

Arrest order

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Abdus Sattar, Iftekhar Mohsin and Kawsar Parvin lodged three cases against Latif with the CMM court separately, while lawyer Abdul Kaiyum filed another lawsuit against the former minister with the court of Metropolitan Magistrate Ahmed Saeed.

Taking the cases into cognisance that day, the CMM court summoned Latif to appear before the court yesterday, said sources.

Latif is under fire for the derogatory comments he made on hajj and Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in New York on September 28.

After publishing the comments in the media, it created widespread protests at home and abroad, leading the government to sack Latif from the posts and telecommunications and ICT ministry. He has also been removed from the Awami League presidium member.

End impunity

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metropolitan police and its joint commissioner (traffic) respondents to the rule.

They would have to submit a report before the court on November 27 on the steps taken to comply with the HC directives.

The Daily Star report points out that traffic police and even a minister appear helpless in preventing government high-ups from driving on the wrong side of Dhaka streets.

Traffic policemen on the ground continue to overlook vehicles taking the wrong side of roads saying the rules violators are influential people and they may face serious repercussions if they penalise them.

Referring to the report, the HC judges said, "It is common knowledge that some VIPs and VVIPs are using the wrong sides of various streets of Dhaka city without caring for the relevant traffic rules, thus compounding the problem of traffic congestion in this over-populated mega-city.

"All citizens, irrespective of their status and position in the society must abide by the relevant traffic rules, failing which, serious traffic tangles and accidents may take place taking a heavy toll on human lives."

NBR commissioner

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Rahman is yet to join office, which was another reason behind the suspension order issued yesterday, an NBR official said.

The Daily Star tried to contact Rahman, who is currently in London, through e-mail to get his comments on the matter but he did not reply at the time of filing.

Meanwhile, the Anti-Corruption Commission is currently investigating into allegations of illegal wealth accumulation by Rahman.

Contacted, ACC Deputy Director Mohammad Ibrahim told The Daily Star that the watchdog launched the inquiry last year, with Ibrahim at the helm.

But early this month, the commission relieved him from the case and a new inquiry officer is yet to be appointed, said a source in ACC.

If any prima-facie evidence in the allegation against Rahman is found through the inquiry, the commission may sue him, the source added.

Editors

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in a meeting at The Daily Star centre adopted a proposal, said a press release.

The council, added the release, has witnessed with grave concern that some organisations have declared Matiur Rahman Chowdhury, editor of Daily Manabzamin; and Nurul Kabir of the New Age unwanted at the Central Shaheed Minar.

The two editors express their opinions in their respective newspapers and television talk shows independently and with responsibility, it mentioned.

The council believes that any attempt to obstruct freedom of expression is an obstacle to democratic practice, said the release, signed by Golam Sarwar, president of Editors' Council.

It hoped that none would take any such step in future.

Recover

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corruption in the project," the PM said, adding, "We challenged the WB's allegation saying no corruption took place in the project and it has been proved."

On June 30, 2012, the WB cancelled its \$1.2 billion credit for the Padma bridge project, saying it has proof of corruption conspiracy involving Bangladeshi officials, executives of a Canadian firm and some individuals.

She strongly criticised the BNP for sabotaging railways during the anti-government demonstration in the run-up to the January 5 elections.

Hasina, also the president of ruling Awami League, said railway incurred heavy loss as its tracks were uprooted and coaches were torched during the demonstration aimed at foiling the election.

Ghulam Azam dies



While the nation was engaged in a war against the Pakistan occupation forces, Ghulam Azam, right, was in a meeting with East Pakistan governor Gen Tikka Khan, the infamous "Butcher of Baluchistan", at Dhaka Cantonment on April 4, 1971.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

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He was shifted to the Cardiac Intensive Care Unit on October 9 from the hospital's prison cell, where he had been kept since January 11, 2012. He was diagnosed with kidney problems, lungs infection and old-age complications.

At 11:55pm, BSMMU director (hospital) Brig Gen (retd) Abdul Majid Bhuiyan announced that Ghulam Azam had died of cardiac arrest.

Senior Jail Superintendent Farman Ali around 12:30am today told The Daily Star that the body would be sent to hospital for autopsy after a magistrate conducts an inquest.

It will be handed over to family members today, he added.

However, Tajul Islam, a counsel for Ghulam Azam, said they went to the deputy commissioner of Dhaka with an application for handover of the body without autopsy. He claimed the DC didn't receive the letter.

Tajul also said the former Jamaat chief had expressed a wish that his namaz-e-janaza be conducted by Motiur Rahman Nizami or Delawar Hossain Sayeede.

Different organisations and individuals protested this as Nizami is under trial in a war crimes case and Sayeede is convicted of crimes committed against humanity in 1971.

Azam had also wanted that he be laid to rest in his family graveyard at his Moghbazar residence, Tajul added.

