

Army has no intention to capture power

Army chief Lt Gen Moeen also says armed forces not running country; under new situation politicians won't be able to do politics squandering money

UNB, Bandarban

Army Chief Lt General Moeen U Ahmed yesterday categorically said the military has no intention to capture power or run the government, but they are assisting the caretaker government to put the country back on the right track.

"The army has no intention to take over. We are not even running the government. But we like to see this government successful as we want to put the country on the right track through concerted efforts of all," he said.

General Ahmed reflected some harsh truths about the trend of

politics, mindset of politicians and governance while exchanging views with representatives of the civil administration, political party leaders, journalists and representatives of government and non-government agencies at Bandarban Cantonment.

The army chief said the nation needs efficient and honest politicians to move forward as "our politicians do not understand anything beyond their self-interest."

He said a new situation has been ushered in now in the country where politicians will not be able to do politics squandering money.

Those who could not do politics so long for want of money will now get the opportunity.

Explaining the background of the promulgation of a state of emergency in the country by the president, General Moeen said the past caretaker government had tried to forge consensus between the two parties for holding a credible election. But it failed, as neither of the two was ready to budge an inch, which resulted in deterioration of the situation.

In this context, he recalled the grisly scene on Dhaka streets on October 28 last year when some people trampled to death another

man-a scene "never seen anywhere in the world. This brutal scene was not only witnessed by people at home but also abroad and 'everyone has hated us'."

He noted that unilateral elections (Jan 22) would not have been accepted at home and abroad and all, including army, BDR, police and ansars, would have been blamed for that debacle.

Under the circumstances, the president decided to impose the state of emergency. He also decided to step down from the office of chief adviser and appointed a new chief adviser. He

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Govt working to create atmosphere for fair polls

CA tells dev partners

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed has assured Bangladesh's major development partners that his government is working to create a congenial atmosphere for holding free, fair and credible elections, as part of which the Election Commission has already been reconstituted.

He gave an overview of the caretaker government's basic goals when an eight-member team of the Joint Strategy Partners' Delegation (JSPD), comprising the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, DFID and Japan, made a courtesy call on him at his office yesterday.

The delegation, led by Japanese Ambassador in Dhaka Masayuki Inoue, included ADB Director General for South Asia Kunio

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PHOTO: STAR

A man rides bicycle with an umbrella in one hand in Tejgaon area in the capital during yesterday's sudden winter rain.

Power import from India to be considered

Says adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh would consider importing power from the neighbouring Indian state of West Bengal to plug any possible shortfalls in power supply during the upcoming summer, but only if there are no conditions attached to the deal, said Power Adviser Tapan Chowdhury.

The power adviser told this to reporters after his meeting with visiting Director General of Asian Development Bank's (ADB) South Asia Department Kunio Senga who advised Tapan to import power from India to meet high power demands during the upcoming summer.

"I categorically told them to mention any possible conditionality they might attach to the deals," Tapan told the newsmen.

The deal would not be considered if there are conditions on the use of ports or providing corridor access to India, he added.

The ADB official, however, said there would be no conditions and it is a simple case of "They want to sell it and whether the Bangladesh government wants to buy it," Tapan said.

"We talked about the new

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Ex-state minister Mosharraf held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

The army-led joint forces last night arrested former state minister for energy AKM Mosharraf Hossain at his home in Mymensingh as part of its ongoing crackdown on 'corrupt' politicians.

With Mosharraf's arrest, 20

high-profile political leaders including former ministers, state ministers and lawmakers have been arrested so far.

Mosharraf was compelled to resign from his post in June 2005 following a scandal that he allegedly received an expensive Toyota Land Cruiser Cygnus, a four-wheel-drive vehicle, from Canadian company Niko Resources.

The former state minister's nephew Shahidul Islam Sohag said a group of at least 50 security personnel raided Mosharraf's home on Gangadas Guha Road around 9:40pm and asked him to go with them. The security personnel also picked up Mosharraf's personal assistant Yusuf Ali from there as well.

The joint forces, however, did not search his house. He had been staying at his Mymensingh home

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Osman Chowdhury

Bangladeshi cabbie in NY returns bag of diamond rings

AP, New York

Never mind diamonds—a New York cabbie was a Texas girl's best friend. The Bangladesh born driver returned 31 diamond rings he found in his cab after

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Govt probes assets of detained politicians

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The government is probing the bank accounts, assets and sources of wealth of the high-profile politicians arrested in the ongoing crackdown.

Sources said the finance ministry will send letters to all banks, via the central bank, asking them to provide information they possess on the detained political bigwigs.

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) has already started investigating the wealth of a number of politicians listed for suspected corruption, some of them already arrested. But some banks, especially foreign-owned ones, refused to divulge any details when asked by the NBR.

