

Now electricity

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Bangladesh is expected to import 250 MW of power from NTPC through an electrical grid interconnection point in Bheramara, Kushtia in October.

According to yesterday's proposal of the power division, 250 MW of electricity will be purchased from the PTC India Ltd in three years.

The Indian private power company will get Tk 4,169 crore as the selling price of the power, it said.

For importing electricity from open market in India, Bangladesh floated tender in April 2010, but did not get any response. Later, PTC India Ltd was selected through a limited tender process.

A consultant from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) had assisted in evaluating the tender bid.

In February 2012, a PPA was signed for importing 250 MW power from NTPC.

In the deal, no tariff was fixed for the purchase of the electricity rather an indicative tariff was settled, which was Tk 3.40 for per MW power.

The real value for the purchase of per unit power will be settled at different times as per the notification of Indian Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC), according to the PPA.

According to the proposal of the power division, the power generation source has to be identified before fixing the tariff.

As the source has not been identified yet, settling the tariff under the agreement is not possible now.

The proposal also said according to the Power Market Report of the CERC published in 2011-12, the tariff for per unit electricity to Bangladesh from Farakka Super Terminal Power Station was fixed at Tk 5.81.

As per the tariff rate of West Bengal Electricity Regulatory Commission, the price of per unit electricity has been fixed at Tk 5 to Tk 5.93.

When the distribution company, owned by the Indian government, floated tender to purchase electricity, the quoted tariff was fixed at Tk 6.41 to Tk 12.82.

HC kept in wait

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of relatives of those who went missing in the incident.

July 18 was the deadline for all the submissions.

But none of the government and private offices responded to the directives as the court sat on July 21 instead of July 18 due to a hartal.

The judges expressed their serious discontent over the failures and gave seven more days to comply with their order.

Yesterday, the law officer, Deputy Attorney General Bishowjit Roy, told the court that the government officials concerned had not communicated with him about any report. "The court may ask them to appear in person with an explanation."

However, the judges did not accept his proposal and asked the IGP to submit the DNA test report on September 17, the next date of hearing in

the case.

"We are giving him [IGP] one last chance to submit the DNA test report," said the presiding judge of the bench, Justice Quazi Reza-Ul Hoque. "We will take stern action if the order of the court is not complied with by the next date."

Also yesterday, BGMEA's counsel Abdul Mannan told the court he had received a report on compensation from the BGMEA on Saturday. Even he said he did not get any order from the court about submitting the report.

In response, the presiding judge said the court had come to know from the media that BGMEA had sent him the report a month ago.

Justice Altaf Hossain told the lawyer, "You were present in the court on July 21, and you know our order. If you follow such practice, we will refer you to the Bangladesh Bar Council for action against

you."

Justice Quazi Reza-Ul Hoque then asked Mannan to submit the compensation report by 2:00pm on the day. Mannan submitted it accordingly.

Earlier on July 21, BGMEA President Atiul Islam told The Daily Star that his office had sent the compensation report to the lawyer around a month ago.

BGMEA in its report said out of a total of 141 injured workers, 90 sustaining grievous injuries were compensated and each of them got Tk 1 lakh. The rest, who suffered minor injuries, got medical treatment and medicine but no cash compensation.

The Daily Star has obtained a copy of the report.

Out of the 112 dead, 99 have been identified till now and the process of identifying the remaining 13 is going on through DNA tests, accord-

ing to the report. Tk 7 lakh in compensation was paid to the heirs/dependants of each of the 99 victims.

Yesterday morning, Tazreen Fashions owner Delwar Hossain appeared before the HC bench as per its July 21 order.

The bench later in the day ordered him to appear before it on September 17 and also asked the anthropologists' lawyer, barrister Jyotirmoy Barua, to submit a statement on the missing, or those who got insufficient or no compensation by that day.

Earlier, Jyotirmoy Barua submitted two separate reports to the HC, saying some 62 persons were still missing and their family members have got insufficient or no compensation.

