

Hillary, Obama could help each other financially

AP, Washington

Hillary Rodham Clinton needs Barack Obama's donors to help retire her sizable debt.

The two former Democratic presidential rivals filed their May fundraising reports Friday.

But if the two have an itch to soothe, they're not yet scratching each other's backs.

How the campaigns can help each other will be a likely topic when Obama, the Democrats' nominee in writing, meets with Hillary and some of her top fundraisers on Thursday in Washington.

Asked on Friday whether Obama's finance team had discussed ways to ease Hillary's debt when it met Thursday night in Chicago, Obama communications director Robert Gibbs said "those meetings have focused more on what these two can do together to bring the party together and move it forward than it has on these logistical details."

Hillary and her backers, meanwhile, are eager for some help.

The former first lady, who bowed out of the Democratic contest on June 7, reported a \$22.5 million debt at the end of May, more than half of which was a personal loan to her presidential campaign.

Hillary reported spending nearly \$19 million more than \$3 million on media advertising and \$3 million on phone banks. She spent more than \$5 million on travel.

Obama reported spending \$26.6 million in May. His heaviest spending was on advertising more than \$4 million buying time for television commercials.

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There are more incidents of the same nature in this area of Bogra. According to locals, Belal from Kadamtali also uttered talak to his wife during a heated exchange of words.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Bogra Humayun Kabir said that he was not aware of Shafiqul's case but that legal action would be taken against the people involved if they have tortured Shafiqul in such a situation.

There are more instances of the same in Kadamtali village. Villagers talk about Jinnah and Jostna, victims of a Dorra beating, who fled to Dhaka since the incident.

Some villagers say that the local preachers have too much power and influence over everyone and get away with their wrong judgments and punishments.

Meanwhile the likes of Shafiqul and Nilufa or Jinnah and Jostna bear the brunt of whips and social disgrace for no wrongdoings of their own.

Govt urged: The damage to the two forests is largely due to rubber plantations and the ADB-financed so-called social afforestation with exotic trees like acacia and eucalyptus.

But then, he said, official and illegal logging left most of those plantations treeless after 10 years, making it a perfect ground for banana, papaya and pineapple cultivation.

Native fauna like leopards, deer and pythons and a wide variety of birds including pheasants and peacocks have completely disappeared from the Modhupur forests.

Ronald Halder said salt trees must be preferred for plantation in the Modhupur forest.

Senior officials of the home ministry and EC do not see any justification for leaving a room in the ministry notification for interpreting the duration of the EPR relaxation.

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EPR relaxation

FROM PAGE 1 Manikganj Sadar, Chuadanga Sadar, Shariatpur Sadar, Naohata in Rajshahi, Dupchanchiya in Bogra, Siripur in Gazipur, Fulbaria in Mymensingh, Golapganj in Sylhet and Sitakunda in Chittagong.

The EC's proposal was made in an effort to create an atmosphere conducive to holding free, fair and credible elections while still having the state of emergency in place.

Had the home ministry followed the EC's proposed timeframe for relaxed EPR and mentioned it in unambiguous terms in its notification, the move could have created an atmosphere where the polls would be held amid a much more relaxed environment.

According to the new election rules, candidates may begin election campaigns on July 14, a day after the deadline for withdrawing candidatures.

In fact, the candidates will have only 20 days for campaigning although the chief election commissioner on Friday, while announcing the poll schedule, said the candidates will have 21 days for campaigning.

Moreover, campaign processions and rallies will be allowed only within the constituencies during the stipulated period in line with the strict election rules.

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Mayawati's party

FROM PAGE 16 Mayawati, chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, also cited alleged neglect by Congress of her BSP-led provincial administration.

The BSP, which has 17 MPs, had given outside support to the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government since it swept to power in 2004.

The BSP's move will not topple the minority government. But it comes at a time when 59 communist MPs have threatened to withdraw their support over a civilian nuclear energy deal.

The government argues that the deal, which would give India access to the worldwide civilian nuclear energy trade even though it has not signed global non-proliferation pacts.

Mayawati's move came a day after inflation shot to its highest level in 13 years, accelerating to 11.03 percent from 8.75 percent a week earlier after a hike in state-set fuel prices.

The rise in inflation has hit India's poor the hardest. Some political analysts, however, suggested Mayawati's departure could help the beleaguered prime minister.

Israel's political activists, and different organisations paid their respects at the killing field in city's Mirpur yesterday with renewed calls on the government for immediate steps to bring all war criminals to trial.

It is a shame, how nothing is being done, with so much evidence lying around us of the criminals' brutality, said a visitor to the park.

Israeli pilots: The New York Times on Friday cited US officials as saying a major military exercise carried out by Israel earlier this month seemed to be a test-run for a potential strike against Iran's nuclear facilities.

The goal was for more than 100 Israeli F-16 and F-15 fighter jets to prepare for long-range strikes and demonstrate Israel's serious concern over Iran's nuclear ambitions.

Iranian government spokesman Gholam Hossein Elham told reporters on Saturday that an attack by Israel was "impossible."

Dr Kamal: In Tehran, senior cleric Ayatollah Ahmad Khatami warned Israel of a "strong blow" if it attacks Iran.

Dr Kamal also addressed a number of meetings yesterday at several places in Nachole, Gomostapur and Bholahat upazilas.

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War crime

FROM PAGE 1 Abul does not know exactly how his father was killed, but evidence retrieved over the years now make it easy to imagine how brutally that must have been.

