

Bhuiyan, Tarique, Babar

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affairs adviser Salauddin Quader Chowdhury, in different criminal cases, an ACC counsel told The Daily Star.

The other accused who got bail yesterday also include former BNP minister Tariqul Islam, former state minister Aman Ullah Aman, former lawmakers Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu, Salauddin Ahmed, Ali Asgar Loby, Nazimuddin Alam and Alamgir Farid, former Awami League lawmaker Kamal Ahmed Majumder, former Rajshahi City Corporation mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu and Sylhet City Corporation (SCC) Mayor Baharuddin Ahmed Kamran.

CASES AGAINST TARIQUE, BABAR
Tarique, also the eldest son of Khaleda, was granted six months' ad interim bail in five cases--three extortion cases, a corruption case for amassing wealth illegally and concealing wealth information from the ACC, and a tax evasion case filed by the National Board of Revenue (NBR).

On his separate petitions, the HC also stayed proceedings against him in the extortion cases for six months.

The HC bench stayed the proceedings against Tarique in the Tk 21 crore bribery case involving the murder of Bashundhara Group Director Humayun Kabir Sabbar.

The bench also granted ad interim bail to Babar in this case and stayed its proceedings against him until October 22. It also granted ad interim bail for one year to Bashundhara Group Director Abu Sulhan and stayed proceedings against him for the same period.

On October 4 last year, ACC Deputy Assistant Director Abul Kashem filed the case with Ramna Police Station, accusing six persons including Babar for receiving and giving the bribe to ensure that Shafiat

Sobhan Sanvir, son of Bashundhara Group Chairman Ahmed Akbar Sobhan alias Shah Alam, did not face charges for killing Sabbar. Sabbar's body was found outside a building in Bashundhara residential area on July 5, 2006.

Tarique's counsel barrister Mahbubuddin Khokon yesterday told The Daily Star that Tarique is arrested in 13 cases and he has been granted bail in 12. Proceedings against him in all the cases have been stayed.

"Tarique Rahman will now have to secure bail only in the Tk 21 crore bribery case to get released from jail. A petition for bail in this case is pending with the Appellate Division," he said, adding that they would move the petition at the Appellate Division today.

CASE AGAINST KAMRAN
The HC bench granted six months' ad interim bail to Kamran in two cases--a corruption case for amassing wealth illegally and concealing wealth information from the ACC and another case for violating Emergency Power Rules (EPR).

The SCC mayor was arrested on June 29 last year at the Gulshan Hotel in Sylhet. A detention order had been issued against him on June 4.

Kamran's lawyer advocate AM Amin Uddin said police earlier filed a case against Kamran on charges of violating the EPR.

On February 6 this year, the ACC filed a case with Sylhet Model Police Station against Kamran and his wife Asma Kamran for accumulating wealth worth Tk 2 crore 16 lakh.

In 2003 during the rule of the BNP-led alliance government, a case was filed against Kamran, the SCC executive engineer and a few ward commissioners for committing corruption in allocating kitchen markets. The police arrested the

mayor on April 5 last year after a court issued a warrant for his arrest in connection with the case.

CASES AGAINST OTHERS
Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, who was already released on bail, yesterday obtained anticipatory bail for four months in the Barapukuria coal mine scam case filed by the ACC. He appeared before the HC bench yesterday for bail in the case.

Salauddin Quader got ad interim bail in five cases including three for extortion.

The bail of former BNP information minister M Shamsul Islam was extended for six months yesterday. He recently secured one month's HC bail in connection with the Gatco corruption case.

Aman Ullah Aman was granted ad interim bail for six months in two cases filed by the ACC and the NBR. The court also stayed proceedings against him in these cases for six months.

The HC bench granted two months' ad interim bail to Tariqul in a case filed by the ACC for amassing illegal wealth and stayed proceedings against him for two months.

