

## BB's monetary

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He, however, said, "I would like to say the discussion that is going on regarding monetary policy is part of a healthy debate."

The IMF representative in Dhaka said the rising inflation has been adversely affecting the country's economy and it relates not only to the supply side factors but also to demand side factors.

Citing the inflation rate in May, he said the highest rate of inflation was not in food items or transport. Furniture, household appliances and some other services and goods were affected by inflation which is actually not related to the supply side.

When the demand side components are key to checking inflation here administrative costs in some sectors keep rising, he observed.

According to him, the government subsidies for different sectors do not reach the right people. Even in the case of diesel subsidy, the benefit goes to the top 40 percent people who in fact do not deserve it.

He said the recipients of such subsidies are mostly people like him who have cars, and not those from the lower income brackets, farmers or rural poor.

"You don't distort the financial system. And eventually you should adjust prices to the international level," he added.

The Fund recommends that Bangladesh acquire an international standard in pricing that will help it adapt to the prices at the

## Dhaka, Yangon

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The power secretary said the feasibility study would look into the technical and financial viability of the project so both the countries can benefit from it.

He mentioned that the proposed power plant would be built under a long-term planning which would have no role to resolve the present power crisis.

He said many countries, including China, India and Thailand, are now working in Myanmar with the same purpose of setting up hydropowerplants.

## Jalil shifted

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The DIG prisons said Dr Matiur Rahman, Jalil's regular physician, will supervise treatment of the AL leader at Labaid.

Asked how long Jalil will stay there, Haider said it on how quick his conditions get better.

He said Jalil's family will bear the expenses of treatment as stated by Jalil's wife in the application.

The movement of the AL leader will be under vigilance, Haider said, adding that jail police will be posted at the hospital to maintain security of the AL leader.

The veteran AL leader was suffering from complexities of heart, kidney and diabetes and was taken to Labaid Hospital under police escort at 8:20pm.

The joint forces arrested Jalil on May 28 at his Mercantile Bank office in Motijheel for his suspected links to corruption and sabotage.

## BNP reformists

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using the name of the party, Ashraf said adding that they destroyed the image of the party as well as of the country.

Ashraf, a close aide to Mannan Bhuiyan, also rejected Khaleda's allegation against Mannan Bhuiyan and said that Bhuiyan is far the best among all secretary-generals of the party and he helped the party achieve two-thirds majority in parliament during his term.

Mannan Bhuiyan cannot be held responsible for corruption charges against ministers and lawmakers from the party because "He was secretary general of the party... not of the government," Ashraf argued.

Meanwhile, Monir Hossain, former president of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) Dhaka University unit, led a group of leaders to meet Mannan Bhuiyan at his residence. They congratulated him on his announcing the reform proposal with a view to introducing democracy in the party.

Among others, vice president of BNP Hafiz Uddin Ahmed, former state minister Rezaul Karim, former lawmaker Sardar Shakhsawat Hossain Bakul met Bhuiyan to discuss latest developments toward reforms.

## President flies

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Ahmed Chowdhury, Information Adviser Mainul Husein, chiefs of the three services and high officials saw the president off at the airport.

"He will undergo medical check-up at Mount Elizabeth Hospital in Singapore as per previous schedule, as advised by his Singaporean physicians," said a Bangabhaban communiqué.

During his stay over there, the president will also make a courtesy call on Singaporean President Sengaran Ramanathan.

President Iajuddin will return home from Singapore on July 19.

## Lankan team

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Mostafa Hassan, an official with SK&F, a leading pharmaceutical exporter to Sri Lanka, told The Daily Star last night that the opportunity for pharmaceutical exports to Sri Lanka is huge and Bangladeshi exporters have hardly tapped even 5 percent of the market.

He also said that even though it is the Bangladeshi exporters who should invest more into the market, the Sri Lankan government could facilitate exporters by improving the registration process, to either expedite it or synchronise Bangladeshi and Sri Lankan pharmaceutical company registration standards.

The foreign ministry official told The Daily Star that apart from trade, other bilateral issues of economic cooperation, civil aviation and fisheries among others will be discussed.

There is a possibility of resuming the Dhaka-Colombo direct flight, that was suspended in 2002, as the Saarc leaders have pledged to link all eight South Asian capitals for 'better connectivity', he added.

Dhaka has already expressed to Colombo that the aviation authorities concerned from both sides should sit to resolve the outstanding issues, which surround Sri Lanka's demands for greater 'freedom rights', sources said.

The foreign ministry official said that the bilateral talks with Foreign Adviser Iftekhar A Chowdhury, to be held tomorrow, will not include the Colombo-backed "Mutual legal Assistance in Criminal Matters," as it is not a bilateral issue.

Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Bogollagama will be accompanied by Mass Media and Information Minister Anura Priyadarshana Yapa, Cultural Affairs Minister Mahinda Yapa Abeywardena, Religious Affairs and Moral Upliftment Minister Pandu Bandaranaike, and Minister for Highways TB Ekanayake.

The delegation will have talks with Iftekhar tomorrow at the state guest house Padma, and later with the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry. They will also call on Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed.

Abul and Abdur, sons of Motakar Hosen, allegedly killed Sharifa, 18, daughter of Bachcha Miah of Shankar Daho on June 16.

Superintendent of Police in Rangpur Hasif Aziz said Assistant Sub-inspector of Police Wahedul and two police constable of Gangachara Police Station-Akkas and

Asghraf--were suspended on charges of negligence of duty.

## Two murder suspects flee from lock-up

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur**

Two murder suspects who were arrested at Patgram upazila in Lalmonirhat Saturday escaped from a lock-up in Gangachara Police Station in Rangpur the same day. Three policemen were suspended in this connection.

Acting Officer-in-charge of Gangachara Police Station Abbas Ali said Abul Hosen, 30, and Abdur Rahman, 25, of Shankar Daho fled from the station while they were in custody. Police are yet to find out how they managed to escape.

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## Judge Faizee

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return from Singapore where he is having a medical check-up now.

The Supreme Court (SC) registrar sent the letter to the president's office following a Supreme Judicial Council meeting. The council sat at around 11:00am to discuss the next steps regarding the issue. The decisions could not be known immediately.

The SC Registrar Iktedar Ahmed yesterday told The Daily Star that on March 19 the trio was accused of illegally allocating an industrial plot in connivance with each other in Tejgaon Industrial Area for a business organisation, Pacific Chemical Ltd., owned by Lobi. It was mentioned that the three accused have exercised their influence in allotting the 19.44 katha plot by ignoring government rules.

Without having no-objection certificates from the Board of Investment and the Department of Environment, the plot was allocated as an industrial plot.

The case has been filed under sections 5(1)(2) of the Corruption Prevention Act of 1947 and section 109 of the Penal Code.

## Rejoinder

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amended or repealed. To deny it amounts to denying the undeniable.

It is undeniable that the Hon'ble Speaker has upheld the dignity, honour and prestige of the sacred Parliament and his high position as Speaker for the last five years. It is unprecedented that he is the only Speaker who held this high office continuously and successfully for five years ever since 1947.

The news of workshop of Global Organisation of Parliamentarians against Corruption (GOPAC) in South Asia is vital and more important. So, the news should have been prominent instead of the news of any medical bill. By pointing out this, it can't be assumed by any stretch of imagination that the Hon'ble Speaker has undermined the high office of Speaker.

Now coming to the allocation of budgetary fund, sections 18, 9 and 14 of Jatiya Sangsad Sachibala Ain, 1994, the law has been explained and clarified in his early two rejoinders. In every office and institution, where the head is the Principal Disbursing Officer, it is his duty to disburse money since there is none above him to do it under the Act. It is worth mentioning that the amount Tk 35,71,192 to late Hon'ble Mr Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury for kidney treatment and Tk 5,74,000 to ex-Chief Whip Abul Hasnat Abdulla were paid from the Sangsads Sachibala fund. Had it not been so, the money from Sangsads Sachibala fund would not have been paid.

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**Mahi, Mannan**

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around 4:00pm and looted valuables from the office at gunpoint.

The valuable included two air conditioners worth about Tk 1.60 lakh, two computers worth about Tk 80,000 and a Sony brand television set worth about Tk 25,000. The gang also took away various important documents from the office, the complainant added.

## Motia

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to the EC plan of action.

The AL leader said, "The whole process is so slow and the Election Commission is ignoring the demands of our movement although this Election Commission is the fruit of our movement."

She said they want a free and fair election as soon as possible as her party never thinks of going to power through zigzag path.

Motia observed the CEC didn't say anything about transparent ballot box, a demand of the AL-led 14-party combine.

She aired doubt about preparation of electoral roll within October of the next year. In this context, she cited the EC-prepared voter list under a model project in Sreepur which contains many defects.

## Upazila polls

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indicates that the EC is considering the necessity of holding the long due elections to these local government bodies.

"Elections to the local government bodies including city corporations, municipalities and union parishes will begin next January and continue up to December 2008," the CEC said.

Asked how it will be possible to hold elections if the state of emergency remains in force, the CEC said the emergency provision will be relaxed for the areas concerned to hold the polls.

The current caretaker government has now moved for holding the upazila parish elections and assured the EC of returning to it the power for announcing the polls schedule for over 450 upazila parishes.

