

BCL given

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 Hanif to join Chhatra League programmes, sources close to him said, adding that he had already declined to join Chhatra League's Mymensingh district council.

"I won't attend any programme of Chhatra League," said Awami League acting General Secretary Mahbubul Alam Hanif, who until recently used to attend Chhatra League programmes frequently.

Hanif, a special assistant to the prime minister, said he is tired of keeping an eye on Chhatra League. He declined to elaborate.

Sources say the top Awami League leaders are going to abide by "no official connection between Awami League and Chhatra League" to avoid going to Chhatra League programmes.

Apparently, the factional feud in Chhatra League at the Polytechnic Institute in Barisal that resulted in a bloody violence on May 4 was the last straw for many Awami League leaders.

The sources said on May 7, when a large number of Chhatra League activists led by its president and general secretary went to prime minister's official residence to meet her, Hasina avoided talking to them. She just gave them a smile and said "have some sweets and then leave", the sources added.

The same day, Home Minister Sahara Khatun did not join a Chhatra League programme at the Teacher-Student Centre on Dhaka University campus.

Asked by The Daily Star as to why senior leaders and ministers are avoiding Chhatra League programmes, Chhatra League President Mahmud Hasan Ripon declined to comment.

A top-ranking Chhatra League leader told The Daily Star, "I think the Awami League leaders and ministers have reservations about our programmes."

The prime minister had designated three Awami League organising secretaries -- Jahangir Kabir Nanak, BM Mojmamul Haque and Ahmed Hossain -- with the charge of looking after Chhatra League activities, but they apparently failed to put a rein on it.

They are to meet Hasina upon her arrival from South Korea and Malaysia on May 21 and discuss the Chhatra League question.

Ahmed Hossain told The Daily Star that holding of Chhatra League's long due central council, bringing it back on track, and ways to handle the organisation are likely to be discussed.

"We will discuss overall Chhatra League affairs. How we will handle Chhatra League and what will be the extent of our supervision, among many other issues," he said.

Chhatra League started to earn bad reputation from the night of Awami League's victory in the parliamentary election late December, 2008. It flexed its muscles in educational institutions and elsewhere in the country.

Recently Jagannath University, Barisal Polytechnic Institute, Dhaka University, Jahangirnagar University, Chittagong University, Rajshahi University, Rajshahi University of Engineering and Technology, Khulna University of Engineering and Technology, Edward College in Pabna, Dhaka College, Kushtia Govt College and many other educational institutions across the country witness unruly activities of Chhatra League activists.

Most of the violence was over establishing supremacy, tender manipulation, and admission trade in educational institutions. Many universities and colleges had to be closed indefinitely for this.

At least five people were killed during the violence, including one each in Dhaka Medical College, Rajshahi University and Dhaka University.

Two factions of Chhatra League clashed with each other in presence of police at Jagannath University on May 10 leaving at least 20 injured.

Hill, forest

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 Locals said if the hill plunder continues, their houses would go under the river in next rainy season.

One of the workers, Abdul Khaleque, said they were digging hills on orders of Ferdous, a resident in Jadimura village.

Ferdous said, "Although it is a hill [the Jadi], I own it. There is no question of anything being affected if I dig and sell earth from my land."

He said the earth cut out from the hills is being sold to the land port.

Abu Noor Khalid, manager (operation) of United Land port Ltd, the private managing agency of the Land port, admitted that the earth filling is part of the land port expansion.

Privately owned hills and hillocks have been bought, and earth is being dug out and brought to the port. As the mangrove forest was filled with earth, a number of trees had to be felled, Khalid added.

President of the committee to protect the temple, Kathing Chowdhury, said they have complained to different government agencies to stop cutting hills. The issue was raised recently in a monthly meeting of Teknaf upazila development coordination committee.

On the consequences of hill cutting, Teknaf Upazila Agriculture Officer Md Abdul Gafur said, now the earth in the areas is loosened. The possibility of mudslides in the rainy season has increased.

Biodiversity officer (Teknaf region) of the Directorate Of Environment ABM Aminul Haque said extracting earth from hill and cropland is prohibited.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer ANM Nazim Uddin said a committee has been formed to probe hill cutting. Legal action would be taken against the persons responsible.

BB freezes

FROM PAGE 1
 found suspicious transactions into the account. BB said it had taken the move under the anti-money laundering law.

An investor can open a trading account with Unipay2u Bangladesh to hold gold as investment that pays off high rebate on a monthly basis, the company says.

The central bank froze four other related accounts: one operated by Unipay2u (International) and three operated by individuals.

The individual accounts are held by Unipay2u Bangladesh Chairman Masudur Rahman, Managing Director Md Muntasir Hussain and another company official, Mohammad Shahiduzzaman.

