

8 banks given Tk 800cr to overcome liquidity crisis

Finance and Planning Adviser Dr Wahiduddin Mahmud yesterday visited the head office of the Bangladesh Bank and held a meeting with the governor, deputy governors and other high officials, reports BSS.

The meeting dwelt mainly on the total money circulation, foreign exchange reserve and inflation.

The meeting also discussed the liquidity problem of banks and the upward trend in the rate of interest in the call money market.

The meeting was told that in totality there was no liquidity problem in the banking sector but over Tk 800 crore re-discounting facilities were given to eight banks to cover their temporary liquidity problems.

JP invites nominations

The Jatiya Party has requested the intending candidates for the coming election to collect nomination forms from the party's Banani office from 4 pm on May 1, reports UNB.

Each nomination form will cost Tk-102 and it should be submitted along with a bank draft/pay order of Tk 5,000 to the same office by May 5, a party press release said yesterday.

The interview of the candidates of Rajshahi division will be held on May 6, of Khulna and Barisal divisions on May 7, of Chittagong and Sylhet divisions on May 8 and of Dhaka on May 9, the release said.

Earlier JP acting chairman Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury has expressed his satisfaction that the election schedule was announced in keeping with the 90-day timeframe for holding the polls.

Giving his reaction to the announcement of the schedule, he however regretted that JP leaders had not been allowed to meet the party chairman, former president HM Ershad, in jail.

Concern over extension of envoys' service tenure

By Staff Correspondent
Sheikh Hasina's political advisor S A M S Kibria has expressed his concern over the reported extension of service tenure of "politically appointed diplomats."

In a statement yesterday Kibria alleged that the President had given approval to the extension of the tenure of Bangladesh High Commissioners to London without the consent of the Chief Adviser.

"Such action (of the President) reminded us the recent incident of resignation of Attorney General Nurullah and rejection of that resignation later," Kibria said.

Kibria also demanded an explanation how extension of the service tenure of an envoy was possible without the approval of the Chief Adviser. The incident has affected the neutral image of the caretaker government, he said.

WB report

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enterprises, IMED reports, macro-economic and project information, amount of tax exemptions and concessions provided to private and public sectors and public officials, and amount of free services provided to public officials.

The study identified the "weak and fuzzy" accountability stretching from parliament to the class IV employees for inability to enforce financial contracts, stop theft in public enterprises or hold officials accountable for their improper judgment.

Identifying the weaknesses of parliamentary accountability, the report said these cropped up because of the heavy weighting of power in favour of the Executive and non-observance of standard parliamentary norms and procedures.

The study recommended that the members of parliament should be provided with adequate office and research facilities and parliamentary standing committees, specially the Public Accounts Committee, should be strengthened to strengthen the parliament.

The WB says lack of accountability coupled with poor pay for public servants breed corruption in the administration.

The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) is too ineffective to fight corruption, the reports said, adding that ACB is "publicly perceived as being vindictive as a vehicle for pursuing personal and political vendetta. Even where ACB investigates properly, it averages three years to investigate cases, of which only 15 per cent actually get to the courts."

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The meeting also noted that the liquidity problems of some of the banks are seasonal and hoped this would be overcome.

Another report adds, money rates in the call money market during the week ending Wednesday last ranged from 7.00 per cent to 14.25 per cent.

During the same week interest rates offered by the bank on certificate of deposits varied from 6.00 per cent to 9.40 per cent.

The bank rate, however, remained unchanged at 6.50 per cent, Bangladesh Bank said here yesterday.

Fire in Ashuganj fertiliser factory

BRAHMANBARIA, Apr 27: Some one hundred rooms of the accounts section building of Ashuganj Zia Fertiliser Factory were gutted in a devastating fire today, reports UNB.

Witnesses said fire fighters of the factory and firemen from Brahmanbaria, Baharab and Ashuganj fought for four hours to put out the fire that broke out at about 1 pm when the office was closed.

