English Medium Schools

FROM PAGE 16

The authorities did not register willingly in a bid to avoid registration fees and newly imposed VAT," said M Abbas Uddin, senior assistant secretary of the education ministry.

NBR Rayerbazar circle Superintendent Officer Humayun Kabir said they are facing a lot of troubles in making the list of English medium schools. A great number of authorities have a tendency to avoid the procedures, he added.

"In Rayerbazar circle -- Dhanmondi, Lalmatia, Rayerbazar and Zigatala -- we've found out around 30 English medium schools and some of those paid VAT in the month of July," Humayun said.

But a latest list prepared by ward commissioners includes 51 English medium schools in Dhanmondi and Zigatala alone.

Many other local circle NBR offices also could not figure out the number of all schools and officials admitted they are yet to make a full list of those institutions under their jurisdiction.

"We can easily collect revenue from English medium schools in time if we have a complete list," said Arefa Begum, superintendent officer of Dhanmondi circle. She added that only one English medium school under her Katabon, Panthapath, Science Lab and Hatirpool jurisdiction has paid VAT.

The caretaker government has imposed 4.5 percent VAT on English medium schools and private educational institutions from the current fiscal year.

Following the budget, school authorities have increased tuition fees and are charging extra in the name of VAT since July.

For example, a renowned school in the capital is now charging monthly Tk 4,200 including VAT Tk 181 from each student of standard II. But the fee was Tk 3,700 even two months ago, school sources said.

Ataur Rahman Khan, school inspector of Dhaka Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board, said only 66 English medium schools are approved and registered with Dhaka Education Board. The registration process of another 34 institutions is pending, he added.

According to the condition of application form for registration, an English medium school has to pay Tk 5,000 as registration fees and Tk 7,000 as renewal of registration in every five years.

Directorate of Primary Education supervises the kindergarten and nursery preparatory schools from standard I to V. Regional education offices of DSHE monitors the junior Cambridge schools from standard VI to VIII. Secondary and higher secondary education boards supervise Cambridge and senior Cambridge schools for O and A levels.

All kinds of educational institutions are to be registered under the Education Control Act, 1962. But English medium schools do not fall into the Act, as there were no such institutions in 1962.

Later, the Act has been amended several times but no specific rules for English medium schools were included in the Act.

The Ministry of Education in August 2004 decided that unregistered English medium schools would be asked to register under the Registration of Private School (Amendment) Act, 1989, and the Non-Government School (English Medium) Registration Regulations, 1999.

Top officers of seven education boards said English medium schools should be brought under proper accountability for containing "mismanagement" and "irregularities" of the authorities.

"Formulation of strict guidelines for the English medium schools is very much needed, but the school mismanagement should also be given certain freedom," said Prof Abdul Wadud, examination controller of Dhaka Education Board.

The government is going to establish a regulatory rule to oversee the activities of these schools but the process is advancing slowly due to bureaucratic tangles, sources in the education ministry said.

"A draft on guidelines for English medium schools is now in the law ministry. We hope it will help remove the irregularities of the institutions," said Abbas Uddin, senior assistant secretary of the education ministry.

Guardians alleged authorities of the schools increase the tuition fees and other charges every year without showing cause.

"Enrolment of students is the main earning source of the authorities and they increase the tuition fees and other charges every year without any logical ground," Said Nazneen Nahar whose daughter is now studying at a renowned English medium school.

None of the government bodies knows the exact number of such schools that offer courses from pre-schooling to A Level.

Money laundered

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don't know the specific figure of the money siphoned offshore."

But different government sources said between the months of April and August of this year the government had recovered more than Tk 3,315 crore of siphoned off money, more than Tk 435 crore of which were deposited to the Bangladesh Bank while the rest of it has yet to be deposited.

The Bangladesh Bank however has no concrete account of the money siphoned off.

"This is a distinct fresh effort of its kind which will inspire other countries, especially the commonwealth countries, to assist us in this regard," the ACC secretary said.

As the task of recovering the smuggled off money is bound to incur a huge cost, the commission is trying to reach an agreement with the British government under which Bangladesh will be allowed to pay off the cost after the smuggled off money is recovered.

A source in the ACC said the cost will be paid off from the money recovered.

