

WEALTH REPORT  
Hamim Group  
chief Azad  
owns Tk 29cr  
properties

UNB, Dhaka

Proprietor of Hamim Group AK Azad, one of the 21 corruption suspects and the publisher of daily Shamokal, yesterday submitted his statement to the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) disclosing wealth worth over Tk 29 crore.

In the statement submitted to ACC Secretary Delwar Hossain through Hamim Group General Manager Golam Kibria, Azad stated that he has immovable property worth over Tk 8 crore while his wife's immovable property is worth about Tk 16 lakh.

Among the family's moveable property, Azad has an investment

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Budget size, financing  
sources not unrealistic

Finance adviser tells CPD dialogue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Adviser AB Mirza Azizul Islam rejected outright the notion that the proposals in the budget for fiscal year 2007-08 are unrealistic or unattainable.

The size and financing in the proposed budget are not unrealistic, he said while speaking as chief guest at a dialogue on the state of Bangladesh economy and budget responses.

Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) organised the dialogue at Sonargaon hotel in the capital yesterday.

"I have talked to various agencies and also the people who are

outside the government and become convinced that the growth target of GPD projected in the budget is not unattainable," said the finance adviser.

He also reiterated his views regarding the rate of inflation, budget deficit, foreign aid, investment, bank borrowing, ADP implementations, revenue collections and other related issues responding to the views expressed by the speakers at the dialogue.

He said the proposed budget tried to strike a balance among various conflicting situations and larger section of the people were given the most considerations.

The people will now be allowed

to send the comments regarding budget proposal until Sunday, he said, adding that giving importance to people's view, the government has opened up the scope for comments from the civil society regarding the budget proposals.

"The seven per cent growth target is quite achievable although the budget was set on a fragile structure," said Bangladesh Bank (BB) Governor Dr Saleh Uddin Ahmed, who spoke as a special guest at the dialogue.

He expressed the hope that Bangladesh would be the next target for foreign direct investment (FDI) as a 'good environment' is

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Bomb planted  
by Jadid found  
in Rajshahi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

True to their earlier declaration, the newly emerged Jadid Al Qaeda yesterday planted another powerful bomb on the campus of Rajshahi University of Engineering and Technology (Ruet) evading tight security.

After a tip-off, Motihar police rushed to the campus and recovered the bomb planted in front of the Ruet main gate. Later, bomb experts of Rajshahi Metropolitan Police (RMP) defused it.

RMP bomb expert Alamgir Hossain said the recovered bomb was similar to five others found earlier on the campus.

The first bomb was found on May 22. On the next day, police recovered a sawed off rifle and a bomb from Students' Union Office of Shaheed Selim Hall.

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Tk 280CR WATER SUPPLY PROGRAMME  
WB may withdraw grants  
for slow progress

RASHIDUL HASAN

The World Bank (WB) has warned that it would withdraw its Tk 280 crore grants for the Bangladesh Water Supply Programme Project because of its slow implementation pace and "reactive" project management.

"The ground breaking project has lately come to a virtual standstill," WB Country Director Xian Zhu said in a letter dated March 14 to the secretary to the Ministry of the Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives.

"The overall progress has suffered considerable delay, negatively impacting follow-on activities that cannot be carried out because they

are dependent on previous steps or actions," he said in the letter.

The WB issued the grants to the Department of Public Health Engineering for such an innovative project for the first time. But the project is facing uncertainty due to unwanted interference of the then secretary to the local government ministry of the BNP-led four-party alliance government, sources said.

The objective of the project is to contribute to Bangladesh's efforts in achieving the millennium development goals in water supply and sanitation by 2015. The project that started in July 2004 will specifically pilot innovative measures to scale up the provision of supplying safe water free from arsenic and pathogens in rural areas and small towns.

The proposed date for the completion of the project is June 2009.

A report meanwhile shows that about Tk 9.20 lakh has been spent as of January this year as salaries of some 87 staffs while Tk 83.04 lakh has been spent to pay its consultant, Tk 3.37 lakh for buying computers, electric equipment and office materials, and Tk. 7.84 lakh for car maintenance, purchasing fuel and other purposes.

