

Latif's bail

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Muslims in Bangladesh but also of Muslims around the world.

Latif was not produced before the court as he was admitted to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) on Saturday due to his chest pain and high blood pressure.

The court fixed March 15 for hearing on charge framing against the AL leader. Latif returned on November 24 after one and a half months' stay in India.

The ex-minister faces 22 cases in 18 districts for hurting religious sentiments. Of those, eight were filed in Dhaka.

He was sacked from the cabinet on October 12 following his comments against hajj and Tablighi Jamaat at a programme in New York on September 28.

Cops attack

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Shahbagh Police Station Sub-inspector Mahfuzur Rahman said before dispersing the demonstrators around 2:00pm, they had first urged to free the road, reasoning that the delegation had made the submission.

One delegation member, Jony Hasan Raju, told The Daily Star that police "attacked them" and snatched their loudspeakers before the delegation's return.

The students had earlier observed a hunger strike, submitted a memorandum to the DU Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique and demonstrated several times on the campus and elsewhere.

SCBA to tackle

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police on October 30 and Boni Amin Mollah, a lawyer's clerk, was declared persona non grata for forgery.

On December 1, the HC sent Md Yusuf Bhuiyan, a lawyer's clerk, to jail for preparing fake bail documents in a gold smuggling case.

PBCP leader

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Bat Tala and asked them to surrender.

The criminals opened fire on the police instead. The law enforcers returned fire, triggering a "gunfight" between the criminals and police.

Enamul was shot dead, the police official added.

However, others managed to flee.

Police recovered a shutter gun, four bullets and a sharp weapon from the spot.

In two arms cases, Enamul was awarded 10 and 14 years' imprisonment in absentia.

He was also a cadre of former BNP lawmaker of Kushtia-2 (Mirpur-Bheramara) Shahidul Islam, according to police.

Kuwait

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counsellor (labour wing) at the Bangladesh embassy, last evening said Kuwait would hire Bangladeshis for all its sectors, including construction and manufacture.

Replying to a query about the signing of a memorandum of understanding on the recruitment between the two countries, Latif said he was unaware of the matter.

Leaders of Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (Baira) though are not hopeful about the reopening of the Kuwaiti job market for the Bangladeshis soon.

Around 190,000 Bangladeshis are now in Kuwait, reports English daily Kuwait Times, quoting officials at the Bangladesh embassy.

Trial run

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Dhaka already operating from Kolkata in West Bengal and Agartala in Tripura.

Negotiations between the two countries for starting the bus services have been underway for the past several months and have gathered momentum, said the statement.

The proposed bus service covering approximately 500 kilometres starting from Guwahati will be taking the Shillong-Dawki (Meghalaya)/Tamabil (Bangladesh)-Sylhet-Dhaka route.

The Indian delegation for the trial run will be led by W. Blah, superintending engineer of Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. The delegation will also have representatives from the ministries of finance, home and external affairs apart from the state governments of Assam and Meghalaya.

The flag off the trial run is scheduled at 9:00am on December 10 from Guwahati.

The Bangladesh delegation consisting of 7 senior officials for the trial run will reach Guwahati on December 9 and proceed to Dhaka on December 10 by the bus along with the Indian delegation.

BNP warns of non-stop

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tion the day the prices are increased," BNP acting secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said yesterday.

He was briefing reporters after a secretary general-level meeting of the 20-party alliance at the BNP's Naya Paltan central office in the capital.

Fakhrul, however, did not explain the nature of the movement, saying it will be announced later.

The prices of gas and electricity are set to go up as retailers and wholesalers have submitted proposals to Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission to have the prices adjusted on January 1 next year.

Yesterday's meeting opined that the government was increasing gas and power tariffs in phases to plunder public money and indulge in corruption further, said the BNP leader.

On a different note, he said a huge amount of rice was being imported from India as the government had withdrawn the duty on rice-import, depriving the local farmers of fair prices.