They could not save the accounts section building, but controlled the spread of the blaze to the adjacent buildings, fire brigade sources said.

Two firemen — Shafiqul Islam and Jahangir Hossain — were injured during their fight against the flame.

The cause of the fire and extent of damage could not be ascertained immediately, the sources said.

Teachers urge Chief Adviser to ensure safety during polls

A 14-member delegation of the Bangladesh Federation of Teachers Association called on Chief Adviser Muhammad Habibur Rahman at his office yesterday afternoon, reports UNB.

The delegation, led by Federation secretary general Principal Kazi Faruque Ahmed, assured the Chief Adviser of their full cooperation in holding a free and fair parliamentary election.

They stressed on improvement of law and order situation to ensure peaceful polling and urged the Chief Adviser to ensure safety and security of all concerned, including teachers, to be engaged in polling.

The delegation also requested the Chief Adviser to raise the honorarium of the teachers for election duties and arrange proper accommodation for them so that they could perform election duties properly.

Other members of the delegation were: Ali Akbar Khan, Salim Bhuiyan, Mohammad Toha, Mansurur Rahman, Marefa Khatun, Abdur Rob M, Mohammad Shahidullah, Azizul Islam, Koushan Ara, Manir, Mazhar Rahman, Muhammad Matir Rahman Gazali, Mohammad Ishaq and G N R Abul Bashir.

May Day Wednesday

Biswas' call to increase output in mills, factories

By Staff Correspondent
The historic May Day will be observed in the country as elsewhere in the world on Wednesday with a vow to establish the rights of the working class and ensure progress of the industrial sector.

On May 1, 1886, the workers of Chicago City in America laid down their lives for realising their demand for 8-hour working day.

On the eve of the day, President Abdur Rahman Biswas, Chief Adviser Justice Habibur Rahman, Awami League Chief Sheikh Hasina and BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia issued separate messages.

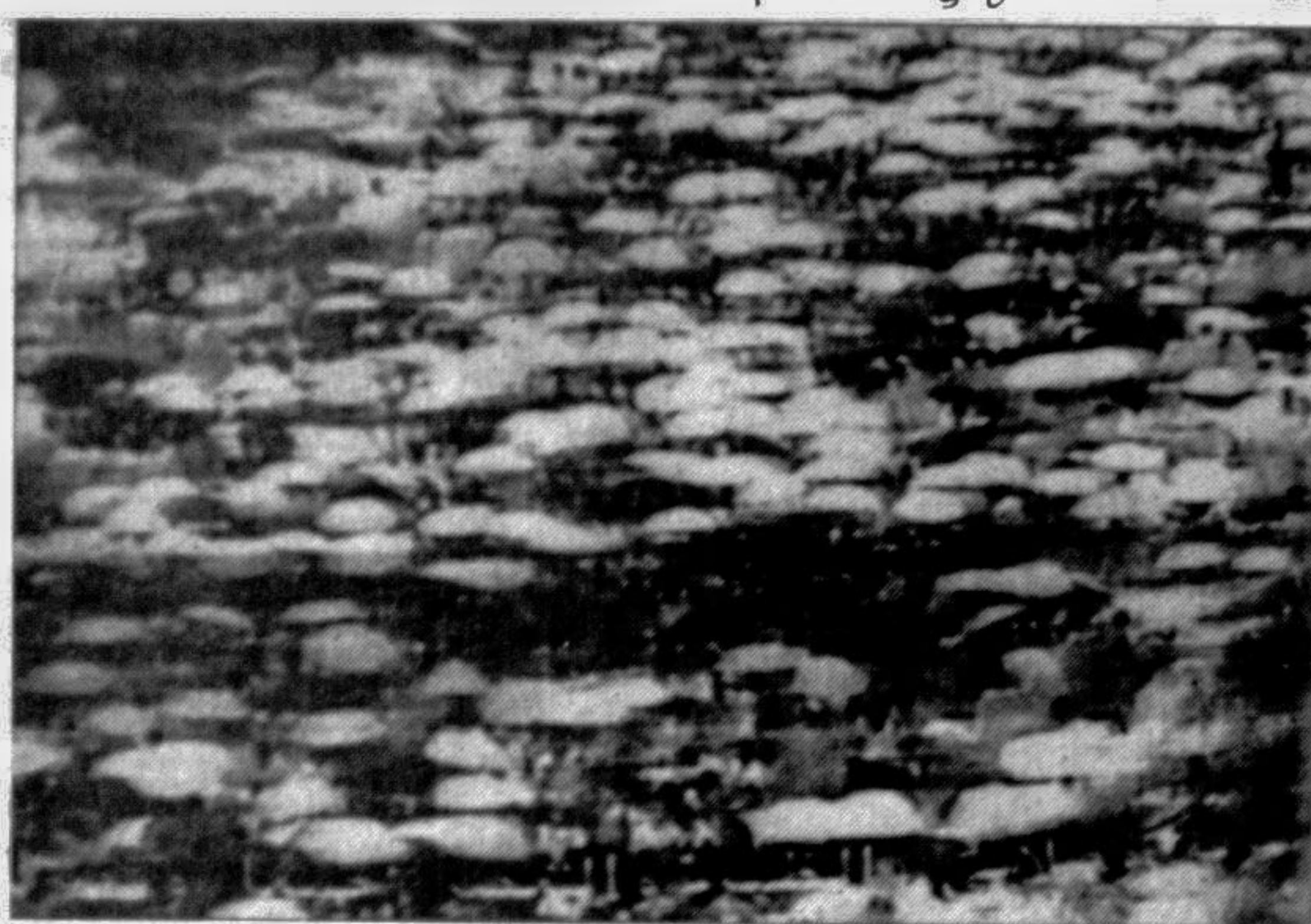
The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) will hold a discussion meeting at its central office here at 4 pm on Wednesday.

