

# ATTACK ON CHTC Police finally accept case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police dawdled until last afternoon when the International CHT Commission finally filed a case against Shamo Adhikar Andolan activists for attacking the commission's microbus in Rangamati three days ago.

Officer-in-charge Monu Sohel Imtiaz of Kotwali Police Station in Rangamati first refused to accept the case statement, e-mailed from the commission's Dhaka secretariat around 3:00pm, on the ground that 30-40 unnamed attackers were already sued by police in another case on Sunday evening.

The OC, however, accepted the case around 5:00pm, hours after the Rangamati SP Amena Begum was contacted by the commission over the matter.

The law enforcers' negligence in providing the CHTC delegation with security was blamed for the attack that followed threats from Bangalee settlers' platform Shamo Adhikar Andolan, reports our Rangamati correspondent.

The organisation is backed by opposition BNP and its key ally Jamaat-e-Islami, which opposed Bangladesh's Liberation War in 1971.

"As our microbus was going down the slope in front of the ASP's residence on Parjatan Road, some 50 to 60

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A mobile court along with a Rab team seizes fake cosmetics at a factory in the capital's Malitola yesterday.

PHOTO: COURTESY

# 2 GRAFT CASES Khaleda goes to SC against HC ruling

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday filed four writ petitions with the Supreme Court challenging recent High Court verdicts that cleared the way for a lower court to continue trial proceedings against her in Zia Orphanage Trust and Zia Charitable Trust graft cases.

The trial court is set to record statements of the prosecution witnesses in the cases filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

On April 23, an HC bench scrapped two petitions, in which the former prime minister had challenged the charge framing against her in the cases.

Later on June 19, another HC bench rejected two writ petitions filed by Khaleda questioning the legality of appointment of Bashudev Roy as judge of the Special Judge's Court-3 of Dhaka.

Roy indicted the BNP chief and eight others in the corruption cases on March 19 and she filed the petitions against Roy's appointment on May 12.

However, the judge deferred the date for recording the deposition of prosecution witnesses to July 9 after Khaleda's lawyers prayed to the court for adjournment of the proceedings.

Among the pleas filed by her yesterday, SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

# A public but private road

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When she argued that the road belongs to the government, the policeman grinned at her, and said, "It is true that the road is public property, but what can you do if someone else uses it?"

Sonia had no choice but to wait for 14 minutes at the traffic signal and watch vehicles coming out of the mall use the left lane exclusively.

Asked about it, Md Rajib Farhan, assistant commissioner (AC) of traffic in Tejgaon zone, said the traffic and market authorities had put up the blocks at the mall's exit to check congestion by shoppers' cars.

He, however, said the gap in the road divider, separating the left lane from the right, near the UTC tower should be open.

"Cars on the road can enter the left lane through the gap to go towards Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue."

"But vehicles coming out of the mall cannot use the gap to get on the road to the right. For that, they have to drive all the way up to Bijoy Sarani and take a u-turn," he said.

In reality, the gap in front of the UTC tower was found closed around 3:00pm yesterday as it was on Friday and Thursday afternoon.

Community policemen working for the mall authorities there were seen unfastening the ropes to allow

one or two so-called VIP vehicles to get on to the right lane.

Unlike Sonia, Shariful Islam found no blocks there. But he had to wait for 15 minutes on his motorbike at the gap to get on to the left lane.

"Vehicles coming out of the market were trying to get on to the road through that gap and blocked the entire lane," he complained.

The entire road from Green Road-Panthapath traffic signal to Sonargaon intersection get choked by vehicles and CNG-run autorickshaws, as shoppers in droves visit the Bashundhara City mall during Ramadan.

As the mall's parking space gets filled up quickly, shoppers' cars are parked on the road opposite the market.

Moreover, mall-bound vehicles often create two parallel lines on the left side of the road from Panthapath, blocking the Green Road-Panthapath intersection.

In order to keep the roads clear, the 30 traffic police and ansars deployed from Green Road-Panthapath to Sonargaon intersection, often need to keep the red light on at the Green Road-Panthapath traffic signal.

Farhan blamed the insufficient parking capacity of Bashundhara

City mall for the traffic congestion on the road.

