

EMAIL THREAT

# Suspected sender remanded again

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed Saibal Saha Partha, arrested on charge of emailing the daily Prothom Alo with a threat to kill Awami League President Sheikh Hasina, on a three-day fresh remand.

In the remand petition, investigation officer of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) said he took up the investigation charge on August 30 and he would require time for interrogation to find out the motive.

The defence lawyers submitted a petition seeking bail and cancellation of the five-day remand prayer. Moving the petition, Advocate Gyanendra Chandra Biswas told the court that Dhanmondi Police had earlier taken Partha on a four-day remand and he was sent to jail after completion of another two-day remand.

Moreover, Partha was physically and mentally tortured in custody of law-enforcement agencies for a five-day confinement without court

order. Life of the young man will be at risk if he is remanded again, as he cannot move without the help of others, the lawyers argued.

After hearing both sides, Metropolitan Magistrate Jahangir Alam rejected the bail petition and placed Partha on a three-day remand.

Intelligence agents picked Partha on August 25 from Heart.net Cyber Café at the Elephant Road. The intelligence agents quizzed him in an undisclosed place for five days, sidestepping the law to produce arrestees before court within 24 hours of arrest.

Partha is facing charges of emailing the Bangla daily to claim the responsibility for the August 21 grenade attack that killed 19 people and threatening to kill Hasina in seven days.

The lawyer said Partha completed his Master's in business administration at Chennai in India and returned to Bangladesh in July, adding that he was browsing websites for jobs.

# Govt destroying rally

**FROM PAGE 1** explosions and huge arms seizures, Jallil alleged the government halted every probe into the crimes finding the involvement of the ruling alliance activists and fundamentalists in them.

He said by involving Interpol and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in the government-run probe, the government was trying to project it as an international investigation.

Quoting Interpol officers, he said they were only giving technical advice to the government investigators. The AL leaders alleged despite repeated demand by the opposition, the government denied independent international probe, fearing exposure of its hand in the crime.

The press conference once again demanded international probe into the August 21 crime under the supervision of the United Nations or the Commonwealth. Replying to a question, Jallil said: "We have seen such investigations in Iraq. Why is it not possible here?"

He said the government was often referring to some irrelevant issues to shift people's attention from the assassination attempt on Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina that killed at least 19 people and injured over 200 others.

"We want to make it clear that Sheikh Hasina left the scene by her bullet proof car."

He said Mukhtangon was not the main venue of the August 21 programme of his party, it was kept as an alternative venue in view of past police action on the party processions and rallies in front of its headquarters.

"We had sent press releases, published advertisements in the newspapers and posted posters a few days before the August 21 programme," he added.

He alleged despite repeated attacks on Hasina and threats to kill her, the government, even the prime minister, showed utter indifference to her security.

"The prime minister even made a derisive comment in parliament after a death threat to the leader of

the opposition on July 5 this year," he said.

On destruction of evidence, Jallil said at least five grenades, retrieved from the scene and the adjacent areas in the wake of the attacks were exploded without taking fingerprints and police did not cordon off the spot after the attacks to preserve the evidence.

Police even took away the truck from the scene, he added.

At the press conference, Jallil quoted a recent speech of State Minister for Manpower Amanullah Aman at a BNP rally.

"Aman told the rally that the government would finalise the probe report soon accusing Awami League leaders Abdus Samad Azad, Abdul Hamid, Tofael Ahmed, M o h a m m a d N a s i m, Motia Chowdhury and Saber Hossain Chowdhury," he claimed.

The AL also raised questions about Khaleda's sympathy for Hasina after the grenade attacks.

"The prime minister's letter to the leader of the opposition did not mention the grenade attacks and it was sent to newspaper offices before it reached Sudha Sadan, Hasina's residence," Jallil said.

AL leaders Tofael Ahmed, Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, Mahiuddin Khan Alamgir, Saber, Abdul Mannan and Asaduzzaman Noor were also present at the press conference.

## Khulna UP

**FROM PAGE 12** (PBCP) and he came to offer me bribe to get the final report of shrimp trader Sultan Joarder murder case in his favour," Habibur said.

Hujjat is also a prime suspect of murder of his predecessor and BNP leader Amir Azam Khan, he added.

Azam was killed in a bomb attack at Tootpara in Khulna on January 29 this year. Hujjat was elected chairman in the by-election and was moving freely taking the benefit of UP chairmanship.

Police sent him to jail showing him arrested in shrimp trader Sultan Joarder murder case.

# Twenty injured

**FROM PAGE 1** Hossain was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) with wounds in head, chest, stomach and hands.

