



Bringing an end to street parking is one of the objectives of the recently-passed Road Transport Act. But the situation on the road in front of Motijheel Ideal School and College indicates there's still a long way to go. In exchange of a Tk 50 "fee", cars of all shapes and sizes were seen occupying both sides of the road. But who is this money paid to? This photographer found a man hosting the transactions without any documents, *inset*. Sensing he was being photographed, the man charged at the photographer and threatened him.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

'Minister can't avoid his responsibility'

MPs tell House about flawed list of Razakars by Liberation War ministry

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Several MPs yesterday in parliament strongly criticised Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Haque, saying the minister cannot avoid responsibility for publishing the flawed list of Razakars.

"It cannot say directly that the Liberation War affairs ministry has no responsibility [for publishing the faulty list of collaborators]. It is responsibility of this ministry to verify the authenticity of the list no matter from where it was collected," ruling Awami League lawmaker Mouazzam Hossain Ratan said.

He made this remarks in a supplementary question during the question-answer session.

Ratan said the government's role came under question due to inconsistency in some cases regarding the list of collaborators of the Pakistani occupation army during the Liberation War.

"We, the pro-liberation force, got hurt severely... even the name of real Razakars were not included in the list," he added.

He also questioned whether the list of actual Razakars would be disclosed before Independence Day [March 26].

In reply, the minister said they have withdrawn the list, expressing regrets about the flaws in it.

"We'll publish the list in future after thorough scrutiny and taking cooperation from all quarters to prevent recurrence of errors," he said.

In reply to a starred question from AL lawmaker Md Faridul Haque Khan, Mozammel said his ministry did not prepare the list of collaborators, rather the Public Security Division of the home ministry sent it to his ministry as per its requirement.

"We published the list as it was. Since the Liberation War affairs ministry did not prepare the list, the home

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First time in nine months

No dengue patient hospitalised in 24hrs: DGHS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

For the first time in the last nine months, no new dengue patient was admitted to any hospitals across the country in the last 24 hours till yesterday morning, the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) said.

A total of 29 dengue patients are currently admitted to different hospitals across the country, according to the daily report of DGHS. Among them, 26 are in Dhaka.

Since the beginning of January, a total of 152 dengue patients were admitted to hospitals till 8am yesterday morning. Among them, 123 have been already discharged from the hospitals and no one succumbed to the illness, the report also said.

"The report is based on DGHS' own surveillance system," said Dr Ayesha Aktar, assistant director of DGHS Health Emergency Operation Centre and Control Room.

According to government

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SAGIRA MORSHED MURDER Three relatives, hitman charged

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It was not a mugging incident gone wrong, rather a planned murder. Relatives hired a hitman to kill Sagira Morshed Salam over domestic disputes.

Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) cracked the 30-year-old sensational case in November last year and yesterday pressed charges against four people -- Sagira's brother-in-law Dr



Hasan Ali Chowdhury; his wife Sayedatul Mahmuda alias Shaheen; brother-in-law (wife's brother) Anas Mahmud alias Rezwana and the hired killer Maruf Reza.

PBI Inspector Md Rafiqul Islam submitted the charge sheet to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate in Dhaka in the afternoon. During investigation, the four accused gave confessional statements narrating the incident, he said.

On July 25, 1989, Sagira (34) was going to Vigarunnisa Noon School on Bailey Road by a rickshaw to pick up her daughter. She, however, could not do so as muggers shot her dead in front of the school.

Sagira's husband Abdus Salam Chowdhury filed a case accusing some unnamed people with Ramna Police Station the same day. But trial of the case remained halted for 28 years, following a High Court order.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, he said, "The killers must be given exemplary punishment." He also thanked the PBI for their efforts.

In the charge-sheet, police said Abdus Salam and Samsul Alam Chowdhury are brothers who lived with their families at a house in Rajarbagh.

Disputes grew among Sagira and her sister-in-law Shaheen over household matters, and in early 1989, Shaheen told her husband to teach Sagira a lesson.

Maruf, now a real estate businessman, was a notorious criminal in Siddheshwari at that time, and used to be Dr Hasan's patient. He was 18 at that time.