Fakhrul also said the government had taken a "contradictory" policy on exporting rice to Sri Lanka "only to say it attained food sufficiency even though rice was still being imported from India."

The 20-party alliance has also condemned a recent remark by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina that the US had made all-out efforts but failed to thwart the January 5 parliamentary election in Bangladesh.

"Such remarks can harm diplomatic relationships between the two countries," he said.

The 20-party alliance meeting also discussed its scheduled rally at Kanchpur on December 13 which would be addressed by BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia.

At another programme in the capital yesterday, Fakhrul said those involved in the "ongoing abductions and killings of opposition men" would be tried if BNP came to power.

I'M NOT THAT WEAK YET: KHALEDA

Calling upon the youths to wage anti-government movement, BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia last night said she would be on the street with them this time.

"You take to the streets. I will be with you. I am not that weak yet that I will stay off," Khaleda said at a view-exchange meeting with members of "Blue Band Group", a pro-BNP platform for online activists, at her Gulshan office.

The country is now going through a big crisis, and the youths have to play a key role in getting the country out of this situation, said the former prime minister.

Referring to the government action to foil the opposition's "March for Democracy" on December 29 last year, the BNP chief said she had been confined to her residence for three days to prevent her from taking part in the agitation.

"Our leaders and activists were not allowed to come out of their homes," she added.

Four quizzed

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general managers Golam Sarwar and Hafizuddin, and incumbent chief regional manager Zubayer Manju of Cox's Bazar at his Segunbagicha office.

Former managing director Mukhter Hossain, who was also scheduled to appear in the office of the anti-graft body for interrogation, did not show up while businessman Wahidur has been on the run since the ACC launched an inquiry into the matter in September.

ACC found that while taking the loan, Wahidur mortgaged a piece of land to the bank's Banani branch, but the land had already been mortgaged to another bank for another loan.

Wahidur is also a loan defaulter of another state-owned lender, BASIC Bank. Like many others, he allegedly took out loans from the bank on forged documents between 2010 and 2013.

Pope says Christians 'being driven out from Mideast'

AFP, Arbil

Pope Francis said Christians are being "driven from the Middle East," in a message to Iraqi Christians forced to flee by Islamic State group jihadists.

"It would seem that they (the extremists) do not want there to be any Christians, but you bear witness to Christ," he said in a video address timed to coincide with a visit Saturday by French Cardinal Philippe Barbarin to the Iraqi Kurdish city of Arbil.

"I think of the wounds, of the pain of women with their children, the elderly and the displaced, the wounds of those who are victims of every type of violence," Francis said according to a transcript.

Thousands of Christians took refuge in Arbil after IS jihadists in June overran Mosul, Iraq's second city, and forced hundreds of thousands of them, as well as members of the Yazidi community, to flee their homes.

"Due to an extremist and fundamentalist group, entire communities, especially, but not only, Christians and Yazidi, have suffered and continue to suffer, inhuman violence because of their religious and ethnicity," the pope said.

"Christians and Yazidi have been forced out of their homes; they have had to abandon everything to save their lives, but they have not denied their faith."

"Even holy buildings, monuments, religious symbols and cultural heritage have been affected by the violence, almost as if to cancel every trace, every memory of the other."

Prosecution returns 'faulty'

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Police Station.

The agency, designated to probe war crimes, finalised its report with five war crimes charges including killings and torture against the duo and submitted its report and other documents to the chief prosecutor's office on November 26. The prosecution scrutinised the documents to press formal charges against them.

Following a warrant of arrest issued by the International Crimes Tribunal-1, Shamsuddin was arrested on November 27, while Nasir is at large, according to the prosecution.

Sheikh Mosfeq Kabir, conducting prosecutor of the case, told The Daily Star yesterday that he had sought opinion from the chief prosecutor after finding "some lackings and errors" in the report and the chief prosecutor sent back the documents for further investigation.

Mosfeq said the step had been taken as per section-19 of the rules of procedure of the international crimes tribunals. The section says: "If any investigation report does not disclose a prima facie case against an accused, the chief prosecutor may initiate further investigation or stop the said investigation."

