

EC moves to make NRBs, enclave people voters

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission (EC) has initiated steps for registering non-resident Bangladeshi citizens and the citizens who live in Bangladesh enclaves surrounded by Indian territories.

Election Commissioners -- Sahul Hossain and Brig Gen (retd) M Sakhawat Hossain -- yesterday met Foreign Adviser Iftekhhar Ahmed Chowdhury in the adviser's office at the foreign ministry and sought government's cooperation.

Election Commissioner Sahul Hossain met the foreign adviser last week also and discussed the issue of registering eligible expatriate citizens as voters.

"We requested the foreign adviser to inform the Indian government, during the current visit of the Indian foreign secretary to the country, about our plan to prepare the voter list and the issue of

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Charges pressed against Babar for possessing illegal arms, ammo

Falu placed on fresh remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday pressed charges against detained former state minister for home Lutfozzaman Babar in connection with possessing illegal firearms and ammunition at his Gulshan home while BNP former lawmaker Mossaddak Ali Falu was placed on a five-day fresh remand in a case filed in connection with misappropriating government relief materials.

A Dhaka court, meanwhile, adjourned the proceedings of a criminal case filed under the Public Safety Act against detained former law minister barrister Moudud Ahmed, former state minister for labour and employment Aman Ullah

Aman and three other former BNP lawmakers.

CASE AGAINST BABAR

Sub-inspector Mohammad Khabir Ahmed of Gulshan Police Station, who is also the investigation officer (IO) of the case, yesterday submitted the charge sheet against Babar before the court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka showing 16 people as prosecution witnesses.

This is the first time police pressed charges against Babar in connection with possessing arms illegally.

SI Helal Uddin of Gulshan Police Station filed the case against Babar on June 3 under the Arms Act.

In his charge sheet, the IO men-

tioned that the charges brought against Babar were preliminarily proved. So, he should be tried. The charge sheet will be placed before the court tomorrow.

The army-led joint forces recovered four firearms--a shotgun, a rifle, a pistol, and a Brazilian revolver--two magazines, and 297 bullets during a raid in Babar's Gulshan home on May 28.

Police said Babar failed to show any documents for the foreign revolver.

Following his arrest that day, Babar was taken on a four-day

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ACC asks Morshed, Mayor Mohiuddin for wealth report

BSS, Dhaka

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday served notices upon former foreign minister M Morshed Khan and his son Faisal Morshed Khan to submit their wealth statements to the commission.

A senior official of the ACC said that the notices were sent to the Gulshan residence of Morshed Khan. The caretaker received the notices in absence of Khan and his son, he said.

The two were asked to submit their wealth statements within seven days.

The ACC also served notices upon detained Chittagong Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury to submit the accounts of his assets to the commission within seven days.

The notice was sent to him

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Dhaka gets IAEA nod to set up N-plant

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh along with seven other countries has got the much-desired approval of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to set up nuclear reactors for power generation.

Disclosing the news, Power and Energy Advisor Tapan Chowdhury told reporters yesterday that the present caretaker government has initiated various moves to resolve the country's nagging power crisis.

His disclosure has come at a time when the country has been experiencing the worst power crisis with 3,200 MW of generation against its demand for over 5,000 MW.

The adviser, however, refrained from detailing the IAEA approval or Bangladesh's plan for the plant.

Official sources said the Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC), instructed by the government, is considering reviving an old plan to set up a nuclear power plant.

"Capacity of the proposed nuclear power plant is likely to be 600 MW and it will be set up at Ruppur in Dinajpur where about 260 acres of land was acquired before the country's independence," a BAEC official told the news agency.

Another source said a high-powered delegation will visit South Korea next month to attend a conference of the IAEA and discuss the matter with a Korean power company, which offered to invest in the nuclear power plant project.

The source also said an IAEA

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Govt not imposing reforms on parties Says Mainul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Adviser Barrister Mainul Hossain yesterday said the government is not imposing reforms on the political parties; it is rather helping them in their endeavours to bring reforms.

