

ACC to ask 21

FROM PAGE 1

BNP's MAH Selim alias Silver Selim--and ward commissioner and film star Monwar Hossain Dipjol will be served with the notice.

Of the public servants and professionals AFM Monjurul Islam, ex-chief engineer of Public Works Department, Munshi Anwarul Islam, former chief forest conservator, Shahidullah Khan, ex-additional inspector general of police, Prof. Mahfuzur Rahman, member of Public Service Commission, and Dr AZM Zahid Hossain, general secretary of Bangladesh Medical Association(BMA) and a leader of pro-BNP doctors association.

Three businessmen--Obaidul Karim of Orion Group, AK Azad of Hamim Group and Editor and Publisher of the Daily Janakantha Atiqullah Khan Masud--too will be asked to turn in wealth statements.

Shamim Iskandar used to be a technical officer at Bangladesh Biman. He had immigrated to Canada with his family in January. Later, he returned to Dhaka to submit his resignation but could not yet leave.

After at a meeting at the ACC yesterday, its Chairman Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury told the press, "The notices will be served as soon as possible. We have completed all formalities to that end. The recipients will be given seven days to produce wealth statement."

Without disclosing the names, he said, "The ACC believes the source of wealth of these people is not honest. If they can prove otherwise, there will be no action against them. But we will sue them if we have enough proof that they are dishonest."

The ACC sources said that the list was prepared on the basis of a preliminary investigation that gave the commission reasons to believe that they have amassed quite a fortune through illegal means.

Various taskforces under the national coordination committee to combat corruption and crime submitted findings of their inquiries to the ACC on April 20.

The 21 will have to submit their statements to ACC Secretary Delwar Hossain. Unlike the last time, the ACC will not require them to hand in the statements in person. "The ACC's rules do not oblige one to do so," said a source.

Earlier on February 18, the anti-graft body asked 50 graft suspects to give in their wealth statements to it within 72 hours. The names came from 420 people listed as graft suspects in February.

Citing the ACC as a source, different national dailies published a second list of 50 corruption suspects on March 8. The latest 21 names derive from there.

Hasan Mashhud yesterday observed, "The list will expand further. Don't think this is the end."

The commission has filed at least two dozens of cases against the first 50 graft suspects. "They will submit charge sheets in six to seven cases within May 31."

Paltan killings

FROM PAGE 16

the matter following a petition by the investigation officer (IO).

The court had also directed the IO to probe the matter and fixed today for submission of the report.

On April 11, Criminal Investigation Department pressed charges against Hasina, AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil, Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal President Hasanul Haque Inu and 42 others for killing five Jamaat-e-Islami activists and injuring several others.

BNP reforms

FROM PAGE 1

The Awami League has already started working for preparing comprehensive proposals for reforms in the party as well as the electoral system. A team of eight top AL leaders headed by their President Sheikh Hasina is analysing the party constitution, funding and electoral systems and funding of parties in countries like the USA, the UK, Australia and India.

But the BNP policymakers are waiting for formal discussion in the party forum after the withdrawal of the restriction on indoor politics.

"So far as I know, no formal move was initiated for reforms in the party. I believe, all of us will sit together to discuss reforms once the ban on indoor politics is lifted," BNP Standing Committee Member Lt Gen (ret) Mahbubur Rahman told The Daily Star yesterday.

He said it is the right time for reforming the party to practise democracy within it.

He described the BNP chairperson's remarks as very positive. Khaleda had said, "We will begin working towards [bringing reforms in the party] once the ban on indoor politics is withdrawn."

A number of senior BNP leaders have already demanded amendment to the party constitution to reduce the chairperson's power.

Talking to The Daily Star, a senior BNP leader said, "It will take a few days to understand if the chairperson really wants reforms in the party."

TV channels

FROM PAGE 16

from them the rights they are supposed to have where freedom of access to information is concerned.

No one raised any question when a few channels were barred from downlink and transmitting over questions of morality, said several viewers.

The government decision also drew sharp reactions from rural areas as cable operators there do not have the ability to transmit pay channels.

Foreign citizens working in the capital, including those from Korea, Pakistan, and Germany, also expressed their dissatisfaction over the government's decision.

Viewers could watch only 30-35 channels instead of 70-80 channels after the government decision to take legal actions against downlink and transmission of unapproved TV channels in the country.

In the face of the adverse reaction, the information secretary told reporters that government has taken initiative not to control the TV channels but to bring the cable channel operators under rules and regulations.

