

CU cancels certificates

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two reports submitted by Prof Saleh and Prof Hakim at the 336th and 353rd syndicate meetings and found similar proofs of tampering with certificates, Nizami said.

Quoting from 'Shamsuddin's' report, he said tampering of certificates was done in eight categories but the CU authorities did not implement the suggestions placed by the heads of those two committees.

The categories include showing examinees passed in gazette while they actually failed as per tabulation sheet, showing examinees passed although they did not sit subsidiary examinations, showing examinees passed although they did not appear in preliminary exams, and overwriting or scrubbing.

"There was no coordination between the authorities concerned and the office of the controller of examination for taking effective action as per recommendations of the two committees put forward at the 336th and 353rd syndicate meetings," Nizami said.

The meeting was chaired by Vice-Chancellor Prof Badul Alam.

JUDGE FAIZEE'S CASE
Press reports: Two major dailies Prothom Alo and Bhoror Kagoj reported on October 30, 2004 that Faizee, one of the 19 additional judges appointed on August 23, 2004, had tampered with his mark sheet of Muslim Law examinations he sat from Chittagong Law College in 1989. A Chittagong University (CU) enquiry committee formed on April 25, 1996 revealed the fraud.

Bar protest: The Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) in an unprecedented move that day asked Justice Faizee to stand down admitting the allegation.

As the bench of Justice Mohammad Ali Asgar Khan and Justice Faizee sat for the day, Bar Secretary Bashir Ahmed accompanied by a group of lawyers rushed to the court and drew the judges' attention to press reports about the fraud.

The secretary told the court that Justice Faizee should not sit on any bench on moral grounds.

The Bar leaders then met with then chief justice Syed JR Mudassar Husain at his chamber and urged him to withdraw Faizee, otherwise they would boycott Faizee's court.

The Bar at an emergency meeting in the afternoon unanimously decided to boycott the bench of Justice Faizee if he is not withdrawn.

Faizee withdrawn: The chief justice withdrew Faizee on October 31, 2004.

Justice Asgar Khan, senior member of Faizee's bench, also declined to sit with Faizee and conveyed the decision to the chief justice the same day.

The chief justice told the SC lawyers that Faizee would no more be allowed to sit on the bench. He also gave the full responsibility of the bench upon Justice Asgar.

Senior SC lawyers and Bar leaders met the chief justice and citing Faizee's fraud expressed their unwillingness to attend his court. A few lawyers suggested not allowing Faizee to sit on the bench until the issue is resolved. The chief justice agreed.

Bar sent documents to CJ: The SCBA on November 1, 2004 sent to the chief justice some documents in support of the allegations of tampering with examination results against Faizee.

The chief justice at a meeting with the SCBA leaders and senior lawyers had said he would ask the CU authorities for providing Faizee's exam documents. Barrister Rokan told the chief justice that he already had the documents and that he would send them over to him.

The documents included a report of a CU enquiry committee on the corruption in the law examinations results of 111 students including that of Faizee, a university syndicate decision to withhold Faizee's result, and documents of allegations brought against Faizee by the Chittagong Lawyers' Association.

Faizee absent at court: Faizee did not go to the High Court on November 1, 2004, a day after he was withdrawn from the bench. He went on a seven-day leave.

CU moves against 2,400 examinees: The CU authorities took action against 2,400 examinees found involved in tampering with mark sheets and results.

"A probe body detected the irregularities in LLB, BA, subsidiary and BA honours examinations resulting during 1983-1994 period," Mofakkarul Islam Khan, then CU controller of examinations, told The Daily Star on November 2, 2004.

Last CU probe committee: After press disclosure of the scandal, the CU authority on November 9, 2004 formed a probe committee headed by professor of political science Dr Abdul Hakim. But he resigned from the committee on November 28, 2004 for "personal reasons".