He said the number of shoppers' cars had gone up during Ramadan. But the mall's parking space was reduced as it had rented out a large portion of its basements to Mustafa Mart.

Besides, the mall uses an automatic ticketing system that allows only two vehicles to pass per minute. It slows down the vehicular movement inside the parking lot, creating a long queue of vehicles outside, Farhan said.

"We had requested the market authority to use a manual system for this month to make vehicular movement faster, but they did not pay heed to it," he said.

However, Md Abul Kalam, senior general manager (admin and security) of Bashundhara Group, claimed that the mall's parking space had not shrunk because of portions of its basements being rented out to Mustafa Mart.

"We have a parking capacity for 800 vehicles. Usually, we accommodate 700 plus vehicles at a time, but during Ramadan the number goes up to 900 plus," he said.

On automatic ticketing, Kalam said they did not want to miss out on the facilities of automation service by switching to a manual system.

# DEATH IN CUSTODY

## 2 Ctg cops held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

Detective branch of Chittagong Metropolitan Police arrested two police officials, including a sub-inspector, yesterday evening in a murder case filed following the death of a businessman in police custody last month.

The arrestees are Sub-inspector Amir Hossain and constable Moslem Uddin of Panchlaish Police Station in the city, said officer-in-charge Abu Jafar Mohammad Omar Faruk.

Rokonuzzaman, 45, a real estate businessman, died after police arrested him in a rape case at his residence in the city's Bakalia around 1:20am on June 19.

His family members alleged that he had been beaten to death in police custody.

Police refuted the allegation and

claimed that he had died of "health-related complications".

On condition of anonymity, a mid-level DB official told The Daily Star that the post mortem report hinted that Rokonuzzaman had died of injuries.

On receiving the autopsy report, DB arrested the duo, he said.

Shimu Akter, wife of the deceased, had filed the murder case accusing ten people, including six policemen, with the court of Chittagong Metropolitan Magistrate Ahmed Sayeed, said her lawyer Iftekhar Saimul Chowdhury.

The accused include Panchlaish Police Station's Sub-Inspector Amir Hossain and constables Mizanur Rahman, Moslem Uddin, Khokon Mia and Akbar, Bakalia Police Station's Assistant Sub-Inspector Md Enayet Hossain, Ansar Battalion's constable

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# AZHAR'S WAR TRIAL

## Defence asked to produce 4 witnesses

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday allowed war crimes accused Jamaat Assistant Secretary General ATM Azharul Islam to produce four defence witnesses and fixed July 13 to record their testimony.

The tribunal gave the order after allowing a defence petition partially and rejecting the prosecution's petition of not allowing the defence witnesses.

The defence submitted a list of 15 witnesses with incomplete details. The tribunal asked defence counsel Abdus Subhan Tarafdar to give particulars of four of them by July 10.

Azhar faces six war crimes charges for his alleged involvement in crimes against humanity and genocide committed during the Liberation War in 1971. He was hauled before the tribunal yesterday.

The three-member tribunal led by Justice M Enayetullah Rahim yesterday also ordered the prosecution to submit the final probe reports against war crimes suspects Sirajul Haque, Khan Akram Hossain and Abdul Latif Talukder by August 20.

Of the trio, Akram and Latif have been detained by the law enforcement agencies.

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# Nearly no time

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the BNP 531 times, although the BNP has no representation in parliament.

The maiden session of the tenth parliament had 36 sittings, where 191 MPs did not participate in any of the House proceedings "to ensure accountability" of the government. Also, none of the 69 women MPs (19 general seats, 50 reserved seats) took part in the law-making process.

And although the ruling Awami League has 276 MPs, the session witnessed 28 minutes of a quorum crisis in every sitting on average. This means the House had to delay its proceedings by 28 minutes because enough lawmakers were not present, causing a loss of around Tk 8 crore in public funds.

At least 60 MPs must be present for the House to begin its proceedings.

On an average, the ninth parliament saw a quorum crisis of 32 minutes and the eighth parliament of 37 minutes.

The TIB estimated that when the House is in session, it costs about Tk 78,000 per minute. The cost includes the salaries and benefits of parliament officials and charges of maintenance of the parliament building and utility service.

