

Litu was not BCL activist

Claims Sylhet district unit; family files murder case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Bangladesh Chhatra League of Sylhet district unit in a statement has claimed that Khaleel Ahmed Litu, who was killed inside a classroom of Beambazar Government College in Sylhet on Monday, was not its activist.

The incident took place around an hour after two factions of the student front clashed on the campus over establishing supremacy.

The statement, received by The Daily Star yesterday, also claimed that Litu "mistakenly" shot himself while loading his revolver in the classroom.

However, the district unit BCL secretary Rayhan Chowdhury earlier told The Daily Star that Litu was a BCL activist and murdered by some outsiders.

Meanwhile on Monday night, Litu's father Khalil Uddin filed a murder case with Beambazar Police Station, accusing seven people by names and four to five others unnamed.

Police detained BCL activists Emdad, Fahad and Kamran on the spot immediately after the incident. Yesterday, they were shown arrested in the case. Later, police also arrested another BCL activist Dewar Hossain Mistu in Nayagram village of Beambazar.

The four BCL men were sent to jail yesterday after they were produced before Sylhet court, said Officer-in-Charge Chandan Kumar Chakrabarti.

On information gleaned from the arrestees, police recovered a revolver from a vegetable vendor's shop on the road in front of the college, said the OC.

The weapon might have been used in the incident, he added.

About the claim that Litu was a BCL activist, Rayhan Chowdhury said initially they got "misleading" information on Monday after the incident. Later, they came to know that Litu was not a student and ran a mobile phone shop, said Rayhan.

Shayan Chakma, additional superintendent of police in Sylhet, said investigation is going on to ascertain how Litu died.

The claim of BCL that he shot himself is baseless, Shayan added.

SM Jakir Hossain, general secretary of BCL district unit, said according to its charter, those who are not students cannot be BCL activists.

The college principal, Darshak Chandra Nath, said Litu was not a student of the institution and he was an outsider in the college.

Litu's family said he dropped out of school after completing class IX.



Once regarded as the lifeline for trade at the traditional business centres of the port city, the Chaktai canal has shrunk alarmingly due to encroachment over the years. Illegal structures on both sides continue to mushroom due to indifference of the authorities concerned. The rampant encroachment has narrowed down the water body, escalating residents' waterlogging woes. The photo was taken recently in Chaktai area.

A LIFELINE UNDER THREAT

Encroachment, waste dumping continue to choke Chaktai canal

SHAHADAT HOSSAIN, Cg

The 6.9km Chaktai canal, one of the main drainage channels of Chittagong city, has been shrivelled up noticeably, thanks to indiscriminate dumping of waste and rampant encroachment over the years.

The width of the canal – starting from Bahaddarhat area of the city and falling into the Karnaphuli River at Chaktai-Charmar-Gudam area – was about 65 feet on an average, as per the BS survey and 61 feet according to the BS survey. But now the width will be about 50 feet, said sources at the Chittagong City Corporation.

Consequently, during monsoon and high tide the canal – flowing through Shulokbhar, Chawkbazar, South Bakalia, West Bakalia, Dewanbazar and Boxirhat – overflows and inundates the adjoining localities.

During the rainy season, these areas remain waterlogged almost all the time and the residents go through untold sufferings.

Following a writ petition, filed by Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh, the High Court on June 6, 2016 directed the Chittagong District Administration to make a list of occupiers of the canal.

As per the statement, the administration submitted a list of 48 occupiers to HC in November last year. However, no progress to free the water body from illegal grabbing has been made yet.

Moreover the CCC, responsible for maintaining the drains and canals of the city, itself is in the list of the 48 occupiers.

According to the district administration, the 48 occupiers constructed different kinds of establishments occupying about 20,000 square feet of land of the canal.

The CCC constructed a four-storey building in Bahaddarhat about 793 square feet of land, occupying about 793 square feet of land.

Shahrear Khaled, 59, a member of Forum for Planned Chittagong, said the canal is not in its earlier state. Apart from illegal occupation, the depth of the canal also reduced significantly for not being maintained properly.

So water overflows nearby areas during monsoon and high tide, said Khaled, also a resident of Masterpool area beside the canal.

