

Egypt court ruling in Jazeera retrial on July 30

AFP, Cairo

An Egyptian court said yesterday it will deliver its verdict on July 30 in the retrial of three Al-Jazeera journalists who were previously sentenced to up to 10 years in jail.

Australian Peter Greste, Canadian Mohamed Fahmy and Egyptian Baher Mohamed were sentenced last year on charges of supporting the black-listed Muslim Brotherhood movement during their coverage of the turmoil following the ouster of president Mohamed Morsi in July 2013.

An appeals court later ordered a retrial, saying the lower court's verdict was not supported by evidence.

Grete has already been deported under a law allowing the transfer of foreigners on trial to their home countries but he is still a defendant in the retrial.

Fahmy and his Egyptian producer Mohamed, who are in Egypt, were freed on bail ahead of their retrial.

In a session yesterday, the court said it would issue its ruling on July 30 in the retrial.

Cops kill

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help, police members from nearby area rushed to the spot and opened fire on the duo, said Sharif, sub-inspector of Paltan Police Station.

Both Shamim and Karim were hit in their legs and were taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital by Sharif.

Shamim died there from excessive bleeding around 11:00pm while Karim was under treatment.

Bahrain declares

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"We aim to remove as many people as possible from this vulnerable position of being illegal and subject to exploitation, and give them the opportunity of a new start without financial or legal costs," he added.

Alabsi also stressed that there would be no penalty fees and therefore no worker should pay anyone for this service, stating that "it is illegal to collect money from workers for the services offered by the amnesty either by employers or middlemen."

However, illegal foreign workers, who face criminal or travel ban cases, will not be eligible for the amnesty offer, said the LMRA announcement.

Foreign workers may also visit the LMRA website at www.lmra.bh or call the LMRA at (973) 1750-6055, for more information.

In 2010, Bahrain offered amnesty programme for illegal workers. Oman also announced a similar amnesty programme for illegal migrants last March.

Latif freed

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Abdu Bakar Siddique, officer-in-charge of Shahbagh Police Station, told The Daily Star that Latif walked out of the prison cell of the BSMMU around 4:45pm after his bail order reached the law enforcers from Dhaka Central Jail.

He left the hospital in a car, the officer added.

Latif, a lawmaker of Tangail-4 constituency, is now staying in his Gulshan home, sources said.

He would join the ongoing parliament session today, the sources added.

The former minister, who was implicated in 29 cases, secured bail in 17 cases in two phases -- in 10 cases on June 23 and in seven cases on May 26 -- from the High Court. There was no arrest warrant against Latif in the other cases.

Talking to The Daily Star, Latif's lawyer Jyotirmoy Barua said, "The High Court not only granted him bail in those [17] cases, but also stayed the proceedings of the cases."

Latif left jail following all legal procedures, he said.

All the cases were filed with the courts of 18 districts over offending the religious sentiments of Muslims after he delivered a speech at a programme in New York on September 28 last year.

He had reportedly demeaned the hajj pilgrimage, Tablighi Jamaat and prime minister's son Sajeeb Wazed Joy during the programme.

On November 25 last year, a Dhaka court sent the sacked minister to prison after he surrendered before police in a case filed over his derogatory remarks.

Two days before his surrender, Latif returned from India, where he had laid low for a while allegedly to avoid the public outrage over his comments.

He was sacked on October 12 from his position as the telecommunications and information technology minister.

In the face of outrage from several quarters, the ruling Awami League also removed him from the party's presidium, the highest policy-making body.

His primary membership in Awami League was also cancelled.

Police seize 1kg powder, suspect it's cocaine

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

Police yesterday seized one kilogram of powder, which they suspect is cocaine, and arrested two persons at Ashulia on the outskirts of the capital.

"We are almost sure it [powder] is cocaine," claimed Nazmul Hasan, assistant superintendent of Savar Circle Police. "But it will be confirmed after the laboratory test," he added.

At a press conference at Ashulia Police Station, Nazmul said that acting on a tip-off, a team of police seized the powder from Sirajul Islam and Shafiqul Islam at Bolivadra Bazar.

Of the arrestees, Sirajul is a resident of Konabari in Gazipur and Shafiqul of Nagarpur in Tangail.

"If it is cocaine, it is worth Tk 1 crore," the police official said, adding the arrestees told police that the powder was smuggled into the country from India.

"We will appeal to the court for allowing the substance to be tested. We will take the next course of action following the court's directives," Nazmul said.

A case was filed with Ashulia police in this connection.



Wheat from Brazil

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Glencore had supplied 1.5 lakh tonnes and Olam 50,000 tonnes.

The import cost was around \$46 million or Tk 355 crore, and 90 percent of the payment had been made, said food ministry officials.

