning verdict would be delivered any time]," said Justice Hassan.

Earlier, the tribunal rejected Kamaruzzaman's petition to allow him to say something before conclusion of the proceeding.

"As per the law, the accused has no right to say at this stage," the tribunal observed.

Completing her replies in response to the defence arguments, prosecutor Tureen Afroz said, "We have come here [before the tribunal] for justice. We want justice. We want his [Kamaruzzaman's] capital punishment."

Prosecutor Syed Haider Ali added, "We have been able to prove the charges beyond any shadow of doubt. Kamaruzzaman's participation and contribution to crimes was at the highest level and we want his highest punishment."

But, completing his arguments on Monday, chief defence counsel Abdur Razzaq said the prosecution had mainly relied on oral evidence and their witnesses had not only "contradicted" with each other but also with the prosecution's documentary evidence.

"The prosecution have utterly failed to prove any of the charges beyond reasonable doubts," said Razzaq, adding, "It is impossible to convict Kamaruzzaman of any of the charges."

Kamaruzzaman, Jamaat's assistant secretary general, was arrested in a criminal case on July 13, 2010 and shown arrested on war crimes charges on August 2 in the same year.

The prosecution pressed formal charges against him incorporating nine counts of crimes against humanity on January 15, 2012 and the Tribunal-1 took the charges into cognisance on January 31. The case was transferred to the Tribunal-2 on April 16, 2012.

On June 4, 2012, the tribunal indicted Kamaruzzaman on seven charges of crimes against humanity including murder and torture of unarmed civilians and complicity in other crimes during the nine-month-long war.

The indictment order in a brief profile of the accused

said Kamaruzzaman had been assigned as the president of Islami Chhatra Sangha, the then student wing of Jamaat, in Mymensingh in 1970.

Accused Kamaruzzaman, in 1971, as the president of Islami Chhatra Sangha, in greater Mymensingh had played the role of a key organiser in formation of Al-Badr force with the selected students of Ashke Mahmud College belonging to Islami Chhatra Sangha," the order added.

Al-Badr is historically known for its role behind orchestrating the killings of the intellectuals in the last part of the Liberation War.

Under the leadership of Kamaruzzaman, all the students of Chhatra Sangha of greater Mymensingh were absorbed into Al-Badr force within a month. They, after receiving summery training, started atrocities targeting the Hindu community and unarmed Bangalee civilians in greater Mymensingh, the order said.

As many as 18 prosecution witnesses including the investigation officer of the case testified against the accused, while five people gave testimony in favour of Kamaruzzaman between July 15, 2012 and March 24, 2013.

The prosecution and the defence held closing arguments from March 24 until yesterday.

CHARGES

On June 29, 1971, under the leadership of Kamaruzzaman, a group of Al-Badr members abducted Badiuzzaman of Ramnagar village under Jhenagati upazila in Sherpur. He was tortured at Ahammed Nagar army camp all night long and was shot to death the following day.

In mid-May, 1971, Kamaruzzaman and his accomplices caused inhuman acts to pro-liberation intellectual Syed Abdul Hannan, the then principal of Sherpur College, by compelling him to walk naked through the town under constant whipping.

On July 25, 1971, Kamaruzzaman advised members of Al-Badr and Razakar forces to commit a large-scale massacre in association with Pakistani troops in Sohagpur village of Nalitabari upazila in Sherpur. The collaborators murdered 164 unarmed civilians, 44 of whom have been named, and raped women.

On August 23, 1971, on Kamaruzzaman's instruction, collaborators took Golam Mostafa of Gridda Narayanpur village in Sherpur to an Al-Badr camp. Kamaruzzaman and his accomplices brought Mostafa and one Abul Kasem to Serih Bridge and gunned them down.

Kasem survived as he jumped into the river but suffered injuries in his fingers. Mostafa died on the

adding that gas reserve now stands at 12 to 15 trillion cubic feet, which will meet the demand over the next 15 years at the current consumption rate.

High officials of Titas said while a section of people indeed had obtained illegal connections by bribing field-level Titas employees and contractors in the last three years, there was no reliable data on illegal connections.

"No survey was conducted to determine any figure. Giving legality to illegal users is a reward for illegal activities," said a high official.

Prof Ijaz Hossain of Buett chemical engineering department said there should be no new gas connection as the reserves for gas depleting very fast.

"So, the government should not go for any new gas connection to households until we find new gas fields," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

The country now consumes about 0.75 trillion cubic feet of gas a year, whereas it has been able to discover only one trillion cubic feet of gas in last one decade.

Another mass

FROM PAGE 1

The court, however, dropped charges against three accused including Jubo Dal Joint Secretary General Golam Rabbani as their involvement was not proved.

It asked officer-in-charge of Paltan Police Station to submit a report by April 29 on execution of arrest warrants against the fugitives.

Upon receiving the report, the court will hear the charge sheet to decide about the merit of the case, said court sources.

Police on March 6 had filed the case with Paltan Police Station under the speedy trial act. On March 27, it submitted the charge sheet to the court.

The same court will decide today whether it will frame charges against 148 BNP leaders including opposition Chief Whip Zainul Abdin Farroque in a case for vandalising vehicles and assaulting police.

The leaders were detained and put behind bars on March 11. They have been denied bail twice.

The same court on April 7 took cognisance of two other cases filed against BNP acting secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, senior leader Moudud Ahmed and 37 others for torching vehicles and assaulting law enforcers on March 2 in the capital.

HRW asks

FROM PGAE 20 statement of New York-based HRW.

"By targeting peaceful critics in the media and blogosphere and promising more arrests, the government is abandoning any serious claim that it is committed to free speech," said Brad Adams, Asia director at HRW.

Referring to recent street agitation, violence and deaths, it said increasingly the protests appear to have sharpened along religious lines, with some Islamist clerics demanding a blasphemy law and with others in the Shabbagh movement publishing statements supporting atheist principles, largely through blogs and other electronic media.

On the arrests of the bloggers, the HRW said the criminal justice authorities cracked down on government critics in the media, including social media. Therefore, the government made clear that the restrictions and arrests will continue.

Police described the arrested bloggers as "known atheists and naturalists" who posted derogatory comments about Islam and Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) on the Internet.

"These bloggers can only be called political prisoners, since they are in jail for peacefully expressing their views," Adams said. "Freedom of religion also includes the freedom not to believe in a religion and to make those views known. For a government that has always presented itself as liberal and secular this is a huge retreat from the values it claims to uphold."

The right body termed the arrest of acting editor Mahmudur Rahman as an "attack on free speech" and said Rahman was charged with sedition and unlawful publication of a hacked conversation between an ICT judge and an external consultant. "The conversations exposed political interference with the trials," it said.

Earthquake

FROM PAGE 1 the relatively low level of damage from this huge quake.

Soon after the quake, an Iranian official had told Reuters he expected hundreds of dead and state media quoted unconfirmed reports of 40 fatalities in Iran.

The earthquake was felt across the region.

This quake shook tall buildings in India's capital New Delhi, sending people running into the streets. People also evacuated buildings in Qatar and Dubai.

On 10 April, a 6.3-magnitude quake near the nuclear plant at Bushehr in south-western Iran killed at least 37 people and wounded 850.