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## Leaders must quit party post if elected to local govt: CEC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Political leaders holding party posts will have to resign from their positions if they get elected to local government bodies, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) ATM Shamsul Huda said yesterday.

Referring to the draft of new electoral laws on city corporations and municipalities, he categorically said the long due polls to upazila parishads must be held in between November and December this year as per the electoral roadmap.

The Election Commission (EC) in its proposal to free the local government bodies from partisan politics had said political leaders holding party posts would have to resign from their posts first to contest the local government elections.

"But the local government ministry has not agreed with us," CEC Huda yesterday said at a views-exchange meeting with a

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## MAKING MONEY ILLEGALLY

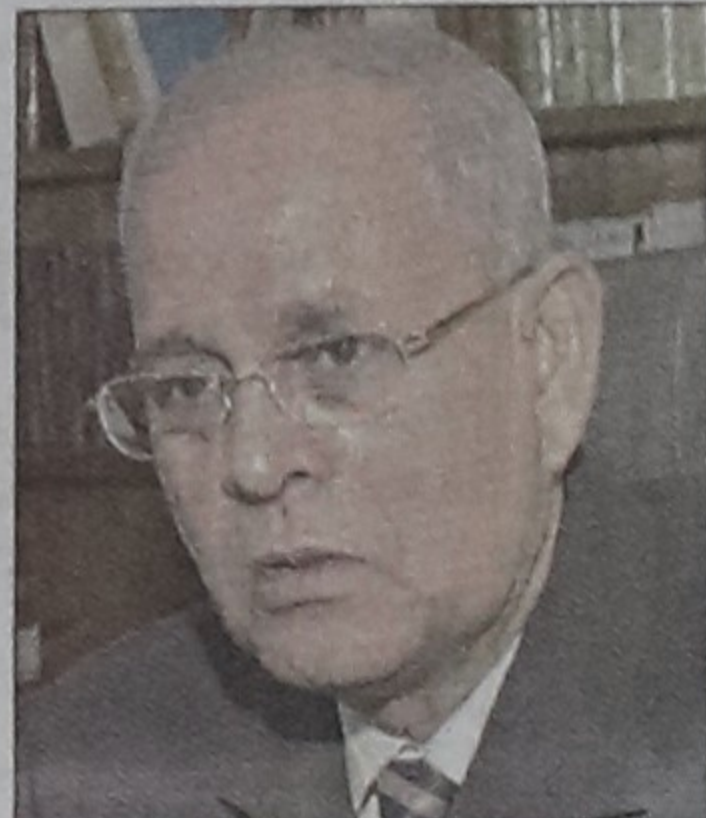
# ACC sues ex-adviser Justice Fazlul Haque

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday filed a case against former adviser to caretaker government Justice Fazlul Haque on charges of amassing assets illegally and concealing wealth information.

First against any former or incumbent caretaker government's adviser, the graft case was filed with Ramna Police Station. According to the first information report (FIR), Justice Haque in his wealth statement to the ACC held back information about moveable and immovable property worth around Tk 97.37 lakh. Those assets do not match up with his known sources of income.

As an adviser to President Iajuddin Ahmed-led caretaker administration, he held the law, justice and parliamentary affairs,



forest and environment, and land portfolios between October 2006 and January last year.

An ACC investigation found that he has a portion of his ill-gotten gains deposited in bank accounts of his son Afzal Hossain Raj, son-in-law Tariqur Rahman Prince and

Raj's friends Abdul Malek, Sujaul Hasan Sujan and Ataul Haque.

"He [Fazlul Haque] had made transactions of over Tk 12.99 crore between different bank accounts in the names of those mentioned above," read the FIR.

This apart, he had money stashed away abroad through his London expatriate daughter and her husband, the case statement said.

He laid out a good amount to buy automobiles and flats. Besides, a portion of the money remains invested in Justice Fazlul Haque Welfare Foundation.

As per tax returns, Justice Haque's net wealth totalled Tk 1.12 lakh in 1984-1985, Tk 33.37 lakh in 2001-2002 and Tk 67.83 lakh in 2005-2006 tax years.

After retirement as an Appellate Division judge, he had wealth

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## Train rolls to Kolkata from today

Bombs found near tracks in India

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The historic resumption of Dhaka-Kolkata train service will go ahead today despite the recovery of four crude bombs near the rail lines on the Indian side of the border yesterday, officials said.

Four hand-made bombs were found hidden in shrubs only eight feet away from rail tracks near Bankimnagar station on Ranaghat-Gede line in the Indian state of West Bengal, the Indian Hindu newspaper reported yesterday, quoting the Press Trust of India.

The bombs were defused immediately. The Indian police have not named any suspects but recently a number of right-wing organisations in Kolkata had protested the restart of the rail link.

