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'Voters lost faith in EC'

Polls system falls apart, speakers tell discussion; some demand restoration of caretaker system

People of Bangladesh have lost faith in the Election Commission as voting system of the country has fallen apart and the democracy has been made non-functional, eminent citizens said yesterday.

Attending a webinar on "Democracy, Election and Election Commission", they also said that the citizens lost interest in voting as they believe their votes would make no difference to election results.

Civil society platform Sushasoner Jonno Nagorik (Shujan) organised the webinar.

At the webinar, former justice Abdul Matin, local government expert Prof Tofail Ahmed, Dhaka University Prof Asif Nazrul and former bureaucrat Abdul Latif Mondal proposed restoration of poll-time non-partisan caretaker government or neutral government or interim government to bring back the voters' confidence.

They made the proposal saying free, fair, and participatory election was not possible under any partisan election time government.

The caretaker government system was introduced in 1996 through the 13th amendment to the constitution.

The system of non-party caretaker government has seen the holding of three successful parliamentary elections in 1996, 2001, and 2008 that were considered free and fair by both local and foreign observers.

The caretaker government system was abolished through



A bus driver is on the phone while occupying both lanes of the busy Dhaka-Aricha highway near Savar's Hemayetpur on Saturday. A law enforcer on a motorbike and a car are seen in the background trying to get passed the bus. Such careless driving often causes crashes that end lives.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN



Man behind historic trials passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mohammad Abdul Hannan Khan, the coordinator of the investigation agency of the International Crimes Tribunal, died from Covid-19 yesterday.

He was 78.

The valiant freedom fighter breathed his last at Combined Military Hospital in Dhaka at 12:45pm yesterday, Sanaul Huq, co-coordinator of the agency, told The Daily Star.

Hannan and all his family members tested positive on Thursday and he was admitted

HIGHWAY EXPANSION PROJECT PD appointed in just 5 days after PM's discontent

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

In a rare move, Road Transport and Bridges Ministry yesterday appointed a project director within five days of the approval of the Jhenaidah-Jashore highway expansion project.

The move came after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the last ECNEC meeting expressed serious discontent over the five-year tenure of the project and asked to cut the project period by two years.

It takes some two to three months to have a project director appointed for a Roads and Highways Department (RHID) project, department officials said.

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) on Tuesday passed the Tk 4,188-crore project to upgrade the 48.50km highway to four lanes, with service lanes.

The tenure of the project, which would be implemented with a loan from the World Bank, had a stipulated deadline of October 2020 to December 2025 including a one-year defect liability period.

But Hasina, at the ECNEC meeting, reportedly questioned why it would take five years to improve a 48km road and asked to complete construction work

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FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES Bangladesh entry recommended

November 30, 1972
SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

UN ASSEMBLY ADOPTS TWO RESOLUTIONS UNANIMOUSLY The General Assembly adopts a unanimous resolution calling for the admission of Bangladesh to the world body at an early date. Member countries including China and Pakistan approve the resolution moved by Yugoslavia with the support of 22 countries. Another resolution tabled by Argentina with the support of 15 nations is also unanimously adopted, which calls for the solution of outstanding problems in the subcontinent, including humanitarian problems of repatriation of Pakistani prisoners of war and stranded Bangladeshis in Pakistan. Thus, for the first time the issue of repatriation of Bangladeshis from Pakistan gets international support.

BANGABANDHU AT PIROJPUR Prime Minister Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who left Dhaka last night on a three-day tour to see the coastal embankment projects and arrangements for conservation of coastal forests, is now at Pirojpur. The PM stops at Barishal for about an hour. Barishal Awami League leaders meet Bangabandhu on board the vessel and discuss local problems.

DRAFT INDUSTRIAL POLICY FINALISED Industries Minister Syed Nazrul Islam says in Dhaka today that the draft of the first industrial policy has been finalised and the policy would be announced after the cabinet's approval. The sole aim of



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Ex-BCL leader beaten to death in Cox's Bazar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Unknown criminals beat a former Chhatra League leader to death in Cox's Bazar's Chakaria upazila early yesterday.

