

## Lost in red tape

### File on anti-corruption commission gathers dust

INAM AHMED AND SHAHRIAR KARIM

A government initiative to form a high-powered committee, supposed to recommend ways to fight corruption, has lost way in bureaucratic wilderness.

The committee, conceived early this year, was to frame the structure and outline the jurisdiction of an independent anti-corruption commission. It was also to study existing laws on corruption and suggest necessary amendments.

A proposal was also there that the committee, to be headed by a retired civil servant, would submit a report within three months of its formation.

Additional secretaries from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), and law, establishment and home ministries were to be on the committee.

Also, former Bangladesh Bank deputy governor MI Khan and a representative from the Bangladesh chapter of the Berlin-based Transparency International, Bangladesh (TIB) were to be included in the proposed body.

The Bureau of Anti-corruption (BAC) director general was to act as the member secretary of the committee.

Accordingly, the proposal was submitted to the PMO. However, there has

been no headway to this end to date and the committee has been confined to the drawing board, according to sources.

"We are still discussing how to address the issue. Obviously, we will need a committee to do the job, but it is yet to be formed," a highly placed source said.

A recent TIB report revealed that corruption was the highest among the first-class government officials, leading to a loss of more than Tk 11,000 crore or 4.7 per cent of the GDP in 2001 alone.

Earlier, a World Bank study released in April 2000 said the country could have achieved 2-3 per cent more GDP growth and also doubled per capita income, had it been able to check widespread corruption.

The BAC, meanwhile, has virtually become ineffective with very low credibility and high rate of pending cases, according to a diagnosis the bureau itself did along with the TIB.

A TIB report says that some 65 per cent of the people surveyed think that the ruling party always uses the BAC, which is dictated by the PMO, to repress

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## Libraries in political web

### Books on Zia, Khaleda crowd reading list; selectors push their own works

MUSTAK HOSSAIN

A committee has selected as many as 52 books on late president Ziaur Rahman and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia for public and college libraries across the country.

Many are on Islamic ideology in the list of 674 books. The selection committee has ignored the thrust of the project on the spirit of the country's liberation struggle and literature.

Thirty-nine books are on the late president and 13 on the prime minister. Also, the committee recommended eight books written by the BNP ministers and Khaleda.

The government will spend Tk 3.0 crore on the yearly project of procuring and distributing books among public and college libraries across the country.

The committee tried not only to please the ruling BNP but to promote its members by selecting their unfamiliar books, sources said.

Eight books written by Prof. Emajuddin Ahmed, convener of the committee, were included in the list. And ignored were the books of noted authors like poet Shamsur Rahman, Begum Sufia Kamal, S h a w k a t

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Covers of some of the books recommended by the selection committee for public and college libraries across the country.

## 13 arrested in Bagerhat for SI killing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Thirteen people have so far been arrested in connection with the murder of Sub-inspector Altaf Hossain.

A team of senior police officials is interrogating the arrested people. Police will produce six of the arrested people before the court today, seeking remand, the officer-in-charge of the Fakirhat police station said.

Meanwhile, Police force in the ten south-western districts have been put on 'red alert' following the murder of Sub-inspector Altaf Hossain of Fakirhat thana.

Check posts have been set up at all vulnerable points and combing operations launched to arrest the killers.

SI Altaf was gunned down by four unidentified miscreants near a tea stall at Chukathi bus stand on Wednesday night.

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PHOTO: STAR

Free talk time... relatives of prisoners swarm a prison van to have a glimpse of their nearest and dearest. Be it in jails or court custody, they often have to pay the officials for a few moments with the inmates. Thus, they wait for the time when the prisoners are taken to or from the courts to have a 'free' time to talk.

## NCBs reduce dollar spread

MONJUR MAHMUD

The nationalised commercial banks (NCBs) have reduced the spread in buying and selling the greenback.

The decision came into effect from yesterday. The NCBs would buy dollar at Tk 57.80, which was Tk 57.40 earlier, and sell it at Tk 58.40. The exporters and remitters would be benefited for this spread.

Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman on several occasions this week expressed his dissatisfaction regarding the huge gap between buying and selling of dollar.

The exporters are getting less money against their exports while the banks are making a profit of more than one taka for every dollar, the minister mentioned. "This cannot be continued," he added.

The finance minister recently asked the central bank governor to take steps to reduce the spread between buying and selling of foreign currencies. Accordingly, the

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## 50,000 more taxpayers identified

RAFIQ HASAN

The government may expect a big jump in income tax collection as around 50,000 fresh individuals would be added to the tax net this year.

"Around 50,000 people have been identified as prospective income tax payers through a two-month extensive survey," said a high National Board of Revenue (NBR) official yesterday.

"Almost half of them have already been brought under the tax net and they were given tax identification numbers (TINs). The rest would soon get their TINs too," the official said.

"Out of the 50,000 fresh individuals, at least 200 of them would be large tax payers, contributing handsomely to the exchequer," the official observed.

The highest of 10,000 individuals have been identified as new tax payers at tax zone-1 in Chittagong, followed by 5,000 at tax zone-5 in Dhaka.

