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MK Alamgir, wife sued for hiding wealth

UNB, Dhaka

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has filed a case against convicted former state minister and Awami League president member Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir's wife Sitara Alamgir for concealing information and amassing wealth beyond her known sources of income.

ACC Assistant Director Rahila Khatun filed the case against Sitara with Ramna Police Station on Monday for concealing information about wealth worth over

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IGP talks of interference in cops' duty in last 36 yrs

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

The police could not perform their duties properly due to interference by politicians and other influential quarters in the last 36 years, said Inspector General of Police (IGP) Noor Mohammad yesterday.

"Now the police department is trying to turn around taking the opportunity of current changing situation," he said.

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Prayer Timing		
December 27		
Fajr	Azan	Jamaat
5:30	5:30	6:05
Zohr	12:45	1:15
Asr	4:00	4:15
Maghrib	5:27	5:30
Esha	7:00	7:30

Source: Islamic Foundation

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40 Tigers killed in intense sea battle

Lankan president vows to crush rebels

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's navy yesterday clashed with suspected Tamil Tiger vessels off the island's northern coast of Jaffna, leaving at least 40 rebels dead, the defence ministry said.

Twelve naval fast attack craft, backed by an Mi-24 helicopter gunship, confronted a flotilla of 16 rebel boats off the southern seas of Delft, one of the bigger inhabited islands off the Jaffna peninsula, the ministry said.

"Six LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) attack boats were destroyed including two suicide craft during a heavy sea battle... at least 40 terrorists were killed during the hours-long sea confrontation," the ministry said.

The military did not give its own casualty figures but said one naval craft was damaged during an explosion when two rebel suicide

boats were destroyed.

However, the rebels claimed they had sunk a navy fast attack craft and damaged two naval boats during the sea battle, the pro-rebel Tamilnet.com web site reported.

Both sides make sharply differing claims about casualties and independent verification is rarely possible.

The sea battle came as the navy earlier Wednesday detained a "suspicious" Indonesian vessel off the island's east coast, an official spokesman said.

The Indonesian registered boat was carrying a 12-member Indonesian crew when the navy detected it 95 nautical miles east of Arugam Bay, navy spokesman D.K.P. Dassanayake said.

He said naval officers were still in the process of questioning the crew.

Sri Lanka has stepped up naval

patrols to intercept Tamil Tiger rebels smuggling weapons.

In October, the navy claimed it had virtually destroyed the ability of the Tigers to smuggle weapons to the island after sinking what it said was the rebels' last gun-running ship.

Sri Lanka is pressing for a military victory over the Tamil Tigers who are fighting for a separate homeland for the ethnic Tamil minority in the Sinhalese-majority nation.

Tens of thousands have died on both sides since the conflict erupted in 1972.

Report from Matara adds: Sri Lanka's president used a tsunami mourning ceremony yesterday to repeat a vow to crush Tamil rebels before conducting peace talks to end Asia's longest-running ethnic conflict.

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PHOTO: STAR

Rickshaw vans are parked on the pavement by the iron fence of Ahsan Manzil, reducing the appeal of the beautiful palace, now a museum, in Old Dhaka. This is also putting pedestrians in difficulty.

Anti-graft issue to be in textbooks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) is to incorporate at least one chapter on "anti-corruption" in textbooks of class I to class VIII from 2009 to build stronger values from the ground up.

The initiative was taken following a request from Anti-corruption Commission (ACC) Chairman Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury yesterday.

The NCTB has already incorporated such chapters in 2008 Bangla textbooks of class nine-10 and 11-12.

The ACC chairman yesterday met NCTB Chairman Prof M Masir Uddin at the NCTB office and urged him to incorporate the chapters in the textbooks.

"We asked the NCTB to include chapters on anti-corruption in textbooks so that the new generation hates corruption from their childhood. The presentation of this issue should be simple so that

students can easily understand. The NCTB will decide how to present the issue in different classes. We will not interfere with that," Hasan Mashhud said while talking with newsmen after the meeting.

"Two months ago I requested the chief adviser to incorporate chapters on anti-corruption in textbooks. We are pleased to see the inclusion of the chapters in textbooks of class nine and class eleven. But it is not enough. We want it in all classes," he said.

NCTB Chairman Masir Uddin said they would discuss the issue with the National Curriculum Coordination Committee (NCCC) soon and decide how to present the issue in primary and secondary level students.

"We hope to incorporate the chapters into the primary and secondary level textbooks from 2009," he said adding that two separate committees of the NCCC will make the final decision.

100 feared dead in Indonesia landslides

AFP, Jakarta

Floods and landslides triggered by monsoon rains left close to 100 people dead or missing on the main Indonesian island of Java on yesterday, officials said.

Landslides hit villages in densely populated Central Java's Karanganyar and Wonogiri districts early yesterday after heavy downpours, with floods also swelling in several areas, leaving 42 dead and 42 missing, they said.

"The last report we received at 4:00 pm (0900 GMT) shows that 66 people in nine areas in Karanganyar district are dead or missing," the head of a local disaster management centre, Heru Aji Pratomo, told AFP.

He said that 36 bodies had been retrieved. Seven of the areas he referred to were hit by landslides and two others were inundated by floods, he added.

An official at the disaster management centre in Wonogiri district, to the south, Sri Mubadi, told AFP that six bodies had been recovered but 12 others remained missing.

In Karanganyar, one family of four died after a landslide slammed into their home.

"The husband was actually evacuated and survived, but knowing that his wife and two children had died, he went into shock and made his condition worse. He later died," said Edi Susanto from Karanganyar's disaster management centre.

A truck carrying three men also careened into a river as it tried to avoid a landslide, which are not unusual across Indonesia in hilly and volcanic areas during the monsoon.

"We've just found the three dead bodies in the river," Susanto added.

In Tawangmangu, the worst-hit area, hundreds of troops, police and residents combed through debris using their hands, shovels and wooden sticks to search for victims.

The disaster centre's Pratomo

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Bangladesh crash to 6-wicket loss

AFP, Auckland

Bangladesh lost their way while batting and eventually conceded a 6-wicket defeat to New Zealand in the first one-day international of a three-match series yesterday.

Given a modest target of 202 on the short boundaries of Eden Park, hosts' opener Jamie How set the platform with a patient 88 before Scott Styris ended the game with a towering six in the 43rd over.

New Zealand captain Daniel Vettori acknowledged his decision to send Bangladesh in to bat first appeared to have backfired when Mohammad Ashraful was in full flight, plundering the boundaries with 70 off 57 balls.

"I think the way Ashraful played took the game away from us for a certain period of time," Vettori said after the match.

"We wanted to win comprehensively, but we had to understand we're going through a bit of a rough patch," a relieved Vettori said.

New Zealand's fortunes turned on one wayward ball from Jacob Oram.

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