Leader of the House Sheikh Hasina was present in 32 sittings out of 36 and opposition leader Raushan Ershad in 14 sittings, which lasted between January 29 and April 10.

Overall, 64 percent MPs were present in all sittings while 51 percent ministers took part in 51-75 percent sittings.

On the law-making process, TIB said in India 8 percent of the total time was spent in both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha in the first session of the immediate past 15th parliament.

Highlighting the dominance of businesspersons in parliament, the study says the participation of businessmen has risen to 59 percent in the 10th parliament, up from 18 percent in the first parliament of 1973-75.

According to TIB, 26 percent of businessmen became MPs in the second parliament, 38 percent in the fifth, 43 percent in the seventh, 58 percent in the eighth and 57 percent in the ninth parliament.

The third, fourth and sixth parliaments were very short-lived and statistics on them were not immediately available.

"Percentage of businesspersons-turned-MPs increased a lot compared to other professions, which is alarming for the interest of parliament," said TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman while presenting the findings.

He added it was only natural that

## KEY FACTS 1ST SESSION OF 10TH JS

None of the 69 women MPs took part in lawmaking process

None from opposition was made standing committee chairman

a businessperson would speak in favour of his business in the House.

TIB said making former ministers chiefs of different parliamentary standing committees has created the scope for them to influence the House watchdog, in case it moves to investigate any corruption by the ministries during the previous AL government.

On a positive note, the study found that the main opposition Jatiya Party did not boycott parliament proceedings as in the past. It staged a walkout for a few minutes protesting the hike in power price.

"But it does not mean that the main opposition [Jatiya Party] is playing its due role to make parliament effective. The opposition does not have the moral courage to play its role in parliament," Iftekharuzzaman said.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The study put forward a set of recommendations for an effective parliament and strong democracy.

The suggestions include recognising the top 10 MPs who have the highest participation in the House sittings, publishing names of 10 MPs with lowest attendance and making a law to stop parliament boycott.

The graft watchdog also reiterated its call to elect the Deputy Speaker from the opposition.

# Govt to disclose verdict today

## MARITIME DISPUTE

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nations, spot visit by judges and examination of survey reports.

The judgement is final and cannot be appealed against. The PCA officially conveyed the result to both parties yesterday.

Bangladesh Ambassador to the Netherlands Sheikh Mohammed Belal received the copy of the verdict at 2:00pm (Bangladesh time) at a ceremony at the PCA.

Indian Ambassador in the Hague Rajesh Nandan Prasad received it on behalf of his government.

As per rules of the court, no party will be able to make the judgement public before 24 hours have elapsed from its official handover time.

