

AUGUST 21 GRENADE ATTACK CASE

Hearing adjourned until Nov 17

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday adjourned the hearing of the grenade attack case until November 17 following a time petition by the defence lawyers, even though the complainant appeared before the court to give his statement.

Earlier on November 5, the

Police HQs refute allegations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Police Headquarters yesterday refuted the allegations made by Swarna Devi Tripura, the wife of detained Khagrachhari Hill District Council (KHDC) Chairman Manindra Lal Tripura, at a press conference in Dhaka on November 9.

In a press release, Assistant Inspector General (AIG-Media) Nazrul Islam termed the allegations false, baseless and motivated.

He said the KHDC chairman is an accused in the Anupam Tripura murder case and that three other arrested accused -- Shantipriya Chakma, Mosharraf and Awal Gazi -- have already confessed to the magistrate that Manindra Lal was involved in the murder.

Swarna Devi made the allegations in a bid to divert the case to a different direction, the Police Headquarters said.

At a press conference on November 9, Swarna Devi alleged that Additional Inspector General of Police NBK Tripura and Assistant Commissioner of Detective Branch (DB) Bidhan Tripura had conspired against her husband.

same court adjourned the hearing following a time petition submitted by detained former deputy minister Abdus Salam Pintu on grounds that he would file a criminal revision petition against the order of charge framing.

The cases were filed for launching grenade attack on an Awami League (AL) rally on Bangabandhu Avenue in the city on August 21, 2004 that left 24 people dead and scores injured.

Judge Mohammad Masdar Hossain of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-1 passed the order following a petition submitted by Maulana Abu Taher, one of the 22 accused in the cases.

Moving the petition, lawyers for Taher told the court that they had earlier filed a criminal revision

petition with the High Court (HC) against the order of charge-framing against their client on October 29.

"The hearing on the criminal revision petition is likely to be held soon. So, we prayed for adjournment of hearing of the cases," the lawyers said.

On the other hand, complainant of the cases Sharif Faruq Ahmed appeared before the court for giving his statements on the two cases.

Pintu, Harkatul Jihad (Huji) chief Mufti Abdul Hannan and 12 others, now in jail custody, were produced in the court during yesterday's hearing.

Eight others, including Pintu's two brothers, have been absconding since the filing of the cases.

Tributes paid to Major Ghani

DU CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a memorial meeting yesterday paid their rich tributes to veteran military officer Major Abdul Ghani, the founder of East Bengal Regiment, for his outstanding contribution to the country.

He dreamt of an independent Bangladesh and so established the regiment in 1948 to give a unique identity to the Bangalee soldiers, they added.

Major Ghani was one of the greatest military officers of the nation who directly protested the then Pakistani president Ayub Khan's speech against the Bangla language in 1948.

The meeting was organised by Major Ghani Parishad to mark the 52nd death anniversary of Major Abdul Ghani at the Diploma Engineers' Institute in the city. Politicians, former military officers, journalists and academicians took part in it.

The speakers expressed their dissatisfaction as the contribution of this great soldier, popularly known as Tiger Ghani, is disappearing day by day due to lack of proper initiatives.

Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka addressed the meeting as the chief guest, while National Press Club President Shawkat Mahmud was in the chair.

Major Ghani's wife Achhia Ghani, former army chief Lt Gen (ret'd) Mahbubur Rahman, former IGP and secretary Abdul Khalek, DU Pro-VC Prof AFM Yusuf Haider and Prof Aminul Islam also spoke.

Mahbubur said Major Ghani is the unsung hero of the nation. His contribution to the country must be recalled.

Achhia Ghani said Major Ghani founded the East Bengal Regiment to establish an independent Bangladesh and to give a unique identity to the Bangalee soldiers.

But it is disgraceful that he did not find any kind of national recognition. There is no national structure named after him, she added.

She hoped that the ideology of Major Ghani would be preserved and spread among the young generation of the country.

The DCC mayor said the way of bringing development would not be smooth for a nation unless it could create a strong force.

SANITATION FAIR BEGINS IN COX'S BAZAR

'Public-private efforts a must to achieve target'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT IN COX'S BAZAR

Speakers at a sanitation fair yesterday sought for public-private efforts to reach the goal in attaining 100 percent total sanitation by 2010 in the country.

They term the natural calamities and diverse topography the main barriers to achieving the target.

The speakers said this at the opening ceremony of the three-day water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) fair at a beach hotel of the tourist city.

