# Seven lawyers

Meanwhile, a leading Canadian lawyer and professor of McGill University, Payam Akhaven, arrived in the capital yesterday to work as a counsel for detained being tried in absentia as she lives Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina and its Presidium Member Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim.

The lawyer has already sought permission from the jail authorities to meet Hasina.

"We have submitted the law-, Selim. yer's application with his photo and signature to the jail authorities seeking permission to meet Sheikh Hasina," Hasina's special aide Dr Hasan Mahmud told The said. Daily Star. He said if the lawyer gets permission to meet the detained AL president, they will discuss the charges brought against her.

Sources said Hasina's US educated son Sajeeb Wazed Joy hired the lawyer to start a legal battle to get his mother and his night. uncle Selim exonerated from the charges. The sources added that loy will send a few more prominent lawyers from the US and Canada in the coming days for his mother and his uncle.

The ACC yesterday decided to issue notices on four persons including former deputy minister for food Asadul Habib Dulu, and former BNP MP Dewan Salauddin, who were listed as graft suspects on the fourth list published on October 4, asking to submit their wealth statement.

Director General (Admin) Col Hanif Iqbal replying to a question regarding opinion of the CA firm said the charge sheet was submitted in the case according to existing rules and laws.

"The evidence produced in connection with the case was gathered through investigation and the matter is now in the court. The court will decide about the report," Hanif told reporters ment premises where she is during a routine briefing at the ACC headquarters.

Contradicting the case filed against seven including Hasina by ACC on September 2 last year, Chartered Accountants and Management and Tax Consultants SF Ahmed & Co, in its opinion has recently said Wartsila-Summit group was the lowest bidder in the tender for installation of the power plant.

The ACC in the case accused that the then prime minister Hasina and six others through mutual understanding and use of influence helped Wartsila-Summit group win the bid depriving the lowest bidder --New England Power Company (NEPC).

The CA firm reviewing the project's bid documents gave its opinion that NEPC was wrongly rated as the lowest bidder.

The Summit Industrial and Mercantile Corporation approached SF Ahmed & Co on September 13 to give its professional opinion on selection of the lowest bidder from among the bids received in response to Request For Proposal (RFP) for the Khulna plant and the government policy on import of fuel for it. The firm completed its report

on September 18. **EXTORTION CASE** 

Hasina filed the writ with the HC last year challenging the government move to bring the Tk 2.99 crore extortion case filed by businessman Azam J Chowdhury tion under the EPR.

The HC issued a rule on the government to explain why bringing it under the EPR should not be declared illegal. The hearing on the rule started last week.

The seven lawyers who have mitted against former engineer been appointed as Amicus Curiae AFM Manjurul Islam, his wife are TH Khan, Mahmudul Islam, Akter Zahan Ruby, former deputy Mahbubur Rahman, Rafiqul general manager of Bapex Nurul Islam Mia, Mahbubey Alam, Monsurul Huq Chowdhury and Abdur Rab Chowdhury.

Azam filed the case against former cabinet minister Sheikh Fazlul Karim and Hasina accusing them of taking about Tk 2.99 crore in return for allowing him to set up a power plant during the AL rule in 1996-2001 on

## BNP rebels offer

FROM PAGE 1

Delwar through a former lawmaker. However, pro-Khaleda faction has yet to give any decision about the proposal, but the sources said they are ready to accept all but wheat and soya bean to families five to six leaders of the pro-Saifur in urgent need. faction, if they want to return unconditionally.

Maj Hafiz recently told the media that there is no alternative to unity of the party and if necessary he was ready to relinquish his post. Besides, Saifur Rahman had an hour-long telephone conversation of nutrition supplements to with Delwar on December 1 and proposed unity, but Delwar did not give a reply.

## NU question

FROM PAGE 1 exam must be held," NU Vice Chancellor Prof Syed Rashidul

Previously, NU postponed the micronutrient fortified blended

Ctg mayor

Solaiman asked him to submit the copy during the next hearing.

