

# NGOs, CBOs INGO



## ATC dismisses application to examine JIT members in Perween Rahman case

An antiterrorism court on Monday dismissed an application pleading to examine the members of the Supreme Court-appointed joint investigation teams (JITs), who had detained and grilled the accused allegedly involved in the murder of renowned social activist Perween Rahman.



Ms Rahman, head of the Orangi Pilot Project, was gunned down near her office in Orangi Town on March 13, 2013. Five detained accused — Abdul Raheem Swati, his son Mohammad Imran Swati along with three co-accused Ayaz Shamzai alias Swati, Amjad Hussain Khan and Ahmed Khan alias Ahmed Ali alias Pappu Kashmiri — have been charged with her murder.

On Monday, when the ATC-XIII judge took up the case, the assistant prosecutor general and the counsel for the complainant jointly moved an application under Section 540 (power to summon material witness or examine persons present) of the Criminal Procedure Code.

APG Ghulam Murtaza Maitlo and complainant's counsel Salahuddin Panhwar contended that at the very initial stage the police high-ups had disclosed in the press conference that the real culprits had been killed in a police encounter upon which the sister of the slain activist had petitioned the Supreme Court to constitute a commission to probe the matter.

They argued that the apex court constituted the commission and JIT to probe the matter, therefore the members of the JIT were material witnesses in the present case and also cited the judgments passed by the superior courts in this regard.

The prosecutor and the defence counsel said that the accused would not be prejudiced if their application was allowed.

On the other hand, Advocates Shah Imroze Khan, Amir Mansoob Qureshi, Abid Zaman and Ajab Khan Khattak, who represented the accused, opposed the plea arguing that the investigating officer of the case had neither cited that the members of the JIT had been witnesses in the charge sheet nor had recorded their statement under Section 161 of the CrPC during the investigation.

They pointed out that neither the report, under Section 173 of the CrPC, and the JIT's findings were supplied to the accused before the commencement of the trial, adding that nor the same were admissible evidence as had been held by the superior courts.

The defence counsel added that the matter pertained to the year 2013 and had not yet been finalised due to the act of the counsel for the complainant.

The accused are behind bars since the date of their arrest and now the matter is near its end as all the material prosecution witnesses have been examined in the case, but instead of closing the side of the prosecution the APG had filed the present application only to prolong the matter without any reasonable ground.

The judge, dismissing the application, questioned that if the evidence of members of the JIT was so necessary, as stated by the APG for the state, then why the prosecution failed to associate them as witnesses in the calendar of the witnesses in the case.

He observed that the charge sheet and the investigation report under Section 173 of the CrPC were submitted by the police after thorough scrutiny by the prosecutor, who was responsible for seeing whether it was complete or incomplete, other necessary papers were attached, and after fulfilling all the legal formalities required by the court.

"The law does not permit the court to fill up the lacunas in the prosecution case," the judge wrote in his order.

He further wrote that the present case pertained to 2013 and could not be finalised due to the above act of the counsel for the parties, adding that now there were directives of the Sindh High Court to finalise the matter within two months and the stipulated time was about to end.

(By Naeem Sahoutara Dawn, 16, 09/01/2019)

## Plea to halt proceedings in Perween Rahman murder case dismissed

An antiterrorism court on Wednesday dismissed an application seeking to halt the proceedings of Perween Rahman's murder trial until an order was passed by the Supreme Court on her sister's plea for re-investigation of the case by the Federal Investigation Agency.



Earlier, the same court had dismissed an application moved by the slain activist's sister pleading to summon and record testimonies of the members of a Supreme Court-appointed joint investigation team (JIT), which had detained and grilled some of the accused involved in the murder.

Five detained accused — Abdul Raheem Swati, his son Mohammad Imran Swati, Ayaz Shamzai alias Swati, Amjad Hussain Khan and Ahmed Khan alias Ahmed Ali alias Pappu Kashmiri — have been charged with the murder.

*ATC rules indefinite adjournment of a criminal case is against normal trend of jurisprudence*

Ms Rahman, head of the Orangi Pilot Project, was gunned down near her office in Orangi Town on March 13, 2013.

On Wednesday, the ATC-XIII conducting trial inside the judicial complex in the central prison pronounced its verdict reserved earlier after hearing arguments from the defence, prosecution and the counsel for the complainant.

The judge passed the order while disposing of an application jointly filed by Advocate Salahuddin Panhwar, who represented the complainant, and Assistant Prosecutor General Ghulam Murtaza Maitlo for the state under Section 344 (power to postpone or adjourn proceedings) of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) read with Section 32 (overriding effect of the act) of the Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997.

After considering the arguments of the prosecutor and the counsel for the complainant and the accused, the judge wrote in his order that admittedly the matter pertained to 2013 and could not be finalised for one or the other reason.

The accused were behind bars since the date of their arrest and their bail applications had also been dismissed by the trial court as well as the high court, the court added.

