

ADP implementation in 6 months

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of their annual development budget.

Most of the ministries and divisions do not have expertise in spending the money in line with the Public Procurement Regulations-2003, the report said adding that in some cases ministry officials were fearful of spending the money.

To speed-up ADP implementation, the planning ministry suggested special training for at least four to seven officials from each ministry and division so they could gain expertise in the procurement rules.

The report observes that some projects need approval from development partners contributing to slower spending of donor component in the ADP.

It suggests that the government set up a committee headed by secretary of the Economic Relations Division to draw up a list of problems that the ministries face in spending donor aid.

The committee will also put forward the list to the Economic Affairs Committee for guidance.

Name of the ministry/division	ADP allocation in %			Rate of spending in %		
	2007-08	2006-07	2007-08	2007-08	2006-07	2007-08
1. Local Govt Division (including block allocations)	21	33	28			
2. Power Division	14	29	18			
3. Communication	12	24	14			
4. Health and Family Welfare	10	17	23			
5. Primary and Mass Education	8	23	33			
6. Education	5	16	22			
7. Water resources	4	9	10			
8. Agriculture	3	30	33			
9. Energy and Mineral Resources	3	7	12			
10. Post and Telecommunications	2	11	7			
Total:	81	24	22			

Source: ADP implementation review report on first six months, Planning Ministry.

lines.

In some projects, contractors are reluctant to begin the work as the prices of construction materials have shot up in the last few months leading to a wide discrepancy between the current prices

and those quoted, the report continues.

It recommends increasing the project expenditure in the event of a big difference between the quoted price and present market price.

Political talks

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an open mind," Zillur told reporters at his Gulshan residence in the capital.

He reiterated the AL's stance that they would not take part in any dialogue with preconditions attached to it.

Echoing Zillur, presidium member Tofail Ahmed said there is no need for any dialogue if the proposed talks do not conclude by March.

Meanwhile, the AL will begin making preparations for the dialogue in a couple of days. The party's presidium will sit in a meeting on February 1 to discuss the prevailing situation in the country and do homework for the dialogue, among other things.

Four senior presidium members - Amir Hossain Anu, Abdur Razzak, Tofail Ahmed and Suranjit Sengupta - already held a meeting among themselves at Anu's Eskaton residence Sunday, mostly mulling over how to prepare for the dialogue.

Denying having smelt anything hidden about the quartet's meeting, Zillur said they are all senior party leaders who would cling to the party until their last days.

Tofail told the reporters that they would start discussion with leaders of the AL-led 14-party combine in a couple of days, adding that they would hold several meetings among

themselves before talking to the allies.

Al Ain chapter of Bangabandhu Parishad in the UAE, led by its former president Mostafa Kamal, gave a cheque of Tk 5.3 lakh while Jubo League's UK chapter donated Tk 1 lakh in cash to the party's relief fund for cyclone Sidr victims. Zillur Rahman received the donations.

AL leaders Amir Hossain Anu, Abdur Razzak, Suranjit Sengupta, Motta Chowdhury, Syed Ashraful Islam, Abdur Mannan, Akhtaruzzaman, Sultan Mohammad Mansur Ahmed, Col (ret'd) Faruk Khan, Dr Dipu Moni, Prof Nazma Rahman, among others, were present at the programme.

Tarique

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four-member medical board to attend to Tarique's treatment needs.

"The doctors also suggested carrying out some tests, including blood tests and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), on Tarique Rahman, the jail authorities decided to admit him to the BSMU following the recommendations," the IGP (prisons) said.

Sources said Tarique, who was arrested March 7 last year on corruption charges, cannot walk well due to back pain and other medical conditions.

JS, upazila polls

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directives on March 27, 2007 that asked the EC to prepare a fresh voter list using new system and bring reforms to electoral laws. Election Commissioner Sakhawati said the EC announced its electoral roadmap on the basis of the court directives. "The court suspended the issue for holding the polls within 90 days timeframe," he said.

About a recent High Court rule asking the EC and the caretaker government to explain why it will not be directed to hold the polls within the next 90 days, both the election commissioners said that they saw it in the newspapers, but did not receive any copy from the court.

Shop-owners

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Since then, a relaxed situation has been prevailing with regard to closing shops in the evening.

Recently, the government decided to give priority to operation of irrigation pumps and withdrew the relaxation.

After the meeting, Dhaka City Shop Owners Association President Helal Uddin Helal told the news agency that they would abide by the order.

"But, at the same time, we have requested the government to ensure closure of commercial exhibitions, trade fairs and business of other stakeholders," he added.

