

CID submits 2nd autopsy report to court

UNB, Comilla

The Criminal Investigation Department submitted the second autopsy report of slain college student Sohagi Jahan Tonu to a local court yesterday.

Gazi Mohammad Ibrahim, CID inspector in Comilla, submitted the report to Senior Judicial Magistrate Muntahim Billah at noon.

On Sunday, the chief of the forensic medicine department at Comilla Medical College said they couldn't determine the cause of Tonu's death, but found "sign of sexual intercourse" at the second autopsy.

Tonu, a student of history at Comilla Victoria Govt College, was found dead in a bush inside Comilla Cantonment on March 20.

On June 7, the CID submitted the full report of the DNA tests on the victim's clothes and teeth to the medical board, formed for the second autopsy.

Earlier, a Comilla court had ordered the CID to hand over the DNA report to the media board.

Tonu's body was exhumed from her grave on March 30 for collecting DNA samples.

The first autopsy, conducted by Dr Sharmin Sultana of the same medical college, didn't find the cause of death or evidence of rape.

Troops

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"This is the prime minister's pledge," he said while replying to a query if any discussion was held about Bangladesh's possibility of joining the current Saudi-led military alliance.

The meeting was held at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban, while the briefing was held at the secretariat. The PM apprised her cabinet colleagues of the outcome of her recent visit to Saudi Arabia.

The cabinet secretary said during the PM's KSA visit, she held bilateral talks with the Saudi king, nine of his cabinet colleagues and chiefs of different organisations.

He said the Saudi businessmen expressed their interest to invest in Bangladesh during the trip.

Besides, from now on, Bangladeshi female workers will be able to take their families to the KSA and live in a family environment, and they will also be able to change their jobs. Before the PM's visit, the workers did not get these facilities, said Alam.

The cabinet adopted a resolution greeting the PM for becoming as one of the world's most powerful women in 2016. Hasina ranked 36th on the 2016 Power Women list of Forbes magazine published on June 6.

It also approved the draft Bangladesh National Cadet Corps Act-2016 to bring BNCC under a legal framework. As per the law, there will be a separate directorate of the BNCC under the defense ministry.

Another suspect

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pro-Jamaat-e-Islami student body. Nityaranjan, 60, was hacked to death around 5:00am on Friday when he was taking his regular morning walk about half a kilometre away from the ashram, the latest in a spate of such killings in the country.

Liton Kumar Shah, additional superintendent of police in Pabna, said police were investigating the murder case, keeping a few things in their mind.

Natore arrestee on remand A Natore court yesterday placed Monwara Begum Moni on a three-day remand in a case filed for the murder of Christian trader Sunil Gomez.

Senior Judicial Magistrate Shamsul Al Amin passed the order after the investigation officer of the case produced her before the court, seeking a five-day remand for her, reports our Natore correspondent.

She was arrested from the capital's Badda area on Saturday.

Unidentified criminals hacked Sunil to death at his grocery shop in Bonpara Christian Mission Palli under Baraigram upazila on June 5.

Apex court

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The attack on the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway took place when the van carrying the three was going to Mymensingh to produce them before a court in a sedition case.

The convicts are Rakib Hasan Russell alias Hafez Mahmud, Salauddin Ahmed alias Salehin and Zahidul Islam alias "Boma" Mizan. Rakib and Salauddin were sentenced to death and "Boma" Mizan to 37 years in prison in different cases.

Trump seems

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"Look, we're led by a man that either is not tough, not smart, or he's got something else in mind," Trump said in a lengthy interview on Fox News early yesterday morning.

"And the something else in mind -- you know, people can't believe it. People cannot, they cannot believe that President Obama is acting the way he acts and can't even mention the words 'radical Islamic terrorism.' There's something going on. It's inconceivable. There's something going on."

In that same interview, Trump was asked to explain why he called for Obama to resign in light of the shooting and he answered, in part: "He doesn't get it or he gets it better than anybody understands -- it's one or the other and either one is unacceptable."

After the deadly shooting in an Orlando nightclub on June 12, some in politics pushed for stricter gun control while others asked for prayers. GOP presidential candidate Donald Trump ignited controversy with his tweets.

Obama said yesterday there was no evidence that the massacre in a Florida nightclub was directed from abroad or was part of a larger plot.

After being briefed on America's most deadly mass shooting in modern times by top security aides, Obama said "we don't yet know" the shooter's motivations.

