

## EC finalises proposals

**FROM PAGE 1**  
lose its registration, if it continues to have those front organisations flouting the provision.

The EC's first basic proposed condition for registration says a political party that won at least one parliamentary seat in elections since 1973 will be eligible for registration. A party that does not meet the first condition will have to have offices and committees in at least 21 districts and 100 upazilas with at least 200 voters as members in each of those units.

If a party does not even meet the second condition, it must prove that it bagged at least five percent of the total vote cast in the constituencies it contested in elections since 1973, to be eligible for registration.

Political parties have been alleging that the EC is trying to have control over them, but the commission has repeatedly rejected the allegation saying the proposals are aimed at brining discipline and financial transparency in the parties.

**FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY**  
A political party registered with the EC and contesting in parliamentary polls will have to maintain accounts of its income and expenditure at any scheduled bank since the announcement of the polling date.

A registered political party may receive donations from individuals and institutions to build its fund. But an individual may donate no more than Tk 5 lakh or assets or services equal to that amount to a political party per calendar year while an institution may donate no more than Tk 25 lakh or services equal to that amount in a year.

A registered political party may spend Tk 4 crore if it nominates over two hundred candidates, Tk 3 crore if it nominates over one hundred candidates, Tk 1.5 crore for one hundred candidates, and Tk 75 lakh for over 50 candidates.

"Expenditure of a candidate with a party ticket will be considered a part of the party's expenditure," the EC's proposal says.

Any violation of these provisions by any registered party will be considered an offence punishable with fines up to Tk 10 lakh.

About submissions of election expenditure reports by political parties, the EC's proposals say, every party contesting in an election will have to submit its expenditure report to the commission within 90 days of the poll's completion.

"If a political party fails to submit the expenditure report within the 90 days timeframe, the Election Commission may warn the party by providing it with another 30 days. If the party again fails to do so, the commission may provide another 15 days with a fine of Tk 10,000 for each of those 15 days. And finally, the Election Commission may cancel the party's registration if the latter fails to submit the expenditure report at all," the proposals say.

"If the registration of a political party is cancelled, none will be allowed to use the name of the party for registration with the Election Commission," the proposals assert.

The EC's proposals go on saying the expenditure reports and other documents submitted by political parties contesting in an election will be kept open for a year, so the people may inspect the documents, and some of the documents will be posted on the EC website.

"An election to a parliamentary seat will be declared null and void if the winner is later found to have submitted wrong information to the EC," the proposals say.

**10 grenades**  
Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) Tofail Ahmed of Patiya Circle said the grenades and ammo could have been left there a long time ago since they had rusted on them.

He said they would ask specialists to examine the grenades and ammunition today.

**Ex-army man**  
Rab arrested Shamsul with his four associates on April 26 in Brahmanbaria. They are Tajul Islam Al Mahmud alias Baba Tajul, Mizanur Rahman, Jamal Miah and Saiful Islam. Of them, Jamal also gave confessional statement before the magistrate.

All the five arrestees were sent to Brahmanbaria jail yesterday.

Meanwhile, both Rab and police sources said the arrestees revealed important information regarding militancy, jihad and arms and ammunition.

Rab Additional Director General Col Gulzar Uddin Ahmed yesterday said: "As they revealed important information, we are trying to take the five suspects to the Taskforce for Interrogation (TFI) cell for more quizzing."

"We should identify the source of explosives and firearms recovered abandoned following the explosion on April 13," the Rab ADG said.

Rab and police sources said in the confessional statement, Shamsul also said he had trained up other militants, who are also his associates, on how to make grenades and bombs and how to use those.

the EC," the proposals say.

Besides, a registered political party will have to have its accounts audited annually by a chartered accounting firm and must send annual reports to the EC.

**INTERNAL DEMOCRACY**  
Every political party seeking registration with the EC will have to have specific provisions in its constitution promising to follow democratic norms and conventions within itself.

A party will have to elect committees from the central to grass-roots levels with specific intervals according to its constitution. Currently most of the major political parties do not follow even their own constitutions in electing party committees.

