

Poll symbols of 3 major parties challenged in the HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A writ petition was filed in the High Court yesterday challenging the validity of boat, sheaf of paddy and plough as election symbols of political parties as these symbols are used in the monograms of different government institutions.

Advocate Shahadat Hossain filed the petition that followed another writ petition filed on May 2 challenging the validity of scales as the election symbol of Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh which is the facsimile of the Supreme Court emblem.

After hearing two separate writ petitions filed as Public Interest Litigation (PIL), a division bench of the court said...

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ELECTRICITY CRISIS Govt now turns to 20 AL planned projects

SHARIER KHAN

Nearly 20 power projects, planned by the previous Awami League government for implementation during 2001-2006 but not implemented by the present alliance government, have now landed in its plan for adding 6,290 megawatt (MW) power to the national grid by 2012.

Power Development Board (PDB) officials are however highly cynical about any such initiative of the government. "The initiatives of the government are so poor that except for a few power plants under implementation now, there will be no new power plant before 2010. The plan however claims new power plants will be set up every year," said one official.

The country is already reeling under a record load shedding of 2,000 MW, triggering unprecedented public protests.

"Failure of the government to initiate any clean move for a new power project now means load shedding will continue to rise till 2010. This will not only cause mounting public sufferings but also affect the national economy severely," says a top PDB official.

In 2012, the demand for power will shoot up to nearly 9,000 MW from 5,200 MW. The country now generates between 3,200 MW and 3,500 MW, and even if the government's updated plan for 26 power plants is implemented, the generation capacity will rise to 9,500 MW. But by 2012, generation capacity of old power plants will decline, and the PDB believes the total generation capacity at that time would be below 8,000 MW.

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Laws needed to stop nomination of black money holders in polls

Says Bhuiyan
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday said the government, the opposition and the Election Commission (EC) will have to take the responsibility to keep elections free from black money and any sort of influence.

"Laws should be enacted so that black money holders could not get nomination in the election," Bhuiyan said, adding that the parties should discourage black money holders and nominate honest and trustworthy candidates in the upcoming polls.

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Babar unhappy as law, order goes downhill

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfozzaman Babar yesterday expressed his dissatisfaction over deterioration in law and order in recent weeks, especially the increase in murder and mugging incidents.

"We once again reminded officials of law enforcement agencies that they will be held responsible for failure to control law and order in their respective areas," Babar told reporters emerging out of a meeting on law and order held at the home ministry yesterday.

The state minister also said that several instructions have been given during the meeting to identify the whole BD Foods racket.

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HEROIN SMUGGLING TO UK Nearly entire BD Foods racket identified

Claims Babar
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfozzaman Babar claimed yesterday that the government has quite succeeded to identify the whole BD Foods racket involved in smuggling heroin to the UK.

While talking to journalists on government steps against the company after a home ministry meeting on law and order, Babar said, "We have now been able to identify the whole BD Foods racket."

Asked if the image of the country has been damaged by the company's involvement in heroin smuggling, he said incidents like this took place several times earlier but the government's achievements in this particular case will definitely restore the country's image.

Meanwhile on Saturday, the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) filed another case with the Sutrapur Police Station accusing Abul Bashar, proprietor of Green Haven Enterprise, and Kazi Zafar Reza, owner of Rainbow Enterprise, of smuggling 54kg heroin to the UK.

Investigators said Bashar and Zafar are members of a strong international syndicate of drug-runners. They said the two close associates have been smuggling heroin worth crores of taka through exported consignments.

In the case, CID Assistant... SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

RAJBARI VILLAGE 500 eligible voters, only 4 make it to list

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Only four persons out of 500 eligible voters of two villages in Rajbari-2 constituency in Pangsha and Baliakandi upazilas made it to the draft voter list prepared by the Election Commission (EC).

According to the draft list published by the EC, there is no male voter at Charkhapur village under ward no 8 at Ratandia union under Pangsha upazila.

