

## Aids cases on decline: UN

AFP, Geneva

HIV infections fell and treatment soared following an unprecedented response to the Aids epidemic over the last decade, the UN said yesterday, while sounding the alarm over declining funds.

New infections dropped by more than a quarter between 2001 and 2009 across 33 countries, a report published ahead of World Aids Day on Thursday said.

More than 6.6 million received antiretroviral therapy last year compared to just 400,000 recorded in 2003.

In their update the World Health Organisation, Unicef and Unaids hailed the "extraordinary" achievements in the battle against the disease.

The WHO and Unaids have adopted bold targets to achieve zero new infections and zero Aids-related deaths by 2015.

But financial pressures on both domestic and foreign aids budgets are threatening the impressive progress.

## Polls to divided DCC uncertain

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that it does not have much time left before it finishes its term in office.

The tenure of Chief Election Commissioner ATM Shamsul Huda and Election Commissioner M Sohul Hussein will expire on February 4, with the completion of their five-year term. Election Commissioner Brig Gen (retd) M Sakhawat Hossain will retire on February 14.

This means the current commission only has two months—December and January—before its tenure expires.

After the expiry of their tenure, the government will make new appointments to the commission. But political analysts say that it will be a tough job appointing people acceptable to the opposition since the new commission will have the tough job of conducting the next parliamentary polls.

"There are some difficulties. If we announce a sched-

ule for the polls, the next commission will have to conduct the elections," Huda told The Daily Star over telephone yesterday afternoon. He said the commission would sit soon to discuss the issue and to decide what to do.

Election Commissioner Sakhawat Hossain echoed the same view and said the new commission would face problems in conducting the DCC polls.

Following the changes to the law, he said, it would be difficult to hold the polls in the next 90 days. "Although it is the job of the ministry to draft the law, the Election Commission should have been consulted to finalise the issue [of holding polls in 90 days]," Sakhawat told reporters at his office.

He said the commission would be in "trouble" in holding the polls in 90 days. "It is not possible to conduct polls to both corporations on the same day. The polls need to be held over two

days," he said.

"Since there is a political crisis, we cannot throw the next election commission into the fire," Sakhawat said, referring to the on-going political debate and opposition around the issue of the bifurcated DCC.

Apart from local government experts, eminent citizens, MPs of the Workers Party and Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, the BNP led-opposition parties have also been protesting the split of the DCC. The opposition parties have even threatened to wage street agitation to force the government into scrapping the bill.

Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka yesterday launched a legal battle against the split. In response to his writ petition, a High Court bench issued a rule upon the government to explain as to why the law passed by parliament should not be considered illegal and unconstitutional.

When the changes brought about by the bill

take effect, Mayor Khoka and his councillors will no longer remain in office. The government will appoint two administrators for DCC north and south until the polls are held.

Contacted by The Daily Star yesterday over telephone, Mayor Khoka said that in his writ petition he had challenged the government's move to appoint administrators and thus remove him from office. He said his lawyers would argue in court against the appointment of administrators as it goes against article 59 of the constitution.

Article 59 says, "Local Government in every administrative unit of the Republic shall be entrusted to bodies, composed of persons elected in accordance with law."

The last polls to the DCC were held in 2002 and the tenure of the incumbent mayor and councillors expired in May 2007. Polls to the DCC could not be held for many reasons, one being

the state of emergency in 2007-2008.

Assuming office in January 2009, the Awami League-led government also opted not to allow the Election Commission to hold the polls and finally came up with the move to split the DCC.

The Election Commission in February last year informed the government that it could hold the DCC polls in April 2010 but the government did not let the commission hold elections.

Annoyed by the government's reluctance, the commission then stopped thinking about the DCC polls. It conducted polls to the Chittagong City Corporation, municipalities, union parishes and Narayanganj City Corporation between 2010 and 2011. The commission is now busy with holding the polls to the newly formed Comilla City Corporation on January 5.

## Mayor Khoka

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rule upon the government and the Election Commission (EC) to explain in four weeks why the bill should not be declared illegal and unconstitutional.

An HC bench comprised of Justice Farid Ahmed and Justice Sheikh Hassan Arif came up with the rule.

The two judges, however, differed over ordering a status quo as regards the holding of offices by the DCC mayor and councillors.

Justice Farid Ahmed, senior member of the bench, issued an order for a status quo, allowing the present mayor and councillors to continue to hold office for two more months.

Justice Sheikh Hassan Arif did not issue any order for a status quo.

Details of their differing stance could not be known immediately as copy of their ruling was yet to be released.

