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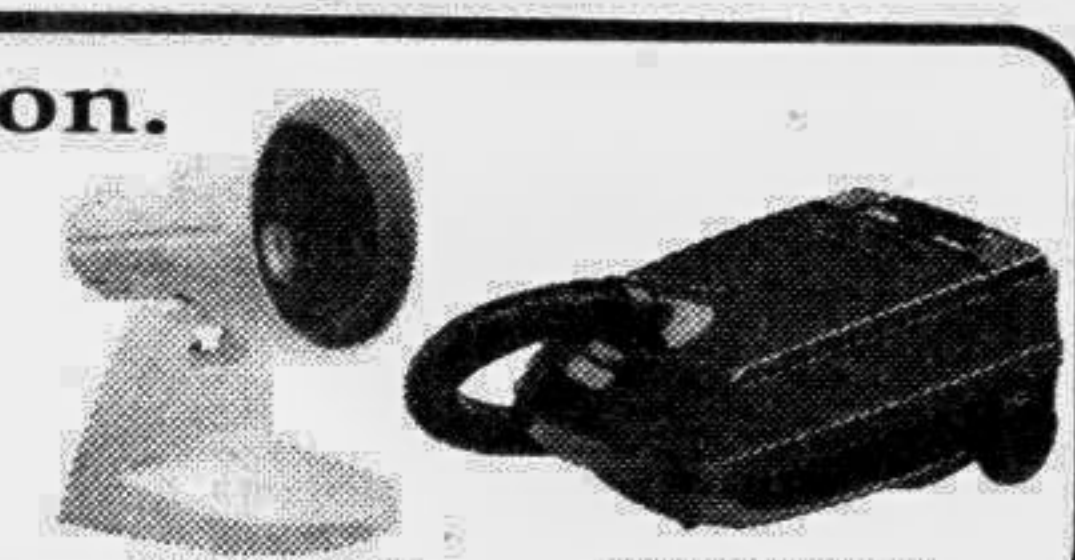
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Friday's landing of DC 10: Probe body formed

By Special Correspondent

Bangladesh Biman has formed a one-member committee comprising its Chief Engineer A. R. Chowdhury to probe Friday's landing of its DC-10 aircraft at Zia International Airport with only one nose wheel.

One of the two nose wheels was missing after the plane took off from Rome Thursday night with 279 people on its flight from London to Dhaka.

Chowdhury will submit his report within one week, Biman officials said.

The Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh will also investigate the incident.

The aircraft made a safe landing Friday morning due to the sheer skill of Captain Alimuzzaman and his co-pilot Captain Mofidul Islam, keeping most of the landing pressure on the rear wheels. None of the passengers or the crew was injured.

The aircraft was later fitted with a new wheel, went to Riyadh and returned to Dhaka yesterday without further trouble, sources said.

2 power stations to be built at Tongi, Siddhirganj

Two power stations will be constructed at Tongi and Siddhirganj to supply more electricity to the capital and mitigate low voltage problem, reports UNB.

Three transmission lines, Tongi-Ulan, Haripur-Ulan and Siddhirganj-Maniknagar, will also be installed to transmit power from outside the capital, officials of Power Development Board said.

During a visit to Kataban system operation control room and Ulan grid sub-station yesterday, PDB Chairman Quamrul Islam Siddique directed the officials to expedite the construction of power stations.

He also urged them to ensure operation of transmission system to ensure smooth power supply in the capital.

Students clash with police near Carmichael College: 50 hurt

RANGPUR, July 24: A group of students demanding upgradation of Carmichael College to a full-fledged university, clashed with police today that left about 50 injured, including female students and police, reports UNB.

The incident took place after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina laid the foundation of Rangpur Science and Technology University on the premises of Carmichael University College this morning.

The angry students clashed with the police after the Prime Minister left the spot laying the foundation stone of the university.

The police resorted to lathi charge, fired tear gas shells and rubber bullets to disperse the unruly students who were shouting slogans and pelting stones, said witnesses.