In a press note issued on Saturday, the government said that it is mandatory for all distributors to take prior permission or licence from the government before transmitting any TV channels including pay channels and free-to-air channels.

The government therefore has produced a list of channels that had taken prior permission, said the press note.

Bird flu

FROM PAGE 16

parent farms or hatchery.

"I had to buy the chicks at Tk 42 each," said Bhai Bhai Poultry Farm owner Jasimuddin.

After the chickens got infected with H5N1 virus, Sumon Poultry Farm owner Mohammad Sirajul Islam culled 800 chickens on his own and the authorities culled the remaining 400. But he got Tk 28,000 for the 400 chickens, Sirajul Islam said, adding that all his chickens were 40-week old.

Denying the allegations, additional DG (Livestock) Khalilur Rahman Siddiqui said, "It is impossible to satisfy the owners as they are dependent on these farms."

By now, Tk 75 lakh has been disbursed among the affected farm owners, he said, adding, "We have tried to strike a balance. After consultation with all the stakeholders, we fixed the rates. The rates are higher than those in the neighbouring countries."

On the guidelines for the poultry farm and parent farms, the additional DG said, they are aware of this situation and would formulate the guidelines very soon.

Meanwhile, the hatchery owners have agreed to give the poultry farms one-day old chicks, poultry feeds and medicines for a month free of cost.

"The compensation seems to be poor. However, if we can distribute the one-day old chicks, poultry feeds, medicine and vaccines free of cost, it will be an exemplary act of support and help," Poultry Somenory Committee President Moshirur Rahman said.

The Asian Development Bank, USAID and FAO will also provide Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities.

Dhaka-Kolkata

FROM PAGE 1

distance between Shialdaha and the Bangladesh border is 120 kilometres while the length of the rail track in Bangladesh territory is 418 kilometres.

A 10-coach train with the capacity of carrying a total of 760 passengers will commute everyday. The train will start at 7:45am from Bangladesh towards India and at 7:00am from Shialdaha to Bangladesh.

"If immigration checks are conducted at the station then it will take eight hours to reach Kolkata. But if the check is conducted at the border, then it will take no less than 11 hours," said Shafiqul Alam Khan.

"But decisions are not finalised yet. If both governments agree then the decisions will be finalised at a joint meeting," Shafiqul said.

Bangladesh crews on board a train will ride up to the border and will come back on board the train coming from India, while the Indian crews will come to the border and go back with the passengers going to India.

Meanwhile our Delhi correspondent reports quoting Indian Railway Minister Lalu Prasad Yadav that conversion of the narrow gauge tracks into broad gauge is completed in India.

"The Dhaka-Kolkata rail link will be ready by August this year," Prasad told a delegation of 35 civil service officers from Bangladesh in Delhi on Wednesday, Indian railway ministry officials said.

He also said India agreed to provide a \$150 million credit line to Bangladesh to upgrade railway tracks here.

Governments of the two countries signed a deed regarding the Bangladesh-India railway link in 2001 during the regime of Awami League government. But the work stalled during BNP-Jamaat-led four-party alliance government's rule.

Indian Foreign Minister Pranab Mukharjee raised the issue again while visiting Dhaka after the current interim government had taken over the reins of Bangladesh, eliciting positive interest about the project from the Bangladesh government.

Voter list

FROM PAGE 1

day after his meeting with Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed.

"There is only one problem...how quickly can we hold the election by preparing the voter list," the CEC said following a meeting with the local administration of Siripur municipality in Gazipur regarding the pilot project that is scheduled to begin there on June 10 as a preamble to preparing the voter list with photographs.

Asked about his meeting with the chief adviser (CA) on Saturday, the CEC said they discussed how to complete the task of preparing the voter list as soon as possible.

Enumerators will distribute voter registration forms to collect particulars about prospective voters by going from door to door. But prospective voters will have to visit the voter registration centres to have their photographs taken, the CEC said.

"One's name can be on the voter list without an accompanying photograph, but he or she will not get a national identity card until his or her photograph is submitted," he said adding, "We will also try to collect their photographs for the voter list."

The CEC categorically said there will be only one voter list prepared containing the names of voters whose photographs will be attached and also of those whose photographs will not be on it.

The existing laws do not allow a separate list, the CEC said.

Election Commissioner Sahul Hossain said they hope that the number of people, who might express reluctance to have their photographs taken, will be very small. "Besides, we will keep convincing them to visit the voter registration centres to have their photographs taken for the voter list," he told The Daily Star last night.

