

## Few more rebel leaders await Bhuiyan fate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP leaders loyal to detained Chairperson Khaleda Zia are planning under the leadership of the newly appointed secretary general to expel a few more leaders close to expelled secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan for their alleged involvement in anti-party activities.

Party sources said Khaleda may soon issue expulsion orders against more leaders including party standing committee member Lt Gen (ret'd) Mahbubur Rahman through her lawyers.

She may also announce the name of a leader as the acting chairperson or chief coordinator to run the party in her absence, the sources said.

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## EC faces BNP test

Finds itself in a soup over which faction to invite for electoral reform talks

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The Election Commission (EC) appears to be faced with a testing time as it braces itself for making a decision as to which of the BNP factions should be invited to the talks on electoral reforms.

It has so much at stake in doing the job since the decision would amount to recognising one or the other as the mainstream BNP. Even a little controversy over the call would jeopardise the commission's acceptability and the efforts it has already put in holding the long-stalled general election by the end of next year.

Despite having no legal authority at this moment to resolve the prevailing dispute over which of the factions represents the real BNP, the EC must make up its mind as it cannot do without the party in its much-awaited dialogue. The BNP established in 1978 won majority in the last election and had run the country for two terms since restoration of democracy in 1990.

Against this backdrop, it has begun examining the electoral laws and the BNP constitution to decide who—expelled secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan or his replacement Khandaker Delwar Hossain—leads the mainline of the

party in absence of its Chairperson Khaleda Zia, sources in the EC said. The commission will have to resolve the issue before sending the invitation meant for the immediate past ruling party.

"We will address the invitation to the secretary general of the party's mainstream," Election Commissioner Brig Gen (ret'd) M Sakhawat Hossain told reporters yesterday.

Asked which one they consider as the mainstream at this moment, he said: "It's too early to say."

The faction to be invited to the dialogue will be in a better position

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## CSB News silenced

Given 7 days to explain why permission won't be cancelled permanently

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The telecom regulatory body of the government yesterday pulled the plugs on the transmission of CSB News, a satellite TV channel of Focus Multimedia Company, for 'forgery'.

A group of officials of the Bangladesh Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (BTRC) including three deputy directors and an assistant director accompanied by a number of security personnel entered the CSB office at Uttara and switched off its transmission at 6:34pm, said a news release signed by Mohammad Ali

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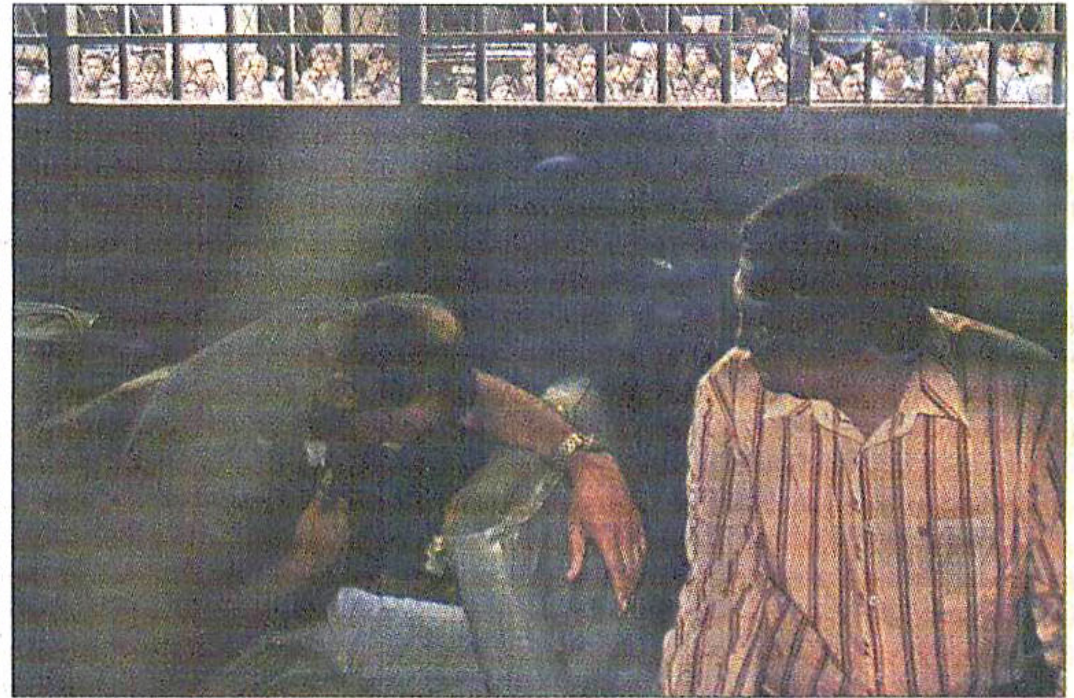


PHOTO: STAR

Arafat Rahman Koko, younger son of detained BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, sits in a prison van with a hand on his chest as he is being taken to jail from CMM Court in Dhaka yesterday.