Insiders said the wheat was accepted although the suppliers failed to provide the crops' year certificate and the Certificate of Standard and Quality of Wheat, issued either by Brazil's agriculture ministry or chamber of commerce.

The suppliers provided certificates issued by a pre-shipment inspection company -- SGS, said Ilahee Dad Khan, procurement director of the Directorate General of Food.

Sources said the quality of the wheat was not good enough but the food directorate accepted the cereal as it fulfilled the contract specification.

The wheat was used in the government's various safety net schemes, such as the Food for Work and the Open Market Sales, and as rations given out to law enforcement agencies.

The police administration later complained of low quality grains, prompting the food ministry to collect samples from district warehouses for testing.

In the tests involving 30 samples, the ministry found the quality parameters within the specification and said the samples of wheat were "storable and fit for distribution".

However, the food directorate's lab detected live insects and pests in samples sent from Bogra, Joypurhat, Magura, Patuakhali, Sirajganj and Sherpur.

As questions were raised about the objectivity of the tests at the food ministry's lab, the ministry sent 14 samples of the imported wheat to the BCSIR on June 25 for testing those on eight parameters.

The ministry also sent samples to the Institute of Nutrition and Food Science (INFS) of the University of Dhaka for testing protein content. The protein content was found within the specification at both the BCSIR and the INFS.

But the BCSIR's Institute of Food Science and Technology (IFST) detected the presence of shrunken and damaged kernels between 9.93 percent

and 21.11 percent.

As per government rules, a supply faces rejection if the level of shrunken and damaged kernels is above 8 percent.

The damage percentage is also higher in all samples except the ones collected from Kurigram, Gaibandha and Sirajganj, said the BCSIR test report.

Neither the food directorate nor the BCSIR, however, has conducted any toxicity test to see whether the wheat is fit for human consumption although the food ministry claims that it did not find any grain "unfit for human consumption".

Zahurul Haque, head of the IFST, said, "We tested eight parameters in line with the requirement of the food ministry. We didn't conduct tests to find whether the wheat is fit for human consumption."

He said toxicity test was needed to see if the wheat was edible.

Contacted, Food Minister Qamrul Islam, at first, handed over the phone to Ilahee Dad Khan.

On the issue of higher percentage of shrunken and broken kernels in wheat, Khan said the differences in test results between the food directorate and the BCSIR arise from the differences in test methods the two agencies follow.

Asked why the toxicity test was not conducted, the food minister said the wheat was imported in line with the quality parameters or specifications followed by the government.

"The government imports wheat based on set specification. Why do we need to go for toxicity test?" he asked.

"Why do we need to test the toxicity if protein and moisture contents remain okay?"

WRIT PETITION FILED WITH HC
A writ petition was filed with the High Court yesterday challenging the legality of the import and distribution of the "substandard" wheat from Brazil.

Pabel Mia, a lawyer of the Dhaka Judges' Court, moved the petition, seeking an order from the High Court on the Anti-Corruption Commission to initiate an inquiry into the import.

The petitioner also requested the court to issue a rule upon the government to explain why the import and supply of such wheat should not be declared illegal.

PM blasts critics

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of desks by the treasury and opposition bench MPs.

Responding to Opposition Leader Raushan Ershad's criticism over setting up the power plant at Rampal, Hasina said there is a coal-based power plant in Dinajpur and it is situated in a densely populated area.

"Let me ask you [Raushan] one question, what are the adverse effects of that power plant in that area. Can anybody point out any sign of negative effect? No," she said.

"If there was any possibility of adverse effect on the Sundarbans in the real sense due to the Rampal power plant, the government would not have gone for constructing this plant.

"Many of us do not like Bangladesh's development and that is the real reason [for opposing the power plant construction]," she added.

About punishing the culprits involved in the share market scam, the PM said, "We've taken punitive actions against those involved in the capital market scam.

"But many of the culprits are now out of the country. They have fled the country... we will take actions against them as soon as we get them."

In this connection, she mentioned that her administration had taken various steps for the development of the capital market.

strengthen the Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission," Hasina said.

On curbing corruption and ensuring good governance, the PM told parliament that her administration had taken various steps including introducing e-tender in different ministries.

When Raushan Ershad raised concerns about possible disaster from nuclear power plant operation, Hasina said any kind of accident could happen at any time.

"We are taking every possible measure while constructing the nuclear plant so that no accident takes place there," she told the House.

Hours before her speech in parliament, senior Awami League MP Suranjit Sengupta strongly criticised the government's failure to handle a wide-range of disorder in the banking sector.

While speaking on the proposed budget, he lambasted the finance minister saying, "There is no discipline in banking sector. It has become easy to make fortunes by taking huge amount of loan from banks."