Meanwhile, John Dennis, director for Asia at the UK foreign and commonwealth office, and British High Commissioner Anwar Choudhury during a visit to the ACC office yesterday assured the commission that they will assist it in recovering the smuggled off money, if they are provided with specific authentic information. They also assured that they will help modernise the ACC. Their visit to the office was a follow-up to the ACC chairman's visit to the Scotland Yard.

"We are glad to help ACC in its activities. The anti-corruption drive is extremely important to create a responsible and responsive political society," said John Dennis.

Meanwhile, a number of embassies including the Australian and the British high commissions offered technical support and cooperation to the ACC's new effort of initiating an investigation of institutional corruption, which is likely to begin in December this year.

The commission is planning to get more trained manpower for its investigation of the widespread allegations of corruption against different public institutions including Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC), Water and Sewerage Authority (Wasa), Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (Desa), and the Land Record and Survey Department.

As a part of the effort, the district offices of the ACC will begin its work after the Eid-ul-Fitr, sources said.

"DFID is helping them, and the ACC need modernisation to work faster and better. The activities of the commission need to have an impact on the rural people so that the ordinary people from different areas may come up to end or minimise corruption," said British High Commissioner Anwar Choudhury.

"A new phase of activity is coming, following the decision the commission has made recently regarding institutional corruption. The effort will ensure that the rural public and the political community have confidence in the ACC operation," said John Dennis.

Replying to a question regarding the state of emergency, Dennis said, "The government is very keen to create a safe condition that is necessary to create a situation for holding a transparent and fair election."

Replying to a question over publication of a new list of corruption suspects, the ACC secretary said the list will come to the commission in piecemeal fashion.

Cab driver

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group of six unknown youths took Kamruzzaman to a secluded place when he was in conversation with his friends near his residence at Kalapani at around 10:30pm on Monday.

The youths then shot him twice on his chin and throat from point blank and fled the scene.

Hearing gunshots, Kamruzzaman's friends ran to the scene and rushed him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead.

Investigation Officer of the case Sub-Inspector Mizanur Rahman of Pallabi Police Station said a local gang of snatchers might have hands in the killing as a sequel to an old enmity.

He however refused to give any detail for the sake of investigation.

BNP-Jamaat men

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the Jama'at and BNP men attacked his house and damaged his property, the complainant said adding that he was later tortured into paying Tk 30 thousand.

Ibrahim alleged that he was also made to commit to paying the rest at a later date.

The court ordered the officer-in-charge (OC) of Bagmara Police Station to investigate into the allegations.

When contacted, Ismail Hossain -- the BNP leader -- described the case as a bid to harass him politically and socially.

CEC

FROM PAGE 1

than a month between announcement of the schedule and polling day. So, the emergency should be lifted at least two months before holding the election. But emergency should go from across the country before the national election.

"I told that emergency will go wherever the elections will be held. Because elections couldn't be held under the sate of emergency," CEC said refuting media reports that quoted him as saying in Tangail on Monday that emergency is needed until the general election.

Grameen Shakti

FROM PAGE 1

growing dominance and market aggression of companies engaged in the genetic engineering of crops."

Grameen Shakti, a company in Bangladesh, was cited for showing "that solar energy applications can be scaled up massively and rapidly to provide an affordable and climate-friendly energy option for the rural poor"

The award, established in 1980, was announced in Stockholm by its founder Jacob von Uexkull, a former member of the European parliament.

"The 2007 Right Livelihood Award Recipients highlight existing solutions for today's world," von Uexkull said in a statement.

"Dekha Ibrahim Abdi and Christopher Weeramantry demonstrate how war and terror can be overcome by peace-building and the rule of international law.

"The Schmeisers and Grameen Shakti show us how to protect two essential services of our global ecosystem: our agricultural resources and our global climate," he said.

The prizes will be formally awarded at the Swedish Parliament on December 7.

Govt to buy SUVs

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Certain private companies would always be preferred for purchase of government vehicles during the rule of BNP-led alliance government. But the present caretaker administration wants to make the purchase through its own organ so that the organisation becomes stronger, sources said.

The government will have to spend nearly Tk 40 crore to buy the 2400cc SUVs that are likely to be used in the upcoming elections, sources said.

Earlier, the establishment ministry had proposed buying 300 cars for the UNOs. The rest of the cars too will be bought within a short time.

