



PHOTO: STAR

Students of Maple Leaf International School present Rabindranath Tagore's dance drama, Chitrangada, at the Shishu Academy auditorium in the city yesterday.

# EC urged to make candidates' personal information public

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Members of the civil society yesterday called on the Election Commission (EC) to take effective steps to collect all the personal information about the candidates in the general election and make those public through mass media so that voters can choose the honest and competent persons as their representatives.

According to a High Court directive on May 24, the aspiring candidates have to provide information about their educational qualifications, profession,

sources of income, assets and liabilities and whether they were accused in criminal cases.

The High Court has directed the EC to collect these information in order to discourage dishonest candidates, but the EC has failed to collect genuine information from the candidates during the recent by-elections, said renowned economist Prof Muzaffer Ahmad at a press briefing in the city.

Many irregularities were found in the information submitted by the candidates who contested the Faridpur and Sunamganj by-

elections, he added.

Even the candidates for the seats reserved for women in parliament did not provide correct information, but the EC still remains indifferent, said Muzaffer, also the convenor of the Shujan.

He also criticised the government's policy of not allowing direct election to the women's seats, saying such a decision will make the women dependent on political parties.

The purpose of the High Court directive is to empower the voters as the people have the right to know, said Dr Badiul Alam Majumdar, country director of the Hunger Project Bangladesh.

The EC was also directed to disseminate the information submitted by the candidates through mass media, but it did not comply, said Syed Abul Maksud.

He also said they have already filed a case against the EC for not implementing the High Court order properly.

Sultana Kamal, executive director of Ain o Salish Kendra, said it has become a culture to keep the information secret, which is a threat to democracy.

Shujan, a citizens' initiative for

good governance, organised the press briefing at the Dhaka Reporters' Unity office.

## Edwards new executive director of World Vision Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Vincent Edwards, a staff member of World Vision International, has been appointed as the executive director of World Vision Bangladesh recently.

He has replaced Daniel Selvanayagam, who had been the executive director for the past six years, says a press release.

The World Vision is an international humanitarian relief and development organisation dedicated to the poor and vulnerable.

It has been working in 22 districts in the country.

Edwards has 23 years' experience in managing and directing relief, food-aid and development programmes in Africa and Asia Pacific regions.

## Price hike of fuel protested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Karmojibi Nari, a women's rights organisation, organised a rally yesterday at Muktangon in the city protesting price hike of essentials, including fuel.

The speakers said such price hikes are causing sufferings to the general people.

The government and authorities concerned must restrain the market prices, they said adding the rise in fuel price would have a disastrous effect on agricultural production.

Later, they took out a procession.

## PM asks party women MPs to protect people's interest

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday suggested her party's newly elected women deputies to play their due role in parliament to protect people's interest and uphold party ideals and tradition.

She also urged the women MPs to project the government's activities carried out in nearly last four years for the welfare of the people.

Khaleda, also chairperson of the ruling BNP, made the call when they met her at the prime minister's office.

She hoped that people would again elect her party to power evaluating the government's development work in all sectors and laudable achievements in a number of areas.

"People have not forgotten the misdeeds and acts of terrorism of the previous government," she told the function.

Khaleda said that BNP came to power with mass support in October 2001 and the popular support still continued and would have to be maintained.

She asked her deputies to work

vigorously with sincerity and devotion on a higher scale for the next general election to ensure the party's victory.

Those who have not got nomination for the women's reserved seats will be given responsible posts in the party, she said.

Congratulating the new women lawmakers Khaleda asked them to work in their respective areas and strengthen the organisation.

Prime Minister's Political Secretary Harris Chowdhury was present.