The workers were spurred into the fire and fury when Hossain beat machine operator Abdul Jalil in his office at 3:00pm allegedly for demanding their outstanding overtime pays.

"I asked manager when he would pay our overtime bills, which he had not been paying for the last two months, though the payment is usually made by the end of every month," Jallil told The Daily Star yesterday.

Instead of answering the query, the manager picked a quarrel asking Jallil why his fingers were dirty and at one stage struck the operator on his head with a tube-light, the workers narrated. Hossain then beat Jallil with a stick, they added.

The workers alleged Rahman, who had joined the factory two months ago, used to beat them whenever they demanded any dues and accused him of embezzling their money.

Hearing Jallil's cry and finding him bleeding, around 50 workers including women stormed into the manager's chamber, beat him with tube-lights and ransacked the room.

The furious workers also damaged some machines on the third floor of the factory building and beat the security guards that rushed in to rescue the manager.

Talking to The Daily Star Hossain denied the allegations against him and said some 60 workers demanding due payments despoiled factory machines and then attacked him.

The workers rushed out of the building hitting and shoving the

security guards aside. They blocked Outer Circular Road yelling slogans against the manager and demanding their dues until police dispersed them after a couple of hours.

The factory management later fixed dates for settling the workers' dues in phases and declared the factory closed for two days from today.

On August 31 last, a large section of around 900 employees of the factory observed a strike demanding the dues. That day the manager persuaded them to withdraw the strike, the workers said, assuring to pay them on September 4, the day the managing director of the company was scheduled to return from abroad.

Impressive Apparels Managing Director Khorshed Alam termed yesterday's incident a feud between the manger and the employees and claimed a loss of Tk one crore.

## Sheba Telecom

**FROM PAGE 12** Bhd (TRI) in the cell phone company for \$15 million.

The companies later reached a consensus following a long arbitration in Singapore. TRI, a concern of Malaysian state-owned Telekom Malaysia, had signed the settlement agreement with the ISL on June 15.

The settlement involved TRI selling its Sheba stake to ISL for \$15 million and a liability of \$10 million with Standard Chartered Bank in Dhaka, officials said.

One of the issues TRI and ISL had disputed was the size of each of their equity stakes in Sheba.

# Trader killed, 2 abducted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushlia

A businessman was killed in Meherpur and a farmer was abducted in Jhenidah on Friday night while a Chuadanga college student abducted on Wednesday is still missing.

Outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP-ML) slaughtered a fish trader as he failed to pay Tk 2 lakh as ransom demanded earlier over his taking lease of a waterbody in the area ignoring the PBCP-ML's warning.

PBCP men stormed into the house of the fish trader Imam Uddin at Dulalpur village in Mujibnagar upazila at about 11:00pm and slaughtered him in a nearby field, Meherpur police said. One Sumon claimed responsibility for the killing saying Imam was a PBCP-Janajuddho sympathiser.

In Jhenidah, criminals abducted a farmer from Mahisdanga village in Saikupa upazila on Friday night and demanded ransom of Tk 2 lakh from his family. A gang in the guise of police called Sunil Kumar Mondol, 50, from sleep and took him to an unknown place at gunpoint, sources said.

Family sources said local union parishad chairman and members were negotiating with the captors while Saikupa police said they have heard the incident, but no complaint was lodged in this regard.

Police could not rescue an Alamdanga Degree College student Asaduzzaman Liton, 24, abducted by a gang on Wednesday while he was returning home from local bazar at about 9:00pm. For his release the gang demanded his family to give Tk 4 lakh. They declined to inform police on receiving death threat to the boy.

## Bangladeshis

**FROM PAGE 1** Referring to the recent incident of bomb attack, Khaleda said those who do not want progress of the country are responsible for letting loose anarchy in a planned way. "The vested quarter is trying to hinder the development process when every factor is in favour."

She also assured that there was no dearth of sincerity of the government in maintaining law and order, and mentioned the invitation to the Interpol and the formation of the judicial inquiry commission to probe the bomb blasts.

The 40-member delegation of the front was led by its convener State Minister for Water Resources Advocate Gautam Chakraborty.

The prime minister called upon people of all religions to work unitedly for progress of the country.

State Minister for Religious Affairs Mosharrar Hossain Shahjahan and Joint Convener of the front Dr Pareesh Chandra Mondol also spoke.

Conveying greetings on the occasion of Janmastami, to be observed tomorrow, the front leaders thanked the prime minister for giving permission for worship at Ramna Kali Mandir.

