

## Electoral talks with parties to start in September

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the way for holding talks with the parties.

Referring to the EC's already announced roadmap which allocated a timeframe -- September to November -- for holding talks with the parties, the CEC yesterday said the EC finalised the roadmap in consultation with Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed.

"I think, the government has some particular problems in lifting

the ban on indoor politics. We discussed with the chief adviser to prepare the roadmap," CEC Huda said.

Asked whether any vacuum will be created in the political arena due to the detention of political bigwigs including Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina and restructuring of the parties, CEC Huda said he believes an atmosphere suitable for polls will be created through this process.

"Any vacuum, if prevails, will be filled up by nature. The country cannot remain standstill for any persons. We will hold discussion with the parties, not with a person," he said.

Asked about the doubts about whether the parliamentary election will be held within 2008, the CEC said majority people are not sceptical of holding the polls in 2008.

"Some people and political parties however are sceptical about whether we will be able to prepare the voter list within the timeline. All doubts will be removed when we keep completing the tasks in phases for the polls," he said.

The CEC convened the press briefing to counter widespread criticism over the activities of the EC for taking 18 months' time to prepare the voter list, planning to hold local government bodies' polls before the parliamentary election and a reported link with the caretaker government in announcing the roadmap to the polls.

Huda defended the EC's stance for taking 18 months time for preparing the voter list.

The two other election commissioners -- Muhammed Sohul Hussain and Brig Gen (retd) M

Sakhawat Hossain were present at the press briefing.

### LOCAL BODIES POLLS

The CEC said both the chief adviser and the LGRD adviser requested the EC for holding the elections to different local government bodies from January.

The EC will have to hold due elections to different local government bodies once the voter list for the areas are ready, he said.

"We will start holding due elections to local government bodies from next January in the areas where the voter list will be ready. Elections to Rajshahi and Khulna city corporations will be held in next January as voter list for the areas will be ready by this year," CEC Huda said adding, "Doubts over the implementation of EC's roadmap will be dispelled when we hold elections to different local government bodies."

He said the field level task for preparing the voter list with photographs for Rajshahi City Corporation area will begin in the first week of August. The voter-listing task in Khulna City Corporation and nine other municipality areas will also begin in August, he added.

Brushing aside criticism for laying special emphasis on polls to

local government bodies, the CEC said the parliamentary election will definitely be held in December 2008. "Before the timeline for parliamentary polls, we will hold elections to different local government bodies and it does not mean that the EC is not giving any importance to the parliamentary polls," he said.

### CEC ON TALK SHOWS

The CEC said persons in talk shows on different private satellite television channels questioned and criticised the activities of the EC and its roadmap, which was announced on July 15.

But Huda said he personally did not watch any talk show on electoral issues. "I feel bad if I watch any talk show. It seems participants of the talk shows know all. We people here [EC] do not know anything," the CEC said.

"On several occasions, I explained the reasons for the 18-month timeframe. But I heard some political leaders' remark on television as if we are intentionally delaying the process for holding the parliamentary election," Huda said, adding, "We need constructive criticism. We as well as our field level workers feel discouraged by negative criticism."



PHOTO: ISPR

Chief of Naval Staff Vice Admiral Sarwar Jahan Nizam and Admin Dhaka Commodore SM Zaman adorn Commodore Mustafizur Rahman with Rear Admiral rank badges at Naval Headquarters yesterday.

## MK Alamgir handed 13 years

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brother of Alamgir.

Defence lawyer Rezaur Rahman prayed for some time to discuss with his client the case, the judge rejected it, suggesting that he should rather proceed according to the law.

Expressing satisfaction over the judgment, Syed Mizanur Rahman of the prosecution said, "The charge has been proved and the verdict was given in accordance with the law."

"The information Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir gave in his wealth statement did not correspond to the amount of income tax he had paid earlier. He also showed different property in names of his wife and sons at prices lower than actual," added the prosecution lawyer.

Prosecution lawyers told The Daily Star that Alamgir would have to be in jail for 13 years as the convictions will be implemented consecutively, not concurrently.

### CASE, INVESTIGATION

The court took about 10 days more than the stipulated time frame for delivering the judgment as seven people gave their depositions in favour of Alamgir and two charge sheets including a supplementary was submitted.

Deputy Director (DD) of ACC Jibon Krishna Roy filed the case with Tejgaon Police Station on March 6, accusing Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir of making a huge fortune through misuse of power. He also accused him of concealing information in the wealth statement submitted to the ACC.

Investigation Officer Sharmin Ferdousi, ACC deputy director, submitted the first charge sheet on April 29 to a metropolitan magistrate's court in Dhaka. She said Alamgir has Tk 1.17 crore in six fixed deposits but did not mention those in the wealth statement to the anti-graft body.

The metropolitan magistrate's court sent the case to the special

court on May 6 for quick disposal.

After submitting the first charge sheet, the prosecution took 10 days' time for further investigation. And the new investigation officer, ACC DD Sayed Iqbal Hossain, submitted a supplementary charge sheet on May 21.

The special court framed charges against him on May 27. Some 37 witnesses gave deposition in the case. Besides, seven people including Dr Akbar Ali Khan, Dr Abul Barkat and an American economist gave statement in favour of Alamgir.

### ASSETS TO BE FORFEITED

The property to be confiscated by the government includes Tk 1.17 crore found in six fixed deposits with the IFIC Karwan Bazar branch. A house in Comilla that in the wealth statement was shown in his son's name, a four-storey building in Banani, a market, a petrol pump, shares and property in Gulbahar Himagar Ltd and a house in Kachua of Chandpur.

Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir in his statement said he has Tk 1.6 crore, and of that, Tk 90 lakh was in fixed deposits.

The joint forces arrested him on February 3 in their first drive against corruption suspects. He was among the 50 people asked to submit wealth statements to the ACC.

## Muggers kill day labourer in Bogra

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra**

A day labourer was stabbed to death by a gang of muggers at Mokamtala area under Shibganj upazila here on Wednesday night.

The victim was identified as Momin, 35.

Shibganj police said supervisor of a Joypurhat-bound coach from Dhaka dropped Momin and Shahin at a remote place at Mokamtara area from where they took shelter at 1:00am at a veranda of a roadside house due to torrential rain.

Police said the miscreants covering their faces with gamchha wanted to snatch away their belongings at knifepoint. The muggers stabbed Momin in his belly when he tried to resist them.

Momin was rushed to Bogra Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries.

A case was filed with Shibganj Police Station in this connection.

## Commodore Mustafiz promoted to Rear Admiral

Commodore Mustafizur Rahman was promoted to the rank of Rear Admiral yesterday, says an ISPR release.

Chief of Naval Staff Vice Admiral Sarwar Jahan Nizam adorned him with the badges of rank of Rear Admiral in presence of senior naval officers at Naval Headquarters.

Rear Admiral Mustafizur Rahman has also been appointed Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Operations) the same day.

He was commissioned in Bangladesh Navy in July 1976. Later, he received training in the USA, China, India and the UK.

During his long career, Rear Admiral Mustafiz commanded different types of ships and establishments. He also commanded the most modern Frigate BNS Osman successfully.



Four members of Government Bangla College Rover Scouts Group began a 100-mile walk from Bogra on July 22 with the theme -- 'Stop corruption, build country'; 'Resist violence, save country'; 'Plant trees, protect environment'; and 'Drink arsenic-free water'. They were scheduled to reach Dinajpur yesterday via Joypurhat, ending their journey.