

GRENADE ATTACK

'Email sender', three others remanded

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday remanded four persons in custody for five days each in a grenade attack case.

Metropolitan Magistrate Abdur Rouf Khan granted the remand prayer when Hannan, Abdur Rahman, Badsha Miah and Saibal Saha Partha were produced before the court at about 2:30pm yesterday.

The four persons picked earlier on different charges from different places in the city were shown arrested on Wednesday in the case filed by police on August 22, a day after the grenade attacks on 13 bullet holes. He was also taken on a 10-day remand for interrogation.

The Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) arrested Abdur Rahman from his house at Sector 10 in the Suburban Uttara on September 4 and recovered a foreign revolver with 13 bullet holes. He was also taken on a 10-day remand for interrogation.

The other two - Hannan and Badsha - were arrested on September 8 from Mogbazar on charges of bomb explosion during an AL-enforced hartal. They were sent to Dhaka Central Jail the next day, as investigation officers did not seek remand.

Advocate Gyanendra Chandra Biswas, the defence lawyer for Partha, submitted a petition seeking bail and cancellation of the remand prayer.

Moving the petition, the lawyer said Partha, who was arrested initially on August 26 allegedly for sending email to the daily Prothom Alo with a threat to kill Hasina within seven days, was implicated in the case as part of a conspiracy.

DHAKA
T O D A Y

Cultural function

Bangladesh Shilpkala Academy organises a cultural function to mark the 30 years of Bangladesh's membership of the United Nations. Venue: Academy premises, Segun Bagicha. Time: 6.30pm.

Print exhibition

The inaugural ceremony of the 5th solo print exhibition by Anisuzzaman will be held. Venue: Divine Art Gallery, Sonargaon Hotel. Time: 6.00pm.

Premiere show

The premiere show of a short film titled 'Interview' by Obaidullah al Zakir will be held. Venue: Brac Centre Inn Auditorium, Mohakhali. Time: 7.00pm.

Academy film show

Academy Film Society will screen three American films titled 'Dr. Seuss Cat in the Hat' (2003), 'Amadeus' (1984) and 'The Day After Tomorrow' (2004). Venue: Society Auditorium, 21/C Jigatola. Time: 10.30am, 3.30pm and 6.30pm.

Muldhara film show

Muldhara, a forum of writers, journalists and artists, will screen three films titled 'Stuart Little', 'Murder' and 'Roman Holiday'. Venue: House-15, Road-7, Dhanmondi. Time: 10.30am, 3.30pm and 6.30pm.

Drama

Bangladesh Theatre will stage a comedy titled 'Shor Morog' directed by Humayun Kabir Himu. Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall of Bangladesh Shilpkala Academy, Segun Bagicha. Time: 7.00pm.

Publication ceremony

The publication ceremony of a book titled 'Plabon Bhumite Motya Chash: Daudkandi Model' by Dr Khandaker Mosharrif

Partha was remanded for seven days twice, but police failed to come up with any concrete evidence of his involvement.

He was physically and mentally tortured when police quizzed him in previous remands, the defence lawyer argued. But the general recording officer opposed the move and prayed for a seven-day remand.

Upon hearing, the court rejected the bail petition and placed the four on a five-day remand.

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34pc crop in 81 upazilas under water

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ongoing deluge has inundated 34 percent of the standing crop including aman and vegetables of 81 upazilas in 19 districts, sources at Agriculture Extension Department (DAE) said.

They however are not sure of the extent of damage to transplanted aman as it may revive if the water recedes in a day or two.

"Transplanted aman can sustain 72 hours totally submerged. Even with few leaves left above the water, it continues to live and grow. So, we can't calculate right away how much of the aman crop will be

spoiled," said a DAE official.

But, agriculturists apprehend all the submerged vegetables will be ruined leading possibly to a price hike.

The DAE is yet to assess the total damage from this latest flooding as the torrential rain is still on.

Until Wednesday, crops in 39,056 hectares out of total 1,176,606 hectares were inundated in the districts, DAE sources said. Of that aman fields account for 370,375 hectares and vegetables 7,982 hectares.

According to DAE sources, most of the crop fields in Dhaka, Chittagong, Laxmipur, Cox's Bazar,

Rajbari, Madaripur, Faridpur, Gazipur, Feni, Noakhali, Jamalpur and Brahmanbaria are under water.

According to government assessment, the month-long devastating flash floods earlier this year ruined crops worth over Tk 2,000 crore affecting nearly 46 lakh farmers. Of them 26 lakh farmers have received transplanted aman saplings and vegetable seeds under a government relief programme.

The World Bank and the Asian Development Bank will provide further support to the flood-affected farmers. A 40-member joint team of the banks is currently conducting a need assessment towards that end.

Dhaka for regional strategy to improve child nutrition

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Bangladesh yesterday called for a regional strategy to support maternal and child nutrition activities in Asia by sharing experiences among the countries.