Later on November 30, the syndicate formed a fresh committee headed by then pro-vice chancellor Prof Md Shamsuddin Ahmed. The committee members were Prof Sirajul Islam, dean of arts faculty and a teacher of English, Prof Morshed Mahmud Khan, dean of law faculty, Dr Nurul Mostafa, chairman of computer science, and Prof Kazi Mostain Billah, a teacher of English.

The committee submitted its report a few months ago.

Ctg Bar probe committees: Chittagong Bar Association also formed two committees to probe the scandal.

"The probe bodies will sort out the names of the lawyers engaged in practice with fake certificates," then Bar president Ibrahim Hossain Babul said.

"We will ask them to bring no objection certificates from the Chittagong University authorities within one week. If they fail, we will

not allow them to continue practising and their names will be sent to the Bar Council for cancellation of their enrolment," he added.

Meanwhile, some 20 lawyers of Chittagong Court had also stopped coming to the court following press reports on the result scandal of 110 lawyers.

Bar decision to ask Faizee to show cause: The Bar Council at an executive committee meeting on November 4, 2004 decided to serve a show cause notice on Faizee asking him to explain in seven days why action would not be taken against him for providing false information while obtaining council's certificate.

Age controversy: Another controversy was created when Faizee was found to have tampered with his age for securing lawyer's enrolment certificate from the Bar Council.

Scrutinising Faizee's documents, the council revealed on November 6, 2004 that he gave his date of birth as September 15, 1965 although his SSC certificate shows the date as September 15, 1963.

The two dailies faced contempt charges: The HC on November 8, 2004 issued a rule on Daily Prothom Alo and Daily Bhoror Kagoj asking them to explain why contempt proceedings should not be drawn against them for running reports on Faizee's tampering with his LLB results.

The rule also asked the newspapers to reply to the rule in two weeks why they should not be punished for maligning the HC through the reports.

The division bench of justices MA Matin and AFM Abdur Rahman issued the rule following a contempt petition filed by Faizee's father Mohammed Faiz.

Ctg Bar probe found 40 lawyers: Chittagong Bar Association's probe bodies identified over 40 lawyers practising in the district who had doctored their mark sheets and certificates of LLB examinations.

Then president of Chittagong Bar Ibrahim Hossain Babul told journalists that the probe bodies have listed some 40 lawyers out of 111, including Faizee, who had earlier been listed as accused of tampering with mark sheets.

Faizee

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decision to cancel Faizee's LLB certificate.

"If Chittagong University decides to cancel LLB certificate of Faizee, the chief justice should withdraw him from the court list and he should not sit in the court from tomorrow," Vice Chairman of Bangladesh Bar Council Barrister Rakanuddin Mahmud said when contacted last night.

Stating that Faizee committed fraud with the Supreme Court, Bar Council and the government, Rakanuddin said, "He should be prosecuted."

In an unprecedented move on April 25, 2005, the Bar Council cancelled enrolment certificate of Faizee for providing false information during enrolment and failing to disprove the allegation about his LLB exam result.

The council, statutory body of legal practitioners, had also decided to file a criminal case against Faizee for providing false information in the affidavit he submitted when he had applied for the council's certificate to practise law as an advocate.

Rokanudin said, "Our decision has been vindicated and our case against Faizee has been consolidated."

Hearing the news of cancellation of Faizee's LLB certificate, eminent jurist Dr M Zahir told The Daily Star, "It is unheard of and I am puzzled."

Former president of the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) Mahbubey Alam said, "He (Faizee) should go immediately. If he doesn't want to resign, the president should immediately form Supreme Judicial Council to remove him."

It is possible to complete the process within two days, he said.

The jurist further said, "He (Faizee) is not a law graduate but he has taken oath by showing that he is a graduate. This is a gross misconduct."

Mahbubey Alam recalled that during his tenure as SCBA president, he had requested Faizee not to sit on the bench. But the additional attorneys general and deputy attorneys general sympathetic to the BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami encouraged Faizee to take the post.

"Chittagong University Syndicate would not have taken this decision if the BNP were still in power."

