

New move to protect

FROM PAGE 16
"Public Service Act, 2015". Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina chaired the meeting, held at her office.

Later, briefing reporters at Bangladesh Secretariat, Cabinet Secretary M. Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan said there will be no bar to arresting a public servant if the charge sheet is accepted by a court.

Any investigation agency concerned, including the Anti-Corruption Commission, can probe allegations of criminal offences and file charge sheet against any public servant, the proposed law says.

The new law will not be in conflict with the existing ACC act and there is no ambiguity in it, said Musharraf. "Everything will remain within the framework of the constitution and the existing laws. It's an epoch-making step as the appointment and other activities of the civil servants have been in discussion for a long time."

Under the proposed act, the government will form a permanent pay commission and introduce new set of rules for the service of public servants.

The appointment and services of civil servants are now regulated by the rules that were promulgated by the country's presidents at different times.

Musharraf said any previous law contradictory to the proposed act would be inoperative. The new law broadly defined the "persons in the service of the republic", he added.

The services of the persons holding constitutional posts, staff of the judiciary, Supreme Court employees, armed forces personnel, railway employees, employees of any temporary commission, employees of local government bodies, public university teachers and employees and employees of development projects will remain beyond the purview of the proposed law. Their jobs will be regulated by the laws of the respective organisations.

The cabinet secretary said necessary rules on 10 different issues will be framed for making the law operational. The rules will cover appointment, promotion, seniority, leave, posting, deputation and lien, conduct and discipline, retirement benefits, resignation and retirement of public servants.

No existing employees will be affected due to the changes to service rules, he added. Rather, public servants will be rewarded for any outstanding role in their service.

The draft law will now be sent to the law ministry for vetting. It will be placed before the cabinet again for

final approval.

The cabinet also gave nod to the drafts of the National Disaster Management Policy-2015, Army (amendment) Act-2015 and Air Force (amendment) Act-2015.

The meeting gave final approval to the draft of the Nuclear Power Plant Ordinance, 2015. Under the proposed law, a public limited company, Nuclear Power Plant Company Bangladesh Ltd, will be formed for smooth commercial operation of nuclear power plants.

Dr Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh, said the law has been drafted without taking public opinion, like the government did in many other cases.

"Whatever reasons have been given by the authorities to justify the new provisions, they will be discriminatory. No particular section of people can be given special privilege under the proposed law It will also be unconstitutional as the constitution guarantees equal rights for all citizens," he added. *The Daily Star*.

If the law has to be enacted, it should be applicable to all citizens, added Iftekharuzzaman.

He warned that the proposed legislation might promote corruption and abuse of power in public offices.

SC clears way for release

FROM PAGE 16
court said Fakhrul could get advanced treatment abroad within six weeks' time as the medical report suggested. "He can go to an advanced centre where intervention for carotid lesions may be possible".

The Appellate Division passed the order after receiving the report from the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) on the BNP leader's health condition.

The SC order maintains the June 21 High Court decision granting interim bail to Fakhrul in three cases for vandalism and arson. The cases were filed with Paltan police on January 4 and 6.

During yesterday's hearing, Additional Attorney General Murad Reza opposed the bail plea of Fakhrul, saying he might be sent to National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases in Dhaka as the BSMMU suggested better treatment for him.

Khandaker Mahbub Hossain, a lawyer for the BNP leader, told *The Daily Star* that there was no legal bar to his client's release from jail following the SC order.

Fakhrul, who has been undergoing treatment at the BSMMU prison cell, will be released after the copy of the SC order reaches the jail authorities, he

said.

In reply to a question, Khandaker Mahbub said it was the first time the judges of a full bench of the Appellate Division dealt with a case during vacation, considering health issues of Fakhrul.

The court went into a two-week annual vacation on July 10 and will reopen on July 26.

Moudud Ahmed, another lawyer for Fakhrul, told *The Daily Star* yesterday the SC permitted him to take treatment abroad as he had a risk of suffering a stroke during an operation at a local hospital.

On July 9, the SC ordered the BSMMU authorities to form a new board to examine Fakhrul's health and submit a "complete" medical report before it.

The authorities submitted the medical report before the SC on Sunday.

The apex court had ordered to form the fresh medical board after Fakhrul's lawyers raised questions over a previous report submitted by a three-member medical board of the BSMMU on July 8.

The report said Fakhrul's heart condition was stable.

Khandaker Mahbub told the SC that the BNP leader had been suffering

mainly from neurological problems, but the BSMMU board had prepared the report on his heart condition.