A party will have to have specific provision in its constitution promising to elect 33 percent women in each of its committees at all tiers by 2020.

In an effort to put a stop to the lucrative business of non-formation sales, much popular in most of the major parliamentary parties, the EC proposed to primarily nominate a panel of prospective candidates of each party from every parliamentary constituency. Party members of grassroots level committees will nominate the panel and forward it to the party's central parliamentary board which will then pick the candidates for elections.

A party will have to report to the EC on a regular basis about its compliance with electoral laws, and must notify the commission if any change is brought to its structure or the constitution, the EC's proposals say.

"Registration of a political party will be cancelled, if it fails to provide the information required by the Election Commission for three consecutive years," the proposals say adding, "Besides, its registration will also be cancelled, if it does not contest in parliamentary polls for two consecutive years."

The EC also proposes laws empowering the government to cancel the registration of a political party, if necessary. It also proposes, if a party gets banned by the government, that party should not be eligible to get registered with the EC again.

**TALKS WITH PARTIES**  
The EC held a series of dialogues with political parties to finalise the electoral reform proposals since September 12 of last year. The talks were concluded on Sunday with a dialogue between the EC and Saiful-led faction of BNP while Delwar-led pro-Khaleda faction of the party was left out.

The political parties, which in 2001 had strongly opposed the erstwhile EC's proposal for registration, however did not reject it this time around, although they did suggest relaxing the criteria for registration.

**CNG-run bus**  
The picture was similar at other ticket counters from Mirpur to Gulistan.

Five CNG-run bus operators stopped their operations after 1:00pm protesting police interventions, staffs of the bus services told The Daily Star.

The passengers had to face immense sufferings when the buses of Shatabdi, Mega, Raja City, Trans Silva and Maitree services stopped plying the roads.

"It's an anarchy. I don't know how I will maintain my family in this situation... price hike of essentials followed by increase in bus fares... its really unbearable," Munira Begum, a garment worker, told The Daily Star while buying ticket for Farmgate from Karnaphuli bus counter at Taltala.

Staffs of this bus service at Mirpur were forced to sell tickets at the previous rate following protests by the aggrieved passengers.

Ticket sellers Nazrul and Saiful of Shatabdi Paribahan and Ekushey Paribahan admitted that they have been facing the anger of the passengers due to higher fares.

"We are helpless, as our companies have instructed us to raise the fares," they said.

BRTA mobile court reinforced by Dhaka Metropolitan Police yesterday filed cases against 93 buses and seized four buses for demanding increased fares. The court also fined Tk 12,000 in five cases and arrested two bus staffs.

Police detained two ticket sellers of Trans Silva bus service for charging higher fares, but they were released later.

The ABC will hold a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club today and place their demand of raising the bus fares.

"If the government does not increase the fare, we will give our buses to it," ABC member Mafizul Islam told The Daily Star last night.

On April 24, the government increased the price of CNG (compressed natural gas) from Tk 8:50 to Tk 16:75 per cubic metre.

Two days later, it adjusted the fares of the CNG-run three-wheelers and taxicabs, but gave directions for not hiking the fares of CNG-run buses.

## Huji man

**FROM PAGE 16**  
granted three days.

Sources from CID and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) said they were not satisfied with the information given by Suman about his involvement in the grenade attack on the AL rally.

Rab sources said they would take Suman to the Taskforce for Interrogation (TFI) cell for squeezing out more information.

According to sources, the charge sheet in the August 21 grenade attack case would be submitted in the first week of May accusing around 25 people including former BNP deputy minister Abdus Salam Pintu, Huji leader Mufti Hannan, Abdur Rouf, Moulana Tajuddin, Arif Hassan Suman, Moulana Abdul Latif, Moulana Monir, Moulana Idris, Moulana Abu Taher, Waliur-Rahman and Waliur-Rahman-2.

Meanwhile, Dr Zafar, arrested in connection with the bomb explosion at a rally of Communist Party of Bangladesh at Paltan Maidan on January 20 in 2001, was taken on three-day remand.

He is also accused in the August 21 grenade attack case and was shown arrested in the Paltan Maidan bomb explosion.

