

# Yusuf's bail petition

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Saha on May 8 submitted the formal charges against the accused.

The 15 war crimes charges include genocide, killing, looting, arson, religious conversion and deportation of people.

Both the prosecution and the defence placed submission on bail petition before the tribunal on May 13.

The defence in their petition said Yusuf had been suffering from different old-age complexities and needed healthcare support.

Opposing the bail petition, the prosecution said since Yusuf was nayeb-e-ameer of Jamaat and his health condition could not refrain him from doing politics, he should not be given bail.

Yusuf was produced

before the tribunal yesterday.

Economist show-cause hearing

Counsel of The Economist's journalists Mustafizur Rahman yesterday told the Tribunal-1 that Rob Gifford and Adam Roberts, chief editor and the South Asia bureau chief of the London-based weekly, made contact with the tribunal's former chairman over phone to verify information.

He claimed their [Economist's journalists] intention was naïve and merely professional.

The Tribunal-1 on December 6, 2012 issued notices upon the two asking them to explain why contempt of court proceedings should not be taken against them for "interfering in ongoing trial and violating

privacy of a judge".

The tribunal on that day asked The Economist to keep secret the information "it had gathered" from former chairman Justice Nizamul Huq's Skype and email accounts.

On that day Justice Huq said a person from The Economist over phone had informed him that the magazine possessed the record of his Skype conversation with expatriate legal expert Ahmed Ziauddin and asked him some questions regarding this information.

Justice Huq termed it "a serious breach of privacy and said the people involved in disturbing the ongoing trial process had links to the hacking of the Skype and email accounts.

Showing personal reasons, Justice Huq resigned amid the

controversy on December 11.

Mustafiz said their clients did not publish anything.

He also claimed his clients got the recorded conversation from third party.

Upon query of the tribunal, he said as per law the journalists are not bound to disclose the source's identity.

He also claimed there was no instance of bringing contempt of court proceeding against a journalist for making contact with a judge.

Mustafiz prayed to the tribunal to exonerate his clients from the contempt proceeding.

The prosecution sought time for a reply.

The tribunal accepted the prosecution's prayer and adjourned the proceeding until June 18.

# 18-party denied

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last night discussed the issue with the senior party leaders and its Dhaka city unit leaders at a meeting at Gulshan office.

The leaders decided that the 18-party alliance will explain its stance on holding the rally through a press conference today at the BNP's central office at Nayapalton.

Meeting sources told this correspondent that the opposition alliance might enforce a daylong hartal across the country either tomorrow or Sunday protesting denial of permission to hold the rally.

The leaders also discussed whether BNP would put its agitation programmes on hold, and consider the government's offer for dialogue.

BNP standing committee member Moudud Ahmed told The Daily Star, "There has to be a congenial atmosphere

for holding talks. The government is talking about the dialogue, but on the other hand it is denying the opposition the democratic right to hold a rally."

"How can there be dialogue between the government and the opposition amid such a situation?" questioned Moudud.

The possibility of a dialogue between the two sides remains uncertain, he added.

Home Minister Muhiuddin Khan Alamgir, however, defended the refusal of permission to the opposition to hold the rally today.

"Those who resort to vandalism and create anarchy in the name of holding rallies cannot be given permission to stage the rally," he said. "They are miscreants, not political activists."

Sheikh Nazmul Haque,

deputy commissioner (Motijheel) of DMP, said police did not give permission for the rally on "security grounds."

Referring to the rampage by Hefajat-e-Islam men in the capital on May 5, he said, "This time, Jamaat-e-Islami, a key component of the 18-party alliance, and its student wing Islami Chhatra Shibir might again indulge in violence from the rally."

Many opposition leaders now face dozens of cases filed in connection with vandalism and arson carried out during the opposition's agitation programmes.

A Dhaka court on Monday fixed June 3 for hearing on charge framing in an arson case against 41 opposition leaders, including BNP leaders Moudud Ahmed, Mirza Abbas and Goyeswar Chandra Roy.

# Traffic fumes

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They believe kidney damage may be an indicator of artery disease due to long-term exposure to air pollution from road vehicles.

Experts already know that long-term exposure to exhaust fumes increases the risk of vascular diseases such as heart attacks and stroke.

The work is published in the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health.

The study authors, Dr Murray Mittleman and colleagues at the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston, measured kidney function using a recognised test called the glomerular filtration rate (GFR).