Both Mohiuddin Chowdhury and Mir Nasir were produced in the court. They shook hands and exchanged greetings. The High Court in separate

orders stayed proceedings of the Bijoy TV case on January 17 this year and the tax evasion case in November last year. On May 27 last year, Abu Md Arit

Siddiquee, deputy director of Anti Corruption Commission (ACC), Chittagong, filed the Bijoy TV case against Mayor Mohiuddin Chowdhury, Chief Engineer Mokhter Alam, former chief

executive officer Imtiaz Hossain Chowdhury, Superintending Engineer Md Shahidullah and Director of Theatre Institute of Chittagong (TIC) Ahmed Iqbal Haider on charges of launching the private TV channel illegally and spending Tk 1.40 crore from the permission to meet her," DIG CCC fund for this purpose.

Engineer Shahidullah died in police custody on July 7 last year. His name was dropped from the charge sheet.

submitted to the court on November 21. Name of Ahmed Iqbal was also dropped from the charge sheet, as his involvement in the graft could not be found.

On September 16 last year, National Board of Revenue (NBR) here filed two cases against former minister Mir

Nasir and his son Barrister Mir Mohammad Helaludin for concealing information on wealth statement and evading

income tax. Deputy Tax Commissioner Bhuban Mohan Tripura of Circle 13 of Tax Region-2, Chittagong filed the cases with the then court of Metropolitan Session Judge AKM Anwar Hossain.

The NBR in its investigation found that Mir Nasir concealed information about Tk 13.80 crore and evaded tax. On the other hand, Mir Helal concealed Tk 11.70 crore in the statement and evaded tax.

## US donates

FROM PAGE 1

US government had supplied 6,500 PPE kits, 20 decontamination kits, and 4,000 rapid antigen kits to the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock in preparation for urgent response to avian influenza outbreaks.

"The US mission will continue to collaborate on avian influenza initiatives as well as to provide ongoing support for the reconstruction efforts after Cyclone Sidr," the release said.

## Govt eyes

FROM PAGE 1

Saturday categorically said political parties would have to pledge to the people before joining talks with the government that they would not go back to pre-1/11 situation.

Political parties however strongly criticised the law adviser's comment, saying they will not sit for talks with the government on conditions.

Issues concerning pre-election situation that might be raised at the talks include reforms in political parties to ensure financial transparency and practice of democracy within the parties, nomination of honest and efficient candidates for polls, code of conduct for the parties after withdrawal of the state of emergency and creating a congenial atmosphere for free and fair election might be raised, sources in the government said.

Meanwhile, the caretaker administration is yet to finalise the dialogue agenda though the advisers are hinting that some crucial issues will come up at the talks.

Earlier, Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed in his January 12 address to the nation said the government would initiate steps soon to hold talks with the parties. The council of advisers at a special meeting on January 10 decided to go for dialogue with parties but since then the advisers did not formally discuss ways to begin the

The council however met twice during this period but it did not discuss the issue of dialogue with

Once the talks between the Election Commission (EC) and political parties are completed, the government will proceed with its plan for dialogue with parties. million to the World Food | Most of the reform issues will be Programme's post-cyclone resolved by the EC move, sources

> So, some major issues will be discussed at talks between the government and political parties," said a source in the interim admin-

istration. Since restoration of parliamentary democracy following the mass upsurge in 1990 against military ruler HM Ershad, the last three Australia will also provide A\$ | parliaments witnessed frequent | boycotts by the then opposition parties while the ruling parties ran the House as per their wishes ignoring the opposition demands. As a result, the opposition parties took to streets with series of agitation programmes that included hartal and strike demanding resignation of the government. The | sea. ruling parties did not make the House effective by not allowing parliamentary bodies to play their due role in ensuring accountability food for pregnant and nursing of the government and transparency of parliament's functioning.s

# 5 US soldiers killed in northern Iraq

AP, Baghdad

A roadside bomb killed five American soldiers yesterday in the northern province described as one of al-Qaeda in Iraq's last strongholds, just days after a massive house explosion and suicide attack killed 40 people in the provincial capital.

The military did not immediately provide more details on Monday's bombing in Ninevah province. On Sunday, Iraqi army reinforcements moved into positions near the provincial capita of Mosul, 225 miles northwest of Baghdad, ahead of a planned offensive announced by İraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki.

US commanders describe Mosul as the last major urban center with a significant al-Qaeda presence since the terror network has been driven from its strongholds in the capital and Anbar province.