In the case Huji boss Mufti Hannan is also accused.

Earlier on December 17, 2003, CID submitted the final report. But following the government directive, investigation into the cases was restarted.

## Cyclone Nargis

**FROM PAGE 1**  
in the Bay since the deadly Sidr in November last year.

The metro office has said it is hard to be definite right now about the cyclone's movement in the coming days.

The office mentioned that the cyclone might intensify further and move in a northerly direction towards the Bangladesh and Indian coast.

"Its tendency is to move in a northerly direction. But there is a possibility it may change its course and move in a northeast direction to hit the Bangladesh-Myanmar coast," Arzumand Habib, the director of the metrological department, said.

The wind speed within 54 kilometres of the storm center, the met office said, is about 62 kmph, which may rise up to 88 kmph in gusts. Sea will remain rough over the northern part of the bay.

The Met office has advised the maritime ports, including Cox's Bazar, Chittagong and Mongla, to hoist distant cautionary signal number two at present. It also warned all fishing boats and trawlers to remain close to the coast and proceed with caution till further notice.

The name of a cyclone is fixed in advance by at regional metrological conferences. Since the name Nargis was fixed, it became a much talked about fear among people in the coastal belts hit by Cyclone Sidr.

There were several false alarms along the southern coast in the weeks following Sidr and people rushed to cyclone shelters thinking Nargis was about to hit the coast.

**River erosion**  
Head Morphologist M Maminul Haque Sarker said presenting the prediction study. These rivers erode thousands of hectares of floodplain every year leaving many without a roof over their head, he added.

In 2007, the three rivers swallowed up about 3,970 hectares of land, 530 hectares of settlement, 1,930 metres of embankment, 2,020 metres of district road and 2,390 metres of rural road.

"Besides, these rivers also devoured 40 educational institutions, nine market places, five government offices, one non-government office and two health centres during the period," he pointed out.

Water Resources Adviser Dr CS Kanim said riverbank erosion is not only devouring lands, houses, roads and settlements, but also damaging the historical heritage.

"In last one year, 40 educational institutions, including 100-year old schools, were washed away," he mentioned while addressing the seminar as the chief guest.

He suggested involving local community people into the prevention measures taken by government and development agencies.

Terming the riverbank erosion as a silent killer, Huja Du, country director of Asian Development Bank (ADB), said the river erosion is taking a serious turn day by day because of rapid changes in climate.

"According to a UN report, climate change could affect more than 70 million people in Bangladesh," she said addressing the seminar as special guest.

ADB has approved \$220 million emergency disaster damage rehabilitation project for rehabilitation and restoring the damaged infrastructures, she added.

CEGIS Executive Director Giasuddin A Chowdhury, Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme (CDMP) Chief Technical Adviser and Team Leader Ian Rector, Water Development Board Director General Moazzad Faruque and CEGIS Head Quality Control Division Ehsan Hafiz Chowdhury also addressed the seminar.

## AL places to CA

**FROM PAGE 1**  
adviser would take appropriate steps soon for the release of Hasina immediately taking into consideration the signatures.

Later at the closing ceremony of the signature campaign at city's Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh, the AL leaders asked the government to free Hasina before starting the official dialogue with the political parties to make the talks successful.

They also demanded that the government lift the state of emergency right away and announce specific date for the next parliamentary election.

Addressing the programme, AL Presidium Member Amir Hossain Amu said a silent revolution has taken place with the collection of around 25 lakh signatures for Hasina's release.

Abdur Razzak, another presidium member, said with the signature campaign, around 70 percent voters of the capital have expressed their opinions in favour of the AL chief's release.

## UN starts meet

**FROM PAGE 16**  
the Universal Postal Union before going in to the main talks with 27 key UN agencies.

Also in Bern were Josette Sheeran, Executive Director of the UN's World Food Programme; World Bank President Robert Zoellick; Jacques Diouf, head of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO); and Lennart Bage, president of the International Fund for Agricultural Development.

Ban was expected to issue a statement and hold a press conference on Tuesday morning at 0700 GMT (0900 CET).

