

It's official

FROM PAGE 1
probe. The commission did not follow up on it.
'CHAPTER CLOSED'
In the last three days since Tuesday's voting, the EC secretariat has received about 50 complaints over vote rigging and driving out of polling agents of different candidates by ruling AL men. Of them, 32 complaints were lodged on the polling day alone. The commission also received more than 50 complaints during the campaign about violation of the electoral code of conduct.

All the complaints have been recorded, but the commission did not look into any of these, EC sources said. As of yesterday, the CEC and the four other election commissioners did not even watch the footage of voting captured by 53 laptop cameras the commission used at various centres in the three city corporations, added the sources.

Two election commissioners -- Shah Nawaz and Zabeed Ali -- refused to talk to journalists yesterday when approached through their office staffers.

Former election commissioner Sakhawat said the results publication in gazette meant the EC did not take the complaints into consideration. "It means this chapter [the election process] is closed," he told The Daily Star.

The election process begins with the announcement of schedule and ends with the publication of the results in gazette.

Asked about the complaints, EC Secretary Sirazul Islam suggested that complainants go to the election tribunal for reparation.

"If any contesting candidate has any grievance, he can challenge the election by filing a petition with the election tribunal," he said.

About the video footage, he said he was yet to get it.

THE TRIBUNALS

Under the law, the EC will constitute two tribunals -- one in Dhaka and another in Chittagong -- for disposal of polls-related petitions. The one-member tribunal will be formed with a joint district judge.

The commission will also set up three Appellate Tribunals -- one each for the three city corporations -- for filing appeals against the electoral tribunal's verdict.

A district judge or an additional district magistrate or an additional deputy commissioner will be the sole member of these tribunals.

A contesting candidate may file a petition with the electoral tribunal challenging the election within 30 days of the gazette notification.

In the petition, a candidate may seek cancellation of the election of a winning candidate or cancellation of the entire election.

THE GAZETTE

Around 7:30pm yesterday, the EC sent the results to the BG press for publishing those in gazette.

The notification is expected to be available in a day or two.

Results of three wards -- 8, 34 and 53 -- of Dhaka South City Corporation remain suspended as voting of three polling stations there was postponed due to irregularities and violence.

So for now, the gazette will bear the names of three mayors, 131 general councillors and 45 councillors from as many reserved wards for women.



US Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Wendy Sherman calls on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Gono Bhaban yesterday. PHOTO: PID

US-Bangla partnership dialogue begins

UNB, Dhaka

The United States yesterday sought tips from Dhaka to deal with global terrorism and extremism, saying many countries could replicate Bangladesh's experience in addressing the issue.

US Under Secretary of States for Political Affairs Wendy Sherman said this during a meeting with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Gono Bhaban.

PM's ICT Adviser Sajeeb Wazed Joy and US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Nisha Desai Biswal were also present.

Briefing reporters after the meeting, PM's Press Secretary AKM Shameem Chowdhuri said the US highly appreciated Bangladesh's success in containing terrorism and militancy as well as economic and social development under Hasina's dynamic and able leadership.

"We treat the terrorists as terrorists as they don't have any border and religion," the PM said, adding that Bangladesh is committed not to allow its land for terrorist activities against any country.

Hasina laid emphasis on stopping illegal arms trafficking across the world to control global terrorism.

About the alleged irregularities in the just concluded three city corporation polls in Dhaka and Chittagong, Sherman said some irregularities in polls also happened in the US.

But, the government always tries to perform better next time, she said, and hoped that Bangladesh would continue its efforts to improve the electoral system.

Hasina said the military rulers after 1975 had manipulated the country's electoral system and now Bangladesh had come out largely from that situation.

Hasina also said the BNP had boycotted the city polls to make the election controversial.

Sherman termed the BNP's decision of boycotting the election very unfortunate.

The US under secretary hailed the transformation and development of Bangladesh's ready-made garment sector after Rana Plaza collapse in 2013.

The PM urged the US under secretary to raise the price of the RMG items to further increase the wages of workers.

Pointing out to the recent devastating earthquake in Nepal, Sherman underlined the importance of regional preparedness for disaster manage-

ment, particularly tackling earthquake. The PM informed the US officials that the international community could use the Bangladesh airports for handling of the relief materials bound to Nepal.

