

## ACC secretary discloses his wealth statement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Secretary to the Anti-Corruption Commission Mohammad Delwar Hossain yesterday publicly disclosed statement on his personal assets, income and expenditure.

This is the first time a senior bureaucrat has made such a move.

The 746 employees of the ACC at present would also make their wealth statement public within the next three weeks, the ACC secretary told the press while disclosing his wealth statement at his office.

The ACC would publicly disclose findings of some of the major inquiries into various allegations of corruption by the end of this month or early next month, he added.

"From the legal and moral point of view, all the government officers and employees should also disclose statements of their wealth, income and expenditure," Delwar said.

Asked whether the ACC would take any step in this regard, he said

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## EC readies reform guideline

Even utility bill defaulters will be barred from polls; party registration a must; one cannot contest for more than two seats; election manifesto may be made a must do

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission (EC) is preparing a set of reform proposals including the ones for independence of its secretariat and stringent electoral laws to ensure the next parliamentary election is free and fair.

Making registration of the political parties mandatory, barring the utility service bill defaulters from contesting the polls, introducing transparent ballot boxes and increasing a candidate's election expenditure from Tk 5 lakh to Tk 10 lakh will also figure in the proposals. The commission will meet on Sunday to finalise those, sources said.

The reforms envisage that civil or military bureaucrats cannot

compete in an election before three years since their retirement. None will be allowed to stand from more than two constituencies. According to the existing laws, a person can contest at the maximum for five seats.

Besides, it is pondering if implementation of the election manifestos could be brought into a legal framework, making it compulsory for the party voted to power, the sources added.

Once the proposals are finalised, the EC will submit those to the caretaker government.

The government has already amended the Emergency Power Ordinance (EPO) to bar those convicted of corruption by a trial court from running in any election

until disposal of appeal against the verdict.

Political experts observe that many big names rounded up by the joint forces might not be able to contest the next parliamentary election.

Alongside the government's efforts to rid politics of corruption, the EC is taking initiative to make electoral laws stricter to make sure the polls are free of corrupt practices and influence of black money.

On orders from the commission, senior officials at the EC Secretariat are working on the proposals for reforms in the electoral system. They are also reviewing the recommendations submitted on different occasions by the

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## \$3B INVESTMENT Tata ponders step to restart negotiations

UNB, Dhaka

A top official of India's industrial giant Tata yesterday said they are exploring the possibility of starting off its \$3 billion package investment project in Bangladesh through a good conclusion of the final deal.

Tata's package investment proposals include setting up of a 2.4million-ton steel plant, a fertiliser plant, a 475MW gas-fired power plant and the development of Barapukuria coal mine through open-cast methodology.

The project remained suspended since last July, before the previous government handed over power to the caretaker government.

"We are exploring the possibility of seeing if we can start off again from where we left last time and come to a good conclusion," S Manzer Hossain, resident director of Tata Group, told the news agency after meeting with Foreign Affairs Adviser Iftikhar Ahmed Chowdhury.

On the meeting with the adviser,

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## CA asks DCs, SPs to be free from any influence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser (CA) Fakhruddin Ahmed yesterday called upon the public servants not to compromise on their need to be completely free from the influence of any individuals, vested groups or politics to regain the trust and respect of the people.

"As officials of the republic, you have to be completely free of individual, group or political influence. You (civil servants) have to be proactive in establishing an honest, impartial and neutral image. The people's trust and respect have to be earned. There is no scope for compromise on these issues," said Fakhruddin in his first address to deputy commissioners (DCs) and superintendents of police (SPs) of all the districts.

Advisers to the caretaker government (CG) and secretaries were also present at the meeting held at the International Conference Centre of the CA's office.

Fakhruddin said the country urgently needs sincere, honest,

knowledge-based and enlightened public administration to establish good governance down to the field level, which is the demand of time.

"We have taken numerous steps to restore neutrality and transparency in public administration and increase its accountability and speed," he said.

The CA hoped that the civil servants would now work only in public interest by strictly following government rules and regulations to make this process a success.

Initiatives are being taken to create a structure for efficient methods of promotion, and proper use of the human resources in public administration, he said.

Reminding the administration and police officials that laws should be applied for the welfare of the people, Fakhruddin said "The law is for the people, and not the people for the law."

He mentioned that the CG has initiated fundamental reforms to achieve its main objective of holding free, fair and credible elections. It has paved the way for creation of

a just society, and the process of reforms in politics, economy and society must be continued, he stressed.

The administration and the law enforcement agencies are to play a leading role in fulfilling the hopes and aspirations of the people, he noted.

Disparity in the society has widened, politics and economy have been polluted and have gone backwards due to endless greed of some dishonest people who misappropriated state resources. Such a situation could not be allowed to continue, the CA said.

Corrupt leaders of any party and godfathers of criminals are the enemies of the state and the people, he said. "I hope the law enforcement agencies would act against these dark forces by staying above all fears and free from influence."

Fakhruddin asked them to root out with an iron hand corruption, the scourge of black money and criminal activities that have

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PHOTO: STAR

Sand traders fill up part of the Turag river at Aminbazar on the outskirts of the capital with sand they keep stockpiled on the riverbank for sale.

