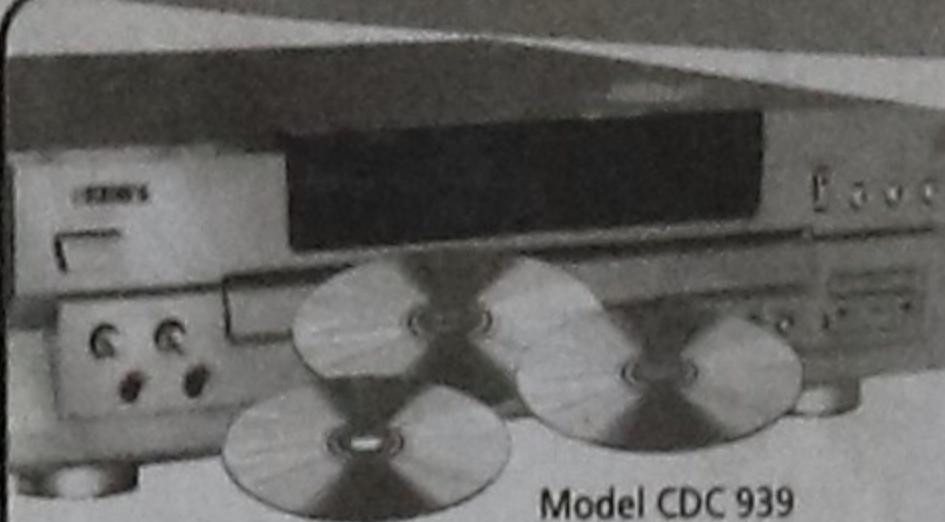


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Gen Musharraf won't bow to C'wealth demand for polls before 3-yr deadline

ISLAMABAD, Aug 26: Military ruler Gen Pervez Musharraf won't bow to the Commonwealth's demand for Pakistan's early return to democracy, but will abide by a Supreme Court's three-year deadline for elections, a foreign ministry official said today, re-ports AP.

The Commonwealth's General-Secretary Don McKinnon, who arrived in the federal capital Islamabad Friday, will be asking for a quick return to democracy when he meets with Musharraf on Saturday.

Aware of the three-year deadline set by Pakistan's Supreme Court, McKinnon said the Commonwealth would like to see elections "earlier rather than later."

However, McKinnon said he won't be issuing any demands in meetings today with senior Pakistani officials, including Musharraf, President Rafiq Tarar and the Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar.

McKinnon will hold talks with leaders of political parties and representatives of human rights groups tomorrow.

Gen Pervez Musharraf, who threw out Nawaz Sharif's elected government last October charging widespread corruption and economic mismanagement, had promised to return Pakistan to democratic rule in three years.

"This is the beginning of a series of high level discussions which we hope will result in democratic elections as soon as possible," McKinnon told

newsmen. "We hope that will be well inside the three year time frame, even sooner," he said.

The Commonwealth, the organization of former British colonies, suspended Pakistan in response to the coup but stopped short of revoking its membership.

Musharraf's timetable is in keeping with a Pakistan ruling earlier this year that authorised the military takeover but ordered the army to call elections in three years.

McKinnon said he wants to discuss electoral rolls, registration of voters to determine the readiness of Pakistan to hold elections. The Commonwealth has already sent two representatives to give Pakistan technical

Fobana convention in NY from Sept 1

By Staff Correspondent
The three-day Fobana convention, the largest congregation of expatriate Bangladeshis will begin at the Madison Square Garden in New York from September 1.

A total of 31 organisations are expected to join the convention, said a press release.

A large number of editors of different eminent dailies, columnists, litterateurs, journalists from Bangladesh and officials of US administration will attend the function.

A number of organisations from the Bangladeshi, including some business firms have booked stalls for participating in the convention.

**Khaleda**

From page 1
eral election. Mannan Binay said BNP believes in democracy and constitutional process.

Replying to a question on government's allegation that the opposition movement was aimed at obstructing trial of the killers of Bangabandhu, Bhuiyan said, "Our movement is aimed at toppling the government because it has completely failed to run the country and proved its incompetence in every sector. We are not doing movement to obstruct or influence any one's trial."