The US military, which a military spokesman said earlier this month was the last urban safe haven for al-Qaeda-led insurgents, has said Iraqi plan to, at an undetermined date, Mohammed told reporters.

shrink the American force and leave

Meanwhile, the situation in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul, rocked by blasts blamed on al-Qaeda, is "worse than imagined," the defence minister said as troops braced for an

The Iraqi Red Crescent, meanwhile, said the toll from one of the blasts, in which a building was oblit-

Mohammed told a news conference late Sunday after touring the flashpoint city.

province command centre in Mosul, Mohammed was highly critical of the Iraqi military's deployment in Mosul.

"The forces are scattered. We are working to unify the command. The military units are distributed in security forces will take the lead in Mosul in a way that means they Mosul a major test of Washington's haven't studied the area,

# Bali meet begins

FROM PAGE 1

munity will lend its full support to us in getting back the ill-gotten wealth kept in foreign lands. Bangladesh is committed against corruption and expects that the international community would provide it support in creating a corruption-free Bangladesh," Abul Hasan Manzoor Mannan, commissioner of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), said during the general discussion. He is leading the 8-member Bangladesh delega-

siphoned abroad.

Officials from different civil society organisations of Bangladesh, including the Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), are also participating in the conference.

"Corruption is a communicable disease, within and across countries. In some places, like a pandemic, it is out of control," Antonio Maria Costa, executive director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, observed at the inaugural function.

"Let me invite you (participants) all to be as perseverant and as conclusive as peers who attend this conference to decide and set targets so as to curtail the poisonous emissions of bribery, graft and greed that overheated public and private administrations," Antonio Maria Costa added.

He listed three tasks for the convention, namely, to share the experiences or reports about what have been done by UNCAC member countries in fighting corruption, to discuss which additional measures are needed like technical assistance and to support the quick development of a solid peer review mechanism.

(UN) and World Bank (WB) report the global flows from criminal activities, corruption and tax evasion are estimated at between \$1 trillion to \$1.6 trillion a year.

former prime minister Khaleda Zia, three former secretaries and a number of high officials of Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (Rajuk) and Power Development Board (PWD).

The houses, located in the city's posh areas like Gulshan, Banani, Dhanmondi and New Eskaton, were sold bypassing an open auction, causing a loss of Tk 127.64 crore to the national exchequer

Advocate Anisul Huq appeared for the ACC while Barrister Rafique-ul Huq for Abbas.

## Pak Sidr aid

It is suspected that the rice containers might have got water drenched during the passage by

it as backup for Iraqi security forces.

assault on the jihadists.

erated and about 100 houses destroyed, was higher than reported by the Iraqi authorities, with 60 people killed and 280 wounded. The situation in Mosul is worse than imagined by far," Defence Minister Abdel Qader Jassim

Speaking at the army's Nineveh

"We hope the international com-

The caretaker government acceded to the UNCAC within the first month of assuming office, the ACC commissioner told the conference adding that the implementation of the convention would help Bangladesh bring down corruption as well as get back the state wealth

## Abbas

FROM PAGE 1

Chowdhury, political secretary to

According to prosecution, the accused in connivance with each other sold 18 abandoned government houses on a fake auction at prices much lower than the market

FROM PAGE 16

in separate letters to the Pakistani high commissioner to Bangladesh and the food secretary. Following directives from the food ministry, the food department received the containers holding the undamaged rice. The other containers holding the damaged rice were sealed off the same day.

The containers of damaged rice might be opened in presence of representatives from authorities concerned, including the shipping agent for a decision in this regard, sources informed.

In September 2007, the UN and the WB launched the Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative, which seeks to help poorer nations retrieve assets

spirited away to richer countries. Narrating the background for declaring the state of emergency, ACC Commissioner Mannan in his statement said that rampant corruption had destroyed the very base of Bangladesh's democracy and crippled the fundamental institutions based on which democratic systems function.

He said the government had restructured institutions like Election Commission, Public Service Commission and ACC to strengthen the capacity of the important institutions. The reorganised ACC now has necessary power to root out graft and has already taken elaborate steps to create awareness amongst the masses about the ill effects of corruption, he added.

