

# US Senator Clarke

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foreign countries," said the 50-year-old democrat senator from district 1 of Michigan.

"Once the investors can feel comfortable that there is no corruption and that their money will really go to investment, they'll come forward to invest their money."

He was elected to the Michigan House of Representatives in 1990, 1998 and in 2000, and to the Michigan State Senate in 2002 and 2006, he is also members of Cornell University Council and Michigan Law Revision Commission, and was the treasurer of Michigan Legislative Black Caucus.

Clarke will meet local entrepreneurs and talk to the US embassy staff to find where there are opportunities and where there are needs. "I will try to put them together," he said.

Asked, entrepreneurs of which sector of Michigan are interested to invest in Bangladesh, he said they will decide on the matter after Clarke returns with his findings.

Terminating the current situation of Bangladesh as 'promising', he said, "The Anti-corruption Commission has been set up, the fact that the interim caretaker government is going to adhere to the roadmap for democracy and hold those national elections by the end of the year, is very important."

Elected a democratic government and handover of power to them by the caretaker government as promised is very crucial, he added.

"That's important not only for the people's will to be expressed in Bangladesh but also to attract foreign investment, especially from Michigan."

His father Mozaffar Ali Hashim migrated to the US in the late 1930s and died when Clarke was only eight years old in Detroit.

By his senior year at Cornell University studying fine arts, he decided to set aside his art to pursue a profession in law and graduated a Juris Doctor from Georgetown Law School.

"This is a life-changing experience," Clarke said about his visit to Bangladesh, which he had been looking forward to for a long time.

But, Bangladesh's culture and attitude of politics need to be 'eliminated', and the people need to return to their traditional values of serving the people, he emphasised.

"I stress the importance of traditional values of this country: having faith in god, loving yourself and your community, and that work is not a burden but a way to really express your talent to serve your people."

Those are the same principles that led him to run for public office in Detroit.

Strongly opposing the view of politicians being elected to office so they can elevate their own status, he said, "That's contrary to the traditional values of this country, the values I've got from my father."

Talking on the deviation, he said many people here now aspire to be consumers like those in developed countries.

"What I'm asking the Bangladeshis is to be proud of who they are and return to those traditional values."

NRBs can serve at many levels especially by bringing their technical expertise here. The government's role is to make sure they serve the public, not themselves. It must not be an obstacle to the growth and prosperity of the people, Clarke said.

"Now that we're a global economy, the US and Bangladesh can grow together as economic partners," he said adding that he is in Bangladesh to play a role in bringing that together.

## Charge sheet

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charge sheet will be submitted against them," said an official preferring anonymity.

The four detained Dhaka University teachers, however, will not be charged with the offences because two students, who confessed to their guilt in the incident, did not mention the academics' involvement.

The teachers are Dhaka University Teachers' Association President Prof Sadrul Amin, General Secretary Prof Anwar Hossain, Prof Harun-or-Rashid, dean of social science faculty, and Prof Neem Chandra Bhowmik, chairman of applied physics department.

The detained students are Din Islam alias Angel and Rafiqul Islam Sujan.

Angel, a student of journalism, said in his statement that Jahidul Islam Bibop, Rafiqul Islam Sujan and Babu were involved in the incident while Sujan, a student of Islamic history, named Siraj, Mizan, Noor, and Shahid.

The sources said the charge sheets would mention about 35 people as prosecution witnesses, including driver of the torched car, its passenger Rifat Chowdhury -- son of Lt Gen Jahangir Alam Chowdhury -- his co-passenger, a number of photo journalists, cameramen from electronic media and police personnel who were on duty at the spot.

Administrative Corporal Kamrul Hasan at army headquarters filed the two cases.

Police, quoting case papers, said a group of marauding youths swooped on the army vehicle and set fire to it as it got stuck in a traffic jam in front of Aziz Supermarket on August 21.

They also assaulted the driver and obstructed police in the transaction of duty, police said.

## Fog disrupts

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steamer was scheduled to arrive at 1:30am.

About 20 Dhaka bound launches from Barisal, Barguna, Amtali and Hularhat remained stranded on the way because of poor visibility.

A report from Barisal said thousands of passengers of launches plying the river routes in southwest region suffered from hunger and cold wave as the vessels remained stranded on the way because of thick fog.

## Militant alert

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Siddiqui said they have been keeping a close watch on the militants as well as the visitors.

Guards have already been assigned to hear the conversation between the militants and visitors. Now no militant is allowed to talk with a visitor in the absence of guards.