A coordinated regional strategy would help bolster governmental efforts to improve child nutrition and maternal health care, said Minister for Women & Children Affairs Khurshid Jahan Haque.

Addressing the Regional Ministerial Consultation on Maternal and Child Health in Asian countries, she outlined the process of incorporating the nutrition perspective into the country's efforts to reduce poverty.

The minister was unanimously elected the chairperson of the consultations on the first day of the three-day conference on Wednesday.

Pointing to the success of food-based nutrition integration programmes in Bangladesh, Khurshid Jahan said infant mortality rate has come down from 75 per

thousand live births to 60 per thousand.

Besides, 30 percent babies are born with a low weight, down from 35 percent, she said.

Listing the various measures taken by the government to improve child nutrition and maternal care, the minister said Bangladesh was "increasingly getting global recognition for its landmark achievements in executing successfully programmes in health care, school education and population control."

Inaugurating the conference on Wednesday, Indian Health Minister Ambraumani Ramadoss suggested a regional collaborative network to support maternal and child nutrition activities.

Such network would help funding institutions and the private sector to reach out to those parts of Asia which have so far remained beyond the food security net, he said.

Ramadoss said underweight status and micro-nutritional deficiencies are one of the major causes of death and foetal malnutrition.

Organised by the World Food Programme and India, the conference is being attended by representatives from several countries, including Indonesia, Nepal, Cambodia and Myanmar.

One electrocuted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An employee of an oil mill was electrocuted at Khilgaon in the city yesterday.

He was identified as Mohammad Humayun Kabir, 30, an employee of Habib Oil Mills at West Jorain.

The accident occurred at 1:00pm when Kabir was hanging his lungi after a bath on a wire which was electrified earlier.

He was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where the doctors declared him dead.

Obituary

BSS, Dhaka

Mohammad Nabab Ali Pradhan, father of M Rashiduzzaman MP, died of a cardiac arrest at his Dewanganj Bazar residence in Jamalpur on Wednesday night at the age of 85.

BNP chairperson and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia expressed her deep shock at the death of Pradhan.

In a condolence message, she prayed for peace of the departed soul and conveyed deep sympathy to the bereaved family.

In a separate message, BNP Secretary General and LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan expressed his profound shock at his death.

He was the secretary general of Bangladesh Diabetic Association from 1993 to 1997.

He had a number of research-based publications in local and foreign journals.

The award giving function was attended by former chief justice Justice Mostafa Kamal as chief guest and Vice-chancellor of Ahsanullah University of Science and Technology Prof Dr M Khan as special guest.

Others who received the award earlier included Ferdaus Khan, Mohammad Ibrahim, SM Al-Hossaini, Syed Ali Ahsan, Principal Dewan Mohammad Azraf, Azizul Haq, Dr M R Khan, former chief justice Justice Mostafa Kamal, Mohammad Shams-Ul-Haq, Prof Dr Wahid Uddin Ahmed and Dr Sirajul Haq.

Agri sector review by yearend

Minister tells British envoy

UNB, Dhaka

An agriculture sector review, focusing on the past, present and future, is underway with assistance from World Bank and FAO and it would be finalised by the yearend.

Agriculture Minister MK Anwar said this when British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Anwar Choudhury met him at his office here yesterday.

Anwar Choudhury said UK, which has been one of the major development partners of Bangladesh over the years, wants to be involved further in the development spree of Bangladesh and is willing to assist it in boosting productivity and competitiveness in agriculture sector.

MK Anwar told the British envoy that most of concerns in

agriculture, including training facilities at the grassroots level, establishing research outposts, manpower, availability of good seeds, reduction of production cost and marketing, would be included in the review.

Anwar Choudhury lauded the efforts and shown interest in the final report saying, "We are observing the progress of the preparation of the review."

MK Anwar told the British envoy that the recent flood and heavy downpour in the last 3-4 days would not affect Aman farming as the water was receding.

Anwar Choudhury appreciated the Bangladesh government's efforts in tackling the flood efficiently.

MD FID Representative Martin Leach was present on the occasion.



Yong Ngai Chan, managing director of Lafarge Surma Cement Limited, hands over relief items to a flood victim at Chhatak in Sunamganj recently.

Lafarge Surma Cement Limited organised a post-flood medical camp near its project site at Chhatak in Sunamganj on Sunday, says a press release.

The two-day camp provided general medical check-up services and medicines for hundreds of flood victims living around the site.

The company also distributed relief goods, including food items and oral saline, among them. Its employees also contributed their one day's salary to the relief activities.

Inaugurating the camp, Managing Director Yong Ngai Chan said the company always stand by the distressed as part of its social responsibility.

It has also been conducting a successful rehabilitation programme for the people affected by the construction of the plant, he said.

The company also runs a non-formal primary school, a health clinic and vocational training programmes under its community development programme.

Meet