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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 manifesto could be brought into a legal framework, making it compulsory for the party voted to power, the sources added.

On 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.

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 Husain, resident director of Tata Group, told the news agency after meeting with Foreign Affairs Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury.

On the meeting with the adviser, SEE PAGE 19 COL 3

\$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.

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On the meeting with the adviser, SEE PAGE 19 COL 3

CA asks DCs, SPs to be free from any influence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser (CA) Fakhrudin 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 Fakhrudin 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.

Fakhrudin 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, Fakhrudin 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.

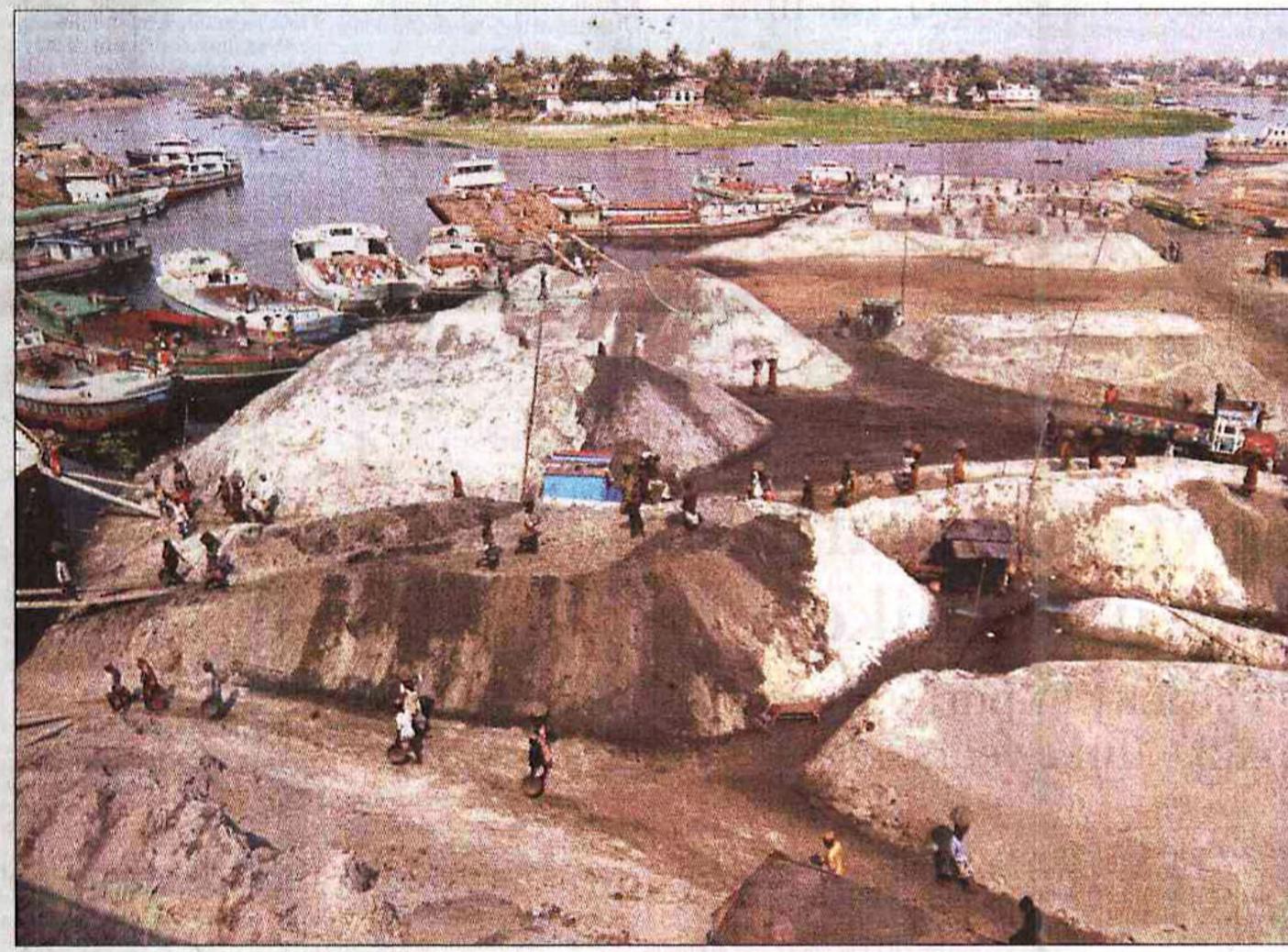
The administration and the law enforcement agencies are to play a leading role in fulfilling the hopes and aspirations of the people, he noted.

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."

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

SEE PAGE 19 COL 6



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.

\$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 JICA 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

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 two cases for attempted murder and

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 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

Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu

Illegal market in Nayabazar demolished

STAR REPORT

Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) authorities during their ongoing eviction drive yesterday demolished Yusuf Super Market, a 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

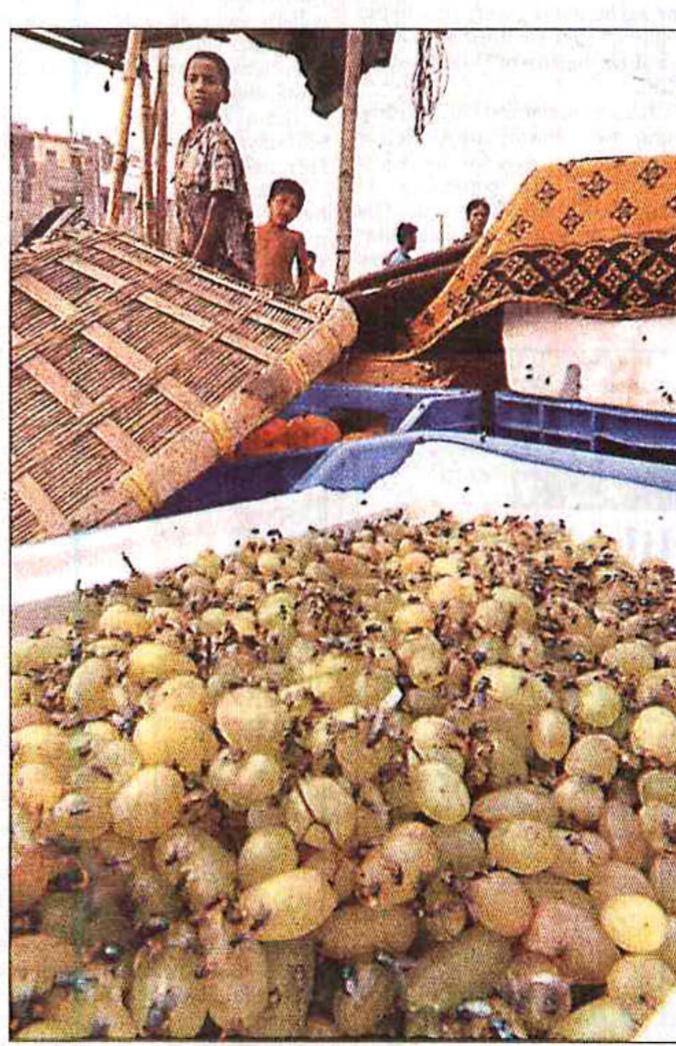
The government yesterday appointed Special Branch chief Hasan Mahmud Khondoker as the director general of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) just two days after a major reshuffle that also saw a change in the top position of Rab.

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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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."

Replies to a query, he said, "Doctors and lawyers among others fall within the 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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