In Geneva, UN special rapporteur on the right to food Jean Ziegler said the meeting in Bern on Monday marked "an essential day for hungry people around the world."

Ziegler called for a suspension of biofuels which he said is one of the causes of the sharp increase in food prices.

He also criticised efforts by the World Trade Organisation to conclude trade liberalisation talks, saying that it works against those who are dying from hunger.

"The line taken by Pascal Lamy (director general of the WTO) is completely against the interests of people dying of hunger because it's exactly the protectionist taxes that allow farmers to cultivate food crops," he said.

He welcomed IMF chief Dominique Strauss-Kahn's "reversal" on the subject and called on governments to support him to

Baset's wife Arjuman Banu told The Daily Star that her husband joined the service on August 14, 1992. He was transferred to the DGFI on September 10, 2004.

The couple had no child. "I was waiting for my husband as we were supposed to go to Bogra to adopt a daughter," with these words Arjuman burst into tears at her North Kafrul home.

## Saifur's younger son

**FROM PAGE 1**  
case against Babu accusing him of concealing information about wealth worth Tk 1.28cr in his wealth statement. Babu will also be charged with amassing wealth worth Tk 13.85cr beyond his known sources of income.

Babu was one of the 11 graft suspects disclosed by an ACC list last October.

Meanwhile, the ACC has approved issuing notice on former state minister for planning Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir's daughter and son, Joya Alamgir and Jalal Alamgir, to submit their wealth statements to the commission.

ACC will submit the charge sheet against Rajib Siraj under section 13 of Money Laundering Act, 2002.

ACC approved filing of a case against former BNP lawmaker Alamgir Mohammad Mahfuz Ullah Farid and his wife Nur Akter Zahana for concealing information of wealth worth Tk 87.91 lakh from the

ACC and accumulating wealth worth Tk 2.39cr beyond their known sources of income.

In another case the ACC will charge nine people, including former director general of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BSB) Waliul Islam and former BSB director (administration) Khurshid Kamal, of misuse of power.

Conservator of Forest, Khulna Sheikh Mizanur Rahman will be charged with concealing information of Tk 2.18 lakh from ACC and amassing wealth worth Tk 14.93 lakh beyond his known sources of income.

The ACC is also set to file a case against former deputy assistant engineer of the Power Development Board (PDB) Jafrul Hasan and his wife Shefali Hasan for concealing information about wealth worth Tk 79.63 lakh in their wealth statement and amassing the same by illegal means.

**Power projects**  
The power cell in a letter informed Summit of its disqualification to participate in the Sirajganj power project in January 10 without giving any explicit reasons. On February 14, the cell in another letter disqualified Summit in the Bibiyana project citing reasons which Summit thought was wrong and unjust.

Summit's disqualification surprised all power industry operators as it had gained a stable reputation in the power sector for nearly 100 years. Presently operating the 100MW Khulna barge-mounted plant and several small power plants, Summit was previously about to be awarded with the 450MW Sirajganj power project in 2004.

Summit had also finalised finances from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). However, the then prime minister Khaleda Zia had cancelled awarding the project without citing any official reason. Unofficially, she did so as the chief of Summit was considered close to her political rival, sources said.

**Asst judges**  
The court ordered to confiscate around Tk 1.75 crore worth of wealth belonging to Lalu and around Tk 57 lakh worth of wealth belonging to his wife.

On September 6 last year, Ashish Kumar Kundu, an assistant director of the ACC, filed the case against the couple with Borga Sadar Police Station.

The former BNP lawmaker earlier received a total of seven years' imprisonment in two separate cases. He was handed down five years' imprisonment for setting up a wireless tower illegally at his Sutrapur residence in Bogra while he was sentenced to two years' imprisonment as he was found guilty of misappropriating government relief materials.

If the state of emergency is lifted, 70 percent people of the country will also make the same choice, he added.

Razzak also said that Hasina's release is a must to create a congenial atmosphere for a free and fair election in the country.

Another Presidium Member Tofail Ahmed said the people of the country do not believe that the election would be held in time. "If the election is not held for any reasons, you [government] cannot blame us for that," he said.

