

Credible polls in time CA reaffirms

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser (CA) Fakhruddin Ahmed yesterday said his caretaker government is moving ahead towards holding a free, fair and credible general election in due time.

He said this when the outgoing Qatari ambassador in Dhaka, Ibrahim Mohamed al-Abdulla, made a farewell call on him at his office.

They talked about investment, manpower recruitment and bilateral cooperation at the time.

The chief adviser said Qatar can invest in Bangladesh availing the attractive incentives offered by the government to foreign investors.

Bangladesh needs more investment to further boost its economy, he said.

He requested the Qatari government to recruit more manpower

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Tarique's hope for release gets a blow

Govt, ACC appeal against his bail orders; NBR sues Moudud, Pintu

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The possibility of Tarique Rahman's release hit a fresh snag yesterday after the government and the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) appealed against the High Court (HC) bail orders in seven of the 13 cases filed against him.

With this shift in the government's policy regarding release of high-profile prisoners, immediate release of detained former prime

minister and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, which is associated with the release of her eldest son Tarique, has also become unlikely.

The latest development has caused huge frustration among BNP leaders and activists who had been expecting that Khaleda and Tarique, also the senior secretary general of the party, would come out free anytime.

In another development, the National Board of Revenue (NBR) yesterday filed separate cases

against detained former law minister Moudud Ahmed, former BNP lawmaker Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu and his wife for dodging income tax for years.

Termining the government's appeal move unfortunate, BNP Vice-President MK Anwar said, "It is another example of the government's discriminatory behaviour with the BNP." The government did not show such attitude in case of others who have travelled abroad

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Upazila polls go political

Draft code of conduct prepared

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The upcoming upazila elections will finally not be non-partisan as the Election Commission (EC) has prepared the draft code of conduct for the polls without any provision to prevent political parties from electioneering for candidates they back.

The draft code of conduct allows candidates to use political affiliations in electoral campaigns but it has imposed restrictions on using portraits of party leaders or party electoral symbols, sources in the EC Secretariat said.

The draft, which was sent to the law ministry at the end of last week for vetting, also prohibits holding of rallies for electioneering without

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

EC regrets BNP handling

Apologises for inviting Hafiz for talks, time loss

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) ATM Shamsul Huda yesterday apologised for the way the Election Commission (EC) dealt with BNP over its electoral dialogue with political parties last year.

He said sorry also for the delay in having new electoral provisions incorporated into Representation of the People Order (RPO).

Mentioning the invitation to pro-reform leader Major (ret'd) Hafiz Uddin Ahmed instead of Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hoossain for the electoral

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

talks, he said, "What happened was unfortunate. I personally regret the decisions. None but we are to be criticised for those."

The polls chief made the observations at a discussion on "Amendment of RPO and Elections." The programme was organised at the National Press Club by Media Initiative for Public Policy (MIPP), a non-government organisation.

In an about-face in its stance on BNP, the EC Friday invited Delwar to talks on registration of the political parties. In the invitation letter, Delwar was addressed as the BNP

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

22 parties take forms for registration

UNB, Dhaka

Twenty-two political parties have collected forms for registration with the Election Commission (EC) until yesterday.

Of them, 14 forms were collected yesterday by parties including PDP of Ferdous Quareshi and Kalyan Party of retired Maj Gen Ibrahim.

The registration of political parties under the Representation of People Ordinance (RPO) began on August 27. October 15 has been fixed at last date for applying for registration, which was made mandatory for contesting the general elections.

The parties who procured forms yesterday are: Bangladesh Muktiujudda Krisak-Shramik

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

BNP to contest if JS elections held first

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP will participate in the parliamentary elections if the government assures them of holding the elections before any other polls.

"BNP is an election-oriented party. We will of course take part in the national elections if they are held first," said BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hoossain at a discussion held at Mahanagar Natya Mancha at Gulistan in the capital.

The discussion was a part of the three-day programme being observed by the BNP to mark its 30th founding anniversary.

BNP (Bangladesh Nationalist Party) wants to take part in the government-sponsored dialogue once its chairperson is released, Delwar reiterated. He also

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

Flood feared to turn ominous in 48 hours

Situation worsens in northern, central parts of country

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The overall flood situation in the country has deteriorated suddenly and experts say the situation could worsen in the next couple of days.

Fresh areas in northern and central parts of the country were inundated yesterday marooning thousands of people. Many were compelled to take refuge in safer places leaving their homestead.

Water levels of all major rivers are expected to continue to rise in the next three days by six inches a day. This would inundate many areas of 20 northern and central districts, said Water Development Board (WDB) officials during a press conference asking people

"not to be worried".

"The next 48 hours is very crucial. If the situation does not improve within this time, the flooding may linger like in 1988 and 1998," said engineer Saiful Islam, director of Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC).

The FFWC is going to monitor the situation round the clock and formed 10 special mobile teams.

"We have already sent the special mobile teams comprising experts in the flood affected areas in the northern districts. They will help field-level officers protect the embankments," said Hoossain Shahid Mozaddad Faruque, director general of WDB.

If the situation upstream starts

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

to improve, we would be able to handle the situation downstream, the officials said. They said they are alarmed as the water levels of three major river systems - Brahmaputra-Jamuna, Ganges-Padma and upper Meghna - have started rising simultaneously.