Election Commissioner Brig Gen (ret) M Sakawat Hossain however said the EC will take a decision about the percentage of eligible persons to be allowed to be registered as voters without photographs.

The CEC termed the 18-month timeframe for preparing simultaneously the voter list with photographs and national identity cards as a broad timeframe.

"We will be able to give a clear picture about the timeframe required for preparing the voter list after the completion of the pilot project by June," the CEC said.

In the EC's original plan, six months were allocated for taking preparations and according to that plan, the field level task of preparing the voter list was supposed to begin from November. But the EC later readjusted the plan and announced that the field level work will start in August in a bid to save time. The EC also decided to increase the number of field level teams from 8,000 to 12,000, who will carry out the task across the country in phases.

Asked whether the budget for the project will be increased as the

number of teams already has, the CEC said the cost will not go up as a lesser amount of time will be required due to the deployment of additional teams.

"Perhaps, it would have taken 10 months if we had deployed 8,000 teams. Now it might require 8 months if 12,000 teams are deployed to do the job," CEC Huda said.

BAN ON INDOOR POLITICS

The CEC said they will not ask the government again to lift the ban on indoor politics. "We have already asked the government," said Huda, who on April 4 at a meeting with the law adviser asked the government to lift the ban on indoor politics to allow the EC to hold talks with political parties on electoral reforms.

"I don't want to say anything about it. My two colleagues and I have already talked enough about it," he quipped.

Asked whether he discussed the issue with the CA during their Saturday's meeting, he replied in the negative.

UPAZILA ELECTION OFFICERS

Asked about 303 controversial upazila election officers who took an exam on May 18 to prove their merit, the CEC said results of the test have yet to be ready for publication. "It's not true," the CEC said when his attention was drawn to news published in some national dailies that most of the examinees flunked the test.

He said the EC will consider the humanitarian aspects in deciding the fate of the controversial election officers.

Judicial body

FROM PAGE 1

importance with the separation of the judiciary from the executive control.

The president called upon them to discharge their duties with "maximum sincerity and honesty" in appointing eligible and meritorious assistant judges to the judiciary.

He also laid emphasis on imparting training to the newly appointed judges.

Justice Ruhul Amin stressed the need for constructing permanent infrastructure for the commission and sought the president's cooperation in its activities.

The president assured them of extending overall support.

Commission members Justice Sayed Refat Ahmed, Justice M Emdadul Huq, Barrister Fida M Kamal, Justice Sirajul Islam, Ali Ashraf Khan Lody, Professor Dr Begum Asma Siddiqui and AKM Ishiaq Hussain were present during the meeting.

Military Secretary to the president Maj Gen M Aminul Karim, President's Secretary M Sirajul Islam and BJSC Secretary M Atoar Rahman were also present.

Indoor politics

FROM PAGE 1

politics. So, the government should withdraw it immediately," he said.

Jalil regretted that there has not been much progress in the voter-listing even though it is a prerequisite for elections. He suggested that the EC should clarify the rationale for the 18-month period that it said it would need to hold the election.

He urged the EC to speed up the preparations for the polls and not to use anyillydallying tactics.

The AL leader also observed that the long-time curbs on political activities have dealt a blow to the public aspiration for democracy.

"When the chief of army staff has categorically said that the military has no ambition for state power, then what's taking the government so long to withdraw the ban on indoor politics," asked Jalil.

He also termed irrational the law adviser's fear that chaos will arise's head again if the ban goes.

Jalil said they are always in favour of reforming the party. It was the AL who placed 31-point reform proposals in parliament. "We are ready to help the government carry out necessary reforms.

We want them to implement the electoral reforms we had proposed," said the AL leader.

"Sometimes it's not possible for an elected government to carry out many things. However, if this government have a go at those, we will be happy to assist them," the AL general secretary said without elaborating on the matter.

He congratulated the recently promoted top brass of the armed forces. "The armed forces stood by the people on several occasions, and we hope this time they will prepare a flawless and fair voter roll and help the nation march towards democracy," he said.

Jalil said they have sent separate letters to missions of the United States, the United Kingdom, the European Union and Australia, requesting information about how the governments in their countries go about providing the political parties with state funds.

He said that the AL central working committee will meet to discuss the issue after receiving replies from the high commissions. "Later on, we will let the Election Commission know about what we think about it," he added.

Power import

FROM PAGE 1

Bangladesh is implemented. It may also open scope for Bangladesh to take Myanmar gas as and when such necessity arises, he said.