The pump house was named Jalladhana, meaning "Butcher's Den" after thousands of Bangladeshis were brutally tortured, killed and then dumped inside the tank in the pump house by the barbarous Pak army.

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Wasa supply network

FROM PAGE 1 Urban expert and Chairman of Centre for Urban Studies (CUS) Prof Nazrul Islam said as per a survey conducted by CUS a few years back the total number of slums in the city is 4,996.

An official of the Wasa revenue department said they have been giving water supply connections to different slums through NGOs and some 10 slums in the city have so far had legal connections through these NGOs.

Talking to the residents of Kalshi slum and Shah Paran slum in Mirpur-12, it was apparent that the two slums have some 700 illegal connections from Wasa pipelines for around 10,000 families living there.

Hazrat Ali, a resident of Kalshi slum, said they tried several times to get legal connections from the Wasa 10 years ago but did not get any response from the Wasa officials who said they issued connections only against holding number.

"Four supply pipes of the Wasa were set up in the area by the local commissioner and an NGO at that time and we had our houses connected with those pipes," he said.

"About 700 pipes are connected with the four supply pipes and we get water freely," said Abul Sardar, who helped a few dwellers get water in exchange for money.

These pipes have meantime developed cracks and contribute to the loss of a good amount of water, said a Wasa official, adding that the supply water also gets polluted and stinky through these cracks.

About one-fifth of Wasa pipelines are very old and need immediate replacement, he said.

Currently, the Wasa has about 2,534 kilometres of pipeline network and over 15-20 percent of the system has pipelines of cast iron (CI) and mild steel (MS) while 2-3 percent of the network has asbestos cement (AC) pipelines.

which are in good condition. The Wasa has also installed high quality ductile iron (DI) pipelines in its supply network although its ratio is negligible compared to the total service network, officials said.

They said the longevity of most AC pipes in the network has already expired while the CI and MS pipes have become rusty and weak and developed cracks.

Water is supplied to a large area in Dhanmondi and some parts of Motijheel and Mohammadpur through MS pipes, and most areas of Lalmatia, Khilgaon, Moghbazar, Malibagh, Mirpur and some areas in Banani, Mohammadpur and Segunbagicha through AC pipelines.

The supply network in Lalbagh, Chawkbazar, Moulavibazar, Sadarhat, Bangla Bazar, Gendaria, Islampur, Sutrapur, Bangshal, Armanitola and parts of Narinda mostly has CI pipes installed during the British period, Wasa sources said.

The Wasa managing director said they have taken up a project financed by the Asian Development Bank for installing and replacing pipelines and a process for appointing consultants for the project is going on.

A Wasa official claimed that as many as 70,000 holdings in the capital and Narayanganj do not have any meters while some 60,000 meters are currently out of order, which is another reason for the huge systems loss.

"We are importing meters through private firms in phases and the number of meter has been increasing," he said, adding, "Now we are not allowing anybody to get new connection without meter."

The underhand dealings between the Wasa officials and employees and customers are another reason for the systems loss.

These Wasa officials take bribes from the customers and prepare bills much less than the actual, thus depriving the government of huge revenue, said an official, adding, "We will take action against the officials and employees found guilty of any irregularity."

AL slates CG

FROM PAGE 1 Working Committee (ALWC) will take a final decision on the issue.

"Since the government claims that the law and order situation has improved, what is the necessity of keeping the state of emergency in force?" he posed the question.

Earlier, Tofail addressed an extended meeting of Gazipur district Awami League at Trust Community Center.

Presided over by Gazipur district AL President AKM Mozammel Huq, the meeting was also addressed by Advocate Rahmat Ali, Mukul Bose, Hafiz Afroz Chumki and Zahid Hassan Russell.

Addressing an extended meeting of Comilla (South) Awami League, presidium member Motia Chowdhury said people will not accept any elections before the parliamentary polls.

Calling for immediate lifting of the state of emergency, Motia, a firebrand student leader of the 60s, said, "A democratic election cannot be held under the state of emergency."

Chaired by Comilla (South) district AL Joint Convenor Mujibul Huq, the extended meeting was addressed, among others, by Adv Abdul Matin Khasru, Capt (ret'd) Tajul Islam Taj, Maj Gen (ret'd) Subid Ali Bhuiyan, Adv Baset Majumdar and Fakhru'l Islam Munshi.

In Jessore, AL central leader Abdul Latif Siddiqui said people will not accept local elections ahead of parliamentary elections.

Addressing an extended meeting of Jessore district Awami League, Latif Siddiqui criticised the government for its failure to contain the soaring prices of essentials.

Presided over by acting president of the district unit Adv Farazi Shahadat Hossain, the meeting was also addressed by Munnujan Sufian, Khan Tipu Sultan, Shah Haduzzaman and Shaheen Chakladar.

Rice yield to leap: Admitting inadequate allocation for the science and information technology sector, Mirza Aziz said he would reconsider improving the allocation for the sector.

He also urged industrialists to invest in the export processing zones to avail the facilities given to foreign investors.

Headvised leaders of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA) and Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA) to enhance training activities to produce capable manpower since the readymade garment sector has been suffering from shortage of skilled manpower.

Economic Reporters' Forum organised the discussion. National Board of Revenue Chairman Abdul Mazid attended the discussion, among others.

Govt trashes claim: Oil and Meghna Petroleum are oversubscribed and overpriced at our stock market, he added.

"I do not think there would be any liquidity crisis for borrowing money from the banking sector to meet the budgetary deficit for 2008-09 fiscal year," he said.

Replying to a query, he said he would inform the media when the government decides to readjust the prices of fuel oil like other countries in the world.

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