

Education sector

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The ACC also asked for a survey the University Grants Commission conducted on private universities.

Meantime, an ACC team formed to investigate institutional corruption at Roads & Highways Department visited several RHD projects yesterday.

On sending a list of 18,000 graft-suspects to the government, Hanif explained that it was earlier necessary for government officials to get clearance from now-defunct bureau of anti-corruption before promotion.

The government officials had to make it clear that there was no criminal charge or ongoing criminal investigation against them at the time of getting promotion, he added.

As the process was time and manpower consuming, ACC has taken an effort to ease it. An inter-ministerial meeting has decided that the commission would send the records to the establishment ministry, which would forward those to respective departments and offices.

"We're planning to bring the amendment so that it would be a must for a bail seeker to make ACC a party in bail petition. In accord-

dance with the existing law the bail seekers are making the state a party and getting bail," Hanif said.

"At present ACC has to apply for becoming a party in bail prayers and by the time it gets permission, the bail seeker secures bail," he added.

CHARGE-SHEET

The charge-sheet against Tariqul will be submitted under section 26 (2) (Ka) of the ACC Act, 2004 for not submitting wealth statement.

Former managing director of Rupantorita Praktik Gas Company Limited (RPGCL) ABM Fazle Elahi will be charged with misappropriation of about Tk 25.38 lakh. The charge-sheet will be submitted under 17 (Ka) of the ACC Act, 2004, and 5 (2) of the Corruption Prevention Act, 1947.

Former project manager of Aggregated Maize Development Project Javed Iqbal will be charged for not submitting his wealth statement.

In another charge-sheet Mohammad Ullah, principal officer of Agrani Bank, Green Road branch, who has been temporarily suspended, will be charged for misappropriating about Tk 29.96 lakh through power abuse.

A life less ordinary

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tortured during the liberation war.

Sufina Lohani, who gave shelter to Husna Banu and eight other Biranganas after the shutdown of the 'Women Rehabilitation Centre' -- which sheltered Biranganas after the war -- in 1975, said the nation has always honoured its freedom fighters but failed to give due respect to its biranganas.

"The Pakistani army with the help of razakars separated me from my child and brought me to their camp. After the war ended, my husband and society refused to accept me. I had to leave my own village. All my sorrows would end if I hear that the country's war criminals have been brought to trial and punished duly," Husna Banu said in a statement recorded in a documentary screened at the programme.

Speakers at the programme said all biranganas, including Husna Banu, would be honoured when the war criminals are brought to trial for the heinous crimes they

committed against humanity during the war.

Speakers also demanded that all biranganas be buried with state honour and the government introduce a special allowance for surviving biranganas.

Golam Kuddus, general secretary of SSJ, said, "The nation does not what miserable conditions the biranganas are passing their days in. They are still neglected by the society today. The government should immediately make a list of the surviving war heroines and provide special allowance to them."

Mafidul Haque, one of the trustees of Liberation War Museum, said that it was a matter of deep regret that the country nation has failed to bring the war criminals to justice so far.

SSJ President Nasir Uddin Yusuf presided over the programme where Ramendra Majumder, among other cultural activists, paid tribute to Husna Banu.

Ram Baran Yadav

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political deadlock.

Ram Baran Yadav, who was supported by the centrist Nepali Congress party, won 308 out of 590 votes cast in Nepal's constitutional assembly in a run-off between him and Maoist-backed rival Ramraja Prasad Singh.

The selection of a president has been seen as a vital step to ending weeks of political impasse after the assembly ousted unpopular king Gyanendra and abolished the 240-year-old monarchy in May.

But the result showed other parties in the assembly ganging up against the Maoists -- who won the largest single block of seats in elections to the new assembly earlier this year but not an outright majority.

Yadav, a former health minister and trained medical doctor, told AFP he would use his new position to try to unite Nepal and address grievances among the country's ethnic communities.

"The immediate need of the nation is to address the lack of a fair political culture," said the 61-year-old Yadav, a son of a farmer.

"I want all Nepalese to join hands in harmony and move ahead in the development of the country."

The Nepali Congress party said the outcome of the vote showed how democratic the country's new political system was.

"We are very happy that a common man's son has become the first president of republic Nepal. Yadav is not of the Nepali Congress, but of all the people of Nepal," said the party's general secretary, Bimalendra Nidhi.

