

## EC declares

**FROM PAGE 1**  
I want to assure the voters that we will go to everything possible so they can go to polling centres without having any fear and also can return home safely after casting their votes," the CEC said in his address to the nation televised live.

For holding the elections peacefully, he announced that members of the armed forces will be deployed along with the police, Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), Bangladesh Ansar, and the Village Defence Force (VDF).

"We will not let the voters be hostage to terror, hooliganism, and muscle, and will arrange to hold the elections peacefully at any cost," Shamsul Huda assured the people.

The EC chief also warned of tough actions against candidates and election officials if they violate electoral rules. He urged all election officials to carry out their responsibilities with full neutrality and efficiency.

"The success of a fair election expected by all largely depends on the full neutrality and efficiency of officials and employees who will be involved at different levels of the election and will play both direct and indirect roles," he said, urging all election officials to carry out their 'sacred duties' remaining above all kinds of fear and threat.

"Disregard all unwarranted influence and unjust demands," Huda told all election officials, reminding them that all of their activities will be monitored.

"We will not hesitate to take actions against persons failing to carry out their duties neutrally," he warned.

The CEC requested prospective candidates to abide by the new electoral code of conduct, which bans pasting of coloured posters on walls, graffiti, erection of gates, and decorative illuminations for campaign purposes.

He also warned prospective candidates against pre-election massive show-downs, undue entertaining of voters, and buying of votes.

"Especially, the traditional show-downs during submission of nomination papers will not be tolerated. And if that happens, candidacy of the applicant will become uncertain."

He urged prospective contestants to maintain a peaceful atmosphere by showing respect to their opponents.

About poll results, the CEC said, "The officials will not orally write the election results numerically but will also write them in letters after taking signatures of polling agents on the result sheets."

Providing polling agents with copies of election result sheets has been made mandatory, the CEC added.

"Presiding officers will send the signed result sheets to returning officers, and will also send a copy to the Election Commission by post," Huda said adding that the post offices will remain open until the result sheets are in, no matter how late at night it is.

The new steps will make publication of the election results fully transparent, he hoped.

The CEC also announced that only candidates nominated by parties registered with the commission and independent candidates will be eligible to contest in the elections, and they must be voters in any of the constituencies.

"Loan and bill defaulters will not be able to become candidates if they don't reschedule their dues," Huda said adding, government

## Toxic milk

**FROM PAGE 1**  
insiders without giving details.

"The experts are now fighting," said a committee member when he came out of the meeting at around 8:00pm.

The committee was formed on October 19 during a meeting at the commerce ministry following confusion over test results of the powdered milk.

Tested by the chemistry department of Dhaka University found melamine in Dano, Red Cow, Nido fortified infant, Diploma, Anlene, Yashili 1, Yashili 2 and Sweet Baby 2.

But tests by BSTI and private laboratory Plasma Plus found melamine only in Yashili 1 that created confusion. The government then decided to test all the brands again at home and abroad.

The October 19 meeting at the commerce ministry decided to re-test all the eight brands at the laboratories of Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC), Bangladesh Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (BCSIR) and at a laboratory in Thailand.

The results from BCSIR and BAEC were received last Thursday, but the result of a laboratory in Bangkok came only yesterday.

The members of the committee are BSTI Director General Azmal Hossain, Deputy Director Dr Ashish Ratan Sen, BAEC scientific officers Dr Didarul Alam Chowdhury and Dr SM Salehuddin, BCSIR scientific officers Matiur Rahim, Dr Nasim Sultana and Dr Umme Ara, child specialist at national nutrition institute Dr Mukim Ali Biswas, two chemistry department teachers from Dhaka University, and Ziaul Abedin of Plasma Plus.

officials and semi-government officials will not be eligible to contest in the polls unless three years have elapsed since their retirements or expiration of their contractual appointments.

CEC Shamsul Huda also went over the events that culminated in yesterday's announcement of the detailed poll schedules since the current EC had taken over the charge in February last year, including holding of electoral dialogues with political parties and amending the Representation of the People Order (RPO).

"The amended laws and rules will help keep the elections free from the influence of black money and muscle in order to make them free and fair," the CEC hoped in his hour and a half address.

Referring to registration of political parties, he said the registration process has been introduced and 'completed' in a short period of time not to control the parties, rather to ensure accountability and transparency of political parties' activities.

He said the EC successfully completed redemarcation of the parliamentary constituencies after 24 years, which is a legal obligation of the commission following every census.

The previous EC had announced a detailed poll schedule for the ninth parliamentary election setting January 22 of last year as the polling date, but that was cancelled amid unabated political violence and controversies over holding the poll, which led the events of 11/11.

