

BHOLA ARMS HAUL Faisal, Badal remanded again

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Barisal

A Bhola court yesterday placed Faisal Mostafa and his prime associate Hassan Saifuddin Badal again on a 10-day remand to grill them on the motive behind keeping arms and ammunition at Green Crescent Madrasa in Bhola.

The Investigation Officer (IO) of the case produced the two before the Bhola Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court on completion of a 10-day remand and prayed for more 10 days for each in the case filed under the Anti-Terrorism Ordinance 2008.

Earlier, the court showed Faisal arrested in the case following a petition filed by the IO, Sub-inspector Rafiqul Islam of Borhanuddin Police Station.

"Faisal and Badal have admitted owning the seized firearms but they are yet to disclose why they had assembled arms and ammunition at the madrasa. That is why we have sought further remand for them," said the IO.

Meanwhile, seven solicitors representing Faisal and Badal filed a petition seeking bail, but the court rejected their plea and granted the two 10-day remand each.

Earlier on Wednesday the two were taken to Bhola where the Task Force Intelligence (TFI) questioned them.

Faisal was not initially made accused in any of the two cases

filed in connection with the recovery from Green Crescent Madrasa cum Orphanage. He was later shown arrested in both the cases as his name came in the recent confessional statement of Mohammad Russell, one of the accused of the two cases.

Police sources said both Faisal and Badal might be again sent to the capital for TFI interrogation.

Faisal, the founder of Green Crescent madrasa, was apprehended along with Badal at Pubail, Gazipur on April 6 in connection with the arms haul.

On March 24, Rapid Action Battalion unearthed the 'mini-ammunition factory' inside the madrasa-cum-orphanage and seized 10 firearms, 2,500 bullets, 3,000 grenade splinters, 200 grams of gun powder, different components of ammunition and 72 books on jihad, Abdul Ala Maududi and Osama bin Laden.

Shoe targets

FROM PAGE 16
shortly after Advani reached the dais, they said.

Soon after the incident, he was taken to the rear of the stage and then whisked away by the police.

The incident comes close on the heels of a journalist throwing a shoe at Home Minister P Chidambaram during a press conference in New Delhi and a retired school headmaster lobbing a foot-war at Congress candidate in Kurukshetra Navin Jindal during a poll rally.

CTG ARMS HAUL CASE 11 more Navy men quizzed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Eleven more former naval officers, GCOs and crew on deputation in Bangladesh Coast Guard in 2004 were interrogated in connection with the sensational Chittagong arms haul case here yesterday.

With yesterday's tally, 17 Navy men appeared before the investigators in last two days for questioning at Criminal Investigation Department (CID), Chittagong divisional headquarters.

Six naval officers gave statements to the investigators on last Wednesday.

CID is interrogating the then Coast Guard men since the main accused Hafizur Rahman, in a confessional statement on March 2, 2009, said that they helped in berthing the two arms-laden engine boats at Chittagong Urea Fertiliser Limited (CUFL) jetty.

The coast guard men were on duty at the Karnaphuli river and the Bay of Bengal during the offloading of the 10 truckloads of firearms and ammunition on April 2, 2004.

HSC exams

FROM PAGE 16
centres under Dhaka Board while 45 examinees under 10 education boards for adopting unfair means on the day of English 1st paper examination while 5,291 candidates were absent, according to the board's exam control room.

Among the expelled students, 11 were from BM exams under Bangladesh Technical Education Board while nine under Barisal Board, six under Jessore Board, five under Rajshahi Board, four each under Dhaka, Dinajpur and Chittagong Boards, one each under Comilla Board and Madrasa Board.

Of the 5,291 absent students, 1215 were under Dhaka Board, 649 under Rajshahi Board, 481 under Comilla Board, 682 under Jessore Board, 245 under Barisal Board, 239 under Sylhet Board, 361 under Dinajpur Board, 429 under Chittagong Board, 730 under Madrasa Board and 260 under Technical Board.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Naheed visited examination centres of Vigarunissa Noon School and College and Habibullah Bahar College in the capital in the morning and talked to the examinees, centre officials and guardians.

Any kind of unfair means in the examination will be controlled, Nahid said seeking cooperation from all.

A total of 618,308 candidates are appearing for the exams this year in 1,919 centres, including five in abroad and under the 10 boards.