In this regard, he said, Dhaka is showing flexibility to its earlier conditions.

Tapan said the foreign ministry is dealing with the pipeline issue and when implemented, it may fetch between \$250 to 300 million annually as wheeling charge. However, Bangladesh is giving priority at this stage to importing electricity from Myanmar, he said.

The meeting was arranged jointly by the Asian Development Bank and the Economic Relations Division (ERD) of the Ministry of Finance.

Japanese ambassador to Bangladesh Masayuki Inoue, ADB country director Hua Du, Secretary of Power Division AKM Zafar Ullah Khan and Secretary of Energy Division AMM Nasir Uddin took part in the discussion.

The meeting was also attended by the Danish ambassador, representatives of JICA, World Bank, USAID, KfW of Germany, Japan Bank and the Norwegian embassy.

Chinese worker

FROM PAGE 16

Hospital for autopsy. Mostafiz is undergoing treatment at the same hospital.

The two had been working in the night shift and the accident took place around 10:30pm, said officials of Barapukuria Coal Mine Co Ltd.

Yesterday's incident did not hamper the mine's daily production, sources said.

With Beting, two foreigners have so far died at the mine in one month since activities officially resumed there on April 17. On April 26, British ventilation consultant Albert Baner Davis died at a depth of 430m near the same phase.

A three-member probe committee formed following Davis' death said in its report that the Barapukuria coal mine is vulnerable for the workers, sources said.

Tarique

FROM PAGE 16

statement to a magistrate on May 10 where he implicated his close friend Tarique Rahman with the extortion of the money. Following the statement, Tarique was shown arrested in that case.

In the case, the complainant alleged that Mamun had extorted Tk 4.89 crore from him on different dates in cash and cheque from 2004 to 2006.

He could not dare to file any case against Mamun at that time fearing reprisal. And he has now lodged the case as the situation has changed, he said in the first information report.

Tarique was earlier shown arrested in several other extortion cases filed with Gulshan and Dhanmondi police stations after Mamun gave his confessional statements implicating Tarique with those cases.

Tarique was arrested from his mother BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's Dhaka Cantonment residence on March 7 after a businessman filed an extortion case against him with Gulshan Police Station.

Ctg mayor

FROM PAGE 16

Of them, Mukhtar was also sued in another graft case filed by the ACC with the same police station on May 24.

In his complaint, the ACC official alleged that the mayor in connivance with other three opened private satellite TV channel "Bijoy TV" without taking any permission from the government.

The channel went on air on December 16, 2006 but on March 15, this year the government ordered it to stop transmission along with six other channels.

The accused misappropriated nearly taka one and half crore from the CCC fund in the name of broadcasting the TV channel, the complainant mentioned.

Charges framed

FROM PAGE 16

case filed with Tejgaon Police Station on March 6.

The case against Alamgir cites inconsistencies between his wealth statement and the actual wealth he has. The Anti-corruption Commission (ACC) found that the accused did not declare in his wealth statement Tk 1.17 crore that he has in fixed deposit accounts.

The first charge sheet was submitted by the ACC on April 29 against the AL leader.

But the court ordered a further investigation into the matter following a petition by the investigation officer (IO) and ACC Deputy Director (DD) Syed Iqbal Hossain. He submitted a supplementary charge sheet on May 21 against Alamgir.

Following the submission of the supplementary charge sheet, his undisclosed and under-estimated assets currently stands at Tk 2.10 crore.

The IO said Alamgir in the wealth statement said his Banani residence was valued at Tk 8.25 lakh while the Public Works Department set the current price of the residence at Tk 87 lakh. Similarly, his Tk 10 lakh assets in Comilla have been re-assessed to Tk 20 lakh.

Alamgir showed his bank account balance to be Tk 90,000 whereas investigations found that the figure is actually Tk 2.45 lakh.

Meanwhile, Judge Firoz Alam of the First Special Court recorded statements of three prosecution witnesses of the case filed against Amanullah Aman and his wife.

After recording their statements, the court fixed today for next hearing of the case.

In the case against Mir Nasir and his son, Judge AK Roy of the Second Special Court recorded the statements of three prosecution witnesses. The court fixed today for next hearing of the case.

Gunrunner killed

FROM PAGE 16

Rab recovered two locally made guns and seven bullets from the spot along with the body. Azim's body was sent to Barisal morgue for autopsy.

Rab sources claimed Azim was wanted in at least 26 criminal cases including four murder, six robbery and four cases filed in connection with illegal arms dealing.