Besides granting Fakhrul ad interim bail in the three cases, the HC on June 21 also issued three separate rules upon the government to explain as to why he should not be granted regular bail in the cases.

On June 28, the SC upheld the HC orders that on June 18 had granted bail to Fakhrul in three other vandalism and arson cases.

In its order, the SC said Fakhrul would remain on bail until submission of the probe report by the police to the lower court concerned.

The SC also ordered the BNP acting secretary general to surrender before the lower court the day the law enforcers would submit their report in any of the cases.

Of the three cases, two were filed with Paltan Police Station on December 28 last year and January 4 this year. The other was lodged with Motijheel Police Station on January 6.

On April 16, Fakhrul, who is accused in 89 cases, got bail from the HC in another similar case.

The BNP leader was detained from the Jatiya Press Club on January 6, and later, was shown arrested in seven cases, his lawyer Sagir Hossain Leon

temperature.

The bottle roads will be lighter as well as hollow making it far easier to install cable and utility pipes below the surface.

Sections of the road will be pre-made in a factory and then transported on-site, which means a shorter construction time, lower maintenance and less road works.

Senior directors at VolkerWessels have said that the project is still at a conceptual stage, but the company aims to put down the first fully recycled road within three years.

Rotterdam, who's Climate Initiative

has keenly bolstered sustainable technologies, is the first city to announce an interest in piloting the roads.

Rolf Mars, the director of VolkerWessels' roads subdivision, KWS Infra, said in the *Guardian*: "Plastic offers all kinds of advantages compared to current road construction, both in laying the roads and maintenance. It's still an idea on paper at the moment; the next stage is to build it and test it in a laboratory."

"Rotterdam is a very innovative city

and has embraced the idea. It fits very well within its sustainability policy and

Fresh Greek deal

FROM PAGE 16
economic abyss with its shuttered banks on the brink of collapse and the prospect of having to print a parallel currency and exit the European monetary union.

"The agreement was laborious, but it has been concluded. There is no Grexit," European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker told a news conference after 17 hours of bargaining.

He dismissed suggestions that Tsipras had been humiliated even though the summit statement insisted repeatedly that Greece must now subject much of its public policy to prior agreement by bailout monitors.

"In this compromise, there are no winners and no losers," Juncker said. "I don't think the Greek people have been humiliated, nor that the other Europeans have lost face. It is a typical European arrangement."

Tsipras himself, elected five months ago to end five years of suffocating austerity, said he had "fought a tough battle" and "averted the plan for financial strangulation".

Greece won conditional agreement to receive a possible 86 billion euros (\$95 billion) over three years, along with an assurance that euro zone finance ministers would start within hours discussing ways to bridge a funding gap until a bailout - subject to parliamentary approvals - is finally ready.

That will only happen if he can meet a tight timetable for enacting unpopular reforms of value added tax, pensions, budget cuts if Greece misses fiscal targets, new bankruptcy rules and an EU banking law that could be used to make

April 11, 2010 - EU announces €30b bailout package for Greece.

May 2, 2010 - IMF, European Central Bank and European Commission announce €110b aid package for three years.

May 18, 2010 - Greece gets €14.5b loan from EU to repay immediate debt.

February 21, 2012 - Eurozone approves €130b second bailout.

July 13, 2015 - EU announces €86b third bailout

big depositors take losses.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel said she could recommend "with full confidence" that the Bundestag authorize the opening of loan negotiations with Athens once the Greek parliament has approved the entire program and passed the first laws.

The secretary-general of Merkel's conservatives said the Bundestag was likely to vote on Greece on Friday.

Merkel's allies rushed to defend the deal, with her chief of staff, Peter Altmaier, tweeting that Europe had won and Germany "was part of the solution -- from the beginning until the end!"

But in Greece, relief that a deal had been struck was mixed with anger at Germany. "Listen, it is some sort of victory but it is a pyrrhic victory because the measures are very strict," Marianna, 73, told Reuters.

Malta's Prime Minister Joseph Muscat said Greece came out of the summit "humiliated" - mostly as a result of its refusal to take an offer made to it two weeks ago.

VERSAILLES IN BRUSSELS?

Asked whether the tough conditions imposed on a desperate Greece were not similar to the 1919 Versailles treaty that forced crushing reparations on a defeated Germany after World War One, Merkel said: "I won't take part in historical comparisons, especially when I didn't make them myself."

The deterioration of the Greek economy since Tsipras won office in January, and particularly in the last two weeks, had led to a much higher financing need, she said.

One senior EU official calculated the cost to the Greek state of the last two weeks of political and economic turmoil at 25 to 30 billion euros. A euro zone diplomat said the full damage might be closer to 50 billion euros.

