

CG, its many actions extra-constitutional

JS special body states in draft report; blasts Iajuddin for stepping beyond constitution

SHAKHAWAT LITON

A draft report of the parliament's special committee calls the formation of immediate past caretaker government and many of its activities extra-constitutional.

The report is likely to be placed in the House today.

It also accuses immediate past president Iajuddin Ahmed of exercising extra-constitutional authority regarding promulgation of ordinances repealing existing laws, sources said quoting from the draft report which was being finalised yesterday.

"The committee thinks, formation of the non-partisan caretaker government, and many of its exercised authorities were

extra-constitutional," observes the report, after examining the caretaker government's jurisdiction allowed by article 58 (D) of the constitution.

Chairman of the committee, Advocate Rahmat Ali, told The Daily Star over the phone yesterday that the report would be finalised after some modification of the draft.

"I am trying to place the report in the parliament tomorrow," said the chief of the committee, which was formed on January 28 consisting 15 senior lawmakers, to select ratifiable ordinances promulgated just before and during the caretaker regime.

Asked about the committee's observation on the immediate past caretaker

government and the erstwhile president, Rahmat Ali said members of the committee raised questions about their activities. "Their opinions will be reflected in the report," he added.

The report might prompt the parliament to bring charges of constitution violation against the immediate past caretaker government and former president Iajuddin Ahmed.

Participating in a discussion on a thanks giving motion on the immediate past president's address to the maiden meet of the House, many treasury bench lawmakers accused him of violating the constitution, and questioned the legality of caretaker government's many activities.

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LGC sees red light 4 months into formation

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN

The initiative for ensuring local government bodies' transparency and accountability and the balanced development across the country is likely to be hampered as the local government commission (LGC) is set to lose its effectiveness.

The parliamentary special committee recommended not to ratify the ordinance on LGC, which the caretaker government promulgated last year.

The LGC was formed to make recommendations on how to strengthen local government bodies and it may lose its effectiveness on February 24, less than four months after its formation.

The plan for making

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Local govt to stay fettered in politics

Fresh bill being drafted to cover Jan 22 polls, let MPs meddle in development activities

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The efforts to free the local government bodies from political control might go in vain as provisions in the ordinances concerned requiring the public representatives-elect to resign from their party positions before taking oath are likely to be dropped.

The immediate past caretaker government had three ordinances proclaimed to define formation and functions of city corporations, municipalities and upazila parishads, repealing the local government laws in force then.

Like the other ordinances, the three were placed before the House on January 25. They must be ratified within constitution-stipulated 30 days since their placement, or else they will cease to be effective on February 24.

