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Your Right to Know

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"On his deathbed, Sir Fazle Abed told me 'there are a lot of challenges in education, don't give up...keep working'."

RASHEDA K CHOUDHURY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CAMPAIGN FOR POPULAR EDUCATION, ON THE LIFE AND WORKS OF BRAC FOUNDER SIR FAZLE HASAN ABED



"Whatever Sir Fazle Hasan Abed did, he got advice from the best brains of the world."

PROF. JAMILUR REZA CHOUDHURY ON THE LIFE AND WORKS OF BRAC FOUNDER SIR FAZLE HASAN ABED



"People are eagerly waiting to vote for me. Sensing this, the government has become nervous and started weaving a net of conspiracy."

BNP'S DSCC MAYORAL CANDIDATE ISHRAQUE HOSSAIN DURING A CAMPAIGNING IN JATRABARI AREA



Arrest warrant issued against Prothom Alo editor, 9 others

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday issued arrest warrants against Prothom Alo Editor and Publisher Matiur Rahman, Deputy Editor Anisul Hoque and eight others in a case filed over the death of Naimul Abrar Rahat, a student of Dhaka Residential Model College.

The other accused are Kabir Bakul, head of event and activation of Kishor Alo, Shuvashish Pramanik Shuvo and Shah Paran Tushar, assistants at event and activation of Kishor Alo, Mahitul Alam Pavel, senior assistant editor of Kishor Alo, and four stage decorators -- Jasim Uddin Apu, Mosharraf Hossain, Md Sujan and Kamrul Hawlader.

Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Md Kaisarul Islam passed the order after investigation officer of

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Workers of Dynamic Fashion Limited, a readymade garments unit, demonstrate blocking the Mirpur Road in the capital's Shyamoli yesterday morning, demanding salary hike and better working conditions. The demonstrations caused severe traffic jam in the area and many had to get down from vehicles and walk to their destination, inset.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Pressure piles up on the EC

Political leaders join growing call for deferral of the DCC election

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission is under mounting pressure to shift the January 30 Dhaka city election with an Awami League mayoral candidate and the BNP-led Jatiya Oikyafront joining the call for its deferral.

Over the last few days, members of the Hindu community and Dhaka University students have been urging the authorities to change the polls date that coincides with Saraswati Puja, a major religious festival of the Hindus.

"Considering the Saraswati Puja, the election date should be deferred," Atiqul Islam, AL mayoral candidate for Dhaka North City Corporation, told reporters yesterday.

His rival BNP mayoral candidate, Tabitha Awal, blamed the government for fixing January 30 as the polls date, which he said would spoil Saraswati Puja.

Jatiya Oikyafront Convener Dr Kamal Hossain termed the fixing of the election date on the puja day an "unjust act" by the government.

Meanwhile, an appeal was filed with the Supreme Court yesterday, challenging the High Court verdict that rejected a writ petition for changing the election date.

Bangladesh Hindu-Bouddha-Christian Oikya Parishad threatened to go for a countrywide strike if their demand for deferring the polls is not met.

Despite growing pressure, the EC appears to be sticking to its guns, saying it is ready to hold the election on January 30.

It, however, said it would change the polls date only if the SC asks it to do so.

In the meantime, during a polls campaign at Mirpur's Alobdi Eidgah Maidan, Atiqul said Bangladesh is a secular country, and he doesn't want

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Onion crisis won't recur

Agri minister tells JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Admitting that people suffered a lot due to exorbitant prices of onion, Agriculture Minister Abdur Razzaque told parliament yesterday that the onion crisis would not recur after the next harvest.

"This year, onion has been cultivated on more land than targeted. So, the production will cross 23-24 lakh tonnes if there is no natural disaster," he said.

The minister was replying to a supplementary question from Awami League lawmaker Ayeen Uddin.

Razzaque said onion imports would be suspended at harvest time so that farmers get fair prices of their produces and feel encouraged to cultivate onion on a large scale.

Farmers do not get fair prices during the harvesting season, leading them to lose interest in growing the cooking item, he opined.

The annual onion production is 23-24 lakh tonnes against the demand for 30-32 lakh tonnes. The deficit of onion is met through imports, the minister said.

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Traffic chaos cripples parts of capital

RMG workers block Mirpur Road, causing jam to spill over on other streets

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Traffic came to a near standstill in some areas of the capital after several hundred garment workers blocked Mirpur Road in Shyamoli yesterday morning.

