

City bus terminals

FROM PAGE 16
Official complaints containing the allegations were already submitted, by the highest bidders in the now cancelled biddings, to the unit of the Task Force for Combating Grievous Crimes and Corruption assigned to investigate graft in DCC.

In both cancelled biddings same companies were the highest bidders. The highest bidder for Gabtoli terminal, Messrs Habib Brothers, filed a writ petition with the High Court (HC) last month challenging the DCC's effort to invite new tenders stating that the company was unjustly deprived of the contract.

The court also ordered DCC to stop the process of inviting new tenders in this connection and issued a notice to the corporation ordering it to explain why Messrs Habib Brothers, should not be awarded the management lease for Gabtoli terminal.

Meanwhile on Thursday, the highest bidder for Mohakhali terminal, Messrs Salvo Trading, also sent a legal notice to DCC.

Talking to The Daily Star the highest bidders of the cancelled two biddings held Mayor Sadeq Hossain Khoka directly responsible for bumping them off the job, alleging that the mayor did it for 'personal interests' as 'his men could not contest in the bids, because they are either in jail or in hiding'.

The mayor, however, denied the allegation saying, "The highest bidders are not being awarded the leases due to some disputes between DCC and the bidders over some conditions of the contracts. The officials concerned will be able to give more details."

"We have taken some measures to bring down the losses and to increase income," the mayor added.

But, when contacted by The Daily Star the officials concerned declined to comment on the matter.

Since the lease contract of the immediate past lessees expired on October 1, 2007, rents from transportation companies using the terminals have been collected by Hanif Paribahan and the two other individuals, to whom temporary leases were awarded verbally, said the mayor.

DCC invited the first round of tenders on July 7, 2007 getting response from 22 bidders.

The city corporation selected Messrs Habib Enterprise as the highest bidder for Gabtoli terminal, which offered to pay the corporation Tk 1,10,411 a day, amounting to

Tk 4,03,00,000 annually including taxes.

Messrs Niaz Traders was selected for Saydabad terminal in exchange for a daily payment of Tk 1,21,530, amounting to yearly revenue earning of Tk 4,43,62,100 for the corporation.

Messrs Salvo Trading was selected for Mohakhali terminal in exchange for a daily payment of Tk 37,515, amounting to yearly payment of Tk 1,36,92,971.

The immediate past lessee of Gabtoli terminal used to pay Tk 1,36,68,000 annually, while Saydabad and Mohakhali used to bring in annual revenue of Tk

1,42,82,400 and Tk 46,38,725 respectively. According to DCC sources, the highest bidders of the cancelled biddings, agreed to pay a total of Tk 9,83,55,071 annually for the three terminals, which was three times higher than what DCC used to earn from the immediate past leases, which was Tk 3,25,89,125 annually.

The mayor cancelled the first round of biddings after selection of the highest bidders, issuing a second round of invitation for tenders on January 10 this year, in which the same aggrieved three companies were again selected as the highest bidders.

But, the mayor yet again decided to cancel the bidding and initiated a process of a third round of invitation for tenders, while for the interim period gave verbal authorisation to lease out the terminals temporarily to Hanif Paribahan, Shah Alam, and another individual.

The DCC sources said the mayor allowed leasing out Gabtoli terminal to Hanif Paribahan for a daily payment of Tk 76,280, Mohakhali terminal to Shah Alam for a daily payment of Tk 32,855, and Saydabad terminal to the other individual for a daily payment of Tk 84,776.

But the bidders, whose bids were cancelled even after being selected as the highest bidders, had offered to pay Tk 1,10,411 a day for Gabtoli, Tk 1,21,530 a day for Saydabad, and Tk 27,515 a day for Mohakhali terminals.

DCC is currently losing Tk 75,945 a day and Tk 22,78,350 a month compared to the offers of the rejected bidders.

In addition, Hanif Paribahan and the other two current lessees are carrying out their operations depending solely on over 60 DCC employees, without hiring any worker on their own while draining manpower of the city corporation.

The salary of the 60 DCC workers is also borne by the corporation, for which the lessees do not even compensate it.

According to DCC policies the lessees are supposed to hire their own work force, and bear the cost for it too.

Talking to The Daily Star, Habibur Rahman, the owner of Messrs Habib Brothers, said, "We fulfilled all formalities and met all conditions, but still the mayor cancelled the tender as his own people could not bid in it."

