

Couple's death sentence

A court here sentenced death penalty to husband and his first wife in a murder case today.

The victim was identified as Zarina Khatun who was the second wife of convict husband.

The convicts are Saidul Islam, son of Nabisuddin and his first wife Jamela Khatun of village Jadobpur under sadarupazila of the district. The accused were absconding when the verdict is announced.

Ripti Kumar Biswas, Additional District and Sessions Judge pronounced the verdict around 11am on Monday.

According to the case statement, Saidul Islam of Jadavpur village of Sadarupazila and his first wife Jamela Khatun killed his second wife Zarina Khatun in 2010 and put her in a potato field. Police recovered the body a few days later. On January 7, 2010 Zarina Khatun's sister Ferdousi Khatun filed a murder case against five people at Meherpur Police Station. When Saidul Islam and his first wife Jamela Khatun were arrested on suspicion of involvement in the incident and taken to court, they confessed their guilt under Section 164. Three people were released from the chargesheet as they were not involved in the incident. Fourteen witnesses testified in the case. The court passed the order after a long review of the statements and evidences of the accused.

Additional Public Prosecutor Kazi Shahidul Haque pleaded the case on government side while Advocate Nargis Ara pleaded for the accused.

Arable land is declining in Meherpur

MEHERPUR, Dec 28:

Due to the digging of brickfields and ponds in one cultivable land after another, the cultivable land in the district specially in Gangni upazila area of □□ is gradually decreasing. As there is no visible step by the government to change the class of land, landowners are digging ponds and establishing brickfields hither and thither. The Department of Agricultural Extension fears that there may be a food grain crisis in the future due to the reduction in cultivable land.

According to the Gangni Upazila Agricultural Extension Office, the cultivable land in the upazila was 28,566 hectares five years ago. At present this land has been reduced to 23,114 hectares. In particular, the area under aman and vegetable cultivation has been gradually reduced. Apart from the construction of brickfields and digging of ponds, the Department of Agriculture has expressed the view that the land is being reduced due to the construction of houses everywhere without plan.

Various information has been gathered by visiting different areas of Gangni on the spot and talking to the locals. Hashem Ali of Zugirgofa village said that there was 50 acres of land in Mundail beel of this village. Albert Biswas, an aristocrat of the village, dug a pond on 30 bighas of land. Later, when the inlet of the local canal was closed, the low lands of the others became waterlogged. At one stage, the landowners became compelled to sell their lands to Albert Biswas with nominal price. In this way he has cut pond in the vast land in the field. But in the deed of that land it is written Dhani land.

Similarly, ponds and brickfields have been constructed on cultivable land in different areas including Sholotaka

Jorpukur Bamandi Chhatian. Many are setting up houses. With the increase in the population of the family, as the family is getting divided, and they are making houses without changing the class of the land. On the other hand, many people are constructing houses on crop lands to facilitate frequentation. Thus the cultivable land is decreasing. Many do not understand the issue of changing land class.

According to sentient people, although there is a class of paddy land houses, ponds and gardens but there is no category of brick kilns. Mentionable, there are at least 42 brickfields in this upazila. And many people are selling soil from the cultivable land to brickfields. This is wasting the fertile energy of the land. It goes without saying, many are digging ponds by selling soil in the brick fields. As a result, the owner of the land is able to dig the pond free of cost and also gets a handsome amount of money.

Gangni Upazila Agricultural Officer Shahibuddin Ahmed said there is no shortage of food due to the cultivation of multi-purpose crops on the same cultivable land and the cultivation of improved and high yielding varieties. As the number of cultivable lands decreases, food shortages may face at anytime. It needs to be remedied now.

Gangni Upazila Assistant Commissioner (Land) Nur E Alam Siddiqui said that no one can change the class of land if he wants to. In this case, permission has to be taken by applying to the Deputy Commissioner. Several have already been raided and fined in the wake of the allegations. Action will be taken in the future too.

Dr. Mansur Alam Khan, DC said that not only in Meherpur, but in the whole country, the cultivable land is declining at the rate of 2%. Land is being reduced in many ways including housing. There is no problem in digging the pond but there are many problems with selling the soil of the pond in the brick field. The administration is working on this and will continue

to do so.

Human chain in protest of rape in Meherpur.

Wave Foundation `Youth Assembly' has organized a human chain to protest the rape with the slogan "Joy of rapists and cry of victim no more' in Meherpur.

