



A five-member delegation of the Supreme Court, led by Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha, hands over the SC's Annual Report 2015 to President Abdul Hamid at the Bangabhaban yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

## Protests over BCL

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Masud Rana, a 23rd batch of BBA student, who belongs to the group of Soheli, filed a general diary (GD) on March 20, saying some of his classmates led by Tamim, Tasrif, Mostafa and Mejbah and unknown people threatened the general students on March 13 and asked them not to organise the programme without their knowledge.

When Soheli and some others were rehearsing on the Wasa intersection campus yesterday, unknown people attacked them, around 12:30pm.

"One of the attackers stabbed Soheli five times, leaving him seriously injured," said a witness.

They also attacked the other students who were taking Soheli to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH). He was declared dead there around 2:30pm.

Mayenur Rahman Mayen, a joint general secretary of the city BCL, said the students wanted to make the vice chancellor chief guest at the programme, but the other group wanted Mohiuddin as chief guest.

He said, "Mohiuddin's followers committed the murder."

He also alleged that police did not take any security measure despite filing of the GD.

Mohiuddin denied knowing anything about the matter. "Even I have no idea what kind of programme they were going to arrange," he said. "I heard of the murder in the media."

Mayor Nasir visited the protest scene around 6:30pm and asked the demonstrators to leave. He also visited CMCH to see Soheli's body.

Soheli was a very good boy, Nasir said. "He had come to me and requested me to be chief guest but I regretted because of a prescheduled programme," he said.

Nasir declined to comment when asked about the allegation against Mohiuddin.

### PUBLIC SUFFERINGS

When the protest was underway, the entire city almost came to a standstill because barricades were put in Cement Crossing, Panchlaish, Khulshi, Polytechnic Institute, Bayezid Bostami Road, Anderkilla, Bandar, Chittagong Medical College gate, Gol Pahar intersection, Akbar Shah intersection, Sholashahar Gate No 2, and Wasa intersection areas.

Patients suffered immensely in Prabantara area, which is close to CMCH.

"My brother was vomiting continuously, so I was taking him to CMCH but I could not because students blocked the road," said Sanjida Begum of Panchlaish.

She then took him to a private hospital.

For a halt in vehicular movement, people had to walk long distances.

Rowshan Ara Hossain, a teacher, walked 4km from Agrabad to her home at Sholashahar.

Stuck in the protest scene, auto-rickshaw driver Mamun Miah was tense as the windshield of his vehicle was vandalised. "The owner will blame me, saying I was not intelligent enough to tackle the situation," he said. "He may take a share off my daily income as demurrage."

Vehicular movement got back to normal around 7:00pm.

Vice Chancellor Prof Anupam Sen said the university was closed till further announcement.

## Ecneec okays

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The other approved projects are enhancing physical and academic facilities of Noakhali Science and Technology University with Tk 238.48 crore, modernisation of food and radiation science facilities at Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission with Tk 47.67 crore, establishment of BSCIC printing industrial estate with Tk 140.41 crore, Kaliaoik hi-tech park (3rd revised) with Tk 394.15 crore, development of Sylhet-Sunamganj road with Tk 140.65 crore and Ruma-Bogalake-Keokradang road development (1st phase) with Tk 89.98 crore.

## Filipino willing to return \$14.3m

FROM PAGE 1  
"The two foreigners were responsible for bringing in the \$81 million," Wong said at the Senate hearing, according to an AFP report.

A portion of the money was later converted into Philippine pesos and deposited into Wong's account at a Manila mega-casino where the junket operator is based, Filipino investigators have alleged.

Wong and another Chinese casino junket operator, Weikang Xu, are under criminal investigation by Filipino prosecutors for their alleged role in laundering the proceeds of the heist.

Wong said he was told last month by the duo that "money was coming" to the five RCBC accounts.

The authorities said the cyber heist occurred a day later.

RCBC has admitted the accounts through which the allegedly stolen money was deposited had been opened under fictitious names.

Wong's testimony appears to shed some light on the brazen caper that has forced Bangladesh Bank governor Atiur Rahman to resign and highlighted how the Philippines has become a money-laundering destination due to loose regulation of its casinos.

Philippine law exempts casino transactions from scrutiny by the country's anti-money laundering council without a case filed in court.

Wong described Sua as a "big junket operator" who was 450 million pesos (\$9.7 million) in debt at Manila's Solaire, one of the Philippines' biggest casinos.

Wong said the high roller told him he would use the RCBC dollar accounts to transfer money to pay off his debt.

"He said he was selling property in China," Wong told the hearing.

