

## ICT prosecutor resigns

Cites health issues

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



**Mir Iqbal Hossain**

Mir Iqbal Hossain, a member of the prosecution team of the International Crimes Tribunal, has resigned on 'health ground'.

He tendered his resignation letter to the law minister yesterday, three days after the government terminated AKM Saiful Islam from the prosecution team for 'breaching discipline and code of conduct.'

Now the lawyer panel has only 19 members.

However, Law Secretary ASSM Zahirul Haque has denied receiving any resignation letter from Iqbal.

Iqbal, who had been on leave since April, also sent a copy of the letter to the office of Chief Prosecutor, Hirishikesh Saha, a member of the prosecution, told The Daily Star yesterday.

On Thursday, the government sacked AKM Saiful Islam from the prosecution team of the ICT. Several prosecutors believe the move was made as he had remained absent for

## Annee faces

hearing on charge framing against them.

The three BNP activists are Nur Mohammad, Selim Uddin and Taleb Mahmud.

The cases were filed with Paltan and Shahjahanpur Police Stations for violence, vandalism, torching of vehicles and assaulting police during the opposition's agitation on March 2 and March 6 last year.

The court also deferred until September 3 the hearing on charge framing against BNP acting secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir and 45 others in connection with the same cases.

Earlier in the day, lawyers for the accused, including Fakhrul, made submissions on charge framing hearing against the accused.

Several accused, including Annee, submitted separate petitions seeking adjournment of the hearing.

Fakhrul, Moudud Ahmed, Mirza Abbas along with 28 BNP leaders appeared before the court.

Of the accused, seven are absconding since the cases were filed against them.

## Fake war heroes

FROM PAGE 1

In case of the public servants who already retired, Mozammel said his ministry would soon ask the deputy commissioners concerned to file criminal cases against them.

Asked about the cancellation of the certificates, Cabinet Secretary Muhammad Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan said it is considered a criminal offence to provide false documents.

The public administration ministry and other authorities concerned would decide on the issue once they get recommendations from the liberation war affairs ministry, he said.

Former cabinet secretary Akbar Ali Khan said if the government decides to take action against the public servants, it first has to investigate the allegations.

"If the public servants are found guilty, departmental action might be taken against them." And in case of the retired public servants, the government has to file lawsuits against them, he told The Daily Star.

Despite repeated attempts yesterday, The Daily Star couldn't contact the public administration secretary over the phone.

On July 21, the liberation war affairs ministry revoked the certificates of 35 public servants on the basis of NSI investigation. Earlier, 116 certificates had been cancelled.

Meanwhile, the Anti-Corruption Commission has been investigating four incumbent secretaries and one former secretary for obtaining freedom fighter certificates allegedly through forgery.

They are Expatriates Welfare Secretary Khandakar Shawkat Hossain, Health Secretary Niaz Uddin Mia, Liberation War Affairs Secretary KH Masud Siddiqui, Public Service Commission Secretary AKM Amir Hossain, and Privatisation Commission Chairman Molla Waheeduzzaman.

Sources at the liberation war affairs ministry said the ministry had

found proof that the five public servants had obtained the certificates through forgery.

Asked about it, Mozammel said his ministry couldn't take any step in this matter as the ACC is still probing the allegations against the five public servants.

Moreover, the government is investigating another 5,000 people, including 300 government employees, for obtaining freedom fighter certificates allegedly through fraudulence.

Following the cancellation of 35 freedom fighter certificates on July 21, Mozammel told reporters that his ministry had asked the public administration ministry to discontinue the privileges and financial benefits of these public servants.

Interestingly, most of the public servants are mid-ranking officials. They include a joint secretary, an executive director of Bangladesh Bank, executive engineers, tax officers, primary school teachers and typists.

The government's decision to extend the retirement age of freedom fighters in public service had prompted the public servants to obtain the certificates through forgery.

In November 2012, the government extended the retirement age of freedom fighters from 59 to 60 years. In April 2010, their retirement age was extended by two years from 57.

In 2012, the number of freedom fighters in government services was around 11,000. Of them, those in final years of their service were of the age of 15 or 16 at best during the Liberation War.

To identify fake freedom fighters in the civil service, the government's first consideration has been the age of the officials during the Liberation War.

At present, the number of freedom fighters is 2.12 lakh, which was 1.98 lakh in the gazette published in 2002.

## Under threat

FROM PAGE 1

roads across the country every year. Other sources estimated the fatalities as high as from 12,000 to 20,000.

Thus the safety problem in

Bangladesh is very severe by international standards with some 60 to 150 fatalities per 10,000 motor vehicles compared to around 25 fatalities in India, 16 in Sri Lanka, two in the USA and 1.4 in the UK.

## Reflections of a khobish

FROM PAGE 1

studies in journalism. I never studied journalism. So I am scum, khobish, because at university I studied English literature. My scum colleagues studied other subjects. So they are, like me and in the view of the minister, all khobish.

I do not have a daughter who has done a Masters in journalism. Had I a daughter -- the minister has one -- I might have sent her to media studies at any one of the many universities in the country today. The reality is there before you: we who have no daughters studying journalism, we who have come into the media world like scum flowing into a world of beauty and ruined the magic of that world, have reasons to be afraid of the future. The minister has threatened me and the

likes of me through the weapon of the National Broadcast Policy. He will teach me and the likes of me a lesson.

