

ACC okays bringing

FROM PAGE 1
from the three companies from October 24, 1996 to November 24, 1997. The amount was spent for buying a house in Dhammendi for Bangabandhu Memorial Trust set up and controlled by Hasina.

The other accused in the case are former energy secretary Dr Toufiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury, former Power Development Board (PDB) chairman Noor Uddin Mahmud Kamal, Managing Director of Summit Industries and Mercantile Corporation Private Ltd Aziz Khan and Director Farid Khan, United Group Chairman Hasan Mahmud Raju and Director Abu Kalam Azad.

None of the accused will be eligible to get bail now following the ACC approval of bringing the case under EPR.

The joint forces arrested Sheikh Hasina on July 16 in a Tk 3 crore extortion case filed by Azam J Chowdhury, managing director of Eastcoast Private Trading Ltd, also a power company.

On September 17, the ACC also brought the container handling case filed against another detained former

UNGA session

FROM PAGE 20
a number of Middle-East countries. He will also attend meetings of the Non-Aligned Movement Committee on Palestine, Saarc council of ministers, Commonwealth foreign ministers, the Organisation for Islamic Conference and the Group of 77 foreign ministers on the sidelines of UNGA.

Ganotantri Party

FROM PAGE 20
political parties on September 12, two of the three participants in the talks opposed giving registration to Jamaat, terming it an anti-liberation force.

Krishak Sramik Janata League that took part in the talks on September 16 first demanded that the EC should disqualify Jamaat from getting registration.

Ganotantri Party leaders yesterday said Jamaat must not get registration with the EC since it is an anti-liberation force and does not believe in the existence of Bangladesh.

"The main leadership of Jamaat-e-Islami was a partner of Pakistani occupation forces in murdering, raping and committing such other crimes during the Liberation War," the party said in its written proposals submitted to the EC.

A senior leader of Ganotantri Party said Jamaat does not believe in Bangladesh's constitution that says all powers belong to the people. "The constitution of Jamaat-e-Islami is against the

AL Presidium

FROM PAGE 20
leaders will go abroad, the meeting has been called at short notice to settle a date for a central working committee meeting." AL presidium member Motia Chowdhury told The Daily Star yesterday.

If the EC invites the party for dialogue just before two days of the dialogue date, there should not be any problem if there is a date fixed for ALWCW meeting, the AL leader added.

She said that the present state of the country's politics as well as party politics would also be discussed in the meeting, which would be chaired by Zillur Rahman. However, there is no possibility of making final decision over any other issue, Motia said.

Sources said that Zillur has called the presidium meeting following suggestions of some party leaders. AL leaders Tofail Ahmed, Motia Chowdhury, Saber Hossain Chowdhury, Mahmudur Rahman Mannan, Akhataruzzaman, Asaduzzaman Noor, among others met the AL acting chief in the last couple of days and suggested him holding a meeting of the party presidium to settle some issues urgently.

They also urged him to arrange an iftar party soon to bridge the gap between the party leaders that developed following the abuse of AL leaders Mukul Bose, Abdul Mannan, AKM Jahangir Hossain and Prof Abu Sayeed by some agitating party activists before and after the meeting of ALWCW on September 12.

Sources said the issue of abuse of the four leaders would also come for discussion in today's meeting. Zillur Rahman might enquire about the progress of the investigation into the matter by the one-member probe body headed by Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury.

Out of 12 presidium members, Syeda Johra Tajuddin, Zillur Rahman, Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Tofail Ahmed, Motia Chowdhury and Ataur Rahman Khan Kaiser are in the country at present while Amir Hossain Amu, Abdur Razzaq and Suranjit Sengupta are abroad.

Three other presidium members Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim and Kazi Zafarullah are in jail at present along with party president Sheikh Hasina and general secretary Abdul Jalil.

ATTACK ON DAILY OFFICE Charges framed against ex-BNP lawmaker Rumi

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Police yesterday framed charge against former BNP lawmaker Syed Mehedi Ahmed Rumi and three others for attacking a newspaper office in Kushtia in 2005.

The other accused are Kushtia district BNP joint secretary Sazedur Rahman Bablu, Nazrul Islam Mukul and Jalaluddin.

The news editor of the daily newspaper "Dainik Arshinagar" filed the case with a first class magistrate's court on June 10 this year.

According to the case proceedings, the newspaper published a news item on November 19, 2005 which infuriated the former BNP lawmaker of Kushtia-4 constituency.

Miscreants led by Mehedi stormed the newspaper office on November 19 night and ransacked it. They also beat up the news editor and other staff.

All the accused in the case are on the run, said the Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Sadar Police Station.

Brac staff

FROM PAGE 1

NGO workers from Brac and Grameen Bank are working in similar, if not worse, conditions in parts of Africa and he sees no reason for Bangladeshis to stop working in Afghanistan.

The abduction of the Brac worker is an isolated incident and Bangladeshis are not particularly being targeted by militant groups in Afghanistan, he added.

Nurul Islam was kidnapped from Kulangar district of Logar province on September 15.