On July 15 last year, the International Crimes Tribunal-1 handed down the sentence after founding him guilty of the offences of conspiracy, planning, incitement, complicity in crimes against humanity and genocide and murders during the war.

Both the government and the defence challenged the tribunal verdict, and the appeals hearing were scheduled to start on December 2. But, after Azam's death, the appeals would be "infructuous or ineffective" as per the law.

Born on November 7, 1922, Ghulam Azam studied in a madrasa first and then obtained a master's degree from Dhaka University in 1950. He was a teacher at Rangpur Carmichael College between 1950 and 1955.

He joined the Jamaat-e-Islami in 1954 and served as its secretary from 1957 to 1960. He became ameer of the East Pakistan Jamaat-e-Islami in 1969.

Ten days after the Liberation War started in 1971, he met Pakistani General Tikka Khan, known as the "Butcher of Baluchistan" to extend his support to the genocide.

He didn't stop there.

He and his party Jamaat-e-Islami, its student wing Islami Chhatra Sangha (later renamed Islami Chhatra Shibir) played the key role in forming the Peace Committees and other collaborator forces, such as Razakar, Al-Badr and Al-Shams.

He campaigned across Bangladesh and even in Pakistan (then West Pakistan) against the Liberation War.

After his meeting with Pakistan's president Yahya Khan on June 19, he addressed a press conference in Lahore. He told journalists, "The miscreants are still active in East Pakistan. People must be provided with arms to destroy them."

Ghulam Azam and his party men and anti-liberation elements used to call the freedom fighters "miscreants", "Indian agents", "malaun" (an offensive word used against Hindus), and "infiltrators".

While the nation was engaged in a life-and-death battle against the occupation forces and their local collaborators, he contested a by-election from Tangail and became a member of Pakistan National Assembly.

On November 23, Yahya declared a state of national emergency. Ghulam welcomed it and told the press in Lahore, "The best way to defend ourselves is striking at our enemies."

He said each patriotic citizen, each member of the Peace Committees, Razakar, Al-Badr, and Al-Shams must be armed with modern automatic weapons.

At a meeting in Rawalpindi on

November 29, he said, "There is no example in the history of a nation at war surviving without retaliation. Aggression is the best form of defence."

Anticipating Pakistan's defeat, the occupation forces and their collaborators picked up leading Bengali intellectuals and professionals in December and killed them en masse with a view to intellectually crippling the emerging independent nation.

The Pakistani forces and their Bangladeshi collaborators committed genocide and war crimes that left three million people dead and around a quarter million women violated; one crore people were forced to take refuge in India.

Forty-two years after liberation, a panel of judges sentenced Ghulam Azam to 90 years in prison for masterminding crimes against humanity, genocide and other wartime offences in 1971.

"We are convinced in holding that accused Prof Ghulam Azam was the pivot of crimes and all the atrocities revolved around him during the War of Liberation," the three judges said in the long-awaited verdict.

The judges said Azam deserved the gallows but he was given prison terms due to his old age.

POST-LIBERATION ROLE

Even after the war, Ghulam Azam tried to revive East Pakistan and spread propaganda against Bangladesh for several years.

As danger loomed for Pakistan in late 1971, he went to Pakistan on November 22, 1971. He formed the "Purbo Pakistan Punoruddhar Committee" (East Pakistan Retrieval Committee) in Pakistan soon after the war ended and campaigned until 1973 to build public opinion against Bangladesh and its recognition in the Islamic world.

In London, he published a weekly, Shonar Bangla, which was used as a propaganda tool against Bangladesh. The Bangladesh government revoked his citizenship on April 18, 1973.

Ghulam Azam later visited Saudi Arabia in March 1975. He met King Faisal and told him that Hindus had captured East Pakistan, the holy Quran had been burnt, mosques had been destroyed and converted into temples, and Muslims had been killed.

He collected funds from the Middle East for rebuilding mosques and madrasas. In order to collect funds and to continue his campaign against Bangladesh, he visited several countries of the region, including Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Kuwait, and Beirut. After completing his tour of these areas, he left for London in April 1973.

After the assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Ghulam Azam returned to Bangladesh on August 11, 1978 on a Pakistani passport.

Even though he came to Dhaka on a three-month visa during the rule of president Ziaur Rahman in 1978, he never left Bangladesh. He became the Jamaat's undeclared ameer.

In the early 1990's, Ghulam Azam was officially declared ameer of Jamaat, while Shaheed Janani Jahanara Imam launched a unique mass movement demanding the trial of war criminals.

Initiated by Jahanara Imam, an unprecedented People's Court held a symbolic trial of Ghulam Azam in 1992. Thousands of people gathered and the court pronounced a verdict to the effect that offences committed by him during the war deserved capital punishment.

