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CPB demands withdrawal of all restrictions on politics

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) yesterday demanded withdrawal of all kinds of restrictions on politics in order to establish democracy in the country.

"We demand withdrawal of all kinds of restrictions on politics. When we make this demand, some people might think that we want to go back to the pre-1/11 situation. But, we do not want to go back to that situation, we want to move forward towards democracy," said CPB President Manjurul Ahsan Khan at a press conference at Moni Singh auditorium in the capital.

The government has withdrawn ban on indoor politics only in the capital, but democracy is not for people living in Dhaka only, he said adding that people should be given back their democratic rights, as it is their inherent rights -- not a gift from any quarter.

Speaking on the much talked-
SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

MEGHNAGHAT-2 POWER PLANT

Deal finally scrapped

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Upon completion of all legal formalities, the power ministry on September 25 asked Power Development Board (PDB) to cancel the contract for Meghnaghat phase-2 450 megawatt (MW) power project signed with scamster Obaidul Karim's shell company BON consortium.

Following a move by the PDB in this regard on July 30 this year, the power ministry followed all legal processes before deciding to cancel the deal.

This is the first such instance of cancellation of a private power deal for a power company's failure to close project financing.

On September 25, the power ministry in a letter asked the PDB to take all measures to cancel the deal with BON Consortium as per clause 4.4 of the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with the company. Alongside, the PDB was asked to cancel the project's Implementation Agreement (IA).

The PDB on July 30 served BON Consortium with the notice to terminate the project's PPA.

In a letter to BON Consortium's Orion House office in Tejgaon, the PDB said the BON failed to close the project's financial arrangement within its agreed deadline of May 27 last. The PDB then gave it extra time until July 15 to meet its contractual obligations, but the BON failed again.

"Under this circumstance, pursuant to Article 4.4 (a) (of the PPA), BPDB hereby issues Notice of Intent to Terminate the Power Purchase Agreement signed with you on March 09, 2006," the letter said.

PDB's Legal Adviser barrister Tofailur Rahman in his opinion noted that BON has failed to meet its original financial closing deadline and subsequently the July 15 deadline. Under this situation, the PDB may issue a notice of intent to terminate the contract with 45 days of consultation period.

The 45-day period expired mid-

September.

The PDB has come to this decision, although it tried its best to pursue this contract with BON Consortium, after its chief-scamster Obaidul Karim of the Orion Group--fled the country in January to avoid arrest in connection with misappropriating Tk 590 crore from the Oriental Bank.

In the absence of Karim, a representative of the UAE based Belhassa group visited Dhaka assuring the government of continuing the project finances. However, the company failed to meet various deadlines--while giving the government an impression that it was working on the project. The government kept the options open but had to ask BON to submit \$10 million security deposit against the project by July 15.

In mid-July BON's main financier Bahrain based Capital Management House (CMH) wrote to the ministry that it would be unable to arrange the finances or

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LDP, Gono Forum plan to submit common reform proposal to EC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

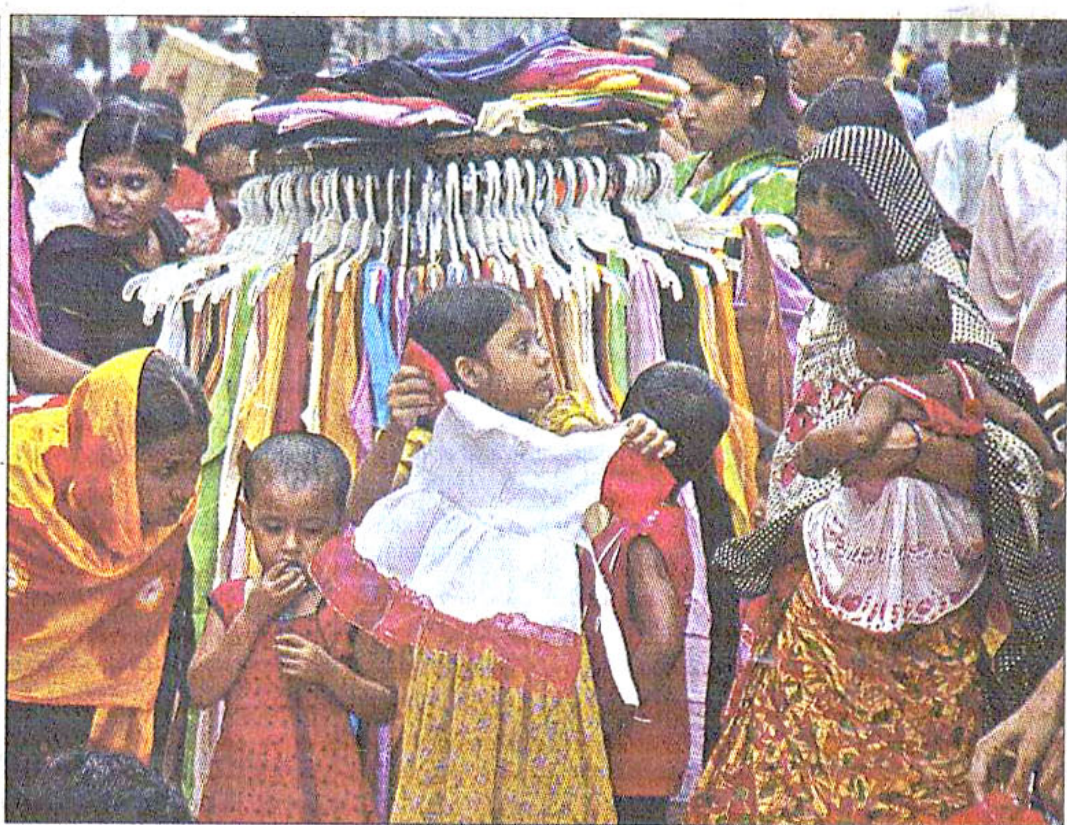
The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) led by Badruddoza and the Gono Forum yesterday said both the parties will place a common electoral reform proposal to the Election Commission (EC).

