

Hawa Bhaban men come to the fore

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN

BNP mid- and junior-level leaders, who were criticised for their wrongdoings during the BNP-led four-party alliance regime, are now set to regain their positions in the party with the blessings of the party's influential factions.

Using the influence of Hawa Bhaban, now defunct office of the party chairperson, these leaders had emerged as the most powerful section in BNP when the party was in power between 2001 and 2006.

Many of them are even trying to get posts in the standing and central executive committees, which are likely

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BNP chief's power consolidated further

Changed constitution ensures Tarique's eventual leadership

SHAKHAWAT LITON and RAKIB HASNET SUMAN

The BNP chairman, once elected, cannot be removed anymore as the provision for such removal was deleted from the party's constitution in Tuesday's national council, which also brought some more changes to consolidate the party chief's authority.

In a surprise move, the BNP opted for abolishing the provision of removing the chairman.

This instrument of the BNP constitution has never been required to be practised.

The deleted provision would require a requisition meeting of the national council



cil convened on demand from at least two-thirds councillors and support of at least three-fourths of them in favour of the motion.

Removal of the chairperson will be the only aim of such council and the reason for removal must be specified, the provi-

sion maintained.

At the fifth national council of BNP on December 8, the provision was replaced by a new one on the duties, power and responsibilities of the newly created post of senior vice-chairman, according to a document containing proposals for amendments to the BNP charter.

The Daily Star obtained a copy of these proposals placed and approved at Tuesday's national council.

Asked about it, BNP Joint Secretary General Goyeshwar Chandra Roy claimed that a new provision was included in the party constitution regarding removal of "any" office bearer.

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CDM PROJECTS

Dhaka for fair regional share

PINAKI ROY from Copenhagen

Bangladesh demanded more balanced regional distribution of Clean Development Mechanism projects at a meeting yesterday on the sidelines of UN Climate Conference in Copenhagen.

Dr Asaduzzaman, a member of Bangladesh delegation, raised the issue and asked the COP president to explain measures taken by the CDM projects.

The CDM is an arrangement under the Kyoto Protocol allowing industrialised countries with a greenhouse gas reduction commitment to invest in ventures that reduce emissions in developing countries.

Meanwhile, two days ahead of the ministerial level talks on Sunday, the parties are yet to decide whether they will go for a new agreement or amend the Kyoto protocol.

The session was adjourned for the second time yesterday over the same issue.

The Conference Meeting of the Parties (CMP) was held at the Bella Centre just after a two-hour discussion, as Tuvalu again

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CLIMATE FUND

LDCs kept in wait

PINAKI ROY from Copenhagen

It still remains uncertain when the least developed countries (LDCs) will get the Adaptation Fund although these nations have been demanding it for years.

"The affected countries will definitely get the fund. But now the delegates are determining who will give the money and who will receive it," said Dr Atiq Rahman, member of the Bangladesh delegation and executive director of Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies.

Besides, the amount and the mechanism of raising the fund will also be figured out. A decision about the share will also be made later, he said.

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Some cops make bucks out of lanes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The strength of new traffic rules in Dhaka are being eroded by a section of traffic police who are accepting bribes from offending drivers.

Last Tuesday the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) introduced Tk 1,000 fines and three-month licence suspensions for those who ignore traffic signals or fail to abide by designated lanes on three of the city's major roads.

The rules are intended to ease congestion in the capital and early reports suggested that commuters were benefiting from a stricter enforcement of road regulations.

However, whilst the majority of intersections are being manned by police who are responsibly discharging their duties, others seem to be indifferent, and a minority are behaving corruptly.

At around 4:00pm yesterday at the intersection near

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An auto-rickshaw gets almost sandwiched between two larger vehicles on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue yesterday as the three-wheeler violates the 3-lane rules introduced on major streets of Dhaka.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Signal lights duration to get shorter

MUKHLESUR RAHMAN

The DMP proposed reducing the red light duration from 25 seconds to 15 seconds initially at intersections of three major thoroughfares in the capital to speed up vehicular movement.

The authority will also set up 43 bus bays across the city narrowing the footpaths to avert unnecessary congestion during picking up and drop off the bus passengers.

Joint Commissioner (traffic) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Md Shafiqur Rahman told The Daily Star, "In a meeting with Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) authorities at DMP headquarters on December 7, we initially decided to resynchronise traffic signal lights on three roads -- VIP road, Mirpur road (from Science Lab to Technical) and Mohakhali diversion to Tongi Bridge."

The meeting decided that within a week from December 8, the DCC would complete synchronising the signal lights, he added.

Deputy commissioner (DC) Awlad Hossain told The Daily Star that on average the signal lights halt vehicles for 25 seconds at the intersections. The meeting proposed to reduce the duration from 25 seconds to 15 seconds, he added.

For instance, he said, at Russel Square each signal halts vehicles for 25 seconds but the commuters using the intersections

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Malaysia-based firm fit for passport job

Concludes evaluation committee report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An evaluation committee selected Malaysia-based firm IRIS Corporation Berhad for introducing machine-readable passport (MRP) and machine-readable visa (MRV) in Bangladesh to meet an international deadline that expires on April 1.

The committee, comprising experts, officials of home ministry, Department of Immigration and Passport (DIP), the police

department and senior army officers recommended IRIS, the lowest bidder that fulfils tender requirements.

The committee, headed by Project Director Brig Gen Md Refayet Ullah, suggested that Flora Telecom Ltd, another responsive firm for the project, be given the job in case IRIS expresses inability.

IRIS quoted Tk 281.66 crore against Flora's Tk 340.88 crore. Flora is associated with the

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Obama defends war at Nobel Prize ceremony

AFP, Oslo

US President Barack Obama yesterday accepted the Nobel Peace Prize, uncomfortably acknowledging his role as a leader at war while insisting that conflict can be morally justified.

Obama said he received Nobel Peace Prize with "great humility". "Compared to some of the giants of history who have received this prize -- Schweitzer and King; Marshall

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EXTRA-JUDICIAL KILLINGS

HR watchdog wants independent probe

Govt to appoint 5 members to rev up HR commission

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) said yesterday it wants independent probe into the allegations of extra-judicial killings.

"As they [law enforcers] provide different versions on [killings in] encounters, we want

independent investigation. This is possible for us only when we have adequate staffs," NHRC Chairman Justice Amirul Kabir Chowdhury said responding to media queries on 'crossfire'.

He was talking to journalists after the inaugural session of a seminar in the city on "Protection and promotion of human rights in

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141 killed by law enforcers in 11 months

Says Odhikar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 141 people were killed allegedly by the law enforcement agencies in the last 11 months, says a report of Odhikar, a human rights organisation.

According to the report, 68 of the victims were killed by police, 39 by Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), 25 by Rab and police, three by army, two by

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Housing Fair

11-12 December 2009

Bangabandhu International Conference Centre, Dhaka

Windy Town (1st Floor)

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