Presidium Member Suranjit Sengupta said that if the government wants a meaningful dialogue and solution to the present crisis, it should free Hasina and hold talks with her. He also asked the government to allow resuming political activities all over the country.

Motia Chowdhury said that state of emergency could not be put in force for a long period of time, as there is no such instance in the world. She criticised the government for its alleged move for "minus-two" politics.

Tanveer Ahmed Siddique led the 11-member pro-Khaleda BNP delegation. Other members of the delegation were BNP Standing Committee Member Dr RA Gani, Vice-presidents MK Anwar and Begum Sarwar Rahman. BNP chairpersons' advisers Brig Gen (retd) ASM Hannan Shah and Riaz Rahman, Joint Secretaries General Nazrul Islam Khan, Goyeshwar Chandra Roy and Selima Rahman, and Acting Office Secretary Rizvi Ahmed.

Earlier in the day, Commerce Adviser Hossain Zillur Rahman (retd) Gulam Quader, Law Adviser AF Hassan Arif, LGDR Adviser Anwarul Iqbal, and Foreign Adviser Iftikhar Ahmed Chowdhury represented the government yesterday.

"put a priority on the cultivation of food produce."

Asked about the protectionist measures taken by numerous rice-producing countries, Ziegler said he "understands the attitude of these countries which consider first their own provisions."

But their governments "know that in history, hunger riots can bring down entire states," he said.

## Mugger stabs

**FROM PAGE 1**  
After Baset captured the mugger, who got inside the school, the thug stabbed him twice in the chest and fled scaling the school wall. Baset was on duty in the area in plain clothes.

Critically injured Baset succumbed to his injuries immediately after he was admitted to Combined Military Hospital (CMH), Dhaka.

Law enforcers, however, arrested mugger Mohiuddin Tipu, 22, six hours later at North Bhasantek with a knife and a cellphone, said Akheruzzaman, a sub-inspector of Kafrul Police Station.

Baset is the son of Adam Miah of village Paneratika in Sheebganj upazila of Bogra, an ISPR press release says.

He will be buried at his village home today.

Baset's wife Arjuman Banu told The Daily Star that her husband joined the service on August 14, 1992. He was transferred to the DGFI on September 10, 2004.

The couple had no child. "I was waiting for my husband as we were supposed to go to Bogra to adopt a daughter," with these words Arjuman burst into tears at her North Kafrul home.

News photos showed several of its carriages sitting across the train tracks just outside the city of Zibo.

News photos showed rescuers pulling passengers from a carriage sitting on its side. Survivors bundled in white bed sheets from the sleeper cars stood or sat near the wreckage.

Xinhua said bloodstained sheets and broken thermos flasks could be seen on the ground beside the twisted train cars.

It did not say how many people were on both trains.

"Most passengers were still asleep, but some were standing in the aisle waiting to get off at the Zibo railway station," one passenger named Zhang told Xinhua.

"I suddenly felt the train, like a roller coaster, topple ... to one side and all the way to the other side. When it finally went off the tracks, many people fell on me," Zhang said.

Zhang, who was on the train from Beijing, was injured when the train toppled into farmland beside the track. She said local villagers used farm tools to smash train windows to pull out trapped passengers.

"I saw a girl who was trying to help her boyfriend out of the train, but he was dead," Zhang said.

A 38-year-old woman told Xinhua that she and daughter, 13, escaped unhurt by scrambling through a huge crack in the floor of their carriage.

Four French nationals, three from one family were among the injured. Xinhua said heavy cranes were being used to move the wrecked rail cars, with workers aiming to reopen the line by early Tuesday, a little more than 24 hours after the accident.

One villager who witnessed the rescue operation said ambulances ferried the injured away for more than three hours.

"There were a lot of police and soldiers around and I saw a lot of ambulances going back and forth," the villager told The Associated Press.

The business leaders who attended the meeting included Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) President Anisul Huq, Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) President Anwar-ul-Alam Chowdhury Parvez, Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) President Latifur Rahman, Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA) President Fazlul Hoque, Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA) President Abdul Hai Sarker and Bangladesh Association of Pharmaceuticals Industries (BAPI) President Shaifuzzaman.

