ICT accepts war crimes charges against 13 men of Bagerhat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday accepted the charges brought against 13 Bagerhat Razakar suspects for crimes during the 1971 Liberation War.

The three-member tribunal led by Justice Anwarul Haque also directed the superintendent of police of Bagerhat to submit a report over nine fugitive accused in the case by August 7. The prosecution on April 19 pressed seven specific charges against the 13.

The charges are: killing 10 people, injuring two others and looting 40-50 houses in Capri and Teligati villages, murdering four people in Hajirakhali and Boikhali villages; killing two unarmed freedom fighters in Dhuligati village; murdering four people in Bilkul and Bichat villages; killing a man in Bilkul village; and raping four women for over a month. The accused are Khan Ashraf Ali, 65; Khan Akram Hossain, 60; Sultan Ali Khan, 68; Rustam Ali Mollah, 70; Edris Ali Mollah, 64; Moksed Ali Didar, 83; Sheikh Mohammad Ukil Uddin, 62; Sheikh Edris Ali, 61; Rafiqul Islam alias Babul, 64; Moniruzzaman Hawlader, 69; Hashem Ali Sheikh, 79; Azhar Ali Sikder, 64, and Mokbul Mollah, 79.

Of them, Akram, Edris Ali Mollah, Ukil Uddin and Mokbul Mollah are in custody and the rest on the run, said Prosecutor Sabina Yesmin Khan Munni.

Meanwhile, the tribunal yesterday directed the prosecution to press charges on July 31 against a former Bangalee army official who allegedly worked for the Pakistan army and committed crimes during the War.

Muhamed Shahidullah, also known as Capt Shahidullah,from Comilla's Daudkandi, had involvement in confinement, torture, abduction, looting, arson and killing of at least three people, said the investigation agency.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

A woman dumps garbage from a bridge into what was once a channel of the Buriganga in Kamrangirchar area. Land grabbers, with the help of garbage collectors, adopted this slow but gradual method to encroach upon invaluable land on the outskirts of the capital city.

NEWS IN *brief*

Khaleda invites Hasina to iftar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia has invited ruling Awami League President Sheikh Hasina, also prime minister, to attend an iftar banquet on June 5.

AL general secretary Obaidul Quader and other senior leaders were also invited to the iftar Khaleda will host for political leaders at Basundhara International Convention Centre in the capital.

A four-member BNP delegation went to AL president's Dhanmondi office with an invitation card around 12:15pm yesterday, said Taiful Islam Tipu, assistant office secretary of BNP. Former AL assistant secretary Sikander Ali received the letter on Hasina's behalf, he told reporters.

Nasim for alternative livelihood for tobacco growers

BSS, *Dhaka*

Health and Family Welfare Minister Mohammad Nasim yesterday said a sharp rise in tobacco cultivation is leaving a negative impact on food production in the country.

"We should find out ways of alternative livelihood for the farmers who are engaged in tobacco cultivation," he told a discussion in the capital's Osmani Memorial Auditorium, marking World No Tobacco Day.

With the theme "Tobacco - a threat to development", the day was observed in the country and elsewhere yesterday.

Elevated expressway from airport to Savar EPZ in the offing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has planned to construct an elevated expressway from the city's airport to Savar Export Processing Zone (EPZ), Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday told the parliament.

"With the financial assistance of the Chinese government, work of the important project is likely to start from December," the minister said in reply to lawmakers' queries.

In reply to another query, the minister informed the House that as many as 2,463 people were killed and 2,134 others suffered injuries in 2,566 road accidents across the country last year.

The minister, quoting the police report conducted by "Accident Research Institute, Buet," also informed the parliament that a total 2,958 people died and 2,686 others injured in some 3,381 road mishaps occurred in 3,381 street accidents in 2009.

A government-supervised survey, however, reveals that on an average, 64 people die every day from injuries suffered in traffic accidents in Bangladesh. The Centre for Injury Prevention and Research, Bangladesh (CIPRB) conducted the survey under the directive of the Directorate General of Health Services.

SSC exam result review applications on rise

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The number of candidates seeking review of their answer sheets in Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and equivalent examinations is on the rise.

This year, some 2.44 lakh review applications were filed under 10 education boards after the results of SSC and equivalent examinations were published, according to officials of Dhaka Education Board. Last year, the number was around 2 lakh.

On Tuesday, results of this year's review applications were published. Some of the applicants in every board got their previous results changed after the review.

In Dhaka board alone, results of 1,679 candidates were changed after the review. Many, who initially did not achieve GPA-5, got the highest grade point average later on. Even some students, who flunked, passed the test. Similarly, 687 students got their results changed in Chittagong board. Of them, 52 students, who failed in the test, eventually passed the examination. A total of 28 candidates got GPA-5, according to the officials of the board.

