

'Pichchi' Hannan remanded in arms case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed freed criminal 'Pichchi' Hannan, arrested in a Savar clinic, on a 10-day remand in an arms case.

Uttara police produced Hannan before the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate at around 11:00am with a prayer for 30 days' remand in three cases, 10 days' for each of them. However, the court granted 10 days' remand in an arms case.

The court also directed the authorities concerned to place two other cases for remand hearing after completion of the remand period.

Defence lawyers submitted three separate petitions seeking bail and cancellation of remand prayers.

After hearing arguments from

both sides, Magistrate Shafiq Anwar went to see Hannan in the van and granted the remand.

Hannan was taken to the court hazzat in a prison van under tight security. He was lying in the van during the 30-minute hearing.

Police earlier sought each of 10 days' remand against the top criminal in three cases of carrying illegal firearms, possessing drug and launching assault on police.

The court also fixed July 19 for hearing on a 10-day remand prayer in connection with the Sub-Inspector Humayun Kabir murder case.

Elite anti-crime force Rapid Action Battalion nabbed Hannan in a Savar clinic on June 26, a day after shooting their way through police dragnet in Uttara.

Design faults blamed for 70pc launch disasters

Study reveals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

About 500 launch accidents occurred in the last 26 years and 70 percent of those happened mainly for faulty design of the vessels, said a study conducted by Nirapad Noupah Bastabayan Jote.

Currently over 8,000 launches ply the water routes, but only 2,000 have registration, revealed the study.

A roundtable was organised by two non-government organisations, Nirapad Noupah Bastabayan Jote and Supra at the National Press Club yesterday on the occasion of first anniversary of MN Nasreen launch disaster.

While presenting the study, Mohammed Samsuddoha held that lack of coordination among Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA), Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC) and Department of Shipping mostly accounts for launch disasters.

The study suggested that the BIWTA and Department of Shipping should be given the authority to approve launch design.

It also said the authorities should detect the faulty vessels and fix a specific time frame to ban those.

Zia first

Major Ziaur Rahman mutinied and Major Zia arrested the regiment commander, Lt Colonel Janjua. Ziaur Rahman then gathered the battalion officers, junior commissioned officers and soldiers, and proclaimed Bangladesh as an independent country at 2:15am on March 26, 1971.

The reprinted book contains the roles, speeches and statements of political leaders and the elite, and documents on political changes before the Liberation War. Its contents also include declaration of the Liberation War, documents of people's participation in the war, descriptions of the war, roles and statements of expatriate Bangladeshis, roles of other countries, refugee problem, tales of genocide and torture, and description of the victory.

In 1977, Zia undertook the project to collect Liberation War documents and compile them into a comprehensive historical documentation. Renowned journalist and poet Hasan Hafizur Rahman edited the book titled 'Bangladesh Swadhinota Juddho: Dalilpatra' (The Liberation War of Bangladesh: Documents). Publication of its 15 volumes completed in 1986.

After the BNP-led coalition government had come to office in 2001, the newly formed Ministry of Liberation War Affairs was assigned with reprinting the book on October 23 of the same year.

This new edition which has Bangla and English editions costs Tk 3,000. A total of 2,250 sets of the book have been published.

At its launching ceremony yesterday, LGRD Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said, "Direct or indirectly, the entire populace excepting a few Rajakar and Al-Badr had taken part in the Liberation War."

Rajuk removes

FROM PAGE 12 On the day a report was published in The Daily Star, said Emdadul Islam, chief engineer of the Rajuk (Rajdhani Unnayan Kartipakkha), capital's development authority.

However, Rajuk officials were undecided about retrieving the sand-filled land of so-called plot No. 5 in the 35-acre area of the waterbody.

Emdad said they would remove sand from the sand-filled parts as well.

"Recently the Rajuk put fence along Banani Road No. 2, opposite to Nam (Non-Alliance Movement) buildings, to prevent Dhaka City Corporation from filling a portion of the lake with wastes," he added.

The Gulshan-Banani-Baridhara Lake has been encroached from all sides, the chief engineer said adding, "Without proper demarcation of the lake areas, encroachments will be hard to stop."

"At Tk 105 crore lake development project is now awaiting the Planning Commission's approval, and once the project is implemented the lake could surely be safe from grabbers," he added.