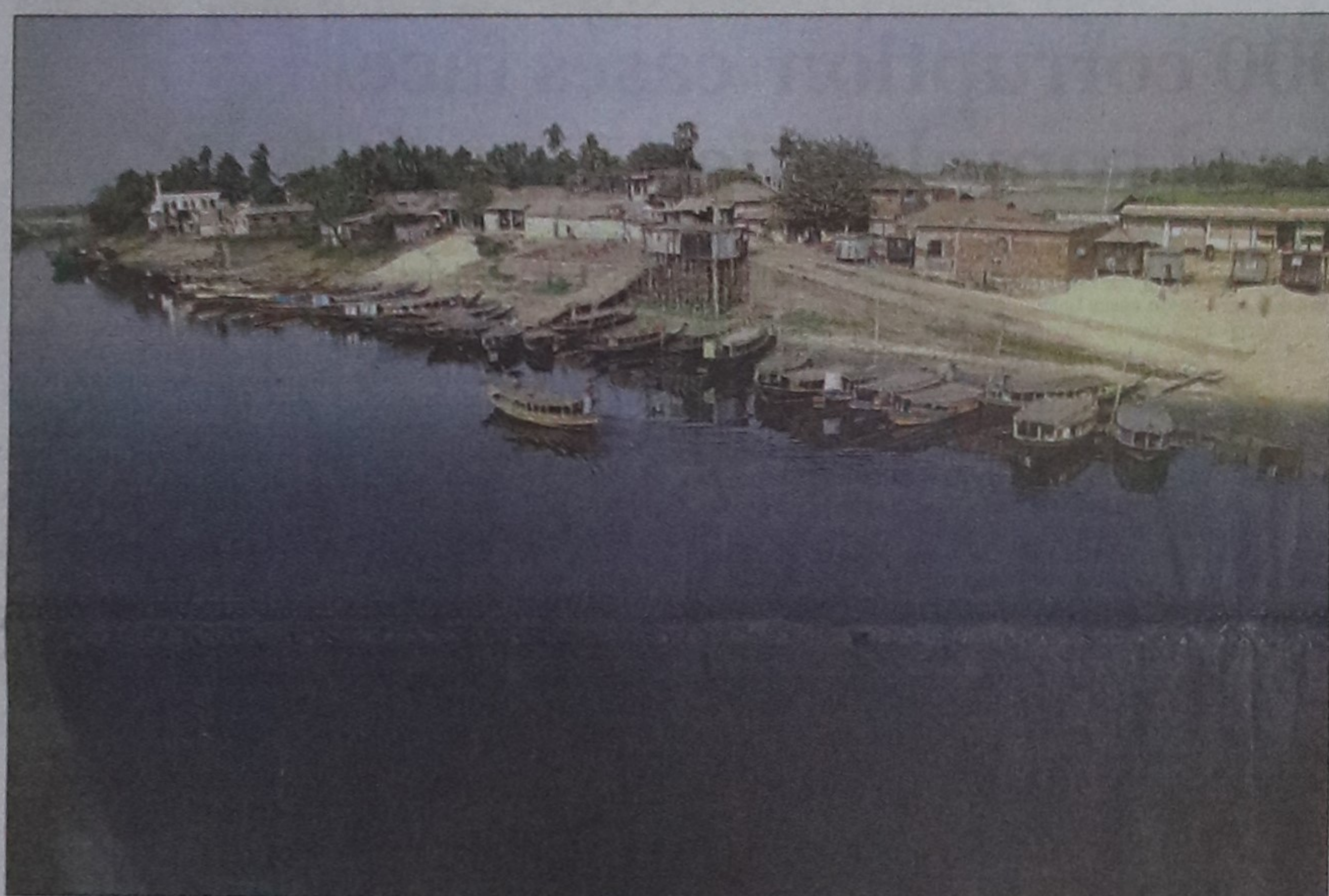
The special committee of the Jatiya Sangsad

on Sunday selected two of the three ordinances -- Local Government (city corporation) and Local Government (municipality) ordinances -- for ratification. But it did not recommend the other -- Local Government (upazila parishad) ordinance -- for ratification.

The LGRD ministry is drafting a fresh bill on upazila parishads without the provision in the ordinance that required the chairmen and vice-chairmen elect of upazila parishads to resign from their party posts before taking oath, sources said.

The new bill will have provisions to safeguard the January 22 upazila elections held under the ordinance. In the new law, members of parliament might have jurisdictions to be involved in development activities at upazila level.

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Stench from the polluted waters of the Balu River irks locals as the sewage of the capital is dumped into the river. This stretch of the Balu near Purbachal project is supposed to be a part of the second phase of the city circular waterway project.

PHOTO: SYED ZAKIR HOSSAIN

Gunbattle at JU again

BCL factions trade shots; 5 bullet-hit among 50 hurt

A CORRESPONDENT, JU

Two factions of Bangladesh Chhatra League locked in a fierce clash on Jahangirnagar University (JU) campus yesterday that left at least 50 people injured, five of them with bullets.

The sporadic clashes continued till filing this report at 2:00am today starting from around 2:00pm yesterday.

Witnesses said the clashes began between the two groups when cadres of Ayon group swooped on Jony group at Bottola, in front of Maulana Bhasani Hall, over establishing supremacy on campus.