It said there were directions of the Sindh High Court to conclude the matter within two months and the trial court had taken efforts and examined all the witnesses cited in the calendar of witnesses and side of the prosecution had been closed.

The judge noted that the statements of the accused under Section 342 (power to examine the accused) as well as 340(2) (right of person to be defended and his competency to be a witness) of the CrPC had been recorded.

He noted that the complainant's counsel moved an application requesting to summon and record statements of the members of the JIT, but the application was dismissed.

Therefore, the complainant challenged the same order by filing a revision application before the SHC besides moving an application with the SC with a request to entrust investigation of the case to an honest and impartial officer of the FIA.

She also filed the present application with the trial court requesting it to indefinitely adjourn the matter or stay further proceedings in the case, arguing that if the present application was disposed of the other applications pending before the SHC and the SC would become infructuous.

Opposing the plea, Advocate Shah Imroze Khan, defence counsel for accused Imran Swati, contended that the plea was not maintainable for passing any order as the relief claimed by the complainant was not within the jurisdiction of the trial court.

"The case cannot be stayed or adjourned sine die without any restraining order by the superior courts," the counsel said, adding that there were directives of the SHC to the trial court to conclude the matter within two months.

The trial was near its end and the complainant intended to make the matter linger on, on one or the other pretext, he said and pleaded to dismiss the application.

The judge ruled that there was no specific direction of the Supreme Court regarding staying the proceedings and observed: "The adjournment of a criminal case indefinitely is against the normal trend of criminal jurisprudence and it should generally be discouraged, as held in numerous cases by the superior courts that the policy of criminal law aims at bringing accused persons to justice as speedily as possible, so that if they are found guilty, they may be punished and if they are found innocent, they may be acquitted and discharged."

The judge ruled that no reasonable ground was shown by the complainant's counsel and in the light of circumstances, "I do not find any merit in the instant application and the same is hereby dismissed".  
(By Naeem Sahoutara Dawn, 15, 10/01/2019)

### **Perween Rahman murder case**

An antiterrorism court has fixed a case pertaining to the murder of renowned social activist Perween Rahman for final arguments for Jan 12 (today).

Five detained accused, Abdul Raheem Swati, his son Mohammad Imran Swati, and three other co-accused, have been charged with her murder.

Ms Rahman, head of the Orangi Pilot Project, was gunned down near her office in Orangi Town on March 13, 2013.

On Thursday, the ATC-XIII judge, who is conducting the trial in the judicial complex inside the central prison, recorded statements of two defence witnesses.

After recording their statements, the judge fixed the matter for Jan 12 for recording final arguments from the prosecution and the defence and the counsel for the complainant.  
(By The Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 16, 12/01/2019)

### Plaintiff given time for transfer of Perween Rahman murder case

An anti-terrorism court on Wednesday granted time till January 20, as a last chance, to the counsel for the complainant, to proceed with his application in the Sindh High Court for transfer of social activist Perween Rahman's murder trial to any other anti-terrorism court.



Five detained accused have been charged with her murder.

Perween Rahman, head of the Orangi Pilot Project, was gunned down near her office in Orangi Town on March 13, 2013.

On Wednesday, the ATC-XIII judge, who is conducting the trial in the judicial complex inside the central prison, was set to hear final arguments from the prosecutor, the defence counsel for the accused and the complainant's counsel.

But Advocate Salahuddin Panhwar, appearing for the complainant, once again requested the judge to adjourn the proceedings till an order was passed by the high court on an application moved by the complainant seeking transfer of the proceedings to any other ATC.

In the last hearing, the judge had allowed a similar request and fixed the matter for Wednesday for hearing final arguments from the parties as two months' time given by the SHC to it to conclude the trial was about to end.

Allowing Mr Panhwar's request, the judge adjourned the matter till Jan 20 to enable him to proceed with his application pending before the SHC till the next date of hearing.

### Policemen's bail pleas dismissed in Naqeeb case

An anti-terrorism court on Wednesday dismissed bail applications of 13 former police officials in the cases pertaining to alleged kidnapping for ransom of aspiring Waziristan model Naqeebullah Mehsud and three others and their killing in "staged" encounter cases.

The then SSP of Malir Rao Anwar, the then DSP Qamar Ahmed Shaikh along with their around 10 detained and 14 absconding subordinates have been booked in the cases of allegedly kidnapping for ransom and then killing four men in a fake shoot-out in Shah Latif Town on Jan 13, 2018.

(By Naeem Sahoutara Dawn, 16, 17/01/2019)

### Crackdown on INGOs

National interest is being cited as the reason why INGOs have been the centre of scrutiny of late. Following an October 2017 order to cancel the registration of many INGOs operating in Pakistan, concerns by other organisational leaders were raised.

The meeting of envoys from Western countries, members from the Ministries of Interior, Foreign Affairs and Economic Affairs Division and Foreign Secretary Tehmina Janjua this week seems to have been a successful one with realigning focus on Pakistan's needs and conveying to organisations that neither we, nor our people, are to be exploited.