The human chain was held in front of Meherpur District Press Club on Sunday morning under the leadership Abdus Salam, Deputy Coordinator of Wave Foundation.

At that time, he said, the way children and women are being abused all over Bangladesh is worrying. There is an environment where rapists are crossing legal gaps due to lack of justice.

He added that, As a result of which the rate of rape is increasing all over the country, the only demand from the Hon'ble Prime Minister is that the maximum punishment for rape should be implemented very soon.

Also present at the occasion were Raju Ahmed, Joint Convener of the Youth Association, Tariq Kazi, Unit Manager of the organization, Youth Members Jahangir Alam, Mitu Akhter, Jabeda Khatun, Sabbir Hossain Zia, Shamim Zaman, Rabia Akhter and others.

Shahiduzzaman MP joined the function even though he was attacked by Corona!

Mohammad Sahiduzzaman, an MP from Meherpur-2 (Gangni) constituency, was attacked by his family on August 13. A lockdown sticker signed by the Upazila Nirbahi Officer is hanging in his house. He broke the lockdown and held a meeting to protest the grenade attack on August 21 at 9 pm on Friday with more than 50 leaders and activists.

Witnesses said he addressed the protest in person as the chief guest.

Witnesses said, he spoke in person as the chief guest at the protest rally. It is learned that on August 13, Shahiduzzaman MP along with his family was infected with coronavirus. Shahiduzzaman is an MP of the ruling Awami League. President of Upazila Awami League. His wife Laila Arjuman, son Sadiuzzaman Saif, Samiuzzaman Sami Corona are positive. In addition to family members, his personal driver Shamim Parvez, PS Sabuj Ahmed, assistant Rashed Raihan were attacked by Corona.

Gangni Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer Reazul Islam said, Sahiduzzaman MP and his family were affected by the corona. He is in home isolation with his family in Gangni municipal town. He and every member of his family are healthy.

Asked about this, District Civil Surgeon Nasir Uddin said that, MP Mohammad Sahiduzzaman and his family are suffering from corona. His residence has been locked down for 14 days. What does he have to do if he does not accept the lockdown as a responsible MP?

Gangni Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Selim Shahnewaz said, his house was lockdown after MP Shahiduzzaman and his family were

attacked by Corona.

However, when an attempt was made to contact MP Shahiduzzaman Khokon, he did not receive a call.

Today Horrifying August 21

Today is the horrifying August 21, one of the cruelest days in the country's political history, when a number of Awami League activists were killed in a violent grenade attack during the BNP-Jamaat tenure.

This day in 2004, grenades were hurled at an AL rally on Bangabandhu Avenue in the capital, killing at least 24 people, including Ivy Rahman, and wounding scores of others.

Awami League president Sheikh Hasina, also then leader of the Opposition, narrowly escaped the barbaric attack, but suffered damage to her right ear.

The people of the country are still haunted by the August 21 carnage even after 16 years of the heartrending incident.

As the clock struck 5:22pm that day, all hell broke loose as assailants hurled grenades indiscriminately at the rally.

There was a makeshift podium on a truck as the BNP-Jamaat government didn't allow the use of any usual podium.

Besides the sound of grenade blasts, there were men and women screaming either in panic or pain after being wounded.

The area was flooded with blood and pieces of human flesh. Sheikh Hasina luckily survived as her party men formed a human shield around her. The grenade targeting her did not explode

luckily.

President M Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina paid rich tributes to the victims of the August 21 grenade attack and prayed for eternal peace of their departed souls on the eve of the 16th anniversary of the heinous grenade attack.

They urged all to come forward being imbued with the spirit of Liberation War to turn the sorrows of August 21 into strength for building a peaceful and democratic Bangladesh which will be free from terrorism and militancy.

“August 21 grenade attack in 2004 is a mournful day as the killers launched history’s barbaric grenade attacks on an Awami League rally on Bangabandhu Avenue with an attempt to kill Bangabandhu’s daughter Sheikh Hasina,” said the President.

In a separate message, Sheikh Hasina said the barbaric grenade attack was carried out that day under the direct patronisation of the BNP-Jamaat alliance during an anti-terrorism rally of Awami League to kill her.

Terming the grenade attack a ‘stigmatised day’ in the political history of the country, she said, “Our party leaders and activists saved me from the series of grenade attacks by forming a human shield.”

