

1521 more held,  
6 arms  
recovered

UNB, Dhaka

Police arrested 1,521 people from different parts of the country on various charges in the last 24 hours till 6.00am yesterday.

During the drive, they also recovered six firearms and 15 bullets and filed six cases against eight people under the Arms Act, says a police headquarters press release.

Adv Razzak murder

AL leader to die, 7  
others get life

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Tribunal in Dhaka yesterday sentenced one person to death and seven others to life in jail for killing Advocate Abdur Razzak under Dewanganj upazila in Jamalpur district on October 11 in 1999.

The convicts are Dewanganj thana Awami League, Chhatra League and Jubo League leaders and activists.

The convict with death is Ahsan Habib Titu, Organising Secretary of the Dewanganj thana Awami League, and Rakhal, Shahan Shah, Manjurul, Mahbub, Selim, Asad and Jewel were jailed for life.

The court also gave one year rigorous imprisonment to four persons- Apu, Tapash, Solaiman and Khaza Alam alias Khazu and acquitted five others- Abul Kalam Azad, Shipon, Chand Miah, Nazmul Hassan and Harun-or-Rashid- as the charges brought against them were not proved.

Of the convicts, Titu was tried in absentia and the rest were present in the court during the pronouncement of the judgement.

Judge AR Masud of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-4 gave the verdict at a jam-packed courtroom.

The judge took his seat at 12:25pm and read the highlights of the 56-page judgement in 10 minutes.

The punishment of the fugitive will be effective from the date of his arrest or surrender and the convict with death can appeal to the High Court against the judgement within 30 days, the judgement said.

Victim's younger brother and

complainant of the case Abdur Rouf expressed his satisfaction at the judgement and expected quick execution of the verdict.

Earlier, the prosecution and the defence completed their arguments and the court recorded statements of 13 prosecution witnesses.

The prosecution story in brief is that Abdur Razzak, former general secretary and president of Dewanganj thana BNP, was beaten to death by a group of assailants at the Shahid Hasem Road Crossing adjacent to Dewanganj Bazar Madrassah Road at about 5:30pm on October 11 in 1999 while he was leading a rally.

Victim's brother filed a murder case with Dewanganj Police Station accusing Titu and 14 others the same day.

The investigation officer (IO) pressed charges against Titu and eight others on November 6, 2000. But the complainant filed a naraji petition (no-confidence) against the charge sheet and the District and Sessions Judge in Jamalpur ordered further investigation into the matter.

Later, the IO pressed charges against Titu and 16 others on February 23 last year. The court framed charges against them on September 29 the same year. The case was transferred to the Tribunal on November 29 for quick disposal and the trial was completed in 116 working days.

Special Public Prosecutor Harun-or-Rashid Khan appeared for the state while advocates AFM Abdul Wadud and Kazi Nazibullah Hiru defended the accused.

Biman engineering deptt  
to be upgraded: Mir Nasir

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The engineering department of Bangladesh Biman will be upgraded so that it can carry out all kinds of aircraft maintenance services such as D-check, said State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin yesterday.

"The engineering department will be separated and given an independent project status. It will provide maintenance services to not only Biman fleet but also aircraft of foreign airlines," he said at a function marking the completion of D-check of a DC10-30 aircraft at the Biman's engineering hangar at

Kurmitola.

Biman's engineering department has completed the transition check of the DC10-30 from Manufacturer Scheduled Maintenance Development (MSG-2) to MSG-3, making way for partial D-check at its own hangar.

Earlier, a D-check would cost Biman around \$5 million, mostly done by KLM and Alitalia at their own maintenance facility.

Under the new arrangement, a part of D-check was done in Garuda Maintenance Facility, Indonesia, and the rest at Biman's hangar at a cost of \$1.8 million.

The state minister said aviation engineering industry has huge potential and the Biman with its skilled engineers can also provide the services to foreign airliners.

Defending the purchase of F-28 planes, Nasiruddin said that the planes were procured at a competitive price and they are most modern in their category.

"I talked with engineers, pilots and experts and everybody said the planes are in best condition. The medium-sized aircraft are most suitable for domestic and regional routes," he said.

Bangladesh Biman recently procured two ageing F-28s from Indonesia at a cost of \$2.91 million, which raised many questions. In January, the Biman sold two ATPs (Air Turbo Prop) for \$2.25 million.

The state minister said the selling and buying prices were reasonable.

He said the Biman had no plan to sell the two ATPs but was forced to do so because of media criticism over safety standards on the aircraft.

Biman's Managing Director Akhtar Hossain Khan, Director (engineering) S Zilani Mahbubur Rahman and President of the Society of Aircraft Engineers of Bangladesh Fakhrul Alam Bhuiyan also spoke.