69 killed

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815 rebels for the loss of just 30 soldiers.

Both sides are known to give wildly varying casualty figures, which cannot be independently verified. The government bars reporters from visiting frontline areas and rebel-held territory.

Sri Lanka pulled out of a Norwegian-brokered truce with the rebels this month, underscoring its belief that it has the upper hand in the drawn-out conflict.

Tens of thousands of people have died since the LTTE launched its campaign to carve out an independent homeland for minority Tamils in the majority Sinhalese nation in 1972.

Ex-BNP MP Millat

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statement submitted to the ACC Millat concealed information about Tk 4.97 crore wealth.

In the first information report (FIR) the complainant mentioned that he also accumulated Tk 5.16, 32,098 wealth beyond known sources of his income.

ACC Assistant Director Ibrahim Kawsar, who is also investigation officer of the case, submitted charge sheet in the case on October 2. Charges were framed on November 5 and deposition of witnesses began on November 12. A total of 46 witnesses gave their deposition in the case.

Millat was on the first list of 50 graft suspects the ACC published on February 18 last year.

Meanwhile, the Special Court-2 will pronounce today its verdict in the case against former power secretary ANH Akhter Hossain. The case was filed by the ACC on charges of amassing illegal wealth and giving false wealth statement.

5-yr-old boy

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allegations were "primarily" proved.

A few rubber garden owners filed the GD on August 15 last year, accusing the five of threatening them with death and encroaching upon land and destroying properties.

The other accused are Abdul Latif (20) and Abdul Barik (25).

The name of a woman accused, Rabika, was dropped from the charge sheet.

Judicial Magistrate Mohammad Faruk granted bail to Bari, his wife and child after defence lawyer Advocate Tapan Das appealed for dropping the name of Shahidul from the charge sheet and granting bail to the accused.

The complainants, meanwhile, prayed to the court for changing the names of accused, but the court kept the matter pending for hearing as the accused protested against the prayer.

Biman's fault

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yesterday, but it was also cancelled later.

The passengers were finally transferred to local hotels yesterday evening as Biman rescheduled their flight, for the third time, for 8:15am today, the sources added.

By the time Biman flies the passengers according to the latest flight schedule, the passengers will endure a 37-hour-long wait.

Flight schedule of the national flag carrier from Chittagong to different cities, especially to the cities in the Middle East, has been riddled with frequent disruptions in recent times, causing immense sufferings to the passengers.

Last week, over 500 Dubai and Jeddah bound passengers were stranded for 21 hours at the Shah Amanat International Airport as their flights were rescheduled three times.

Chief justice's panel

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in the selection process.

For permanent appointment to the High Court, the additional judges will need further recommendations of the council, according to the proposal.

Judges have so far been appointed on political consideration since the power to appoint lies with the prime minister and the president acts on the advice of the premier.

Appointments of judges since 2001 triggered widespread controversy, prompting the SCBA to launch protracted agitation programmes including boycotting court. The then BNP government appointed around 50 judges to the High Court Division, including one who was a BNP lawmaker.

The BNP government also did not confirm the jobs of a number of HC judges temporarily appointed by the previous Awami League government.

Even recommendations from chief justices in this regard were ignored in the past.

According to the approved EC Secretariat ordinance proposal, the

secretariat will be considered as a division according to the Rules of Business under the control of the EC. It will also have its own budget as per its request and will be responsible for the appointment of its secretary and other staff.

The demand for separation of the EC Secretariat from the control of PMO always figured prominently in the proposals placed at different times by former election commissioners, civil society groups and political parties.

The EC had faced difficulties in conducting polls because of interference from the executive. The EC secretary often seemed to be working against the commission and only those who would serve best the interests of the ruling party or alliance were appointed to the commission's posts.

With a view to breaking free from the PMO grip, the current EC came up with a number of proposals on June 7 last year.

The advisory council had approved the proposals in principle on June 23 and asked the law ministry to draft an ordinance.

Canadian lawyer

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"I want to say after observing everything that there is political motive behind bringing charges against Sheikh Hasina," the counsel told a crowded press conference at Sonargaon Hotel.

Payam arrived in Dhaka on Sunday to meet Hasina.

When contacted, Inspector General of Prisons Brig Gen Zakir Hassan however said they could not allow the foreign lawyer to meet Sheikh Hasina and Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim in jail since the Jail Code does not allow any foreign national to meet a detainee.

Payam, a professor at McGill University in Montreal in Canada and also a US attorney, said he would lodge a complaint with the UN in this regard.