Pintu and Minu each got six months' bail in cases filed by the ACC for accumulating illegal wealth. The court also stayed the proceedings against them for the same period.

The HC granted two months' bail each to Kamal Ahmed in a tax evasion case filed by the NBR and to Loby in a case filed by the ACC. The court stayed proceedings against them in the cases for the same period.

The HC bench stayed for two months the proceedings against former BNP lawmaker Ilias Ali in two cases--a corruption case filed by the ACC and an extortion case. Earlier, Ilias was granted bail in these cases from the HC.

Rail tracks

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living in a slum next to the lines at Munshi Bari Signal in Gandaria for the last 28 years said the area remains waterlogged for 2-3 days after heavy rains.

"I have seen postponement of many scheduled trains due to waterlogging in the area," he said.

The waterlogging situation between Munshibari Signal and Gandaria Bazar is very bad, he said.

Mohammad Musa, a resident of the area, said the only way for rainwater in Gandaria Bazar to recede is under the railway bridge built many years ago and it is inadequate. Another exit route for water is needed, he said.

Mohammad Salam a shopkeeper at DIT plot Pushkunipar said waterlogging has worsened a lot since the construction of Jurain Road in 2004 filling up a large water body.

Water bodies near the eastern part of the road have also been filled up and those played an important role in draining out rainwater from the area, he said.

Nazrul Islam, another resident of the area, said illegal structures have been erected on both sides of the road filling low-lying areas with earth.

The bridge was over five feet high from the ground 20 years ago but now it is on the same level with the ground, he said.

Around 20 years ago there was a long water body on the western side of the lines from Gandaria Station to Jurain graveyard, it is not there anymore, said Nazrul.

The extension of Jurain graveyard, Gandaria Bazar and many structures constructed on the filled-up land is another reason for

waterlogging, he claimed. A number of structures beside the rail lines in Gandaria Railway Station were demolished on January 24, 2007 but lack of monitoring has led to illegal occupiers returning to the scene. Besides these, a large number of structures had been constructed illegally on both sides of the rail lines which is also a reason for waterlogging in the area, said stationmaster Hafizur.

Delwar Hossain, divisional estate officer of Bangladesh Railway, said it is his duty to evict illegal occupiers from railway land but it is the duty of the engineering division to monitor railway land.

He said waterlogging does damage to sleepers of rail lines and creates the chances of soil subsiding under the lines causing the possibility of an accident.

Mokbul Hossain, divisional engineer-1 of Bangladesh Railway, said since the water bodies, which retained most of the rainwater, have been filled up, this has become the main reason for waterlogging on the train lines.

"We have a project to raise the height of the train lines which would start in the next dry season," he said.

Mokbul said they do their regular maintenance work and evict illegal structures but those are reconstructed again.

Since the canals and water bodies drained out rainwater in the area, Dhaka Wasa had no rainwater drainage lines there, said Waliullah Sikder, superintendent engineer of drainage circle of Dhaka Wasa.

"We have no plan as yet to set up rainwater drainage lines in the area but we will take the initiative in future," he said.

Outlaw killed in 'shootout'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A regional commander of Purba Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) was killed yesterday in a 'shootout' between police and his accomplices at Galkandi village in Rajshahi.

The dead was identified as Sirajul Islam Siraj, 30, son of Ishaq Ali Dewan of Namkand village, and the PBCP commander of Jhikra region in Bagmara.

Police said locals at Romsibari village caught Siraj and handed him over to Rab members on Tuesday evening.

Later, Rab handed him over to Bagmara police.

Acting on Siraj's confession, police took him to Galkandi village of Bagmara upazila to recover illegal arms and ammunition at about 4:00am. When the law enforcers reached the village, Siraj's cohorts fired on the policemen prompting them to retaliate.

Siraj sustained bullet injuries during the shootout while his cohorts managed to escape.

He was rushed to the local health complex where the on-duty doctor declared him dead.

