

People will try

FROM PAGE 1
10.06am He was given oxygen in the ambulance for about 45 minutes before being produced before the court at 10.50am on a wheelchair.

An emotional situation arose after Khaleda entered the courtroom at 11.00am as a tearful Khaleda rushed to embrace her son. The mother and son met after nine months since their arrests.

With the judge's permission, Khaleda said day by day it is becoming clear to the country's people why 1/11 was staged.

In her 18-minute speech, the former premier said, "The incidents of 1/11 were staged to fulfil a few persons' high ambition and those who made it happen have no concerns about the country and its people."

She asked why this government has been running the country under the state of emergency for over one and a half years if it is so popular.

"Ours was also a popular government but the emergency was not required during our tenure," she said, adding, "The popularity of this government has slid down to zero."

Renewing her call to the government for lifting the state of emergency within this month and holding national elections by October, Khaleda said there is no alternative to holding an election to save the country.

"It is not possible to move the country forward without politicians," she added.

She alleged that the government started arresting and filing "false" and "concocted" cases against politicians to implement its blueprint.

"The government is harassing political leaders to stay in power and is making excuses to divert public attention from the disastrous situation in the country," she said.

"When people started extending spontaneous support to politicians after indoor politics was allowed, the government became scared and launched mass arrest in the name of curbing terrorism," she told the court packed with lawyers, journalists and security personnel.

The BNP chairperson asked how the election could be credible if major political parties are barred from participating in it.

"It seems the government wants to hold an election similar to those during the rule of Ershad," she said, adding that the government wants to legitimise its actions by forming parties with its "agents".

Khaleda said although the tenure of the caretaker government was 90 days during which it was supposed to hand over power to an elected government through holding a free and fair election, the government is continuing its rule violating the constitution.

"Rice prices have gone above Tk40 and to survive children now have to stand in queues to get rice instead of studying," she said.

Terminating the cases filed against her false, baseless and concocted, Khaleda claimed that she, her son and other accused in the Gato case are innocent because her government had worked as per the rules of business.

"We neither committed any offence, nor did we misuse power," she said, asking why the government has not yet scrapped the contract with Gato if it was so bad.

"The aim of this government is to keep political leaders away from elections and belittle them before the people," she said.

RMG unrest

FROM PAGE 1
the morning, the journalist provoked other workers to go on rampage at Ashulia.

Over 3,000 workers of several garment factories vandalised 40 vehicles and damaged properties at 30 garment factories, three markets and two banks.

SI Obaidul Huq told the Daily Star said he could only mention the name of TV journalist Nazmul Huda as one of the accused since the identity of others accused is yet to be known.

Meanwhile, the authorities of Pasco Ltd, Shad Fashion, Shad Fashion International, P & Go Catter Ltd, Libra Knitwear, SGM Knit and Printing and Han and Hush Ltd filed general diaries in connection with the incidents.

Rab nabs 4

FROM PAGE 16
Chowdhury and arrested Rafiqul, Borhan and Shakhawat on Tuesday afternoon. Following information extracted from them, the law enforcers picked up Zafar yesterday.

From the arrestees, the Rab members found out that C&F firm staff Rafiqul, owner of Raj Electronics (to be identified) at 66, Bangabandhu Avenue and owner of JB International at 17, Iskaton, Rezaul Karim Maznu in connivance with some importers have long been evading tax and VAT in this manner.

Bhuiyan's salam

FROM PAGE 1
sweeping reform proposals in the party.

Hours before her arrest on September 3 last year, Khaleda expelled him from the party for his "controversial" role, replacing him with diehard Khandaker Delwar Hossain.

Bhuiyan, however, ditched his reform bid, called Khaleda as 'Desh Netri' on the day he surrendered to court in connection with the Gato graft case.

NASIM-NIZAMI EMBRACE
Awami League leader and former home minister Mohammad Nasim embraced Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Motiur Rahman Nizami as they came across in front of Special Court-3 at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhavan complex.

Nasim was produced before another court in connection with a graft case.

EC plans

FROM PAGE 16
Brig Gen (ret'd) M Sakhawat Hussain will then visit other divisional headquarters from June 19 to hear the appeals, sources in the EC said.

