

## Review body

**FROM PAGE 1**  
phrase "women's equal rights to earned movable and immovable properties" and follow Islamic provisions on inheritance if the earned properties include inherited properties.

Suggesting inclusion of guidelines "in the light of the Quran and Sunnah" while taking any decision regarding women's rights, the ulama recommended abolishing the section that suggests steps to implement the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

Asking the government to withdraw Bangladesh from the convention, they said many sections in it go against the belief, spirits and culture of the Muslim ummah.

The ulama committee also opposed and asked the government to eliminate the provision for keeping reserved seats for women in parliament and local government bodies and direct elections to those.

"This policy has strongly hurt the pious Muslims of the country since many sections of it clash with the Quran and Sunnah...It does not go with Bangladesh's constitution, religious traditions and culture," the report concludes.

Adviser Hassan Arif expressed hopes that the recommendations will remove the "language or interpretation gap" created surrounding the Women Development Policy.

The committee members did not support the attempts by a section of opportunists to create chaos by taking advantage of the situation, he told reporters.

**THE RECOMMENDATIONS**  
The committee said 15 sections of the National Women Development Policy are against Islam and should be revised or corrected while six sections should be eliminated.

The Islamic scholars said not only is it impossible to establish equal rights for men and women in the country, but in some cases, giving women equality would deprive them of their rights in many sectors.

They proposed replacing the phrase "equality, equal rights and affirmative action" with "just rights".

The committee also said the ambition of eradicating "existing disparities between women and men" is unclear and should be replaced by the phrase "existing disparities between women and men in light of the Quran and the Sunnah".

On the section that asks for giving women equal human and fundamental rights such as political, economic, social and cultural, they said "just rights" should be ensured for men and women in light of the Quran and Sunnah.

They said the government must ensure participation of ulama and muftis alongside women's law experts while drawing up or eliminating or amending any "existing discriminatory" law.

They proposed inclusion of religion experts in a committee to resolve any inconsistency regarding women's interest arising from misinterpretations of provisions of those religions.

They also opposed the provision of a child's being identified by both the mother and father, saying it "encourages sexual abuse" and pre-marital cohabitation. They recommended identifying a child by "legally married" parents.

The committee observed that the policy's proposed penalty for child marriages is not in line with Islamic policy as the legal mar-

## BSMMU

**FROM PAGE 1**  
activities on Sunday. It will work to find out how much money has been lost at BSMMU due to institutional corruption," ACC Director General (Admin) Col Hanif Iqbal told the journalists during a routine press briefing yesterday afternoon.

Besides, the ACC is also considering filing a case against former prime minister Khaleda Zia's son Arafat Rahman Koko about his wealth statement to the commission, he said.

The commission has already sent a letter to the BSMMU vice chancellor to extend cooperation to the task force through assigning an official, allocating a room for it as well as providing files and documents as per its demands, Hanif Iqbal said.

The members of the task force are Maj Maksudur Rahman, Nasim Anwar and assistant inspector Khandaker Akhteruzzaman.

The ACC team formed for investigating rampant corruption in Roads and Highways Department has completed making spot visits to 11 RHD projects and it is preparing reports on those, Hanif Iqbal said.

About enquiries into the wealth statements submitted by former prime ministers Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia, Hanif said the reports on the statements are under process.

riage age of 18 should not apply here because Islam states that a girl can be married as soon as she has "come of age".

It recommended replacing the phrase "child marriage" of the section concerned with "discourage underage marriage".

The committee opposed inclusion of women in peace-keeping missions, saying it would make women insecure and it could tarnish Bangladesh's image. The ulama proposed cancelling the provision.

They also opposed the provision that women "must be given equal opportunities and participation in wealth, employment, market and business", saying it clashes with the Quran's teachings. They proposed giving women equal opportunities and participation in these sectors in light of religious dictums.

The committee specifically said one's inheritance rights should be determined by their own religions.

The ulama asked the government to cancel the initiative to reserve one-third parliamentary seats for women to increase women's participation in parliament and its application in local elections.

A few Islamist parties started staging demonstrations immediately after the chief adviser announced the National Women Development Policy 2008 on March 8.

On March 11, the law adviser told the ulama that the caretaker government had not passed any law regarding inheritance and there is nothing that contradicts the Quran and Sunnah.

The next day, Women and Children Affairs Adviser Rasheda K Choudhury asked people to refrain from unnecessary criticism of a progressive document like the policy without going through it.

On March 27, the government formed the 20-member committee to identify inconsistencies in the policy as per Islamic rules and suggest steps.