Sources said although the high-profile militants can be identified easily, the jail authorities might face difficulty in monitoring the activities of other militants as no separate register for them is maintained. A jailer wishing anonymity said they would try to identify them by studying the cases.

Meanwhile, 26 militants were moved to separate cells in the Chittagong Central Jail yesterday. Previously, some of them were kept in the same cell.

## Motive unknown

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personnel gathered around 200 pieces of the two statues. Later, two National Museum officials identified 27 pieces as parts of the stolen Gupta era "Vishnu" and "Bust of Vishnu" idols.

According to a National Museum official, of the fragments salvaged, 20 make up about 25 percent of the black terracotta statuette of Vishnu where the Hindu god stands with goddesses Saraswati and Laxmi. The other pieces make up a little over 10 percent of the bust.

Police said 80 percent of the goddesses portion of the statuette was retrieved and only a fraction of a hand (one hand was already missing) and legs of Vishnu was recovered.

Meanwhile, the investigators are yet to find out the motive behind the theft and destruction of the 1,500-year-old relics that were stolen from ZIA on December 22. The two along with 143 others were awaiting shipment to Paris for an exhibition at the Guimet Museum.

## Mainul

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He said democracy and good governance cannot be restored through mere free and fair elections as it requires a new trend of politics and new leadership.

The adviser urged the judges to practise judicial activism the way it is done in the developed countries for quick dispensation of justice.

He said the judges will also have to redeem the people's confidence in the judiciary through their wisdom in justice delivery system.

About the association's demand for 50 percent appointment of the higher court judges from district judges, Mainul said the government will look into the matter.

Supreme Court Registrar Ikhtakar Ahmed in his speech dismissed the allegation that he had given postings of the newly recruited judicial magistrates by abusing power.

# NRBs for transfer

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Thanks to their skills in English, other nations like India, China and Japan are reaping the benefits in the global market, he said.

He urged the NRBs to come forward to help the nation to develop English education in the country. "If the NRBs enjoy the fruits of knowing good English, why should we deprive our natives of the same privilege?"

In his presentation titled "Education System in Bangladesh", Jamal Uddin, head of community and primary languages, London Borough of Tower Hamlets, said there is no national standards or target to justify the quality of education.

He suggested that school management and leadership be developed to ensure quality education.

Zenat Nabi of Society to Help Education in Bangladesh International (Shebi), New Jersey, US, presented two case studies on how NRBs can help develop Bangladesh's education.

She said Shebi, a New Jersey-based non-profit organisation of NRBs, is working to reduce the gap between the poor and the reach in terms of getting the opportunity of education.

The organisation has already donated \$250,000 to Bangladesh to set up school-cum-cyclone shelters in the coastal belt.

Another New Jersey-based organisation named Computer Literacy Program (CLP) is also playing a significant role in providing computer education to the rural people, she said.

In collaboration with local non-government organisation D.Net, CLP has established 59 computer-learning centres in 23 districts.

Nabi said as many as 8,000 students have already taken computer literacy training from the CLP-D.Net project.

Though NRBs' efforts are still limited, significant success can be achieved in collaboration with the government and NGOs, she noted.

She said such activities could be widened by establishing a coordination centre so that NRBs could link up with their country and

contribute to educational development.

Speaking on Promoting Biotechnology, Dr Subarna Khan, development scientist in ImClone Systems, Inc, said the government should come forward to provide support to the NRBs so that they can transfer their skill.

In such a case 'Virtual Education' could be a way to transfer educational skill to Bangladesh.

Virtual education refers to instruction in a learning environment where teacher and students are separated by time or space, or both, and the teacher provides course content through course management applications, multimedia resources, Internet, and videoconferencing.

Dhaka University Microbiology Alumni Association of Maryland, US is raising a fund to donate educational equipment to the Alma Mater.

"This is very little what we are doing. But if every department like us comes forward to do something that could be significant for the country," she said.

There is no alternative to training of the teachers, said the education secretary. "If we introduce demand-based vocational school programme, the amount of remittances would be doubled," he pointed out.

He said like all other sectors corruption is one of the major barriers to educational development of the country.

The primary and mass education secretary admitted that there is lack of quality teachers for public educational institutions.

Citing an example, he said the government has recently announced to recruit 13,000 primary teachers. But after holding an examination it got only 61 percent quality teachers against the requirement.

As for training he said 71 percent primary teachers have been trained.

He however said anyone can question the quality of training, adding that a mechanism is needed to justify the teaching standard before and after the training.