Considering that both sides ended on a similar note of agreeing to maintain dialogue and communication, continuous relationships can be sought.

Pakistan has seen many benefits of allowing INGOs to work in various areas of development, such as health, education, and technology. Examples include education and technology initiatives, research projects, and clinics to treat patients. Thus, an expulsion of INGOs without explanation would damage the country's reputation in the way of harsh government intervention in areas where unnecessary. The meeting rescued this image from being portrayed and we welcome the Foreign Secretary conveyed to organisations that Pakistan has every right to defend its interests and that organisations can exercise their rights to appeal unfavourable decisions.

Previous governments cared little about who set up camp in the country whether to feed into a foreign country's saviour complex, collect other data, or genuinely enter to work for Pakistan's benefit. It is unacceptable that entities working against national interest were ever welcomed. This government seems to have taken a plausible step by coming down firmly to guard its policies. We may ask what our national interests are and who refines them. This area remains slightly vague, noting that we vastly need help for development. It is imprudent to become overly strict.

(By Editorial The Express Tribune, 16, 18/01/2019)

### Concluding arguments deferred in Perween Rahman's murder trial

An antiterrorism court on Thursday deferred the concluding arguments in renowned social activist Perween Rahman's murder trial following a restraining order issued by the Sindh High Court.

Ms Rahman, head of the Orangi Pilot Project, who devoted her life to the development of impoverished neighbourhoods, was gunned down near her office in Orangi Town on March 13, 2013.

Five detained accused — Abdul Raheem Swati, his son Mohammad Imran Swati along three co-accused Ayaz Shamzai, alias Swati, Amjad Hussain Khan and Ahmed Khan, alias Ahmed Ali, alias Pappu Kashmiri — have been charged with her murder.



On Thursday, the matter came up for hearing before the ATC-XIII judge, who is conducting the trial in the judicial complex inside the central prison.

At the outset, the complainant's counsel Advocate Salahuddin submitted that his client had moved a review application against the trial court's order of dismissing her application to halt its proceedings till the fate of her application for examining the members of three joint investigation teams (JITs) constituted to probe the murder case, was decided by the Supreme Court.

On Dec 22, the SHC issued an interim order, restraining the trial court from pronouncing judgment in the present case till Feb 12; the counsel informed and requested the judge to defer further the proceedings till then. He also produced a copy of the SHC's restraining order.

Allowing the request, the judge deferred the concluding arguments being advanced by both sides in the case till Feb 14 and adjourned the hearing.

Earlier, the complainant had requested the trial court to record testimonies of the JITs' members observing that at the very initial stage the police high-ups had disclosed in the press conference that the real culprits had been killed in a police encounter upon which the sister of the slain activist had petitioned the Supreme Court to constitute a commission to probe the matter.

The counsel had argued that the apex court constituted the commission and JIT to probe the matter, therefore the members of the JIT were material witnesses in the present case. The state prosecutor had also given his consent to allow the application.

While dismissing the plea, the judge had questioned that if the evidence of members of the JIT was so necessary then why did the prosecution fail to associate them as witnesses in the calendar of the witnesses in the case?

The judge had further observed that the law does not permit the court to fill up the lacunas in the prosecution case and noted that the Sindh High Court had issued clear directives to the trial court to finalise the matter within two months and the stipulated time was about to end.

(By Naeem Sahoutara Dawn, 16, 08/02/2019)

### **Perween Rahman murder trial put off till 26th**

An antiterrorism court on Thursday put off hearing of a case pertaining to renowned social rights activist Perween Rahman's murder following a restraining order issued by the Sindh High Court.

Five detained accused — Abdul Raheem Swati, his son Mohammad Imran Swati along three co-accused Ayaz Shamzai, alias Swati; Amjad Hussain Khan and Ahmed Khan, alias Ahmed Ali, alias Pappu Kashmiri — have been charged with her murder.

Perween Rahman, head of the Orangi Pilot Project, was gunned down near her office in Orangi Town on March 13, 2013.

On Thursday, the matter came up for hearing before the ATC-XIII judge, who is conducting the trial in the judicial complex inside the central prison. Advocate Salahuddin Panhwar for the complainant, who is a sister of the slain activist, was absent.

However, the judge put off the hearing till Feb 26 following a restraining order issued by the SHC.

On Feb 7, the judge had deferred hearing concluding arguments in the case after the complainant's counsel Advocate Salahuddin pointed out that the high court on Dec 22 restrained the ATC from proceeding further with the trial until it would decide the complainant's review application.

In her review plea, the complainant had challenged the trial court's order of dismissing her application pleading to halt trial proceedings.

(By The Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 16, 15/02/2019)

### **ATC rejects bail in Perween Rahman murder case**

An anti-terrorism court (ATC) rejected on Tuesday the bail plea of an accused in the murder case of Orangi Pilot Project Director Perween Rahman.