Mizanur Rahman, owner of Messrs Salvo Trading, said, "I sent a legal notice to the DCC regarding the matter. If DCC doesn't respond appropriately, we will file a case against the mayor and the corporation."

The mayor said, "DCC's legal department is working on the writ filed with the High Court."

When contacted, Mohammad Enamul Huq, DCC general manager (transport), who is also a member of the tender committee, said, "I am in DCC on deputation and responsible for overseeing regular deposit of the rents in banks. It would not be appropriate for me to comment on issues regarding the tender process."

He, however, advised The Daily Star to talk to Superintendent Engineer Kudrat Ullah, who also declined to comment when approached.

Govt asked

FROM PAGE 1
Advocate Shamsul Huq and advocate Tajul Islam filed the writ petition as a public interest litigation with the HC, challenging the legality of sections 2(g), 3(1)(kha), 3(1)(lga), 3(1)(gha), 3(1)(cha), 3(1)(chha), 3(1)(jha), 3(3), 3(4), 3(5), 7(1), 7(2), 10(1), 10(3), 10(5), 11, 14, 19, 22 and 23 of the Contempt of Court Ordinance 2008.

The petitioners stated that these sections have curtailed the powers of the Supreme Court under Article 108 of the constitution to give orders for investigation and punishment for contempt of court and as such those provisions violate the constitution and the principles of separation of the judiciary and its independence—some of the basic features of the constitution.

These are the sections, "which permit the filing of an application before the government for institution of disciplinary proceedings against a judge, and thereby obviating the necessity of conducting an enquiry by the Supreme Judicial Council under article 96(4) of the constitution," the petition said.

The cabinet on March 2 this year approved the Contempt of Court Ordinance 2008 and a gazette notification in this regard was issued on May 25.

The ordinance allows the press to publish and comment on "normal" court proceedings and functions or anyone to seek disciplinary proceedings against a judge as long as they are done in "good faith" and through "restrained language".

Alleged corruption or incompetence of any judge and their extra-judicial activities outside judicial functions can also be reported, according to the ordinance.

A judgment can also be criticised as long as it is "constructive". According to the ordinance, a contempt of court would be punishable by six months imprisonment or a fine of Tk 20,000.

Jamaat

FROM PAGE 1
"We'll not enter into the talks without the unconditional release of Nizami, Khaleda and Hasina as we've said earlier that the dialogue and the election would not be credible keeping them behind bars," Jamaat Secretary General Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojahid told reporters at a press briefing at the party's central office.

Mojahid said the government's "ill intention" is delaying the election through creating complexities instead of handing over power to an elected government after holding the general election immediately. Stating that the interim administration's main duty was to hold the parliamentary elections within 90 days of its taking office, he said the government overstepped its limits for which the country is suffering badly.

"Release all detained political leaders and hold a credible parliamentary election as it's your first duty," he said, adding that the elections would not be acceptable home and abroad without the participation of all political parties. "It's the government duty to ensure the participation of all political parties in the election and the government has to do it."

Referring to the recent crackdown on political leaders "in the name of curbing corruption", he asked the government to stop such "political harassment".

Firoz gets 5yrs

FROM PAGE 1
Special Court-5, set up on the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban premises, also fined Firoz Tk 36 lakh. He will have to serve one more year behind bars if he failed to pay the fine.

As Firoz is absconding and was tried in absentia, his sentence will come into effect the day of his arrest or surrender. Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Assistant Director Syed Iqbal Hossain filed the case with Gulshan Police Station on November 13 last year accusing Firoz of using five vehicles of Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) and Essential Drugs Company Ltd for personal purposes in the name of Prime Minister's Office.

The case statement said that the fuel and maintenance expenses of the vehicles caused a loss of over Tk 36 lakh to the government exchequer.

Earlier on May 13, another special court sentenced Firoz to 10 years' jail for amassing wealth beyond known sources of income. His wife Intiaz Begum was also handed down three years' imprisonment for abetting him in the offence.

Budget placed

FROM PAGE 1
The national budget before the nation at 3:00pm today through a televised speech. Members of the advisory council attended the meeting at the Chief Adviser's Office. The cabinet secretary, the press secretary to the chief adviser and secretaries concerned were present.

Earlier, the finance adviser apprised President Iajuddin Ahmed of the proposed budget and told him that the budget has given priority to expanding social protection network and private sector and creating new jobs.

He told the president that emphasis on these issues has been placed keeping in mind the current global situation. "The budget will be realistic, business-friendly and pro-growth," he said.

