

Probes of most money laundering cases stalled

JASIM UDDIN KHAN

The central bank identified 79 bank transactions as suspected acts of money laundering but only four cases were filed under the Money Laundering Prevention Act 2002.

Investigations of most of the cases are pending as the government has yet to decide who will investigate the cases after dissolution of the Bureau of Anti-Corruption (Bac).

The central task force on money laundering prevention will meet on Wednesday to discuss the matter with a view to speed up the process.

Sources said the Bangladesh Bank (BB) after identifying the suspicious transactions had assigned Bac and the criminal investigation department (CID) to investigate the cases.

But after dissolution of Bac on November 21, 2004 the investigations of 55 cases were stalled.

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) primarily had refused to carry out investigations of the cases with a plea of limitations in its jurisdiction.

Later the central bank informed the banking division of the finance ministry to settle the issue.

The finance ministry through the law ministry clarified that ACC has no problem in carrying out those investigations under section 5(1) of the Money Laundering Prevention Act 2002.

ACC yesterday in its meeting did not discuss the matter despite the issue being in its agenda but expressed its desire to discuss it in the next meeting.

Sources said, 20 nationalised and privatised commercial banks

reported 205 transactions to the central bank as suspected acts of money laundering.

BB conducted investigations of the 205 suspicious transaction reports and identified 79 as acts of suspected money laundering. The suspicious transactions were made in both local and foreign banks.

BB assigned Bac to investigate 55 cases and CID to 18 cases and the remaining two cases were filed under criminal laws and foreign exchange regulation laws as those two were linked with Gridhari Modi, an Indian citizen.

The task force will again discuss the issue of investigation on Wednesday.

Gas supply to Rajshahi, Khulna not possible in govt's tenure

Ministry reports to JS body

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

There is no possibility of implementing the government's electoral pledges to supply gas through pipelines to Rajshahi and Khulna divisions during its present tenure.

Gas supply through pipeline in Rajshahi City has been planned for 2009 while the supply to Khulna, Kushtia and Jessore will start from 2010, said a power, energy and mineral resources ministry report submitted at the meeting of the parliamentary standing committee yesterday.

The government has taken a project with financial support from the Asian Development Bank to set up pipeline to supply gas to Rajshahi and Khulna regions, the report said.

About the ongoing gas crisis, the

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Traders protest JCD attack, keep shops closed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Tension mounted in and around Chandrima Super Market in the city yesterday as a big traders' protest rally was held near it and the market was kept closed and heavily guarded fearing further attacks by students allegedly belonging to Dhaka College unit of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD).

The students clashed with traders at the market on Sunday night, leaving about 50 injured.

The traders and the students had a series of clashes for over four hours from about 9:30pm, and police fired tear gas shells to bring the situation under control.

The students also ransacked some makeshift shops on the walkways around the market and tried to set the market afire. Traffic came to a halt on the road from Nilkhet to Science Laboratory

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The traders of Chandrima Super Market, with sticks in the hands, bring out a procession protesting Sunday night's attack on them allegedly by JCD activists of Dhaka College. The photo was taken on Mirpur Road yesterday.



A washerman washes clothes in the dark polluted water of the Buriganga yesterday. Some laundries wash clothes this way with their clients unaware of it.

AL parliamentary team to place its finds in next JS session

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

A six-member opposition parliamentary team led by Whip Bir Bahadur yesterday visited Joysen Para and Sabru Karbari Para in the district where BNP cadres allegedly raped two indigenous girls and tortured others recently.

They visited the areas on instructions from Awami League (AL) chief and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina and will submit a report to her.

The report will be placed in the coming session of parliament for

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EU mulls sanctions on Iran over nukes

US tries to dampen report on strike plan

AFP, AP, Luxembourg/Washington

The European Union could consider slapping sanctions on Iran, including a visa ban, if current UN-centred diplomatic efforts fail, EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana said yesterday.

Speaking at a meeting of EU foreign ministers in Luxembourg, he meanwhile dismissed a report that the United States might take military action in the standoff with Tehran over its nuclear plans.

"We have to be prepared just in case they fail," he said, referring to

diplomatic efforts to persuade the Islamic republic to renounce sensitive atomic activities, currently centred on the UN Security Council.

"We have to begin thinking about that possibility," he said, referring to the possibility of eventual sanctions. Asked specifically about a visa ban, he said that such a move "is a classical type of measure that is taken."

The EU official dismissed a report that US President George W. Bush is mulling military options to knock out Iran's nuclear program.

The New Yorker magazine has reported that the administration is

planning a massive bombing campaign against Iran, including use of bunker-buster nuclear bombs to destroy a key suspected Iranian nuclear weapons facility.

"I have read the article... I think it has nothing to do with reality," he said, although admitting: "I don't know what is going on in the Pentagon and the different levels of the Pentagon."

However, Solana said: "Any military action is absolutely out of the table for us."

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Interns call off strike at CMCH

BDNEWS, Chittagong

The intern doctors of Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) yesterday called off their strike following an assurance from the authorities to fulfil their demand.

