

3RD ELECTION SINCE SUHARTO
Indonesia goes to polls today

AFP, Jakarta

Indonesians will cast their ballots today in only the third general election since the fall of the Suharto regime in 1998, which ushered in a new era of democratic reform.

The country's 171 million eligible voters are being asked to choose between thousands of candidates in a legislative vote that will help decide the field of contenders for presidential elections in July.

Billed as a celebration of the country's young democracy, a new study found it could also be the last rites for up to 30 small political parties expected to fail to reach the 2.5 percent vote threshold to enter parliament.

"We'll see the burial of many small parties," Denny Januar Ali of the Indonesian Survey Circle, a polling and research agency, said Tuesday.

He said only eight to 11 parties out of 38 competing for the 560-seat House of Representatives would survive to see another election.

Looking at the party posters and flags that have littered the streets of the world's third-largest democracy during the three-week campaign period it is hardly surprising they are struggling to win support.

One candidate depicts himself as Superman in a green cape and tights, another as James Bond. There are fighter pilots and helicopter pilots and a bearded mountain man alongside "Lord of the Rings" wizard Gandalf.

Although they have never met him, several candidates show themselves hand-in-hand with US President Barack Obama who attended school in Indonesia in the late 1960s and is hugely popular in the mainly Muslim archipelago.

Damin Sada, a Muslim candidate with the United Development Party in West Java, depicts himself as a peacemaker standing between Obama and Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden.

President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's Democratic Party is leading most opinion polls, well ahead of its more established rivals in the Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P) and Golkar.

A survey published by the Indonesian Survey Institute on Sunday gave the Democrats 26.6 percent support compared with 14.5 for the PDI-P of former president Megawati Sukarnoputri and 13.7 for Golkar.



PHOTO AFP

Supporters of Thailand's ousted prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra rally outside the Government House in Bangkok yesterday. More than 100,000 anti-government protesters rallied in Bangkok 8 in their biggest bid yet to topple premier Abhisit Vejjajiva, deepening Thailand's political crisis ahead of a key Asian summit.

US to step up drone attacks in Pakistan

THE DAWN, New York

United States intends to step up its use of drones to strike militants in Pakistan's tribal areas and might extend them to a different sanctuary deeper inside the country, the New York Times said Tuesday quoting US officials.

The administration officials told the newspaper the plan to intensify missile strikes underscored President Obama's goal to 'disrupt, dismantle and defeat al Qaeda in Pakistan and Afghanistan, as well as to strike at other militant groups allied with al Qaeda.

Officials are also proposing to broaden the missile strikes to Baluchistan, south of the tribal areas, unless Pakistan manages to reduce the incursion of militants there.

The Times said influential American lawmakers have voiced support for the administration's position.

Senator Carl Levin, a Michigan Democrat who heads the Armed Services Committee, acknowledged last week that 'the price is very heavy' when missile strikes mistakenly kill civilians, but he said the strikes were 'an extremely effective tool.'

The plans have met strong resistance from Pakistani officials and have also worried

some former American officials and some analysts, who say that strikes create greater risks of civilian casualties and could further destabilise the nuclear-armed nation, the newspaper said.

On Sunday, a senior Taliban leader vowed to unleash two suicide attacks a week like one on Saturday in Pakistan's capital, Islamabad, unless the Central Intelligence Agency stopped firing missiles at militants.

Pakistani officials have expressed concerns that the missile strikes from remotely piloted aircraft fuel more violence in the country, and some American officials say they are also concerned about some aspects of the drone strikes.

John Radsan, who worked as a CIA lawyer from 2002 to 2004, argued in a recent scholarly article he wrote with Richard W. Murphy, a fellow law professor, that the United States should follow the lead of the Israeli Supreme Court and require an investigation of 'targeted killings' by the CIA to control the practice.

While the notion of remote-control killing may seem chilling, military experts say the drones, which can transmit live video for nearly a day at a time, typically supply the weapons targeting officers with enough information to

avoid civilian casualties.

Marc Garlasco, a former military targeting official who now works for Human Rights Watch, the international advocacy group, said the drones had helped limit civilian casualties in Afghanistan and Iraq, where the Air Force uses them to attack people laying roadside bombs and to attack other insurgents.

