

GENERAL ELECTION EC may not use CCTV cameras

Hint 2 commissioners

UNB, Dhaka

Election commissioners Md Alamgir and Rasheda Sultana yesterday indicated that there is no plan to monitor the upcoming 12th national election via CCTV cameras.

Talking to reporters at the Nirbachan Bhaban, Alamgir said, "It hasn't been discussed much between us. There was no formal discussion...Because you know, there are about four lakh centres in 300 constituencies. There may be a number of risky centres. It is difficult to monitor through CCTV cameras in so many centers."

"We will make special arrangements at the vulnerable centres in that case. I mean, we're going to hire more law enforcement members in those centers."

He said, "They [parties] play a great role in maintaining discipline Because they know that if the situation deteriorates or the situation worsens in the elections, they will be the ones who will be affected."

Talking to reports at her office, Rasheda yesterday said that the commission will not use CCTV cameras in the upcoming 12th parliamentary election.

She said there is no legal obligation to use CCTV cameras in the election, so the commission is not obliged to use them.

KIDNEY TRANSPLANT Documents of donor, receiver falsified

Finds BSMMU probe,
gives hospital clean chit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The committee tasked with probing a possible scam involving the first-ever kidney transplant surgery at the newly inaugurated BSMMU SuperSpecialised Hospital found that the documents concerning the relationship between the donor and the recipient had been falsified with the latter's consent.

Both the donor and the recipient have admitted the matter to the probe committee, officials at the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) told this newspaper yesterday.

"The committee however did not find anyone from the hospital

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

Every balcony holds a distinct sight of the rain, and it eventually becomes a safe spot for us to ponder on life or take a break from it. The narrow lanes and the familiar alleys – everything look more refreshed after a drizzle. Even a look outside the window amidst work or class to catch a glimpse of the city acts as a soothing respite from our everyday life.



A RAINY DAY in the capital

FARIHA AMBER

It's a dark, gloomy day and the smell of earth dampened by rainwater sweeps the city. You hear the sounds of pouring rain on your window and make yourself a cup of freshly brewed tea. Leaving behind all thoughts of going out, you immerse in the delight of a rainy day in Dhaka.

While this may sound dreamy, many argue rain in Dhaka is more of an inconvenience than a respite. Indeed, the waterlogged roads and unruly traffic congestion caused by a downpour creates a lot of problems for us, but once in a while we can relish the good things rain has to offer.

Imagine being tucked in your bed and waking up at 7:00am to the pattering of raindrops. It can be the cause of horror to reach work on a weekday or it can be the best feeling in the world to drift off to the cosiest nap you have had in a while during the weekend.



As we, residents of Dhaka, search for delight in the little things life has to offer, moments spent in the rain hold some of the fondest memories we have.

As the roads beneath may be flooded, the rooftops in our concrete jungle quickly fill up with happy faces when it rains. One hears the laughter of children, watches young people have the time of their lives, or even a solitary individual just enjoying some time alone.

Every balcony holds a distinct sight

of the rain, and it eventually becomes a safe spot for us to ponder on life or take a break from it. The narrow lanes and the familiar alleys – everything look more refreshed after a drizzle. Even a look outside the window amidst work or class to catch a glimpse of the city acts as a soothing respite from our everyday life.

Rain also changes the landscape of our city, beautifying what we already find beautiful – take our lakes for example. Our parks gain a refreshed look as if their souls have been rejuvenated; a walk in TSC holding hands under the tranquil rain is something on most couple's bucket list in Dhaka.

Rain in Dhaka has its distinct beauty and it does not take much to appreciate it. Although it comes with its fair share of problems, valuing the little things can turn a gloomy rainy day in the metropolis into a blissful one.

US keen on sharing info, collaboration

FROM PAGE 1

ACC operates, and discuss potential cooperation and exchange of information regarding corruption," he said.

The delegation's focus was on sharing insights about anti-money laundering and asset recovery, and increasing collaboration, he added.

Asked, whether the ACC sought cooperation from the delegation to bring back money laundered from Bangladesh, Mahbub said that no specific discussion took place on that matter.

He said the delegation's visit to the country is part of their global activities. The delegation would participate in the G20 summit in India after this visit.

He said the ACC would be willing to sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Nephew's institution if it wanted to.

On yesterday's High Court order to investigate allegations of money laundering by S Alam Group, Mahbub told journalists that the ACC

will conduct the investigation if it received directives from the court.

He said the delegation's visit has no connection with the national election or any specific political party.