The students wanted to submit a memorandum to the Prime Minister. But they were kept far away from the college compound where the Prime Minister was laying the foundation stone of the proposed University.

Torrid tales of Tanbazar inmates

By Nazmul Ashraf and Ehsanul Haque

Sex workers of Narayanganj have their own stories to tell. What pushed them to the 'pariah' profession are all stories of shattered dreams, broken families, cheating by pimps and a lot more. In the past few days, The Daily Star talked to some sex workers of the red-light areas and listened to their untold stories.

Coming from a middle-class family, Jyotsna was married to a police havildar, Kamal in 1985. After three years of marital life, the couple had a conflict as the husband forced Jyotsna to sell out land she owned at Kashipur in Fatullah, Narayanganj and grabbed the money.

Later, one day, the havildar sent his wife with an 'aunt' of him, for outing. The so-called aunt brought Jyotsna to the Tanbazar brothel and sold her

for Tk 20,000. Her husband, she alleged, was involved in the deal.

"I was forced into the sex trade. Words cannot describe my early days at the brothel. There was no way to return to a normal life and one day I discovered myself a professional sex worker," said Jyotsna, 27, who was living at the AC Building owned by Moinuddin in the Tanbazar brothel since 1988.

Meantime, Jyotsna fell in love with a client, Ripon, who was a worker in Saudi Arabia. They got married and went to Saudi Arabia in 1990. There, her husband forced her to have sex with his employer as well as with a son of the employer. It continued for seven months.

"I then decided to return to the sex trade at home, as my

dream of a normal life was shattered. I returned home with the employer's son, who also fell in love with me. We stayed at the Dhaka Sheraton Hotel for a week. The son also proposed marriage but by then I had lost all trust in men."

Cheated for the second time, Jyotsna came back to Tanbazar brothel and resumed sex business.

Jyotsna bore a son at the brothel two years back. "The father is a well-known businessman in Narayanganj. But I won't mention his name." The son is being brought up by her sardari (mistress), outside the brothel. Jyotsna bears all expenses of the son.

Jyotsna remained at the Tanbazar brothel, vacated by many, since a sex worker was murdered there and the gov-

ernment initiated rehabilitation programme. She does not know what to do in the prevailing situation. "Time will decide everything."

She has some permanent clients called 'Babus'.

Nasrin, 26 has a different story to tell. A neighbour of her village in Laksham, Comilla brought her to Dhaka promising her a job. At Gulistan, she was trapped by a broker. She was taken to an unknown destination. There she was gang-raped.

Later, she was sold to a sardari, Rekha of Nimtoli brothel in Narayanganj in 1989. Two years, later, she became a resident of the adjacent Tanbazar brothel.

She gave birth to a son and a daughter, both in the brothel. See page 11 Col 7

Cancel int'l tender for binding textbooks: Khaleda

Opposition leader Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday asked the government to immediately cancel the international tender for binding textbooks for the sake of domestic traders and workers, reports UNB.

She said six lakh domestic book binders and traders will be affected by the government move.

Begum Zia was addressing the members of Bangladesh Book Binding Traders Society at her Minto Road official residence in the afternoon.

The society president Mohammad Liaqat Hossain Khan handed over a memorandum to Begum Zia demanding cancellation of the international tender that had floated on June 27.

The former Prime Minister said she did not bow down to the international pressure during

her regime considering the interest of the domestic book binders.

Questioning patriotism of the government, Begum Zia said how could Awami League claim that it was a people's government when it betrayed 12 lakh members of the book binders' families.

Referring to the cancellation of allotment of RAJUK plots, Begum Zia said, "If you (Prime Minister) could cancel it for criticism in the press, why you would not cancel the Ganges Water Sharing treaty with India and CHT accord which also came under severe criticism in the press."

The Opposition leader said the cancellation of the allotment of RAJUK plots was eye-wash. The plots would be distributed in other ways.

Sex workers

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guards of those buildings were also seen.

