

FELANI KILLING Revision trial begins today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A revision trial centring the killing of Felani Khatun will begin today at the 181 Border Security Force (BSF) Battalion headquarters in Cooch Behar district of West Bengal, informed Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) sources yesterday.

Kurigram Public Prosecutor (PP) SM Abraham Lincoln, lawyer of the case from the Bangladesh side, informed our Kurigram correspondent that he had also come to know of the matter.

"We have all preparations to fight the case through legal procedure. As soon as we are asked, we will go to India," he said.

Earlier, Lt Col Mofazzal Hossain Akand, commanding officer of BGB 45 Battalion, had informed that they had already sent the names of the witnesses to the Indian authorities.

They are Felani's father Nurul Islam and maternal uncle Abdul Hanif.

Besides, the BGB commanding officer and the PP will remain present in the special BSF court.

On returning from Delhi and on her way home with her father, Felani, 15, was crossing the border illegally through Anantapur border in Phulbari upazila of Kurigram and was shot as her clothes got stuck in the barbed-wire fence on January 7, 2011.

The photo of her body hanging at the top of the fence triggered a huge outcry around the globe.

Later, a special court in the Indian state of West Bengal acquitted the lone accused, BSF constable Amiya Ghosh, of the murder charge. Felani's father Nurul Islam rejected the verdict.

This was the first time a BSF jawan had been put on trial for such a killing.



The century-old Baro Bari on BK Das Road in Old Dhaka, that used to stand out in rows of buildings for its French rococo-style design, nowadays with its flaking and crumbling walls waiting helplessly to be knocked down as the government seems reluctant to protect it while its owner wants to lease the land to a developer for profits. Inset, only some beams are now visible on the spot in Shankhari Bazar where Kalachand Temple used to stand before being demolished in July. The photos were taken recently.

PHOTO: STAR

Boy falls to death while flying kite on roof

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An eight-year-old boy died after falling from the roof of a under-construction building in the capital's Khilgaon yesterday.

The dead, Riya Uddin, a student of class-III, had been living with his parents on the third floor.

The boy fell down due to lack of roof railings while he was flying a kite on the roof in the afternoon, Assistant Sub-inspector Rezaul Alam of Khilgaon Police Station told The Daily Star.

He was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead.

IMPEACHMENT OF SC JUDGES Pro-BNP, Jamaat lawyers protest amendment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pro-BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami lawyers yesterday brought out black flag processions at Supreme Court Bar Association and Dhaka Bar Association protesting the 16th amendment to the constitution that empowered the parliament to impeach Supreme Court judges on grounds of misconduct or incapacity.

The lawyers demonstrated as per a decision taken by Bangladesh Bar Council, a statutory autonomous body dominated by pro-BNP lawyers, on Saturday.

The lawyers are also set to boycott courts across the country today demanding cancellation of the amendment to the constitution, as per a bar council resolution adopted at a meeting attended by representatives of lawyers at the auditorium of SCBA the same today.

AM Mahbub Uddin Khokon, a member of the bar council, told The Daily Star that he has been informed over phone that lawyers have brought out processions at all 81 bar associations across the country.

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HERITAGE SITES IN OLD DHAKA

Blame game bars preservation

MD MIZANUR RAHMAN HIMADRI

More than a century old buildings in Old Dhaka which speak of history are going to be a history themselves. And this dire condition is mainly caused by a blame game about who would protect these heritage sites, according to an expert and The Daily Star investigations.

Take the case of 120-year-old Baro Bari whose distinct French rococo-style design stands out in rows of old buildings, on BK Das road, which was declared a heritage thoroughfare along with eight other roads in Old Dhaka and a total of 94 buildings in 2009 following a writ

petition filed by an architect, Taimur Islam.

With colour peeling off and bricks crumbling, the building is now being used for binding books.

The blame game starts when the owner of the building, Shakil, was asked about its bleak look and precarious existence.

"Having inherited this building from my father, I leased it to some people for binding books. Though it is in a vulnerable condition, I am too poor to bear the cost of renovation," he said.

Urban Study Group (USG), an organisation struggling for years to preserve the heritage sites, filed

another writ petition with the Supreme Court in October 2012 to protect at least 2,500 buildings with heritage status after finding that the century-old district council building in Old Dhaka was demolished as it was not enlisted in the list that the government made in 2009.

Hearing the petition, the Supreme Court in 2013 passed an order asking the authorities concerned, including Rajuk, Urban Development Community (UDC), and the Department of Archeology (DoA), to update the list of buildings with heritage values and formulate policies for protecting the sites.

The order also directed those

bodies to renovate the heritage sites or construct similar buildings, only if needed, after demolishing the vulnerable structures and also to compensate the owners, mentioned Taimur, also CEO of the UGS.

But the authorities concerned neither updated the list nor took any other initiative. And the building owners are using the same excuse as Shakil's to lease their land to developer companies to construct high-rises for benefits, claimed the locals.

Dr Ataur Rahman, regional director of the DoA, said they sent a team to visit Baro Bari but they had to return on receiving threats from Shakil.

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Pro-BNP and Jamaat lawyers bring out a black flag procession on the Supreme Court Bar Association premises yesterday protesting the 16th amendment to the constitution that empowered the parliament to impeach Supreme Court judges on grounds of misconduct or incapacity.

PHOTO: STAR

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