

BANGLADESH
UPDATE



214
New cases in 24hrs



15,69,753
Total cases



27,870
Deaths



15,33,625
Recoveries

GLOBAL
UPDATE



5,017,697
Deaths



247,604,478
Total cases

Cut trial-time jail stay from total term

Apex courts rules

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday ruled that the tenure of any convict serving jail time during trial proceedings will be deducted from the total imprisonment handed down in the case by the court concerned.

The Appellate Division of the SC also asked the authorities concerned to take necessary steps to this effect.

A five-member full bench of the division, headed by Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain, passed the order while delivering a verdict on an appeal filed by a convict named Md Younus Ali challenging a High Court verdict that sentenced him to life imprisonment in a murder case.

Younus's lawyer Golam Abbas Chowdhury Duial told the SC that his client had already served 26 years in jail.

The apex court also asked the jail authorities to release Younus Ali from jail if he has already served life imprisonment in the case filed against him.

Deputy Attorney General Bishwajit Debnath told The Daily Star that according to Section 35A (1) of the Code of Criminal Procedure 1898, the tenure of any convict's serving in jail during trial will be deducted from the total imprisonment handed down by the court concerned to him or her in the case.

The section says, "Except in the case of an offence punishable only with death, when any court finds an accused guilty of an offence and, upon conviction, sentences such accused to any term of imprisonment, simple or rigorous, it shall be deducted from the sentence of imprisonment, the total period the accused may have

been in custody in the meantime, in connection with that offence."

Younus's lawyer Golam Abbas told this correspondent that Natore's Additional District and Sessions Judge's court had sentenced Younus Ali to death in a double murder case and the High Court in 2005 commuted his death sentence to life imprisonment in the same case.

Younus then filed an appeal with the SC seeking bail and release from jail claiming that he has already been in jail for 26 years, he said, adding that Younus will be released following orders from the apex court.

The SC in a verdict in the Aatur Mridha versus Bangladesh case said life imprisonment means 30 years in jail and a convict awarded such a sentence should get remission of seven and half years as per the laws.

"In Bangladesh, life sentences have become a complex patchwork of judicial and executive orders. A young person sentenced to imprisonment for life could theoretically serve many more years in jail than an older person. An older person has a significantly greater chance of serving the rest of their life in jail.

"Many prisoners serving life sentences will likely die in prison. The society should find a humane way of handling life sentences," the Appellate Division of the SC observed in the full text of the verdict released on July 15. Interpreting the observations, lawyer Mohammad Shishir Manir told The Daily Star that prisoners who have been sentenced to life imprisonment will have to serve 30 years and will get the remission. It means, convicts awarded life imprisonment will have to remain behind bars for a total of 22 and a half years.

'We are digging our own graves'

FROM PAGE 1

Echoing Greta Thunberg -- who is in Glasgow with thousands of other protesters -- he urged the summit against indulging in "blah blah blah".

If the leaders "fluff our lines or miss our cue", generations as-yet unborn "will not forgive us", the prime minister said.

"They will know that Glasgow was the historic turning point when history failed to turn."

US President Joe Biden pledged that his country will fulfill its climate goals.

The task of the COP26 conference was made even more daunting by the failure of the Group of 20 major industrial nations to agree ambitious new commitments at a weekend summit in Rome.

The G20 including China, India and Western nations committed on Sunday to the Paris goal of limiting global warming to 1.5C. They also agreed to end funding for new coal plants abroad without carbon capturing technology by the end of 2021.

But the precise pathway to 1.5C was left largely undefined and campaigners expressed disappointment with the group, which collectively emits nearly 80 percent of global carbon emissions.

At the G20, Biden singled out China and Russia, neither of which sent its leader to Glasgow, for not bringing proposals to the table.

Observers say the Glasgow gathering,

which runs until November 12, will be tough going.