Looking at the current circumstances, the experts are finding similarities with the situations that prevailed in 1988 and 1998. Like now, the water levels of the three major rivers had started rising simultaneously during the end of August, WDB experts said.

They are also worried about the active monsoon over northeast Bangladesh and adjoining Assam,

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Over 150 top graft suspects get bail

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

Over 150 bigwigs obtained bail from the High Court (HC) in last two months in different cases filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), the government and individuals, and most of them have already been released from jails.

ACC sources say the HC has stayed proceedings of at least 120 graft cases in this period. Following petitions filed by the accused, the HC also issued rules upon the state why the petitioners should not be granted regular bail and the proceedings against them should not be quashed.

The HC also quashed proceedings of the cases against 15 people, who were accused by the ACC for abetting and aiding the principal accused of amassing illegal wealth and concealing wealth information.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 6

AL mulls agitation to force govt to drop all charges against Hasina

HASAN JAHID TUSHER

The Awami League (AL) may go for tougher programmes, including street agitations, in a couple of weeks to force the government to withdraw all charges against Sheikh Hasina and lift the state of emergency.

The party will also speak out against holding upzila elections ahead of the general election at its meetings with the Election Commission (EC) on September 4 and 9, party leaders said.

The tough programmes came up for discussion at the AL's Central Working Committee meeting at its Dhanmondi office yesterday. The meeting, presided over by acting party President Zillur Rahman, was adjourned till 11:00am today.

Sources said today's meeting

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

will review the latest political development and its fallout, not least the possible release of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and her son Tarique Rahman.

Acting AL General Secretary Syed Ashraf Islam told reporters that the government should free all people arrested in the anti-corruption drive before releasing Tarique, who he said ran a parallel government during the BNP-Jamaat coalition administration, becoming the "world champion in corruption."

On Tarique's bail in all the cases against him, Zillur Rahman said people would put him on trial.

He said the BNP was directly collaborating with the caretaker government.

"We'll have to take a tough stance as without showing strength

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7



Smoke engulfs 23-storey Faruk Rupayan Tower at Banani in the capital yesterday after a car catches fire at its basement.

Fire in city skyscraper

20 panicked people hurt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 20 of the panic stricken occupants of a 23-storey building were injured in the capital's Banani area yesterday after a minivan

parked in the underground parking lot caught fire engulfing the building with dense smoke.

Several hundred people were inside the building when the fire broke out trapping them amid the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

dense smoke.

The injured were hurt trying to leap off to adjacent buildings. The entire area around Kamal Ataturk Avenue remained closed to

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Ramadan begins tomorrow

UNB, Dhaka

The holy month of Ramadan begins tomorrow as the Ramadan moon was not sighted anywhere in the country yesterday.

The announcement of Islamic Foundation Bangladesh came after a meeting of the National Moon Sighting Committee.

The meeting was presided over by Director General of Islamic Foundation Mohammad Fazlur Rahman.

Pay Commission formed

Recommendations in 6 months

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday set up a pay commission to review and recommend a revised salary structure for employees of the government and autonomous bodies.

Former secretary Mir Mustafizur Rahman has been made chairman of the commission.

According to a gazette notification from the finance ministry, the commission has been asked to submit its recommendations in six months.

Former inspector general of police Azizul Haque, and former secretaries AK Abdul Mubin and

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

ILL-GOTTEN WEALTH Justice Fazlul to be charged

UNB, Dhaka

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) will press charges against Justice Fazlul Haque, former law adviser in the Iajuddin-led caretaker government, today in a case filed for amassing illegal wealth and hiding information from the commission.

ACC Assistant Director Mohammad Ibrahim, also the investigation officer (IO) of the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

CULTIVATE YOUR LOVE FOR TRAVEL SINGAPORE AIRLINES ALL-IN FARES



LOMBOK (INDONESIA)

USD 748
RETURN

LANGKAWI

USD 745
RETURN

BANGKOK

USD 723
RETURN

PHUKET

USD 723
RETURN

KUALA LUMPUR

USD 708
RETURN

SINGAPORE

USD 609
RETURN

Now all Singapore Airlines fares come complete with taxes and surcharges*. So you know at a glance what your total ticket price is. En route, enjoy KrisWorld, your personal inflight entertainment system, and the inflight service even other airlines talk about. To plan your next journey with us, please contact your travel agent, call Singapore Airlines Dhaka office on 8811504, Chittagong office on 712120 (from Saturday to Thursday, between 9am and 3:30pm), or visit singaporeair.com/bd

*All advertised Singapore Airlines fares include the price of the air ticket, associated taxes and surcharges only. Fares quoted do not include a Singapore stopover and hotel accommodation. The additional tax for a Singapore stopover is approximately USD16. Fares quoted are subject to change due to currency fluctuation. Fares quoted are per person in Economy Class, for travel out of Dhaka from now to 11 October 2008. Tickets must be purchased between now and 29 September 2008. A minimum stay of three days, and a maximum stay of 30 days apply. A fee of USD100 applies to a refund for a completely unused ticket. No refund is allowed for a partially-used ticket. A fee applies to a change in travel date and in the event of free-show. Tickets are not eligible for mileage accrual, and cannot be used in conjunction with upgrade awards and cannot be endorsed. Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore are Singapore Airlines destinations; while Langkawi, Lombok and Phuket are SIRAIR destinations, with connections to Singapore. KrisWorld is only available on Singapore Airlines flights. Other terms and conditions apply.

