

Khaleda's bank accounts

FROM PAGE 1
violating tender conditions and appointing Gatco, ignoring its lack of experience and skill, to manage the cargo handling at the ports.

Meanwhile, another Dhaka court gave the investigation officer (IO) of the case the permission to interrogate Khaleda about the graft charges brought against her at the gate of the sub-jail set up for her on the Jatiya Sangsad Bhavan premises.

BANK DOCUMENTS
Judge Mohammad Azizul Haque of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court passed the order after ACC Deputy Director Johirul Huda submitted a petition for allowing him to seize all bank-account records and documents of Khaleda in Sonali Bank, local branch Motijheel, Dhaka, and Prime Bank, Banani branch.

Sources said the ACC requires the documents and records to see if there were any payments made to her in connection with awarding Gatco the job.

Court sources said the IO in his petition mentioned that the records and documents at the two banks should be seized for the sake of proper investigation of the case.

KHALEDA TO BE QUIZZED
Metropolitan Magistrate Mizanur Rahman yesterday allowed the same IO to interrogate Khaleda Zia at the gate of the sub-jail, where she is detained, as an application seeking to interrogate her was submitted before the court.

In the petition, the IO said he needs to quiz the former premier to have her statement regarding the allegations brought against her in the Gatco case.

Meanwhile, the ACC questioned four members of the committee that prepared the tender for the container handling job at Dhaka Inland Container Depot (ICD), and Chittagong Port ICD yards and three other officials and employees of Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) in connection with the Gatco case.

The committee members were deputy traffic managers of CPA KM

Moazzem Hossain and Golam Sarwar, CPA Finance Officer Elias Reza and former plant manager Nazmul Hossain.

The investigators are quizzing people concerned almost every day, since questioning five former ministers of Khaleda's cabinet and some former top bureaucrats on September 25, in order to submit the charge sheet and finish their investigation within the timeframe.

The tender preparing committee members were questioned on how the tender list was prepared and whether they prepared the list under political influence.

The case accused in the case are ex-chairman of CPA Commodore (ret'd) Zulfiqar Ali and AMM Shahadat Hossain, ex-director (transport) of CPA AM Sanwar Hossain, former chief finance and accounts officer Ahmed Abdul Qasem, former director Luthful Kabir, Ismail Hossain Simon, son of former shipping minister and BNP leader Col (ret'd) Akbar Hossain, Gatco directors Syed Galib Ahmed, Syed Tanveer Ahmed and AKM Musa Kajor and Akbar's wife Jahannara Ansar and one Ehsan Yusuf.

Apart from Khaleda and Arafat, seven accused including Simon were earlier arrested. Moreover, Simon, Galib and Tanvir gave confessional statements admitting their involvement with graft.

In the case filed by ACC Deputy Director Golam Shahriar Chowdhury, it was alleged that the former prime minister and her son influenced the tender process and the CPA officials helped Gatco win the tender even though a three-member tender evaluation committee of the port termed Gatco unfit for work.

A day after the filing of the case, joint forces, with an official of the ACC, arrested Khaleda and Arafat at their Dhaka Cantonment home.

Although the HC last week granted bail to Khaleda and stayed proceedings of the case, the Supreme Court later on stayed the HC order following appeals filed by the ACC.

Mainul

FROM PAGE 16
many things were not done correctly.

Mainul said the politicians caused harm to themselves by patronising politicisation in every sector in the past, resulting in a horrible situation.

The adviser said, "If we fail to establish a good government and justice, people's aspirations will not be fulfilled."

He urged the journalist community to project the ills and wrongdoings of the society so the government could take actions to have remedies.

Mainul again said the present government is not only working for holding elections but also for establishing good governance.

Ex-AL lawmaker

FROM PAGE 1
could not be known.

A close aide to AL stalwart Suranjit Sengupta, Manik shot into news after his bodyguard and a Juba League activist were killed in a blast while making bombs inside his house at Chhatak March 15, 1999. Two others sustained serious injuries.