The minister has cheerfully informed the nation that his earlier diatribe against the media has the approval of the prime minister. If he is to be believed, the PM was dismissive of her information minister because he belongs to the ruling alliance and not to the ruling Awami League. But Minister Mohsin Ali is grassroots, is an Awami Leaguer. And Sheikh Hasina is appreciative of his role in running down journalists.

Does the prime minister share her minister's view that journalists are khobish? The kind of comments the minister has attributed to the PM have not been contradicted. So here goes this

## NAME

M Mahbubul Alam Joint secretary of public administration ministry

Abdul Hamid Executive director of Bangladesh Bank

Sirajul Islam Executive engineer at the public health engineering department

Saidur Rahman Executive engineer of Bangladesh Water Development Board

Nazmul Kabir Tax officer at Benapole Customs House

Mostak Ahmed Tax officer at Customs, Excise and Vat Commissionerate of Dhaka (south)

Nilufa Sultana Tax officer at the same office

Ala Uddin Lower division assistant/typist at Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority

Fayez Kabir Former security inspector at Chittagong Port Authority

Abdur Rouf Molla Assistant teacher at Narerkanda non-government primary school in Madaripur

Motiar Rahman Assistant teacher at Saritoil Govt Primary School in Tangail

Mohiuddin Moral Assistant teacher at Dakkhin Shahpur non-government primary school

Khagendra Nath Saha Headmaster at Badarghat Government Primary School in Naogaon

Afaz Uddin Assistant teacher from Naogaon

SM Selim Project director of UCRI under the LGED

Alamgir Kabir Retired typist of Tax Zone-3 in Chittagong

Abdul Mannan Former chief assistant-cum-accountant at Upazila Health Complex in Nababganj, Dhaka

KM Abul Hossain Deputy assistant engineer of Roads and Highways of Faridpur

Abdul Malek Food inspector of Kapashia Food Godown, Gazipur

Abdul Rauf Sarkar Clerk from Narsingdi

Niranjan Kumar Roy Sub-inspector in Chittagong

Monisha Ranjan Roy Retired accountant at BADC, Krishi Bhaban, Dhaka

Asaduzzaman Assistant agriculture extension officer of Narsingdi Sadar

AKM Ataul Islam Director (planning and training) of Civil Aviation Authority, Dhaka

Khan Sirajul Islam Chief assistant of Chittagong Port

SM Alauddin Employee at directorate of agriculture extension

Jasim Uddin Mohammad Sub-registrar of Gazipur

Minral Kanti Mitra Doctor in Jessore

Masudul Haque Head clerk of Sylhet land registry office

Wali Ahmed of Chittagong

Hafizur Rahman of Jhenidah

## Plane crashes

FROM PAGE 16

Iran's deputy transport minister, Ahmad Majidi, said the Antonov An-140 turboprop plane had 40 passengers, including six children, and eight crew on board.

The accident killed 39 people and injured nine, according to the latest official toll. A fire official initially said all on board had been killed.

The aircraft was operated by Sepahan Airlines, and a tail section bearing the company's dolphin logo could be seen sticking out of the road as security forces cordoned off the crash site where firefighters had doused the flames.

Black smoke billowed from the mass of burnt out and twisted metal, with officials saying the plane hit a wall and trees.

A witness told state television: "I was on my motorbike and I heard something behind me. I turned round and it was a plane, so I got on to the ground because it was so close."

"With other people, we ran to try to save the passengers but there were two or three loud explosions and a huge fire."

Mehrabad airport, near central Tehran, is by far the country's busiest domestic hub, serving routes to all major Iranian cities.

Most international passenger flights take off from Tehran's Imam Khomeini International Airport, which is farther west of the capital.

An investigation is under way, said Alireza Jahangirian, the head of Iran's civil aviation authority.

The Ukrainian-designed An-140 is intended for regional use, has a range of around 2,400 kilometres and can carry up to 52 people. Iranian airlines are one of the plane's biggest users.

Later Sunday, President Hassan Rouhani ordered the grounding of all domestically produced An-140s.

Iran has suffered several air crashes in recent years, blamed on ageing planes, poor maintenance and a shortage of new parts because of international sanctions.

Iran's last major air crash was in January 2011, when an Iran Air Boeing 727 shattered on impact while attempting an emergency landing in a snowstorm in the northwest, killing 77 people.

## New Gaza truce

FROM PAGE 16

"Israel will not engage in negotiations under fire," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told his cabinet yesterday, warning the operation would not stop until there was a prolonged quiet.

More than a month of bloody fighting in and around Gaza has killed at least 1,939 Palestinians and 67 people on the Israeli side, most of them soldiers. The UN says just under three quarters of those killed in Gaza were civilians, and around a third of the civilian victims were children.

On the ground, eight Palestinians were killed, including a woman and two 17-year-olds, in a barrage of Israeli air strikes and 10 bodies were pulled from the rubble east of Gaza City, local medics said.

Throughout the day, Israeli warplanes hit 41 targets. Militants launched 35 rockets over the border, 23 of which struck southern Israel and eight which were shot down, with the rest falling short inside Palestinian territory, the army said.

In the West Bank, an 11-year-old Palestinian boy was shot dead by Israeli troops as he played outside his home in Al-Fawwar refugee camp near the southern city of Hebron, relatives and medics said.

Israel's Gaza operation has triggered a series of almost daily protests across the West Bank, during which 16 Palestinians have been killed, the Ramallah-based health ministry said.

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