"We will place the same demands to the EC and if our demands are not met, we will announce unified programmes," said LDP (Badruddoza) Secretary General Maj (retd) MA Mannan during a meeting with Gono Forum at Maj (retd) MA Mannan's residence at Gulshan in the capital.

LDP secretary general said that his party and Gono Forum will also take on unified programmes if, for any reason, the election roadmap declared by the government is hindered in anyway.

Gono Forum president Dr Kamal Hossain, LDP president Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury, LDP president members Nurul Amin Bepari, Brig Gen (retd) Giasuddin A Chowdhury, Gono

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An eight-year-old picks out a dress for her infant sister on her mother's arms as families rush to shopping malls and hawkers' stalls on Dhaka streets to buy new clothes for Eid. The photo was taken from Hatirpul yesterday.

4 electrocuted in Savar

UNB, Savar

Four day labourers were electrocuted at Baipail under Ashulia thana yesterday.

Locals said the day labourers came in contact with the live wire of 11,000 KV electric line during soil testing on a nearby site at about 2:30pm, killing the four on the spot.

One of the deceased was identified as Shah Alam, 40. The identities of others, aged between 35-45, could not be known immediately.

Opposition vows fresh challenge to Musharraf

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistan's key opposition parties yesterday vowed to lodge a last-ditch Supreme Court challenge aimed at stopping President Pervez Musharraf standing for re-election on October 6.

The country's election commission approved Musharraf's candidature on Saturday amid bloody clashes between lawyers and riot police.

The commission's acceptance came a day after the top Pakistani court dismissed petitions seeking to disqualify Musharraf, a key ally in the US-led "war on terror."

