

Polls in 4 city corporations today under emergency

SHAKHAWAT LITON

Four city corporations and nine municipalities go to polls today with the emergency power rules (EPR) back in full force.

The first elections under the present military-backed caretaker administration, these are considered crucial to determining whether the all-important parliamentary polls too will be held under the state of emergency.

Earlier at midnight Saturday, relaxation of the emergency curbs in election areas ceased to be in effect with the cessation of electioneering.

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) ATM Shamsul Huda yesterday said the emergency rules being in place will not cause any obstacle to polling.

"It will instead complement the three-tier security in place for a peaceful conduct of the polls," he added, talking to reporters at his office.

On June 20, the EC announced the polls schedules while the government relaxed the EPR to allow processions and rallies for election campaigns.

According to the electoral rules, the time limit for electioneering that began on July 14 ended 32 hours before the polling opens at eight this morning.

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Presiding officers escorted by Ansar and police take ballot boxes and ballot papers to different polling centres in Barisal City Corporation area. The photo was taken at Barisal Election Commission office yesterday.

KCC	BCC
Voters	3.99 lakh
Polling stations	239
Mayoral candidates	15
Councillor candidates	253
RCC	SCC
Voters	2.58 lakh
Polling stations	129
Mayoral candidates	18
Councillor candidates	266
Voters	1.79 lakh
Polling stations	91
Mayoral candidates	14
Councillor candidates	184
Voters	2.56 lakh
Polling stations	120
Mayoral candidates	21
Councillor candidates	243

Tac gets going

Graft suspects must seek
absolution by Sept 1

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The much talked about Truth and Accountability Commission (Tac), the newest institution for dealing with graft charges in the country, finally started operating yesterday letting corruptionists seek mercy by voluntarily confessing to their graft, and by depositing their ill-gotten wealth to the state exchequer.

"This is a great opportunity for us, for the people of Bangladesh. Let people come here and be purified by confessing to their corruption, if they feel repentant, and let us embark on a new journey to working for the people and for the welfare of the country," said Tac Chairman Habibur Rahman Khan, immediately after the commission

began operating officially.

The commission, with a tenure of five months, launched its operation by issuing a public notice about its objectives, perspectives, and jurisdiction. Habibur Rahman Khan, who is a retired judge of the High Court, discussed the issues with journalists in an introductory briefing in the Tac office on Hare Road in the capital.

Graft suspects may apply to the commission by September 1 of this year for making voluntary disclosures about their corruption, the public notice said.

The idea of Tac came into being for relieving the state and the judiciary from the overwhelming burden of adjudicating a large number of graft cases, and to let

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Kuwait warns firms against poor pay

80,000 Bangladeshi workers resume work

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Kuwait warned companies employing Bangladeshi workers in Kuwait of punitive actions if they fail to pay the workers the government-fixed minimum 40 Kuwaiti Dinar.

Kuwaiti authorities also directed its law enforcement agencies not to arrest any more workers provided they do not go on strikes or take part in illegal activities, a handout of Bangladesh Press Information Department (PID) yesterday said.

Bangladesh government also requested Kuwait to handover the outstanding dues and personal belongings of the deported workers through the Bangladesh mission in Kuwait.

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Fire in city building kills 9

Over 20 injured

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least nine people, including women and children, were burned alive and over 20 others were injured when a fire devastated a seven-storey building in Old Dhaka early today.

The fire broke out around 12:10am from a shoe factory on the ground floor of the building on Aga Sadeq Road.

Fire fighters and police sources around 2:20am said they recovered nine bodies from different floors of the charred building. The identities of the victims could not be known immediately.

Witnesses said the fire extensively damaged the bottom four floors of the building.

Babar framed SP in bribing case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The case against suspended Special Superintendent of Police (SP) Muhammad Abdul Baten filed for offering bribe to the then state minister for home Lutfuzzaman Babar has been finally proved false and fabricated.

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday submitted the final report of the case, clearing Baten of the charge as no evidence was found during investigation.

Babar's secretary Mohammad Quamruzzaman Chowdhury filed the case with Ramna Police Station on June 3, 2004.

After a long probe into the allegation ACC Deputy Assistant Director Khondaker Rahim Joarder, who investigated the case, yesterday submitted its final report to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka.