"We are not interfering, rather we want to assist the move for reforms," Mainul told reporters after the seventh meeting of the advisers' committee on law and order at the home ministry.

Communications Adviser Maj Gen (retd) Abdul Matin, Education Adviser Aiyub Quadri, secretaries to the home, communications, health and education ministries and senior officials concerned were present at the meeting.

The law adviser said politics is still going on inside houses and discussions on reforms are taking

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Proposal ready to up fertiliser price 51pc

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The government is going to raise the price of per tonne urea fertiliser by 51 percent in a bid to minimise the loss of government-run fertiliser factories and to stop smuggling of fertiliser to the neighbouring countries.

The industries ministry has prepared a proposal in this regard, which will be placed at tomorrow's meeting of the Advisers' Committee on Economic Affairs.

Production cost of per kilogram paddy may rise by 2 percent if the proposed price of urea fertiliser is implemented, the proposal calculates.

Current price of per tonne urea

fertiliser at the factory end is Tk 4,800, which has been proposed to set at the current production cost of Tk 7,000, with an increase of 45.83 percent. On the other hand, per tonne urea fertiliser is now being sold at Tk 5,300 at the buffer end, which will be hiked to Tk 8,000, with an increase of 50.94 percent, as per the industry ministry proposal.

The proposal said that annual demand of fertiliser in Bangladesh is 28 to 29 lakh metric tonnes while the six government-run fertiliser factories' present production capacity is 17 to 18 lakh metric tonnes at the highest. The rest of the demand is met by import and

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LANDSLIDE PROBE REPORT DoE, city corporation, forest office blamed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Absence of specific policy guidelines on hill management, lack of initiative to check indiscriminate hill cutting and encroaching on government land are the main reasons behind the rain-induced landslides in Chittagong that left 127 people buried alive on June 11.

Two committees formed to investigate the landslides and collapse of a Bangladesh Railway (BR) wall at Pahartali submitted their reports to the Chittagong divisional commissioner yesterday in which they also pointed out growth of illegal slums as another cause behind the tragedy.

The two committees headed by Additional Divisional Commissioner (revenue) MAN Siddique submitted a number of recommendations to the government, including preparing a national hill management policy.

A six-member committee formed to probe the landslides blamed Chittagong City Corporation (CCC), Department of Environment (DoE), Department of Forest and Chittagong Development Authority (CDA) for their failure to take effective measures to check massive hill cutting.

The probe bodies observed that these organisations and others

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PHOTO: STAR

Pangolins, which live on ants and termites, are endangered in Bangladesh and considered a threatened species worldwide. Locals of Begunbari of Amin Bazar captured this pangolin and informed Savar police of the matter. The photo was taken from Savar Police Station yesterday.

First Test from today

BISHWAJIT ROY from Colombo

Survive as long as possible will be the key when Bangladesh, under new captain Mohammad Ashraful, face mighty Sri Lanka in the first Test of a three-match series at the Sinhalese Sports Club (SSC) ground here today.

The Tigers have proved a point in the slam-bang one-day cricket. But they are yet to make an impression

in the more demanding five-day game. And no doubt Ashraful's men would be up against a Herculean task of avoiding a series whitewash against a team that is almost invincible even against the top-ranked sides in their own den.

There was also hardly anything encouraging for the visitors as far as statistics are concerned against the Lankans, who won all the seven

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Dhaka, New Delhi foreign secretaries talk today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka and New Delhi foreign secretary-level talks start today with both sides expected to take advantage of the recent goodwill between the two neighbours.

The top diplomats, meeting after a two-year hiatus, are also expected to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to remove non-tariff barriers tomorrow at the end of the two-day talks.

Indian Foreign Secretary Shivshankar Menon touched down at the capital yesterday afternoon to lead the Indian delegation at the talks.

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Rejoinder

Awami League leader and former civil aviation minister Engineer Mosharraf Hossain sent a rejoinder to a news item published in The Daily Star on June 18 headlined "Big shots levelled vast terrain of Ctg hills".

In the rejoinder, Mahbubur

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