



Vehicles of guests of an iftar party at the official home of the prime minister make U-turns near Gono Bhaban. This stalled the traffic flow heading north on Mirpur Road around 5:00pm yesterday. The mess near Gono Bhaban spilled over into surrounding streets as seen on south-bound Sangsad Bhaban Avenue, right. The Lake Road was closed on both ends.

PHOTO: STAR



SQ Chy was in country in '71'

Attorney general submits newspaper report to SC as evidence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Attorney General Mahbubey Alam yesterday presented an original report of 1971 from Dainik Pakistan before the Supreme Court that "indicates" war criminal Salauddin Quader Chowdhury was in Bangladesh during the Liberation War.

The report reads that a son of Fazlur Quader Chowdhury was injured in a bomb attack in Chittagong on September 20, 1971. Though the report did not mention the son's name, subsequent evidence and documents prove that the son was Salauddin Quader Chowdhury, Mahbubey Alam told the apex court.

The government had earlier submitted a photocopy of the newspaper report to the SC through swearing affidavit during hearing of the appeal filed by Salauddin against death sentence handed down on him for his war-time offences.

The prosecution had also submitted a copy of the report before the tribunal trying him. They also submitted a fortnightly report of Pakistan police of 1971 that said Salauddin was injured in the attack on September 20.

But, the defence on Tuesday argued that the report, which was a photocopy, "is false and not credible" as they tried to establish that Salauddin was not in Bangladesh then.

Against this circumstance, Mahbubey Alam on Tuesday told the apex court that he would produce the original report of Dainik Pakistan before it. The top law officer of the state yesterday produced the original report of Dainik Pakistan of its September 29, 1971 issue from the Bangla Academy library.

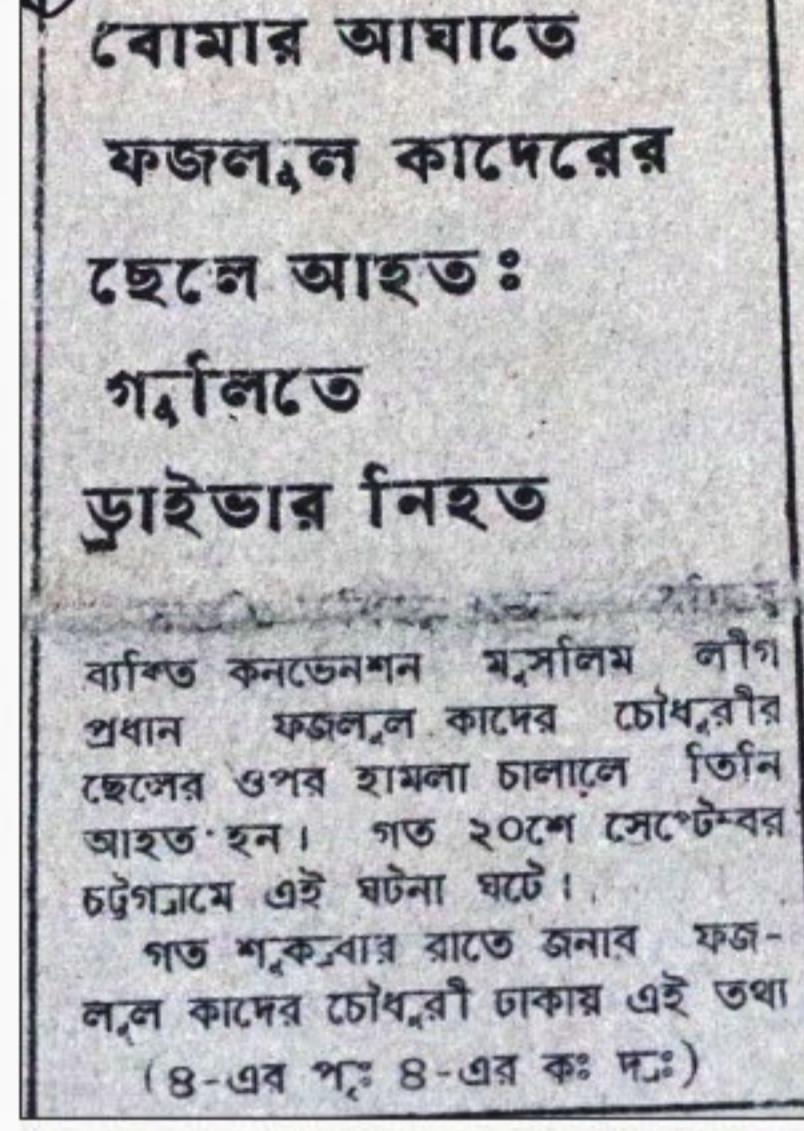
During yesterday's hearing, four judges of the Appellate Division including Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha went through the newspaper report. The other judges of the bench are Justice Nazmun Ara Sultana, Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain and Justice Hasan Foez Siddique.