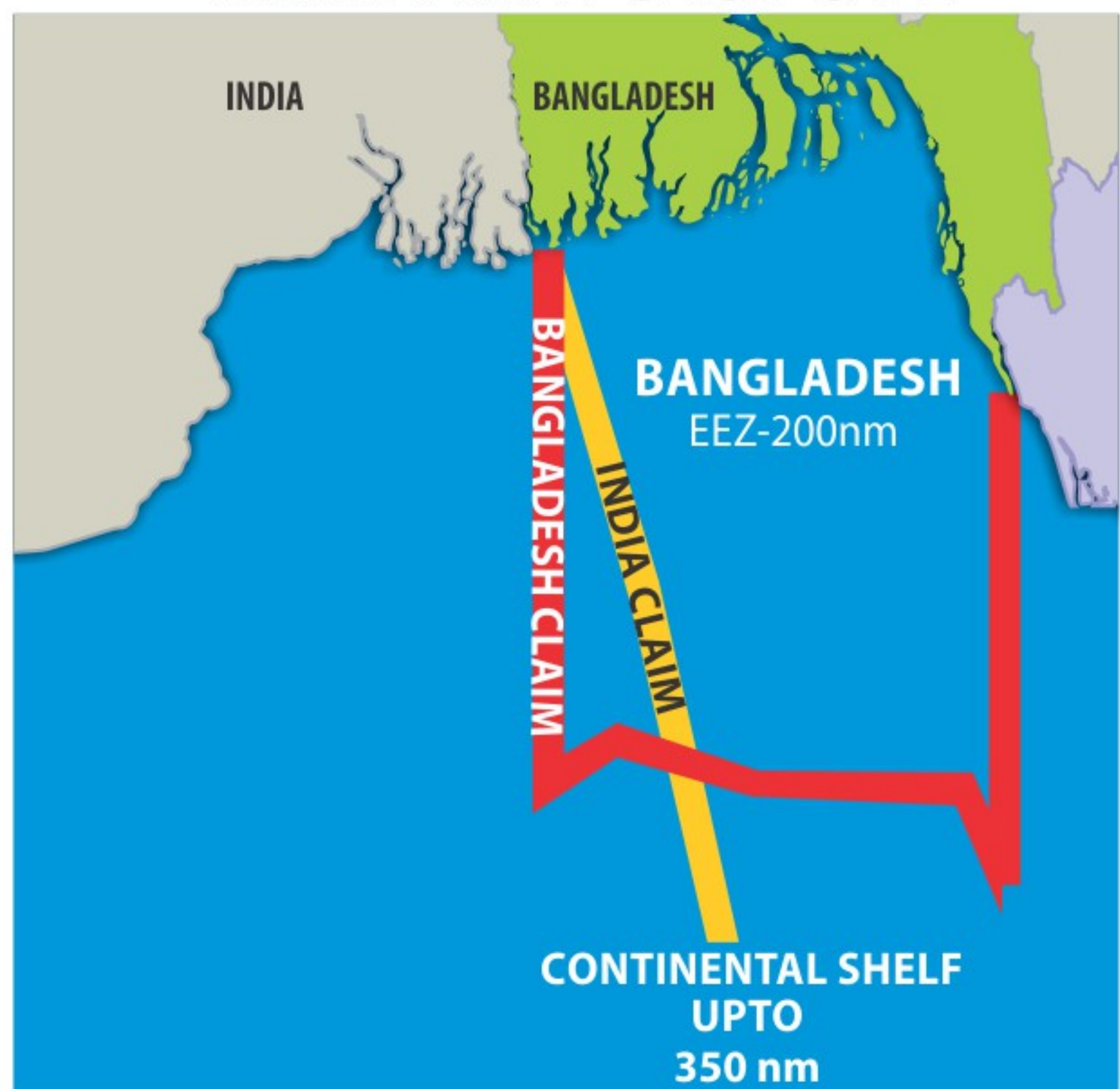
Dhaka and New Delhi are expected to give their observation on the verdict simultaneously today, foreign ministry officials have said.

According to the rules of procedure of the PCP, the verdict in the maritime boundary was due to have been announced last month. But it had been delayed for over two weeks due to unknown reasons.

Bangladesh favours a principle based on "equity" while India favours "equidistance" system to get bigger maritime areas.

Dhaka expects a positive result, similar to the settlement with Myanmar in the maritime boundary delimitation case in 2012.

The verdict delivered by the German-based International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) on March 14, 2012 sustained Bangladesh's claim to 200 nautical miles exclusive economic zone and territorial rights in the Bay of Bengal against Myanmar's claim.



Over the course of the hearings, Bangladesh and India presented their positions on certain key issues relating to the maritime boundary between the two states, including the location of the land boundary terminus between them, the delimitation of the territorial sea, the exclusive economic zone, and the continental shelf within and beyond 200 nautical miles.

The court concluded its hearings on December 18, 2013 at the Peace Palace in The Hague.

The PCA is a permanent judicial body established by the United Nations in 1899 to facilitate arbitration and other forms of resolution of dispute between states.

The judges of the court are Prof Dr Rüdiger Wolfrum (president), Thomas A Mensah, Dr Pemmaraju Sreenivasa Rao, Prof Ivan Shearer and Jean-Pierre Cot.

At the PCA, the Bangladesh side was represented by former foreign minister Dipu Moni and Rear Admiral Md Khurshed Alam (retd), secretary of the maritime affairs unit of the foreign ministry.

The counsels were Prof James Crawford SC and Prof Philippe Sands QC of Matrix Chambers in London, Paul S Reichler and Lawrence Martin of Foley Hoag LLP, Washington, DC, Prof Alan Boyle of Essex Court Chambers, London and Prof Payam Akhavan of McGill University, Montreal.