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Transit, trade gap to rule talks with India

Secy-level meeting starts today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The foreign-secretary level talks between Bangladesh and India begin in New Delhi today with both sides set to put forward their agenda of interests the two neighbours have been negotiating for years.

Foreign Secretary Towhid Hossain leads the six-member delegation to the two-day talks.

He left for the Indian capital yesterday hoping to return with positive results on long-standing issues relating to economy and border.

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Fresh step to shut convicts out of polls

Govt adding new provision to RPO to disqualify contestants convicted by trial courts

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The caretaker government is incorporating a new provision in the Representation of People Order (RPO) Ordinance 2008 to bar individuals convicted by a trial court of criminal offences involving moral turpitude from contesting elections.

At present, due to the lack of specific legal provisions an individual convicted by a trial court of

such criminal offences can participate in elections while their appeal against the conviction is pending with the higher court.

The new provision drafted by the Election Commission (EC) upon government desire says such a convict will be disqualified from contesting the parliamentary polls while their appeal against the trial court verdict is pending with a higher court.

Due to loopholes in the existing

electoral laws individuals convicted by the trial courts have come up as candidates for the August 4 city corporation polls. Sources said Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed himself recently expressed concern about how to prevent this.

Asked by the chief adviser, senior officials of his office communicated with the EC and requested it to look into the matter. Following the government's desire,

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AL rejects RPO ordinance

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League yesterday rejected the proposed Representation of People Order (RPO) Ordinance 2008, saying that the amendments brought in the RPO 1972 did not accommodate the recommendations made by political parties.

"We had demanded more amendments. The Election Commission was also of the same opinion with us during our meeting with it. But after the approval of the RPO by the Council of Advisers we found our suggestions absent. The government is day by day pushing people towards confrontation," said AL acting General Secretary Syed Ashrafur Islam.

He was briefing journalists after a party presidium meeting at the

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Attorney General Fida Kamal quits

Cites personal grounds as reason; sources tell of discords with govt

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK

Attorney General (AG) Fida M Kamal yesterday resigned from his office in the wake of a series of disagreements with the government over a number of issues.

He cited "personal" grounds as the reason for his resignation, but a number of government sources confirmed that Fida has had "issues", including several "serious" ones, with the government over the last few months.

The recent of them was the AG

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Fida M Kamal

No talks with anyone in Jamaat's presence: AL

HASAN JAHD TUSHER

The Awami League (AL) has said it would not hold talks with anyone including diplomats if the leaders of Jamaat-e-Islami are present.

The AL yesterday informed the US Embassy in Dhaka about its stance and asked them not to invite the party to any discussion if Jamaat leaders are present. The AL asked the embassy to invite them separately to avoid meeting Jamaat.

The request came following strong criticism from in and outside the party following talks on

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HC grants SQ Chy, Pintu, Hashem bail

Asks govt why graft case proceedings not to be quashed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday granted ad-interim bail for one month to three detained former BNP lawmakers -- SQ Chowdhury, Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu and MA Hashem -- in separate corruption cases filed by the Anti-corruption Commission (ACC).

After hearing separate petitions, an HC bench comprising Justice Sharif Uddin Chaklader and Justice Md Emdadul Haque Azad stayed the case proceedings against the three for a month, and also issued separate rules upon the government and the ACC to explain within four weeks why the case proceed-

ings against the three should not be quashed.

ACC lawyers said the HC granted the bail to SQ Chowdhury, Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu and MA Hashem on grounds that investigation reports in the cases had not been submitted within the stipulated 60 days of case filings and because the filings are deemed marred with procedural flaws by the court.

Defence counsels said SQ Chowdhury and Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu cannot be released immediately since there are multiple other cases pending against them.

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PHOTO: STAR

Many roads in the city were waterlogged after the heavy downpour early yesterday morning. This photo taken from Begum Rokeya Sarani in Mirpur shows manhole lids lifted to allow the rainwater to drain away.

RAJSHAHI CITY POLLS

2 mayoral candidates warned for violating code of conduct

RU CORRESPONDENT

The Returning Officer (RO) for Rajshahi City Corporation (RCC) poll yesterday issued warnings to two mayoral candidates and a councillor candidate for violating electoral code of conduct.

Mayoral candidates AHM Khairuzzaman Liton, a Nagorik Committee nominee and Progressive Democratic Party (PDP) leader advocate Raihanur Rahman were issued with the notices for using party affiliations during campaigning.

Meanwhile the cabinet division has asked the establishment minis-

try to transfer the additional divisional commissioner (ADC) of Rajshahi, for approving candidacy of five candidates not eligible to run for local polls, and take necessary action against him.

Although the RO for RCC had earlier rejected candidacies of five contestants for the post of councillorship during scrutiny, ADC (General) Mohammad Akhtaruzzaman, in his capacity as the election appeal authority for the August 4 polls, declared their candidatures valid on appeal.

The four had been earlier denied candidacy, as they were

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Mirza Azam sent to jail on surrender

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday rejected the bail petition of Jubo League General Secretary Mirza Azam and sent him to jail in a case filed against him by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) for amassing

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