

BNP's Aslam sent to jail on completion of remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sent BNP leader Aslam Chowdhury to jail after completion of his five-day remand in a sedition case filed for allegedly hatching a conspiracy with Israel's Likud Party and its intelligence agency Mossad to oust the Awami League government in Bangladesh. Metropolitan Magistrate SM Masud Zaman passed the order after Fazlul Haque, investigation officer (IO) of the case and inspector of Detective Branch of police, produced Aslam before the court with a forwarding report.

In the report, the IO claimed that they gleaned some important clues from him about the incident, which were being verified. So he should be confined to jail until the investigation is completed, mentioned the IO.

Earlier, he was placed on a 12-day remand in two phases in the case.

Aslam was shown arrested in the case on May 27 after he was sued for the alleged sedition on May 26. Earlier, on May 15, he was picked up from the capital's Khilkhet over the alleged plot.

Later, he was remanded for seven days showing him arrested under Section 54 of the Criminal Procedure Code.

On May 24, Aslam was also shown arrested in two arson cases filed during BNP-led 20-party alliance's anti-government agitation in January last year.

Police later prayed for a 20-day remand. The court fixed June 15 for remand hearing.

Hearing on charge framing deferred in Rana Plaza cases

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday deferred to July 18 the hearing on charge framing against 41 people, including Rana Plaza owner Sohel Rana, in connection with the country's deadliest industrial disaster.

At least 1,136 people, mostly garment workers, were killed and more than 2,500 injured after the nine-storey building collapsed in Savar on April 24, 2013.

Judge SM Kuddus Zaman of the District and Sessions Judge's Court gave the order as Sarwar Kamal, one of the accused, now in jail, was not produced before the court yesterday.

The court on April 28 took cognisance of the charges against Rana and 40 others in connection with the case filed over the killings.

Earlier on June 1 last year, Investigation officer (IO) Bijoy Krishna Kar, CID assistant superintendent of police, submitted two charge sheets, one for murder and the other for building code violation.

The 41 accused also include Rana's parents, four factories' owners, mayor of Savar and 11 government officials. Of the accused, only Rana is in jail, 31 are on bail and nine are absconding.

Another Dhaka court fixed June 15 for the hearing on charge framing against Rana and 17 others in a case filed over "violation of building codes" in constructing the building.

Death anniversary

CITY DESK



Today is the 7th death anniversary of Ferdous Ara Chowdhury, wife of politician and social worker Syed Ahmed Chowdhury of Feni. Youngest daughter of Bashir Ahmed of Ghoramara Mian Bari, She was buried in her family graveyard in Sonagazi upazila.

A doa mahfil and a memorial discussion will be held in Feni and Sonagazi today, says a press release.



Iftar is not only about breaking fast, it's also about fellowship and upon visiting Anderkilla Shahi Jame Mosque, near Lal Dighir Par in Chittagong city, it becomes quite obvious, as hundreds of Muslims, rich and poor alike, join together for having iftar there, arranged daily by the mosque committee. The photo was taken on Friday. PHOTO: STAR

Train service still poor despite fare hike

Allege passengers; initiatives being taken to improve services, say authorities adding that fare will be readjusted every year from now on

UNB, Dhaka

Although Bangladesh Railway raised the train fares three and half months ago aiming to improve train services, nothing has been done so far to justify the fare hike,

The Bangladesh Railway increased the train fares by 7.23 percent, effecting from February 20 to cut losses and improve the services.

Although nearly three and half months have elapsed since the fare hike, the railway services remain horribly poor as were in the past, allege many passengers.

"Most train compartments, seats and toilets of almost all trains are not fit for use as those are torn, dirty and filthy. Besides, any train hardly leaves its station in time," said Ariful Haque, a resident of the capital, who

commutes from Dhaka to Chittagong and vice versa by trains frequently for his official work.

Farhana Karim, another passenger who travelled to Feni by Turna Nishita recently, said her night-time journey turned into a nightmare due to nuisance of bugs.