Manik was not home at the time of the explosion.

Police and explosives experts of the army later recovered 10 live homemade bombs and bomb-making materials from the scene.

There were allegations that the bombs were being made to be used against the rival faction of the party there.

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) was given the investigation responsibilities in this regard and it submitted the charge sheet with Manik as the prime accused.

Sylhet Divisional Speedy Trial Tribunal Judge Shah E Alam Chowdhury on October 9, 2004 sentenced Manik and two others to 10 years' rigorous imprisonment each in this connection. He served 22 months in jail but following an appeal at the High Court, he was acquitted on August 12, 2006.

The other convicts are Manik's cousin Abul Lais Chowdhury and Gopal Chandra Das. Gopal has been absconding since the blast.

Shajahan Siraj

FROM PAGE 1
order on October 5 to attach all movable property of Shajahan Siraj as he did not appear before the court.

Shajahan, former lawmaker of Jangal-i-Awashtinyan, has been absconding along with his family members.

4 alleged killers

FROM PAGE 1
Muktar Hossain at Matuail in Demra on October 4. Acting on his information, they arrested three others the same day.

DB police Joint Commissioner Abdul Jalil said they confessed to the murder of Mukul. Jahangir, one of the arrestees, gave confessional statement before the court admitting their involvement in the killing.

Quoting the arrestees, DB police said Dewan Rahat Karim Mukul, 36, a lecturer of School of Business of NSU, left for his Dhanmondi residence from NSU at Banani by an auto-rickshaw on September 25 night.

When the vehicle reached the Army Stadium, its driver Alal turned off the engine. The other arrestees led by their leader Liton, got into the vehicle and beat Mukul up.

They snatched money and a mobile phone set from Mukul and threw him out of the vehicle after putting ointment in his eyes.

Mukul was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where the on-duty doctor declared him dead.

Dr Kamal

FROM PAGE 1
Kamal also suggested that the probe commission make some recommendations on politics of university students and teachers, Justice Habib told reporters.

Eminent citizens and a good number of teachers, who met him earlier, also urged him to make recommendations on the matter, he added.

On the recent campus violence, he said, "Initially, the incident was accidental and the movement spontaneous. Then it gained another dimension."

Asked if there was political influence on the student movement, Habib said, "The influence was not totally political, but a motivated circle in its own interest was involved in it."

Regarding participation or involvement of student leaders in the movement, he said, "Student leaders did not participate in the movement, but it cannot be said they did not act behind the scenes."

On the 29th working day of the commission yesterday, two more persons came to it to give their testimony.

The commission has so far received testimony or suggestions from 101 persons.

The probe commission is supposed to submit its report by October 22, but Justice Habib said it may be delayed "due to complication of the report".

82 deported

FROM PAGE 1
was told that a 'communication gap' had led to the incident, said the secretary.

The mission, following the UAE immigration's explanation, has advised the expatriates' welfare ministry in Dhaka to ask the recruiting agencies to resend the 82 job seekers to the UAE, he added.

He has already had a meeting with the recruiting agencies and asked them to send the 82 job seekers to the UAE again, Chowdhury said.

Meanwhile, various sources concerned including immigration officials in Bangladesh said denial of entry by the UAE authorities occurs frequently and the issuance of 'photocopy visas' to the job seekers by the country's authorities is the main reason for the misunderstanding. These types of visas also leave room for manipulation of the visas.

Photocopy visa is a copy of a visa that the employer in the UAE sends to Bangladesh for hiring a worker. The photocopy visa is, however, attested by the Bangladesh mission in the UAE. Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET) in Bangladesh also issues immigration certificates after verifying the photocopy visas.

Due to the misunderstandings caused by the photocopy visas, returned job seekers have to endure immense sufferings as they have to make two additional trips -- back home to Bangladesh and to the UAE again. All throughout the ordeal, a job seeker's future and investment hangs in the balance while the recruiting agencies count heavy

losses in the two additional air tickets for each worker, added the sources.