The four advisers present at the meeting are Law Adviser AF Hassan Arif, Communications Adviser Gulam Quader, Education and Commerce Adviser Hossain Zillur Rahman and LGDR Adviser Anwarul Iqbal.

"The business community wants

## Khaleda, Hasina

**FROM PAGE 1**  
pro-Khaleda faction of BNP and the five government advisers began at 5:15pm, marking the end of the first round.

Meanwhile, Commerce Adviser Hossain Zillur Rahman told reporters, "We started the talks emphasising three points -- creating confidence, holding a meaningful election, and making decisions to bring qualitative changes in politics."

He said they are happy as the discussions were held in congenial atmosphere and since they received good suggestions from the political leaders. During the informal talks, a ground for formal discussions was created which will help them to hold a credible election timely, he added.

He said they will report to the chief adviser tomorrow about the talks with political parties held over the last 22 days.

Commerce Adviser Hossain Zillur Rahman, Communications Adviser Maj Gen (retd) Gulam Quader, Law Adviser AF Hassan Arif, LGDR Adviser Anwarul Iqbal, and Foreign Adviser Iftikhar Ahmed Chowdhury represented the government yesterday.

Tanveer Ahmed Siddique led the 11-member pro-Khaleda BNP delegation. Other members of the delegation were BNP Standing Committee Member Dr RA Gani, Vice-presidents MK Anwar and Begum Sarwar Rahman. BNP chairpersons' advisers Brig Gen (retd) ASM Hannan Shah and Riaz Rahman, Joint Secretaries General Nazrul Islam Khan, Goyeshwar Chandra Roy and Selima Rahman, and Acting Office Secretary Rizvi Ahmed.

Earlier in the day, Commerce Adviser Hossain Zillur Rahman invited Khaleda loyalists to the talk by sending a cell phone text message to Khandaker Delwar Hossain, the faction's executive chief also BNP secretary general appointed by its detained Chairperson Khaleda Zia.

Khaleda loyalists also demanded release of all detained political leaders including Tanque Rahman. They argued that the detained political leaders should be tried under the regular laws of the land if there are reasonable allegations against them.

They also asked the authorities to withdraw all cases filed against detained political leaders and urged the government not to interfere in the functions of the judiciary, constitutional institutions, the media, and the administration.

Urging all to uphold the spirit of the constitution, pro-Khaleda BNP leaders demanded an end of intervention by 'certain quarters' in political and electoral process.

"They also demanded access of the media to the proposed formal dialogues between political parties and the government, and stressed the need for taking necessary measures to bring back confidence among the business community."

Comparing the present situation in the country with a 'famine-like situation', the leaders asked the government to introduce a rationing system for the lower income group people and allowances for the jobless.

The leaders of the BNP faction also asked the authorities to stop 'harassing' their leaders as such 'harassments' create obstacles to holding a peaceful election.

They also asked the government to disclose the steps taken by the government for the treatment of detained political leaders as well as the recommendations made by the medical boards formed for their treatment.

Earlier, the panel of government advisers held talks with Krishak Samik Janata League and Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal.

**HC halts**  
The Supreme Judicial Commission will also recommend names of eligible candidates drawn from the HC Division for appointment as a judge of the Appellate Division.

Noted jurist Dr Shahdeen Malik moved for the petition filed by SC lawyer Idrisur Rahman while Additional Attorney General Salahuddin Ahmad opposed the plea for stay.

Law secretary and the SC registrar are respondents to yesterday's HC rule on the military-backed caretaker administration.

In his submission, the petitioner said the ordinance states that initially the law ministry will send a list of probable candidates and the commission will select one from those on the list.

"This ensures complete control of the executive over selection of judges for the apex court," he added.

The ordinance also authorises the president not to accept any of the names recommended by the commission. And this all undermines the independence of the judiciary, he observed.

Shahdeen Malik argued that the ordinance entails interviewing candidates whereas appointment to no other constitutional positions like the chief election commissioner or chairman of Public Service Commission requires interviewing the candidates.