"The bug bites were so terrible that I had to remain busy driving them away all the time," she said.

General Secretary of Consumer Association of Bangladesh (CAB) Humayun Kabir, who visited Sylhet by trains many times, said he noticed no difference in the railway services before and after the fare hike.

Talking to the news agency, Railways Minister M Mazibul Hoque said standard railway services will be visible within the next

one year.

"We have taken initiatives to improve the railway services following the hike in the train fares. Those will be implemented gradually."

"The fare hike has caused no burden to people," claimed Mazibul, adding that railway fare was the lowest in the transport sector in Bangladesh.

Claiming that nearly 94 percent of trains leave timely in different stations now, Bangladesh Railway Director General Amzad Hossain said as part of ensuring quality services, they would gradually turn all train lines into double ones which would reduce the travel time.

He said a total of 15 compartments already were procured from Indonesia while 22 more will come

from that country soon and another 22 bogies will be brought later.

Besides, some 40 bogies were procured from India while 20 more will be brought later, added the DG.

Bangladesh Railway Additional Director General (operations) Habibur Rahman said the railway authorities used to increase the train fares after 10-15 years in the past, but from now on the fares would be readjusted every year.

He said a tariff reform policy was formulated in this regard and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has already approved it.

According to the Bangladesh Railway, the fare for general seat was raised at a lower rate while that of air-conditioned ones and goods and container-carrying trains at a relatively higher rate.



Family, friends, colleagues and admirers at a milad mahfil and discussion programme yesterday in remembrance of Syed Fahim Munaim, former executive editor of The Daily Star, who died of a cardiac arrest on June 1. The memorial programme was organised by the newspaper at The Daily Star Centre in the capital. PHOTO: STAR

20 companies must stop manufacturing drugs

SC upholds HC order

UNB, Dhaka

The Supreme Court yesterday upheld a High Court order that asked 20 pharmaceutical companies to stop manufacturing medicines for their failure to produce quality medicines.

Chamber Judge of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court Justice Mirza Hussain Haider passed the order following two petitions filed by two companies-- Universal Pharmaceutical Limited and MST Pharma -- seeking a stay on the HC order.

Haider also sent the two petitions to the regular bench of the apex court for hearing.

The regular bench of the Appellate Division is likely to hear the two petitions on June 15, said Advocate Manzill Murshid who filed the writ petition with the HC on behalf of Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB).

On June 7, HC ordered the companies to stop manufacturing medicines

within seven days for their failure to produce quality medicines.

The court issued a rule asking the authorities concerned to explain why the government's inactivity in cancelling their licences should not be declared illegal and unlawful.

The court also issued two other rules asking why it should not order the cancellation of their licences and 14 other antibiotics companies, which were also ordered to stop manufacturing.

The health secretary, director general (DG) of the Directorate General of Health Services, director of the Directorate General of Drug Administration, inspector general of police, and DGs of National Consumer Rights Protection Department and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) have been asked to respond to the rules within four weeks.

Earlier on June 5, Manzill filed the petition.

Huda-led BNA to join AL-led protest against killings

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Expressing solidarity with the ruling Awami League-led 14-party alliance, former BNP leader Nazmul Huda-led Bangladesh National Alliance, a platform of 31 political parties, would join the 14-party's programmes protesting the criminal activities and secret killings.

The announcement came after the 14-party had a meeting with Huda at AL president's Dhanmondi office in the capital yesterday with Health Minister Mohammed Nasim in the chair.

After the meeting, Nasim said Nazmul Huda-led alliance assured them the BNA would express solidarity with their programmes and take part in the 14-party's human-chain slated for June 19.

Huda said they will not join the 14-party alliance, but will participate in their programmes against terrorism, secret killings and attempts to create anarchy.

Special Indian visa camp to open soon

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Following an overwhelming response, the Indian high commission will open a special visa camp, similar to an ongoing 12-day one launched for the first time on June 4 to attract Bangladeshi tourists during the Eid-ul-Fitr holidays, in a few months.