The fair, first of its kind in Bangladesh and 2nd in the world, has been organised to disseminate the best practices and share ideas, products and services in the field of WASH.

The local government division, United Nations Economic and Scientific Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), the Philippines-based Streams Resource Foundation and NGO Forum for Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation jointly organised the fair.

A number of participants from Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, The Philippines, Kenya, Senegal, Gambia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland and host Bangladesh are sharing knowledge in this fair.

Speaking as the chief guest, Local Government Division Secretary Sheikh Khurshid Alam said, "Natural calamities like

floods and cyclones along with varied topography of the country are being emerged as main barriers to achieving sanitation target across the country."

Team leader of Water and Sanitation Programme (WSP) of World Bank Glenn Pearce-Oroz spoke on the occasion as the special guest, while Deputy Commissioner of Cox's Bazar Monjurul Alam Bhuiyan was in the chair.

Streams Foundation Executive Secretary Rory Villaluna and NGO Forum Executive Director SMA Rashid and Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council Programme Officer Carolien van der Voorden also spoke.

The secretary said the country has attained 88 percent sanitation coverage in 2008 from merely a 33 percent in 2003, adding that the achievement is a major success of the government and its partner agencies, but last year's devastating flood and cyclone Sidr have overturned the progress in many areas.

Besides, the country has a variation in topography which comprises flat, hilly and marshy lands, a combination that has put programme implementers to follow different technologies and methods to ensure the sanitation

coverage, he said, adding that steps have been taken to overcome such barriers.

WaterAid, a British NGO, at a recent press conference in Dhaka said the real sanitation coverage, which not only includes sanitary latrines but also encompasses personal hygiene practice including hand washing and safe water supply, could hardly reach 38 percent, a claim immediately denied by the government.

Asked about the validity of the NGO's claim, the government official said the perception of the both sides were different.

"They have their own indicators and the government has its own yardsticks to assess," he said, adding that some NGOs talk about European-style 'total sanitation', which is difficult to afford in Bangladesh under the present socio-economic condition.

He, however, said the government's next target is to improve the quality of sanitation and ensure its sustenance after achieving the first phase of 100 percent sanitation by 2010.

The present national campaign mainly focuses on open defecation, hand washing and locally developed ring-well latrines at every household. One

of the main objectives of the sanitation campaign is to reduce diarrhea-related child mortality which is still high in the country.

Glenn endorsed that many things have been done in the water sanitation field, but it needs further attention for the improvement of quality of service.

He underscored the need for devising new programmes and fine-tuning of the existing ones to make substantial development in the campaign.

"We need immediate action to move forward. And also we need collective efforts," said the Chilean WSP expert, who suggested for looking into sanitation horizontally, an approach which sees issues from a multicultural outlook.

The fair, which also holds a series of technical sessions, will discuss issues on addressing environmental vulnerability through integrated water resources management, policy practice and advocacy for sustainable sanitation, waste water management, sanitation entrepreneurship, community participation in sanitary solutions, safety net for ensuring water quality and knowledge management for WASH.

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Australian Deputy High Commissioner Kilmeny Beckering Vincners poses with blind students at the Assistance for Blind Children (ABC) complex in Gazipur on Monday. During her visit there, she was shown the Braille production unit, eye hospital and boarding houses for blind students run by ABC. The Australian High Commission provided funding earlier this year to ABC to publish Braille reading material for blind children/ readers.

Prepare to protect territorial waters

Navy chief asks BN ships

UNB, Chittagong

Navy Chief Vice Admiral Sarwar Jahan Nizam yesterday inspected different operational activities of BN ships in the Chittagong naval area and asked for total preparedness to face future challenges by developing technical and human resources to protect the country's territorial waters.

Addressing the occasion, he called upon the navy personnel to work together to protect sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country as a vigilant operator at sea.

He admired the contribution of Navy

personnel in mitigating the recent crisis, said an ISPR press release yesterday.

Bangladesh Navy deployed its ships since November 1 to face recent problems as Myanmar attempts to explore hydrocarbon in the claimed territorial water of Bangladesh. Meanwhile, Myanmar pulled back their floating gas rig from Bangladesh waters.

Senior officials of Naval Headquarters, Commodore Commanding Chittagong, Commodore Commanding BN Flotilla and Commodore Superintendent BN Dockyard were present on the occasion.



Zonta International Director Dilruba Ahmed cuts a cake at a function marking the 89th Foundation Day of Zonta International at a city hotel recently. Zonta Area Director Fahmida Karim and Lt. Gov. Nahid Moyeen were also present.

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