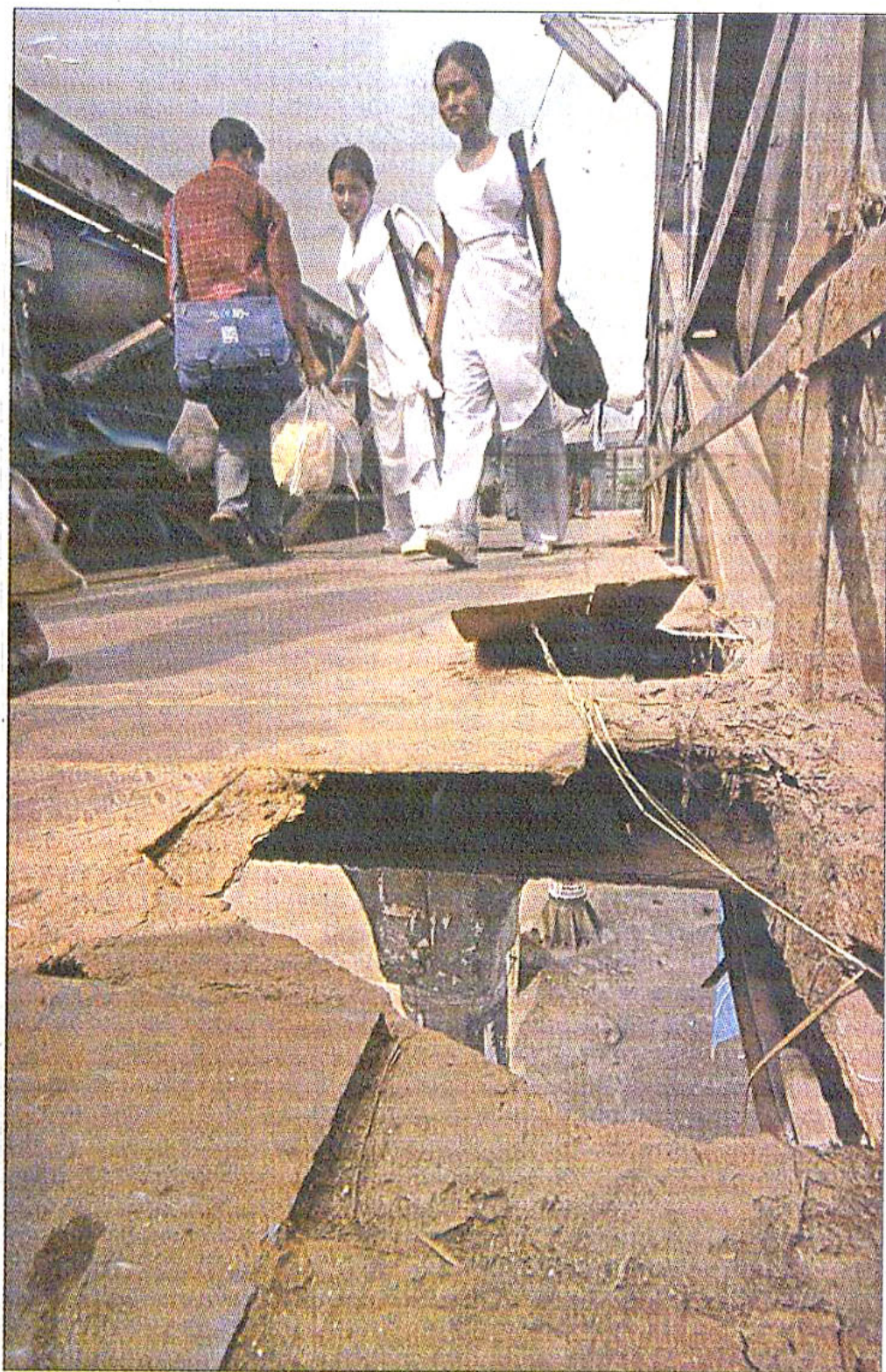
Dozens of people including journalists and lawyers were injured in the violent protests outside the election commission building.

Journalists condemning police action staged rallies in major cities late Sunday while lawyers and opposition party activists wearing black armbands joined the march to express "solidarity" with them.

"Protest rallies were held in almost every city and town, including the remote tribal region" bordering Afghanistan, union leader M. Riaz told AFP in the northwestern city of Peshawar.

The commission overruled objections by rival candidates and approved Musharraf's candidacy

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7



Schoolchildren walk pass gaping holes on the foot-over bridge at Jatrabari in the capital yesterday. Locals claim many people have been injured after they fell in the holes at night.

Charge sheet against Harris Chy submitted

Hearing tomorrow

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday fixed October 30 for hearing on charge framing against Akhter Hamid Paban, son of BNP Secretary General Khondaker Delwar Hossain, and three others in connection with a carjacking case.

Hearing on charge framing against Harris Chowdhury, former political secretary to detained former premier Khaleda Zia, in connection with a graft case will be held on October 2.

An order to attach all properties of Dhaka City Corporation Ward Commissioner Monwar Hossain Dipjol was issued in connection with a tax evasion case.

HARRIS CASE
Assistant Director of the Anti-Corruption Commission Monayem Hossain, also the IO of the case, submitted the charge sheet against Harris and one of his accomplices, Amin Badal.

Harris has been absconding since the joint forces started

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Outlaw killed in 'shootout' with cops

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kustia

A member of outlawed Gono Mukti Fouz (GMF) was killed yesterday in "shootout" between police and his accomplices at Chadagara in Kustia.

Meanwhile, Chuadanga police arrested four members of a faction of Purbu Banglar Communist Party (PBCP-ML) on Saturday night.

The dead was identified as Zohurul Islam, 35, son of Razab Ali of Shimulia.

Police said acting on a tip-off, they cordoned off a graveyard at Chadagara where GMF members were holding a meeting at about 3.30am.

Sensing the presence of the law

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

HC stalls FBCCI polls for 3 weeks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday halted election process of the country's apex trade body, Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), for three weeks.