“I survived the attack due to immense blessings of the Almighty but some 22 leaders and activists, including Mahila Awami League president Ivy Rahman, embraced martyrdom,” the premier said, adding that more than 500 leaders and activists, journalists and security personnel were injured.

In a landmark verdict, the court on October 10, 2018 awarded capital punishment to 19 people, including former state minister Lutfozzaman Babar and former deputy minister Abdus Salam Pintu, in two cases filed over the deadly grenade attack.

The other convicts are former NSI chief Brig Gen (rtd) Rezzaqul Haider Chowdhury, former DGFI Director Brig Gen (rtd) Abdur Rahim, BNP leader and owner of Hanif Paribahan Mohammad Hanif, Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) leader Yusuf Butt alias Majid Butt, Kashmir-based LeT leader Abdul Malek alias Golam Mohammad, Harkatul Jihad (HuJi) founder Abdus Salam, and Huji leaders Maulana Tajuddin, Maulana Shawkat Osman, Maulana Abu Sayeed alias Dr Abu Zafar, Abul Kalam Azad alias Bulbul, Jahangir Alam, Maulana Abu Taher, Hossain Ahmed Tamim, Mufti Moinuddin Sheikh alias Abu Zandal alias Masum Billah, Rafiqul Islam Sabuj, Mohammad Ujjal alias Ratan and Mohibullah alias Mofizur Rahman alias Ovi.

The court also sentenced life imprisonment to 19 persons, including BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman, who is now staying in London.

The other convicts are Khaleda's former political secretary Harris Chowdhury, former BNP lawmaker Qazi Shah Mofazzal Hossain Kaikobad, BNP leader Ariful Islam Arif, Huji leaders Shahadatullah Jewel, Maulana Abdur Rouf, Maulana Sabbir Ahmed alias Abdul Hannan Sabbir, Arif Hasan Sumon, Hafez Maulana Yahya, Maulana Abu Bakar alias Selim Howlader, Mahibul Muttakin, Anisul Mursalin, Md Khalil, Jahangir Alam Badar, Md Iqbal, Liton alias Maulana Liton, Mufti Shafiqur Rahman, Mufti Abdul Hai and Ratul Babu.

The court awarded four years' imprisonment to two former inspectors general of police – Ashraful Huda and Shahudul Haque, Lt Commander (retd) Saiful Islam Duke, nephew of Khaleda Zia, former DGFI official (sacked) Saiful Islam Joarder and Maj Gen (retd) ATM Amin under two sections.

Former Deputy Commissioner (South) of DMP Khan Sayeed Hassan and former DC (East) of DMP Obaidur Rahman Khan were also jailed for six years each under three sections.

The court also awarded five years' jail to former IGP Khoda

Baksh Chowdhury, former SP Ruhul Amin and former ASPs of CID Atiqur Rahman and Abdur Rashid.

Earlier, three accused – Jamaat secretary general Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed and Huji chief Mufti Abdul Hannan and his associate Sharif Shahedul Alam alias Bipul – were dropped from the cases as they were hanged following their conviction in other cases.

To protect the real culprits, the then BNP-Jamaat government staged 'Joj Mia drama', showing him the prime accused in the grenade attack case.

To mark the day, the ruling Awami League, its front organisations and different political, socio-cultural and professional organisations will place wreaths at a makeshift altar on Bangabandhu Avenue at 9:00am today.

The ruling party alleged that the BNP-Jamaat alliance government had carried out the grenade attack to kill Sheikh Hasina to make the party leaderless.

The incident took place on Saturday. Sheikh Hasina attended the party rally as the chief guest. After the rally, an anti-violence procession was supposed to be brought out. Miscreants started hurling grenades soon after she (Sheikh Hasina) finished her speech with the slogan 'Joy Bangla, Joy Bangabandhu'.

AL leaders and activists and common people got stunned when grenades exploded at the political gathering, killing at least 16 party activists on the spot. Ivy Rahman, wife of late President Zillur Rahman, succumbed to her injuries after fighting for 58 hours in hospital.

Party leaders and activists started screaming and made a human shield to save Sheikh Hasina's life.

Her private security personnel Mahbubur Rahman sacrificed his

life while trying to save Sheikh Hasina.

Many Awami League leaders, including Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, Kazi Zafarullah, Abdul Latif Siddique, Obaidul Quader, Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya, Maj Gen (Rtd) Tareq Ahmed Siddique, AFM Bahauddin Nasim and Pankaj Debnath escaped death but still haunted over the gruesome incident as they have been living life with splinter injuries.

