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SQ Chowdhury sued for hiding assets

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday filed a graft case against Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury, former BNP lawmaker and parliamentary affairs adviser to former prime minister Khaleda Zia, for concealing his wealth of over Tk 1.17 crore in the statement submitted to the commission on February 25.

SMM Akhter Hamid Bhuiyan, ACC assistant director and investigation officer (IO) of the case, filed the case with Ramna Police Station, accusing Salahuddin of hiding his two cars valued more than Tk 1.17 crore in his wealth statement.

In the first information report
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Two more extortion cases against Hasina

Noor Ali, Azam J Chowdhury complain of Tk 8cr extortion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two separate extortion cases—one for Tk 5 crore and another for over Tk 2.99 crore—were filed against former prime minister and Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina yesterday.

Noor Ali, managing director of Unique Group of Companies, filed a case with Teigaon Police Station accusing Hasina and her two relatives of extorting Tk 5 crore in exchange for mediating between the Power Development Board (PDB) and his firm to finalise a



power plant in 1997.

Azam J Chowdhury, managing director of Eastcoast Trading Private Ltd, filed the other case with Gulshan Police Station against Hasina and AL leader Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim for extorting over Tk 2.99 crore.

Earlier, another case was filed against Hasina on April 9 for extorting Tk 3 crore.

In his complaint, Noor Ali alleged that he also had to give two flats to Rupa Chowdhury, wife of Hasina's cousin Sheikh Helal, after
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Hasina barred from visiting Chittagong

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has not permitted Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina to travel to Chittagong for visiting the areas devastated by landslides, citing 'security reasons,' sources said.

However, no statement from the government was available in this regard.

The AL chief was scheduled to visit the affected areas today, AL sources said.

Hasina, who was in a personal tour to Tungipara in Gopalganj, curtailed her trip and returned to the capital for Chittagong visit. Her personal aides said that they had made all arrangements for Chittagong tour and she was expected to start from Dhaka at
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Mega FDI plans hang in limbo

RAFIQ HASAN

Around half a dozen multi-billion-dollar proposals of foreign direct investment (FDI) in infrastructure, power, oil, gas and manufacturing sectors have been hanging for years due to complicated policies, government indecisions and bureaucratic tangles.

The government is neither giving approval to these proposals nor refusing them, leaving the investors frustrated. This is also creating a wrong impression about the country and its investment prospects, sources said.

These investment proposals include Indian conglomerate Tata's \$3 billion, United Arab Emirates-based Abu Dhabi Group's \$2 billion, UK-based Global Oil and Energy Ltd's \$2.9 billion, Malaysian Azimat Corporation's \$900 million, and Contech Ltd's \$900 million.

Sources said the proposal of Tata is pending for the decision of the next elected government while the rest are being delayed due to government indecision and policy complications.

Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya, executive director of Centre for

Policy Dialogue (CPD), at a recent press briefing expressed his disappointment over such indecision from the government.

"There is no doubt that the flow of foreign direct investment in the country declined significantly due to political indecisions regarding some big investment proposals," he said.

According to sources in the Board of Investment (BoI), FDI declined by 16.5 percent during July-March in 2006-07 fiscal year with net FDI of \$385 million against \$505 million during the same
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AL leaders draw up 21-pt reform plan

HASAN IAHID TUSHER

In a bid to bring 'drastic' reforms in the Awami League (AL), several influential leaders of the party have prepared a 21-point draft proposal, which they will hand over to party President Sheikh Hasina within the next week.

Several pro-reform leaders said they will be with Hasina if she accepts the proposals, otherwise they will challenge her leadership.

Many senior leaders of the party

have held regular secret meetings during the last couple of weeks for preparing the draft, which they said have been prepared after taking opinion from the party's central to grassroots level leaders.

To review the draft proposal, they held a meeting at the residence of the party's central leader Dr Ali Ashraf on Tuesday.

"After finalising the proposal by Sunday, we will hand it over to the party chief as well as all the party
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VOTER ROLL, NATIONAL ID CARD Field level work starts next month at Rajshahi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission (EC) will start the field level task of preparing voter list with photographs and national identity cards initially at Rajshahi from mid-July.

"Initially, the task for preparing the voter roll with photographs will begin in Rajshahi City Corporation area. On receiving the required equipment, the task will begin in full swing in other places," Chief

Election Commissioner ATM Shamsul Huda told reporters at his office yesterday.

"We will start the process for holding the polls soon after the voter list is ready," he said.

According to EC's original timeframe announced on April 5, the field level task was supposed to begin from November as the CEC had said that six months would be required to prepare the voter roll.
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Death toll now 123 in Ctg mudslides

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The death toll in Monday's series of devastating landslides in the city reached 123 with 15 more bodies retrieved yesterday.

The rescuers fear that the toll might rise further as the rescue operation will continue for the fourth consecutive day today.

However, the overall situation marked some improvement as the floodwater started receding with no more downpour yesterday. The power and gas supplies have also been restored in most parts of the city.

The members of the joint-forces might dig 15 more bodies out of mud at the cantonment adjoining Lebu Bagan, Kaichyaghona, Sekandar colony and Barisal colony yesterday and Tuesday night.
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Re-commissioning of Navy frigate postponed

UNB, Dhaka

The programme for re-commissioning of BNS Khalid Bin Walid, scheduled to be held at naval jetty under the supervision of BNS Isa Khan in Chittagong at 10:00am today, has been postponed.

The programme has been put off due to natural calamity caused by recent downpour in Chittagong region, said an ISPR release.

The fresh date for re-commissioning of the ship will be notified in due course, it added.