In the report, he said Special SP Baten had given a statement saying he had investigated several sensational murder cases against BNP and Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal leaders.

The then state minister for home asked Baten to drop their names from the murder charges but Baten did not comply. So, he was accused of offering bribe to Babar, Baten said in his statement.

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Saarc meet ends with vow to implement Safta

UNB, Colombo

South Asian leaders pledged to implement the South Asian Free Trade Area (Safta) by removing trade barriers and giving special consideration to the bloc's least developed countries (LDCs), at the closing session of the 15th Saarc Summit in Colombo yesterday.

The 41-point Colombo Declaration adopted at the concluding session at the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall focused on collective regional efforts in core areas: food, energy security, trade, combating terrorism and climate change.

It also embraced connectivity, partnership for growth for the peoples of the region, environment, water resources, poverty alleviation, SDF, transport, ICT development and Saarc social charter.

In the communiqué, the Saarc leaders recognised the need to

continue to address the major barriers hindering effective trade liberalisation in the region, which include sensitive lists of items and non-trade barriers (NTBs).

They underscored the need for implementing the decision by the Safta Ministerial Council (SMC) to revise the sensitive lists at the earliest but agreed to give special consideration to the Saarc LDCs when adjusting them.

They directed the Safta experts committee to expeditiously resolve the issues concerning non-tariff and para-tariff measures to facilitate and enhance trade under the mooted free-trade regime.

Chaired by Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa, the final session was attended by Afghan President Hamid Karzai, Bangladesh Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed, Bhutanese Prime Minister Jigmi Thinley, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, Maldives President

Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, Nepalese Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala and Pakistan Prime Minister Yusuf Raza Gillani.

The Saarc leaders renewed their commitment for collective regional efforts to accelerate economic growth, social progress and cultural development which would promote the welfare of the South Asian peoples and improve their quality of life, contributing to regional peace, stability, amity and progress.

On the war on terror, the declaration expressed deep concern over the "serious threat posed by terrorism to the peace, stability and security of the region."

It emphasised the need for strongest possible cooperation, exchange of information in particular, among relevant agencies of the member-states in order to fight terrorism and transnational organised crimes.

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GRAFT CASES

Saifur, 3 ex-MPs get HC bail

Bail matters of 4 bigwigs sent for full-bench hearing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday granted anticipatory bail for six months to former finance minister M Saifur Rahman in Gato corruption case filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

After hearing separate petitions, the HC bench comprising Justice Sharifuddin Chaklader and Justice Md Emdadul Haque Azad also granted anticipatory bail to former BNP lawmakers Shahidul Islam Master, Abul Khair Bhuiyan, and Habibul Islam Habib, and to Laila Arjumand Banu, wife of Khulna City Corporation Mayor Sheikh Tayebur Rahman, until submissions of police reports in separate criminal cases against them.

Detained president of BNP

student wing Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, Azizul Bari Helal, was also granted ad-interim bail in a case filed against him on charges of violating Emergency Power Rules (EPR).

The HC bench also issued separate rules upon the government ordering it to explain why the petitioners should not be granted regular bail.

Meanwhile, Chamber Judge of the Appellate Division of Supreme Court Justice MA Matin yesterday sent ACC petitions against recent HC orders granting bail to former LGD minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, former land affairs minister M Shamsul Islam, former housing and public works minister Engineer Mosharraf Hossain, and

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Gen Mustafiz passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former chief of Army Staff General (ret'd) Muhammad Mustafizur Rahman, Bir Bikram, died of Pancreas cancer at the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) in Dhaka Cantonment yesterday morning.

The valiant and decorated freedom fighter was 67. He left behind his wife, three daughters, and a host of relatives, admirers and well-wishers to mourn his death.

He was laid to eternal rest at Military Graveyard in Banani

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Threat, blame, money factors surface in Barisal

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN and
RAFIQUL ISLAM, from Barisal

Threats, accusations and counter-accusations, allegations of distributing money to buy votes, efforts to control slum dwellers and rumours heated up the atmosphere in Barisal city yesterday ahead of today's polls to the city corporation.

Voters complained that the government's initiatives to bring honest and competent candidates have failed as most candidates are the old faces with numerous allegations against them and have little image.