As per the draft schedule, the hearings on appeals in Sylhet division will be held on June 19 at Sylhet Circuit House, in Barisal division on June 25 at Barisal Circuit House, in Khulna division on June 26 at Khulna Circuit House and in Rajshahi division on June 29 at Rajshahi Circuit House.

The hearings on appeals against re-demarcation of constituencies in Chittagong division will be held in two parts--on June 22 at Comilla Circuit House and on June 23 at Chittagong Circuit House.

The details of the schedules are likely to be disclosed today through a notification issued by the EC Secretariat, in which appellants will be asked to come up with their arguments at the hearings in their respective areas.

This is by far the largest number of appeals filed following the EC's move to re-demarcate 133 constituencies ahead of the next parliamentary elections.

The re-demarcation plan was unveiled on April 29 this year amid growing opposition from major political parties, which maintain that the move will create obstacles to holding of the upcoming ninth parliamentary polls by the end of this year as announced in the electoral roadmap.

No appeal was filed against the re-demarcation of 59 parliamentary constituencies.

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Tarique

FROM PAGE 1
the ACC. Zubaida and her mother were accused of abetting Tarique.

ACC Assistant Director Taufiqul Islam, also the investigation officer (IO) of the case, submitted the charge sheet against them to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court on March 31 this year, showing 57 people as prosecution witnesses.

According to the charge sheet, Tarique concealed wealth worth about Tk 2.17 crore in his wealth statement and amassed about Tk 2.75 crore beyond his known sources of income.

Advocate Anisul Huq appeared for the ACC while Barrister Rafique-ul-Huq for Tarique Rahman in the court.

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Rajuk

FROM PAGE 1
some portions of the building was constructed violating the Rajuk-approved plan.

He said the Rajuk team demolished parts of three other buildings in the area for the same reason.

The Rajuk drive is routine work and since the number of buildings which were built deviating from the approved plans is high, they decided to go for a drive against under construction buildings, said Dastgir.

DMP

FROM PAGE 16
Of the 19 cases, three each were detected in Kotwali and Mohammadpur police stations, four each in Sutrapur and Pallabi police stations and one each in Demra, Badda, Shahbagh, Motijheel and Kafnol police stations.

Of those, 11 were filed in 2007, six in the last five months this year and the other two in 2006, police said.

Apart from the people accused in such false cases, police also have to face harassment, as these cases add up to their caseload.

In addition, the investigation officers also need to visit the place of occurrence and contact the complainants and witnesses as part of the probe, which waste time and energy of the law enforcers.

The DMP official observed that a couple of years back, there were around 6,000 cases under investigation with different police stations in the metropol.

An investigation officer (IO) was even tasked with probing up to 50 cases at a time.

"The DMP authorities has undertaken a crash programme to bring down the number of cases under investigation to around 3,800," said another top DMP official seeking anonymity. If the programme is successfully implemented, an investigation officer will not have to deal with more than nine cases at a time, he added.

Giving an example of false cases, the DMP official said that on January 18 this year, one Salma Begum filed a case with Sutrapur Police Station in the city against 50 to 60 people, identifying nine.

In the first information report (FIR), the complainant alleged that the accused broke into her house and took away gold ornaments and furniture.

The same day, a similar case was lodged with the same police station against the same accused by one Fazila Begum.

Later, the investigation found that the allegations were false and both cases were filed out of personal enmity.

Gas-fed generators operate

FROM PAGE 1
supply authority in a written statement stated that the company is giving only limited permission for using NG for alternative power generation only in the capital, on a direction from the government issued on March 13, 2007.

So far Titas Gas gave permissions to 25 domestic subscribers in upscale neighbourhoods of Gulshan, Banani, Baridhara, Dhanmondi, and Lalmeta in the capital. Those subscribers installed converted gas operated generators of different popular brands such as Honda, Walton, and Navana, said an engineer of Titas Gas.

According to sources, Titas Gas is giving permission for up to 10kva gas operated generators, which consume 120cft of NG an hour amounting to 3,600cft per month if a consumer uses the generator one hour daily through a month.

At a time when the whole country is facing a severe NG crisis, for which gas supply is being rationed even to industrial zones, such a decision of giving permission to use natural gas for alternate power generation in households, has raised questions.

