

## HC issues rule on Tarique's detention

Asks govt to explain in 10 days why it is not illegal

BSS, Dhaka

The High Court (HC) yesterday issued a rule asking the government to explain why the detention of BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Tarique Rahman should not be declared illegal and without lawful authority.

After hearing a criminal miscellaneous petition filed by his wife Dr Jubaida Rahman challenging the legality of the detention of her husband, a division bench comprising Justice Abdul Wahab Miah and Justice Mohammad Emdadul Haque issued the rule, which is returnable within 10 days.

The law enforcers arrested Tarique Rahman, the eldest son of former prime minister Khaleda Zia, from her cantonment residence on March 8. He was produced before the Chief Metropolitan

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## BANGABANDHU MURDER CASE SC now can form bench for hearing after six years

ZAYADUL AHSAN

Proceedings in the historic Bangabandhu Murder Case may resume any time after about six long years, as the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court (SC) now has enough judges who could hear the case.

The SC requirement of three judges to form a bench could be met with High Court (HC) Judge M Hassan Ameen's appointment to the Appellate Division yesterday.

Former special public prosecutor of the case, Anisul Haque, yes-

terday said currently, there seems to be no legal roadblocks.

"It only needs an initiative to have the case back on the cause list and begin the hearing proceedings," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

A senior official at the Attorney General's Office said they would soon communicate with the law ministry regarding the case and will move upon receiving directives from there.

The official told The Daily Star, "We will consult the ministry also about whether a team of special

public prosecutors should be assigned or our office will do the job."

The hearing on petition for leave to appeal against the High Court's verdict has remained stalled since August 2001 due to shortage of judges who could hear the case.

In about six years, a three-member bench could not be formed as five of the seven Appellate Division judges had either felt embarrassed or heard the case before as HC judges.

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## 5,000 paid JMB cadres active in country

Held militant leader claims

UNB, Pabna

A suspected military commander of Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), a banned Islamist outfit, Mostafizur Rahman Shahin, disclosed today that about 5,000 paid cadres are still active across the country.

Shahin made the confession during interrogation under a five-day remand.

Earlier on Thursday, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested Shahin at his home in Pabna.

During the interrogation, he also revealed that the JMB cadres are paid monthly remuneration, police sources said.

Shahin was quoted to have told the interrogators that the money for them comes from foreign countries, including the USA and Saudi Arabia, sent by some Bangladeshi expatriates.

He was today produced in the

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## Scope now for wide institutional reforms

C'wealth secretary general tells CA

UNB, Dhaka

Visiting Commonwealth Secretary General Donald C McKinnon yesterday said the opportunity has come for the caretaker government to carry out fundamental and institutional reforms in the electoral process.

The C'wealth executive chief made the remark when he paid a courtesy call on Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed at his office.

The chief adviser informed the secretary general that reforms are being carried out for holding a free, fair and credible election so honest and competent persons can participate in the election.

About the next general election, the chief adviser said: "The Election Commission has been reconstituted and is already functioning to hold the election in a credible manner."

McKinnon said he will convey to the Commonwealth leaders the message about the steps and achievements of the government.

Fakhruddin informed McKinnon that the present caretaker government is directly accountable to the people and believes in transparency and openness. He said despite promulgation of the state of emergency, media are free and always evaluating the government's performance.

He said steps have been taken to separate the judiciary from the executive and to strengthen constitutional institutions like the Election Commission and the Anti-Corruption Commission.

The chief adviser also informed the Commonwealth secretary general that the caretaker government is working to remove the influence of three Ms—muscle, money, and misuse of authority—

from the election process to create a level playing field.

The government is also taking steps to accelerate economic activities, he said.

Earlier at a meeting with Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury at state guesthouse Padma, the Commonwealth secretary general offered technical assistance to Bangladesh for holding fair elections and other ongoing reforms.

After the meeting, the foreign adviser told reporters that the C'wealth secretary general was apprised of the preparations for holding the next elections.