But in trying to take advantage of what can be fleeting chances to kill top Taliban and Qaeda leaders in Pakistan, the CIA faces a much more difficult task, especially if it follows the targets into more populated areas.

'When you're operating under very short time frames, like the CIA is in Pakistan, you are exponentially increasing the risk of killing noncombatants,' Mr. Garlasco said.

In Pakistan, the extensive missile strikes have been limited to the tribal areas, and authorities say they have killed 9 of the top 20 Qaeda leaders. American officials say the missile strikes have forced some Taliban and Qaeda leaders to flee south toward Quetta, a city in the province of Balochistan, which abuts the parts of southern Afghanistan where recent fighting has been the fiercest.

FIVE KILLED IN SWAT VALLEY

Taliban advance beyond stronghold

AP, Peshawar

Police and tribesmen battled Taliban militants attempting to expand their stronghold in Pakistan's Swat Valley, leaving at least five people dead, authorities said yesterday.

Police said a group of Pakistani Taliban fighters crossed late Monday from Swat into Buner, a previously peaceful district on the Indus River just 60 miles (100 kilometers) northwest of the capital, Islamabad.

After the militants ignored appeals from community leaders to go back, armed tribesmen and police confronted them, sparking a battle that left three officers and two tribesmen dead, local police officer Zakir Khan said.

More than a dozen Taliban also were killed before the battle died down, Khan said.

He provided no evidence to back up the assertion or other details. He said community elders were still trying to persuade the Taliban to leave.

Taliban spokesmen could not be reached immediately for comment.

The provincial government agreed in February to impose Islamic law in Swat and surrounding areas to halt 18 months of terror and bloody

fighting between militants and security forces that killed hundreds of people.

But President Asif Ali Zardari has yet to sign an order introducing the new legal system, fueling speculation that Washington is pressing him to hold back and that the cease-fire between the militants and the army won't hold.

Visiting US envoy Richard Holbrooke said Tuesday that the violence, including the Taliban takeover of the Swat region, had persuaded Pakistani leaders of the need to fight back.

In the past, Pakistan has struck a series of short-lived peace deals with militants along the Afghan frontier that American officials say allowed the Taliban and al-Qaeda to regroup and focus on attacking other areas, including Afghanistan.

The government of North West Frontier Province argues that its peace effort in Swat, which lies outside the tribal belt along the Afghan frontier, addresses long-standing local demands for a speedier justice system. The bill before Zardari foresees a mild version of Islamic, or Sharia, law and would allow authorities and police to gradually reassert control over the valley, whose Alpine scenery once attracted

hordes of tourists.

But there have been signs of rising violence in several neighboring areas.

Criticism of the peace accord intensified in the past week after local television channels aired a video showing alleged Taliban militants flogging a screaming woman in public in Swat.

Rights groups seized on the undated video to warn that extremists would impose the kind of brutal justice favored by the former Taliban regime in Afghanistan. Militants in Swat have also beheaded political opponents after makeshift trials.

Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani said last week that the government remained committed to reconciliation in Swat but warned that it would restart military operations against militants there if its authority was challenged.

An opposition lawmaker from Swat warned Wednesday that the government lacked any clear strategy to bring peace to the embattled northwest.

'Neither are they fully implementing the Swat deal, nor do they want to scrap it and this confusion is leading the nation toward nowhere but trouble,' Amir Muqam said.



PHOTO AFP

Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) Prime Ministerial candidate L K Advani (R), Kamaladevi Advani (C) and MP Rajya Sabha Surendra Patel discuss at an election meeting in Gandhinagar yesterday prior to Advani filing his nomination for the upcoming elections. Indian voters are set to go to the polls in five phases across the country for general elections from April 16-May 13.

CROWDS BEGIN TO DISPERSE
Tamil protest in London dwindles

AFP, London

A demonstration outside London's parliament by Tamils urging Britain to intervene in Sri Lanka's armed conflict dwindled on its third day yesterday.

Around 100 campaigners were still protesting on Parliament Square by the middle of the day, down from a peak of around 3,000 on Monday evening and between 300 and 400 just hours earlier.

Five police vans and several officers watched over protesters, allowing people to freely move in and out of the square, in the shadow of the House of Commons.