Only two women were enlisted as voters from the village. They are Farida Khatun 25, wife... SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

AL walks out of JS to protest Speaker's ruling

Opposition MPs' remarks on govt "failure" expunged
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The main opposition Awami League (AL) walked out of parliament yesterday protesting the Speaker's move to save the government from opposition lawmakers' criticism.

After the opposition lawmakers had censured the government's "failure" to run the country and demanded its resignation, Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar expunged some words and phrases like "failure" and "demand for resignation" from the House proceedings. He said such words were unparliamentary.

"You can't say that the government has failed and you can't also ask the government to step down," Sircar told four AL lawmakers in a ruling. They criticised the government for power, water and fuel crises, and the price hike of essentials on points of order.

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AL, BNP MPs for review of contempt bill

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A parliamentary body yesterday did not finalise the Contempt of Courts Bill 2006 amid objections from both the ruling BNP and opposition Awami League (AL) lawmakers.

The parliamentary standing committee on law, justice and parliamentary affairs at a meeting observed that as the bill deals with a sensitive issue, it needs more scrutiny.

"Chances of the bill being passed in the current session of parliament are slim," Law Minister Moudud Ahmed told reporters after the meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

"Many of the committee members think the bill needs further... SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

OBITUARY

This is to announce with profound sadness and grief that our mother Mrs. Maimoona Ariff Tabani, W/o Late Ariff W.M. Tabani expired on the 7th May, 06 at 3:15pm at her residence (Inna Lilahe Wa Inna Ilahe Rajeroon) after protracted illness and old age complications.

Her NAMAZ-E-JANAZA will take place after Zohr prayers at Gulshan Central Mosque on Monday 8th May, 06 INSHAALLAH and will be buried thereafter at the Banani Graveyard.

All relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to attend the NAMAZ-E-JANAZA.

All members of the TABANI FAMILY

Upazila election office hemmed in as AL MP not on voter list

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Awami League (AL) Mirzapur upazila unit yesterday besieged the upazila election office in protest against the dropping of the name of local AL lawmaker Ekabbar Hossain from the draft voter list published on Wednesday.

Leaders and activists of Mirzapur upazila unit of AL brought out a protest procession at 12 noon and marched to the upazila election office and besieged it. They also held a rally in... SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

PM reaches Kuwait City

UNB, Kuwait City

A red-carpet reception was given to Prime Minister Khaleda Zia as she flew into Kuwait International Airport last afternoon to begin a two-day official visit at the invitation of her Kuwaiti counterpart.

Kuwaiti Prime Minister, Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammed Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah, received Khaleda when she along with her entourage arrived here at about 1:00pm (Kuwait local time).

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DRAFT VOTER LIST CONTROVERSY EC bins complaints as 'nothing new'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission (EC) seems to be at ease shrugging off the contentious surge in the number of voters on the new electoral roll while controversy over the issue keeps getting intense.

"It's nothing new. Complaints have always been there regarding voter-listing," Election Commissioner Justice Mahfuzur Rahman yesterday said referring to the allegation of unusual rise in voters on the draft list published Wednesday.

He was speaking to the reporters who intercepted him on his way to the chief election commissioner's (CEC) room.

Mahfuzur however declined to say whether the EC will initiate measures to examine the accuracy of the number of voters on the fresh roll. He said the media should rather talk about it with the secretary to the EC Secretariat.

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Outages in Demra spoil Wasa efforts

BNP goons prowl neighbourhood
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Residents of Shanir Akhra are still suffering from water crisis although Wasa claimed to have activated their 17 pumps in the locality, most of which had remained stopped due to lack of adequate power supply.

Residents of other localities have been contacting the Sangram Parishad, which led Friday's movement for water and power, to help them organise demonstrations in their areas.

Meanwhile, cadres of BNP and its different wings have been continuing to threaten Friday's demonstrators and local people with... SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Heartiest congratulations to our beloved Chairman **Md. Mozibar Rahman** for achieving the **BANGLADESH BUSINESS AWARDS-2005** in the category of Enterprise of the year

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