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EPR CASES
Sigma Huda, Mir Helal granted ad interim bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday granted three months' ad interim bail to Sigma Huda, wife of detained former communications minister Nazmul Huda, and Mir Helaluddin, son of detained ex-state minister for civil aviation Mir Mohammad Nasruddin, in two cases filed under the Emergency Power Rules.

The HC bench of Justice Md Abdul Quddus and Justice Syed Mohammad Ziaul Karim passed the orders after hearing the bail petitions of Sigma and Helal.

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) filed the case against Sigma and her husband with Dhanmondi Police Station on March 21 last year, stating that the couple took Tk 2.4 crore in bribe from the proprietor of a construction firm.

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POWER PLANT CASE
Hearing on Hasina's plea for quashing trial starts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday began the hearing of a petition filed by detained Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina for quashing the trial proceedings of the barge-mount power plant corruption case against her.

An HC bench comprising Justice Khademul Islam Chowdhury and Justice Mashuque Hosain Ahmed fixed June 8 for further hearing on the matter.

ACC Deputy Director SM Sabbir Hasan filed the case with Tejgaon Police Station against Hasina and six others on September 2 last year under the Emergency Power Rules.

The complainant said the accused through mutual under-

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OMAN
6 Bangladeshis acquitted of murder charge

UNB, Dhaka

Oman on Wednesday declared that its primary court had acquitted Mohammed Momin Miah and five other Bangladeshis held in that country on charges of murder.

Momin Miah was repatriated to Oman as an accused wanted by Omani authorities in December last year. Immediately thereafter, Oman lifted the 12 years long ban

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5 burned as CNG-run bus catches fire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A bus caught fire at Gulshan in the capital yesterday morning and left five people wounded.

Fire service and police sources said the fire originated from the engine of the 52-seater around 8:30pm when it was crossing a bridge on Gulshan Lake near Brac Centre Inn in Gulshan-1.

Police and fire service said the fire completely destroyed the interior of the CNG-run bus and the five passengers were hurt as

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Diabetes in children on the rise

Low birth weight, lifestyle seen as reasons

MAHBUBA ZANNAT

Cases of diabetes in children are on the rise in the country and low birth weight and changing lifestyles may be a few of the contributing factors, said experts.

Obesity and a sedentary lifestyle could be linked with the increasing trend of diabetes among the younger populace, they went on to say that the rising figures of diabetes in children however could also be contributed by an increased availability of diagnostic facilities and an overall improvement in health awareness.

Statistics of BIRDEM Hospital, the lone specialised hospital in the country for the treatment of dia-

betic patients, show that out of 20,549 diabetic patients treated in the hospital between July 2006 and June 2007, 213 were children (aged below 18 years).

The figure was 193 from July 2001 to June 2002 and 92 from January to December 1998.

Between 1995 and 2007, a total of 1,973 children, mostly aged between 8 and 16, were diagnosed with diabetes.

Prof M Abu Sayeed of BIRDEM Hospital said urbanisation has been found to be associated with sedentary lifestyle, intake of higher calorie foods and stressful conditions that may contribute to the increasing prevalence of diabetes mellitus (medical term for the

disease). The situation is not much different in rural areas and the prevalence of diabetes has increased significantly in the rural population of Bangladesh during the last few years, he added.

A study conducted in 2004 by Prof Sayeed and a few other experts in Chandra, a rural community 35 miles north of Dhaka city, found that the prevalence of diabetes among people below the age of 20 years was 6.8 percent, as opposed to 2.3 percent in 1999.

For many children, low birth weight and malnutrition could lead to diabetes, experts said adding that the children weighing less

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Menon warns about perils of constitutional review

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Workers Party (WP) President Rashed Khan Menon yesterday warned about the dangers that would result if an unelected government does a review of the constitution.

"Our constitution is based on our independence. Only an elected government can review it. If it is reviewed by an unelected government, a dangerous situation will be created," Menon said at a press conference in Rajshahi.

