



REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XVI NO. 5

DHAKA WEDNESDAY JANUARY 18, 2006

People's Right to Know

MAGH 5, 1412.BS

JILHAJ 17, 1426 HIJRI

24 PAGES PRICE: TK 7.00

Rules bent to appoint ex-PDB boss as power secretary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Violating promotion rules and ignoring opposition from the Cabinet Division, the government on Monday appointed Power Development Board (PDB) Chairman ANH Akhtar Hossain as secretary-in-charge of Power Division of the energy ministry on

Akhtar, also a senior leader of pro-BNP Association of Engineers Bangladesh, informally held the rank of joint secretary for the last five months and was serving the PDB on lien from the Water Development Board (WDB). He was formally holding the rank of deputy secretary.

The government used the president's quota twice on the same day Monday to promote him to the position of additional secretary and then to the post of secretary.

As he has been promoted under the president's quota, he had to be placed as the Power Division secretary on a two-year contract, establishment ministry sources said.

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New EC members throw weight behind CEC

Mahfuz terms HC directive unlawful; Zakaria calls two other commissioners illiterate

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The two new election commissioners on the very first day in office yesterday openly sided with the CEC, with one of them terming the High Court's directive for revising the existing voter is unlawful and beyond its jurisdiction.

"It's not a High Court directive. It's its certain observations. It's absolutely [self] contradictory and beyond its (the court's) jurisdiction," new Election Commissioner Justice Mahfuzur Rahman told the press about the HC directive.

"If the High Court had issued a rule and if that rule became absolute then it could be called a directive," he argued, adding, only then it would become mandatory for the Election Commission (EC) to demonstrated their bias to and

ment is not lawful, the question of compliance does not arise," he

SM Zakaria, who after taking the oath as an election commissioner had blasted election commissioners M Munsef Ali and AK Mohammad Ali on Monday for opposing the ongoing fresh voter listing, became even more offensive and slurred them yesterday.

"They [Munsef and Mohammad] know nothing. They are illiterate. They have tarnished the image of the election commission by talking nonsense, which must be stopped right away,' Zakaria told the EC Secretariat staffs during a courtesy meeting.

The new commissioners also

Commissioner (CEC) MA Aziz by avoiding the customary courtesy calls on Munsef and Mohammad, who are opposed to the CEC's unilateral move for preparing a fresh electoral roll.

The attitude the new commissioners showed yesterday indicates a sharp division in the EC, which is likely to stoke up the existing crisis instead of resolving the existing deadlock, which the government claims the new appointments are aimed at. The government is in favour of a fresh voter list while the Awami League-led 14-party opposition combine supports a revision of the existing one, as directed by

CEC Aziz, who from the very beginning had no accord with

comply with it. "Since the judge- support for Chief Election Munsef and Mohammad, and had been alone until Monday, has now gained a one-member majority in the EC with the new two col-

> Munsefand Mohammad yesterday reiterated their stance for implementing the HC directive. In a file sent by the EC Secretariat Monday seeking their instructions about the next course of action in light of the HC directive, they asked for a halt of all on-going activities for a fresh voter roll and holding an EC meeting immediately to take decision on the issue. The EC Secretariat sent the file with opinions of Munsef and Mohammad to the CEC on Monday afternoon.

> CEC Aziz, who has kept himself confined to his residence since

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CTG PORT 'ARMS'

Probe on, cops seize 10 trucks for search

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police on Monday night held 10 of the 20 trucks that had left the restricted area of Chittagong Port with imported cargo of a consignment, which was suspected as carrying more "replica weapons". The Chittagong Port security

personnel also seized the remaining

STAFF CORRESPONDENT The appointment of SM Zakaria as

an election commissioner has been greeted with disappointment by many in the Election Commission (EC) Secretariat while sending the camp loyal to Zakaria into triumphant celebrations. As the news reached the com-

mission premises on Monday, a number of officials considered very close to Zakaria, the immediate past secretary to the EC Secretariat, burst into applause and moved immediately for celebrating the appointment.

Some of them rushed to the Supreme Court premises where Zakaria was taking oath while some others withdrew Tk 10,000 from the secretariat for flowers and sweetmeats to rejoice over the appoint-

It takes two years just to discuss it

The government has spent about two years just discussing the draft of a comprehensive manpower export policy while over 2.5 lakh Bangladeshis go abroad for jobs every year.

The expatriate welfare and overseas employment ministry prepared the draft titled Bangladesh Overseas Employment Policy almost two years ago and is discussing it with the relevant ministries and international bodies for incorporating their views and giving it a final shape, sources

The cabinet sub-committee on manpower headed by Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan meets

Fear, rejoice at EC

today to discuss the draft policy." The policy is at its final stage and it will be formally announced very soon following inclusion of the views expressed at tomorrow's (today's) sub-committee meet-ing," said a high official of the

expatriate welfare ministry. Sources however said it would take a few more months to officially announce the policy. They mentioned that after approval by the cabinet sub-committee, the draft would be sent to the prime minister for her approval before it is published in the gazette, and she may send it to a cabinet meeting for final approval.

Asked why it is taking such a long time to announce the policy,

ment. They, however, did not sub-

mit any application for the

the EC Secretariat were in fact

waiting for Zakaria to retire from

the service. They felt compelled to

congratulate the new commis-

sioner with a smile for fear of back-

lash from the pro-Zakaria camp,

which is set to dominate the secre-

tariat because of the latest develop-

us," a senior official told The Daily

Star, wishing anonymity

Expressing apprehension about

the future, another official said,

"We better be leaving the job soon

Meanwhile, in yet another hasty

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

move Mohammad Zakoria, a joint

"We don't know what fate awaits

ments, added the sources.

to keep our dignity intact.'

