

CA for DCs' active role in curbing graft

New dawn, new opportunities

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constitution and law," he said.

During his guidelines-oriented address to the deputy commissioners, the caretaker chief dwelt on a number areas, including social and economic issues, public service, law and order and the government's policies and plan of action.

He discouraged unnecessary eviction of small and poor traders from urban and rural hats and bazars. "Informal economy plays an important role in the economy of Bangladesh through generating employment," he said.

The chief adviser asked the district authorities to take necessary steps within their jurisdiction for rehabilitating the poor and small traders.

About providing better public service, he suggested them to hang "client charter" in their respective offices to inform the service-seekers about the details to get government service promptly and smoothly.

The chief adviser urged the civil servants to come out of the "traditional mindset and system" in rendering services to the people.

Cabinet Secretary Ali Imam Majumdar, Divisional Commissioner of Sylhet Aziz Hasan, Deputy Commissioners of Comilla Md Manzurur Rahman and Deputy Commissioner of Jessore Md Abul Hossain also spoke.

Advisers to the caretaker government, secretaries of different ministries, high civil and military officials and the divisional commissioners were present.

The chief adviser said there will be little scope for corruption if people are allowed to know the status of their works in government offices and the timeframe to have them done. "For that, strong monitoring is needed to find out the reasons behind unusual delay to have a job done and improve the standard of services."

He said "client charter" is being introduced in various government departments and institutions to provide standard services.

"The government is determined to establish good governance, but that is not possible overnight. Institutional reforms are needed to ensure good governance and the present government is working on that," he said.

As part of the reform measures, the CA said, the Election Commission, the Anti-corruption Commission and the Public Service Commission are being recast through appointment of honest and competent persons to key positions.

He asked the field-level officials to increase interactions with people, which will help them know their problems and resolve those accordingly.

He said an honest and efficient administration is necessary for building up a knowledge-based society to survive in this competitive world.

Speaking on the occasion, the DCs of Comilla and Jessore expressed their firm determination to carry out their jobs without fear or favour to win the fight against corruption.

The divisional commissioner of Sylhet said improvement of civil service is essential to sustain the outcome of various reforms and achievements of the caretaker government.

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programme lies in the fund allocation – a huge Tk 3,633 crore, or 31 percent higher than last year's, goes to power sector that so lamely limps along for lack of any direction in the last five years when the four-party alliance was in power. If nothing else, the future growth that could see Bangladesh as a middle-income country would depend on availability of adequate and quality power supply. And then the much grinded term 'rural development' can be given a new meaning now – until now it mostly meant development of the party loyalists – by channeling funds to the real needs and not to bridges that can stand unfinished for decades without the villagers ever raising a finger to them.

But what is still unclear is how the finance adviser is going to address the lax implementation capability of the line ministries – already it has been reported that the administration has further slackened off now and piling files are just one evidence. The fact that this year Bangladesh is witnessing the lowest ADP implementation in years – only 44 percent of the funds used in 10 months, which is 5 percent lower than last year – is just another. Here, the caretaker government can show some spunk to sort out the age-old implementation problems – we are all familiar with the same jargons of frequent change in project directors, delay in land acquisition and delay in negotiation with donors. Aziz can now take the bull by the horn and throw the mucks off the ring once forever. His proposal to appoint the same project director for the entire duration of the project plus six months is a step in the right direction.

A new reality for the policymakers this year may be the rediscovered importance of the agriculture sector – a weak Boro has already sent projected growth figures on a downward course of varying degrees as estimated by different organisations and institutions. Notwithstanding the shrinking role of the agriculture in GDP – it now counts for about 17 percent of the GDP – the sector still employs over 50 percent of the population, and the finance adviser has to think ways of revamping the sector by pumping more money into it. Big diesel subsidy has already been incorporated in the proposed budget for the next year, it has been reported. Some other form of input subsidy may also be there. But more important now is keeping the supply chain intact, making inputs available so that predicaments like the recent fertiliser and diesel crisis at the farmers' level do not happen. The informal supply chain to the rural areas has to be brought into confidence simply because of its importance in serving the unreachable.