Returning officers

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missioner of Dhaka has been appointed as the Returning Officer for the five constituencies of Dhaka district, while the DCs of 63 districts have been appointed the Returning Officers for the rest 285 constituencies under their districts.

Among the 506 Assistant Returning Officers are one additional district magistrate, one additional deputy commissioner (general), one ADC (Revenue), one ADC (LA), 460 TNOs, 10 district election officers and 32 thana election officers.

The Returning Officers or the Assistant Returning Officers will receive nomination papers till May 12 during office hours at their respective offices which will remain open everyday except the Eid day.



A partial view of Mount Arafat during Hajj yesterday.

— TV photo

Hajj

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outside Makkha in sight of Mount Arafat where they spent the night.

On Saturday, the pilgrims, who came from as many as 100 countries, performed the noon and afternoon prayers in Mina. They then were to spend the night in the air-conditioned tents of Mina, in preparation for Hajj's final rite Sunday — stoning three monuments representing the devil.

Later Sunday, they celebrate the Eid-ul-Azha, commemorating Prophet Ibrahim's readiness to offer his son's life to God.

Tragic end of a 7-yr old

JESSORE, Apr 27: A minor boy was run over and killed by a bus in Gauhata area of Jessore today, while returning home with his father after buying a sacrificial goat for the Eid-ul-Azha, reports BSS.

Witnesses said Sakhar, 7, a student of class one, was holding the rope of the goat which suddenly tried to flee away. While chasing the goat, he was crushed under the wheels of the bus.

BCL activist shot dead in Raozan

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Apr 27: A Chhatra League activist was shot dead this morning at Kachukine village under Raozan thana when supporters of a rival political party attacked him, police said.

Emdadul Hoque Kokan, 23, identified as BCL activist, was called out from his house at around 11 am today by some youths who then opened fire on him and hurriedly fled away, police said.

Emdadul died on the spot and police recovered the body later.

BCL blamed the activists of National Democratic Party (NDP) for the killing. But NDP denied the charge.

