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No Door to Door Voter Listing

EC decision illegal

Observe legal experts

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The Election Commission's (EC) recent decision to revise the existing voter list in the office without going door to door contradicts the High Court (HC) directives as well as the commission's own decision taken on August 6 last year.

The EC on Monday asked people to come to the election offices in district and upazila headquarters to include their names in the list.

Legal experts and former election commissioners termed the EC decisions contradictory to the HC directives upheld by the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court (SC).

"The Election Commission's decision definitely contradicts the High Court directives and it is tantamount to contempt of court," Justice Ghulam Rabbani, former judge of the Appellate Division, told The Daily Star yesterday.

"The law has given the duty to the Election Commission to revise the electoral rolls. But the commis-

sion has directed people to get themselves registered in the voter list. How can they audaciously direct people to do the job? The directive is also illegal," he said.

"It is clearly an impertinent device to bypass or ignore the directives of the High Court upheld by the Appellate division of the Supreme Court," Rabbani said.

Former election commissioner M Munsef Ali held the same view, saying it is not possible to prepare a voter list without visiting door to door and the EC's decision contradicts its previous decision.

Former election commissioner Justice Naimuddin Ahmed termed the EC decision "absolutely illegal".

The EC decided on August 6 last year to prepare the voter list for the ensuing parliamentary election—following the Electoral Ordinance 1982 and Electoral Rolls Rules 1982—by visiting door to door as it did in 1983, 1990, 1992, 1995 and 2000.

Ignoring the opinions of the then election commissioners M

Munsef Ali and AK Mohammad Ali who favoured revising the existing voter list, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) MA Aziz unilaterally decided to prepare the voter list afresh.

The decision was challenged in the HC and the court asked the CEC on January 4 this year to immediately call a meeting of the commission to decide and take appropriate

steps to implement the August 6 decision of the EC.

The commission filed an appeal with the SC Appellate Division on February 1, challenging two of the five HC directives. The two directives are: the commission should prepare the electoral roll taking the existing roll as a major basis and if there is a computerised database,

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

Many may miss new roll

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Experts fear that huge number of eligible people will be deprived of their constitutional right to franchise in the next parliamentary elections, as the Election Commission (EC) for the first time has decided against the officials' going door to door to get the voters enrolled.

The EC documents show only 26 lakh people have been added to the existing voter list in last five years

while the election officials estimated that about one crore people have become eligible for registration in the voter list by this time.

The EC has now fixed only a one-month time limit to allow the rest of the eligible people to register their names in the voter list, asking them to go to the election offices in district, thana and upazila headquarters for the purpose.

It is a routine procedure that continues round the year as

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

EC's another appallingly illegal step

Justice Naimuddin

STAR REPORT

Former election commissioner Justice Naimuddin Ahmed has said the Election Commission (EC) has taken yet another appallingly illegal step by deciding "to revise the existing voter list but its officials will not go from door to door to get the job done," in compliance with the orders of the Supreme Court.

Following are the observations

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Commentary

The trio and their election 'subversion' ploy?

The decision of the CEC and his two commissioners is illegal and yet another step to obstruct a free and fair election

MAHFUZ ANAM

Seldom, if ever, there has been a chief election commissioner (CEC) so bent upon creating obstacles to the process of holding a free and fair election than our venerable Justice M.A. Aziz. From the start his stubborn insistence against all sane advices to go for a new voter list, his total non-cooperation with then two election commissioners,

his controversial dialogue with literally non-existent political parties (except the 4-party alliance) that was boycotted by most of the opposition parties, his refusal to meet with the EU delegation, his frequent illness at politically convenient moments, his relentless media bashing etc have created serious doubts in public minds as to his intention, ability and sincerity to conduct a free and

fair election. His latest decision not to send enumerators from door to door to update the voter list, which has been termed by many eminent jurists as illegal (see accompanying stories), has forced us to raise the question whether there is a ploy to subvert the coming election by the CEC and the two new commissioners. Otherwise, how can one explain their bizarre activities?