The counsel also talked on some issues like human rights situation in Bangladesh, role of the army, caretaker government and judicial system.

"It is not for the caretaker government or the international community to decide who will be the leaders of this country. It is the people who will decide their leadership, and it is the democracy," he observed.

There is no alternative to establishing democracy in the country but it (democracy) has now been confined to jail, Payam said.

He noted that "manipulation of

judicial system" in Bangladesh is a great concern. Due process of law has not been followed in trying Hasina and this could hinder establishing democracy, he said.

The charges against Hasina are not only a question of human rights as they could also lead to a grave consequence for Bangladesh and its democracy, the Canadian lawyer added.

He posed a question how a reported event eight years ago could be brought under the Emergency Power Rules instead of filing a regular criminal case. He urged the government to ensure transparent and open trial of Hasina.

Payam said Azam J Chowdhury's case against Hasina is based on a single piece of evidence -- confessional statement by detained Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim -- which is not enough to convict her.

Referring to different international Human Rights organisations reports, he expressed concern over alleged violation of human rights in Bangladesh.

The jurist said he would try to meet the chief adviser (CA), government officials and representatives of different human rights bodies in the country, and draw the CA's attention to rights situation. On his return, he would also try to bring to UN notice the legal and human rights situation here.

Bush seeks

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still expect tough fighting ahead." A senior aide said a progress report due by April would shape any draw-down decision beyond current plans to bring some 20,000 soldiers home by July.

Bush had promised the crackdown would quiet sectarian violence that he blamed for thwarting Iraqi national reconciliation and that Iraqi security forces would be in charge of the whole country by November.

But 2007 proved the deadliest year for US troops since the 2003 invasion, major political progress has been elusive, and Iraqi officials have suggested that it may not be until 2012 that they can assume full control of security.

The president unveiled no bold new proposals, instead frequently invoking "the past seven years" in speech that, at times, sounded as if he were polishing his legacy, anticipating his own political obituary.

Democrats hope that deep dissatisfaction with his record will help them retain control of Congress and reconquer the White House. Some of his Republicans worry he could be a liability.

A January 20-22 Wall Street Journal survey found that 64 percent of Americans disapprove of Bush's handling of the economy and 67 percent his record on Iraq -- issues that will shape the race to succeed him.

The leading Democratic presidential hopefuls, Senators Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama, roundly criticised Bush on the leading issues in his speech.

Hillary Clinton called it "more of the same -- a frustrating commitment to the same failed policies that helped turn record surpluses into

large deficits, and push a thriving 21st-century economy to the brink of recession."

Obama described the speech as "full of the same empty rhetoric the American people have come to expect from this president."

The Republican nationwide presidential frontrunner according to poll averages, John McCain, backed Bush's economic package. "We should pass it quickly," he told CNN news.

Bush urged Iran to freeze uranium enrichment that Washington fears is a step towards nuclear arms, and to stop backing extremists abroad.

"America will confront those who threaten our troops, we will stand by our allies, and we will defend our vital interests in the Persian Gulf," he warned.

He called for the United States to stay the course in Afghanistan, for his giant tax cuts to be made permanent, and pressed the Congress to approve free trade pacts with Colombia, Panama and South Korea.

12 killed

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statement. Twelve insurgents were arrested in the area, it said.

And in another area of North Waziristan region, four members of the paramilitary Frontier Constabulary were injured when assailants fired several artillery rockets at a military base, said a local intelligence official who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorised to make media comments.

The mounting violence in the northwest has contributed to the growing unpopularity of President Pervez Musharraf, who returned early Tuesday from a European tour.

The hostage drama in Bannu, on the border with the tribal area where Tuesday's clashes occurred, ended peacefully after five hours when the hostage-takers were allowed to flee to avoid bloodshed.

The incident further underscored the government's fragile grip on Pakistan's borderlands near Afghanistan, where crime also is rife.

Meanwhile, a teenage boy suspected to be a member of a suicide squad picked to murder former Pakistan premier Benazir Bhutto has identified the bomber who blew himself up near her car, TV channels reported yesterday.

The interior ministry confirmed that 15-year-old Aitzaz Shah had been arrested in the northwestern city of Dera Ismail Khan last week. He confessed that he was a member of the backup group of suicide bombers who killed Benazir Bhutto.

Aitzaz Shah was later shifted to Islamabad for questioning and a court has given him 10-day custody to the police for interrogation. Another suspect, Sher Zaman, was also arrested on a tip from Aitzaz Shah, according to officials.

Aitzaz Shah has identified the bomber as Bilal, who belongs to South Waziristan tribal region, TV channels said.

