



EMERGENCY POWERS RULES AMENDED

Right to bail curbed until trial ends

Accused cannot also seek redress from higher court

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday promulgated an amendment to the rules under Emergency Powers Ordinance 2007, suspending the rights to appeal for bail and seek redress from any higher court until a case is resolved in trial court.

The amendment also gives sweeping powers to the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) to

investigate, arrest or seize property by itself without the permission of the government or the official appointed by it.

The government issued a gazette notification last night promulgating the amendment with a retrospect effect from February 13.

According to the amended law, an accused will not be able to file a bail petition during the investiga-

tion or trial of a case.

Additionally, an accused will not be able to seek redress from any higher courts against any order given by any court or tribunal before or during the trial—until the delivery of the final verdict.

A court or tribunal will have to dispose a case filed under the Emergency Powers Rules within 45 days, but the court or tribunal

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Anti-graft body seeks to bolster its muscles

Wants to appoint high profile lawyers to fight cases

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK

To kick-start its activities effectively, the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has sought a number of facilities from the government and taken up a few measures on its own.

Sources said to come out of traditional practices the anti-graft body has decided to appoint a panel of high-profile lawyers to fight cases in trial courts on its behalf.

These lawyers will be paid professionally in sharp contrast to the existing ACC rate of maximum Tk

500 per hearing for public prosecutors and government pleaders. The ACC has already informed the finance ministry of its decision.

Meanwhile, the commission has made preparations to launch a massive nationwide campaign against corruption and, as part of this, sent a letter to the Cabinet Division yesterday, seeking permission to use a helicopter of Bangladesh Air Force.

Sources said the ACC will bear the fuel cost of the helicopter that the ACC chairman will take across

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FAIZEE'S CERTIFICATE CASE

President's nod to form Supreme Judicial Council

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday gave consent to form Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) to conduct an inquiry into the case of High Court Judge Faisal Mahmud Faizee, highly placed sources said.

The approval came after Chief Justice Md Ruhul Amin sent a letter to the president on March 12 seeking his permission to form the SJC.

Chittagong University recently cancelled graduation certificates of judge Faizee and others after a probe committee found evidence of tampering with the tabulation sheets.

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Corruption cases filed against Huda, Sigma, Nasim, Tuku, Lobi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday filed graft cases against three former ministers and their families and a former lawmaker.

The big fishes facing the corruption charges are former communications minister BNP leader Nazmul Huda, his wife advocate Sigma Huda, former home minister Awami League (AL) leader Mohammad Nasim, former state minister for power BNP leader Iqbal Hasan Mahmud Tuku and former BNP lawmaker Ali Asgar

Lobi.

Another graft case is expected to be filed with Khagrachhari Police Station against former BNP lawmaker Abdul Wadud Bhuiyan by morning today for acquiring wealth worth Tk 6.15 crore illegally.

Khagrachhari police said the ACC had already informed them over phone regarding filing of the case.

ACC Deputy Director (DD) Shafiqul Islam lodged the case against Nazmul Huda with Shahbagh Police Station for providing Bangladesh Railway land to

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Nat'l ID cards, voter list with photos on way

No polls likely before end-2008

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission (EC) has finally decided to prepare simultaneously national identity cards and a voter list with photographs for holding the stalled ninth parliamentary election.

The massive undertaking is likely to start after July and it will require at least a year to be completed. So, the ninth parliamentary election might be held at the end of 2008 or in early 2009 after the task is completed, senior officials of the EC Secretariat predicted.

The work of preparing the Voter list and national identity cards will start simultaneously following a single procedure. There is no point in spending time and

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McKinnon for early lifting of emergency

Suggests reinstatement of right to political activities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Commonwealth Secretary General Don McKinnon yesterday said the state of emergency and the 'suppression' of political activities should be lifted without 'unnecessary delay'.

McKinnon also stressed the need for the government to provide a 'best estimate' timetable and a roadmap leading up to and inclusive of elections, if it is to sustain the popular support required to complete its task of 'redesigning and rebuilding' democratic institutions.

"I note the current state of emergency and the suppression of political activities. These should be lifted without unnecessary delay, and certainly should not be



Don McKinnon

led to the completion of the voter registration process," said McKinnon at a news conference at Hotel Sonargaon in the capital.

McKinnon also said in absence of national or local government assemblies there is no forum for the people to voice their opinions. "No people should be deprived of such a forum any longer than absolutely necessary. This is a fundamental right," said McKinnon.

Termining the current situation as 'critical' and 'somewhat unusual', he said, "Once a new voters' registry is ready, elections should be held expeditiously," adding, "There should be no significant gap between [the preparation of the voter list] and the elections."

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PROF TAHER MURDER

Arrest warrant against Shibir leader Salehi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court in Rajshahi yesterday issued arrest warrant against Mahbubul Alam Salehi, president of RU unit Islami Chhatra Shibir, the main accused in Rajshahi University professor S Taher Ahmed murder case.

The High Court earlier granted bail for Salehi but it was cancelled as he violated the HC bail conditions of appearing before the lower court, said the lawyers concerned.

The bail granted on grounds of no charges against him also went useless on March 18 when charges of the murder were pressed against six people including him, sources said, adding that as he did not

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ICC WORLD CUP 07

Tigers in deep trouble

AFP, undated

Bangladesh lost half of their side for next to nothing as they were in pursuit of a massive 319-run target set by Sri Lanka in their Group B World Cup match at the Queen's Park Oval in Port of Spain yesterday.