Meantime, the apex court on Tuesday set July 29 to deliver the verdict on the appeal of the BNP leader challenging the sentences, including capital punishment, handed down on him by the International Crimes Tribunal-1 for his war crimes.

Earlier on October 1, 2013, the tribunal found Salauddin, now 66, guilty of nine of the 23 charges brought against him for committing crimes against humanity and genocide in Chittagong.

During the trial of Salauddin at the tribunal, his defence made the same claim that Salauddin went to Pakistan on March 29, 1971 for studying at Punjab University and returned home in 1974.

But the tribunal did not buy the claim



and gave its verdict on the basis of oral testimony of prosecution witnesses and documents including the report of Dainik Pakistan and Pakistan police report.

Nurul Islam, investigation officer in Salauddin's case, had provided the tribunal with a report of Dainik Pakistan with the headline "Son of Fazlul Quader wounded in bomb attack: driver shot dead," the tribunal judgement mentioned.

The report stated that "miscreants" had carried out an attack by hurling a bomb at the car on which the son of Fazlul Quader Chowdhury was present. "As a result, the driver was killed, while the son of Fazlul Quader Chowdhury sustained severe injuries and was provided treatment at a hospital."

The IO also submitted a fortnightly report on the political situation for the second half of September 1971 from Special Branch, East Pakistan, Dhaka, which was prepared on October 2, 1971 by MM Hossain, deputy inspector general of police, said the judgement.

The report, mentioned in the verdict, stated that on the evening of September 20, 1971, "rebels" fired at the car of Salauddin Quader Chowdhury, son of Fazlul Quader Chowdhury, president, Pakistan Muslim League (PML) at Chandrapara, Chittagong. They also threw a hand grenade in front of the car. Salauddin Quader Chowdhury was injured and his driver was killed.

Freedom Fighters were termed "miscreants" and "rebels" by the then Pakistani government in 1971.

Besides, two prosecution witnesses -- SM Mahbub-Ul-Alam and Qazi Mohammad Nurul Afsar -- who were involved in the attack on Salauddin's car, also gave testimony narrating how they had carried out the mission.

But the tribunal did not buy the claim

No jam, so easy

FROM PAGE 1
by 50 percent annually, said Shameem.

Riding on the rapid growth of the internet and mobile phone use across the country, 250 e-commerce sites and 2,800 Facebook pages are now selling products online.

Every year, an average GDP-growth of over six percent and fast-paced urbanisation contribute to the expansion of the middle class with higher disposable incomes -- the ideal target group for e-commercial activities.

Mohammad Abdur Rouf, chief operating officer of Aarong, said customers were increasingly embracing online shopping, shaking off initial jitters.

When Aarong, one of the leading fashion houses in the country, launched its online sales in Ramadan last year, most of the sales were done through cash on delivery.

Now, more and more customers are buying products online using credit cards, he said.

"This is a huge shift. It proves that they now trust our online sales system," Rouf said, adding that many buyers also paid bills through payment services such as bKash.

For Aarong, online orders are rising by around 20 percent on average a month. It now delivers about 400 packages a month, which, Rouf hopes, would go up to 1,000 a week before Eid.

"The sale is very small compared to our sales at stores. But we hope it would increase in the days ahead," he said.

