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Sayedee no more MP

HC finds him guilty of election fraud

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) Division yesterday stripped ruling Jamaat-e-Islami leader Delwar Hossain Sayedee of membership of parliament (Jatiya Sangsad) for submitting false statement on his poll expenses and violating other election rules.

The HC in its judgement declared his election for Pirojpur-1 constituency null and void for corruption, illegal practice and violation of the Representation of People's Order, 1972, setting the first example of

unseating a lawmaker.

The court found Sayedee guilty on several counts: he concealed the sources of election fund, spent more money than Tk 5 lakh ceiling set by election rules and did not send an affidavit along with his poll expenses to the Election Commission (EC).

A one-member HC bench with Justice Mohammad Iman Ali gave the ruling on the election of Sayedee following a petition by main opposition Awami League leader Shudhangshu Shekhor Halder that

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CHT accord under review

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is reviewing the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) accord to find whether it contained anything contrary to the constitution and will amend it, if need be, a minister told the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday.

MKANwar, the minister in charge of CHT affairs in parliament, disclosed the government plan in reply to a query of Jatiya Party lawmaker GM Quader.

"We will go for an amendment if necessary after reviewing the accord," Anwar, also agriculture minister, said.

The minister however said no rights to protection of property were violated by the CHT accord, signed in 1997 with the indigenous people. In reply to another question by ruling BNP lawmaker Shahid Uddin Chowdhury Anny the minister said some provisions were included in the accord to protect the rights of indigenous people.

Troubled talks set to drag on for a day

Poor, rich states still deeply divided

STAR DESK

World trade talks were set to be extended by a day at Cancun, as trade ministers of 146 WTO states grappled with continuing differences over farm subsidies and a host of other contentious issues.

With less than 10 hours to reach a consensus (till 2:00am BST) and a looming threat of talks failure, ministers say they do not see any sign of improvement in the given deadline and chances can be made only by extending it, according to journalists and delegates at the meeting venue.

Deeply divided, the trade ministers are still trying to give a final push

to bring rich and poor countries together and rescue troubled talks on freeing up global markets, according to reports from BBC News Online, Reuters, AFP and WTO official website.

The mood was sombre as the delegates met for a final round of hard bargaining. There has been criticism from virtually all sides of a compromise declaration drawn up in an attempt to bring the ministerial meeting to a successful conclusion later on Sunday.

The main disagreement is over subsidies paid to farmers in rich nations, but developing countries are also upset by proposals to negotiate

new rules on foreign investment. No country is entirely happy with the latest draft circulated about 24 hours ago. A top European Union official said it crossed several red lines.

The least developed countries (LDCs), African Union (AU) and block of African, Caribbean and Pacific nations (ACP) in a joint statement have expressed utter dissatisfaction over the draft for not reflecting the interest of the LDCs.

The draft calls for an end to export subsidies on farm products of special interest to developing countries, designed to tackle the most harmful impact of subsidised

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Altaf sings cop success

Police to be equipped with Chinese rifles, close circuit cams to curb crime

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will equip the police force with Chinese rifles instead of .303 rifles and install close circuit cameras at crowded places in the city to combat crimes.

Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury said this in response to questions in parliament yesterday. "There are 45,000 .303 rifles in police department. We have planned to provide them with Chinese rifles in phases," the minister said responding to a question from BNP lawmaker Alamgir Mohammad Mahfuz Ullah Farid.

Altaf told another questioner police force has 'regained' efficiency, honesty and patriotism. The past Awami League government had destroyed the force using its members as their cadres, he claimed.

He informed the House various

initiatives of the government to improve law and order.

The minister however avoided a question from Hafiz Uddin Ahmed of Jatiya Party (Ershad) why law and order has not improved despite those initiatives.

Replying to another question from him on the number of people abducted and killed during the rule of this government, Altaf said the question involved statistics and a notice was needed for an answer to it.

Asked about abducted Chittagong magnate Jamal Uddin Ahmed Chowdhury, he said efforts were on to rescue him.

Altaf also asked BNP lawmaker Sayed Iskander to give a notice for an 'appropriate answer' to his question on the Awami League's allegation that about 30, 000 party activists were killed since this government took over.

Bangladesh has ample scope for gas export, says US envoy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

US Ambassador Harry K Thomas has said there is ample scope to export a portion of Bangladesh's natural gas.

"However, it depends on the government of Bangladesh and its people whether to export the natural gas or not," he said.

The US envoy was addressing a press conference at Hafiz complex in Sylhet yesterday after inaugurating a US catalogue show there.

He said Bangladesh could develop its infrastructure like roads, bridges, culverts, schools and colleges with earnings from gas export.

Replying to a question, Thomas said there should be a transparent arrangement with international oil

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Announcement

Today's edition of The Daily Star includes 'Cancun Special' on page 8.

Say sorry, we'll return to JS

Hasina tells PM, speaker

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The main opposition Awami League (AL) yesterday preconditioned its return to parliament with apologies from the prime minister and the speaker for their recent remarks.

Emerging from an hour-long crucial meeting of the AL Parliamentary Party (ALPP) at the Sangsad Bhaban last night, Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina demanded apologies for the premier's remarks that she said undermined an AL lawmaker and the speaker's comment about the functioning of parliament.

During Saturday's visit to Faridpur on the occasion of the joining of Bangladesh Jatiya Party leader Shah Mohammad Abu Jafar to BNP, Khaleda Zia introduced Jafar to the people of the constituency as their 'undeclared lawmaker'.

Hasina dubbed the premier's



comment as a 'complete negation of people's elected representative Kazi Sirajul Islam', lawmaker for Faridpur-1 constituency.

The same day, at a meeting with Opposition Chief Whip Abdus Shahid, the speaker said 'despite the absence of opposition AL lawmakers, the parliament was functioning well'.

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Govt sees AL stance a trick to skip JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has termed the Awami League's (AL) demand for apologies from the prime minister and the speaker an excuse for not joining parliament.

In an instant reaction to the AL's precondition for joining parliament, Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Moudud Ahmed told newsmen last night that they would still request the speaker to talk to the AL on their return to parliament.

Moudud said, "It's a pre-planned political decision of the AL. The AL lawmakers don't want to come to the House. They don't want to make it effective."

Earlier, Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina demanded apologies from the prime minister and the speaker for their recent remarks as the precondition for returning to the House.

During her Saturday's visit to Faridpur in connection with Bangladesh Jatiya Party leader Shah

Tigers aim to bounce back

HASAN MASOOD from Lahore

Bangladesh will be desperately looking to translate words into deeds when they meet a high-flying Pakistan in the third one-day international at the Ghaddafi Stadium this afternoon.

The visitors already 2-0 down will be aiming to do something extraordinary to keep the five-match series

alive. Bangladesh Television and Ten Sports will telecast the day-night encounter from 2:15pm (BST). Khaled Mahmud's men have not been able to deliver the same kind of performance as they did in the Test series.

The Tigers lost the opening match in Multan by 137 runs and

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