Azim, a resident of Sagordi-Rypatoli, was absconding for a long time. His father Kawsar and brother Oli Howladar are in police custody.

Last year Panirul Islam Panir was killed during a shootout between criminals and Rab at the same spot.

India win Test series

FROM PAGE 16

took five for 34 in the first innings and two more in the second salvo on a bowlers' graveyard to be adjudged man-of-the-match as Bangladesh continued to struggle in their return to the longer version cricket after thirteen months.

Zaheer admitted that the wicket played tricks on the batsmen's mind.

"It was quite difficult conditions to bowl due to the hot and humid weather but the wicket helped as it was two paced and had low bounce even with the new ball," said Zaheer in the post-match press conference.

"We put the ball in the right areas throughout and that really helped. I am very happy that I took a five-wicket haul as it has come after a long time," said the man from Baroda who plays his domestic cricket for Mumbai these days.

The hosts, resuming on 58 for five, lost overnight batsman Shakib Al Hasan (30) off the second ball of the day when he was erroneously given lbw by umpire Billy Doctrove off Zaheer. Replays showed that the ball hit the pads outside the line of off-stump as Bangladesh continued to be on the wrong end of the umpires' imprudence throughout the series.

After Shakib's dismissal, Khaled Mashud played one of his typical back-to-the-wall knocks by scoring 25 off 64 balls, having struck two

boundaries. He was the last man out as Bangladesh trailed by a gigantic 492 runs in the first innings.

Javed Omar was again out first ball, completing a king pair, but his caught-behind decision was also debatable as replays suggested the ball had not actually struck the bat as thought by Daryl Harper. He was soon followed by skipper Habibul Bashar (5) who failed again as did opener Shahriar Nafees (4) who tickled the ball down the leg as India wicketkeeper Mahendra Dhoni took a brilliant diving catch, ensuring the Bangladesh top-order perish within the first 20 minutes of the innings.

Ashraful then put the Indian seamers to the sword, as he shared an 81-run stand with Rajin Saleh, who struck eight fours in his 83-ball 42.

Mashud remained at the crease for almost an hour to score eight as Mashrafe entertained the sparse crowd with his big hitting abilities. Tendulkar took the final two wickets as he capped off a fine tour to Bangladesh. He struck a century each in Chittagong and Dhaka and bowled quite effectively to sign off a successful tour with the wicket of Mashrafe who skied a comfortable catch for Dhoni -- another success for India in the trip.

India, scheduled to leave on May 30, will depart Dhaka this morning.

8 more US troops killed

FROM PAGE 16

Petraeus, the US commander.

Elsewhere on Saturday, three US soldiers were killed in Salahuddin Province, north of Baghdad, when an explosion hit their patrol; another died in a roadside bombing in south Baghdad.

Late Friday, a soldier was killed in an ambush near Taji, north of the capital, and two other soldiers were hit by a roadside bomb on Wednesday in eastern Baghdad, the military said.

al-Qaeda in Iraq is still active in Anbar which includes the cities of Fallujah and Ramadi and continues to launch devastating attacks, US military officials said. On Thursday, insurgents exploded a car bomb on a passing funeral procession in Fallujah for a tribal leader opposed to al-Qaeda. At least 26 mourners were killed.

Iraqi police found 12 bullet-riddled bodies with their hands bound and showing signs of torture in south Baghdad on Sunday, security and medical officials said.

"We received the bodies of 12 men today, all of whom had died from gunshot wounds, mostly to the head," an official at Baghdad's Yarmuk hospital said. All the men appeared to be in their 20s and 30s.

The bodies were found in the neighbourhood of Dura, a mixed district south of the city centre that has seen intense fighting in recent weeks between Shiite militias, Sunni insurgent groups, and US and Iraqi forces.

Like other flashpoints in the capital, US-led forces have flooded into the battered streets of Dura over the past few months as part of a city-wide crackdown on sectarian violence aimed at stabilising the capital.

The overall number of execution-style killings has declined since the operation was launched on February 14, but Baghdad authorities still recover 20 to 30 corpses from the city's streets nearly every day.

In other violence on Sunday, two people were killed and eight wounded, including women and children, when gunmen ambushed a market in north Baghdad, security officials said.

"The emergency room in Al-Kindi hospital received two bullet-riddled bodies and seven people wounded in the shooting," a hospital official said.

In a separate attack gunmen shot dead two people and wounded at least eight others in Nahrwan, a farming area on the outskirts of the capital, the official added.