UNB adds: Opposition leader Begum Khaleda Zia does not have any plan to retire from politics.

"You will know in time. See how many days Allah keeps me alive," a smiling Khaleda told reporters when asked if she had any plan to retire from politics.

She was responding to a volley of questions from the members of Dhaka Reporters' Unity at her official residence yesterday.

She was asked whether her eldest son Tarek Zia was going to get party nomination in the next general elections.

The BNP Chairperson said: "Time has not yet come to talk about it."

JP observes hartal: 10 hurt in clash AL declares Ershad persona non grata in Rangpur

Children of different ages formed a human chain in front of the National Press Club yesterday seeking financial help for the treatment of 11-year-old Amit Amit, who has been attacked with the rare wild polio virus, is fighting for his life at Bangabandhu Medical University Hospital.

— Star photo

JP observes hartal: 10 hurt in clash

AL declares Ershad persona non grata in Rangpur

non grata in Rangpur

RANGPUR, Aug 26: At least 10 people were injured in a clash between Awami League and Jatiya Party activists during a dawn-to-dusk hartal observed here today to protest court verdict against former President Ershad. report agencies.

Sources said Dhaka Medical College Hospital admitted 16 while Mitford Hospital one.

Dhaka Shishu Hospital reported admitting four, BIRDEM one, Red Crescent Holy Family Hospital three, Bangladesh Medical College Hospital two, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital two, Suhrawardi one, Central hospital at Green Road three, Samarita Hospital two and Al-Rajhi Hospital reported admitting five patients.

Some experts however expressed fears over the side effects of incineration.

The participants suggested finding out appropriate technology for better waste disposal, recycling and resource recovery and assessing technical and financial viability of the technology.

Besides, unplanned urbanisation and industrialisation should be stopped, they said.

The Chief Engineer of Dhaka Wasa said theoretically there are four separate systems in the capital for disposal of solid waste, storm water, domestic waste and liquid waste, but practically all the four systems have become one.

In this connection, Dr Firoz Ahmed said that in some places, local people have connected their sewerage lines with storm sewerage line, which is largely affecting the system.

Dumping of polythene bags is also blocking sewerage lines. About 60 lakh polythene bags are used in the city every day, Kazi Mohammad Seishi said.

Huge quantity of untreated sewage oozing out of faulty sewerage network in the city is severely polluting surface water, particularly the water of Buriganga river.

The existing sewerage network is covering only 30 per cent of the WASA's total service area and 20 per cent of the service area's total population.

The workshop recommended that the coverage should be increased, considering suitable options and the existing system should be rehabilitated, maintained and operated properly.

It also stressed smaller independent sewerage system with its own treatment plant.

Participants expressed deep concern over disposal of untreated industrial waste. About 40 tons of Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) from about 300 industrial units are going into rivers around the city every day.

Mills and factories in Hazaribagh and Tejgaon industrial areas in the city are disposing of 16,000 cubic metres and 12,000 cubic metres respectively of untreated waste per day.

The participants emphasised that different standards set by the DOE in managing industrial, chemical and domestic waste must be followed. There should be a national policy to manage chemical waste, they felt.

Environmental awareness programme must be undertaken in the industrial sector and environmental education should be introduced in curricula. The workshop suggested while discussing the importance of public awareness and motivation programme.

The civil society should actively seek transparency in policy making and implementation of it, the workshop noted.

The students of the institute staged a demonstration on the campus at about 10:30 am demanding extension of their course period.

At one stage, they went on the rampage and damaged furniture in 37 classrooms of the institute.

The Principal's office, teachers' rooms and the administrative building also came under attack by the unruly students.

Later, police rushed to the spot and fired tear gas shells to disperse the unruly students. They also resorted to lathicharge to bring the situation under control. Six students were arrested from the spot.

The unruly students pelted stones at the policemen and clashed with them, resulting in 20 injured.

A huge contingent of police has been deployed on the campus.

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