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STAR CELEBRATES STAFF DAY! Rokia Afzal Rahman, chairperson of Mediaworld Ltd (centre); A Rouf Chowdhury, member of the board of directors of the company (right); and Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of the newspaper (left), cut a cake marking Staff Day at The Daily Star Centre yesterday. On the occasion, journalists and employees of the daily were awarded in different categories for outstanding performances in the last year, inset.

DNCC All candidates' info still not on EC site

MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN

It has been 14 days since councillor aspirants for the two Dhaka city corporations filed their affidavits and income statements, but the returning office of Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) polls is depriving voters of information about most councillor candidates.

Let alone information about affidavits and income statements, even names of councillor contenders have not been posted online, contradicting electoral code.

"There are posters of only the AL-backed incumbent councillor in my area. To know about other candidates, I visited the EC website but found nothing," said Azizur Rahman, a resident of ward-26 of DNCC.

Till 8:30pm last night, DNCC's returning office published affidavits and income statements of general councillor candidates in only 19 of 54 wards.

It also failed to disclose information of reserved seat candidates completely. Information of only seven out of 18 reserved seats were published till yesterday evening.

However, affidavits and other information of mayoral candidates of both city corporations have been published on the site.

According to the city corporation election operations manual, a massive publicity on affidavits should be carried out by the returning officer, so that voters can analyse information and choose the right candidate.

It has also directed the returning officer to publish affidavits and income statements of contenders on the Election Commission Secretariat website.

Mayor and councillor candidates submitted their affidavits, tax return files and income statements along with their nomination papers to the returning officers by December 31 last year.

The returning officers scrutinised the nomination papers on January 2.

Two days later, the returning office of Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) polls published the information on the website. A couple of days later, they however removed the information and again made it public on the website on January 12.

On the contrary, their counterpart -- the office of DNCC -- published information of only a few councillor candidates on January 12.

On Monday, Sushashoner Jonno Nagorik (Shujan) wrote a letter to the secretary of Election Commission, to publish information of income and tax return of all candidates at the earliest.

Dilip Kumar Sarker, central coordinator of Shujan, said there were no instances of such delay in publishing candidates' information in previous elections. "It's a kind of negligence of officials concerned," he said.

According to election manual, if an EC official willingly or without any logical reason fails to carry out government

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AL lawmakers continue to flout polls rules

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League lawmakers continue to violate electoral code of conduct by taking part in campaign and election-related activities for the party mayor candidates of Dhaka city corporation polls.

Yesterday, AL lawmaker Sadek Khan joined a street meeting in Agargaon area, seeking vote for party-nominated Dhaka North City Cooperation mayor candidate Atiqul Islam.

Atiqul was scheduled to be at "Shatadaal Complex" playground in the area, but he did not show up till noon. Meanwhile, Sadek Khan participated in the campaign there.

When journalists asked the MP why he joined the campaign violating polls code, he replied, "I merely came to see the campaign. I won't participate in any activity."

He left the place soon after the inquiries from journalists.

Asked, DNCC Returning Officer Abul Kashem said

if MPs participate in the electoral campaign, asking votes for the mayor or councillor candidates then it is of course a violation.

"However, I need to look into the matter whether he [Sadek Khan] participated in the campaign," he added.

Though Atiqul was not available for comments, his media coordinator Saifuddin Emon said, "He [Sadek Khan] just came to see the campaign as the area falls under his constituency. He did not seek votes."

On Saturday, Sadek Khan and another AL MP Aslamul Haque joined campaign for the same mayor candidate.

Awami League lawmakers are participating in the campaign and other electoral process, when the ruling party and Election Commission are at loggerheads over MPs participation in the campaigns and election-related activities for Dhaka city polls -- slated for January 30.

It began after AL on January 3 formed two committees comprising several lawmakers like Tofail Ahmed,

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DHAKA CITY POLLS 2020



Awami League lawmaker Sadek Khan at a campaigning event for DNCC mayoral candidate Atiqul Islam at Agargaon yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

CASINO BUSINESS

Enamul, Rupon on four-day remand

JNU CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed two alleged ringleaders of illegal casino business in the capital on four-day remand each, in connection with two separate money laundering cases.

Enamul Haque Enu, vice-president of Awami League Gendaria thana unit, was remanded in a case filed with Gendaria Police Station on September 25 last year, while Rupon Bhuiyan, joint general secretary of the same AL unit, was placed on remand in the case filed with Sutrapur Police Station on September 26.

The court also granted a three-day police remand to Sheikh Sunny Mostafa, an aide of the duo, in the laundering case filed with Gendaria Police Station.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Rajesh Chowdhury passed the order after Inspector Mehedi Maksud of Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of police produced the trio before the court with a 10-day remand prayer for each in the cases.

The CID on Monday arrested the trio from a flat in Dhaka's South Keraniganj, where Enamul and Rupon took shelter after failing to flee the country with forged passports.

Enamul and Rupon, who allegedly ran a casino illegally in the capital's Motijheel, went into hiding after law enforcers launched a crackdown on illegal casinos, bars, and spas in September last year.

Wanderers Club, of which Enamul was the director, was raided by Rapid Action Battalion on September 18, the first day of the crackdown.

The two brothers have 22 houses and plots in the capital, five cars, and Tk 19.11 crore in 91 bank accounts frozen by the Bangladesh Bank, according to case dockets and police.