Meanwhile, tension rose high at Raozan after the incident and police were deployed to prevent any outbreak of violence.

Zaker Party to contest from 300 seats

By Staff Correspondent

Zaker Party will contest the forthcoming general elections from all 300 constituencies of the country.

The decision was taken at an emergency meeting of the executive committee of the party held yesterday with party Chairman Pirzada Mostafa Amir Faisal in the chair, says a press release.

The meeting also formed an 11-member "Central Election Conducting Cell" to monitor overall election activities of the party.

Advocate Abu Bakar Siddique has been appointed as the Chief Election Agent of the party.

Addressing the meeting Zaker Party Chairman Mostafa Amir Faisal said that his party would create such alternative political stream which would not fight for power only but struggle to establish rule of law.

Eid-ul-Azha

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"I wish that the path of peace embodied in Islam makes life for us bountiful."

Chief Adviser Muhammad Habibur Rahman, in a message underlined the need for united efforts for the welfare of the people, imbued with the spirit of sacrifice of Eid-ul-Azha, and for establishing a happy and prosperous society.

BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia, in her message, said the occasion reminds the sacred duty of all to try to improve the lot of the poor people.

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina called for establishing an exploitation-free society, imbued with the spirit of Eid-ul-Azha.

The main Eid jamaat in the capital will be held at the National Eidgah. Besides, jamaats will be held at the Baitul Mukarram mosque and other mosques, eidgahs and open places.

UNCTAD needs reform: Ghali

MIDRAND (South Africa), Apr 27: UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today mapped out a plan at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development's ninth session (UNCTAD IX) here to ensure its survival in an age of global free trade, reports AFP.

Boutros-Ghali, opening the two-week UNCTAD IX meeting, said that while the organisation will have to reform its operation, it still has a critical role to play in promoting development through trade.

Like all organisations, UNCTAD must undergo reform and keep adapting to the realities of the world, but UNCTAD's basic mission has not changed, he said.

"UNCTAD is certainly the irreplaceable forum for the global community. Now more than ever, it is an essential organ of the United Nations action in the field of trade, development, equity and social justice."

President Nelson Mandela earlier delivered the keynote address to the conference — the first major UN meeting to be held in South Africa — at Gallagher estate at Midrand.

Indian elections

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Three people were injured in a clash between rival factions at Cuddapah in Andhra Pradesh and crude bombs were exploded in at least three other villages, causing no casualties, it added.

The election passed off smoothly in most other areas, officials said.

"Polls have been held in a free and peaceful manner," election commissioner GV Krishnamurthy said. This is an historic day in the annals of our national democracy. The next parliament will take India into the 21st century."

He said fears that turnout could be low after a lackluster campaign, remarkable for the absence of a single campaign theme, had proved to be unfounded.

Both Rao's Congress Party and the main opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party) claimed they would win a majority despite opinion polls signalling they would both fall well short of the requisite 273 seats.

The Hindu-revivalist BJP, mounting its most serious bid yet for national power, claimed

a large voter swing in its favour.

"It has further strengthened our expectations of getting a comfortable majority to be able to form government at the centre," said a BJP leader, JP Mathur.

Kamal urges CA to prohibit use of black money in polls

Gano Forum president Dr. Kamal Hossain called on Chief Adviser Muhammad Habibur Rahman at his office yesterday morning, reports UNB.

During the discussion, Dr. Kamal emphasised the need for recovering illegal arms and improving the law and order situation to ensure a free and fair election.

The Gano Forum leader urged the Chief Adviser to take effective measures to prohibit the use of black money in the election.

Dr Kamal said black money vitiates the election process and poses a threat to holding of election in a free, fair and impartial manner.

Some 2,50,000 Rohingyas

took refuge in Bangladesh in 1991 following atrocities on Muslims in Arakan. Of them, 1,97,379 went back home till April 24, this year since the repatriation begun on September 22, 1992 under the supervision of the UNHCR and 53,498 are waiting in 5 camps in Teknaf for repatriation.

