

Sohel murder: Charge framing on Oct 30

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The third Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka yesterday fixed October 30 for framing charge against the accused in Sohel Murder Case.

Judge Mollah Mostafa Kamal adjourned the hearing following a time petition by the defence lawyers.

The lawyers of Bunti Islam in a petition said he (Bunti) could not appear before the court as he had gone to America for treatment.

Soheb Chowdhury, a film star, was shot dead by a group of assailants in front of the Club Tramps under Gulshan thana at about 8.00 pm on December 18 in 1998.

Victim's brother Towhidul Islam filed a murder case with Gulshan thana, accusing Adnan Siddiqui the same day.

The IO of the case submitted a charge sheet against nine people including Aziz Mohammad Bhai and Bunti Islam on July 30 in 1999.

Accused Aziz Mohammad Bhai, Adnan Siddiqui, Selim Khan, Farook Abbasi and Harun-ur-Rashid, now on bail, were present in the court. Tariqul Saif Mamun, now in the custody, was also produced in the court.

Meanwhile, the same court directed the authorities concerned to return the passport of Aziz Mohammad Bhai following a petition by his (Aziz) lawyers.

11-party protests govt response to US request

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The left-leaning 11-Party yesterday strongly protested the recent government permission to US forces to use Bangladesh airspace and port facilities to crack down on the Taliban and demanded its immediate cancellation.

In a statement signed by Bazlur Rashid Feroz, the party deplored the terrorist blitz in America last week, in which hundreds of innocent people perished, and offered sympathy to the bereaved families.

However, it expressed reservations about retaliatory attacks against any country without concrete evidence.

Retaliatory attacks cannot give any enduring solution to the long-drawn problems, as terrorism expanded its network into global community, the statement reasoned.

The US administration is making the Afghans the scapegoat in the name of a global coalition to eradicate terrorist outfits, the statement said.

BNP expels 5 rebel candidates

UNB, Dhaka

BNP yesterday expelled five leaders and cancelled their primary membership for contesting the October 1 parliamentary election violating party decision, said a press release.

They are Zakaria Chowdhury (Habiganj-2), Habibur Rahman Habib (Pabna-4), Salauddin Kamran (Noakhali-3), Atiar Rahman (Dinajpur-6) and Nurul Alam (Chittagong-7).

Public holiday on Oct 1

UNB, Dhaka

All government, semi-government, autonomous, semi-autonomous and non-government institutions will remain closed on October 1 on the occasion of the 8th parliamentary election.

The government announced the public holiday so that all officials and employees of the institutions can cast their votes in their respective areas on the day, said an official release.

Husband hacks wife to death, commits suicide in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Husband hacked to death his seven-month pregnant wife and later, committed suicide in the city's Mirpur area in the early hours of yesterday.

Yasmeen Akhter, 25, wife of Mohammad Manik, was killed at her father's residence at 61/1 Harirampur, Mirpur section-1, at about 10:00pm Wednesday.

Manik had had an altercation with her wife and getting angry at one stage stabbed her indiscriminately with a bati (traditional kitchen knife).

When she collapsed on the ground, Manik -- remorseful and penitent -- swallowed poison to commit suicide.

The couple was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where the doctor declared them dead in the early hours. Their six-year-old son Sajib has been orphaned.

Abdur Rob, maternal uncle of Yasmeen, said Manik, who had been jobless for the last two months, was faced with serious financial crises, which might have led to the tragedy. Abdur Rob filed a case with Mirpur Police Station in this regard.

In another incident, wife identified the body of her husband, a rickshaw-puller, yesterday at the DMCH morgue.

Mohammad Akkas Ali, 23, son of Azizur Rahman, hailing from Pranagar, Birganj in Dinajpur, left his North Adabar residence after Esha prayers on Monday and was stabbed to death by unidentified people. A neighbour informed her of her husband's death.

Hospital sources quoting the victim's wife said Akkas wanted to purchase a rickshaw from Taher, a garage owner, but he was refused.

Later, Akkas purchased a rickshaw and kept its necessary papers with Taher, who did not allow him to pull the vehicle.