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Statements of Hasina, Moshir expunged

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Monday's heated exchange that took place in the parliament between Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina and ruling BNP lawmaker Moshir Rahman has been expunged from the records of the day's parliamentary proceedings yesterday.

"I, after examining, expunged from the records of the House proceedings all un-parliamentary words uttered yesterday (Monday) by the leader of the opposition and the ruling BNP lawmaker," Acting Speaker Akhter Hamid Siddiqui

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

1 BSF man dies in shootout on Satkhira border

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

At least one member of the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) was killed during a fierce shootout between the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and the BSF in the bordering village in Sadar upazila.

According to a BSF protest letter sent to the BDR, the dead was identified as Rajendra Sharma of Soladana BSF camp in Basirhat

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Rejoinder

The Youngone Group has contradicted some information mentioned in a report headlined "30 hurt as workers fight with officials at DEPZ factory" published in The Daily Star and similar news item carried by other newspapers yesterday.

The company claimed that there was no incidence of assault of a pregnant worker during the untoward incidents on the Youngone factory premises in DEPZ on June 12. The mention of such assault was "baseless" and a "fabrication," the company says.

The Youngone alleged that in order to incite the workers, malicious rumours were spread that two workers had been killed and subsequently a pregnant worker fell into coma allegedly having been beaten by an official of the factory.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

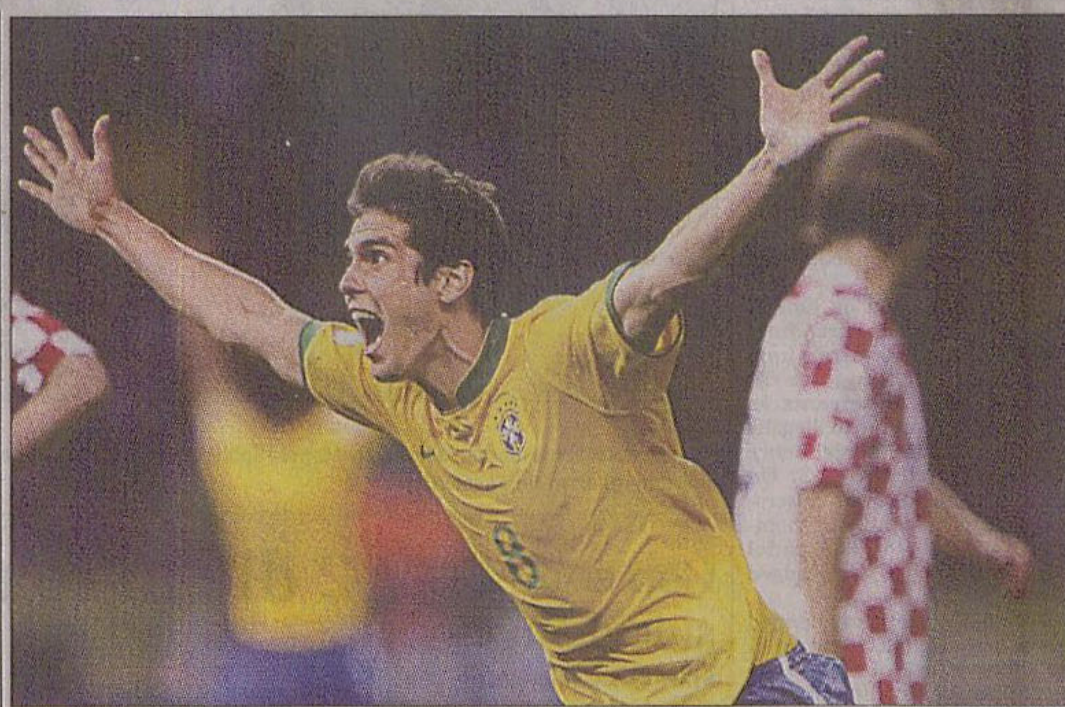


PHOTO: AFP

HERE STARTS QUEST FOR HEXA: Brazil playmaker Kaká goes over the moon after scoring the first goal for his team against Croatia at Berlin stadium.

