

Election Commission warns Bribery, disguise are punishable offences

Anyone who will take or agree to take largesse in exchange for casting vote or refraining from voting for or against any candidate will face bribery charge, reports UNB.

This is one of the electoral offences and punishment thereof laid down in sections 75, 76 and 77 of the People's Representation Order 1972. The Election Commission announced yesterday ahead of June 12 parliamentary elections.

Bribery (Section 75) — A person will face bribery charges if he himself or through others takes or agrees to take bribe in any form in exchange for casting vote or refraining from voting for or against any particular candidate.

Bribery charge can also be brought against one who gives or proposes or pledges bribe to anybody for following gains:

(A) Resisting an individual from contesting the polls or resisting a voter from casting vote or influencing a candidate to withdraw his candidature, or

(B) Rewarding a person for contesting or refraining from contesting the election or for withdrawing from the race, and also rewarding a voter for voting for a

particular candidate or refraining from voting.

One charged with such offences may face imprisonment upto seven years alongwith fine. Minimum punishment is two years in jail.

Disguise (Section 76) — A person can be charged with electoral offence if he casts vote or asks for ballot paper in fake name or in the guise of another person, dead or alive. If convicted, the person may face cash penalty and upto seven years in jail.

Undue Influence (Section 77) — A person could be charged with exerting undue influence and be convicted if he directly or indirectly terrorises an individual by musclepower or by any peer or by using government influence, or assault and injure him physically or financially for voting or refraining from voting in favour of any particular candidate.

Resisting a voter from exercising franchise by abduction or by any other ways will also fall under the similar offence.

All those offences are cognizable and non-bailable and, therefore, police can arrest the accused without warrant. Session Court will conduct trial.



Police dispersing lathi-wielding garments workers demonstrating in front of the Jatiya Press Club in demand for their arrear salaries.

5 garments workers hurt in clash with police

By Staff Correspondent

At least five garments workers were injured in a clash with police in front of the Jatiya Party Press Club in the city yesterday afternoon.

The incident occurred when about 50 workers of a garments factory came to stage a demonstration reportedly following a dispute over the payment of salary, police sources said.

Police picked up four workers from the spot. They were identified as Yunus, 18, Ratan, 19, Anwar, 30, and Khalil, 32.

The chase and counter chase between the workers and police created panic in the area, witnesses said.

However, it could not be known immediately how the trouble began.

EC for cooperation deal with Bangladesh

BRUSSELS, May 9: The European Commission has made a proposal to member countries that economic and commercial cooperation agreements should be negotiated with four Asian countries: Pakistan, Bangladesh, Laos and Cambodia, a Commission spokesman said on Wednesday, reports AFP.

The goal of such accords would be to increase, over a five-year period, trade, economic relationships and technology transfer between the EU and those countries, the spokesman said.

It would be the first cooperation deal with Laos and Cambodia, the second with Bangladesh and the third one with Pakistan.

The proposed agreements, based on mutual respect for human rights and democratic principles, would share the following objectives: Increasing investments and trade in both directions, strengthening economic cooperation, the struggle against poverty and the pursuit of lasting development.

For Laos and Cambodia, the Union is proposing reciprocal application of the most favoured national trade provision.

For Pakistan and Bangladesh, it wants to upgrade cooperation with the private sector as well as the investment climate. Since 1976 the EU has supplied Pakistan with total aid of 767 million dollars the bulk of it being for food and humanitarian aid and for development cooperation.

Over the same period, Bangladesh received total aid of more than 520 million dollars as non-repayable development aid.

Arafat forms new cabinet

RAFAH, Gaza Strip, May 9: Palestinian President Yasser Arafat announced today the formation of a new cabinet at a meeting of the Palestinian Legislative Council, officials said, reports AFP.

Arafat had delayed the selection of his cabinet for about a month and earlier received a two-week extension from the council which expired on April 24.

He had hinted on Wednesday that he might seek a further delay during heated exchanges with legislative council members on charges he was abusing his power.

The cabinet is his first since being voted president in historic Palestinian general elections in January.

C>Wealth team

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tariat.

A Canadian observer representing NDI, USA, Richard Balasko, chief political officer of Manitoba province, is also expected shortly.

US Congressman Bill Richardson who came here a few months back has expressed his desire to visit Bangladesh in the middle of this month to familiarise himself with the election situation.

