METROPOLITAN/NEWS

The Daily Star

three-month leave, Mahfuz said he will complete the tasks Aziz could

Before being appointed as an

election commissioner on January

16 this year, Mahfuz was not very

Mahfuz's name cropped up in

he media when his brother-in-law

Zafrul Hasan Penny was arrested at his Mohammadpur residence on

October 27, 2002. Upon informa-

tion obtained from Penny, an army

team recovered three firearms and

46 rounds of ammunition from

Penny, who was the senior vice-

president of BNP unit of ward-42 at

that time. stands accused in an

arms case filed with Mohammadpur

Police Station in connection with

the arms recovery under the

Justice Mahfuz was appointed

as a High Court (HC) judge during

the BNP rule in 1992. He retired in

2000. Later, he served as the chair-

man of the Administrative Appellate

He was appointed as an election

commissioner along with SM

ent bid to win CEC MA Aziz the

majority in the EC as Aziz was the

only person in favour of preparing a

Aziz decided unilaterally to

prepare a fresh voter list on August

6 last year, ignoring opposition from

the then two election commission-

ers--M Munsef Ali and AK

The HC on January 4 directed

the EC to revise the existing voter

list. Following the judgment, CEC

Operation Clean Heart of 2002.

Aziz's work

FROM PAGE 1

not complete

well known.

Mahfuz's house.

Tribunal.

resh voter list.

Mohammad Ali

COLLEGE OF LEATHER TECHNOLOGY Teachers not paid for 17 months

MAMUN AL MOSTOFA

Academic activities of Bangladesh College of Leather Technology (BCLT), the country's lone institution producing technologists for the leather sector, virtually came to a halt as most of its teachers and staffs are observing work abstention demanding payment of salary arrears

The teachers and staffs started an indefinite work abstention on November 7 as they have not been

paid for the last 17 months Sources said most teachers and staffs were recruited under BCLT Modernisation and Reconstitution Project launched in July 1997, Atotal of 28 teachers are now teaching the core subjects -- leather technology, footwear technology and leather products technology. And the number of staffs appointed under the project is 60.

Nine of the teachers have already left the institution and went abroad

Only a few teachers and staffs who came from the Department of Technical Education on deputation are receiving their salary regularly

Work together

President/Ccief Adviser to

Caretaker Government lajuddin

towards holding the forthcoming

all would have to work together

He made the call when a nine-

member delegation of the Council

for Interfaith Harmony Bangladesh

met him at Bangabhaban, at a time

when various developments are

taking place concerning the general

will also have to be maintained,'

lajuddin said during the discussion

President for taking the charge of

Chief Adviser and steps for resolv-

the government so that "none can

secretary Shah Abdul Hannan led

the delegation. Secretary General

of the organisation Maulana Abul

take the law into their own hands".

"Country's peace and discipline

The delegation thanked the

They also sought intervention of

Council Chairman and former

for fair polls

CA urges all

Ahmed yesterday said

elections in a fair way.

about electoral matters.

ing the political impasse.

UNB, Dhaka

election.

as they are under revenue sector, sources said.

manpower for the country's fourth These teachers and staffs have

not joined the work abstention programme but have sympathy with our demands," said Dr Md Abdul Mottalib, academic in-charge of the college

The 28 teachers and 60 staffs are deprived of their salary as they were not brought under the revenue sector after the tenure of the project ended in July 2005.

According to a Statutory Regulatory Order issued by the aovernment in 2005, the employees working under the projects launched after June 30, 1997 would not be automatically shifted to the revenue sector.

Considering the importance of the contribution of such institutions to the booming leather industry, which had a growth rate of 23 percent in 2004-05 fiscal, the government decided to set up leather technology departments in four public universities but did not give proper attention to the BCLT issue.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT.

fair and credible election.'