Brazil ride on Kaká

AFP, Berlin

A first-half moment of magic by AC Milan star Kaká gave defending champions Brazil a 1-0 win over Croatia in their opening World Cup Group F match at the Olympic Stadium here yesterday.

Kaká ended a frustrating opening period for the five-times winners when he sent a curling left foot drive zipping past helpless 'keeper

Stipe Pletikosa one minute before the break for his 11th goal in the national shirt and it proved sufficient for the points with Australia and Japan to come.

The victory also gave Brazil their eighth consecutive World Cup win, a new record in the history of the competition.

The effort lit up a match which initially had failed to ignite before a capacity crowd of 72,000 and came

just days after Kaká told reporters he needed to improve his left-footed shooting.

Mission accomplished on this evidence.

In contrast to Kaká's dynamism, Ronaldo failed to shine and was hauled off midway through the second half, leaving the Real Madrid forward still looking for the goal that would see him surpass

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

Rusty start for France

REUTERS, Stuttgart

A lacklustre France failed to tame Switzerland in their World Cup opener yesterday, having to be content with a 0-0 draw from a tight, tactical battle at the Gottlieb Daimler Stadium.

The 1998 champions, who had drawn with their neighbours twice in World Cup qualifying, could not surprise a compact and well organised Swiss side on a hot, sunny evening. They have not scored in the finals since they won the title eight years ago.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

TODAY'S MATCHES	TEAM	TIME	VENUE
	Spain v Ukraine	6:50 pm	Leipzig
	Tunisia v Saudi Arabia	9:50 pm	Munich
	Germany v Poland	12:50 am (Thursday)	Dortmund

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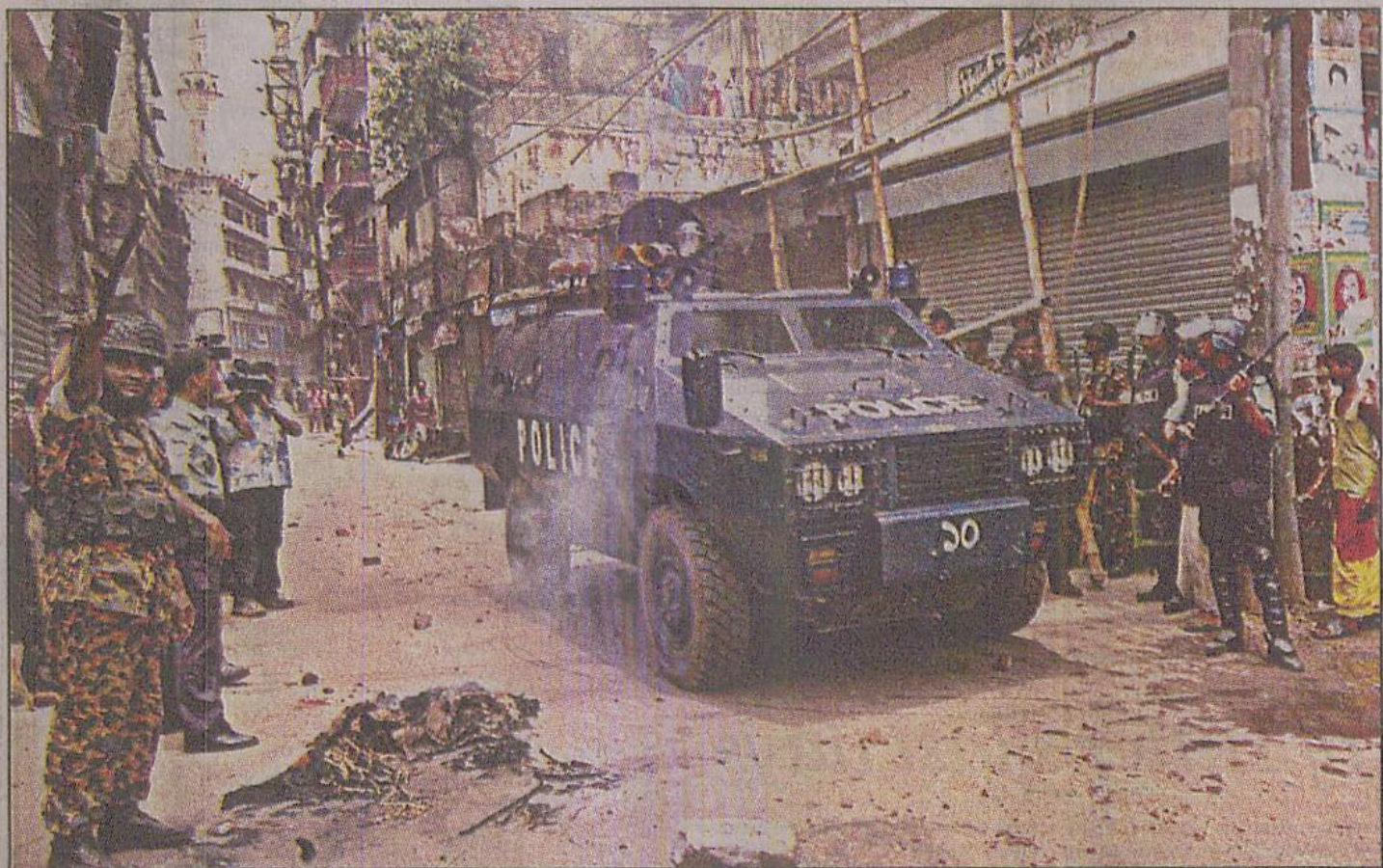