"If a review of the constitution is opened up, Jammal-e-Islami can claim for establishment of Islamic rule, for example, or some other can say that the liberation of the country was a wrong thing," Menon said illustrating his point.

The press conference was held

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A concrete electric pole with cracks is being taken to Lalbagh in the capital on a pushcart yesterday for using in the electricity supply system of the area.

Hillary vows full-throated backing for Obama

AFP, Washington

Fallen White House contender Hillary Clinton yesterday promised to throw the full weight of her formidable support behind Democrat Barack Obama as she prepared formally to quit the race.

"I will be speaking on Saturday about how together we can rally the party behind Senator Obama," the former first lady said in an elegiac message to supporters announcing a farewell event this weekend in Washington.

"The stakes are too high and the task before us too important to do otherwise," Clinton said.

"I have said throughout the campaign that I would strongly support

Senator Obama if he were the Democratic Party's nominee, and I intend to deliver on that promise."

Hillary Clinton had refused to concede late Tuesday despite Obama's crossing the winning line of 2,118 delegates needed to become the Democratic standard-bearer in November's presidential election against Republican John McCain.

Speaking at a private fundraising dinner in New York, costing 28,500 dollars a plate, Obama said late Wednesday: "Your junior senator from New York engaged in an extraordinary campaign."

"Now that the inter-family squabble is done, all of us can focus on what needs to be done in

November," he said, in a message of unity echoed by his vanquished opponent after five months of brutal primary campaigning.

"My differences with Senator Obama are small compared to the differences we have with Senator McCain and the Republicans," Hillary Clinton said.

She added to her supporters: "I made you -- and everyone who supported me -- a promise: to stand up for our shared values and to never back down. I'm going to keep that promise today, tomorrow, and for the rest of my life."

Obama spokeswoman Linda Douglass said Clinton had run a "great race."

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A tricycle is tied to the crumpled front end of this human-hauler covering a goart of the number plate. Erratic driving often by drivers with fake or no licence has led to such appalling condition of these vehicles. The photo was taken Shapla Chattar, Motijheel in the capital yesterday.

ILL-GOTTEN WEALTH ACC okays charge heets against Aminul, Faisal

Kazi Zafarullah to be sued

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday approved the submission of two charge sheets against former post and telecommunications minister barrister Aminul Huq, Faisal Morshed Khan, son of former foreign minister M Morshed Khan, and Faisal's wife Shyama Sejan Khan for ill-gotten money.

The anti-graft body also decided to file a corruption case against Awami League presidium member Kazi Zafarullah and his wife Nilufa Zafar Ullah for amassing wealth beyond their known sources of

income.

While briefing journalists, ACC Director General (admin) Col Hanif Iqbal said the ACC would file a case against five people including Proshika Chairman Kazi Faruq Ahmed under the Money Laundering Prevention Act 2002 for illegal international money transfers and transactions.

"The case will be filed against Faruq and four others for illegal transaction and transfer of \$24,690 on the pretext of scholarship," said Hanif.

Despite having a parent account, he said, the accused opened a separate account and

ferred the money from a \$6.38-fund that came for the Prough Proshika.

Other accused are Nbul Karim, senior vice president of Proshika, David V Biswas, a former director ohika, M Yusuf Ali Mia, chief fial officer of Proshika, and Aminur Rahman, director of Ttion Banking at Standard Ced Bank.

ner BNP minister Aminul Hnd M Mofiz Uddin, Cria Union Parishad chair- mder Tanor upazila, caused T5,522.16 loss to the state

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ASSAULT OF REPORTER Tangail jurnos demand jailer's removal

STAR REPORT

Journalists in Tangail have demanded immediate removal of district Jail Superintendent Sagir Miah.

They made the demand at a meeting at the Tangail Press Club auditorium on Wednesday night.