Mentioning the amount of default loans in the banking sectors, Suranjit demanded the government amend the loan court act.

"We will not be able to do anything unless we can bring discipline in the financial sector," he observed.

Govt blocks

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Supreme Court yesterday, seeking bail on the HC orders that granted bail to Fakhrul in three vandalism and arson cases.

Investigations into the charges might be hampered if Fakhrul got bail, the government argued in the petitions.

The HC granted him bail on June 21 in the cases filed with Paltan police on January 4, 5 and 7 under the Explosive Substances Act.

After a brief hearing yesterday, Chamber Judge of the Appellate Division Justice Hasan Foez Siddique sent the stay petitions to its full bench for hearing on July 2.

Earlier on Sunday, the Appellate Division upheld the HC orders of June 18 that granted bail to Fakhrul, who is now undergoing treatment at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, in three other vandalism and arson cases.

A four-member SC bench headed by Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha passed the order after disposing of three petitions that had sought a stay on the June 18 HC orders.

The government filed the petitions on June 21. The next day the SC chamber judge sent the pleas to the full bench for hearing.

In its order, the SC on Sunday said Fakhrul would remain on bail until police submitted its probe report to a lower court, which is hearing the three cases against him.

The SC also ordered the BNP acting secretary general to surrender before the lower court the day the law enforcers would submit their report in any of the cases.

Of the three cases, two were filed with Paltan police on December 28 last year and January 4 this year. The other case was lodged with Motijheel police on January 6.

Asked if Fakhrul would get released from jail, Attorney General Mahbubey Alam yesterday told The Daily Star that the defence should wait for the SC order on the government's stay petitions.

Sagir Hossain Leon, a lawyer for Fakhrul, told this correspondent that there was no legal bar on his client's release from jail since the SC had not stayed the HC bail orders.

Is Great Wall

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of kilometres in sections, from Shanhaiguan on the east coast to Jiayuguan in the windswept sands on the edge of the Gobi desert.

In places, it is so dilapidated that estimates of its total length vary from 9,000 to 21,000 kilometres, depending on whether missing sections are included. Despite its length it is not, as is sometimes claimed, visible from space.

Construction first begun in the third century BC, but nearly 6,300 kilometres were built in the Ming Dynasty of 1368-1644, including the much-visited sectors north of the capital Beijing.

Of that, 1,962 kilometres has melted away over the centuries, the Beijing Times reported.

Some of the construction weathered away, while plants growing in the walls have accelerated the decay, said the report Sunday, citing a survey last year by the Great Wall of China Society.

"Even though some of the walls are built of bricks and stones, they cannot withstand the perennial exposure to wind and rain," the paper quoted Dong Yaohui, a vice president of the society, as saying.

"Many towers are becoming increasingly shaky and may collapse in a single rain storm in summer."

Tourism and local residents' activities are also damaging the longest human construction in the world, the paper added.

Poor villagers in Lulong county in the northern province of Hebei used to knock thick grey bricks from a section of wall in their village to build homes, and slabs engraved with Chinese characters were sold for 30 yuan (\$4.80) each by local residents, it said.

Under Chinese regulations people who take bricks from the Great Wall can be fined up to 5,000 yuan, the state-run Global Times said yesterday.

"But there is no specific organisation to enforce the rules. Damage could only be reported to higher authorities and it is hard to solve when it happened on the border of two provinces," said Jia Hailin, a cultural relics protection official in Hebei, according to the report.

A year of the Islamic State group's 'caliphate'

AFP, Beirut

Main dates in the history of the Islamic State jihadist group's "caliphate" in Iraq and Syria, which it declared in late June 2014.

ISIS began as an Al-Qaeda offshoot, before disavowing the authority of that group's leader Ayman al-Zawahiri in 2013.

June 29, 2014: ISIS proclaims 'caliphate'

Jihadists from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, declare an "Islamic caliphate" across territory they have seized in Iraq and Syria.

They rebrand themselves the Islamic State and declare their chief Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi "caliph" and "leader for Muslims everywhere".

In Syria, the group has controlled Raqa province since January, the first provincial capital to fall from regime control, which becomes its stronghold.

In Iraq in June, the jihadists launch a lightning offensive in the northwest, seizing second city Mosul before sweeping across much of the Sunni Arab heartland bordering autonomous Iraqi Kurdistan. Tens of thousands of members of the Christian and Yazidi sect flee.

July 5, 2014: Baghdadi appears in public

In a video released on social media, the hitherto elusive Baghdadi orders all Muslims to obey him.

August 8, 2014: American warplanes strike

US jets strike ISIS positions in northern Iraq, the first American military operation in the country since troops withdrew in late 2011.

In early September President Barack Obama vows to build "a broad, international coalition" to defeat ISIS.