A group of unidentified men at one stage also attacked the residents of acting Proctor Prof Md Nasiruddin and General Secretary of Jahangirnagar University Teachers Association Prof Shamsul Alam Selim.

Police raided Bangabandhu Hall and AFM Kamaluddin Hall late last night but failed to seize any arms except a few iron rods. Police, however, arrested 19 students of Ayon group, sources at the Savar Police Station said.

Chhatra League central committee suspended all activities of JU Chhatra League unit for a month more following

the clashes. Last month, the two Chhatra League factions clashed with each other on campus that left 30 students injured. The central committee had then suspended activities of its JU unit for a month.

"A few activists of Ayon group beat up Nayan, an activist of Jony group, in Bangabandhu Hall in the morning. Hearing the news, activists of Jony group launched a hectic search for the attackers on campus and finally they beat up some activists of Ayon group in Bangabandhu Hall around noon," a student said.

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Time not right to try war criminals

Says special Pak envoy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Visiting Pakistan President's special envoy Zia Ispahani yesterday said his country has apologised for the atrocities during the Bangladesh Liberation War.

"Former President Gen Pervez Musharraf apologised when he visited Bangladesh.

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Cabinet okays 10 ordinances

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The cabinet yesterday approved in principle 10 of the 54 ordinances the parliamentary special committee recommended for making into laws.

More ordinances out of the remaining 44 are likely to get the cabinet nod Wednesday, sources said.

The special committee, formed to examine the ordinances promulgated by the

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27TH BCS EXAM Govt assures second-phase candidates of appointment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two ministers yesterday assured the unsuccessful candidates in the second phase of the 27th Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) examinations of considering their demands for recruitment in

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MINE SUBSIDENCE

Coal city planned to rehabilitate victims

SHARIER KHAN

The government is considering establishment of a "coal city" near Barapukuria which would provide housing and occupation to people affected by the coalmine and become the centre focus for mining related higher studies.

The idea stemmed from the fact that the government in the past had ignored land and water related issues while approving the Barapukuria coalmine project. But such problems are affecting livelihoods of at least 15 villages around the mine. In future, the problem would deepen, as the mine would cause 4.2 square kilometres area to subside by two metres.

The government is thinking of ways to address such issues in consultation with the locals, who are affected the most by such devel-

opment projects, says Dr Towfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury, energy adviser to the prime minister.

"Only through people's consultation can any project get peoples' cooperation," he said, adding, "Such projects should improve peoples' lives, not worsen it."

The size of such a city would not be big and the government would try to utilise Khas land in that area for this purpose. It would acquire agriculture land as little as possible, he said.

The prime minister is open to the idea, he added.

A special committee would be set up to spearhead the idea and the government would take up survey work and environmental studies, and study best examples of coal cities in other countries.

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Ecneec to decide MRP fate today

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The much-awaited machine-readable passport (MRP) and visa project will be placed at a meeting of Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecneec) today.

The five-year project will be implemented at a cost of Tk 350 crore although the last BNP-led alliance government attempted to undertake the project with an estimated cost of Tk 750 crore bypassing Ecneec in 2006.

Prime minister Sheikh Hasina will chair today's Ecneec meeting. The home ministry sent the project proposal to the planning ministry to fulfil an international obligation after the present Awami League-led government came to power.

The attempt of the previous BNP government had failed, as the purchase committee rejected the project due to excessive cost.

Planning ministry sources said the government would earn around Tk 9,000 crore in the next five years when the project will be implemented.

Bangladesh will have to introduce MRP to comply with the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) requirements

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'Luggage' issue of Khaleda raised in JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In the face of treasury bench lawmakers' demand, Finance Minister Abul Maal Abdul Muhith told the House yesterday that the government will look into whether an investigation of an alleged money laundering by former prime minister Khaleda Zia could be launched.

Initially the finance minister expressed reluctance to investigate the allegation that Khaleda as the prime minister at the very end of BNP-led four-party alliance government's tenure carried 400 pieces of luggage to Saudi Arabia to perform Umrah.

Muhith said the incident

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