Munshiganj jail super faces contempt of court charge

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday ordered the superintendent of Munshiganj jail to appear before it in person and explain as to why he would not be held in contempt of court.

Judge Syed Zahed Monsur of the Artharin Adalat-4 passed the order against Jail Super Mohammad Obaidul Haq for repeatedly violating a court order.

The court directed the jail super to appear before it within 3 days from the date of receipt of the notice.

Earlier the court in a money-laundering case sentenced Nitya Nanda Mondol to six months civil jail on May 24 this year. Following the judgement, Sirajdikhan Police arrested Nitya Nanda Mondol and sent him to Munshiganj District Jail.

After making the full payment of money as per the order, the court ordered the jail super to release Nitya Nanda. A special messenger of the court Abdul Motin delivered the release order on July 1. But the jail super did not receive it despite the messenger showed his identity. The court sent him again on July 5 but to no avail.

After repeated violation of the court order, the judge yesterday brought proceedings for contempt of court against the jail super and directed him to appear before it in person.

DB man turned for assaulting commissioner

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Locals yesterday held a Detective Branch (DB) of police sub-inspector and turned him to Subrapur Police Station for allegedly assaulting the local ward commissioner and contractors of Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (Desa).

A group of local people held Jasim with his gun and five bullets on Bhajo Hari Saha Street at around 2:15pm when he, his brother-in-law and Ripon were beating Liakat Ali, Dhaka City Corporation commissioner of ward No. 77, sources said.

According to witnesses, Desa contractors were installing electric poles on Bhajo Hari Saha Street when local youths Ripon and Jamil demanded toll from them.

As the contractors refused to pay, the pair beat the labourers, they added.

Other sources said the youths asked the contractors to erect the poles elsewhere but in front of their houses. They along with

Jasim, who joined them later, started beating the Desa labourers at one stage of the altercation.

Locals claimed Jasim chased Liakat with his gun as the ward commissioner reached the spot to settle the matter.

Subrapur police, however, failed to provide details about the incident. The duty officer said the DB official was kept at the police station for a peaceful settlement of the dispute.

However, Jasim was not arrested as they did not receive any official complaint against him till 9:00pm, he added.

Quoting Jasim, police said he (Jasim) did not do anything wrong and locals attacked him when he reached the scene hearing that his relative was in trouble.

Liakat was not available for comments despite repeated attempts.

Acting CEC

FROM PAGE 1 vote has no validity as it was held in violation of the court directive. The EC should cancel the poll and arrange it afresh for the sake of democracy, he argued.

Rahman said they did not come to the EC with election dispute case. "We have challenged the validity of the election held in violation of the court orders."

Mannan filed an appeal to the EC on July 3 challenging the validity of holding the by-election that violated the High Court's orders.

2 CHT children suspected to have polio

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

Two indigenous children are suspected to be polio affected and remain under treatment in the Bandarban General Hospital.

Samaching Chak, a three-year-old girl, and Maa Thuy Ching Mamma, 8, of Kamichhara Para and Mrangkhaymukh of Naikhiyang upazila were admitted to the hospital on July 4 and 6. Their stool samples have been sent for tests to the central laboratory of Department of Health in Mohakhali, Dhaka.

The resident physician of Bandarban, Aung Shai Pru, said the two children are suspected to be affected by polio, but it can not be confirmed until the test results are received.

The health department's claim of 100 percent success in vaccination remains only on paper as the polio vaccination programme often does not cover the remote area of Bandarban, local people's representatives said.

Civil Surgeon Mahfuzur Rahman Talukder said he has directed his staff to provide polio vaccines for 200 children of Kamichhara of Naikhiyangchhari upazila.

"We are in search of other affected children in different areas of the district," Mahfuzur added.

Zing Ma Chak, mother of Sama Ching, alleged that no children of Kamichhara Para, Melai Para and Anjhiri Para received polio vaccine during the last half decade.

Her daughter caught severe fever three weeks ago. Now her legs are almost paralysed and she can not walk.

8 killed

FROM PAGE 12 In Laxmipur, two people were killed and five others injured when a Laxmipur bound passenger bus from Dhaka skidded off Beganganj-Laxmipur road and fell into a ditch yesterday morning, killing two on the spot and injuring ten others.

One of the dead was identified as Babul, 20, son of Mohammad Sayedullah of Shampara under Chaikhil upazila of Noakhali. Identity of the other could not be known.