Thousands of students may be denied admission in colleges

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Students passing this year's SSC (Secondary School Certificate) examinations, even GPA-5 scorers, are in anxiety of being denied admission at their college of choice due to shortage of available seats.

Since the prestigious colleges are mostly located in urban areas, seats in colleges in rural areas are however likely to go unfilled.

According to Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics (Banbeis), a total of 1.34 lakh students will not be able to attend a college as there are only 4.63 lakh seats available for around 5.97 lakh students passing this year's SSC exams all over the country.

After a high number of schools in the urban areas succeeded to have 100 percent of their students pass the SSC exams with a good number of them securing GPA-5 this year, contenders for each seat

at prestigious colleges have multiplied.

Only 995 intermediate-level colleges are located in the urban areas while 2,155 colleges are in rural areas, Banbeis sources said.

There are 135 colleges in Dhaka metropolitan area. Ten of the most prestigious colleges in the country, where only around 10,000 seats are available, are also located here.

As there will be no admission test and the students will be enrolled at the colleges based on their scores, the fate of admission seekers hangs in the balance when in Dhaka Board alone 9,439 students secured GPA-5 and 34,404 received 'A'.

The situation is also tough for science group students this year as there are only 98,000 seats available for them against a whopping 1,51,201 students passing from this group across the country. As a result, 53,201 of them might wind
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Ex-whip Wahidul Alam sued for extortion

Ex-MP Harun, Mufti Shahidul denied bail

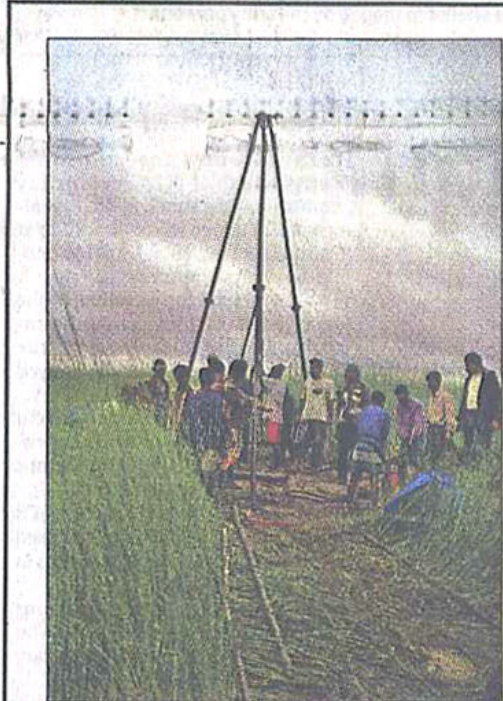
COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday rejected bail petitions of detained former BNP lawmaker Harunur Rashid and Nayeib-e-Amir of Khelafat Majlis Mufti Shahidul Islam in connection with criminal cases.

In Chittagong, former BNP lawmaker and whip Syed Wahidul Alam and three others were sued in an extortion and money embezzlement case yesterday.

Detained former BNP lawmaker MAH Selim was shown arrested in two extortion cases while the cheating case filed against barrister Nazmul Huda was transferred to a Dhaka court for its trial.

Proceedings of graft cases against General Secretary of Sweekhshebok League Pankaj Kumar Devnath, his wife Monika Devnath, CBA leader of T&T Miah and his wife Rawshan Ara
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Impoverished Chilmari found mineral rich

SHARIER KHAN, back from Chilmari

The resource-starved impoverished Chilmari area of Kurigram district may become a world



Sample collection for heavy metals at a Brahmaputra char, left, and magnet-drawn metals found in a riverbed in Chilmari.

class source of heavy metal minerals mainly used in high-tech industries, according to a primary exploration report.

Based on a 1979 finding of Geological Survey of Bangladesh (GSB), British company Carbon Mining Plc for the last four months have been exploring for the heavy metal minerals in the Brahmaputra riverbed in Chilmari and detected significant volume of the minerals carried by the river from the Himalayas.

The economic implication of this finding could be enormous, if the Carbon Mining finds it economically viable to set up a mineral mining establishment to tap a high-end export market.

Primary tests of the minerals done at the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) in Cox's Bazar recently detected garnet, ilmenite,
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AGREEMENT FOR SHARING ATM/POS NETWORK



Dutch-Bangla Bank Limited, National Credit and Commerce Bank Limited (NCCBL) and Bangladesh Electronic Payment Systems Ltd. (BEPS) sign an agreement for sharing ATM/POS Network. Md. Yeasin Ali, Managing Director of Dutch-Bangla Bank Limited, Md. Nurul Amin, Managing Director of National Credit and Commerce Bank Limited (NCCBL) and Maruf Alam, Chief Operating Officer of Bangladesh Electronic Payment Systems Ltd. (BEPS) signed the agreement on behalf of their respective organizations. K. S. Tabrez, Deputy Managing Director (Administration) of DBBL, Ghulam Kabir, Deputy Managing Director (Operation) of DBBL, Abul Kashem Md. Shirin, Senior Executive Vice President & Head of Information Technology of DBBL, Momen Uddin Ahmed, Executive Vice President & Head of Card of DBBL, S. M. Shamsul Alam, Deputy Managing Director of NCCBL, Mohabbat Khan, Senior Executive Vice President of NCCBL, Tapan Kanti Sarkar, Senior Vice President of NCCBL, Md. Amirul Islam, Asstt. Vice President of NCCBL, Saiful Alam, Chief Technical Officer of BEPS, Asif Murad Chowdhury, Senior Manager Operations of BEPS and Ryan Dias, Business Development Manager of BEPS were present on the occasion. **DBBL owns the nation's largest ATM fleet.**

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