Sherman highly appreciated Bangladesh's success in achieving many MDG targets, including the MDG4.

Foreign Secretary M Shahidul Haque, and US Ambassador in Bangladesh Marcia Stephens Bloom Bernicat, among others, were present.

Bangladesh and the US yesterday began a two-day partnership dialogue to advance the robust and growing bilateral relationship and provide it a strategic direction, our diplomatic correspondent adds.

"This year, we've broadened the discussion to include an emphasis on the environment, health and infectious diseases, and the blue [maritime] economy," US Ambassador to Bangladesh Marcia Bernicat tweeted soon after the dialogue began.

"A tune-up for our 2 countries as we continue to refine our strategic engagement," she tweeted.

Wendy Sherman and Nisha Desai Biswal, who arrived in Dhaka yesterday, will attend the plenary session today.

Sherman leads the US delegation while Foreign Secretary Shahidul Haque the home side.

Diplomatic sources told The Daily Star that the two sides would discuss the full range of bilateral activities, including development and governance, trade and investment, and security cooperation.

They said the crucial dialogue was taking place at a time when the US, UN, UK, EU, Australia and Canada have expressed their disappointment over the April 28 city corporation elections in Dhaka and Chittagong, which was marred by electoral irregularities and violence.

According to a media note of the US State Department, "She [Sherman] plans to raise issues related to the political situation with the government and other interlocutors."

The two top US diplomats will also meet top political leaders, senior government officials and civil society members during their stay in Dhaka, said sources.

There will be a joint press conference this morning on the outcome of the dialogue.

Australia, Canada worried at polls irregularities

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Expressing concern about the reports of electoral irregularities and violence, Australia and Canada have called on all parties to conduct themselves within peaceful, lawful and democratic bounds.

"The people of Bangladesh deserve to be able to live their lives in a climate of peace, respect for human rights, and the rule of law," high commissioners of the two countries to Bangladesh said in a joint statement yesterday.

Australia and Canada saw the elections as an important opportunity to build confidence and strengthen democratic process in Bangladesh following a significant period of conflict between the government and its opponents, the statement said.

Australian High Commissioner Greg Wilcock and Canadian High Commissioner Benoit-Pierre Laramée expressed their concern over the reports of anomalies and violence during Dhaka and Chittagong city corporation polls on April 28.

They have called on the Election Commission and all responsible authorities to swiftly and impartially investigate the reports of irregularities and violence, and to ensure that individuals found to have broken the law are held to account.

The envoys also said Australia and Canada value their close and long-standing relationships with Bangladesh.

Attackers

FROM PAGE 20

They were the first convictions for the attack.

Malala was seriously wounded and airlifted to Britain for treatment, where she now lives. Two other schoolgirls were wounded.

Since then, Malala has become a symbol of defiance in the fight against militants operating in ethnic Pashtun areas in northwest Pakistan. She won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014.

A security official said none of the four or five men who carried out the attack on Malala was among the 10 men sentenced yesterday.

"But certainly they had a role in the planning and execution of the assassination attempt on Malala," said a police official in Swat who declined to be identified as he was not authorised to speak to the media.

Police believe the gunman who shot Malala escaped across the border into Afghanistan.

Several people, including Pakistani Taliban leader Fazlullah, are wanted in connection with the attack on Malala.

Fazlullah, a fiery preacher from Swat, is also believed to be hiding out in eastern Afghanistan.

Malala is unable to return to her homeland because of Taliban threats to kill her and her family members.

'Nobody cares

FROM PAGE 1

"Most workers still toil more than 12 hours a day. They don't have identity cards. They don't get fair wages, pension and housing and health benefits. Nobody cares about them, unless there is an international pressure," he observed.

Against this backdrop, Bangladesh observes the International Workers' Day, also known as May Day, today through different programmes organised by the government, labour rights organisations and workers' platforms. The day is a government holiday.

"But workers' rights are still less respected in Bangladesh than in the US in 1886," said Syed Sultan, referring to the 1886 Haymarket Massacre in Chicago which acted as a watershed event in improving rights of the workers across the world, including the achievement of an eight-hour working day.