Tsipras accepted a compromise on German-led demands for the sequestration of Greek state assets worth 50 billion euros - including recapitalized banks - in a trust fund beyond government reach, to be sold off primarily to pay down debt. In a gesture to Greece, some 12.5 billion euros of the proceeds would go to investment in Greece, Merkel said.

The Greek leader had to drop his opposition to a full role for the International Monetary Fund in the next bailout, which Merkel had insisted on to win parliamentary

Amnesty

FROM PAGE 16
through e-mail to Chief Justice HL Dattu of the apex court. Within a few days, it will be confirmed whether the writ is accepted," Sushanto Sarkar, secretary of the organisation, told *The Daily Star* last night.

"We did not question the trial by the BSF directly, rather we sought directives to clear the confusion created among the people of the two countries surrounding the trial process," Sushanto said.

Fifteen-year-old Felani Khatun was shot dead by a BSF man while she along with her father was returning home from India through Anantapur border in Phulbari upazila of Kurigram on January 7, 2011.

A special court of the Indian BSF began trial over this incident on August 13, 2013. As an outcome of the proceedings, the lone accused trooper Amiya Ghosh was acquitted of murder charge on September 6, 2013.

Felani's father had appealed to Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh for revision trial in the case. On his appeal, proceedings of the revision trial, held in Cooch Bihar of West Bengal, began from September 22 last year.

On July 2, a special West Bengal court of Indian Border Security Force (BSF) upheld its previous verdict after the hearing of the revision trial.

Shab-e-Qadr

FROM PAGE 1
the angels and the spirit descend here by the permission of Allah.

Muslim devotees will offer special prayers overnight at mosques and homes, seeking divine blessings and mercy of Allah for themselves as well as for the country and the Muslim Ummah. Special prayers will be arranged at the Baitul Mukarram national mosque and other mosques across the country.

GM cotton on trial

FROM PAGE 1
(CDB) Executive Director Dr Md Farid Uddin told *The Daily Star* that once they take the GM variety to the farmers it would revolutionise the country's cotton industry.

Each year Bangladesh grows a paltry 0.15 million bales of cotton and spends up to Tk 20,000 crore for importing over 5 million bales more to meet the demand, said Dr Farid.

Industry sources said typical synthetic pesticides have become increasingly ineffective in fighting cotton bollworm, thereby causing crop losses of up to 20 percent. Cotton growers' expenditure on pesticides accounts for 40 percent of the total production costs.

Bari Biotechnology Division Head Dr Dil Afroza Khanom told this correspondent that once the greenhouse trial completes successfully by December this year, the Bt cotton will see a field trial within the Bari compound in the next season and then trials for its adaptability will begin at a regional level in the following season.

Dr Farid expects that the GM variety should be available in the hands of cotton growers once all the trials are done in three years' time. "Bt cotton has the potential to increase the yields up to 20 percent and enhance fibre quality of cottons as those are not attacked by the bollworms," said Dr Farid.

In January last year, Bangladesh joined the GM-crop cultivating nations by introducing Bt brinjal, the first GM food crop in South Asia. Currently, GM varieties of rice and potato are in the pipeline as well. But if cotton trials go well, it will be the second GM plant in the country.

The Bt cotton trial came nearly seven months after the National Committee on Bio-safety (NCB) gave approval for this GM variety.

CDB set a target to increase annual

cotton production to one million bales in the next five years. Officials said introduction of Bt cotton would help reach that target easily as well as helping save the money spent for costly imports.

CDB is likely to advance biotechnologically with the successful trial of GM cotton but is there adequate land to expand its cultivation?

Response came from the CDB executive director.

"Modern cotton varieties are to some extent resistant to certain stress conditions like drought and salinity. We can look for lands in the South as well as the drought-prone Barendra region for the expansion of cotton cultivation," said Dr Farid.

Bari Director General Dr Rafiqul Islam Mondal said introduction of Bt brinjal paved the way for an array of other biotechnologically derived better crop varieties to come to the market. "We provided our greenhouse facilities to CDB for the GM cotton trial." Besides, he said, trials on *Golden Rice* - a Vitamin A-enriched GM rice, and GM potatoes are also on.

Pro-green activist Farida Akhter of non-government development organisation, Ubinig, however, cautioned against introduction of "one after another genetically modified crops in the country."

"We don't know for sure what would be the environmental fallout and yet why are we entering this unsafe territory," questioned Farida, who champions the cause of homegrown traditional technologies in farming.

