

# Guard murdered

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attempts to break into the booth, said police.

"My night supervisor called me around 5:20am. He told me that a staff of another security company had informed him over the phone that one of our security personnel lay bleeding in front of his station," said Javed.

Footage from a closed-circuit camera inside the booth shows that Enamul was at his post till 5:10am, Biplob Kumar Sarker, deputy commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (Tejgaon), told The Daily Star.

The footage shows that a middle-aged woman crossed the street and talked to Enamul, who immediately moved away from the camera's line of vision at 5:10am. It was the last time he was seen on the camera that captured the images through the glass door of the booth.

There were seven more cameras inside the booth, but none captured the murder.

However, the footage showed that a group of four to five people gathered in front

of the booth around 5:26am, said the DMP deputy commissioner.

He said Enamul was killed between 5:10am and 5:26am.

Police arrived at the scene around 6:00am and took Enamul to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors pronounced him dead.

His body was then sent to Dhaka Medical College morgue for autopsy.

Sources at the morgue told The Daily Star that Enamul was hit hard in the head by a heavy object.

The DMP deputy commissioner said the murderers did not even try to unlatch from Enamul's body the key to the ATM booth that had remained locked during the night.

Biplob said the woman, who was seen talking to Enamul in the footage, is the primary suspect in the murder.

He said the murder might have been committed following some personal feud.

However, Enamul's parents, who live in Mohammadpur, said their son had no enmity with anyone.



Enamul's mother and father in tears holding a photo of their deceased son at their home in Nabadoa of the capital's Mohammadpur yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

# Happy you could say

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battles. Known as the Battle of Bogra, the combat came to a head between November 23 and December 18 that year. Fighting with Bangladeshi freedom fighters was Major General Lachman Singh Lehl, who led a mountain division of the Indian army.

For his outstanding contribution to the independence of Bangladesh, Lehl was conferred the honour of "Friends of Liberation War" in Dhaka on Tuesday.

Talking to The Daily Star at the Sonargaon Pan Pacific Hotel the following day, the 92-year-old veteran gave an account of how his soldiers and the freedom fighters had captured Pakistani Brigadier Tajamul Hussain Malik, who was leading the Pakistani side at Bogra.

"I was always a step ahead of the Pakistani army," Lehl began, "because I had the Mukti Bahini on my side. The boys may not have had the best of weapons or training but they knew the area like the back of their hands and could point out the whereabouts of the Pakistanis."

Besides blowing up bridges and planting landmines on roads to limit their options of communications, the Bangladeshi freedom fighters acted as guides to the Indian army at that time, he added.

"The serious fighting began near the end of November. And by mid-December, Bogra was surrounded on all sides by us and the Muktis. Despite having little hope of winning, one of Brigadier Malik's units

was still fighting in the region.

"Since we were using tanks, the Pakistanis reckoned that we would not be able to reach them, as there was only one road to their post which was covered by their soldiers."

At the suggestion of the freedom fighters, however, Lehl planned to get through to the Pakistani post from behind and launch an attack. He remembers that he was incredulous at first when the freedom fighters told him they could build a road for their tanks to use.

He recalled, "Much to my disbelief, the [Mukti Bahini] boys rounded up thousands of villagers and began to work on a track, making it into a usable road overnight."

Lehl's idea was to stop the Pakistani troops' food rations and cut off all their connections with others, he said, adding that he had wanted them to attack the joint forces and get killed, as those in a defensive position have an advantage over the attackers.

"As we reached the Pakistani post and shot three of their bunkers down with our tanks, they were completely flabbergasted," he observed.

The retired major general later learnt that the duty officer of the unit thought his men were seeing things when he was told that Lehl's men and the freedom fighters were coming from behind.

"How can they come [this way]? Not even a buffalo could use that track," the duty officer was quoted as saying.

However, the Indian Army

also had a surprise waiting for them on that day. Brigadier Malik was coming to Bogra from Rangpur in the evening.

The soldiers were digging up the road used by the Pakistanis in the evening to make sure that the Pakistani forces were divided and the brigadier could not go to the headquarters.

When Lehl stood there looking after the work, two jeeps were heading to Bogra from Rangpur, he was informed. "As the jeeps approached, one of the tanks fired and toppled the jeeps. The brigadier fell down on the field behind some bushes from his jeep," he said.