Like last year, the May Day in Bangladesh this year comes just a week after the anniversary of the tragic Rana Plaza collapse that killed at least 1,135 workers and injured about 2,000 on April 24, 2013.

The heart-wrenching incident is a glaring example of failures of all stakeholders in ensuring workers' safety. The government agencies did not enforce building laws, factory owners did not pay heed to safety concerns and international buyers did not bother much about the working conditions in the factories manufacturing products for them.

The country has progressed a lot in improving workplace safety since the collapse, as the government and private sector entrepreneurs have taken a lot of positive initiatives, according to the International Labour Organisation.

But two days before the second anniversary of Rana Plaza collapse, US-based Human Rights Watch said while changes to some labour laws since the incident, including provisions easing the union registration process, have facilitated registration of new unions, still fewer than 10 percent of garment factories in Bangladesh have unions.

At Rana Plaza, factory managers compelled reluctant workers to enter the building despite major cracks in the complex's walls. At the Tazreen factory, where a fire killed at least 112 workers on November 24, 2012, managers refused to let workers escape even after the fire alarms went off. None of the factories involved had a union to represent workers to help them to push back against the managers' deadly demands, said the HRW.

3 cops hurt

FROM PAGE 20

drowning their shutters.

As the followers of Elias tried to resist the attackers, chases and counter chases took place between the two groups till 2:30pm.

Law enforcers fired at least 20 shots in the air to quell the disturbance. The troublemakers also fired at least 15 shots, leaving the three cops injured, said Babul Chandra Banik, officer-in-charge of Baizid Police Station.

Police were preparing a case in this connection last night.

In the Rana Plaza case, the families of the deceased and the survivors have yet to be fully compensated. Moreover, justice to the victims remains elusive as police have not yet submitted charge sheets against the government officials culpable for the tragedy.

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of police completed its investigation in two criminal cases, filed along with nine more following the incident, about six months ago. It found four officials of the labour ministry and two of the public administration ministry along with 38 others responsible for the incident, CID sources said.

However, the CID could not submit the charge sheets as it did not get the approval from the labour and the public administration ministries to press charges against their officials.

About the refusal to give the permission, Labour Secretary Mikail Shipar said the four officials in question had not violated any provision of the labour law that existed back then.

The law did not permit the ministry officials to inspect mills and factories, he said.

It was only through an amendment to the labour law in 2013 that the officials were given the authority to inspect mills and factories, Mikail said.

However, Israfil Alam, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on the labour ministry, said he was sceptical that the victims would get their due justice as the people whose negligence led to the collapse were very powerful.

"There are loopholes in the legal system," the ruling party lawmaker said at a programme in the capital's Brac Inn last month.

Owl that loves

FROM PAGE 20

on people who happen to be walking by, for no apparent reason!

Apparently, a fence or a tree just isn't good enough for the beautiful European eagle owl, weighing around six pounds. It only lands on people's heads, staying perched for about a minute before flying off in search of its next target.

The residents of Noordeinde aren't bothered by the owl one bit. In fact, they're quite delighted with all the attention that their town is receiving, thanks to the wild bird. "I've seen photographers and birders from around the country, from The Hague to Spijkenisse, they come from everywhere to see the eagle owl," a cheerful resident said. "Our village is finally on the map!"

Forty-eight-year-old Dutch photographer, Menno Shaefer, who visited the town just to see the owl, was flummoxed by its bizarre behaviour. "I had heard a lot about the owl and decided to visit the site to see it in action for myself," he said. "It was a very funny thing to watch, however, I'm just as confused as anyone as to why it does this."

Menno, who clicked several photographs of the eccentric owl, said: "When I show people these photographs they like them very much, they are as amused as I was. Whilst photographing the owl, it did try to land on my head once. However, as soon as I lifted my camera to get a shot, the owl flew onto my neighbour standing by my side."

Bangladesh 8th

FROM PAGE 1

brightened the Tigers chances of playing the ICC Champions Trophy 2017, came as surprise to everybody, including Bangladesh's ODI skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, as ICC had stated on a media release dated April 15: "Bangladesh knows that it cannot move up the table irrespective of the result, but a 3-0 whitewash (against Pakistan) in its favour would see it move to 81 points."

"Really!" a surprised Mashrafe said when he heard the news that Bangladesh had claimed the number eighth rankings.