BGMEA President Anwar-ul-Alam Chowdhury said, "When the government can't even provide natural gas support for smooth operation of industrial zones, such a decision of allowing domestic users to generate electricity using natural gas does not reflect a responsible attitude on the part of the government."

"In fact, the government is concentrating on minor interests, instead of focusing on the need of the industrial sector for its proper growth," he observed.

According to the sources, so far no Chinese dual system gas operated generator has been installed by Titas Gas engineers. "A few dual system gas operated generator distributors approached us for permission to use natural gas, but were refused. We will investigate illegal use of the equipment," said a high official of Titas Gas on condition of anonymity.

Meanwhile, an official of Total

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Power Generation Company, a distributor of gas operated generators, said, "We have been marketing these generators for the last three years. This year the demand has increased. Our brand is the most popular one. So far we have sold over 300 generators of different capacities."

Gas operated power generators have become so popular that distributors of diesel operated generators of popular brands are converting their generators to dual system gas operated ones, to infiltrate the lucrative market.

A manager of an outlet of Walton told this correspondent, "We suggest our clients that they use liquefied petroleum gas to run the generators. For conversion one has to pay 15,000 taka extra."

Purchasing converted gas operated generators of such popular brands, buyers usually use NG to run the equipment instead of using LPG. "Liquefied petroleum gas is quite expensive. A 2kva gas generator runs for only 20 hours with a 12kg LPG cylinder, which costs 1,280 taka. That's why we use natural gas from kitchen lines," said the same domestic user in Dhanmondi area.

When the illegal user was asked why he was not getting permission from Titas Gas, he said, "It's not so easy to get a permission."

Admitting that the problem of illegal use of natural gas in producing alternative power does exist, a high official of Titas Gas said, "The government instruction is quite confusing regarding giving permissions. The term, limited permission, is not adequately explained in the instruction."

"Even the tariff has not been reviewed. After giving permission we attach meters to a supply line. Domestic users have to pay 4.59 taka for using each cubic metre of natural gas. After setting the meters for generators they however don't need to pay for the gas supply to their kitchen stoves," he added.

Obama wins

FROM PAGE 1
On November 4, voters must pick between Obama, a freshman senator and charismatic mixed-race standard-bearer of a new political generation, and McCain, a wounded Vietnam war hero asking for one final call to service.

Clinton congratulated Obama on an "extraordinary" race but refused to bow out, demanding respect for the nearly 18 million people who voted for her and leaving no doubt that she considered herself the best potential president.

"The question is, where do we go from here, and given how far we've come and where we need to go as a party, it's a question I don't take lightly," the 60-year-old New York senator said.

"This has been a long campaign, and I will be making no decisions tonight."

Obama, who must now mend his divided party, paid lavish tribute to Clinton.

"She's a leader who inspires millions of Americans with her strength, her courage and her commitment to the causes that brought us here tonight," he told 19,000 supporters packed inside the stadium in St Paul.

"Our party and our country are better off because of her, and I am a better candidate for having had the honor to compete with Hillary Rodham Clinton."

Obama's soaring calls of hope and change, in a country weary by the Iraq war and stalked by fears of recession, ended a 16-year era of Clinton family dominance over the Democratic Party.

He claimed victory capturing the final primary in Montana, after a flood of party superdelegates during the day, and vaulting over the winning post of 2,118 delegates to the party's August nominating convention.

Clinton snapped up a consolation

victory in South Dakota's primary, taking 55 percent of votes to Obama's 45 percent. In Montana, almost complete results showed Obama with 56 percent to Clinton's 41 percent.

Five months before the election, Obama had a slight 49-44 percent lead over McCain in a USA Today/Gallup poll, with their battle already boiling over Iraq, whether to talk to US enemies like Iran and the alling US economy.

In the frenzied end-game, Clinton meanwhile said for the first time she may be ready to serve as Obama's vice president, in a phone call with lawmakers from the New York state, a staffer with the New York delegation told AFP.

Obama needs Clinton's army of white working-class voters, women and Hispanic voters, but some analysts question whether he wants to associate himself so closely to the Clinton political legacy.