The interns postponed the strike until April 17 when the hospital authorities and local BMA leaders on behalf of the Director General of Health Services assured them of meeting their demand for increased allowances.

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1 killed as train hits tractor

UNB, Dinajpur

A train rammed a tractor and killed its driver at Bagjana level crossing in Hilli in the district yesterday.

The dead was identified as Golam Rabbani, 35, hailed from Ramchandrapur village of the same area.

When the sand-laden tractor was crossing the rail gate, a

Rajshahi-bound train, Barendra Express, hit it, says a spot account of the accident that occurred at 8:45am.

The tractor driver died on the spot.

Rail communication was disrupted for several hours after the accident.

120 feared dead in Ghana boat capsized

REUTERS, Accra

Some 120 people were feared drowned after a boat packed with passengers and goods capsized on Ghana's Lake Volta, police in the West African country said yesterday.

"There were 150 passengers on board but only 30 have been rescued. The rest are feared dead," police spokesman Kwesi Ofori said.

He said the accident happened on Saturday and that a search party was still looking for survivors.

Ofori said the boat was probably overloaded. He said it hit a stump as it travelled across the lake, which covers 8,500 square km, more than three times the size of Luxembourg.

He said the bodies of three young children had been recovered from the accident site but gave no further details.

GUNFIGHT WITH RAB Two jailed in Sylhet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The Speedy Trial Tribunal of Sylhet Division yesterday sentenced two people to 31 and 17 years' rigorous imprisonment in two sensational arms and explosives cases.

The convicts are Rajkanta Dev Barma alias Sunil Chowdhury of Srimangal and Hamir Dev Barma of Komolganj upazila of Moulvibazar district.

The cases were filed following a gunfight between criminals and a

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20yr higher edn plan discourages politics

PM suggests monitoring cell for quick implementation

UNB, Dhaka

An expert committee yesterday submitted to Prime Minister Khaleda Zia a long-term education plan recommending the government to discourage teacher and student politics.

"A student should largely concentrate on academic activities, with social-cultural involvement, and should not have affiliation with party politics," says a major recommendation in the plan.

Khaleda called upon all concerned, particularly the teachers, to keep their contribution to spreading quality education in order to compete in the present competitive world.

"Proper and standard education is very necessary in today's world of competition. Only you can play a

leading role in this regard," the PM told a function arranged for submitting report on the 'Strategic Plan for Higher Education in Bangladesh: 2006-2026'.

Members of the strategic planning committee and six expert groups, including chairman of the University Grants Commission, vice-chancellors and professors of public and private universities and distinguished personalities of various professions and organisations, were present at the function at ICC in the PMO complex.

The prime minister suggested constituting a monitoring cell for quick implementation of the strategic plan for higher education, saying that initiative would be taken to properly implement the recommendations of the strategic plan with cooperation of all.

UGC Chairman Prof Dr M Asaduzzaman, convener of the 17-member strategic planning committee, flanked by Education Minister Dr Osman Farruk and State Minister for Education Ehsanul Huq Milon presented the strategic report.

The 78-page report, which touched on a number of areas and issues, suggested bringing all public and private universities under an 'Umbrella Act'.

It also suggested to form a scouting committee by the chancellor for appointment of vice-chancellors, set up at least 28 more universities by year 2026 to expand scopes for higher education and constitute an accreditation council

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VOTER LIST

CEC appeals to SC to expunge HC directives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) MA Aziz yesterday appealed to the Supreme Court to expunge two of the High Court's directives on voter list, arguing that they contravene the law.

He also called on the full bench of the Appellate Division to stay the HC directives for the EC to publish some of the court's observations in the media.

Advocate Khandaker Mahubuddin Ahmed spoke on behalf of Aziz during hearing on CEC's leave to appeal petition

against the HC January 4 directives.

He submitted that it is not possible to prepare a fresh roll following the HC directive that asks the Election Commission (EC) to frame the new list in light of the one prepared back in 2000. No provision in the existing law provides for anything like that, he added.

Referring to the HC instructions for the EC not to drop any names from the old voter list, Mahubuddin, also a ruling BNP lawmaker, said if the commission fails to locate a person who was on

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Salman jailed for 5 years for poaching

AFP, Mumbai

Bollywood superstar Salman Khan was sentenced to five years in prison yesterday after he was convicted of poaching endangered Indian gazelles almost a decade

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Clarification

CARE Bangladesh in a clarification of a report published in The Daily Star on April 8 said slain NGO worker Baby Begum was never a staff of CARE Bangladesh as mentioned in the report headlined 'Female NGO worker murdered.'

The victim's relatives and those who took her to Dhaka Medical College morgue on April 7 identified her as a CARE Bangladesh staff. In fact, she was a field worker of Durjoy Nari Sangha, which runs a project on sex workers.

Prayer Timing		
April 11		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-35	5-10
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-24	6-28
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation



Portraits of late president Ziaur Rahman, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and their son Tarique Rahman are being painted yesterday on the walls next to Shishu Park entrance in Shahbagh at the initiative of a DCC ward commissioner.

PHOTO: STAR