

# Yemen vote ensures Saleh's exit

REUTERS, Aden/sanaa

Yemen ushered Ali Abdullah Saleh from power after 33 years yesterday, voting to endorse his deputy as president, with a mission to rescue the nation from poverty, chaos and the brink of civil war.

Vice President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi, the sole, consensus candidate, billed the vote as a way to move on after months of protests against Saleh's rule, but the president's sons and nephews still command key army units and security agencies.

"Elections are the only exit route from the crisis which has buffeted Yemen for the past year," Hadi, Saleh's long-time right-hand and former army general, said after casting his vote.

Five people were killed in violence in Yemen's south on Tuesday, where a secessionist movement is active, a reminder of the challenges Hadi will face in taming a nation where half of the population of 23 million owns a gun.

The vote will make Saleh, now in the United States for more treatment



PHOTO: AFP

**Ecstatic Tawakul Karman, the Nobel winner, after casting her ballot in Sanaa**

of burns suffered in an assassination attempt last June, the fourth Arab autocrat in a year to be removed from power after revolutions in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya.

At stake is an economy left in shambles, where 42 per cent live on less than \$2 per day and runaway infla-

tion is driving up food and fuel prices.

Long queues formed early in the morning outside polling stations in the capital Sanaa amid tight security, after an explosion ripped through a voting centre in the southern port city of Aden on the eve of the vote.

"We are now declaring the end of

the Ali Abdullah Saleh era and will build a new Yemen," Yemeni Nobel Peace Prize winner Tawakul Karman said as she waited to cast her ballot outside a university faculty in the capital Sanaa.

Voters dipped their thumbs in ink and stamped their print on a ballot paper bearing a picture of Hadi and a map of Yemen in the colors of the rainbow.

A high turnout was crucial to give Hadi the legitimacy he needs to carry out changes outlined in a U.S.-backed power transfer deal brokered by Yemen's Gulf neighbors, including the drafting of a new constitution, restructuring of armed forces and multi-party elections.

An official from the election security committee estimated a turnout of 80 per cent, although final results will not be known for several days.

The vote was backed by the United States and Yemen's rich neighbors led by Saudi Arabia, who alarmed at signs of al Qaeda exploiting the disorder wracking the country to strengthen its regional foothold sponsored the power transfer deal.

# US seeks base in Pak province eyeing Iran

ANI, Islamabad

The US is reportedly pushing Pakistan for permission to establish bases in Balochistan for intelligence operations against Iran, despite recent reports that bilateral relations between both countries have worsened yet again over a resolution introduced in the US House of Representatives seeking sovereignty for the fragile province.

"Like always, things are not what they look like, and how they unfold ... lies at the heart of all (this). The outburst in America for Balochistan is part of an ambition to set up intelligence bases close to the Iranian border," The Express Tribune quoted a Pakistani official, as saying.

Indicating that the Congressional hearing and proposed resolution were playing their part as pressure tactics, an official said: "They (Americans) want to use our soil against Iran, which we can never allow."

Three officials, two from the security agencies and one from diplomatic circles, confirmed that American diplomats and

military leaders have been requesting for permission to allow their agents to operate near the Iranian border in Balochistan.

The revelation came days after a bill was moved in the House of Representatives, blaming Pakistani security agencies for forceful disappearances and extra-judicial killings in Balochistan and calling for the liberation of the country's largest province.

It also follows the visit of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to Pakistan for a trilateral summit.

Meanwhile, Interior Minister Rehman Malik has once again blamed foreign elements for inciting violence in Balochistan and trying to separate it from Pakistan.

Malik said Washington needs to give further clarification on a resolution tabled in the US Congress on Balochistan.

Talking to media representatives in the capital yesterday, Malik said that situation in the province was much better as compared to the past.

A specific group was funding miscreants to kill people in the province, he said.

## Karzai invites Taliban for direct talks

AFP, Kabul

Afghan President Hamid Karzai yesterday invited the Taliban to direct talks with his government, while urging Pakistan to facilitate negotiation efforts towards ending Afghanistan's decade-long war.

"In order to realise the objectives of the peace process, I invite the leadership of the Taliban to engage in direct talks with the Afghan government," Karzai said in a statement issued by his office.

"I request our brotherly government of Pakistan to support and facilitate our direct negotiation efforts as part of the peace process," Karzai said.

