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## Ad hoc PAC finally dissolved

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The caretaker government has finally dissolved the controversial ad hoc Public Accounts Committee (PAC) it set up in December last year to scrutinise audit reports on government accounts in absence of a parliament.

The dissolution follows allegations that the military-backed administration had violated the constitution by forming the public accounts body.

Through a notification, the finance ministry has recently cancelled the one it issued on December 18 forming the 11-member ad hoc PAC that could not start functioning due to objections from different quarters including the speaker of parliament.

Wishing not to be named, a senior finance ministry official

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## Per capita income leaps to \$599

High remittance flow seen as major contributor

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Per capita income in Bangladesh has shot up to \$599 this fiscal year from the previous year's \$523, demonstrating that the country's overall income has significantly gone up despite many odds.

The odds include fall in growth by one to three percentage points in agriculture, manufacturing, construction and services sectors.

According to the latest national accounts data of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), the increase in per capita income is very significant because it (per capita income) used to be \$440 in

Per capita GDP & Gross National Income (GNI) 2003 to 2008 (In US dollar)					
	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
GDP	418	441	447	487	554
GNI	440	463	476	523	599

fiscal 2003-04, \$463 in '04-05 and \$476 in '05-06.

"Per capita income marked a rise by nearly 14 percent due to high growth of remittance," said Executive Director of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) Mustafizur Rahman. "This is the same reason why our per capita income marked

a rise of 12 percent in the previous fiscal year."

Bangladesh's achieving the status of a middle-income country from that of a Least Developed Country (LDC) is not very far away. A country remains an LDC till its per capita income remains below \$750.

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## AL picks 9 for talks with govt

List of leaders sent to CA's office

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) yesterday sent names of nine party leaders to the Chief Adviser's Office who will take part in the dialogue with the government.

In a letter to Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed, AL Acting General Secretary Syed Ashrafur Islam urged the government to take necessary steps in this regard.

AL leaders advocate Abdul Mannan Khan and ABM Mojmamol Haque handed the letter over to the secretary to the chief adviser Aminul Haque at about 2:00pm.

AL Acting President Zillur Rahman will lead the delegation consisting of

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## Hold local govt polls before JS elections

Around 300 city corporation officials urge govt at dialogue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Local government representatives urged the government to hold local government elections before the general elections in December to reduce political influence on them.

They said this during the government-citizens' group dialogue yesterday.

Around 300 elected city corporation officials attended the dialogue at the Chief Adviser's Office, where they held three separate meetings. The government held meetings with city corporation commissioners, municipality mayors and union parishad chairmen.

Commerce Adviser Hossain Zillur Rahman told the post-dialogue joint press briefing that the government would discuss holding local elections earlier with political parties and at the next cabinet meeting.

Anwar Hossain, a ward commissioner from the City Corporation Association, said, "We want local government elections at all levels to be held before general elections to free it from any political influence."

Abul Hossain Khan, vice-president of Union Chairmen Oikya Jote, said the local elections must be held before the general elections because previous elected governments never kept their

promise of holding local government elections.

Municipal Chairmen Association President Shamim Al-Razi echoed these views, adding that the general elections should also be held according to the government roadmap.

He also said the local representatives must also get a bigger chunk of the budget and be exempt from value added tax (VAT).

All three groups also urged the government to review distribution of power between the president and the prime minister, ban hartals and aborodhs (sieges), decentralise political party structures and an

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## I don't accept any condition: Khaleda

Prefers treatment at home, blames govt for her sons' poor health

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detained former premier Khaleda Zia yesterday reiterated her resolve to seek treatment in the country instead of going abroad.

"I told you earlier that I will not go abroad. I will receive treatment in the country as there are many good doctors here," BNP Chairperson Khaleda told journalists yesterday at a special court after the trial proceedings of Gato corruption case against her and 23 others including her younger son Arafat Rahman Koko.

Asked if there is any pressure on her regarding sending her sons abroad for treatment, Khaleda said, "I don't accept any condition."

She was produced in Special Court 3 on the parliament building premises in the capital at 10:50am amid tight security.

Blaming the government for worsening health conditions of her detained sons Tarique Rahaman and Koko, she said it is the duty of

the government to send them abroad for proper treatment.

"My sons were completely well when they first appeared in court. You can see for yourself the condition they are in now. The government is responsible for their deteriorated condition and that is why it must take the responsibility of their treatment," she said.

"Their treatment is not possible in the country, and if it is possible then why their condition is deteriorating. The government should immediately send my sons abroad for treatment," she added.