The GFR is an indicator of how well the kidneys are working. A low GFR suggests kidney problems.

Half of the stroke patients in the study lived within 1km of a major road in the Boston metropolitan region, and the rest lived between 1km and 10km away.

Those patients who lived closest to a major road had the lowest GFR even after taking account of factors such as age, sex, race, smoking and other underlying medical conditions.

The difference in GFR between these patients and those who lived further away from traffic pollution was comparable to a reduction in GFR associated with being four years older, the researchers say.

Dr Tim Chico, a heart expert at the University of Sheffield in the UK, however, cautioned that the current study only showed a link - it does not prove living next to a road definitely affects kidney function.

The researchers say more studies looking at different groups of people are needed to confirm the findings.

# 58 missing

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Myanmar's department of meteorology on Tuesday said the cyclone was travelling through the Bay of Bengal about 820 kilometres from the state capital Sittwe and would make landfall on Thursday near the Myanmar-Bangladesh border.

It threatens to worsen the humanitarian crisis in Rakhine, which was sparked by two outbreaks of deadly religious violence beginning last June that saw around 200 people killed and the homes of tens of thousands razed.

In Geneva a spokesman for the UN's refugee agency said millions of people living in the area could be hit, with latest estimates suggesting some 69,000 displaced people in three locations were at particular risk.

Myanmar's army was deployed to help evacuate those most at risk. But some international observers said the effort had come too late after months of warnings of the danger posed to the camps by this year's monsoon.

"If the government fails to evacuate those at risk, any disaster that results will not be natural but man-made," said Brad Adams, Asia director at Human Rights Watch.

The warnings have revived memories of Cyclone Nargis, which devastated Myanmar's Irrawaddy Delta in May 2008 and killed about 140,000 people.

# Shun path

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The premier said the huge loss, which occurred due to the vandalism unleashed by Hefajat and Jamaat-Shibir men, could not be recovered by the government.

But the government was providing token assistance to the small businessmen to express its sympathy for the victims of the mayhem, she added.

She also mentioned that the government would have to provide a huge amount of financial assistance to the large number of victims of the Savar building collapse.

Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury and Post and Telecommunications Minister Sahara Khatun, among others, were present at the programme.

# AL to invite BNP

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after BNP gives the vibe that the opposition would sit for talks "unconditionally".

But before inviting BNP, AL will sit with key stakeholders of its 14-party combine and take opinions from its grassroots leaders, who are set to attend the party's extended meeting at Gono Bhavan today.

AL insiders said informal talks about a dialogue had been going on with BNP leaders for the last several days.

Sources said AL chief and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had given party General Secretary Syed Ashrafur Islam the green signal for sending the invitation.

The Daily Star yesterday talked to at least seven AL leaders, ministers and lawmakers about the matter, but none could give any exact date of sending the letter.

AL sources said Hasina would make her party's position clear about the dialogue with the BNP at the extended meeting today.

Hasina is expected to make her party's stance clear about the dialogue with the

BNP in today's extended meeting, said AL insiders.

Asked AL Organising Secretary AFM Bahauddin Nasim said the grassroots leaders would be given guidelines on the party's strategies for the next election and a clear idea on the poll-time government at the meeting.

"Besides, the latest state of the party in each area would also be discussed and directives will be given accordingly," said Bahauddin.

He said the extended meeting had the utmost importance, as previously every crucial decision of the party had been taken by the highest forum.

Before the election of 2008, when Hasina was kept detained by the military-backed caretaker government, an AL extended meet unanimously stood for the release of the party chief to take part in the polls.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina last night held a marathon meeting with several key leaders of the party. Details of the meeting could not be known immediately.



The second day of the Dhaka divisional round of The Daily Star Spelling Bee will be aired at 7:50pm on Channel i tonight. The last divisional round was held recently at the Institution of Diploma Engineers, Kakrail.

PHOTO: STAR

# Ashulia peaceful

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He added no vandalism took place yesterday although production was suspended.

"We are holding meetings with the labour leaders to work out solutions for reopening the factories," he said but added, "We will reopen the factories if a peaceful environment is created."

The owners shared this stance at a discussion with State Minister for Labour and Employment Begum Monnuazzan Sufian at her Secretariat office. She is the chief of the crisis management committee in the apparel sector.