The lawyer, however, told The Daily Star that he was trying to know whether all the 62 were on the BGMEA list.

Adulterated

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Formalin was found also in 75 percent tomatoes, 20 percent cucumbers, 60 percent brinjals, 100 percent vermicelli and 89 percent noodles, said Paba Secretary Abdus Sobhan.

He said children and pregnant mothers are being mostly affected by formalin-tainted food items.

Paba conducted the tests between June 13 and July 26.

The environmental group noted that the situation is so deplorable that the government must pass the food safety law in the next parliament session and strengthen drives against food adulteration.

Paba Chairman Abu Nasar Khan termed food adulteration a silent killer and noted that the current drives against adulteration are very inadequate.

Contacted, SM Abu Sayed, assistant director of Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institute (BSTI), said it had conducted 17 mobile courts during this month. It filed 46 cases against businessmen and fined them around Tk 44 lakh on charges of adulteration.

"As we are not provided

with sufficient magistrates, we cannot conduct the drives on a large scale," he said, adding that at least five mobile courts are necessary to cover the city on a daily basis.

According to Dr Md Habibullah Talukdar Raskin, associate professor of National Institute of Cancer Research and Hospital, formalin in food takes a long-term toll on the human digestive system and organs like kidney and liver.

The cabinet on July 1 approved in principle the draft of the Food Safety Act 2013, with a provision of up to 14 years' imprisonment for food adulterators.

The draft law also sought to form a unified authority — Bangladesh Food Safety Authority — to fight food adulteration and address other food-related concerns. It also proposed forming as many food courts as deemed necessary to try adulterators.

The existing system of food quality control involves 15 ministries, 10 of them directly taking part in inspection and the enforcement of the existing food safety law. This gives them the scope of shifting the responsibility to each other.

Country rain-struck

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remained under water.

Office goers had a hard time reaching their destinations as the rain intensified traffic jams, inundating many thoroughfares, including those at Kakrail, Bijoy Sarani, Mouchak, Shantinagar, Malibagh, Dhanmondi-27, Asad Gate, Mohammadpur, Kaptan Bazar and Gandaria.

Commuters had to wait long hours in the queue for transport. Many rickshaw-pullers and CNG-run auto-rickshaw drivers were seen charging passengers double or even more than that.

Open manholes and pot-holes on the streets added to people's sufferings, with vehicles and pedestrians stumbling on them and slipping in the water in many areas.

Trade in the first half of the day suffered a setback, as shop-

pers could not go to shopping malls ahead of the Eid.

Mahbubur Rahman, an employee of a private organisation, told The Daily Star that the road from behind Bangabhaban to Ittefaq intersection went under one and a half feet of water, forcing all vehicles to move very slowly and causing severe congestions up to Sayedabad bus terminal.

"I left the bus near Sayedabad rail gate because it was moving at a snail's pace and walked to Gulistan defying the rain," he said.

A CNG-run vehicle broke down near Shahjahanpur crossing amid the rainwater, said Mamun Hossain, a resident of the area.

Meanwhile, a woman and her daughter were killed in a landslide triggered by heavy rainfall early yesterday while

over 100 villages and sandbanks in Patuakhali were flooded due to rain coupled with tidal surges.

Activities in Mongla maritime port were interrupted for a few hours. Loading and unloading of cargo at the outer anchorage of Chittagong port was also disrupted, said port officials.

Ferry services on the Mawa-Kawrakandi route were disrupted due to heavy rain, creating tailbacks on either side.

The highest rainfall was recorded in Teknaf at 214mm, he said. The downpour that began on Friday due to a monsoon wind in the Bay might continue for the next two days, said the Met official.

Meanwhile, the maritime ports of Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Mongla have been advised to hoist local cautionary signal number 3.

BNP vows

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Press Club.

Dhaka city unit of the BNP organised the rally protesting a recent remark of Sajeeb Wazed Joy, son of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, that Tarique wanted to kill Hasina.