According to recruiting agencies, once the workers with photocopy visas arrive at the UAE immigration, the immigration officials verify the visas on computer network. The workers are not allowed to enter the UAE if the visas are not found on the immigration computer network.

"Around five to ten Bangladeshis are deported [from UAE] every week," said an immigration official in Dhaka.

But interestingly, after a few days, the same returned workers are sent to the country again with the same visas, he added.

Due to numerous reports of such returns, the immigration police asked the government not to accept photocopy visas when a job seeker departs the country. The proposal was rejected as such a policy might have adverse impacts on the manpower business with the UAE, said sources in the immigration police.

Asked on the proposal of the immigration police, the acting secretary of the expatriates' welfare ministry said, "We cannot rush to take a decision as we have to think of the impacts of a new system. The proposal is, however, under consideration."

According to the manpower businesses, the UAE and Qatar are the two countries in the Middle East that issue photocopy visas for hiring workers from Bangladesh.

According to BMET, since 1976 till December 2006, a total of 6,83,388 Bangladeshi workers have migrated to the UAE.

NBR asks

FROM PAGE 1
Khaleda Zia, and his close associate Giasuddin Al Mamun, were also listed. They are -- Rafiqul Islam Bakul and Towhidul Islam Ashik, officials of Hawa Bhaban, Sajjadul Siraj Joy, administrative officer of Hawa Bhaban, Mia Nuruddin Apu, assistant personal secretary to Tarique and Kamrul Islam, personal secretary to Mamun.

Account details of former Awami League (AL) MP Akhtaruzzaman Chowdhury's children Anisuzzaman Chowdhury, Ashikuzzaman Chowdhury, Roksana Zaman Chowdhury, Afroza Zaman Chowdhury and Farhana Zaman Chowdhury were sought.

The list also included former AL MP Ali Reza Raju and six of his family members, Md Abu Hanif Patowary and three of his family members, Captain Md Azizul Hasan and six of his family members, Md Kutub Uddin Ahmed and three of his family members.

The businesses in the list are Eastern Housing Group, GQ Ballpen Industries Ltd, Marshall Distilleries, Al-Amin Construction Pvt Ltd and Sound Valley.

Harris

FROM PAGE 1
The case statement said Harris amassed wealth worth Tk 19.40 lakh illegally in connivance with the other accused.

The other accused are his wife Hosne Ara Chowdhury, son Naim Shaif Chowdhury, daughter Samira Tanjil, brother Selim Chowdhury, sister-in-law Jahannara Chowdhury, Akhlaasur Nahar, Masum Ahmed, Mosharraf Hossain Thakur and Harris' private secretary Ziaul Islam.

Harris went into hiding soon after the present caretaker government launched crackdown on high-profile graft suspects.

Abdul Karim, ACC deputy director, filed the case against Obaidul and his family with Ramna Police Station.

In the case, the ACC deputy director stated that Obaidul Karim, his wife and son did not mention their wealth worth over Tk 6.36 crore in the statement submitted to the commission.

AL acting GS

FROM PAGE 16
Calling upon the Juba League leaders and workers to remain united and work for the party, Ashraf said, "There is no alternative to unity of the party."

"I had talks with Abdur Razzak and Suranjit Sengupta (AL president members) in London and both have told me they also want unity of the party," he said.

Ashraf said misinformation has been spread in the name of pro-reform and anti-reform. He urged all not to spread such misleading information. The AL leader directed the Juba League leaders to resist those who have been spreading the misleading information.

Ashraf said discussion on AL reforms will be held in the next meeting of the party's central working committee.

The AL leader, who returned home from London on Thursday, observed that there is no reason to keep the state of emergency in force.

"The government has repeatedly been saying that the law and order of the country is normal. So, in this circumstance, I think there is no need to keep the state of emergency in force," said Ashraf.

