

Involve local govt in making voter list within two months

Speakers tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With a view to preparing correct and updated voter list within two months, local government (LG) should be involved in preparing data-based voter roll with photographs while the Election Commission (EC) will monitor the entire process, said the speakers at a roundtable yesterday.

They said chairmen and members of union parishads or ward commissioners will conduct the preparation of voter list ahead of the next parliament election because they know every people of their own locality.

The roundtable on 'Fair and acceptable election: Some proposals' was organised by Jatiya Paribekhak Parishad (National Observers' Council) at the National Press Club in the city.

Former chief election commissioner Justice Abdur Rouf said it is not difficult to prepare proper data-

based voter list within 60 days if local government is involved in preparing it with photographs.

"At this moment, voter identity cards are not essential for fair election, but without data-based voter list, one cannot expect correct voter list," he added.

Justice Rouf said data based centre will have to be set up at thana level so that local people can easily correct their names and addresses.

The caretaker government should take effective measures for making data-based voter list immediately, he added.

Dr Ferdous Ahmed Qureshi, editor of Dainik Deshbangla, said the tasks of preparing voter list and voter identity cards will have to be decentralised and handed over to local government instead of the EC.

"A total of Tk 122.75 crore will be needed for making data-based voter list with photographs and additional Tk 27 crore will be required for making identity cards

for all voters," said Dr Qureshi while presenting his keynote paper at the roundtable.

Monira Khan, president of Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA), said the EC failed to make a proper voter list due to its politicisation.

Dr Badiul Alam Majumder, country director of The Hunger Project, said the EC had wasted crores of taka for making a faulty voter list.

The caretaker government should take measures to reconstruct the EC.

Dr Mustafizur Rahman said a election review board should be formed on the eve of the next general election.

Executive Editor of Dainik Deshbangla Rezaul Karim Talukdar moderated the roundtable which was participated by AP Bureau Chief Farid Hossain, writer Badru Alam Khan, Dr Fazlul Kabir and Tofazzel Hossain.

ACC chief, 2 others to quit if president requests

UNB, Dhaka

Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Chairman Justice Sultan Hossain Khan yesterday said he and two other ACC commissioners would resign without any hesitation if request is made by the president and the chief adviser for reconstructing the watchdog body.

"If the president and the chief adviser request me and my two other colleagues to step down, thinking that we are the obstacles on the way to the reconstitution of the commission, we will not take more than a second to do so," he told UNB at his office.

His observations came when there has been an outcry against inaction of the ACC in the wake of an apprehensive spread of corruption and a call for revamping the commission.

The ACC chairman said the decision to resign would be a collective one.

When reminded that constitutionally they could not be removed without forming Supreme Judicial Council, he said, "That is out of the question, as charges based on which Supreme Judicial Council can be referred to do not exist here."

Furthermore, Justice Sultan said, "We do have self-esteem."

In reply to a question, he said he is yet to be contacted by the government about the reconstitution of the commission.

Asked to comment on the recent remarks of Communications Adviser and former director general of the now-defunct Bureau of Anti-Corruption Maj Gen (retd) MA Matin, who said the ACC should be made free from the 'clowns', he said, "The remarks are unfortunate."

Welcoming the initiatives of the caretaker government to make the ACC active, he said that should the government seek any cooperation in this regard, he would provide that.

Hasina to visit Tungipara today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina will visit the mazar of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Tungipara in Gopalganj today.

Hasina, accompanied by several leaders of her party, will leave Dhaka for Tungipara at 8:00am.

She will place wreaths at the mazar and pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

Hasina, also chief of the AL-led grand alliance, will attend a milad mahfil organised by Tungipara upazila unit of AL there.

The AL president will return to Dhaka on January 31, says a press release.

CG mulls new TV licence system

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The caretaker government is considering introducing a new licence procedure in purchasing television sets, under which a purchaser has to pay instant licence fee to the seller.

A meeting of Law and Order Committee yesterday took the move, said Communications Adviser MA Matin, who is also a member of the committee.

He said the government is also considering exempting licence fee of the television users who have already purchased television sets but did not pay the fees.

The meeting asked the law enforcers not to harass any television users in the name of mandatory licensing.

27 OSDs to monitor fertiliser supply activities

BSS, Dhaka

Twenty-seven officers on special duty (OSDs) of the establishment ministry have been attached to the industries ministries, an official handout said yesterday.

The officers (deputy secretaries) will monitor and strengthen the activities of fertiliser supply and marketing from 21 buffer stocks and six urea fertiliser factories in Rajshahi, Khulna and Barisal divisions.

They are M Ibrahim, M Zahangir Alam, SM Ebadur Rahman, M Mostak Hasan, Khurshid Alam, Priyo Jyoti Khisa, M Wahidul Islam Khan, Mohammad Yusuf, Lokman Hossain Mia, M Ilias Bhuiyan, M Nasir Uddin, Dr M Ferdous Hossain, Hari Prasad Pal, Shahadat Hossain Chowdhury, M Zamal Uddin Ahmed, M Abdus Salam Sarker, Abul Kalam Azad, M Zahidul Islam, Nurd Islam, Abul Bashar, M Arshad Hossain, M Mokhlesur Rahman Sarker, Abdul Quddus Khan, M Nurul Amin, M Ilias Laskar, Sajjadul Hasan, M Abdul Haque and Benjamin Hambrom.



PHOTO: PID
Chief Adviser Dr Fakhruddin Ahmed addresses officers of the armed forces at Dhaka cantonment yesterday.

CG to ensure credible polls
Hopes German envoy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

German Ambassador in Dhaka Frank Meyke has expressed the hope that the caretaker government (CG) will ensure all preconditions for free, fair and credible elections as early as possible to strengthen democracy in Bangladesh.

"I am confident that the caretaker government, with its widespread support, will be able to provide the prerequisites for free, fair and credible elections as early as possible for strengthening democracy in Bangladesh," he said.

Meyke was speaking at the monthly luncheon meeting of the Foreign Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) in the city yesterday.

"We welcome the positive political steps taken by the caretaker government, its measures for the improvement of governance, particularly its action against corruption, and its implementation of the separation of the judiciary from the executive," he said.

The German ambassador, on behalf of the European Union, urged all election stakeholders to carry out their responsibilities ensuring confidence in the democratic process of the country.

He said a credible election strengthening the democratic process in Bangladesh is also important for the improvement of investment perspectives.

About German investment in Bangladesh, the ambassador said, "We are aware that foreign companies find a legal framework considered to be among the best in Asia in terms of tax holidays, repatriation of profits and fiscal incentives of various kinds."

"However, we also know that there are many obstacles like massive bureaucratic tangles, frequent power cuts, a congested port with a large amount of strikes and nationwide political blockades that intimidate the newcomer," he said.

Speaking at the meeting, the foreign investors urged the government for weekly holiday on Sunday instead of Friday.

RU teacher gets death threat

RU CORRESPONDENT

A teacher of Rajshahi University (RU) received a death threat from outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBPC) yesterday.

The PBPC has issued the threat to Associate Professor Fayekuzzaman of Islamic history and culture department over telephone.

It threatened to kill him if he does not pay Tk 25 lakh, the teacher told The Daily Star.

Fayekuzzaman filed a general diary (GD) with Motihar police in this connection yesterday.

Free treatment for acid victims

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The

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JU CORRESPONDENT

The results of the admission tests held under 2006-2007 academic sessions for first year honours courses at Jahangirnagar University (JU) have been published.

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