Malik was found later in the night with severe injuries. He spent two nights at an Indian army hospital and refused to surrender. However, on December 18, Major General Nazim Hussain Shah flew from Natore to Bogra to have Malik's brigade surrender officially.

Malik was later promoted to major general in the Pakistan army.

Summing up the interview, Lehl noted, "We wanted your country to be independent. We were hoping that your country and our country would be very great friends in time."

About the "Friends of Liberation War" award, he said, "I am happy that your country has finally realised that it must say 'well done' to me. Perhaps you realised that it does not cost much to acknowledge the contribution of a friend."

# Disastrous for Sundarbans

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policies, bilateral treaty and international conventions.

The Sundarbans is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and also Ramsar site, they said in a statement. It not only protects the country like a wall from natural disasters, it works as the national resource upon which thousands of people's livelihoods depend.

The statement added the plant would ruin the reputation Bangladesh earned for its role in climate change adaptation.

Coal is now worldwide known as "dirty fuel" and its use is being reduced.

According to experts, coal is not the only source of power. Natural resources like strong wind, sunlight and bio wastes could generate as much as 35 thousand megawatt (MW) of electricity.

Another two thousand megawatt electricity could be arranged by repairing the rundown machinery of Bangladesh Power Development Board, it adds.

The statement was signed by Professor Abdullah Abu Sayeed, former adviser to the caretaker government M Hafiz Uddin Khan, Professor Muhammed Zafar Iqbal, Farah Kabir, country director of Action Aid Bangladesh; Sultana Kamal, executive director of Ain o Salish Kendra; Dr MA Matin, secretary general of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (BAPA); and member secretary of National Committee for the Protection of the Sundarbans; Abu Naser,

chairman of Paribesh Andolon; Aroma Dutta, executive director of Pip Trust; Khushi Kabir, coordinator of Nijera Kori; Badiul Alam Mazumder, executive director of Sujon, and Dr Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of TIB.

They strongly condemned the project terming it anti-environment and demanded the plant's relocation at a safe distance.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Indian counterpart opened the foundation plaque yesterday,

amid public concern that the power plant, only 14km off the Sundarbans, will wreak havoc on the largest mangrove forest of the world.

Manmohan joined the ceremony through video conference from his New Delhi office.

Though the project site is in Bagerhat, the unveiling took place at Bheramara in Kushtia, where the two prime ministers also inaugurated the Bangladesh-India Power Transmission Centre.

# Farmers frown at jute prices

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The biggest employer in industrial sector with nearly 90,000 people on its payroll, the BJMC operates 23 jute mills and buys nearly 1.5 million bales of raw jute annually through 174 purchasing centres across the country.

BJMC sources said since December last year, the corporation had to pay an extra Tk 400 crore to its mill workers in arrears, thanks to a government-announced wage increase last year and that also with retrospective effect from 2009.

"Otherwise we wouldn't have walked a tightrope," said a BJMC official. The corporation paid the arrears in two instalments in December last year and March this year while another instalment became due in July. But it could not be paid till date due to non-availability of fund.

Yet, BJMC Secretary Abdun Noor Muhammad Ali Firoz claimed that the mills under the corporation had purchased 35 percent of their targets till last week. But he could not provide the quantity of jute already purchased.

Contacted, Firoz said had they been provided with the fund they sought from the government, they could have gone to the jute market more vigorously, thereby minimising the farmers' woes due to the dull market.

This season, said sources, the BJMC purchase centres are mostly buying jute from traders on credit as the mills are not able to pay the cash readily for the procurements. In the process, jute farmers are being deprived of good price as they simply cannot afford selling their produce on credit and they are being forced to sell it to the mid-

dlemen at lower prices, said the sources.

At Mohimaganj jute purchase centre in Gobindaganj upazila of Gaibandha recently, farmers burnt jute to vent their wrath over the dull market.

The centre that procures jute for the BJMC-run Alim Jute Mills could procure 8,000 maunds of jute till last week as against its targeted purchase of 30,000 maunds, and then again an overwhelming volume of it on credit.

Reached over the phone, centre-in-charge M Khairul Islam told this correspondent, "I got only Tk 10 lakh from BJMC but I purchased jute worth over Tk 1 crore, most of it on credit. Farmers cannot sell jute to our centre as we cannot make payment readily. The traders, who have so far sold jute to us on credit, are also becoming impatient."

Khairul feared if the BJMC failed to provide the jute mills and their jute purchase centres with enough cash immediately, the mills would run short of raw jute supply and jute prices may drop further.