The HC also ordered the FBCCI Electoral Arbitration Council to explain within next three weeks as to why dropping of five voters of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) from the final voter list would not be declared illegal.

An HC bench comprising Justice Shahid Mahmud Hossain and Justice Farid Ahmed passed the order following a writ petition filed by two aggrieved BGMEA voters-- Mohammad A Salam, BGMEA acting president, and Anisul Huq, a former president of the association.

The other voters made ineligible are Faisal Samad, ABM Shamsuddin and Ferdous Parvez Bivon.

The arbitration council dropped their names on

September 25 from the final voter list of the upcoming FBCCI election following a complaint from Mahbub Minhas, a garment businessman.

Barrister Rafiqul Haque and Barrister Rokonuddin Mahmud appeared for the petitioners while Barrister Ajmal Hossain stood for the defendant.

Businesspeople say the latest development brings an uncertainty over holding of the election, which was slated for November 20.

According to the FBCCI constitution, of the 38 executive committee members of the apex trade body, 12 are elected from district level chambers and 12 from trade associations, seven are nominated from the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry and six divisional chambers, and seven from leading trade associations.

This year, the FBCCI president will be elected from the association group. Anisul Huq and MA Rouf Chowdhury, director of the FBCCI, had earlier announced their presidential candidatures.

UNDISCLOSED WEALTH

Rich less keen as tax amnesty time ends

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

People mostly from middle and lower-middle income groups came up with information of their undisclosed income under the special opportunity given by the National Board of Revenue (NBR), which ended yesterday.

"I went to different tax offices today [Sunday] and found that people were mostly depositing Tk 2,000-4,000 as taxes to disclose slim

amounts of undisclosed income," NBR Chairman Badiur Rahman said at a briefing at his office.

Tax payment under the special opportunity was satisfactory, he said, adding that the targeted affluent section of people, who had earned a huge amount of money and inquired about the rules frequently, did not ultimately respond well to the opportunity.

According to NBR sources, as of

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

8 JMB men get 4 yrs in jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A Mymensingh court yesterday sentenced eight Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) members to four years of imprisonment.

The convicts are Garibullah Akanda, Muktagachha JMB regional commander and close aide of Bangla Bhai, Abdus Samad, Emdadul Haque Ujjal, Julhas, Mofazzol Hossain Bhulu, Hazrat Ali, Abdus Samad and Javed Ali.

They were also fined Tk 10,000 each, in default of which they have to suffer eight more months in prison.

Shafiq Begum, first class magistrate of Speedy Trial tribunal, delivered the verdict.

Of the convicts, Garibullah and Samad are behind bars while others are on the run.

Rab held Garibullah of Binnakuri village in Muktagachha Upazila at Tangail bus stand on June 25. Acting on his information, they arrested Abdus Samad at Binnakuri village.

Later, Sub-inspector Md Nazrul Islam filed a case with Muktagachha Police Station.

Get Prayer times from Warid Menu

Iftar Sehri
5.49 PM 4.31 AM

WARID

Sehri, Iftar timings	Sehri	Iftar
18	1	5-49
19	2	4-31
20	3	4-31

Prayer Timing	October 1
Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-31
Zohr	12-45
Asr	4-15
Maghrib	5-49
Esha	7-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

UN envoy meets Suu Kyi, junta leaders

AP, Yangon

A UN envoy met yesterday with detained opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi after meeting with Myanmar's military rulers as he sought a peaceful solution to the government's crackdown on pro-democracy demonstrators.

The separate talks occurred as thousands of troops locked down Myanmar's largest cities Sunday. Scores of people were arrested overnight, further weakening an uprising that sought to end 45 years of military dictatorship.

Ibrahim Gambari, the UN's special envoy to Myanmar, went to the remote bunker-like capital Naypyitaw on Saturday to meet with the junta and stayed overnight, foreign Asian diplomats said.

On Sunday, he returned to Yangon and was whisked to the

State Guest House to meet Suu Kyi, who was brought out of house arrest to see the UN envoy in what appeared to be an unexpected concession by the junta.

The meeting with Suu Kyi lasted about 90 minutes, said the diplomats, who spoke on condition of anonymity, citing protocol. Details of the meeting were not immediately known.

The diplomatic effort comes after the military government launched a bloody crackdown last week on demonstrations that first began Aug. 19 to protest a sharp increase in fuel prices.

Over time, thousands of Buddhist monks, who revered in this impoverished country, joined the people in venting anger at decades of brutal military rule. At the height of the protests, some

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

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