



EC puts the cart before the horse in Rajshahi

Goes for voter listing without amending electoral roll ordinance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission (EC) has started the field level task for preparing a fresh voter list with photographs in Rajshahi City Corporation (RCC) area without amending the existing electoral rolls ordinance, which does not allow such a move.

Directed by the EC, the local election office on July 29 started sending its enumerators on door-to-

door visits in the city corporation area to collect particulars of prospective voters with prescribed forms for preparing the voter list with photographs.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, legal experts termed the step 'unlawful' and asked the EC not to continue the task before amending Electoral Rolls Ordinance 1982. The ordinance asks the EC to update the existing voter list, but there is no

provision for preparing a new one.

The Supreme Court had also asked the EC to update the existing electoral roll several times.

"It seems that the task is unlawful. The Election Commission should have amended the law before beginning the task," Ghulam Rabbani, former judge of Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, said.

Former election commissioner

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GRENADE ATTACK ON UK ENVOY HuJi boss Hannan, 3 militants charged

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A Sylhet court yesterday framed charges against Mufti Abdul Hannan, chief of the outlawed Harkat-ul-Jihad (Huji), and three others for the grenade attack on British High Commissioner Anwar Choudhury in Sylhet in 2004.

Additional District and Sessions Judge Ferdous Ahmed framed the charges at about 10:30am in presence of the accused.

The other accused in the case are Mufti Hannan's brother Mofizur Rahman and Huji operatives Delwar Hossain Ripon and Sharif Shahedul Alam alias Bipul.

The judge also fixed August 14 for starting deposition of the prosecution

witnesses. The number of prosecution witnesses is 56, court sources said.

Coming out of the court Mufti Abdul Hannan went on shouting. "I am totally innocent, I am falsely implicated in the case. I know nothing about it," he told the reporters. "You all know well what Sheikh Hasina had done, she had staged a drama. She implicated me in the bomb case during her regime," the Huji chief added.

Another accused Shahedul also said that he had been falsely implicated in the case. "I was also not given the time to hire a lawyer to defend me," he added.

On July 29, District and Sessions

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Ex-BCL secretary Iqbal arrested on extortion charge

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The anti-crime taskforce members yesterday arrested former Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) general secretary Iqbal Rahim from the city's Shegunbagicha area and later he was charged in an extortion case, in which four other Awami League and its front organisation leaders were also made accused.

The others are Sweekchhasebok League President Bahauddin Nasim, Awami League Assistant Secretary and former student leader Shafi Ahmed, and ex-BCL leaders Shah Alam and SM Kamal.

Mirza Oaid, managing director of MRG Ltd, filed the case with Shahbagh Police Station at around 4:00pm.

Earlier at noon, the taskforce

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US diplomat
for lifting ban
on politics

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

US Charge d' Affaires Geeta Pasi yesterday urged to lift the ban on politics saying it is required to bring positive change in Bangladesh.

"Dialogue is part and parcel of an effective reform process. As such, lifting the ban on politics is absolutely critical as a kick start to positive change in Bangladesh. The arbitrary application of the ban has been a concern, both domestically and internationally," she said.

Geeta Pasi added lifting the ban does not mean ushering back the culture of violent partisan street politics. "It would signal that there is room for a new, constructive political discourse, and

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15 militants killed in fierce Pak clash

AFP, Miranshah

Pakistani troops backed by helicopter gunships killed 15 pro-Taliban militants in intense fighting in a troubled tribal zone bordering Afghanistan yesterday, the army said.

Separately security officials told AFP the Islamic rebels abducted four soldiers in the rugged North Waziristan region, where the United States alleges that al-Qaeda has created a safe haven to plan attacks against Western targets.

North Waziristan has seen a spike in violence since pro-Taliban rebels in the area scrapped a peace deal with the government on July 15, five days after

the army stormed a radical mosque in the capital, leaving scores dead.

Fighting raged for six hours after an army patrol came under attack after signalling three vehicles to stop at the Banda checkpoint in the conflict-torn region, said chief military spokesman Major General Waheed Arshad.

"Around 40 miscreants started firing at security forces and took positions in nearby hills, and security forces retaliated. Helicopter support was called in, there was a heavy exchange of fire," said Arshad.

"Fifteen miscreants are dead and we have their bodies with us. Two were injured and they have

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Court orders
attachment of
Bashundhara
chief's property

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday ordered attachment of properties of Bashundhara Group Chairman Ahmed Akbar Sobhan Shah Alam and seven others in connection with a case filed by the National Board of Revenue (NBR) for evading income tax.

Proceedings of detained former state minister for home Lutfozzaman Babar and ntv Managing Director (MD) Enayetur Rahman Bappi and two others were adjourned yesterday.

CASE AGAINST BASHUNDHARA CHAIRMAN

Judge Mohammad Azizul Haq

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UNDECLARED MONEY
Deadline now
Sept 30 for
legalisation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) yesterday extended the deadline for legalising undeclared but lawful income till September 30, 2007.

The decision was announced yesterday on the eve of the expiration of the previous deadline amid a huge response from taxpayers and a time extension request by Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI).

Till yesterday, the public exchequer received around Tk 300 crore in income tax from 8,559 persons. Their total declared income was Tk 1,622 crore.

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Plumes of smoke coming out of the gutted Jon Sing Textile Mills factory in Dhaka Export Processing Zone. The factory caught fire Monday afternoon but fabrics stored there continued to smoulder yesterday.