

## Indoor politics

**FROM PAGE 1**  
DFID (Department for International Development) in Bangladesh.

They visited the Rajshahi Divisional Stadium where the main data entry server has been set up and two voter registration centres at Madar Baksh Home Economics College and Barendra College.

The election officials informed them that the voter-listing project in RCC will need five more days to complete, with 2,42,253 voters registered so far. The number was 2,74,128 in the 2006 voter list, they said.

Briefing the journalists later, Shakhawat Hossain reiterated EC's firm stand on holding the general elections in due time.

"We requested the government to withdraw the ban on indoor politics for holding talks between the EC and the political parties over electoral reforms and other issues...and if the ban cannot be lifted completely at this moment, the government should at least create an environment for the talks," he said.

The election commissioner, however, said that the government is aware of the election roadmap by the EC and they have extended support to EC's steps. "So we still think that the government will allow politics in accordance with our programme."

"If the government thinks it will not be possible to lift the ban, some arrangements will be made for the talks," he said replying a question.

Shakhawat said that they would schedule the talks according to the roadmap. "All the parties will sit for the talks with us as they all want election and we, too, are on the way towards the election."

About some demands of several political parties, the election commissioner said that it was the matter of the parties themselves and the government. "What we want to say is that we don't want to move away from our roadmap," he added.

**BRITISH HIGH**

## Peoples Jute Mills

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Law enforcers later dispersed them.

The first instalment of the gratuity was scheduled for payment on August 31. But as it was a weekly holiday, the authorities moved to pay off the part yesterday.

The mill's project director, Habibur Rahman, said he did not get any government allocation for full payment, adding that refusal to accept instalments will result in no payment at all.

Meantime, tension is running high in the city's Alim Jute Mills where workers are yet to get their 30-week wage arrears.

The mill's project director said the government has stopped fund for buying raw materials to run the mill.

## BTV autonomy

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Just days before handing over power to a caretaker government, the then AL government in July 2001 passed the BTA to make BTV autonomous. But the law triggered enormous controversy over the government's sincerity alleging it allowed more control over BTV.

Besides, the law was made ignoring the high profile 16-member commission's major recommendations submitted after a year of its formation.

The then AL government at the fag end of its tenure in 2001 passed two laws to give autonomy to the state-run media.

While discussing the law ministry's proposal for enforcement of the BTA yesterday, the council of advisers asked the information ministry to revise the commission's recommendations and make suggestions that can be incorporated in the existing law. They believe that no political government will give autonomy to the state-run media, which were used by successive governments in the past as their mouthpiece, sources said.

The commission recommended that a single body run both BTV and Betar and that the president appoint the chairman and members of such a body for a five-year term.

But the laws made by the AL government said there will be two separate authorities for Betar and BTV, and the government will appoint the chairmen and members of the two authorities for three years each. And both the authorities will be accountable to the information ministry, and the government will have power to remove the chairmen and members to be chosen from among experienced persons in the fields of education, culture, journalism, administration and broadcasting. Besides, the information ministry will approve the budget of the two media, said the laws.

But the commission recommended that the government cannot remove the chairmen and members and that the National Broadcasting Commission, which will be formed comprising eminent personalities, will approve the budget for the two media. The commission will be accountable to the parliamentary standing committee on information ministry, it suggested.

### COMMISSIONER'S BRIEFING

Briefing the reporters at Rajshahi Divisional Stadium, British High Commissioner Anwar Choudhury expressed hope that the data entry and the election processes will be completed soon.

"As a friend of this country, we believe in enhancing the country's democracy...Everybody wants the return of a better democracy as soon as possible," he said.

The high commissioner termed the ongoing work for preparing the voter roll "a great job" and lauded the roles of the EC, army and the local people. He asked the authorities to be careful about security of the data being collected and the transparency in the system.

Anwar said that EC and army officials briefed him about the work they are doing and he is highly impressed.

"We are simply taken aback watching the levels of organisation, the kind of checking and the young people doing the data entry and the young students helping....," he added.

The high commissioner said that they have asked the people involved with the task to make sure that everybody is registered, specially the minority people and the disabled people from all wards in the city corporation.

"We hope that the voter registration project, if it is completed successfully, will be unique in Asia," Anwar said.

He also said that DFID has just handed over \$20 million to the Election Commission for the voter roll registration project. "Other donors will be giving more as the time goes on," he added.

Chris Austin, head of DFID in Bangladesh, said that the new voter list will create confidence among people. The British government is delighted to help in the project, he added.

