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EC to unveil poll 'roadmap' today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) ATM Shamsul Huda will announce today (Sunday) a complete road map for holding the stalled ninth parliamentary elections with specific timetable for preparing the voter list with photographs and a tentative date for the polls.

CEC Huda earlier hinted that the polls might be held late November or early December next year. The procedure for preparing the voter list is also expected to be mentioned in the roadmap, sources in the Election Commission (EC) said.

In the past, the EC always prepared the voter list by sending its staff on door-to-door visits. But this time, people will have to go to the voter registration centres to have their names registered.

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Reformists mull BNP council minus Khaleda

Prepare to call requisition meeting if chairperson does not oblige

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pro-reform leaders of the BNP led by its Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan are preparing to hold the party council keeping party Chairperson Khaleda Zia away.

They plan to call a requisition meeting of the councilors to decide on party council if the party chairperson does not consent to holding it to implement the reform proposals.

One of the proposals says no one would be eligible for the post of party chairperson or secretary



Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan

general for more than two terms.

"Requisition meeting will be held as an alternative step if the chairperson doesn't agree with us to hold the party council," Mannan Bhuiyan told a press briefing at his Gulshan residence in the capital yesterday.

He however said on completion of preparations, he will seek permission from the party chairperson to hold the council.

"She [Khaleda] has already opposed some of our proposals openly. So, we will take an alternative step for holding party council if

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Sajeda for immediate election

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) presidium member Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury yesterday called upon the caretaker government to hold parliamentary election without delay, so that a democratic government can be formed.

"We urge the caretaker government to hold the polls early for establishing democracy permanently," the AL leader said while talking to the reporters at the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum in Dhanmondi.

Sajeda was accompanying AL chief Sheikh Hasina.

Criticising the government for changing the name of the navy frigate BNS Bangabandhu, she observed that it was the caretaker government who spoke against distortion of history. "Is it (changing

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Curbing loans, hiking fertiliser, energy prices to hurt economy

CPD in criticism of BB policy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) yesterday criticised government plans to curb loan-disbursing capacity of the banks and increase prices of natural gas, fertiliser, power and petroleum products, bowing down to World Bank (WB) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) suggestions.

"It will be suicidal for us if we accept these (donors' suggestions) without paying attention to our independent policy space," CPD Executive Director Debapriya Bhattacharya said while giving its reaction to the recently announced monetary policy of the central bank.

He asked the government to give attention to reducing systems losses of power and gas instead of increasing their prices.

Termining Bangladesh Bank (BB) plan to squeeze credit flow in the private sector a wrong decision, Debapriya said it will hamper private sector investment as well as achievement of the target of seven percent growth.

"Contractionary policy will be counter productive for inflation," he added.

The BB governor is giving contradictory explanations for price spiral of essentials, Debapriya said. "We did not find any similarity between the central bank's previous statements on price hike of

essentials and the views they (BB) are giving now through its monetary policy."

The CPD also disagreed with the BB views on recent upward trend of inflation and claimed that the increase is not due to demand-pull but due to cost-push.

The renowned economist said inflation rate is increasing due to problems on supply side, not for increased demand as explained by the IMF. "On the basis of their (BB) explanations, the IMF suggested the government to limit credit flows and the central bank acted on the IMF suggestion," he said.

"In the past, Bangladesh Bank and local economists gave similar

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Sohel F Rahman's office property confiscated

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday raided the office of Beximco Group Chairman Sohul F Rahman in Dhanmondi and confiscated his office property following a court order.

On June 21, the court issued the order as Sohul failed to appear before it in a deception case within the stipulated time fixed by the court.

The law enforcers raided Sohul's office on the second floor of Beximco Group head office for one and half hours starting from 1:10pm.

The seized materials include chair, table, sofa set, tea table, land phone set, some documents and miscellaneous office items.

Following the filing of two deception cases with New Market Police Station against Salhan F Rahman, now detained, and Sohul

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Police confiscate furniture at Beximco Chairman Sohul F Rahman's office at Dhanmondi in the capital yesterday following a court order.

PHOTO: STAR

Sircar's rejoinder

Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar yesterday protested at M Hafizuddin Khan's write-up that was published in The Daily Star on Saturday under the headline "Sircar violated basic standard of financial propriety".

In a rejoinder, he said the interpretation given by M Hafizuddin is totally confusing and misconceived.

"As regards his [Hafizuddin] remark, 'the then Prime Minister Khaleda Zia did not approve his [speaker's] medical bill', the Hon'ble Speaker merely quoted a paragraph of rejoinder which reads as 'After perusal of the summary of the prime minister's office sent the summary back stating—the summary as stated is sent back as directed for necessary action under Jatiya Sangsad Sachibhalaya Ain 1994', reads the rejoinder sent by the public relations of the parliament secretariat.

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Commentary

When a Speaker speaks the unspeakable

Sircar's personal undertaking proves that he was doubtful about the legality of his own action

MAHFUZ ANAM

Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar held a press conference on Thursday last to condemn this paper's lack of ethics and shoddy journalism, and claimed that our purpose was nothing more than to denigrate him. We are writing this comment not so much because he criticised us or questioned our motive but because, while doing so, he revealed a sense of value and a pattern of thinking that we feel strongly that we should challenge. We have been further motivated by

the rejoinder he sent against Mr Hafizuddin's comments published yesterday, in which he "concluded that Parliament Secretariat Act, 1994, under which he acted in good faith is supreme and no regulation and rule can override the act of parliament." This position seems to be directly contrary to his undertaking that he would be prepared to return the money if competent judicial body decides so. When constitutional amendments can be set aside by the Supreme Court then why should the Parliament Secretariat Act, 1994 be supreme?