The ACC commissioner also said that many corrupt people in Bangladesh are now being prosecuted under the law of the land with full respect to the due process. In you is a namow souton

In his speech, Indonesia Minister Widodo Adi Sutjipto said that Indonesia would continue to build a clean government and society with implementations of anti-corruption laws and regulations and cooperation of the international community.

At the meeting, Indonesian Attorney General Hendarman Supandji was elected the new rotational president of UNCAC.

The United Nations Convention Against Corruption, ratified by 107 nations, came into force three years ago. It requires the members to make corruption a criminal offence and to cooperate with each other over graft issues and returning stolen assets.

## Kibria murder

Presiding over the discussion, BFDR Chairman Professor Kabir Chowdhury said that an effort is on According to a United Nations to limit the culprits in the killing only to the Huji, whereas the main perpetrator behind it was the BNP-Jamaat alliance government. The investigators are not linking the BNP-Jamaat men to the incident,

he added. "We hoped that the investigation would progress smoothly during the period of the caretaker government, but that did not happen. Therefore, questions arise if there are people in the government favouring the Jamaat," Professor Kabir Chowdhury said

He also observed that at times, sympathy for the militants and the fundamentalists is noticed in the government itself. He asked the chief adviser to be careful of such elements.

Kibria's son Dr Reza Kibria said that there is neither any effort to catch the masterminds of the incident nor any endeavour to find out about the source of grenades used in killing the former finance minister.

whole blame on the Huji, he said, adding "If such is the case, I outright deny the investigation report now." The Huji might be involved in the killing, but their patrons are not being mentioned, Dr Reza added. Paying tribute to SAMS Kibria's role in diplomacy and economy

An ill attempt is there to put the

Muhith in his memorial speech said as a diplomat in Washington in 1971, Kibria expressed his loyalty to Bangladesh government and contributed immensely in creating opinions in favour of Bangladesh in the US. Kibria was very knowledgeable

about economic diplomacy and played a strong role in various international initiatives as a Bangladeshi representative in Geneva, Muhith said. He said Kibria also contributed actively in the process of forming

Saarc (South Asian Association for

Regional Cooperation). BFDR Director General Monayem Sarker also spoke, while Kibria's widow Asma Kibria was present at the programme.

## Reclaim plots

FROM PAGE 1 Nizam Ahmed, assigned to investigate institutionalised corruption in Rajuk, have been working since

The task forces already recommended expediting the function of "One Window Cell", an expert committee that issues development permits to land developers, and reviews certain conditions for them.

Whether the condition that requires land developers to have at least 85 percent land while starting a project is practical," was discussed at the briefing, housing ministry source said. Since the One Window Cell,

comprising representatives from different utility providers and Dhaka City Corporation, works very slowly, the task forces' recommendation to expedite the process led to formation of a subcommittee to this end, the source mentioned.

"And of course, they recommended raising the quality of staff at Rajuk," the source a said.

Discussing various irregularities in plot allotment, members of the task forces urged the government to initiate probe into incidents of misinformation and hiding information in the process.

Many people received plots hiding information of having a housing plot in Dhaka City Corporation area and even after having one government plot, they

The task forces also asked for looking into documents concerning power of attorney given to land developers by plot recipients. Land developers start their business before they get necessary documents from the plot recipients, an official told this correspondent. Recommendations have been made to look into this, he added.

## DU Arabic dept

FROM PAGE 16 university and Madrasa Board, which is illegal as per the university ordinance.

The Syndicate finalised their

appointment on June 5 last year. But the appointment process was stalled following allegations of violating university ordinance. Selection committee's subject expert Prof Dr Md Abubakar Siddique of Arabic department

issued a 'note of dissent' while a

Syndicate member resigned

expressing resentment over the According to the university ordinance, if any honours student studies at any other institution simultaneously, his or her admis-

sion and degree will be cancelled.

Sources said the authorities completed the appointment process through doubtful interpretation of rule claiming that the particular rule is not applicable to these candidates. DU Vice-chancellor Prof SMA Faiz said the attorney general

recommended that there was no

legal complication over their appointment as the university's 'dual degree' rule is not applicable "Following allegations from a number of teachers, we reviewed the legal aspects of the appointment very carefully. At last we found out that the candidates were

## WB initiates move

harassed without proper reason,"

FROM PAGE 16 bank's fund for post Sidr recovery. The deal was signed by Economic Relations Division Secretary M Aminul Islam Bhuiyan and WB Country Director Xian Zhu. With vesterday's deal WB's total

contribution rose to \$370 million for post Cyclone Sidr rehabilitation including re-allocated funds, budget support, and livelihood support. Asked of WB's assessment of the

caretaker government's economic performance, Patel said, "We think the economic management has been done very well."

