

TRAWLER ACCIDENT One killed, 15 missing

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

At least one person was killed and 15 others remained missing after a sand-laden boat collided with a trawler in the Meghna river amid storms last night. The identity of the deceased could not be known immediately. His body remained trapped inside the vessel, said police.

Although the collision took place somewhere in Chandpur or Comilla, both the vessels were spotted near Bhashanchar in the Meghna river at Gazaria, said Habibur Rahman, sub-inspector of Gazaria Police Station. Pias, 25, of Narayanganj, who survived the accident, said the trawler left for Chandpur from Bauchia Launch Jetty near the Daudkandi Bridge in Comilla around 7:30pm yesterday.

When the trawler reached the confluence of the Meghna river amid heavy storm, the sand-laden boat hit it. The vessel, however, did not completely sink and kept floating near the shore, he said.

A number of passengers managed to swim ashore, but some 15 people, including Pias' three-year-old niece, remained missing, Pias said.

A rescue team of the fire service reached the spot around 12:00am, a fire service official said, adding that rescue efforts were on for the missing passengers.

Court asks Rab

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complete the probe. As a result, the trial of the case was being delayed. The court also cancelled accused Palash Rudra Pal's bail and issued an arrest warrant for him as he remained absent from the hearing yesterday.

Palash, a security guard at the building where the couple was killed, had secured bail from the High Court.

On September 18 last year, another Dhaka court expressed its dissatisfaction with the pace of the murder investigation.

It also ordered Rab to record statements of the couple's only son Mahir Sarowar Megh, Runi's mother and brother and also to scrutinise cell phone records of two security guards at the victims' home.

Following the court order, Rab took Palash and Enamul Haque, who was also a security guard at the building, on remand for interrogation, said sources.

Sagar Sarowar, news editor at Maasranga TV, and his wife Meherun Runi, senior reporter of ATN Bangla, were killed at their rented flat in the capital's West Rajabazar on February 11, 2012.

Police have arrested nine people for their alleged involvement with the killing.

Another Magura

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A trucker for four years, Imran came out of financial hardship barely a year ago and built a small house of his own, said his relative Fazlur Rahman. Earlier, he lived with his father and brothers in an extended family.

"With his death, his family will be in deep trouble," added Fazlur.

He was the father of two -- a daughter with the first wife whom he divorced around five years ago, and a son with the second. "Although his daughter lives with her maternal grandparents, Imran took great care of her," said the relative.

Imran's brother-in-law Yadul, 25, who received burn injuries in the same incident, died at the burn unit of the DMCH on March 25.

Earlier, Matin Biswas, Rawshan Ali, and Shakil Ahmed, who also suffered burns in the incident, died in the hospital.

A total of nine people received serious burns in the incident.

The rest four victims are taking treatment at the DMCH burn unit as their condition is still critical, said Partha Shankar Pal, resident surgeon at the burn unit.

With Imran, at least 95 people have so far been killed, mostly in arson attacks, since the BNP-led alliance called a countryside indefinite blockade on January 5.

RAPE OF NUN IN WEST BENGAL Indian cops arrest four Bangladeshis

AFP, Kolkata

Indian police yesterday said they have arrested four Bangladeshi nationals in connection with the rape of an elderly nun that sent shockwaves through the Christian community.

The nun, who is in her 70s, needed surgery after she was attacked last month when a gang of robbers broke into the convent school in the eastern state of West Bengal where she lived.

Deputy inspector general Dilip Kumar Adak said police tracked the suspects down to the northern state of Punjab after CCTV images and e-

fit images were circulated nationwide.

"Four more Bangladeshi nationals resembling the photographs and sketches of the suspects in the rape and robbery at the Convent of Jesus and Mary High School in Ranaghat have been arrested," he said.

Two other suspects in the case are already in custody after they were arrested last week.

Adak said police had identified all eight people who broke into the convent using CCTV footage.