"This result is a process of democratic multi-party politics. The

OMS of rice

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Under the programme, rice will be sold six days a week and each person will be allowed to buy three kilograms of rice instead of five at 7,100 outlets across the country.

The food ministry said OMS would resume eight to 10 days before Ramadan when prices of essentials, including rice, go up.

Food Secretary Molla Wahiduzzaman told BBC Bangla State last night that they decided to resume OMS to keep the price of rice stable during Ramadan.

The government would fulfill its target of purchasing 12 lakh tonnes of rice and 3 lakh tonnes of wheat, he said adding that the official procurement of rice would be closed by the end of August.

"We have already achieved 54 percent of the target," he added.

Rajshahi city polls

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formal complaints about any sort of rules violations, the government should ask its intelligence agencies to increase vigilance over different campaigns.

Rajshahi Divisional Commissioner Hafizur Rahman Bhuiyan, Rajshahi Deputy Election Commissioner Sayed Muhammad Musa and the commissioner of Rajshahi Metropolitan Police were present at the meeting among others.

Mayoral candidate and Rajshahi city AL President Masudul Haque Dulu said the AL-led 14-party alliance quite openly endorsed Fazle Hossain Badsha, but the AL is now backing AHM Khairuzzaman Liton.

"Isn't this political campaigning? Doesn't this violate electoral rules? If yes, the authorities are being two-faced as they had been trumpeting the rules on one hand, while on the other, they aren't taking any action against the violators," Dulu said.

Another mayor aspirant Durul Huda, president of Jatuya Party city unit, said, "Major parties are openly endorsing their candidates. Let us know if it's legal, then we'll also arrange political support... Why would we lag behind?"

Progressive Development Party's Raihanur Rahman said almost all candidates are secretly hiring workers by huge numbers to do their campaign work.

Acting mayor Rejaunabi Dulu alleged that many candidates are spending black money to engage hired thugs and run smear campaign against their opponents.

Abu Bakar Siddik, a councillor hopeful at ward 10, said many public servants are also taking part in campaign work in exchange for money. "Hired goons of the present councillors who are also contesting the polls are threatening to kill us," he added.

Abul Kalam Azad, contesting councillorship post at ward 14, said many candidates are campaigning at places of worship including mosques.

Rajshahi Divisional Commissioner Hafizur Rahman Bhuiyan said to assist the authorities take swift action, everyone, if necessary withholding their identity, should provide the authorities with specific information on rules violations.

Deputy Election Commissioner Sayed Muhammad Musa said starting Monday (yesterday), the authorities would take tough action against violators of the code of conduct.

Rejecting Musa's comment, a few candidates said they also want action against all the violations that have been committed so far.

"We so far warned candidates for violation of rules. But from now on, we will inform the Election Commission in Dhaka [of any allegation] so it can initiate an investigation and cancel candidacy of the offender," Musa said.

Musa also assured the candidates of justice and told them that the commission has instructed them to take action against those who are using resources of political parties in their election campaigns.

BTTB graft

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BTCL from July 1 this year.

TRANSPORT FARE

Between 2005-2006 and 2007-2008 fiscal years, the BTTB showed Tk 8.40 crore as transport fare expenditure while the ACC found that the employees of BTTB used only Tk 2.42 crore of the money by mentioning the expenditure in their register.

The rest was drawn and embezzled by submitting fake vouchers, of journeys never taken. Interestingly, the vouchers are always valued at only Tk 25.

The ACC investigation disclosed that the employees and officers of BTTB drew money by submitting a number of these vouchers, usually Tk 2,000 a week in two phases. The fake vouchers usually showed fare of "journeys on official purpose".

The investigation also cited an example on how the money was distributed. A deputy director of BTTB took Tk 800 in a phase while an assistant director took Tk 600 and then the amount goes downwards according to the rank.

The BTTB showed Tk 2.68 crore, Tk 2.66 crore, Tk 2.73 crore, Tk 2.91 crore and Tk 3.05 crore as transport fare of its employees in the fiscal years between 2000-2001 and 2004-2005 respectively.

TRANSPORT MAINTENANCE
The BTTB showed Tk 33.36 crore as vehicle maintenance expenditure between the fiscal years 2000-2001 and 2005-2006. The ACC found documents of workshop bills worth Tk 3.63 crore.

Tk 6.44 crore, Tk 4.84 crore, Tk 3.97 crore, Tk 4.37 crore, Tk 5.30 crore and Tk 5.41 crore were embezzled during the fiscal years respectively.