## 14 VIPs

FROM PAGE 1 are being deprived of their right as there is no space for them," he said. On the allegation of doctors being involved with the inmates' overstay, the VC on Sunday said, "I cannot say for sure... obviously every doctor concerned is not

involved in such acts." The 19 prisoners, including three women, have been under treatment at the BSMMU prison cell for the last two to three months.

According to sources, the jail authorities have already prepared a list of the prisoners who need the special treatment facilities. They are: Arafat Rahman Koko, younger son of former prime minister Khaleda Zia, former minister Tariqul Islam, former state minister for home affairs Lutfozzaman Babar, Khulna City Mayor Sheikh Tayebur Rahman and Jamaat-e-Islami leader Mizanur Rahman.

Former Awami League lawmaker Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, former Awami League lawmaker Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, former BNP lawmaker Mosaddak Ali Falu, wife of ex-minister Nazmul Huda, Sigma Huda, former BNP lawmaker Ali Asghar Lobi's wife Khushnud Asghar, former JP lawmaker Anwara Begum, BNP Secretary General Hannan Shah, former lawmaker MA Hashem, Amzad Hossain Sarkar, Prof Rafigul Islam, former Awami League lawmaker Lotus Kamal, Janakantha Editor Atikullah Khan Masud, and ntv Managing Director Eneyatur Rahman Bappi are among the VIP prisoners staying at the BSMMU prison cell.

# Corrupt Titas staff

FROM PAGE 1

As part of the efforts, they asked all Titas staffers to submit wealth statements.

On the basis of newspaper reports and their own investigation, the task force prepared a list of 250 employees and as many officials for questioning them about how they had accumulated wealth inconsistent with their legal sources of income.

So far 209 employees have been quizzed and of them, 118 were found to have amassed a fortune through corruption. As 10 others have denied allegations of corruption, the task force has decided to refer their cases to the ACC.

The sources said the rest were primarily proved not to have been involved in corruption.

Out of 250 officials on the list, 79 have been questioned and of them, eight have pledged to return their ill-earned wealth to the exchequer. Evidence of graft has been

found against 13 other officials. But since they deny having done anything wrong, their files would be sent to the ACC. Kamal Uddin, a former director general of Titas, told newsmen at

the Titas Bhaban yesterday that he

would return Tk 2 crore to the state Now a coordinator of a Petrobangla project, he observed that 80 percent officials and employees of Titas Gas Transmission & Distribution

## ZIA blackout

Company Ltd are corrupt.

FROM PAGE 1 which was started some 30 minutes after the blackout.

"We have worked the whole day but are yet to come to a conclusion in this regard," Abdur Rafiq Dewan, head of the probe committee, formed by Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB), told The opposition leader Abhisit Vejjajiva Daily Star last night.

He however said that the probe

committee had come across some said. primary reasons that may have caused the power outage but declined to give any further details on the continuing investigation. Mahbub Jamil, special assistant to the chief adviser who is in charge

office of Biman Bangladesh Airlines Ltd. He held talks with different

of civil aviation and industry min-

istry, yesterday spent almost the

whole day at ZIA and Balaka, head

officials on the matter. Sources at the airport say that the power supply to ZIA snapped due to a power trip in the circuit machine. breaker of the ZIA feeder lines.

There are about 10 to 13 feeder lines and 13-power sub-stations in ZIA through which power is distributed in this area. Commodore Sakeb Khan Majlish had initially said on Sunday night

that the outage occurred due to a

power failure in a grid of the power supply authority. Desco provides power supply to

## Pakistani hostage

FROM PAGE 16 my information is that negotiations have been successful, village police chief Mohammad Ayub told AFP by telephone.

The incident comes amid a tide of violence in Pakistan since the assassination of former premier Benazir Bhutto that has raised fears for the country's stability ahead of key elections on February 18.