Body recovered in N'ganj

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Apr 27: Police recovered the body of a man aged about 30 from near the Kumudini playground in the town today.

The victim was identified as Naib Ali, a rickshawpuller and resident of Syedpur area of the town.

The wife of Naib Ali said he had left the house for Dhaka in the morning of April 25 and did not return.

Police recovered the body when on information from local people.

Police said there were bullet injuries in his chest.

A case was filed with Narayanganj thana in this regard.

Besides, a young woman allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself with the ceiling of her room in Kadamtali area under Siddhirganj thana.

Family sources said Nilufar Yasmin, 20, committed suicide because family dispute.

She was buried without autopsy.

Train dacoity, 15 passengers stabbed

NARSINGDI, Apr 27: At least 15 passengers were injured as armed dacoits snatched cash and other valuables worth about Tk 8 lakh from two compartments of a Chittagong-bound train from Dhaka around Friday midnight, railway police said, reports UNB.

According to passengers, some 15 dacoits in the guise of passengers boarded the mail train from Tongi and swooped on two second class compartments one after the other soon after the train left the station.

The armed group snatched cash money, gold ornaments and other valuables from the passengers, and stabbed 15 of them as they refused to part with their belongings.

The dacoits disembarked from the train at Ghorashal station.

Critically injured Abul Kashem and Belayet were admitted to Narsingdi Sadar Hospital while Jahangir, Farid and Abdul Hye at a Ghorashal clinic.

Railway sources said some 40 armed railway police were on board the train for the security of the passengers. But passengers alleged that no police were present in the two compartments during the dacoity.

A case has been filed in Bhairab Railway thana.

Some political leaders meet CEC

Leaders of some political parties and organisations yesterday met Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Abu Hena at his office in the city, reports BSS.

They discussed with the Chief Election Commissioner matters relating to Jatiya Sangsad elections and stressed the need for improvement of law and order situation for the purpose.

Those who met the (CEC) separately included Secretary General of BNP, Barrister Abdul Salam Talukdar and Sham-ul-Islam, Left Democratic Front leaders, Rashid Khan Menon, Nirman Sen, Bimal Bhowmik, Abdullah Sarkar and Shamsuzzaman Selim and a delegation of FEMA led by Fakrudin Ahmed.

JS polls

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speed within this time limit so as to present the country a truly representative government which can help nourish and blossom the democratic values.

He said there is no scope for showing laxity in ensuring transparency, credibility and impartiality in the election which is being held within a limited time frame, provided for in the Constitution.

Fairness in the election is largely dependent on the efficiency and impartiality of the officials concerned, said the CEC.

He urged officials and employees at all levels, including the district and thana levels, to carry out their election duties without fear and ignoring threat or intimidation.

Abu Hena also directed them to ignore all undesirable influences and unjust demands.

He further directed the officials to counter all conspiracies designed to making the journey to democracy thorny through evil influence on the electoral process.

Laxity, misconduct and co-operation to unfair means will under no circumstances be tolerated, the CEC warned. He said: "The Election Commission is determined to take drastic action against such lapses."

He called for people's co-operation to the Election Commission to enable it to discharge its onerous responsibilities reposed in it by the nation for holding a free and fair election.

The Midnight File

Dozens of Hamas men freed

GAZA, Apr 27: Palestinian authorities today released dozens of members of the Islamic militant group Hamas who had been arrested in a crackdown, a Palestinian security official said, reports Reuters.

Updating of voters' list concludes

By Staff Correspondent

The Election Commission (EC) yesterday instructed the registration officials across the country to stop the voters' list updating process and to send the final report. EC officials said.

The EC decided to update the voters' list as some political parties had demanded up-

dating the voters' list. The updating drive started on April 11 and on April 18, the EC announced that the process would continue till the election schedule was announced.

