

## Eight Months To Confirm Kasab's Death Penalty?

New Delhi: (IANS) The Bombay High Court could take 253 days (8 months, 13 days) to confirm the death penalty given to 26/11 terrorist Ajmal Amir Kasab, a study of past such cases has revealed.

A study of hundreds of judgments of the Bombay High Court, especially in the last 17 years, reveals that the average disposal time per case comes to 253 days.

As per the procedure, every death penalty awarded by a sessions court has to be confirmed by the state high court.

The state government has to formally approach the high court for confirmation of the sentence.

"The Bombay High Court has rejected the death penalty in 52 percent of the cases and only in 48 percent cases confirmed the sentence," according to advocate K.V. Dhananjay, who has done the study along with a battery of other lawyers.

"Given the fact that Kasab has been sentenced to four distinct death penalties, from the

statistical perspective, the possibility of the high court rejecting all four sentences is too remote and extremely unlikely. At least two death sentences are likely to be confirmed," Dhananjay, who practices in the Supreme Court, told IANS.

"It is most likely that the Bombay High Court would stay the confirmation order of the death sentence for a period, generally of eight weeks, to allow

the convict to appeal to the Supreme Court under Article 136 of the Constitution," Dhananjay added.

In case Kasab appeals, the Bombay High Court will combine the two cases - confirmation of death sentence and his appeal - to avoid diverse conclusions.

"The shortest time taken by the Bombay



High Court in disposing of a confirmation case stands at 76 days, and the longest at 469 days. Accordingly, even if his appeals are heard on priority basis, the possibility of four distinct confirmation cases being disposed of in less than 253 days looks very remote," added Dhananjay.

Another roadblock in hanging Kasab will come if the gunman appeals to the Supreme Court against the high court ruling and then files a clemency petition before the president.

"A clemency petition to the president is required to be made in respect of each death sentence. Accordingly, if Kasab wishes to seek pardon from the president, he would be required to submit four distinct clemency petitions," said Dhananjay.

Kasab was last Thursday sentenced to death for his role in the 26/11 carnage by a special court in Mumbai. The Nov 26-29, 2008 terror attack, which left 166 people dead and 244 injured, was carried out by 10 Pakistani terrorists, including Kasab.

## My Work Will Speak For Itself: Tharoor



New Delhi: Shashi Tharoor recently said his "work will speak for itself", when asked about his future plans after quitting as junior foreign minister over his alleged links to the Kochi Indian Premier League (IPL) franchise. He refused to elaborate. "I am not giving any media interviews. My work will speak for itself."

Dressed in a white kurta-pyjama with a tricolor scarf around his neck, he looked relaxed and none the worse for the controversy that cost him his job.

The IPL row erupted after its then chairman Lalit Modi revealed that Tharoor had allegedly misused his office to help his close friend Sunanda Pushkar get Rs.70 crore sweat equity in the IPL Kochi franchise. The issue snowballed, with fingers being pointed at the auctions of two franchises in 2008 and the income tax authorities conducting raids at the IPL offices in Mumbai.

## Madhuri Gupta: A Lonely Woman Exploited For Her Insecurities?

New Delhi: (IANS) She was a lonely spinster with a taste for life's good and extravagant things. She also bore a grudge against her superiors. And when Madhuri Gupta got a chance to work on her Urdu language skills at the Indian mission in Islamabad, exposing her to virulent anti-India propaganda from rightwing Pakistani media, it didn't take long for the junior Indian diplomat to turn against her own country.

Piecing together information from her confessions and a dissection of her e-mails, interrogators have profiled a woman who fell for blandishments and non-financial lures to sell her country's secrets as she indulged in her weaknesses. The 53-year-old, who was second secretary in the press and information section at the Indian High Commission at Islamabad, also saw it as an opportunity to get even with her bosses at the external affairs ministry who would not even grant her paid study leave she thought she was entitled to.

So she used her knowledge of Urdu to familiarise herself with the issues that bedevil bilateral issues, kept her eyes and ears wide open for the vital and the trivial and made frequent trips to New Delhi to bring herself up to speed with the current thinking on Pakistan, giving her insights from what she was able to gather on the peace dialogue, SAARC, terrorism and military issues.