Obama rocketed to prominence at the 2004 Democratic presidential convention with an electrifying call for unity, proclaiming "There is not a Black America and a White America... there's the United States of America."

Son of a white American mother and a black Kenyan father, Obama was raised in Hawaii, and lived for several years in Indonesia in the 1960s, which he remembered in a memoir as the "bounty of a young man's life."

Meanwhile, Hillary Clinton came home to New York to praise her White House campaign, not to bury it, to flex the muscles of her 18 million supporters even if her vaulting ambition has been thwarted now.

On the night that Barack Obama became the Democratic heir apparent, the New York senator returned to her most ardent supporters, whose tears and recriminations laid bare the agonizing nature of her primary defeat.

Clinton snapped up a consolation

Desa chairman

FROM PAGE 1
police reports on the arrest warrants the court had issued against the fugitives on June 1.

The accused who are in hiding are the energy ministry's deputy secretary Abdullah Mahmud and Ismat Ara Jahan, senior assistant secretary Laila Jesmin, former joint secretary SM Mesbaul Islam, ex-deputy secretary Zahidur Rahman, ex-assistant secretary Ali Hossain, Desco member Monzur Hossain, Desco secretary AHM Nurul Huda, Desco directors Monzur Rahman and Kudrat-e-Khuda, former Desco directors Khan Lodi Mainul Haq and Mustafizur Rahman, and managing director of Summit Power Ltd Chanchal Krishna Talukder.

Detained former power secretary ANH Akhter Hossain and incumbent managing director of Desco Saleh Ahmed have also been accused in the case.

Akhter has been shown as the principal accused while the others as abettors.

Saleh Ahmed's lawyers in a petition yesterday told the trial court that their client could not appear before the court due to illness, noting that the High Court (HC) earlier directed him to surrender to the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court by July 15 after he had sought anticipatory bail to the HC.

The petition said the HC also directed the law enforcement agencies not to arrest or harass him in the meantime.

The Anti-Corruption Commission's (ACC) Assistant Director Mahbul Alam filed the case against Akhter Hossain and nine others on August 8 last year, stating that Akhter and the other accused bought 61,000 shares of Desco and Desco in their own names on behalf of the energy ministry violating the ministry's rules and regulations.

Moreover, they bought the shares showing lower rates, causing a loss of Tk 10.20 crore to the government.

Investigations later found the involvement of six others, including former Desa chairman Towhidul, in the share scam.

On May 29, ACC Assistant Director Amirul Islam, also the IO of the case, submitted charge sheet against the 16 people, showing 26 people as prosecution witnesses.

Akhter has already been convicted in two other cases filed for evading tax, amassing wealth illegally and concealing information.

BIWTA engineers

FROM PAGE 16
his company was forced to pay the accused Tk 1.29 crore in bribe in exchange for payment of bills.

Basic Dressing Company Ltd Director Tahmina Rehman paid them Tk 1.29, 05, 339 through 21 pay orders between November 10, 2005 and June 30, 2006, AGM Jahangir Hossain said.

According to the case statement, the company paid Tk 81,99,821 to project director Saiful Islam and his wife Sharmina Islam through 12 pay orders while Tk 15,68,706 was paid to Abu Bakkar, his wife Fazila Khatun, Zahurul Huq, his wife Afroza Khanam, Mohammad Farhaduzzaman and his mother-in-law Ferdows Jahan.

The project was completed at a cost of about Tk 9 crore.

4 new social safety

FROM PAGE 1
allocated for a programme to provide maternity allowances to women of low-income groups including garment workers in urban areas, they said.

Under current fiscal year, there is a similar programme in the rural areas where poor women are provided Tk 300 monthly.

The government has planned another Tk 200 crore programme for rural employment and road maintenance. The workers employed under the scheme will get Tk 120 a day for road maintenance and social forestry.

They will also have to deposit a portion of the wage to the bank and after a certain period can get bank loans against the savings, the sources added.

The government is also considering 10 percent increase in the amount for social safety-net programmes in the next budget.

The amount for targeted social empowerment, social safety net, poverty reduction and employment generation programmes in the current fiscal year is Tk 3,893 crore.