Obama called the shooting a case of "homegrown extremism" Monday, saying that the gunman appeared to be "inspired by various extremist information that was disseminated over the Internet."

"At this stage we see no clear evidence that he was directed externally," Obama said.

"It does appear that at the last minute he announced allegiance to ISIL, but there is no evidence so far that he was in fact directed by them," he said, using an acronym for the Islamic State group.

"There's also no direct evidence that he was part of a larger plot."

IS earlier claimed responsibility for the massacre, saying in a radio bulletin that it was carried out by "one of the soldiers of the caliphate."

Trump on Sunday had called for Obama to resign for not using the words "radical Islam" in his comments about the shooting. He also renewed his call for a temporary ban on Muslims entering the United States.

During an appearance on the "Today" show later yesterday morning, Savannah Guthrie pushed Trump to explain what he meant in the earlier interview.

"Well there are a lot of people that think maybe he doesn't want to get it," Trump said. "A lot of people think maybe he doesn't want to know about it. I happen to think that he just doesn't know what he's doing, but there are many

people that think maybe he doesn't want to get it. He doesn't want to see what's really happening. And that could be."

Guthrie asked Trump why that would be, and the presumptive Republican presidential nominee responded: "Because Savannah, Savannah, why isn't he addressing the issue? He's not addressing the issue. He's not calling it what it is. This is radical Islamic terrorism. This isn't fighting Germany; this isn't fighting Japan, where they wear uniforms."

Trump seemed to repeatedly accuse Obama yesterday of identifying with radicalised Muslims who have carried out terrorist attacks in the United States and being complicit in the mass shooting.

"We have many people coming in whose hate is equal to his and just as bad and even worse, frankly, and we have to stop people from coming in," Trump said, adding that gun control measures also could not stop a terrorist attack.

"The problem was that we have a maniac, we have a madman. He could have used a bomb. He could have used other things, just as easily, just as easily," Trump said. "It would have been, probably, even more devastating. So that's not the problem."

Trump has repeatedly taken credit for having been "right" on issues of terror, and yesterday he continued to face scrutiny for a tweet he posted on Sunday that read: "Appreciate the congrats for being right on radical Islamic terrorism, I don't want congrats, I want toughness & vigilance. We must be smart!"

"I'm getting thousands of letters and tweets that I was right about the whole situation," Trump said on Fox News. "I mean, I've been right about a lot of things, frankly... I was right about many, many things."

HILLARY ON GUN CONTROL

Hillary Clinton yesterday warned against demonising Muslim Americans.

In proposals for dealing with threats of violence at home and abroad, Hillary called for increased efforts to remove Islamic State propaganda from the Internet, more air strikes in the areas held by the militant group and better coordination with allies in the region.

She specifically called out three US allies - Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Kuwait - for allowing its citizens to fund mosques and schools that train jihadists.

She also called for stricter gun control laws, reiterating prior calls to prohibit those on terrorism watch lists from buying guns. She pointed out that while the Federal Bureau of Investigation was aware of Mateen as a possible threat, he was still able to legally purchase a gun.

[From Washington Post, Reuters, AFP]

Ashraf tears into JSD

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decision, he will have to repent throughout his entire life for the wrong decision," said Ashraf, also public administration minister.

JSD President Hasanul Haque Inu holds the portfolio of information minister in the Sheikh Hasina-led cabinet.

At the programme, Ashraf said, "Those who talk aloud about revolution can never make a revolution successful. And those who talk tall have very little courage. Imprudent people can never do a constructive work."

"Those who separated from Chhatra League after the independence came up with the theory of scientific socialism and formed Jasad [JSD]. They are 100 percent hypocrites."

Ashraf alleged that those JSD leaders tried to distort the history of the Liberation War.

"If Jasad [JSD] had not created grounds for Bangabandhu's assassination, today's Bangladesh could have been different," said the AL spokesperson.

Criticism of the JSD by ruling AL leaders for its role in the post-

independence period is nothing new.

Last year, several AL leaders, including Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, Mahbul Alam Hanif and Bahauddin Nasim came down heavily on the JSD, and accused the party of creating grounds for Bangabandhu's assassination in 1975.

Yesterday, Ashraf advised BCL leaders and activists to learn from history and stay away from the "reckless" JSD.

He said Bangladesh is now progressing fast under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina but it is not possible for her alone to implement all people-oriented development work.

The AL leader urged them to help build the "Sonar Bangla" as dreamt by Bangabandhu.