In 1991, the BNP formed the government with support from the Jamaat and in 1992 Azam filed a case with the High Court to get Bangladeshi citizenship. The government of the day arrested him and put him in jail.

However, he acquired Bangladeshi citizenship through a court order in 1994, and the government released him from prison.

He left the party's top post in 2000 and was succeeded by Motiur Rahman Nizami.

Ghulam Azam stayed out of focus after 2000 but he was back in the spotlight when the war crimes trial process started against him at the end of 2011.

He landed in jail in January 2012 in the war crimes case.

Four Saudi women jailed for preparing sons to wage jihad

AFP, Riyadh

Four women in Saudi Arabia have been jailed for preparing their sons to wage war and for supporting al-Qaeda, official media said, in the kingdom's latest "terrorist" convictions.

They were sentenced to between six and 10 years in prison, the Saudi Press Agency reported late Wednesday following the verdicts.

It said a court convicted the women on charges including "preparing some of their sons to fight in conflict areas believing that it is required by Islam".

They were also found guilty of "supporting al-Qaeda", accessing blocked Internet sites, and downloading "audio-visual material related to fighting."

Shooter

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In an audio of the attack on parliament, repeated shots could be heard booming through its chambers.

The suspect, Michael Zehaf-Bibeau, 32, first shot and killed a Canadian soldier who was on ceremonial guard at a war memorial on Parliament Hill in downtown Ottawa, before storming into the nearby parliament building.

The slain soldier was named as Corporal Nathan Cirillo. At least three people were admitted to hospital with minor injuries, reports AFP.

The attacker was killed, reportedly by a shot fired by the bearer of the House of Commons' ceremonial mace, Sergeant-At-Arms Kevin Vickers, who was hailed as a hero by lawmakers.

Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson said it appeared the shooter had acted alone.

A petty criminal with a string of minor convictions dating back to 2001, Zehaf-Bibeau had recently converted to Islam and dreamed of travelling to the Middle East to study Arabic, Canadian media reported.

According to CTV News, the Canadian federal government had deemed Zehaf-Bibeau a "high-risk traveller". It also quoted a source as confirming that officials had seized the suspect's passport.

Court records showed Zehaf-Bibeau as having a total of 13 charges to his name in Quebec, 12 of which resulted in convictions, the Herald reported. They include at least one weapons charge and a number for drug possession and theft.

Various Canadian media outlets reported concerns over Zehaf-Bibeau's mental state, with court records apparently showing that he was made to undergo a psychiatric assessment prior to a 2011 robbery conviction. He was found fit to stand trial.

Speaking to the Globe and Mail, a fellow convert to Islam Dave Bathurst said he befriended Zehaf-Bibeau at his mosque about three years ago – but that he had recently been expressing concerns about "the devil". "I think he must have been mentally ill," Bathurst said.

The Globe and Mail also reported that Zehaf-Bibeau was the son of Quebec businessman Bulgasem Zehaf, who it said "appears to have fought in Libya in 2011".

It said that the Washington Times carried quotes that year from a rebel named "Belgasem Zehaf" who said he had joined the fight after travelling from Montreal.

Spain honours

FROM PAGE 1

Order of Civil Merit in recognition of his outstanding contribution to poverty alleviation and community empowerment.

The Spanish ambassador in Dhaka Luis Tejada handed over the award to Abed in a ceremony at a city hotel yesterday.

Receiving the award, Abed said he owes this recognition to all his colleagues at Brac.

"I'm extremely happy to receive this award. However, this recognition has been achieved by all of my hard-working colleagues," he said.

The Order of Civil Merit award is usually granted to Spanish nationals or foreigners who have carried out civil services of extraordinary value to Spain, said an official of the Spanish embassy in Dhaka.

BRAC since its inception in 1972 has worked consistently to alleviate poverty through microfinance and various other community development programmes on agriculture and food security, health, education, safe water, sanitation, human rights, migration, disaster management and environment conservation in Bangladesh, and other Asian, African and Caribbean countries.

AECID, the Spanish agency for cooperation and international development, finances various women empowerment programmes of Brac.

Among other prestigious global awards, Abed was honoured with the Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George (KCMG) by the British Crown in 2010.

Govt may extend hilsa catching ban

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government may extend the duration of the ban on catching and trading of mother hilsa during its peak breeding season.

Incidents of egg-carrying hilsa getting caught in various parts of the country even after the ban call for extending the duration of the ban, said Fisheries and Livestock Minister Muhammed Sayedul Hoque.

The minister made the observations at a seminar organised for reviewing the success of the 11-day ban on catching, selling and transporting hilsa across the country from October 5 to October 15 this year. Officials of different departments also attended the seminar.

"Hilsa will be under a great threat in the near future if mother hilsa and jatka [hilsa fry] are not preserved properly," noted the minister.