One had been hired by the nuns to do construction work, he said.

Returning officers

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Mihir Sarwar Morshed, returning officer (RO) of Dhaka South City Corporation polls, and Shah Alam, RO of Dhaka North City Corporation polls, said they would look into the matter if there is any complaint.

The RO, responsible for conducting Chittagong City Corporation polls, said he received an allegation on violating the electoral code of conduct, and would investigate it.

In blatant violation of the electoral code of conduct, some ministers and state ministers on Tuesday held separate meetings with leaders of the Awami League-led 14-party alliance in Dhaka and Chittagong cities to discuss the polls, scheduled for April 28.

On Monday, four cabinet members and a prime minister's adviser with the status of a minister had another such meeting with the AL's Dhaka city unit leaders.

Sayed Khokon, AL-blessed mayor aspirant in Dhaka South City Corporation, was also present at the meeting at the party chief's Dhanmondi office.

According to Article 14 (A) of the code of conduct for city corporation elections, "... ministers, state ministers, deputy ministers or anybody of their status cannot participate in election campaigns or electoral activities..."

"If any minister holds a meeting for a candidate, it is a violation of the electoral code of conduct," Election Commissioner Abdul Mobarak told The DailyStar on Monday.

Asked, Chief Election Commissioner

Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad yesterday said, "... We have directed the returning officers to take necessary action whenever they receive complaints of violation of the electoral code of conduct."

Shah Alam, RO for DNCC polls, said they were not aware of any reported violation of the electoral code of conduct by some ministers but came to know about it through media reports. "We are looking into the matter," he told reporters.

Mihir Sarwar Morshed, RO for DSCC polls, said, "We received objections regarding violation of code of conduct against 15 mayoral aspirants. We will issue show cause notices after scrutinising (the complaints)."

Replying to a query, Mihir said they did not receive any allegation against any minister to this end. Action will be taken after receiving specific allegation, he told reporters.

Chattagram Unnayan Andolan, a platform that is backing mayor candidate BNP leader Manjur Alam Manju in the CCC polls, filed a complaint with the returning officer against Housing and Public Works Minister Mosharraf Hossain yesterday.

In the complaint, they mentioned that the minister in a meeting at a city hotel on Tuesday urged the leaders and workers of the AL for making efforts to get its mayoral candidate elected.

Abdul Baten, RO of the CCC, confirmed about receiving the complaint, and said they would first investigate what actually happened in the meeting and then take decision on its next course of action, reports our Chittagong office.

Local govt polls

FROM PAGE 16

The PM said there should be accountability of an elected mayor or councillor. If there is party's control over them, they could be monitored by the party as to whether the elected person is implementing his or her commitments or working for the welfare of the people, added the premier.

The Awami League chief said although the elected person is known by party name, no measures can be taken if he or she commits a crime.

To ensure transparency and accountability, the local government polls should be held like the general election, said Hasina.

Replying to another query, the PM said ministers must not take part in election campaign under any circumstances.

"They must abide by the Election Commission's law," she said. There have been allegations that ministers were working for Awami League-backed mayoral candidates in Dhaka and Chittagong.

CITY POLLS WILL BE FAIR

Replying to a query, the PM said the Election Commission would hold the Dhaka and Chittagong city polls in a free, fair and neutral manner and the government would provide all assistance to this end.

She said the government would not interfere in the elections under any circumstance.

Referring to the BNP's decision to take part in the elections, Hasina said good sense had prevailed upon the BNP as the party decided to back candidates in Dhaka and Chittagong city corporation elections due on April 28.

About level playing field, the PM said all opportunities are there for a free and fair election. The BNP, she said, has been using "level playing field" issue in order

to backtrack from the election race. "It is not understood what they are seeking in the name of level playing field."

"I can say that the government won't interfere in the elections," she mentioned.

Hasina, also the president of the Awami League, said if the Election Commission seeks assistance from the government for holding a free and fair election, the government would provide that.