Rajshahi voter listing task coordinator Lt Col Taher, deputy commissioner Khalilur Rahman and election officer Sayed Muhammad Musa were present at the briefing.

## Probe body

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"We are gradually advancing," Rahman said when asked about the progress of the commission's activities.

Commenting on the students' participation in the investigation process, he said, "The response from the students is very low. They did not turn up either for fear or any other reasons."

He, however, hoped that students' response would increase substantially when the university reopens.

DU Pro Vice-chancellor (VC) AFM Yusuf Haider Chowdhury, National University VC Syed Rashedul Hassain, DU former vice-chancellor AK Azad Chowdhury, Treasurer of Dhaka University Teachers' Association GM Chowdhury and Assistant Registrar Sheikh Md Shah Newaz gave their statements before the commission yesterday.

Seven persons including a student gave their statements in the first three working days of the commission.

Meanwhile, Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) yesterday called upon the city-dwellers to assist them by providing information about the persons involved in the violence.

The DMP said identities of the information providers would be kept secret.

Interested people can contact: Intelligence and Crime Information Department, Dhaka Metropolitan Police, 36, Minto Road, Ramna, Dhaka. Phone: 8331685, 8332406, 9337361. Fax: 9335866, 9336494. Mobile: 01711-883713, 01713-373193, 01711-605148, 01711-605147, 01711-883714, 01711-605144, 01711-368065. Email: jcdmp@police.gov.bd.

## DU provosts

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recent demonstrations at the varsity while he was abroad. They advised the VC to meet Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed to discuss the matter.

Faiz will sit with all department chairs and faculty deans today.

"We all feel insecure and everyone of the university family is devastated, anxious and afraid," Zahur Haq Hall Provost Zahidul Islam told reporters after the meeting.

Former Dhaka University Teachers' Association president AAMS Arefin Siddique told the reporters that they have demanded the release of their detained colleagues and asked the VC to take steps so that the campus situation returns to normal and the varsity can be reopened.

Referring to the judicial commission to investigate the demonstrations, Arefin said that the university's residential halls should be reopened, at least partially, to assist the investigation, otherwise the probe would remain incomplete.

The families of two detained DU teachers also met Faiz yesterday. The VC assured them of his full support and said that he would take up the matter with the high-ups in government.

## RMG export

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to put an end to the malpractice.

"As China and India do not get the generalised system of preference facility in European countries, some companies of the two countries try to export products using fake GSP certificates," a member of the investigation team said preferring anonymity.

Bangladeshi companies often failed to utilise the whole GSP facilities due to stringent rules of origin system, he said.

Commerce ministry sources said the government is going to take stern action against the officials and businessmen who have helped issuing fake GSP certificates to foreign companies.

The investigation team is supposed to prepare a full list of authorised offices and officials who have been designated to issue GSP certificates.

The team will advise the government to introduce the technology (ASYCUDA++) that is being used by the National Board of Revenue (NBR) for issuance of customs clearance.

The team has prepared a list of complaints made by European Union about the exports using fake GSP certificates.

The team is also considering how the previous governments took action against the officials and companies who had been involved with the forgery.

The EU's GSP offers lower tariffs or duty-free access for imports from 178 developing countries and territories into the EU market.

In 2002, EU imports worth 53 billion euros were made under GSP.

The European Community first implemented a GSP scheme in 1971.

General guidelines are drawn up for ten-year cycles for implementation of EU's GSP. Guidelines for the period 2006-2015 were adopted in 2004.

For products imported from GSP beneficiary countries, the EU's GSP grants either duty-free access or a tariff reduction, depending on which of the GSP arrangements a country enjoys.

## Foreign adviser

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our manufacturers. It is a very important source of food grains, fertiliser and energy. The intellectual and cultural connections between our two peoples go back centuries and there is a great possibility of converting these linkages to mutual economic and political benefits," Ifekhar added.

A foreign ministry handout said the Dhaka-Moscow relationship has 'remained in the backburner' and the visit aims to 'reinvigorate' the relations as "Today Russia is fast evolving as a power in political and economic arena and is once again poised to play a key role."

During his visit, Ifekhar will hold bilateral talks with Lavrov, and call on Prime Minister in-charge SE Naryshkin.

He will also hold meetings with acting Industry and Energy Minister IS Materov, and St. Petersburg Governor Valentina Matvienko.

As mandated by the Advisors Council of the caretaker government, Ifekhar will also sign a Consular Convention to codify consular practices by mutual consent, and the privileges and immunities of consular officers and offices from the laws of the "receiving State".