"We have plans to set up such visa camps through other parts of Bangladesh," Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Harsh Vardhan Shringla told reporters at the New Chancery Complex in the Baridhara diplomatic zone yesterday.

Around 10,000 persons seek visas every day and the camp would approve around 50,000 to 60,000 applications, giving out one-year multiple entry visas, he said.

He said extending the camp's duration depended on a number of factors, including their capacity. "Let us focus on the next three days. We will do our best...We will apply our experiences and best practices in similar camps," he said, adding that the visa process would be further simplified.

"There are many measures which are under consideration. All of them require a fair amount of work within our system before we can bring them into practice," Shringla said when asked whether on arrival visas would be available for Bangladeshis or particular groups.

Diplomatic sources said the high commission wrote to the home ministry to tackle unscrupulous middlemen.

NEWS IN brief

Meena Bazar, four shops fined

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mobile court of the Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) yesterday fined Tk 1.50 lakh to super shop Meena Bazar in the capital's Mohammadpur for keeping an advertisement of cigarette and freezing stale meat for sale.

The court led by executive officer of DNCC (zone-5) ASM Azior Rahman also fined Tk 40,000 to four different shops of Town Hall market in the area for grabbing footpaths and not maintaining hygiene. The court also demolished illegal structures on footpaths near the market.

Graft case filed against GCC mayor

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

The Anti Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday filed a case against Gazipur City Corporation mayor MA Mannan on charge of embezzling around Tk half a crore of a relief fund.

Golam Kibria, accounting officer of the GCC, has also been accused in the case filed by ACC deputy director Shamsul Alam.

According to the case statement, the ACC found evidence that while MA Mannan was serving as a mayor Tk 49,1,848 of the fund was embezzled by showing 999 fake recipients.

Lawyers urged for greater unity to protect rule of law

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Democratic Lawyers Association of Bangladesh (DLAB) yesterday said Bangladesh was going through a deep crisis as it seems to have turned into a sanctuary for killers and every citizen was concerned about their lives and property.

"Militant terrorism, secret killings, targeted killings, disappearances, torture on people of minority communities and kidnappings are permanent reports of daily newspapers," said DLAB International Affairs Secretary Hasan Tarique Chowdhury at a press conference at the office of Law Reporters Forum on the Supreme Court Bar Association premises.

He urged lawyers to build greater unity to protect the rule of law and the judiciary from terrorism and militancy.

Three-day child forum leadership gathering ends in Gazipur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A three-day annual child forum leadership gathering with the slogan "Build Child Friendly World for Future Generation" ended at Prayer Garden in Gazipur yesterday.

World Vision Bangladesh, Mymensingh region organised the programme. Fred Witteveen, national director of World Vision Bangladesh, was present as the chief guest. World Vision officials and leaders from 267 child forums committees of Mymensingh region were present in the gathering. These organisations have been working against child marriage and labour and making people aware of education, health and etc.

Hasina urges Obama to work

FROM PAGE 3 with you as partners to counter terrorism and violent extremism that have emerged as threats to human civilization," she said.

"We express our deepest condolence and sympathy to you and through you to the members of the families of these ill-fated victims...with every life lost in terror, our heart bleeds in pain and grief," she added.

A US-born man gunned down 50 people and wounded at least 53 at a gay nightclub in Orlando with an assault rifle and a pistol on Sunday.



Asia News Network Editor

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Must have strong spoken and written command of English, and preferably at least one other Asian language. In addition to writing and communication skills, candidate should have flair for projection and design across platforms. Should have led teams covering stories across the region. The selected ANN Editor could be based in any of the major Asian capitals.

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Timeline:
June 10: Open applications for post; job notice to go up on ANN website and all member sites; board members to suggest candidates
July 15: Applications close
July - August: interview and selection process; complete by end Aug
Target for new hire to start in third quarter of 2016.