Of the total candidates, 55.17 percent are males while 44.83 are females.

The highest number of candidates, 1,53,398 appear under Dhaka Board, 75,629 under Rajshahi, 61,444 under Comilla, 74,489 under Jessore, 41,754 under Chittagong, 30,159 under Barisal, 18,349 under Sylhet and 59,411 under Dinajpur Education Board.

Some 59,354 students sit for Alim exams under Bangladesh Madrasa Board, and 64,121 under Bangladesh Technical Education Board.

The maximum sustained wind speed within a 54-km radius of the cyclone centre was around 60 kph, rising to 80 kph gusts or squalls.

The maritime ports have been asked to elevate the local cautionary signal to four.

All boats and travelers have been advised to remain close to the coast so they could move to safety at short notice.

Our Khulna correspondent reports: Mongla Port Authority (MPA) has taken all-out measures to prevent loss of life and damage to property.

MPA Member (operation) Lutfar Rahman told The Daily Star that four foreign ships had already been moved to a safer place.

Three of them are laden with imports including wheat and fertiliser while the other is waiting to be loaded with raw jute for Pakistan.

A correspondent from Cox's Bazar said it was drizzling throughout the day there.

At least six thousand trawlers were getting back to the shore, said Mujibur Rahman, president of district boat owners association.

Half of those were supposed to come ashore by last night while the rest by this afternoon, he added.

Our correspondent from Barisal reports: The plying of water vessels with length under 65 feet has been suspended while bigger ones have been ordered to operate with caution.

Our correspondent from Patuakhali adds: The district disaster management committee held an emergency meeting yesterday with acting deputy commissioner (DC) Lakhan Chandra Devnath in the chair.

It asked all seven UNOs and officials concerned to take necessary steps to deal with a potentially disastrous storm.

Mujibnagar Day

FROM PAGE 16
commander of the armed forces.

Syed Nazrul Islam was made acting president in the absence of Bangabandhu since he was arrested by the Pakistani occupation forces on March 25, 1971. The occupation forces also massacred thousands of unarmed Bangladeshis in Dhaka and elsewhere in the then East Pakistan on that night.

At the Mujibnagar ceremony, a contingent of police presented a guard of honour to the acting president. He received the salute and hoisted the National Flag of independent Bangladesh.

The Mujibnagar government with Tajuddin Ahmed as prime minister led the country's nine-month Liberation War that ended in surrender of the occupation forces on December 16, 1971.

The ruling Awami League (AL) and its front organisations have taken up elaborate programmes for countrywide observance of Mujibnagar Day.

In the capital, the National Flag and party flag will be hoisted at Bangabandhu Bhaban in Dhanmondi, and AL's Bangabandhu Avenue central office at 6:00 this morning.

Floral wreaths will be placed at the portrait of Bangabandhu at Bangabandhu Bhaban at 7:00am. Wreaths will also be placed at the graves of four national leaders -- Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed and Mansur Ali -- at Banani graveyard in the city, and at the grave of AHM Kamruzzaman in Rajshahi.

A separate programme has been taken up to mark the day at Mujibnagar. The programme includes placing wreaths at Mujibnagar memorial at 10:00am, followed by a guard of honour, a public meeting and a cultural function.

AL has formed a committee with presidium member Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury as its convener. Members of the committee include Amir Hossain Amu, Abdul Razzak, Tofail Ahmed, Suranjit Sengupta, Matia Chowdhury, Abdul Mannan, Abu Sayeed, Talukder Abdul Khaleque, Mirza Sultan Raza, Begum Monnoja Sultana, and presidents and general secretaries of the party's district units in Khulna Division and those of its front organisations.

They will visit Mujibnagar today.

Prime Minister and AL chief Sheikh Hasina will chair a party discussion on Mujibnagar Day at Bangladesh-China

Friendship Conference Centre in the capital at 3:00pm.

In a message on the occasion, President Zillur Rahman recalled the contribution of Mujibnagar government in achieving independence, and said it is part of the history of Liberation War.

He urged all to unite and work with the spirit of the Liberation War for implementing the changes Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has pledged.

In a separate message, Hasina said the Mujibnagar government had led the Liberation War by uniting people of all walks of life with prudence, and won in the war with help from allied forces.

