

Shop owners and employees of the capital's **New Market** block the adjacent Mirpur road yesterday, protesting a recent ban on rickshaw movement on the thoroughfare. They fear they could lose many potential customers in the bustling market due to the restriction.

PHOTO:

Poverty rate decreased

Says Hasan Mahmud
Staff Correspondent

Environment and Forests
Minister Dr Hasan Mahmud
yesterday said the poverty
rate in the country, which
was above 40 percent a few
years back, is now below 30
percent.

He also said the present government has increased the per capita income of people from \$600 to \$850 in the last three and a half years, which is a rare feat.

The minister made the remarks at a discussion styled "Present Political Context and The Citizen's Rights" organised by Gonoadhikar Bastobayon Parishad, a think tank of ruling Awami League, in the capital's Mukti Bhavan.

The minister slated the BNP-Jamaat opposition for their stance in the construction of Padma bridge with local fund and holding the next national election under an interim government.

State Minister for Home Advocate Shamsul Haque Tuku, amongothers, was present.

10-Truck Arms Haul

PW tells of late recovery of two fire arms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A prosecution witness in the 10-truck arms haul cases yesterday said two more fire arms were recovered from one of the two trawlers after the seizure of the main cache of armaments that the trawlers had carried to Chittagong on April 2, 2004.

Helal Uddin, also a then sergeant of Koiler Depot Police Outpost in Patenga, said this during his cross-examination by two defence lawyers at Chittagong Metropolitan Special Tribunal-1.

Advocate Mohammad Ahasan and Advocate Kamrul Islam Sajjad, lawyers for the accused, Maj (retd) Liakat Hossain, a former director of National Security Intelligence (NSI), cross examined the prosecution witness for the second day yesterday.

Asked whether he knew about the recovery of arms from the trawlers on the next day of the arms haul, Helal replied, "On the following day or later on, a constable and two local boatmen went to the seized trawlers to get the engine and chassis numbers. They found two fire arms at the engine room."

He said, "Sub-inspector Majid of Patenga Police Station made the seizure list in this regard. But I can't recall the date."

Helal Uddin began testifying against Maj (retd) Liakat on Monday.

Helal Uddin and Alauddin, who were the then sergeants in Patenga and the first visitors of the 10-truck arms haul scene, had been picked up by Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in 2005 in a separate case filed against them on charge of stealing two arms from the haul.

The court fixed August 27 for resuming the crossexamination of Helal.

Man gets life term for killing girl

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced a young man to life term imprisonment for killing a four-year-old girl in the capital's Sutrapur area in August 2009.

Judge Md Akhteruzzaman of the Third Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court handed down the verdict to Mohammad Faruque.

The court also fined him Tk 10,000, in default of which he will have to suffer one more year in jail.

According to the prosecution, Faruque stabbed to death Megha, 4, daughter of Airin Akhter of Distillary Road in the area, on August 8, 2009 following a land dispute.

Following the incident, Airin Akhter filed a case with Sutrapur Police Station. The case's investigation officer pressed charge against Faruque on November 23, 2009.



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