As per the purchase committee meeting, the government will buy electricity at a rate of Tk 2.26 per unit from Youth Spinning Mills Ltd, the lowest bidder, who will set up an 80-MW power plant at Shahjibazar of Habiganj district.

The Desh Energy Ltd will supply power at a rate of Tk 2.36 per unit from its 10-MW plant to be set up at Kumargaon of Sylhet city.

These rates will remain applicable for 15 years starting from the time the plants begin generating electricity.

Mira Aziz said the prices are quite competitive when the Power Development Board itself has to count Tk 2.38 for per unit electricity.

The meeting also approved importing 50,000 metric tons of urea fertilizer in efforts to meet the demand in the upcoming Boro season.

The industries ministry proposed that the committee approve 2.5 lakh metric tons fertilizer.

But the committee declined to approve the proposal in its entirety due to higher price, said the finance adviser. He said the government approved purchasing the fertilizer at a rate of $319 per metric tons.

The government decided not to buy another 2 lakh metric tons as proposed because prices ranged between $342 and $397 per metric tones.

Sources said 15 lakh metric tons of fertilizer is required to meet the demand in the next Boro season. The government only has 3 lakh metric tons in its stock while the rest will have to be imported.

The purchase committee also approved buying 1.08 lakh metric tons of rice.

UK foreign office

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and circumstances for a truly fair election," Dennis said, adding that it is up to the Bangladesh government to judge what their options are.

British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Anwar Choudhury, who accompanied Dennis, also told reporters, "It would be much better, nicer if the restrictions were not there."

But Choudhury quickly added, "The elections do need to be held in a safe environment, where people can travel and vote freely during the election campaign and during the time leading up to the elections."

Asked if Dennis thought that elections would be possible with the leaders of the two major political parties, the British Foreign Office director said the British government has always urged the Bangladesh government to follow due process regarding the political leaders arrested under charges of corruption.

Dennis added that he is also encouraged by the Election Commission's decision to hold dialogues with the political parties. "We very much welcome their progressive steps," he said.

Earlier, Dennis also met Chief Election Commissioner ATM Shamsul Huda at the EC Secretariat. Huda briefed the British emissary about the EC roadmap to polls by the end of 2008.

"There are another 15 months to hold the elections. We expect that more developments will come by that time," Dennis said.

Dennis will meet members of the British-Bangladeshi community in Sylhet today. He is scheduled to meet the president, chief adviser and the army chief tomorrow.

Zia Fertiliser

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said their poultry are dying due to reasons they do not know. They suspect the emitting ammonia is responsible for the "epidemic".

Shurab Mia said they submitted a written complaint to the ZFCL authorities but that has not yield any result.

A number of victims last month gathered in front of the main gate of the ZFCL to press the authorities to look into the matter.

The authorities denied any meeting with them. Rather the security guards shooed away the victims from there. The guards also harassed three reporters who went there to cover the incident.

Ashuganj Upazila Press Club and Ashuganj Upazila Journalists Association protested against the incident and urged the authorities to take immediate measures to stop ammonia pollution.

Chartala ward member Md Jakir Hossain said they repeatedly asked the authorities to take necessary steps against pollution in vain.

Acting Union Parishad Chairman Md Ziaur Rahman said the ZFCL authorities have made no move though the entire area is becoming ecologically imbalanced.

Md Osman Goni, managing director of ZFCL, said high authorities have already visited the factory and taken urgent steps to stop the evaporation of ammonia.

He also visited the affected Chartala village last week, the MD added.

Contacted, Dr Md Shawkat Hossain, medical officer of the Civil Surgeon's Office, Brahmanbaria, said ammonia pollution may cause skin diseases, breathing complexity and some long-term diseases.

Excessive level of ammonia may cause both air and water pollution, he added.

A source in the ZFCL said the emitting ammonia is a regular feature of the factory. The system to control evaporation of ammonia has long been out of order. Whenever the plant is over-heated, the tank emits a massive volume of gas every day.

About one tonne of ammonia is being lost a day due to uncontrolled evaporation and leakage in the condensers and tanks.

The source said the condensers have several leaks, through which emitted ammonia pollutes the cooling water excessively. As a result, all related parts are losing durability and being polluted.