"To mitigate the waterlogging crisis in the city, the depth of the canal has to be increased and the illegal establishments



Not only the encroachment, the 6.9km canal is also swamped by many parts like this one in Masterpool area.

removed," he added. Shuvecha Ghosh, a resident of West Bakalia and an honours student of Nasirabad Government Women College said, "When it rains, the road in front of Chawkbazar Kitchen Market, which is my college route, goes under knee to waist deep water as Chaktai swells up."

"I have to walk through the filthy water to go to my college due to a shortage of public transport at that time," she said, adding, "Even hiring a rickshaw becomes difficult."

Sayed Golam Haider Minku, councillor of Ward-16 in Chawkbazar, said illegal occupation of the canal is one of the main reasons for waterlogging in many parts of Chawkbazar area.

The canal cannot contain rainwater for being silted up. Besides, people living beside the canal throw garbage in it which also obstructs the water flow, he further said.

Soon after the removal of the waste by the CCC, people again dump garbage in it, he added.

Jamal Hossain, organising secretary of Khattunagar Trade and Industries Association, said drives were conducted in

the canal area in 2007 during the period of caretaker government.

Later, portions of the canal again went under illegal occupation, said Jamal, also a former councillor of Boxirhat ward.

Abdul Jalil said, "We submitted the list of the illegal occupiers of the canal to the city. Only making the list of occupiers will not do. The authorities have to be serious to demolish them."

Regarding the list, Additional Deputy Commissioner (Revenue) Abdul Jalil said, "We submitted the list of the illegal occupiers to the HC and steps would be taken as per the HC direction."

Contacted, CCC Mayor AIM Nasir Uddin said they are working to increase the depth of the canal.

CCC is also conducting a survey to identify the occupiers. After that a massive drive to free the canal will be conducted, he informed.

They will cooperate with the district administration to demolish the illegal establishments.

"If any such establishment of CCC is found that will also be demolished," the mayor said.

CTG Waterlogging Big projects don't mean big success

Press conference told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cg

Chittagong city's waterlogging problem cannot be mitigated only through taking big projects like installing pump houses or sluice gates, said experts and environmentalists yesterday.

In this regard, the experts recommended excavating the city canals and removing illegal structures encroached upon the canals' banks.

They came up with the observation at a press conference organised by 'Forum for Planned Chittagong' in Chittagong Press Club.

The organisation's Vice President Engineer Subash Barua said the city canals have to be demarcated first as per Cadastral Survey (CS) and Revision Survey (RS) sheets.

Once demarcated, those have to be excavated for increasing their water containing capacity.

Moreover, as per the recommendations of the city master plan of 1995, Engineer Subash suggested setting up silt traps, renovating big water bodies, digging up new canals, and excavating the old ones.

"Or else, all the projects taken for mitigating waterlogging would fail," he observed.

Blaming the concerned government organisations engaged in development works of the city, Subash in the written statement said the port city is turning into a city of misery day by day due to the organisations' inefficiency in identifying the problems and the reasons behind those.

Forum President Dr Md Sikander Khan said through capital dredging, water holding capacity of the river Karnaphuli has to be enhanced.

The forum's leaders said at present, around 30 per cent areas of the city get inundated during rain.

Regular renovation and cleaning works of all the drains must be continued for draining out water easily from the city, they said.

They also urged the authorities concerned to establish tidal regulators at the points as per the city master plan.

For operation and maintenance of the regulators, the organisation also suggested forming a technical team.

Engineer ABMA Barua, architect Bidhan Basu, Member Secretary of Chittagong Centre for Advanced Study Dr Shamul Hossain, and artist Sharif Khaled spoke among others.

INDIAN STUDENT KILLING IN CTG Father files murder case against 8 students

MINHA UDDIN, Cg

The father of the deceased Indian student Atef Sheikh yesterday filed a murder case accusing eight students of the University of Science and Technology, Chittagong (USTC) including two of Atef's brother Indian students of USTC – Vinay and Jyotsna.