The statement came after Karzai spoke by telephone to US President Barack Obama about Afghan-led reconciliation moves and a visit last week to Pakistan, where he said it was time to take action for peace.

## Amar Ekushey observed

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Tens of thousands of people from all walks of life crowded Shaheed Minar in the capital and elsewhere in the country singing the Ekushey anthem -- *amar bhaiyer rokte rangano Ekushey February, ami ki bhumite pari* -- and showered the hal-lowed monuments with flowers, mourning the martyrs of the 1952 Language Movement.

On February 21 that year, Pakistani police fired on the peaceful protesters, who had taken to the Dhaka streets demanding that Bangla be made one of the state languages of the then Pakistan.

The police brutality killed many people, mostly students, including Salam, Barkat, Rafiq, Jabbar and Shafiur.

The day has since been observed as Language Martyrs' Day. In November 1999, UNESCO declared it the International Mother Language Day.

President Zillur Rahman

and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina were the first to place wreaths at the Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka at 12:01am.

They offered a moment of silence, bowing their heads, to remember the sacrifices of those brave hearts.

A sea of people then started paying tributes to the language heroes.

At daybreak, they streamed towards the Central Shaheed Minar through every street on the Dhaka University campus leading to the monument, leaving hardly any room for traffic.

Imbued with the spirit of patriotism, many demanded introduction of Bangla at all levels and enforce correct use of Bangla. Others sought a quick completion of the war crimes trial.

Bangladesh missions abroad observed the day in a sombre mood.

Street paintings, festoons, banners and other forms of placards inscribed

with popular poems on the Language Movement were seen around the Central Shaheed Minar and on adjacent streets, adding to the solemnity of the occasion.

Some foreign citizens also placed wreaths at the Central Shaheed Minar.

The day was a public holiday. The national flag was hoisted at half-mast and black flags flew on government, autonomous and private offices.

State-run Bangladesh Television and Bangladesh Betar and private TV channels aired special programmes while BTV telecast the wreaths laying ceremony live from the Central Shaheed Minar.

Newspapers published special supplements highlighting the significance of the day.

From the Shaheed Minar, many went to the Bangla Academy, where the month-long Amar Ekushey Boi Mela, organised to commemorate the Amar Ekushey, is going on.

## Airline sues regulator

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requirements of Caab, although the provisional licence was extended thrice, according to Caab documents.

Rupashi Bangla was required to own at least two aircraft within the provisional period meeting required standards for getting the final permission to operate as a passenger-carrying airline.

During the period the company applied for technical clearance for 17 different types of aircraft, none of which got clearance because neither the company could provide all required original documents nor did the aircraft meet the required standards.

"Due to frequent change of aircraft for purchasing and placing of incomplete proposals, Rupashi Bangla caused loss of huge government work hours of Caab officials," said a top Caab official wishing anonymity.

On the other hand, Rupashi Bangla Managing Director Afzal Hossain said he filed the case because Caab Deputy Director Golam Sarwar had demanded Tk 10 lakh bribe in exchange for issuance of a no-objection certificate (NOC).

Afzal claimed that he did not get the clearance although his airline complied with all requirements.

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) is now

investigating the case being ordered by Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka with which Afzal lodged the complaint on July 31 last year.

The immediate past investigation officer (IO) of the case, ACC Deputy Assistant Director Nazim Uddin, summoned eight top and mid-ranking Caab officials including its chairman and the director of flight safety and regulations, to the commission in December last year, although the case is against only one official.

Some of the summoned officials alleged that Nazim did not tell them whether the other seven officials were being accused or being summoned as witnesses.

"Nazim gave us a questionnaire to answer. After giving the answers we asked for copies of what we wrote, but the IO refused to give copies," one of the summoned officials told The Daily Star wishing anonymity.

Nazim said he did everything following ACC rules and regulations.

Caab sources said when their top officials brought the matter to the notice of ACC top officials they rebuked Nazim and replaced him by ACC Deputy Director Benzir Ahmed as the IO. Contacted recently Benzir said he is now studying the case.

The case statement says that Golam Sarwar

assured Afzal of awarding an NOC for importing an aircraft from the Philippines in May 2010 if he was bribed.