The BB directive said the restriction would also be valid for all other accounts that had transactions with these five accounts.

The central bank asked all banks and other financial institutions to turn in details of transactions into these accounts in seven days.

"We have restricted transactions into these accounts based on suspicious transaction reports from three private banks, including The City Bank and NCC Bank," a senior BB official said, asking not to be named.

The official said Unipay2u Bangladesh promises high returns to individuals on investment in gold.

But the company -- instead of giving gold to investors -- gives certificates with a promise of returns after a certain period, the official added.

The company is raising

money from people in Dhaka, Chittagong and Mymensingh, he said.

"We have come to know from our primary investigation that these accounts have deposits of about Tk 30 crore."

The City Bank Ltd Managing Director K Mahmood Sattar and NCC Bank Managing Director Mohammed Nurul Amin said they had sent reports to the central bank, suspecting unusual transaction into these accounts.

Bank officials said people from parts of the country have transferred money into these accounts for the last one month.

The website of the company says it was incorporated as 'Unipay2u Bangladesh Ltd' on October 11, 2009.

A Facebook account of Unipay2u Bangladesh says it offers rebate as high as 150 percent on investment in gold for six months.

Officials of Unipay2u Bangladesh said the company offers trade in gold through its Malaysia-based parent company Best Genius Sdn.Bhd that provides "trust, corporate and financial services".

"Unipay2u plan is 100 percent backed at all times by gold in allocated storage," the company says in a Facebook posting.

Md Muntasir Hussain, managing director of Unipay2u Bangladesh, said: "We are not involved in any money laundering activity."

"I am confident Bangladesh Bank will withdraw restrictions on transactions after its investigation."

Sheikh Helal, wife granted HC bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday granted bail to former Awami League lawmaker Sheikh Helaluddin and his wife Rupa Chowdhury in two cases, in which they were earlier sentenced to different terms of imprisonment.

The previous city corporation law also had similar provisions. But they were not duly enforced in the past allowing city corporation mayors to contest the polls without relinquishing their posts.

According to a Supreme Court verdict delivered at the end of 2008, the post of city corporation mayor is "full time and it is an office of profit", and anybody holding the office will be disqualified from contesting the city corporation polls.

However, incumbent CCC councilors can contest the polls while in office.

CCC Mayor Mohiuddin ran for mayor twice in 2000 and 2005 without resigning his post.

Sylhet City Corporation Mayor Badruddin Ahmed Kamran also contested the August 4, 2008 poll without relinquishing his position and got re-elected.

But Mohiuddin this time has to resign before filing application for candidacy in the CCC polls as the EC has decided to enforce the electoral laws strictly.

If Mohiuddin, who has already announced contesting the polls, does not resign, the RO will reject his application, said EC officials.

Mohiuddin said he was yet to know about the EC decision.

If he resigns, a CCC councillor will act as the mayor until the corporation's tenure expires on June 25.

City corporation mayors cannot contest parliamentary election without relinquishing their posts as the Representation of the People Order disqualifies a person from contesting parliamentary polls for holding any office of profit in the service of Republic or of a statutory authority.

On EC's suggestion, the returning officer cancelled application of Dhaka City Corporation Mayor Sadek Hossain Khoka for candidacy in the last parliamentary election.

Khoka moved to the High Court that issued an interim order allowing him to contest the polls.

However, the court later gave a verdict disqualifying

JS budget

FROM PAGE 16
 fiscal 2010-11 is likely to be placed in the House on June 10.

Meanwhile, the BNP-led opposition alliance is yet to decide whether it will join the budget session or not. The combine includes Jamaat-e-Islami and Bangladesh Jatiya Party.

Asked about this last night, BNP sources said policy makers of the alliance will meet before the session begins to take a decision in this regard.

The opposition boycotted the budget session last year.

BNP to take

FROM PAGE 16
 chairperson's adviser advocate Ahmed Azam Khan.

Reacting to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's Wednesday remarks that Khaleda had whitened black money earned through corruption, Delwar once again said the government is misleading the nation by resorting to limitless falsehood to hide its own failures.

Replying to a question, he said BNP will tackle the situation legally.

He said they will take legal steps against the NBR for leaking out information violating Section 163 of the Income Tax Law, while legal steps would be taken against the government for "snatching the information using influence".

Responding to the Awami League Joint Secretary Mahbub Alam Hanif's allegation against him, Delwar objected to his comment and claimed he is not at all communal.

"I am completely non-communal", the veteran BNP leader said.