DC of Narayanganj Abdur Rahman was not available for comment. But the SP, Sanaul Haq, told The Daily Star that they did not force any sex worker to leave the red-light area. "We took only those who volunteered to be rehabilitated. We just cooperated with the people of the Social Service Department."

DG of the Social Service Department Mir Shahabuddin said today's move was a part of a government plan for rehabilitation of the sex workers.

"Today we found only 267 out of 698 sex workers who earlier opted for rehabilitation. We'll also take the rest if they come back to the brothels," he told The Daily Star.

The DG further said that those taken to the vagrant centres would be given counselling for a normal life.

Kohnor, 30, who escaped from one of the buses that carried the sex workers from Narayanganj, later told another Star correspondent in Dhaka that she lost her three children. "I want to get them back," she said.

Our Staff adds: Various social and human rights organisations and NGOs yesterday issued press statements, condemning eviction of sex workers from the brothels.

Mahbuba Mahmud, Coordinator of a committee of 50 such organisations in a statement alleged that more than 100 sex workers and their children were injured during the police action.

Leader of the sex workers, Shathi, was severely beaten up and she was missing since the eviction drive, the statement said, and accused a ruling party MP of using the Narayanganj district administration for the eviction.

Meanwhile, Shamim Osman, an AL MP from Narayanganj, hailed the government action. "Prayers were offered at mosques in the town for closure of the two brothels," Osman later told The Daily Star. "It was long-felt demand of the people of the town."

Shathi

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Khadija said. Shathi, a sex worker for ten years and a mother of a daughter, had been giving leadership to the inmates since the trouble started there following the murder of a sex worker, Jesmin, at the brothel on July 1.

Shathi had opposed the government's brisk move for rehabilitation of the sex workers and demanded that it start an "awareness programme" in the brothels first.

Following the incident, the government decided that the 150-year-old brothels would be removed from Narayanganj town. The government also promised to rehabilitate the sex workers elsewhere. About 698 sex workers out of 1,053 agreed to be rehabilitated under a government scheme.

Khadija alleged that when Shathi and her child were grabbed by policemen other sex workers who protested the violent move were also manhandled and dragged into the police vehicles.

"I asked the policemen where they were taking her. They replied that she was being taken to Gazipur or Myemensingh. Please tell them not to hurt her," a weeping Khadija said.