Renewing her call for lifting the state of emergency and for holding the parliamentary election immediately, she said, "We want an election, not a selection. The selection process that is going on in the name of election must stop immediately."

Khaleda said a free, fair, neutral, and credible election must be held with participation of all political parties, while stressing that an

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PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Salesmen of Bangabazar shops in the capital barricaded the nearby Fulbaria intersection yesterday over the alleged killing of a salesman by his employer.

## Fulbaria erupts into violent protests

15 shopping centres closed, roads barricaded for hours over death of a salesman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Alleged killing of a salesman by his employer sparked violent protests and closure of at least 15 shopping centres yesterday in Fulbaria area in the capital.

The salesman, Aminur Rahman Rana, 35, an employee of SK Traders in Bangabazar market, died Sunday night after he had finished work and gone home.

Kamal Hossain, one of the owners of SK Traders, is said to have beaten up Rana earlier in the evening the same day.

At around 11:30 yesterday morning, agitated over the news of Rana's death, several hundred employees from different shopping centres in Fulbaria area poured in to the street and staged demonstrations in the area for hours.

As the workers barricaded the streets and shouted slogans demanding immediate arrest and punishment of Rana's killer, the

surrounding streets witnessed a massive gridlock for at least a couple of hours.

A large contingent of police took position in the area and tried to calm the agitators. Police finally used force to disperse the agitators at around 2:00pm.

Elder brother of the deceased Afsar Ali, said, "My brother threw up after coming home in the evening. At one stage he asked us to take him to the hospital and he died on the way to Dhaka Medical College Hospital."

Afsar however said until yesterday morning, he was unaware that Rana's employer had beaten him the day before. They already buried Rana at Azimpur cemetery in the morning, he added.

A relative of Kamal Hossain, who owns six stores in the area and employs over 30 workers, said Kamal only slapped Rana on the day of the incident as he did not show up for work for a week

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# ADM

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## Koko quizzed over ill-gotten wealth

UNB, Dhaka

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday questioned Khaleda Zia's detained son Arafat Rahman Koko in connection with the case filed against him for acquiring Tk 2.23 crore beyond his known sources of income and concealing information of assets worth Tk 11 lakh.

Sources said ACC Deputy Director Abu Sayeed quizzed Koko at the prison cell of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU).

DIG (Prisons) Major Shamsul Haider Siddiqui told the news agency that ailing Koko was questioned for about an hour from 3:00pm in presence of his lawyer Ahmed Azam Khan.

The ACC filed the case against Koko on April 24.

## Dr Kamal terms Hasina's release lawful

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Calling for an end to the controversy surrounding his recent remarks, Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday said the release of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina was not against the law.

He however said people hope that the caretaker government would remain "hundred percent neutral" and free from bias towards anyone.

The noted jurist also said he expects the government to hand over power to an elected government and make a dignified exit.

He was speaking at a press briefing at the Gono Forum headquarters in the city's Arambagh area.

Replying to a query, Dr Kamal said those on trial will have to

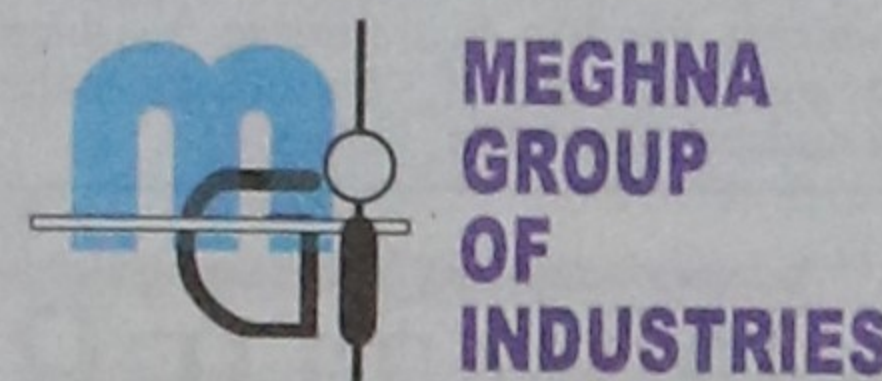
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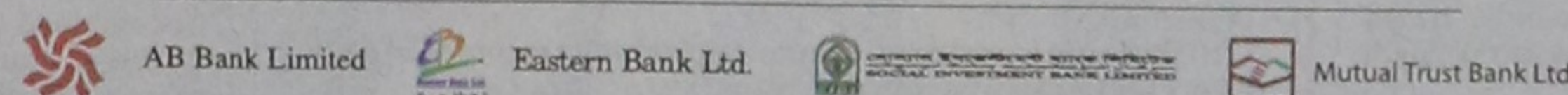


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