

## BARAPUKURIA CASE HC bench now refuses to hear 5 petitions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A High Court (HC) bench yesterday refused to hear petitions filed by six ministers of past BNP-Jamaat alliance government for quashing proceedings against them in the Barapukuria coal mine corruption case.

Jamaat Ameer and former industries minister Motiur Rahman Nizami, Jamaat Secretary General and ex-social welfare minister Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojahid, former finance minister M Saifur Rahman, ex-health minister Khondker Mosharruf Hossain, former commerce minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury and former state minister AKM Mosharruf Hossain had filed the petitions.

The petitioners' counsels told reporters that the bench of justices Md Muzammel Hossain and Afzal Hossain Ahmed did not mention the reasons for their refusal to hear

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## Stay orders on 2 cases against Hasina extended

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday extended its stay orders on proceedings against Awami League President Sheikh Hasina in the Niko and barge-mounted power plant corruption cases.

Now the stay orders would be effective until the court disposes of the petition filed to quash the cases.

In response to a prayer moved by Shafique Ahmed, counsel for Hasina, an HC bench comprised of Justice Sheikh Rezaul Karim and Justice Md Rais Uddin yesterday extended the stay orders.

He also said they would soon request the chief justice to constitute a larger bench of the HC to dispose the pending rules.

On July 7, the HC stayed for two months the proceedings of these cases filed against Hasina, also a former premier, and issued separate rules upon the ACC and the government to explain as to why the proceedings against her should not be quashed. The hearings of the rules are now pending with the HC. The HC on August 27 extended the stay orders till October 14.

The Anti-corruption  
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## Govt trying for controlled polls by not lifting emergency

Observes Matia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) presidium member Matia Chowdhury alleged yesterday that the government is trying to stage a 'controlled election' by not withdrawing the state of emergency completely.

"We have experience of the past elections. Without withdrawing the state of emergency completely, the government wants to hold a controlled election," she told The Daily Star in a telephone conversation.

Matia questioned the government's motive -- and who they want to help by doing so -- when the people of the country want a free and fair election.

Meanwhile, another AL  
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# Cyclone Reshmi dies down with little loss

6 killed; crops, thatched houses razed

STAR REPORT

At least six people were killed and dozens of fishermen missing as Cyclone Reshmi lashed Khulna-Barisal coast yesterday morning with winds gusting up to 84 km an hour.

Hundreds of thatched houses and crops on a vast tract of land were razed to the ground by gales and heavy rains.

Offshore islands and coastal areas were swept by tides leaping up to 6 feet above normal level.

As of filing the report at 10:00pm, communications between the capital and southern districts through interior waterways remained suspended. Road links between many areas however

were restored.

A special bulletin from the Met office said Reshmi crossed the south coast near Patharghata at 9:00am. It soon weakened into a land depression and moved inland towards northeast.

Travelling across Faridpur, Madaripur, Chandpur, Dhaka and adjoining districts, the storm uprooted numerous trees, and electricity and telephone poles.

It grew even weaker as the day wore on, and exited through Netrakona border in the evening, meteorologist Sadekul Alam told The Daily Star.

The squally weather conditions may continue for a day more in the northern districts, he added.

Local cautionary signal for

maritime ports Mongla, Chittagong and Cox's Bazar has been downgraded to number three.

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority has advised fishing boats, trawlers and other river craft to be berthed till further notice.

Runa, 9, of Char Kukrimukri, and Hazera Begum, 58, of Charfashion in Bhola died when their houses came crashing down on them.

Ainal Khan, 70, was blown away by winds in Mehendiganj upazila of Bhola. Later, locals recovered his body from Maskatara, 40, of Muladi upazila in Barisal, was crushed to

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## No money laundering in Trust Bank

Says BB deputy governor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The central bank yesterday said the Trust Bank's loss of about Tk 22.41 crore was not due to money laundering rather it was transactional loss.

"The bank incurred the loss dealing in foreign exchange. We have no evidence that indicate the loss was due to money laundering," Ziaul Hassan Siddiqui, deputy governor of Bangladesh Bank, told reporters.

Reporters asked the question to the Bangladesh Bank governor who referred it to his deputy for the answer.

The issue came to the limelight when Bangla daily Amar Desh published a news item in this regard. Amar Desh publisher and former energy adviser Mahmudur Rahman also tried to file a case in

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# Emergency inconsistent with normal elections

Commonwealth favours lifting before  
polls, Kamalesh tells media

UNB, Dhaka

Commonwealth Secretary General Kamalesh Sharma has said the state of emergency is "inconsistent" with a normal electoral process and favoured its lifting before the election.

"We've conveyed our position that it is inconsistent with normal elections. Obviously, it would be desirable for us if it is lifted," he told a media conference at Sonargaon Hotel yesterday evening after holding meetings with the caretaker government and the Election Commission.

In reply to a question, Sharma said he has not received any response from the government

during his discussions regarding the lifting of the emergency. But, he said if it is the government policy that is for the government to share with the people.

He said the Commonwealth Secretariat will send an election-assessment mission on November 8 or 9 to talk to stakeholders, including parties, election officials, media and civil society, to assess the pre-election situation. Later, an election observation mission will be coming to monitor the polls.

Sharma welcomed the assertions that the elections are taking place on December 18 and said, "It is important that the caretaker government and the election commission will together ensure that

the elections take place in a climate of peace and security."