The PBI official said Dr Hasan hired Maruf with Tk 25,000 to "teach Sagira a lesson". He paid Maruf Tk 15,000 after the incident.

On July 25, 1989, Dr Hasan called his brother-in-law Anas (59), now an NGO official, and told him to stand in front of Mouchak Market to escort Maruf to identify Sagira.

Around 4:40pm, Anas and Maruf followed Sagira on a bike. Before her rickshaw could reach Vigarunnisa School,

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HELEMIUL ALAM, DSCC

A week has passed since the 19-day election campaign for Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) polls officially kicked off on January 10, but activities of BNP candidates and their supporters are hardly noticeable compared to their Awami League counterparts.

According to BNP activists and locals, fear of fresh "political" cases, harassment by ruling party men and law enforcers and vote rigging, and the party not being in power for a long time are the major reasons behind poor campaigning.

During campaign, the ruling party mayor and councillor candidates are pledging to



Ishraque Hossain campaigns in Jatrabari.

continue the ongoing development work in the capital while BNP candidates said they would participate in the elections to "re-establish democracy" in the country.

Visiting five wards (41, 42, 45-47) of Old Dhaka yesterday, this correspondent saw only a handful of campaign offices of BNP while the number was much higher for Awami League aspirants.

The ruling party candidates were also leading the "poster race" by a huge margin. Rashed Ahmed, a resident of ward-42, said they only saw activity in BNP camps when its mayor candidate Ishraque Hossain visited the area. He said he saw BNP activists hanging posters at night and then leaving quickly.

Meanwhile, Awami League candidates along with their activists are going all out to woo prospective voters. They are holding street meetings and door-to-door campaigns and handing out leaflets to

passers-by.

Though Dholaikhal and its adjoining areas used to be a stronghold of BNP, it is not reflecting in the campaign, said locals.

Nazibullah, a resident of ward-42, said they have not seen any campaign by BNP in the area yet.

Wishing anonymity, a BNP activist of ward-45 said they want to remain unnoticed as they fear they will be harassed after the polls. "But we have a huge vote bank in the area," he claimed.

Abdus Saheb Montu, BNP councillor aspirant from ward-44, alleged that their posters were torn down couple of days ago and they have also filed a complaint with the Election Commission in this regard, but to no avail.

He, however, said they are conducting campaigns on a regular basis.

Sarowar Hossain Alo, AL councillor candidate of Ward-41, alleged that it is BNP supporters who are threatening their activists. "We're still doing door-to-door campaigns," Sarowar added.

'CONSPIRACY AGAINST SHEAF OF PADDY'

Ishraque yesterday alleged that sensing a mass support for "sheaf of paddy" in the upcoming polls, the government is behaving outrageously.

"While electioneering, I see a mass wave of people in favour of sheaf of paddy [BNP's electoral symbol]. People are eagerly waiting to vote for me. Sensing this, the government has become nervous and started weaving a web of conspiracy," he said.

A Dhaka court on Wednesday framed charges against Ishraque in a case over not submitting his wealth statement to the Anti-Corruption Commission.

Ishraque, son of former Dhaka mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka, pleaded not guilty and demanded justice after Judge Shaikh Nazmul Alam of the Special Judge Court-4 of Dhaka read out the charges.

The court set February 9 for starting the trial.

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MATHEWS CHIRAN, DNCC

With elections to Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) only two weeks away, Awami League candidates are dominating the electioneering scene while the picture is quite the opposite for BNP contestants.

AL mayor and councillor candidates are campaigning in full swing, while BNP aspirants are alleging that their supporters are being pressurised and intimidated by ruling party activists.

BNP mayor candidate Tabith Awal complained that polls code was being violated incessantly but the Election Commission was not doing anything about it even after complaints were lodged.

Tabith, along with senior leaders and activists of the party, started the election campaign from Panthapath area yesterday and sought votes from people from all walks of life.

He said their campaigns were being obstructed by the ruling party supporters.

Meanwhile, BNP councillor aspirants were not faring any better.

Visiting several newly-included wards (37-39) on the seventh day of the campaign, this correspondent found election camps of AL councillor candidates full of activities while BNPs were almost barren.

AL offices were situated in open spaces besides roads. On the other hand, BNP camps were mostly inside buildings.