Media reports said that investigators showed the picture of the bomber to Aitzaz Shah, who recognised him.

BDR-BSF

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BDR headquarters in the afternoon said a patrol team of BDR 15 Battalion was patrolling near Haripara. A BSF team also was patrolling on the other side of the border there.

He said BSF troops and the BDR patrol team were involved in an exchange of heated words near the zero line of the border regarding the cutting of a barbed wire fence.

At one stage, one BSF personnel behind the BSF team started shooting without provocation around 9:20am, the colonel said. He said the commander of the BDR patrol team was injured in that incident and the BDR team retaliated with gunfire.

Both border forces increased their presence near the area following the incident and exchanged bullets. During the battle, villagers held Om Prakash in Bangladesh territory and handed him over to BDR.

BSF Sector Commander of Malda around 11:00am requested a ceasefire over telephone to his counterpart BDR Dinajpur Sector Commander Col Rezaul Kabir.

Around 2:00pm the two parties hoisted white flags and ended the shootings.

Kabir, along with six BDR high officials, sat in a flag meeting at 3:30pm with their counterparts on no man's land. Sources said the meeting ended at 4:45pm with an amicable solution.

"BDR personnel, however, have been put on high alert to avoid any more untoward incidents," one BDR source said.

Sidr victims

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regard with Finance Adviser Mirza Azizul Islam at the planning ministry yesterday.

"The donation is dedicated to the cyclone victims in the worst-affected areas in coastal Bangladesh," Salem told reporters after the meeting.

He said the funds will be used mostly for rehabilitation and reconstruction of primary schools in the affected areas and a soft element will be used for agriculture and fisheries rehabilitation.

Asked about the philanthropist, he said the donor wished to be anonymous.

Replying to another question, he said IDB will also support rehabilitation and reconstruction projects after final assessment of the damages done by the devastating cyclone.

Aziz told reporters that \$ 110 million will be used for rehabilitation and reconstruction of schools and shelters while the rest for agriculture and fisheries.

An ERD official told the news agency that an agreement between the government and the donor agency (IDB) to this effect would be signed on February 4.

Home adviser

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into the cases of acid violence so that the acid throwers get punishment. He also asked for monitoring the cases of acid violence.

Gen Matin also issued an order from the meeting for strengthening the traffic management in the capital to get rid of the heavy traffic jam and take action against the vehicles running with fake licence and without fitness certificate.

He vented his apprehension about heinous acts of eve teasing and asked the law enforcers to take stern action against the culprits.

Matin requested the members of the police to change their behaviour. "You (police) have to prove that you are friend of the people."

About the unrest in garment sector, he stressed the need for immediate and permanent resolution to labour unrest in this sector through negotiation between owners and workers.

At the meeting, high officials of the law enforcement agencies urged the home adviser to introduce 30 percent more incentives for them. The adviser assured them of doing it in the next fiscal year.

Nuclear proliferation cannot be controlled

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in the USA, Europe, Vietnam, and China and in other countries. He was arrested by Polish counterintelligence in 1987 on charges of espionage for American and Japanese secret services. He was released from prison in 1990, after the fall of communist regime in Poland.

In the following years he worked for several western intelligence services for the monitoring of illegal nuclear trade. He survived two assassination attempts. His son died mysteriously in the UK in 1996. He is living in Poland these days and writing for some local and international magazines. This interview was done via email.

Q: For how long you worked with the CIA and in which countries you performed your duties? (Also mention about your arrest and then release from prison)

A: I had first informal contacts with the CIA in North Vietnam, when working for the International Supervision and Control Commission (ICSC) and the Polish Intelligence in 1967. Canadian officers enabled them. But I was blocked from going to South Vietnam and I was expelled from that Communist country (and was) declared "persona non grata."

I went to China then. A formal CIA recruitment was my own initiative and it happened in summer of 1973 in Saigon, Republic of Vietnam. Then, in August 1973, I passed lie-detector tests and interrogation by CIA teams in Paris. In Poland I reported my CIA recruitment and I became a covert agent, in loose contact with the Agency and targeted against the Soviet Union, from 1973 until my arrest in March 1987.

In fact, I became sort of a double agent for the CIA in the Polish Intelligence and Counterintelligence and that lasted fourteen years. I worked in Poland, USSR, Hungary, East Germany and other countries of Eastern and Central Europe - in the countries of the Warsaw Pact. In result of a "sting operation" I was arrested under false accusations of spying for the Japanese Intelligence. Following a secret military trial I got a sentence of 8 years in 1988, but the Communist regime in Poland collapsed in 1989 and I was released by general amnesty in February 1990.