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Govt wants to create a group thru' farcical local body polls

Says Delwar
UNB, Dhaka

BNP leader Khandker Delwar Hossain yesterday termed the caretaker government 'unconstitutional' and said it has planned to create a group through local bodies elections that would allow them to cling to power.

"We cannot be a part to legalise the unconstitutional government by participating in the stage managed elections," he said after a meeting of the BNP-led 4-party alliance.

The 4-party viewed that the government wants to make the

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Wildlife disappears with forest destruction

VANISHING FORESTS-4



INAM AHMED

It came as a shocking reality to us at the end of our five-day trip to the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) that this vast area hardly supports any wildlife anymore.

The systematic destruction of the forests had been so severe that many of the animals that used to reside here and nowhere else have disappeared.

Dr Reza Khan who led us to this awakening trip to the hills searched every nook and corner of the forests for sightings of such great animals and birds like the great hornbill, pied hornbill, dollar bird, mathura, great horned owl, fairy blue bird or holook gibbon.

But he was disappointed and troubled by the realisation that an irreversible change has already taken place in the hills that will no longer support these life forms.

"This is the first time I have come across such a limited number of animals and birds in these forests. This is unbelievable," said Dr Khan.

A quick stocktaking of the

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The forest department chopped off the teak trees (top) and left the stumps from where new foliage grew. But they would never again become mature and will remain a dwarf teak forest. Serow or wild goat (left) was once found in the hills and now is extinct. This one, probably the last remaining one, was rescued by an army officer from an indigenous person's house in Bandarban and is now kept at Dulahajra sanctuary. The sanctuary is also home to this bear (right). These bears are not seen in CHT districts anymore.

Completing 25 years of Success & Progress
stepping towards Prosperous Golden Future

Islami Bank Bangladesh Limited

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www.islamicbankbd.com

NOTICE OF 25th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the 25th Annual General Meeting of **Islami Bank Bangladesh Limited** will be held on Friday the 29th August 2008 at 9:30 a.m. at **Bangladesh China Friendship Conference Center, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka** for transacting the following business:

AGENDA

01. To approve the minutes of the 24th Annual General Meeting held on 31/08/2007.
02. To receive, consider and adopt the Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss Account for the year that ended on 31st December 2007 and Reports of the Directors and Auditors thereon.
03. To approve Dividend for the year that ended on 31st December 2007.
04. To appoint Auditor(s) and to fix up their remunerations for the year 2008.
05. To elect Directors.

All shareholders of the Bank are requested to kindly make it convenient to attend the Meeting in time.

Dated : Dhaka
2 August, 2008

By order of the Board of Directors
Md. Shouquat Ali
Executive Vice President & Secretary

Notes

- a) **Record date is 29/07/2008.** That is shareholders whose name appeared in the CDS/ Company's Register on 29/07/2008 will be entitled to dividend for the Year 2007 against their shareholdings.
- b) A member eligible for attending and voting at the Annual General Meeting may appoint a proxy on behalf of his/ her.
- c) Power of Attorney/Proxy forms must be submitted to the Registered Office or Share Department (63 Dilkusha C/A, 5th Floor, Dhaka) of the Company at least 48 (Forty Eight) hours before the Meeting i.e. 9:30 a.m. on **Wednesday the 27th August, 2008.** Revenue Stamp of Tk. 10/- (Taka Ten) only shall have to be affixed on the proxy forms.
- d) The last date for submitting nomination papers at the Registered Office for election of Directors is Friday the 22nd August 2008 upto 9:30 a.m. Last date of withdrawal of nomination paper is Monday the 25th August 2008 upto 12:00 Noon. Scrutiny of nomination papers will be done on the same day by 4:00 p.m.
- e) List of the valid candidates for election of Directors will be hung in the Notice Board at the Registered Office on **Tuesday the 26th August 2008.**
- f) Election procedures and rules thereto will be available at the Registered Office of the Company/Meeting place.
- g) Annual Report, Attendance Slip and Proxy Form along with the notice will be sent to the shareholders by post/courier. The shareholders may also collect Proxy Forms etc. from the Share Department of the Company.
- h) Entry is reserved only for the Honourable Shareholders and Proxies/Attorneys. Attendance slip (duly signed) must be submitted to the Registration Counter at the time of entrance. Registration Counter shall remain open till 11:00 a.m.

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