The school is near the north-

western border with Afghanistan,

where Pakistani forces have been

locked in fierce fighting with al-

Qaeda and Taliban Islamist militants for the past three weeks. Police said the militants holed up at the school, about 250 kilometres west of Islamabad, after they abducted a health worker in

the village and drove off with him, police said. Police gave chase and in the ensuing shoot-out one militant was killed and a policeman was wounded, while the medic escaped, senior local police official Shakirullah, who goes by

one name, told AFP. District police chief Dar Ali Khattak said the militants had "all types of weapons like rocket launchers and grenades."

Militants in northwest Pakistan have increasingly resorted to kidnappings and hostage-takings to press their demands for Islamic Sharia law and an end to military operations in the region.

Pakistani forces on Sunday said they had seized control from the militants of a key road tunnel that links the district where the school is located to the main northwestern city of Peshawar.

But a soldier died in fierce fighting that continued on Monday in the nearby tribal area of South Waziristan, where and pocketbook are still powerful. Pakistani officials say the key suspect in the murder of opposition leader Benazir Bhutto is on his experience, his own stature. hiding out.

in her killing but fighting in his mountainous fiefdom has esca-Bhutto on December 27.

Asked to name a few involved in large-scale corruption, he said, "They are so powerful that my life would be at risk if I disclose their

names." According to task force sources, Altaf Hossain, an employee, owns a

five-storey building on a 3.5-katha land in the capital, Tk 3.43 lakh and furniture worth around Tk 2.5 lakh. A meter reader named Makbul Hossain has 5.8 kathas of land and a

house on a 2.75-katha plot in the city. Another employee named Sirajul Islam Majumder has 3.5 kathas of land in Gazipur, 2.75 kathas of land at Khilkhet and 7.7 kathas of land at Demra in the city, gold ornaments worth Tk 4.20 lakh

and a station wagon. DRIVE AGAINST BILL **DEFAULETRS** 

Meanwhile, the Titas Gas authorities in cooperation with the task force launch a drive today against businesses defaulting on gas bills.

Task force sources said around 480 factories and industrial plants across Savar, Tongi, Joydevpur, Munshiganj and Dhaka owe Titas around Tk 1,200 crore in unpaid

The authorities however would not consider any action against those who would promise to pay the outstanding bills within a week, added the sources. Earlier, Titas gave the defaulters

a month's time after they had

pleaded that if any action is taken

against them they would not be able to pay salaries to the workers ahead of Eid-ul-Azha. The time expired more than a week ago, but no-one of them has

### bothered to pay the arrears. Thaksin

FROM PAGE 16 2006 and since then has been living in self-imposed exile.

Samak won 310 votes, defeating of the Democrat Party who won 163 seats, speaker Yongyut Tiyapairat "Samak received a majority of

the votes in this chamber, which

means that parliament has elected Samak as prime minister," Yongyut A charismatic yet deeply divisive figure, he will take office and form his cabinet only once King Bhumibol Adulyadej has endorsed

him, a formality that could take a few days. Royalist generals in the military\_ who led the coup that ousted Thaksin had spared no effort in

trying to crush his political Junta-appointed authorities barred him from politics, banned his political party, and froze about two billion dollars worth of his assets. The self-made billionaire CAAB chairman Air has been living in Britain, where he bought Premiership football club Manchester City, and still faces

criminal corruption charges at home. But Thaksin, who remains widely popular in Thailand, tapped Samak, 72, to rally supporters through the People Power Party

It duly swept to victory in December's elections, falling just short of an absolute majority in parliament, and now leads a sixparty coalition with two thirds of the lower house's 480 seats.

Samak, who overcame doubts

about his record and his gruff

manner by openly campaigning as

Thaksin's proxy, was first elected to parliament in 1975 and has held top cabinet posts under civilian and military governments. He was a popular elected leader of Bangkok from 2000 to 2004, even though he is saddled with heavy political baggage from his alleged links to bloody crackdowns on pro-

Samak remains under investigation for corruption over a purchase of fire trucks for Bangkok during his time as governor, a post equivalent to mayor. As voting got underway in par-

liament, he promised to reporters

democracy protesters in 1976 and

that he would not celebrate his victory but would continue to lead a normal life in his new office. "I will still go to the market to buy groceries before returning home to cook and share meals with my wife. There will be no celebra-

mal life," he said. Although he is known for fiery outbursts during press conferences, he also hosts television talk shows and a cooking programme that draws viewers in with his folksystyle.