Of the injured, four were admitted to Laxmipur Sadar Hospital, while the rest released after first aid.

PM for AL's

FROM PAGE 1 The prime minister hoped that the main opposition would soon give the names of their members for the standing committees and play effective role in the committee to strengthen the parliamentary democracy.

During the meeting, the prices of essential items were discussed. It was observed that the prices of essentials remained stable though floods caused some temporary rise in the prices of essentials at some places.

The government would do whatever necessary to keep the prices of essentials within the reach of the common people, the meeting was told.

The meeting also stressed the need for strengthening family planning programme at grassroots level.

Cancer patients

FROM PAGE 12 Dam officials expressed gratitude to the management of The Prothom Alo and The Daily Star for publishing advertisements on cancer awareness free of cost.

Eminent child specialist Prof MR Khan, member of Dam's governing body, Dr MA Hai, director of Dam cancer hospital, AKM Delwar Hossain, project director of the Uttara cancer hospital, among others, addressed the press conference.

Verdict in case against SQ Chy shifted to July 21

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Judgment in the trial for firearms and ammunition recovery from Salauddin Quader Chowdhury's city residence could not be announced here yesterday.

Metropolitan Sessions Judge Sajedul Karim fixed July 21 as the next date for announcing the judgment.

Sources said the court failed to pass the judgment yesterday because the verdict copy could not be prepared.

The case was filed with Kotwali Police Station on May 29, 2001 following a recovery of firearms and ammunition from the Goods Hill residence of Salauddin Quader Chowdhury MP.

The recovered items included six guns, one Spanish made pistol, six hundred bullets, four bullet-proof jackets and some other weapons.

Police pressed charges against a driver and a security guard of the residence but dropped those against Quader Chowdhury, who is also the adviser to the prime minister.

Panam Nagar's fate

FROM PAGE 1 architects, newpersons and cultural activists, the government invoked the Antiquities Act 1968 to declare the town as a protected site.

"We are living here for the last 40 years. Now it is our home, our hope, our everything. We cannot leave it for the sake of heritage," Maya Begum, president of Panam Women Association, told The Daily Star.

"The government should permanently allocate these houses to us rather taking them away from us."

The graffiti on most buildings in the historic town echo the same sentiment. "We will sacrifice our lives, Not Panam," reads one. "It's our right to live here," proclaims another.

From the end of the 19th century to the beginning of the 20th, Hindu landlords and merchants put up the residential quarters on both sides of the road, bringing together contemporary Mughal architecture and grandeur.

Two bridges on the Pankhiraz canal between Dulapur and Panam add to the archaeological riches of the old town.

The residents of Panam Nagar have been living in the historic buildings since 1965 when the original owners left them behind during the Indo-Pak war.

The current residents leased the buildings, treated as vested enemy property after the war, for 99 years from the government.

In March 2003, the president directed the authorities concerned to list the structures on more than 10 acres in Sonargaon upazila in Narayanganj district.

But the government's step to protect the heritage is so far limited to the official declaration.

"We have just submitted a project concept paper to the government for the preservation of the town. The government will probably include the project in the next Annual Development Programme," said Dewan Delwar Hossain, the

director of the archaeological department.

"When the government will take the project, we will discuss the matter with local residents and convince them to shift to somewhere else."

"Virtually we are yet to do anything with Panam Nagar. But hopefully in the next year we will be able to start renovations to the relics and preservation of the town," he added.

After the declaration of the old town as a protected site, some local residents continued putting up new houses in the preserved area with the intent of making some quick money in damages from the government during eviction.

The new structures appeared incongruous with the historic buildings standing in virtual ruin with the images carved on their pillars and walls were peeling off, doors and windows rotting and rickety cast iron grills falling apart.

But some local residents underscored the value of the heritage they were destroying by careless use as residential houses and trade centres.

"It's really a laudable decision of the government for the protection of our heritage. But people, afraid of not getting proper compensation, are planning protests against the government decision," one of them said, requesting anonymity.

Archaeological department sources said they would conduct a survey in the area to find out real property owners.

"Compensation will be given to real owners," Dewan said.

US firm hired

FROM PAGE 1 abroad will be engaged on a three-year contract to suggest ways of reducing wastage, losses and lending rates, recovering default loans and choosing good borrowers.