KHALEDA'S PROGRAMMES WILL DESTROYBNP

Replying to another query, the leader of the House said the government would forfeit the property of the BNP chief and distribute those among the affected people of the ongoing countryside blockades and shutdowns, if the court gave a directive to this end.

She said if Khaleda did not surrender before the court, police would take necessary steps once the arrest warrant reached the police station.

Hasina said Khaleda's hartal and blockade programmes that entered 85th day yesterday would push BNP into extinction, and that would be the rationale consequences of her so-called movement.

The AL chief said the countrymen knew that there was no political movement except for subversive activities in the name of Khaleda's movement.

Khaleda Zia is unleashing terrorist and militant acts across the country the way terrorist and militant outfits conduct such acts across the world, she alleged.

Urging the countrymen to resist the subversive acts of the BNP-Jamaat nexus, the PM said there is no participation of the people in the BNP-Jamaat-led movement. She also asked the people to carry on with their usual works. "We're always with the people."

Militants pose

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located in a remote char area. He was charged under the anti-terrorism act and sent to jail. But he managed to secure bail from a Narsingdi court three weeks later. The other arrestees were also released with him, Raipura police said.

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) in a charge-sheet submitted in July 2013 found Ariful, his fellow arrestees and six teachers of the madrasa guilty of militant training.

The madrasa teachers were mainly involved in bringing students from various parts of the country and providing them with militancy training, a CID official told this correspondent.

Ariful later enrolled at Hathazari Madrasa in Chittagong. Last year, he enrolled at Jamil Ullum Madrasa in Dhaka's Mirpur area for higher studies.

Since his release, he had roamed freely in Dhaka and Chittagong. He was completely forgotten by law enforcement agencies until he was caught from Tejgaon following Oyasisur's killing.

Joint Commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police Monirul Islam said police had not kept track of Ariful after he was released.

"We have to collect his records from Raipura police station where he was arrested in 2012," he said while briefing journalists at DMP media centre.

Monirul said Ariful was encouraged by the ideology of Jasimuddin Rahmania, the then spiritual leader of Ansarullah Bangla Team (ABT).

He attended the special lectures delivered by Rahmania after Jumma prayers at his madrasa [in the capital's Basila]. Rahmania was arrested in August 2013 on charge of killing blogger Rajib Haider. Ariful then joined ABT, said Monirul.

Anwar Hossain Faruk is another example of how a JMB leader was arrested and then released on bail to carry out a more reckless mission of attacking a police van and snatching three top JMB leaders in Trishal of Mymensingh.

Faruk, a key player behind the Trishal ambush in February last year, had been arrested from the city's Mirpur-1 area on July 10, 2007 after a brief gun fight with Rab. He secured bail in 2012 and moved freely for nearly two years to prepare for the Trishal attack, investigators said.

Aged 33, he is also the prime accused in the 2007 murder case of madrasa teacher Rafiqul Islam of Mymensingh.

There are many other examples in which militants got out of jail even after having been arrested with explosives or firearms or charged with murder, police sources wishing anonymity said.

Oyasisur Rahman Babu, 27, was brutally hacked to death by three youths in the capital's Tejgaon Industrial area around 9:00am Monday morning.

Zikrullah, another attacker who was caught by the public and handed over to police, too is a madrasa student. He is a student of Hathazari madrasa in Chittagong.

US sanctions to target foreign cyber criminals

REUTERS, Washington

President Barack Obama yesterday launched a new sanctions program to target individuals and groups outside the United States that use "malicious" cyber attacks to threaten US foreign policy, national security or economic stability.

In an executive order, Obama declared such activities a "national emergency" and allowed the US Treasury Department to freeze the assets and bar other financial transactions of entities engaged in destructive cyber attacks.

The executive order gives the administration the same sanctions tools it now deploys to address other threats - including crises in the Middle East and Russia's aggression in Ukraine - and makes them available for less visible cyber threats.