According to the BGMEA, workers were demanding a minimum wage of Tk 8,000, higher bonuses, and allowances for tiffin and transportation during Monday's demonstrations.

"Our hardship will

increase if the owners do not pay our wages for the days of closure," said Sabina, who lives in a rented room with her three kids and husband. Her husband is a small vegetables retailer.

She fears her dues to groceries will increase if her earnings fall for the closure.

The income of my husband was not enough to meet all family needs, said Sabina, claiming that they had got wages in the past even when factories were closed for unrest.

Her neighbour Rozina Akhter, who works at another factory, was also at unease for the unexpected shutdown and was concerned over a cut in salary next month.

"Our livelihood depends on our wages. It will not be a wise decision on part of the owners of not paying us for the days of closure. We have not enforced the shutdown

and are not responsible for it," said Rozina.

Nurjahan Akhter, another worker, said like others she also wanted a hike in their wages as the existing wages are too inadequate to meet all family needs.

"But I am ready to join work if our factory opens tomorrow. A closure means loss for both the workers and the owners," she said.

Like Nurjahan and Sabina, Abul Hossain, a worker at Hollywood Apparels, is also concerned over the shutdown.

"We have no problem in our factory. But we are the sufferers for the unrest in other factories," he said, adding that he did not like the no-work-no-pay policy.

"I have not done any damage to the factory or called a strike. Why will I not get my salary?" Abul questioned.

# Ex-RCC

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Of the amount, he has earned Tk 6,21,600 as mayoral honorarium, while Tk 50 lakh came from different realtors under contracts for developing his personal properties. Besides, he has earned Tk 2,54,172 from bank interests.

Although Liton, general secretary of the city unit of Awami League, mentioned himself as a lawyer by profession, he showed no income from his occupation.

The annual income of another mayoral aspirant, Mosaddek Hossain Bulbul, has seen a small increase during this tenure.

Convener of the Rajshahi city unit of Jatityatabadi Jubo Dal, Bulbul had an annual income of Tk 1.68 lakh in 2008 when he was defeated by Liton. After five years, his income now stands at Tk 1.92 lakh. He has earned the amount from his fisheries business.

The other mayoral aspirants, Shafikul Haque Milon, Mohammed Jahangir, Habibur Rahman and Mir Mojammel Ali, are expected to join the polls race for the first time.

The Rajshahi office of the Election Commission will scrutinise the nomination forms of the mayoral and councillor aspirants today and tomorrow.

# Four US soldiers killed in Afghanistan

REUTERS, Kandahar

Four US soldiers were killed by a roadside bomb in Afghanistan's Kandahar province yesterday, the coalition and officials said, a day after three Georgian soldiers were killed in nearby Helmand.

The soldiers were in a vehicle on patrol in Kandahar's Zhari district when they were killed, provincial spokesman Jawid Ahmad Faisal said.

May has proved particularly bloody for members of the Nato-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), which is preparing to withdraw most combat troops by the end of next year.

# UN chief calls for dialogue

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Monday, according to a message received here yesterday.

Dipu Moni briefed him about the latest political developments in the country and assured the UN secretary general that the government's offer of a political dialogue on the modalities of the election was very much on the table.

She also expressed the hope that the opposition parties would respond to that sooner than later.

At the meeting, Ban Ki-moon thanked the Bangladesh government for providing consistent support to UN peace operations, including the latest in Mali.

He acknowledged the historic importance of holding the war crimes trials in Bangladesh to bring to justice the perpetrators of war crimes committed during the

Liberation War, and underscored the need for a closure of the matter.

The foreign minister briefed Ban Ki-moon about various comprehensive actions taken by the government and other stakeholders to create a robust compliance regime under the new Labour Act 2013.

She reaffirmed Bangladesh's continued support to the UN's peace initiatives and sought the country's due share of appointments to senior positions in the global peacekeeping hierarchy.

The UN chief praised Bangladesh for its proactive contributions to the open-ended working group on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the post 2015 development agenda.

Dipu Moni attended the UN high-level meeting on the Global Plan of

Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons which was held in New York on May 13-14.

At the meeting, she made a number of pledges and recommendations from Bangladesh, including enhanced mutual legal assistance amongst countries of origin.

Earlier on Monday, the foreign minister called on Vuk Jeremic, the president of the 67th UNGA, and exchanged views on a number of issues, including the upcoming UNGA high-level meetings.