## Nurul Haque

**FROM PAGE 16**  
So they should be granted bail, the defence said.

Agreeing that the case is long due for disposal, the prosecution appealed to the court to schedule a date soon on which date he would try to produce the investigation officer.

After the hearing, the court granted bail to Nurul Haque and fixed April 28 for next hearing.

According to the case statement, Dhanmondi resident Ulfat Rana alias Rafiqul Alam filed the case on April 22 in 1993 with Dhanmondi Police Station against three to four unknown individuals who broke into his house, blindfolded him and made off with 15 tolas of gold, Tk 40,000 worth of clothing, Tk 90,000 in cash and other materials worth Tk 20,000.

Police later arrested 22 people and four of them gave confessional statements.

## Probe finds

**FROM PAGE 16**  
rail crossing remain on 24 hours a day, making it difficult for drivers to know when a train is coming.

It said there are 17 level crossings between Jamuna Bridge and Joydevpur where 47 people work as gatemen. But only two of the gatemen are permanent employees while the rest are on muster roll, eroding their sense of duty.

## Prof Mahfuz

**FROM PAGE 1**  
The punishments were handed down under section 26 (2) and 27 (1) of ACC Act and the two jail terms would be carried out consecutively.

There are numerous allegations against Mahfuzur, including taking bribes and conducting irregularities in 27th BCS examination when he was a PSC member.

The judge observed that being a professor of a public university (Mymensingh Agricultural University), and holding a constitutional post like membership in PSC previously, Mahfuzur should have faced the trial.

As he did not do that despite being a respectable citizen, exemplary punishment is delivered upon him, the judge added.

"This is for the first time a PSC member is convicted for graft since the country's independence," advocate Khurshid Alam Khan, the public prosecutor, said.

ACC Assistant Director Helal Uddin Sharif filed the case against Mahfuzur with Kafrul Police Station on September 23, 2007 accusing him of accumulating wealth of Tk 4.5 crore beyond known sources of income.

Depositions of 49 witnesses were taken in the case.

ACC Assistant Director Nasir Uddin Ahmed submitted the charge sheet on February 12 this year and the charge framing against Mahfuzur took place on March 3.

In his wealth statement, Mahfuzur showed that he owns Tk 99.20 lakh while the ACC investigation revealed that he owns wealth worth Tk 5.42 crore.

## Father kills

**FROM PAGE 16**  
until he sustained back injury a few months back. As the injury rendered him incapable of supporting his family -- wife, a son and two daughters, he had been staying at his mother-in-law's house at Dasmaria, said his relatives and locals. The living child, Shajib, 10, is a student of local Brac School, they added.

They also said remorse and guilt for not being able to provide for the family might be behind Bablu's actions.

Asela, Bablu's wife, said he looked distressed in the past several days when he often told her, "What can I do? I cannot run my family and cannot even provide for my children."

Asela's mother, Hazara Begum, said as her daughter and Bablu had been in severe hardship, she brought them and their three children along to stay with her.

However, Khaled Mamun Chowdhury, upazila nirbahi officer of Puthia and Jasim Uddin, officer-in-charge (OC) of Puthia Police Station, claimed that Bablu had genetic mental disorder that led him to kill his little girls.

"His brothers and cousins are also insane," said OC Jasim.

At around 10am, Bablu took the two girls out with Tk 40 from his mother-in-law, saying that he would buy them sweets, said Hazara.

Bablu took off his clothes, wrapped up the two girls in his lungi and pushed them down into the pond with a banana trunk, locals said adding that he then drank poison that he had bought with the money.

## Tofail

**FROM PAGE 1**  
withdrawing the state of emergency. He said election to local government entities ahead of the parliamentary polls could hamper the national elections.

Tofail criticised the caretaker government for not observing the historic Mujibnagar Day at state level.

Presidium member Suranjit Sengupta alleged that the government arrested Hasina and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia in a bid to send politics and politicians into exile.

"The two top leaders were not arrested on corruption and power-misuse allegations; rather, they were arrested to implement the government's plan to remove politics from the country," he said.

Presidium member Motia Chowdhury said the AL cannot compromise on party demands just to make the government's dialogue with political parties a success.

AL leaders Mukul Bose, Abdul Mannan and Dr Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin and Jubo League leaders Mujibur Rahman Chowdhury, Faruq Hossain, Abdus Sattar Masud, Ataur Rahman Ata, Ismail Hossain and Mohiuddin Mohi, among others, spoke at the discussion.

## DU teachers

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Talking to The Daily Star a teacher said, "As the state of emergency is an obstruction to holding elections to different democratic bodies in the country, we want its immediate withdrawal so that democratic activities of different democratic bodies could be restored by holding their elections."

