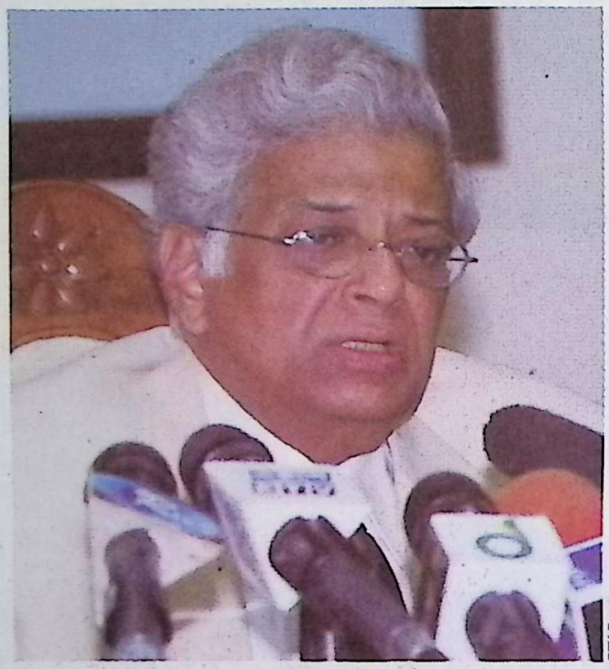
BANGLADESH



STAR

Elections at last

The EC finally and definitively announces on November 23 that the long-awaited parliamentary election is to be held on December 29 and upazila election on January 22. The new dates are the upshot of hectic negotiations between the EC, CTG, and political parties, after the BNP had refused to accept December 18 and slated a list of demands. It is the third revision to the polls schedules unveiled on November 2.

Tussle over growth

The World Bank on November 26 says that GDP growth in Bangladesh might come down to 4.8 per cent in the current fiscal year from the government projected 6.5 per cent as ready-made garments export and remittance inflow are likely to suffer due to the global financial crisis.

Finance and Planning adviser A.B. Mirza Azizul Islam however, rejects the WB projection on GDP, saying it might cross six per cent, and other economists and business leaders also pillory the Bank for its gloomy prognostications, arguing that the Bank has consistently been wrong on such issues.

Truth Commission unconstitutional

The High Court on November 13 declares illegal and unconstitutional the Voluntary Disclosure of Information Ordinance 2008 through which the government formed the Truth and Accountability Commission for voluntary disclosure of corruption.

The HC bench observes that through formation of the commission, an alternative system bypassing the judiciary was set up which was against the constitution, and possesses scopes of exonerating the offenders without trial in the courts and interference in the judiciary.



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ISPR

Maritime tensions

On November 10, Myanmar finally withdraws its warships, the oil and gas exploration rig and the fossil fuel exploration vessels from Bangladesh waters after a protracted stand-off. The withdrawal comes after Myanmar first mobilises huge forces on the other side of the border, and, in response, Bangladesh reinforces Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and Bangladesh navy efforts with the deployment of Bangladesh army troops on the Myanmar-Bangladesh border.