The leaders expressed their happiness over the initiative to establish a Christian Welfare Trust and recalled that the allocation of Tk 3 crore for the Buddhist Welfare Trust last year spurred the activities of the organisation.

Earlier, members of the Janmastami Udjapan Parishad (Janmastami Observation Council) led by its leaders Ranjit Kumar Chakraborty, Sukumar Chakraborty and Sujit Kanti Dutta met the prime minister and invited her to the festival.

## Rab arrests

**FROM PAGE 12** According to his confession, the elite force later recovered a foreign-made revolver, a sawn rifle, a bullet and a sophisticated knife from his bedroom.

He was being quizzed at the Rab-7 headquarters at Patenga until afternoon.

While talking to reporters yesterday, Shahidullah blamed his uncle Idris Alam, also an AL leader and a columnist, for his arrest.

"He (Idris) was a candidate in the last city corporation election and suffered a heavy defeat. Now he has avenged the defeat helping Rab to my arrest," Shahidullah said.

Shahidullah was earlier arrested twice in the last two years but came out on bail. He was first arrested during the countrywide special anti-crime drive, Operation Clean Heart.

Sources said four more brothers of Shahidullah have a history of crimes and the eldest one is now serving a 30-year imprisonment.

## HC grants

**FROM PAGE 12** alias Thandu on 'health ground' despite strongly opposed by Deputy Attorney General Gholam Mohammad Chowdhury Alal.

TH Khan, known as top legal adviser of the government, had appeared for petitioner Thandu.

The government had identified the murder as a sensational case and transferred it to the Speedy Trial Tribunal.

The court sentenced Thandu and three others to life imprisonment for murder of Abdul Kader, a businessman, gunned down at Motiheel Commercial Area in October 2001. Seven others were awarded death penalty in this case.

Additional Attorney General Abdur Rezzak Khan who deals with criminal cases told the news agency that he had already filed a petition with the Supreme Court seeking stay of the High Court order, which is likely to come up for hearing in the vacation bench today.

# India won't link

**FROM PAGE 1** October, Hafiz said while taking part in live online discussion styled "Flood 2004 and our role" yesterday. The discussion was jointly organised by website www.kobitaogaaan.com and www.banglascity.com at the ministry's conference room.

He sought cooperation of neighbouring countries for an effective flood management plan as "Bangladesh alone can't accomplish it."

"A multilateral flood management plan involving India, Bangladesh, Nepal and China is necessary," the minister said responding to a query about the country's flood management plan.

On the multilateral flood management, Hafiz said Bangladesh has taken steps to this end. Nepal has already responded and we are now waiting for India's response.

Dhaka was concerned about India's plan to link 37 major rivers including the Ganges and the Brahmaputra and divert their flow from northeastern India to water-deficient southwest areas. Once implemented, this scheme will deprive Bangladesh of its fair share of water.

Bangladesh is very much dependant on the Ganges and the Brahmaputra, as 85 per cent of its dry season surface water stream from them, officials said. If the flow of these rivers stops due to the river-linking project, seawater will gradually fill southern rivers and land, increasing salinity and reducing land fertility, they noted.

The minister said Bangladesh with its own resources has faced the recent deluge which left at least 500 people killed. The extent of damage of the nearly one-month long deluge was estimated at about \$7 billion.

In reply to another query, he said food grain production has increased three-fold to 2.50 crore tonnes from 80 lakh tonnes in the 1960's. Bangladesh can attain self-

sufficiency in food production by increasing irrigation and using hybrid seeds, he added.

Dr Omar Faruk Khan, secretary of the ministry, Md Mkhlesuzzaman, director general of Water Development Board, ANH Akhter Hossain, managing director of Dhaka Wasa, Dr Asif Nazrul, associate professor of Dhaka University, and water experts also took part.

A panel of selected journalists, experts and professionals from home and abroad attended the session moderated by Aman-Ud-Dowla, a US expatriate journalist.

## 4 lawyers jailed

BSS, Bogra

Four lawyers, including Secretary of Bogra Bar Association Golam Rabbani, were sent to jail after their bail prayer was rejected in a criminal case.

They were accused of assaulting Abul Hasan of Koigari area of the district on February 29 inside the courtroom where he appeared as plaintiff of a case.

The incident took place at a magistrate's court when the trial of the case was going on, court sources said.

Abul Hasan lodged an FIR (first information report) with the local police station alleging that the lawyers attacked him inside the courtroom.

Police pressed charges against the lawyers on July 23.

The accused lawyers yesterday surrendered before the court and prayed for bail. But the court rejected their bail prayer and sent them to jail.

Three other lawyers accused in the case are Abdul Mottalib, Syed Akhter and Ashequr Rahman.