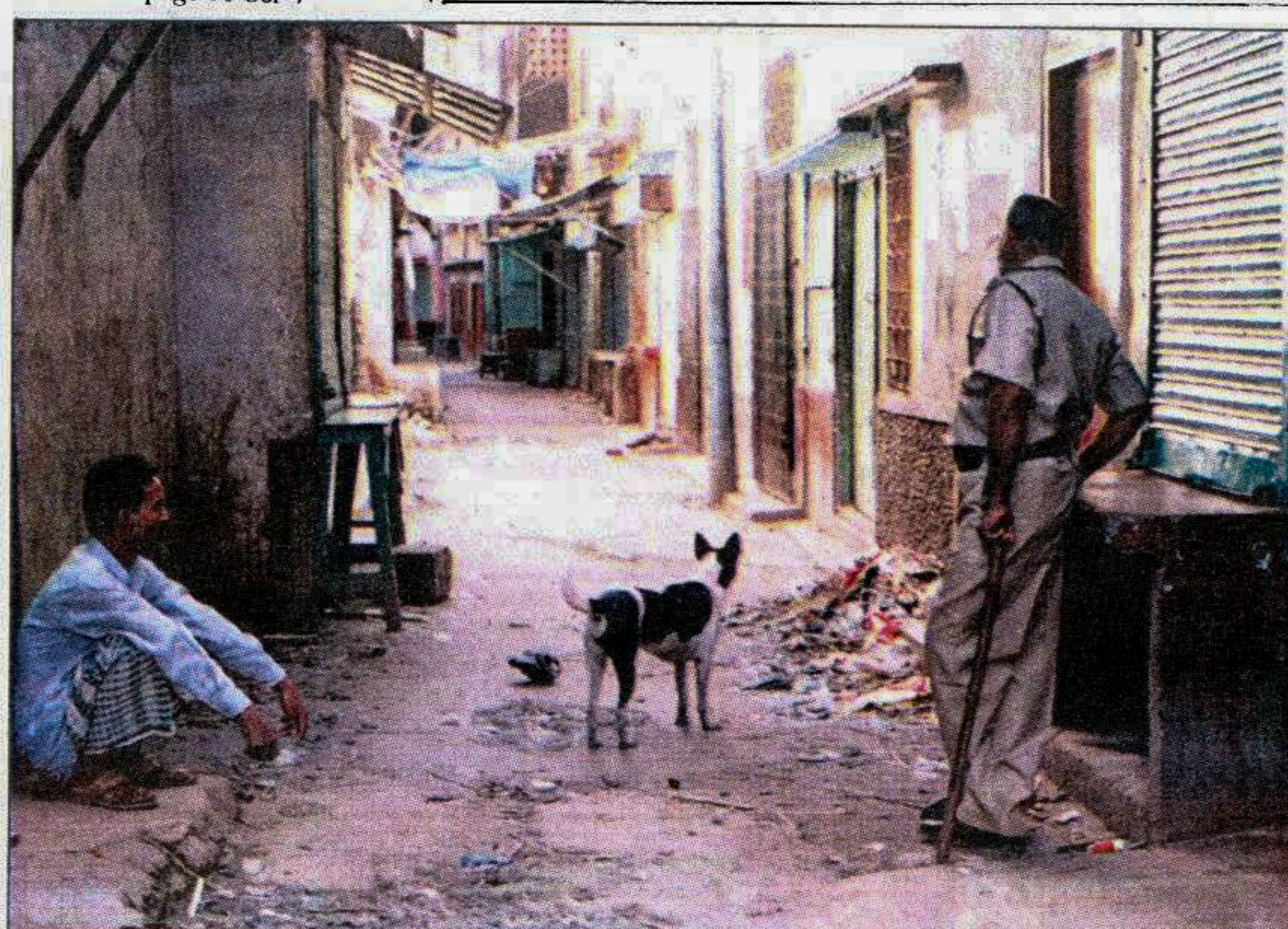
Khadija claimed that police picked up about 400 girls. Many others escaped the "operation" and fled away. Shathi and most of those picked up were not allowed to take any of their belongings, she claimed.

Khadija said she came from Bagerhat recently to see her daughter.



A day at Tanbazar:

Sex workers at Tanbazar brothel protesting eviction (left), the brothel wears a deserted look after eviction.



— Star photo

TechnoVista launched

By Staff Correspondent

A joint venture software development and export company, TechnoVista, was launched yesterday aimed at providing complete IT solution for businesses.

Having strategic business alliances with IBM as its authorised solution provider and Pentafour Software and Export Ltd, India's second largest software exporter, TechnoVista is offering Pentabank, an integrated total branch automation system, Care+Care, an integrated hospital management system and Electronic Case Sheet for patient services at hospitals.

It will also offer enterprise resource planning, CAD and GIS solutions, complete insurance software and programmes for garments and footwear businesses.

Speaking at the inaugural ceremony of the company at a city hotel, Finance Minister SAMS Kibria said the country's total industrial base has to be computerised to make software development and export activities successful.

He urged the banks and insurance companies to computerise their activities for better services to customers.

Kibria also said the quality of education has to be improved to spread information technology and that IT training centres

have to be set up in sub-urban and rural areas as well.

Prof Jamilur Reza Chowdhury, former Adviser to the Caretaker Government and advisor to the National Standing Committee on Software Export, said the positive results of the government's supportive policy actions toward the IT sector would be visible within the next two to three years.

He said Bangladesh must explore the tremendous opportunities in e-commerce to remain in business in the globalised economy. Prof Chowdhury pointed out that lack of high-speed data transmission system is posing a real challenge to IT development in Bangladesh.

Commerce and Industries Minister Tofail Ahmed said the government will remain sensitive to the needs of the IT sector to tap the massive software export market.