Police seized a shutter gun, five rounds of bullet and four empty cartridges from the scene.

Siraj was accused in six cases on different charges including murder and extortion, police added.

STP opens today

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area including the capital and five nearby districts -- Narayanganj, Munshiganj, Narsingdi, Gazipur and Manikganj.

Mass transport system in the capital will get special attention in the STP implementation. Setting up of three Bus Rapid Transits (BRT), repair and rebuilding of 330 km roads and construction of 60 km underground rail tracks have been included in the plan.

The STP aims at coordinated operations of road, railway and water transport systems.

It also seeks to address the issue of air and environment pollution. When implemented, people of the city will have a safe, environment-friendly and coordinated transport system.

The handout mentioned that Dhaka Transport Coordination Board (DTCB) under the communications ministry is now implementing various projects to resolve the problem of traffic congestion. It is also the implementing agency for the STP.

Meanwhile, on May 1 last year, an STP Taskforce Committee was formed with the communications adviser as its chief. The committee made some changes in the STP proposals and recommended placing it before the council of advisers. And the council at a meeting on February 17 gave nod to the STP.

Loan defaulters

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Commissioner Sohul Hossain earlier told The Daily Star.

"Nomination papers will not be accepted from those who will reschedule their loans within this time," he added.

According to the electoral road map, EC will have to announce election schedule in November for the national elections, while the gazette of the amended RPO was published on August 19.

The defaulter as well as aspirant candidates will not have the respective six-month and one-year time required for rescheduling their loans.

The new electoral laws allow the defaulters to become eligible by rescheduling the loans, but they would be deprived of the opportunity as the laws are being promulgated too late.

In the past, the loan defaulters were allowed to contest the elections through rescheduling the loans anytime prior to the dates of filing applications for candidacy.

According to the RPO, 2008, if a person has a record of defaulting on loan payments within a period of six months prior to submission of application for candidacy, they won't be eligible for candidacy in the upcoming parliamentary polls. The Upazila Parishad Ordinance, 2008 sets the timeframe for the same provision as one year.

The Upazila Parishad law was promulgated in June this year and upazila elections are expected to start from October 23, leaving no time for the defaulters to become eligible for candidacy.

Typist jailed

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fined him Tk 10 lakh, in default of which he has to serve jail term for one more year.

Kutubuddin was handed down 10 years' rigorous imprisonment for accumulating wealth beyond his known sources of income and three years' simple imprisonment for hiding information about his wealth. The jail terms will run consecutively, the court said in its judgement.

ACC Assistant Director Mahfuza Khatun filed the case against him with Ramna Police Station on January 1 this year for accumulating wealth worth Tk 1.44 crore through illegal means and concealing information about wealth worth Tk 35.57 lakh in his wealth statement.

Ailing Kutubuddin was taken to the courtroom in a wheelchair and kept beside the dock. He kept his eyes closed when the judgement was pronounced.

With the court's permission, he was later taken back to Dhaka Central Jail hospital in an ambulance.

Sudanese plane

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hijackers were armed with small calibre pistols.

The passengers had reportedly been given water but no food and some fainted when the air conditioning failed in the searing desert heat.

The hijackers, who had refused to talk directly with Libyan officials, said they belong to the Sudanese Liberation Army, whose exiled leader Abdel Wahid Mohammed Nur lives in Paris, according to airport director Khaled Saseya.

An official at the World War II-era military airport had said earlier that the hijackers were continuing to hold the crew and were demanding a flight plan to Paris and fuel.

"All of the passengers have left the plane," a Libyan official had said earlier. "The two hijackers and the seven crew are still inside. We are continuing to negotiate with them."

Libya's civil aviation director Mohammed Shlibag said that two Egyptian members of the UN-led Darfur peacekeeping force, two Ethiopians and a Ugandan were among the passengers, the official JANA news agency reported.