## VCs to meet

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the residential halls, Faiz said, "Now I am not in a position to make any straight comment about the reopening of the university and its dormitories. I was abroad during the incidents. Let me first know about the incidents in detail."

The VC met the hall provosts on Friday to know their opinions about the reopening of the dormitories. He will meet the chairpersons of the departments and directors of the institutes at the university's Senate building at 3:30pm today.

Campus sources said the provosts in the meeting urged the VC to take proper steps to reopen the dormitories immediately.

Meanwhile, a group of teachers yesterday met the DU vice-chancellor and placed their demand for release of their two detained colleagues—Prof Anwar Hossain, general secretary of Dhaka University Teachers Association (Duta), and Prof Harun-or-Rashid, dean of the Social Science Faculty.

On August 22, the government closed the DU and other universities for an indefinite period and also ordered vacating the dormitories in the wake of violent incidents on the campuses.

Later, a one-member judicial inquiry commission with Justice Habibur Rahman was formed to investigate the incidents.

## Office timing

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Authority Act 2001 and asked the information ministry to submit it after re-examination.

Chaired by Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed, the meeting approved a proposal for ratifying the agreement to set up South Asian University.

The meeting was apprised of the post-flood agricultural development activities, according to Chief Advisor's Press Secretary Syed Fahim Munaim.

Members of the Advisory Council, the cabinet secretary and the secretaries concerned attended the meeting at the Chief Adviser's Office.

## Benazir's party

**FROM PAGE 16**  
in the Pakistani capital, although he refused to confirm whether government representatives were meeting with Benazir this weekend.

But a Cabinet minister and a senior figure in the Pakistan People's Party in Islamabad said associates of Musharraf were in London for talks with Benazir's side. Both spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the issue and said they had no details of the discussions, whose outcome remained uncertain.

Farhatullah Babar, a spokesman for Benazir Bhutto's party, told The Associated Press on Friday that "we would like to know firmly whether the government agrees to our proposals for the transition to democracy or not."

"If we conclude that the talks are leading nowhere, we have a number of options," including breaking them off, Babar said in Islamabad.

Benazir said Wednesday that Musharraf had agreed to step down as military chief before he asks lawmakers for a new term as president in either September or October.

However, The New York Times reported on its Web site Friday night that the president of Pakistan's ruling party and one of Musharraf's closest allies, Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, said the president would resign from his post as army chief before parliamentary elections scheduled for early January. He told the newspaper in an interview that Musharraf would run for re-election while still in uniform.

Durrani, the information minister, stopped short Saturday of confirming that Musharraf would give up his uniform. Any such decision would be announced only by the president, he said.

"President Gen Pervez Musharraf's term as the army chief and the president expires in December, and he has said that he will follow the Constitution, and we think that he will take this decision at an appropriate time," Durrani said. "He will announce it himself."

Musharraf, who governed Pakistan virtually unchallenged for years after he seized power in 1999, is in a three-way fight for power with Benazir and another former prime minister, Nawaz Sharif, the man he deposed in a bloodless coup.

Musharraf once vowed not to let either return to Pakistan, accusing them of corruption and mismanaging Pakistan in the 1980s, when each served two truncated terms.

But he has lost support since a botched attempt to fire the country's top judge in March spawned street protests and widespread calls for an end to military rule.

Sharif vowed Thursday to return to Pakistan on Sept. 10 to wage a "decisive battle against dictatorship."

Hassan said the Pakistan People's Party had set a date in October for Bhutto's return to Pakistan but the party has yet to announce it.

Benazir's dialogue with the government has angered Sharif, who has accused Bhutto of breaking an agreement among opposition leaders to fight against prolonging Musharraf's regime.

## Plain-clothes men

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The plain clothed people showed photographs of Angel, Shyamol, Enam, Rony and Romel to the hall officials.

As the officials could not give any information on the basis of the students' nicknames, they beat up and left them injured.

The employees are Abu Taher, Shamsul Alam, Mujibur Rahman, Shafiqul Islam and Jahangir.

After the incident, the hall staffs along with the acting Hall Provost Nasir Uddin Munshi lodged a complaint to Vice-chancellor Prof SMA Faiz.

Faiz confirmed the incident and told The Daily Star that they talked to the authorities concerned. "What happened [yesterday] will not take place again," he hoped.

## ICCB cautions

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sector and export-oriented industries to make them aware of the latest tools used for exporting goods.

