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The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION

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COMMITTED TO
People's Right to Know

REGD. NO. DA 781 • VOL. XVIII No. 196 • DHAKA THURSDAY JULY 31, 2008 • SRABAN 16, 1415 BS • RAJAB 27, 1429 HJRI • 24 PAGES PLUS RISING STARS PRICE: Tk 10.00

www.thedailystar.net

Zilla Parishad law, Local Govt Commission on cards

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed yesterday said the government will enact Zilla Parishad ordinance and form an independent Local Government Commission soon for sustainability of the local government strengthening process.

He said the government has already finalised the Zilla Parishad ordinance and it will be promulgated in the near future.

The chief adviser was speaking at the regional level national dialogue on 'Turning to the democracy' at Rajshahi Medical College auditorium.

He said the government has

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No possibility to go back to pre-Jan 11

Says home adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Adviser MA Matin yesterday ruled out any possibility of the country sliding back into last year's pre-January 11 situation.

"We're very cautious about it," he told reporters when asked about the possible consequences of detained corruption suspects and people with criminal records being freed on bail.

"There's no question of plunging back into the previous situation. I can assure you of this," he said at the shipping ministry.

He said the High Court is granting bail to political leaders and businessmen sued for corruption through legal procedures.

"So I'll not comment on this," he

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HC asks for medical reports of Nasim

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday directed the inspector general (IG) of prisons and LabAid Hospital authorities to submit the medical reports of former home minister and Awami League leader Mohammad Nasim to the court by August 5 for examining those.

An HC bench comprising Justice Md Muzammel Hossain and Justice Syed AB Mahmudul Huq passed the order during the hearing on a petition filed by Nasim seeking bail in a case in which he was sentenced to 13 years' imprisonment.

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Truth Commission gets chief, members

Ready to roll in 10 days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday appointed chairman and members of the Truth and Accountability Commission, completing formation of the much-anticipated body to allow people exemption from prosecution in exchange for confession and surrender of ill-gotten wealth.

Justice Habibur Rahman Khan, a retired judge of the High Court, has been picked as the chairman while former comptroller and auditor general Asif Ali and Major Gen (ret'd) Manzur Rashid



Justice Habibur Rahman Khan

Chowdhury as members of the commission.

President Iajuddin Ahmed gave the appointments.

Earlier on May 25, the council of advisers approved the Right to Voluntary Disclosure Ordinance 2008, paving the way for forming the three-member commission.

The president promulgated the ordinance in early June. On July 6, the advisory council proposed some amendments to the ordinance.

Law Adviser AF Hassan Ariff on July 23 announced that the truth

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Khaleda denied bail in fake orphanage case

Pintu's bail stayed by SC

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday rejected the bail petition of detained former prime minister Khaleda Zia in Zia Orphanage Trust corruption case.

Meantime, the Supreme Court (SC) stayed till August 7 the High Court (HC) order granting ad-interim bail to detained former BNP lawmaker Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu in a case for amassing wealth through illegal means.

The HC also granted ad-interim bail to former BNP lawmaker and Partex Group Chairman MA Hashem yesterday in a criminal case.

In the case against Khaleda, her lawyers submitted a bail petition to Additional Chief Metropolitan

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Three-tier security for 715 polling stations

SHAMIM ASHRAF

The government will start deploying around 20,000 police and Ansar members in four city corporations and nine municipalities from tomorrow for the August 4 local-government elections there.

A three-tier security blanket will be put up at 715 polling stations: 579 for the city corporations and the rest for the municipalities.

Besides, special strike force and mobile teams drawn from the police, Rab and Ansar, will also work to ensure security during the polls.

Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal and Sylhet city corporations and Naohata, Dupchanchia,

Chuadanga, Sreepur, Manikganj, Fulbaria, Shariatpur, Gopalganj and Sitakunda municipalities will be the first to hold elections under the stewardship of the current interim government.

The authorities have already identified 283 polling stations, 218 in the city corporation areas alone, as vulnerable in terms of security.

At least 30 law enforcers will be deployed at each of the vulnerable stations while a minimum of 28 personnel will guard the other 432 centres each.

The stationary force will take up position at the polling stations one day before the polls, on August 3. Presiding officers, with polling materials, will also report on the

same day. The strike force and the mobile teams will leave their stations at 6:00am tomorrow and will be on election duty through August 7.

Police commissioners, deputy inspector generals of police or superintendents of police will determine their jurisdiction. An executive magistrate will be with each of the mobile team or strike force.

Mobile teams will ensure that voters do not face any trouble going to the polling stations. Patrolling on the highways and riverways will also be strengthened.