However, Ding said he was planning to invest in the Philippines because "casinos in Macau are struggling", according to Wong.

The current whereabouts of the two Chinese nationals is unknown.

The Senate investigation had earlier established that \$29 million of the stolen Bangladesh Bank money was shifted to Solaire.

Wong said his friend and RCBC branch manager Maia Deguito, who authorities say is a suspect in the Philippine investigation, helped open the dollar accounts, reportedly telling Sua at one point: "Leave it to me."

Wong said Gao has been a junket agent for almost eight years now, while Ding, a businessman from Macau, was introduced to him by Gao.

Wong said Gao borrowed 450 million pesos from him after incurring big losses at a casino in Solaire, according to the Inquirer.

At that time, he said, the former branch manager of RCBC-Jupiter in Makati City, Maia Santos-Deguito, had been asking him to open an account in her branch. He then referred Gao to Deguito.

Wong said he and Gao met Deguito in his office at the Midas Hotel sometime in May 2015.

Wong said Gao wanted to open a dollar account but the branch manager said they needed five persons to open an account for a company.

"Gao said that we would probably find it difficult to open an account. Maia told us that she would take care of it. I was in a hurry, and she offered to assist us," Wong said.

After two or three days, Wong said Deguito called asking for \$2,500 to open the five dollar accounts.

On February 4 this year, Wong said Gao told him that he and Ding would close their casino in Macau and would just invest in Manila.

On February 5, Wong said he met both Gao and Ding at the Solaire hotel and the two had told him to

call Deguito to check on the five bank accounts.

After repeated calls, Wong said Deguito called again at around 1pm and informed them about the tranches of funds that started to come into the accounts totalling \$81 million, the Inquirer reported.

Wong said he then asked Deguito if she could bring the money to the hotel.

At around 7:00pm the same day, Wong said Michael Bautista of Philrem Service Corporation arrived with 80 million pesos supposedly upon Deguito's request.

"Maia was supposed to bring the remaining 20 million pesos. She then arrived," he said.

Aside from the 100 million pesos in cash that was delivered to the hotel, Wong said he also collected a total of 300 million pesos and \$5 million cash from Bautista's house.

He said he picked up the first 100 million pesos and \$3 million cash from Bautista's house on February 9, another 100 million pesos and \$2 million cash on February 10, and another 100 million pesos on February 14.

In his opening statement, Wong accused Deguito of forging the documents of the bank five account holders used to receive and withdraw the stolen funds.

"It was also Maia who pursued all means to release the money from the bank," Wong said.

Of the total \$81 million stolen funds that were deposited and withdrawn from the RCBC branch of Deguito, Wong said about \$63 million went to Midas and Solaire casinos.

"The balance of more or less \$17 million, as far as I know, is with Philrem," he said.

Deguito, who has denied involvement in money laundering, was suffering from fatigue and was absent from Tuesday's hearing, her lawyer said.

None of the money has been recovered yet.

### FED SHOULD RETURN MONEY: AJMALUL

Bangladesh may not have to sue the New York Fed if the bank returns the \$81 million stolen from the Bangladesh Bank account with it to protect its reputation, lawyer Ajmalul Hossain QC said yesterday.

The BB, which plans to sue the Fed and three other banks for negligence, appointed the senior Supreme Court lawyer last week to help it get back the stolen money.

The NY Fed should return the money out of embarrassment, he told reporters in the capital.

"Then there will be no need to file the lawsuit. There is a strong reputational risk for the New York Fed, as many central banks may deem it insecure and take back their money."

The Fed provides banking services to approximately 250 foreign central banks and other official institutions.

Foreign central banks open accounts with the Fed to accommodate international monetary transactions, settle their US dollar obligations, and hold their foreign reserves.

Ajmalul said it was very important to find out whether the Fed breached the contract by allowing hackers to transfer the \$81 million to bank accounts in the Philippines.

The lawyer also said it appears that there are some shortcomings in the Fed's system.

The Fed thought that some of the instructions sent to it were not genuine. "They had sought confirmation from the BB. But the Fed made the payments before getting confirmation," Ajmalul said.

If funds were transferred from

someone's account to another account through illegal means, then there is a system to recall the money, said the lawyer.

The payment instructions were sent from the BB on February 4, but the payment was made on February 9, because of the holidays in Bangladesh, the US and the Philippines.

"Though BB's system was not working on those five days, BB had sent complaints through letters, emails and SWIFT messages, saying it had not made the payment instructions. But responses of those correspondences did not arrive," he said.