Mahbubur Rahman pointed out that the International Commercial Terms, known as 'Incoterms', are a set of uniform rules codifying interpretation of trade terms defining rights and obligations of both buyers and sellers in international transactions where commercial, legal and insurance responsibilities pass from one party to the other.

Incoterms are periodically revised by the ICC, and Incoterms 2000 is a revised version of Incoterms 1990 which clearly and accurately reflects trade practice.

Foreign direct investment (FDI) inflow to Bangladesh declined in the past year and the country is falling behind compared to other developing countries in terms of attracting FDI. "Diversifying the FDI basket is also emerging as a major challenge," Mahbubur Rahman said.

He also suggested that the Board of Investment should change its decision-making procedures and take quick decisions. Otherwise, whatever worthwhile proposals are in the basket will be diverted to other countries, he said.

Mamun Rashid, chairman of the ICC-B Standing Committee on Banking Technique and Practice, said using Incoterms correctly saves time, money and needless

litigation. Incorrect application or outdated use of the terms has contributed to the bulk of disputes involving commercial terms.

Mamun, also managing director of Citibank, NA, Bangladesh, urged all concerned to read the full text of Incoterms 2000 to ensure that the terms are applied correctly.

Mentioning that every nation is pursuing new market niche with an unrelenting effort, Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) President Anwar-ul-Alam Chowdhury said Bangladesh needs to explore new market to increase productivity as well as to sustain in the competitive world market.

He also said global business and trade scenario are very competitive and basically depend on 4 Ps such as product, place, price and promotion.

"The manifestation of globalisation has made business more dynamic in nature and competitive advantage-oriented. As a result, liberalisation of trade and providing equal opportunities to disadvantaged economies have been getting growing concerns in the global community," Anwar said.

ICC expert on Incoterms from Europe Pavel Andrie also spoke at the inaugural session.

Some 160 participants from apparel and knitwear industries attended the workshop.

## BBC Sanglap

**FROM PAGE 16**  
Conference Centre in the capital.

The panellists viewed that Dhaka University Teachers' Association General Secretary Prof Anwar Hossain's statement seeking apology to the army was unusual.

"Not a single person in the country will believe that the Dhaka University professor has willingly sought apology," said Hannan Shah, adding that the way teachers and students at the DU were harassed might invite sharp reaction when the university reopens.

He said it was the first time in the country's history that a university professor sought apology to the army.

Sultana Kamal said if the crisis is not resolved right now through discussion, the government cannot blame anyone for the looming sharp reactions.

Prof Moniruzzaman Miah agreed that teachers and students have to be appeased through dialogue.

Contradicting Law Adviser Mainul Hossain, the discussants said the present government is a caretaker one, not a national government. They said the government must not style itself a national government as the constitution does not provide for any such concept.

Hannan said the law adviser might not clearly understand the differences between national and caretaker governments, while Prof Sayeed said, "to uphold our national constitution, we must address this government as caretaker one."

Replying to a question, they also suggested that the government take strict measures to ensure that journalists are not harassed any more while on duty during emergency or crisis times.

The discussants also termed the government's decision of reopening the private university at the time when the public universities have been closed as discriminatory.

Sultana Kamal questioned the formation of this second caretaker government, saying "There is no provision in the constitution for two caretaker governments in a row".

Hannan Shah recommended the government to seek guidance from the Supreme Court as it has passed the stipulated 90 days.

Prof Abu Sayeed, however, mentioned the doctrine of necessity and said the next parliament will have to ratify the government.

Echoing Sayeed, Prof Miah said they will have to accept the activities of the present government, otherwise another problem might pop up.

The BBC Bangla Service in association with the BBC World Service Trust organised the event which was moderated by Kamal Ahmed.

## Khaleda

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Witnesses said some pro-Khaleda workers who gathered outside the grave compound also threw shoes and bricks and shouted 'agent' ... 'agent' when Bhuiyan was passing by a car with police protection after placing wreath.

They also tried to shove party's Vice President Maj (ret'd) Hafizuddin Ahmed and former state minister Shah Abul Hossain, now working with Bhuiyan who is trying to hold a party council to bring changes in party constitution. The law enforcers intervened to protect them.

Earlier, Mannan Bhuiyan reached the bailey bridge entrance point of the grave compound by a car under police protection but the other leaders had to leave their cars at a corner of Chandrima Udayan.

Senior party leaders expressed dissatisfaction at the government decision not to allow party chief Khaleda Zia to come out of her cantonment residence to visit the grave of Ziaur Rahman.

