

'Allegations over EVM use baseless'

CEC Nurul Huda says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) KM Nurul Huda yesterday said allegations being raised over electronic voting machines (EVM) are "baseless".

He was addressing a views-exchange meeting with officials of law enforcement agencies in the port city, ahead of by-election to the Chattogram-8 constituency, scheduled to be held on January 13.

"Anyone can raise allegations but we have to see whether they have validity," said the CEC, adding that there is no scope of vote rigging if the election is held through EVM.

The CEC said propaganda is being spread that presiding officers can cast 25 percent vote through EVM, which is unfounded.

Replying to a query, Huda said adequate number of law enforcers will be deployed to hold the polls peacefully.

Nurul Huda said he was content to see the atmosphere in the constituency. "Officials told me that all candidates are conducting campaigns peacefully," he said.

Chattogram Divisional Commissioner Abdul Mannan and Chattogram Election Officer Md Hasanuzzaman were also present at the meeting.

A total of 4,75,988 voters will cast their votes through electronic voting machine, said Election Commission officials.

The constituency fell vacant following the death of lawmaker Moin Uddin Khan Badal on November 7 last year.



President Abdul Hamid awards a student at the third convocation of Sust yesterday. Eminent scholar and writer Dr Syed Manzoorul Islam was the convocation speaker.

PHOTO: PID

Technology the key

Says President Hamid at Sust convocation

UNB, Sylhet

Terming teachers "lighthouse", President Abdul Hamid yesterday urged them to come forward to play their due role in making the universities in Bangladesh world-class.

"People have faith in you [teachers]... it's my request: please guide all towards the path of welfare and development through your knowledge and wisdom," he said.

The president said this while addressing the third convocation of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology on its campus.

"Many students from abroad used to come here [Bangladesh] for attaining knowledge. I want you to work towards making every university in the country a centre of knowledge," Hamid said.

He stressed the importance of achieving self-reliance in technology sector and highlighted the need for research and innovation. There's no alternative to technological knowledge and advances in this era of globalisation, the president said, adding that it is imperative to focus on

technology-led skills development.

He also termed the youth the driving force of development and positive change. Hamid urged graduates to work for the betterment of the country. "There is no end to acquiring education, knowledge and experience," he said.

Praising Sust, the president hoped that this university will uphold its reputation and continue inspiring youths to become scientific-minded.

The third convocation was held after a 12-year break. After starting academic activities in 1991, the university's first convocation was held on April 29, 1998 while the second on December 6, 2007.

A total of 6,750 students signed up for the convocation. Twenty students received President's Gold Medal while 89 received Vice Chancellor's Award. President Hamid, also chancellor of the university, presided over the event while eminent scholar and writer Dr Syed Manzoorul Islam addressed the graduates as convocation speaker.

Sust VC Prof Farid Uddin Ahmed delivered the welcome speech.

HSTU DOUBLE MURDER CASE

PM promises justice after four years of zero progress

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Two students of Hajee Danesh Science and Technology University (HSTU) in Dinajpur were killed during BCL infighting in April, 2015. It has been over four years, but there has been zero progress in their murder cases.

On Monday, families of the murdered students -- Md Zakaria and Mahmudul Hasan Milton -- met with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Gono Bhaban in the capital. The PM handed over cheques of Tk 10 lakh to each family.

"We have been scrambling from door to door to get justice for the death of our son," said Zakaria's father Md Golam Mostafa. He said he has already visited law enforcement agencies and the home ministry with his demand.

"The PM pledged that justice will be delivered," said Md Golam Mostafa.

Milton's parents Mahubar Rahman and Rebeka Begum said they are more hopeful after the PM's assurance. "We demanded capital punishment for the killers," said

Zakaria's mother Zinnatun Begum.

Zakaria was a second-year student of business administration, while Milton was a final-year student of agriculture. On April 16, 2015, a faction of campus BCL organised a programme marking the Bengali new year with support from district Awami League. Meanwhile, another BCL faction brought out a procession on the same night protesting corruption and irregularities on the campus.

A clash erupted between the two groups, and district AL was involved. Zakaria and Milton, both BCL activists, died in the fighting.

Terming the double murder a "curse on HSTU", Fazlul Haq, registrar of the university said that they will extend all kinds of support to ensure justice.

"University authority also wants justice," said Dr Abdul Kashem, vice chancellor of the university.

Following the two deaths in 2015, Milton's uncle filed a murder case with

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AMASSING Tk 275CR ILLEGALLY

Case filed against ex-MD of NRB Global Bank

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former Managing Director of NRB Global Bank, Proshanto Kumar Haldar -- who is now abroad -- had questionable transactions of about Tk 1,636 crore in his personal and interest-involved bank accounts over different periods, Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has found.

Of the amount, ACC found that Proshanto had transaction of about Tk 240.87 crore in his accounts, Tk 160 crore in his mother's account and Tk 1,235.7 crore in other interest-involved bank accounts.

"He later withdrew the money and transferred, transformed and handed it over in a bid to conceal it, which is a punishable offence under the Money Laundering Act," reads a case document.

ACC yesterday filed a case against Proshanto for amassing about Tk 274.91 crore beyond the known source of income.

ACC Assistant Director Mamunur Rashid Chowdhury filed the case with its integrated district office in Dhaka.

According to the case statement, Proshanto has immovable property worth about Tk 187.78 crore. Of the amount, he has investment about Tk 123.54 crore in Lipro International.