Q: Is it correct that you tried to break up a Soviet Nuclear spying ring in Europe in the 70's?

A: Yes, my information to the CIA about Soviet spies in Western Europe helped the Nato to break up a multinational organisation of Soviet agents (planted in Germany, France, Italy and other countries). This organisation consisted of nuclear scientists, engineers and technicians, working in sensitive places. Most of the members of that intelligence network were arrested in a sweeping operation but some escaped. It happened in the second half of the 1970s.

Q: Did you monitor the illegal trade in nuclear materials, weapons parts and technology in 1990's and which particular countries were involved in illegal proliferation?

A: Yes, I did. For me it was a voluntary mission and I worked under many covers in Europe and Asia. Since the beginning of 1992, following a meeting in Jerusalem's "King David Hotel" with a prominent Israeli and international nuclear expert, the late Shaikevith Freier, I performed many special tasks. The purpose of my mission was to penetrate organised crime and intelligence groups trading in nuclear materials, weapons parts and technology. Most of these products originated in Russia and in other states of the former USSR, some also from China.

In my work, I had contacts

with several intelligence agencies but I was not employed by any of them. My work lasted until December 16, 1994. At this stage, the countries (or rather their intelligence services and various criminal groups) involved in the nuclear proliferation were mainly Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Baltic states (Latvia and Lithuania), and Kazakhstan. Chinese and Mongolian private groups traded in post-Soviet nuclear materials via Hong Kong.

The countries searching for nuclear materials, weapons and technology were (among other) Saudi Arabia, Brunei, Pakistan, Iran, Libya, Iraq, North Korea and some terrorist groups like al-Qaeda. Palestinians from several political-military organisations (al Fatah, Abu Nidal Organisation) often served as intermediaries for Arab and other states. Chechen rebels, fighting against Russia and cooperating with the Russian and other mafias, were an important source of materials and weapons for al-Qaeda.

Several countries, including Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Slovakia and the Czech Republic, as well as Germany, France, Switzerland, Italy, Greece, Turkey and Israel were "transit" places for shipments of nuclear materials and products from Russia or other post-Soviet states to "end users" in other countries. Specialised laboratories in Switzerland, Germany, Austria, France and other states tested illegally imported nuclear products.

American, Australian, Canadian, and also Mexican businessmen or intelligence "front companies" participated in the illegal nuclear trade and in the proliferation of nuclear technology.

Q: How safe are the Russian and American nuclear weapons.

A: I have no direct access to the Russian and American nuclear secrets but I know from many sources that the main nuclear arsenals of these big nuclear powers, as well as other nuclear states like Britain, France, China, India and Pakistan, are safe and under strict control. In the early 1990s, tactical nuclear weapons from Russia, Belarus and the Ukraine were offered on international nuclear black markets.

Most of these weapons were offered and sometimes sold by military-business groups, some by organised crime groups. A few transactions of very expensive nuclear materials and products were organised by specialised Russian military enterprises. Technical descriptions of these materials and products were available from Russian military laboratories.

Q: Do you know anything about the nuclear purchases made by Pakistan in the past?

A: Yes, I think I could trace some purchases of nuclear materials and products by Pakistan from Russia on black market. In fact, there was no other way to get them. Saudi Arabia and Brunei financed some of these transactions. I remember a shipment of special nuclear products from Russia to Austria in late 1992, which went to Pakistan then. It was perfectly organised from both sides -- the seller and the buyer.

The products were shipped by Russian military plane, delivered to a Russian diplomatic mission, inspected by experts and sold and shipped to the buyer. The end user was Pakistan but the products went there through a third party. No Pakistani officials or other people took part in the transaction carried out in Austria, near Vienna. Money was paid through banks, not in cash. But there were also cash-goods exchanges in Germany, Switzerland, Luxemburg and Liechtenstein.

Q: Do you know anything about some US officials selling nuclear secrets to others?

A: I do, but only through my American contacts in the Intelligence and the FBI. Some corrupt US officials of the Department of Defence and State Department facilitated the theft of US nuclear secrets (technology) from American national laboratories -- Los Alamos and Sandia -- to customers in several countries, including Pakistan. This procedure involved Israeli and Turkish intelligence and also Pakistan's ISI.

Dr A Q Khan's laboratories were brokers for nuclear proliferation to other countries, including Algeria, Iraq, Iran, Libya, Syria, Myanmar and other states looking for nuclear technology. This information first surfaced five years