The BB even wrote a letter to the Fed based on detailed information on February 24, but it is yet to get any response.

Asked whether there are enough grounds for the BB to file a lawsuit, he said, "Of course cases can be filed because we are the victim of the theft. The money has to be paid as per our instructions, but we did not give the instructions."

"It is clear that the thieves gave the instructions. If you act on the instructions given by thieves, then definitely we can ask for return of the money," he added.

## Trouble

FROM PAGE 1  
making a mockery of the heist of \$101 million from Bangladesh Bank".

"We could have destroyed the centre, but we won't do that. We will bring its chief to book," said Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid.

He was speaking at the inauguration ceremony of a content sharing portal, www.edutubebd.com, developed by Ethics Advanced Technology Limited, at a city hotel yesterday.

Referring to Saifur Rahman Khan, managing director of S@ifur's, the minister said despite being a teacher, the head of the coaching centre was "luring students into studying there in order to be good hackers".

"We will file a case against them."

Nahid on Monday sent a note to Education Secretary Sohorab Hossain, saying, "This issue is dangerous and a serious step needs to be taken."

He made some suggestions including filing a general diary and a case and, requesting the Anti-Corruption Commission to take necessary steps in this regard.

Sources in the education ministry said the process of filing a case against the coaching centre was underway.

Other coaching centres that are being run in violation of rules too will face serious actions, they said.

Cyber-thieves last month stole \$101 million from Bangladesh Bank's account with the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

In an ad published in a daily recently, S@ifur's said, "Hackers failed to get off with Tk 160 crore of Bangladesh Bank due to mistakes in English."

During the transfer of the money to Sri Lanka, the Deutsche Bank became suspicious as the word Foundation was misspelt as Fandation and eventually transfer of \$20 million was stopped, the ad read.

"Due to weakness in English, thousands of students are failing to get admitted to DU, JU, CU, RU and to achieve success in BCS, MBA and IELTS," it continues.

"Moreover, all textbooks at the university level are in English, which means to become a skilled doctor, engineer, MBA, officer, lawyer (even a skilled hacker), it is essential to be good in reading, writing, speaking, listening and spelling [in English]," the ad said.

## Protests rage through

FROM PAGE 1  
to the DB, a top official in Comilla police on Sunday said detectives are more skilled than local cops. They were asked to take over the case because of its merit and sensitivity.

A second-year history student of Comilla Victoria College and a cultural activist, Sohagi Jahan Tonu was found dead about 400 yards from her house inside Comilla Cantonment on the night of March 20, according to her family members.

As the demand for justice grows louder and protest surges across the country, people from all walks of life, especially students, yesterday demonstrated in many districts, including Dhaka, Comilla, Chittagong, Pirojpur and Gaibandha.

Protesters condemned law enforcers' failure to detain any one though Tonu's father Yaar Hossain, an employee of Comilla Cantonment Board, filed the murder case just the day after finding her dead.

Local cops not even quizzed anyone apart from the family members.

Tonu's family members, including her parents, were interrogated by detectives and Rab on Saturday.

Following a court order, investigators are supposed to exhume the body of Tonu today for a fresh autopsy. She was buried at her ancestral village Mirzapur under Muradnagar upazila of the district on March 21.

SP Shah Abid Hossain yesterday told the BBC Bangla that they sought exhumation of the body for a fresh autopsy as they needed more evidence.

He said they primarily suspected that Tonu was strangled. But, without a complete report, they cannot say whether she was raped before being murdered.

"Her lung was congested, heart congested and brain congested. She might have been killed through strangulation," he said.

Also yesterday, in a press release issued by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR), the army yet again vowed to continue its cooperation in the murder probe, and demanded the culprits be brought to trial following a quick probe.

It said the body of Tonu was found in the bordering area of the cantonment around 11:00pm on March 20 and probe began according to the law.

Public representatives and officials from the administration, rights body Ain o Shalish Kendra and law enforcement agencies visited the crime scene and talked to her family.

The army has been cooperating with the investigators since the beginning. But still a vested quarter has been making speculation-based statements about the army on the incident and creating confusion among the public. This is not expected, said the release.

"Tonu is our child" and her father is a member of the army family, it said, adding that every army person is shocked at her tragic death.

In this situation, the army expects responsible statements from all.

### PROTESTS ON

Meanwhile, students of Dhaka University yesterday called for a daylong strike at all educational institutions in the country on April 3, demanding punishment to the killers of Tonu.

Several hundred students blocked the busy Shahbagh intersection for more than two hours from 1:00pm to press home their demand. They also brought out a procession from the DU campus to the intersection.