Hasina's going abroad

FROM PAGE 1
On September 2 last year, ACC Deputy Director Sabir Hasan filed the case with Tejgaon Police Station.

Earlier at 4:00pm, Hasina's three counsels -- Barrister Shafique, Advocate Sahara Khatun, and Barrister Fazle Noor Taposh -- met her at the special jail for 22 minutes. As the news of her possible release on bail spread among AL leaders and activists, hundreds of them thronged the parliament building complex and her Sudha Sadan residence in Dharmondi.

Her aunt Khodeja Khanom and her cousin Shelly Zaman were allowed to spend time with her in the special jail between 6:55pm and 8:15pm. Meanwhile, AL Presidium Member Amir Hossain Amu waited at the entrance of the makeshift jail for an hour since 7:30pm in an effort to meet her, but in vain, while other top leaders of the party including Abdur Razzak, Tofail Ahmed, Matia Chowdhury, Suranjit Sengupta, Sajeda Chowdhury, Syed Ashraf Islam, Sabir Hossain Chowdhury, Asaduzzaman Noor, and Mahmudur Rahman Manna went to Sudha Sadan and stayed there for hours.

No sources however could confirm till filing this report at 1:45am today whether the AL chief was leaving the country early today. There was also no government confirmation.

But a cross-section of sources however told The Daily Star that Hasina might leave the country anytime between today and June 12.

Security at the sub-jail and Zia International Airport were beefed up yesterday. Col (ret'd) Faruk Khan of AL told The Daily Star last night that the government decided to send Hasina abroad.

Hasina has been suffering from acute ear and eye problems. A medical board formed by the government on Friday in its report suggested that her hearing aid should be replaced as soon as possible. Hasina's lawyers earlier said her hearing aid became dysfunctional due to expiry of its durability, and that the device needs to be replaced immediately in order to save her hearing.

After the trial proceedings of the barge-mounted power plant graft case against Hasina earlier in the day, her counsels told reporters that she will head the medical board's advice regarding her treatment abroad.

UNB reported that Inspector General (IG) of Prisons Brig Gen Jakir Hasan yesterday said the jail authorities are fully ready to execute any decision of the government regarding medical treatment of detained former premier Hasina, and Khaleda Zia's son Arafat Rahman Koko.

He was talking to journalists after a high-level meeting of the chiefs and top officials of various government departments and armed forces with Home Adviser Maj Gen (ret'd) MA Matin at Bangladesh Secretariat.

The IG (prisons) further said what he knew about Hasina's and Koko's medical treatment is more or less the same as the news published in the media. When the journalists tried to get comments from the home adviser on Hasina's treatment, he said, "I am unable to say anything on the topic."

Meanwhile, highly placed sources said yesterday in a meeting with the chief adviser, some other advisers including the home adviser to the military backed caretaker government discussed the issue of sending Hasina abroad "for treatment".

Hasina was detained on July 16 last year in connection with an extortion case accusing her of extorting the plaintiff a businessman named Azam J Chowdhury of Tk 3 crore, but the proceedings of the case were stayed by an order of the High Court (HC). The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court (SC) on May 8 however cleared the bar on continuing its trial.

The hearing on charge framing in the MIG-28 purchase case and Niko graft case against her already started.

Besides, two more extortion cases against her, filed by AL leader Noor Ali and a businessman named Tajul Islam Faruq, are now under investigation. A murder case against her, in connection with a killing at Paltan intersection in the capital, is pending in a Dhaka court.

Trials of Meghna Ghat power plant graft case, and frigate purchase graft case both filed against her during the tenure of BNP-led four-party alliance government remain stayed by the HC orders.

Six other graft cases against her which were also filed during the four-party alliance government's rule are also under investigation. During the first round of court proceedings yesterday, Judge Firoz Alam of Special Court 1 adjourned the proceedings as the defence asked for time.

Hasina was brought to the court around 10:00am from the special jail where she is being detained since her arrest. The defence yesterday cross-examined three persons who witnessed the listing of seized items in connection with the case. The witnesses who were cross-examined are Assistant Director of Power Development Board (PDB) Enamul Haque, PDB's lower division clerk Nurunnahar, and a computer operator of the Ministry

of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources, Motaleb Hossain.

As a defence lawyer Advocate Syed Rezanur Rahman asked Enamul how many pages is the list of seized items, Enamul said he does not know.