Both Zillur and Hasina paid rich tributes to the four national leaders who formed the first government of the country, and to Bangabandhu.

AL spokesman and Joint General Secretary Syed Ashrafur Islam called for observing the day in a befitting manner.

EC plans

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The budget session is likely to begin in the first week of June.

Earlier, the EC held a series of talks with political parties on electoral reforms before the December 29 parliamentary election last year, and major amendments to the RPO were made.

At present there are 39 registered political parties in the country.

The EC is going to initiate the process of electoral reforms again in the light of its experience in conducting the last parliamentary election.

Sakhawat said the EC wants to maintain contact with the political parties represented in parliament.

He mentioned that some 52 out of 1,538 candidates in the last parliamentary election are yet to submit their polls expenditure reports. None of the incumbent lawmakers is among them, he confirmed.

"Officials concerned have been directed to file cases against candidates failing to submit polls expenditure reports," Sakhawat said.

Asked about election expenditure reports submitted by political parties, he said six parties are yet to comply with the law.

HSC examinees

FROM PAGE 16
The officials visited, however, blamed on shortfall in power generation and low pressure of gas behind the frequent power cuts.

About 3,963 megawatts (MW) of power was generated in the country yesterday against a demand of 5,050MW, causing an official shortfall of 1,087MW. Over 550MW of power could not be generated due to poor gas supply to many power plants, Power Development Board (PDB) source said.

The scenario was pretty satisfactory on April 14 as around 402MW of power was generated thanks to an increased gas supply to the power plants.

The demand of power has already crossed the last year's demand of 4700MW in peak hours. Due to shortage of gas supply, power unit over 500MW capacity has been sitting idle for the last six months, according to sources.

"This situation could have been better if only we could ensure adequate gas supply to power plants," said a PDB official adding that power could not be generated in Haripur, Tongi and Rajbari power plants due to the low pressure of gas.

The official load-shedding yesterday was over 1000MW while about 1150MW on Wednesday.

According to Dhaka Power Distribution Company (DPDC), around 1,292MW of power was supplied to the capital against an approximate demand of 1,800MW during peak hours yesterday.

The DPDC officials said they keep load-shedding in different areas for ensuring power supply to the HSC examination centres.

Admitting excessive deficiency in power generation and its erratic supply in almost every area in the capital, an official at Dhaka Electricity Supply Company (DESCO) said there will be no improvement in power situation until new power stations are set up.

Sources however said frequent load-shedding will be reduced only after end of irrigation for Boro crops and beginning of the rainy season. Now about 1,000MW of power is being used for irrigation every day.

During daytime it is intolerable to stay at home due to the scorching heat and frequent power cuts, said Moksud Reza, a resident of Sector-5 of Uttara, adding the fuel costs for operating generator have also shot up due to the crisis.

M Rubel of Sector-14, Uttara said, "Power goes off every two hours in my house and remains off for over an hour. Even, it goes off at awkward times like 1:00 am every day."

BNP head office eviction notice stayed till Apr 23

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court Wednesday stayed the eviction notice issued against the BNP head office till April 23 and another court yesterday asked both of parties of the case to maintain status quo during this period.

The court also issued a notice asking eight defendants of the case to explain with in seven days, from the day of receiving the notice, as to why they would not be refrained from entering the disputed property during temporary injunction.

Judge Mohammad Mamunur Rashid of the Seventh Joint District Judge's Court yesterday passed the orders following an appeal seeking temporary injunction upon the defendants.

One of the defendants, Rezia Khatun, filed a title suit in 1977 claiming that she purchased the land from Abdul Malek on February 16, 1968 and Malek had purchased it from one Ojafa Begum on December 13, 1962.

Rezia got an ex parte decree from the then Third Assistant Judge's Court of Dhaka on March 21, 1979 and on July 19, 2001 she obtained all titles for evicting illegal occupants from the land.

BNP Chairperson and former prime minister Khaleda Zia, on behalf of Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Charitable Trust, filed another title suit with a Dhaka court on September 27, 2001 claiming that the land belongs to trust.

In the suit, Khaleda mentioned that on September 1, 1993 the trust purchased the 3.75-katha of land from M/S Saifee Glass House at Inner Circular Road in the city's Naya Paltan through its managing partner AH Khan.