# CA seeks long term

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The concluding ceremony of the three-day conference also saw acting Army Chief Lt Gen Jahangir Alam Chowdhury proposing to change the constitution for granting equal rights to the NRBs and setting up a development bank run with remittances received from expatriates.

"I encourage NRBs to continue and expand these efforts to ensure that the skills developed abroad by our citizens can be used to the fullest advantage of our nation," said Fakhruddin to the audience comprising over 1,000 expatriates who attended the NRB conference organised by Scholars Bangladesh.

The country's goal is to become a middle-income country by 2021 to coincide with 50 years of independence and the goal can only be achieved with the support from citizens at home and abroad, the chief adviser said.

Expressing gratitude and pride on behalf of the nation for the successful achievements of the NRBs, Fakhruddin said that there is an urgent need to devise sustainable ways to pool financial and human capital for the country's development.

"It is now necessary more than ever to create the environment and opportunity for the NRBs to make long-term contributions to the socio-economic progress of the nation," he added.

In a rare open question and answer session, Fakhruddin said the government and the Election Commission are still trying to work out the legal and logistical issues about allowing the NRBs to vote.

He also urged the NRBs to establish a forum through which they can formally engage in activities with local administration and organisations.

Lt Gen Jahangir, acting Army chief and also the quartermaster general, proposed that the constitution should be changed to give dual citizens the same rights enjoyed by resident Bangladeshis.

The government has received a proposal to establish a development bank created with remittances received from NRBs, he said adding that the bank would finance development projects in numerous sectors including health, education, energy and infrastructure.

Lt Gen Jahangir said NRBs are also considering setting up an IT platform to provide a creative outlet for strategic interventions and look for job opportunities here.

Foreign Adviser Iftekhar A Chowdhury said that the NRBs and locals must find ways to strengthen linkages through which expatriates can secure investments, assist in education, share their expertise and extend their moral support.

Dr Kamal Hossain, an adviser to the organisers, gave his vote of thanks saying the conference is not only an event but also the start of a process that would strengthen the ties the NRBs have with Bangladesh.

Hansen Clarke, the Michigan state senator of Bangladeshi descent, said he is proud to claim Bengali his heritage.

Merely electing public officials is not enough. Rather, the officials must embrace the traditions of the country, Senator Clarke said adding, "Elected officials should no longer raise their status and serve themselves but must serve others and the people of Bangladesh."

Sandra Kabir, head of Brac (UK), said remittances should be used to purchase bonds and the NRBs should not only contribute here financially, but also socially and culturally.

# Sundarbans

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caused by the cyclone's heavy tidal wave that drove vast amount of salt water deep into the forest, explained Elisabeth Fahrni Mansur, an environmentalist and CEO of The Guide Tours Ltd on a visit to southeast Sundarbans.

Mansur had just returned from distributing relief materials among the Sidr victims. "It is encouraging to see how strong people are, they get up again, build a new house, a new life," she said.

At Katka, where Sidr hit the coast, fishermen came back for 'char' (paw) fishing. They were putting out their nets along the riverbank waiting for the tide to rise and carry the fish into the trap. On the shore, where the cyclone destroyed the Forest Department premises, the staffs were busy rebuilding a cottage.

Wildlife of the forest is also getting back to normal recovering from the shock Cyclone Sidr imposed on them. The animals found new territories or reclaimed the old ones.

However, the grass cutters who collect straws for betel leaf plantations, were yet to return to the meadows of Katka island. Many of their colleagues lost their lives in the cyclone.

# Hong Kong granted greater democracy

AP, Hong Kong

Hong Kong will be allowed to directly elect its leader in 2017 and all of its lawmakers by 2020 at the earliest, China said yesterday, an announcement that sparked protests by pro-democracy activists who sought an earlier date.

"A timetable for obtaining universal suffrage has been set," the former British colony's leader, Donald Tsang, said in announcing the decision early Saturday. "Hong Kong is entering a most important chapter of its constitutional history."

Political analysts noted that candidates contesting the leadership race may still need to be nominated by an electoral committee and that Beijing will likely remain involved in the election process.

Setting a timetable for universal suffrage would help end conflicts in Hong Kong and allow the bustling financial hub to focus on developing its economy, said Qiao Xiaoyang, a senior member of China's parliament who flew to Hong Kong to explain the decision.

He said Hong Kong would be allowed to choose its leader through a direct election in 2017, and all its lawmakers by 2020 at the earliest. Changes would need to be made gradually, starting in 2012, the date of the next leadership race, he said, without saying what those changes may be.