Seven people have been arrested in the non-stop demonstration which began Monday and saw repeated scuffles with police on Tuesday, although the overwhelming majority have been peaceful for the protests.

The demonstrators want Sri Lanka's former colonial

ruler Britain to intervene with Colombo to protect the Tamil people, who they say are being targeted.

It is illegal under a law which prohibits demonstrations close to parliament without prior police permission.

Two men still out Wednesday said they had begun a hunger strike, and promised they would not relent until their call for an immediate ceasefire in Sri Lanka was met.

Other protesters held up signs reading 'Stop The Bloodshed, End Genocide Now' and 'Mr Gordon Brown, Demand Immediate Ceasefire in Sri Lanka' while a group chanted 'We Want Ceasefire!' as a drum was banged alongside them.

'Britain has the moral responsibility to fix its historical mistakes,' Samuel Edward, a 26-year-old protester, told AFP, referencing Britain's status as Sri Lanka's former colonial ruler.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
সদর দপ্তর, আনসার ও গ্রাম প্রতিরক্ষা বাহিনী
শিলগাঁও, ঢাকা
২৪/০৩/২০০৯ খ্রিঃ
স্মারক নং-আনসার/রেকর্ড/বাটা/১৬০০০৭(০০০০১)/২২৪, তারিখ: ১০/১২/১৪১৫ বঙ্গাব্দ

বিজ্ঞপ্তি

রেজিঃ নং-পি-১০২৬৪ এপিসি মোঃ আব্দুস ছামাদ (সাময়িক বরখাস্তকৃত), ১৫ আনসার ব্যাটালিয়ন, লংগু, রাংগামাটি-কালিহাতি টাংগাইল অবস্থানকালে (বর্তমানে ৩৩ আনসার ব্যাটালিয়ন, আনসার ও গ্রাম প্রতিরক্ষা বাহিনী, সদর দপ্তর, শিলগাঁও, ঢাকায় সংযুক্তির আদেশাবধি) তার বিরুদ্ধে আনসার আইন ১৯৯৫ এর আওতায় বিভাগীয় মামলা সংক্রান্ত।

অভিযোগ নামা (Charge Sheet)

যেহেতু আপনি এপিসি মোঃ আব্দুস ছামাদ এর বিরুদ্ধে বিভাগীয় মোকদ্দমার অভিযোগনামা ও অভিযোগ বিবরণী আপনার স্থায়ী ঠিকানায় রেজিঃ ডাকযোগে প্রেরণ করার পর আপনাকে স্থায়ী ঠিকানায় না পাওয়ায় ডাকপিয়ন উহা বিনা জারীতে ফেরত দেওয়ায় আপনার জ্ঞাতার্থে সংক্ষিপ্ত অভিযোগনামা পরিকায় বিজ্ঞপ্তি আকারে প্রকাশ করা হলো।

যেহেতু, আপনি আপনার সহকর্মী ল্যাস নায়েক মোঃ মোস্তাহান আলীকে প্রলুব্ধ করে তার ভাগ্নেকে আপনার শ্যালকের মাধ্যমে বিদেশ পাঠানোর আশ্বাস দিয়ে ১,৮৯,০০০/- (এক লক্ষ ঊনসত্ত্বই হাজার) টাকা গ্রহণ করেছেন এবং তাকে ভয়ভীতি দেখিয়ে উক্ত টাকা আশ্বাসই করেছেন।

যেহেতু, আপনি নৈমিত্তিক ছুটিতে থাকাকালীন ০৬/০৮/০৭খ্রিঃ তারিখে চাটখিল থানা পুলিশ কর্তৃক গ্রেফতার হয়ে জেল হাজতে আটক থাকার পর জামিন প্রাপ্ত হয়ে গত ১৪/০৯/০৭খ্রিঃ তারিখে কর্তব্যে যোগদান করেন এবং গত ১৭/০৯/০৭খ্রিঃ তারিখে আপনাকে সাময়িক বরখাস্ত করে ১৬ আনসার ব্যাটালিয়নে সংযুক্ত করা হয়। আপনি সংযুক্ত কর্মস্থলে যোগদান না করে অদ্যাবধি পলাতক রয়েছেন।