A ZFLC officer said there are two condensers in the factory and one of those is dilapidated. The authorities have taken a plan to replace it, he added.

Another officer said the authorities should change all condensers and parts at the same time; otherwise the old condenser will corrupt the new one hampering smooth function.

Sources said the ammonia gas is now being emitted through several leaks polluting more areas rapidly.

Ashuganj Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Rezaul Maksud Zahedi said he has already prepared a list of 30 families fallen victim to ammonia pollution. Once completed, the list will be submitted to the deputy commissioner of Brahmanbaria.

He has also sent a recommendation to the ZFCL authorities to check the pollution soon, the UNO added.

ZFCL sources said a committee has been formed to investigate the problems and submit a report soon.

Khaleda appeal

FROM PAGE 1

and Nazmul Huda for amassing wealth beyond their known sources of income.

An ACC deputy director filed the case against Khaleda and her younger son Arafat Rahman Koko and 11 others on September 2 on charges of corruption in awarding Global Agro Trade (Pvt) Co Ltd (Gatco) the contract for container management at inland container depots in Dhaka and Chittagong Port yards. The complainant alleged that the selection incurred a loss of over Tk 1,000 crore to the government exchequer.

Koko also filed a writ petition on Thursday, challenging initiation and continuation of the case.

Khaleda and Koko in their separate petitions also questioned the validity of the government move bringing the graft case under the Emergency Power Rules (EPR).

The accused has no right to bail once the charges are brought under the EPR.

After hearing the petitions on Sunday an HC bench granted bail to Khaleda and ordered the government to explain within six weeks why its bringing the charges under the EPR shall not be declared illegal.

The court also stayed proceedings of the case, but it did not grant bail to Koko.

The ACC on Monday moved to the SC Chamber Judge's Court seeking stay on the HC decision. After the hearing Chamber Judge Hassan Ameen yesterday referred the matter for hearing in the regular bench of the SC on October 4.

HEARING OF OTHER ACC APPLICATIONS

The same court fixed tomorrow for hearing of the ACC applications seeking stay on the HC rulings in response to separate writ petitions filed on Thursday by detained BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Tarique Rahman, former law minister Moudud Ahmed, former communications minister Nazmul Huda and his wife Sigma Huda.

An HC bench on Monday stayed proceedings of the cases filed by the ACC against the four for amassing wealth beyond their known sources of income.

The HC bench of Justice Shah Abu Nayeem Mominur Rahman and Justice Zubayer Rahman Chowdhury separately ordered the ACC and other authorities concerned to explain within six weeks why the cases regarding the notices asking the defendants to turn in wealth statements shall not be declared illegal.

The ACC yesterday moved to the SC Chamber Judge's Court for staying the HC rulings.

Tarique is accused of accumulating wealth worth over Tk 4.82 crore through illegal means and concealing information of properties worth over Tk 4.23 crore.

ACC Deputy Director Jahirul Huda filed the case on September 26 against Tarique, his wife Dr Zubaida Rahman and mother-in-law Iqbalmand Banu. Zubaida and her mother were charged with aiding and abetting Tarique in attempts to show that his was legal income.

ACC Deputy Assistant Director Shariful Haque Siddiqui filed the case against Moudud on September 16 for not declaring wealth worth Tk 4.40 crore. He has assets worth Tk 7.38 crore which is disproportionate to his sources of income.

ACC Assistant Director Talebur Rahman sued Huda and his wife on July 11 for discrepancies between their actual wealth and the statements they had submitted to the anti-graft body. They are also accused of concealing information of wealth worth over Tk 2.19 crore.

Graft charges pressed

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statements submitted earlier to the ACC.

HARRIS CASE

Judge Mohammad Azizul Haque of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court framed charges against Harris in absentia in a graft case filed with Paltan Police Station.

The court fixed October 8 for trial of the case and summoned the complainant and other witnesses to appear before the court to give their statements on the scheduled date.

On July 22, Monayem Hossain, assistant director of the ACC and also the IO of the case, submitted the charge sheet against Harris and Amin Badal, one of Harris' accomplices.

Harris has been on the loose since joint forces started clamping down on the alleged corrupt bigwigs.

The proceeding of the case against Badal was earlier stayed on an order from the High Court.