Following assumption of the country's helm by Fakhruddin Ahmed-led caretaker government, the military backed government cancelled all proceedings regarding the earlier schedule of the ninth parliamentary election, and the EC was reconstituted on February 5 last year. Becoming the chief of the EC, Huda promised to hold a free, fair and credible election in the shortest possible time.

## Hasina wishes

**FROM PAGE 1**  
would confuse the voters, and might lead to many ballots being cancelled.

Meanwhile, AL acting president Zillur Rahman said the party will start formal electoral activities today.

He said its nomination forms 'have already gone to press'. The parliamentary aspirants could begin to collect those within a week.

Briefing newsmen at his Gulshan residence after the CEC's televised address, he said AL would settle on its nominations on recommendations from the grassroots level committees.

Both Hasina and Zillur said confusions in the public mind over the December 18 polls would almost be over how that the schedules are published.

"We are glad the election schedule is announced," he observed.

He said despite its disapproval of two major elections being held in such close proximity, the party will participate in both the polls.

Replying to a query, the veteran AL leader said the party will firm up its electoral alliance after Hasina's return home on October 10.

He demanded immediate unconditional release of Hasina so that she could take part in the polls as a free person.

He called for the EC to have the upazila and national elections spaced at least a month apart. Otherwise, he said, there might be violence centring the polls.

Zillur expressed displeasure at CEC's not mentioning anything about withdrawal of the state of emergency.

He said the government's main duty now is to lift the emergency curbs to create an atmosphere congenial to free electioneering.

## Sultana Kamal

**FROM PAGE 1**  
which caused some negative reactions to its good initiatives.

Pointing out complexity in the administration, she said, "There was a clash of authority between the Anti-Corruption Commission and the National Coordination Committee on Serious Crimes and Corruption. Not only was there any coordination among them but one obstructed the other's work."

People did not see expected changes in political culture as the government's steps were not transparent and due processes were not followed, she said.

She noted that incidents like not arresting any of the fundamentalist parter of the BNP-led alliance that committed huge corruption while in power and Jamaat Secretary General Ali Hossain Mohammad Mojahid's presence at a meeting with the chief adviser when the former was wanted in a case have aroused doubts in people's mind about whether to support the government anymore.

"People do not consider the government safe anymore. People can neither trust the Awami League nor the BNP and now even the caretaker government," she said.

## Hannan Shah

**FROM PAGE 16**  
attended the programme as chief guest and delivered a speech before hundreds of party leaders, workers, supporters and locals.

Hannan flew to Matlab on a chartered helicopter for the meeting. The chopper landed on Ahmadiyya Madrasa ground. He then went to the meeting at Lohdhu High School field in a motorcade with leaders and workers of local BNP and its front organisations.

## Army chief

**FROM PAGE 1**  
peace missions in the near future.

"The UN secretary general was very happy to know that Bangladesh keeps one brigade and a battalion on standby to respond to any urgent UN request for troops deployment," Gen Moeen said, adding Ban has requested Bangladesh to contribute more women troops and police to the peace missions.

Nearly 10,000 Bangladesh troops and police personnel are now engaged in UN peace operations in different parts of the world, armed forces sources said.

A good number of women troops are also working in different troubled areas to restore peace and uphold human rights there.

The UN secretary general has visited peace operations in Liberia and Sudan, two war-ravaged African countries where members of Bangladesh armed forces are working as blue helmets.

"He (Ban) is extremely happy with the standard of service from Bangladesh troops in Africa and other parts of the world," Gen Moeen said, adding that Bangladesh is going to contribute more to the UN efforts to restore world peace.

Principal Staff Officer (PSO) Lt Gen Mohammad Abdul Mubeen, Chief of General Staff Maj Gen Sina Ibne Jamali and senior UN representatives were present at the meeting.

## AL, BNP differ

**FROM PAGE 1**  
General Secretary Syed Ashrafur Islam told reporters after the meeting yesterday. "Of course a peaceful environment will be created through withdrawal of the state of emergency, as one adviser has already said the restrictions on fundamental rights will be withdrawn and the process will start from tomorrow."

"The environment will be created peacefully, and we will take part in the poll. We urge all the people to take part in the election process from today," he added.

While a sceptical BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain said, "Although the government had said it had accepted six of our seven demands, it has yet to implement any of those, therefore, we think the government has not taken any positive step yet towards holding a free, fair and credible election."

"We also told him [the UN secretary general] that we want to contest in the December 18 election, but the government has to remove all kinds of obstacles on the way to our participation," Delwar said.

