

ABRAR MURDER

Roommate on 5-day remand

19 other accused land in Kashimpur prison

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed Buet student Mizanur Rahman on a five-day remand in Abrar Fahad murder case.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Baki Billah passed the order after police placed Mizanur before court with a seven-day remand plea.

Meanwhile, 19 accused in the case were shifted to Kashimpur high security jail in different phases, reported our Gazipur correspondent.

Eight accused gave their confessional statements narrating horrific descriptions of torturing Abrar to death.

Abrar, a second-year student of Electrical and Electronic Engineering

department of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet), died after he was brutally beaten allegedly by some Chhatra League men at dormitory of the university between October 6 night and the early hours of October 7.

The incident triggered a firestorm of protests on campuses across the country.

Abrar's father filed a murder case against 19 students of the university, mostly Buet BCL leaders, and several other unnamed accused with Chawkbazar Police Station on October 7.

Police so far have arrested 20 people, including 16 FIR-named accused, in connection with the murder case.

Ex-students

FROM PAGE 1

The situation is almost the same at most other dormitories of the university ... They are staying there illegally under different banners [of various student organisations],” the tutor said.

He was speaking at the view-exchange meeting attended by DU Vice Chancellor Prof Akhtaruzzaman, two pro-VCs, and the provosts and house tutors of all the 19 halls at the Senate Building.

The DU authorities convened such a meeting after more than 12 years amid growing concern among students and guardians about security at university dormitories following the killing of Buet student Abrar Fahad.

Abrar was beaten to death by a group of Buet unit Chhatra League leaders and activists at its Sher-e-Bangla Hall on October 7.

“We asked them [the illegal occupants] to leave the hall by October 30... What will we do if they don't leave after the deadline?” Shamsuzzoha questioned at the meeting.

The teacher further said the regular students are being deprived of different facilities as the reading rooms of dormitories and libraries are occupied by “influential” non-students.

On October 9, the DU authorities issued a notice asking students to leave dormitories within 15 days of completing their Master's degree examinations.

Defying the notice, hundreds of such students, mostly affiliated with pro-ruling party student body BCL, are still staying at male dormitories, several teachers and students told this newspaper.

At the meeting, at least two teachers alleged that many of the house tutors do not visit their halls regularly.

“We tried to oust the former students, who have been staying illegally at the hall, several times but we had to fall back, which was uncomfortable for us as teachers,” the meeting source quoted Shahidul Hasan, a house tutor of Kabi Jasimuddin Hall, as saying.

Shahidul told the meeting that

they sometimes felt helpless and were ashamed of holding the post of house tutors.

Jewel Mia, a house tutor of Bijoy Ekattor Hall, proposed that every hall should maintain an online data base on students so that the authorities could know with a single click about those staying there illegally.

Another teacher told the meeting that the time has come to analyse whether the university authorities are making efforts to fulfil the students' expectations.

AKM Iftekharul Islam, a house tutor of Haji Muhammad Mohsin Hall, said when a student gets admitted to the university, he is deprived of the right to stay at a hall because of non-students.

Following the meeting, the DU VC in a press statement said the hall authorities must make collaborative efforts to solve the problems that have been piling up at dormitories for years.

Non-students should not be allowed to stay at the dormitories, the VC said, adding that seats should be allotted among the first-year students on the basis of merit.

The VC further said the hall authorities should engage the hall sangsads in their initiatives. He also requested the house tutors to visit all floors of the dormitories regularly.

Meanwhile, the DU authorities suspended four students for possessing drugs and firearms.

They are Hasibur Rahman, fourth-year student of Institute of Education and Research; Imran Hossain, fourth-year student of World Religion and Culture; Iftekharul Islam Tusher, fourth-year student of Pali and Buddhist studies; and Abu Bakar Alif, first-year student of Philosophy.

The university authorities served show-cause notices on the four, asking them to explain why they would not be expelled from the DU. They have been given a week to reply.

Earlier on October 8, Hasibur and Alif were arrested with yaba pills, a pistol and sharp weapons from Mohsin Hall of the university.

Players call off strike

FROM PAGE 1

The players had originally put forward an 11-point demand on Monday, saying that they would boycott all cricket-related activities if they were not met. That led to a heated press briefing by Hassan on Tuesday, and tempers had apparently not cooled down when yesterday's meeting started.