LDF announces 11-pt polls manifesto

The Left Democratic Front (LDF) yesterday announced an 11-point election manifesto pledging to establish a democratic, secular and exploitation-free socialist Bangladesh which, it said, was the main spirit of the Liberation War, reports UNB.

The LDF, a conglomerate of eight left-leaning parties, said it will take constitutional and other pragmatic steps to ensure people's basic rights — food, clothing, education, treatment, shelter and employment.

Rights of the people irrespective of their religion, caste, creed, colour and gender will be established if LDF is elected, it said.

Announcing the manifesto at a press conference at Taher Auditorium in the city, LDF Convenor Khaleduzzaman Bhuiyan described it as an alternative socio-economic programme to bring about fundamental changes in the society.

LDF leaders Kazi Aref Ahmed, Shahjuda Islam Chowdhury, Mujahidul Islam Selim, Hasanul Haq Inu, Dilip Barua, Nirmal Sen, AFM Mahubul Haq, Abdullah Sarkar and Moinuddin Khan Badal were present on the occasion.

According to the manifesto, the LDF will enforce a massive reform in the agriculture sector to reorganise the rural life and economy to achieve self-reliance in food production. It will also go for land reform to ensure "land under genuine peasants and cooperatives".

The left front pledged to ensure share-croppers' ownership on land and their right to get two-thirds of production by introducing ceiling system that will allow a family highest 50-bigha one-crop land and 30-bigha two-crop land.

The manifesto said the LDF will build up a self-reliant economy changing the present market economy "prescribed by the World Bank, IMF and imperialist countries".

On the international plane, it will strengthen the fight for reorganising the world trade system, protecting the interest of third world people and can-

celling the imbalanced GATT accord.

The front will formulate a pragmatic industrial policy for boosting production, creating employment opportunities and establishing a self-reliant economy.

While attaching priority to the public sector, it will encourage the genuine entrepreneurs in private sector and keep up the interest of working class ensuring their full trade union rights.

To develop human resources, the LDF will consider the employment issue as a central point of economic activities. It wants to eliminate unemployment within 10 years allotting 12 per cent of budget for new employments.

It will introduce allowances for the jobless and rationing system in rural areas and reorganise expenditure in defence and other unproductive sectors. It imparti defence training to all eligible people and make the armed forces accountable to parliament.

According to the manifesto, the LDF will restore the fundamental principles of the 1972 Constitution cancelling the 2nd, 4th, 5th, 7th and 8th amendments.

It will scrap all black laws including the Special Powers Act and ensure freedom of speech and the press. Trial of all political killings will also be ensured.

The front, if voted to power will arrange trial of all "war criminals" including Golan Azam. It will take step to impose a ban on the use of religion in politics.

It will regularly publish income and expenditure of top-level officials and political leaders to remove the discrepancy between income and expenditure at all levels.

The front will separate judiciary from the executive and bring the magistracy under the judiciary. To establish rule of law and uphold interest of the working class, CrPC and BFC will be reformed in line with democratic norms and values.

Attack on Mamunur Rashid condemned

The Sammita Sangskritik Jote yesterday strongly condemned the attack on playwright-actor Mamunur Rashid and demanded immediate arrest of the attackers, reports BSS.

The Jote held a protest rally in front of the National Press Club which was presided over by Nasiruddin Yusuf Bachchu.

The speakers alleged that Mamunur was attacked on Wednesday by a group of BNP workers when he was passing through Kakrail area towards his residence.

The rally was also addressed, among others, by Syed Hasan Inam, Golam Kuddus, Tariq Anam and Mamunur Rashid.

Workers Party General Secretary Rashid Khan Menon yesterday strongly condemned the attack on Mamunur, saying that this attack has exposed BNP's autocratic character.

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) President Shahidullah Chowdhury and General secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim, in a statement, condemned the attack. Dhaka Metropolitan Chhatra Union has also condemned the attack on Mamunur.

UNB adds: Awami League general secretary Zillur Rahman yesterday condemned the attack on dramatist and cultural activist Mamunur Rashid and demanded arrest and punishment of the culprits.

Oppression against women Investigation centre at Mirpur likely

Setting up of a separate investigation centre at Mirpur in the capital is under active consideration of the government in view to preventing oppression against women, reports UNB.