In Sylhet board, the results of 234 were changed with 28 obtaining GPA-5. Thirty-five students passed anew.

Similar is the picture in Barisal board where results of 209 candidates were changed in the review. Twenty-one got GPA-5 and 23 passed the test afresh.

In Comilla Board, 575 students got their results changed. Of them, 44 obtained GPA-5, and 139, who failed in the previous evaluation, passed after the review, confirmed Kaiser Ahmed, controller of examinations of Comilla Education Board, reports our Comilla correspondent.

Every year, a huge number of examinees apply for reviewing their scripts as they are dissatisfied with their grades. The review application for a single paper costs a student a non-refundable fee of Tk 150.

Officials of Dhaka board said the mistakes in evaluating the answer scripts happen because of examiners' hasty move to prepare the results in a short time.

Due to the hurried move, they said, the examiners sometimes forget to give number or make mistakes in counting.

Participatory polls

FROM PAGE 3

Noting that the US is one of the Bangladesh's development partners, she said, "Election commissioners need our help to ensure these elections are free, fair and credible."

To make the next election fair and credible, Bernicat focused on ensuring congenial atmosphere so that everyone can participate in electoral process with confidence.

She said the CEC informed them that Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) would not be used in the election if any party opposes the initiative.

EC Secretary Muhammad Abdullah said the US ambassador had raised the issue of January 5 election and told the CEC that the election could not be called a participatory one as a major party did not join it.

She told the CEC that they want no more repetition of such election, which was largely boycotted by the political parties.

He said Bernicat had also expressed concern over irregularities and violence in the country's recent elections, particularly in the January 5 election.

"In response, the CEC told her if the next election is inclusive, the problems will be minimised. If the next election is participatory one, the polls will be fair and free," Abdullah quoted the CEC as saying.

SC verdict on Moudud's residence June 4

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A four-member bench of the Supreme Court led by the chief justice yesterday fixed June 4 for passing an order on two separate review petitions filed against its verdict which declared the Gulshan residence, where senior BNP leader Moudud Ahmed has been living, an abandoned property.

On August 2 last year, the SC scrapped a High Court verdict that had directed the authorities to mutate the Gulshan residence, where Moudud has been living using the name of his brother -- Manzur Ahmed, and also ruled that the house land is an abandoned property.

The SC order means that Moudud has to leave the residence, said Anti-Corruption Commission lawyer Advocate Khurshid Alam Khan.

Earlier, Manzur and ACC filed separate petitions with the SC.

The ACC in 2013 lodged the case with Gulshan Police Station against Moudud and Manzur on the charge of grabbing an abandoned public land -- stretching over around one bigha and 13 katha -- worth over Tk 300 crore in Gulshan between 1978 and 2006.

Death anniversary

CITY DESK

Today is the seventh death anniversary of Hasina Banu Younus; wife of late Ahmed Younus, former joint-secretary of Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation and founder president of Rajshahi Zila Samity.

She lived in sector-3, Uttara Model Town, Dhaka. She received the "Ratnagarva Ma Award". Her eldest son is Ahmed Reza, a professor of English at Jahangirnagar University.

Journalists of Bangla daily Inqilab form a human chain demanding unpaid dues from the newspaper authorities in front of Jatiya Press Club yesterday. Journalist leaders from Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) and Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) also took part in the programme. PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Justice or else…

FROM PAGE 4

After she came back, she met Midul at a programme around eight months back and developed a relationship with him.

When informed about the money, Midul told her to settle the issue with the "intervention" of Rakib Sarker.

Both Midul and Rakib also collected a hefty amount to settle the issue, she claimed. "They also harassed me as I pressured them to settle the issue," the woman added.

Although two accused of the case -- Midul and Roni -- got arrested but the other accused, especially Rakib, is still roaming free and threatening her to withdraw their names from the case, she claimed.

"Due to the constant threat, I cannot go back home. My daughters also stopped going to school," she said.

Even police are also helping the rapists, she alleged. "They visited our home and threatened my father," she claimed.

Her father, who was also present at the briefing, demanded justice and sought punishment for the perpetrators.

Asked, Abul Kashem, an inspector at Joydebpur Police Station, also the case's investigation officer, said they do not care about what the woman said at the briefing.

"We have asked her to come to the police station but she disappeared after filing the case," he said. "If a complainant does not cooperate, it gets hard to continue the investigation."

Contacted, Rakib Sarker, an accused in the case, said he did not know the woman or her family. "So, why would I threaten them? This is nothing but a conspiracy of my political opponents to ruin my image."

Moudud's Niko trial stayed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday stayed for three months the trial proceedings against former BNP law minister Moudud Ahmed in Niko corruption case.