Despite a good industrial performance this year, Aziz will have to invent more ways to pump new life into the sector as fears of a rollback are echoed from different quarters. Banks are already saddled with more than Tk 10,000 crore in idle money and they say options are now limited for investment. Entrepreneurs are not coming forth with projects. Meantime, the risk of the capital market getting overheated is rising as new scripts are slow to hit the market. Confidence building will be just one side of the game now, but putting a relaxed interest regime and allowing more financial products will be equally important. And many of the jobs mentioned earlier such as fighting inflation will also be vital for the industry as higher inflation will surely lead to demand for wage hike, eroding competitiveness.

But transferring income to the poor so that the widening rich-poor gap can be filled may prove the adviser's toughest and trickiest job to come. The household income and expenditure survey of 2005 shows how income distribution has been skewed in half a decade to the time of survey – the share of national income going to the bottom 5 percent of the poor has shrunk to 0.77 percent in 2005 from 0.93 percent in 2000. Income disparity is again unequally manifested across regions – Khulna and Barisal are now the worst-off areas.

Turning eye to the agriculture and the rural non-farm sector can be one solution to bridge the rich-poor gap. On the other spectrum will be the subsidy and safety net programmes. But in the middle will remain investment in quality education that always plays a significant role in ensuring higher wages. Mirza Aziz's budget will prove if that vital link is properly served.

4 teachers asked to skip exam process

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tampered in the tabulation sheets. There were also allegations of possible irregularities in evaluating the answer papers.

A fact-finding committee headed by Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof AFM Yusuf Haider was formed on February 28 last year to investigate these allegations.

The committee reviewed the tabulation sheets of all examinees and reported a good number of mistakes in them.

It however did not get any proof of leakage of question papers and mark tampering.

DU Syndicate, the highest decision making authority of the university, took the decisions on the basis of the report submitted by this committee.

The authorities said the corrected results will be published soon.

Meanwhile, several members of the fact-finding committee said after taking statements of the teachers, officials and students concerned and verifying related information during their investigation, they think there are possibilities of question paper leakage.

Then acting examination controller Mohammad Bahalul Haq Chowdhury told the committee that he tried to stop publication of the results when the office of the Controller of Examinations was processing the tabulation sheets. Bahalul claimed that examination committee chairman Prof Ataur Rahman threatened him to publish the results fast.

The disputed results were published in June 2005 with Pro-VC AFM Yusuf Haider's signature.

A number of teachers questioned the legitimacy of Prof Haider's inclusion in the fact-finding committee as he had approved the tabulation sheets.

"All the allegations still remain unsolved and one cannot rule out the possibility of question paper leakage. We asked the authorities to form an investigation committee," said Prof Sadeka Halim, a member of the syndicate who issued a note of dissent against the syndicate decision. Prof Sadeka was also a member of the fact-finding committee.

Former president of Dhaka University Teachers' Association Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique said such allegations will remain as stain on the university's goodwill and its examinations system. "There should be a proper investigation into this incident," he said.

Vice-Chancellor Prof SMA Faiz said although there is no proof of question paper leakage and mark tampering, there were some other serious irregularities in the examination process.

"The number of first class achievers changed because of mistakes in counting marks, so the syndicate has decided to bar the teachers concerned from all examination processes of the department."



The photograph titled 'Campaign' by deputy director of Bangladesh Fire Service and Civil Defence Selim Newaz Bhuiyan, *inset*, won silver medal in an international photography contest in Japan organised by the Scouts of Asia Pacific region. Selim will be awarded the medal on October 22 during APR Scout Conference in Tokyo.

Ten robbers arrested in Gazipur

A CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested a gang of 10 robbers at Tongi in Gazipur on Tuesday night.

The arrestees were identified as Mohammad Hanif alias Nabi Hossain, 30, Mohammad Biplob Sheikh, 30, Mohammad Hamid Ali, 28, Mohammad Ashiq, 28, Mohammad Sobhan, 25, Mohammad Nasim Mallik, 32, Mohammad Salam, 45, Mohammad Dulal alias Faqir Ali, 20, Tamiz Uddin alias Tapu, 50 and Mohammad Mashur Rahman, 45.

Rab sources said a team of Rab-11 raided Zilani Market where the criminals were plotting a robbery and arrested them.

Rab members seized a volt cutter, machete and other weapons from their possession.

Major Maksudul Bari, deputy director of Rab-11, informed that two cases have already been filed against Nabi Hossain, the leader of the gang, with Kaliganj and Joydevpur police stations.