The government also appointed a consulting firm for Agrani Bank under the programme.

AL walks out

FROM PAGE 1 and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said.

He said the government was concerned over the threat and was probing it.

Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdul Hamid sparked the heated debate condemning Khaleda's remarks on a point of order.

"The prime minister cannot deliver such an speech that inspires criminals. She should withdraw the remarks," he demanded.

"We want to discuss the matter in parliament today adjourning the business of the House. If we are not allowed to talk, we will walk out of the House," Hamid threatened.

Taking floor on another point of order, AL lawmaker Sheikh Fazul Karim Selim said the premier violated the constitution making such a speech.

"The speech should be withdrawn immediately."

Desa to become

FROM PAGE 12 sources said. The company will be given specific financial and technical targets, including reduction of system-loss, they added.

At present, Desa has a 20 to 23 percent system-loss, which is considered to be too high, as it does not generate power or make large-scale power transmission. Sources said more than 50 percent of this so-called system-loss is nothing but theft.

Asian Development Bank (ADB) will provide \$100 million to Desa to clear its dues and another \$860,000 as infrastructure support for turning it into a company. Desa presently owes Tk 2,700 crore as arrears (over Tk 5,500 crore as cumulative arrears) to PDB. On the other hand, consumers owe Tk 1,300 crore to Desa.

In line with donors' recommendation, Desa was formed in 1991 by separating the Dhaka unit from PDB with a hope to arrive at improved

performance and reduced system-loss. But, within a few years, it had turned out that Desa's performance was even worse than PDB.

Donors then started to hammer away at turning a part of Desa into a holding company. Accordingly, in 1997, Desco was formed and started operating in Mirpur -- the worst performing and theft-infested zone. Although the take over by Desco did not improve the scenario much, donors kept on urging to bring more zones under it.

In recent years, the government gave Desco the capital's most profitable zones of Gulshan, Banani and Uttara. With these zones under its umbrella, Desco's performance now looks good. But, power sector experts say Desco really has not improved the power distribution service in any way, as bill collection in Gulshan, Banani and Uttara had been much better all along.

Pvt infrastructure

FROM PAGE 12 vehicles and to be collected by the private investor. The proposal is also for increasing the toll rates every three years on the basis of inflation.

The Cabinet Committee had rejected this proposal in January last, suggesting a revision. But it was placed again yesterday without any revision and so the committee turned it down once again.

Sources said the tariff proposal does not reflect the socio-economic realities and is more tilted to helping the investor make profit than actually benefiting the citizens.

"Just consider that, in addition to the tariff, there will be Vat (value-added tax). It would make the flyover so costly that people will try to avoid it," said a source, "and in such a case, the flyover will only intensify the

traffic jam in its adjacent areas."

Belhassa-Acom JV and Associates, a joint venture of the United Arab Emirates, Bangladesh and India, was selected in January for the task on condition that the DCC would further negotiate the deal. The local government ministry intends to give Belhassa a 15-year tax holiday.

Sources said a certain 'Bhaban' is pushing the tariff structure as it has stake in the deal.

According to government estimate, the flyover will cost Tk 670 crore and will be set up within 30 to 36 months on the Boot basis. The ING Bank of the Netherlands will lend \$80 million and Commercial Bank of Dubai 75 million derham for the project. The developer will arrange the rest of the fund on its own.

Ex-Enron

FROM PAGE 12

of criminal activity." Lay continued to place the blame for the financial irregularities that triggered the company's bankruptcy filing in December 2001 on more junior executives, notably former chief financial officer Andrew Fastow.

Fastow has pleaded guilty to two counts and is cooperating with prosecutors in exchange for a 10-year jail sentence, while Lay's other lieutenant, former chief executive Jeffrey Skilling, pleaded not guilty to 35 counts in February.

In the indictment, the government alleges that Lay was a major figure in the conspiracy to mislead the world about Enron's financial health, particularly after taking day-to-day control of the operation once again in August 2001.

Specifically, prosecutors contend that Lay tried to cover up the company's ballooning losses as it headed towards bankruptcy in late 2001, after the abrupt departure of its then-CEO Skilling.

Morshed Khan leaves for Vietnam July 12

BSS, Dhaka

Foreign minister M Morshed Khan leaves for Vietnam on July 12 on a three-day official visit at the invitation of his Vietnamese counterpart Nguyen Dy Nien.