On September 2 last year, ACC Deputy Director Sabir Hasan filed the case with Tejgaon Police Station. HASINA'S PASSPORTS Our court correspondent added that a Dhaka court yesterday adjourned till June 12 the hearing of a petition regarding returning Sheikh Hasina's 'three passports' seized after her arrest.

Metropolitan Magistrate Abdullah Al Mamun passed the order following a petition submitted by Hasina's lawyers. On March 12, another court ordered the authorities concerned to return Hasina's passports, but the next day the same court stayed the earlier order following a petition submitted by the prosecution.

In the defence's petition, a counsel of Hasina appealed to the court that their client might need her seized passports any time.

Rice prices

FROM PAGE 16
The BTRB headquarter's spent Tk 6.18 crore to run the 27 cars that the managers concerned pocketed the rest 42 lakh for their own purposes, Parvez alleged.

Parvez said, "No one knows how the rest of the vehicles were running." The BTRB already got government nod to run as public limited company by next month. The government is working on forming a new board for BTRB. The state organisation owns 1,843.29 acres of land across the country but it did not complete mutation process of its 616.95 acres of land, which could be a problem when it turns into a public limited company, said Parvez.

The taskforce will also help BTRB solve the problem immediately. The taskforce found that on average a total of 130 officials of BTRB go abroad for training purposes a year. But when they return, they are not placed to a post according to what they have learnt abroad.

Parvez said the taskforce found that 35 officials of BTRB went abroad for training in the engineering quota even though they were not of the engineering cadre. Some officials of BTRB frequently went abroad, even six to seven times, while some officials never had a single training trip.

"Actually, there is no policy in BTRB on sending people abroad for training, which is absolutely intolerable," Parvez said. The taskforce will work with BTRB for a certain period of time. During that time anyone can share their views with them to strengthen BTRB. For contacting the taskforce anyone can fax to 8333429 or email to bttb.taskforce@gmail.com or ncc.taskforce@gmail.com.

Obama

FROM PAGE 16
Washington's Centre for a New American Security. "Every European diplomat I talk to is aware of that. But it's hard for me to imagine somebody better than a president Obama in terms of the image it sends to the rest of the world about who we are," he said.

If he is elected president, the United States will no longer be defined by Guantanamo Bay, by torture, by Iraq," said Chollet, who was the foreign policy adviser to defeated Democratic White House runner John Edwards. Any doubts about where foreign sympathies lie in the US presidential election were dispelled by reactions to Obama's victory over Hillary Clinton in their arduous primary race.

In Britain, The Times was representative of adulatory global press coverage with its declaration that Obama had "rekindled America's faith in its prodigious powers of reinvention -- and the world's admiration for America."

Africans in general and Kenyans in particular rejoiced at the mixed-race Obama's emergence as the first black presidential candidate of a major US party. But in a port of disputes to come should the 46-year-old Obama beat McCain, 71, European Commission president Jose Manuel Barroso fretted over the Democrat's tough talk on trade.

"I think we have to discuss this... with our American friends because we need the United States of America to be the frontline for open economies in the world," the head of the European Union's executive arm said. Both Canada and Mexico are aghast at Obama's threat to renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement. China has looked askance at his talk of cracking down on countries that fail to play fair in commerce.

And in the Middle East, Iran was infuriated and the Palestinians vexed by Obama's speech Wednesday to a US-Israeli lobbying group, in which he promised an "undivided" Jerusalem and vowed to "eliminate" any Iranian nuclear threat. "Obama out-Bushed Bush with his proclamation on Jerusalem. This is not an anti-imperialist we would be electing," commented Karen Dolan of the left-leaning Institute for Policy Studies.

"But it's true that he elicits those desires for the second coming of Camelot and John F. Kennedy," she said, referring to the romanticised White House of the assassinated president. "There's so much goodwill toward him. There would be a honeymoon phase where folks at home and abroad would give him the benefit of the doubt."

In truth, provoking the ire of Tehran and the Palestinian militants of Hamas was probably the intention of Obama, who stands accused by McCain of being soft on US adversaries with his offer of direct engagement. It is with his promise to end the war in Iraq that the Illinois senator represents the clearest break with the Bush administration, and with McCain.

That, and his promise to redeploy the US military against Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan, has found an eager hearing among France and other European allies grasping to mend the transatlantic rupture opened by Bush's "war on terror". Even if Obama is the favoured son of the foreign electorate, McCain too would represent a paradigm shift in US diplomacy with his vows to attack climate change and shut down the Guantanamo Bay detention centre in Cuba.