Ahmed Azam Khan, also Khaleda Zia's lawyer, once again said former prime minister Khaleda did not whiten a single unit of black money. If she did, the NBR could file a case against her.

Azam said if the NBR fails to provide an explanation for disclosing Khaleda's income tax related information, they would take legal steps against the NBR.

Quit to contest

FROM PAGE 16
 commission had notified the Returning Officer of its decision.

The letter sent to the RO cited a provision in the Local Government (City Corporation) Act 2009 and also a SC ruling. As per the provision, an individual holding an office of profit is ineligible to contest city corporation polls.

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the DCC mayor from contesting the poll. The judgment had become conclusive as no appeal was filed against it, EC officials said.

Meanwhile, the EC Secretariat was preparing to send letters to food and disaster management ministry, women and children affairs ministry and Red Crescent, Bangladesh asking them not to distribute any relief materials or VGF cards through the CCC before the polls, a senior EC official said.

Power tariff

FROM PAGE 1
 rental plants in Khulna, Ghorashal, Siddhirganj, Madanganj and Gazipur. Those small plants will use heavy fuel oil. Two 100 MW plants, one in Khulna and the other in Ghorashal, will be set up by July this year.

Sources in the Power Division said the tariffs will be increased by 8 to 10 percent.

The PDB chairman said the price of per kilowatt hour (kWh) electricity generated by diesel fired plants will be Tk 13.66.

The rate will be Tk 7.66 per kWh for furnace oil fired plants, and Tk 7.34 for public sector plants that will operate during peak hours.

Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission will finalise the new tariffs after public hearings.

"We have a target of generating surplus electricity by the end of 2012," Elahi told reporters, as he along with State Minister for Power and Energy Mohammad Enamul Haque faced a volley of questions about the country's nagging power crisis.

The adviser said he hopes that the situation will improve from August this year.

As some reporters drew his attention to the allegation that PDB has been signing deals to buy power at higher rates, rejecting offers of lower rates from some companies, Elahi brushed it aside saying, some newspapers and political parties are trying to mislead the people through such rumours.

"Those who did corruption before, are now smelling it here," he said.

About fuel supply for the proposed fast track rental power plants, Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) Chairman Anwarul Karim said the country now has a storage capacity for only 2.72 lakh metric tons of petroleum oil.

But when rental power plants will come into operation later in the year, BPC will have to increase import of diesel by 1,90,000 tons, and furnace oil by 46,000 tons for the June to December period, he added.

He mentioned that BPC already took an initiative to increase its storage capacity by another 2 lakh tons by 2012.

Defending the government's move to sign unsolicited deals with private companies for rental power plants, Power Secretary Abul Kalam Azad said the Public Procurement Act allows it to do so.

"Everything is being done by the books," he claimed.

Energy Secretary Mesbauddin Ahmed also spoke on the occasion.

MK Anwar

FROM PAGE 16
 two other officials, questioned the former minister for two hours in connection with an enquiry against former prime minister Khaleda Zia.

Anwar was a member of the cabinet committee on purchase during the tenure of BNP-led Khaleda government that approved construction of the bridge, allegedly causing a loss of Tk 100 crore to the state exchequer.

The purchase committee gave its approval after the cabinet division okayed the project, Anwar said.

The ACC team did not show even a single document supporting that anything was done in violation of law, he mentioned.

The former minister also told journalists that the questioning of BNP ministers in connection with the graft allegation is just a continuation of the past caretaker government's move to harass political leaders.

"I think people will lose faith in the commission if it goes on with such activities. During the caretaker government's tenure, it earned distrust of people for the same reason," he said.

"If the commission continues to work this way, it will not only become lawless and toothless but also lifeless. The government is trying to make the commission subservient to it."

Meanwhile, the ACC has already questioned former communications minister Nazmul Huda and LGRD minister Mannan Bhuiyan in this connection. Eight former ministers have been served with notice for questioning.

MONEY LAUNDERING Koko, Saimon asked to appear in court Jul 18

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday asked Arafat Rahman Koko, son of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, and Ismail Hossain Saimon, son of former shipping minister late Akbar Hossain, to appear before it on July 18 in connection with a money laundering case.

Judge (in-charge) Mohammad Ismail Hossain of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court passed the order after Koko's lawyers informed the court that the home ministry had earlier extended his parole until July 18.

Saimon has been absconding since the charge sheet was submitted. Koko was arrested on September 2, 2007 in connection with the Gato graft case and was later released on parole after which he went abroad for treatment.

The Anti-Corruption Commission filed the case against Koko on March 17, 2009 under the Money Laundering Prevention Act for siphoning off Tk 19.70 crore to Singapore.

As per the deposition of the ACC, a portion of the money deposited to Koko's bank account was from an account of China Harbour Engineering Company Ltd in the USA.