It is the Obama administration's latest effort to get tough with hackers, following indictments of five Chinese military officers and the decision to "name and shame" North Korea for a high-profile attack on Sony.

Companies that knowingly use stolen trade secrets to undermine the US economy would also be targeted.

It's painful

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The other alleged killer held with Arif was Zikrullah, 19, who confessed before police that they merely carried out the attack planned by one Masud. Taher, another accomplice of theirs, had managed to escape.

According to police, Masud had provided them with Oyasisur's photograph and three cleavers, accusing the blogger of demeaning Islam and its prophet.

Like Zikrullah, Arif was also a student of Hathazari Madrasa in Chittagong from where he obtained the "Maolana" title, which is equivalent to a master's degree, about three years ago.

Arif had attended four madrasas in Dhaka's Mirpur before travelling to Hathazari for obtaining the degree. He was a research student of Islami Shariah Law at a madrasa in Mirpur-1 prior to the murder.

Admitting that Arif was his student, Abdus Sabur of the Mirpur madrasa said the accused had been on sick leave for the last three months.

"He [Arif] was born with asthma," said Arif's mother Ayesha, adding: "He could not attend his classes in the last three months as blood came out whenever he coughed."

Ayesha's second daughter Mariam said Arif was expected to return to his

classes soon as his condition was improving.

Arif had gone to the house of his eldest sister in Narayanganj the day before the killing, she added.

It was not until police raided Arif's house around 10:00pm Monday night that the family learned about his involvement.

"Arif does not use a cell phone and we do not have a television set to know anything about the murder," said Ayesha.

During visits to the three madrasas Arif studied in the capital, it was learned that the use of cell phone and computer was banned for students at those institutions.

A teacher at Darul Habib Madrasa, from where Arif completed his primary-level education, claimed technology was dimmed deterrent to the study of religion.

The madrasa is situated next to Arif's house. His father Mufti Tajul Islam teaches at a girls' madrasa in Mirpur 13. Tajul also runs a Maktob, equivalent to elementary school, on the ground floor of a two-storey house with the help of his wife and daughters.

Arif's family is revered in the neighbourhood, better known as a slum area where sewerage overflows narrow lanes and many people are reportedly involved in drugs trade.

China's 'great

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It has been reclaiming land in contested waters -- something it said last year was "totally justified" as it had "sovereignty" over the area.

In recent months, images have emerged of Chinese construction on reefs in the Spratly Islands to create artificial islands with facilities that could potentially be for military use, including an airstrip.

Several nations, including Vietnam, the Philippines and Taiwan, also claim ownership of territory in the Spratly Islands.

Adm Harris described China's land reclamation as "unprecedented".

"China is building artificial land by pumping sand on to live coral reefs -- some of them submerged -- and paving over them with concrete. China has now created over 4sq/km (1.5 sq miles) of artificial landmass," he said.

"China is creating a great wall of

sand with dredges and bulldozers over the course of months."

He said that considering China's "pattern of provocative actions towards smaller claimant states" in the South China Sea, the scope of the building raised "serious questions about Chinese intentions".

The row over territory in the South China Sea has escalated in recent years, raising regional tensions.

Last year, responding to a BBC report on the land reclamation, China's foreign ministry spokesman Hua Chunying said China's operations in the Spratly Islands fell "entirely within China's sovereignty and are totally justifiable".

Asked whether the reclamation was for commercial or military use, Hua replied that it was "mainly for the purpose of improving the working and living conditions of people stationed on these islands".

Kamal resigns

FROM PAGE 1

Kamal, who took centre-stage of world cricket during a 40-odd minute press briefing, explained the reasons behind his decision.

"I have decided to resign. I can't work with people who don't follow the constitution. As per 3.3B of the constitution, the president is supposed to give away the trophy. There are no clauses to that. But I still couldn't do that.