However, no money has been spent and no significant task has been done regarding the piped water supply schemes in rural and municipality areas, and the rural

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Dhaka Wasa workers dig up road to lay sewerage lines yesterday, creating traffic jams on the busy Khilgaon Chowdhurypara intersection in the capital.

Rejoinder,  
our reply

Saifa Siddique, daughter of former finance minister M Saifur Rahman, has protested a report headlined "Babar talks about illegal VoIP network" published in The Daily Star on June 13.

In a rejoinder yesterday, Saifa said neither she nor her brother Babu is involved in the VoIP business. She also said the report can create unnecessary and inaccurate perceptions about her and her brother.

**Our Reply**

Our report is based on former state minister for Home Lutfozzaman Babar's information given to the Task Force for Interrogation (TFI).

Hamas poised to seize  
full control of Gaza

14 killed as Fatah's main base  
captured, PLO asks Abbas  
to sack cabinet

AFP, Gaza City

Hamas was poised to seize full control of the Gaza Strip yesterday, overrunning a key security stronghold of the rival Fatah movement after days of ferocious gunbattles in the chaotic territory.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation called on president Mahmud Abbas to sack the teetering coalition government and declare a state of emergency in

Gaza where almost 100 people have been killed in a week.

Hamas gunmen stormed the compound of the preventive security forces in Gaza City and hoisted the green flag of the Islamist movement on the roof after an hours-long battle that left at least 14 dead, witnesses said.

Dozens of Fatah fighters loyal to Abbas, some of them stripped to their underwear, were dragged out

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BSF kills 1

UNB, Sathkhira

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) shot dead a Bangladeshi on Ghona border in Sathkhira Sadar upazila yesterday morning.

The victim was identified as Babul Biswas, 28, son of Mannan Biswas of Boikari village under the upazila.

BDR sources said the Indian border

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| Prayer Timing              |       |        |
|----------------------------|-------|--------|
| June 15                    |       |        |
|                            | Azan  | Jamaat |
| Fajr                       | 4-05  | 4-40   |
| Juma                       | 12-30 | 1-15   |
| Asr                        | 5-00  | 5-15   |
| Maghrib                    | 6-50  | 6-55   |
| Esha                       | 8-15  | 8-45   |
| Source: Islamic Foundation |       |        |

Nepal parliament gets  
armed to axe king

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE, Kathmandu

Almost five years after it was dissolved for defiance, Nepal's resurrected parliament has finally got its revenge - becoming empowered to axe King Gyanendra ahead of the crucial November election.

It was a moment of triumph for the Maoist guerillas, who had begun a war on the monarchy 11 years ago, as the house, in a near-midnight drama Wednesday, voted overwhelmingly to amend the new constitution and insert a provision that now enables it to abolish monarchy.

All but two of the 283 MPs present in the marathon session Wednesday voted for the provision that will now allow parliament to remove the king if it feels he is trying to sabotage the constituent assembly election slated for mid-November, provided the move is supported by two-thirds of the 329-member house.

This is the first time in Nepal's history that parliament has been given the power to remove the king, who was earlier regarded as an incarnation of a Hindu deity and as one above law.

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BIRD FLU  
2,000 poultry  
birds culled

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Live Stock Department (LSD) of Rangpur culled about 2000 poultry birds at Ghagotpara of Lakhmitari union under Gangachara upazila on Wednesday night following detection of avian influenza (bird flu) virus.

A 10-member team comprising experts of the department and district administration culled 1642 poultry birds and destroyed 592 eggs in the village.

Sources with the LSD said avian flu virus was detected in the dead bodies of chickens and ducks belonging to Moksuder Rahman of Ghagotpara.

Deputy Director of LSD of Rangpur said "All poultry birds and their eggs within three sq km of the village were culled from evening to midnight."

Many of the poultry birds of the village were found infected with avian flu virus, he added.

He said all officials and employees of LSD of all upazilas have been kept in the highest alert so that they may take immediate action in case the virus is detected anywhere.