Mahbubey Alam said the then chief justice (CJ) Syed JR Mudassar Husain did not recommend Faizee's confirmation as an HC judge. He heard that the then prime minister Khaleda Zia's adviser Salauddin Quader Chowdhury pressured the government to confirm Faizee as an HC judge, he added.

When contacted, former SCBA secretary Enayetur Rahim said, "Chittagong University should file a case against Faizee, and the president should remove him."

Faizee no longer has the right to act as a judge of the HC, and he should resign, said Enayetur Rahim.

Ecneec sends back

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body that examines and approves development projects and programmes, however, approved eight other projects involving Tk 748 crore. Those include Tk 69.58-crore first-phase of a project designed for solving waterlogging at Bhabadaha in Jessore.

Thousands of people in Jessore, Sathkira and Khulna are affected by the waterlogging problem that causes extensive damage to the crops every year.

The projects that failed to get approval were: the rehabilitation and modernisation of units 1 and 2 of Ghorashal thermal power station (revised) estimated at Tk 210.2 crore, rehabilitation of unit 3 of the Karnaphuli hydro power station (revised) at Tk 180.2 crore, the 150-MW Chandpur combined cycle power plant and its transmission line (revised) at Tk 687 crore, development of support services for Bangladesh Police at Tk 65 crore, improvement of the brake system of Bangladesh Railway at Tk 34 crore and Debagram-Pragati Sarani link road estimated to cost Tk 90 crore.

The Chandpur power project had been awarded to the blacklisted Chinese company Harbin amid allegations of gross irregularities and corruption.

The other controversial project was the rehabilitation of 50-MW third Karnaphuli hydropower unit. The proposal for the project seeks to obtain Tk 180 crore for its rehabilitation under an Italian soft loan whereas a new plant could be installed at a cost of Tk 150 crore.

The Tk-210 crore project for the rehabilitation and modernisation of Ghorashal 1 and 2 power units (revised) was also sent back. In its revised budget, Tk 122 crore has been stated as Russian suppliers' credit. The original cost of the project was Tk 117 crore.

Meeting sources said the Ecneec members have asked the concerned ministry to review terms and conditions of the suppliers' credit.

The Tk 65-crore project for developing support services for Bangladesh Police also did not get the nod. It proposes to buy vehicles from China on interest-free loans. China would supply vehicles instead of giving the loan in cash.

But the Ecneec members raised questions about the need for vehicles for police department and at the same time sustainability of the Chinese cars.

About the Debagram-Pragati Sarani link road, the meeting asked the communications ministry to see whether the proposed two-lane link road could be upgraded to a four-lane highway. It also directed the ministry to study the environmental impact especially the probability of waterlogging, a source said.

The project for improvement of the brake system of Bangladesh Railway was sent back as the meeting questioned the necessity of the project when a master plan is on the card for improvement of the railway sector.

"It might turn out to be unnecessary duplication of works under the master plan to which a number of donor agencies have committed funds recently," another source said.

The other projects that were approved at yesterday's meeting are Paglabiri-Tista Barrage road development costing at Tk 32.33 crore, Mohraghat-Kalurghat Water Treatment Plant Tk 82.30 crore, infrastructure development in greater Rajshahi Tk 116.24 crore, development of Military Institute for Science and Technology at Mirpur Cantonment Tk 30.72 crore, Atomic Treatment Centre extension in Bogra, Barisal, Khulna, Mymensingh and Rangpur Tk 45 crore, overhaul of Zia Fertiliser Company at Tk 190 crore and Jamuna Fertiliser Company at Tk 181.48 crore.

Sources said the Ecneec was apprised of some 45 other projects approved by former finance and planning minister M Saifur Rahman during the immediate past BNP-led alliance rule. A finance minister can approve projects costing under Tk 25 crore without the approval of the Ecneec.

Asked about the matter, finance and planning adviser said, "The projects were approved by the past finance minister, but so far no funds have been allocated against those. He added that they would examine those before approving any allocation."

