

Ctg mayor's bail order stayed for 2 days

Another extortion case filed against him

UNB, Dhaka

The Supreme Court yesterday stayed for two days the operation of Tuesday's High Court order, granting bail to the ailing Chittagong Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury.

The High Court had granted the bail to the CCC mayor for three months, but kept pending the hearing on its rule on the detention order against him.

The joint forces arrested Mohiuddin Chowdhury at his residence in the port city on March 7 on charges of corruption. Later, he was sent to Bandarban jail with one month's detention order.

Meanwhile, the mayor was sued in another corruption case filed

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PROTHOM ALO ROUNDTABLE

CEC slams wrong choice in picking election commissioners in past

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) ATM Shamsul Huda yesterday said past practices of "picking people from the streets" to make election commissioners have to stop if we have to have an independent and efficient Election Commission (EC). Huda said although it is difficult to prepare the voter list with photographs and national ID cards within the "tight" schedule of 18 months, it is necessary as the previous database and voter lists have lost all

credibility because of politicisation.

The CEC was speaking at a roundtable discussion titled "Immediate Action Plan for Election Commission" organised by Bangla daily Prothom Alo at Hotel Sheraton. The two election commissioners, former advisers to the caretaker government, legal experts and civil society representatives attended the discussion.

Former CEC Abu Hena spoke at length regarding the EC's independence, saying it is a matter of percep-

tion and it is the election commissioners who have to use their professionalism to ensure the commission's ability to draw up its own organogram and budget.

Huda concurred, saying it is the appointment of the election commissioners, which requires the closest scrutiny. "You cannot pick people from the streets to make them election commissioners as was done before," he said.

The EC is trying to accelerate its

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Nazrul's birth anniversary today

UNB, Dhaka

The 108th birth anniversary of National Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam will be celebrated today.

On this day in 1899, Nazrul was born at Churulia in Burdwan district of West Bengal. The poet through his powerful poems had inspired the people to fight against injustice and repression during the colonial rule.

Nazrul's songs and poems were also a great source of inspiration for

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Outlaw killed in 'shootout'

UNB, Rajshahi

A regional commander of outlawed Sarbojha Party was killed in a shootout between his cohorts and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) at Gonopara village in Bagmara upazila under the district early yesterday.

The dead, Akkas Ali alias Titu, 32, was a convicted fugitive and wanted in several cases including four for murder.

Acting on a tip-off, Rab raided a mango orchard of the village at 4:30am as 10 to 12 outlaws gathered there for committing a crime, Rab said.

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Prayer Timing		
May 25		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-05	4-40
Juma	12-30	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-40	6-45
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

BB seeks banking info of 24 graft suspects

List contains Koko, ex-ministers Altaf, Sajeda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The central bank yesterday asked all banks for account details of 24 corruption suspects, including former prime minister Khaleda Zia's son Arafat Rahman Koko, BNP leader Altaf Hossain Chowdhury, Dipu Chowdhury, son of AL leader Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya, Moyeen Abdullah, son of former AL chief whip Abul Hasnat Abdullah, Masud, son of AL leader Hazi Mokbul Hossain, Jewel, son of AL leader Kamal Ahmed Majumder, Hedayatullah, son of former AL MP Rahmatullah, Barisal City Corporation Mayor Mojibur Rahman Sarwar and Sylhet City Corporation Mayor Badaruddin Kamran.

The list also includes former state minister for law Shahjahan Omar, former state minister for sports Fazlur Rahman Patal, AL

leader Prof Rafiqul Islam, ex-BNP lawmaker Nadim Mostafa, AL leader Noor-e-Alam Chowdhury Lito, BNP leader of Keraniganj Mohammad Nazimuddin, former chief engineer of Roads and Highways Department Faizur Rahman, former prime minister's (Khaleda Zia) assignment officer Dr Firoze Mahmud Iqbal, former vice chancellor of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Medical University Dr MA Hadi and BNP leader and Power Development Board CBA leader Zafrul Hasan.

As per the BB directive, the banks will have to submit detailed information on transactions made

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TI GLOBAL CORRUPTION REPORT Politicisation major reason for judicial graft in Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International (TI) in its Global Corruption Report (GCR) 2007 said Bangladesh failed to ensure full independence of the judiciary and the politicisation of the judiciary is one of the major reasons behind judicial corruption.

The TI also highlighted a number

of other issues including bribery, judges' (except High Court and Supreme Court) bindings to the government, low population-to-judges ratio, huge backlog of cases strangling the judiciary and low salary and benefit structure for the judges.

The TI yesterday disclosed the

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Two bombs with Jadid al Qaeda message found

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Police recovered two more locally made bombs near the main gate of Rajshahi University of Engineering and Technology (Ruet) yesterday.

A similar bomb was recovered at Ruet main gate on Tuesday.

One of the bombs was wrapped in aluminium sheet and had a short erroneous message carved on it from "Jadid al Qaeda".

Police rushed to the scene soon after locals informed them around 9:00am. One bomb was found near the main gate while the other was

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PHOTO: STAR

Rise in the number of CNG-run vehicles and power cuts is resulting in long queues of vehicles at filling stations. The photo was taken at Mirpur-13, Dhaka.

Australian assistance to rise 33pc from next year

UNB, Dhaka

Australia yesterday announced 33 percent increase in its bilateral assistance for Bangladesh from next year, raising the amount to around 48 million Australian dollars.

Australian High Commissioner Douglas Foskett disclosed it to reporters after his meeting with Foreign Adviser Itekhhar Ahmed Chowdhury.

The adviser will go to Canberra on June 12 on a two-day official at the invitation of Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer.

The envoy said the talks between the two foreign ministers will focus on how Australian development programme will effectively be implemented in Bangladesh.

Besides, he said the present situation in Bangladesh will come up for discussion.

In reply to a question, Foskett said, "It is very important that everybody knows what is going

on...We're very positive that all are looking promising for the future."

About the annual aid programme, he said last year the volume was 36 million dollar, which will increase by 33 percent from next year.

The director general from the Ausaid will visit Dhaka early June to discuss the Australian aided projects, particularly in the health and education sectors.

Asked about Australian technical assistance for the election in Bangladesh, Foskett said a team from Australian Election Commission visited Dhaka last year and conducted two weeks practical training course for the election officials here.

The foreign adviser said his planned visit to Canberra will strengthen the Bangladesh-Australia bilateral ties and cooperation in promising sectors including IT and scientific development.

Tamil Tigers ambush Lankan navy base

35 sailors, 18 rebels killed

AP, Colombo

A flotilla of rebel boats launched a deadly raid yesterday on a navy camp in northern Sri Lanka, hours before a bomb exploded near an army bus in the capital killing one soldier and wounding six people.

The surge in violence came amid a deepening conflict between the government and separatist Tamil Tiger rebels that has shattered an internationally backed peace process and left at least 5,000 people dead in the past 18 months.

The Tamil Tigers attacked the small navy base in the village of Delft just after midnight, rebel and government officials said. The

details of what happened, though, were sharply in dispute.

Rebel spokesman Rasiyah Ilanthirayan said Tiger forces had killed 35 sailors and lost four of their own fighters. Military spokesman Brig. Prasad Samarasinghe said four sailors had been killed, four wounded and 18 Tigers killed.

The military and the rebels routinely deny and contradict each other's casualty tolls, and nearly all battles occur in isolated parts of the island nation off-limits to journalists or other outsiders.

"The fighting lasted only 20 minutes and we completely overran the camp," Ilanthirayan told

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