City Mayor and Chittagong

Divisional Coordinator of AL-led 14-

party combine ABM Mohiuddin

Chowdhury called upon Awami

League President Sheikh Hasina to

announce 'Bangabhaban Siege

Programme' to press home their 11-

point demand which aims at 'a free,

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC)

MA Aziz followed the suit. But these

aren't enough to ensure a free and

fair election. Please, immediately

declare a siege programme to the

Bangabhaban," he urged Sheikh

Hasina adding if it is necessary the

leaders and activists of 14-party

from Chittagong will be heading

towards Dhaka with 1,000 trucks to

make the siege programme a suc-

rally during the countrywide block-

ade in AK Khan Gate area at

Pahartali yesterday. The combine

leaders Ataur Rahman Khan Kaiser,

Mosharraf Hossain and

Akhtaruzzaman Chowdhury Babu

The Mayor was addressing a

"Justice KM Hasan is gone and

Chittagong

The teachers said the government should take up the issue on priority basis as it produces skilled

siege programme'

Mohiuddin urges Hasina

largest export-oriented industry. We have sent letters to the education ministry, establishment ministry and finance ministry apprising them of our condition, but they did not take any action to redress our grievances," said Dr Mottalib. "Finally, we have resorted to indefinite

work abstention to press our demands.' Students of the college said the deadlock over payment would add to the session jam in the institution, which is already facing a session

jam of two and a half years. Principal Dr Khan Rezaul Karim said the process of bringing the teachers under the revenue sector is underway. But he could not tell how long it would take to complete the

process. When contacted, Additional Secretary to the education ministry Abdul Matin Chowdhury said the government is sincere about meeting the demands of the teachers, but it will take some time to bring them under the revenue sector

thin presence of activists and sup-

porters. BNP Joint Secretary

General and former minister

ers addressed the rallies

the four-party were present.



tion of 2005 under National University (NU) scheduled to be held today has been postponed due to some unavoidable circumstances Fresh date for the examination

will be notified shortly. The schedule for other LLB

examinations will remain unchanged.

Abeda Khatun

a social worker

and mother of

Farhana Reza,

executive

director of

Narikantha

Foundation,

Obituary



passed away on Wednesday at city's Monwara Hospital at the age of 65, says a press release.

She left behind her two sons and four daughters to mourn her death. Abeda was buried on Nawab Ali Shah Mazar premises at Khala Para in Narsingdi.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held on the Mazar premises after Juma prayers today.

Death anniversary



Jheelpaar Yateemkhana after Juma

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to attend the mild and pray for salvation of the departed soul.

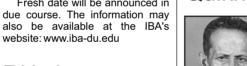
Ashfia Nigar Reema



Eastern Rokeva Tower, Apt 1/1501 (opposite to Maghbazar Kazi Office) at 4:00pm today, says a press release.

Ashfia, daughter of Principal Hamida Ali and Mohammad Ali passed away on November 22.

Qulkhwani





Students seeking admission to the government medical colleges stage a demonstration in front of the High Court in the city yesterday protesting alleged question leakage and demanding cancellation of the results.

for the leak of question paper.

staged demonstrations in front of

country

not met.

MBBS ADMISSION TEST Zakaria on January 16 in an appar-Cancellation of results demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A number of students, who had appeared for MBBS Admission Test on November 17, have demanded cancellation of the result published on Tuesday last. At a press conference at the

National Press Club yesterday, they alleged that the guestion paper of the admission test was leaked out. The students also urged the

Dhaka Medical College and the National Press Club alleging that authorities concerned to stop admission process and hold fresh the question paper was leaked out.

They also faxed a copy of the admission test for the greater interest of medical education in the leaked question paper to The Daily Star office

They demanded exemplary They mentioned that the leaked punishment to persons responsible question paper was found at a coaching centre in Chittagong.

The students said they would The authorities concerned have however denied the allegation seek legal help if their demands are saving that it was a rumor. Earlier on Wednesday, they also "We are very strict in maintaining

Aziz remained absent from his office for a few days as the two the secrecy of the question paper. election commissioners were in said Prof Khandaker Safavetullah favour of implementing the HC director of Medical Education judament. Board.

Under the circumstances, the government in a hurried move appointed Mahfuz and Zakaria as election commissioners.