The investigation report says Nasir is 62 now but mentions February 9, 1954 as his date of birth, meaning his age is 60 years and nine months, according to a letter sent to the chief prosecutor.

As per the report, Shamsuddin was 17 in 1971, but the agency did not produce any evidence to support that. Besides, as per his National Identity card, his date of birth is December 1, 1958, the letter written by the conducting prosecutor read.

The agency, while briefing the media about the case on November 25, said the accused had gone into hiding after independence and later pursued their studies changing name and age.

The probe report mentions Nasir as an army officer and Shamsuddin as a lawyer without giving any details about their professional life, the insiders added.

The incidents relating to the charges took place between August 23 and November 11 of 1971, but the agency made no mention of the suspects' whereabouts between March 26 and August 22, 1971, they said.

The insiders said the conducting prosecutor wrote to the chief prosecutor saying that if they went ahead

Egypt sentences four Islamists to death

AFP, Cairo

An Egyptian court on Sunday sentenced to death four members of the blacklisted Muslim Brotherhood over the killing of protesters who stormed the group's Cairo headquarters in June last year.

A crowd of angry protesters stormed and torched the headquarters on June 30, 2013, as millions took to the streets in Cairo and other cities demanding Islamist president Mohamed Morsi's resignation.

Morsi, who belongs to the Muslim Brotherhood, was ousted just days later by then army chief and now President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi after one year in office.

A Cairo court sentenced the four men to death after finding them guilty of "killing, inciting to kill, possessing guns and live ammunition and joining armed groups to terrorise people," a judicial official said.

Prosecutors said 12 protesters were killed when they clashed with Morsi supporters during the storming of the offices. More than 90 protesters were wounded.

Sunday's sentences are preliminary and will be forwarded to the country's mufti, or top Muslim cleric, to be ratified.

Change in law

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The law, however, lacked specific provisions for punishing the guilty organisations, which was considered a major obstacle to try Jamaat.

The minister in May had said it was not possible to try any war criminal organisation, as there was no specific rule over punishing such organisations. In June, the government drafted an amendment to the act with a provision of banning those.

On a different note, Anisul yesterday said the government was working to formulate a law, determining the procedures for removal of any Supreme Court judge for incapacity or misconduct.

In September, the parliament amended the constitution empowering the House to remove the SC judges.

Key suspect

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regarding the assassination plot to kill Hasina or BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia as reported in a few Indian media earlier last month.

Bangladeshi investigators also did not endorse the claim.

Joint Commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police Monirul Islam, who led a seven-member delegation to Kolkata last month, said that the NIA did not provide them any evidence in this regard.

Khalil: 1934-2014

FROM PAGE 1

the intimidating landlord (in *Sangsaptak*) into someone who brought into play a lot more than just the quintessential baddie.

The actor who always left his audience in awe of his classy, baritone voice died yesterday morning at a city hospital, ending a career in acting that spanned more than five decades, and creating a void that could never be filled in.

The story of his life in itself would make a formidable plot for a 1950s film. A young Ansar officer in the early 1950s, who was once elected the best cadet, was suspended from service following an altercation with a union board chairman. Despite financial hardship, he did not let go of his passion for acting, and was gradually picked up by a film producer. To his utter astonishment, he was offered the hero's role. Infuriated, his religious father ousted him from his house. The film, however, was a success and his acting career took off thereafter.

Khalil Ullah Khan, known best as Khalil, the menacing villain of Bangla films, began his acting career for the big screen in 1953 through *Sonar Kajol*. The film was produced by Masud Chowdhury - who discovered him - and directed jointly by Kalim Sharafi and Zahir Raihan.

During the early days of his career in the early 1950s, he was deeply into theatre. After being originally cast for Masud Chowdhury's *Preet Jane Na Reet* (opposite Shabnam, with whom he would go on to form a successful screen pair), he was replaced by the romantic hero Rahman who seriously injured one of his legs in an accident

during the shoot. So Khalil was re-cast in the film.