The production of hilsa could be increased up to five lakh metric tonnes annually if the preservation of mother hilsa is done properly. The production of hilsa was 3.85 lakh metric tonnes last year (till June 2014).

Government officials and law enforcers, who had worked at the field level in 14 districts, suggested the duration of the ban be extended up to 20 days from 11 days.

A presentation at the seminar revealed that law enforcers seized more hilsa and arrested more fishermen during this year's 11-day ban than last year. But the number of drives they conducted this year was less than what they did in last year.

Mobile courts, comprising government officials and law enforcers, seized 40.65 metric tonnes of hilsa, arrested and jailed 723 fishermen by conducting 4,357 drives. But last year, law enforcers seized 26.6 metric tonnes of hilsa and arrested 474 fishermen conducting

4,843 drives.

Also, a total of Tk 37 lakh was fined during this year's drive as penalty for fishing hilsa defying the ban.

The government officials requested the minister to amend the current law, which puts a violator in jail for at least one year. They said putting the fishermen, who are the sole breadwinners of their families, behind bars for a year would deal a further blow to their impoverished families.

Lawmaker Narayan Chandra Chanda and Shelina Afroza, secretary to Ministry of Fisheries & Livestock among others, spoke at the seminar. Ar Azad, director general of Department of Fishing, moderated the programme.

Meanwhile, preliminary findings of an ongoing research by Bangladesh Fisheries Research Institute (BFRI) reveals that around 1.6 lakh brood-hilsa, which is around 36 percent, spawned eggs before and after the full moon of Bangla Ashwin. The cause of less spawning of eggs could not be known immediately as the research is yet to complete, said an official of BFRI.

"Our research will be completed in a day or two. We will be able to provide more information once it is done," said Anisur Rahman, director of BFRI.

Meanwhile, an eight-month countrywide ban on catching, trading and marketing jatka (hilsa fry less than 10 inch in length) will start from November 1, said Masuda Ara, assistant director of Department of Fisheries, who is working on Jatka Conservation Project.

To discourage the netting of jatka during this period, the government, like previous years, will give 40kg of rice per month under the government's Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF) programme to each fisherman as compensation. The government will also provide them with livestock worth Tk 10,000 as alternative livelihood support, said Masuda.

Number of Ebola cases nears 10,000: WHO

Lebanon reports first suspected case of Ebola

AGENCIES

The number of people with Ebola is set to hit 10,000 in West Africa, the World Health Organisation said, as the scramble to find a cure gathered pace.

The UN's public health body said 9,936 people in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone -- the three countries at the epicentre of the world's worst-ever Ebola epidemic -- have contracted the disease. In total, 4,877 people have so far died.

With experts warning the rate of infections could reach 10,000 a week by early December, researchers around the world are scrambling to beat the tropical fever, for which there is currently no licensed treatment or vaccine.

The figures were released as the WHO in Geneva on Wednesday held its third round of emergency talks on Ebola, discussing efforts to combat the tropical fever. A press conference will be held Thursday following the end of the talks.

The talks are expected to last two days, reports AFP.

Lebanon's health minister says a Lebanese man who arrived from West Africa is suspected of having Ebola and has been quarantined, the first such case in the country.

The minister, Wael Abu Faour, said yesterday that the Lebanese national reported himself to hospital after fearing he was displaying symptoms of the disease.

Abu Faour says the man arrived from a West African country earlier in the week. He did not provide more details.

He says the man is being cared for in a Beirut hospital, which has prepared a special unit to deal with diseases such as Ebola, reports AP.

Meanwhile doses of the experimental rVSV vaccine against Ebola arrived at the Geneva University Hospital from Canada.

The WHO is to coordinate trials of

3 policemen

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Accessories Ltd, a local factory, filed the case with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka.

Metropolitan Magistrate Md Mostafizur Rahman yesterday took cognisance of the charges and directed Criminal Investigation Department (CID) to submit a probe report to the court by December 10.

The accused on October 20 went to Makbul's factory at Abdul Sarker Lane, according to the case statement.

As he was not at the factory, his employee Nazrul Islam was asked to go and bring him from his house.

When Makbul reached the factory, the three policemen demanded Tk 5 lakh from him as extortion.

As Makbul denied paying the money, the accused threatened to arrest

him saying that they had found yaba tablets in his factory.

The three also intimidate the owner of the factory saying he would be implicated in pending case filed with Bangshal Police Station, if the money is not paid, the plaintiff alleged in the case.

The matter was settled after the policemen were paid Tk 3.5 in two phases, the case statement said, adding that they also strictly told the plaintiff not to inform anyone about the incident.

Makbul in the case said a CCTV camera installed at his factory captured the entire incident and if necessary, he could place the footage before the court as evidence.

He alleged that he filed the case with the Dhaka court after Bangshal Police Station denied taking the case against its three police personnel.