



**Robert O Blake, US assistant secretary for the Bureau of South and Central Asia, calls on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office in the city yesterday. Former president of World Bank Sir James Wolfensohn and US Ambassador to Bangladesh James F Moriarty were also present.**

PHOTO: PMO

## 50 freedom fighters also stand by Prof Yunus

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some freedom fighters expressed disappointment over the removal of Prof Muhammad Yunus from Grameen Bank and demanded a peaceful and honourable transfer.

In a statement sent here yesterday, they said, "We the undersigned freedom fighters are totally disheartened and thoroughly frustrated at the deplorable treatment mooted out to one of our greatest icons of the country.

"What do we achieve by denigrating ourselves? What are the charges against Dr Yunus?"

The statement of 50 freedom fighters also pointed out four charges made against Prof Yunus and defended those.

"He has over extended his stay as chief of Grameen Bank. Well, same goes for many of our political leaders.

"His attempt to float a political party was not appreciated by thoughtful people. But a responsible government ought to correct his errors and not cut him to pieces.

"We hope wisdom will prevail and the government will refrain from humiliating Dr Yunus any further and negotiate a peaceful and honourable transfer of power in Grameen without jeopardising the entire micro-finance programme."

The signatories include Ali Ahmed Ziauddin (Bir Pratik), Faruk Azam (Bir Pratik), Dr Tarek Chowdhury, Dr Zafarullah Chowdhury, Akku Chowdhury and Nasiruddin Yusuf Bachchu.

## 272 gas connections cut off

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company Ltd disconnected 272 unauthorised gas connections in Dhaka and its adjacent areas.

A special inspection team identified them visiting 5532 consumers' houses from January 16 to March 8 in Dhaka, Gazipur, Narayanganj and Mymensingh, says a press release.

Punitive measures have taken against those who used gas illegally as per the Gas Distribution Laws.

## IAB submits memo on fatwa to CJ

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Islami Andolan Bangladesh (IAB) yesterday submitted a memorandum to Chief Justice ABM Khairul Haque, requesting him to cancel the High Court (HC) verdict that declared fatwa (religious edict) illegal.

The leaders in the memorandum said nobody has jurisdiction to deliver verdict against the law of Allah.

A 12-member delegation of IAB led by its Secretary General Maulana Yunus Ahmad met the Chief Justice at his Supreme Court (SC) office.

According to the memorandum, the courts have to refrain from issuing any suo moto rule against Islamic rules or Shariah. It also said the HC suo moto rules against burqa have to be cancelled immediately.

After the meeting, the leaders told reporters on SC premises that the Chief Justice assured them of not declaring any verdict against the rule of Holy Quran and Hadith.

The Appellate Division headed by Justice ABM Khairul Haque on March 1 started hearing an appeal against the HC verdict that in 2001 declared fatwa illegal.

The apex court is set today to deal further hearing on the appeal.

## Country to face dire consequences if govt fails: Ershad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Party (JP) Chairman HM Ershad yesterday said the country would face dire consequences if the Awami League (AL)-led grand alliance fails to run it.

Ershad also said his party wants to participate in the next parliamentary polls with the alliance.

He was speaking with journalists after cutting a cake marking his 81st birthday at his Baridhara residence in the city.

AL Joint Secretary General Mahbub-ul Alam Hanif came to the function with a bouquet, wishing Ershad on behalf of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, also AL president.

Hanif said the premier would soon sit with Ershad to discuss participation of the alliance's components in the council of ministers and other positions of the government.

Talking to reporters, Hanif also said AL will try its utmost to strengthen the good relation the alliance has with JP.

## CASE AGAINST KOKO Hearing adjourned till April 7

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday adjourned the hearing on charge framing against Arafat Rahman Koko, youngest son of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, till April 7 in connection with a tax evasion case.

Judge Mohammad Zohurul Haque of the Senior Special Judge's Court passed the order after Koko's lawyer submitted a petition seeking an adjournment of the hearing.

In the petition, the lawyer said they had earlier filed a writ petition with the High Court (HC) challenging the legality of the case. NBR filed the case on March 1, 2010.

## Case against Huda couple quashed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday acquitted former BNP minister Nazmul Huda and his wife Sigma Huda in a bribery case in which they were convicted and sentenced to different terms of imprisonment.

The Anti-Corruption Commission filed the case against them with Dhanmondi Police Station on March 21, 2007 on charge of taking Tk 2.40 crore from a businessman in favour of their weekly newspaper Khobor Ontorale.

A special court on August 27 in 2007 con-

victed them and sentenced Nazmul Huda to seven years imprisonment and his wife to three years of imprisonment.

The HC bench of Justice Siddiqur Rahman Miah and Justice Md Ataur Rahman Khan yesterday delivered the verdict after granting two separate appeals filed by Huda and his wife against the trial court judgment.

Earlier, the couple got bail from the HC in the cases.

Barrister Nazmul Huda and Advocate Sigma Huda argued for themselves, while Advocate Khushid Alam Khan appeared for ACC.



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