Nephew is likely to hold meetings today with Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen and relevant authorities including the Criminal Investigation Department and Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit and a civil society leader working against corruption.

The visit of Nephew follows a high profile visit by US under secretary of state for civilian security, democracy, and human rights early July and US' visa policy for Bangladesh that says those involved in vote rigging and intimidation will be denied US visas.

In December 2021, the US imposed sanctions on Rab and seven of its officials for human rights violations. In 2021 and 2023, the Biden Administration did not invite Bangladesh to the Summit for Democracy, one of its priorities being

fighting corruption.

Asked about the significance of Nephew's visit, Transparency International Bangladesh Executive Director Dr Iltekaruzzaman said there is scope to look at his visit positively as he may come up with proposal for cooperation in fighting poverty.

Possibly, he said, the delegation might look at the policies, legal framework, and institutional strength for curbing corruption and come up with support.

He said there are countries that do not question the source of big investments by individuals, which actually may be laundered from countries like Bangladesh.

"Discussing these aspects will be helpful," he said.

A diplomatic source said there was uncertainty if the delegation would want to know about cases of money laundering and take measures against the launderers. If the US does, it would be a big blow to money launderers.

Syria jihadist attacks kill 6 soldiers in northwest

AFP, Beirut

Six members of Syrian regime forces were killed yesterday in attacks on government positions in the conflict-torn country's northwest, the last main bastion of armed opposition, a war monitor said.

"Six regime forces, including two officers, were killed and two others wounded" in three attacks by jihadist group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) and allied factions, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said.

The attacks targeted regime positions in Latakia province, said the Britain-based group which relies on a vast network of sources on the ground.

HC orders probe

FROM PAGE 1

The HC asked the Bangladesh Bank governor to come up with a report clarifying whether the money in question was transferred abroad without permission and approval from the central bank.

The court also asked the government officials concerned to explain why their inaction and failure to prevent money laundering, if any, by the S Alam Group owner should not be declared illegal.

The court ordered the respondents to show causes as to why they should not be directed to enquire into the matter disclosed in The Daily Star report and why they should not be ordered to take appropriate legal steps against the individuals and entities, if any, involved in the commission of corruption and money laundering in accordance with the law.

The HC bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice Khizir Hayat Lizu issued the order and rule after Supreme Court lawyer Syed Sayedul Haque Suman placed The Daily Star report before the bench and sought necessary directives.

Secretaries at the ministries of finance and home affairs; governor of Bangladesh Bank; ACC chairman; heads of Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) and CID; and chairman of National Board of Revenue (NBR) have been made respondents to the rule, Sayedul Haque Suman told The Daily Star.

The HC asked The Daily Star editor to submit an affidavit with regard to the

authenticity of its report published on August 4 and the documents, if there is any, to this court in two months and fixed October 8 for passing further order on this issue.

Full text of the HC order and rule have yet to be released.

During the proceedings, the bench said that money laundering is a white collar crime and it seriously affects the interest and welfare of the country.

The allegation should be examined to check whether it is true or false.

If the allegation is not correct, S Alam will submit an affidavit before this court and the confusion, if any, will be gone, the HC bench added.

There is no scope to see this offence leniently, the HC bench said, adding that nobody can transfer money abroad from Bangladesh without permission from Bangladesh Bank.

Sayedul told the court that during the colonial rule, the British had taken money from Bangladesh to their countries.

"At present, we ourselves transfer the money from Bangladesh to foreign countries," he said, adding that if Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman were alive, he would have been shocked.

Lawyer Sayedul said those who laundered money to Singapore could have made Bangladesh a country like Singapore.

But they made Singapore richer by laundering money from Bangladesh, he said.

Citing The Daily Star report, he said

Six hurt in landslides

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

Six people were injured in landslides yesterday triggered by heavy rains for five consecutive days in Bandarban.

Bandarban Deputy Commissioner Shah Mojahid Uddin said the multiple landslides hit different parts of the district throughout the day.

The affected areas are Kala Ghata Bir Bahadur Nagar and Sadar union areas of Bandarban town and various parts of Naikhongchhari upazila.

Of the six injured, Rumi Akter, 28, is a resident of the Kala Ghata Bir Bahadur Nagar area while four are residents of various parts of Naikhongchhari upazila and one is from Bandarban Sadar union.

SM Iqbal, resident officer (RMO) of Bandarban Sadar Hospital, said Rumi Akter was admitted to the hospital with injuries around 12:30pm. She is undergoing treatment at the hospital, but her injuries are not serious.