The Anti-Corruption Commission filed the corruption case in December 2007 over charges that BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and several others abused power to award a gas exploration and extraction deal to Canadian company Niko when she was the prime minister between 2001 and 2006.

On April 12, the HC cleared the way for a lower court to resume the trial proceedings against Moudud by rejecting his petition challenging the proceedings of the case.

Later, the BNP leader filed an appeal with the SC challenging the HC order and seeking a stay on the trial proceedings against him.

Water crisis all around Dhaka

FROM PAGE 3

deep tube wells are the main reasons behind the crisis.

Meantime, the water crisis in Kakrail also intensified.

Lily Costa, a resident of the area, said they have been suffering from a shortage of water for the last two months. "Every night we stay up late to collect water. If we are lucky, we get water for 30 minutes at best," she said.

Lily said a few building owners installed deep tube wells, which provide some relief to the residents. "But those without access to the deep tube wells are the worst sufferers."

Even Wasa's water carrying trucks are not available all the time, she said. "In every three days, such trucks will show up in the area and people will rush to get water from it."

Lily said they have also contacted the Wasa water suppliers. They said as water from the trucks is in high demand, they cannot supply it on a regular basis.

"With viral fever all around and this scorching hot weather, the water shortage has made our lives miserable," she said.

Meanwhile, residents of Shewrapara are also hit hard by the water crisis. Many of them alleged that the price of water they buy from Wasa went up due to the huge demand.

"We've been purchasing water jars at Tk 60 each though the price was Tk 50 just two days back," said Shaheen, a local.

Also, several hundred residents at Mirpur section-6 are not getting sufficient water from the Wasa supply lines for the last one month.

"We have been facing the water crisis since the installation of new lines," said KM Moshiur Rahman, a resident of Mirpur-6. He said in the last one month they did not get any water except for a week.

Contacted, Managing Director of Dhaka Wasa Taqsem A Khan said, "In general, during dry seasons, problems arise in some areas since the deep tube wells malfunction. Also, load shedding and declining water level are the other reasons behind the water shortage."

But there has been no reduction in the water production, he said.

He, however, said people are facing water crises in some areas.

The water crisis at sector 11 and 14 in Uttara occurred due to load shedding, which disrupted the water supply system in the areas, he added.

"We're trying to solve the crisis," said Wasa MD. "We are supplying water through the water trucks or if needed rationing the supply," he said.

HC summons four cops

FROM PAGE 3

Star that his client had issued a show cause notice to the SI and constables for the handcuffing of the student.

Nazmul Hossain fell sick on Saturday while protesting the death of two JU students in a road accident in Savar. On Monday, police showed 42 JU students, including Nazmul, arrested in the case.

During treatment, one of Nazmul's hands was handcuffed to the hospital bed. When he requested removal of the handcuffs so he could eat, police refused to do so, witnesses and his fellows alleged.

Narrating the ordeal, Nazmul yesterday told The Daily Star that a constable even threatened to shoot him and tie his legs if he spoke further.

Meanwhile, Ain o Salish Kendra expressed concern over the arrest and harassment of female students of JU in police custody on Sunday.

The rights body also demanded action against the responsible upon investigation.

The Daily Star published a report yesterday under the headline "JU Vandalism Case: 12 female students talk of 'ordeal' in custody" where several female students alleged that policemen of Dhamrai Police Station "counted" at least 15 times to ensure whether there were 12 female students at the police station, which is tantamount to harassment.

They also alleged police were very rude to them and even hurled abuses when they were being taken inside a microbus to the police station. Another female student alleged that she was pushed and slapped by a policeman while she was getting into the microbus.

Firefighters a tap away

FROM PAGE 3

will inform fire service and traffic control room automatically after detecting smoke, he said.

The AFCS machine will be installed on the rooftop of a high-rise building and it will then detect smoke from every flat during any fire incident. For a 10-storey building it will need Tk 50,000 or Tk 55,000 to install the hardware, said Rafid. One can get the service at a cost of Tk 1,000 to Tk 1,500 and under the service, each family will get the smoke detector in their flats as well, he said.

"Brac will help us to implement the entire project," said Sabrina, the winning team leader of Buet firefighters at the Bracathon contest.

Nine arrested over

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A walkie-talkie and two pairs of handcuffs were also seized.

Detective officials said the gang members, posing as matchmakers to brides, invited their targets to their houses rented in Demra area.

The gang would then confine the targets and make them pose for indecent photographs with the gang's female members, said police officials.

Some of them would act as police personnel and journalists and demand ransom in exchange for their release. They would also rob the victims of their valuable possessions.

Mohammad Bashir Uddin, senior assistant commissioner of DB (east), said there might be 22 to 25 people working in such fraud gangs.