He never had to look back since then. He starred in Pakistan's first colour film - Zahir Raihan's *Sangam* - and became a successful lead actor, working in 11 films, before being detached from the film world for a while as Urdu films saw a decline in the erstwhile East Pakistan in the late 1960s. But after Bangladesh's liberation, he revived his career through films such as *Utshorgo and Ekthane Akash Neel*. He also ventured into the small screen, most notably in *Sangsaptak* and *Bhagoner Shobdo Shuni*, and appeared in numerous adverts as well.

Spending his childhood in Sylhet, Khalil's love for acting had blossomed early. He was given his job as an Ansar officer back in 1977 - a year after he'd won the National Film Award for Best Actor in a Supporting Role for *Gunda* - and served the force with integrity. But he continued to work in films: be it as the heroine's rich father or the kingpin of a notorious gang.

Khalil never meant to be a professional actor, and began acting only to make ends meet when he was unemployed. But with his sincerity and discipline, he took Bangla cinema to a different height. The actor had been suffering from various old-age complications for long. He had fallen critically ill a year before he received the Lifetime Achievement Honours at the National Film Awards 2012.

His unique voice, square jaw and cold gaze will remain etched on the minds of film lovers and serve as a perennial source of inspiration for the generations of actors to come.

Republican win in runoff US Senate vote boosts majority

AFP, Washington

US Senator Mary Landrieu, one of the last standing elected Deep South Democrats, lost her bid Saturday for re-election in Louisiana, further clinching Republicans' dominance in the Senate following mid-term elections last month.

Her loss to Republican rival Bill Cassidy in the runoff vote consolidates a conservative majority in the southern state, in a region where political winds have shifted strongly in the Republicans' favor in recent years.

The vote -- the last in the Senate contest and the only runoff -- comes after Democrats suffered a sweeping blow in November 4 legislative elections, which saw energized Republicans reclaim the Senate majority and expand their control in the House of Representatives.

Republicans will hold 54 out of 100 seats in the Senate next year, nine more than they hold today.

Landrieu, who was elected in 1997, said she had no regrets and applauded the work of her party in dealing with various catastrophes, including several hurricanes that battered Louisiana during her tenure.

"Tonight, we have so much to be proud of, a record of courage, honesty and integrity and delivering for the state when it mattered the most in some of our darkest hours after Katrina, Rita, Gustav, Ike, and the BP oil spill," she said in New Orleans after her defeat.

"The joy has been in the fight, it's been a blessing, it's been a fight worth waging. Louisiana will always be worth fighting for."


According to final official tallies, Cassidy took about 56 percent of the ballot.

The Republican National Committee applauded Cassidy's win, and congratulated voters for making the right decision.

"Once again, voters have spoken clearly. They have rejected the Democrat agenda and the Obama-Clinton policies that have produced higher health care costs and job-killing regulations," RNC Chairman Reince Priebus said in a statement, referring to President Barack Obama and former US Democratic president Bill Clinton.

- Pipeline politics -

In a state inextricably tied to the oil and gas industry, Landrieu had played up her importance for constituents as chair of the Senate Energy Committee.



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Syria army repels jihadist advance on key air base

AFP, Beirut

Syrian troops have repelled an attack by jihadists from the Islamic State group on a key military airport in the eastern Deir Ezzor province, a monitoring group said yesterday.

"Troops and pro-regime militia stopped the attack that Islamic State launched on the Deir Ezzor

military airport," the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said, adding that both sides suffered heavy losses in the fighting.

The jihadists had withdrawn to the edges of the base, a day after managing to seize a southeastern part of the complex, it said.

The Observatory said more than 100 jihadists had been killed in fighting for the base since

Wednesday, when they launched an operation to try to take the airport.

Pro-regime forces also suffered heavy casualties, with some 59 troops killed, it said.

State news agency SANA said Syrian army units had "repelled an attempt" by IS fighters to attack positions at the base, but provided no further details.