FUEL EXPENDITURE
The ACC investigation mentioned that on an average the BTTB has shown fuel usage of a car between 500 and 600 litres per month even though government rules do not allow using over 200 litres of fuel per month.

Most of the money shown as fuel expenditure was misappropriated either by showing fake journeys to destinations or by showing poor mileage of vehicles, the report said adding that investigation in the sector is not yet complete.

Party leaders

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were in contravention of the electoral rules.

Instead, it maintained that it was overlooking the matter in efforts to create a congenial atmosphere for the elections.

However, on instructions from the EC, the ROs have lately been meeting the contestants, asking them not to have any central or senior local leaders canvassing for them.

Asked about the allegations against some flouting the electoral rules, CEC Huda yesterday told reporters that the candidates were carrying out election campaigns in compliance with the code of conduct.

"The situation is satisfactory as we are not seeing any wall writings, street showdowns and use of microphones in the election areas," he said.

ENQUIRY

The EC yesterday instructed its secretariat officials to probe the allegations against some mayoral candidates of furnishing false information.

"There are allegations that some candidates have given false and incomplete information in their affidavits. Steps will be taken against the violators on completion of enquiry," the polls chief told reporters after a meeting at the commission secretariat.

At the meeting, the EC in particular discussed the allegation against Syed Habibur Rahman Hiron, a mayoral contender in Sylhet City Corporation (SCC).

Hiron is alleged to have provided incomplete information and also divulged his political identity in his affidavit on per-

sonal information, said sources.

The EC will also examine if it was irregular for the RO in SCC to accept Hiron's candidacy application, said the meeting sources.

This apart, the commission will launch enquiry on the basis of allegations that came up in the media about candidates furnishing incomplete information. **EC ACCUSES ATN**

In a somewhat surprise move, the EC yesterday accused ATN Bangla, a private TV channel, of violating the electoral code of conduct.

It said the satellite channel has breached the rules by introducing candidates in a city corporation election in terms of their political identity in a live programme titled 'Dialogue between the candidates in city polls'.

"Introducing a candidate by his/her political identity is a clear violation of the code of conduct for city corporation polls 2008," says a press release issued by the EC Secretariat.

"This programme by ATN Bangla is creating obstacles in the way of conducting a free and fair election," it continues.

"In this context, it is requested that the electoral code of conduct be complied with in broadcasting any programme on election in future."

A copy of the press release signed by EC Secretariat's Public Relations Officer SM Asaduzzaman has been sent to the ATN Bangla chairman while the information secretary and principal information officer of the Press Information Department too have been informed of it.

Manmohan moves

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from BJP Shiv Sena, JD (U) and BJD may also abstain.

Mukherjee said in his 'simple arithmetic', UPA's combined strength of 237 with Samajwadi Party's 39 added up to 276. With the Lok Sabha having an effective strength of 541, the ruling coalition enjoyed a simple majority, he said.

But BJP leader V K Malhotra claimed they needed just four to five MPs more to defeat the government.

Failure of Shiv Sena MP Tukaram Renge Patil to turn up at the party's parliamentary group meeting triggered speculation that he may ditch the party, which has 12 MPs.

Singh sought the confidence vote after his government was reduced to a minority following withdrawal of support by his Communist allies, which stridently opposed the Indo-US civilian nuclear deal that they allege would undermine the independence of India's foreign policy and affect its strategic nuclear programme.

Singh, in his brief speech, said "This exercise was wholly avoidable as I had repeatedly told the political parties, particularly the Left, that after completing the safeguards agreement with IAEA and a waiver from Nuclear Suppliers Group I would come back to parliament to seek its guidance".

He said every single decision taken by his government "was in the best interest of the nation".

Singh said that Left parties decided to withdraw support to his government when he was attending the Group of 8 developed countries summit in Japan earlier this month and immediately on his return home he met President Pratibha Patil and wanted to seek a trust vote.

Opposing the motion, the Leader of the Opposition LK Advani, in his over-hour-long speech, said there was no consensus in Parliament in favour of the nuclear deal with the United States.

Advani said the prime minister should not call Sunday's special session a distraction and accused him of being responsible for the present situation in which his government has to seek a trust vote by "not following the norms of coalition politics".

"This situation has been brought about not by the opposition NDA and not even by Left parties. It was invited by the government itself," he said. "Mr Prime Minister, don't blame anyone else. It is your government itself, which is responsible," the opposition leader said in a riveting speech.