However many voters, espe-

cially in Bangkok, are turned off by

his abrasive demeanour. A survey

tion. I will continue with my nor-

released Monday found that only 44 percent of Thais support Samak as prime minister. Analysts say that in important ways Samak will remain beholden to Thaksin, whose political clout

"On day to day matters, Samak will have some autonomy, based But on the overall direction, obvi-Islamist warlord Baitullah ously Thaksin will be the determi-Meshud denies any involvement nant of the major direction of a Samak-led government," said Thitinan Pongsudhirak, a political lated since the killing of Benazir analyst at Chulalongkorn University.

reason.

Hasan told The Daily Star.

Sheikh Rehana was also charged with taking a portion of the extorted money in the supplementary charge sheet. Rehana is in London. Dr Hasan, also the forest and environment affairs secretary to

September 13 last year.

tee, said the Canadian lawyer has been appointed as a counsel of Hasina and Sheikh Fazlul Karim "The lawyer will especially look into whether human rights and due process were maintained

the AL central working commit-

in trying Sheikh Hasina," Hasan "We have received an application from him [Payam]. As he is a foreigner, the Ministry of Home Affairs will look into the matter and decide whether to give him

He said they will send Payam's application to the home ministry today and will take necessary steps according to the rules and regulations. Dr Hasan said if law is allowed

to take its own course then the

Prisons Maj Shamsul Haider

Siddiqui told The Daily Star last

government should allow the lawyer to meet Hasina. Prof Payam, who is an US attorney and an international human rights activist, will also assist Hasina's and Selim's panel of lawyers, said the AL leader.

He added that the foreign

lawyer will stay in the country till

February 1, and is likely to come

again considering necessities and the environment prevailing in the country in the future. Meanwhile, three other lawvers of Hasina -- Barrister Shafiq Ahmed, Advocate Abdul Mannan Khan and Advocate Shahara Khatun -- met Hasina yesterday in the special jail on the parlia-

interned, and discussed the cases

During the meeting Hasina

would have kept the price of rice

at 16 taka a KG," Shahara quoted

The other two be served with ACC

notices are Hossain Ahammad,

With these, the ACC has so far

The ACC has also decided not

served notices on 16 out of the 35

from the fourth list of graft sus-

demanded that the stalled 9th parliamentary election be held soon. Advocate Shahara Khatun told The Daily Star that the AL chief also instructed her party leaders to seek early polls. She also said the AL chief has expressed her sadness at the sufferings of the people caused by price hikes of commodities. "If Awami League was in power, we

Hasina as saying.

**ACC** Notices

against her.

deputy assistant director, Habigani passport office, and Sayed Abdul Bashir, office assistant, sub-registry office, Habiganj

> to file non-submission case against AL presidium member Sajeda Chowdhury and informed her about the decision in a letter. Meanwhile, the ACC yesterday approved submitting charge sheet against six including the Daily Janakantha editor Atik Ullah Khan Masud and his wife

Shamima A Khan for amassing

wealth beyond known sources of

income and concealing informa-

In the charge sheets, Masud and his wife would be accused of amassing Tk 54.58 lakh and concealing wealth worth about Tk 1.3 Charge sheet will also be sub-

This contribution reflects

Australia's strong commitment to

Bangladesh, particularly in its

time of need, and our concern for

### Islam and assistant manager of Bapex Alamgir Kabir.

FROM PAGE 16

Australia

people suffering in the affected areas," he added. Australia will contribute A\$ 4 response programme, which will said. provide rice, pulses, vegetable oil, iodised salt, high-energy biscuits,

> tributed to WFP for its immediate cyclone relief programme. 1.5 million to Brac for provision 16,000 pregnant women and nursing mothers for six months, rehabilitation of around 2000 destroyed and damaged schools, replacement of school supplies, and provision of water and sani-

A further \$1 million will be

provided to Unicef for

tation facilities.

mothers and infants.

This contribution is in addi-

tion to A\$ 1 million already con-