# Forex reserves

**FROM PAGE 1** end of June this year.

The reserve will remain above \$3 billion even after payment of \$200 million to Asian Clearing Union (ACU) next week. The amount is equivalent to the import bills of more than four months, the BB officials said.

Bangladesh has been receiving over \$3 billion remittance for the last two years which was earlier below \$2 billion on average. BB officials said the continued growth in remittance mostly contributed to the healthy reserve.

Besides, the country received a total of \$400 million from the WB and IMF as budgetary support, assistance for education sector and Poverty Reduction Growth Facility (PRGF) loan, which also helped maintain higher foreign exchange reserve.

In last one month, the WB disbursed \$200 million as budgetary support and \$100 million for education sector development while the

IMF provided \$100 million as PRGF loan to help Bangladesh prepare for the quota-free regime.

Finance ministry officials said although overall foreign aid disbursement was not very significant over the last few years, Bangladesh received another \$450 million as budgetary support and PRGF loan in the last one-and-a-half years.

Remittance flow also saw an 11 percent rise in the first month of this fiscal year compared to the same month of last year. Expatriates sent \$287.7 million in July this year while the amount was \$258.8 million in July 2003.

According to Bangladesh Bank statistics, expatriates sent remittances worth \$239.39 million between August 1 and 26.

Moreover, the country witnessed robust growth in export earnings that enriched the foreign exchange reserve. In the last financial year, the amount fetched was \$7602.99 million posting a 16.10 percent growth over the previous year.

# Astronomers deny ET

**FROM PAGE 12** computers around the world to sift through data for anything unusual.

The data has been collected by radio telescopes scanning the sky for any unusual signals from space.

It is believed that any extraterrestrial intelligence might want to send radio messages across the cosmos to make contact with other intelligences.

Over the years, Seti@home has detected many hundreds of thousands of spurious signals and has used statistical techniques to identify them as interference.

About 150 signals survived the process and were subjected to further scrutiny but none passed the final test to be classed as a potential signal from ET.

The "signal" that kicked off furious media excitement on Thursday is called SHGb02+14a and was first detected by computers running Seti@home software in

Germany and the US.

It has a frequency of 1420 megahertz - one of the principal frequencies of the most abundant element hydrogen.

Speaking to BBC News Online from the Arecibo radio telescope in Puerto Rico, where he is preparing an observing run to follow up Seti@home analysis, Dr Wertheimer said: "It's all hype. We don't have anything we are excited about."

"At the moment, we have no candidates that we are particularly excited about and the new 'signal' is not a priority."

He continued: "With Seti@home having analysed some 50 trillion frequency bands, it is not surprising that a signal like this occurs purely due to chance."

Dr Horowitz, who looks for alien signals using optical telescopes, told BBC News Online that it was "not new and definitely not a signal".

# Violence flares

**FROM PAGE 12** as insurgents lobbed mortar rounds and fired Kalashnikovs in response to the US armoured vehicles, warplanes and helicopter gunships, an AFP reporter witnessed.

The US Army's 2nd Infantry Division entered the city at 8:00 am (0400 GMT) to hunt down a "terrorist cell" and detained one wanted individual, the military said.

"The city of Tall Afar has been a suspected haven for terrorists crossing into Iraq from Syria," it charged.

Amid heavy fighting, an aircraft dropped a one-tonne bomb near the city, the military acknowledged.

Soldiers killed two insurgents and detained 18, the US military said, adding that an OH-58D Kiowa helicopter made a controlled landing near Tall Afar after being hit by gunfire. None of the crew were seriously injured.

US forces left the town at around 2:00pm (1000 GMT), but insurgents were humked down in their positions around Tall Afar for fear of a fresh assault by US and Iraqi gov-

ernment forces.

Twelve policemen were killed and five national guardsmen wounded Saturday in a joint US-Iraq offensive on Latifiya, a haven for Sunni Muslim insurgents, an Iraqi national guard intelligence officer told AFP.

"Twelve policemen were killed and five national guardsmen wounded. Two hundred suspects were arrested in the Bass district in central Latifiya," the officer said on condition of anonymity, speaking from Mahmudiya, 20km from the trouble spot.

The towns of Latifiyah and Mahmudiya have long been under de facto control of the insurgents. Rebels have regularly assassinated police officers, raided stations and ambushed cars on the deadly stretch of road.

Two French journalists being held hostage by a radical Islamist group since August 20 disappeared while traveling the perilous route. (AFP, AP)

# Rab nabs ten outlaws, recovers arms

OUR CORRESPONDENTS, Rajshahi and Pabna

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) of the Rajshahi region arrested 10 suspected outlaws and recovered arms and ammunition from the village of Salaipur under Gayespur union in Pabna Sadar Upazila in a pre-dawn raid yesterday.