"The government should not call it a distraction. You invited it yourself", the opposition leader said.

Advani charged that the prime minister and Congress president Sonia Gandhi did not believe in norms of coalition politics. "Had the coalition dharma been followed, this situation would not have arisen," he added.

In this context, the leader of the opposition said that before exploding the nuclear device on May 11, 1998 the then prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee had taken the consent of his coalition partners and the issue was included in the national agenda of governance of the then ruling coalition led by BJP.

Advani said the controversy over the nuclear deal between the

prime minister and Left parties had been going on for more than a year after Singh had said in an interview to a Kolkata daily that he was determined to go ahead with the pact and if Left parties withdraw support so be it.

He said the opposition wanted to defeat the government in the trial of strength on the floor of the Lok Sabha but did not want to destabilise it.

"I draw a distinction between defeating the government and destabilising it. It is not our habit to destabilise an elected government," Advani said.

The BJP leader said "sometimes it appears to me that the nuclear deal is between two individuals (Manmohan Singh and American President George W Bush) and not between two sovereign countries".

Advani said if the nuclear deal was so important for the Congress-led government, then why it had not been included in the joint Common Minimum Programme of Congress and its allies framed in May 2004.

The Left parties, which had provided outside support to the government at that time to give it majority, opposed its inclusion in the programme.

He said nuclear deal with the US would make India a "subservient" partner and majority in parliament did not agree with the Congress-led government's interpretation of the deal and its effects on India.

Advani said if BJP and its allies were voted back to power, they would re-negotiate the nuclear deal with the US and not scrap it so that there was no compromise in India's strategic programme and it was an agreement between two equal partners.

He said it was wrong to project BJP-Led NDA as being against nuclear energy or against close relationship with the United States.

Lok Sabha Speaker Somnath Chatterjee presided over Sunday's special session although his party CPI-M wanted him to step down from the post ahead of the trust vote.

Before the confidence motion was moved, Chatterjee said he was very happy to see a "full House" and the entire country was looking at the debate on the important issue.

He asked the members to hold the debate in a manner which raises the dignity of the Lok Sabha.

Advisers' meet

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special committee or cell on development of haor area and establishment of labour court to ensure expansion of tea industry, its modernisation and protection of tea workers' interest.

It also included special steps to flourish tourism industry, establishment of a coordinated network connecting upazilas inhabited by expatriates of Sylhet with district and divisional headquarters, special programme to remove hurdles to the spread of education, particularly for women, special projects for development of the communications system and solving electricity problem.

Bringing arid land under cultivation to increase food security, setting up a shooting academy at Sylhet Rifles Club and establishing a refuelling station at MAG Osmani Airport to upgrade it to an international airport are also in the development package.

MPO of 48

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School, Yakubpur High School, Dewangan-Doyel High School, Bibhi Girls High School, Nasibgaon Adarsha Girls High School, Ramna Chanduhar Girls High School, Banglagarh Girls High School, Chanpon-Parbatipur Adarsha High School, Ratnai Girls High School and Amgaon Girls High School.

The 16 institutions of Panchagarh are Kadirpur High School, Pahartoli High School, Langolgram Adarsha Girls High School, Pukuridanga High School, Bhutipukuri Girls High School, Ayubul Haque Girls High School, Boalmari Girls High School, Shalshiri Girls High School, Dhakarhat Adarsha High School, Bakhshiganj Girls High School, Maria Girls High School, Shatamar Girls High School, Alua-Khwa Girls High School, Gunjanmari Hati Adarsha High School and Vitura High School.

Durgadah Girls High School was the only school of Joypurhat that had its MPO cancelled.

MiG 29 case

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The now-defunct Bureau of Anti-Corruption (Bac) filed the case against Hasina and four others with Tejaon Police Station on December 11, 2001, accusing them of causing a loss of Tk 700 crore to the state exchequer by purchasing eight MiG-29 jet fighters while Hasina was the prime minister.

The names of Brig Gen (retd) Iftekhar-Ul-Bashar and former deputy secretary Hasan Mahmood Delwar were dropped from the case due to poor evidence regarding their culpability while former army chief Mustafizur Rahman, air commodore (retd) Mirza Akhter Maruf, former joint secretary Hossain Serniabat, and businessman Nur Ali were implicated after investigators had found their involvement in the alleged scam.

Bac Inspector Abdullah Al Zahid submitted a charge sheet to the Dhaka Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court on December 11, 2001, showing 40 people as prosecution witnesses.

Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said Israel "highly appreciates" Brown's "determination ... (on) the issue of terrorism and Iranian nuclear armament."

"The most serious threat for stability in the Middle East and the global peace is rooted in ... Tehran," he added.

Brown was introduced by parliament speaker Dalia Itzhik, who evoked the turbulent history of Anglo-Israeli relations.

However, Rice said that instead of a coherent answer, Iran's chief nuclear negotiator Saied Jalili delivered a "meandering" monologue full of irrelevant "small talk about culture" that appeared to annoy many of the others present at the table in Geneva.

"We expected to hear an answer from the Iranians but, as has been the case so many times with the Iranians, what came through was not serious," Rice told reporters aboard her plane as she flew to the United Arab Emirates. "It's time for the Iranians to give a serious answer."

"They can't go and stall and make small talk about culture, they have to make a decision," she said. "People are tired of the Iranians and their stalling tactics."

Time not ripe

FROM PAGE 1
ineligible for election. He hoped political parties will field honest and competent candidates in the elections.

He said the Election Commission will be able to ensure an appropriate environment for free and fair polls through its election code of conduct.

To another question, the CA said the Election Commission has already planned to hold upazila election in phases before and after the general election.

About the mode of future government, balance of power and amendment to the constitution, he said a constitution commission could be formed so it can make recommendations on these subjects and keep those for the future elected government and parliament for consideration.

About the Truth Commission, he said the formation of the commission is at the final stage and it will start functioning within weeks.

Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury and Press Secretary to CA Syed Fahim Munaim were present.

Troops clash

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forces across the border.

Dera Bugti is near Pakistan's biggest natural gas field and was formerly the base of late Baluch rebel leader Nawab Akbar Bugti, who was killed in a military operation in August 2006.

Hundreds of people have died in violence in the province since the insurgency flared in late 2004, but until recently it had quietened down after Bugti's death.

The province has also been hit by attacks blamed on Islamist Taliban militants, but officials say that the separatist insurgents do not have links to the hardliners.

Pakistani officials have previously accused rival India of sponsoring the separatist rebels from its consulates in southern and eastern Afghanistan, a charge that New Delhi denies.

Last Wednesday a bomb blast in the town of Mastung, 35km south of the provincial capital Quetta, wounded 14 people, including eight security personnel.

No group has claimed responsibility for the attack.

5,000 Bangladeshi

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deducts five dinars per day if any worker fails to turn up for work due to illness.

He alleged that the company is compelling them to buy plane tickets from a certain travel agency, which charges exorbitant fares, the Arab Times reported.

"We want the company to pay our wages through bank, besides paying us for overtime. Most of the workers are falling sick because of the long hours of work. The company is also not allowing us to take sick leave. How can we work under such an environment?" the worker posed a question.

The labour councillor said many of the workers alleged that they couldn't go on leave over the last 8 to 10 years as the company did not allow this. Even if a worker is granted leave for returning home, the company charges 30 dinars from him as security money for getting the passport deposited with it. But they never get back the

Bush admin

FROM PAGE 16
which can be used to fuel atomic weapons. The Bush administration broke with long-standing policy to send a top diplomat to support the offer.

Meanwhile British Prime Minister Gordon Brown warned Iran on Monday it must freeze sensitive nuclear work or face more sanctions, in the first address by a British premier to the Israeli parliament.

Brown also attacked Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's "abhorrent" threats against Israel and declared that Britain stands alongside the Jewish state.

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15 politicians'

FROM PAGE 1
appointed Attorney General (AG) Salahuddin Ahmed.

The AG told the HC that as per a ruling issued by the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court it could not hear the bail prayers of the accused in the criminal cases filed under the Emergency Power Rules (EPR).

He also said the Appellate Division on July 20 stayed five HC orders that granted bail to the accused in the cases.

The HC bench asked the AG whether the HC could consider bail prayers of the accused against whom specific allegations were not brought.

"Will the accused suffer in jail for years without trial if the investigation reports are not submitted within 60 days after filing of the cases?" the court asked.

AG Salahuddin said he would make submissions interpreting these matters but he needed time for it. The court then adjourned the hearing of the petitions. Salahuddin later told the journalists the HC could not consider bail petitions in the cases filed under the EPR following the Supreme Court judgement.

The politicians, who filed petitions for bail and quashing the cases against them, include M Shamsul Islam, Altaf Hossain Chow