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## Govt, ACC at loggerheads

Circular asks 1,107 Bac staff not to work for the commission

ZAYADUL AHSAN and  
JULFIKAR ALI MANIK

The government yesterday ordered employees of the now-defunct Bureau of Anti-Corruption (Bac) not to work for the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) until rules and regulations of the newly formed body are formulated.

The Cabinet Division in a circular yesterday formally announced 1,107 Bac staff as government's reserve employees in the wake of boiling conflicts between the government and the ACC.

The Bac officials have been

temporarily working at the anti-graft commission since November 21.

The latest development is going to stall the ACC investigations into the status of 1,028 vehicles purchased for different development projects and allegations of tax dodging by a business house.

A letter has come from the Cabinet Division regarding the status of the staff of the Bureau of Anti-Corruption, "ACC Commissioner M Maniruzzaman Miah told The Daily Star by telephone last night, without elaborating.

The ACC chairman, its two

commissioners and their personal staff, meanwhile, are shifting their offices today from the Segunbagicha Bac office to the Bureau of Statistics building at Agargaon. They were attending their duties at the former Bac office since the ACC started functioning on November 21.

The ACC is supposed to screen out the Bac employees to absorb them in the commission on the basis of a rule that has not yet been framed. The conflict was quickly brewing between the bureaucrats and the ACC since it came into being over assigning some Bac staff.

The conflict surfaced when an ACC letter, issued by ex-Bac director (administration and establishment) Lt Col Abdul Hannan Mridha, asked 13 secretaries of different ministries to provide information on the whereabouts of 1,028 motor vehicles.

The wording of the letter angered the secretaries, sources said. Besides, the Bac director is still serving as a 'reserve government employee', which means he cannot issue letter on behalf of the ACC, the bureaucrats argue.

The secretaries feel that the ACC undermined the image of the

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DHAKA-10 BY-POLLS  
Judge expresses embarrassment, declines to hear contempt charges

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The hearing on the High Court (HC) rule on the government and the contempt charge on four government officials over army deployment at polling centres in the Dhaka-10 by-polls was not held yesterday as a judge expressed 'embarrassment'.

The HC division bench comprising Justice Abdul Wahab and Justice Zinnat Ara sent the case to the chief justice to take a decision after the junior judge, Justice Zinnat, declined to hear it without explaining the

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## Plan to link up with global disaster forecasting system

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An inter-ministerial meeting yesterday decided to link up the country with global forecasting system on natural disasters and include tsunami into its comprehensive disaster management programme (CDMP).

The meeting also decided to buy the equipment necessary to quickly respond to natural disasters like earthquakes and tsunami and to start the rescue operations immediately in order to minimise the loss of life and property.

"The country will be a member of

Honolulu and Hawaii-based disaster forecasting centres very soon for getting early warning of earthquake and other natural calamities," Minister for Food and Disaster Management Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf told the reporters after the meeting.

Experts on natural disaster told the meeting that the possibility of a tsunami hitting the country is not likely because of the country's geographical location.

Still the government would buy all necessary equipment that the armed forces division has suggested for the country to be better

equipped to deal with such natural disaster, the meeting decided.

State Minister for Energy AKM Mosharraf Hossain, Chief of Army Staff Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury, secretaries of different ministries, teachers of Dhaka University, Buet, and representatives from meteorological department and different other bodies attended the meeting held at the conference room of cabinet division.

Sources said the meeting also decided to set up a national institute on disaster management training under the armed forces division and

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## GRASSROOTS-LEVEL ACTIVITY BNP begins conferences on 18-point agenda

UNB, Thakurgaon

The ruling BNP (Bangladesh Nationalist Party) starts a country-wide organisational campaign on an 18-point agenda with a grand conference of grassroots-level party leaders and activists here today.

Such conferences will be held in 19 places covering 64 districts with the participation of about 50,000 leaders and activists, BNP sources said.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain will inaugurate the conference at Thakurgaon Girls' High School ground at 9:00am with BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Tarique Rahman in the chair.

They said 23 editors of national dailies have been invited to the conference in this northern district headquarters.

A total of 1,555 representatives, including 1,150 from union level

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## ROHINGYA REFUGEES Repatriation resumes

UNB, Cox's Bazar

Repatriation of Rohingya refugees to Myanmar resumed on Saturday.

Ten refugees of a family left the camp for home on the day, while 19,000 others in two camps at Teknaf and Ukhia are on the waiting list.

The repatriation of Rohingyas remained suspended for seventh months since June last year.

About 2.5 lakh Rohingya Muslims of Myanmar entered Bangladesh in 1991.

## 16 DCC cattle markets for Eid-ul-Azha

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) has selected people to operate 13 of the 16 sites set aside as makeshift cattle markets for the upcoming Eid-ul-Azha as allegations have been raised that only those who were supporters of the ruling party were selected.