The court heard the bail plea of accused, Imran Swati, and rejected it. The accused had also approached the Sindh High Court (SHC) for bail but later, withdrew his plea. The plaintiff's counsel, Salahuddin Panhwar, said that there was concrete evidence against the accused and requested that the plea for bail be rejected. The police have booked Raheem Swati, Mohammad Imran Swati, Ayaz Khan, Mohammad Amjad Hussain and others in the murder case.

Rahman was shot dead on March 13, 2013 for raising her voice against land grabbing in Orangi Town.

**Arguments sought**

An ATC sought arguments after the counsel of the accused, booked in the case pertaining to the attack on Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) MPA Ramzan Ghanchi, moved an application to transfer the case to a sessions court.

Ghanchi did not appear before the court despite court orders. The court had ordered that the MPA would be summoned if needed. Salman Soomro and his sons, Shahnawaz Soomro and Ali Nawaz Soomro appeared before the court.

Ali is the vice-chairman of UC-16 and is affiliated with the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP). The counsel for the accused, Amir Mansoob, argued that there was a personal dispute between the two parties and the case thus, does not fall under the Anti-Terrorism Act and should be referred to a sessions court. The court, seeking arguments, adjourned the hearing till March 19. The court also ordered the investigation officer (IO) to submit the final challan.

According to the police, the incident took place over a water dispute. Ghanchi had refused to give an illegal water supply connection in Napier area on January 25, 2019. He got into a quarrel with the UC Chairman and his brothers. Ali Nawaz Soomro and his brother Shahnawaz Soomro had attacked Ghanchi, who was injured in firing.

**Proceedings initiated**

An ATC ordered the IO on Tuesday to initiate proceedings to declare six Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) workers, accused of inciting violence in the city, absconders. The court also ordered the IO to present the report and adjourned the hearing till March 26. Saqib Qadri, Mehfooz Ali, Altaf Hussain, Jameel Qadri, Farman Jetline Wala and Noman AB are among the accused.

According to the police, the accused are booked under charges of encounter, siege and arson, etc. The case against the suspects is registered at the Brigade Police Station.

(By Our Correspondent The Express Tribune, 05, 13/03/2019)

**Suspect's second bail plea rejected in Perween murder case**

An antiterrorism court on Tuesday rejected the second bail application filed by an accused, Mohammad Imran Swati, charged with facilitating the killing of renowned social activist Perween Rahman.

Five detained accused — Imran Swati and his father Abdul Raheem Swati along three co-accused Ayaz Shamzai, alias Swati; Amjad Hussain Khan and Ahmed Khan, alias Ahmed Ali, alias Pappu Kashmiri — have been charged with her murder.

Perween Rahman, head of the Orangi Pilot Project, was gunned down near her office in Orangi Town on March 13, 2013.

On Tuesday, the ATC-XIII judge, who is conducting the trial in the judicial complex inside the central prison, pronounced his judgement reserved earlier.

The judge noted that the laws relied upon by the defence counsel were quite distinguishable from the facts and circumstances of the present case. Therefore, the judge did not find any merit in the bail application at the present stage of the case and rejected the same.

In the bail plea, defence counsel Shah Imroz Khan argued that the trial court had earlier dismissed his client's bail plea and the same order was challenged before the Sindh High Court, where he did not press the matter since it (SHC) directed the trial court to conclude the trial within two months. However, he contended the trial court failed to conclude the proceedings within the stipulated period, hence second bail application was moved on behalf of the accused, as neither his name was in the FIR nor was he arrested from the spot.

The counsel contended that the police arrested him on Aug 1, 2015 and implicated him under Sections 201 (causing disappearance of evidence of offence, or giving false information to screen offender) and 202 (intentional omission to give information of offence by person bound to inform) of the Pakistan Penal Code for allegedly helping the killers of Perween Rahman though there was no direct or indirect evidence available to connect him with the alleged offences.

Arguing that the prosecution's case needed further inquiry and the offences did not fall within the ambit of the prohibitory clauses, the counsel had pleaded to grant post-arrest bail to his client.

On the other hand, the state prosecutor as well as the counsel for the complainant had vehemently opposed the plea arguing that since a bail application of the present accused had already been dismissed on merit, thus no fresh ground had been taken by the prosecution in the second bail plea filed before the same court.

Replying to the argument regarding failure of the trial court in concluding the trial within two months as ordered by the SHC, they argued that since there was a stay order passed by the high court against the trial proceedings, such period could not be considered as part of the two months' time.

They further mentioned that in compliance with the directives of the Supreme Court passed on an application moved by the victim's sister, a Joint Investigation Team of the Federal Investigation Agency had been constituted to probe into the matter afresh, adding that all the prosecution and defence witnesses had already been examined and statement of the accused had also been recorded, thus the present bail plea at this stage of the case did not carry any merit. They pleaded to dismiss the plea.