Despite wide criticism from anti-GM lobbies, the use of Bt cotton in neighbouring India has grown exponentially since it was introduced there over a decade back and India has become the number one global exporter of cotton and the second largest cotton producer after China in the world.

A person who departs from this earth never truly leaves, He will remain alive in our hearts and minds, He lives on through the work he has done and the lives he has touched.

Our deepest condolences for the demise of our Founding Director Syed Humayun Kabir - a philanthropist, far-sighted leader, guardian of the business community and a symbol of ethical business.

Mr. Kabir was an inspiration for all of us at BRAC Bank and we pray for the salvation of his soul and for the strength of his loved ones.

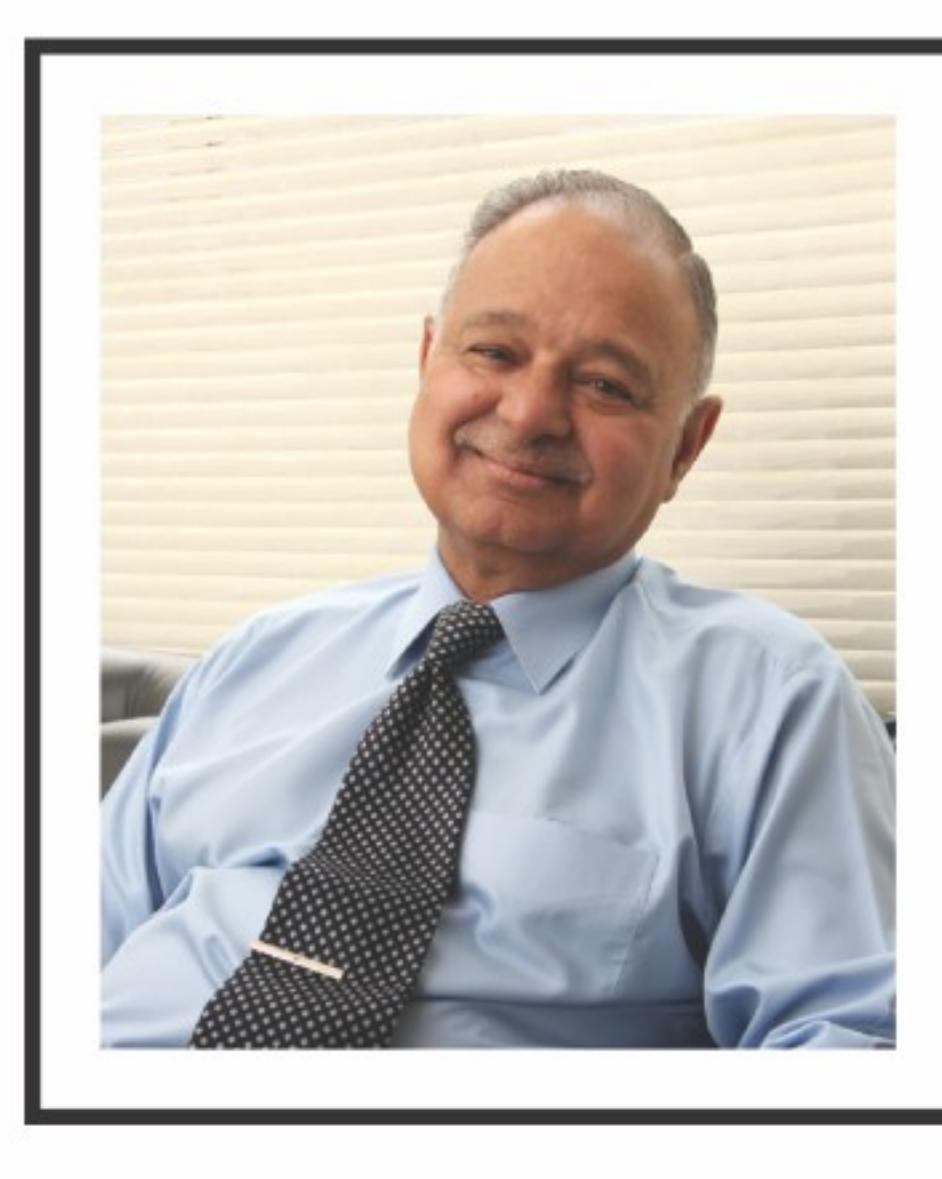
- BRAC Bank Family

BRAC BANK

আম্বু অধিবেশন



He who leaves this earth, leaves behind a legacy of his love, work and his teachings. He is remembered for his good deeds, And we carry on with his memory in our hearts as our guiding light.



Our deepest condolences for the