BNP aspirants alleged that AL supporters were intimidating ward level BNP activists not to participate in campaigning.

MA Bashar, BNP councillor candidate in ward-37 (East Badda), who has set up a camp in his office, said, "Though we're getting help from administration, Awami League activists are harassing our supporters. Activists are afraid to set up camps as the incumbent councillor is influential."

Expressing concern, BNP candidate for ward-38 Jahangir Mollah said they have not faced any major problem yet, but their supporters are in fear of harassment.

Party's candidate for ward-39 Mohammad Ali echoed Mollah.

On the other hand, Awami League candidates, who are also incumbent councillors, said they were not obstructing BNP's campaigns.



Atiqul Islam greets locals in Mirpur-12.

AL councillor aspirant Jahangir Alam (ward 37) was busy looking for another office in the area. He had already set up a camp in his office. "If BNP does not have enough manpower, that's not our fault. We are not obstructing their campaigns."

"Those who are bringing allegations against us do not have popularity in the area," he alleged.

In ward 38, Councillor Sheikh Selim has set up three camps so far. "In my ward, everyone is free to campaign for their candidates."

He said they have not heard of any allegation from others. "We are focusing on our campaign now," he added.

'PEOPLE NOT READY TO USE EVM' While campaigning, Tabith yesterday alleged that people were not ready to cast votes using the Electronic Voting Machine (EVMs) in the January 30 elections. "Use ballot papers instead of EVMs," Tabith said, reiterating his party's call to the EC.

He also expressed his disappointment at the election not being deferred for Saraswati Puja, which is to be celebrated on the polls day. Tabith called upon members of the Hindu community to "respond" to this by voting for "sheaf of paddy", the electoral symbol of BNP.

He alleged supporters of ruling party were threatening those who will vote for him.

"But I'm getting positive response from people. They will cast their votes for me..." said Tabith, son of BNP Vice Chairman Abdul Awal Mintoo.

All coaching centres to be closed during SSC exams

Says education minister UNB, Dhaka

All coaching centres will remain closed during the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and equivalent examinations scheduled to begin from February 1, Education Minister Dipu Moni said yesterday.

"The goal is to ensure free and fair examination atmosphere," she told the media at the Secretariat.

She said the centres will remain closed from January 25 to February 25. The minister also urged everyone not to pay heed to rumours.

More than two million students are expected to take part in the SSC and equivalent examinations. Among the candidates, 10,24,363 are male and 10,23,416 female. The examinations will be held

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'Expel Nur's attackers'

Anti-terror student alliance demands proctor's resignation

DU CORRESPONDENT

Santrash Birodhi Chhatra Oikya -- an alliance of 12 student organisations -- yesterday demanded academic expulsion and punishment for those who attacked Dhaka University Central Students' Union (Ducusu) Vice President Nurul Haque Nur and his followers on December 22 last year. The alliance also demanded the proctor's resignation for his failure to provide security to students.

Faisal Mahmud, general secretary of Bangladesh Chhatra Federation, placed the demands while reading out a statement at a press conference at Modhur Canteen in DU.

Referring to some incidents, they alleged that attacks were carried out by Chhatra League men and the university proctor did not protect students, rather abetted the attackers.

Their other demands include -- allocating seats in every dormitory under supervision of university administration; eradicating terrorism, seat-grabbing and "guest room" culture in dorms; ending all kinds of harassment of students, and establishing a democratic campus.

The alliance also expressed deep concern over the rising number of rape incidents across Bangladesh, including the rape of their fellow student at Dhaka's Kurmitola area.

They demanded trial and punishment of those involved in crimes against women and children, and urged the government to ensure their security.

Speaking about the city corporation polls, Nur said, "It [Saraswati Puja] is a festival of Hindu people, which is enjoyed by everybody, irrespective of religion... We don't want the polls on the day of puja."

The alliance leaders announced to hold a protest rally on January 23 to press home their demands.



A student attempts to pray to the goddess Saraswati, but remains tied up by Dhaka city corporation polls which fall on the same day. This symbolic protest was organised yesterday at the base of Raju Memorial Sculpture, where students announced a hunger strike unto death to press home their demand to defer the election date from January 30.

PHOTO: SAYYED MOHMUD ULLAH