Khaleda also sought for a stay order from the court so that the defendants could not evict them from the property.

Gram Sarkar

FROM PAGE 16
years--Tk 20 crore in 2003-04 fiscal year, Tk 40 crore in 2004-05, Tk 60 crore in 2005-06 and Tk 61 crore in 2006-07 fiscal year.

Of the allocated money, Gram Sarkar spent Tk 135 on "sanitation, tree plantation, preservation of water bodies etc". Remaining Tk 46 crore was sent back to the finance ministry.

While disposing a writ petition, the Supreme Court declared that the Gram Sarkar system was illegal.

The AL-led government repealed the Gram Sarkar Act, 2003, in the just concluded session of the ninth parliament.

Khaleda vows

FROM PAGE 16
"I might be evicted from the cantonment house that bears memories of former president Ziaur Rahman, announcer of independence of Bangladesh, but nobody can drive me out of politics."

The demonstrating BNP men demanded immediate withdrawal of the Khaleda Zia's cantonment house.

The opposition leader said with bold assertion that people of Bangladesh are with her.

On the government's completion of 100-day she said, "I can not see anything except for failure. Educational institutions are being closed one after another due to terrorist acts of ruling party's student wing."

Ruling party men are involved in extortion at all levels--from upazila, district to divisional towns, she added.

The former premier said the government had started the debate over her cantonment house and BNP central office only to divert people's attention from Pilkhana carnage.

BNP UK branch convener Kamaruddin Ahmed presided over the meeting. After the rally they held a views-exchange meeting with High Commissioner Allama Siddiqui. They also handed over a memorandum to him demanding immediate withdrawal of the lease cancellation order of the cantonment house of Khaleda Zia.

The memorandum also demanded resignation of the home minister and the law minister.

ANA in a report from New York said Tarique Release Movement USA unit held a protest rally in front of the UN headquarters in New York demanding immediate withdrawal of the lease cancellation order of Khaleda Zia's cantonment house. President of the organization Akter Hossain Badal presided over the rally.

The BNP USA branch also held a protest rally in front of the Bangladesh Consulate Office in New York. It's president Abdul Latif Samrat presided over the rally.

UN inspectors

FROM PAGE 16
They removed their seals from equipment and rooms before going.

The IAEA said in Vienna that four of its inspectors pulled out - two who were already posted at Yongbyon and another two who had arrived in Pyongyang in preparation for taking over at the complex.

"It's a step backward. We're obviously concerned about this," State Department spokesman Robert Wood said Wednesday, referring to North Korea's planned expulsion of the US monitors.

"They (North Korea) just bring upon themselves further isolation from the international community."

Wood said the United States would speak with other nations in the talks -- China, Japan, South Korea and Russia -- about the next step.

North Korea has previously threatened to quit the talks, which began in 2003 and several times came close to collapse.

But its Tuesday statement announced it would "never" take part in such discussions again and was no longer bound by any six-party agreements.

Pyeongang appears to be pushing instead for bilateral talks with the United States, analysts say.

White House spokesman Robert Gibbs said the United States and its negotiating partners were "anxious for the North Koreans to come back to the table."

In Pyongyang, North Korean leader Kim Jong-il Wednesday watched a fireworks display marking the anniversary of the birth of his late father and founding president Kim Il-Sung.

He "warmly greeted" the cheering crowd that gathered along the Taedong River to mark the occasion, official media said.

State media have trumpeted Kim's "incomparable courage and boldness" in going ahead with the much criticised April 5 rocket launch, which Pyongyang says was staged to put a peaceful satellite into orbit.

The United States and its allies say the launch was a disguised missile test. The Security Council in a statement Monday condemned the launch as violating a resolution passed after the North's 2006 missile and nuclear tests.

It vowed tougher enforcement of sanctions contained in the 2006 resolution.

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Edible oil

FROM PAGE 16
Price of non-brand palm and soybean oil increased up to Tk 10-12 per litre in retail.

Major edible oil brands have also announced price hike to be effective in a couple of days and most of them stopped their supply. A crisis of branded soybean oil has already been prevailing in the market for the last two days.

Yesterday, non-brand palm oil was selling between Tk 66 and Tk 70 per litre, it was between Tk 54 and Tk 58 a week ago. Super Palm oil was selling between Tk 68 and Tk 72 per litre yesterday, it was between Tk 60 and Tk 62 last week.