But just as curiosity killed the cat, her "unusual" eagerness to inform herself about military matters of concern to Pakistan earned the suspicion of the defence attache's office at the Indian High Commission who then trapped her with false leads that ultimately led to her undoing and her arrest here last week.

But it is yet unclear what Gupta got from her handlers, who included members of Pakistan's Intelligence Bureau leading perhaps up to the notorious Inter-Services Intelligence, as her bank accounts have not revealed any unusual transactions or large deposits.

"She does not seem to have done this either

for money or love," the sources told IANS, but said the jury was still out on her and more secrets might come out in the course of further interrogation and investigation.

The possibility of Gupta acting as she did just to "get back" at her "tormentors" in the MEA is not altogether being ruled out, but the gravity of her actions and the sustained period of several months for which she played the mole for the Pakistanis is making counter-intelligence authorities here delve further. They are hoping that the reading of her computer hard disc would throw up more evidence and clues.

There is little doubt that the Pakistanis played on her psychological insecurities: a lonely woman, with no parents, her only sibling a brother not much in contact; a woman who drank and ate heavily, had flamboyant tastes in clothes and jewellery and was susceptible to pampering with personal gifts.

Her knowledge of Urdu that exposed her to major Pakistani newspapers, particularly papers like the Nawa-i-Waqt, owned by Majid Nizami, widely believed to be connected to Lashkar-e-Taiba founder Hafiz Saeed also with known links to the ISI, proved potent motivational influences for her, officials said.

However, it is unlikely that she was able to pass on reports of any significant or sensitive nature other than the high commission's activities, and till now there is no indication that there has been any serious security compromise or that important documents were traded, knowledgeable sources added.

A thorough study of her mails revealed that she was a "faithful reporter" of the events and schedules at the Indian High Commission, giving daily and weekly reports of the engagements of the high commissioner and other staff and other schedules which she diligently kept track of.

"We are pretty certain that no serious damage to India's security interests have been caused (by her transgressions)," a senior security official told IANS, speaking with full knowledge and authority.



## I Want To Run Around Trees & Sing With SRK: Ms India World

Mumbai: (IANS) The newly crowned Miss India World 2010 Manasvi Mangai says Bollywood can wait for sometime, but deep inside her heart she wishes to work with Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan.

"I would like to work with Shah Rukh Khan. He is my favorite actor. I want to run around trees and sing songs with him," Manasvi told IANS in an interview.

Delhi girl Manasvi is not new to the fashion world. The 22-year-old has been a regular at Wills Lifestyle India Fashion Week (WIFW) and has featured in TV commercials of Fair and Lovely as well. Apart from this, she was crowned Miss Tourism International in 2008.



am focused on my goals. And you know, we all go through tough times and we tend to give up. But during such times sustaining the belief in yourself and going ahead is the most important thing. I have that quality," said Manasvi.

"Also, I had a great stage presence because I had been dancing for a long time. So I am very comfortable on stage. That's what gave me an edge over others."

From this year, the Miss Universe franchise has been taken over by Sushmita Sen's company and hence the title was replaced by Miss International.

But the leggy lass has no regrets. "My dream since childhood was to become Miss World. I won't call myself successful till I get the Miss World crown on my head. I hope I do get it," she said.

So has the feeling sunk in that she is finally closer to winning her dream title Miss World?

"Now finally, after a few days, the feeling has sunk in. First day I felt that I am in a dreamland. I woke up in the morning and pinched myself just to realise that no it's not a dream and I have actually done it."

After Priyanka Chopra, who won the Miss World title in 2000, no Indian beauty has brought home the international title.

So doesn't this put added pressure on her shoulders?

"It's a huge responsibility. And why we didn't get the crown because I didn't take part. This year I have come in and I am going to get the crown," said a confident Manasvi.

***My dream since childhood was to become Miss World. I won't call myself successful till I wear the Miss World crown on my head...***

At the Pantaloons Femina Miss India 2010 pageant, Manasvi vied with 18 girls for the crown and she feels her focused approach helped her win the title.

"The good thing in me is that I believe in myself, have a great belief in my dreams and I