

### CUSTODIAL DEATH OF JONNY Decision on charge framing against SI Jahidur April 17

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court decides on April 17 whether charges will be framed against five persons, including three former policemen of Pallabi Police Station, for killing Ishtiaq Ahmed Jonny in police custody in February 2014.

The accused are Sub-inspector Jahidur Rahman Khan, assistant sub-inspectors Md Kamruzzaman Minto and Rashedul Hassan and police informers Sumon and Russell. Of them, Jahidur and Sumon are now in jail.

After completing the hearing on charge framing yesterday, Judge Kamrul Hossain Mollah of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court of Dhaka set the date.

According to the prosecution, it was alleged that Jonny, his brother Imtiaz Hassan Rocky and three others were detained by a police team, led by SI Jahidur, on February 9, 2014, when they were celebrating a pre-wedding programme of Jonny's friend at Irani camp in Pallabi.

Informer Sumon and his friends Russell and Nasim called police after Jonny slapped Sumon for stalking women at the programme.

Later, Jonny, 28, was allegedly tortured to death. He was a resident of Talab camp in Mirpur-11.

Following the incident, the victim's brother, Rocky, on August 7 that year filed a case against nine people, including SI Jahidur.

Later, a metropolitan magistrate conducted a judicial inquiry and found Jahidur and four others' involvement.

Jahidur is also accused of being involved in the custodial death of garment-waste trader Mahabubur Rahman Sujat at Mirpur Police Station.

## Factory building tilts on another in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A six-storey RMG factory building has tilted on an adjoining five-storey residential building in Tejgaon in the capital, the factory workers verbally complained to Tejgaon police on Monday.

Rajuk officials inspected the building at the Airport Road Super Market in Monipuripara and vacated it yesterday, as police informed them.

"We have instructed the factory authorities to examine the building by a Buet expert team within a day or two and we will take necessary actions based on the report," said AZM Shafiqul Hannan, a relevant authorised officer of Rajuk.

The factory authorities could not produce a copy of any approved plan or building construction design that houses the factory, Continental Apparels Ltd, and the building owner was not available at the site, Shafiqul said.

He said he would serve a formal notice today asking for the plan.

They have not strengthened the building despite Buet's recommendation during the Accord inspection in 2014, he said, adding that they requested local police to make sure that no worker is allowed to enter.

The Accord on fire and building safety in Bangladesh, signed in May 2013, is a five-year, independent and legally-binding agreement to ensure a safe working environment in the readymade garments industry.

The building is loaded with garments machineries on the top three floors and houses warehouses on the first two floors, said Hannan, adding that apparently the tilt, if any, has occurred slowly over a long time.

Md Ashraf Hossain Khan, manager of the factory, said they have been running the factory since 1984 there at two adjoining buildings owned by two brothers Nazim Uddin and Abu Bakar.

As to compliance with the Accord recommendation, he said that they have downsized the number of workers from 1,500 to 421 with 62 working at the said building.

While visiting the building, this correspondent did not find any separate entrance, inside stairway or passage for the buildings. Rather, it was one large space on each floor, filled with machineries. The building was also mildly shaking as the machines were running.

"We have written to the owners several times asking for the approval documents but they did not respond. We have proof of such correspondence," said Khan.

Abdullah Al Rajin, a director of the factory, said, "We will act as per Rajuk's direction."



The RMG factory building, left, that tilted on an adjoining residential one in the capital's Tejgaon area on Monday; forces us to ask why a factory building be allowed to function next to a residential one or set up in the inhabited areas of municipalities?

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sent back Mahmudur Rahman, acting editor of Bangla daily Amar Desh, to jail after rejecting remand and bail petitions in a police assault case.

The court, however, allowed police to interrogate Mahmudur at the jail gate for three days within four workdays.

The case was filed for creating anarchy and preventing police from discharging their duties in the capital's Kotwali area on February 23, 2013.

The court gave the order after Sub-inspector Azizul Haque, also the investigation officer of the case, produced Mahmudur before it with a seven-day remand prayer.

On February 15, Mahmudur was shown arrested in a bomb blast case, a day after the Supreme Court upheld a High Court bail granted to him in a sedition case.