The majority of the officials at

amount, sources said.

DRAFT MANPOWER EXPORT POLICY | Ctg arms cache was for Ulfa

Claims the defence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Ten truckloads of arms and ammunition, seized on April 2, 2004 at the jetty of Chittagong Urea Fertiliser Limited (CUFL), were smuggled in for the rebels of the United Liberation Front of Assam (Ulfa), claimed a defence lawyer in the arms smuggling case filed in connection with the haul, during a hearing yesterday.

"In fact, Ulfa military chief Paresh Barua and his close aide Anthini Simley, reportedly chief of another India-based rebel organisation NNCM, had arrived in Chittagong just the day before the biggest ever arms seizure at the CUFL jetty and had clandestine meetings with their allies here on how the consignment of firearms and ammunition could be smuggled out safely through the Chittagong borders to the Indian SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Tullow sees huge oil reserve around St Martin's Island

Tullow Oil, an Irish oil and gas exploration and production company, sees an immense potential of having huge oil reserve in Bangladesh, particularly in and around St Martin's Island in Cox's

Tullow high officials at a meeting here yesterday said they have conducted hectic seismic survey near blocks 17 and 18 and in the Bay of Bengal around the offshore island, and found bubbles and petroliferous matters in the deep

They told the meeting at the SEE PAGE 15 COL 6



Most of the state-run BRTC busses are in worn out condition due to lack of proper maintenance. This particular bus that runs on Gulistan-Gabtoli route suffers heavily from the wear and tear of daily operations with all its seats torn.

CTG COURT BLAST Court order to submit fresh charge sheet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Crg

A Chittagong court yesterday did not accept the charge sheet in a case filed for November 29 suicide blast on the Chittagong court premises, following objections from the public prosecutor (PP). Metropolitan Sessions Judge AKM Anwar Hossain ordered to submit within a month a fresh charge sheet after further investigation into the

case, said sources in the court. Investigation Officer (IO) Laching Pru of Kotwali Police Station first submitted the charge sheet to the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate on December 29, which transferred it to the judge's court.

On knowing in detail about the charge sheet, PP Abdus Sattar SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Charges couldn't be framed against Sunny, others

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court could not frame charges against the military commander of banned Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) Ataur Rahman Sunny and six others in two cases as two accused, including Sunny, were not produced before it yesterday.

The two cases, one under the Arms Act and another under Explosive Substances Act, were filed with Sabujbagh Police Station on September 8 last year.

Judge Mohammad Monzurul SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Barapukuria power plant starts trial production

Supplies 60MW to national grid

Bandarban Rohingyas

get into voter roll

the other unit of it is also expected

The plant had run another five-

The Barapukuria plant project

hour test on November 15 last year,

has been implemented involving

2,000 local and foreign labourers at a cost of around Tk 1,660 crore.

Using high quality bituminous coal

of the Barapukuria coal mine for

power production, the plant will

save around \$2,000 million a year

areas including Naikkhongchhari, Alikadam, Lama, Roangchhari and

Sadar upazila for long like

Bangladeshi citizens and it is very

difficult for the enumerators to

anonymity told The Daily Star that

be listed as voter this time.

around 15,000 Rohingyas might

Admitting that the local political

leaders may be interested in fortify-

ing their vote bank with the Rohingyas, he said Naikkhongchhari

and Alikadam upazilas are more

vulnerable in this regard as these

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

An intelligence official seeking

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producing 20MW electricity.

the sources said.

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

The Barapukuria 250MW Power to be commissioned in February, Plant, first ever coal-based plant in the country, went into trial production last Monday, with one of its two units contributing 60MW electricity to the national grid, power plant sources said.

Bangladesh Power Development Board officials expected that the 125MW unit of the plant will go into full production within next two-three days.

The unit will be operated on mechanical test for two more days while the plant is likely to go into

MONIRUL ISLAM MONU,

home ministry.

The Rohingyas from Myanmar

living illegally in different areas of

Bandarban are being included in

the fresh voter list, violating orders

of the Election Commission and

Rohingyas are being enrolled in the

voter list at the behest of political

leaders and local government

representatives in a bid to create

eigners have been living illegally in

They, however, said these for-

Locals alleged that the

Judges ask govt to meet demands by Jan 29

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Lower court judges yesterday gave an ultimatum to the government and vowed to go for tougher movement if the government does not meet all of their demands by January 29.

The Bangladesh Judicial Service Association (BJSA) made the declaration at the end of their three-day token protest programme that started on Sunday.

The judges wore black badges for three days during the court proceedings protesting govern-ment inaction to meet their 11point demand.

BJSA's demands include -providing personal gunmen, taxfree vehicles and firearms for all the SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Pirates loot 3 firearms from forest outpost

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Pirates looted three firearms and some ammunition from a forest outpost at Haldibunia in the Sundarbans early yesterday and demanded Tk 3 lakh for their return. The loot includes one SLR (self-loaded rifle), two .303 rifles and 183 bullets.

Sources said a gang of 10 to 15 led by Shawkat attacked the forest outpost and held four forest guards, Delwar Hossain, Md Aslam, Babul Hossain and Kalam, at gunpoint. They later tied them up to a

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Bringing a Smile to Small Medium Entrepreneurs

Leading the wind of change in SME Banking