From the very first day in office. Justice Mahfuz had openly sided with CEC Aziz and termed the HC directive "unlawful" and "beyond its iurisdiction"

"It is not a High Court directive. It is its certain observations. It is absolutely [self-] contradictory and beyond its jurisdiction," Mahfuz had told the press.

"If the High Court had issued a rule and if that rule became absolute, then it could be called a directive," he argued, adding that only then it would become mandatory for the EC to comply with it. "Since the judgment is not lawful, the question of compliance does not arise," he

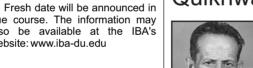
Mahfuz's remarks, however, were proved wrong when the Appellate Division upheld the HC udgment.

After the appointments of Mahfuz and Zakaria, Aziz con-

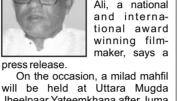


test postponed

The BBA admission test of the Institute of Business Administration (IBA) University of Dhaka scheduled to be held today has been postponed due to unavoidable



qulkhwani.



pravers today.

Qulkhwani of

Bazlur Rahman,

former deputy

director of

Bangladesh

house at 1

Khanpur in the city after Asr prayers

Alhaj Mizanur Rahman Bachchu,

Bazlur Rahman, elder brother of

Relatives and well-wishers have

been requested to attend the

in the city after Asr prayers today,

Dr Asadur Rahman passed away

Relatives, friends and admirers

Qulkhwani of

Md Hasib UI

due to a cardiac arrest and brain

have been requested to attend the

haemorrhage on November 20.

today, says a press release.

FROM PAGE 1

Khaleda Zia said, "(for a party) to win the election, it doesn't matter who is in the caretaker government or in the Election Commission". They (AL) did not get anything

and they brought out victory processions only to indulge themselves," she told the press while replying to a question from a reporter.

When a reporter asked if she was worried that the election might not be held on time, she hoped for the EC's success on holding a timely election and said, "The Election Commission is working to hold the election. They had already completed all tasks earlier as they are aware that the election must be held

within 90 days". Asked whether the chief election commissioner going on a leave is constitutional, Khaleda replied, 'There had been previous instances of taking such leave".

On price hike of essentials, she pointed her finger at the media. "Price of essentials did not increase at all. Only journalists and newspased the price increase oers wi

their blockade programme as the

chief election commissioner went on a leave". "Withdraw the blockade and

come to the election process," she advised the 14-party leaders. The BNP chief urged the care-

taker government to announce the election schedule immediately. BNP would launch its election campaign after the announcement of election schedule, she told a reporter.

"We wanted to uphold the spirit of the constitution and we succeeded. Now we hope chief adviser and the council of advisers will be more active to hold the election". Khaleda said.

The former premier also criticised the advisers to the caretaker government. "Some advisers could not maintain their oath. Its not their job to hold briefings on trivial matters"

When asked if she thought the creating anarchy and keeping increasing of retirement age limit people hostage have failed ". for the Supreme Court judges was wrong, Khaleda Zia said, "It was a requested the people to give their cision. The proposal cam

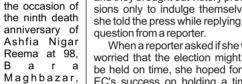
Khaleda welcomes lajuddin's solution

election because they are not capable of winning the election". Reading out from the written statement, the former prime minister said the 14-party alliance placed their 11-point demand only to put pressure on (the caretaker government). Their demands. including the ouster all the election commissioners, are impossible to

implement as per constitution. She thanked the chief adviser and the council of advisers for successfully working out and executing a resolution to solve the problems under the framework of the constitution.

said. "This is a victory for peace loving people -- those who stand up for rule of law and rise against terror and anarchy. This is the victory of constitutional politics." Khaleda said. "Those who tried to destroy the constitutional rule by

vened an EC meeting on January 19 and with their support decided to appeal against the HC judgment. Aziz kept continuing the task for preparing the fresh voter list and consequently published a draft electoral roll on May 3 listing 9.13 crore voters. The staggering number of voters triggered enormous controversy. The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court later rejected the EC appeal on May 23 and upheld the HC judgment. The draft of the fresh voter list prepared at a cost of Tk 42 crore was cancelled.



eyes posthumously

Kalam Azad was also present.