Most nations have already submitted their renewed emissions cutting plans -- known as "nationally determined contributions", or NDCs -- in advance of COP26. But even these current commitments -- if followed -- would still lead to a "catastrophic" warming of 2.7 Celsius, according to the UN.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday announced that India's economy would become carbon neutral by the year 2070. India is the last of the world's major carbon polluters to announce a net-zero target, with China saying it would reach that goal in 2060, and the US and the EU aiming for 2050.

"Climate financing" could make or break the talks. The failure of rich countries to deliver \$100 billion annually to help climate vulnerable nations adapt to climate change might generate mistrust and reluctance among some developing nations to accelerate their emissions reductions.

The goal -- meant to be delivered last year -- has been postponed to 2023, exacerbating tensions between richer nations, responsible for global warming, and those poorer countries who are the victims of its effects.

Two days of speeches by world leaders will be followed by technical negotiations. Any deal may not be struck until close to or even after the event's Nov 12 finish date.

Schoolchildren get Covid jabs

FROM PAGE 1

capital's Ideal School and College, Health Minister Zahid Maleque said there will be no crisis of Pfizer Covid-19 vaccine, which is being given to the schoolchildren.

Eight vaccination centres have been set up in as many schools in the capital for jabbing schoolchildren. The government has a plan to expand the vaccination programme to 21 others districts soon.

"We will need around 3 crore doses of Pfizer vaccine to bring all 12- to 17-year-old schoolchildren under the vaccination coverage. We have about 1 crore doses in hand and another 1 crore jabs are in the pipeline. The World Health Organization has informed us that we will get more Moderna and Pfizer vaccines," Zahid said.

Vaccines will be administered from the eight centres from today, the minister said, adding that each centre will administer 5,000 doses a day, and the government plans to give the jabs against Covid10 40,000 children in Dhaka a day.

He said the government will expand the student vaccination programme to 21 other districts.

"We are also considering rolling out the vaccine to all districts and if possible, to the upazila level. No child

will be left out," Zahid added.

The eight vaccination centres are: Ideal School and College in Motijheel, Hurdc International School in Bashundhara, South Point School and College in Malibagh, Chittagong Grammar School in Banani, Dhaka Commerce College in Mirpur, Kakoli High School and College in Dhanmondi, South Breeze School in Uttara and Scholastica school in Mirpur.

The health minister said during a trial run on October 14, the authorities administered the Pfizer Covid vaccine to 120 students from several schools in Manikganj. None of them showed signs of side effects.

He said children aged 12 to 17, who are out of school, will also get the vaccine.

Addressing the event, Education Minister Dipu Moni said steps will be taken so that preference is given to SSC and HSC examinees for the vaccination.

"We will be able to resume classes at educational institutions fully soon after completing the vaccination of students," she said.

Over two dozen countries have so far approved or started giving Covid shots to children below 18, according to media reports.

TRIAL/PROBE ONGOING		
Sagar Sarowar and Meherun Runi, <i>Maasranga TV, ATN Bangla</i>	Feb 11, 2012	9yrs
Dipankar Chakrabarty, <i>editor, Durjoy Bangla, Bogura</i>	Oct 3, 2004	17yrs
Syed Farroque Ahmed, <i>editor, Pubali Barta, Sreemangal</i>	Aug 3, 2002	19yrs
Mohammad Quamruzzaman, <i>reporter, Neel Sagor, Nilphamari</i>	Feb 19, 1996	25yrs
Saiful Alam Mukul, <i>editor of Daily Runner, Jashore</i>	Aug 30, 1998	23yrs
Mashiur Rahman Utsho, <i>Juger Alo, Rangpur</i>	Dec 23, 2015	6yrs
Ihsan Ibn Reza Fagun, <i>subeditor, Priyo.com</i>	May 22, 2019	2yrs

CASES THROWN OUT		
SLAIN JOURNALISTS	DATE OF KILLING	According to Committee to Protect Journalists, a total of 23 journalists have been killed in Bangladesh since 1992
Nahor Ali, correspondent, <i>Daily Anirban, Khulna</i>	Apr 21, 2001	
Sheikh Harunur Rashid, <i>reporter, Daily Purbanchal, Khulna</i>	Mar 2, 2002	
Shukur Hossain, <i>reporter, Daily Anirban, Khulna</i>	July 5, 2002	

Justice a mirage as impunity prevails

FROM PAGE 1

General Antonio Guterres said, "Impunity for killing journalists is extremely high. According to UNESCO, almost nine out of 10 cases go unpunished."