## CAMPUS VIOLENCE

# RU suspends its 6 detained teachers

Arrest warrant issued against 2 other teachers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The six Rajshahi University (RU) teachers, now detained in the case for violation of Emergency Power Rules following their alleged involvement with late August campus violence, were suspended from their job yesterday.

They are former RU vice chan-

cellor Prof M Saidur Rahman Khan, RU Progressive Teachers' Alliance convener Prof M Abdus Sobhan of applied physics department, Prof Moloy Kumar Bhowmik of management department, Dulal Chandra Biswas, Sayed Selim Reza Newton and Abdullah Al Mamun of mass communication department.

Rapid Action Battalion arrested

the first three on August 24 while the others surrendered before a court on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, Rajshahi Metropolitan Magistrate's Court for speedy trial yesterday issued arrest warrant and ordered attachment of properties against 13 persons including two RU professors in the

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## HASINA FACES TRIAL

# HC rejects appeal to quash MiG case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday rejected detained Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina's petition for quashing a graft case against her regarding purchase of MiG-29 fighter aircraft during her tenure as the prime minister.

Following the HC verdict now there remains no bar to holding proceedings of the graft case in the trial court as the HC also vacated its earlier order of stay on the trial court proceedings of the case.

Hasina's counsel said they would move to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court (SC) seeking stay on the HC verdict.

"We will appeal on Sunday challenging the verdict," barrister Fazle Noor Taposh, a counsel of the detained AL President Sheikh Hasina, told The Daily Star after submitting a vakalatnama to the authorities of special jail on the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban premises for Hasina's signature.

"I hope we will get the

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# Koko sent to jail before remand ends

Daughter-in-law Zubaida allowed to meet Khaleda

STAR REPORT

Arafat Rahman Koko, younger son of detained former prime minister Khaleda Zia, was sent to jail yesterday before completion of his seven-day remand in a graft case.

Meanwhile, Zubaida Khan Rahman, wife of Tarique Rahman, yesterday met her detained mother-in-law Khaleda at the sub-jail in the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban

complex.

Koko was taken to the court under tight security and was produced before the court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka at 1:50pm after being kept in custody only for three days, reports our court correspondent.

He was put on the seven-day remand on Monday after his arrest for interrogation in the graft case against a prayer for a ten-day

remand.

In the forwarding report, Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Deputy Director Zahurul Huda, also the investigation officer (IO) of the case, mentioned that there is a necessity to verify the information obtained from Koko. If necessary, he might be remanded again for quizzing in future subject to the development of the investigation.

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# Murder charges framed against ex-Jamaat MP Shahjahan, 41 others

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A Chittagong court yesterday issued warrant of arrest against former Jamaat-e-Islami lawmaker Shahjahan Chowdhury after framing charges against him and 41 others in connection with a murder case.

Third Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge Paresh Chandra Sharma pressed the charges against 42 persons for killing freedom fighter and then chairman of Fochia Union Parishad of Satkania upazila, Nurul Kabir, in 1998.

The court issued warrants of

arrest against 25 accused including Shahjahan Chowdhury while 17 of the accused were present in the court. Of the 17, Dr Nurul Hoque, convener of Satkania unit of Jamaat-e-Islami, Shamsul Alam and Md Ishak were in jail custody.

Armed cadres of Jamaat and its student wing Islami Chhatra Shibir reportedly shot Nurul Kabir dead in broad daylight on October 8 in 1998 at Satkania.

Nurul Kabir's younger brother Shab Uddin filed a murder case against the 42 leaders and cadres of Jamaat and Shibir including the

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# Flawed voter list was prepared to rig polls

Says CEC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Voter rolls in the past were deliberately prepared with flaws so that those could be used in rigging elections, Election Commissioner Sohul Hossain said yesterday.

Sohul said this at a views exchange meeting at Sylhet Zila Parishad auditorium where officials of the government, army and NGO, professionals and a cross-section of people were present.

The Election Commission (EC) will start preparing photo voter rolls in Sylhet division from September 12, beginning with

Tahirpur upazila of Sunamganj district.

During the meeting, the commissioner said crores of taka had been spent in the past on flawed voter rolls. In the last voter roll alone, 1 crore 22 lakh fake voters were included for malevolent purposes.

To help stop rigging of elections, Sohul urged all to cooperate in the preparation of the new voter roll with photos and the national identity (NID) cards and ensure every single eligible person's enrolment.

Sohul also advised all to raise

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# Gas continues to burn at Titas field

More cracks developed; no fresh step yet to stop the leakage

SHEIKH MD SHAHIDUL ISLAM, B'baria

Gas emission through all five tube-wells and hundreds of holes at the villages of Shyampur and Anandapur and Loiska Beel near Titas Gas Field Location-3 of Brahmanbaria is yet to be stopped.