Bari donates

Abdul Bari Chowdhury, hailed from Kalihati in Tangail, donated his eyes posthumously vesterday, says a press release.

He passed away yesterday at Dhaka Medical College Hospital at the age of 75.

On hearing the news of his death, a group counselor of Sandhani National Eye Donation Society (SNEDS) persuaded his nephew Md Shamimul Huq Talukdar to donate his uncle's eyes for the

sake of blind people. Later, Bari's family was convinced

and decided to donate his eyes

also addressed the rally. Rejecting the president/chief adviser's address to the nation, Mohiuddin Chowdhury said that CEC MA Aziz's decision to go on

cess.

leave was in fact an arranged drama and an act of a farce "The departure of KM Hasan and

MA Aziz is an initial victory of the people of Bangladesh, but that's not the end of the ultimate objective of the on-going movement." he further said

14-party combine also held rallies at Nimtala in Chittagong port and Barik Building Intersection in Agrabad and Saraipara in Pahartali areas during the blockade Meanwhile, BNP-led four party

alliance held rallies at Olonkar Intersection, Bohaddarhat Crossing and Kazir Dewri Intersection with a

RU classes, exams deferred until Nov 28

UNB, Dhaka

circumstances

website: www.iba-du.edu

RU CORRESPONDENT

Rajshahi University (RU) authorities senior vice-president of Araihazar vesterday suspended all academic Thana Awami League, died of a activities till November 28 fearing cardiac arrest at Shaheed Suharawardi Hospital on Tuesday at intensified political unrest on the the age of 72 campus.

A RU press release said that Vice Chancellor Prof Altaf Hossain took the decision by applying his executive power

However, RU offices and the functions for the admission tests for the first year honours courses for the session 2006-2007 will be functioning as usual



says a press release.

qulkhwani

Justice Mahfuz makes himself acting CEC

FROM PAGE 1

meeting at 11:00am to authorise himself as the acting CEC.

Sources said no EC Secretariat officials, except the EC secretary knew anything about the meeting presided over by Mahfuz. The meeting was not convened

officially following the procedure, they said.

Election Commissioner SM Zakaria proposed the name of Justice Mahfuz being the senior most in the EC to act as the CEC while Election Commissioner Mahmud Hasan Mansur seconded the proposal, meeting sources said.

Upon receiving the information from the media yesterday afternoon, a number of advisers to the caretaker government expressed their surprise as they did not know anything about the development.

Talking to The Daily Star, former CEC Abu Hena said the CEC, being the chairman of the EC, is authorised to convene EC meetings. But in a normal situation, election commissioners can convene a meeting in absence of the CEC to carry out EC activities. but the prevailing situation is not normal. he said.

"In such an extraordinary situation, the president will decide who will act as the CEC or the president may ask the commissioners to sit in a meeting to decide who will discharge as the acting CEC," Abu Hena said, describing the present situation as very complicated.

Asked to comment on the present situation following Aziz's going

on leave without authorising any member to act as the CEC, former CEC Justice Abdur Rouf referred to article 118(5) of the constitution.

"Subject to the provision of any law made by Parliament, the conditions of service of Election Commissioners shall be such as the President may, by order, determine," says the constitution.

Referring to the High Court (HC) udgment on voter list on January 4 this year, a senior official of the EC Secretariat said the court also referred to the jurisdiction of the CEC to convene the meeting of the

EC. The HC said the EC is a composite body and it must function institutionally and not individually. The CEC should immediately call a meeting of the commission and the was correct. But now it is an unusual commission should decide and take all appropriate steps to implement ing. the decision, the judgment said.

At that time, CEC Aziz, who had been absent from the office for 11 days since the delivery of the judgment, did not convene any meeting for the next 15 days to implement the HC judgment to update the voter

The then two election commissioners M Munsef Ali and AK Mohammad Ali repeatedly tried to communicate with Aziz for holding a meeting, but they could not hold any EC meeting despite being the maiority in the EC.

