

WAR CRIME TRIALS

Three charges accepted against six Gaibandha suspects

One Moulvibazar accused denied bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday accepted the three charges pressed by prosecutors on March 20 against six Gaibandha men, including a former Jamaat-e-Islami lawmaker, for allegedly committing tortures, killings and genocide during the 1971 Liberation War.

The three-member tribunal led by Justice Anwarul Haque also directed the inspector general of police to submit a report in two weeks over an arrest warrant it issued earlier against the six. It fixed April 19 to pass the next order.

The six, from Sundarganj upazila, were allegedly involved with the Razakar Bahini, an auxiliary force of the Pakistani army.

The ex-Jamaat lawmaker, Abu Saleh Md Abdul Aziz Mia, 65, is the alleged commander of a local Razakar Bahini while the rest are Ruhul Amin alias Manju, 61, Abdul Latif, 61, Abu Muslim Md Ali, 59, Najmul Huda, 60, and Abdur Rahim Mia, 62.

The charges are killing of one Hindu man and looting of his house in Moujamali village in Gaibandha Sadar upazila, killing of a Chhatra League leader and killing of 13 chairmen and members of five unions in Sundarganj.

Meanwhile, the tribunal rejected the bail petition of Akmal Ali Talukdar, one of four accused men of Rajnagar upazila of Moulvibazar, allegedly involved in similar crimes committed in 1971.

Abdun Nur Talukdar, Anis Mia and Abdul Mosabber Mia are on the run. Completing investigations on March 23, the tribunal's investigation agency said to have found evidence against them. The next date for proceedings is April 5.



A guest speaks at the four-day International Model UN 2016 conference, organised by Asian University for Women Model United Nations (UN) Club on AUW campus in the port city yesterday. Students from different countries are participating in the conference.



PHOTOS: COLLECTED

AUW Model UN Conference inaugurated

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A four-day international conference was inaugurated at Asian University for Women (AUW) in Chittagong yesterday, organised by AUW Model United Nations (UN) Club.

Prof Herman T Salton, a faculty member of AUW and an advisor of the club, inaugurated the conference titled AUW International Model UN 2016, aiming at building skills in critical thinking, public speaking, networking and problem solving of different international issues.

A total of 200 students from 20 countries are participating in the conference. Anjuma Tanha, a student of AUW and secretary general of the conference, said this is the first ever international model UN conference in the country.

The conference will cover different sessions of five committees, namely, UN Security Council, International Tribunal for Law and Sea, Unicef, Economic and Social Council and UN Women Council, she said, adding that the theme of the conference is thriving towards an equitable and inclusive global political economy. Participants will also discuss on how the European nations are dealing with the refugee crisis.

Farishta Afzaly, an AUW student hailing from Afghanistan and also the vice-president of the club, said they organised the conference as they wanted to help the students in building various skills.

"Students will discuss different international issues like refugee issues in Middle East, Child soldiers in Boko Haram, IS and beyond, and South China Sea conflict. They will also give a pragmatic solution of the crisis in a diplomatic way," she added.

Genocidal rape should be part of genocide

Dr Kamal tells international conference; underscores need for finishing ongoing war crimes trial within specific timeframe; Shahriar Kabir demands trial of 195 Pakistanis

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent jurist Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday underscored the need for incorporating genocidal rape in the definition of genocide to try the war criminals of 1971.

After addressing the inaugural session of an international conference, he also told reporters that the war crimes trials should be completed within a specific time.

"Law should run its course everywhere. Those who will come under the law as war criminals must be tried. But there should be a directive on how many people will stand trial and how long this trial will go on because a nation has many things to do," he said.

"Of course the war criminals will be tried, and we are trying them despite much delay. We knew the reasons of this delay after the incident of 1975."

An author of the country's constitution, Dr Kamal said the trial had started, and it should end.

"Because it can't be our only goal to continue this trial...for next 100 years. This can't be acceptable. It is necessary to move forward by taking everyone along after finishing this trial."

In a later session, war crimes researcher Shahriar Kabir demanded start of the trial of 195 Pakistani suspects.

The Centre for Genocide Studies organised the conference, "Genocide and Mass Violence: Theories, Traumas, Trials and Testimonies", at the senate building of Dhaka University.

Replying to a query about the trial of the accused Pakistani army officials, Dr Kamal said it was necessary to convince the Pakistani people that they were not responsible for what happened in 1971, but rather it was their army who committed war crimes and they should be tried.

"The young generations of Bangladesh and Pakistan are not part of the genocide... So why will they take the responsibility?" he said.

Earlier, he gave a keynote presentation on "Genocide and Crimes against Humanity".

Shahriar Kabir said the 1974 tripartite agreement between Bangladesh, India and Pakistan was not ratified in Bangladesh's parliament despite constitutional obligation.

Moreover, the Pakistani government publicly promised to try the 195

war crimes suspects but they did not, he said. "So there is no legal bar to try the Pakistani war criminals."

Under the deal signed on April 9, 1974, Bangladesh had agreed not to proceed with the trial of 195 prisoners of war repatriated to Pakistan.