"What we knew before the series was that there would be no changes to the rankings even if we won the series 3-0. Anyway, if we can continue our good and positive cricket, we will receive more good news like this in the coming days. Now we have to focus on the next home series' against India, South Africa and Australia, and target staying within the top eight spots to qualify for the 2019 World Cup. This is an important first step," said Mashrafe.

The ICC however explained the reasons behind the sudden changes in the rankings.

"An annual update was carried out to ensure the table continues to reflect results from the last three years. As such, results from 2011-12 have been dropped while the results from 2013-14 have been reduced to a weighting of 50 percent."

World Cup winners Australia have doubled their lead over second-ranked India from six to 12 points following the annual update, while the West Indies, Bangladesh and Pakistan are now locked in a tight struggle for the remaining two slots in the ICC Champions Trophy 2017, whose cut-off date is September 30 this year.

The top seven sides in the world, plus hosts England, will compete at the 50-over tournament. Meanwhile, the top eight sides will also compete in the 2019 ICC World Cup to be held in England.

Currently, West Indies and Bangladesh are locked on 88 points in seventh and eighth place, with Pakistan just a point behind. West Indies currently have no ODIs scheduled between now and September 30, leaving them potentially vulnerable to Pakistan, who have eight matches to come -- three at home to Zimbabwe and five in Sri Lanka -- while Bangladesh are scheduled to play three ODIs against India in June, followed by three ODIs against South Africa in July.

New Zealand's run to the final of the World Cup sees them rise to third in the table, while England's miserable tournament has sunk them to sixth place. South Africa are in fourth and Sri Lanka in fifth position.



MARIE STOPES BANGLADESH

Marie Stopes Bangladesh, a leading NGO affiliated with Marie Stopes International (MSI), UK engaged in providing high quality sexual & reproductive health services, developing and implementing effective reproductive health programmes especially for the poor and vulnerable, is looking for a dynamic and passionate candidate for the position of

DIRECTOR - PROGRAM SUPPORT

This senior position will provide strategic and charismatic leadership to Marie Stopes Bangladesh's program support team and will report to the Country Director. The incumbent will ensure development of innovative social business/projects at national and international level. The incumbent will also lead Communication & Marketing activities and innovation in programme implementation. S/he will play a key role in achieving MSB's vision through a holistic approach including learning, capacity building & advocacy. Being a senior management team member, s/he will also provide strategic inputs for the effective functioning and sustainability of the organization.

If you are passionate about making a difference in society, please download the Application Form (<http://www.mariestopes-bd.org/apply-job>) and send your application to the General Manager - Human Resources, Marie Stopes Bangladesh, House # 6/A, Block-F, Lalmatia Housing Estate, Dhaka 1207. Or email it to: hr@mariestopesbd.org by May 16, 2015

Key Requirements:

- Masters or equivalent degree in Public Health, Management, Medicine or any other relevant discipline.
- Minimum 12 years experience in reputed international or national organizations -- minimum 5 years at a senior management level.
- Proven track record in leading diversified and dynamic health sector programs that deliver transformational change in a social business context.
- Proven ability to build, manage and motivate large, highly capable teams and to promote a high performance culture.
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- A visionary and influential communicator with excellent writing skills in English and Bangla.

Report to: Country Director
Job Profile: Senior Management Position
Work Station: Marie Stopes Head Office, Dhaka
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This senior position will provide strategic and charismatic leadership to Marie Stopes Bangladesh's clinical service department and will report to the Country Director. The incumbent will ensure that the quality of health services is maintained at all times, drive productivity and deliver results. The incumbent will also be responsible for delivery of projects, providing technical guidance and maintaining stakeholder relationships. S/he will play a key role in achieving MSB's vision through maintaining a high quality sustainable services delivery network. Being a senior management team member, s/he will provide strategic inputs for the effective functioning and sustainability of the organization.

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- Comprehensive understanding of international and national quality standards & building quality assurance systems.
- Ability to build and maintain a good rapport with GoB, Donors, NGO partners and other stakeholders to remain updated about current issues.
- Proven ability to build, manage and motivate large, highly capable teams and to promote a high performance culture.
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- Ability to identify and adopt best practices
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