The government filed two cases – one for the murder and the other under the Explosive Substances Act.

The government is trying to bring back 18 fugitives in the cases to the country through the Interpol. Tarique Rahman is now staying in London while Maulana Tajuddin Ahmed and his younger brother Ratul Babu are believed to be hiding in South Africa.

Kazi Mofazzal Hossain Kaikobad is hiding in Saudi Arabia and Haris Chowdhury moves through the United Kingdom, Malaysia, Singapore, the USA and India.

One of the key accused in the cases, former minister and Jamaat-e-Islami secretary general Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed was hanged to death in a case over crimes against humanity during the War of Liberation in 1971 while Huji chief Mufti Abdul Hannan and Shahidul Alam Bipul were hanged in the another case over terrorism.

Two other major suspects – former Major General ATM Amin and former Lt Colonel Saiful Islam Joarder – are believed to be staying in Dubai.

Besides this, Mohibul Mustakin and his brother Anisul Mursalin are now in Tihar Jail in India.

Militant leaders Shafikur Rahman, Mufti Abdul Hai, Maulana Abu Bakar, Iqbal, Khalilur Rahman, Jahangir Alam alias Badar, Maulana Liton alias Zobair alias Delwar, then DCs Obaidur

Rahman and Khan Syed Hasan are also staying abroad, sources said.

A total of 225, out of 511, prosecution witnesses gave their depositions before Judge Shahed Nuruddin of Dhaka Speedy Trial Tribunal-1 in the cases.

Ref-Daily-Sun

Meherpur jail serves pitha to inmates

Inmates of Meherpur jail had a chance to escape from their everyday mundane activities inside the prison on Thursday when the authorities arranged a pitha festival for them.

On Thursday night, the prison compound was brimming with aroma of various types of pitha, the rice-made delectable winter delicacies of the country.

ASM Kamrul Huda, superintendent of Meherpur jail, said they arranged the festival for the 227 male and 6 female inmates so they also can join in the pitha-tasting festivities that grip the nation during the winter time.

Professional pitha makers were brought in and some of the inmates along with staff members of the jail took part in preparation, presentation and distribution of the pithas among all.

As a correctional facility, they try to organise these types of activities for inducing humane qualities among the inmates and the pitha festival will continue in years to come, he added.

Tajmid Ali, whose brother has been in the jail for the last eight years in connection with a murder case, said since there is a restriction on bringing home-cooked meal for a prisoner, it was a laudable initiative of the prison authorities.

Meherpur Deputy Commissioner Ataul Gani said treating inmates with compassion through such programmes can go a long way in facilitating behavioural correction of prison inmates.

MP/MEM

Five die in Kushtia Road crash

Five people, including three members of a family, have been killed after a head-on collision between a truck and an autorickshaw in Kushtia's Bheramara Upazila.

The accident took place in front of a power plant on the Pabna-Ishwardi Highway in Sholodag around 3:15pm on Tuesday, said Bheramara Police OC Shuvo Prokash Faruk

Four of the five fatalities have been identified as Mezba Uddin, 32, his wife Runa Begum, 26, their son Ruzbi, 7, and autorickshaw driver Jalal Uddin, 32. All of them were residents of Rajshahi.

"Mezba and his family were returning home in an autorickshaw after visiting his in-laws in Jhenaidah. The vehicle collided with a truck coming from the opposite direction, leaving three people dead on the spot," OC Shuvo said.

"Two others died after being taken to Kushtia Sadar Hospital

shortly after the incident.”

Police seized the truck but the driver managed to flee the scene, Shuvo added.

Raushan made chief patron, GM Quader chairman

Jatiya Party (JaPa) founder HM Ershad's widow Raushan Ershad has been made the chief patron of the party today during its national council where GM Quader was elected chairman for the next three years.

Chief Election Commissioner Supreme Court advocate Sheikh Seraj announced the names at the ninth national council of the party at the engineers Institute in the capital this morning.

Moshiur Rahman Ranga was made Secretary General of the party.

Awami League General Secretary and Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader was present as a guest at the council.

Ruhul Amin Hawlader, former secretary general of JaPa, Kazi Firoz Rashid, MP, and other senior leaders of the party were also present at the council.

Kalerkantho Online

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