**UPAZILA PARISH IN LOCAL GOVT**

The first election to the upazila parishes was held in 1985 after its introduction in the local government system during the regime of military ruler HM Ershad. But the very existence of upazila parishes faced severe crisis following the second election in 1990 when Ershad stepped down in the face of mass movement.

The BNP government assumed power in 1991 and dissolved the upazila system. The Supreme Court in a judgment in 1992 directed the government to hold elections to upazila parishes within six months, but the BNP government did not hold the polls in its tenure.

Assuming power through the 1996 general elections, the Awami League passed the Upazila Parish Act in 1998. The law empowered the EC to declare the schedule for upazila parish elections.

However, in the midst of volatile political situation, the then EC could not conduct the upazila parish elections and later the government amended the upazila law and took the authority for announcing its election schedules.

The immediate past BNP-led alliance government, which came to power through the 2001 elections,

## 18 killed

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unidentified gunmen," said Brigadier General Ahmed Deskara, a senior border guard commander stationed in the nearby city of Sylaimaniyah.

One of the seven guards killed was an officer, he added.

Border guards have come under attack in the past from an extreme Islamist group calling itself al-Qaeda in Kurdistan -- formerly Ansar al-Islam -- which operates along the porous border between Iran and Iraq.

In another attack, three policemen including an officer were killed and two others were wounded in clashes with armed men west of the southern Iraqi city of Nasiriyah, police there said.

And in the village of Aziziyah south of Baghdad gunmen burst into the home of a local councillor, Hasmim Jassim, and killed his wife and son, according to police Lieutenant Al Kadhim.

Jassim was not in the house at the time of the attack, he said.

Just outside the northern Iraqi oil refinery town of Baqji, a Turkish truck driver died in a roadside bomb blast, according to local police.

## Power plant

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contracts of the RPCL without any tender. Captain Reza also officially represented Siemens during the secretive tender for the third phase.

Meanwhile, the five-year tenure of over 4,000 union parishes will expire between next January and March. According to the laws, elections to the union parishes are to be held within the last six months of their tenure.

By-elections to some union parishes are also due.

Apart from this, elections to 90 municipalities will be due by the end of this year with the tenure of around 50 having already expired.

Elections to the rest 115 municipalities were held on May 5-10, 2004 and their tenure will expire in 2009.

"Now under a new financial schedule, we have cleared \$108 million payment to Siemens. In the next four months, we will pay it \$3 million each month," said the RPCL high official.

RPCL Managing Director Md Nazmul Hossain Chowdhury told The Daily Star in May, "The Rural Electrification Board (REB) in a study determined that once we complete this project, RPCL will become financially sound within the next five years."

Meanwhile, the joint forces recently visited the RPCL office and collected documents as part of an investigation into the past corruption led by Captain Reza.

The RPCL is currently fighting a legal battle against Captain Reza at the High Court. Reza has claimed Tk 200 crore "compensation" for terminating contracts with the LIPPS. The LIPPS contracts were cancelled following an incident in which Reza and his men sabotaged the Myansingh Power Plant in 2005 and fled the country.

In June, a leader of the ousted Taliban claimed that bin Laden was alive, saying that he received a letter of condolence from the fugitive leader following the death of his brother.

"The latest proof Osama bin Laden is alive is that he has sent me a letter of condolences after my brother was martyred," Mansoor Dadullah said in an interview with Al-Jazeera television, referring to the Taliban's top military commander, Mullah Dadullah, who was killed by US-led forces in May.

He was last seen in a video released in October 2004, although in September last year Al-Jazeera broadcast previously unseen footage it showed bin Laden and al-Qaeda suicide hijackers preparing for the September 11 attacks.

His right-hand man Ayman al-Zawahiri, an Egyptian born surgeon regarded as the network's chief strategist frequently emerges in video or audio tapes to speak for al-Qaeda.

"We have discussed many key issues of the draft umbrella act which the UGC submitted to the ministry in the last week of June. We have decided that some points of the draft would be changed and the UGC will finalise the amendment of the draft by July 31," UGC Chairman Prof Nazrul Islam told The Daily Star after the meeting.

The university syndicate members and deans will be appointed on the basis of seniority, he added.

Teachers of public universities protested the move to approve the draft of 'umbrella act' for all public universities without consulting the academics and others concerned while academics said the new act will destroy the autonomous character of the public universities.

Apparently responding to the strong objections, education ministry yesterday called an emergency meeting at the secretariat. Education Adviser Ayub Quadri presided over the meeting where Education Secretary M Mamtaul Islam, UGC Chairman Prof Nazrul Islam and UGC Secretary Mohammed Mufakhar were present.