The case was filed on March 25, as Harris, through abuse of power, got a hold of a government automobile belonging to National Tea Company and later handed it over to Badal for use.

Harris was earlier convicted for three years in connection with a case filed for not submitting his wealth statement to the ACC within the deadline.

LOTUS KAMAL CASE

The same court fixed October 8 for framing charges against Lotus Kamal and his family members in a case filed for concealing information in their wealth statements to the ACC.

On September 5, the ACC's deputy directors Abu Sayed and Fayaz Alam --also the IOs in the case -- submitted the charge sheet to the CMM's Court against Lotus Kamal and his family, showing 44 people as prosecution witnesses.

Lotus Kamal was earlier arrested and is now in jail custody while his two daughters have been on the run since the case was filed against them.

His wife, Kashmiri Kamal, earlier secured bail from the High Court.

The case was filed against the Kamal family with Gulshan Police Station on March 22 this year for allegedly concealing Tk 2,99,55,658 in their February 25 wealth statements to the ACC.

CASE AGAINST FIROZ MIAH

Assistant Tax Commissioner Faruqul Islam of the National Board of Revenue (NBR) yesterday filed a tax evasion case against Mohammad Firoz Miah, the detained CBA leader of Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB).

The case was filed with the same court for evading tax against his income of Tk 2.44 crore for the fiscal years from 1985 to 2007.

Earlier, Firoz was convicted for 13 years for concealing a large amount of money in his wealth statement submitted earlier to the ACC.

Korean leaders

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But he has not given any specifics about what he will propose or get in return, prompting criticism from conservatives at home that the summit is an ego trip for Roh seeking to establish a legacy for his unpopular administration that ends in February.

Earlier during the 125-mile journey by road from Seoul, Roh stepped out of his vehicle to walk across the border that divides the Koreas in the centre of the heavily fortified Demilitarised Zone the first time any Korean leader has crossed the land border. In the first summit between the Koreas in 2000, the South's Kim flew to Pyongyang.

"This line is a wall that has divided the nation for a half-century. Our people have suffered from too many hardships and development has been held up due to this wall," Roh said before crossing.

"This line will be gradually erased and the wall will fall," he said. "I will make efforts to make my walk across the border an occasion to remove the forbidden wall and move toward peace and prosperity."

This week's summit, which runs through Thursday, comes a year after the North conducted its first test detonation of a nuclear bomb. The explosion catalysed world opposition to the regime but soon led to a reversal of Washington's hard-line policy on the North.

In July, Pyongyang shut down its sole operating nuclear reactor that produced material for bombs and the country has tentatively agreed to disable its atomic facilities by year-end in a way that they cannot be easily restarted.

Before leaving the South Korean capital, Roh acknowledged that the two Koreas alone could not totally resolve the nuclear standoff or bring peace to the peninsula.

The North is involved in international talks on its nuclear weapons programme including the US and other regional powers. A peace settlement to the Korean War would require the participation of the US and China that also fought in that conflict.

"Even if we do not reach an agreement in many areas, it would still be a meaningful achievement to narrow the gap in understanding and to enhance confidence in each other," Roh said of the meeting with Kim.

Washington expressed scepticism the summit would lead to progress on the nuclear standoff and noted that the peace issue was also being discussed at the international arms negotiations known as the six-party talks.

"I certainly am not looking for those inter-Korean discussions to change the basic facts on the ground or the six-party talks," US State Department spokesman Tom Casey said Monday.

Aug 21 massacre

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But in August the investigators said the same thing when asked about the progress in the investigation.

New investigators are now focusing on a group of Afghan war veterans led by Mufti Abdul Hannan, presuming that the fanatic group might have carried out the attack as it had its hands in many other grenade attacks in the country.

During the regime of the immediate past BNP-Jamaat-led alliance government, no progress was made in the investigation of the August 21 carnage, as the erstwhile political honchos used their influence to stifle the inquiry to safeguard their own political ambitions, according to the new investigators.

Earlier, the investigators tried to weave a story dictated by the erstwhile political big fish -- leading to the discovery of a petty criminal, Joj Miah, out of the blue by the former supervising officer of the case, CID's Special Superintendent Ruhul Amin, the new investigators said.

