

ACC for arresting suspects without court's permission

Readies proposals to amend act for making all offences under ACC jurisdiction non-bailable

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has prepared an amendment proposal to toughen up the ACC Act that will empower the anti-graft body to arrest corruption suspects without the court's permission.

The ACC also proposed to the government to expand its jurisdiction to include greater number of offences and consider those as non-bailable and cognizable.

The commission will soon send the proposed amendment to the government, who, if satisfied after a quick examination, will promulgate an ordinance to amend the ACC Act, 2004, in absence of parliament, said an ACC official preferring anonymity.

The whole process to promul-

gate the ordinance might be finished within a week, said the official.

Sources said, currently Section 21 of the ACC Act states that an ACC-assigned official needs the court's permission to arrest a person suspected of holding movable or immovable property in their name or others' that is not compatible with their declared income resources.

The proposed amendment would add that during inquiries or investigations regarding sections 26 and 27 of the ACC Act, an ACC-assigned official can arrest a person without the court's permission if the official is convinced that the accused has acquired more than his/her declared income.

Section 26 of the ACC Act directs people to declare their assets, while

Section 27 of the act provides guidelines for sentencing persons found guilty of possession of property in excess of known sources of income.

Under the current ACC Act, the commission can act against only a small number of offences, as outlined in its 'schedule of offences'. There were a higher number of offences under the jurisdiction of the now-defunct Bureau of Anti-Corruption.

The ACC has proposed the inclusion of the Anti-Money Laundering Act, 2003 in its 'schedule of offences'. Besides, the commission has also asked for the inclusion of 35 sections of the Penal Code in its jurisdiction.

The Foreign Exchange Regulations, 1947 could also be included in the commission's

'schedule of offences'.

The current ACC Act also states that the ACC must formulate a number of rules for the commission's operation. However, no rules have been formulated since the ACC's inception in November 2004. This is largely to blame for the non-functional state of the ACC till the commission was recast in February this year.

Although the new ACC chairman and two commissioners have taken several important measures to combat corruption, no rules have been formulated yet.

In the absence of rules, a number of cases were filed against the ACC between November 2004 and February this year, challenging their actions against corruption.

The proposed amendment to

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Huge unusable arms, ammo found in pond

STAR REPORT

Police yesterday recovered a huge cache of abandoned and unusable World War II era heavy artillery ammunition including mortar shell, anti-tank projectiles along with several thousands of machinegun and SLR bullets from a pond at Rupganj in Narayanganj.

Police believe that the ammunition found were stockpiled in the area during World War II when nearby Jhagara Stadium in Araihajar was used as an airport by the British forces.

The ammunition included 5,500 machinegun bullets, a 120mm mortar shell, nine 40mm anti-tank projectile shells -- that are also used as anti-aircraft shells, 19 anti-tank projectile short (37mm) shells, 350 tracer bullets and 1,300 SLR bullets, said ASI

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Single list of remaining graft suspects on cards

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Council of Advisers has reached a consensus on publishing a list of remaining graft suspects at a time.

"If a single list of all corruption suspects is published, it would be better for all. Once such a list is published, be it short or long, other people would know they are not on the list," LGRD Adviser Anwarul Iqbal told a business delegation that met him yesterday at his office.

"The advisers are convinced that the list of graft suspects should be published within 72 hours," he added.

The adviser discussed with the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industries (DCCI) leaders the ongoing crackdown on the corrupt and assured that honest business-

men will not be harassed. But there are sufficient grounds for the corruption to be panicked, he noted.

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) is preparing to come up with a second list of graft

suspects within a week taking into account the list of 50 such suspects published in newspapers on March 7. The new list might contain over 100 names, ACC sources said.

Earlier on February 18, the ACC made public its list of 50 corruption suspects asking them to submit to it their wealth statement within 72 hours. Of them, 35 submitted their wealth statements and 33 are now in prison.

The ACC in its investigation found inconsistencies in the wealth statements submitted to it. The sources said graft suspects

on the ACC's second list will also be asked to submit wealth statements within 72 hours.

Meanwhile, the government is set to go for a crackdown also on its corrupt officials and those of autonomous bodies as in the case of politicians and businessmen suspected of corruption, sources said.

The drive will mainly focus on corrupt officials of the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), Roads and Highways, Education Engineering Department, Dhaka Water and Sewerage Authority (Wasa), Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (Desa), Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company Ltd and Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB).

Banks find low deposit, credit demand

Economists say situation to be temporary

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Credit in commercial banks decreased while deposit showed a slight growth in the first two months of the year, and the bankers relate it to the recent spree of anti-graft drives for the unusual trend.

Economists view this is only a temporary effect of a strict measures taken for welfare of the country.

The Bangladesh Bank (BB) statistics show that credit in com-

Titas gas field stares at disaster

SHEIKH MD SHAHIDUL ISLAM
from Brahmanbaria

The country's biggest gas field Titas in Brahmanbaria continues to face a possible disaster due to leakage of a dangerous amount of gas mixed with water and oil through thousands of holes and cracks on the ground there.

According to the central bank data, deposit growth was 4.34 percent and credit growth was 4.06 percent in the two months period of November and December 2006.

The overall growth of credit and deposit in 2006 was 20 percent

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meaningful action to ameliorate the situation which has virtually become a ticking time bomb.

Gas and the thick hot sludge of water and oil are gushing out with increased force now through thousands of cracks and holes on the ground and five tube well pumps at Sampur and Anadapur villages near gas well No 10 of location No 3.

However, the authorities are consoling the endangered residents of the area by saying that the leakage, that is visibly massive and spread over about 1,000 acres of land, 'will not cause any major disaster'.

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Abandoned and unusable artillery ammunition of World War II recovered by police from a pond at Rupganj in Narayanganj yesterday.