In the programme, BNP acting secretary general Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir criticised the Election Commission for its move to amend the electoral code of conduct without consulting the political parties.

Pointing to Joy's recent remark about the outcome of the coming elections, BNP standing committee member

Moudud Ahmed said Joy's remark was the reflection of his mother's [Sheikh Hasina] plan of holding a "blue print election".

In 2006, the AL rejected KM Hasan as chief of the caretaker government. The party chief Sheikh Hasina asked its activists to protest against the then BNP-led four-party alliance government with the logi-boitha to realise their demand.

At least 12 people were killed and around 2,000 wounded, many of them bullet-hit, as the BNP- and AL-led groups clashed across the country on October 28.

5 banks swindled

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bills based on mere papers to create opportunity for misappropriating money through different banks."

Documents showed that no export items were shipped to the ports of delivery of the goods in the USA, Britain and other countries, said the report.

The ACC probe found some bank documents that had no addresses or names of the so-called foreign buyers, except for some fake signatures without date.

The ACC enquiry team led by its Deputy Director Syed Iqbal Hossain will soon submit its report to the commission seeking its permission to file a first information report [FIR] against the culprits, said ACC sources.

Apart from the Group's managing director, its chairman and directors, and around 50 officials of the five banks might be accused in the FIR, they said.

The controversial Group siphoned off Tk 627.27 crore from three branches of Janata Bank, Tk 303.01 crore from Prime Bank, Tk 163.79 crore from Jamuna Bank, Tk 102 crore from Shahjalal Bank and Tk 59.15 crore

from Premier Bank, said the sources.

All the bank branches that disbursed the money are located in the capital.

Bismillah Group along with its several sister concerns, including Shaharish Composite Factory Ltd, Alpha Composite Towel Ltd, Shaharish KT Ltd, Hindul Wali Ltd and Bismillah Towel Ltd pulled off the loan scam, said the sources.

Solaiman, the key person of the Group, made his wife Nawrin Hasib its chairman, and appointed his mother-in-law Abida Hasib, father Shafiqul Anwar Chowdhury, sister Nahida Anwar Khan and brother-in-law Khandaker Mohammad Moin Uddin as its directors.

The ACC probe found that the chairman and directors hardly attended office, and Solaiman had faked their signatures on documents, said an ACC official, preferring anonymity.

During interrogation, Solaiman's sister Nahida told the ACC that she didn't know that she had been made a director of the Group, said the official.

The five-member ACC team launched an enquiry into the scam on February 26.

DCC elections

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with the High Court seeking its directives on holding the DCC elections without further delay.

EC officials have repeatedly been saying they cannot hold the DCC polls until the LGD completes the demarcation.

"We will hold the elections. But the LGD will have to create the ground to that end," said Election Commissioner Shah Nawaz on several occasions.

New areas were included in DCC South and the process of incorporating new areas in DCC North is underway, the LGD secretary said.

"If any attempt is made to hold the elections by excluding those areas, it may lead to legal complications. The residents of these areas might go to court challenging the polls. So, it is not possible to hold the elections without solving these issues," the secretary claimed.

Former election commissioner M Sakhawat Hossain, however, believes it is not very difficult to remove the barriers. The commission might be facing political pressure from the government not to hold the elections, he predicts.

Local government expert Dr Tofail Ahmed said the excuses the EC shows are not a major problem. The major factor for holding the DCC elections is political will, he

added.

Political analysts say the government is not interested in holding the polls after its debacle in five city corporation elections in June and July. Policymakers of the ruling Awami League fear the candidates they support may not win in the DCC polls if they are held now, analysts observe.

The government had earlier thwarted an EC move for almost similar reasons. The previous EC led by ATM Shamsul Huda moved to hold the polls on May 31, 2010. But the government did not let it do that.

Earlier on November 4, 2011, the government split the DCC into two and appointed two administrators to run them.

The present EC in April 2012 announced that the polls would be held on May 24, 2012. But a writ petition challenging the polls schedule led to a postponement of the elections.