Ashraf said they will participate in the next election whenever it takes place. "I believe that the detained party chief Sheikh Hasina will be released by that time and we will take part in the polls under her leadership."

Juba League presidium member Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury presided over the meeting while Joint Secretary Mujibur Rahman Chowdhury conducted it.

Hatirjheel project

FROM PAGE 16
In addition, low-lying areas in the middle of Hatirjheel will be developed and the wastewater will be disposed. Roads and walkways will be built around the whole Hatirjheel area to check illegal grabbing of land and stop traffic congestion.

Besides, there will be driveways by the canal from behind Hotel Sonargaon to Rampura, an overpass on the Tongi Diversion Road on the east part of Panthapath, bridge connecting Moghbazar Wireless Gate and Tejaon Industrial Area, forestation, bus bays and parking spaces.

Eleven kilometres of road and footpath, 14-kilometre walkway, 320-metre bridge and 250-metre overpass will be built.

Other projects got the go-ahead yesterday include National Agriculture Technological Project (first phase) at Tk 604 crore, Bangladesh Marine Fisheries Capacity Building Project at Tk 119 crore, Regional Fisheries and Livestock Development Project (Barisal Component) at Tk 101 crore, Regional Fisheries and Livestock Development Project (Noakhali Component) at Tk 77 crore and Moulvibazar Meteorological Radar System Setup Project at Tk 88 crore.

In addition, systems loss reducing of acquired electricity lines (revised project) estimated at Tk 1024 crore, Shikholaha 150 MW power plant construction at Tk 778 crore, construction of bridge over Bolsheshwar river (revised project) at Tk 36 crore, shed, expansion and development of Dhaka Railway Station (revised project) at Tk 30 crore, BMR of KPM Ltd project at Tk 182 crore and Leather Industry City, Dhaka, (revised) project at Tk 545 crore were also approved.

Markets buzzing

FROM PAGE 16
shops everyday from morning till night, but the volume of sales is quite dismal.

The Daily Star talked to the holiday shoppers in the last five days and found out that a large number of them are quite frustrated by the sky high prices of garments and fabrics on the market.

Many shoppers said they are not daring yet to buy anything new this holiday season due to the soaring prices of garments, on top which the price hike of essential commodities is also making it difficult for them to buy anything new by constantly pushing up the living cost.

Some of them said the traders are asking for such high prices that it seems they are in it to make all their profits during this holiday season alone.

"It seems that the traders are in a drive to make all the profits before the Eid. Prices of fabrics and dresses are increasing by the day although our income has been stuck at one point... can you tell me how the middle and lower income group families will afford to buy something new for the Eid?" asked a visibly frustrated Anwar Hossain, who works for a private firm and was trying to buy something from NewMarket.

"I've got my salary and the bonus but still couldn't buy anything for the Eid. I have to buy the high prices of clothes," he said, adding, "Gifts for my two sons and my mother still remain to be bought and I am searching frantically for something affordable."

Nasim Reza, who was shopping at Ayesha Super Market, claimed the traders are making 100 to 150 percent profit from each sale.

"Last year I bought a panjabi for 400 taka. But this year the traders are asking double that price for a similar panjabi," he said.

Meanwhile, readymade garments traders said the volume of sales has dropped significantly this year although people of the Hindu community have also already started their Puja shopping, adding to the rush of the Eid shoppers.

The traders said they have nothing to do with the price hike since the prices of almost all raw materials including cotton went up.

"After the 22nd Ramadan last year the sales were of 50,000 taka a day but this year the sales have dropped to Tk 30,000," said Rezaul Karim, owner of a readymade garment shop in Karwan Bazar.

"I am hopeful that the sales will pick up a couple of days before the Eid," he however added.

The traders also said the prices of garments have been shooting up for the last two months due to the price hike of cotton and an overall increase in the production cost.

Raihan Kabir, who was in Bangla Bazar Super Market on Sunday, said the increase in the living cost is also making Eid shopping difficult this year.