"It's unfortunate... Madam could not come here," Mannan Bhuiyan told the reporters after placing wreath.

Each and everyone of the party expected that madam would come, Hannan Shah said.

"It is regrettable that she [Khaleda] could not come here as the government did not allow. There is no case against her and she is not under arrested," said party's Joint Secretary General Nazrul Islam Khan, who is also the official spokesman of the party.

Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar and Deputy Speaker Akhtar Hamid Siddiqui also paid homage by placing wreath on Ziaur Rahman's grave.

BNP part organisations including Zia Parishad and Jatityabadi Sramik Dal placed wreaths and offered fateha at Zia's grave.

The party leaders also organised Quarkhwani and milad mahfil on the grave premises but following the government decision law enforcers did not allow more than 20 people at a time to join the programmes.

Among others party leaders Tanvir Ahmed Siddique, Shamsul Islam, Selima Rahman, Dhaka Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka, Ashraf Hossain, ZA Khan and Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir attended the programme.

## C'wealth secy

**FROM PAGE 1**  
parties on the roadmap to the elections by the end of 2008 but said people's full support and consent is required for the ongoing reforms to be legitimate and sustainable.

McKinnon called for lifting the state of emergency and the ban on indoor political activity because he is "Convinced that these are urgent and essential steps that need to be taken if the dialogue is to be meaningful and the roadmap implemented on schedule."

"I am also concerned about the very large number of political detainees, reportedly over 100,000, who have yet to be brought to trial. It is crucial for the caretaker government to respect the human rights of all citizens and to ensure that the rule of law and due process are respected," he said.

McKinnon added, "The judicial processes should deal with detainees swiftly, fairly and transparently."

He said it is important for the government to keep people up-to-date with the reform process, in order to retain the people's confidence, because "Only with their full consent and support that political reforms can have the legitimacy required to be sustainable."

## Tangail farmers

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flooded and over 70 percent of those got damaged.

About 26,195 hectares of land on which transplanted amon was cultivated were submerged by recent floods. Of those, 4,700 hectares of land were inundated at Mirzapur upazila in the district.

Jute cultivated on 5,046 hectares of land in the district went under water during floods. Of those, 1,650 hectares of land were inundated at Bhupur upazila.

Vegetables on 4,234 hectares of land in the district were inundated during the flood. Of those, 850 hectares of land were inundated at Mirzapur upazila in the district.

Other crops damaged by recent floods include transplanted amon, sugarcane, banana, pineapple, chilli, and ginger.

Local DAE officials said they have already distributed seeds of vegetable among the flood-affected farmers. They also said that the badly affected marginal farmers would be provided with seeds of different crops including rice, wheat, pulses, and winter vegetables for free.

Meanwhile, the farmers said that they were forced to buy amon seedlings at a very high price.

"Each 80 bundles of amon seedling is being sold between Tk 300 and Tk 350 at different local markets while it was sold at Tk 150 last season," the farmers added.

When contacted, Mohammad Hakim Uddin, deputy director of Tangail DAE, said that they had taken up emergency and long-term rehabilitation programmes to help the farmers recover the loss they had suffered due to flood.

"We have been providing seeds of different vegetables to the farmers since the floodwater receded," he added.

## Hasina says

**FROM PAGE 1**  
today, strongly advised that the AL should participate in the dialogue with the EC whether or not there is a ban on indoor politics.

Hasina's attorney, Khondoker Moniruzzaman, while briefing reporters after meeting Hasina at the special jail inside parliament complex, quoted Hasina as saying, "The party's Central Working Committee will decide whether the party should go for dialogues with the Election Commission."

Hasina also said that she would accept any decision taken by the AL working committee, Moniruzzaman said.

**ZILLUR'S BRIEFING**  
Personal comments made by Amir Hossain Amu have drawn mixed reactions within the party, said Zillur Rahman at his Gulshan residence yesterday.

Contradicting Amu's position that the AL should go to election in a bid to free Hasina, Zillur said, "It is true that the Awami League is an election-oriented party. But, the party cannot go to elections when the party president is being detained."

Since Amu was away in Singapore for a while, he might not have been aware that the party has decided not to hold dialogues with the EC until the ban on indoor politics is lifted as well as hold a council meeting or bring reforms in the party without the release of Hasina, explained Zillur.

When asked about Amu's remarks on Hasina, Zillur termed Amu's the remarks "sad and uncalled-for". Amu at his Eskaton residence claimed that when the AL made Hasina the party chief, her only qualification that was considered was that she is daughter of Bangabandhu