Sohel Rana, 25, was a former joint convener of Chakaria municipality unit BCL, the student wing of the ruling Awami League.

According to witnesses, Soheli went to Hajipara to visit his ancestral property after hearing that the property was being grabbed.

Around 1:30am, the criminals beat up Soheli, leaving him seriously injured.

He was rushed to Chakaria Upazila Health Complex where doctors declared him dead.

Ashraf Hossain, inspector (investigation) of Chakaria Police Station, a man, Abdul Mannan, 34, was arrested for his alleged involvement in the murder.

"If we receive any

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Villagers trust magic scarecrows to ward off Covid



REUTERS, Decho

Cambodian villager Ek Chan has avoided the coronavirus so far without masks or social distancing but rather the scarecrows she has made to keep the deadly virus at bay.

Ek Chan's two scarecrows, known locally as "Ting Mong", guard the gate of her house in Kandal province near the capital Phnom Penh, giving her peace of mind.

The practice has existed for more than a century in some Cambodian villages, where residents like 64-year-old Ek Chan trust their ability to fend off evil spirits and disease.

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Homemaker stabbed, burnt to death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A housewife was stabbed and burnt to death in her flat by unidentified criminals in the capital's Kafrul area yesterday.

The victim, Shima Begum, 33, was the wife of Shahjahan Sikder.

Selimuzzaman, officer-in-charge of Kafrul Police Station, said the woman used to live with her husband in a flat on the sixth floor of a 10-storey under-construction building in Baishteki area. Her stepson along with his wife also lived with them, the OC said.

There had been a longstanding family feud. Neighbours said they heard them quarrels even yesterday morning, the police officer said.

The body was recovered around 1:00pm.

"We are suspecting that she was first beaten up, stabbed and then burnt to death. Most parts of her

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ANGER OVER REFORMS Indian farmers vow to step up protests

Reject govt appeal to lift blockade

REUTERS, New Delhi

Thousands of protesting Indian farmers yesterday refused to comply with a government appeal to stop blockading major highways into New Delhi and vowed to intensify their action against Prime Minister Narendra Modi's liberalising reforms.

Farmers from states around the capital have been demonstrating for three straight days against reforms that deregulate the sector and allow farmers to sell produce to buyers

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PRAYER TIMING NOVEMBER 30

| | | | | |
|-------------|-------|------|---------|------|
| Fazr | Zohr | Asr | Maghrib | Esha |
| AZAN 5-05 | 12-45 | 3-45 | 5-21 | 7-00 |
| JAMAAT 5-40 | 1-15 | 4-00 | 5-24 | 7-30 |

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



PHOTO: RAJIB RATHAN

Lorries and trailers, used for carrying goods from Chattogram Port, are triple parked on the Port Connecting Road. The vehicles are parked over a kilometre stretch of the busy street in Port Colony area, making the street narrow and causing traffic jams. Even in this narrowed down street, a trucker decides to go against the traffic putting the lives of people on the road at risk. The photo was taken yesterday.

NUCLEAR SCIENTIST KILLING Iran to give 'calculated' response

Says top adviser to Khamenei; Fakhrizadeh's remains taken to shrines ahead of funeral today

AGENCIES

Iran will give a "calculated and decisive" response to the killing of its top nuclear scientist, said a top adviser to Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, while a hardline newspaper suggested Tehran's revenge should include striking the Israeli city of Haifa.

"Undoubtedly, Iran will give a calculated and decisive answer to the criminals who took Martyr Mohsen Fakhrizadeh from the Iranian nation," Kamal Kharrazi, who is also head of Iran's Strategic Council on Foreign Relations, said in a statement.

Fakhrizadeh, long suspected by Western and Israeli government of masterminding a secret nuclear weapons program, was ambushed on a highway near Tehran on Friday and gunned down in his car.

Iran's clerical and military rulers have blamed the Islamic Republic's longtime enemy, Israel, for the killing. Iran has in the past accused Israel of killing several Iranian nuclear scientists since 2010.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office has declined to comment on the killing. An Israeli cabinet minister, Tzachi Hanegbi, said on Saturday he did not

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