Nikhil Banga Nagarik Sangha (All Bengal Citizens Group), comprising Hindu refugees from Bangladesh before and after 1971, recently told the BBC, "Why should

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## Nation gets ready to embrace Pahela Baishakh

Security blanket spread

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As the Bangladeshis celebrate Pahela Baishakh, the first day of Bangla year 1415 today, security agencies have already swung into high alert to prevent any terrorist attack on the festivities.

The traditional centres of celebration around Ramna Park, Suhrawardy Udyan, Shahbagh and Dhaka University campus are under a tight security net as hundreds of thousands of carnival goers are expected to throng central Dhaka to welcome the Bangla New Year.

Chhayanat starts its musical programme at Ramna Batamul at sunrise, while the Fine Arts Institute is scheduled to bring out its traditional procession of floats and giant masks around 9:00am to usher in luck with the year 1415. A

host of other programmes are also planned in and around the city.

Over twelve thousand members of police, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), Special Branch and Detective Branch will be keeping their sharp eyes on the movements of carnival goers.

"We are taking the measures in consideration of existing threats," said Rab DG Hassan Mahmood Khandkar at a news conference yesterday after a demonstration of force by the security agencies for the big day.

Hassan however declined to name the threats for security reasons, while appealing to city residents to bear with security procedures during the day.

Rab and police personnel are posted at all entrances to Ramna Park to avert a repetition of the

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## UNOFFICIAL TALKS WITH GOVT AL demands Hasina's release, date for polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League (AL) yesterday placed before the caretaker government a five-point demand including release of its chief Sheikh Hasina, measures for her treatment abroad and a specific date for the ninth parliamentary polls.

"If we love the country, want a solution to the country's prevailing crises and want handover of the power through holding a free and fair poll, then Sheikh Hasina's chance to take part in the dialogue have to be ensured through her unconditional release," the AL said in its written statement to the advisers.

The statement was handed over to five caretaker government advisers during the second round of unofficial talk between seven AL leaders and the advisers in the state guesthouse Meghna in the capital.

Briefing newsmen after their meeting with the advisers, AL

acting General Secretary Syed Ashrafur Islam said at the talk they also demanded holding of the national election by the year end, immediate curbing of price hikes of essentials, lifting of the state of emergency, and trials of war criminals.

The AL suggested holding talks with political parties separately and demanded that the chief adviser be present there, he said.

Saying that there is doubt in the public mind about the certainty of holding of the election by the year end, the AL statement said the state of emergency must be lifted for electoral preparations creating a congenial atmosphere for the poll, and to dispel the public confusion about the election. "So we are demanding announcement of a specific date for the election immediately," the statement read.

Assuring the AL leaders of holding the election by the end of this

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PHOTO: STAR

Awami League acting General Secretary Syed Ashrafur Islam talks to the media after having an unofficial dialogue with the government at the state guesthouse Meghna in the capital yesterday.

## Govt invites pro-Saifur BNP to talks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The caretaker government once again invited pro-Saifur faction of the BNP to an 'unofficial' talk with it, prompting the faction's leaders to seek more time for discussing the invitation among themselves as well as with leaders of the rival faction led by Khandaker Delwar Hossain.

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## Hasina taken to hospital again for check-up

UNB, Dhaka

Detained Awami League President Sheikh Hasina was taken to Square Hospitals in the city for routine eye check-up yesterday.

Hospital sources said the former prime minister was brought to hospital at about 8:30am and was taken back to the makeshift jail on

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## Jamaat ex-MP Shahjahan, Faisal Morshed Khan get jail terms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former Jamaat-e-Islami lawmaker Shahjahan Chowdhury was yesterday handed down 10 years' imprisonment for corruption while Faisal Morshed Khan, former foreign minister M Morshed Khan's son, seven years for aiding and abetting Shahjahan.

The Special Court-2 of Judge Amar Kumar Roy delivered the verdict in the illegal wealth accumulation and concealment case filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) on July 1 last year.

Alleged militant patron Shahjahan Chowdhury's name was on the first list of 50 high-profile graft suspects made public by the ACC on February 18.

The court sentenced the former Satkania lawmaker and a member of Jamaat's Majlis-e-Shoora (the highest policy making body of the party) to seven years' imprison-



Shahjahan Chowdhury Faisal Morshed Khan

ment for amassing wealth beyond his known sources of income and three years for concealing information in his wealth statement that he had submitted to the ACC.

However, Shahjahan would have to serve seven years in jail altogether as the court ordered the sentences to be effective concurrently.

Former foreign minister's son Faisal, also managing director of Pacific Motors and chairman of AB Bank Ltd, was given seven years' imprisonment as the court found

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All joy of life is in staying together. On this note, we wish you a Shubho Nobo Borsho.

grameenphone