(By Naeem Sahoutara Dawn, 16, 13/03/2019)

### **SHC seeks JIT report in Perween Rahman's murder**

The Sindh High Court (SHC) sought on Thursday the joint investigation team (JIT) report in the case of the murder of Orangi Pilot Project Director Perween Rahman.

A two-member-bench headed by Chief Justice Ahmed Ali Sheikh and comprising Justice Omar Sial heard the bail pleas by three accused, Amjad Swati, Ayaz Ali and Imran Swati, in the murder case.

The counsel for the accused maintained that a JIT was formed on the orders of the Supreme Court. While addressing the counsel for Imran, the court asked where the report of the JIT is. The accused's counsel responded that they hadn't received the JIT report as yet. He added that his client has completed his sentence and has been in the jail for four years.

The court sought the JIT report at the next hearing and adjourned the hearing of bail pleas till May 30.

According to the counsels for the accused, final arguments couldn't be presented in the trial court for the past four months. The JIT has been formed thrice before. According to the government lawyer, Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has also interrogated the accused in jail.

#### **Return of surety**

The same bench also heard the plea for return of the surety money deposited by former provincial minister Sharjeel Inam Memon. The court adjourned the hearing as Nazir's report regarding the return of surety amount for his bail wasn't received by the accused's counsel.

The defence lawyer argued that he hadn't received the report by SHC's Nazir following which, the court adjourned the hearing. According to the National Accountability Bureau (NAB), Sharjeel has been nominated in the corruption reference of Rs5.76 billion in Sindh information department.

#### **Extension granted**

While hearing the bail pleas of accused, former IG Sindh Ghulam Haider Jamali, AIG Tanveer Tahir and others, in the corruption reference in Sindh police department, the same bench gave an extension till today (Friday) to the counsel for former AIG Faisal Bashir Memon to present his argument.

The other accused include Fida Hussain Shah, Kamran Rashid, Sarmad Midhat Hussain and Ali Asghar.

The court expressed annoyance over the absence of the accused's counsels. While addressing the junior lawyer of Advocate Farooq H Naek, the bench remarked till when should the court listen to the counsel for accused and give extensions.

The court inquired from Faisal if he had signed the cheque. The accused replied that yes he had. The court asked where the money of the cheques the accused had signed go, and if the angels had taken the money with them.

Faisal's counsel argued that extension should be given for the arguments. The court said it's enough, extension won't be granted again and again. The court gave extension to the accused's counsel till today (Friday) and adjourned the hearing.

NAB's prosecutor argued that the police officials, Tanveer Ahmed, Atiqur Rehman and Shafiq, had filed plea bargain pleas, which have been sent to the headquarters. The accused have been charged with causing a loss of Rs150 million to the national treasury.

According to NAB, reference had been filed on the complaint of general accounts controller. The accused allegedly committed corruption in police feeding fund, money was deducted from the salaries of the police officials and millions rupees of loss was caused to the national treasury in the name of maintenance of police cars. The accused also allegedly gave contracts to the people of their choice without tenders.

#### **Missing persons case**

The SHC disposed of three pleas of missing persons when the police informed about the whereabouts of the missing persons.

A two-member bench, headed by Justice Naimtullah Phulpoto, heard three pleas seeking recovery of missing persons. The report submitted by the police said that of the three missing persons, Oan, a bank employee, appeared before the bench after he returned home. The other missing person, Ghulam Ali, was arrested by the police while the third missing man, Saeed Ahmed, was killed in Mochko area. The police informed that culprits in Saeed Ahmed's murder case had been arrested. Three persons were missing since past several months.

The bench remarked that they try their best on a daily basis that the missing citizens return to their homes. The bench sought a report from Sindh inspector general of police (IGP) and Rangers director general on pleas of other missing persons till August 22.

Earlier, the police had submitted reports pertaining to the recovery of 20 missing persons. The families of missing persons have been following the proceedings for many years and as a result, a number of missing persons have been recovered.

(By Our Correspondent The Express Tribune, 04, 24/05/2019)

### **ATC seeks new JIT report in Perween Rahman murder case**

An antiterrorism court on Thursday directed the prosecutor to submit the report of a joint investigation team constituted on the directives of the Supreme Court to re-investigate a case pertaining to murder of renowned social rights activist Perween Rahman. Five detained accused — Imran Swati, his father Abdul Raheem Swati along with three co-accused Ayaz Shamzai, alias Swati; Amjad Hussain Khan and Ahmed Khan, alias Ahmed Ali, alias Pappu Kashmiri — have been charged with her murder.

Perween Rahman, head of the Orangi Pilot Project, who devoted her life to the development of impoverished neighbourhoods, was gunned down near her office in Orangi Town on March 13, 2013.

On Thursday, the bail applications of three detained suspects were fixed before the ATC-XIII judge, who is conducting the trial in the judicial complex inside the central prison.