He bought 589-decimal land in Mymensingh at the cost of Tk 1 crore.

In the enquiry, ACC found that there is about Tk 67.35 crore investment in eight companies.

Besides, documents show Proshanto has Tk 32.25 crore worth of

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Matin Chowdhury reelected IUB Trustee Board chair

CITY DESK

Matin Chowdhury has been reelected the chairperson of Independent University, Bangladesh's (IUB) board of trustees for 2020-2021, says a press release.

Chowdhury is a freedom fighter and industrialist, who has been actively involved in the leadership of various non-profit organisations -- such as Underprivileged Children's Education Program, Diabetic Association of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Textile Mills Association, and Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST).

Along with Chowdhury, 20 trustee members of the board will predominantly focus on world-class higher education and research for scholars and students.



No more cobweb of cables!

Sylhet becomes first city in country to have street with no overhead wires



Sylhet city's Dargah Gate area takes a fresh look, with the nuisance of overhead wires now removed. The photo was taken on Tuesday evening.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Sylhet is the first city in the country to have a road with no overhead cable.

Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) successfully initiated underground power lines in the Dargah Gate area and removed all overhead cables and electric poles last Sunday.

Seven-kilometre area of the city is about to go overhead cable free by February under a pilot project, costing Tk 55 crore.

BPDB is now working on a mega project worth Tk 1,900 crore for sustainable distribution of electricity in Sylhet division, and underground power line project is

a part of that.

Under this pilot project, 25 circuit kilometres of 11KV line, 18 circuit kilometres of 0.4KV line and 2 circuit kilometres of 33KV line are being installed in underground tunnels, which will cover 7km of road.

Covered areas under the project are from Electric Supply Substation to Chowhatta via Amberkhana, Chowhatta to Sylhet Circuit House via Zindabazar and Court Point and Chowhatta to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College via Rikabibazar.

Moreover, several stations are also being constructed over the underground trenches for maintenance.

KM Nazim Uddin, project

director of BPDB, said, "The work was supposed to be finished by March last year but it was extended for another year and will be finished by February."

Sylhet citizens are to be first in the country to experience no overhead cables, he added.

While visiting Dargah Gate area on Tuesday night, this correspondent saw hundreds of people gathered to see the road with no overhead cables.

Sylhet City Mayor Ariful Haque Choudhury said, "Sylhet is on its way to become first smart city of the country and this project will provide the very first exposure to that. All overhead cables in the city will eventually go underground."



Marma girls perform a traditional dance as part of an event marking passing away of a religious leader in Bandarban. On the occasion, people of the community gather to pay their tributes and celebrate a life well lived through various rituals. The photos were taken at Ujanipara Rajguru Bouddha Bihar premises recently.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Man sent to jail for raping 11-year-old

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

A Dhaka court yesterday sent a man to jail, on charges of raping an eleven-year-old girl at Ambagan adjacent to Jahangirnagar University in Savar earlier this month.

Rokibul Hasan, sub-inspector of Ashulia Police Station, said they arrested Kudrot Hossain (32), lone accused in the case filed with the police station over raping the fourth-grader of a local school, on Tuesday night.

The accused was placed before the Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court in Dhaka, which sent him to prison after he gave a confessional statement under section 164, added Rokibul.

The police official said on that day, Kudrot had called the girl from her parent's house and took her to a nearby house and raped her.

The victim, who used to live with her grandmother in Kishoreganj, was visiting her parents in Ambagan area.

Her parents work in Savar, SI Rokibul said.

ARMS, DRUGS CASES

Hearing deferred as Samrat not produced at court

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court could not take cognizance of the charges against former Jubo League leader Ismail Hossain Chowdhury Samrat yesterday in two cases filed under the Arms and Narcotics Control Acts, as jail authorities failed to produce him.

Rab filed the cases against him with Ramna Police Station. On October 15, Samrat was remanded for 10 days in arms and drug cases.

Judge KM Emrul Kayesh of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court of Dhaka set February 10 for next hearing of the cases, after jail authorities informed the court that Samrat was under treatment at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU).

Meanwhile, the court rejected a bail petition of Samrat's close aide Enamul Haque Arman in the drug case. Arman was present at the court.

On November 6, Rab Sub-inspector Shekhar Chandra Mallik, investigation officer of the case, submitted the charge-sheet to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka.

On December 8, SI Abdul Halim submitted another charge-sheet against Samrat and Arman.

On October 6, Rab members arrested Samrat, former president of Dhaka South Jubo League, and Enamul Haque Arman, former vice-president of the same unit, in Cumilla.

Samrat was then brought to the capital, and the elite force conducted operations at various establishments where the Jubo League leader either lived or carried out political and business activities.

On November 12, the Anti-Corruption Commission filed a case against Samrat on charges of amassing wealth worth Tk 2.95 crore beyond known sources of income.

Nabiha Raidaa passes away



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nabiha Raidaa, director of Fair Group Bangladesh, passed away in the US on Saturday. She was only 20 years old.

Raidaa, daughter of Fair Group Bangladesh's chairperson Ruhul Alam Al Mahub, was a student of Chamberlain International School in the US.

She died in her sleep. Raidaa's body arrived yesterday morning in Dhaka.

Raidaa's first namaz-e-janaza was held at Gulshan Azad Masjid after Zohr prayers yesterday.

Her body was then taken to her hometown in Kandipara of Brahmanbaria, where her second janaza was held.

Her body will be taken to Samsung plant in Narsingdi today, where her third janaza will be held, and she will then be buried.