PHOTO: STAR

A police armoured vehicle patrols the streets at Lalbagh in the capital following a series of clashes erupted there between law enforcers and pickets during the hartal hours yesterday.

Clashes mark first day of 36-hr hartal

100 injured; vehicles set ablaze

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sporadic clashes between police and pro-hartal activists in the capital and elsewhere in the country left over 100 people injured on the first day of the 36-hour hartal from 6:00am yesterday enforced by the Awami League (AL)-led 14-party opposition combine.

The law enforcers arrested at

least 30 activists of the AL and its allies in the capital on charge of violent picketing during the shutdown.

Pro-hartal pickets set fire to seven vehicles and damaged at least 10 more in the city.

The opposition combine called the hartal that ends at 6:00pm today to press home its demands

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

INDIAN INSURGENTS KILLING 8 of the dead still unidentified

Raid conducted on tips from 2 drug peddlers

STAR REPORT

Bodies of the 10 suspected Indian insurgents killed in a gunfight between them and a joint team of army and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) on remote Bhuichhari Mukh frontier at Baghaichhari in

Rangmati were handed over to police on Monday night.

The joint force recovered 10 firearms and a huge amount of explosives from the insurgents' den after the gun battle.

Meanwhile, the Indian High

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

3 DEPZ garment units closed

Youngone factories still out of production

EMRAN HOSSAIN EMON

Three factories in Dhaka Export Processing Zone (DEPZ) were closed yesterday following workers' unrest and untoward incidents while Youngone Group could not resume production in their factories in the zone.

Youngone's factories remained closed yesterday following work-

ers' unrest and clashes inside the factory on Monday. "Under the circumstances, Youngone is not in a position to open their factories in DEPZ till the situation improves," the company said in a press release yesterday.

Hoplun (BD) Ltd, Paddocks Jeans Ltd and Redpoint Jacket Ltd also suspended production as the workers demonstrated on factory

premises yesterday demanding higher wages and protesting against the authorities' failure to meet their demands.

Meanwhile, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and police arrested eight people and recovered three machetes and at least 30 iron-rods at Redpoint Jackets Ltd. Workers of the factory alleged the arrestees

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

DEAL FOR RMG WORKERS Govt forms 15 teams to watch implementation

UNB, Dhaka

The government yesterday formed 15 teams to ensure implementation of the tripartite agreement signed on Monday by the government, garment owners and workers' leaders to ensure labour rights and peaceful atmosphere in the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

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The new fees will be effective from July 2006. Existing students are also entitled to the subsidy for their remaining courses.



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