While Ashraf said, "We have told them [the UN] that the election must be held on the announced date since there is no alternative to it. It is their belief that the election will be held on December 18, which will be fair and participated by all."

About lifting of the emergency, Delwar said, "We have told him that a total lifting of the emergency is an imperative for holding a free, fair and credible election, and he urged us to settle the issue through discussions with the government."

While Ashraf said, "The UN has also agreed with us that the people won't have fundamental rights under the state of emergency, so that will be a problem for an acceptable poll. If any political party does not want to take part in the election with the excuse of the emergency, then the party might be able to make the election process look questionable."

## Bus fare row

**FROM PAGE 16**  
Witnesses said different bus companies called the strike and forced others to keep their buses off the road.

The commuters became helpless in absence of transport and many of them in an angry move vandalised several vehicles parked on the road.

The bus communications, however, resumed with the police intervention later.

Anwar Hossain, DMP's deputy commissioner of Mirpur Zone, told The Daily Star, "The hassle between passengers and bus employees was followed by misunderstanding over bus fares."

"We asked the protesting operators not to create obstacle to other buses and also detained some of the employees who tried to resist others," he said.

The government has meanwhile reduced fares of diesel-run inter-district and long-haul vehicles by Tk 0.07 per kilometre following the reduction in diesel oil price by Tk 7 per litre.

However, fares of CNG-run buses and minibuses operating in Dhaka and Chittagong metropolises remain unchanged at Tk 1.2 and Tk 1.1 per kilometre respectively, says a PID handout.

## CG assures UN chief

**FROM PAGE 1**  
visit in the coming weeks to assess the conduct of the election and report to him.

The UN chief, who left for New York last evening ending his weeklong tour of the Philippines, India, Nepal and Bangladesh, had a very busy schedule yesterday. He visited a micro-financing programme in Bogra and a disaster preparedness programme in Sirajganj. He also met with the president, chief adviser, foreign adviser, and leaders of the BNP and Awami League.

He said the UN stands ready to help. "As a friend of Bangladesh, I have an obligation to speak frankly and I hope to lend my advice and personal assistance in any way that I can."

For Bangladesh, he said, much depends on good governance. "Perhaps never before has it been so important for the nation's diverse people and political leaders to pull together to fight corruption, to uphold the rule of law, to respect institutional checks and balances and to promote democracy."

"This was my message to all I met—government authorities, political parties, civil society leaders and ordinary citizens," he added.

The UN secretary-general said it is in the best interest of the world and the people of Bangladesh to see the country achieve its full potential for democratic development through free and credible elections.

Asked if the UN will set up a special tribunal to try war criminals of the 1971 Liberation War, Ban said first the Bangladesh government needs to have an official position on this issue and then it must make an official request to the UN which will then go through proper procedures.

Turning to his talks with the army chief, he said they discussed how to strengthen the partnership between the UN and Bangladesh, especially in peacekeeping operations.

"I expressed my desire that Bangladesh can contribute more troops to the peacekeeping mission."

## Cop promotion

**FROM PAGE 16**  
He also said, "The decision on traffic policeman recruitment was made in principle. It would be sent to the home ministry for approval."

Meanwhile, policemen seeking promotions expressed their happiness and welcomed the decisions. They said their promotions were dependent on lobbying and bribes which sometimes deprived the deserving cops.

Seeking anonymity, a constable said senior officials often treat policemen below their rank as their personal servants. Some have no other way but to obey the unethical directives since their promotions are dependant on the seniors.

Wishing not to be named an ASI, who was promoted from constable, said, "Despite my good performance, I had to bribe my seniors for my promotion."

Sources in the police headquarters said, the first promotional procedure under the new decisions already started and yesterday was the last day for candidates to apply.

Hasanul Haider, Assistant Inspector General of Police (Recruitment and Management), said, "The new decision to control the promotion procedure will prevent deprivation of qualified members."

"Earlier there were various complications in the promotional procedures as the examinations were held separately at different units," Hasanul said, adding, "Now a list would be prepared at the headquarters and the promotions would be given according to the merit list."

He said if the government agrees with the police headquarters decision, the post of traffic sergeant would be dissolved and SIS would be posted for controlling traffic.

Currently, Bangladesh Police has over 1,23,000 policemen. Of them 87,934 are constables, 5,784 Nayek, 6,587 head constables, 6,623 ASIs, 1,213 sergeants, 11,211 SIS, and 2,307 inspectors.

## War criminals

**FROM PAGE 16**  
the state, its independence and sovereignty," the SCF said.

SCF Chairman and deputy commander-in-chief of the liberation war Air Vice Marshal (ret'd) AK Khandaker told reporters that they have been preparing a list of war criminals, which will be published soon.