He said, "I used to be able to save some money from my salary in previous years, but now I can't save a single paisa as everything I earn goes to by food and other essentials."

Mona, a student of Home Economics College who was roaming through Gausia Super Market and the adjacent markets with her younger sister, said it took her five hours to find an affordable three-piece salwar-kameez set for her sister.

"The money I brought with me to buy dresses for both of us is already spent buying my sister's dress. I will have to come back tomorrow to buy my own," she said.

Garment industry worker, Abdul

Delwar protests

FROM PAGE 16
Khaleda has the birth and constitutional right to stay in the country.

"Khaleda is a citizen of the country and the leader of a major political party and she served the country as prime minister three times," he said while talking to reporters at his NAM flat in the capital yesterday.

He said, "The adviser cannot say something like this about one's inherent right."

BNP Secretary General said expelled BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan announced his reform proposal "with a certain mission in mind" and the party has no affiliation with it.

Meanwhile, pro-Bhuiyan leader Ashraf Hossain, after meeting Bhuiyan at his Gulshan home, yesterday said they want to reform the party so none can amass illegal wealth in future using the party.

Musharraf

FROM PAGE 16
crash near the town of Garhi Dopatta some 20km from Muzaffarabad.

Military rescue teams had reached the area and cordoned it off.

Television footage taken soon after the accident showed hundreds of local people helping the injured and dousing the smoking wreckage with water from a nearby river.

Musharraf was due to make a speech hailing Pakistan's recovery efforts -- led by the military -- after the giant 7.6-magnitude quake two years ago, which also left 2.5 million people homeless.

The crash came two days after Musharraf, a key US ally, swept to victory in a presidential election. However he must wait until later this month for the Supreme Court to officially confirm the result.

Several helicopters involved in the massive quake rescue operation have crashed in the mountainous terrain of Kashmir, a Himalayan territory split between Pakistan and India.

In March 2006, a Red Cross helicopter crashed while ferrying food to earthquake survivors, injuring the two South African crew members.

Six Pakistani soldiers were killed when another Mi-17 crashed days after the quake.

Khaleque, who was checking the prices of garments being sold by a street vendor in Karwan Bazar on Sunday evening said, "I came to know the prices of dresses for my parents and three siblings who live in Bogra. I will buy the gifts for them after getting my salary and the bonus."

"But I don't know whether I will be able to buy all the things I want to give them in the Eid with my salary. Moreover the overtime pay is also very little," he added.

Abdul Jalil, a street vendor of readymade garments in Karwan Bazar, said, "I have been in the business here for the last 20 years. But sales are poor this year compared to the last couple of years' Eid seasons."

He however expressed his satisfaction over the nascent absence of extortionists in the market this year.

"In the last couple of years we had to pay at least a half of our income to the extortionists, but this year although the sales are bad, we are nonetheless happy that we are not being fleeced by the goons," he said.

A salesperson in Tareq Fashion at Farmview Super Market said they are getting afraid looking at the dismal volume of sales this holiday season.

"Since the Durga Puja will start just in a couple of days following the Eid, we purchased a huge amount of items. But the sales are so depressing that it has become tough for the management to even pay our salaries," he said.

Karwan Bazar is one of the famous places for buying items for Zakat. But the traders in Karwan Bazar claimed that the sales of Zakat items have also plummeted significantly.

The sales of clothes that people buy for Zakat have dropped to 20 percent of the last few years' sales, they said.

ACC to launch

FROM PAGE 1
The ACC secretary also apprised the newsmen of the present state of the cases against the 142 suspects.

The ACC earlier served notices to 141 corruption suspects asking them to submit wealth statements, and 117 of them complied. The ACC filed non-submission cases against five of the 141, and it is preparing four more non-submission cases against four of the remaining suspects who did not submit their wealth statements.

The commission is now investigating 37 of the 141 suspects and it readied first information reports against 33 others. Charge sheets were submitted against 19 other suspects while 10 others are being tried in the court currently. The courts also delivered verdicts against nine persons of the corruption suspects.