China Harbour was operating in Bangladesh during the time of the transfer as it was constructing the New Mooring Container Terminal.

The investigation officer of the case included Saimon's name as his involvement with the money laundering was evident.

On November 15, 2009 the court accepted the charge sheet against Koko and Saimon. Mohammad Abu Syed, assistant director of ACC, submitted the charge sheet before Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court in Dhaka on November 12, showing 23 people as prosecution witnesses.

Koko and Saimon were charged with siphoning off Sing\$ 28.84 lakh and US \$9.32 lakh from Bangladesh.

BTCL MD

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 receive the letter of the establishment ministry, said Sunil Kanti Bose, chairman of BTCL board. "We will take necessary steps after getting the letter."

Bose also said that the sitting MD might be requested to continue until the issue is resolved.

Khairuzzaman may be reappointed as MD of BTCL following due legal process in company's (BTCL) policy, said ministry sources.

Despite several attempts over the phone, Khairuzzaman could not be contacted.

The appointment of Khairuzzaman raised controversy in telecom industry. Even the employees of BTCL heavily criticised the government move.

As per the Memorandum of Association of BTCL, appointment of the MD would be ratified by the board of the company. Interestingly, Khairuzzaman joined BTCL without the board's approval.

The controversy mounted as the government appointed Khairuzzaman when the sitting MD Ashraf Alim was on leave.

According to clauses 37, 52 and 149 of the Memorandum of Association of BTCL, any appointment of the company would go through the company's board. The board has the exclusive right to appoint new MD of the company.

Even before the board ratified his appointment, Khairuzzaman took some controversial decisions including a penalty waiver of Chinese vendor Huawei Technologies and issuing letter of intent to KT Corporation of a Tk 140 crore project.

Later, at a board meeting on April 2, 2009 board meeting, the board ratified all activities of Khairuzzaman from February 22 to March 10.

Another girl

FROM PAGE 1
 Rahima Begum, Sufia's elder sister, said their neighbour Hasan used to pester her sister.

Yesterday morning he embarrassed her in front of many people by pulling her hand, she said. Locals made a big issue out of it and complained to her mother that she was responsible for Hasan's behaviour, she added.

The girl locked herself in her room after her mother beat her and committed suicide.

Hasan, 20, a day labourer, hails from Noakhali and has been living in a rented house in the area. He fled after the incident.

Officer-in-Charge of Rugganj Police Station Sultan Sikder said none had complained to the police about the stalking until yesterday evening.

However, locals told the police that the girl had an affair with Hasan.

Thai general

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 The circumstances of the shooting were unclear. Hours earlier the army had warned it would deploy snipers in the area as part of a lockdown in the protest site aimed at preventing more protesters joining the rally.

The fiery general, accused by Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva of trying to prevent an end to the street demonstrations, has made no secret of encouraging the "Red Shirt" protesters to oppose a reconciliation deal.

"It's important that I'm here. Everyone is here because Seh Daeng is here," he told AFP earlier in the day during an interview within the protest site, using his own nickname.

An army spokesman had said that troops would surround the rally site in the heart of Bangkok with armoured vehicles and that demonstrators would be allowed to leave but not enter the area.

"Snipers will be deployed in the operation," said the spokesman, Colonel Sunern Kaewkummer, after issuing a series of tough warnings to the "Red Shirt" protesters in recent weeks.

Sunern said soldiers would be authorised to use real bullets for warning shots, self-defence and against "armed terrorists," although the government did not announce any immediate plan to forcibly disperse protesters.

An unsuccessful attempt by troops on April 10 to clear a different area in the capital's historic district sparked fierce street fighting that left 25 people dead and hundreds wounded.

The Reds say the government is undemocratic because it came to power in a 2008 parliamentary vote after a court ousted elected allies of their hero, former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who was unseated in a 2006

Mugger

FROM PAGE 16
 the criminal as Faisal Parvez, 30, of Nazimuddin Road under Bangshal Police Station.

Witnesses said a gang of three to four muggers intercepted Mohamad Shahjahan, a supervisor of Suryamukhi Paribahan, 35, near Karalipara Mosque around 5:30am when he was returning home after his work.

The muggers stabbed him in the hand and took away Tk 5,000. When he cried out for help, locals rushed in, caught Anwar and beat him up while the others managed to flee.

Anwar was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries at about 8:30am.

Meanwhile in Shahidnagar embankment area of Lalbagh, criminal Faisal sustained bullet injuries in a gunfight.

A gang of three criminals opened fire on Rab personnel when a team of Rab-10 challenged them, Rab members said. Faisal was hit