Multinational companies are also entering the local e-commerce market to take a fair share of the pie and bulk

Iraq court sentences 24 to hang over Tikrit massacre

APP, Baghdad

An Iraqi court on Wednesday sentenced 24 men to hang over the June 2014 massacre by jihadists and allied militants of hundreds of mostly Shiite military recruits in Tikrit.

The central criminal court in Baghdad handed 24 of 28 defendants the maximum sentence over the "Speicher" massacre, named after the base from which the victims were captured before being executed.

"After deliberations, the court finds that the evidence collected is sufficient to convict 24 defendants," said the judge. "The court decided they will be executed by hanging."

All 24 denied any involvement in the massacre, committed during the first days of the Islamic State group's broad offensive in Iraq.

The other four defendants were acquitted.

up their presence in Bangladesh.

Global footwear brand Bata initiated its e-commerce sales through online marketplaces Ajkerde and Daraz in the first quarter of this year.

"We have got good response. It will grow in the coming days as it is convenient," said Mohsena Hassan, e-commerce manager of Bata.

Online sales are not limited in the capital or other major cities. Consumers in many towns are also catching up with those in big cities.

For example, Bata is getting 50 percent of the online orders from outside the capital, said Hassan.

Buoyed by the initial response, Bata is now working on initiating its own e-commerce portal to drive its online sales.

Shameem, also chief executive officer of leading online shop Akhoni.com, said the government needs to formulate a policy to protect local companies in e-commerce as foreign firms wouldn't miss the opportunity to capture the hugely untapped market.

"Online shopping will account for \$10-15 billion in the next one decade. If we can retain control over the market, it will not only benefit the local firms but also help the economy," he said.

BASIS has launched an e-commerce alliance to help online sellers grow and improve the quality of their products and services. It also aims to ensure that no customers are fleeced or served with fake or defective products.

"In case customers receive faulty or damaged goods, we want to make sure that they get proper redress."

Online sellers need to improve their services in order to woo custom-

ers, who are still leery of online shopping.

One such buyer is Sanjida Islam, an MBA student at Dhaka University. She has mixed experience about online shopping. Recently, she bought a wrist band from an online store that delivered the product a day after she made the order. The product was fine.

But she had bitter experience in purchasing an ornament online. The store delivered the product 15 days after the due date. The trouble didn't end there. She received a faulty product, prompting her to call the seller.

"When I called them, the seller's representative talked to me in such a tone that I didn't feel like asking for a refund."

The online stores have to improve the quality of their products and services to become an alternative to bricks-and-mortar stores, she said.

Another buyer, Sarah Karim, first ordered only low-cost products to see whether online shopping would be a viable option for her.

She started with online food delivery services such as Foodpanda and HungryNaki a year ago. And she was pleased with their services. This experienced her to buy other products online.

Sarah, an official of a multinational company operating in Bangladesh, then ordered around a dozen products on Kaymu.com in the last two weeks, and received them in good condition.

She was happy with the service and the quality of the products.

"The service is very good. I am very happy." She also advised her friends to buy items online, saying it would save them time and hassles.

FAKRUL'S BAIL SC order on govt appeal today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court is set today to pass an order on the government's petitions challenging the High Court orders that granted bail to BNP acting secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir in three vandalism and arson cases.

The pleas were enlisted in today's cause list of a four-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha, as the medical report of Fakhrul reached the apex court yesterday afternoon, the BNP leader's lawyer Sagir Hossain Leon told The Daily Star.

He said the authorities of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) sent the medical report to the SC as per the court's order on July 5.

The Appellate Division was scheduled yesterday to pass an order on the three petitions. But it didn't pass the order because of not getting the report on time.

Attorney General Mahbubey Alam told this correspondent that Fakhrul would not be released from jail until the SC granted him bail.

On July 5, the SC ordered the BSMMU authorities to form a four-member medical board to examine Fakhrul's health and submit a report by yesterday.

On June 21, the HC gave bail to Fakhrul in the three cases filed with Paltan Police Station on January 4, 5 and 7 under the Explosive Substances Act.

Later, the government filed the three petitions with the SC seeking stay on the HC orders.