The chief executive of the Commonwealth praised the developments that political parties are holding dialogue with the Election Commission and caretaker government on the preparations for elections. "This dialogue should ensure that any concerns can be addressed."

Asked about some concerns about former prime ministers Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina's participation in the elections, he said the Commonwealth position is that electoral laws should be uniform and consistent. He hoped that the Election Commission is

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Slum children in ragged winter clothing watch TV at a makeshift shop beside the city-protection embankment at Mohammadpur in cold and windy weather yesterday.

PHOTO: SHAFIQUL ALAM

## Emergency might be lifted before polls

Says Adviser Iftakhar

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Adviser Iftakhar Ahmed Chowdhury yesterday hinted that the state of emergency may be lifted before elections after gradual relaxation of emergency rules depending on the evolving situation and discussion with the political parties.

"My hunch it will ultimately go before polls, but again you see it will depend on how things evolve and discussion with political parties," he told reporters after a meeting with visiting Commonwealth Secretary General Kamalesh Sharma at the foreign ministry.

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## BNP ready for polls, movement: Khaleda

No bar to her participation  
in polls, she says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday said since her party is the most popular and an election-oriented one, it is ready for the December 18 national elections as well as a 'movement'.

Dispelling confusion over her participation in the upcoming parliamentary election, she questioned, "Why should I not be able to



take part in election?" She went on, "There is no bar to my participation in election. Even there is no apprehension in this regard." Khaleda was talking to journalists at her Gulshan office for the first time since her release from jail on September 11.

The former prime minister did not however explain the 'movement'.

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# Govt finally acts on HC ban order

Contempt petition filed against govt over delay  
in stopping sale, display of 8 brands

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Though the High Court (HC) banned sale and display of eight brands of powdered milk 'contaminated with melamine' on October 23 the government apparently took no measures until yesterday.

Health Adviser AMM Shawkat Ali after a meeting on Sunday and at a press conference yesterday said they would strictly follow the HC order. The district administrations have been asked to form committees to monitor markets and conduct drives, he added.

But officials of the civil administration in the capital and major cities last night told The Daily Star they did not receive any such order.

Meanwhile, a contempt of court petition was filed with the HC against the government yesterday for not complying with the HC order, which restricts display and sale of the powdered milk until receipt of test results from abroad.

The brands in question are Australia's Diploma and Red Cow, Denmark's Dano Full Cream, China's Yashili-1, Yashili-2 and Sweet Baby-2, and New Zealand's

Nido Fortified Instant and Anlene.

Samples of these brands have been sent to a laboratory in Bangkok and at the laboratories of Bangladesh Council for Scientific and Industrial Research and Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission. The results are expected to be available in next three days.

Advocate Manzil Murshid, counsel for Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh, filed the petition seeking issuance of a rule upon Home Secretary Abdul

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## Govt to form regulatory body on food

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has decided to set up a regulatory body specific to checking adulteration of food items, Health and Food Adviser AMM Shawkat Ali said yesterday.

The decision taken at an inter-ministerial meeting Sunday is expected to be implemented over the next two years. In the interim, two committees will help to ensure quality and contain the use of impurities in food, he told a press conference.

One of the committees, one will be high-powered and formed with the health ministry at the controls. It will draw representatives from commerce, home, and local government ministries and the National Board of Revenue.

The other one will be technical, the adviser added.

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Bangladesh Bank yesterday put 1,000-taka notes in circulation. The reddish violet notes are slightly larger than those of other denominations.

PHOTO: STAR

## HC sends back Huda's petition against EPR

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A High Court (HC) bench yesterday sent back a writ petition challenging the legality of the provision of the Emergency Power Rules (EPR) 2007 that bar people convicted in the cases under the EPR from contesting polls, as the bench was overstressed with other cases.

Detained former BNP communications minister Nazmul Huda, who was convicted in two criminal cases under the EPR, filed the writ petition with the HC on October 26.

The petitioner's counsel barrister Abdur Razzak yesterday placed the petition before the HC bench of justices Syed Mahmud Hossain and Quamrul Islam Siddiqui for hearing.

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## Talking polls and beyond

# Dec 18 election will rehabilitate corrupt Fears Hasanul Haq Inu

SHARIFUL ISLAM and  
SURANJITH DEABNATH

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD-Inu) President Hasanul Haq Inu fears that political parties which will get defeated in the upcoming parliamentary election will reject the poll results and attempt to resume politics of confrontation since, he said, allegations of bias have



already been raised against the caretaker government.

In an exclusive interview with The Daily Star, Inu said the December 18 election would be an election for 'rehabilitating' identified corrupt people, war criminals and militants as they are going to join the electoral race

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Find details of the interview on page 11

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Faculty of Business :  
House F-54, Road #4A, Dharmoad, Dhaka. Tel: 9667237-40. Fax: 302, 303, 304, 0119426301, 0119426302, 0119426314, 0119426315  
City Campus:  
81, Naz Nazul Islam Avenue, Kaman Bazar, Dhaka. Tel: 0447600002, 0119426303, 0119426306, 0119426308-12, 0119426310 (Building) 918122  
Rajshahi Campus:  
256, Jahangir Sharani Road, Talaimat, Rajshahi. Tel: 0721-751529, 751529, 751003, 0119426315, 0119426316-17  
Khulna Campus:  
A-16, Majid Sharani, Sonadanga, Khulna. Tel: 041-813844, 813855, 730326, 0119426318, 0119426319-20  
e-mail: info@nub.ac.bd web: www.nub.ac.bd