V Chandrasekaran, Chairman and Managing Director of Pentafour, highlighting the importance of IT, said that it was the capability of a company to process and utilise information that would determine its existence in the next millennium.

He said South Asia has the prospect of becoming the leading software exporter adding that if India could come up vig-

See page 11 Col 6

Flood-hit people in Comilla demand repair of Gumti embankment

COMILLA, July 24: People of three flood-hit unions in the Gumti embankment area brought out a procession on Dhaka-Comilla Highway today demanding repair of the embankment, reports UNB.

"We don't want relief, we want repair of the embankment," chanted the processionists from Moinamati, Bhayella and Mokam unions in the morning.

They said vast areas of the three unions are under water. If these areas remain submerged, farmers will face difficulty in cultivating their lands.

However, water level in the river Gumti remained almost static.

Special drive

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"These professional killers are so strong that political leaders and even senior police officials sometimes provide them shelter," he added.

The police were directed to make a separate list of professional criminals in the capital and the power behind them.

The DMP has already arrested four hardcore criminals, including Kala Firoz and Mamoon.

4 alleged ULFA men acquitted of charge of keeping illegal arms

NETRAKONA, July 24: A court here has acquitted four alleged ULFA guerrillas and a Bangladeshi national, charged with possession of unauthorised arms, reports UNB.

The ULFA men, hailing from Indian state of Manipur, were Ahaju Maithai, Thava Maithai, Chawba Maithai (1) and Chawba Maithai (2).

According to prosecution, the ULFA men entered Bangladesh through Sylhet border with the help of Pradesha, a Bangladeshi citizen, and were heading for Durgapur.

On information, Durgapur police arrested them from Birishiri Ferry ghāt and recovered seven Chinese rifles from their possession.

The Assistant Sessions Judge GMS Farid Hossain examined records and witnesses and found them innocent of the charge.

Pradesha was released from jail soon after the judgement was pronounced on July 4 but the ULFA men still remain in the jail facing the charge of illegal border crossing.

King Hassan dead

From Page 1
raelis closer together, partly because tens of thousands of Israelis are of Moroccan origin. In the 1970s, he made several secret diplomatic overtures to Israel.

In 1983, Hassan challenged Arab sentiment by inviting hundreds of Jews of Moroccan origin, many from Israel, to a convention in Morocco.

In another surprise gesture, Hassan in 1981 became the first Islamic chief of state to visit Pope John Paul II in the Vatican to discuss ways to achieve peace in the Middle East.

John Paul returned the visit in 1985 to a triumphant welcome from more than 100,000 Moroccans in a Casablanca soccer stadium.

In May 1995, Hassan mediated peace talks between Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and PLO chief Yasser Arafat. A summit of the world's Muslim leaders hosted by the king in 1994 resulted in a public statement against Islamic extremism.

After the king's death Friday, the Palestinian leadership announced three days of mourning in Hassan's memory, beginning today.

Peres said the Middle East was mourning a leader who had offered much to the peace process. "He contributed a great deal," Peres told Israel radio.

UN Secretary-General Kofi

Annan said: "By serving as a bridge of peace between different nations and cultures, King Hassan made Morocco itself a bridge of understanding and co-operation between Europe and Africa, North and South, East and West."

The Middle East has lost one of its greatest peacemakers," US President Bill Clinton said in a statement. "He worked to break down barriers among the peoples of the Middle East, bravely opening a dialogue with Israel, ... seeking greater tolerance and stability in the region."

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak called his death a great loss for his people, Arabs and the Muslim world.

Egypt, Libya, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Tunisia, Sudan, Yemen, Qatar and the Palestinians declared a three-day official mourning to mark the death of Hassan.

The United Arab Emirates, whose leader Sheikh Zayed Al Nahyan was a close friend of Hassan, declared 40 days of mourning and ordered all public offices closed for three days starting Saturday.

Bahrain announced a seven-day mourning and ordered public offices closed today.

Hassan inherited the throne of Morocco when his father, King Mohamed V died in 1961 during minor surgery.

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