To operate the casinos, Enamul and Rupon hired several Nepalese nationals, law enforcers said, adding that the

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MJF honours 10 unsung rights defenders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) yesterday honoured 10 individuals who worked silently for protecting human rights, such as preventing child marriage and violence against women and marginalised communities, at different parts of the country.

The rights organisation handed over the awards titled "Manusher Jonno Human Rights Awards 2020" at a ceremony, held at Krishibid Institution Bangladesh (KIB) auditorium in Dhaka.

The awardees are: Beli Begum of Gaibandha; Rehana Begum and Maloti Rani of Dinajpur; Saleha Begum, Halima Khatun and Nurjahan Begum of Kushtia; Khairuzzaman Monnu of Sirajganj; Anowara Begum of Kishoreganj; Hedayetul Aziz of Brahmanbaria and Chanchal Kanti Chakma of Khagrachhari.

Speaking on the occasion, rights activists urged the government to give more emphasis on protecting rights and ensuring justice for poor and marginalised communities. They also demanded more budget allocation in this sector, according to a press release.

About the awardees, MJF Executive Director Shaheen Anam said these 10 individuals stood up for what is right in the present situation of violence against women, child marriage and the marginalised.

"They are working selflessly without any concern for recognition or rewards to build a just and humane society," she said. The noted rights activist also announced to continue their efforts to honour such unsung heroes.

Speaking as chief guest at the event, Law Minister Anisul Huq said, "The country's economic development and protection of human rights are interconnected."

Referring to several government initiatives, the minister said they are committed to taking appropriate steps to stop violence against women as

well as protecting human rights.

Judith Herberston, country representative of DFID Bangladesh, said the struggle to protect, promote and strengthen human rights is real and constant.

"Where human rights are not adequately protected, there follows a cycle of insecurity, instability, suffering, and poverty. Human rights are more than just principles enshrined in international law. They are the bedrock of successful and progressive societies," she said.

After the award-giving ceremony,

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Awardees with organisers and guests at the event. Manusher Jonno Foundation organised the programme yesterday to recognise individuals working tirelessly to protect human rights and establish justice.

PHOTO: STAR

A struggle for water

Patients, attendees suffer due to interrupted supply at Nat'l Institute of Cardiovascular Disease

MOUDDUD AHMED SUJAN

As soon as the clock hits six in the morning, Salma jumps into action. She hurries towards the bathroom either to take a shower or save some water in a container.

But there's completion. Most of the time the 35-year-old has to wait for a long time before she can use the facility, since many others form a queue there, as running water has become sort of a precious commodity at the wards of state-run National Institute of Cardiovascular Disease (NICVD).

Salma has been staying at Ward-1 of the 414-bed specialised hospital with a patient for the last six months. "The situation has been the same for as long as I have been here. From dawn to noon, there's no water at the washrooms. We do get some afterwards, that too at intervals," she told this correspondent recently.

"As soon as the supply starts, all of us stand in a queue to begin our day. Even patients have to wait in line. Water should be a basic amenity at a hospital but it's not the case here," she added.

Due to the crisis, patients and their attendees continue to suffer at the hospital. This interrupted water supply has also resulted in making the washrooms unhygienic.

But their sufferings do not just end there. There is also no source of drinking water at the wards.

"I have to spend around Tk 200 daily to buy water --

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DEMAND TO DEFER CITY POLLS

DU students issue 18-hour ultimatum



Agitating students blocked Shahbagh intersection yesterday for nearly two hours till 6:30pm yesterday.

DU CORRESPONDENT

Agitating students of Dhaka University yesterday blocked Shahbagh intersection for nearly two hours, demanding deferment of Dhaka north and south city corporation polls, as it coincides with Saraswati Puja.

The protesters also issued an 18-hour ultimatum to meet their demand, and threatened to lay siege to the Election Commission office otherwise.

"We will besiege the election commission if they do not change the date of the polls within our given time frame," Utpal Biswas, vice president of Jagannath Hall union told The Daily Star.

Terming the decision contradictory to the constitution, he also demanded resignation of the officials concerned.

Earlier, around 500 students of the university staged a sit-in, blocking the capital's Shahbagh intersection at around 5pm.

Vehicular movement on the roads connecting to the intersection remained at a standstill as a result of the blockade.

They withdrew the blockade at 6:30pm after giving the ultimatum.

Earlier in the day, the High Court rejected a writ petition filed for shifting the date of the elections and cleared the way for the Election Commission for holding the election on January 30.

The court passed the order considering the progress in the election process and the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examinations scheduled to take place on February 2.

'Pro-AL officials got election duty'

Alleges Mirza Fakhrul

UNB, Dhaka

BNP yesterday alleged that "pro-Awami League" officials have been given the responsibility for conducting the elections to two Dhaka city corporations, billed for January 30.

"We know those having pro-AL backgrounds have been given the responsibility for holding elections to the two city corporations," said BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir.

Speaking at a programme at BNP chairperson's Gulshan office, he further said, "Those who lack ethical values have been given charges to conduct voting through EVMs. Most countries have already rejected the machines as these can be manipulated."

Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Help Cell arranged the programme to provide financial assistance to family members of the party's 10 leaders who were either subjected to enforced disappearance, killing or maiming

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Manzura Shameem
22nd September, 1956 - 15th January, 2019

We remember the beauty of your soul that graced us every single day with so much love, fondness and admiration. As today marks the completion of a year without you amidst us, we pray that the Almighty grants you the highest level of Jannah.

We request everyone who knew **Manzura** to kindly continue to pray for her. Ameen

Lovingly,
Shameem & Family