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SHAZNEEN RAPE, MURDER SC hearing today on appeals of 5 convicts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A larger five-member bench of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court is set to hear today the appeals of five convicts who challenged their death sentences in the case filed over rape and killing of Shazneen Tasnim Rahman in 1998.

Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha will head the bench for the hearing this morning. The other four bench members are Justice Nazmun Ara Sultana, Justice Md Imman Ali, Justice Hasan Foz Siddique and Justice Mirza Hussain Haider.

Earlier on March 29,

SEE PAGE 10 COL 5



FALLING INTO RUIN

A memorial for the freedom fighters of Liberation War turns out to be a shelter for the homeless at the city's Osmani Udyan, just across the street from the headquarters of Dhaka South City Corporation. Lax enforcement of law has contributed to the setting up of shops and bathing of horses, left, in the lake there. The DSCC has only put up a notice at the park, prohibiting people from plucking flowers, dumping trash and driving vehicles. The photos were taken on Sunday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Khaleda gets bail in 5 cases

COURT CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday secured bail in five cases, including a sedition case.

The four other cases are Jatrabari arson attack and killing cases, Gatco graft case and the case filed over a crude bomb attack on a procession led by Shipping Minister Shahjahan Khan.

Khaleda was also exempted from appearing in court in the cases linked with the Jatrabari arson attack and the crude bomb attack.

Metropolitan Magistrate Jakir Hossain granted Khaleda bail in the sedition case filed by a Supreme Court lawyer for her derogatory remarks on the number of Liberation War martyrs.

SC lawyer Momtaz Uddin Ahmad Mehedi on January 25 filed the case with approval from the home ministry.

The BNP chief got bail in both the cases linked with the petrol bomb attack on a passenger bus in the capita's Jatrabari on January 23 last year.

Metropolitan Magistrate Md Maruf Hossain delivered the bail order in the case filed over the killing of a passenger in the incident.

Judge Kamrul Hossain Mollah of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court granted bail to Khaleda in

SEE PAGE 12 COL 8

Philippines moves to recover rest of stolen BB fund

Junket operator Kim Wong promises to return about \$9.7 million this month

AGENCIES, Manila

The Philippines will turn to the country's gaming industry to recover a part of the \$81 million stolen from the Bangladesh central bank channelled through local casinos and gambled by a network of at least 19 people.

The Philippine Anti-Money Laundering Council will ask the courts to direct casinos and junket operators to recover and return as much of the stolen funds as possible to Bangladesh, Executive Director Julia Abad said at the Senate hearing yesterday, reports Bloomberg.

"We have proof that the money was actually transferred to their accounts," Abad said, referring to the gaming operators.

Philippine casinos are in the spotlight for one of the largest bank heists in modern history, where thieves hacked into the Bangladesh Bank's account at the US Federal Reserve, routed the funds to accounts at Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. and then laundered the money in at least two local gaming halls before the trail went cold. The Senate held its fourth hearing on the case that had riveted the Philippines.

The 19 players gambled for five weeks under two foreign junket operators at Solaire Resort & Casino, according to two reports its parent Bloomberg Resorts Corporation submitted to the Senate Blue Ribbon Committee and gaming regulator, which were seen by Bloomberg News. Silverio Benny J Tan, compliance officer at Bloomberg, said in the reports casinos were made "a scapegoat in this unfortunate affair."

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

NEWS ANALYSIS

UP POLLS ANOMALIES

Is the media at fault?

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The Election Commission has now made the media a whipping boy to counter widespread criticism for its failure to hold the Union Parishad elections in a free, fair and peaceful manner.

In a media release on Monday, it said "misleading discussion" about the EC is going on in some newspapers and TV talk shows.

Why has the EC been a subject for discussion during the ongoing UP polls? Incidents of large scale electoral irregularities including capturing polling stations and stuffing ballot boxes took place in the two phases-elections to 1,364 UPs held on March 22 and 31.

Numerous incidents of violence have left 33 people dead in election related clashes.

But on both days after polling hour, the EC claimed that there were "some sporadic incidents of violence" and "the voting was peaceful in most of the centres."

Incidents of widespread violence and

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

Facebook lets blind people 'see' photos

BBC ONLINE

As the internet becomes dominated by images, Facebook is launching a system which can "read" photos and tell visually impaired people what appears in them.

The internet is changing. From a medium based almost entirely on text, it is now becoming increasingly picture-led. An estimated 1.8 billion images are uploaded every day to social networks such as Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

Good news for aspiring photographers, bad news for blind or partially sighted users who often have no way of telling what is in an image - despite the available modern assistive technologies.

But a new service from Facebook, launched yesterday, is attempting to remedy that.

Blind people use sophisticated navigation

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

Nine charged with killing 4 Habiganj kids

Accused include Bachchu killed in 'shootout'

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

Detectives yesterday pressed charges against nine people in the case filed in connection with the killing of four schoolboys in Bahubal upazila of Habiganj in February.

The four boys were the victims of enmity between two groups in local Panchayat (village arbitration council), according to the charge sheet submitted to Judge Kawsar Alam of the Court of Senior Judicial Magistrate, Habiganj.

The accused are Abdul Ali, 60, who allegedly ordered the killing, his two sons Rubel Mia, 18, and Jewel Mia, 20, and Habibur Rahman Arju, 25, Shahed Ahmed Bashir, 32, Billal Mia, 30, Ustar Mia, 48,

SEE PAGE 12 COL 6



PRAYER TIMING

APRIL 6

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

4-40 12-45 4-45 6-21 7-45

JAMAAT 5-15 1-15 5-00 6-24 8-15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



The appalling state of the Dholai river in Companiganj upazila of Sylhet. The river is almost dry and farmers have started growing paddy in it but a lack of water is making even that difficult. People just walk across the river now. Stone extractors use the river as a quarry and their digging and dumping silt willy-nilly has clogged the water flow. The photo was taken on April 1.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

FAKE ENCOUNTER

47 Indian cops get life for killing Sikh pilgrims

AFP, Lucknow

A special court in India has sentenced 47 policemen to life in prison for killing a group of Sikh pilgrims in 1991 whom they had claimed were militants, a prosecutor said yesterday.

The officers were convicted of shooting dead the pilgrims to try and earn promotions in Uttar Pradesh state which at the time was hit by Sikh militant activity, the Press Trust of India (PTI) said.

The officers stopped a bus carrying the pilgrims and their families before later marching 11 of them into a jungle area of the northern state and carrying out the killings, prosecutor SC Jaiswal said.

"The court observed that there was ample evidence to award life sentences to the guilty," Jaiswal told AFP of the court's decision on Monday.

"The court specifically observed that a crime of such magnitude could not have happened without the knowledge of those higher up and they too should have been charged."

The court of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), India's leading investigative agency, found the police guilty of carrying out a "fake encounter".

The term is commonly used in India for staged confrontations in which police or military forces execute unarmed suspects and later claim it as self-defence.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4