Three accused — Imran Swati, Ayaz Shamzai and Amjad Hussain — had moved applications through defence counsel seeking grant of post-arrest bail to them in the present case.

The defence counsel, Imroze Khan, and others argued that the applicants were behind the bars for around last four years and were entitled for the post-arrest bail on statutory grounds.

They further argued that the case was fixed at the stage of final arguments, but the proceedings were stayed by the Sindh High Court as the complainant moved an application before the Supreme Court seeking re-investigation of the case.

The counsel submitted that the trial proceedings had been halted for around last four months as a new joint investigation team of the federal investigation agency was constituted by the Supreme Court to re-investigate the matter.

The counsel argued that three JITs had already been constituted in the case, adding that the complainant was deliberately trying to get the proceedings delayed with mala fide intentions. Therefore, they pleaded to grant post-arrest bail to the three applicants. The judge inquired about the report of the new JIT constituted to probe the matter afresh.

The state prosecutor informed the judge that the JIT had grilled the accused persons in the prison.

However, the defence counsel complained that they had not received any report of the JIT. Therefore, the judge directed the prosecutor to submit a copy of the report of the SC-appointed fresh joint investigation team before the court and adjourned the hearing till May 30.

In April, the court had allowed an application moved by a special public prosecutor for the FIA stating that the SC had recently constituted a new JIT to probe the murder afresh.

Headed by the director-general of the counterterrorism wing of the federal investigation agency, the five-member team reportedly comprises officers from other law enforcement agencies as its members. The court was requested to allow the JIT members to interrogate the five accused detained in the prison.

According to the prosecution, some of the detained accused during interrogations had confessed to their involvement in the crime and disclosed that local leaders of the Awami National Party had hired Taliban militants to kill Perween Rahman.

Ayaz and Raheem, said to be local leaders of the ANP, were living near the OPP office and allegedly tried to obtain a designated area to build a karate centre, but Perween Rahman refused to allow it, it added.

The prosecution further said that all the accused were present in a meeting held in January 2013 at the residence of Raheem in which they planned the assassination of Perween Rahman, adding that they hired local commander of TTP Moosa and Mehfoozullah, alias Bhaloo, to kill the OPP head.

Initially, a case was registered under Sections 302 (premeditated murder) and 34 (common intention) of the Pakistan Penal Code at the Pirabad police station.

In April 2014, the Supreme Court had ordered a fresh probe into Perween Rahman's murder after a judicial inquiry conducted on its order revealed that then IO Ulfat and other police officers had manipulated the investigation.

Subsequently, Section 7 of the Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997 was incorporated in the case on the basis of judicial inquiry conducted by the then district and sessions judge (west) Ghulam Mustafa Memon on the orders of the SC.

(By The Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 16, 25/05/2019)

### **Interim JIT report on Perween Rahman murder submitted to SC**

The investigators are still trying to collect "basic forensic and circumstantial evidence" related to the murder of renowned rights activist Perween Rahman as two joint investigation teams reportedly overlooked the basic things to resolve the mystery surrounding the high-profile killing, it emerged on Monday.



This disclosure came in an interim report of the new joint investigation team (JIT) filed early this month in the Supreme Court, where the slain activist's sister Aquila Ismail moved an application for reinvestigation of the case by the Federal Investigation Agency.

Ms Rahman, head of the Orangi Pilot Project (OPP), was gunned down near her office in Orangi Town on March 13, 2013.

Earlier, two JITs constituted by the Sindh government to probe the high-profile killing failed to make any breakthrough in the investigation.

The third joint investigation team, constituted by the federal government in February, with director of the FIA's counterterrorism wing Mazhar Ul Haq Kakakhel as its head and former SSP South Pir Mohammed Shah, Sindh Rangers superintendent Mohammad Asghar, the Inter-Services Intelligence's director Mohammad Arif and the Intelligence Bureau's director Raja Mustafa Ali, as its members, filed its interim report with the Supreme Court earlier this month. However, it sought six months (from February till September) to complete the investigation.

#### *Slain activist's sister expresses disappointment over lack of progress in the case*

The interim report stated that the matter was being probed de novo (from the beginning) since complainant Aquila Ismail told the investigators that no fruitful investigation had been done in the case of the murder of her elder sister.

In her statement, the complainant deplored that the investigating officers, including the senior officers, could not reach any conclusion on the ground that it was too late to collect legally acceptable evidence at a belated stage.

"No police officer took statement of the OPP staff and those in the neighbourhood," she told the JIT, adding that Ms Rahman had no personal enmity with anyone.

The report stated that to find out and fill the lacunas in the previous investigations and to examine the case record the new JIT got attached with the Intelligence Bureau's director Rizwan Shah-led JIT to seek assistance from the previous IOs.

The new team decided to ascertain the wider motives for killing Ms Rahman by examining the link of the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan, water mafia/illegal hydrants, land-grabbing and Goth Abad schemes with the murder, the interim report stated.