JANA also reported that several Sudanese officials were among the passengers released by the hijackers, including the tribal affairs adviser at the Provisional Authority in Darfur Yaqub al-Malik Mohamed Yaqub.

No Darfur movement has claimed public responsibility, but the director of Kufra airport said the hijackers belong to a faction of the Sudanese Liberation Army, whose exiled leader Abdel Wahid Mohammed Nur lives in Paris.

The pilot said "the hijackers claim to have coordinated with him (Nur) to join him in Paris," Kufra airport director Khaled Saseya told JANA, adding that they had demanded a flight plan to Paris and fuel.

Nur, whose group was one of two

EU poll observers

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September analysing the given situation.

In June last, an Exploratory Mission of the European Commission visited Dhaka and submitted its report on the pre-election situation to the EC Commissioner.

Asked whether they are confident about the holding of the general elections in the third week of December according to the roadmap, Frowin said the Election Commission "will announce the election date and they are confident since it is still on in December."

Italian Ambassador Ms Itala Maria Marta Occi, Netherlands Ambassador Ms Bea Ten Tusscher, French CDA Patrick Branco Ruivo, Swedish CDA Ola Hallgren, German CDA Rolf Dieter Reinhard, Danish CDA Jan Moller Hansen, UK Head of Political Affairs Simon Lever and Arturo Manuel Perez Martinez were in the team.

Later, Iftekhar told the reporters that the discussion ranged from development cooperation to the preparations for the elections.

He said European support to the electoral process also featured in the discussion. The possibility of the deployment of a mission in Bangladesh to observe the election in December was also discussed.

Iftekhar said the European Commission will take a decision in this regard, possibly by the end of September.

Pak govt

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partner Asif Ali Zardari over the issue of the sackings, which set off months of political turmoil.

The legal community described the move as a "conspiracy" to harm their demands for the restoration of all judges, including independent-minded chief justice Iftekhar Muhammad Chaudhry.

Chaudhry was among dozens of superior judges fired by Musharraf last year under emergency rule.

"Eight former judges of the Sindh High Court took oath today," provincial law secretary Agha Rafiq told reporters in Karachi.

They have not been reinstated but freshly appointed, he said, a technicality that allows the government to hold off on any change to the status of the sacked judges.

"This is a conspiracy aimed at dividing the judges and lawyers," Karachi bar council leader Rashid Razi told AFP.

The judges had previously refused offers to return to their jobs, insisting on reinstatement of all including chief justice Chaudhry.

"We are deeply sad and disappointed," he said, said Aitezaz Ahsan, the president of the Supreme Court Bar Association and a leader of the lawyers' movement.

He said the eight who took office "gave up when our victory was in sight."

Musharraf, who seized power in a bloodless coup in 1999, deposed dozens of judges under a state of emergency last November when it appeared they would challenge his re-election as president the previous month.

The sackings sparked large and sometimes violent protests by Pakistan's influential lawyers.

Musharraf, whose allies were trounced in February elections, resigned under threat of impeachment last week, but the ruling coalition has since collapsed after failing to agree on how to restore the judges.

Patients seeking

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taking treatment at private hospitals are satisfied, renowned Phayathi Hospital physician Surapong Ambhanwong told a delegation of newsmen, businessmen and other professionals from Bangladesh recently.

The study also reveals that when the duration of patients' average stay at both private and public hospitals is 9.9 days in Bangladesh, it is just 3-4 days in the Bangkok hospitals.

The Royal Thai Embassy in Dhaka organised the trip to demonstrate that Thailand can offer Halal (Islam approved) ways of life to people for Muslims from different countries including Bangladesh.

During the week-long tour the delegation was showed a number of facilities where Halal foods are prepared for hospitals including the Bangkok Hospital.

The tour also sought to enhance the interaction between Bangladesh and Thailand through promotion of health tourism and other products and services from that country and promote people-to-people contact between the two countries.

