

PMO help sought

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which stated tender clarifications which may lead to a change in the substance of the tender or in any of the key elements of the tender, shall neither be sought from the Tenderers nor the Tenderers are permitted to do so.

This prompted the Chinese CMEC to write to the Principal Secretary at the PMO against PDB's questionable handling of the project. "This is very unusual that a Chinese company is lodging a protest against another Chinese company in Bangladesh," quips a CDB source, "because both are owned by the Chinese government."

The CMEC notes in its letter that the July 9 letter from the PDB's project director violates Regulation 29 of the PPR (Public Procurement Regulation, 2003) which states, "Tenders received after the deadline for the submission shall be returned to the Tenderer unopened."

The CMEC adds, "If this disqualified bidder continues to be favoured by the BFPD in violation of rules and regulations...we will be left with no option other than to take necessary legal actions in a Court of Law."

Sources said following the June 28 bid closing, PDB's Chandpur project director and a deputy director of the

Design 1 department had initiated the process of sending Harbin the July 9 letter in the pretext of seeking "Clarifications on Proposal". The letter was not authorised by the Chairman of the Technical Evaluation Committee or the PDB's Member (Generation) as was required.

According to the bidders of this project, other than lacking the legal basis, the Harbin offer is so tricky that the PDB will eventually lose more money to purchase extra spare parts for the power plant if Harbin builds it.

Harbin is the only power company to bag two power projects under the present government so far, although its experience does not meet the government's criterion. These two are PDB's Tongji 90 megawatt peaking power project and the Fenchuganj 90 megawatt power project.

The Tongji plant started operation one year behind the schedule a few months ago and it is frequently tripping due to technical flaws. The Fenchuganj project has just been awarded to last month.

Industry insiders said that a section of bureaucrats, some PDB officials and some influential policymakers took a huge amount of money from the business lobby behind Harbin.

UNDP official

FROM PAGE 16
Lissner said at an international workshop on "Parliamentary Committees in Westminster Systems: Lessons for Bangladesh," in Dhaka.

The UNDP official was critical of the existing provision for cancellation of a lawmaker's membership in Bangladesh that says a lawmaker loses his membership for 90 consecutive days' absence in the House. "Ninety days is too long," he said.

Main opposition Awami League lawmakers at the workshop demanded that the opposition members should be given chairmanship of the parliamentary committees proportionately to the number of their seats in parliament.

They said many countries are now practising this in order to ensure effective scrutiny of the government functioning by the parliamentary watchdog bodies.

Chairmen of different parliamentary standing committees as well as lawmakers from both the treasury and opposition benches participated in the workshop, organised under the UNDP-sponsored "Strengthening Parliamentary Democracy" project.

Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar addressed the inaugural session, which was chaired by Chief Whip Khandaker Delwar Hossain.

On the parliamentary committee system of Bangladesh that allows one committee to look into the matters of a particular ministry, Lissner said it is better for the committees to work for different sectors. "Committees should work comprehensively on issues as a macro-management system," he said.

Opposition Chief Whip Abdus Shaheed, responding to Lissner's statement after the inaugural session said, "Lissner has tabled irrelevant issues in this programme, which are beyond the UNDP resident mission's jurisdiction."

"Participation of the opposition is not an agenda [in the workshop] and we are here to discuss how to strengthen the parliamentary committee system," Shaheed said. He said the opposition boycotts parliament as they are not allowed to speak in the House.

Speaker Sircar, while presiding over a plenary session, urged the opposition to join the House and make it functional.

He referred to a recent amendment to the Rules of Procedures and said, "We have taken the decision to form parliamentary standing committees by the third sitting of any new parliament." In the past, it took about two years to form the committees.

Sircar said the ministries should consider the recommendations of standing committees thoroughly as these watchdog bodies ensure transparency and accountability of the government, its cabinet and also of the bureaucrats.

Saifur blasts

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Development] countries," he mentioned while speaking as the chief guest at the concluding session of a two-day international conference on corporate governance in the city.