"The SCF is preparing three lists containing the names of war criminals, the victims and the witnesses of war crimes separately," said AK Khandaker.

The SCF also submitted a memorandum to the chief adviser (CA) on Saturday demanding trial of war criminals. It also asked the CA to hold talks with the SCF leaders on the issue.

Sector commanders Maj Gen (ret'd) CR Dutta and Maj Gen (ret'd) KM Shafiqullah also spoke.

Meanwhile, Awami League (AL) called upon the UN secretary general to take initiative to try the war criminals before the national elections.

"The UN is conducting trials of war criminals in many countries. We also want UN help for trying the war criminals of 1971," AL acting General Secretary Syed Ashrafur Islam told reporters after a meeting with the UN secretary general at Sonargaon Hotel in the capital.

sions and I got very positive response from the military leadership," Ban Ki-moon said, mentioning that Bangladesh is the second largest contributor to the UN peacekeeping operations, with more than 9,000 troops and police officers serving in UN missions.

He also spoke on climate change and global financial crisis.

The UN secretary-general recalled his first visit to Bangladesh in 1975 as a Korean government official. He lauded the warm hospitality of the people of Bangladesh. He said he was impressed to witness the development Bangladesh achieved in the last three decades.

## Political activities

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Arif, at the communications ministry.

Zillur however stopped short of saying whether the emergency rules will be withdrawn.

"A successful election with participation of all political parties is an important milestone for us. We've got to reach this successfully."

As per Section 3 of the Emergency Power Ordinance promulgated through a gazette notification on January 25 in 2007, the government restricted processions, demonstrations, hartals and strikes across the country.

Rallies, processions and functions relating to religious, social and state affairs were however kept out of the restrictions.

The emergency rules allow the government to ban any meetings, processions, demonstrations and any news or information deemed harmful in the interest of public security and peace.

The government later relaxed the emergency power, allowing political parties to hold indoor political rallies on a small scale.

## Global recession

**FROM PAGE 16**  
Other members are the governor of Bangladesh Bank, chairman of the National Board of Revenue, chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission, chief controller of insurance, vice-chairman of the Export Promotion Bureau, additional secretary of the Economic Relations Division, and a representative from the Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Department of the planning ministry.

The finance adviser said the committee would analyse the situation of export, import, terms of trade, share market and other economic issues and suggest corrective measures.

He said the global economic meltdown would not affect Bangladesh's economy immediately as the country's financial sector including the capital market was not integrated with the international market.

He however did not rule out the possibility of being affected in the long run.

The Bangladesh Bank's quarterly report released yesterday says, "Since a large part of the country's exports (especially RMGs) is destined for developed country markets, one danger is the potential adverse impact of global economic slowdown on our export earnings."

The central bank advised the government to remain vigilant regarding price competitiveness and related development, which are keys to maintaining and expanding the country's export shares in the global market.

## Toxic Liquor

**FROM PAGE 16**  
and Punam Homeo Hall.

Police arrested Noor Islam after Papia confessed to police that she collected alcohol from Parul Homeo Hall.

Rafiqul Islam, assistant director of the Department of Narcotics Control, told The Daily Star that they arrested Globe Laboratory owner Arifur Rahman for keeping alcohol and sealed off the shop.

Adamdighi police arrested Arifuddin, Khorshed and Dilip Chandra for possessing eight litres of alcohol.

A total of three cases have been filed in this regard.

## Suicide car bomb

**FROM PAGE 16**  
Under American pressure, Pakistan has deployed security forces throughout its northwest in an attempt to tamp down growing militancy. The troops have been frequent targets of attacks by militants, who have demanded Pakistan end its alliance with the United States.

Washington is suspected of launching at least 17 missile strikes of its own in northwestern Pakistan since August, an apparent reflection of US frustration over Pakistan's efforts against militants in its territory.

Pakistan routinely protests the missile attacks as violations of its sovereignty, but the strikes have continued nonetheless.

In a statement Sunday, Pakistani Prime Minister Yusuf Raza Gilani condemned the suicide attack in South Waziristan, saying he "deplored the loss of innocent lives."

## ILL-GOTTEN WEALTH

## Saifur's son charge sheeted

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday pressed charges against former finance minister M Saifur Rahman's younger son Shafiqur Rahman Babu in a case filed for amassing wealth worth Tk 13.84 crore illegally and concealing wealth information from the commission.

ACC Assistant Director Farid Ahmed Patwary, also the investigation officer (IO) of the case, submitted the charge sheet to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court in Dhaka, showing 39 people as prosecution witnesses.