It also claims Sarwar told Afzal that he would pocket Tk 5 lakh while the rest of the bribe would be given to his director to earn his approval. But Afzal refused to bribe, the case statement adds.

In December 2010, Rupashi Bangla again applied for an NOC for importing two aircraft from a Philippines-based airline.

Following the application, three Caab inspectors inspected the aircraft in May 2011, but the inspection results were not satisfactory. The inspectors were not even provided with the original copies of two key documents -- Certificate of Registration and Certificate of Airworthiness.

But on May 29, 2011, one of the aircraft that failed inspection landed at Chittagong Shah Amanat Airport without flight clearance, violating Bangladesh air space and Caab rules, an incident that irked all related government agencies.

After the incident Caab contacted the Philippines Civil Aviation and arranged for the unauthorised aircraft's return.

Days later the Directorate of Air Defence of Bangladesh Air Force wrote to Caab saying Rupashi Bangla should not

be allowed to operate flights.

Afzal, however, denied all allegations and claimed that despite signing aircraft purchase agreement with different companies he could not buy those as Caab intentionally delayed in giving him necessary clearances.

He also said although in the original case he accused only one of seeking bribe, in his statement to the ACC he named nine officials including the Caab chairman, and the director of flight safety and regulations, all of whom allegedly demanded bribe from him.

He also accused them of causing his financial loss due to forcible return of the aircraft to the Philippines.

Asked why he did not file a petition with a higher court against Caab for sending back the aircraft, he said he tried "but a lawyer demanded a huge amount of money". He also said as the next two days were government holidays, by the time he could file the petition, the aircraft would have already been sent back.

Rupashi Bangla was first awarded the provisional licence to operate flights after certification from the registrar of Joint Stock Companies and Firms that the company has a paid up capital of Tk 20 crore which is Caab's required amount for issuance of the licence.

## Cheats target mobile users

FROM PAGE 1

telephone sex.

These numbers usually start with +9609 or +4382 but they do not match any nation's international dialling code.

Some victims said when they returned a call, they were presented with sexually provocative conversations in Bangla from the other side. Others said they just heard noises.

The frauds also send text messages like "Call me baby at +9609....", or "We have an important message for you... Call +9609....", or "Your cheque is ready... Please call +9609... to collect your cheque".

When googled, it was found that these numbers were also used in making junk calls in other countries. According to some forum posts on the Internet, returning the calls resulted

in hefty phone bills.

Tanveer Mohammad, chief technology officer of Grameenphone, said telecom operators were not involved in international calls. He said the international gateways receive and deliver international calls.

The operators were talking to the regulator to solve the problem by blocking the numbers. He, however, said the callers frequently change their numbers.

Interestingly, a Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission official said the commission had received complaints from subscribers and had given the numbers to mobile operators to trace their origins.

Lt Col Md Zakir Hossain, director of the Engineering and Operations Division of BTRC, said his office was working on these junk calls.

An official of Grameenphone said the calls could have been made from neighbouring or South-East Asian countries over voice over internet protocol (VoIP) through using various numbers. When receivers return the calls they may face high charges. The initial call maker could receive a percentage of the charge, the official speculated.

The calls could have originated from Bangladesh too, he said.

Kazi Monirul Kabir, chief communication officer of Grameenphone, said subscribers need to be aware of these junk calls. He said a telecom operator's responsibility is to receive or deliver international calls to subscribers or end users. The rest is done by interconnection

exchanges or international gateways.

Gateways should be monitored, he said.

Mohiuddin Babar, vice-president of communication division of mobile phone operator Robi, said a lot of Robi subscribers have been receiving these types of calls and their office is concerned.

"We are already blocking such numbers and have informed the regulator of the matter. The BTRC also gave us a letter on the issue," he said.

Zakiul Islam, director legal and regulatory of operator Banglalink, said so far he had not heard anything about the issue.

When this correspondent talked to Citycell, the mobile phone operator said it had not received any such complaints.

## Hasina for making Bangla

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Mother Language Institute in the capital.

Hasina said the government is trying its best to make Bangla as one of the official languages at the United Nations, and she herself had already placed a proposal to this end before the UN General Assembly.

The premier said International Mother Language Day "calls us all to become world citizens by being respectful to everyone. All countries and people of all languages will benefit by bearing this spirit. And this will lead to unity in diversity."

This year the theme of the day is 'Mother tongue instruction and inclusive education'.