“I was angry at first and scolded them,” Hassan said after the meeting. It was learnt that Hassan had focused his anger on Mehedi Hasan Miraz when the players had come in.

“We thank them for coming. They had some demands and I let you know yesterday [Tuesday] that most of them were agreeable and that they would be done if they came to us, and that happened today,” Hassan said.

“Of the 11 demands, there is nothing the BCB can do about the first one [demand for more respect from the Cricketers' Welfare Association of Bangladesh and resignation of its committee] and the last one [permission to play in more than two foreign leagues per year]. We said the last one would be on a case-to-case basis because not many players get the chance to play in more than two leagues. We are not saying anything solid because we have a certain line of thinking behind that.

“I think it is a very good resolution. The players may not think that because of my anger the previous few days.”

A major notch for the players was that the BCB agreed to revert to the players' draft system in the Dhaka Premier League, the clubs of which had been recruiting players in the player-by-choice system that imposed salary caps and divided the players

into grades. The players' draft, which was the method employed before 2013, allowed players greater freedom to choose clubs and negotiate their salaries.

“Most of our demands were heard by everyone here, including the president, and they agreed to meet them as soon as possible. With that hope, first-class players will start playing [in the NCL] from Saturday and the national team players will start camp from the 25th,” Test and T20I captain Shakib Al Hasan, one of the major forces in the players' movement, said after Hassan finished speaking.

Asked about the number one item on their list of demands, the demand for the CWAB committee to step down, Shakib said: “We spoke about that. We do not know the names of the rules or regulations even but we asked to hold the elections as soon as possible. We asked that the players have a representative to hear the issues of the players. We will do that when we have time, maybe after the NCL.”

Earlier, Hassan and CWAB president Naimur Rahman had visited Gono Bhaban to meet with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the afternoon and the premier, according to Hassan, urged the cricketers to return to action immediately.

“The prime minister asked why the players had boycotted and said that they should return to cricket as soon as possible,” Hassan told The Daily Star last night while waiting for the cricketers to come and meet him in Mirpur. “She said that they could have easily come to me or [Naimur Rahman] Durjoy with their demands, or they could even have gone to her.”



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina unveiling a list of schools and colleges that have been brought under the MPO scheme at the Gono Bhaban yesterday.

PHOTO: BSS

39 bodies found in Essex lorry

FROM PAGE 1

The police said they were alerted by the ambulance service shortly before 1:40am following the discovery of a truck container with people inside at the Waterglade Industrial Park.

Officers in white forensic suits could be seen working by the truck and a white tent was erected outside.

Ambulance services said the victims were already dead by the time they arrived.

‘VILE’ PEOPLE-TRAFFICKING

“We are in the process of identifying the victims. However, I anticipate that this could be a lengthy process,” said Mariner.

“We believe the lorry is from Bulgaria,” he added.

“We have arrested the lorry driver in connection with the incident, who remains in police custody.”

The tragedy sparked questions about the route taken by the truck -- and whether people trafficking had played a part.

In August 2015, at the peak of Europe's migration crisis, the bodies of 71 migrants including a baby girl were found piled up in the back of a poultry refrigerator lorry left in Austria.

Investigations later revealed they had been transported along the Balkan

migrant route and left to suffocate in the back of the truck after the driver dumped the vehicle near the Hungarian border.

The truck discovered yesterday is left-hand drive, indicating that it was not British or Irish.

Police said it was thought the lorry entered Britain on Saturday at Holyhead on the northwest tip of Wales -- one of the main ports for ferries from Ireland.

The UK and the Republic of Ireland are not in the European Union's no-borders Schengen zone but have their own historic Common Travel Area, meaning there are no checks on the movement of goods or people between the two.

Richard Burnett, chief executive of the Road Haulage Association which represents truck drivers in Britain, said: “Our thoughts are with the families of the deceased but whatever the circumstances, it highlights the danger of migrant gangs people-smuggling on lorries.”

Jackie Doyle-Price, the MP representing the local Thurrock constituency surrounding Grays, said the news was “sickening”.

“People trafficking is a vile and dangerous business,” she said.

“Let's hope they bring these murderers to justice.”