A number of new gas-emitting holes have also developed in a field of Anandapur in Majlishpur union, villagers claimed. Gas is also bubbling out through new and old holes under water, the villagers said. Authorities concerned have asked them not to kindle fire or take burning kerosene lanterns near these holes and advised using flashlights at night.

Gas is being discharged into the air through the holes for at least the last three-and-half years but the authorities concerned failed to take any appropriate steps to stop it, they alleged.

Several teams of Bangladesh Gas Field Company Ltd (BGFCL) men went to Shyampur a number of times and took samples of tube-well waters and surveyed the land. But steps are yet to be taken to save the villages from

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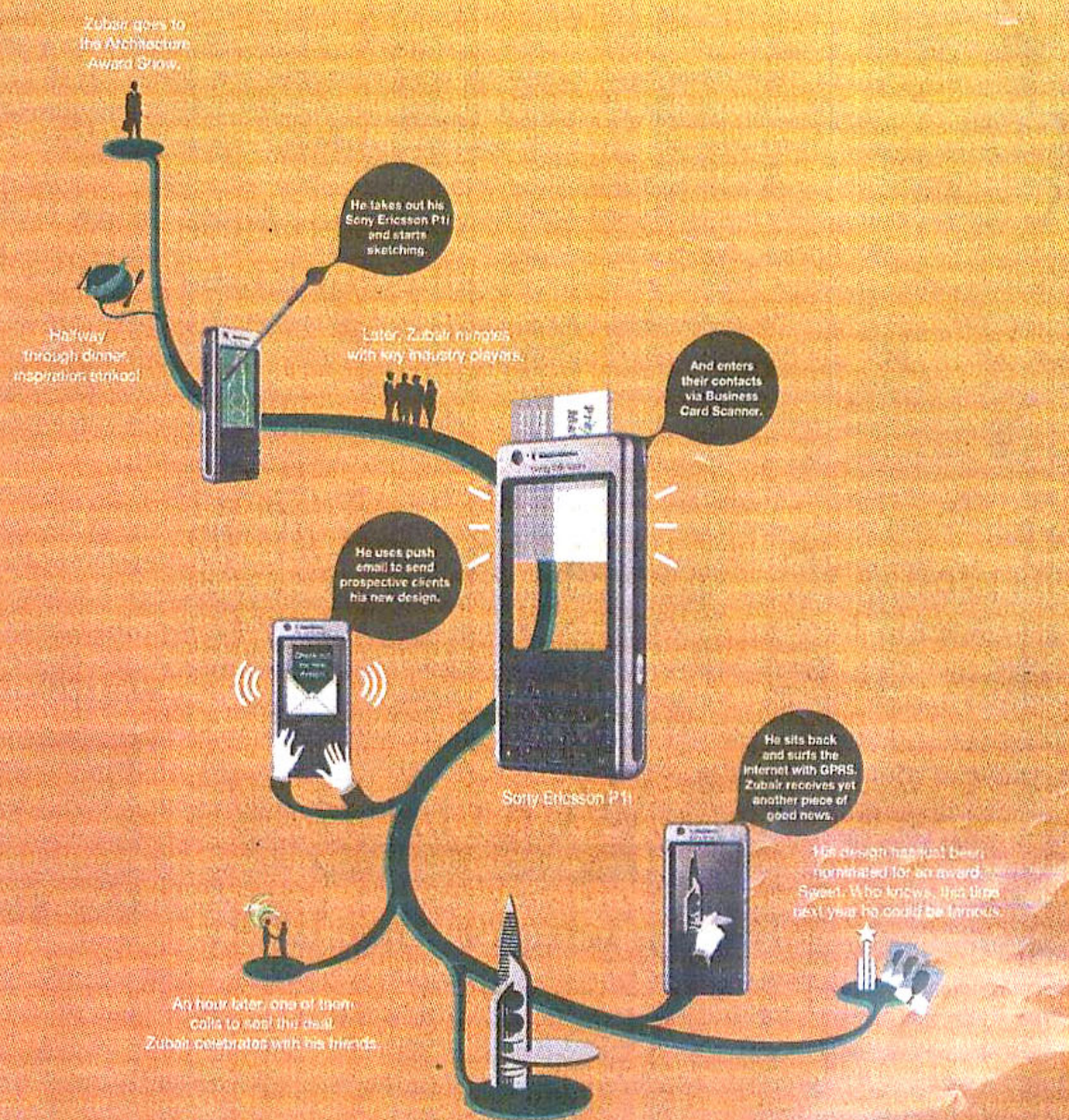
PHOTO: STAR

Gas and water gush out of a tube-well in Shyampur village of Brahmanbaria; gas bubbles (inset) are seen in nearby Titas river.



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