The five other accused students – three Indian and two Bangladeshi – are Debansu Winsin Singh, Gangmei Niraj, Tongbram Jyotsna Devi, Mahabakar Laishram, Mahalemanba Mayengbam, Athokpam Ronald, Promesh Chakma alias Tuku, and Sojol Chakma alias Moon.

"According to the complaint, Atef, a MBBS final-year student, used to live in a flat on the fourth floor of a six-story building in the port city of Akhbar Shah area along with two other Indian students of USTC – Vinay and Jyotsna.

On Friday, they organised a 'drink (alcohol) party' from 7:00pm to 10:30pm joined by the five other students.

Atef was murdered with sharp weapons and his body was taken to the hospital around 1:45am on Saturday early hours. The father suspected the incident, present at the flat at that night, for the murder.

Traffic cop sues InU Students over assault

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An attempt to murder case was filed against 30 to 40 anonymous students of Jagannath University (InU) and three bus drivers yesterday over beating up a traffic sergeant for stopping three university buses travelling on the wrong side in the capital.

In the case filed with Ramna Police Station, Traffic Sergeant Kowar Hamid also accused the students of obstructing him from discharging duties and assaulting him after "unlawful confinement".

In the case statement, he said drivers of three BRTC double-decker buses carrying InU students towards Farmgate drove through the wrong side on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue at Bangla Motor Intersection around 5:00pm on Monday.

"As I asked the drivers to take the right lane, 30 to 40 unknown students got down from the buses and were locked into an illegal standstill with me. When I barred the drivers from driving through the wrong side, I was threatened with life by the students," Kowar alleged. He said when he again requested the drivers to take the right lane, the students started punching him and also tore his uniform.

Kowar added that as he shouted for help, nearby traffic policemen rushed to the spot, rescued him and sent him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where he took primary treatment.

OC Mashrur Rahman of Ramna Police Station said they were trying to identify the accused from TV footage and photographs published in newspapers.



Atef Sheikh

Responsibility lies with all to keep judiciary in force

Says SK Sinha; executive magistrates-led mobile courts can run for two more weeks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha yesterday said welfare cannot take place in a country if its judiciary is kept dormant.

"Even though you and I will not remain, the judiciary will remain in place, as it is for all. Everybody has responsibility to keep the judiciary in force. If the judiciary of a country is kept dormant, welfare cannot take place there," he told Attorney General Mahbub Alam.

The chief justice made the comment while presiding over a six-member bench of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court during a hearing on the three government petitions challenging the HC verdict, clearing the way for the executive magistrates to run the mobile courts for two weeks. It also adjudged the hearing on the petitions for two weeks.

AG Mahbub Alam met the chief justice at his SC office yesterday afternoon. Talking to The Daily Star, the attorney general refused to disclose what they have discussed.

He, however, said the executive magistrates can run the mobile courts until the SC hears the leave to appeal petitions filed by the government against the verdict.

Delivering a verdict on the three writ petitions on May 11, the HC declared unconstitutional the rules under which executive magistrates run mobile courts. It also observed that empowering them to exercise "a frontal attack on the independence of the judiciary and is violative of the theory of separation of powers."

On July 2, the government filed three separate leave to appeal petitions with the SC challenging the HC verdict. Last on July 4, the SC had extended its standby judge's stay order on the verdict.

Barister Hassan MS Azim appeared for the writ petitioners.



Quader hints at cabinet reshuffle, again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday once again hinted that the cabinet might be reshuffled.

It is his second such hint in two months. On May 8, Quader hinted at cabinet reshuffle, but it has not materialised.

In a bid to bring dynamism to the government activities ahead of the upcoming 11th parliamentary election, the cabinet might be reshuffled, he said, while talking with reporters at Setu Bhaban in the capital's Motakhal area yesterday.

"It's prime minister's jurisdiction. I can't say when the reshuffle will be made, but I can sense that the change will be brought," Quader added.

Responding to a query over Quader's post of deputy prime minister, Quader said, "It's nothing but a rumor."

Expressing hope that the next general election will be held in an inclusive and impartial manner, he said the government will extend its all-out cooperation to the Election Commission to make the polls a success.

"We will carry out our jobs just as routine works and army will remain under control of the Election Commission," he added.

It is the EC's decision whether army will be