AL Joint General Secretary Jahangir Kabir Nanak, Central Working Committee members Sujit Roy Nandi and RAM Ubaidul Muktedir Chowdhury, former BCL president Mainuddin Hasan Chowdhury, former BCL general secretary Ishaque Ali Khan Panna and former BCL president Liaquat Ali Shikdar also spoke.

Exporters in trouble

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This time, vegetables and betel leaves exporters are again losing money hand over fist. They are having to take back the goods from the airport for missing scheduled Biman flights and sell them in the local market.

"The incidents of exporters taking back goods from the airport are happening frequently due to the acute shortage of pallets, containers and other necessary equipment," said Foyez Ahmed, proprietor of Tahura International, a clearing and forwarding (C&F) agent and exporter of perishable goods.

Foyez said six consignments were booked and properly screened at the airport, but the cargo could not be sent timely due to shortage of pallets. The plane left the goods on the ground as those could not be loaded on time, he said.

Tahura could not send 15,000kg vegetables and betel leaves worth \$75,000 on June 7 and it was not the only C&F agent who had failed to ship that day.

The clients of Tahura had to sell the goods at the capital's Shyam Bazar Wholesale Market at throw-away prices. Mohammed Mansur, general secretary of Bangladesh Fruits, Vegetables & Allied Products Exporters' Association, said the exporters did not face the crisis of loading equipment in the case of foreign airlines.

"The crisis of pallets of Biman is nothing new. This is a problem of at least 10 years. But the Biman staffs managed the crisis somehow. But, now

the crisis has turned acute. This is why the exports of perishable goods are hurt at the airport," Mansur said.

The screening of goods at the airport improved as the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh in March installed a separate machine only for screening perishable goods.

"Now, we are facing another kind of crisis. We tried to meet the Biman authorities several times to discuss the issue. However, we are not getting the appointments of the Biman high-ups," Mansur said.

The export process of perishable goods should be sped up as exporters are sending a lot of jackfruits and mangoes abroad alongside vegetables and betel leaves, he said.

Jackfruits and mangoes go bad quickly.

In addition to Middle East countries, the European countries have also become a big market for the national fruit and mangoes. A lot of Bangladeshis there consume these fruits, he said.

Every day, more than 100 tonnes of perishable goods are carried by different airlines from the Dhaka airport, Mansur said, adding that almost half of it are carried by Biman.

Mahbulul Anam, president of Bangladesh Freight Forwarders' Association said Biman has a crisis of pallets, containers and trolleys and the ground services of the airport should be improved by Biman since export by air was increasing every day.

HC stays

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proceedings of all the 82 cases against Anam have been stayed.

Earlier on April 11, the same bench had stayed the proceedings of 72 cases.

Yesterday, the court also extended its April 11 order for next six months, Anam's lawyer Barrister Abbas Uddin told this correspondent.

Barrister Rafique-ul Huq, Barrister Abbas and Barrister Margub Kabir appeared for the Star editor, while Assistant Attorney General Arobindu Kumar Roy represented the state.

A total of 83 lawsuits, including 17 petitions seeking sedition cases, were filed against Anam in 56 districts. A Sylhet court dismissed one of the cases on March 14.

The case spree against the editor began days after he made an introspective comment at a TV talk show on February 3 about a lapse in his editorial judgment in publishing some reports, based on information given by the Taskforce Interrogation Cell during the 2007-08 caretaker government rule, without being able to verify those independently.

The cases against Anam drew condemnation from local and foreign journalists and their unions as well as human rights bodies.

He has secured bail in all 82 cases from the HC and lower courts concerned.

Transit gets

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India would have to pay other charges, he said.

If the Bangladesh side provides security for consignments, it would cost the Indian side an additional Tk 50 for transport of a tonne of goods from Ashuganj to Akhaura, said the BIWTA official.

The Indian side would give Tk 10 for shipment of one tonne of goods through the two canals -- the Mongla Ghosiakhali canal and the Gabkhan Canal.

Labour handling and other charges would cost the users Tk 70 a tonne at Ashuganj port. Besides, piloting charge would be Tk 2,100 and berthing charge a minimum of Tk 250 per consignment, said Mofizur.

The fees were fixed after analysing opinions of Bangladesh Tariff Commission and different ministries, and government high-ups, he added.

On a trial basis, India used the route to bring a consignment of iron rods to Agartala three years ago.

At Delhi's request, Dhaka also allowed it to use the route for carrying heavy machinery to Palatana power plant in Tripura and also 10,000 tonnes of rice to the north-eastern state.