Duta President Prof Sadrul Amin said the programme was successful. He said, "The teachers' community does not want the state of emergency any more as it interferes with the democratic functioning of different bodies in the country."

Duta General Secretary Prof Anwar Hossain said teachers of the university participated in the programme spontaneously and the decision to protest this way was made unanimously at the Duta general meeting.

"Even though it is a symbolic protest against the state of emergency, we think the government will not consider this a teachers' demand only. Today, the withdrawal of state of emergency has become the demand of all," he said yesterday.

"Due to the state of emergency, the basic rights of people are being violated," Prof Anwar said.

## IOJ demands

**FROM PAGE 16**  
staging protest against the Women Development Policy," IOJ chairman Misbahur Rahman Chowdhury told reporters at the party office in the city's Motijheel.

The IOJ chairman demanded removal of the home adviser for failing to ensure security of the people who went to the mosque to offer prayer.

He said Director General of Islamic Foundation Fazlur Rahman must be removed for allowing political activities in the national mosque.

IOJ chairman also called upon the government to scrap the sections of the Women Development Policy, which are against Islam.

## Unite within 72hrs

**FROM PAGE 1**  
to see the BNP reunite for the sake of a meaningful parliamentary election.

"It's not in our constitutional jurisdiction, but still we have taken the initiative since we don't want to see division in a major political party like BNP," a Saifur-led BNP leader quoted the poll chief as saying.

Leaders of pro-Khaleda faction blasted the EC for sending an invitation to its rival and for not addressing Delwar properly in the letter sent to him Wednesday.

The EC first met leaders of Saifur-led BNP at his office. Attended also by election commissioners Muhammed Sohul Hussain and Brig Gen (ret'd) M Sakawat Hussain, the meeting began at 10:30am and lasted about an hour.

The other meeting, between the EC and a 15-member delegation of Delwar-led BNP, started at half past noon at the EC Secretariat's conference room.

During two-hour long discussions, pro-Khaleda leaders headed by BNP Standing Committee Member Tanveer Ahmed Siddiqui argued that as per their party constitution Delwar is the lawful secretary general of BNP. They urged the EC to send him a "properly addressed" invitation for electoral reforms talks.

Coming out of the meetings, leaders of both the factions however said the BNP would contest the next general election unitedly.

"The Election Commission wants us to come together for the electoral talks. We said there might be some misunderstanding between us, but we are still united," BNP Standing Committee Member Lt Gen (ret'd) Mahbubur Rahman, who led the four-member team of Saifur-led faction, told reporters.

Apart from the reconciliation issue, Mahbubur said, they have asked the commission to declare the elections schedule immediately.

According to meeting sources, Saifur-led faction leaders told the EC that they are ready to sit with the EC anytime as they have already been invited to the talks.

They said while they support 80 percent of the reforms proposed by the EC, they too have some suggestions. At this point, the CEC said the EC might ask them to attend reforms talks within a day's notice, added the sources.

Tanveer Ahmed Siddiqui said they had a frank discussion with the EC.

"BNP has preparations to contest the next parliamentary election unitedly," he said referring to the meeting with the EC.

Nazrul Islam Khan, another leader of pro-Khaleda faction, said at first they spoke of their objection to the way the commission had addressed Delwar in its invitation letter.

He said they have suggested that the EC ask the government to release detained BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia. "Her presence is crucial for taking any important decision. Besides, she has no charge framed against her."

They also demanded withdrawal of the state of emergency to create an environment conducive to holding free and fair election.

About the much-talked about October 29 standing committee meeting that appointed M Saifur Rahman and Major (ret'd) Hafizuddin Ahmed as acting chairman and acting secretary general, Nazrul, joint secretary general of BNP said it was not a standing committee's meeting at all.

Earlier on Wednesday, Major (ret'd) Hafiz and Delwar were invited to meet the EC yesterday. The invitation letters did not mention designation of the recipients.

## 11 JMB men

**FROM PAGE 1**  
The others sentenced are - Rajshahi University Arabic student Ibrahim Hossain, madrassah teacher Jaharul Islam, madrassah students Merajul Islam, Shah Wali Ullah, Zakir Hossain, Mansur Rahman, Biplob Hossain, Abu Zafar and Mozammel Hossain.

They were arrested from Mozammel's house at Puthiara in Paba upazila on July 18, 2005 while they were undergoing combat training. Police recovered diaries and notes from them including details on "restricted military training on arms, ammunition and detonators", guerrilla warfare and revolutionary Islamic slogans and songs for Jihad.