This was informed in the 9th meeting of the Interministerial Coordination Committee on Prevention of Oppression Against Women held at Bangladesh Secretariat yesterday.

Jayalalita, Kerala CM resign

NEW DELHI, May 9: The Chief Minister of the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu resigned today after her party was routed in legislative elections, reports AFP.

Jayalalita Jayaram, a former movie actress, sent her resignation to Tamil Nadu governor M Channa Reddy after her regional AIADMK Party was voted out of power in the sprawling state of 55 million people, the agency said.

PTI adds: The Kerala Chief Minister, A K Antony, sent his resignation to the Raj Bhavan this afternoon as the Left Democratic Front (LDF) was close to an absolute majority in the assembly polls.



Supporters of the Hindu Nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) chant slogans in the street following elections results yesterday in New Delhi.

Prominent winners and losers in Indian polls

NEW DELHI, May 9: Prominent winners and losers of India's 11th general elections, reports AFP.

Embattled Indian Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao was elected from two parliamentary seats. Rao won Nandyal in the southern state of Andhra Pradesh by more than 98,000 votes and Behrampur in the eastern state of Orissa by 167,000 votes.

Atal Bihari Vajpayee, projected by the Hindu Nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party) as its prime-minister-in-waiting, opened up an unassailable lead in Gandhinagar in the western state of Gujarat.

Former movie star Rajesh Khanna (Congress), seeking reelection from a New Delhi constituency for the third time, lost by 58,315 votes to Jag Mahan (BJP), a former governor of the northern state of Kashmir.

Former health minister B Shankaranand (Congress), seeking reelection for a record eighth time from the southern state of Karnataka was beaten by 112,000 votes by Ratnamala Dharshwar Savanour of the Janata Dal (People's Party).

Maneka Gandhi (Janata Dal) was leading Parshu Ram (BJP) by 70,000 votes in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh.

Civil Aviation Minister Gulam Nabi Azad (Congress) lost by 38,565 votes to Rajabhau Thakara (BJP) in the western state of Maharashtra.

Rao quits today

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day it would stake its claim to form the next government in alliance with regional groupings.

"Definitely we will emerge as the single largest party and then it becomes our right and duty to form the government," Pramod Mahajan, general secretary of the BJP told reporters.

"For the first time in history, a non-Congress homogeneous party has emerged as the single largest party," he said.

BJP's prime ministerial hopeful Atal Behari Vajpayee was more subdued.

"The BJP will emerge as the single largest party but it will be difficult for us to form a government on our own," he told Reuters.

Another report says, Congress was divided over whether it should stake a claim to forming a government, party spokesman Vithal Gadgil said today.

But he told reporters there was no question of Congress trying to stay in power by making an alliance with the BJP.

There are three or four trends. One is that we should not form the government at all," Gadgil told reporters.

He said in 1989, when the Congress won 192 seats, there was pressure on then leader Rajiv Gandhi to try to form a government. "The reply was that we should sit in the opposition."

Khaleda visits Shahjalal, Shah Paran's mazars

SYLHET, May 9: BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia today visited the mazar of great saints Hazrat Shahjalal (RA) and Shah Paran (RA) here, reports BSS.

She offered feteha there and sought the divine blessings for the peace and prosperity of Bangladesh.

Earlier on her arrival at Sylhet Osmani Airport in the morning the BNP chairperson was welcomed by thousands of cheering people chanting different slogans. Outside the mazar, Begum Zia was accorded a rousing reception by thousands of members of Bangladesh Dargah Mazar Mutwalli Samity led by Najibul Bashar Maibhandari.

Police raid on SM Hall: 5 outsiders held

By DU Correspondent

Police made several surprise raids on the Salmullah Hall of Dhaka University on Wednesday in a bid to recover illegal arms.

During raids five outsiders were arrested and no arms recovered.

The provost committee at a meeting yesterday alleged that some terrorists of a particular political party attacked the residence of Mujahidul Islam, a house tutor of the hall, following the arrest of the outsiders, according to a DU press release.

The terrorists asked him to arrange the release of these outsiders, the press release added.

The meeting condemned the incident and demanded immediate arrest of the terrorists.

Mujahidul Islam could not be contacted for comments.

2 die in city incidents

By DMCH Correspondent

Two persons including a woman were killed in separate incidents in the city yesterday.