The five-day-long torrential rainfall flooded low-lying areas, including Kashem para, Bir Bahadur Nagar, Kanapara, Lemuzhiri, Catchingghata's Nayapara, and Milonchari of Sadar upazila.

Emdadul Haque, officer-in-charge of the Bandarban meteorological department, said the met office recorded 219mm of rainfall in the last 24 hours and about 400mm in the last four days. This rainfall is likely to last for another 5 to 6 days.

1kg crystal meth seized

UNB, Dhaka

Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) recovered a little over a kilogram of crystal meth in Ukhiya upazila of Cox's Bazar early yesterday.

A team of the 34 BGB Battalion conducted a drive in the upazila's Paschim Anjuman Para area after receiving a tip-off that a consignment of drugs would be smuggled to Bangladesh from Myanmar through the border, said a media release signed by Lt Col Saiful Islam Chowdhury, unit commander of the force.

Around 3:00am, they spotted some people intruding into Bangladeshi territory from Myanmar with a bag. However, seeing the law enforcers, they dumped the bag and fled.

Later, 1.045kg of crystal meth was found inside the bag.

Known by its street name 'ice', crystal meth is a powerful drug that affects the central nervous system. It comes in the form of clear crystals or shiny blue-white rocks.

Two children drown

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Two children drowned in a pond near their house in Rangpur's Gangachara upazila yesterday.

The deceased were identified as 18-month-old Rahima Begum, daughter of Obaidul Haque, and her cousin Sayeed Mian, 2, son of Abu Taleb of Mobfarpara village under Alambiditor union of the upazila.

Dulal Hossain, officer-in-charge of Gangachara Police Station, said that the children were playing near a pond beside their house unsupervised in the afternoon. They fell into the pond without the notice of their family members.

After searching frantically, relatives recovered the two bodies from the pond.

An unnatural death case has been lodged at the police station, he added.

Rally behind whoever

FROM PAGE 1

Dinajpur AL General Secretary Altafuzzman Mita said, "A lawmaker from Dinajpur is openly spreading rumours about the other leaders of our district. It is not desirable. We do not want bad blood between us and the parliament member. We want to work in unison."

Jamalpur AL General Secretary Bijan Kumar Das said, "Many MPs are alienated from the people. After winning the election, they lose touch with the people and activists. That is why I demand that popular leaders get nominated in the next election."

Lalmonirhat AL General Secretary Matiar Rahman said, "Jatiya Party Chairman GM Quader is an MP from Lalmonirhat-3. There is development across the whole country. But not in that area. In the next election, I demand putting an AL candidate against the Jatiya Party candidate."

At the meeting, Hasina asked the party men to remain alert about the BNP-Jamaat's possible subversive activities.

She instructed the leaders to woo voters and work for the country.

The next election will be fair, she said, directing the leaders to go to people's doorsteps and publicise the development achieved by the AL government in the last 14 and a half years.

AL central working committee and advisory council members, MPs, presidents and general secretaries of district committees, municipal and upazila units, metropolitan cities, district and upazila parishad chairman, mayors, presidents and general secretaries of AL associate organisations were present in the meeting.

The AL holds such meetings months ahead of every general election.

several Bangladesh Bank officials have refused to disclose their names.

If they have no courage to disclose their names, one must ask how they can run the regulatory bank, he said.

ACC lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan told the HC bench that the central bank does not permit offshore banking, which is used to launder money.

There should be an enquiry into the allegations mentioned in The Daily Star report, he added.

DAG Saifuddin Khaled, who represented the state, told the HC that no property has been amassed abroad in the name of S Alam Group.

If lawyer Sayedul moves a writ petition instead of seeking a suo moto order, S Alam Group can reply to the rule, he said.

According to The Daily Star investigative report, S Alam Group owner Saiful Alam has built a business empire in Singapore worth about \$1 billion, although there is no record of him taking any permission from Bangladesh Bank to invest or transfer any funds abroad.

The Bangladesh central bank has so far allowed 17 companies to invest outside the country, and this Chattogram-based business giant is not one of them.

In Singapore, Alam bought at least two hotels, two homes, one retail space, and other properties over the last one decade, all the while seeking to remove his name from the paper trails, documents cited by the report show.

Otherwise, the hospital authorities would be punished.

"So we have arranged NOC for every public hospital," Alam said at an event in Dhaka yesterday.

As of yesterday, Essential Drugs have issued NOCs to three hospitals, according to Kabir.

Meanwhile, the total number of fatalities in dengue infection has risen to 313 as 10 more patients died yesterday. The total number of hospitalisation cases rose to 66,732 including yesterday's 2,764.