Later, in the evening, she attended a meeting organised by expatriate Bangladeshis in New York.

Dipu Moni was accompanied by Saifuzzaman Chowdhury, MP, and AK Abdul Momen, ambassador and permanent representative of Bangladesh to the UN, to all the events.

# Govt to acquire

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Thousands of mourners gathered at the site of the wreckage at noon and attended the doa, arranged by the army, to pray for the souls of 1,127 people and recovery of the wounded.

Meanwhile, hundreds of relatives of the missing workers staged a demonstration on the Dhaka-Aricha highway at 12:30 pm, demanding the bodies of their dear ones.

They also called for the highest punishment to the building owner.

Victim shop owners and traders, at a human chain programme near the collapsed site yesterday, appealed to the prime minister for their proper rehabilitation and compensation.

"The shop was my only source of earning. I am totally ruined following the disaster but have not yet got any assurance of assistance," said Shahinur Islam Parag, a

cloth trader.

Around 150 traders, who had shops inside the plaza, embraced the same fate, he added.

Md Kamrul Hasan Mollah, upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) of Savar, said the administration had begun preparing a fresh list of missing persons and till yesterday it had recorded the names of 211 people.

The victims' family members have been requested to communicate with the UNO office for all kinds of information related to their missing relatives.

"We will also segregate the names related to genuine missing cases from the list prepared by the district administration and finally add them to the complete list to be checked by the BGMEA," he added.

Asked why the authorities needed to prepare a further list of missing persons, he said, "The list that

was hurriedly prepared by the district administration control room had some inconsistencies and it was also lacking in chronological order."

After scrutiny, the final list will be sent to the Prime Minister's Office through the deputy commissioner's office.

Adhar Chandra High School playground, which witnessed heart-rending wailing of relatives of the missing workers for the last 20 days, wore a desolate look yesterday.

The school authorities were seen doing some clean-up work at the premises.

The army, which along with locals and the fire brigade had rescued 2,438 people from the rubble and recovered 1,115 bodies, declared the end of the operation through a press briefing at 8:30pm on Monday.

# Mahasen moves towards

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they were delivering warning messages to the people over loudspeakers.

"There is no need to panic."

At present, the country has 3,770 shelters while at least 5,200 are necessary, the minister said. If needed, all primary schools will be used as cyclone centres.

Holidays have been cancelled for all public officers and employees in all of the coastal districts -- Khulna, Barisal, Barguna, Bagerhat, Bhola, Patuakhali, Satkhira, Chittagong, Cox's Bazar, Noakhali, Feni, Pirojpur and Jhalakathi.

Medical response teams -- one in every union, two in every upazila and five in every district headquarters in the coastal belt -- are ready for emergency relief operations, the minister added.

Six community radio stations are informing people about Mahasen, which formed on Saturday in the Bay, around 1,700km away from the coastline. The stations are keeping contact

with district disaster monitoring cells and volunteers round-the-clock.

Fishermen in the Sundarbans and the Bay of Bengal have been asked to move to safety while workers of all vulnerable camps in the forest have been ordered to evacuate.

The water level of the rivers and the sea has risen up to five to six feet amid squally winds.

The Chittagong City Corporation has declared eight of its wards vulnerable to what could be a disaster. They are: North Kattali (ward-10), South Kattali (11), North Halishahar (26), Munir Nagar (37), Middle Halishahar (38), South Halishahar (39), North Patenga (40) and South Patenga (41).

According to the met office bulletin 19, the cyclone was 970km from Mongla, 1,080km from Chittagong and 1,015km from Cox's Bazar at around 9:00pm yesterday.

"The cyclone is continuously shifting its directions. Now it is moving north-

wards; it will come to the Bangladesh coast if it moves northeast," said the duty forecasting officer of Dhaka met office last evening.

Later, bulletin 21 issued early today spoke of the cyclonic storm over the west central Bay and adjoining east central Bay moved slightly north-northeastwards over the same area.

It was centred at midnight last night about 1,040km southwest of Chittagong, 975km of Cox's Bazar and 930km of Mongla ports.

The cyclone is likely to intensify further and move in a north-northeasterly direction.

Maritime ports of Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Mongla have been advised to keep hoisted local warning signal number four.

However, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in a statement said Mahasen would gradually be weak and cross the coastline of Chittagong tomorrow.