Mahmudur was picked up from his newspaper office in the capital's Karwan Bazar on April 11, 2013. The newspaper stopped printing in mid-April that year.

### HC stays construction of park near Noakhali court for 3 months

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday prohibited construction of a "commercial park" in the government land near the district judge court in Noakhali for three months.

The court also issued a rule asking the government to explain as to why the construction without approval from authorities concerned should not be declared illegal.

The HC bench of Justice Zubayer Rahman Chowdhury and Justice Md Khasruzzaman came up with the order and rule following a writ petition filed by five local people, including one Shahid Sarwar, challenging the legality of constructing the park.

Petitioners' lawyer Gias Uddin Chowdhury told The Daily Star that some influential people had been constructing the park named "Dream Park" in the government land without approval from the authorities concerned of the government.

Some important structures including the grave of former Jatiya Sangsad speaker Abdul Malek Ukil, Shaheed Minar, Bijoy Mancha and Kochikanchar Mela will be affected if the commercial park is constructed, he added.

## BCL beating sends Chhatra Dal leader of JU to hospital

JU CORRESPONDENT

A leader of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) suffered serious injuries in an attack by Bangladesh Chhatra League activists at Jahangirnagar University on Monday night.

Ibrahim Khalil Biplob, JCD vice president of JU unit, was first taken to Enam Medical College Hospital and then to the Bangladesh Spine & Orthopaedic Hospital, as he suffered fractures in the right hand and right leg.

JCD General Secretary Abdur Rahim Saikat said Biplob was attacked in front of the vice chancellor's residence around 9:30pm while going to a teacher's house to sit for a special exam.

Among the BCL attackers were deputy human resource secretary Firojuz Rahman Sobuj, assistant secretary Mehedi Hasan Roman and activists Soud Mishu, Ujjal Hossain, Saddam, Zubayer, Rokon, Imran, and Arif, he said.

They used iron rods and sticks. All the attackers are resident students of Moulana Bhasani Hall and followers of JU BCL Organising Secretary Morshidur Rahman Akanda, he added.

Akanda said, "Suspecting that Biplob might create unrest on the campus, some juniors beat him up."

JCD demanded steps against the BCL attackers within 48 hours, and threatened to otherwise launch tough protests, said a JCD press release.

"In the last couple of years, BCL goons attacked 30-40 JCD activists and leaders of JU unit, but the university authorities did not take any action against the people responsible, which encouraged the goons to repeat such crimes," claimed the JCD general secretary.

JU Assistant Proctor Mehedi Iqbal said, "Proper steps would be taken after getting the complaint."

### CNG sector owners for reduction of gas price

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government should cut the price of compressed natural gas (CNG) when reducing fuel oil prices, demanded businesspersons yesterday.

"If fuel oil prices are reduced and CNG price is hiked, it will create discrimination and chaos in the public transport sector," said a statement of the Bangladesh CNG Filling Station and Conversion Workshop Owners' Association, which raised the demand at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity.

Private entrepreneurs invested around Tk 3,500 crore in the CNG sector and vehicles owners spent around Tk 2,500 crore to run on CNG. So, the CNG sector will face a threat, if the price of CNG is not decreased proportionately, it said.

Moreover, people will be discouraged to use CNG, increasing air pollution, said the statement, read out by the association president, Masud Khan. Currently, per cubic foot of CNG is sold at Tk 35, he said.

The government plans to slash prices of diesel, kerosene, octane and petrol by 15 to 25 percent to allow the economy to benefit from the slump in global oil prices, according to media reports.

The price of octane may come down to Tk 84.15 a litre from Tk 99, petrol to Tk 81.60 from Tk 96 and diesel and kerosene to Tk 51 from Tk 68. Moreover, Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission has received proposals from gas distributors to hike the price of CNG.



Police rescuing a passenger from a CNG-run auto-rickshaw after it turned sideways, when a speeding private car, losing balance, hit it from behind. Reckless driving is a leading cause of road accidents yet adequate efforts to make roads safer or implementing strict laws against the offenders seem like a long shot. The photo was taken in front of the capital's Chandrima Udyan yesterday morning.

