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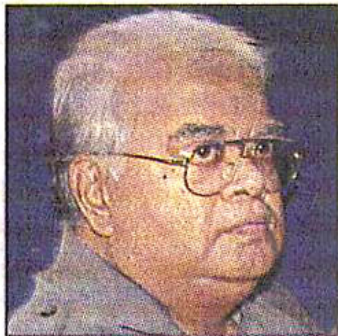
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Huda gets 7 years, Sigma 3 yrs for graft

Shajahan Siraj's wife sentenced to 32 years for tax evasion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In the first ever bribery case filed by the Anti-corruption Commission (ACC), a court yesterday sentenced former communications minister Nazmul Huda to seven years rigorous imprisonment, while his wife Sigma Huda was sentenced to three years simple imprisonment. Another special court, convened on the same premises and designed to adjudicate graft cases, yesterday sentenced in absentia former jute minister Shajahan



Nazmul Huda



Sigma Huda

Siraj's wife Rabeya Haider to 32 years simple imprisonment in connection with four tax evasion cases.

But, Rabeya will have to spend only five years in jail as the court ordered her jail terms to be served concurrently. The former minister and his wife are currently absconding.

Nazmul Huda was also fined Tk 2.50 crore, in default of which he will have to serve one more year of jail term. The court also ordered the

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Curfew lifted

UNB, Dhaka

The government has totally lifted the curfew clamped on six divisional cities, including Dhaka, amid campus violence as law and order situation has now improved.

"Curfew has been completely lifted as law and order situation improved following all-out efforts of law enforcement agencies and cooperation of the people," said an official announcement last night.

There was prior announcement of a relaxed curfew from midnight last night to 5:00am today. But, following the latest government decision, there won't be any curfew.

The government enforced indefinite curfew in six divisional cities, including Dhaka, from 8:00pm on Wednesday in the wake of violent incidents on the Dhaka University campus.

The official announcement said legal actions are being taken against the troublemakers through identifying them.

"The government will take

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Hasina's bail stayed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court (SC) yesterday stayed the High Court (HC) orders granting Sheikh Hasina bail in two extortion cases until disposal of her writ petitions with the HC.

In response to the government appeals seeking reversal of the HC orders, a full bench of the apex court headed by Chief Justice M Ruhul Amin made the ruling that means no immediate prospect for her release from prison.

It also stayed another HC order that imposed a freeze on operation of the Anti-Corruption Commission's (ACC) notice for Awami League (AL) President Hasina to declare her wealth. It asked her to submit in a week a wealth statement to the anti-graft body.

Following yesterday's orders, the trial court can now begin proceedings of the extortion cases under the emergency power rules

in which a defendant has no right to bail.

Earlier, the Appellate Division had put off the HC orders till yesterday.

Legal experts said the AL president might have to stay behind bars for an indefinite period as it would take a long time for the entire legal proceedings to be completed. They said an HC division bench would look afresh into



the writ petitions filed by Hasina.

Hasina was arrested by the joint forces on July 16, and later that day a magistrate's court sent her to a sub-jail in the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban complex.

Since then, she has been continuing legal battles to obtain bail and stop the government's bringing the extortion cases against her under the Emergency Power Rules, 2007.

A bench comprising Justices Shah Abu Nayeem Mominur Rahman and Zubayer Rahman Chowdhury on August 7 granted her bail in the case filed by businessman Noor Ali and asked the government not to have her tried under the emergency rules.

It also asked the military-backed interim administration to reply within four weeks why its approving the case to be under the emergency rules should not be adjudged illegal.

The same day the bench stayed

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After harvesting IRRI paddy, farmers at Khajal village of Kahalu upazila in Bogra separate paddy from stalks by thrashing yesterday. The harvest season has just begun in the northern region.

PHOTO: STAR

Hasina to submit wealth report within 7 days

UNB, Dhaka

Detained Awami League (AL) President and former prime minister Sheikh Hasina will submit her wealth statement to the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) within seven days, her lawyer said.

Talking to reporters after consultation with Hasina in a makeshift jail yesterday afternoon, Advocate Khandaker Moniruzzaman said the preparation of her wealth statement is almost final.

"It'll be finalised after amending certain matters regarding her movable and immovable property," he said.

In reply to a question, the lawyer said Hasina was shocked and disappointed after learning the Supreme Court order that stayed the previous order of the High

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POVERTY CUT RATE

Bangladesh among leading S Asian nations: WB

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The rate of poverty reduction in Bangladesh is one of the best in South Asia, finds a World Bank (WB) report.

The finding was revealed at a workshop organised by the WB yesterday at its resident office in Dhaka. Hassan Zaman, lead economist of the WB, presented the report before the workshop.