In the charge sheet, the IO mentioned that Shafiqur had amassed wealth worth Tk 13,84,92,392 through illegal means and concealed information of wealth worth Tk 1,22,44,453 from the commission.

The IO also prayed for issuance of arrest warrant against him and orders to attach his properties as the accused has been absconding since the case was filed.

The charge sheet was submitted under sections 26(2) and 27(1) of the Anti-Corruption Commission Act-2004 and 15 of the Emergency Power Rules-2007.

The charges brought against Shafiqur were primarily proved and he would be brought under trial, the IO said.

On April 29 this year, ACC Deputy Director Sharmin Ferdousy filed the case against Shafiqur with Ramna police station for amassing wealth beyond his known sources of income and concealing wealth information.

In the case statement, Babu was accused of concealing information of wealth worth about Tk 1.28 crore in his wealth statement submitted to the ACC and amassing wealth worth about Tk 13.85 crore beyond his known sources of income.

Shafiqur is one of the 35 graft suspects on the ACC list disclosed in October last year. He submitted his wealth statement to the commission on November 28, 2007.

## Myanmar

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Bahamas, one in Belize and one in India.

A competent government source said the spot was "well inside" Bangladesh maritime boundary.

Foreign Secretary Md Touhid Hossain told the press yesterday that the dispute could be resolved through dialogue as Bangladesh has very good relations with Myanmar.

Additional Foreign Secretary MAK Mahmood, who led the Bangladesh-Myanmar maritime delimitation talks in Dhaka in September, said the matter will be raised at the upcoming talks with Myanmar on November 16 and 17.

Mahmood pointed out that Bangladesh would also ask the South Korean company not to conduct the exploration work in the disputed area.

He added that Bangladesh would also sit with India on the maritime boundary issue later this month.

The Bay of Bengal has become very important, especially after India's discovery of 100 trillion cubic feet of gas in 2005-06 and Myanmar's discovery of seven trillion cubic feet of gas during the same time. India also discovered oil.

The Bay in Bangladesh's territory promises huge natural resources, experts say. The Daily Star reported in 2006 discovery of sedimentary rock oolite that promises oil and gas there.

## SQ Chy

**FROM PAGE 16**  
Mirza Hussain Haider and Justice Mamnoon Rahman granted him three months' anticipatory bail in a tax evasion case filed by the National Board of Revenue.

The bench also stayed the case proceedings against Salauddin for three months and issued a rule upon the government asking it to explain why the proceedings against the petitioner should not be quashed.

A Dhaka court on October 26 issued an arrest warrant against Salauddin Quader in the case.

In response to Mojibur Rahman Sarwar's petition, the HC bench of Justice Tariq ul Hakim and Justice Sheikh Abdul Awal granted him interim bail for six months in an arms case filed by the police.

The HC on October 23 granted bail to Moudud Ahmed in the illegal wealth-related case and issued a rule upon the government asking it to explain within four weeks why Moudud should not be granted regular bail in the case.

The ACC recently filed a petition with the Supreme Court to stay the HC order.

Hearing the petition, the chamber judge yesterday passed "no order" and asked the ACC to file a regular leave to appeal with the apex court.

The ACC filed the case against Moudud with Gulshan Police Station on September 16 last year, alleging that the former law minister concealed information about his actual and illegal wealth in the statement submitted to the commission.

Barrister Rafique-ul-Huq moved for all the three petitioners.

## US electoral system

**FROM PAGE 1**  
nearly 9,000 new registrants have been flagged through the state's "No Match, No Vote" law.

In Ohio, Republicans have repeatedly gone to court to make public a list of more than 200,000 unmatched registrations, presumably so that those voters can be challenged at the polls.

According to Time, millions have been stripped from electoral roll in key states, but legitimacy of those eliminations remains unclear.

While talking to a group of foreign journalists on Wednesday, Gregory P Magarian, professor of law at Washington University in St Louis, highlighted some loopholes in the electoral process.

For example, a convicted felon can vote in Maine, but not in Virginia. A government-issued photo ID is required to cast vote in Indiana, but not in New York.

In Indiana, residents who attend state-run schools can use their IDs in many cases to cast votes, but students attending in private schools cannot enjoy the rights.

In Pennsylvania, first-time voters can use firearm permits or utility bills to identify themselves, and long-time voters do not have to show anything at all. In Georgia and Florida, gun permits do not help; all voters must come up with state or federal photo IDs at polling stations.

"Of course, it is a discrimination in the eyes of laws. It should be addressed. But our Supreme Court has not said anything about it," Prof Magarian said.