The Centre for Corporate Governance and Finance Studies of the Dhaka University, Dhaka Stock Exchange, the OECD and the Asia Foundation jointly organised the event at a city hotel. Dhaka University Vice Chancellor SMA Faiz chaired the session.

Saifur said, "The textile businessmen are pocketing huge sums, taking advantage of the government protection. I've told them, if they continue selling yam at such high prices, I'll take action against them."

He termed the textile company owners dishonest, who do not give proper dividends to their shareholders, which is why the share prices of textile companies are so heavily depressed.

The finance minister also questioned the veracity of their financial reports, saying, "I don't trust the auditors. They are the worst element in this case, making fictitious financial reports of the companies."

He dubbed the textile company boards rubbish. The company owners include their brothers and sisters, and brothers and sisters in law in the boards, he alleged.

To correct the situation and protect the interests of the minority shareholders, Saifur said a regulatory body is urgently needed. A regulator can also play a strong role in ensuring truthfulness of the company reports.

Japan team

FROM PAGE 1
Yako Akahane, manager and assistant manager of Jitco.

The delegation will hold talks with the officials of the ministries of expatriates' welfare and overseas employment and the foreign affairs during the visit for preparing the modus operandi of the recruitment process.

Bangladesh Manpower Export and Training (BMET) and the apex chamber body Federation of Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industries (FBCCI) will jointly select the intending workers on a preliminary basis.

The Japanese authority will finally approve the list.

According to the conditions for the recruitment, the workers must work in the designated company and join the organisation that he worked for in Bangladesh after returning from Japan.

Japan will hire a few hundred people from Bangladesh as a test case in the first phase, A K M Shamsuddin, secretary in-charge of the expatriates' ministry, told The Daily Star last night.

Sources, however, have hinted that if the Bangladeshi workers perform well and do not violate the conditions, hiring large number of workers from here is likely.

The intending workers, who must be employees of any public sector or private sector enterprise in Bangladesh, will get one year's training and be allowed to work in a Japanese company for two years as an intern for a handsome salary.

Japan has signed such an agreement with 14 underdeveloped and developing countries, including China, from where over 2,000 workers have already been hired under the programme, sources said.

Entering the vast Japanese market, which is currently facing an acute worker crisis, is looked upon as a great opportunity for Bangladesh.

Bangladesh envoy

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credential to Bangladesh envoy is causing serious problems in carrying out official activities at New Delhi mission.

Liaquat could not attend the Foreign Office Consultations held in New Delhi on June 21-22 between India and Bangladesh with his full official capacity.

He will also be unable to join the official visit of Indian External Affairs Minister K Natwar Singh to Dhaka scheduled for August 6-7 as high commissioner if he was not given the credential by then.

A reliable source at the Bangladesh High Commission in New Delhi said Deputy High Commissioner Masud Bin Momen, who has been discharging responsibilities as acting high commissioner, is attending all official programmes hosted by the Indian government.

The source said Indian government is a bit unhappy with the frequent changes of high commissioners as three envoys have been appointed in the last three years.

A senior official of the foreign ministry told The Daily Star India usually honour credentials after a good number of new ambassadors and high commissioners arrive.

Liaquat is expected to get credential in the second week of August, the official said asking not to be named.

Khulna BNP

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two factions.

Meantime, leaders of the factions - Mayor Shaikh Tayebur Rahman, lawmaker Ali Asgar Lobi and city unit Secretary Nazrul Islam Manju - left for Dhaka yesterday at the instruction of the party high command, sources said.

They are likely to meet BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia today, the sources added.

Security measures have been beefed up in the city to ward off further violence, said a senior officer of Khulna Metropolitan Police (KMP).

After Saturday's clash at Zia Hall, both the factions filed separate general diaries with Sonadanga Police Station against each other the same night.

Tariqul Islam Taru, president of Khulna city unit Jatiyatobadi Samajik Sangskritik Sangstha (Jasas), filed a GD against 11 people of the whip-Manju faction.

