

Property of 9 high-profile graft suspects attached

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday attached houses and property of nine high profile political leaders, businessmen and government officials including former commerce minister Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury in a graft case.

The eight others are former secretary of Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk) Mir Mosharraf Hossain, its former chief engineer Emdadul Islam, Bashundhara Group Chairman Ahmed Akbar Sobhan Shah Alam, former BNP lawmaker and Matco Co-chairman Shafiqur Rahman Kiron, Chairman of Advanced Development Technologies Ltd SM Anwar Hossain, Chairman of MN Co Ltd Niu Ze Mendes, former superintendent engineer of Public Works Department (PWD) Ziauddin Ahmed and Chittagong Awami League leader Afsar Uddin's wife Hasna Ahmed.

Gulshan police said they conducted the drive following a court order on October 1 to attach all

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

GRAFT ACCUSATION

Truth Commission for businessmen on cards

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is going to set up a "Truth Commission" to have confessions from businessmen accused of corruption with an aim to settle the charges against them without putting them to trial.

Formulation of the commission, which is quite identical to the reconciliation commissions in several countries, comes as the government is pondering over giving corrupt businessmen a chance to surrender their ill-gotten wealth or pay financial penalty and thus avoid arrest or trial.

The commission will be a major tool for "Plea Bargain", an agreement where a defendant agrees to plead guilty or no contest in

exchange for a settlement from the prosecution regarding the punishment.

"In many countries, the question of reconciliation and settlement comes after a major change. So, we are thinking about introducing plea bargain for businessmen," Law Adviser Mainul Hossain said yesterday.

The government is working on enacting a law to give legal cover to the commission, he told reporters at the information ministry. He, however, did not elaborate on the structure of the commission.

"Businessmen have been repeatedly saying they are in panic, they cannot get involved in their businesses as per their expectation," Mainul said, adding, "Going

before the Truth Commission, they will admit to acquiring wealth through dishonest means and will say: 'Fine us or take away our illegally-earned wealth'."

Acknowledging that the identity of an accused—whether they are politicians or businessmen—cannot be considered during the ongoing campaign against corruption, he said, "Since this government's prime objective is to ensure democracy and good governance through elections, we cannot deal all types of corruption the same way."

While all are putting utmost emphasis on the transparency and honesty of the government, people must also think about reviving the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

KIBRIA MURDER

Investigators now looking for militant link

SHARIFUL ISLAM with IQBAL SIDDIQUEE

Investigators of the Shah AMS Kibria murder case are now looking into militant links in the killing.

Criminal Investigation Department (CID) chief Foni Bhushan Chowdhury recently said, "We are investigating the case further as we've got some information about militant links in the assassination."

Asma Kibria, wife of slain leader Kibria, however, said the investigators are focusing on militants to hide the masterminds of the attack. "They are incriminating militants in every case so that they don't have to do anything new," she said.

"If militants were involved in the killing of my husband, why didn't they confess to it earlier?" she added.

"Now we are checking whether militants had anything to do with the killing," the CID chief told The Daily Star adding that the charge sheet of the case will be submitted as soon as possible.

Intelligence officials said they

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Malaysia suspends taking Bangladeshi workers

STAR REPORT

The Malaysian cabinet yesterday decided to freeze the intake of Bangladeshi workers with immediate effect as the process has caused problems to the country, reports Malaysian news agency Bernama from Putrajaya.

Home Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Radzi Sheikh Ahmad said there were now too many workers and agents from Bangladesh in Malaysia.

He said the presence of such agents who used Malaysians as sub-agents and the huge amount of money involved "are not a healthy sign, it is not good for the country".

Mohd Radzi told reporters in Putrajaya that Malaysia could obtain workers from 10 other countries such as Indonesia, Thailand, Cambodia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Nepal and Laos.

He said the government felt that it would do to rely on these coun-

tries for workers.

"For the time being, we won't be taking in Bangladeshi workers," he said, adding that the freeze involved fresh applications for workers from that country.

Mohd Radzi said Malaysia had also inked agreements to hire workers from several other countries such as Kazakhstan.

The most popular, he said, were workers from Indonesia, India and the Philippines.

The minister said that Malaysia froze the recruitment of Bangladeshi workers back in 1999 because of various problems.