সেহেতু, আপনার বিরুদ্ধে ১৯৯৫ সালের ব্যাটালিয়ন আনসার আইনের ১৫(১) (আ) ও (ই) ধারা মোতাবেক শৃংখলা ভঙ্গ/অসদাচরণ এবং দুর্নীতির দায়ে অভিযুক্ত করা হলো।

উক্ত অভিযোগের প্রেক্ষিতে আপনাকে কেন চাকুরি হতে বরখাস্ত করা হবে না বা অন্য কোন প্রকার শাস্তি প্রদান করা হবে না তার লিখিত জবাব, জবাবের সমর্থনে কোন দাখিলিক বা মৌখিক সাক্ষ্য হাজির করতে চাইলে কিংবা বাস্তবিক সত্যনিত্যে অগ্রহী হলে তাও জবাবে উল্লেখসহ অত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের ১০ (দশ) কর্ম দিবসের মধ্যে নিম্নবাক্যকারী নিকট দাখিল করার নির্দেশ দেয় হল। অন্যথায় আপনার বিরুদ্ধে প্রাপ্ত অভিযোগের বিষয়ে কর্তৃপক্ষ আপনার অবর্তমানে আইনানুগ সিদ্ধান্ত গ্রহণে বাধ্য হবে।

উপ-মহাপরিচালক
সদর দপ্তর, আনসার ও গ্রাম প্রতিরক্ষা বাহিনী
শিলগাঁও, ঢাকা
জিডি-১৮৪৪

ACC says 'no'

FROM PAGE 1

Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, the chairman of the parliamentary committee, said they were yet to receive the ACC letter.

'Where was the question of independence when the commission worked with task forces. The commission is a government body. We have summoned them and they are bound to appear before the committee,' he said.

'If the anti-graft body does not appear before the committee, it will undermine parliament. Necessary steps will be taken if they do so,' said

Alamgir.

He said Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury, who recently stepped down as the ACC chief, has also been asked to attend the meeting as a witness to discuss the last two years' activities of the commission.

The ACC in its letter said, 'Breaking of protocol and legal norms of accountability shall undermine the very independence and authority of the commission eroding its efficiency and affectivity to achieve its objective mandated in the anti-corruption laws.'

'The summons served by

the chairman of parliamentary standing committee on public undertakings on the acting Anti-Corruption Commission chairman and commissioner asking them to appear before the committee is beyond their jurisdiction,' senior lawyer and counsel for the ACC Anisul Haque told The Daily Star yesterday.

The parliamentary committee sent the letter to the ACC a day after commissioner Habibur Rahman was made acting ACC chairman following the resignation of Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury on April 3.

The committee also sent copies of the letter to the cabinet secretary, the comptroller and auditor general of Bangladesh and the chairman of national board of revenue.

'Numerous recent derogatory uttering and revengeful threatening remarks of the chairman of your committee in and outside the parliament and in the media towards this commission unfortunately make us apprehensive of undue pressure on the commission connecting his conviction for corruption,' read the ACC letter.

'The parliamentary standing committee on public undertakings cannot do so. It is an attempt to embarrass the government and parliament,' Anisul Haque said.

'Summoning the commissioners before your committee for enquiring into the affairs of the commission appears to be wanting in bonafide and not in keeping with legal, administrative and other cannons of good order and rules of procedure,' the ACC letter read.

Under the ACC act the commission can take all decisions and is also independent in making all expenditures from the allotted budget under section 24 of the act, ACC sources said.

As per section 3, 10 (3), and 24 of the ACC act, the commission enjoys independence, self-governance and neutrality while the commissioners are of the status of Supreme Court judges.

'The commission is fulfilling its accountability to the president by submitting its yearly report under section 29 of the Act for placing before the parliament and it continuously submits proposals on prevention of corruption to the president in compliance with its duties as contemplated under section 17 of the Act,' the letter read.

Govt to follow trial

FROM PAGE 1

agencies. The people, who have been raising voices for the trial, including some prominent figures in the War Crimes Fact-finding Committee and Sector Commanders Forum might be in the team, the home ministry officials inform.

Meanwhile, an inter-ministerial committee will sit for its second meeting on war crimes trial today to take crucial decisions like appointment of a chief investigation officer (CIO) and public prosecutor (PP) and formation of tribunal.

The home ministry will deal with the first two issues and the law ministry with the third one.