He said McKinnon is very happy to see various ongoing steps taken by the caretaker government.

Law and Information Adviser Barrister Mainul Hossain and Energy Adviser Tapan Chowdhury also joined the meeting.

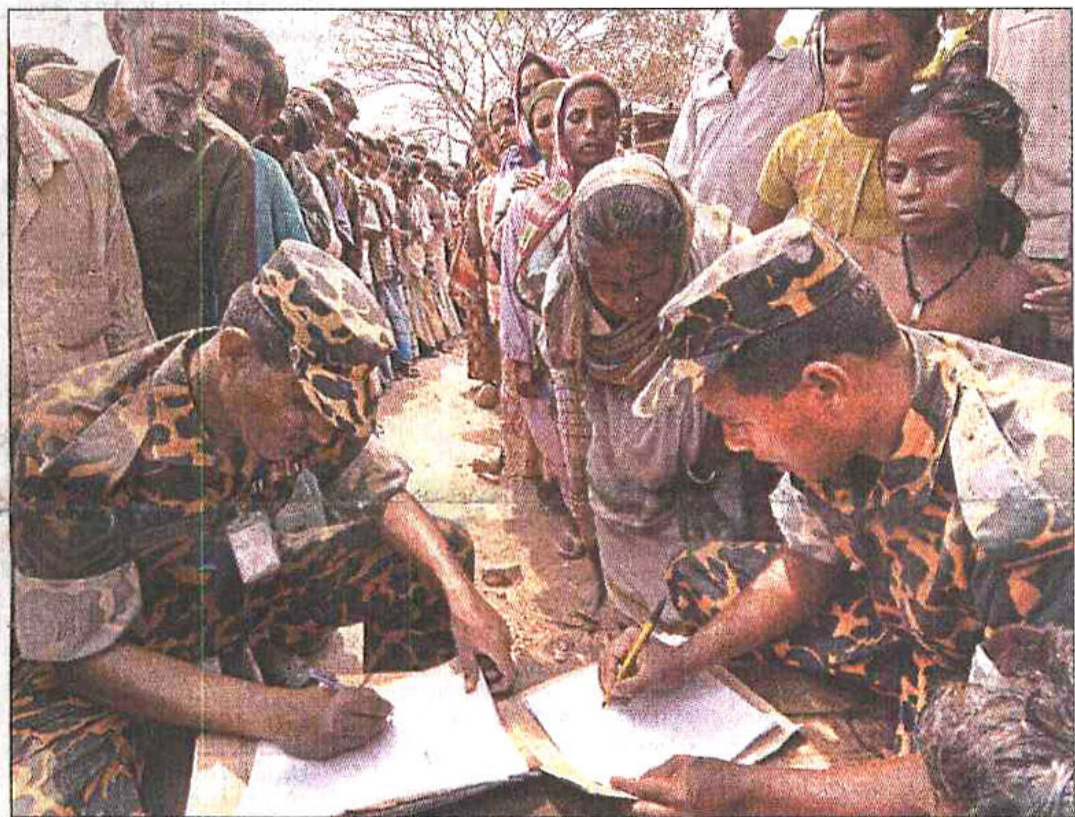


PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh Rifles personnel list victims of the government's eviction drives at Titipara in the capital yesterday so that they could be allocated shops in temporary kitchen markets.

## Housing sector saps on anti-graft drive

Knock-on effect felt on other sectors too

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country's booming housing sector has hit a huge snag as flat and land plot sales plummeted following the government's move to collect information about the buyers' sources of income.

The sales of flats and plots dropped by 50 percent at the latest fair of Real Estate and Housing Association of Bangladesh (REHAB) compared to the last fair in 2005. Tanveerul Haque Probal, REHAB general secretary, yesterday said.

"Fear and uneasiness have affected potential buyers of apartments and flats because of the move initiated by different government agencies as part of the ongoing anti-corruption drive," Probal said at a press conference organised by REHAB at a city hotel.