The NBR searched for new tax payers during April-May this year and identified the individuals still beyond the tax reach.

People having multi-storied buildings, shopping malls and property in the metropolitan cities and district towns who are not paying tax have been

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## Education reforms report filed

UNB, Dhaka

The Expert Committee on Education Reform yesterday submitted its final report to Prime Minister Khaleda Zia with recommendation for comprehensive reforms in the sector.

An eight-member delegation led by Education Minister Dr Osman Farooque handed the report over to the prime minister at her office.

The task of the 51-member expert committee, formed on December 24, 2001, was to identify priorities of reforms in the country's education sector that deserve urgent implementation.

Receiving the report, Khaleda called for turning all the educational institutions into vibrant centres for learning and teaching in order to build up an educated nation.

In this respect, she urged teachers, students, guardians and elite of the society to play active roles in achieving the objective.

Prof MA Bari, former vice-chancellor of the National University, was head of the education reform committee. The committee consisted of incumbent and former chairmen of the Public Service Commission, incumbent and ex-VCs of different universities, teachers of different universities,

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## Cashier killed in daylight

### Tk 3 lakh snatched at Dhanmondi few paces away from bank

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Muggers stabbed to death the cashier of a clearing and forwarding firm at Dhanmondi in the city yesterday morning and took away Tk 3 lakh from him.

Ali Arshad, the 52-year-old cashier of Korona Associates, came under attack at around 10:30 in the morning on his way to the New Market from the Standard Chartered Bank at Dhanmondi.

Ali and Shakhawat Hossain, a

colleague, went to the Dhanmondi Branch of the Standard Chartered Bank at Dhanmondi Road No. 2 and withdrew Tk 2.5 lakh. They were also carrying Tk 50,000 from the office.

As Ali and his colleague came near the Bell Tower, the money in a bag, five young men stopped and asked them to hand the money over.

Upon refusal, the muggers stabbed Ali at will until he collapsed. They snatched the bag from him and left the scene immediately.

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## JCD rampage at CMC again

NURUL ALAM and ABDULLAH AL MAHMUD, Chittagong

Classes were not held at Chittagong Medical College (CMC) yesterday as rampaging activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhaira Dal (JCD) laid a siege to the college and again locked class rooms, the principal's office and the main gate in the morning, demanding release of their four arrested leaders.

The situation in and around the college and the medical college

hospital grew tense as a rally was held on the college campus under the banner of 'general students action committee', demanding release of the JCD leaders and protesting Wednesday's police "raid" at the college hostels.

During yesterday's rampage, the principal of CMC took shelter at the office of the hospital director, the sources said.

Though the hospital was spared from any agitation programme

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## Community participation in waste management stressed

### Making Dhaka Livable: The Daily Star -BUET initiative

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Re-excavation of the canal network and introduction of a community-based waste management mechanism are a must to save Dhaka from water-logging and filth.

The recommendations were put forward at a roundtable titled 'Storm-Water Drainage and Solid Waste Management of Dhaka City' jointly organised by Centre for Environmental and Resource Management (CERM) of BUET and The Daily Star. The roundtable was held at the Civil Engineering building of BUET.

Experts from Rajuk, DCC, WASA, BUET, IUCN, REHAB, Waste Concern and various other organisations participated in the roundtable where the Mayor of Dhaka Sadek Hossain Khoka was the Chief Guest.

The participants discussed various problems related to water-logging and waste management in the city and said immediate measures must be taken to protect the designated retention ponds of the city.

They said by adopting ward-based waste management system to produce compost, the Dhaka City

Corporation could save crores of taka as well as make profit by selling the organic fertiliser retrieved from 5000 tons of solid wastes generated in the city every day.

Dr. Mohammad Mujibur Rahman of BUET said the relevant organisations should take immediate measures to promote open and flowing canals avoiding construction of box culverts, which could solve the city's drainage problems.

"To keep the canals flowing unhindered, regular maintenance of storm drainage lines is a must," he said.

He also suggested projects to set up community-based 'transfer station' for introducing a systematic procedure of waste management in the city. He said there is no need for large containers on the roadsides and footpaths; instead the DCC should have transfer stations on a small piece of land at strategic points of the ward where door-to-door collectors could dump the waste in containers. The DCC trucks can then take away the wastes for dumping or converting it into compost.

The speakers stressed the need for 'integrated

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PHOTO: STAR

Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka speaks at a roundtable titled "Storm-Water Drainage and Solid Waste Management of Dhaka City", jointly organised by The Daily Star and the CERM yesterday at the BUET.

## Army at AJM

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Army has been deployed at the recently closed Adamjee Jute Mills Limited yesterday.

According to sources, two platoons of army personnel led by a lieutenant colonel took position at the mill premises. The deployment of army in an apparently peaceful situation has caused suspicions among many, sources added.

Local police station said they were not formally contacted before the positioning of the army.

Meanwhile, Ruhul Amin Sardar, president of Adamjee CBA (collective bargaining agent) reportedly received a cheque of Tk 8.30 lakh yesterday. Workers of the preparing and batching unit of Mill No. 2 were also given their dues yesterday without any untoward occurrence.