Attorney General Mahbubey Alam and Akther Imam, a counsel for the petitioner, later told journalists the HC order along with the writ petition will be sent to the chief justice.

The chief justice will refer

the issue to a third bench of the HC for its disposal. The rule issued yesterday will remain in force, they said.

The AG, however, said there is a legal bar to appointment of administrators for the DCC following the HC order.

Akther Imam said the government should not appoint administrators for the DCC till disposal of the matter.

In his writ petition, Khoka stated that the bill for splitting the DCC into two was passed without complying with the required procedures, rules and regulations.

There was no logic for splitting the DCC, and it was a violation of constitutional provisions, he said.

During the hearing yesterday, petitioner's counsel Dr Kamal Hossain said Dhaka is the capital of Bangladesh as per the constitution of the republic, and there is no provision in it for slicing DCC into parts.

Mahbubey Alam opposed the petition, saying the bill to split the DCC is not a law until the president signs it, and a writ petition cannot be filed challenging any bill until it is turned into a law.

## Detainee's death raises question

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door with "his shirt" in the toilet around 7:30pm, Kazi Bazley Maola, officer-in-charge of the police station told The Daily Star yesterday.

Robi's younger brothers Ranaglal Robi Das and Bangolal Robi Das, however, said that while arresting Robi at their village home police did not allow him to wear a shirt.

They demanded punitive measures against the police men involved.

Police said Robi was an accused in two liquor cases.

Meanwhile, protesting the mysterious death around a hundred people in Sunamganj yesterday staged demonstrations in front of the office of the superintendent of police (SP) and the district hospital morgue.

According to the agitating people, police tortured him to death and were

## SQ Chy wants a year to prove

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and witnesses to prove his innocence.

Salauddin argued for himself saying that he could not hire any lawyer to defend him for alleged intimidation. The prosecution rejected his allegation as baseless.

On November 14, the prosecution charged Salauddin with 24 counts of crimes against humanity, including murder, genocide, abduction and torture during the nine months of bloody Liberation War against Pakistan.

SP Kibria told The Daily Star, "It is thought that he committed suicide by hanging himself from the door.

But since the body bore no injury marks, we have to wait for the post-mortem report."

The additional SP was asked to investigate the incident and file a report in three days, the SP said.

The body was handed over to the family yesterday afternoon after an autopsy, police said.

inside the courtroom for live coverage of the proceedings and let foreign counsels to work as consultants of the defendants. He also urged the tribunal to define the crimes against humanity in accordance with the international law.

Terming the tribunal as local and rather than international, he said the proceedings should be held under the Evidence Act and Code of Criminal Procedure, and foreign observers should be allowed to watch the trial.

Salauddin also told the tribunal that he should be able to challenge its proceedings in the higher court. Besides, the government will have to implement the international covenants which it signed regarding the war crimes trial, he appealed to the court.

"The tribunal can bring me here by force to take part in the proceedings, but, I will not come here willingly if my conditions are not met," Salauddin told the three-member judges'

panel headed by Justice Nizamul Huq.

Salauddin argued that it is not legally and constitutionally acceptable that High Court judges are conducting the trial.

Among the judges of the tribunal, its Chairman Justice Nizamul Huq and Justice ATM Faizle Kabir are from the High Court Division of the Supreme Court while the other, Justice AKM Zaeer Ahmed, is from lower court.

Salauddin alleged that he has been deprived of his fundamental rights through amendments to the International Crimes Tribunal Act 2009 that do not allow him to challenge the tribunal proceedings in the higher court.

"Until my basic rights are ensured, the tribunal cannot take the charges against me in cognisance," he told the judges.

Salauddin, who was brought to the court from Dhaka Central Jail, made some unpleasant remarks about the army unrelated to the trial.

Responding to Salauddin's arguments, prosecutor Zead-Al Malum told the judges that this tribunal can't deal with such demands as these are related to the constitution.

About the legality of appointing HC judges in the tribunal, Zead said the issue has already been disposed of in the higher court.

He protested Salauddin's statement against the army and requested the judges to record it in the order.

Zead also protested Salauddin's claim of innocence of his father Fazlul Quader Chowdhury during the Liberation War. The prosecutor said his father was a "terror" in Chittagong from 1947 to 1971 and he tortured the minority people. Investigators collected evidence on Fazlul Quader, he added.

As proceedings resumed yesterday, the tribunal rejected Salauddin's appeal to allow him to attend parliament session as a lawmaker.

agent claimed that it went to

Kutubdia area for some survey and repair work.