The allocated 13 sites are the open land of DCC beside Armanitola playground, Khilkhet Tanpara, Golapbagh ground, Rahamatganj playground, Dhupkhola ground, Hosni Dalan Road (from Chankharpool intersec

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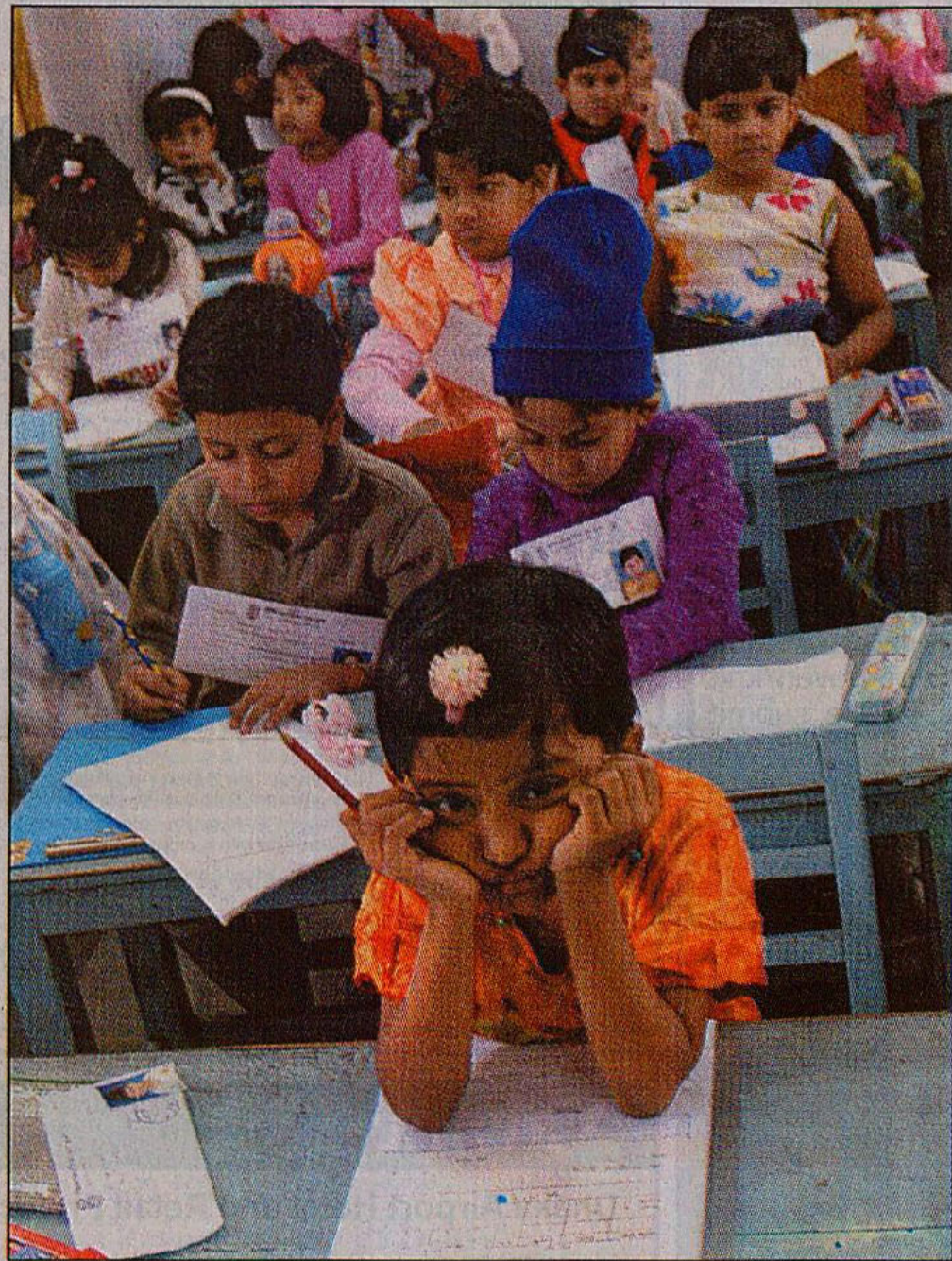


PHOTO: STAR

WHAT DID I LEARN? A tiny tot grimaces in despair at the admission test at Viqarunnisa Noon School yesterday, the second day of exams to schools for this academic year.

## NEWS ANALYSIS

### BTTB mobile puzzle

STAR REPORT

It is still unclear what prompted the telecommunications ministry to fix the call tariff for its new cellphone service at a rate much higher than expected -- and in particular at a rate similar, if not higher, to the four private companies currently offering service to 4 million customers in Bangladesh.

In the past, the Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB), which entered the market last week with a soft-launch of its service, has strongly suggested that it was going to offer cheaper cellular

phone service.