Soybean oil is selling between Tk 78 and Tk 82 a litre in retail, it was between Tk 68 and Tk 70 a week ago.

Amir Hossain, a distributor of Rupchanda soybean oil at Karwan Bazar, told The Daily Star, "Customers are returning form the market frustrated due to meagre supply of soybean oil."

Saiful Islam, an employee of Chandpur Store at Karwan Bazar Kitchen Market, said he needed 40 five-litre cans of soybean oil for a buyer but he could not get those searching the whole market. The buyer was forced to purchase the oil from retail at a higher price--Tk 10 to Tk 20 more per can.

Grocers at different markets said price of Teer soybean oil rose by Tk 11 per litre yesterday.

MA Rauf Chowdhury, president of Bangladesh Edible Oil Refiners Association, told The Daily Star that in the last one and a half months the price of edible oil has gradually increased in the international market and the impact has started to show in Bangladesh.

He said one and a half months ago price of crude palm oil was \$600 per tonne in the international market but now it is \$790. Soybean oil was available between \$670 and \$675 per tonne and now it is between \$835 and \$840.

He said usually Bangladesh stocks 1.5 to two lakh tonnes of edible oil but this season the stock is below one lakh tonne. He said importers failed to open Letter of Credits as bank loans have been quite difficult to get.

Price of all types of pulse have increased by Tk 3-5 per kilogram (kg) while the price of flour has increased by Tk 1 per kg over the last week.

A potato wholesaler at Karwan Bazar said supply of potato dropped since last week.

to the Turkish diplomat chairing the first meeting of the Security Council's sanctions panel.

Diplomats said the US submitted a list of 11 North Korean entities involved in banned missile-related activities, while Japan put forward a list of at least 15.

South Korea, apparently mindful of increasing tensions, delayed a widely expected announcement that it would join a US-led initiative to seize international shipments of weapons of mass destruction such as missiles.

North Korea has said any decision by Seoul to join the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) would be seen as a declaration of war.

The time suggested Wednesday was not right for Seoul to sign up.

"The current situation is already too complex and China doesn't want it to become further complicated," its ambassador to Seoul, Cheng Yonghua, told a lecture when asked how Beijing views Seoul's move to join the PSI.

"We hope for respective parties to maintain positive and active attitudes and believe that tension should not be heightened," Yonhap news agency quoted Cheng as saying.

7 ex-BTT staff

FROM PAGE 16
Chittagong for misappropriating over Tk 2.88 crore.

ACC Assistant Director SM Shahidur Rahman filed the cases on April 13 on charge of misappropriating the money through fake schedule, bills or vouchers in the name of maintenance and repair.

The accused include former divisional engineers in Chittagong Abdul Awal, Pradip Kumar Saha and Ajit Kumar Muhuri, ex-assistant divisional engineers Habibullah Kaiser, Khalilur Rahman and Swapan Kumar Roy and former assistant engineer Nasir.

According to the case statements, the former BTTF officials misappropriated the money by abusing power in 2000-'01, 2001-'02 and 2005-'06 fiscal years.

In the first case filed with the Kotwali Police Station, Pradip, Ajit and Nasir were accused of misappropriating Tk 10.55 lakh by showing fake schedule and bills or vouchers in the name of maintenance and repair in 2005-'06 fiscal year.

The case statement said Pradip and Ajit also drew Tk 49.15 lakh in addition to the allocated budget the same fiscal year.

The second case was filed with the same police station against Abdul Awal and Ajit on charge of misappropriating Tk 47.15 lakh in 2005-'06 fiscal year.

Awal and Kaiser were charged with misappropriating Tk 39.50 lakh by showing fake vouchers and schedule in 2005-'06 fiscal year in the third case filed with the Bayezid Police Station in the port city.

Pradip, Swapan and Khalilur Rahman were accused of misappropriating Tk 84.71 lakh in the name of maintenance and repair in 2005-2006 fiscal year in the fourth case filed with the Double mooring Police Station.

The fifth case was filed with the Rangamati Police Station against Abdul Awal on charge of misappropriating Tk 57.62 lakh in the name of maintenance and repair in addition to the allocated budget in 2000-'01 and 2001-'02 fiscal years.

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