Govt eyes

FROM PAGE 1
the socialist party, told reporters at a post-dialogue joint press briefing that the constitution needs to be amended to include benefits for the unemployed and uniformity in the education system.

"The country has been practising just the opposite of what is sanctified in the constitution. We have a free market and three separate education systems when the constitution says otherwise," he said, adding, "the constitution should be either changed or followed."

"A consensus among political parties will be built to form a commission or a committee. It is up to the next elected government to implement the committee's recommendations or not," Zillur told the briefing at the Chief Adviser's Office.

He said the government agreed with a number of BSD proposals to correct, amend or annul a number of what the party said were constitutional inconsistencies.

Both the sides agreed this could be done through a "constitutional review commission" that could provide recommendations.

After the Gono Forum, BSD is the second party that has proposed such a constitutional review.

Zillur also dismissed doubt over success of the dialogue saying it would be completed even if carried on until next month. He said this would not slow down polls preparations, adding the Election Commission would not be affected by these talks.

He said the dialogues are necessary to hold meaningful elections after consultations with a cross-section of the people.

The government also backed-tracked from a full-blown legal ban on hartal. Instead, it is trying to build a consensus among political parties to refrain from calling the general strikes.

The next dialogues are set to be held with Islami Oikya Jote on June 10 and with Unity for Political Reform (UPR) on June 11.

World leaders

FROM PAGE 16
hoarding, drive up prices and hurt the poorest people around the world who are struggling to feed themselves," he said.

"These restrictions and taxes must be lifted at the minimum for humanitarian food purchases and transportation by the WFP," he said, referring to the World Food Programme, the UN agency that delivers emergency food aid.

"They should be lifted or at least eased for shipments to less developed and fragile countries," Zoellick said, urging that "the immediate requirements of 20 of the most vulnerable countries (be met) by the time of the G8 summit in early July."

Zoellick urged "safety net support, school feeding, food for work, maternal and child programmes, conditional cash transfers and budget support" for the countries most in need.

"We need to get seeds, fertilisers and inputs to those developing countries where smallholder farmers can expand production this season," he added.

\$1.5B ISLAMIC BANK SUPPORT FOR FARMING
The Islamic Development Bank will donate 1.5 billion dollars (970 million euros) to support farming in the developing world, the head of the Food and Agricultural Organization announced Wednesday.

Dhaka Wasa and BITTB has been digging up 695.16 square metres of road in Ward 50 of DCC while PGC (Power Grid Company of Bangladesh) is digging up 198 square metres of the road from Anjuman Mufidul Islam Sharani to Pioneer Road.

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Road digging

FROM PAGE 1
difficulties to locals, said Jhilar resident Hassan.

Sheema, a resident of the same area, said, "I have to go about half a mile on foot to get to my work due to the digging on the road that becomes especially hazardous during rains."

While speaking with the Daily Star recently, Dhaka City Mayor Saadeq Hossain Khoka blamed the absence of proper coordination for the unplanned road digging by different utility providers in the city.

Coordination among different utility service providers is very essential and their work should be brought under a single umbrella to ease the sufferings of the people in the city, Khoka said.

Different utility service providers apply for approval of their projects by June (the closing month of a fiscal year) in order to collect allotted funds for the projects and that is why they tend to do the work in the rainy season, explained the mayor.

The DCC most of the time has to approve the work at the eleventh hour, considering the urgency of the work, he added.

Khoka however blamed Dhaka Wasa for violating guidelines set by One Stop Cell that was established in 2003 to coordinate works of different utility service providers.

"We cannot take action against Wasa as it is a government organisation," said the mayor of Dhaka.

A DCC official said the One Stop Cell, since its establishment in 2003, has failed to improve the disorderly situation due to flagrant violations of its guidelines by the utility service providers.

According to the guidelines, a utility service provider has to publish a notice in newspapers about their work in a particular area and make announcements over loudspeakers in the area seven days before the commencement of the work.

Besides, the excavation work has to be completed within a certain time with modern equipment and the work has to be done mainly at night with sufficient lights and signal lights marking the site.

Earth from the excavated area must be removed within 24 hours of digging so it does not block the movement of vehicles and pedestrians, says the guidelines.