Jasas leader Mehedi Hasan Dipu, on the other hand, filed a GD against 15 rivals.

Two factional district committees of the Jasas, the cultural wing of ruling BNP, were formed on Saturday night.

Marketing Manager of Enfalac Belal Ahmed said the nine BMS brands imported and marketed by his company do not have IPHN registration but are BSTI certified Bangladesh Standard Testing Institute.

He said his company took over the BMS business about one and a half years ago but he came to learn about the BMS ordinance only three months ago.

Ahmed initially said he was not aware of which authority he should obtain the registration from. Later, however, he said, "Why should we run after the registration authority? The IPHN never asked us to follow such obligations."

The inactive IPHN Although the IPHN is responsible for issuance of registration and implementing the BMS codes, it

30 lakh eligible voters

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An adult has to fill up only one form to register his/her name during the registration period while he/she has to go through three stages to be registered after the period. This discourages people from being registered on their own initiative.

An EC official suggested resetting the qualifying date by extending it for a few more months, leading up to the publication date of the list.

"The electoral roll law will have to be amended to readjust the qualifying date. If the commission fixes the date to be in January next year, a large number of people will get the chance to be registered," he added.

The task of preparing the voter list will take at least eight months to complete and the final list will be published in March/April next year, according to the current plan of the EC.

The official said the Indian election commission fixes the qualifying date, extending it for a few months to deal with such problems. He said if they set the date to be in January next year, they would start putting voters' names on the list from October or November in the previous year.

"We can do the same. In that case, our enumerators will gather information also on those people who will come of age in January next year, and accordingly, register those as voters," he added.

11 to die for killing

FROM PAGE 1
Begum, 35, Dulal, 28, Farida, 30, Babul alias Babu, 28 and Al-Amin, 26.

Of them, Al-Amin and Dulal were tried in absentia and the seven others were present in the court during the delivery of the judgement.

Jamai Motin, Babu Jamai and Alam's chief maids Farida and Jahanara were given the death sentence for instigating and assisting the killers, while the seven others were convicted for killing Alam and his three maids.

Rabbat Ali and his wife Sheuli Akhter were awarded five years' rigorous imprisonment (RI) for harbouring the other accused.

Abdur Rahman, his wife Asma Rahman and Rehena Parvin were sentenced to three years' RI for sharing the booties while Alauddin had to suffer seven years' RI for theft.

The court acquitted another accused, Abdul Latif Khan, of charges.

The punishment of the fugitives will be effective from the day of their arrest or surrender, the court said.

The convicts sentenced to death can appeal to the High Court against the verdict within seven days from the day of receipt of the judgement copy, the judge said.

After the verdict, Jamai Motin broke down in tears and told journalists that the charges brought against him were false and baseless.

Alam's other son-in-law, Babu Jamai, remained calm while the rest broke down in tears.

Earlier, the prosecution and the defence completed their arguments in 51 dates and the court recorded statements of 57 prosecution witnesses.

Alam's three sons Jahir Alam Khokan, Nure Alam Babul and

Food traders

FROM PAGE 1
inexperienced mobile court officials". Otherwise, it will call a two-day strike at all restaurants and food shops across the country on August 3-4, the BKBP said in a press release.

Meantime, three mobile courts yesterday raided a number of restaurants and shops in Gulshan, Motijheel and Old Dhaka and fined lawbreakers about Tk 1.86 lakh.

A court chaired by Magistrate ABN Abdul Fattah raided 11 restaurants and shops in Gulshan and fined them Tk 1.27 lakh for unsafe preservation and unhygienic kitchen environment.

He also forfeited Tk 10,000 from Banoful Sweetmeat for selling rotten burgers. Four other small restaurants and Biriani shops were fined Tk 12,000.

The court of Magistrate Md Rokan Uddouh raided butter shops and factories at Patuati in Old Dhaka and fined 17 cases against their owners.