According to Mofizur, a consignment should take around 10 days to reach Tripura from Kolkata via Ashuganj.

But it would take about two weeks for the first Indian consignment to reach Tripura through the route, as the ship carrying the cargo of corrugated iron sheets faced problems.

Siddiqui said they had initially thought that the fees would have to be deposited with the National Board of Revenue office in Ashuganj.

But when the ship reached the port in Khulna's Angtiara on June 7, customs officials told the vessel's crew to go to Khulna to deposit the fees with the NBR office there and get clearance, he said.

The ship had been moored at Angtiara for around four days and finally set out for Ashuganj on June 11 after the crew got the clearance.

Siddiqui said it would be convenient for them if they could deposit the fees with the NBR offices in Dhaka or Ashuganj.

He, however, said his company had received cooperation from all the government agencies concerned.

The goods are being carried under transhipment arrangement, which means offloading a container from one ship (generally at a hub port) and loading it onto another to be carried to the final port of discharge.

According to BIWTA officials, though the transhipment facility has been given through Ashuganj, the port there is not yet ready for it.

Under a Tk 400-crore financial credit from India, a modern inland container depot was supposed to be built in Ashuganj for smooth transit.

Construction of the depot was delayed because of land acquisition problems and non-disbursement of Indian funds, they said.

However, Bangladesh spent around Tk 10 crore from its own funds to facilitate transit, they said.

At present, trucks from Kolkata have to travel around 1,600km to reach Agartala.

But the distance would be just 800km if they travel through Bangladesh, said Mofizur.

And with the drop in distance comes a significant fall in costs.

SK Mahfuz Hamid, a member of the Bangladesh team negotiating the transit issue with the Indian side, said the cost of transporting goods to Agartala from Kolkata now is \$67 per tonne and it takes 30 days for trucks to reach there.

But if the trucks travel through the Kolkata-Ashuganj-Agartala route, the cost would be a maximum of \$35 per tonne and it would then take around 10 days to reach the destination, said Hamid, also managing director of shipping company Gulf Orient Seaways.

Rising number

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"preventable calamities" and worrying trends in human rights around the world, including detailed concerns about the situation in more than 50 countries.

"I note recent reports of police arrests, and I urge that investigating and prosecuting the perpetrators of these vicious crimes be made a priority, with full respect for human rights," he said.

He also urged all government officials and political and religious leaders in Bangladesh to unequivocally condemn these attacks on freedom and to do more to protect affected groups.

Meanwhile, international groups working on press freedom and freedom of expression, including the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), made a joint submission to the UNHRC calling for urgent and concrete steps to reverse the deteriorating climate for free expression in Bangladesh.

The joint statement said a "string of murders" of bloggers and publishers since February last year, for which no one has been convicted, has produced an "atmosphere of fear".

It said the mainstream press, meanwhile, continues to face an array of challenges, ranging from imprisonment of journalists to legal threats.

The written submission was made by PEN International, Canadian Journalists for Free Expression, Center for Inquiry, Committee to Protect Journalists, Dansk PEN, English PEN, European Humanist Federation, Finnish PEN, Freemuse, Icelandic PEN, Index on Censorship, International Humanist and Ethical Union, International Publishers Association, Norsk PEN, PEN America, PEN Bangladesh, PEN Melbourne, Reporters Without Borders and PEN Sweden.

URGENT STEPS NEEDED

The international organisations said the recent years have seen a serious decline in respect for freedom of expression and the associated rights of freedom of association, assembly and of religion or belief in Bangladesh, a member of the UNHRC.

Deeply entrenched and widening political differences between the ruling Awami League, the opposition BNP and their allies were contributing to a government crackdown on freedom of expression, with Bangladesh's vibrant civil society also under attack, the statement read.

It said legislative changes, poor law enforcement, lack of governmental

support for the principle of freedom of expression, attempts to undermine independent media and a justice system "ill-equipped" to provide recourse to victims of rights violations have all contributed to the silencing of dissenting voices, through murder, imprisonment, self-censorship or exile.

Urgent and concrete steps were needed to reverse this trend and to ensure a climate where political, religious and other views may be debated and discussed in safety and where civil society is respected and enabled to fulfill its vital function of holding government to account, the organisations observed.

On attacks on bloggers, publishers, academics, civil society activists and religious figures, they said since bloggers-led protests demanding capital punishment for war crimes committed during Bangladesh's Liberation War and calling for ban on religious politics broke out in 2013, radical Islamist groups have claimed the killings of seven bloggers and freethinkers and their publishers, six of them since February last year.