## Detained ex-MP Salahuddin sued for extortion, land grabbing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least five cases were filed against detained former BNP lawmaker from Dhaka-4 constituency Mohammad Salahuddin and several of his "associates" with two police stations in the city.

Extortion and land grabbing cases were filed against them Wednesday evening with Jatrabari and Shyampur police stations under Special Powers Act, police said.

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## 1 lakh sacks of fertiliser seized

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Joint forces and mobile courts in separate drives all over the country yesterday seized huge quantities of commodities including date expired medicines, more than 1.13 lakh sacks of banned FMP fertiliser and 1,500 sacks of spoilt rice and wheat.

A mobile court in the capital raided a homeopathy medicine manufacturer and importer named Pragati Homeo Lab in

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## FEB 4 RAID ON HUDA'S HOUSE Huge amount of currencies found

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A huge amount of local and foreign currencies, some revolver bullets and other items were seized from the Dhanmondi residence of former communications minister Nazmul Huda when the joint forces arrested him on February 4 on charge of corruption, police said yesterday.

A case against Huda was filed with Dhanmondi Police Station late on Wednesday in connection with the seizure.

Police said they have filed the case under the Special Powers Act, Money Laundering Act and Excise Act.

The seized items include Tk18,68,470 and 1,796 Singapore dollars, 1,350 pounds, 300 euros and 18 dinnars, 14 revolver bullets, four passports of Huda and a mobile phone set.

"The foreign currencies were being possessed illegally. Besides, no one can keep such a huge amount of local currency with him under the Special Powers Act," said Officer-in-Charge of Dhanmondi Police Station Monwar Hossain.

He also said three of the four passports carry official cancellation seals while the other is alright.

Asked about the seized bullets, the OC said they are still investigating whether those were being possessed legally.

Meantime, Huda was shown arrested yesterday in this case following a petition filed by investigation officer (IO) of the case and Sub Inspector of Dhanmondi police AKM Monzurul Haq Akand.

Metropolitan Magistrate Syed Mohammad Mojibul Haq granted his petition.

A day after the February 4 arrest, Huda was sent to detention on charges of anti-state activities, sabotage and corruption. He had been in Dhaka Central Jail until he was taken to Rangpur district jail along with another BNP leader Salahuddin Qader Chowdhury.

The former communications minister was widely accused of making huge money through corruption relating to CNG-run autorickshaws and allocation of land for filling stations during the tenure of the immediate past BNP-led four-party alliance government.

Huda even allotted a costly piece of Bangladesh Railway land in the heart of the city for his wife's human rights organisation at a nominal price.

## Wadood Bhuiyan's brother among 1,449 held

STAR REPORT

The army-led joint forces arrested the elder brother of detained former BNP lawmaker Abdul Wadood Bhuiyan yesterday. As part of their ongoing countrywide drive, they also arrested 1,449 others on various charges in the last 24 hours preceding 6:00am yesterday.

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) personnel arrested eight top BNP leaders of Khagrachhari including Belayet Hossain Bhuiyan alias Saheb, elder brother of Wadood Bhuiyan, in separate raids early yesterday, our Khagrachhari correspondent reports.

Belayet, chairman of Ramgour municipality and also the president of Ramgour upazila BNP, was arrested at his house.

The other arrestees are Ramgour upazila BNP Secretary and Union Parishad (UP) Chairman Nurul Islam Pathoary, ex-UP chairman Hafez Ahmed Bhuiyan, Ramgour Municipality Commissioners and BNP leaders Moazzam Haq Bablu, Mohammad Harunur Rashid, Mohammad Ibrahim, Mohammad Jasim and Mohammad Imran.

Belayet had a meteoric rise in fortune during the last five years, locals claimed. He was allegedly the ringleader of G-8, a group belonging to former lawmaker

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## \$170m deals signed to revamp rly

WB, ADB to provide fund

UNB, Dhaka

The government yesterday signed three credit agreements involving \$170m with the World Bank (WB) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to support the plans to transform Bangladesh Railways into a well-managed and customer-focused organisation.

Of the total amount, ADB is providing \$130 million under two agreements while the World Bank \$40 million in the third agreement.

ERD Secretary Md Aminul Islam Bhuiyan inked the deals for the government of while Country Directors Hua Du and Zhu Xian signed on behalf of ADB and WB at a simple ceremony at ERD's Sher-e-Bangla Nagar office.

Penny Davies of DFID, UK, Masami Tamura of Japanese embassy and Kyoshi Amada of JIBC were, among others, present at the signing ceremony.

ADB Country Director Hua Du said, "As identified in Bangladesh's national poverty reduction strategy (2006), we are committed to supporting the railway sector development as it is critical for accelerating economic growth and poverty reduction, which remains a formidable challenge in spite of the

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## Ex-BNP MP Pintu sent to jail after he surrenders to court

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former BNP lawmaker Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu was sent to jail yesterday after he turned himself in to a Dhaka court to seek bail in two cases for attempted murder and theft.

