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About 7,150 bankers lost jobs for pandemic

Pradeep, Liaquat given gallows

A Cox's Bazar court also sentences 6 others, 3 of them cops, to life for the premeditated murder of Major (ret'd) Sinha



Pradeep



Liaquat

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN and MUHAMMAD ALI JINNAT

Major (retired) Sinha Md Rashed Khan's murder was premeditated, a Cox's Bazar court said yesterday as it handed down death sentence to suspended police officers Pradeep Kumar Das and Liaquat Ali for the killing.

Pradeep, the then officer-in-charge of Teknaf Police Station, had plotted to kill the retired army official, and Liaquat, who was the in-charge of Baharchhara Investigation Centre, executed the plan by shooting Sinha at an APBN checkpoint on July 31, 2020, it said.

Cox's Bazar District and Sessions Judge Mohammed Ismail also sentenced six others, including three policemen, to life in the murder case.

All the convicts were fined Tk 50,000 each.

Seven other police personnel, however, were acquitted as the charges against them could not be proven in court.

All the accused and Sinha's elder sister Sharmin Shahria Ferdush, who filed the case, were present at the packed courtroom yesterday afternoon. Pradeep, in a beige jacket, and Liaquat, in his blue-grey jacket over polo shirt, looked calm.

While reading out the summary of the 300-page judgment, the judge said the court tried to find out answers of some questions, including whether the murder was planned, why police shot Sinha, if there was any necessity to open fire and whether the fatal incident could have been avoided.

The judge then said Liaquat opened fire to kill Sinha, which left him injured. He then deliberately wasted time in sending the injured to the hospital and ensured his quick death. He also destroyed evidence and filed a case against Sinha later.

Pradeep helped Liaquat open fire, kicked Sinha in the chest breaking his ribs, choked him, and delayed sending him to hospital. He also lodged false cases against Sinha and his companion Shifat to avoid the murder charges and destroyed evidence, the judge said.

"Despite knowing that the order [to shoot Sinha] was illegal, he [Liaquat] followed the senior's [Pradeep] order after being a part of the conspiracy to kill Sinha," said the judge.

It's so unfortunate, the judge said.

Police Sub-Inspector Nandadulal Rakshit, constables Sagar Deb and Rubel Sharma, and informants Nurul Amin, Nezam Uddin and Ayaz Uddin were sentenced to life-term imprisonment.

The court acquitted SI Md Shahjahan, Assistant Sub-Inspector Liton Mia, constable Kamal Hossain Azan, and Abdullah Al Mamun, Safanur Karim, Md Rajib and Md Abdullah Al Mahmud.

In her reaction to the verdict, Sinha's elder sister

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#CALMDOWN written on her mask, slain major (retired) Sinha's elder sister Sharmin Shahria Ferdush speaking to reporters after a court in Cox's Bazar delivered its verdict in the Sinha murder case yesterday. These were the words the former army official kept repeating moments before he was shot and killed at a checkpoint in the district on July 31, 2020.

PHOTO: COLLECTED



SINHA MURDER CASE

TIMELINE

JULY 31, 2020

Major (ret'd) Sinha Md Rashed Khan shot dead by police at a checkpoint on Marine Drive road, Teknaf, Cox's Bazar.

AUG 1, 2020

Police file two cases against Sinha's companions Shahedul Islam Sifat and one case against Shipra Debnath; inspector Liaquat Ali and 20 other policemen withdrawn.

AUG 2, 2020

Armed forces and police personnel included in a high-powered probe committee.

AUG 4, 2020

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina assures Sinha's mother Nasina Akter of fair investigation and trial.

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MANUFACTURING CROSSFIRE

Court gives insights into how extrajudicial killings take place in the garb of shootouts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Yesterday's landmark verdict that sentenced two cops to death and six for life also offered a rare glimpse into how a "crossfire" is cooked up.

The usual storyline offered is that law enforcers encounter a group of criminals who begin the offence, compelling the former to shoot in defence.

Another version is that an arrestee is taken by the law enforcers to a remote location for drugs or arms recovery when the group is attacked by the arrestee's cohort. A shootout ensues and the only one dead is the arrestee.

A similar version was first presented

in Major (ret'd) Sinha Rashed Khan's case.

The police had said that Sinha had aimed a gun at them when they stopped his car and inspector Liaquat Ali shot Sinha in self-defence, according to the first information report (FIR) of the case filed by sub-inspector Nandadulal Rakshit with Teknaf police station.

Sinha was rushed to the Cox's Bazar district hospital but died on the way.

Police have recovered drugs and a gun in Sinha's car and then followed up with a drive in his hotel. The drive yielded more narcotics, the FIR added.

The court yesterday ruled that none of the events took place: it was not a "shootout" as the cops maintained

but a premeditated murder planned in cold blood.

On the day he was killed, Sinha met with the villagers of Marishbunia while filming and then identified himself, according to the charge sheet of the case filed by Rab-15.

The villagers were victims of the Teknaf police station's former officer-in-charge Pradeep Kumar Das. But among them were Nurul Amin, Ayaz Uddin and Md Nezam Uddin, all informants of the police. They tipped off Pradeep on the development.

Pradeep then informed Liaquat, who then met with the villagers.

As Sinha walked towards his car parked on Marine Drive, Ayaz followed

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'SHOOTOUT' JUSTICE

The first, at long last

ZYMA ISLAM

This is the first time in the country any law enforcer, let alone five, has been brought to book by a court for staging a "shootout".

While delivering the verdict in the Major (retired) Sinha Mohammad Rashed Khan murder case, the Cox's Bazar court concluded that the former army official's death did not occur in a "gunfight" as claimed by Teknaf police, when Sinha allegedly brought out a gun and the police fired shots in self-defence.

It was a "pure and simple murder", said the court.

Now the question arises -- is there any possibility that at least some of all the

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We're mulling setting up rights cell

Says foreign secy

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The foreign ministry is considering setting up a human rights cell under the supervision of the foreign ministry director general (UN) to better analyse the country's human rights situation and rightly present it before the international community.

"We are considering a human rights cell with a director so that we can give more importance on the human rights issues," Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen told journalists at the ministry yesterday.

The move comes following December 10 US sanctions on Rab and seven of its current and former officials on the grounds of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances.

Besides, 12 international human rights

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Grasping a rope with one hand, a man paints a footbridge with the other while standing on some rickety bamboo poles tied together in Science Laboratory area of the capital yesterday. He had no safety harness and could have fallen to his death or injured himself. Many workers put their lives at risk every day for wages on which their families can hardly survive.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

SHOCKING CREDIT CARD DEBT

NBL apology not enough

BB officials say about the bank's pledge not to repeat it; 'action to follow'

AKM ZAMIR UDDIN

National Bank Limited has apologised to Bangladesh Bank for extending unprecedented amounts of credit card loans to its directors and their relatives violating the rules.

"This type of misdeed will not happen in the future," NBL promised in a letter sent to the central bank on January 12.

In a serious breach of banking rules, NBL let 11 individuals, including its two directors Rick Haque Sikder and Ron Haque Sikder and their family members, spend a staggering \$13.63 million (about Tk 118 crore) using international credit cards from 2017-2021.

NBL also promised to operate its card division with utmost caution, requesting Bangladesh Bank not to suspend its card operations

The letter was written in response to BB's show-cause notice that asked NBL in December last year to explain why its card operations should not be stopped or suspended.

According to BB rules, a Bangladeshi citizen cannot spend any more than \$12,000 in a year outside the

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