Essentials' prices
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Price of coarse rice increased by Tk 2 per kg to Tk 20 while it was selling at Tk 18 last week. Fine rice also saw an increase of Tk 1.5 to 2 since last two weeks.

Soyabean oil is now selling at Tk 60, which was selling at Tk 56-57 last week.

Fish market in the capital also saw a rise in prices of different kinds of fish. Price of small fishes rose by Tk 20-30 per kg. The prices of other fishes, which were earlier Tk 200 per kg, went up by Tk 50-100.

Prices of milk powder and condensed milk also rose. Milk powder Diploma (.5 kg) is now sold at Tk 165, a Tk 15 increase from the previous price.

Small and medium sized chicken (local) is now sold at Tk 120-140, which was only Tk 80-100 two weeks back. Per kg broiler is now selling at Tk 95-98, which was only Tk 70-75 two weeks ago.

Retailers at Palashi, Hatirpuli and Kathalbagan said that the recent price hike might be caused by countrywide drive against food adulteration and black-marketeering.

Mahbub, a schoolteacher shopping at Palashi Bazar, said that he has been struggling to meet his family expenses these days, as the prices of essential products have been soaring every day.

Hasina asks CG, EC

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they have always brought about reforms and changes in the party-and will continue to do so in the future-as per demands of the time.

She said the EC could now start preparing the voter list with photographs in the six divisional headquarters for holding elections within June.

An AL delegation placed the demand at a meeting with the chief election commissioner last week.

Hasina also urged the caretaker government to make sure transparent ballot boxes are used at all polling centres across the country during the elections.

Terming the present caretaker government the outcome of the AL-led grand alliance's movement, Hasina welcomed the reforms introduced in the EC, Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), and its initiative to separate the judiciary from the executive.

She said the interim government should finish the reform work at the earliest possible time.

Referring to the recent EC reconstitution, she said now the government should take steps against the 345 politically appointed election officials.

Hasina also demanded reforms in the Public Service Commission as, she said, the highest body for

recruiting government officials was severely politicised by the immediate past BNP-led government.

She accused the BNP-Jamaat coalition government of repressing, harassing and killing leaders and workers of opponent political parties, looting and plundering public wealth. She asked the caretaker government to initiate a thorough investigation into the matters and bring the corrupt BNP-Jamaat men to trial.

The AL president also demanded investigations into the killings of former AL lawmakers Ahsanullah Master and Shah AMS Kibria, the August 21 grenade attack on an AL rally, the bomb attack on British High Commissioner Anwar Choudhury, smuggling of 10 truckloads of arms in Chittagong, and the countrywide bomb blasts on August 17.

Hasina said Jamaat-e-Islami is involved in the entire range of criminal activities and asked the caretaker government why only one Jamaat leader has been there among the corruption suspects. She also asked why the Jamaat leaders who looted relief goods and indulged in criminal activities in the country are not being arrested.

Farmers block roads

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They also urged the government to start selling fertiliser on the open market immediately to ensure its smooth supply. Otherwise, the target of IRRI-Boro cultivation of the district will not be achieved this year, they feared.

Acute fertiliser scarcity has been prevailing in all 13 upazilas of Dinajpur since the very onset of IRRI-Boro season, the farmers added.

Local agricultural officials expressed hope that the problem will be solved soon as necessary steps have been taken and several letters were sent to the agriculture adviser for ensuring adequate supply of fertiliser.

At least 138 fertiliser dealers have been appointed in the district, Dinajpur DC official sources said. Only 4,000 metric tons fertiliser has been supplied so far against the required amount of 14,000 metric tons for March, they added.

Our correspondent from Pabna reports: Several hundred farmers besieged upazila agriculture offices of Chatmohar and Bhangura of the district on Friday demanding fertiliser.

The farmers went to the offices to get slips issued for fertiliser from the agriculture officers, but they were given none. The upazila nirbahi officers (UNOs) pledged to provide them with the slips and required amount of fertiliser by yesterday, but a large number of the farmers returned empty-handed from the dealers yesterday, as there was not sufficient stock.