The protest disrupted traffic on the busy street.

## Eviction outside

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Bangladesh, as soon as possible.

The HC bench of Justice Md Moinul Islam Chowdhury and Justice JBM Hassan gave the verdict, hearing nine writ petitions challenging the eviction move.

However, the grounds on which the verdict was delivered could not be known immediately as its copy was not released.

Some Urdu speaking people and Odhikar, a rights organisation, filed the petitions at different times between 2001 and 2011.

Seven lakh Urdu speakers live in and outside 116 camps across the country, and approximately 90 per cent of them have the national ID card, Sadakat Khan, one of the petitioners, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Around three lakh of them live outside the camps, said Khan, who is also the president of Urdu Speaking Peoples Youth Rehabilitation Movement.

He said the people would suffer a lot if the government evicted them without ensuring their rehabilitation.

Sadakat claimed that the Urdu-speaking people owned houses and land before the Liberation War in 1971 but the government and the Red Crescent moved them to the camps after the war.

Mahmuda Parveen Poppy, assistant attorney general, said many of

Later, more protesters, mostly students from schools and colleges, joined the DU students, carrying placards and banners.

Ujma Tazrian, a DU student, gave the call for the strike on behalf of "general students" while briefing reporters at Shahbagh.

An alliance of 13 left-leaning and progressive student bodies expressed solidarity with the April 3 strike.

Ashraful Alam Soheli, co-ordinator of the alliance, said the culture of impunity lead to recurrence of incidents like murder and rape.

The protesters carried banners including the one that read, "You silence legitimises rape and murder one after another."

Some protesters stopped a car which was coincidentally passing through the area carrying an army official's wife. They pasted some posters on the windupane but allowed it to pass by unharmed, said witnesses.

The Workers Party of Bangladesh (WPB) formed a human chain in front of the Jatiya Press Club in the capital yesterday.

At the human chain, its Polite Bureau Member Nur Ahmed Bakul, demanding justice for Tonu said the nation needs to come out of a culture of impunity, reads a press release.

Sammilito Sangskritik Jote, a platform of cultural organisations, will submit a memorandum to the home ministry on April 4 if investigators fail to make visible progress.

Its President Golam Kuddus announced the programme from a rally in TSC area.

Hasan Arif, general secretary, sought prime minister's order to the law enforcement agencies to carry out the murder probe without the slightest negligence.

Left-leaning student body Bangladesh Chhatra Union yesterday held a torch procession at Shahbagh and TSC areas following a rally at Raju Sculpture. Biplobi Nari Mukti also staged a protest march in front of the National Museum.

Students of Home Economics College, Dhaka, formed a human chain demanding highest punishment to murders of Tonu and security to women in all sectors, said a press release.

On Comilla Victoria College campus, several hundred student demonstrated from morning on the Shaheed Minar premises, now called "Tonu Chattar", to press home their demand.

Cultural activists and others continued their protest at Pubali Chattar of Kandirpar area at the heart of Comilla town yesterday.

They also went to different educational institutions as part of their campaign for justice.

At Chittagong University, students and teachers of dramatics department through a play protested the murder of Tonu, who was theatre activist. They formed a human chain and brought out a procession, demanding capital punishment to the perpetrators.

Protests were staged by students in Pirojpur district town while locals in Mathbaria upazila formed a human chain.

In Gaibandha, several hundred students and teachers of different educational institutes demonstrated on DB Road, demanding exemplary punishment to the killers without any delay.

[Our correspondents from Comilla, CU, Pirojpur and Gaibandha contributed to this report]

the Urdu-speaking people had been staying outside their camps, illegally occupying the land of the National Housing Authority (NHA) in different areas of Dhaka and on lands of Bangladesh Railway in Saidpur and Nilphamari.

She said the NHA could not hand over allotted plots because of the illegal occupants.

Mahmuda also said the government has a plan to rehabilitate Dhaka's Mirpur camp residents to Savar. She said they had submitted a letter about the plan to the HC during the hearing.

The court has not issued any directive on the Urdu-speaking people who do not have the national ID cards, she added.

Hafizur Rahman Khan, a lawyer for two other writ petitioners, told The Daily Star that the HC yesterday has also withdrawn its earlier orders that restrained the government from evicting the illegal occupants of government land across the country.

Following the petitions, the court had also issued nine separate rules questioning the legality of the government actions aimed at the eviction. The court discharged the rules yesterday, he said.

The government can now again start the eviction of the Urdu-speaking occupants of government land, he said.