According to the report, during the years 2000-2005, Bangladesh's rate of annual average poverty

reduction secured second position among other South Asian countries, falling behind that of India.

The workshop titled "Poverty determinants, employment patterns, education trends and regional differences" was dedicated to late Syed Nizamuddin, senior economist of WB.

The WB prepared the report based on Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) conducted by Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS). The WB provided technical assistance to BBS for the

survey. Some economists, however, raised questions about the nature and quality of data that was used to prepare the report.

They also disagreed with the WB report, which stated that during the period between 2000 and 2005, inequality was stable in urban areas and it increased slightly in rural areas.

Comparing the annual average rate of growth in GDP with the annual rate of poverty reduction

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Govt to depart after restoring democracy

Says Mainul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law and Information Adviser Mainul Hossain yesterday said the present government is a 'national government' backed by the army.

"Our present government is a national government, army-backed government. That means it is a collective government," the adviser said at a briefing after a meeting with the heads of news of different private television channels at the Ministry of Information at Bangladesh Secretariat.

"This government has an exit

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Elections to be held within EC timeframe

Reiterates president

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday told the Belgian envoy to Bangladesh that the next parliamentary elections would be held within the timeframe set by the Election Commission (EC).

Patrick Beyer, the outgoing ambassador of Belgium, based in New Delhi, made a farewell call on the president at Bangabhaban.

Welcoming the envoy, the president appreciated him for his sincere efforts in strengthening relations between the two countries during his two-year tenure.

He stated that the existing bilateral relations between Bangladesh and Belgium are "excellent" and the ties will be further strengthened and deepened in the days to come.

The president underscored the need for enhancing trade and

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Tk 6.7CR EMBEZZLEMENT ACC presses charge against Orion chief Obaidul Karim

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday pressed charges against Orion Group Chairman Obaidul Karim and five high officials of Oriental Bank Limited in connection with embezzlement of around Tk 6.7 crore from its principal branch at Motijheel.

Besides, National Board of Revenue (NBR) filed separate tax evasion cases against detained Swechasebak League General Secretary Pankaj Debnath and Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) Ward Commissioner Chowdhury Alam.

Meanwhile, the hearing on charge framing in a graft case against detained former deputy

minister for land Ruhul Kuddus Talukder Dulu and his wife Sabina Yasmin will be held today.

OBABDUL KARIM CASE
ACC Assistant Director Rafiquzzaman, also the investigation officer (IO) of the case, submitted the charge sheet to the court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka showing 12 people as prosecution witnesses.

Apart from Obaidul Karim, other charge sheeted accused in the case are former senior vice-president of Oriental Bank Ltd Shah Mohammad Haroon, senior assistant vice-president AQ Mahmud Ullah; former assistant vice-president Mohammad Fazlur Rahman, assistant vice-president

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

CA updates Iajuddin on post-flood rebuilding

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser (CA) Fakhruddin Ahmed yesterday called on President Iajuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban and apprised him of the government's post-flood rehabilitation and food-rationing plans.

The president called for concentrated efforts to make sure that the people can lead a normal life.

"We have to ensure a normal lifestyle of the people through combined efforts," he said, expressing his satisfaction over the programme undertaken by the government.

He stressed the need for taking all necessary steps to keep the prices of essentials within the reach of the common people during Ramadan.

The president also asked for beginning the post-flood agricultural rehabilitation in full swing.

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DU INCIDENTS

Judicial body starts probe today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The one-member judicial probe commission of justice Habibur Rahman Khan today will start investigating the untoward incidents occurred on the Dhaka University (DU) campus on August 20 and 21.

The commission has been given a 15-day time limit to submit its report.

While talking to a private television channel yesterday, Justice Rahman said he would work to reveal how, where and why the incidents happened.

Justice Rahman urged all concerned to give deposition before him without any fear, as the probe will be conducted depending on their statements.

"The one-member probe commission will also work to identify the persons responsible for the incident," he headed.

Justice Habibur Rahman went to his central circuit house office yesterday evening.

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▶ BA in Tourism & Hotel Management (Day/Evening)	Bangkok University
▶ B.Sc. in CSIT	Kingston College, Canada
▶ B.Sc. in CSE (Day/Evening)	College of Tourism & Hotel Management, Cyprus
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Class Starts From September 22, 2007

For further information, please contact (9 am - 8 pm, including Friday):
House # 21/A, Road # 16 (Old-27), Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka-1209, Tel: 8127476, 8152325, 8156420, 8110531, 9121927, 9124064, Mobile: 01711-021617, 01552-389834, Fax: 880-2-9121970, E-mail: admission@ibais.edu, registrar@ibais.edu http://www.ibais.edu/

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August 28, 2007
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