The High Court on May 13, 2013 cleared the way for the elections to be held by vacating the stay it had earlier imposed on the polls.

The EC again moved to hold the polls, but the LGD has created new grounds leading to a further delay in the holding of the polls.

The LGD on May 30 issued a gazette notification including Sultanganj in ward No. 57

of DCC South.

The EC rejected the demarcation showing technical faults and sent it back to the LGD asking it to demarcate the area afresh.

Besides, a process of bringing some areas from Sector 11-14 of Uttara under the city corporation remains underway. The Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk) has already handed over these areas to the city corporation authority.

Residents of Niketon, Rupnagar, Turag, Dakkhinkhan, Bataara, Pallabi, Banasree and some other areas have appealed to the LGD to be included in DCC North.

WRIT PETITIONS
Two writ petitions were filed yesterday in connection with holding the DCC polls as soon as possible.

The HC, after concluding hearings on the petitions, fixed today for passing orders.

The SC lawyers urged the HC to direct the government and the EC to inform it as to what steps they had taken for holding the polls.

Barrister Golam Nabi and advocate Mostafa Ahmed filed a petition in favour of polls to Dhaka North City Corporation. Advocate Md Alamgir Hossain and advocate Mirza Al Mahmood filed another writ for elections to Dhaka South City Corporation.

EC chooses

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candidatures for gross violation of electoral laws, s/he would be declared elected uncontested.

This drew criticism from the main opposition BNP which alleged that the EC would then cancel candidacies with the ill motive of declaring certain candidates elected uncontested.

But the EC did not drop this proposal and sent the set of proposals to the law ministry on Thursday.

And yesterday, it came up with the decision of not retaining the sweeping authority that surprised many.

Defending this decision, Hafiz said their "new proposal" drew criticism. But the existing provision also contradicts fundamental rights of people.

As per the existing provision, he said, fresh

election will be held if only one candidate remains in the electoral race in a constituency after cancellation of a candidature or candidatures for gross violation of electoral laws.

"This provision means someone is punished for his offences. But the other one is also punished despite his innocence," he said, citing the loophole in the existing authority to scrap the candidacy.

The EC was given the sweeping authority before the ninth parliamentary election in December 2008 to empower it.

At that time, some political parties vehemently opposed this authority fearing its abuse. However, it was not applied in that polls.

Earlier, the EC was given this authority before the 2001 parlia-

mentary polls during the then caretaker government tenure. But it was abolished in face of severe opposition from political parties.

Contacted, former election commissioner Brig Gen (ret'd) M Sakhawat Hussein expressed surprise at the EC decision.

"Will the Election Commission be more empowered or weaker after the scrapping of this authority," he questioned.

Sakhawat was in the past EC headed by ATM Shamsul Huda that gave the EC this authority.

In reply to a question, he said this contributed largely to bringing discipline in the polls. The candidates used to abide by the electoral code of conduct due to the EC's authority to cancel candidacies, he added.

Spelling Bee

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Shykh Seraj and Champs21.com -- organizers of the competition -- CEO Russell T Ahmed.

The president said that there was no alternative to learning English language while competing on the global stage. He also said that the Spelling Bee competition would help encourage students to improve their language skills. He hoped the winners would be future leaders of the country and thanked the organisers for taking the timely initiative.

The Spelling Bee competi-

tion was originally started in the United States in 1926, and every US president traditionally has met almost every spelling bee champion, during their term, to encourage the young generation.

The organisers have arranged for the winners from Bangladesh to take a trip to Washington DC, US -- the city where the competition originated from.

All three winners felt very elated to have met the president and for him to have appreciated their hard work and dedication.