But the scene is different this time. The three election commissioners--Mahfuzur Rahman, SM

Zakaria and Mahmud Hasan Mansur--on Wednesday claimed that they did not know why the CEC was absent from the office that day.

However, after holding the sudden meeting yesterday, Justice Mahfuz said, "Hearing the president's address, we came to know that the CEC took leave of absence.

"In the absence of the CEC, the other election commissioners can sit together and decide who will act

communicate with the EC secretary.

cannot be run without its head.

Mahfuz said.

Defending his move, he said he

as the CEC," he added.

When his attention was drawn to the fact that the two former CECs convened EC meetings before going on leave and authorised an election commissioner to act as the CEC, Mahfuz said, "Their procedure

situation. So, I convened the meetaway due to a cardiac arrest on November 21 at Mirpur Heart Asked how he came to know that Foundation Hospital at the age of 70. the CEC took leave from Wednesday since the president did not mention it in his address, after Juma prayers today. Mahfuz suggested the reporters to

Ambia Khatun

convened the meeting since the EC Oulkhwani of Ambia Khatun, wife of Md Ishaq, former general manager of Bangladesh Bank, will be held at "Chief Election Commissioner Uttara (House no 39, Road- 7, MA Aziz did not convene any meet-Sector-3) after Juma prayers today, ing of the commission before going says a press release. on leave. And now he cannot con-

Ambia passed away due to a vene the meeting as he is on leave," cardiac arrest at her Uttara residence on November 18 at the age of 65.

lland vvate but people were fine. Rather, we Transport increased salaries for employees Authority, will be held at his (civil servants)"

She ridiculed the Awami League-led 14-party's claim on victory and questioned, "If they think they achieved victory, so why are they still observing the blockade programme"?

Demanding the withdrawal of blockade, Khaleda Zia said, "It's not logical anymore to continue

increase retirement age limits for other public servants". On Liberal Democratic Party leaders, Khaleda said, "BNP will not be a loser due to their resigna-

tion from the party. They took shelter at others places (parties) as they knew they would not get nominations (from BNP) in the next

verdict through their votes as they from the Chief Justice. We did not did in the last general election. do this to fulfil any objective.

The BNP chairperson

BNP secretary general Abdul Rather, we are also thinking to Mannan Bhuiyan and Standing Committee members of the party Saifur Rahman, Khandaker Delowar Hossain, Chowdhury Tanveer Ahmed Siddique, Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, Mahbub Uddin Ahmed and Moudud Ahmad were also present

over the meeting while General

Secretary of Netrakona Press Club

Mahbubul Kibria Halim spoke to

demned the repression of journal-

ists and demanded punishment for

the attackers. They also

demanded punishment for the

criminals who attacked Niamul

Kabir Sazal. Mymensingh corre-

spondent of Prothom Alo, Babul

Hossain, Mymensingh correspon-

dent of Dainik Janakantha and

Golam Mostafa, Mymensingh

correspondent of Dainik

Samakaal. Criminals had beat

them up recently in Mymensingh

Khulna Union of Journalists

(KUJ) yesterday condemned the

attack on Bilu, our staff correspon-

and General Secretary Sarwar

the arrest of the culprits and exem-

attack on a journalist on his duty is

enough to prove that freedom of

the press was never secured

during the BNP-Jamaat regime

Alhajj Liaquat Ali and General

Secretary AK Hiru also issued a

similar statement. They prayed for

Press Club yesterday noon pro-

testing the assault on The Daily

Star journalist Hasibur Rahman

A meeting was held at Kurigram

President of Khulna Press Club

and it is still not secure.

quick recovery of Bilu.

dent in Khulna reports.

town.

fair trial

The speakers at the rally con-

the rally among others.

at the press conference.

Bogra journos demand arrest of attackers

protested the gruesome attack on Bilu by holding rallies and processions in their districts yesterday. The journalists of Bogra also

alliance to refrain from spreading hatred of journalists at public rallies that provoke violence. Bogra Press Club in a meeting

attack on Bilu by a team of journal-Convenor of Bogra Press Club

Mozammel Hossain Lalu presided over the meeting where district BNP President and Daily Bogra Editor Rejaul Karim Badsha, Editor of The Daily Bangladesh, also former Awami League lawmaker, Aman Ullah Khan also spoke among others.