Workers on the site said they will need at least four more days to complete the work started about one and a half month ago.

"Nowhere in the world traffic police have to work so hard to maintain traffic as we do here. But the fact is that sudden rush of traffic on all the streets at 8:00am and during office breaking hours is not easy to manage," he said.

Sarwar however will have to serve five years' jail term as both the sentences will run concurrently.

His jail term will begin from the day of his surrender or arrest.

Rabiu Hasan Pradhan, deputy tax commissioner of the NBR, filed the case with a senior special judge's court on August 15 this year.

In the case statement, the complainant said that in different tax years from 2000-2001 to 2006-2007, Sarwar concealed information involving about Tk 4,31,90,106 in his tax returns and thereby dodged tax on the concealed amount.

Charges were framed against the former NBR member on September 13 while deposition of witnesses began on September 17. Five witnesses gave their deposition in the case.

In addition, the commission has

Tailback stops city

FROM PAGE 1
collapsed? Traffic authorities won't agree to take the blame.

The authorities said they have very little to do as the number of vehicles is "far far beyond" the road capacity, with road repair work in some places worsening the problem further.

The road divider replacement and road extension on the VIP road from Sonargaon Hotel to Dhaka Sheraton Hotel have shrunk the busy road. It is not only causing jam on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue but also equally affecting other adjoining streets, lanes and by-lanes.

"Traffic pressure here is quite maddening from 8:00am to 11:00am when people go to office," traffic constable Jahangir Hossain, on duty near Saarc Fountain at 1:15pm, told The Daily Star.

The congestion starts taking acute turn again by 2:30pm when people start rushing home, he added.

"Vehicles coming in full flow from different streets have to slow down due to shrinking of this VIP road, creating a long jam at their tails," said Jasim Uddin, joint commissioner of traffic police.

Vehicles coming through the roads hitting Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue can hardly advance, creating a nagging gridlock from Mohakhali flyover to Paltan through Farmgate.

"We are not taking any hard stance to evict the iftar sellers, but asking them not to occupy space illegally," a traffic official said.

An inter-ministerial body on September 13 received a proposal for opening the road through Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) headquarters in Pilkhana for general public for two hours in the morning and two hours in the afternoon. But it is yet to be implemented, said traffic officials.

"We're working to reorganise the bus routes through the city," Joint Commissioner Jasim Uddin said.

Passenger buses ply on 138 routes, stretching over 200-kilometre road in the city.

Talking on a proposal for cutting traffic stoppage time during traffic signals, some officials said it would not be of much help.

"During Ramadan, people have a short day to finish all their businesses outside as they start late and return home early. So all of them come out on the streets at the same time," Abdul Hannan, driver of a route No. 4 (Gabtoli-Sayedabad) bus said when stuck at Karwan Bazar.

Many drivers tend to break traffic rules as passengers ask them to drive fast, he noted.

"Absence of a footover bridge at Bangla Motor and people's negligence in using the footover bridge at Shahbagh contribute a lot to traffic congestion there," DC Sayedur Rahman said.

A fencing, like the one at Farmgate, may help stop people from crossing the road at Shahbagh, he added.

Pointing out the huge number of schools in Dhammendi, Rahman noted that traffic rush to schools in the morning and school break hours is a major reason for congestion in that area.

Some traffic officials pointed out that makeshift iftar shops on the footpaths and walkways are also contributors to traffic congestion.

Taliban insurgents have waged a bloody insurgency since their ouster from power in late 2001 by the US-led invasion of Afghanistan, which has claimed thousands of lives so far.

In another incident related to the insurgency, a suicide bomber on a bicycle blew himself up on Thursday in the southern province of Ghazni, provincial police chief Alishah Ahmadzai said.

His target was an Afghan army truck, and a soldier was severely wounded.

Elsewhere Afghan soldiers carried out an operation in Wardak province in which three "enemies" were killed and nine wounded and arrested, police said.

Wardak, which adjoins Kabul province, is where Taliban-linked militants captured a German engineer two months ago. The operation did not appear to be related to the kidnapping.

A Bangladeshi national was seized in neighbouring Logar province on Saturday by unknown men whom police say were criminally motivated and not linked to the Taliban. Three suspects have been arrested.

In response to a lawmaker's query, he told the House on June 7 last year that in accordance with the Bangladesh Abandoned Property (control, management and disposal) Order 1972, the housing ministry is authorised to control, manage and dispose of abandoned houses.

But before informing the House of the legal aspects, he had already ordered for measures to sell the abandoned houses. Accordingly, the Rajuk published an auction notice in different national dailies on April 5, 2006 for 10 of the houses.

They sold the 10 houses at a "fake auction" at prices much lower than the then market rates. The sale bypassing an open auction resulted in a loss of Tk 127,64 crore to the nation's coffers.

The houses sold are located in posh areas like Gulshan, Banani, Dhammendi and Eskaton.

As the housing minister, Abbas was vocal in his opposition to the use of residential plots for commercial purposes.

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