Over 1,200 journalists have been killed across the globe between 2006 and 2020 for reporting and bringing information to the public.

"Ending impunity for crimes against journalists is one of the most pressing issues to guarantee freedom of expression and access to information for all citizens," the UN secretary-general said in the statement issued yesterday.

NO PROGRESS IN MOST CASES

Among the journalists killed in the country, the murders of journalist couple Sagar Sarowar and Meherun Runi are much talked about.

Hours after the gruesome murders in 2012, the then home minister Sahara Khatun announced the killers would be arrested in 48 hours.

Nine years have passed, justice still remains a far cry for the couple's families. So far, investigators have been asked at least 82 times to submit the probe reports, but they could not make any headway in the sensational case.

Sagar, news editor at private TV channel Maasranga, and Runi, a senior reporter at ATN Bangla, were brutally murdered in the early hours of February 11, 2012, at their rented flat in the capital's West Rajabazar.

In the latest development, a High Court bench once again asked Rab to submit the probe report by November 24.

Talking to The Daily Star, Faruq Faisal, regional director of Article 19 of South Asia, called upon the government to investigate the case with utmost priority.

While Sagar and Runi became household names, a few might know that Dipankar Chakraborty suffered a similar fate.

The editor of the Bogura-based daily the Durjoy Bangla and former vice-president of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists was hacked and decapitated on October 3, 2004.

At least nine investigation officers dealt with the case and the police submitted final reports at least four times, but the family declined all of them alleging that the actual culprits are not being charged.

Last month, Dipankar's son Aniruddha told a memorial, organised in his father's memory, that an accused in the Holey Artisan attack case, and four other dead men were named as his father's murderers.

Syed Farroque Ahmed of Sreemangal too is fading away from

public memory.

"The murder case was filed by the police and they never pursued it," Sreemangal Press Club President Bishwajyoti Chowdhury told our Sylhet correspondent.

The editor of "Pubali Barta" was killed in a gruesome manner on August 3, 2002. His mutilated and dismembered body was found in a decomposed state by the police.

Reporters Without Borders said the body was found on rail tracks and that he had been missing for two months.

Mohammad Quamruzzaman, a reporter for "Neel Sagor" in Nilphamari, was shot dead on February 19, 1996.

According to documentation by the Committee to Protect Journalists, he "was fatally shot by security officers while covering their crackdown on a violent protest against election results".

No trial ever happened, reported our correspondent in the district, quoting family members.

On the other hand, the trial in the case over the murder of Saiful Alam Mukul, editor of the Jashore-based the Daily Runner, has been going on for 23 years. He was killed after a handmade bomb thrown at him exploded on the night of August 30, 1998.

The case was once thrown out by a court. The High Court then revived it in 2005, but to no avail.

"Former minister and BNP standing committee member Tariqul Islam was one of the accused. But then, one of the accused got a stay order from the High Court and the case has been at a stalemate ever since," said Jashore Press Club President SM Tauhidul Rahman.

Rangpur-based journalist Mashiur Rahman Utsho used to work at the Daily Juger Alo.

"It has been six years since he was killed, but not even his lawyer knows the case's status. I could not find the lawyer prosecuting his case, I could not find his case number at the court and nobody lets me know when the hearing dates are. I myself don't know what is happening at court," said his sister Morsheda Begum.

Utsho was hacked to death by a nexus of drug dealers.

While most might be racking their brains to remember all those whose pens were stopped decades ago, the murder of 21-year-old Ihsan Ibn Reza Fagun might still be raw in public memory, his name still cutting fresh wounds in the heart of his father, Kakon Reza.