The government suspects that most of the politicians on the list have their money deposited in foreign banks, the sources said.

The banks asked by the NBR to

provide details on the listed politicians told its investigating officials, they cannot divulge any banking information to anyone but the account holders according to the Bank Company Act.

According to the Income Tax Act, the NBR is authorised to investigate and collect banking information from any banks in the country.

In the letters to be sent by the finance ministry, it will ask the banks to provide accounts-related information as per the Income Tax Act.

The NBR is also simultaneously probing the sources of wealth and expenditures of the listed politicians, sources say.

The registrar of Joint Stock Companies has also been asked by the government to look into the listed politicians' shares and directorship of any company.

Government sources say

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UK wants govt to respect HR for detainees

UNB, Dhaka

The British government believes that the caretaker government in Bangladesh will apply due process for detainees, respect human rights and the rule of law in the country's changed context.

When asked to comment on the ongoing arrest and detention of politicians for alleged corruption, a spokesman for the British High Commission here said, "Britain welcomes fight against corruption across the world."

He added: "We believe the caretaker government will apply

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Axe to fall only on 'godfathers of graft'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Adviser Mainul Hossain yesterday said the caretaker government will take action only against the 'godfathers of corruption' because the government is trying to speed up the processes to fulfil their main objective to hold free and fair elections.

"We do not have enough time to act against everyone involved with corruption. So we would only catch the godfathers," Mainul said, adding that the caretaker government's main goal is to hold a fair election free from the influence of black money.

"A section of politicians illegally became wealthy in a very short time by looting the country and they will be arrested. They can be easily identified," Mainul told reporters at his office yesterday.

"The drive against them is on and will continue," he said, adding, "Many of them were never businessmen, but under political patronage they became powerful businessmen in a very short period."

Terming baseless the rumour that no businessperson is safe under the current caretaker government, Mainul said such

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YET-TO-QUIT ACC COMMISSIONER Ex-graft body staff lock up his room

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group of ex-employees of the now-defunct Bureau of Anti-Corruption (Bac) who were not recruited by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) locked the office room of Commissioner Maniruddin Ahmed yesterday.

The disgruntled ex-employees

brought allegations of financial irregularities against Maniruddin, who refrained from resigning with the two other colleagues a day before.

The exact reason behind locking his office was not explained but it appeared to be an outburst of resentment against him, ACC

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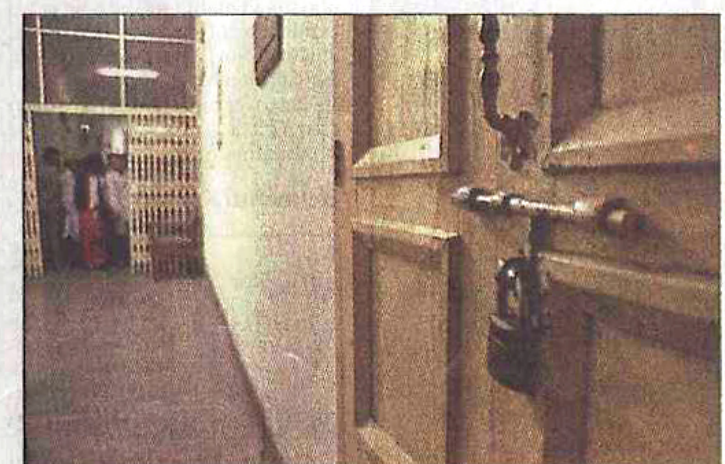


PHOTO: STAR

Aggrieved staff of the now-defunct Bureau of Anti-Corruption yesterday lock the room of ACC Commissioner Maniruddin Ahmed, who is still holding the post.

10 petitions filed against politicians' detention

HC issues rules on govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday issued 10 separate rules on the government to explain why the 10 political leaders should not be brought to court to be convicted that they are not being detained illegally or improperly.

The rules came following separate petitions filed by the relatives of the 10 detainees challenging the legality of their detention.

The detainees are BNP leader and former parliamentary affairs adviser to prime minister Salauddin Quader Chowdhury, former forest and environment minister Tariqul Islam, former state minister for labour and employment Amanullah Aman, former state minister for power Iqbal Hasan Mahmud, former BNP lawmakers Mosaddek Ali Fala,

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Stay order on VoIP licensing vacated

UNB, Dhaka

The high Court yesterday vacated the stay order on granting VoIP licence to internet service providers.

A division bench comprising Justice Nozul Islam Chowdhury and Justice Zubayer Rahman Chowdhury passed the order discharging the rules issued earlier on two similar public interest litigation (PIL) writ petitions as the

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Notice

A roundtable on "Challenges before the Caretaker Government" was organised by The Daily Star on January 27, 2007. Today's edition contains its proceedings on pages 16 and 17.

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