With the announcement of the schedule yesterday, the EC instructed the registration officials involved to send the final report on inclusions, omissions and the reasons behind and correction of the voters' list, the EC officials said.

It could not be ascertained how many new voters have been included during the updating drive.

But BNP Secretary General Abul Salam Talukdar, after meeting the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) yesterday, told newsmen quoting the CEC, that till April 21, some 30,000 voters were included in the updated list.

The CEC today told me that until April 26, more than two lakh people had applied for registration as voters, Salam Talukdar said, quoting the CEC, adding that some one lakh people were registered as voters until that date.

The EC will have to wait until the registration officials send their final reports on updating process to be able to announce the exact number of voters in the country, an official pointed out.

Meanwhile, the Planning Adviser yesterday approved a Tk 2.7 crore UNDP-funded project — Electoral Process of 1996. The project would include providing information and training materials during the coming elections.

Shantibahini Lt surrenders

KHAGRACHHARI, Apr 27: A self-styled lieutenant of Shantibahini surrendered to the government today. Regional Commander of army Lt Col Ashfaq Chowdhury said Aloke Bikash Chakma alias Monom, 45, lieutenant of Shantibahini general headquarters quit insurgency and surrendered at the region office this morning. He also submitted some important documents, reports UNB.

BNP

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areas would be difficult in the rainy season as most of the villages lack pucca roads, although 12,500 kms of roads were built at the initiative of the LGD Ministry alone, the former LGD minister said.

In this regard, Salam Talukdar reiterated his party's proposal for holding of the polls in May.

Replying to a question, he said the BNP manifesto was being drafted and would be announced shortly.

Former minister and BNP standing committee member Rafiqul Islam Mia and Office Secretary of the party Nazrul Islam Khan were also present at the briefing.

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ঢাকা ওয়াসা বিপুল পরিমাণ বকেয়া পানি ও পয়ঃ অতিকর পরিশোধে ব্যর্থ গ্রাহকদের সংযোগ তাৎক্ষণিকভাবে বিচ্ছিন্নকরণের এক বিশেষ অভিযান পুনরায় শুরু করেছে। তাছাড়া পিডিআর এ্যাক্টের অধীনে মামলা দায়েরের মাধ্যমে খেলাপি গ্রাহকদের মালামাল ক্রোক করে বকেয়া আদায়ের কার্যক্রমও চালু করেছে।

দেশের সাম্প্রতিক পরিস্থিতির কারণে অনেক সম্মানিত গ্রাহক বিল পরিশোধ করতে ব্যর্থ হয়েছেন। ঢাকা ওয়াসা বকেয়া পরিশোধের সুবিধার্থে আগামী ২৫শে মে '৯৬ইং তারিখের মধ্যে সমুদয় বকেয়া পরিশোধকারী গ্রাহকদের সারচার্জ মওকুফ করার সিদ্ধান্ত গ্রহণ করেছে।

বকেয়া আদায়ের কারণে সংযোগ বিচ্ছিন্ন এবং পিডিআর এ্যাক্টের অধীনে মামলার বিড়ম্বনা এড়ানোর নিমিত্ত ২৫শে মে '৯৬ইং-এর মধ্যেই বকেয়াসহ হালনাগাদ আপনার পানি ও পয়ঃ অতিকর পরিশোধ করুন। বিল না পেয়ে থাকলে অথবা বিলের ব্যাপারে কোন অভিযোগ থাকলে সংশ্লিষ্ট রাজস্ব আঞ্চলিক অফিস বা প্রধান রাজস্ব কর্মকর্তা (ফোনঃ ৩২৫২৪০) বা বাণিজ্যিক ব্যবস্থাপক (ফোনঃ ৩২৭২৪৫) অথবা সদস্য (অর্থ) (ফোনঃ ৮১৬৭৯৯)-এর সাথে যোগাযোগ করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হল।

ওয়াসা জরুরীঃ ৯৬/৯৬
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ওয়াসা

ঢাকা ওয়াসা