Representatives of construction-related industries, including

cement, re-rolling, financial institutions, paints and ceramic, were present at the press conference. REHAB President Mohammad Abdul Awal gave the introductory speech at the event.

Besides the illegal money holders, general people as well as remittance earners are also being discouraged to invest in the housing sector, the REHAB general secretary said.

"Notwithstanding the downturn in sales the real estate entrepreneurs have to pay bank interests regularly," he said, adding that this downturn has also caused a negative tendency in all the industries related to the housing sector.

Probal said REHAB members provide 6,000 apartments on an average. The housing industry along with other related sectors contributes 20 percent to the national GDP, he claimed.

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## Rain holds SA back

AFP, Basseterre

South Africa were well on their way to a thumping win against Scotland when rain halted play after 19 overs at Warner Park in St Kitts yesterday.

Captain Graeme Smith and AB de Villiers added 134 for the opening stand, setting the tone for a rout. De Villiers fell after making 62 but Smith was still at the crease with an unbeaten 77. Ashwell Prince was at the other end with 7.

Earlier, Scotland gave the Proteas attack a surprise workout when they registered their highest World Cup score of 186 for eight in the Group A match.

The five-pronged pace attack was led by Andrew Hall (3-48) who was ably supported by Charl Langeveldt (2-48) after Graeme Smith won the toss and decided to give his bowlers a runout before their clash against group rivals

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## Teen-powered Tigers take on Lanka today

AFP, Port of Spain

Giant-killers Bangladesh are counting on their teenagers to deliver yet again when they clash with experienced Sri Lanka in their second World Cup match here on Wednesday.

Teenagers Tamim Iqbal, Shakib Al Hasan and Mushfiqur Rahim played key roles in Bangladesh's shock five-wicket victory over 1983 champions India in the previous game here on Saturday, slamming impressive half-centuries.

Just one win was enough to raise Bangladesh's hopes of qualifying for the next Super Eight stage from Group B. In their last game, they will take on first-timers Bermuda who lost to Sri Lanka by 243 runs in their first match.

Sri Lanka have won 17 of their 18 one-day internationals against

Bangladesh, but are not expected to have another stroll in the park this time considering their opponents' recent form.

Bangladesh are looking a different side since arriving in the Caribbean early this month, having stunned higher-ranked New Zealand in a warm-up game in Barbados and then India here.

"We haven't played against most of the Bangladeshi players, but we watched them against India and they looked very good," said veteran Sri Lankan opening batsman Marvan Atapattu.

"The word pressure just doesn't exist with them. There is also the advantage of being young. When you have been around for a long time, the opposition can work out your strengths and weaknesses."

Sri Lanka may have Cup

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## Indigenous people of Madhupur protest death of leader in joint Forces' custody

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

The indigenous community of Madhupur continued their agitation yesterday demanding investigation of the questionable death of one of their leaders allegedly in the custody of the joint forces.

The deceased leader Chalesh Rishil Sangma was buried at his

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## FOREST FIRE

## Trees on 250 acres burnt in Sundarbans

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A devastating forest fire swept through Chandpai range near Nangli Forest Office in the Sundarbans destroying trees and animal habitat in almost 250 acres of the jungle on Monday.

The fire started around 4:00pm Monday and was eventually brought under control around 11:30pm with the help of forest

guards and local people.

The fire-affected area is under the east wing of Sundarbans Forest Division of Dakop upazila in Bagerhat district.

The origin of the fire could not be known but sources in the forest division said the fire could have started from a small fire which bawalis (honey collectors) make to smoke out bees.

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**Invitation for Registration**

The First Convocation Ceremony will be held on **April 24, 2007** at **Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Hall, Dhaka.**

**Registration Requirements:**

- Registration Form (Available at ACAD or NUB website)
- Tk. 2,000/- (cash or pay order in favour of NUB)
- 2 (two) copies of passport size color photographs.
- Last date: **March 31, 2007 (Saturday).**

- Registrar

**Contact:** 3/18, Iqbal Road, Asad Avenue, Mohammadpur  
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