"You may have good doctors but they will not be able to do the best without advanced technology and training for doctors, technicians and nurses," Dr Paul said in reply to a question.

He said the Bangkok Hospital has 15 branches in 11 Thai provinces and two branches in Cambodia. It also has separate units for preparing meals for Muslims following Halal standards.

Replying to a question, Dr Paul said Bangladeshi patients go to hospitals in Bangkok for complicated surgeries like the heart surgery and treatment of cancer and neurology because they prefer more reliable

hospitals and physicians.

It takes around Tk 8 lakh for a bypass surgery, he said.

Dr Ambhanwong, chairman of Business Healthcare Service Committee, Board of Trade of Thailand, said if Bangladeshi investors invest, he is ready to come to Bangladesh with the technical know-how and his knowledge.

The renowned heart specialist said Thailand has gained popularity as a healthcare hub since it is the gateway to the region, patients do not need to queue up at hospitals, appointments can be made anytime, the waiting time is conveniently short and because of the unique Thai hospitality.

Citing statistics of the Department of Export Promotion of Thailand, Dr Ambhanwong said some 47,999 people from Bangladesh visited Thailand last year and 28,979 of them took medical treatment.

As per the statistics, 81,000 patients from South Asian countries went to Thailand for treatment last year with India topping with 34,661 patients.

It also shows that in 2006 the number of foreigners taking treatment in Thailand was 1,320,000; the figure was 1,400,000 last year. Thailand is expecting 1,690,000 foreigners to visit the country for treatment purpose this year.

Thailand earned \$1,051 million last year and \$931 million in 2006.

Thai Ambassador to Bangladesh Chalermpol Thanchitt said they maintained the Halal standards of food prepared for patients at Thai hospitals with seriousness and provide visas to people seeking medical treatment in Thailand in the quickest possible time.

Politicians

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Tac, Justice Khan said they are not coming because of a provision barring the clemency-seekers from participating in elections for five years.

Citing another provision of the law, he said the bar to participating in elections will not be applicable to those politicians who will apply to the Tac voluntarily and if there are no cases or investigations against them.

The Tac chairman said the commission has decided to extend the deadline for clemency applications to September 30 from September 1.

He said the Tac has so far received 182 cases involving 184 individuals. Of them, 170 are government servicemen, 10 wives of some of them and two businessmen.

According to Tac sources, the government servicemen are from Rural Power Distribution Company, Bangladesh Telecommunications Company Limited (BTCL), Roads and Highways, Titas Gas, Dhaka Electricity Supply Authority (Desa), Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA), Land Registration department, Forest department, Chittagong Port Authority and Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA).

Of the cases received so far, 145 have been referred by the National Coordination Committee (NCC) on Serious Crimes and corruption while 34 by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC). Four persons applied themselves.

Justice Khan said the hearings of the cases will begin on September 1.

About those who already deposited their ill-gotten money with the exchequer, the Tac chairman said if

they apply to the commission, it will be deemed that they got the clemency.

Asked what about jobs of the government servicemen who will be granted clemency by the Tac, Justice Khan said in the ordinance there is no mention of dismissal.

About the writ petition challenging the legality of the ordinance creating the Tac, the former High Court judge said, "Unless we get any order, we will move on."

Meanwhile, Truth and Accountability Commission (Tac) Chairman Justice Habibur Rahman Khan and two members of the commission--Maj Gen (ret'd) Monjur Rashid Khan and Asif Ali--called on President Iajuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban yesterday.

They apprised the president of the commission's activities and sought extension of time for disposal of cases of the clemency-seeking corrupt people.

The Tac team also informed the president that the commission had received 183 applications until Tuesday.

According to the provision of the ordinance, the period of case disposal is confined to only 22 days with extension of seven days. The team said it will be difficult to dispose of the cases within this time.

The president gave a patient hearing to the chairman and members of the commission and assured them of possible cooperation.