Around 800 workers of a factory kept the road blocked for over two hours from around 9:50am, demanding increment, maternal leave and better working conditions.

People were subjected to particularly long tailbacks on streets where construction work of the metro rail is going on.

The rush hour traffic created a tailback that reached as far as Aminbazar. There were gridlocks on streets connected to Mirpur Road in New Market, Dhanmondi, Pantha Path, Bangla Motor, Farmgate, Manik Mia Avenue, and Bioy Sarani.

Parents taking children to school and people going to work suffered the most. Russel Bapari, driver of a bus of New Vision Private Ltd, said it took him five-and-a-half-hour to reach Mirpur zoo from Motijheel via Shyamoli. He left Motijheel around 9:30am.

It usually it takes him one and a half hours to make the trip, he said.

"I will have to lose at least Tk 2,500 today for missing three trips," he told The Daily Star, adding that regularly made eight trips a day.

As his bus remained stuck, frustrated passengers got down and started their journey on foot.

On Manik Miah Avenue, parents with school children were seen struggling to find a ride to their destination.

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DU STUDENT RAPE Lone accused confesses his crime

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Majnu, the lone suspect in the rape of a Dhaka University student in the capital's Kurmitola area, yesterday confessed he committed the crime, court sources said.

He told the magistrate that he was lying in wait for a victim that day. When he saw the girl walking from Kurmitola bus stop, he grabbed her from behind, gagged her and took her to an isolated place nearby, the sources added.

"I beat her and raped her. But she was still able to escape," Majnu said in his confessional statement, adding that he tried to strangle her and at one stage she lost her consciousness.

"Not killing her was a mistake," the court sources

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Star MOTTO ON MUJIB BORSHO

His first week after homecoming

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

Bangabandhu's arrival on January 10, 1972, truly completed Bangladesh's struggle for freedom, and the state building efforts of the new-born country got momentum. Bangabandhu in his 10 January speech at Race Course (now Suhrawardy Udyan) outlined the guiding principles of Bangladesh as a nation-state: democracy, socialism and secularism.

The war-ravaged country posed a formidable task of simultaneously building both a state apparatus and a stable political system. There was an urgent need to establish a central locus of authority, which would exercise moral authority as well as demonstrate that the government was effectively in



Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman takes oath as the prime minister of independent Bangladesh (January 12, 1972)

charge of the country. Bangabandhu put a gigantic effort to address this immediate concern.

On 11 January 1972 Bangabandhu

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SNAPSHOT of reality

Were those really incidents of 'crossfire'?

RAFIUL ISLAM

So, someone can be deliberately killed in "crossfire"!

While law enforcers have all along maintained that the deaths in the incidents labelled as "shootout", "gunfight" or "crossfire" are not intentional at all, a number of lawmakers have asked for such extrajudicial killings to be carried out as measures to check the scourge of rape.

What they said on record in parliament also implies that people were shot to death in "crossfire" during the anti-drug drives because they committed crimes.

The "crossfire" killings, understood to be a blatant violation of all human rights laws, have been termed by an MP an "instant action" when it comes to dealing with criminals.

But rights activists say if someone can be killed in such a manner and if lawmakers are openly admitting that it is being used as a tool to quash crimes, what about all the earlier incidents of "crossfires" and the police versions that followed those? Were those mere accidents or deliberate?

Going by numerous previous reports, after each of those incidents, officials came up with almost same narratives of the sequence of events.

They went on to claim their use of firearms was retaliatory in nature and that a "gunfight" was initiated by the one

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Ahead of the January 30 Dhaka city corporation polls, many printing presses in the capital are passing busy hours bringing out leaflets and posters of political leaders and their parties. Some of the presses are running throughout the night to hit the production target. The photo was taken in Fakirapool area yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN



Rajshahi and Khulna set for title bout

SPORTS REPORTER

After a battle between seven sides spanning more than a month, the Bangladesh Bangladesh Premier League (BBPL) will come to a climax today with Khulna Tigers taking on Rajshahi Royals in the all-important final under lights at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

For Khulna skipper Mushfiqur Rahim, it will be a chance to be on the same level as three other Bangladesh stalwarts in Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Shakib Al Hasan and Tamim Iqbal. Mashrafe has been the most successful leader in BPL, having lifted the trophy four times. Shakib has also had the feeling when he led Dhaka

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