Apart from the 141, the commission on its own effort submitted charge sheets against 23 other suspects including Mosaddak Ali Fahu, Nasiruddin Pintu, and a joint tax commissioner.

The commission could not take any action against one of the corruption suspects as he had filed a writ petition with the High Court.

The ACC secretary also said all the steps regarding appointment process and required qualifications for ACC appointments will be made public in the media once the draft of the appointment rules is approved by the authorities concerned.

"As different ministries are involved with the process of approving the new rules, it will take a while," he said.

Replying to a question regarding the proposed Truth Commission, the ACC secretary said, "This matter is still under process. Until the government finalises the matter, everything will run as usual."

Myanmar junta

FROM PAGE 16
brought back into the faith.

It came with the UN Security Council due Monday to weigh a draft statement condemning the military regime.

The non-binding text, drafted by the United States, Britain and France, was submitted after the world body heard a report from UN envoy Ibrahim Gambari on his recent mission to defuse the crisis.

The statement condemns "violent repression of peaceful demonstrations" and urges Myanmar's rulers to "cease repressive measures" and release detainees as well as political prisoners, including opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

However, diplomats in New York said it was likely to be toned down at the request of China, Russia and possibly Indonesia.

The donations were latest in a series of gestures by the military aimed at easing domestic and international pressure on the regime.

During the weekend the military trumpeted its release of more than half of 2,171 people arrested in the crackdown and noted that nearly 400 of 533 monks detained had been "sent back to their respective monasteries."

State media reported that pornography and weapons, including one pistol and 13 slingshots, had been confiscated during raids on the monasteries.

Junta chief Senior General Than Shwe has indicated he is prepared to meet Aung San Suu Kyi, although the offer came with heavy conditions including that she end support for sanctions.

Gambari was allowed to see the democracy leader, who has spent most of the last 18 years under house arrest, on his mission here a week ago.

The United States has led calls for her release, and warned Friday that it could push for UN sanctions, including an arms embargo, if the ruling generals pursue the crackdown on pro-democracy protesters.

3 JMB men charged

FROM PAGE 1
tortured severely in custody.

The 40 detained individuals included Awami League (AL) leader Sabur Hossain Chowdhury, Myensingh AL president Principal Motiur Rahman, writer-journalist Shahriar Kabir, Prof Muntassir Mamoon and journalist Enamul Hoque Chowdhury.

A few hours into the arrests on December 8, then prime minister Khaleda Zia during her visit to Alok Cinema said the authorities had arrested some people for their suspected involvement in the blasts. Hinting at the opposition leaders and the intellectuals, she said those who had been running a smear campaign against Bangladesh -- at home and abroad -- bear links to such terrorist attack.

Ministers and high officials of the law enforcement agencies also gave the impression that those who were detained had connection with the blasts.

Over the submission of charge sheets against JMB operatives, the political leaders and intellectuals, who were detained for their alleged involvement in the blasts, said they were arrested and tortured deliberately despite their innocence.

Different quarters had criticised the then government for arresting political leaders and intellectuals.

Amnesty International at that time in a press release expressed concern over the arrests and said Sabur was detained solely for being a vocal critic of the then ruling party.

Our Mynensingh Correspondent adds investigation officer (IO) of the cases, Rafiqul Islam, assistant superintendent of criminal investigation department (CID) of police, submitted charge sheets of the eight cases filed in connection with the serial bomb blasts in four cinema halls against the three JMB men to the No 1 Cognisance Court.

First Class Magistrate Shefali Begum accepted the charge sheets.

It has been mentioned in the charge sheets that Salah Uddin, during interrogation, has confessed to the plan of attacking the cinema halls with bombs. At the house of Shaikh Abdur Rahman in Jamalpur,

Shab-e-Qadr

FROM PAGE 1
their warm greetings to the countrymen. They prayed to the almighty for welfare of the country and the Muslim Ummah.