Besides, the liberation war affairs ministry will assist the two ministries by providing necessary documents and evidence related to war crimes during the nine-month War of Liberation in Bangladesh in 1971.

Asked about the issues of the meeting, Home Secretary Abdus Sobhan Sikder said, 'We are going to discuss the process of trial at tomorrow's meeting.'

'The appointment of public prosecutor will also be decided at the meeting,' he told The Daily Star.

The first meeting took place on March 25 with Home Minister Sahara Khatun in the chair and ended inconclusive.

Meanwhile, the home ministry will take precautionary measures to avert any possible unrest or chaos in the country with the start of war

crimes trial. 'We are keeping constant vigilance so that no quarters can create any untoward incident,' said the home secretary, responding to a query.

The United Nations has offered Bangladesh assistance to help trial of the war criminals. The local office of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has also named four international experts with experience in war crime trials. Their profiles have been submitted to the law ministry.

The government has also taken initiatives to ask Pakistan and the US, which supported Pakistan during the Liberation War, to provide Bangladesh with particular war-related documents and evidence for the trial.

The requests are being made under the International Crimes (Tribunal) Act, 1973.

Pakistan in particular will be requested to send information regarding the Razakars [the collaborators of the erstwhile Pakistani occupation forces in Bangladesh], say the officials.

Earlier, an initiative to prosecute war criminals was called off after the 1975 bloody regime change following the assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and most of his family.

Some three millions civilians were killed by the erstwhile Pakistani occupation forces and their collaborators in 1971, while about 200,000 women were violated, and tens of thousands of homes were torched and plundered.

RAB Forces Headquarters
Civil Aviation Cargo Admin Building
Kurmitola, Dhaka

Invitation for Tender

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Home Affairs.								
2	Agency	Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) Forces.								
3	Procuring entity name	Director General, Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) Forces.								
4	Source of funds	GOB Revenue.								
5	Tender package no.	S(G)-02(C)/2008-2009.								
6	Tenders invitation Ref No. & date	RAB HQ/Admin(Supply)/508/1/Part-3/1910 date: 05/04/2009.								
7	Tender name	Tender for supply of uniform & uniform related items for RAB Forces.								
8	Procurement method	Open tender method (OTM).								
9	Eligibility of tenderers	Adequate experience in supply of uniform & uniform related items to any govt/semi-govt/autonomous organization or reputed agency with satisfactory performance.								
10	Time for completion of delivery	Within 60 days from the notification of contract award.								
11	Name and address of the office selling, receiving & opening the tender documents	RAB Forces Headquarters (Admin & Finance Wing), Civil Aviation Cargo Admin Building, Zia International Airport, Kurmitola, Dhaka.								
12	Last date and time for selling tender document	29-04-2009 at 17.00 hours.								
13	Last date and time for submission of tenders	30-04-2009 at 11:30 hours.								
14	Date and time for opening of tenders	30-04-2009 at 12:00 hours. (Tenderers or their authorized representatives may attend).								
15	Date, time & place of pre-tender meeting	Date: 19-04-2009 at 11.00 hours. Place: Conference Room, RAB Forces Headquarters, Civil Aviation Cargo Admin Building, Kurmitola, Dhaka.								
16	Brief description of items, price of tender schedule & tender security money are to be given below:									
Item No	Description of item	Unit of supply	Quantity of unit required	Price of tender schedule	Tender security money					
16.1	Traffic Torch Light (normal)	Piece	400	300/-	8,000/-					
16.2	Reflecting Vest	Piece	350	300/-	3,200/-					
13.3	Water Bottle with cover	Piece	1600	300/-	7,200/-					
13.4	Hand Gloves (white)	Pair	500	100/-	600/-					
17.	Special instructions									
i) Each of the above items shall be consider as a single lot. ii) Tenderers should allow to submit their tender for single or more of the above items. iii) Tenderers shall submit at least 03 (three) in numbers sample (according to approved sample) at the time of submitting tender documents. iv) Tenderers shall submit the laboratory test report from BSTI or any international reputed laboratory for the items no. 16.3 at the time of submitting tender document. v) Without assigning any reason the procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders.										
Aftab Uddin Ahmed Director (Admin and Finance) RAB Forces Headquarters Phone-8961107										

GD-1852