"Both the candidates, it has to be said, are a big change on Bush," Chollet said.

BTTB bills

FROM PAGE 1
provide legal support to BTTB in recovering the outstanding bills," he added.

He, however, said the taskforce's aim is not to harass the defaulters. BTTB's bill defaulters will have a chance to clarify their position and pay their dues in a process, he said. The taskforce found major irregularities in transportation, accommodation, finance and training trips abroad in BTTB. Many investigations in different departments of BTTB are going on to find out more irregularities.

Interestingly, the management of BTTB does not know how many employees it has. The taskforce assumed that there are loopholes in paying salaries as there is no transparent process of the accounts division in this regard. During the last three weeks, the taskforce found that the BTTB owns 500 vehicles. However, it has 922 vehicles in its transportation pool.

Citing the irregularities in BTTB's transportation system, Parvez said the BTTB headquarters in Dhaka has 80 vehicles including 27 cars that BTTB owns. During the 2005-06 financial year, Tk 1.50 crore was allocated as transportation expenditure to the BTTB headquarters. But, the BTTB headquarters spent Tk 6.60 crore.

The BTTB headquarters spent Tk 6.18 crore to run the 27 cars, the managers concerned pocketed the rest 42 lakh for their own purposes, Parvez alleged.

Parvez said, "No one knows how the rest of the vehicles were running." The BTTB already got government nod to run as public limited company by next month. The government is working on forming a new board for BTTB.

The state organisation owns 1,843.29 acres of land across the country but it did not complete mutation process of its 616.95 acres of land, which could be a problem when it turns into a public limited company, said Parvez.

The taskforce will also help BTTB solve the problem immediately. The taskforce found that on average a total of 130 officials of BTTB go abroad for training purposes a year. But when they return, they are not placed to a post according to what they have learnt abroad.

Parvez said the taskforce found that 35 officials of BTTB went abroad for training in the engineering quota even though they were not of the engineering cadre. Some officials of BTTB frequently went abroad, even six to seven times, while some officials never had a single training trip.

"Actually, there is no policy in BTTB on sending people abroad for training, which is absolutely intolerable," Parvez said. The taskforce will work with BTTB for a certain period of time. During that time anyone can share their views with them to strengthen BTTB. For contacting the taskforce anyone can fax to 8333429 or email to bttb.taskforce@gmail.com or ncc.taskforce@gmail.com.

Nadal

FROM PAGE 16
screaming at himself. The drubbing went on from there. Nadal won his fourth consecutive French Open title in a rout Sunday, again spoiling Federer's bid to complete a career Grand Slam.

Dominating the world's No. 1 player with astounding ease, Nadal swept six consecutive games early in the match to take control and won 6-1, 6-3, 6-0.

It was a humbling defeat for Federer, but for the No. 2-ranked Nadal, it was merely another in a series of dominating wins. He lost only 41 games in seven matches at this year's French Open.

The Spaniard became the second man to win four consecutive French Open titles. Bjorn Borg did it in 1978-81. Nadal improved to 28-0 in Roland Garros, where he has won 84 of 91 sets. Only six-time champion Borg won more French Open men's titles.

It's the fourth consecutive year Federer arrived in Paris seeking to become the sixth man to win all four major titles. Each time he has lost to Nadal in the semifinals in 2005, and in the final each of the past three years.

Lt Gen Masud

FROM PAGE 1
ministry last week after being transferred from the NDC. The same day last week, Lt Gen Masud had resigned from his position as the chief coordinator of the National Coordination Committee on Corruption and Serious Crimes (NCC).

One of the most prominent military officials during the present caretaker government, Masud was promoted to Lieutenant General (three star) from Major General (two star) last year and took over as the principal staff officer of the AFD.

Previously, he was in charge of the 9th Infantry Division in Savar when the state of emergency was declared January 11, 2007.

Lt Gen Masud was drafted from the Jatiya Rakshi Bahini in 1975. He was appointed the Counter-Intelligence Bureau chief at the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence by the previous BNP-led coalition government.

He is the brother-in-law of BNP chair and former prime minister Khaleda Zia's younger brother, Saaved Iskander. Foreign ministry sources said Masud, along with Lt Gen Zahur, would be considered for a number of vacant ambassadorial posts in Western Europe.