An official of Star Jute Mill, another BJMC entity in Khulna, also admitted that farmers and traders were returning with unsold truckloads of jute as they were "unable to procure enough because of fund crisis."

Without providing any specific figure, the Star Jute Mill official told this correspondent that they had carryover debt, and if they still continued to ask the traders to sell jute to them on credit, how long they (traders) could do so.

Rezaul Islam, a farmer of Auria village in Sadar upazila of Narail, said, "I sold 37 maunds of jute at Tk 1,000

per maund. The price is disappointing compared to the production cost."

Besides the BJMC's fund crunch, devaluation of the Indian currency, and Syria situation that has affected jute export to the Middle East have some impact as local and international jute buyers are taking time before they go in a big way for procuring jute, explained M Rashedul Karim Munna, General Secretary of Bangladesh Jute Diversified Product Manufacturers and Exporters Association.

Munna, also chief executive officer of Creation Private Limited, said that in any case, jute growers should get price incentives so they do not get discouraged to grow jute, specially at a time when demand for the natural fibre is expected to rise in the world market.

# HC clears

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plaque of the power plant was unveiled on Saturday.

Attorney General Mahbubey Alam told The Daily Star that there is no legal bar to constructing the plant at Rampal following the HC order.

The HC has rejected the petition as it "did not have any substantial merit" and the petitioners had no jurisdiction to move such petition, he added.

On September 29, four Supreme Court (SC) lawyers filed the petition with the HC to maintain status quo on the project's construction until the assessment was done by forming a committee of local and international experts.

Asaduzzaman Siddiqui, Md Aklas Uddin Bhuiyan, Mahbulul Islam and Sayeda Shaheen Ara Laili filed the petition as public interest litigation in their appeal.

They prayed to the court to issue a rule upon the government to set up the power plant in an environment friendly area in the country.

The petitioners also sought the court's intervention in taking necessary steps for protecting the environment

and lives of locals and preserving the biodiversity of the Sundarbans.

In the petition, they said the government had reportedly permitted the Power Development Board to construct the plant near the Sundarbans without conducting an environmental impact assessment properly.

The Sundarbans is the largest mangrove forest in the world, and its environment might be damaged, if the power plant is constructed in the area, the petition added.

Yesterday, the HC bench of Justice M Moazzam Hussain and Justice Md Badruzzaman passed the order after holding a hearing on the petition.

Petitioners' counsel Manzill Murshid told this correspondent that his client would move an appeal before the SC challenging the HC's rejection order.

On Saturday, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Indian counterpart Manmohan Singh unveiled the foundation plaque for the power plant amid growing public concern that the coal-fired plant, only 14 km off the Sundarbans, may bring on a disaster for the forest.

# Detectives find

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After a visit to the tribunal, DC Krishna told reporters that Detective Branch of police had taken Nayon Ali, detained in connection with the leak, to the tribunal office where he helped them collect the evidence.

Nayon, a cleaner of the court, and Faruk Hossain, an office assistant at the registrar's office of the tribunal, were arrested on Friday and placed on remand for eight days each the following day.

Police are yet to arrest another accused, Mehedi Hasan, an assistant to Salauddin's lawyer Fakhrul Islam.

Detectives filed the case against the trio and several other unnamed people with Shahbagh Police Station on Friday following an investigation prompted by filing of a general diary by the tribunal registrar.

At a press briefing on Friday, Joint Commissioner of DMP Monirul Islam said Nayon had confessed to his involvement in the leak.

DC Krishna yesterday said DB police had also talked to the tribunal justices about the leak.

A high official of DB prefer-

ring anonymity said they were keeping watch on some tribunal staff and looking into political affiliation of those and their family members.

Detectives are also examining the computers seized from the tribunal office and the chamber of Salauddin's lawyer Fakhrul to find the track record of the portable devices used in these computers.

Besides, they are trying to ascertain from where the draft verdict was digitally transferred and then uploaded on websites.

On Tuesday, the ICT-1 awarded the BNP leader death sentence for committing crimes against humanity in Chittagong during the Liberation War in 1971.

Soon after the verdict was delivered, his wife Farhat Quader Chowdhury claimed before journalists that she had already received "a copy of the judgment", saying it was retrieved from a computer of the law secretary and that it had been written by the law ministry.

During the pronouncement of the verdict, the accused himself made similar claims standing in the dock.

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