Nat'l coordination body for watertight steps against corrupt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The newly formed National Coordination Committee for crackdown on the corrupt and criminals has directed the officials concerned to work in such a way that they do not lose any legal fight against them.

The high-power committee at

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UGC to probe CU certificate scam, other irregularities

CU CORRESPONDENT

The University Grants Commission (UGC) on Tuesday formed a committee headed by its member Prof Sultan Hussain to probe into various irregularities at Chittagong University (CU) including the LLB

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বাংলাদেশ ক্রিকেট দলকে ফেভিকল-এর পক্ষ থেকে শুভকামনা

40 spotted deer seized in Thakurgaon

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Rangpur Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday seized 40 spotted deer from a business establishment at Chhit Chilarong Daroga slum under Thakurgaon district.

Acting on a tip-off, a Rab team led by Assistant Superintendent of Police Zahirul Islam raided the business house of Ezab Group, owned by Wali Ahmed and recovered the deer.

Rab also arrested Dabirul Islam, caretaker of the deer, and handed him over to Thakurgaon Sadar police.

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CA opens Saarc car rally today

UNB, Dhaka

In a landmark mega-event in the South Asian forum's history, SAARC Car Rally will kick-start from Cox's Bazar resort today to showcase the oneness and diversity of the region.

The cross-border caravan that will cruise through the South Asian countries is also planned as part of an effort to tap the vast potential of intra-SAARC trade, investment and

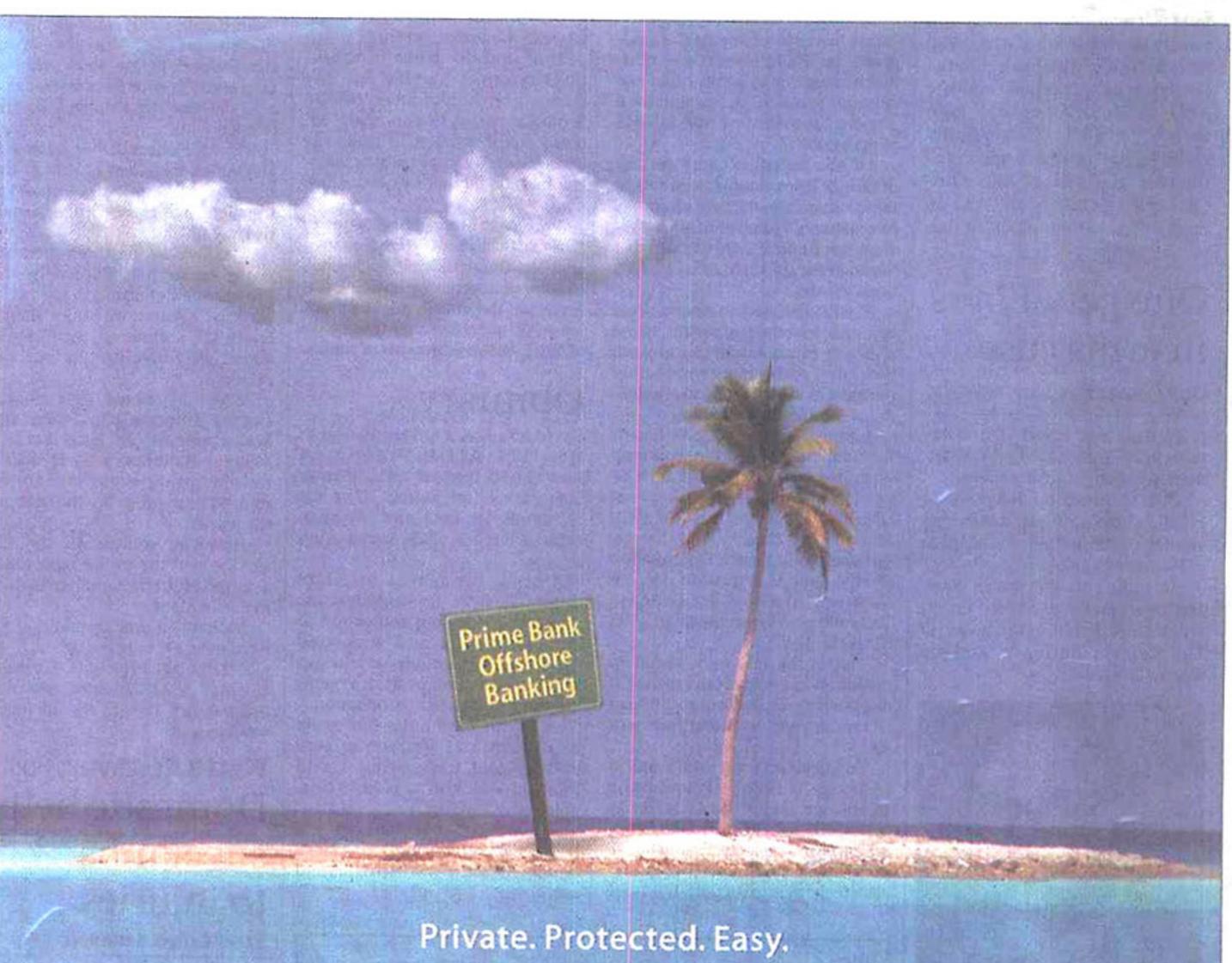
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Rejoinder, our reply

Chairman of Hyperion Builders Shamsul Alam in a rejoinder sent to The Daily Star on a news item titled "Partying on the beach" published on March 11 claimed that they are not constructing any apartment in the tourism zone in Cox's Bazar and they set the billboards of their housing project near the exclusive tourism zone just to attract the prospective buyers.

He claimed that all the five of their apartment projects are

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