Currently, the post of ambassador or high commissioner is vacant in Germany, France, Australia, Libya, the Maldives, and Morocco. Last year, two generals were also transferred out of key military posts and placed under the foreign ministry. Later, Maj Gen Mostafa Reza Noor was appointed ambassador to Kuwait and Maj Gen Mohammad Ishaq was posted as the ambassador to Turkey.

Food budget

FROM PAGE 1
proportions for law enforcers. On the current fiscal year's target of food distribution, food ministry sources said they had the target of distributing 22 lakh tonnes of food grains through different programmes. "But it is possible to distribute 15 lakh tonnes at most by the end of the fiscal year," said a source, blaming it on limited stock.

Delwar

FROM PAGE 16
what Hannan had told at a discussion meeting in the capital, according to the BNP leaders. Hannan had said many BNP leaders came into the limelight utilising the bad times of the party, but only he and Gayeshwar Chandra Roy had maintained contact with the former prime minister until her arrest.

All the other leaders were silent at the time, he said. "There are many sycophants in the party who are using the name of the secretary general... those very people used the name of Tarique Rahman and that of Hawa Bhaban in a bid to disgrace him," Hannan said the meeting.

Delwar and Hannan supporters are also at odds over the formation of the Dhaka City unit BNP committee, with some leaders wanting Hannan to head the new committee, while his rivals are rooting for joint secretary general Nazrul Islam Khan, insiders said.

The previous committee, headed by Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka, was dissolved June 4. Delwar also looked for Khaleda's decision about forming the new committee. She, however, did not give her opinion in this regard.

Hannan has recently also disapproved of Delwar's call for inter-party unity, saying what the secretary general said was his personal view as no such decision was taken at the party forum.

Delwar Thursday called on all political parties, especially the Awami League, to go for a united movement against the government in order to "salvage the country from the current deep crisis."

As the row between Delwar and Hannan continues to grow, at least 86 former lawmakers in a joint statement Saturday threw their full weight behind Delwar, expressing "indignation at remarks by certain senior leaders against him."

Hinting at Hannan, the former lawmakers said indecorous remarks and insinuation are being made against Delwar at a time when leaders and workers of all tiers of the party are working with him on party Chairperson Khaleda Zia's instructions.

The new budget will allocate Tk 13,500 crore as subsidies. Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation will get subsidies of Tk 6,000 crore, the fertiliser sector will receive Tk 3,200 crore, diesel Tk 550 crore, electricity Tk 500 crore, Power Development Board Tk 400 crore and Petrobangla Tk 400 crore. The government will also give subsidy for food and export sectors.

The target of total revenue collection has been set at Tk 69,382 crore. To meet the deficit of over Tk 30,000 crore, the government plans to borrow Tk 13,500 crore from banks while the rest would come from other sources.

Khaleda

FROM PAGE 1
in the morning amid tight security. Terming the case 'false' and 'baseless,' the BNP chairperson said that the case has been filed to harass herself, her family members and others.

Asked about the medical board recommendations for her treatment abroad, Khaleda said, "I will receive treatment in the country if needed since there are many good doctors at home."

Renewing her call to the government for lifting of the state of emergency and holding the national elections immediately, the former prime minister said that a free and fair poll is not possible without the participation of all political parties.

The people would not accept any 'manipulated' election, she observed. The BNP chairperson said that she wants the trial under the existing laws in the conventional court, since justice will not be established in a 'camera trial' in the special court.

Regarding the government's move to amend the constitution, Khaleda said that the caretaker government has no right to do so and only an elected government can do it, if needed.

Meanwhile, Judge Khandaker Kamal Uzzaman of the special court fixed June 12 to give order on a petition filed by the defence counsel. In their petition, Khaleda's lawyers said that the case cannot be continued as separate trial proceedings on the same charges are going on at present.

They said that the case should resume only after the proceedings of the Niko graft case against Hasina end, since both the cases involve the same event, same summary and same evidence.

On another prayer, the court granted the defence lawyers, including BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain, 30 minutes for legal consultation with Khaleda.

Talking to the reporters later, Delwar said that the BNP chairperson had told them that a farcical trial is going on in a false case against her, adding that she had demanded immediate withdrawal of the case. "My sons are very sick and there is no improvement of their conditions so far. I demand their proper medical treatment," he quoted Khaleda as saying.

On December 9 last year, Assistant Director of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Mahbubul Alam filed the case with Tejgaon Police Station against Khaleda