They managed to 'extract a confessional statement' from Joj Miah where he mentioned that a criminal gang, 'seven star group' of Maghbazar in the capital, had carried out the grisly attack. In the statement, Joj Miah also implicated a ward level AL leader and former ward commissioner of Maghbazar, Mokhlesur Rahman, as the mastermind.

"Authenticity of the confessional statement of Joj Miah is questionable, as no other corroborative evidence was found," Kaosar Ahmed Haydory told The Daily Star in August.

1cr children

FROM PAGE 16

Former adviser advocate Sultana Kamal moderated the discussion. Dr Nurunnabi, former joint secretary to the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Obaidur Rahman, country representative of SCSD and Shahida Begum, programme coordinator of child labour, SCSD, also spoke at the discussion.

Three child workers -- Marzia Akter Ripa, Saddam Hossain and Ashik -- shared their experiences with the audience.

Ex-ISI chief appointed

FROM PAGE 1

forces which were still sceptical that he would retain his army role."

Musharraf announced in September that he would quit the army if he was re-elected and be sworn in as a civilian, but he has still not announced the date when he expects to do so.

He has until now argued that he needed to be in control of the army to oversee Pakistan's continuing fight against al-Qaeda and Taliban rebels holed up in the country's tribal areas bordering Afghanistan.

Musharraf put Kiyani personally in charge of the investigation after two assassination attempts on his life in December 2003, incidents in which both al-Qaeda and rogue members of the armed forces were implicated.

In his autobiography, "In the Line of Fire", Musharraf praised Kiyani's ability to get Pakistan's often fractious intelligence agencies to pull together.

"When Kiyani got tough, the problems of coordination disappeared and the agencies started working like a well-oiled machine," Musharraf recalled.

Pakistan has been ruled by army generals for more than half its existence since independence in Britain in 1947.

On the other hand Pakistani opposition MPs staged a mass resignation yesterday in a bid to wreck the credibility of President Pervez Musharraf's expected re-election for another five-year term.

Musharraf's two rivals in Saturday's crunch presidential vote meanwhile filed new petitions in the Supreme Court challenging the military ruler's eligibility to stand for re-election.

Eighty-five opposition MPs backed by flag-waving supporters chanting "Go, Musharraf Go!" marched to parliament, where they submitted their resignations to the speaker of the national assembly, or lower house.

Two female lawmakers from the ruling party also quit, state media said.

Musharraf, who seized control of the nuclear-armed Islamic republic in a 1999 coup and is now a key US ally, is set to win as his allies dominate the national and the provincial assemblies that will conduct the vote.

But his opponents hope the resignations of the MPs from the anti-Musharraf All Parties Democracy Movement will cast doubt on its legitimacy.

"This is a historic day. The presidential election holds no constitutional legitimacy now," parliamentary opposition leader and hardline Islamist Maulana Fazlur Rehman told reporters.

The alliance includes the parties of former premier Nawaz Sharif -- the man whom Musharraf ousted -- and cricketer-turned politician Imran Khan, plus a clutch of fundamentalist groups.

Ex-prime minister Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party is not part of the coalition, having held talks with Musharraf on a power-sharing deal which have since apparently stalled.

The MPs and 600 supporters marched from a parliamentary apartment building in Islamabad to the nearby national assembly, shouting "This is the end of your show -- Go Musharraf, Go!" and "A friend of America is a traitor".

"This is the first step to discredit the election process," said Khan as the MPs quit the 342-seat national assembly.

Around 125 provincial legislators were also expected to submit their resignations in the assemblies of Pakistan's four provinces, alliance officials said.

The two candidates standing against Musharraf in the election earlier lodged their court appeals against his re-election, saying that the nomination papers he filed last week were invalid.

Former Supreme Court judge Wajihuddin Ahmad, who quit rather than swear allegiance to Musharraf after his 1999 coup, and Bhutto party vice chairman Makhdoom Amin Fahim both called for the vote to be halted.

Musharraf won a major legal victory in the Supreme Court on Friday when it threw out a plethora of opposition challenges and ruled that the president was eligible to seek another term while keeping his role as army chief.

Former commando Musharraf has said he will quit his military role before November 15 if he wins the election.

2 outlaws killed

FROM PAGE 16

Sensing the presence of the law enforcers, the outlaws fired on them prompting the policemen to retaliate.