PM ‘APPALLED’

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said he was receiving regular updates and sent his sympathies to the victims' families.

“I'm appalled by this tragic incident in Essex,” he said.

“My thoughts are with all those who lost their lives and their loved ones.”

Meanwhile, Home Secretary Priti Patel, Britain's interior minister, said she was “shocked and saddened”.

“Home Office immigration officials will be working closely alongside them to establish how this horrific event came to happen.”

Cases of this kind are rare in Britain. In 2014, staff at the Tilbury container port -- next to Grays -- heard screaming and banging coming from inside a shipping container, and found 34 Afghan Sikhs alive inside suffering from severe dehydration, hypothermia and lack of air.

One man was found dead, having passed away during the sea crossing from Belgium.

In 2000, the bodies of 58 clandestine Chinese immigrants were discovered in a Dutch truck at the British port of Dover. Two people survived.

Shela crowned first Miss Universe Bangladesh



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shirin Akter Shela has become the first Miss Universe Bangladesh 2019.

Bollywood actress Sushmita Sen crowned her in front of an excited crowd in Dhaka last night.

Alisha Islam and Jessica Islam have respectively become the first and second-runner up in the grand finale.

For the first time, Miss Universe Bangladesh has been organised in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

The journey started when the registration began in July 2019.

The first round started with 12,000+ registrations, before the elimination process and then three months of boot camp. After these, the winner was finally chosen.

The franchise owner for Bangladesh SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Two ‘robbers’ killed in ‘crossfire’

Key suspect of Chattogram child specialist murder killed in ‘gunfight’

STAR REPORT

The prime suspect in the Saudi-returnee child specialist murder case and an alleged robber were killed in separate “gunfights” with law enforcers in Chattogram and Cox's Bazar yesterday.

The prime suspect of the child specialist murder case was killed in a reported gunfight with Rab-7 in Sitakunda upazila of Chattogram in the early hours of yesterday.

Najir Ahmed Suman alias Kalu, 26, was the suspected mugger who, along with his gang members, killed Dr Shah Alam on Friday, said Kazi Tarek Aziz, assistant superintendent of police (ASP) of Rab-7.

Acting on a tip-off, a patrol team of the elite force raided Uttar Bashbaria area to arrest Kalu and his associates, said Aziz.

Sensing presence of the elite force members, associates of Kalu opened SEE PAGE 13 COL 1

Man held for raping 4th grader

STAR REPORT

Police arrested a young man on charge of raping a fourth grader of a madrasa in Laxmipur, while a court sent a man to jail allegedly for raping a seventh grader in Patuakhali yesterday.

In Laxmipur, the arrestee, Masud Goldar, 20, is a resident of Charkachiya village in Raipur upazila.

Police said the student on Tuesday morning was on her way to the madrasa from home. On her way, Masud intercepted her, took her to a nearby betelnut garden and raped her there.

When the girl started screaming, locals rushed to the spot to rescue her. The accused had fled by then.

Later at night, the victim's mother filed a complaint with police, said Tota Miah, officer-in-charge (OC) of Raipur police station.

In Patuakhali, a local court yesterday sent a man to jail for raping a seventh grader of a madrasa in Baufal upazila.

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Another AL front chief removed

FROM PAGE 1

Quader, also the road transport and bridges minister, made the comment a day after the National Board of Revenue (NBR) asked different commercial banks to freeze all accounts of Kawser, his wife Parveen Luna, daughter Nujhat Nadia Nila, and his business entity Fine Power Solution Limited.

The NBR issued the order in its bid to look into their tax compliance.

The banks were asked to provide within seven days the details of their

accounts since July 2012, sources at the NBR said.

According to police documents, Molla Abu Kawser is also the president of Dhaka Wanderers Club, which is among the clubs that had been closed on charges of running illegal casinos following the start of law enforcement agencies' drive against illegal casino business in the city.

Several top leaders of Jubo League and Krishak League were arrested after the drive began on September 17. They are now facing

investigations for their alleged involvement in various irregularities and corruption.

Last week, the NBR asked banks to freeze the accounts of recently removed Jubo League boss Omar Faruk Chowdhury, his wife, three sons and two business entities: Lake View Properties and RAO Construction Ltd, according to source.

Since September 17, RAB and police have raided different clubs across the country, busting illegal casino business.