The supply of fertiliser falls far short of the demand, sources said.

"While we need at least 10 sacks of Urea, we just got one sack," said a frustrated farmer of Chatmohar.

Chatmohar Upazila Agriculture Officer Md Azahar Ali said that 793 metric tons fertiliser is needed in March, while the dealers have withdrawn 140 metric tons so far.

The Urea crisis further intensified as the stock for previous month ran out by February 20, he added.

In Bhangura, only two dealers out of 10 collected their allotted fertiliser in this year causing shortages in distribution, sources said.

Our Correspondent from Barisal says: Farmers in Mehendiganj, Hizla, Muladi, Agoljkhara and Gourmadi upazilas have laid siege to government offices concerned and blocked roads and highways demanding fertiliser.

Against the total demand of 10,728 metric tons of fertiliser for the months of January and February, only 2,908 metric tons have been supplied, sources said. With the supply for the month of March yet to be reached, the district godown had only 278 metric tons in stock yesterday.

GMS Alam, deputy director of the district agricultural extension directorate and member secretary of the monitoring cell for the fertiliser and seeds distribution, blamed scarce supply from the Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC) for the crisis.

Barisal DC Manzur-e-Elahi said that they are yet to get a reply to the letter sent to higher authorities by fax on February 20 asking for adequate supply on emergency basis.

The farmers alleged that Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation's (BADC) direct sale to the authorised dealers without establishing a retail sales network, causes hassles to the farmers, increases chances of smuggling and often creates artificial crisis in the market.

The BCIC has no control over the fertiliser business at present and even their godowns are leased out to the private fertiliser businessmen, they added.

Passports of 200

FROM PAGE 1
According to sources, the army-led crack forces have a list of over 400 people alleged to have made a huge fortune through corruption in the last 12 years.

Their 'misdeeds' include siphoning off public money, manipulating tenders, grabbing land, misappropriating funds from different government projects, and creating political chaos.

The forces first seized passports on February 4, the day they launched a crackdown on 'corrupt' political big names from both the BNP and Awami League (AL), businessmen and bureaucrats.

As of February 28, they have seized passports of 74 politicians, 86 businessmen and 25 incumbent and former bureaucrats from their houses, offices and the places they would frequent, said sources.

Passports of the wife, sons and daughters of a few have also been seized as part of the pressure tactics.

"They may also detain close relatives to force them to surrender," said a source.

Most of the serving and ex-bureaucrats whose passports have been seized are from customs, the National Board of Revenue, Roads and Highways and Power Development Board. A number of secretaries are among those.

Some of the influential people who have dual nationality are learnt to have siphoned off a huge amount of money from Bangladesh, said sources.

"The joint forces fear that it might not be possible to bring them back to Bangladesh once they have managed to flee the country," a top official of a law enforcement agency told The Daily Star.

One of the 50 graft suspects, a large chunk of whose wealth came from illegal businesses, has already

left the country.

Another top businessman has gone abroad incognito, using a separate passport, said sources.

The immigration police at Zia International Airport yesterday said they have yet to receive a complete list of such individuals.

"We bar people from going abroad on instructions from the government agencies. Usually, we get an alert message when these people come to the airport or a short while before they move in that direction," officer-in-charge of the immigration police told The Daily Star.

Border confce

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Both sides also discussed the issues including BSF's obstruction to the movement of Bangladeshi citizens and cattle through the corridors and prevention of Bangladesh farmers from cultivating land at Uttarkul-Amalshid-Biabail in Sylhet and Jokiganj, propaganda against Bangladesh and BDR in Indian media, pumping water out of Feni river for irrigation, shifting of Bholanath BSF camp 150 yards away from zero line, construction of border pillars at Doikhata and Berubari in Panchagarh district and mutual cooperation and understanding.

Representatives from the home ministry, foreign ministry, Bangladesh-India Joint Rivers Commission, Bangladesh Land Record and Survey Department and high officials of BDR participated in the conference under the leadership of the BDR director general.