In the first phase, the JIT members met Ms Ismail, also the petitioner, who stated that her sister was targeted due to her work which was primarily against the interests of the land and water mafia.

"She might have been targeted due to the work that she was doing," the report quoted Ms Ismail as saying.

In the first phase, it examined eight staffers and office-holders of the OPP.

Ms Ismail told the investigators that her elder sister was working against land-grabbers and illegal water hydrants and suspected that they might have played some role in her murder, the report quoted her as saying.

"Perween Rahman was documenting the lands of Mohammad Khan Colony, Gadap, Malir, Keamari etc which was not in the interest of the land-grabbers," the complainant said and believed that the "land-grabbers have killed her".

She recalled that Ms Rahman once told her that the "Swati group" was interested in the land of the OPP office for establishing a karate centre and once they even entered the premises of the office to make Ms Rahman surrender the land, the report added.

The complainant disclosed to the investigators that OPP employee Shamsuddin, alias Shamsoo, was the last person to talk to Ms Rahman on the day of her murder. "He delayed the departure of Ms Perween Rahman from office for some unknown reason, and because of this she doubted that he may have some information regarding the murder," the report stated.

She suspected that Shamsuddin might also have links with the five accused persons, already arrested in the case. She also suspects that another employee, Rasheed Gul, whom Ms Rahman had dismissed for stealing Rs6,000, but was reluctant to nominate him in the murder, might also know something about the crime.

Sources told Dawn that Mr Shamsuddin used to work as a recovery officer for the OPP while his brother Sirajuddin worked on the designing and maps of the projects.

#### **Threatening calls**

The report further stated that according to Ms Ismail another OPP director, Anwar Rashid, had received threatening calls or emails and informed the apex court that the same information had been shared with the authorities concerned to trace the unknown caller.

It mentioned that five OPP staffers, including Shamsuddin and Sirajuddin, did not appear before the JIT to record their statements. "A team was constituted to arrest both the brothers, who were summoned twice, while the Nadra authorities were approached to seek requisite information while the cellular companies and other agencies for tracing their mobile phones and collecting their call detail record and locations, etc," it added.

**Cops and accused interrogated**

The report said that the JIT members also visited the crime scene, took necessary notes and prepared a list of the witnesses in the neighbourhood, who would be examined during investigation.

It further mentioned that the relevant record pertaining to all the related cases/FIRs had been requisitioned to find out the links among the incidents to unearth the motive for the murder.

The police officers associated with the case, including the investigation officers, were examined by the JIT in the second phase, the report said.

In the third phase, the investigators also grilled three of the five accused persons detained in the Karachi Central Prison in connection with Ms Rahman's murder, the report added.

The investigators grilled the key accused, Abdul Raheem Swati, his son Imran Swati and Ayaz Ali, inside the prison in April.

"All the detained accused said that neither they had committed the murder of the OPP director nor were they part of any conspiracy, which resulted in her murder", it added.

"It is pertinent to mention here that Raheem Swati, who made a confession before the senior superintendent of police, has retracted his confession and stated that he made confession under pressure of police," the report stated.

The report stated that the other important details, which may help the JIT in apprehending other persons involved in the present case, had been taken and requisite actions initiated in the light of the information shared by them.

The other persons arrested in the case will be interrogated later in the light of information collected by that time, it added.

**Basic evidence collection**

In order to collect the basic forensic evidence six years after the murder, the report said to conduct geofencing of the crime scene and a CDR analysis it had been recommended to appoint the focal persons of the NR3/Cybercrime Wing of the FIA, the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority, the PTCL and four private cellular companies.

It mentioned that the JIT started receiving information from different agencies and cellular companies which was being analysed and further actions were being planned in the light of the information received so far.

**Help from media and public**

The report said that the programmes broadcast on television channels regarding Perween Rahman, articles written in newspapers, confession made by Raheem Swati on TV channels and interviews given by the slain activist were analysed and requests made to Pemra and other relevant persons to share the requisite information and come forward and help the JIT in ascertaining the facts.

It said the public had also been invited to come forward and share information related to the murder, adding that the telephone numbers and email addresses had been shared with the public to share such information without any fear. The JIT has also decided to call the public for sharing information through the radio channels of Karachi, it added.

(By Naeem Sahoutara Dawn, 15, 18/06/2019)

**Overdue Edhi Line to get almost a billion-rupee share in 2019-20**

The Sindh government has allocated Rs934 million for the Rapid Transit Edhi (Orange) Line project in the upcoming budget.

The project, initiated in June 2016, was to be completed in exactly a year's time but after three years, only 70% of the three-kilometre corridor has been completed. The Sindh government has now vowed to complete the project by this year's end and import buses by February next year.

For a change, the project's cost of Rs2.26 billion is not the reason which has led to delay. The Sindh government has had no problem releasing funds for this scheme at least. Instead, the project has been delayed on account of three things: a legal battle, tardiness on contractors' part and water supply and sewerage issues.