The training included making simple and sophisticated bombs including time bombs and remote control bombs, operating rifles, etc. Local and foreign personnel provided the trainings, according to the prosecution.

After investigation, sub-inspector Zahidul Islam, the then officer-in-charge of Paba police station, lodged a seditious case with a magistrate court on September 4, 2005 and pressed charges against them on February 6, 2006.

Delivering the judgement the court said, prosecution allegations that the militants were engaged in anti-state activities and that they had been receiving "exclusive combat training on arms, ammunition and detonators" with ulterior motives against the state was proved without any doubt.

The court examined a total of eight prosecution witnesses in the case and evidence recovered from possessions of the accused.

One of the sentenced militants, Mozammel, hurled abuses at the police and journalists after the sentence was read out.

A large number of leaders and workers loyal to Khaleda crowded the EC Secretariat premises and adjacent areas. At the end of the meeting, a group of female activists who somehow took position inside the EC Secretariat amid beefed up security measures chanted slogans against the commission and CEC.

Journalists who were earlier allowed in the EC Secretariat's conference room during talks with the other political parties were not given any access yesterday.

**WHAT THE EC MAY DO**  
Asked what the EC would do if the factions are not united, CEC Huda said they would go on to "take the next course of action".

The EC could not hold talks with the BNP in over last five months due to the leadership dispute. Earlier on November 5 last year, it invited the Saifur-led faction to participate in the electoral talks. But in the face of legal complexities, it had to suspend the meeting scheduled for November 22.

Queried whether the EC would act in line with its earlier decision to have only the Saifur-led faction in its talks, the CEC replied in the negative and said, "There must be a long-term solution to the BNP issue."

Requested for his reaction to the pro-Khaleda faction's proposal for a formal invitation to Delwar, he said he knows nothing about it.

"We will send a formal invitation once they are united," added Huda.

Sources in the EC yesterday said they would wait for the next three days to see whether the BNP factions could resolve the differences. "If the issue is not resolved within the time limit, the commission will take its next step next week," said one of them.

## Govt to take

**FROM PAGE 1**  
violent demonstrations against the policy in Dhaka and Chittagong by Islamists.

Additional police forces will be deployed today at Baitul Mukarram National Mosque, a place that saw violent demonstrations on April 10 and 11 when Islamists clashed with law enforcers leaving 200 hurt.

After a rumour had spread that an imam was killed in the clashes on April 11, madrasa students stormed Hathazari Police Station in Chittagong the same day.

Talking to newsmen yesterday, the home adviser expressed hope that no violence or demonstration will take place today as the government is actively considering the recommendations of a committee of ulama (Islamic scholars) regarding the women development policy.

"The government will analyse their recommendations. I am sure that there will be nothing in the policy that contradicts the Quran and the Sunnah. The government is determined about it," he said.

Asked if the government would put the policy on hold in the wake of demonstrations against it, the home adviser said, "There is no question of any activity [on part of the government regarding implementation of the policy]. This is not a law and the government has no desire to enact any."

He said he believes that a vested quarter is banking on the issue to generate violence and urged all to refrain from such activities.

He said the intelligence agencies are working to find out who were involved in last week's violence.

On measures to prevent further incidents at Baitul Mukarram, Matin said, "We have ordered for announcement on loudspeakers asking devotees to leave the place after the prayers. Besides, there will be security personnel there."

The adviser held an emergency meeting with officials of law enforcement agencies at his office in the evening to work out a plan to stop violence breaking out near the National Mosque today.

## Khaleda

**FROM PAGE 1**  
meeting at Delwar's Nam flat to discuss the matter.

Emerging from the meeting at around 8:30pm, Delwar told reporters that they had received positive signal from the party chief about joining the discussions with the government.

"We received some [positive] directives from our chairperson and our senior leaders are now discussing the matter," he said hoping that the outcome of their discussions would be positive.

Among others, BNP standing committee member Dr RA Gani, chairperson's adviser Brig Gen (ret'd) Hannan Shah, vice presidents MKN Anwar and Sarwar Rahman, joint secretaries General Nazrul Islam Khan, Goyeshwar Chandra Roy, Selima Rahman and MA Mannan attended the meeting that started at 6:30pm.

Delwar said he had spoken with several advisers over the phone during their meeting and told them that they did not have any objection in joining them in the proposed dialogue since BNP is a pro-election party.

On April 07, the commerce adviser made a phone call to pro-Khaleda leader Rizvi Ahmed and invited the faction for talks with the government. However, on April 08, the pro-Khaleda leaders told the adviser that Delwar needed to get the party chairperson's consent before joining any dialogue with the government.

