

October-2-2005

JS body set to resume stalled probes into CNG scam

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The stalled probes into allegations of corruption against the communications minister in the import of CNG-run autorickshaws and against the state minister for communications in allocating land to set up CNG filling stations are likely to be resumed.

The parliamentary standing committee on the communications ministry that formed two sub-committees in January and February 2004 to probe the allegations will dissolve them at its meeting today.

The standing committee itself will now investigate the allegations as the two sub-committees failed to produce any probe report till now.

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Militant kingpin Mufti Hannan captured

He tells of Altaf's assurance to stay in country

STAR CORRESPONDENT

In a dramatic nightlong drive in the capital, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) intelligence officials early yesterday arrested one of the country's top Islamist militant leaders, Mufti Abdul Hannan.

The Rab members arrested Hannan along with his wife and four children at an Ananda Nagar house in Maddhya Badda and took them to the Rab Headquarters.

Hannan, who also has links to international militant groups, is the operation commander of the Bangladesh chapter of the international Islamist militant organisation

Harkatul Jihad.

Hannan told newsmen at the Rab office in Dhaka that he has been staying



Mufti Hannan

in the country after the former home minister, now the commerce minister, Altaf Hossain Chowdhury, assured him of "no fear" in staying in the country.

"Editor of Monthly Madina Moulana Mohiuddin played the mediator between me and the home minister," Hannan told journalists.

Mufti Hannan, who is accused in a sedition case, is also the prime accused in the plot to assassinate former prime minister Sheikh Hasina at Kotalipara in Gopalganj on July 20, 2000.

He also submitted a merci petition to Altaf to relieve him from the case of attempting to assassinate Hasina, he told newsmen.

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US INTERFERENCE

Saber trashes PTI report on Hasina's remark

UNB, Dhaka

Saber Hossain Chowdhury yesterday outright denounced an Indian news agency report quoting opposition leader Sheikh Hasina as having said that once India, Pakistan and Bangladesh shed all their differences and come together they could effectively prevent the US from dictating policies of developing countries.

"The report is devoid of any truth and is baseless," Chowdhury, political secretary to the opposition leader, told the news agency over telephone from New Delhi.

He said the opposition leader did not make any comments whatsoever against any country's "aggression" or "interference". Her remarks were strictly related to regional

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INDIAN CRIMINALS' LINK TO AUG 17 BLASTS

BDR chief blames it on Indian media

Claims that his statement was distorted; India denounces allegation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) Director General Maj Gen Jahangir Alam Chowdhury yesterday said the Indian newspapers presented a distorted version of his statement and that he actually said some Indian criminals "might have been involved" in the August 17 countrywide bomb blasts in Bangladesh.

On arrival at the Zia International Airport after a three-day talks with Indian Border Security Force (BSF) Director General RS Mooshahary, Jahangir told journalists that whatever he said was said before the BSF chief and

that "everything has been recorded".

"I made the comment on the basis of the arrest of Indian citizen Giasuddin in Satkhira on suspicion of being involved in the August 17 blasts and recovery of Indian-made explosives later," the BDR chief said.

"The BSF chief has also admitted that Gias is an Indian citizen," he added.

Meanwhile, India said late on Friday night that it was "deeply shocked and dismayed" at the charges levelled by the BDR DG that some people from India

had crossed

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2 arrested with rocket launcher, M16 bullets

CU CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) on Friday arrested two criminals with one rocket launcher, one grenade launcher, 167 bullets of the sophisticated M16 assault rifle and a modern wireless set at Cox's Bazar.

Rab sources in a press release yesterday said Myanmar based militant group National Union Party of Arakan (Nupa) left the arms and ammunition in custody of the arrestees.

The arrestees, Syed Noor and Nazir Ahmad, hail from Harinmara village of Razapalang Union in Ukhiya upazila.

Rab-7, being tipped off, raided the Harinmara village around 3:30am and arrested Syed from his residence. Rab recovered a US made M79 grenade launcher, a Chinese made T56 rocket

launcher and a

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OMS of rice starts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The countrywide Open Market Sale (OMS) of rice began yesterday at all city corporations and district headquarters to check further price hike of rice.

Government's OMS programme will continue until November when of new harvest is likely to come to the market, said Deputy Minister for Food and Disaster Management Asadul Habib Dulu, while inaugurating an OMS centre at the city's South Begunbari area.

With the start of OMS, further rise in the price of rice is unlikely, said Dulu. "But it is a difficult job to prevent the hoarders in the open market system," he added responding to a question.

Under this year's OMS programme, one person may get a maximum of five kilogram rice at Tk14.50 a kg. A dealer will draw an allotment of 500 kg of rice every day unlike the same allocation every alternate day last year, the ministers said.

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PHOTO: STAR

Mothers seeking justice for 2003 Banshkhali arson victims break down near Chittagong Circuit House as the police bar them from meeting the state minister for home yesterday.

BANSHKHALI ARSON CARNAGE

Human chain asks Babar for justice

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police yesterday intercepted a procession and barred its leaders from entering Chittagong Circuit House when they tried to submit a memorandum to State Minister for Home Lutfozzaman Babar demanding arrest of the alleged mastermind behind the Banshkhali carnage.

Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council, Bangladesh Mohila Parishad and residents of Banshkhali and Anowara also formed a human chain near the meeting venue of Babar.

They demanded the arrest of Aminul Islam Chowdhury alias Amin Chairman and Maruf Nizam, alleged masterminds behind the Banshkhali arson and businessman Jamal Uddin Ahmed Chowdhury abduction.

The agitating people marched towards the circuit house after arrival of the minister's motorcade, but the police barred them. The state minister's protocol officer received the memorandum later from the leaders.

Amin Chairman, brother of State Minister for Forest and

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Blasts kill 23 in Bali resort

AP, AFP, Bali

Bombs exploded almost simultaneously yesterday in two tourist areas of the Indonesian resort island of Bali, killing at least 23 people and wounding 51 others, police and hospital officials said.

The victims included at least two Americans.

The blasts at Jimbaran beach and a bustling outdoor shopping centre in downtown Kuta "were clearly the work of terrorists," police Maj. Gen. Ansyaa Mbai, a top Indonesian anti-terrorism official, told The Associated Press.

The first explosion occurred at 1200

GMT in the Jimbaran area of Bali in front of beachside coffee shops, local policeman Nyoman Suwita told AFP.

EIshinta radio quoted an eye-witness identified as Bagas as saying he saw eight bodies at the Jimbaran blast site, including four foreigners and two Indonesian women.

He also told EIshinta more than 30 people were wounded.

Minutes later another blast also took place in front of coffee shops at the Matahari Square shopping centre in the popular beach resort area of Kuta, Suwita said.

An eye-witness there told

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