This year's competition

started in January through an online registration process. More than 2 lakh students of class VI - X from all over the country participated in it. The number of contestants was reduced to 1,900 who later participated in on-stage elimination rounds held in seven divisional cities. Only 72 performers were chosen to proceed to the TV round. The champion speller emerged from the last of them in front of a capacity audience attending the programme held in the Bangladesh International Conference Centre earlier this month.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Social Welfare
Jatiyo Protibandhi Unnayan Foundation (JPUF)
2/A, Section -14, Mirpur
Dhaka -1206, Bangladesh

IFB No. J.P.U.F: 49/2012-1066 Date: 23-07-2013

Corrigendum Notice

Invitation for Bids (IFB) for 'Procurement of Mobile Rehabilitation Bus and Therapy Equipments & Ancillary Goods (Mobile Van) vide Memo No. J.P.U.F: 49/2012-834: dated 12-June-2013 (Tender Package No-GD-8.1) was published in "The Daily Ittefaq" on 16-June-2013, "The Daily Star" on 15-June-2013, CPTU website on 19-June-2013 and UNDB online 19-June-2013 respectively which has been amended as follows. The other contents for IFB will remain unchanged.

Sl No.	Conditions to be Amended	Previous provision	Amended provision
4.	Tender last selling date and time	Date: 28-July-2013 Time: at 5.00 pm Local Time.	Date: 18-August-2013 Time: at 5.00pm Local Time.
5.	Tender closing date and time	-	Date: 19 August-2013 Time: at 11.00am Local Time.
	Tender opening date and time	Date: 31-July-2013 Time: at 11.30 am Local Time.	Date: 19 August-2013 Time: at 11.30am Local Time.

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GD-2800

Govt asked to act

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gets punished," Rustom said.

He added some extortionists in connivance with police snatched goods from trucks, vans and covered vans. A good number of extortionist groups are active on the highway.

Mugging and extortion have gone up ahead of Eid, Rustom said.

A top garment exporter shared the horrifying details of some extortion and hijacking incidents.

"Last year, two of my garment-laden trucks were hijacked from the Dhaka-Chittagong highway in a six-month gap. In one of the incidents, the extortionists killed the driver," he told The Daily Star, requesting anonymity.

After intervention from the law enforcement agen-

cies, the exporter got back half of the stolen goods, but by that time he had missed the shipment.

"Now I have to pay Tk 10,000 at a spot in Comilla and Tk 12,000 at a spot in Chittagong in bribe every month. Otherwise, I face problems in bringing goods from Dhaka to Chittagong," he said.

Sabur Khan, president of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said it was very unfortunate that nobody was coming forward to stop extortion.

He said the government was reluctant to take any bold steps against the extortionists as it did not want to displease any quarter ahead of the national elections.

Sabur blamed the police department for the rise in extortion.

"It is impossible for any

group to extort without shelter from the police.

"It has now become a custom. As a result, transport owners charge extra for carrying goods and commodities -- a cost that ultimately passes onto the customers," he told The Daily Star.

He said the Chamber had gone through a number of highway extortion incidents every month. "We duly contact the police commissioners. They assure us that the incidents will not repeat. But it does not stop. We are tired of complaining."

So far this month, 28 extortion cases have been filed with different police stations in the capital, according to Abul Yusuf, assistant commissioner (media wing) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

On an average, about 30

extortion cases are filed every month, he said, adding: "People usually don't report extortion incidents in fear of retribution, as many extortionists have political or other influential links."

People file extortion cases only when they know the extortionists, he added.

Another police source said most people filed general diaries after extortion.

Hassan Mahmood Khandker, inspector general of police, declined to comment on the issue, saying he could not speak on the matter without seeing the court order.

The court order came a day after FBCCI Vice-president Helal Uddin resigned from two committees -- one formed by the government and the other by the apex body to monitor prices of basic commodi-

ties -- after their efforts failed mainly due to alleged extortion by highway police.

Man falls

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as a sweeper in the building for nearly seven years, was talking to another person while heading towards the elevator, said Shahjahan Saju, director of the real state.

Residents of the building alleged they had faced several problems with that elevator, including occasional closure of its doors for a time longer than usual.

They had filed complaints with the relevant authorities on several occasions in the last one year but in vain.

The real estate's director denied the allegations.