The attacks widened to include civil society actors, academics and religious figures with diverse views.

The statement said while condemning these attacks, the Bangladesh authorities repeatedly made statements and took actions implying that the responsibility for avoiding such attacks lies with the victims.

'PROBE ALL MURDERS'
In the wake of worsening spiral of violence, the signatories to the joint statement urged the UNHRC to press the Bangladesh government to thoroughly investigate the murder of bloggers, publishers, academics, civil society activists and religious minority figures.

They wanted an end to the culture of impunity for human rights abuses, whether committed by state or non-state actors and the police ensure adequate protection for all dissenting and minority voices, however controversial, particularly those who have been publicly targeted for attack.

The signatories called upon Bangladesh to unequivocally uphold people's right to freely express views, in accordance with the constitution, including of those who disagree with or question the government.

They also urged Bangladesh to release immediately and unconditionally anyone held solely for peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression, including anyone imprisoned for expressing views about religion.

Hunger stalks life

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"The government did not give us the carrying cost. So, it becomes difficult for us to distribute food to the affected families right away," Anwar said.

However, he claimed that Tk 2 lakh was already spent on carrying food to the two unions, which he had managed from his own pocket and other projects of the government.

The UNO said he would later request the relief and disaster management ministry for refund.

Of the allocated rice, only 36 tonnes have been distributed among the affected families, said Alamgir Hossain, project implementation officer (PIO) of Thanchi.

"We need time to distribute food due to communication problem."

Since the river water has risen due to rains, it is now not possible to carry food to the remote areas, said Thanchi Upazila Chairman Kwa Hla Ching.

Asked about recent media reports on food corruption, he denied such allegations and said the rice allocated by the government had reached Thanchi bazaar.

However, both the newly-elected Tindu and Remakri union parishad chairmen said an insignificant amount of government relief had reached those areas.

Adivasis have reportedly been scouring jungles for what they can eat to survive.

Remakri Union Parishad Chairman Mui Shwe Thoai Marma said the former chairman used to give relief materials to people in loans locally known as "Dadan".

One sack of rice was given for a payback of two sacks the next year, Mui added.

Responding to the allegation, Maliram Tripura over the phone said he was not the only one involved in the illegal act. The higher authorities at the upazila level, including officials responsible for food distribution, and ruling party men had been behind the corruption, he added.

Tindu former chairman Shigoram Tripura could not be reached for comments.

Food shortage is not something unusual in remote areas of Thanchi. Every year, indigenous people face such a situation because of damage by rats or insects to jhum crops they harvest.

This year, the crisis worsened since indigenous people could not cultivate enough crops for themselves last year for incessant rain.

Apart from the allotment of rice to tackle the ongoing crisis, the govern-

ment allocates food every year under different schemes like Vulnerable Group Development, Vulnerable Group Feeding, General Relief, Open Market Sale etc.

In fiscal 2015-16, the total amount of food allotted for Thanchi is 964 tonnes, PIO Alamgir said.

However, only 400 tonnes of food reached Thanchi food store, said District Food Controller Subir Nath Chowdhury. The remaining food was collected from the district headquarters and Chittagong by local representatives.

"If local representatives want to collect food [allocated for their areas] from the district town, we cannot help but give permission," Subir said.

Meanwhile, contractors made bills with the help of food department officials for transporting the food, which they actually did not carry to Thanchi upazila from the district town, at Tk 1,680 per tonne, said a few of them asking for anonymity.

"There is a syndicate of people, including ruling party men, behind the malpractice," one of them said.

Every time news on food crisis in Thanchi appears in the media, the government rushes for a temporary solution and so the problem arises again the following year.

Ataf Hossen, deputy director of the agricultural extension department, emphasised the importance of improving communication networks for a permanent solution.

Assam facing

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The resolution said the landslide victory of BJP in Assam "has given us a great opportunity to expand our footprint in the entire North Eastern region. The North Eastern region is important for us electorally in local terms; development-wise in national terms; and pivotal in international strategic terms."

Indicating its decision to assume power in eight northeastern states, BJP said the party had constituted the North East Democratic Alliance (NEDA) saying the alliance of non-Congress political parties from the eight states "will emerge as a powerhouse of faster development of the entire region. It will also help us expand the party in the entire region."

Prime Minister Modi and BJP President Amit Shah addressed the National Executive meeting.