Secretary of the President's Office Md Sirajul Islam, Military Secretary to the President Major General Muhammad Ruhul Amin and President's Press Secretary Abdul Awal Howlader were present.

50 militants

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The military operation in Bajaur has left more than 500 people dead and 260,000 displaced.

US and Afghan officials say the rebels have sanctuaries in the rugged tribal border regions of Pakistan that they use to train, regroup and launch attacks on international troops in Afghanistan.

Separately, Pakistani helicopter gunships pounded militant hideouts yesterday in the troubled Bajaur tribal region near the Afghan border, killing eight rebels.

Pakistanis forces moved into Bajaur, a hub of Al-Qaeda and Taliban militants, earlier this month.

Second PRSP

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15 percent and enhancement of revenue mobilisation efforts for reducing dependence on import taxes.

To enhance private investment, the government will take measures to make unused land available for creating industrial or economic zones, provide incentives for private industrial estates, and will acquire land to handover to potential investors through the Board of Investment for setting up new industrial or special economic zones, or for industrial parks.

The government in the second draft PRSP has also disclosed a plan for instituting new policies and regulatory frameworks for enabling private investments in economic zones, and for improving land zoning for industrial purposes.

To attract foreign direct investment (FDI), the government will also introduce equity protection laws, and simplify procedures for opening up branches or liaison offices of foreign companies in Bangladesh.

Measures will also be taken to reduce the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides along with phasing out of persistent organic pollutants.

The first PRSP had been introduced for the period of 2005-2007, the tenure of which was extended up to the latest fiscal.

The PRSP has been prepared mainly with advice from International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. But, so far the government has not assessed the failures and successes of the first PRSP.

Asked about the evaluation, a high official of the planning ministry said they have incorporated the evaluation in the second PRSP. The draft of second PRSP, however, does not show any such specific evaluation.

Home adviser

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medical care according to the jail code.

Meantime, backtracking from the statement he made Tuesday, Inspector General (Prisons) Zakir Hassan yesterday said Tarique was getting treatment under the custody of the jail authorities.

"It is our responsibility to provide all types of security to Tarique," he said after a separate meeting with the home adviser at the secretariat.

The IG (prisons) had earlier claimed that Tarique was under the supervision of the BSMMU hospital authorities.

He said he did not make any such comment.

CT SCAN ON TARIQUE NOT NECESSARY
A senior prison official, meantime, said there is no need for any CT scan on Tarique as his injury was not serious.

"We'd moved to carry out a CT scan on Tarique Rahman. But doctors said there is no need for it," Deputy Inspector General (Prisons) Maj Shamsul Haider Siddiqui told The Daily Star yesterday.

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beleaguered party.

Police broke up the human chains in most places across the country, as the law enforcement department had issued an order Tuesday night urging the protesting alliance to refrain from demonstrating, saying "the action would violate the emergency powers rule".

In some places including Khulna and Kishoreganj the alliance activists clashed with the law enforcers.

In the capital the protesters managed to form the chains on a limited scale at 12 points between Jatrabari intersection and Gabtoli.

Police charged batons on a human chain of Juba Dal (South) in front of the stock exchange building in Motijheel.

Khandaker Delwar Hossain, who is the de facto executive chief of pro-Khaleda faction of BNP and the detained chairperson appointed secretary general, announced countrywide protest rallies scheduled for September 2 from a small gathering on National Press Club premises in the city amid a heavy downpour in the afternoon.

Jamaat Secretary General Ali Hossain Muhammad Mujahed and Jatiya Party leader Andalib Rahman Partha were also present.

Around a hundred activists gathered at the press club in the afternoon, but they could not form the human chain due to heavy rainfall.

Delwar and other leaders came out from the press club building and delivered brief speeches amid the downpour demanding immediate release of Khaleda and Tarique.

"I demand that the government releases them soon and create an environment favourable for holding the national election. Otherwise the people will topple the government through a movement," Delwar told journalists.