Besides problems related to the agents, the workers themselves were causing many social woes, he said.

He said Malaysia was currently hosting about 200,000 Bangladeshi workers and 100,000 more were expected to arrive in the country as their intake had been approved earlier.

Asia Energy wants to renegotiate deal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Adviser Mirza Azizul Islam yesterday said coal mining company Asia Energy has expressed its willingness to re-negotiate terms of its contract with the government.

"Before this re-negotiation, the government must decide which contractual terms should be revised," the adviser told the press following a meeting at his planning ministry office with the visiting Asian Development Bank (ADB) mission led by Kunio Senga.

At the meeting, the ADB expressed its concern that the government's indecision about the investment proposals of Asia Energy and Tata was giving "investors a wrong signal".

"It will be difficult for me to express the government position regarding both these deals because the projects involve not only the finance ministry but also other ministries," the adviser said. Till date, the council of advisers has not discussed any of the projects, he added.

Mirza Aziz said the government had signed the Asia Energy deal in the past.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

LOCAL BODY POLLS AL for lifting emergency more than 2 months before

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League (AL) and the Samyabadi Dal (SD) yesterday called on the government to lift the state of emergency earlier than two months ahead of each election, saying this will give the political parties leeway to prepare for the polls.

The two parties of the AL-led 14-party combine at a meeting also called for the resumption of indoor politics across the country so that

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

GATCO CASE Khaleda might be quizzed next week

UNB, Dhaka

Detained former prime minister Khaleda Zia is likely to be quizzed next week in connection with the container handling case filed against her by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

"The investigation officer is likely to file a petition in a day or two to allow him to question and take a statement from the detained former prime minister. If permitted, it'll happen sometime next week at the sub-jail," a competent

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

IFTEKHAR REVEALS FOREIGN POLICY PLAN Better relations with neighbours, 5 key world powers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Adviser Iftekhar A Chowdhury yesterday revealed a 10-point foreign policy plan of the caretaker government, which includes improving relations with neighbouring countries and the five key world powers, securing duty-free export access, attracting foreign investment and promoting manpower export.

At a press conference in New York Iftekhar also said Russia has assured Bangladesh of assisting in building a nuclear power plant, which the government plans to set up by 2015.

The foreign adviser pointed out the government's achievement in securing jobs for 4.6 lakh Bangladeshis overseas and road-link deals with Myanmar.

Enumerating the 10 points of the caretaker government's foreign policy, Iftekhar said it should be geared to the benefit of "common man and woman".

The foreign policies include strengthening a "balanced relationship" with the neighbouring nations and member states of the Saarc and Bimstec, and developing linkages with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, European Union, Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and the

Commonwealth.

Dhaka will also look to "actively engage ourselves in the demarcation of land and maritime boundaries," he said.

Bangladesh needs to "cultivate relations" with the five key global powers—the USA, Russia, Britain, Japan and China, he added.