Khaleda to be tried in spl tribunal

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Anti-Terrorism Act 2009 for constituting anti-terrorism special tribunals. The government has plans to set up such tribunals in line with the provision," Hasina said in response to a question from AL lawmaker Selina Begum.

The cases filed against Khaleda and her associates would be tried under the act, she said.

Instructions have already been given to the authorities concerned to quickly complete the probe in the cases filed for petrol bomb attacks across the country during the agitation, she said.

"The government is closely monitoring whether the instructions are being carried out properly."

Sessions judges have been given the authority to dispose of the cases until the formation of the special tribunals.

Of the cases, the important ones would be transferred to speedy trial tribunals, she said.

At least 134 people were burnt to death in petrol bomb attacks during

the agitation. Besides, 1,395 vehicles were vandalised while railway came under attack 13 times and launches six times, Hasina told the House.

The PM also slammed Khaleda for resorting to falsehood against the government in the month of Ramadan.

Referring to Khaleda's allegation that police carried out arson attacks during the BNP-led combine's agitation, Hasina questioned how Khaleda told such lies against law enforcers who work hard to ensure security of people.

The PM showed several pictures as proof of BNP-Jamaat men's involvement in subversive activities during the agitation.

"They are BNP-Jamaat activists. How could she [Khaleda] say police hurled the firebombs? The BNP leader is trying to shift the blame onto police," she said.

Taking part in a thanksgiving motion, Hasina vowed to turn Bangladesh into an upper middle income country by 2020, and sought people's cooperation to that

end.

"We will celebrate the birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Rahman in 2020, and celebrate the golden jubilee of the country's independence in 2021. Bangladesh will be turned into an upper middle income country before the celebrations," she said.

The country would be able to achieve that target if people take a strong stance against violence as they did before, said the PM.

Earlier, treasury bench lawmaker Abdur Razzak moved the motion in parliament on Bangladesh's elevation to lower middle income nation from the low income status by meeting the World Bank's requirements comfortably.

Senior AL lawmakers Matia Chowdhury, Tofail Ahmed, Suranjit Sengupta, AMA Muhith and Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, among others, spoke.

After the discussion, the House passed the motion unanimously by a voice vote.

Will Speaker do the right thing?

they were expelled from the then ruling AL.

The then AL-led government had opted for inserting this provision in the country's constitution to empower the party over its MPs. And this provision was included in the draft constitution in 1972.

But this move had triggered huge criticism back then. Some AL members of the Constituent Assembly had vehemently opposed the proposed provision for cancellation of parliamentary membership in the case of an MP's expulsion from the party. Some of them had given a note of dissent.

"Nowhere in the democratic world, membership of Parliament ceases on the grounds of one's expulsion from a

political party. Such cessation of parliamentary membership may be found only in a dictatorship where system of one party prevails," Hafiz Habibur Rahman, an AL member of the Assembly, had said in his note of dissent.

In the face of criticism, however, the proposal had been dropped.

But the provision for vacating seats on the grounds of an MP's resignation from the party or violation of his/her party's decision or casting vote against the party in parliament was introduced in the constitution. This constitutional provision still remains in effect.

After the enactment of the constitution, the Constituent Assembly (Cessation of Membership) Order, 1972

ceased to have any effect. Since then nobody has lost his/her seat in parliament on the grounds of their expulsion from a political party.

There are two more instances of expulsions from political parties since the restoration of parliamentary democracy in 1991.

In November 2005, the BNP expelled its MP Abu Hena from the party for his remarks against the rise of militiamen under the direct patronage of a section of the party and the government.

The question was raised whether Hena would retain his membership in the then parliament after his expulsion from the party that nominated him in the election and he was elected on the

party ticket.

Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar then announced that Hena would retain his membership in parliament. Sircar ruled that: "There is no possibility of losing his parliament membership as he did not violate party's decision or cast vote against the party."

In the ninth parliament [2009-2013] again, Jatiya Party expelled its MP Golam Reza from the party for violating party discipline. But he did not lose his membership in parliament as then Speaker Abdul Hamid had followed the decision of his predecessor Sircar.

Now it depends on Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chowdhury whether she will follow her predecessors in deciding

Latif's fate or she will create a new instance.