The court filed cases against Uttam Devnath and Zakir Hossain, jailed them for one month and fined Tk 6,000 each for producing spurious butter.

The court also fined the butter shops of Narendranath Nath, Afzal Hossain, Moslem Ali and Mofakkarul Islam Tk 5,000 each and filed cases against them.

Another mobile court headed by Magistrate Nurul Alam charged Tk 24,600 to three restaurants and fast food shops in Motijheel.

A court in Narayanganj fined 14 restaurants and fast food shops Tk 7,600 for selling rotten items and preserving food in unhygienic conditions, reports our Narayanganj correspondent.

Our Chittagong staff correspondent adds: A mobile court formed by Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) yesterday fined 21 bakery, sweetmeat and food shops and hotels in the city Tk 3.54 lakh for unhygienic environment and selling adulterated items.

The court led by Magistrate Syeda Sarwar Jahan in a follow-up inspection on Saturday arrested six employees of Tamanna Bakery in Halishahar for defying its order.

The magistrate fined Sweetmax at GEC Intersection Tk 10,000 for unhygienic kitchen and adulterated fast food items.

Polls volatility

FROM PAGE 16
54 percent over the previous fiscal year. The extra cost of around \$550 million depleted the foreign exchange available for other essential imports and put pressures on reserves and the exchange rate.

The higher import price of oil, together with the administered retail prices, has threatened the viability of the state-owned Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC). Over the last one year, domestic prices of oil products have increased by 9-30 percent, but in terms of dollar, the increase was only 2-21 percent, resulting in a loss of around \$445 million to the BPC in FY2005.

The higher prices of imported goods, rapid depreciation of taka and a food price hike have fuelled the inflation shooting it from 5.7 percent in July 2004 to 6.9 percent in May 2005 on a point-to-point basis, the outlook explained.

4 RU teachers

FROM PAGE 16
Romana, a JCD leader of the hall responsible for beating up her roommate Shamim Ara Roni, a masters student of Bangla on May 17 for not following her order.

As meeting between the hall JCD and authorities following JCD workers' angry demonstration over the probe report ended in serious altercations, they confined the house tutor, game teacher and hall supers and started vandalising properties at 11:00pm on Saturday.

JCD leaders placed a four-point demand that include removal of the hall provost, two house tutors and the game teacher, and immediate expulsion of Shamim Ara Roni, who they claimed was beaten up for stealing things from different rooms.

Raids, fines

FROM PAGE 1
sugar syrup was not rotten he claimed, and said, "Just yesterday we made it."

Other unhygienic conditions prevailed. Bags of flour sat just beside the washing corner of the narrow kitchen. Dirty water from the washing corner was dropping into the flour bags, which are used to produce parata, singara, sweetmeat and other flour-made items.

Other restaurants, including Mitali Restaurant, Saimon Hotel and Restaurant, and Sohag restaurant, have also not improved even after being charged Tk one thousand each on the same day.

"The environment of our restaurant was as good as you see now. Always we ensure the quality," said Mainuddin, manager of the Mitali restaurant, which was fined Tk one thousand for having an unhygienic environment.

He claimed that the kitchen is a little bit dirty due to the heat and smoke of the burner.

Unlike these others, which have continued to operate, the Hatirpul factory of Muslim Sweetmeat has remained closed following the raid.

"All our workers from the factory are in jail. So we are not producing sweets there," said a worker.

But they are still selling colourful sweets like before. "We bring the sweetmeats from our Bijoynagar and Mirpur branches and sell it here," he said.

Muslim Sweetmeat was also fined due to the unhealthy environment in the factory and for mixing rotten sweetmeats with new ones.

Face to face

FROM PAGE 1
teachings of Islam. They have forgotten Jihad. They just lick the foot of the Christians."

The three belong to the group of Al Muhajeroon now renamed Al Gharib, the extremist Islamic group in Britain set up by Syrian born radical Islamist Sheikh Omar bin Bakri Muhammad whom the British government wants to deport for spreading religious hate.