## Two lawyers

**FROM PAGE 16**  
sub-jail around 3:00pm Saturday.

In the petition, the lawyers said the jail authorities did not produce Khaleda Zia before the court, even though there is a provision to produce an accused on scheduled dates. They said their client was not brought to the court even for a single day in this case.

They said the investigation officer (IO) may submit a police report implicating their client in the case before the court but they were not able to meet Khaleda Zia and talk about the Niko graft case.

After the hearing, Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Golam Rabbani gave permission to two lawyers to meet their client at the sub-jail.

On December 30 last year, Khaleda Zia, BNP leaders Moudud Ahmed and AKM Mosharraf Hossain were shown arrested in the case following a petition by the IO.

Mahbubul Alam, an assistant director of the ACC, filed the case on December 9 with Tejgaon Police Station against Khaleda Zia and four others.

The case statement said Khaleda Zia, despite being the custodian of the country's wealth as a prime minister, violated her oath and abused power to award Niko the opportunity to extract Tk 10,000 crore worth of gas.

Two other accused in the case are Khandaker Shahidul Islam, former acting energy secretary, and Kashem Sharif, vice president (South Asia) of Niko Research Bangladesh Ltd.

On January 11, former Dhaka Club president Selim Bhuiyan was arrested in connection with the case and later he gave a confessional statement to a magistrate saying that all the dealings between Bangladesh Government and the Canadian energy company were made through him.

Following Selim's confessional statement, controversial businessman Giasuddin Al Mamun was shown arrested in the case and interrogated at the jail gate.

Khaleda was arrested on September 2 last year after a graft case was filed against her.

## Pabna jail super

**FROM PAGE 16**  
people loyal to Bera municipality Chairman Md Abdul Baten visit the detained.

Akteruzzaman told this correspondent that he had informed the matter to the authorities earlier but to no avail.

Pabna Police Superintendent AFM Masum Rabbani said they would investigate into the matter.

The joint forces arrested Md Abdul Baten on March 19 on charges of corruption and misappropriation of money.

## Oil price

**FROM PAGE 16**  
"Crude futures were ... still supported by last night's (US oil stockpile) figures and with the dollar still holding near all time lows against the euro," said Sudden analyst Andrew Kryuchonkov in London.

"Overall, it is quite clear that investors are not prepared to liquidate oil futures at the moment, with strong fund and speculator interest as they seek better returns in commodities."

Just as before, the weakness in the US dollar theme dominates most markets at the moment," he added.

On Thursday, the euro hit a record high 1.5984 dollars as the European Central Bank warned that surging eurozone inflation could last longer than thought, reducing chances of a cut to interest rates, analysts said.

The sliding US currency makes dollar-priced goods, like crude oil, cheaper for foreign buyers and therefore stimulates demand.

Kryuchonkov said that "as long as the greenback remains under pressure, market participants will be buying into gold, oil and other commodities."

On Wednesday, the US government's Department of Energy (DoE) announced that American crude inventories slumped 2.3 million barrels in the week ending April 11, compared with the consensus forecast for a drop of 1.8 million.

## Niko graft case

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Tejgaon Police Station against five persons including former prime minister Khaleda Zia for inflicting an enormous loss to the state by awarding gas deals to Canadian gas exploration company Niko through abuse of power.

Monwar Hossain, officer-in-charge of Dhanmondi Police Station, told The Daily Star that the ACC officials would produce Shahidul before the court when they feel necessary.

## Matin

**FROM PAGE 1**  
journalists after inaugurating the programmes organised to mark the 'Third Jail Week' on the Jail Directorate premises.

When asked about the release of the two detained former premiers Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina, the home adviser refrained from making any comment on the matter.

The two former premiers are detained in separate special jails set up at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhavan.

## Cancellation

**FROM PAGE 16**  
on the matter. Dr Hamida Hossain presided over the meeting held at the Central Shaheed Minar.

Karmojibi Nari has also demanded cancellation of the review committee and implementation of the policy.

It also urged the government to initiate trial of war criminals after forming a special tribunal.

Organisation President Shirin Akhter and General Secretary Sharmin Kabir in a joint statement yesterday said, "The Women Development Policy is a significant step by the current government for establishing equal rights and respect for women. But the fundamentalists and war criminals in the country are opposing the policy terming it an anti-Islam policy."

Workers' Party of Bangladesh has condemned the review committee's recommendations for omitting six sections and amending 15 others of the Women Development Policy.

It also called upon the government to implement the policy for establishing the rights of women.

"When the entire nation is vocal about trial of war criminals, a certain quarter is trying to create anarchy in the country in the name of religion," the party politburo said in a statement.

The Workers' Party urged the government to take actions against those responsible for