Mariam, 30, who was injured in a road accident yesterday morning, succumbed to injuries at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) in the afternoon, witnesses and hospital sources said.

In another incident, one Alamgir, 50, was electrocuted while working with a drill machine in Kairi canal area under Sutrapur thana in the city at around 1:20pm, the sources added.

The bodies were sent to the DMCH morgue for autopsy.

Alliance

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59 of its nominees lost their deposits. The AL and its allies won 100 seats and deposits of five of their candidates were forfeited, a CAC fact sheet pointed out.

JP got 35 seats while the deposits of 154 were forfeited. Of the 221 Jamaat candidates, 18 won and 104 lost their deposits, the fact-sheet added.

Of the total 300 seats in the House 78 were won with a margin of less than five per cent. Of the 78, BNP won 33, AL 25, JP 11, Jamaat 7 and others two.

AL got second position in 43 of the 78 constituencies, BNP in 14, JP in seven, Jamaat in six and others in two, CAC said.

Hasnat joins

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"Once he was with us and now he has returned to us today," a former mayor of Dhaka city, Abul Hasnat joined the BNP expressing his allegiance to the leadership of Khaleda Zia at a simple ceremony at the BNP's election office at around 9 pm last night. Earlier, he resigned from his primary membership of the Jatiya Party and the post of a presidium member of the Party he had served for the last six years.

In his letter of resignation, submitted to the JP's acting chairman Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, Hasnat accused a section of the JP leadership of trying to serve their personal interests in the name of release — Ershad movement. He also alleged that his position in the JP was questioned as regards the party's movement for release of the jailed party chief HM Ershad.

Speaking on the occasion, Abul Hasnat termed the day as the happiest day in his life since Khaleda Zia had allowed him to return to the BNP on the day.

"We formed the BNP at the call of president Ziaur Rahman and I've returned to this party at the call of Khaleda Zia to protect democracy, independence and sovereignty of the country in this critical hour of national life...I'm very much emotional now," he said.

While Hasnat was seeking Khaleda Zia's cooperation for serving the BNP, some people shouted to say, "Please, don't leave this party once again." This caused laughter among those present on the occasion.

In reply, Hasnat said, "Pray for me so that I can be with this party until my death."

Addressing the partymen the BNP secretary general Abul Salam Talukder termed Hasnat as a very favourite colleague of him and expressed his great pleasure for the old BNP leader's return to the party.

Later, Abul Hasnat issued a press statement on his leaving the JP and joining the BNP.

Beaten up

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According to preliminary medical report, Mian, an inhabitant of Sylhet, died of head injury.

Airport security men reached by telephone at night said they did not know anything about the morning incident as they were on duty in the night shift.

A case was registered with the Cantonment thana in this connection.

The Midnight Cafe

Parliament votes to probe corruption against Tansu Ciller

ANKARA, May 9: The Turkish parliament voted today to probe corruption charges against coalition party leader Tansu Ciller, threatening to bring down the ruling conservative alliance, Deputy Speaker Uluc Gurkan said, reports Reuter.

JP manifesto

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The sixth Parliament was elected in the February 15 polls, which was boycotted by all major political parties.

The party also pledged to establish good governance and an independent national economic base to achieve self-reliance by the year 2000.

Addressed by acting chairman of the party Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, the press conference was also attended, among others, by Presidium members Begum Roushan Ershad, Moudud Ahmed, Kazi Zafar Ahmed, Shah Moazzam Hossain and Secretary General Anwar Hossain Manju.

"Ershad is being denied of his constitutional right to put forward the JP election manifesto before his constituents," said Mizan Chowdhury adding that he was presiding over the programme as the acting chairman of the party, because of the party chief's absence.

During the press conference, a letter addressed to the Chief Advisor seeking the release of Ershad was also circulated. The letter was signed by the acting chairman Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury.

In its polls manifesto, the JP spelled out that it was participating in the forthcoming general elections to secure the release of its jailed leader HM Ershad and to ensure the basic rights of the people.

The JP manifesto pledged to seek national consensus on all economic and political issues. With the opposition parties, the JP policy would be that of "compromise and consensus and not confrontation."

It also promised to bring about transparency, neutrality and accountability of the government for economic development and improving the efficiency, and sensitivity of the administration to bring about a qualitative change.