On September 23 the US and Arab allies launch strikes on ISIS militants in Syria.

Less people floating

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percent to 8.63 percent.

The slum census says that over 84 percent of households own mobile phones while another 16.80 percent took to rickshaw-pulling as the main source of income.

However, there are more garment workers than rickshaw-pullers -- 13.18 percent and 6.92 percent respectively.

Among the floating population, 14.19 percent are day labourers, 10.18 percent do not work, and 9.33 percent are rickshaw/van pullers.

The health and morbidity survey showed morbidity to have decreased

and fever as the most prevalent disease.

Besides, it showed an increase in communicable diseases and the prevalence of high blood pressure, diabetes, asthma and heart diseases to be higher in urban areas compared to rural ones.

Buses and motorcycles were identified as the two main vehicles causing accidents and injuries, as reported by 17.12 percent and 11.66 percent of respondents respectively.

The reports will be available on the BBS website soon, said BBS Deputy Secretary and programme director Jafor Ahmad Khan.

Framework signed

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An official of the Economic Relations Division said the terms and conditions of its loans would be similar to those of ADB.

At present, the ADB gives two types of loans: one which carries an interest rate of 2.5 percent and another linked to Libor, which is normally within the range of 4.5 to 5 percent.

Mannan said the new bank will provide loans for big infrastructure projects such as roads, railways and power.

When asked for what type of projects Bangladesh will seek loans first, he said: "The government will make the decision on this in due time."

'RIVALRY'

The AIIB has been viewed by some as a rival to the World Bank and Asian Development Bank, and the United States and Japan -- the world's largest and third-largest economies, respectively -- have notably declined to join.

Earlier this month, former Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke rebuked US lawmakers for effectively encouraging the AIIB's formation by blocking reforms giving developing nations a greater say in the IMF.

Beijing will be by far the largest AIIB shareholder at about 30 percent, the articles of association posted on the website of China's finance ministry showed. India is the second biggest at 8.4 percent with Russia third on 6.5 percent.

The voting structure gives smaller members a slightly disproportionately larger voice, and a statement accompanying the articles said China will have 26 percent of the votes.

That is not enough to give Beijing a formal veto over all the bank's decision-making, but it will still have an outsized say and a block on some votes which require a 75 percent majority -- including the choice of the bank's president, suspensions of members, and changes to the rules.

"China's shareholding and its voting power at the establishment of the AIIB is a natural result led by the rules decided by all members," said Shi Yaobin, a vice finance minister, according to the official Xinhua news agency.

"China is not deliberately pursuing the veto power," he added, saying share percentages could be diluted by future new admissions.

Among non-Asian participants, Germany is the largest shareholder with 4.5 percent, followed by France

with 3.4 percent and Brazil on 3.2 percent.

The AIIB is expected to go into operation later this year and its headquarters will be in Beijing, despite calls from Indonesia that it be based in Jakarta, further cementing China's prominence in the institution.

But all financial terms in the agreement are in US dollars, rather than China's currency, the renminbi, and the bank's working language will be English.

TRANSPARENCY CONCERNS

Only 50 of the 57 countries that have applied for founding membership signed up in Beijing on Monday, and the finance ministry said the remainder -- Denmark, Kuwait, Malaysia, Philippines, Poland, South Africa and Thailand -- have yet to ratify the necessary agreements.

Washington sought to dissuade its allies from taking part but European countries including Britain, France and Germany have rushed to sign up as they seek to bolster ties with the world's second-largest economy.

There are some concerns over transparency of the lender, which will fund infrastructure in Asia, as well as worries that a resurgent Beijing will use it to push its own geopolitical and economic interests.

The articles of association promise the bank will "be guided by sound banking principles in its operations" and ensure its operations comply with "policies addressing environmental and social impacts".

But equally vague statements in the past have done little to soothe critics.

Supporters say fears over undue Chinese influence are overblown, and that the participation by more than 50 countries will dilute Beijing's power.

The articles of association specify that the bank's president must come from the Asian region and will serve a maximum of two consecutive five-year terms.

Shi, a vice finance minister, said that China will "recommend a strong and powerful candidate" for the position, Xinhua reported.

In Tokyo, Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga said: "We hope the AIIB will play a role as a financial institution that contributes to Asia's development while meeting standards of international institutions, including for its governance."

"We'd like to watch it closely, including its actual operations."

E-Tender Notice

e-Tender will be invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for procurement of LC-MS/MS

Tender ID No.	Package No.	Description	Online tender notice publication date	Online tender closing date
27455	UGC/HEQEP/DU/CP3257/Procurement/G1-2015	OTM	01/07/2015	27/07/2015

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for last selling/downloading the e-Tender documents from the e-GP system portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches up to date and time. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP helpdesk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

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