On July 22, barely two weeks after the London attacks, Bakri said militant Islamists will continue to attack Britain until the government pulls its troops out of Iraq and Afghanistan.

And these three two Bangladeshis and one Pakistani are his followers in Luton, a small town outside London. It is here that the 777 bombers had met briefly at the station before finally going ahead with their deadly mission. It is here that the police recovered a rented car stocked with explosives.

In this crime prone town of Luton, where ghettos abound, Al Muhajeroon has been active among the youth, residents say, indoctrinating them with the idea of Jihad. Over the years, this group has mushroomed in Britain and even in London they are seen preaching their ideas in Whitechapel and Brick Lane. But since 7/7, they simply vanished from London; even on Fridays, a day they usually prefer to hand out their flyers at the mosque corners, they could not be seen. But here in Luton, they were.

One of the Luton residents who knows these youths from their early age said they grew up as any other lad: they used to have fun, play cricket, dress up smartly in the latest designs and go to mosques on Fridays.

"They had good jobs at the council, one of them even had a BMW," said the resident. "He must have been earning at least 22,000 pounds a year. Then suddenly they started to change."

They started doing this group, left their jobs, and grew beards. They started talking of Jihad and the West's policy on the Middle East.

"I was in the path of the Satan," said the thickly bearded youth. "Then I got to know Allah's way and that is what I have been working for."

"No, I don't belong to this society. You tell me if anyone can integrate with this immoral society of sex and drugs," says the other one with a way beard and long hair. He looks more like an Afghan. "I am not a Bangladeshi, I am not a British, I am not a Bangali. My identity is I am a Muslim. And I must fight for Islam."

"I am here because this country belongs to nobody," he says. "It is Allah's land. Even my body is not mine, concealing facts in the summary.

While briefing reporters, the law minister once had claimed that he would have opposed granting pardon to Jhinto, had the home ministry included all necessary facts in the summary. He also said that his ministry did not furnish the president with any opinion in favour or against the pardon.

He also said that the prime minister should not be blamed as she made her decision on the basis of the summary [prepared by the home ministry]. It was rather the duty of the officials at the Prime Minister's Office to examine all facts before forwarding it (summary) to the President's Office for final decision, he told reporters at his office on July 24.

Then making a U-turn on Saturday, Moudud attempted to rationalise the presidential pardon, saying that his name was not in the FIR (first information report) and there was no witness against him.

He told reporters that his ministry would recommend pardon for anyone, who has been sentenced by a martial law court, and his name was not in the FIR or there was no witness against him.

Although the law minister met the prime minister on Saturday, he denied it while talking to the journalists at around 2:30pm the same day.

But news agency UNB reported that Moudud had admitted to the meeting. "I was not asked by the prime minister, but I sought an appointment from her to discuss certain issues," UNB quoted the law minister as saying.

When reporters raised the issue of Jhinto's clemency yesterday, the law minister did not say anything. He has confined his discussion with reporters to reserved seats for women only.

MOUDDUD'S CORRUPTION CASE
Now defunct Bureau of Anti-Corruption during BNP's 1991-96 had filed a case against Moudud for corruption while he was the industry minister of former military ruler HM Ershad's government.

Moudud had filed a petition for quashing the case and it was a part heard earlier. Yesterday was fixed for further hearing and it was item No. 4 on the cause list of a High Court division bench. But Moudud's counsel sought for more time for the hearing, which the court granted.

When this correspondent contacted one of the lawyers to know about the court decision, he skipped the issue, saying that the developments were nothing significant.

Meantime, Sammiitoo Ainiibi Parishad of Narayanganj yesterday protested inviting the law minister to a reception ceremony for the newly elected Narayanganj District Bar Association committee. The function is scheduled to be held on August 2 at Narayanganj Club Auditorium.

The Parishad yesterday demanded the plan for having the law minister as the chief guest at the programme.

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