### Discussion on books about Abul Mansur Ahmad today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Abul Mansur Ahmad Smriti Parishad will hold a discussion on two books about Abul Mansur Ahmad today at Nalini Kanta Bhattashali Gallery of Bangladesh National Museum at 4:30pm.

Nurul Amin and Emran Mahfuz, editors of the books, "Abul Mansur Ahmad'er Shreshthagalpa", published by Daily Star Books, and "Abul Mansur Ahmad Smarakgrantha", published by Prothoma Publication, would share their experiences of editing the books. Presided over by Prof Emeritus Rafiqul Islam, the discussions include Prof Biswajit Ghosh and Akhtar Hossain.

The event would be organised with the assistance of the publishers.

### Indictment

FROM PAGE 4 The ACC filed the case in December 2007 accusing that Khaleida and several others abused power to award a gas exploration and extraction deal to Canadian company Niko when she was prime minister between 2001 and 2006.

The High Court on June 18 last year rejected a petition filed by Khaleida challenging the legality of the opening and proceedings of the case.

It also ordered the BNP chief to surrender before the trial court within two months after its verdict reaches the trial court.

Complying with the HC order, Khaleida on November 30 last year surrendered to a Dhaka court and secured bail in the case.

Earlier on February 28 this year, the court deferred the hearing.

### BMW with fake papers seized in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A black BMW manufactured in 2003 and costing around Tk 5 crore was seized from a house in Block F of the capital's Banani around 6:00pm during a raid, said customs intelligence.

The vehicle's registration number and fitness certificate are fake, said sources in customs intelligence, adding that the owner bought it three years back.

Moinul Khan, director general of customs intelligence, said they acted on a tip-off and a deed showed that it was sold by a man from Sylhet.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police Assistant Commissioner (Gulshan zone) Rafiqul Islam said he was unaware of the incident.

### US Embassy closed tomorrow

CITY DESK

The American Embassy will remain closed on April 14 to celebrate the Bangla New Year, a Bangladeshi national holiday.

The closure also includes the Consular Section and the American Center with the Archer K Blood American Center Library and the EducationUSA, Student Advising Center.

American citizens can call at 5566-2000 for emergency services.

### DPDC snaps illegal electricity connection of Dhaka hotel

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A special taskforce of Dhaka Power Distribution Company Ltd (DPDC) yesterday snapped the electricity connection to a high-rise hotel in the capital's Moghbazar for using electricity illegally.

It also fined Abdul Kalam, owner of the hotel, Green Tower, Tk 10.6 lakh.

On information, the taskforce raided the hotel and found that 70 percent of electricity usage of the building was not being recorded in the electricity metre.

A case was filed.

### BNP calls 7.05pc growth projection a stunt

FROM PAGE 3 set to break out of its 6 percent growth "trap" this fiscal year as per a provisional estimate.

"This is a matter of pride for the whole nation as we're going to achieve a 7.05 percent GDP growth rate for the first time," he told reporters after a meeting of the National Economic Council (NEC), chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

In addition, he said, the per capita income would rise to \$1,466 from \$1,316 in the current year.

Refuting the claim that the country would grow at 7 percent for the first time, Fakhru said the growth rate hit 7.06 percent

during the BNP-led government in the 2005-2006 fiscal year.

He said BBS hurriedly made its estimate at the behest of the government. "The country's indicators of macro economy are not that much encouraging."

"It is not possible that the GDP would grow at 7.05 percent, given the present sorry state of the economy and investment. If the country's investment increases, import of machineries and raw materials will also increase for setting up industrial units. The demand for personal loan will also increase. But the import of raw materials and machineries has decreased."

### Eminent citizens demand Manna's release

FROM PAGE 3 Prof Abdul Kashem Fazlul Haque and Dr Asif Nazrul, Gonoshasthaya Kendra founder Dr Zafarullah Chowdhury, Manabzamin Editor Matiuur Rahman Chowdhury, educationist Mahbub Ullah, New Age Editor Nurul Kabir, journalist Mahfuz Ullah and Amader

Orthoneti Editor Nayeemul Islam Khan.

Manna was arrested on February 24, 2015, a day after his telephone conversation with BNP leader Sadeque Hossain Khoka about strengthening the anti-government movement, among many other issues, was leaked. A sedition case was filed against the two on March 5.

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