The two foreign ministers will hold talks on July 13 on bilateral, regional and international matters, an official source in the foreign ministry said yesterday.

During his stay in Hanoi, Khan is scheduled to address a meeting of the leaders of Vietnamese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI).

Khan will call on Vietnamese Prime Minister Phan Van Khai on July 14. He will also pay a courtesy call on President Tran Duc Luong the same day.

The foreign minister will return home on July 15.

Independent MP

FROM PAGE 1 privileges in favour of his demand and said he will consider the matter.

Shahin, a former BNP leader from Moulvibazar, alleged, "The BNP lawmaker, also son of the finance minister, can disregard even his father as he spoke against BNP chairperson and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and joint Secretary General Tarique Rahman."

"Khaleda Zia and Tarique Rahman are of no importance in politics of greater Sylhet as long as Saifur Rahman is alive," Shahin quoted the BNP lawmaker as saying.

Shahin termed Naser Rahman a by-product of the parliament, as he came to the House through a by-election.

Prices

FROM PAGE 12 Shariful Alam, a government official, yesterday at Hatirpool kitchen market.

The price of sugar, which was Tk 1,400 per 50kg a couple of days ago, now stands at Tk 1,460.

Price of palm oil has increased by Tk 1 per litre to Tk 38 and that of soybean by Tk 2 to Tk 50.

Fishermen at the city markets now ask as much as Tk 1,000 for a 2kg hilsha fish. Mutton is being sold at Tk 140 per kg, Tk 10 up from what the price was just two days ago. Small fishes have become scarce and dearer, too.

During the last week, vegetable prices have increased by Tk 2 to Tk 8 per kilo. Price of tomato has shot up by Tk 10 to Tk 40 and green chilli by Tk 4 to Tk 24 a kg.

There is no vegetable in the market below a price of Tk 10 per kg.

"Prices of all items, particularly vegetables, have shot up. Last week I bought eggplants for Tk 20 per kg; now it stands at Tk 28," said M Jajnal Abedin at Karwanbazar kitchen market.

Vegetable traders however put the blame on heavy rains. "The recent heavy rainfalls have damaged vegetable farms in many areas, giving rise to a crisis and a price inflation," said M Razzab Hossain, a trader at Hatirpool market.

Price of every 100 eggs has increased by Tk 20 to 30.

Of the spices, cumin has become dearer by Tk 30 per kg and onion by Tk 3. Strangely, price of ginger has decreased by Tk 20 a kilo.

2 US soldiers

FROM PAGE 12 Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) in Toronto, supported by another fugitive American soldier Brandon Hughey.

The IRB set a refugee status hearing for October 20, 21 and 22 for Hinzman, said board spokesman Charles Hawkins.

N Korea

FROM PAGE 12 Kim Il-Sung governed the Stalinist country for 46 years until his death by building a personality cult around him and his family. North Koreans still call their deceased leader "eternal president."

DCC ups outlay

FROM PAGE 1 crore in road digging fees, Tk 25 crore in 'bazar salami', Tk 23 crore in market rent, Tk 1.50 crore in community centre rent, Tk 5 crore from bus terminals, Tk 11 crore from cattle markets and Tk 6 crore in rickshaw licence fees.

About holding tax, the mayor said without increasing the tax, the DCC is going to introduce self-assessment system this month to collect it in all the 90 wards.

The DCC has Tk 85.76 crore arrears of holding tax. Of the amount, Tk 14.03 crore is due from government, semi-government and autonomous organisations and Tk 71 crore from general taxpayers, he mentioned.

On waste management, Khoka said the corporation does not have

adequate manpower and funds for this. It has only 7,000 cleaners while 17,000 are needed and it spends Tk 60 crore in the sector.

"Dhaka will be a clean city if we can spend Tk 150 crore a year for waste management but it is quite impossible for DCC," the mayor said.

He hoped implementation of the proposed seven-kilometre-long Jatabari-Gulistan flyover will begin this fiscal year.

The DCC has allocated Tk 1 crore to establish a cemetery for Buddhists to meet a longstanding demand of the community, the mayor said.

The budget presentation ceremony attended by DCC ward commissioners was held at Mahanagar Natya Mancha auditorium.

UK envoy talks

FROM PAGE 1

the investigation would end