Shahriar said it was a "political agreement", and it did not have a legal basis.

He also observed that both prosecutors and judges of the war crimes trial had "failed to understand" the spirit of the International Crimes (Tribunals) Act, 1973 in adjudicating genocide charges brought against war criminals.

They tried to conduct the war crimes cases like they did under the CrPC, he said.

Earlier, ICT prosecutor Tureen Afroz said only 32 genocide charges out of 200 charges in 12 war crimes cases were brought against the war criminals.

Prosecutors have been able to prove 11 genocide charges, she added.

She opined that due to the failure in proving genocidal intent, producing witnesses, and supplying adequate evidence by the prosecution and changes in the legal characterisation of genocide into crimes against humanity by the tribunals, there had been a poor rate of convictions.

Family meets Nizami in Kashimpur jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Convicted war criminal Matur Rahman Nizami's wife, two sons and two daughters-in-law met and talked to him for around 45 minutes in a room in Kashimpur Jail-Part 2 yesterday, reports our Gazipur correspondent citing Jailer Nasir Ahmed.

The meeting comes against the backdrop of a death warrant International Crimes Tribunal issued for him on March 15 hours after the Supreme Court released its full verdict upholding his death penalty.

In October 2014, the tribunal-1 handed down capital punishment to Nizami, the chief of anti-liberation Jamaat-e-Islami and leader of the infamous

Al-Badr Bahini, for committing crimes against humanity during the Liberation War.

On March 16, his three lawyers met him and Nizami asked them to seek a review of the Supreme Court verdict.

NEWS IN brief

1 killed, 10 hurt in post UP polls clash in Dohar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man was hacked to death and at least 10 people were injured in a clash between two rival groups of Union Parishad election at Purbachar village in Dhaka's Dohar upazila yesterday.

The deceased was Jalal Matbar, 65, brother of defeated member candidate Alal Matbar of Bilashpur UP.

The clash took place between the supporters of Alal and elected UP member Abul Hossain over election rivalry, said Dohar police.

Freedom fighter killed by dope gang in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Members of a dope gang took life of a freedom fighter, Aftab Uddin, 65, yesterday in the capital and snatched away Tk 40,000 and a mobile phone.

The victim was returning home by a bus, withdrawing his freedom fighter's allowance from a bank in Sreepur, Gazipur when the incident occurred, said Zamalur Rahman, brother-in-law of Aftab.

Aftab was found unconscious inside the bus near Bangabazar and one Selim brought him to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital by a rickshaw-van, where he died around 6:00pm, added Zamalur.

He said the doctors told him that Aftab might have died due to the use of sedative.

MasterChef judge Matt arrives

CITY DESK

Popular cooking reality show MasterChef Australia's judge, famous food critic and food journalist Matt Preston is now in Dhaka, said a press release.

He has come to Bangladesh to take part in the "Meet Matt Preston" competition hosted by Bangladesh's cookie brand Rivoli.

Winners of "Meet Matt Preston" campaign will get a chance to meet Matt Preston and taste Rivoli cookies with him on Monday.

Death anniversary

CITY DESK

The 7th death anniversary of Sirajul Islam Babul, a businessman, will be observed at his residence tomorrow after the Zohr prayers.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to attend the programme and pray for the salvation of his departed soul. He died in 2009 at the age of 57.

Nation building rests

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"You are the torchbearers of the society. The less fortunate and deprived people need you. Enlighten them."

He said the universities would have to create new knowledge and conduct research. He also warned of taking legal action against the private universities failing to comply with conditions laid down in law.

Prof Abdul Mannan, chairman of the University Grants Commission, said convocation symbolised the culmination of hard work and transition from one stage of life to the next. He said, "Education is not only about instruction, technical skills and information. It is more about dissemination and mastering of knowledge, enhancing problem-solving ability, nurturing the passion to innovate, understanding the values of life and transforming a person in to a more decent human being."

IUB Vice Chancellor Prof M Omar Rahman said convocation was an opportunity to reflect on what a university stood for, its values, ambitions, hopes and aspirations.

"IUB has taught you to question rather than accept, to be independent rather than dependent, to not fear taking the long hard road rather than the shortcut, and ultimately, to lead rather than be led."

Rashed Chowdhury, chairman of the Board of Trustees, IUB; A Matin Chowdhury, chairman of Education, Science, Technology and Cultural Development Trust, IUB; and Prof Milan Pagon, pro-vice chancellor (designate), IUB, also spoke.

Mahtab Fahim, a student of the School of Business, was awarded the Chancellor's Gold Medal while four students received awards for their outstanding performance in various fields -- Mahtab Fahim for academic excellence, Saquiba Bintay Ali for culture, Salman Ahmed for community service, and Hisham Rahman for sports. Saquiba Bintay Ali was also awarded for being an "all rounder".



Bangladesh Gram Police Karmachari Union staging a hunger strike in front of Jatiya Press Club in the capital Thursday, demanding a similar salary scale as grade-IV government employees.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

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