Our views are not directed at Mr Sircar as an individual but at the holder of the high office of the Speaker, whose views, values and actions necessarily reflect the dignity of the parliament and by implication the practice of democracy itself.

In trying to prove our mal-intention he questioned how we could give his news more prominence than that of the army chief. His comment implies that the army chief is a far more important person than the Speaker of the Jatiya

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Sofa set seized from Harris Chy's home

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Kanaighat police yesterday seized one sofa set and a rack of clothes from the village home of Harris Chowdhury, former political secretary to the former prime minister Khaleda Zia.

First Class Magistrate Abdul Hai Al Mahmud last week ordered to attach Harris' movable properties from his paternal house at Darpanagar under Kanaighat Police Station in connection with a case filed under Wildlife Preservation Act, sources said.

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Resignation won't save Faizee

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court (SC) registrar will send the resignation letter of controversial judge Faisal Mahmud Faizee to the president's office today after discussion at the Supreme Judicial Council on future steps following Faizee's resignation.

Legal experts said Faizee's resignation does not absolve him of his past crimes and he should be tried accordingly.

Faizee resigned on Wednesday night, 72 hours before he was scheduled to stand before the Supreme Judicial Council for keep-

ing reportedly 180 cases pending during his controversial tenure as a High Court (HC) judge.

Sources said the council may still investigate Faizee's past crimes.

The Anti-Corruption Commission is also likely to discuss Faizee's fraudulent act at its regular meeting today.

On March 27 this year, the president asked the Supreme Judicial Council to take a decision on Faizee.

The council was in the primary stages of investigating the allegation of keeping around 180 cases

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BTTB network glitch disrupts Internet service

STAR REPORT

A large section of Internet users in the capital were being deprived of stable service from noon yesterday because of problems in the BTTB's network that acts as a gateway to the submarine cable.

The Internet Service Providers Association of Bangladesh (ISPAB) says Internet services remain suspended from 12:30pm due to problems in the BTTB's router and Synchronous Transport Module (STM). The association in a press release claimed that except for three, no Internet Service Providers (ISPs) were able to provide Internet services.

It added that the ISPs were temporarily providing services through very small aperture terminals (VSAT), a two-way satellite ground station with a dish antenna.

According to a competent source in the Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB), out of its 70 ISP clients, 40

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NU clarification, our reply

The National University (NU) in a clarification to a story headlined "Teachers who never took any classes" published in The Daily Star on July 13 said the report is not based on facts and is likely to create confusion in the minds of the public.

The clarification signed by NU Public Relations and Publications Director Mohammad Moatter claimed that the NU teachers regularly take classes of PhD and MPhil courses and training programmes for teachers of the NU-affiliated colleges.

The clarification also said the order on the 38 NU teachers to take classes at four affiliated colleges has been postponed, not withdrawn, as the teachers found the language used in the letter objectionable.

It claimed that these teachers never misbehaved with the vice-chancellor (VC) and other high officials of the university.

It also said the information that the NU teachers do not come to the university regularly and usually sign attendance register once a week or two is untrue.

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Errors creep into nat'l identity cards

SHAKILAWAT LITON, back from Sreepur, Gazipur

Nilufa is married to Montazuddin, but on the new National Identity (NID) card, her husband's name is Mostafazuddin. On receiving her NID, Nilufa went rushing to the office of local municipality to rectify the error.

Abu Taher has been shown as a married woman in his NID and his husband's name is Shafia Khatun! Taher had the error corrected by visiting the municipality.

Like Nilufa and Taher, many

other residents of Sreepur municipality are crowding the municipality office to correct numerous errors on their NIDs, which were prepared along with an electoral roll containing the voters' photographs under a pilot project of Election Commission (EC).

Since the draft voter roll has not been made public yet, the locals registered as voters under the pilot project could not check for similar errors on it.

Officials at the local election office said they were still making preparations to make the draft list

available for registered voters who would then be able to go over it and request for corrections if they find any errors on it.

The understanding of the locals is that both the NIDs and the electoral roll will contain similar errors since those were prepared at the same time using the same voter information.

"Various mistakes are being detected on the national identity cards and we are helping the card holders have those corrected," said commissioner of ward 2 under

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Commissioner Salu held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday detained absconding ward commissioner Salim Ullah Salu of Ward No. 42 of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) from Moghbazar in the capital.

Rab also recovered a licensed shotgun, 38 bullets, two bottles of foreign alcoholic beverages, three cell-phone sets, three firearm licences, a pistol cover and two lethal weapons from the ward commissioner's residence.

Acting on tip-off, a Rab team from Rab-2 arrested the commissioner from the top floor of a 6-storied building at Ahammed

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20 July 2007 at 10 am

700 wkts for Murali

BISHWANT ROY from Kandy

Muttiah Muralidaran blew away Bangladesh on way to reach the 700-wicket milestone in Test cricket as Sri Lanka swept the three-match series with an innings and 193-run victory in the rain-interrupted third and final Test at the Asgiriya Stadium here yesterday.

Despite most of first two days'

play washed out, the Bangladesh batting found no answer to the rich Lankan attack as the visitors were bundled out for 176 in their second innings shortly before tea on the fourth day.

Bangladesh suffered innings defeats in all the matches to experience their worst Test series so far. The picturesque venue took a festive mood with the holiday

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