Fagun was a sub-editor of Priyo.com and the trial of his murder is yet to begin.

His body was found beside the Jamalpur-Mymensingh highway on May 22, 2019.

"His shirt was tucked in, he was strangled, but they had taken away all of his identification documents. This was a planned murder, but the police have not been able to arrest four of the five accused. The main accused is still on the run. They are stalling the investigation," Kakon said.

CASES THROWN OUT OR ACCUSED ACQUITTED

Deceased journalist Nahor Ali's wife Asmani Begum did not even clearly remember when her husband's case was thrown out by the court.

"Let's see... he died in 2001, and the case went on for two years. But then there was this doctor who told the court that he died in an accident and so the case got disposed of," said Asmani.

"All four of his limbs were broken as 30-40 men attacked him. How could this have been an accident?"

The case of Sheikh Harunur Rashid who was shot at point-blank in his chest on March 2, 2002, was dismissed in court, while that of Shukur Hossain, also shot, saw no convictions.

Cases of only four journalists could be tracked as having received some form of justice -- and that came after many excruciating years.

Humayun Kabir Balu, editor of the Daily Janmabhum, was killed in 2004. His family received a verdict only this year.

Again, it took 13 years for the court to deliver a verdict in the case over the murder of Manik Chandra Saha, Ekushey Padak winning journalist of the New Age.

This trend bears bleak tidings for the family of journalist Borhanuddin Muzakkir who was shot dead during clashes between two groups of Awami League men on February 19 this year.

According to our correspondents' reports, 24 people have been arrested so far, but the pattern of yesteryears begs the question: Will Muzakkir ever get justice?

When the court read out verdicts over the murders of Faisal Arefin Dipan, Avijit Roy and Xulhaz Mannan this year, the esteemed judges made a common observation in all three cases -- They were killed for having the audacity to exercise their freedom of expression.

What the court pointed out is this -- when all is stripped away, the crux of the conclusion is that journalists are killed for speaking truth to power. Impunity for those killers only serves to mask the truth.

[Our district correspondents contributed to this report]

Police raided our house to threaten us

Says mother of victim of enforced disappearance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The mother of Sajedul Islam Sumon, a victim of enforced disappearance, yesterday said police raided their house in the capital's Shaheenbagh on Sunday afternoon and detained several people as she organised a programme demanding return of such victims.

"We are scared. We think police raided our house to threaten us since we hold programmes every year demanding return of the victims of enforced disappearance," Hazera Khatun told The Daily Star.

Hazera is the key organiser of "Mayer Dak", a platform of families who lost their loved ones to enforced disappearances. It holds programmes on different occasions, demanding return of the victims.

Around 50 cops raided Sumon's Shaheenbagh home on Sunday afternoon during a "Doa Mahfil". BNP leaders Amanullah Aman and Aminul Islam along with several other party men joined the programme, family members said.

"Police suddenly laid seize to our house... At least 20 people were detained from the house," Sumon's sister Sanjida Islam Tuli claimed.

Police later released all but one detainee.

Md Shohidullah, deputy commissioner (Tejgaon Division) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, said they raided the house on information that several people accused in a case filed over the August 17 violence at the capital's Chandrima Udyan by BNP men gathered there.

He said they detained eight to 10 people from the house for interrogation. One of them, who is an accused in the case, was arrested while the others were freed on Sunday night, the DMP official said last evening.

The arrestee is Akhter Hossain, joint convener of the BNP's Dhaka city north unit. A Dhaka court sent him to jail yesterday after police produced him before it.

Sumon, general secretary of BNP's ward-38 unit in the capital, and seven others were allegedly picked up by the Rapid Action Battalion between 8:00pm of December 4 and 2:00pm of December 5 in 2013 from the city's Bashundhara and Shaheenbagh areas. The Rab, however, dismissed the claim.

Buttler ton

FROM PAGE 1

Buttler smashed six fours and six sixes in his 67-ball knock and put on 112 with skipper Eoin Morgan, who made 40, to lift England after they were in trouble at 35-3.