**Legal trouble**

The Edhi Line project was delayed by one year due to a legal battle between the Sindh government and one of the contractors initially hired to handle part of the project.

When it was initiated, the project was split into two 'packages', each of which were awarded to a different contractor. Package One comprised construction of two stations and an elevated bridge structure between the Orangi Town office and Banaras Bridge while Package Two entailed construction of three stations and reconstruction of Shahrah-e-Orangi.

The project ran into legal trouble when the Sindh government tried to sack the Package Two contractor for failing to meet legal requirements and award the project to another company. The aggrieved contractor took the matter to the Sindh High Court and

obtained a stay order. While the court eventually ruled in Sindh government's favour, the project was put on hold for a year till legal proceedings concluded.

#### **Slow pace of work**

Even when the project was not on hold for legal reasons, the contractors handling the project made very slow progress, sources said. According to them, both contractors were warned last year that their contracts would be cancelled unless they picked up pace but no such action was taken despite persistent delays.

#### **Water woes**

According to officers involved in the project, a third main reason for delays is non-cooperation on the part of the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB). They said that the dilapidated condition of water and sewerage lines in project sites has brought the pace of construction to a crawl.

Although the Edhi Line administration installed new lines at different locations using their own funds, the joints and connections still had problems, resulting in leakages.

KWSB officials, meanwhile, said they are unable to take action because those involved in the project have not provided exact data on the water and sewerage lines.

Talking to The Express Tribune, new Sindh Mass Transit Authority Managing Director Iqtidar Ahmed claimed work on the Edhi Line has been sped up in the two months since he took charge. "We will now try our best to finish the project by December and import buses in February."

(By Ashraf Ali The Express Tribune, 04, 22/06/2019)

### **SC rejects petition by police in Perween Rahman murder case**

The Supreme Court (SC) rejected on Monday the petition moved by the police department against the decision of the service tribunal pertaining to the murder of Perween Rahman, the director of Orangi Pilot Project.

A two-member bench comprising Justice Mushir Alam and Justice Faisal heard the case at the SC's Karachi registry. The Sindh service tribunal, instead of dismissing the sub-inspector, Ashfaq Baloch, had issued orders for his forced retirement. The court rejected the police's appeal as it was approached after the period for registering an appeal against the service tribunal had expired.

The petition maintained that Baloch had shared incorrect facts in Perween Rahman murder case and had staged a fake encounter after Rahman's murder in which Qari Bilal was shot dead.

According to Baloch, Bilal was an important suspect in the Perween Rahman murder case.

Later, the joint investigation team (JIT) proved that the encounter was staged and Bilal was not in any way linked to the murder case.

The higher police authorities had termed Baloch's claim a big success and after his claim was proven false, Baloch was dismissed on the grounds of staging a fake encounter and reporting incorrect facts.

(By Our Correspondent The Express Tribune, 05, 25/06/2019)

### **Sindh govt allocates Rs979m for Aman Foundation to get 40 more ambulances**

Sindh Rescue and Medical Services (SRMS), a project of Sindh government in collaboration with Aman Health Care Services, was formally launched at the Sindh Secretariat on Tuesday. Health Minister Dr Azra Fazal Pechuho also announced a fund of Rs979 million for Aman Foundation to be used over the next six months. It will be utilised to add 40 more ambulances to the existing fleet of 60 ambulances.

The provincial government had first extended formal support to Aman Ambulances in 2018. The service was operating a fleet of 60 ambulances at the time and had made 74,776 life-saving interventions including the deliveries of 11 babies in the vehicles.

Dr Pechuho inaugurated the newly branded ambulances, bearing the emblem of the Sindh government. The ceremony marks the launch of Karachi's first ever government-backed, free-of-charge ambulance service.

The government intends to expand the size of the fleet to 200 to cater to the population of 20 million that resides in the city. A similar project, Sindh Peoples Ambulance Service, has already proven successful in the Thatta and Sujawal districts where a fleet of 25 ambulances have been operating since 2017.

During the last two years, 51,120 lifesaving interventions have been made including the deliveries of 151 babies in the vehicle on way to the health facilities.

"Today is a great milestone for the people of Karachi and fruition of Sindh government's unwavering efforts and resolve to facilitate the citizens of this province," said the health minister, adding that they were looking forward to expanding the service to all districts of Sindh at the earliest.

Mujahid Khan, the chief executive officer at Aman Foundation, said, "Today marks for us the true actualisation of Aman Foundation's founding vision of bringing about systemic change by incubating public service initiatives for the underserved, and scaling them through strategic partnerships".

SRMS ambulances will continue to be run by Aman Health Care Services. As earlier, the service can be availed by dialling 1021 and as has been the practice in the past, and in line with global best practices, the service will prioritise critical and lifesaving interventions across Karachi.

(By Our Correspondent The Express Tribune, 05, 26/06/2019)