The former world champions rode on Sanath Jayasuriya's devastating century as they piled 318 for 5 in their 50 overs after being put in by Tigers captain Habibul Bashar. In reply, Bangladesh lost five wickets for only 55 runs after 22 overs.

Opener Shahriar Nafees's horror World Cup continued when he left an incoming ball from left-arm seamer Chaminda Vaas in the first over, only to be out plumb in front.

His partner and hero of the last match Tamim Iqbal fell for only six, edging a Lasith Malinga delivery to keeper Kumar Sangakkara.

Atab Ahmed gave in to his temptations to a big shot as he holed out to Jayasuriya at square-leg. One-drop Mushfiqur Rahim soon followed, out caught at point off Farveez Maharoof. With the score on 41, Sakib Al Hasan fell to off-spinner Muttiah Muralidaran. Mohammad Ashraful joined captain Bashar and with the innings in tatters, the two men at the crease should look to play face-saving knocks.

Earlier, left-handed Jayasuriya, who had left the field on 83 due to cramp, returned in the closing overs to score an 87-ball 109 for his

24th hundred in one-day international.

Jayasuriya struck seven sixes and as many fours in an engrossing display of aggressive batting, reaching his century with a six off left-arm spinner Abdur Razaq.

The 37-year-old Jayasuriya had already put his team on course for a big total before he had retired hurt.

Sangakkara and Chamara Silva continued the good work to ensure Bangladesh chased a stiff target in their second Group-B match, which was interrupted for 30 minutes due to rain.

Sangakkara smashed 56 and Silva cracked a 48-ball 52 not out for their second successive half-centuries.

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Businessmen against steps that may lead to harassment

They say panic situation to hamper economy, want review of proposed sweeping power to ACC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of the country's business community yesterday suggested the caretaker government not to take initiatives that might make way for harassment of business people.

"Bad elements might exist in all sectors including among the business people, government officials, and politicians. But they should be brought to justice under existing laws of the land so that the measures cannot give rise to panic among the business people," Mahbubur Rahman, president of

the International Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) said after a meeting with Finance and Commerce Adviser Mirza Azizul Islam in his Planning Commission office.

Mahbubur said if panic grips hold of the business people it will hamper normal economic activities in the country.

"Nobody likes an emergency situation forever. The emergency situation should go after the government carries out necessary reforms," Anissul Huq, former president of Bangladesh Garment

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CA urges all to help curb price hike

UNB, Rajshahi

Chief Adviser (CA) Fakhruddin Ahmed yesterday urged all professionals, growers, suppliers, distributors and consumers, to play their wider role in controlling market price of the essential commodities.

"People's active support is indispensable to curb corruption and improve law and order situation in the country," the CA said at an opinion-exchange meeting with the elite and representatives of various professions of Rajshahi division at the local circuit house.

He said the present government is working with an ultimate aim to hold a "meaningful election so that people's representatives can take the responsibility of the government."

Mentioning various reform steps taken by his government, he said, "Measures are being taken to keep the election free from the

influence of black money."

He said judiciary is being separated from the executive with a view to bringing check and balance in democratic system.

The CA expressed the hope that Monga crisis would be resolved within next few years through a well-coordinated effort of the government and the private sector.

Citing financial constraints and limitations of institutional capacity of the government, the CA stressed prioritising works to be implemented for the development of the country.

Khondaker Habibur Rahman of Rajshahi Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Chapainawabganj Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Abdul Wahid, former principal Abdul Karim, chairman of Dinaipur municipality and NGO representative Mostafizur Rahman, among

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Effluent Treatment Plant (ETP), left, of Pakija Dyeing and Printing Ltd. The factory was fined yesterday for polluting water of adjacent Bangshi River, right, by keeping the ETP turned off.

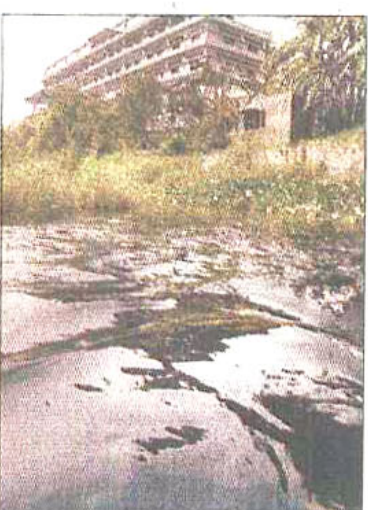


PHOTO: STAR

Four textile firms fined for polluting river

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Department of Environment (DoE) along with the armed forces and a mobile court during their clamp down on severe environment polluters at Savar in the capital yesterday fined and disconnected utility services of four dyeing and textile factories.

The four factories -- Pakija Dyeing and Printing, Anima Yarn Dyeing, HR Textile Mills and Bangladesh Dyeing and Finishing Industries -- had been polluting the environment by emitting toxic wastes into natural water bodies of the area.

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Star reporter held

Plaintiff not aware of case

STAR REPORT

The Daily Star's Nilphamari correspondent EAM Asaduzzaman Tipu was arrested yesterday morning in a case supposedly filed by a local fertiliser dealer who is not aware of any such case.

Journalists of Nilphamari gave the district administration an

ultimatum to release Tipu by mid-day today otherwise they will declare a greater course of action.

The Daily Star published a photo on March 17, showing a number of farmers surrounding fertiliser dealer Biswajit Bhoomik Bapi in the wake of an ongoing crisis of fertiliser in the district.

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Star Cruise from Mumbai to Goa

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