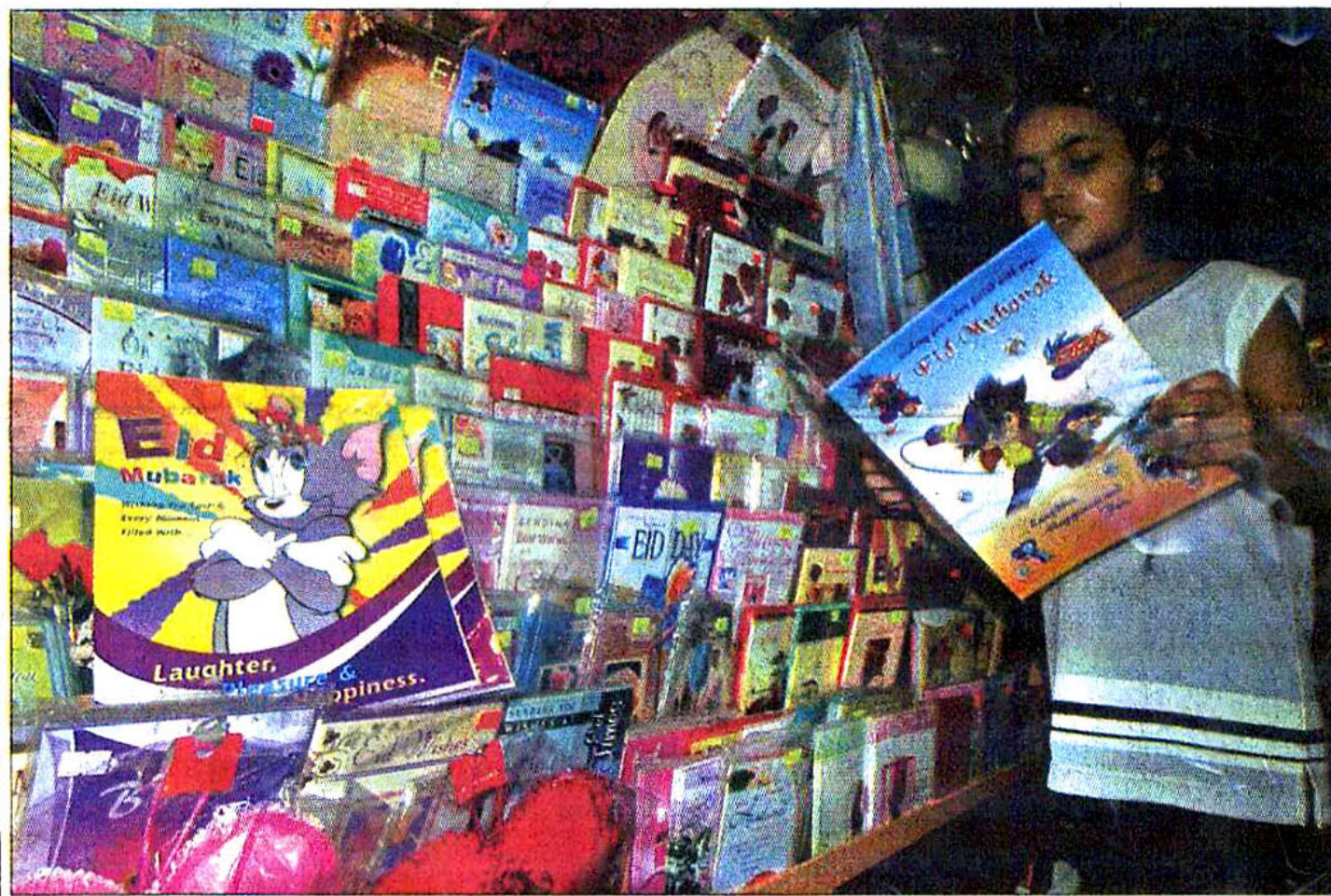
Dhaka should also play a greater role in the UN by enhancing participation in peace-keeping and peace-building, and "actively espousing non-proliferation and disarmament," said a foreign ministry press release.

On trade, Iftekhar said the government should secure "unimpeded entry of Bangladeshi products into foreign markets, particularly of the readymade garments and negotiate reduced tariff and non-tariff barriers and favourable trading regimes through WTO mechanisms".

The foreign policy also includes attractive foreign direct investment in the country, including from the non-resident Bangladeshis.

"The government should also locate newer markets for skilled and semi-skilled workforce and take active measures to promote and protect the welfare of all expatriate Bangladeshis," the foreign

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5



A child makes choice of Eid cards for her near and dear ones at a city shop on Sonargaon Road yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Dhaka team to visit Delhi to resolve train service disputes

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

A six-member team of Bangladesh railway officials will visit New Delhi next week to find a solution to end the row over fencing on the no-man's land to start the much-awaited passenger train service between Kolkata and Dhaka.

Bangladesh remains reluctant to accept India's proposal for fencing the two sides on the no-man's land between Gede on Indian side and Darshana on Bangladesh side through which the "Maitree Express" will pass. India made the proposal for security reasons, particularly to stop cross-border smuggling.

While both the sides agreed on all other arrangements including the number of coaches, customs and immigration clearance, disagreement over the issue of fencing has held up the launch of the project.

"We are ready to launch the service but before that the issue of fencing on the no-man's land has to be sorted out," said a senior official of Indian Railway.

Since the issue involves the Ministry of External Affairs and the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

VOTER LISTING

EC for indoor politics in district HQs by Dec

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission (EC) wants the interim government to allow indoor politics in all district headquarters of the country by December this year for expediting the field level task of preparing the voter list with photographs and to implement the electoral reforms.