The widely expected announcement dealt a blow to Hong Kong's opposition pro-democracy camp, which had campaigned heavily for full democracy in 2012 for both the leadership and legislative polls.

Hundreds of people marched through central Hong Kong in protest, saying they had been cheated out of their right to full democracy. Holding banners that read "democracy delayed is democracy denied," they accused Beijing of failing to listen to the wishes of Hong Kong's 7 million people.

"We are extremely disappointed you could say we are furious about this decision in ruling out 2012," Democrat Party chairman Albert Ho told Hong Kong government-run RTHK radio station. "The wishes of the Hong Kong people have been totally ignored."

## Rice price

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quality rice available on the market, which had been sold for Tk 34 to Tk 35 a kg four days ago, was selling for Tk 37 to Tk 38 a kg yesterday.

The price of miniket, another variety of popular medium quality rice, leapt to Tk 40 to Tk 42 a kg on the retail markets yesterday whereas the same had been sold for Tk 36 to Tk 38 a kg just four days ago.

Prices of pajam and other categories of rice also rose by Tk 3 to Tk 4 a kg over the same period.

Aiyub Ali, owner of Barisal Agency at Karwan Bazar, said prices of all kinds of rice have been going up almost twice a day on the wholesale markets since the Eid-ul-Azha.

Meanwhile, the wholesalers of Badamtali in the old part of the city, said price hikes at the source, and a shortage of supply coupled with increasing transportation cost are pushing the rice price up in the capital.

Although the aman variety of rice has not arrived in the markets of the capital, its harvest is currently available at the source, but wholesalers fear that the arrival of aman is not likely to arrest the price hike since the entire agricultural sector is still reeling from the after-effects of Cyclone Sidr and the two floods preceding it. On top of that the production cost this year also saw a sharp rise, contributing to the ongoing price hike of rice, they added.

Soybean oil was being sold loose for Tk 93 to Tk 96 a litre yesterday on the retail markets, the price of which had been Tk 87 to Tk 90 a litre four days ago.

While the price of a five-litre can of soybean oil rose to Tk 460 to Tk 475 from Tk 440 to Tk 450 four days ago.

Falling to cope with the spiralling prices of essentials on the kitchen markets, shoppers of low income group population of the city were seen thronging the BDR shops with visceral desperation.

Different varieties of coarse rice were being sold for Tk 20 a kg at the BDR shops yesterday, said a source in the border security force which had been deployed within the city limits by the interim government for curbing the incessantly skyrocketing prices of essentials.

## India withdraws

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Citizens and entities from Bangladesh and Pakistan have so far been barred from making investment in India as per the FEMA regulations. Sri Lanka, which too was in the negative list of countries in this regard, was excluded three years ago. However, the restrictions on investments from Pakistan will continue.

# Militants, Benazir

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Benazir's death. But the government challenged the cover-up claim saying the Pakistani government would let the body of Benazir be exhumed for inquiry if her party requested it, interior ministry spokesman Brigadier Javed Cheema said on Saturday.

With questions raised about the official account of how she died, which has been rejected by Bhutto's aides and supporters, Javed Cheema said the Pakistan government had told the truth.

"We do not require the assistance of the international community," he said when asked about calls for an outside probe into her assassination, which has plunged the nuclear-armed Islamic nation deeper into turmoil.

"We understand the environment, the international community does not understand the environment," Cheema told a news conference.

Violent protests and looting which have left at least 38 people dead have rocked the nation of 160 million Muslims since Benazir was assassinated at a campaign rally in the northern city of Rawalpindi on Thursday.

"In two days 38 innocent people have lost their lives and 53 have been injured," Cheema told AFP.

Cheema also said the violence had also caused tens of million dollars in damage, with hundreds of shops, offices, banks, trains and cars burned by rioters following Bhutto's death on Thursday.

The United States and Western powers have urged Pakistan to commit to the democratic process in the aftermath of her death, but leading opposition figure Nawaz Sharif has already said his party would boycott the polls.

Benazir's Pakistan People's Party, which has accused the government of trying to cover up her death, has said it will take a decision on Sunday on whether to take part in the parliamentary elections scheduled for January 8.

The crisis-hit country's election commission said it would hold an urgent meeting on Monday to decide the election's fate, but it indicated a delay could be on the cards.

"All activities pertaining to pre-poll arrangements, including printing of ballot papers and logistics as well as training of polling personnel, have been adversely affected," it said in a statement.