The England opener, who hit an unbeaten 71 in the win over Australia, surpassed his previous T20 best of 83 and now leads the tournament batting chart with 214 runs.

Sri Lanka had England on the backfoot but Buttler stood firm and took the attack to the opposition as he got to his hundred on the final ball of the innings with another hit over the fence.

Former champions England are bidding to become the first team to hold the 20-overs and 50-overs World Cups at the same time while Sri Lanka slipped to their third loss in four matches.

The damage must

FROM PAGE 1

countries, though it contributes less than 0.47 percent of global emissions.

Hasina noted that the government has established the "Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund" in 2009 to address this challenge. "We've doubled climate-related expenses in the last seven years. Currently, we are preparing the National Adaptation Plan."

As the Chair of the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) and V20, Bangladesh is promoting the interests of the 48 climate-vulnerable countries, she said.

On behalf of the CVF, Hasina added, Bangladesh is pursuing to establish a Climate Emergency Pact.

Youth beaten

FROM PAGE 1

"Even the victims' families and the AL chairman candidate supporters attacked their house at night and vandalised the house and a motorcycle," Shila said.

This correspondent visited Mizanur's house and found that the house was attacked.

Atikur Islam, officer-in-charge of Dhamrai Police Station, said, "We are investigating the incident. Police are trying to nab the culprits."

He, however, said the murder took place over previous enmity.

Top officials of law enforcement agencies, including SP of Dhaka Zila police, visited the spot yesterday and said they were probing the incident.

Locals said police detained Ridoy, an associate of chairman's son, from the village yesterday morning, but he managed to flee from police van.

However, Owahid Parvez, OC (investigation) of Dhamrai Police Station, said such a thing did not happen.

'Legal' front for illegal arms!

FROM PAGE 12

The arms were also sold to criminal groups in the Chattogram Hill Tracts and Dhaka.

The seized arms and ammunition include a US-made shotgun, three pistols and a revolver made by Italy, Germany and US, and 301 rounds bullets including 10 of AK-47.

"We fear they have already sold many weapons and ammunition to various criminal groups. We also fear that the criminal groups ordered AK-47s. We are trying to find out to whom they wanted to sell AK-47 bullets. We suspect the criminal groups in the Chattogram Hill Tracts and Cox's Bazar may have contact with them."

Officials said Hossain is the kingpin of the illegal arms racket. He had been arrested earlier by a law enforcement agency and was in jail for long.

Nine were made accused in the case filed under the arms act with Jatrabari

Police Station yesterday. Of them, five are on the run.

Hossain used to collect old unused licenses and buy firearms using them and subsequently selling those to criminals, erasing the guns' serial numbers, Asaduzzaman said, adding that the shotgun seized from his possession was also collected using such a license.

Asaduzzaman said Lal Tan, a close associate of Hossain, used to smuggle firearms from Myanmar and India's Mizoram.

Adilur and Ali used to meet the two other arrestees in Jatrabari to buy the seized arms and ammunition and sell those to others, he added.

"Apart from Pankhoa, Hossain used to buy firearms from some other dealers including Swapan in Dhaka and sold them to various criminal groups in Chattogram and Cox's Bazar through Ali and Adilur.

They used to sell illegal weapons

9:20pm, said a member of the police station, wishing not to be named.

The situation in the area was tense when this report was filed around 10:30pm.

Contacted, Kaunia Upazila Nirbahi Office Tahmina Tarin said, "Tajul was a drug addict. He died after police went to the village to detain some people who were taking drugs ... Details [of how he died] will come after the autopsy."

Additional police personnel have been deployed to avert further

untoward situation, she said.

Shawkat Ali Sarkar, officer-in-charge of the police station, said, "Police went to the spot and caught Tajul taking drugs. When police were putting cuffs in his hands, he felt sick." Tajul's condition worsened quickly. Police handed him to locals and left. "Later, we came to know he died. He was not tortured in any way," he said.

Police were preparing to file a case, the OC said, without giving further details of the incident.