The journalists condemned Sagir, the head of the committee formed to probe the assault on a reporter of The Daily Star by jail guards, for terming the attack on the journalist 'drama' in a rejoinder.

They also decided to submit a memorandum to the home ministry through the Tangail deputy commissioner on Sunday demanding immediate removal of the jail super and neutral investigation into the incident.

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Dhaka yet to reach global standard

US report on human-trafficking prevention

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Despite making significant efforts last year, the government has yet to fully comply with the minimum global standards of human-trafficking prevention, according to a latest US State Department report.

The Trafficking in Persons Report, 2008, released by the US State Department yesterday also recommends that the government increase criminal prosecutions against traffickers and their government aides and protection of adult male trafficking victims and forced-labour victims.

"Bangladesh does not fully comply with the minimum stan-

dards for the elimination of trafficking, however, it is making significant efforts to do so," the report states.

Over the past year, the report states, "The government has made uneven efforts to punish trafficking offences," as the rate of convictions against both labour and sex trafficking has gone down from last year.

The report cited government figures of 106 sex-trafficking related arrests, but only 20 reported convictions, which is 23 fewer than last year. No convictions were achieved last year for the 76 labour-trafficking related arrests.

"Areas of continued concern

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MASS ARRESTS 1,679 more held in 24hrs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The joint forces arrested 1,679 people, including 183 in the capital, in the last 24 hours until 8:00am yesterday in the ongoing special anti-crime drives across the country.

Of them, 1,055 were arrested on warrants, 590 on various charges, 10 under the Arms Act, three under the Explosive Substances Act while 28 are convicts and two are listed criminals.

With the latest detainees, the number of people picked up since the launching of the crackdown on May 28 stands at 13,465. The detainees include some grass root-level leaders and activists of different political parties.

The joint forces also recovered 17 firearms, nine bombs, five cock-tails and 53 bullets during the drives, raising the total number of recovered firearms and explosives

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45 killed in fresh Lankan fighting

Colombo lashes out at war reporting

AP, AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's Tamil Tigers said yesterday they had killed 10 soldiers while security forces said they killed 35 rebels during the latest heavy clashes across the island's north.

Military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said the clashes took place Wednesday in the Vavuniya, Mannar, Welioya and Jaffna areas bordering the rebels' de facto state in the north.

In the worst battle, soldiers killed 20 insurgents in Vavuniya and five soldiers were wounded, he

said. Clashes in the nearby Mannar district killed 11 rebels and wounded one soldier, while other battles in Jaffna and Welioya killed four rebels and one soldier, he said. Rebel spokesman Rasiyah Ilanthirayan was not immediately available for comment.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) said their fighters had beaten back an army attempt to break through their forward defence lines near Vavuniya during a six-hour battle on Wednesday.

The Sri Lanka army has suffered casualties, at least 10 killed.

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RELIEF MISUSE ACC presses charges against ex-MP Shahidul

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Charges have been pressed against former BNP lawmaker Shahidul Islam Master (Jhenidah-3 constituency) for misappropriating relief materials.

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Prayer Timing		
June 6		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-05	4-40
Juma	12-30	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-45	6-50
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

N summit struggles tendorse food crisis plan

AF

Wefers held last-ditch talks yet to agree an action plan to tac global food crisis, after thr, of wrangling that has exprains over how to prevent and poverty.

raft summit declaration obty AFP, they vowed to use "all" to help victims of soarices, which have streamly budgets in rich could sparked food riots in oith.

draft includes comprom- isage notably on the

vexed issue of biofuels, which are promoted in Brazil and the United States but criticised by others as taking up land that could otherwise be used to produce food.

Hours before the final declaration was due to be agreed in Rome - a final press conference was scheduled for 5:00 p.m. (1500 GMT) -- EU Development Commissioner Louis Michel warned against short-term fixes.

"We mustn't give in to panic ... to surrender to the temptation for short-term solutions, even if we have to respond to a situation of

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