Frontier IGs and high officials of home and foreign ministries of India attended the conference.

2 Rab men killed

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On information, other Rab personnel rushed to the spot and raided the whole area. They recovered two casings of bullets and a mobile phone from there.

Criminal Investigation Department (CID) Superintendent Abdul Momin has been tasked with the investigation of the incident.

The victims' bodies, however, were kept at the crime scene till filing of this report at 9:15pm yesterday.

Humayun Kabir hailed from Barisal while Phool Mia from Sariakandi in Bogra, said Rab-11 officials.

Learning about the incident, Inspector General of Police Nur Mohammad and top Rab officials including Director General Hasan Mahmud Khondoker visited the crime scene yesterday evening.

6 Sunnis slain

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security force in retaliation for the rape of a Sunni woman by members of the Shia-dominated police.

The brutal killing occurred in one of the provinces surrounding Baghdad, where violence remains high despite a sharp drop in bombings and sectarian killings in the capital since the start of the US-led security crackdown last month.

Brig Gen Abdul-Karim Khalaf, an Interior Ministry spokesman, said the bodies were discovered Friday afternoon in Diyala province. The policemen were kidnapped Thursday on their way to their homes in Diyala for leave, he said.

On Friday, the Islamic State of Iraq said in a Web statement that it seized 18 Interior Ministry employees in Diyala in retaliation for "the crimes carried out ... against the Sunnis," including the alleged rape last month of a Sunni woman by policemen in Baghdad.

Govt focused

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system before holding a meaningful general election since all of the important institutions for good governance have been weakened systematically under the guise of democracy over the years, the law adviser said.

The meeting was jointly organised by UN Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor and Brac University School of Law at Brac Centre Inn in the capital.

"Our fight against corruption has been undertaken as part of the reform necessary for fair election and good governance," he said, urging all to work together to usher in responsible politics and political leadership.

To strengthen the legal mechanism the interim government has taken the bold step of separating the judiciary from the executive, said the adviser. "As we are going through a very difficult time, we wish to see our efforts toward establishing democracy and the rule of law as part of combined national exercise in building a just and safe society for all."

He said the government is sincerely trying to uphold the constitutional process and make the democratic system work. "Our main efforts are directed towards restoring the legal mechanism...for an integrated social contract as an effective weapon in the fight against poverty."

"Our civil society needs to be more assertive and focused when it comes to issues of good governance," barrister Mainul noted.

The adviser also urged the business community to come forward boldly at this critical time to cooperate in restraining rising prices of essentials.

"Suffering of the general public must be alleviated even if that involves some sacrifice. Everyone has a role to play if we do not want the crisis to go worse," Mainul said.

Rejoinder

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concerned following which the officer stopped the voting.

"Shortly afterwards, the presiding officer left the polling centre with all the election officials and submitted a written statement to the upazila nirbahi officer, who was then working as assistant returning officer, about the criminals' illegal activities at the polling centre."

"As the criminals came to the centre again and tried to snatch the ballot boxes and also the rifles of policemen, a policeman opened fire in defence and Khorshed, one of the criminals, was killed."

Hafizuddin also claimed that when the police opened fire he was sitting at the UNO office and filing a written complaint about the irregularities at that centre, which is two kilometres away.

Two cases were filed in this connection and investigation proved that bullets shot by police killed Korshed, he added.

Manik, who recently submitted an application implicating him in the incident, did this being instigated by the AL leaders, the rejoinder said.

Lalmohon Police Station is now examining the matter and no case has been filed yet, it said, adding that there is no legal basis for filing a case concerning the application.

OUR REPLY
The news item for which Major (ret'd) Hafizuddin Ahmed sent the rejoinder was not reported by The Daily Star. It ran the news as received from news agency UNB. And therefore, The Daily Star by no means could be made responsible for the report.

Relief goods found

FROM PAGE 1
brother's wife Nazma Begum, Astha Director Rokhsana Aktar Ranu and Member-Sultan Mahmud.