The arrested were identified as Abdur Rouf, Abdul Hannan, Abdul Khaleque, Helal Uddin, Abdus Salam, Rezaul Islam, Saiful Islam, Bablu, Nayan and Benu.

The Rab personnel recovered seven firearms including foreign revolvers, SBBL guns, .22 rifle, air rifle and 72 bullets and sharp weapons including 15 machetes and two Chinese axes from their possession.

Acting on a tip-off, the elite forces raided house of Abdur Rouf in the village at 3:00 in the morning as the gang was staying there.

The Rab sources said the arrested outlaws were involved in road robbery, killing and extortion.

Police sources said they were likely to be members of some outlawed group and were preparing to carry out some criminal operations.

Rab and police are interrogating the arrested and filed an arms case with the Pabna sadar police.

## Bomb threat

**FROM PAGE 1** "An academic committee meeting will be held on September 7 to discuss the overall situation," the chairman said.

A delegation of 12 teachers of the department went to the office of Vice-chancellor (VC) Prof SMA Faiz yesterday morning to ask for security measures at the department. The VC later visited the department and asked the security officer to deploy two security guards for routine duty round the clock for at least 10 to 12 days.

Talking to reporters, Prof Faiz said, "We the students, teachers and officials will work together so that the congenial academic atmosphere at the university continues. We have already taken appropriate steps for this."

Evil forces are trying to create anarchy in the country as well as at the university by spreading panic by planting bombs or not planting, he added.

## JS body

**FROM PAGE 1** passage of the bill.

According to the rules of procedure of the Jatiya Sangsad, the speaker will include the bill in the order of the day. At yesterday's meeting held at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban, opposition Awami League (AL) lawmakers expressed dissatisfaction as the speaker did not include several amendment bills to the constitution in the day's order.

AL lawmaker and member of the committee AKM Jahangir Hossain threatened to resign from the parliamentary body if the speaker did not allow introduction of the bills to the House.

The parliamentary body decided that chairman of the committee would communicate with Speaker Jamir Uddin Sircar for placement of the bill.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia set up a 60-member jumbo cabinet that drew criticism from different quarters. Later, a few members were dropped, but the size of the cabinet still remains over 50. Different donor agencies are still insisting that the government downsize the cabinet.

Talking to The Daily Star Jatiya Party lawmaker GM Quader said the cabinet should have a specific number of members just as parliament has a fixed number of lawmakers.

"Downsizing the cabinet will help reduce the cost of the government," he said.

If the speaker allows Quader to place the bill, then it will be sent to the standing committee on law ministry for scrutiny.

Mozammel Haque, chairman of the committee, presided over the meeting. BNP lawmaker Nazir Hossain, Awami League lawmakers Shawkat Ali and AKM Jahangir Hossain, Jatiya Party lawmaker Dr TIM Fazle Rabbi Chowdhury and Jamaat-e-Islami lawmaker Abdus Sobhan were present at the meeting.

The meeting also adopted a censure motion on the August 21 grenade attack on an opposition rally and expressed deep shock at the killings.

## 10 more AL

**FROM PAGE 12** Rahman, Women's Affairs Joint Secretary of Sechchasebok League Ummeh Razia Kajol, Women's Affairs Secretary of Dhaka district Sechchasebok League Mahbuba Parveen and grievously injured Neela Chowdhury left Dhaka at 6:00pm.

AL leaders Mahfuzur Rahman, Mohammed Firoz Hossain, Mohammed Ataulah and Iqbal Hossain Titu were also among them.

The party leaders will get treatment at Peerless Hospital in Calcutta.

Earlier, 20 AL leaders including Presidium Member Abdur Razzak and Joint General Secretary Obaidul Quader went to India for better treatment.

# Kashmir peace plans

**FROM PAGE 12** disclosed but during ongoing meetings between the two sides since March -- known as the Composite Dialogue -- both teams have released a number of blueprints for building peace.

India's ideas on the table have included the start of a bus connecting the capitals of the Indian and Pakistani zones of Kashmir, the granting of most favoured nation status by Pakistan to India, the opening of the Wagah border for trade and greater interaction among the business communities.

The mandate for the Khokhar-Saran talks was to finalise the agenda for the dialogue between Singh and Kasuri.

The last foreign secretary-level talks were held in New Delhi on June 27-28 and were followed by a

# President, PM shocked at Russia incident

BSS, Dhaka