

SC dumps

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assets and liabilities, and criminal records, if any.

The rule was strictly abided by during the by-elections and election to 50 reserved seats for women in parliament. But after 19 months, Abu Safa, not known in politics, secured a stay order against the ruling from a vacation chamber judge of the SC, a day before the last day of filing nomination papers for the January 22 stalled election.

The stay order had raised many eyebrows as it was granted without hearing the Election Commission or the writ petitioners. The story did not end there. Abu Safa surreptitiously got leave-to-appeal to overturn the HC ruling.

Finally, the SC yesterday morning set aside the ruling.

In the meantime, Dr Kamal had filed two petitions seeking to ascertain the locus standi of Abu Safa and draw criminal proceedings against him and his lawyers' acting fraud upon the highest judiciary by making false statements.

What happened yesterday is that before disposing of Dr Kamal's petitions, the four-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by the chief justice pronounced its verdict annulling the HC ruling triggering the row in the courtroom.

Many lawyers were heard sh h o u t i n g " s h a m e ... shame...fraudulent judgment," to the discomfort of the judges.

Soon the security in and around the court of the chief justice was beefed up. Scores of additional armed police cordoned off the courtroom while entry of public was restricted.

Sources said finding the situation volatile, Attorney General Barrister Fida M Kamal rushed to

the chief justice's chamber and communicated to him the sentiment of the Bar.

Apparently the chief justice had a second thought. He resumed the court at 12:45pm along with three other judges. He meekly recalled his earlier order saying: "Our unsigned [earlier] order is recalled."

Earlier, sharply reacting to the verdict, Dr Kamal said, "No, my lord, you cannot pronounce such an order without going into the merit of the case."

"This will be unprecedented in the history of the highest judiciary in dispensation of even-handed justice," said Kamal.

"Granting leave-to-appeal filed by a 'fake' person, should be revoked first, as he had no locus standi to seek remedy against the HC," he contended.

Somehow some fraudulent acts had been committed in the process of dispensation of justice, Dr Kamal told the court. "We cannot destroy the dignity and image of the highest court."

The court interrupted him that evoked a brief altercation. "Unless I am heard, I will not leave the courtroom. If you can, draw contempt proceedings against me and call police to arrest me. I will not leave the place until I die. And you will not attend my namaz-e-Janaza," said Dr Kamal.

"I will tear off my gown if I am not allowed to complete my submission."

Finding the atmosphere unpleasant the judges hurriedly withdrew from the ejash. But a grim faced Dr Kamal remained seated in the court.

Rejoinder

FROM PAGE 1

Monday, February 19, 2007 issue published a long interview as a lead news with the sole intention of maligning before the nation the former prime minister and chairperson of BNP Begum Khaleda Zia, members of her family and some other former ministers and government officials.

The title of the interview was, "Khaleda Zia became reckless in her second term." The interview was given by Mr AHM Nurul Islam, who worked initially as private secretary (PS) to the then prime minister and subsequently as secretary in-charge at the prime minister's office (PMO) during the four-party alliance government.

The wealth statement of Ibrahim makes some startling claims. For instance, Ibrahim claimed that he owns furniture worth Tk 10,000 and 12 bhor of gold worth Tk 12,000. His wife owns 30 bhor of gold worth Tk 20,000. He also claimed that his wife owns 14 katha of land in Tejgaon worth Tk 26 lakh when in reality each katha of Tejgaon land is worth Tk 50 lakh.

Jamal is at t's S h a h j a h a n Chowdhury's statement portrays a picture of a man whose sole source of income during 2001-06 was the honorarium for being a member of parliament (MP). But the claim is in sharp contrast to his submission that he imported a car worth Tk 49 lakh duty free, which he has not yet released from the importer.

The ACC meanwhile decided to ask the government to clarify the status of corruption suspect Giasuddin Al Mamun who was reportedly arrested by the joint forces, but officially he has not yet been declared as such. Mamun is one of the 50 suspects. Although the notice has been served at his residence and office, his 'unofficial arrest' has made it difficult for the ACC to expect that Mamun will get a fair chance to submit his wealth statement.

"Since questions have been raised about him, we will at first get confirmation about his status and then decide on his case," said Delwar Hossain, secretary to the ACC.

In actuality, Mr AHM Nurul Islam was retired compulsorily from service on some proven specific and serious charges during his terms first as PS to prime minister and then as secretary in-charge in the PMO, both the posts being very important and extremely sensitive. The Bureau of Anti-Corruption also filed a case against him. He then filed a writ petition in the High Court which is still pending for disposal. The then government allowed the case to proceed and the law to take its own course. But how it appears that at the end of the term of the alliance government, Mr Islam has launched with vengeance, an ill-motivated effort to destroy the image and honour of the former prime minister and chairperson of BNP. His statements are absolutely out of grudge, and are baseless and false. He has thereby tried to confuse the people.

We hereby lodge a strong protest to this interview given with an ill motive and also to its publication in Prothom Alo.

Corrupt policemen

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Deputy Managing Director Abu Sadek Mohammad Sohel were present.

Taher said an SIBL official and a sub-inspector from Tejgaon Police Station went to the house of Serajul Hossain, proprietor of Liberty Accessories Ltd, with an arrest warrant to arrest him last June. Serajul had defaulted a loan of Tk 9 crore with SIBL.

"The police officer sat our official in a room and went to talk to Serajul," Taher said. "As it was getting late, our official went looking for them and found that the SI and Serajul were having meal together and chatting.

"The SI told our officer that the defaulter agreed to repay the loan within a couple of days and that he would contact the bank," Taher said.

"But Serajul did not come to the bank. Our officer again pressurised the police to arrest the defaulter but this time the house was found under lock and key," he added.

Another SIBL official said, "We suspect that the SI took bribe from the defaulter and helped him go into hiding."

Another bank official said they apprehend that the Khilgaon police had informed another defaulter of the bank, Sakhawat Hossain Sohag, in advance about an early morning raid.

"The court had issued a warrant of arrest against Sohag of Abish Carton and Accessories Ltd for a total of Tk 95 lakh defaulted loans," Taher said, adding that Sohag was not at home during the raid.

According to our Noakhali correspondent, the owners of the projects failed to show legal documents during the drive.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Abdul Qayum Sarker said Bulu illegally occupied 200 acres of land.

Besides, former lawmaker and Partex Group Chairman MA Hashem encroached 200 acres, Awami League leader Ruhul Amin Khandaker 300 acres and Bengal Group Chairman Morshed Alam grabbed 200 acres of land, he added.

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