The district court sent them to jail after the law enforcers handed them over to the court, reports our Jessore correspondent.

Police raided the house of Nargis Begum but she was not present there.

Of the 103 CI sheets seized in Jessore, 23 were recovered from the Astha office set in a part of a house owned by Astha Secretary Sharfuddowa Chhotlu, police said.

The relief material was used to build the roof of Astha office and a library in honour of Tariqul's father-in-law.

Upazila Project Implement Officer Nazrul Islam filed a case against 28 people including Astha President Nargis Begum on charge of misappropriating the CI sheets meant for relief.

Other accused in the case include: Astha Vice-President and Sadar Upazila BNP President Golam Reza Dulu, Secretary Sharfuddowa Chhotlu, Joint Secretary Nur Alam Pannu, Treasurer and Tariqul's son Aninda Islam Amit, Member Shantanu Islam Sumit and his wife Lamia Rahman, Executive Secretary and Juba Dal leader Masudul Haq, Member and Juba Dal President Ehsanul Haq Munna.

The law enforcers also recovered 40 CI sheets from the house of Manir Hossain, 16 pieces from the house of Ansar Ali and 16 pieces from the house of Nurul Islam. Another eight pieces were recovered from the house of Zarina Begum.

Police arrested and Zarina Begum and Dalim, son of Nurul Islam.

DHAKA
Khilaqon police yesterday impounded two vehicles including a luxurious Toyota Prado owned by Chowdhury Alam - an influential BNP leader and ward commissioner of Dhaka City Corporation.

The two vehicles -- Toyota Land Cruiser Prado TX Limited (Dhaka Metro Gha 11-7023) and Toyota Will VS (Dhaka Metro Kha 12-0250) -- were confiscated by Khilaqon police from Alam's residence at 315/C Khilaqon.

Retail market price of Toyota Prado is now Tk 55 lakh while Toyota Will VS is Tk 19 lakh said the police officials.

Officer-in-charge of Khilaqon Police Station SMA Zahid told The Daily Star that these vehicles were impounded as part of an ongoing investigation to assess the value of Alam's wealth to compare with his income.

Alam had been placed on a one-month detention after he surrendered to a Dhaka court on February 23.

COMILLA
UNB adds: Joint forces and officials of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) confiscated valuables from the house of former BNP MP Engineer Manjurul Ahsan Munsif at Debidwar yesterday.

Engineer Munsif, one of the 50 corrupt corrupts, is now in jail.

The confiscated valuables include 150 pieces of sari, 23 pieces of lungi, one freezer, two colour TV sets, one sofa set and several air-

conditioners.

They also asked Manjurul's maternal uncle Abdur Rab Munsif and Imam of the local mosque Emdadul Haq to take care of his two-storey house.

ACC Deputy Director Abu Syed, Army Major Enayet Karim, local UNO Rezaul Maksud Jahedi, OC Tapan Kumar and engineers Abu Taher and Helal Ahmed were present during the drive.

NETRAKONA
The joint forces recovered 73 CI sheets meant for relief from Kendua and Purbadhala upazila in the district on Friday night, our correspondent reports.

Police sources said, the joint forces recovered 39 pieces CI sheets for relief from the house of BNP leader Abul Mansur at Chilimpur village of Kendua upazila.

The joint forces also recovered 44 pieces of CI sheets from the business establishment of BNP leader Nurul Islam at Narayandohor bazar in Purbadhala upazila.

BENAPOLE
The joint forces seized five bundles of CI sheets from Gopi Central Road in the town on Friday night, reports BSS.

The forces recovered the CI sheets from the house of one Monir Hossain. Police arrested Monir Hossain.

MOULVIBAZAR
One of the close associates of detained former lawmaker M Naser Rahman and Moulvibazar district BNP finance secretary Mohammed Kamal Uddin was produced to Moulvibazar police on Saturday.