"We strongly recommended the government to relax the restrictions on indoor politics in district headquarters by December," Election Commissioner Brig Gen (ret'd) M Sakawat Hussain told reporters yesterday in his office.

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) ATM Shamsul Huda on Tuesday said the state of emergency

should be lifted in places at least two months prior to holding polls to local governments there, which are scheduled to begin in January.

In defence of the demand for allowing indoor politics, the election commissioner argued that only senior leaders of the political parties are now discussing the electoral reform proposals including the proposed provision for mandatory registration of the parties, which they should actually discuss with district level leaders too.

On political parties' cooperation in the field level task of preparing the voter list with photographs, Sakawat said the grassroots level

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

CG can hold parliamentary polls only

Says Delwar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The only election the caretaker government can hold is the parliamentary election -- to hand over power to an elected government, Khandaker Delwar Hossain, secretary general of BNP, said yesterday.

"The task of the interim government is to hold only the parliamentary polls, not any other polls," he said while talking to reporters at his NAM apartment.

He hoped that the Election Commission (EC) will hold a neutral election soon after creating a suitable political environment.

"It is their [caretaker government] only duty to help the EC

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Flood losses estimated at \$200-250m

Foreign donors to channel large part of the required funds, says finance adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The financial damage resulting from the two spells of countrywide floods this year is between \$200-250 million, Finance Adviser Mirza Azizul Islam said yesterday quoting primary government estimation.

The foreign donors will provide large part of the funds required for bearing the losses, he added.

The finance adviser was talking to the reporters after he met Asian Development Bank (ADB) Director General for South Asia Kunio Senga at the planning ministry.

Senga is visiting Bangladesh after Azizul pointed out the massive damage caused by the floods to ADB President Haruhiko Kuroda

during a recent meeting in Manila.

They have completed an inter-ministerial assessment of the flood damage, the finance adviser said, adding that the estimate might be finalised by the government committee concerned by 8th or 9th of this month.

Asked who would pay for the rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts, Aziz said that the ADB would provide a substantial amount along with other donors.

The World Bank (WB) has already pledged \$75 million loan as flood assistance.

Coordinated by the ADB, other donors to contribute to the post-flood reconstruction efforts are

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

bold & beautiful
an exclusive fashion house

L a d i e s

- Sharee
- Muslin
- Bareje
- Jamdani
- Chiffon
- Cotton
- Katan
- Designers Sharee

S a l w a r - K a m e e j

- Creap Silk
- Muslin
- Katan
- Duplan
- Jamdani
- Khadi
- Cotton

G e n t l e s

- Panjabi
- Fotua

Attractive Offer
10% Off
Due to Eid-ul-Fitr

Dhaka Show Room
House # 2 (1st Floor),
Road # 11, Block - F, Banani,
(880 2 8556093)
E-mail: info@saaj.com.bd

Sylhet Show Room:
Shafiq Shopping Complex
(1st Floor) Nijor Pul
(880 821 2870056)

www.saaj.com.bd

HC stays graft case proceedings against Salman

UNB, Dhaka

The High Court yesterday stayed the proceedings of a graft case against detained Beximco Group Vice-Chairman Salman F Rahman.

Passing the interim order upon a petition, a division bench comprising Justice Shah Abu Nayeem Mominur Rahman and Justice Zubayer Rahman Chowdhury issued a rule upon the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) to explain why initiation of the case should not be declared unlawful.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Celebrate Your Eid With Scent
Prestige Bengal Ltd. Presents To You A Big Yearly Sale Of Perfume

5th, 6th & 7th Of October 2007

Discount from 30% up to 50%
Come & buy your favorite perfume for gift & for yourself
Limited time offer, only for 3 days
Limited stock, so rush before it ends

@Almas Super Shop
Gulshan, Dhanmondi
Bashundhara city

Prestige Bengal Ltd. official distributor of:
Kenzo, Ck, Givenchy, Davidoff, Carolina Herrera, Nina Ricci, Kenneth Cole, Bulgari, Aigner, Paul Smith, Paco, Lanvin, Jennifer Lopez, Lolita Lempicka

Tel: 880-2-8858128, Fax: 880-2-8813026, 8828509, e-mail: prestige@bol-online.com