Ibdar and Nasir received bullets during the "shootout" while their accomplices managed to flee.

They were taken to Chuadanga Sadar Hospital where the on-duty doctor declared them dead.

Police recovered two shutter guns and 11 rounds of bullet from the spot.

Police said Idbar was accused in six cases while eight cases were filed against Nasir on different charges including murder.

Meanwhile, a Chuadanga court yesterday sent four members of banned Communist War to jail. Police arrested them on Sunday night.

Hannan Shah

FROM PAGE 16

like other political parties.

"We cannot properly use the relaxation of ban on political activities as our party office is still locked," he said, adding, "We're not running any political activities according to our strategy as well."

Criticising the reformist leaders in BNP, he argued that they have "hijacked" the word 'reformists' as each and everyone of the party including Chairperson Khaleda Zia wants reformation.

He also welcomed the chamber judge's yesterday's decision that fixed Thursday for hearing before a regular bench the Anti-corruption Commission's (ACC) appeal seeking stay on the High Court orders granting bail to Khaleda.

"I hope she [Khaleda] will be released soon if there are no legal obstacles," he said, urging the government to implement the court orders without delay.

"There is no evidence against Khaleda Zia and even the case is still under enquiry. So the government should take action after completing all investigations," he said when asked about the ACC's quizzing a few former ministers and secretaries in connection with the case against Khaleda.

"Khaleda Zia should not have been arrested before completion of investigation into the case against her," he said, adding that it was not fair to arrest a former prime minister in such a manner.

Earlier, Hannan met party standing committee member RA Goni at his Dhanmondi residence and discussed party related issue, sources said.

575 BRTC buses

FROM PAGE 16

already started its work and would continue its work until October 21.

Meanwhile, law enforcers had meetings with bus and launch owners' associations and urged them not to charge homebound passengers extra for their tickets.

Law enforcers, comprising Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) personnel, police and traffic policemen, had meetings with the owners at Mohakhali, Sayedabad bus terminals and Sadarghat launch terminal.

Leaders of bus and launch owners' association complained that illegal toll collectors have re-emerged in some places. They urged the law enforcers to capture these extortionists, giving assurance that they would not charge extra during the Eid rush.

The law enforcers in the meetings said they would monitor situations in the terminals and would keep a close eye on service operators' behaviour towards passengers. They assured the bus and launch owners that they would stop all sorts of extortions in the terminals.

UN envoy talks

FROM PAGE 16

Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer described the security sweep as "brutal" and said the number of dead was "substantially higher" than the 13 confirmed so far.

"We think that at least 30 have been killed, about 1,400 people have been arrested," he told reporters. "This is a brutal regime and we've seen it at work over the last few days."

The demonstrations were the biggest challenge in nearly two decades to the regime, which has ruled for 45 years and stifles any sign of dissent.

But speaking at the United Nations in New York, Foreign Minister Nyan Win blamed the unrest on political "opportunists" and insisted the junta was not responsible for the violence.

He said the security forces had shown "utmost restraint" in handling the protests, which began in mid-August following a huge fuel price increase but escalated last week after monks joined the movement, bringing 100,000 people into the streets for several days in a row.

People, cars and buses were returning to the streets of Yangon on Tuesday, as citizens tried to attend to their jobs and businesses, but the atmosphere remained tense and significant monasteries continued to be blockaded.

"We have to work for our living so we came downtown to do our jobs today," said one woman, a carpark attendant.

Although the security presence had dropped off and a dusk-till-dawn curfew had eased, soldiers were still stationed at the main rallying points of last week's protests, including City Hall and two key pagodas.

As he waited to meet with the general, Gambari found himself in the town of Lashio, where Deputy Foreign Minister Kyaw Thu escorted him to a pro-government rally with tens of thousands of people in attendance Tuesday.

Witnesses said many in the crowd were members of ethnic minority groups who could not understand the speeches given in the majority Myanmar language. Some appeared to be dozing off.

Aminul Haque

FROM PAGE 16

The accused, however, did not secure the promised job for him, nor did they return the money, the complainant added.

The former minister has so far been charged in six cases, including two for allegedly abetting Jama'atul Mujahidin Bangladesh (JMB) militants.

He and Shis went into hiding after the state of emergency was declared in January while Mafiz was arrested in April.