The student leader-turned-politician whose name is closely linked with several crimes had been evading arrest since the joint

forces launched a countrywide hunt for top corrupt people and criminals last month.

The former president of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, student wing of BNP, captured a room at the MP Hostel immediately after winning the 2001 parliamentary elections from Lalbagh-Kamrangirchar constituency although no room had yet been allotted there to him.

During his stint as a member of parliament, Pintu allegedly exerted political influence to grab public land, manipulated tenders, patronised local extortionists and criminal groups, and tortured workers of rival political parties as well as rival factions in BNP.

He was arrested once during the 1996-2001 Awami League (AL) rule and even once during the immediate past BNP-led coalition government's rule. However, Pintu could not be awarded punishment due to government intervention.

The BNP government withdrew three cases against Pintu filed for snatching bidding documents at gunpoint, injuring a number of AL men and police, and for explosion of cocktails and bomb in his house.

Pintu saw quite a rise in fortune in the last five years and three

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## Illegal market in Nayabazar demolished

STAR REPORT

Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) authorities during their ongoing eviction drive yesterday demolished Yusuf Super Market, a tin-built unauthorised market, to recover grabbed land of the Siraj-Ud-Daulah Park at Nayabazar in the capital.

Meanwhile, joint forces evicted dwellers of Chandmari slum in Narayanganj and recovered land belonging to the army.

Locals encroached the land of the park and built the market on it.

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## Hasan Mahmud new Rab DG

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday appointed Special Branch chief Hasan Mahmud Khondoker as the director general of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) just two days after a major reshuffle that also saw a change in the top position of Rab.

Hasan Mahmud will replace Deputy Inspector General of police Baharul Alam, sources said.

Hasan earlier served in the elite force as a director.

Baharul will take Hasan Mahmud's position at the Special Branch of police.

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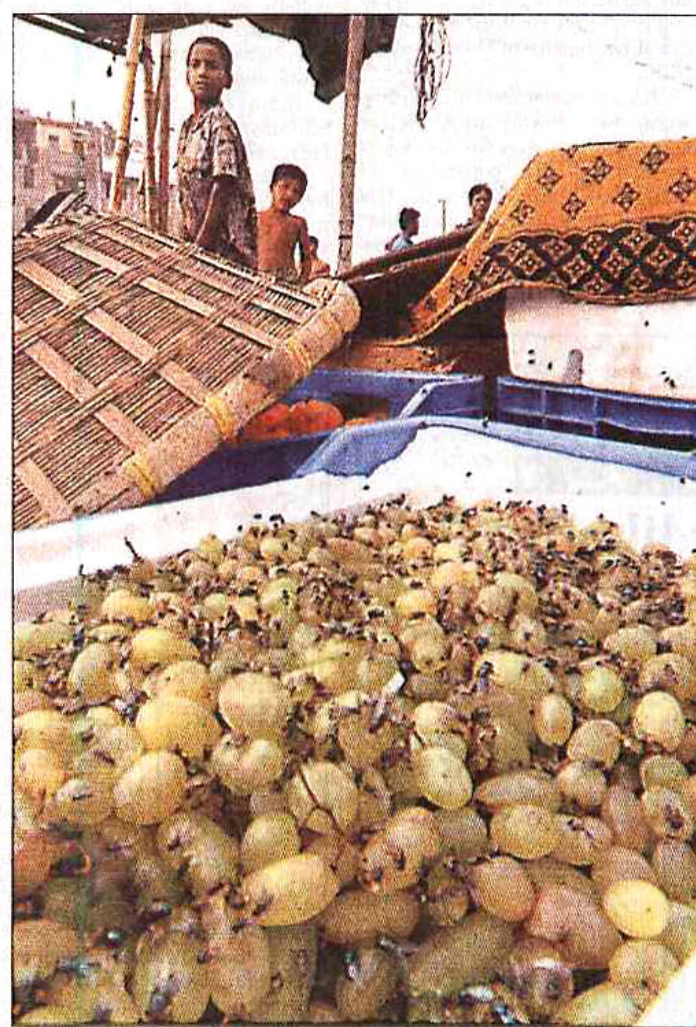


PHOTO: STAR

Grapes swarming with flies are being sold near Keraniganj Chourasta on the outskirts of the capital. The photo was taken yesterday.

## Govt to go tough on corrupt professionals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will act also against people in different professions accused of graft as part of its ongoing drive to curb the menace of corruption.

Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Secretary Delwar Hossain yesterday said the anti-graft body knows how some influential individuals both in public and private sector hold back information about their massive incomes and wealth.

He made the observations while publishing his wealth statement at a press briefing in his office yesterday.

All of those arrested so far on allegations of corruption are

leaders of the two major political parties. A few businessmen held on corruption charges too are involved either in BNP or Awami League (AL) politics.

Asked about the number of people on the much-talked about government list, the ACC secretary said, "I cannot tell you who or how many are on the list."

Replying to a query, he said, "Doctors and lawyers among others fall within range of the actions being taken against the corrupt ones."

Meanwhile, Home Secretary MA Karim has asked all the government departments to assist the 20 teams set up to probe corruption

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