Hasina said the aim of her government is to build the Bengali nation as science-oriented and technology-efficient. "We have created scopes for extensive use of Bangla in all spheres of science... it is easier to impart

education and acquire knowledge in mother tongue."

As part of the efforts to build digital Bangladesh by 2021, Hasina said, the government has made the installation of full-fledged Bangla key pads in basic mobile handsets mandatory, beginning this month.

Besides, initiatives have been taken to formulate the second country coded internet domain dotbangla, apart from dotbd (.bd), she said.

The premier also mentioned that all those countries, which have advanced in the innovation of information technologies, used their mother languages in their applications.

Hasina said her government has taken an initiative to use Bengali in information technology. "Even the rural people can now take the e-services."

She recalled the contributions of language martyrs

Salam, Barkat, Rafiq, Jabbar and others. She also reminisced about the role of her father Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as he had been imprisoned several times while leading the language movement.

The premier said the movement had opened up the path for the preservation and flourishing of Bengali language, culture, non-communal philosophy of life, democratic ideology, and human values.

"These expectations were fulfilled through the Liberation War in 1971, but that did not last long. After the assassination of Bangabandhu with most of his family members in 1975, a process was initiated to return the country to its pre-liberation state," she observed.

"We have restored the spirit of the Liberation War through the (15th) amendment to the constitution,"

she said.

Bangladesh first placed formal proposal to Unesco in September 1999 to name February 21 as International Mother Language Day. Unesco then recognised the day as International Mother Language Day on November 17, 1999.

Thus, the February 21 has become the day for protecting the rights of languages of different ethnic people of the world, she said.

The prime minister also said the government has taken steps to turn the International Mother Language Institute into an international organisation.

Prof Emeritus Dr Rafiqul Islam presented a paper titled 'Ekusher Rin' at the ceremony.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid, Zinnat Intiaz Ali, director general of International Mother Language Institute, among others, were present.

**Bangladesh Ordnance Factories (BOF)**  
Gazipur Cantonment, Gazipur-1703  
Phone: 9204613/4026 Fax: 880-2-9204633  
Web: www.bof.gov.bd, E-mail: procurement\_bof@yahoo.com

### Tender Notice

1. Sealed tenders in prescribed form are invited from bonafide manufacturers/local agents/importers/suppliers for supply of the following items:

Sl. No.	Nomenclature & qty	Last date of selling tender form	Date of dropping & opening tender	Currency	Price of tender form	Tender No. & date
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)
1	Centrifugal Water Pump With Stater & Relay	12 March 2012 1300 hrs	13 March 2012 dropping 1200 hrs opening 1205 hrs	Local	Tk 300/- (non-refundable)	4401/172/6813 dt. 16-02-2012
2	Frok Lift Truck	19 March 2012 1300 hrs	20 March 2012 dropping 1200 hrs opening 1205 hrs	Local	Tk 500/- (non-refundable)	4401/171/6813 dt. 29-01-2012
3	Gas Chlorination Plant	19 March 2012 1300 hrs	20 March 2012 dropping 1200 hrs opening 1205 hrs	Local	Tk 500/- (non-refundable)	4401/179/6813 dt. 16-02-2012
4	Tools for Ammunition (28 items)	19 March 2012 1300 hrs	20 March 2012 dropping 1200 hrs opening 1205 hrs	Local	Tk 2000/- (non-refundable)	4401/169/4856 dt. 19-01-2012
5	Tools for BD-08 Rifle (49 items)	19 March 2012 1300 hrs	20 March 2012 dropping 1200 hrs opening 1205 hrs	Local	Tk 5000/- (non-refundable)	4401/174/4856 dt. 07-02-2012
6	Tools for BD-08 Rifle (47 items)	19 March 2012 1300 hrs	20 March 2012 Dropping 1200 hrs Opening 1205 hrs	Local	Tk 5000/- (non-refundable)	4401/175/4856 dt. 09-02-2012

2. Supplier enlisted at BOF, DGDP and any other defence organisation who have security clearance will only be eligible to participate in the above tenders.

3. Tender forms with detail specifications and terms & conditions will be available in the auditorium of BOF on all working days between 9:00am to 1:00pm.

4. Commandant, BOF reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without any reason thereof.

**Deputy Director Material**  
For Commandant

GD-792