Captain Shahjahan, member (harbour and marine),

said the navy intercepted the vessel as he informed them about the incident. "It would come to the port tomorrow (today) and we'll investigate whether the vessel was responsible for the spillage or not," he said.

To ensure that the oil slick is properly removed, Shahjahan said another vessel would be sent today to the affected area.

Meanwhile, EMU yesterday sent letters to the master of the vessel and its local agent Elite Shipping Lines saying that the recipient would have to bear the clean-up cost.

It also said legal action would be taken against the master and the subject vessel for polluting water as it is a violation of maritime laws.

On June 4 this year, oil had spread over 10 square kilometres of Karnaphuli river when an oil tanker, MV Moon, sank at the port. The DoE had fined its owner Tk 10 lakh.

## Forty winters ago . . .

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taken a concrete shape owing to the increasing activities of the Mukti Bahini, especially in the border regions.

Additionally, in the urban centres and particularly in Dhaka, guerrilla movements became increasingly more pronounced. A sign of that were the growing

instances of explosions in areas where the military regime was thought to have a presence, be it in terms of infrastructure or troop concentrations. The rural regions had by the first day of December turned into a veritable death trap for Pakistan's soldiers. The feeling had begun to rise that the occupation forces were fast finding themselves in a constantly shrinking area of operation.

But, of course, these ground realities were ignored by the regime, at least in public. It went into desperate saber-rattling against India and into harshly abusive mode against the Mukti Bahini which for it was but a ragtag band of "miscreants". In late November, a group of pro-Pakistan Bangalee politicians had travelled to Rawalpindi, the ostensible purpose being seeking ways for a "transfer of power" to the elected representatives of the people.

The irony was not missed: the elected representatives who had won a majority at the general elections just a year earlier and who had been deprived of power were at the time marching steadily toward creating the new state of Bangladesh. The pro-Pakistan politicians were to be trapped in Pakistan, for soon December 16 would upset everyone's calculations.

As December began, the Yahya Khan regime prepared to hand down a sentence of death on the imprisoned Bangalee leader Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman following a sham military trial in camera. Bangabandhu had been detained since March and in

his name his lieutenants had been waging the war for freedom. By December 1, the Bangalee freedom fighters could tell themselves that it was possible for them to breach and storm the citadel of the enemy.

In Dhaka, the so-called civilian administration of Dr Abdul Mutalib Malek, dominated by Pakistan army officers, began to demonstrate signs of nervousness as the full weight of the situation swiftly began to dawn on it. Malek and his cabinet would resign some days later in the intense bombing launched by the Indian air force on Governor's House (today's Bangabhaban).

Four decades ago, the Bangalee nation spotted the unmistakable points of light dotting the heaven of freedom. December 1971 was to be unlike any other season, for it would symbolise a glory that was to be etched for all time in the collective Bangalee consciousness. It is that time of year when the softness of dawn complements the tenderness of twilight, to remind us of the dreams that powered us to liberty through a long, tortuous valley of death.

In December, we recall in solemn manner the three million of our compatriots whose lives were snuffed out by an enemy intent on a demonstration of barbarism in its efforts to quell civilised living. In December, we remember with deep reverence the political leadership which inspired us into shaping visions of national grandeur.

In December, it is time to rend the skies with the cadences of *Jai Bangla* once more. Letter grades of O-Level and A-Level subjects are converted into grade points on the basis of A=4, B=3, C=2 and D=1. Grade Point Average (GPA) is calculated by averaging the grade points of the five best grades for O-level and the two best grades for A-level.

## Bachelors and Masters Program

Certificate / Degree	Class / Division	1st	2nd	3rd
Bachelor Degree (Pass)		4	3	2
Bachelor Degree (Hons.), Bachelor of Engineering, Medicine, or Agriculture		5	4	2
Masters Degree		1	1	1

## the IBA MBA

Admission Test Notice  
MBA 47th Batch (Session 2011- 2012)

MBA Admission Test (2011-12) of the Institute of Business Administration (IBA), University of Dhaka will be held on Friday, December 30, 2011 at 10 am.

## ELIGIBILITY

All applicants must have at least a Bachelor Degree in any field of study. The minimum qualifying point is seven (07) for all applicants. The point determination is laid out in the tables below:

## SSC, HSC or Equivalents

SSC GPA/Div	HSC GPA/Div	O-Level GPA*	A-Level GPA*	Qualifying Points
>= 4.0/1st	>= 4.0/1st	>= 3.0	>= 2.5	3