On Wednesday, unidentified criminals mercilessly beat up Hasibur Rahman Bilu and damaged his motorcycle allegedly for reporting against the BNP."

Journalists of Bogra are feeling insecure fearing further attacks on them by BNP-Jamaat cadres, several journalists said. Most local journalists have restricted their movement to home and office.

A number of journalists of different national dailies and private TV channels in Bogra yesterday said leaders of a political alliance spread hatred of journalists at a rally in the town on November 3. They said since the rally, they have been fearing that attacks could be

launched against them. "Leaders of the alliance took a stance against journalists when different dailies started publishing news on corruption of leaders during their tenure in power," a senior leader of Bogra preferring anonymity said.

Journalists' organisations across the country yesterday

protested the Wednesday's assault on Hasibur Rahman Bilu. staff correspondent of The Daily Star in Bogra, who was apparently attacked by activists of four-party alliance.

Several journalists' organisations brought out protest processions and held rallies demanding the people responsible for the attack be captured and brought to justice. They also demanded exemplary punishment for the miscreants.

In Dinajpur, journalists yesterday condemned the brutal attack on The Daily Star correspondent and demanded exemplary punishment for the miscreants involved in the incident, our Dinajpur correspondent reports.

Dinajpur Union of Journalists (RUJ) President Sharup Kumar Bakshi and its Secretary M Akram Talukder in a statement termed the attack "BNP-Jamaat alliance's vengeance on journalists.'

They called for a journalists' rally at Dinajpur Press Club in the afternoon today to protest the gruesome attack on Bilu.

They also demanded immediate arrest of the culprits. They said the caretaker government must arrest the attackers, as it has to prove that it is committed to eradicating violence.

Dinajpur Press Club President Chitta Ghosh and General Secretary M Golam Nabi Dulal also expressed their concern over the incident.

In Netrakona yesterday, journalists brought out a procession protesting the beating up of Bilu on Wednesday, our Netrakona correspondent reports.

The procession started at News Media Centre at Chutabazar and paraded a number of thoroughfares of the town.

The journalists held a rally in Bilu, a correspondent in Kurigram front of Netrakona Press Club reports following the procession. Kurigram Press Club President President of Netrakona Sangbadik Rabindra Nath Ray chaired the Samity Shamolandu Paul presided

meeting while General Secretary Mominul Islam Monju and district correspondents of national dailies and private TV channels addressed the meeting.

The speakers demanded immediate arrest of the criminals and exemplary punishment for them.

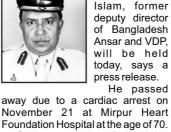
Journalists of different dailies and electronic media in Pabna yesterday condemned the attack on Bilu, our Pabna correspondent reports.

President of Pabna Reporters Unity Shajiaul Islam Shibly, and several other journalists of national and local dailies and electronic media in a joint statement demanded immediate capture of the four-party activists who were involved in the attack.

KUJ President Mamun Reza In Sirajganj yesterday, journal-Ahmed Kajal issued a joint press ists of several national and local statement yesterday demanding dailies and electronic media condemned the barbaric attack on the plary punishment for them after a staff correspondent of The Daily thorough police investigation and a Star in Bogra, our correspondent in They said such an unprovoked Sirajganj reports.

Sirajganj Press Club President Jakirul Islam and several other district correspondents of national dailies and electronic media in a joint statement said Bilu ran reports against corruption and that is why the miscreants tried to kill

They also demanded immediate capture of the criminals followed by a quick trial and exemplary punishment.



Md Hasib Ul Islam

today, says a press release. He passed

On the occasion, a milad and doa mahfil will be held at Nurani Mosque near his Mirpur residence (Section-2)

Dr Asadur Rahman FROM PAGE 1 Qulkhawani of Dr Asadur Rahman former law-

urged leaders of the four-party University. Mymensingh, will be held at his decided to investigate into the residence at 4 Circuit House Road