Earlier on Friday, Kamal Uddin appeared before the Moulvibazar Anti-Corruption Commission office where the commission asked him to do so. After interrogation, he was handed over to the joint forces. The joint force produced Kamal to Moulvibazar Police Station on Saturday evening, reports our correspondent.

BNP leader Kamal is said to have made crores of taka from various firms working for Water Development Board and Roads and Highways Department with blessings of detained former lawmaker M Naser Rahman.

JHENIDAH
Jhenidah police detective branch yesterday arrested Harinakundo upazila BNP secretary general and Doulatpur UP chairman Abul Hossain.

Police sources said Hossain was arrested on charges of extortion, tender manipulation and sheltering extremists, reports our correspondent.

US war-wounded

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Defence officials said Harvey was fired because of the army leadership's failure to move more decisively to fix the problems.

"I am disappointed that some in the army have not adequately appreciated the seriousness of the situation pertaining to outpatient care at Walter Reed," Gates said.

"Some have shown too much defensiveness and have not shown enough focus on digging into and addressing the problems."

"Also I am concerned that some do not properly understand the need to communicate to the wounded and their families that we have no higher priority than their care," he said.

Gates was surprised when the army named Lieutenant General Kevin Kiley, the army's surgeon general, to temporarily replace Weightman when Kiley himself had been a target of criticism, said a senior defence official, who asked not to be identified.

The Post had reported that Kiley was aware of complaints about outpatient care of wounded soldiers as far back as 2003 when he was the commander of the centre.

Kiley had earlier dismissed the Post stories as "one-sided."

The army, meanwhile, announced that Major General Eric Schoomaker would replace Weightman as commander of the medical centre.

Gates reaffirmed his confidence in the staff at Walter Reed, a specialty care hospital in Washington that treats thousands of soldiers critically wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"From what I have learned the problems of Walter Reed appear to be problems of leadership," Gates said. "Walter Reed doctors, nurses and other staff are among the best and most caring in the world."

An outside panel formed by Gates is reviewing conditions at Walter Reed and at the National Naval Medical Centre in Bethesda, Maryland. It is to report back in 45 days.

The presidential commission announced by the White House will have a broader charter.

It will examine the treatment of troops from "the battlefield to their return to civilian life as veterans so that we can ensure that we're meeting their physical and mental health needs," said White House deputy spokeswoman Dana Perino.

In his radio address, Bush was to highlight that he has asked Congress to approve 86 billion dollars for veteran services in his upcoming budget.

"If Congress approves my

request, this would amount to a 77-percent increase since I took office, and the highest level of support for veterans in America's history," he was to say.

40 people killed

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later told EIShinta radio, adding that the road is the main distribution line especially for fuel.

He said people were taking refuge in churches since they have been "warned through local radio to move away from critical areas near the big river."

He also said that many rice fields were destroyed by the landslides, which will lead to food shortages in the district in the near future.

Houses in two other districts were reported to have been washed away by flash floods that followed five days of heavy rain in the area.

Authorities are preparing to send food supplies to displaced people in the affected areas.

Erasmus pleaded for help from the central government and aid agencies for "body bags, rubber gloves, masks, gum boots and also mosquito nets for the refugees, medicines, kerosene lamps and tents."

"We have sent staff to help ... including sending 100 body bags," Ministry of Health official Rustam Pakaya told state news agency Antara from Jakarta.

Telephone communication to the area has been almost entirely cut off since the landslides late Friday.

With phone lines down, search and rescue teams are instead having to rely on citizen band radio, with all information coordinated by the disaster management office in the provincial capital, Kupang.

"(Provincial authorities) have requested the police and military help with evacuation efforts," he said, adding that work was being hampered by access problems.

Erasmus said bad weather had also prevented the delivery of some body bags to areas that had requested them.

Heavy downpours in the island caused 11,000 people in the Reok subdistricts to leave their homes after floods hit the area on Thursday.

The meteorology agency forecast more rain in the area for the next two days.

Indonesia is currently at the height of the monsoon season, with heavy rains causing landslides and flooding in various parts of the archipelago.