"I resigned to let the whole world know the truth. I resigned to let the whole world know what's going on in the ICC. There are some people in the ICC who have an ugly mindset and that's not good for the game," remarked Kamal.

"This is the first time in the history of cricket that the game has been insulted so badly. But, in the end, I don't think cricket ended up losing, because the person [responsible for the move] got booed by 90,000 people at Melbourne when his name was announced after the final.

"To me those 90,000 people in the stadium represented the views of the 16 crore people of Bangladesh. He was only saved when Sachin Tendulkar's name was announced after him. Things could have been different had Tendulkar's name not been announced," he added.

Kamal explained that his role was usurped during an 'informal' meeting, which included four to five directors of the ICC board, that was organised a day before the final. Following the Bangladesh-India quarterfinal, Kamal criticised the umpires, describing them as poor and also stated that they might have had 'an agenda'. He also objected the biased phrases, supporting India, that

were being shown on the big screens of the stadium during the game.

Kamal explained that he was asked to apologise for his remarks.

"I told them that I wouldn't do that. They then asked me to retract my statement. I decided against doing that either. I tried to reason with them and told them that they can ask me to submit a statement explaining my comments, but I won't apologise or retract my statements.

"However, they did not agree to that and told me that I will not be able to give away the trophy to the winning team," said Kamal.

"I told them that that was unconstitutional, and that if they wanted to change the norm then they would have to go through the official process, which would take a while. However, they told me that they would take care of it," he added.

When asked if his fallout with the ICC would have a backlash on Bangladesh's bilateral series, Kamal said, "Why should it? I don't expect any such thing to happen." The Tigers are scheduled to play Pakistan, India, South Africa and Australia this year.

International Cricket Council (ICC) yesterday confirmed Kamal's resignation and an official handout read: "The ICC Board will now consider the vacant position of the ICC President at its forthcoming meeting in Dubai on 15 and 16 April."

Kamal was a member of the ICC executive board for the past six years. Apart from being a member of the board, he served the organisation as a vice-president for two years and president for nine months, three months short of his one-year stint.

SC hearing on review plea now on April 5

FROM PAGE 16

Pointing to advocate-on-record Jaynal Abedin, who moved the petition on behalf of Kamaruzzaman, Justice Manik said, "You are misleading the apex court with blatant falsehood. It is absolutely horrendous."

Jaynal Abedin told the court that Khandker Mahbub was admitted to a hospital for treatment.

Then Justice Manik said, "I have seen him [Mahbub Hossain] in the private television channel Ekattur. He addressed the press. Then, how can you say that he is in a hospital."

"You [Khandker Mahbub and Jaynal] are doing farce with the apex court. Nowhere in the world has an adjournment prayer been granted on the ground of personal difficulties of an advocate."

Justice Manik also said the defence had no desire to complete this case.

Attorney General Mahbubey Alam vehemently opposed the adjournment petition, saying it was filed intentionally to delay the proceeding of the case.

Khandker Mahbub Hossain has presided over a meeting of the executive committee of Supreme Court Bar Association and addressed a press briefing on Tuesday, he said.

After hearing from both the prosecution and defence, the SC came up with the adjournment order yesterday.

On March 8, the Jamaat leader lodged a petition with the SC, seeking a four-week adjournment of hearing on the review petition.

The SC fixed yesterday for holding the hearing on the petition.

and acquit him of the charges.

On February 19, the prison authorities read out the death warrant to him after the International Crimes Tribunal-2 had issued it the same day.

On November 3 last year, the SC upheld his death penalty awarded by the tribunal on May 9 in 2013 for his wartime offences.

Kamaruzzaman submitted his appeal to the court, challenging the tribunal's judgment on June 6, 2013.

During the court's proceedings yesterday, the SC could not hear two other appeals filed by war crimes convicts -- Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed and Salauddin Quader Chowdhury -- challenging their death penalties awarded by the International Crimes Tribunal.

Both the appeals were included in yesterday's hearing list of the apex court.

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