In some places, the commission said, the security situation was "not conducive" to holding the elections which Benazir had come home from exile in October to contest.

It cited the death of an election candidate in a bomb blast and said election commission offices in nine districts had been set on fire and that voter lists had been "reduced to ashes".

The polls would lack credibility without the participation of Benazir's PPP, which has been infuriated by the government's official account of her leader's death.

Benazir died after a suicide attack targeted her vehicle at a campaign rally in the northern city of Rawalpindi. Early reports and witnesses said she had been shot before a bomb exploded nearby.

However the interior ministry said she had no gunshot or shrapnel wounds. It said the opposition leader died after smashing her head on her car's sunroof as she tried to duck.

The ministry also blamed al-Qaeda, saying intelligence services had intercepted a call from Baitullah Mehsud, considered the extremist group's top leader for Pakistan.

Senior members of Benazir Bhutto's party dismissed the government's version of events as "lies".

"There was a bullet wound I saw that went in from the back of her head and came out the other side," Benazir's spokeswoman Sherry Rehman, who was involved in washing her body for burial, told AFP.

"This is ridiculous, dangerous nonsense because it is a cover-up of what actually happened," said Rehman.

Farooq Naik, Bhutto's lawyer and a senior PPP official, said Benazir had a second bullet wound in the abdomen.

Benazir was an outspoken critic of al-Qaeda-linked militants blamed for scores of bombings in Pakistan and had received threats.

But she had also accused elements from the intelligence service of involvement in a suicide attack on a Benazir rally in October that left 139 dead and which she only narrowly escaped.

Maulana Omar, a spokesman for alleged al-Qaeda kingpin Mehsud, denied involvement in the attack and expressed grief over Benazir's death.

"This is a conspiracy of the government, army and intelligence agencies," said the spokesman from Waziristan, a lawless tribal region where al-Qaeda leaders, including possibly Osama bin Laden, are alleged to be hiding.

One day after Benazir was laid to rest at her family's mausoleum in southern Sindh province, Pakistan was virtually paralysed with most people unable to buy food or petrol, with all shops, fuel stations, banks and offices closed down.

The streets of the country's main cities -- Karachi, Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Lahore and Peshawar -- were largely empty, and in many places there was evidence of violence and looting.

Analysts warned that Pakistan was facing its biggest crisis since Bangladesh split off from the country more than 35 years ago.

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Analysts warned that Pakistan was facing its biggest crisis since Bangladesh split off from the country more than 35 years ago.

"We are heading towards a very uncertain phase of politics which has the potential to plunge the country into a state of anarchy," Hasan Askari, former head of political science at Lahore's Punjab University, told AFP.

The assassination has also thrust security concerns and foreign policy back into the US political spotlight less than a week before Americans start voting to decide their Democratic and Republican presidential candidates.

Leading democratic candidate Hillary Clinton called for an independent, international probe into Benazir's murder, saying Musharraf's government had no credibility.

"I think it's critically important that we get answers and really those are due first and foremost to the people of Pakistan," Clinton said.

Benazir was buried on Friday with hundreds of thousands of grief-stricken mourners following her coffin on the final journey to the family's mausoleum in the village of Ghari Khuda Baksh.

Educated at Harvard and Oxford, Benazir first took the helm of Pakistan in 1988. She was ousted in 1990 amid corruption allegations but was premier again from 1993 to 1996.

She has been buried next to her father Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, a former premier who was hanged by the military government in 1979.

Meanwhile, New Delhi has suspended two train services to Pakistan following violence in the wake of the assassination of former premier Benazir Bhutto, the railways ministry said.

Two trains were "cancelled on security considerations with immediate effect until further notice," the ministry said in a statement late Friday.

The "Samjhauta (friendship) Express" runs between New Delhi and the eastern Pakistani city of Lahore.

The "Thar Express" -- named after a desert -- connects India's Jodhpur city to the Pakistani town of Khokrapar and was reopened in 2006 after a gap of four decades to improve relations between the people of the rival nations. (AFP/AP)

# Govt asked

FROM PAGE 16  
Zafar Iqbal and Yasmeen Haque, teachers of Shahjalil University of Science and Technology (SUST), MA Hasan, convener of War Crimes Fact-finding Committee, Sarwar Ali, a trustee of Bangladesh Liberation War Museum, Shamsur Rahman Khan, former director general of National Museum, Dr M Nurun Nabi, a councilman of New Jersey, US and Dr Dipu Moni, an Awami League leader.

Prof Anisuzzaman said the government should form a fact-finding committee to collect