Telecommunications Minister Aminul Haque had several times publicly announced that the state-operated cellphone service would be popular for its cheaper call tariff.

Even the prime minister while inaugurating the service on December 28 directed the BTTB officials to offer an affordable rate.

It is widely believed that fearing a drastic loss of business if the tariff was set too low, the private companies have played a role in changing the minds of the government policymakers who finally approved the call rate and subscription fee.

Although the BTTB mobile call rate is between 25 percent and 35 percent lower than the private operators charge for zonal calls in the post-paid segment, BTTB's others charges are higher -- for instance, its monthly subscription charge is Tk 350, which is 29 percent higher than private operators'. At least one private operator now offers monthly subscription fee of Tk 250.

As the BTTB is yet to offer special packages that could include special rates for calling particular numbers of friends and family members, the customers of its pre-paid segment

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PHOTO: COURTESY

A Rakhain woman weaving cloth faces an uncertain future.

## Kuakata Rakhains pushed out of land

PINAKI ROY, back from Kuakata

Hundreds of families from the Buddhist Rakhain community in Kuakata have been forced from their land as a result of the activities of an influential group of local Bangalis, an investigation by The Daily Star has uncovered.

The situation has become so bad that in the last 30 years the numbers of Rakhain para in Lata Chapali (Kuakata) union of kalapara upazila in Patuakhali has reduced from 54 to 14.

"The number of families living in the paras that do remain has also

decreased," said Emong Talukder, president of the Rakhain Cultural Academy, Kuakata.

The situation is said to have become particularly bad in the last three years.

Some of the Rakhain families have gone to Cox's Bazar and Bandarban and others have been forced to go back to Arakan state of Myanmar, from where their descendants first came.

Much of the agricultural land of the Rakhain community was forcibly grabbed in the years after the 1963 cyclone, which severely

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## EPZs OF BANGLADESH BONANZA FOR THE INVESTORS

Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority offers a highly competitive package of fiscal & non-fiscal incentives and facilities to the investors. A few of these are:

### INCENTIVES

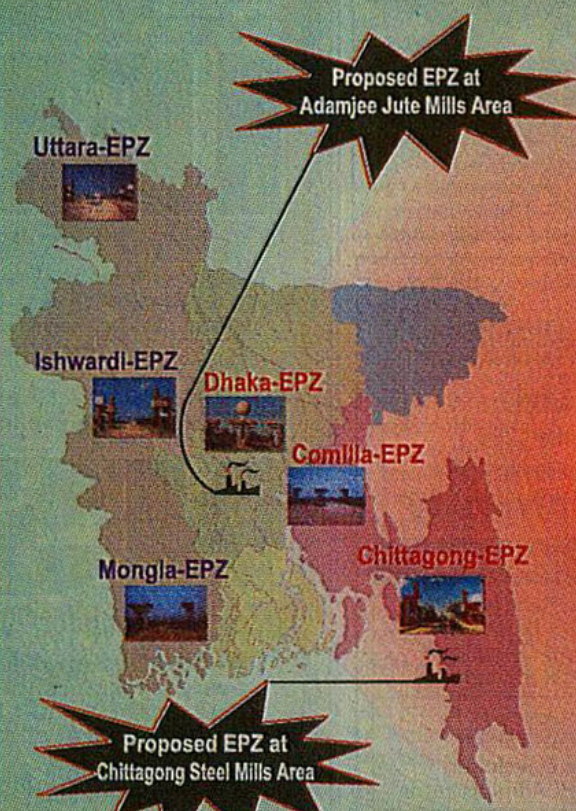
- \* No ceiling on foreign, joint venture & Bangladeshi investment
- \* Tax holiday for 10 years
- \* No dividend tax during tax holiday period
- \* No double taxation
- \* Duty free import of machineries and equipments
- \* Duty free import of raw materials/export of finished goods
- \* Duty free import of construction materials
- \* Duty free export to the DTA export oriented industries
- \* Inter and intra zone exports permitted
- \* Sub-contracting inside and out side EPZs allowed
- \* Re-location of existing industries from abroad allowed
- \* 10% Sale permission to local market
- \* Expatriates exempted from income tax for three years

### FACILITIES

- \* Provides plot & factory building with all infrastructural facilities
- \* Offers one-window same-day service
- \* All customs formalities are done at the factory gate
- \* Import/Export and Work permits are issued by BEPZA
- \* Support services and Banking facilities are available
- \* Water, gas, electricity and telecommansations are available

### SPECIAL OFFER

50% concession on rent of plot and factory building and 30% cash incentives for agro based sector at EPZs of Mongla, Ishwardi & Uttara (Nilphamari).



\* Please visit our website no. [WWW.epzbangladesh.org.bd](http://WWW.epzbangladesh.org.bd)



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