To stop any downpour in law

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Kuwait deports over 100

Several hundred other Bangladeshi workers await similar fate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Over a hundred Bangladeshi workers yesterday arrived in Dhaka from Kuwait that deported them over allegations of instigating labour unrest.

Several hundred others who have been put in jail might also be deported soon.

Kuwait police have so far arrested about 1,000 workers for staging demonstrations. About 300 of them will be released as their involvement in it was not found, said a press release of foreign affairs ministry yesterday.

As per a decision of the Kuwaiti cabinet, only those involved in instigating labour unrest and staging demonstrations will be kept detained, sued or deported for security reasons, the press release said without mentioning the number of workers to be deported.

Thousands of workers had been on strike in Kuwait since Thursday protesting low wages, bad working conditions and exploitations.

Kuwait has told the Charge d'affaires at the Bangladesh Embassy that it has no discriminatory policy regarding Bangladeshis and the Kuwaiti law enforcers resisted the demonstrators to avoid violence, the press release said.

Around 16,000 workers have already joined work while others who are still on strike have been asked to go back to work.

The Kuwaiti government will

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Bangladeshi worker Anwar Hossain arrives at ZIA yesterday from Kuwait wearing a bloodstained T-shirt and bandages. Anwar said he was dragged out of his residential camp and beaten up by Kuwaiti police though he did not take part in any protests.

Process on for release of Khaleda, says CA

UNB, Shahjadpur, Strajganj

Chief Adviser (CA) Fakhruddin Ahmed yesterday said the process is on for the release of former prime minister and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and bringing her and her party to the pre-election dialogue.

He categorically said the government wholeheartedly wants all political parties, particularly the two major parties--BNP and Awami League--to participate in the next general election.

The CA noted that the chief of a major political party--indicating ex-prime minister and Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina--was released and the government had a dialogue with

her and her party.

"A press statement was issued during the temporary release of Sheikh Hasina, saying similar measures are open from government side for the release of Khaleda Zia," he said.

The head of the caretaker government made the remarks while addressing a local-level national dialogue on democratic transition at Rabindra Kacharbari auditorium here.

The dialogue was participated by teachers, freedom fighters, businessmen, farmers, dairy farm owners, weavers, journalists, and representatives from non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and union parishes.

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Bhuiyan freed on bail, demands Khaleda's release

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, a top leader of the BNP's reformist faction and former LGRD minister, was released on bail from Dhaka Central Jail yesterday afternoon.

After arriving at his Gulshan residence in the evening, Bhuiyan, also former BNP secretary general, for the first time demanded release of party Chairperson Khaleda Zia.

He also urged the authorities to release and ensure proper treatment for all political leaders including Tarique Rahman,



Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan

BANGLADESHI WORKERS IN KUWAIT Poorly paid, exploited at will, extorted even

PORIMOL PALMA

Most of over 2 lakh Bangladeshi workers in Kuwait get monthly salary as low as Kuwaiti dinar (KD) 20-25 (equivalent to Tk 5,000-6,500) and cannot recover the amount they invest for the overseas job even in three to four years.

Some employers even extort them by charging for health insurances, annual renewal of residency permits and even for vacation. All these leave the workers under precarious conditions who pay around Tk 2 lakh to find a job in the oil-rich Gulf nation.

These are the reasons why the Bangladeshi workers have recently taken a strong position demanding

pay hike and other facilities, said a former official of Bangladesh mission in Kuwait.

About 20 percent of the Bangladeshi expatriates are engineers, architects, doctors, nurses, junior executives, supervisors and petty businessmen, while the rest are low-paid general workers. Most of the workers serve in the cleaning companies or work as agricultural labourers, shepherds and houseboys or housemaids.

The low-paid workers sometimes tend to do extra jobs or part-time businesses in violation of the Kuwaiti laws, while some even get engaged in crime to recover their expended money, the official said

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BAR ON LEADERS' INVOLVEMENT IN LOCAL POLLS

AL terms EC's directive illegal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A delegation of legal experts from Awami League (AL) in an unscheduled meeting with the Election Commission (EC) yesterday labelled 'illegal' the commission's barring of political parties' central leaders from taking part in local government election campaigns.

Later in the day in an AL central working committee meeting the party went even further and decided to send four campaign teams led by four of its presidium members to the cities of Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal and Sylhet to seek votes for 14-party backed mayoral candidates in the city corporation

polls scheduled to be held in those cities on August 4.

The five-member AL delegation to the EC, led by its Presidium Member Suranjit Sengupta, told the commission that they are not obliged to abide by the restrictions since those were imposed 'without any lawful authority'.

Suranjit claimed the electoral rules stipulate that local government polls are non-partisan, but there is no specific provision in the rules that allows the EC to bar political leaders from campaigning for candidates.

At the meeting Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) ATM

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