The manifesto said that effective measures will be taken for implementation of Islamic ideology and its principles. An Islamic Council will be formed as an advisory body to the government while communal harmony and freedom of all religions will be ensured, it said.

A strong defence for the country and a modernised armed forces with latest and sophisticated equipment will get priority, it said.

On foreign policy, the manifesto pledged to pursue "friendship with all, enmity with none" with emphasis on strengthening relationship with the OIC and SAARC countries. JP will also seek the rightful share of water of all the international rivers including the Ganges and Brahmaputra and will establish sovereignty over South Talpatti, it said.

The JP manifesto said that an inquiry committee will be formed to probe into irregularities, corruption, nepotism, plundering of the economy by the BNP regime and punishment for those found guilty.

It also pledged to make the Jatiya Sangsad an effective institution and to accommodate the opposition political parties in the decision-making process.

The defunct Upazilla system would be restored and the local government system would be further strengthened, it said.

The manifesto also pledged separation of the judiciary from the executive, cancellation of repressive black laws, announcement of a minimum wage board for the labourers, formation of a new pay commission to reduce the disparities of the officers and employees and banning of the use of child labour.

It also promised to eradicate terrorism and anarchy from the educational institutions, introduce a mass-oriented education policy and ensure "education for all" by the year 2000.

Construction of bridges in all major rivers, introduction of electronic train service, development of airports, improvement of the inland water transport service and establishment of road communication with the Union Parishads would be undertaken if JP is elected, it said.

The JP will encourage private initiative in the health sector, keep the life-saving drugs and essential medical equipment out of government taxation and establish high-quality hospitals to ensure health for all.

The party would initiate special measures for women's rights, eradication of joblessness and ensure a better future for the destitute children by reintroducing the Pathakali Trust.

The JP manifesto also assured autonomy for Radio and Television, allowing setting up of TV channel in the private sector, independence of the news media, increase in the production of newsprint and formation of wage board for journalists.

It pledged to take up measures for urban development and steps for solving the housing problems in the big cities and take effective measures for improving the traffic system of Dhaka city.

A separate ministry to ensure the rights of the freedom fighters and preserve their memories and uphold the spirit of the liberation war would be set up, it added.

GM transferred

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managing company of the hotel, headed by its Vice President (administration), saying that the ranking officials should have to shoulder the responsibility for the unpleasant incident which occurred in the hotel in January this year. The delegation of the Japanese Pan Pacific Hotel and Resort arrived here on Tuesday.

Though their resignation were accepted by the authorities, the officials were instructed to carry on their duties up to July 1996 unless new appointments are made, the sources added.

Meanwhile, police formally made charges against 34 employees and executives of the hotel in connection with the January 30 incident.

Following the untoward incident, in which a group of employees ransacked the office of the General Manager and injured a number of officials, the hotel management filed an FIR with Tejgaon thana accusing 45 employees of whom, 29 were arrested. They were later granted bail by the court.

Gen Salam

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Colonel (retd), Qamrul Husain Murad, former land secretary Aminul Islam, former chairman of Bangladesh Handloom Board Maizuddin Ahmed and JSD (Inu) central committee member and its Jessore district committee president Ali Hussain Moni.

Earlier they met Sheikh Hasina at her Dhanmondi residence, says a party press release.

AL leaders Begum Sajeda Chowdhury, Abdur Razzak, Abdul Jalil and Sultan Mohammad Mansur Ahmed were present.

BNP, AL, JP lists

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do so as a scheduled meeting of the BNP standing committee was delayed.

The BNP standing committee could not hold its meeting in time yesterday in the absence of the party chief, Begum Khaleda Zia, who was on a brief visit to Sylhet. However, the committee was in a meeting for finalizing the party candidates till the filing of this report late last night.

After interviewing all the nomination seekers last night, the Jatiya Party will announce its list sometime today.

JP Acting Chairman Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury told newsmen yesterday that the names of the party nominees for 300 constituencies would be announced today.

BAF pilot killed

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deceased Flight Lieutenant Masud, chiefs of the Three Services, Defense Secretary and BAF personnel attended the janaza, said an agency report quoting an ISFR press release.

Besides, wreaths were placed on behalf of the President and the Chief Adviser by their respective secretaries, the press release added.

Later, the body was sent to his village home at Hezoidanga in Keshabpur thana of Jessore district for burial with full military honour.