Asked about the incident, the duty officer of Mohammadpur Police Station said they did not get any information about the death of any rickshaw-puller.

Delhi reacts sharply to Musharraf diatribe

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

India has reacted sharply to Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf's anti-India tirade during an address to the nation Wednesday night in which he sought to defend Islamabad's decision to co-operate with the United States on the hunt for Saudi dissident Osama bin Laden in neighbouring Afghanistan.

Terming Musharraf's remarks as "unwarranted and most regrettable", New Delhi said the issue facing the international community was terrorism and not Indo-Pak relations.

"Instead of focusing on terrorism

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The deaf formed a human chain in front of the Jatiya Press Club yesterday, demanding disabled-oriented programmes in electronic and print media.

4-party lacks unity: Samad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Awami League Presidium member Abdus Samad Azad has said how the four-party alliance can win the election, while it suffers lack of unity.

The country saw an extraordinary level of development activities during the 5-year rule of Awami League, which is why the people will vote for the AL to keep up the flow of development in the days to come, he said.

Azad was addressing a big rally arranged to mark the joining up of ex-chairman of Sylhet Sadar upazila and Pourashava Babur Hossain Babul with the AL.

Chaired by the district AL presi-

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ME ceasefire starts to unravel amid renewed killings

AFP, Gaza City

The fledgling Middle East ceasefire started to crumble yesterday like its predecessors amid slayings and a rapid upswing in violence after a day of calm, as both Israel and the Palestinians traded accusations and pondered their next moves.

A Palestinian man died after being shot in the head by Israeli forces at a checkpoint in the southern Gaza Strip after a drive-by grenade and shooting attack on a nearby Jewish settlement left five Israeli soldiers injured.

There was no immediate confirmation that the 33-year-old

200 hurt as AL, JP activists clash in Rangpur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pre-election clashes involving activists of rival political parties left at least 285 people injured in different parts of the country yesterday.

Of them, 200 were injured in Rangpur, 36 in Sirajganj, 28 in Pabna, 10 in Kushtia and 11 in Bhola.

In Rangpur, at least 200 people, including 15 policemen, were injured in clashes between Awami League and Jatiya Party (E) activists at Mithapukur upazila headquarters.

Police and witnesses said the clash erupted at about 3 pm when both the parties were trying to hold their meetings at the same venue at Mithapukur college ground defying Section 144.

Local administration imposed Section 144 from 1 pm to 10 pm yesterday in the area as tension was mounting there.

Sources said Awami League called the meeting to protest terrorism by JP while JP called the meeting protesting Tuesday's alleged armed attack on their peaceful procession that left seven people

Election results
EC approves modalities of jt transmission

UNB, Dhaka

Election Commission in a meeting yesterday approved the layout of joint broadcasting studio for live transmission of the October 1 election results by BTV and ETV in unison.

The meeting chaired by Chief Election Commissioner MA Syed also discussed the technical aspects of the joint transmission of the results by Bangladesh Television and Ekushey Television.

The commission decided that the state-owned BTV and private channel ETV should transmit the results immediately after they receive the results from the EC.

"There will be a common booth and collective presenters. But there will be no logo of the either channel. Only the logo of Bangladesh Election Commission will be there," said an EC spokesman.

He said the two TV channels would telecast the results from the control room of the EC Secretariat. Bangladesh Betar will also broadcast the results while Radio Metrowave will relay it.

Election Commissioners Shafiqur Rahman, MM Munsef Ali and AK Mohammad Ali were present in yesterday's follow-up meeting.

Attack on AL rally: 69 BNP, Jamaat men sued in Bagerhat

UNB, Bagerhat

Some 69 leaders and workers of 4-party alliance have been sued under the Public Safety Act in connection with the Tuesday's attack on a meeting of Awami League at Kartikia village in sadar upazila.

Local Awami League leader Abul Kalam filed the case with sadar thana on Wednesday.

On Tuesday, some BNP and Jamaat activists attacked a meeting of Awami League at the village leaving some 15 people injured. They also ransacked and looted five houses of AL supporters in the village.



Moinul Hossain Chowdhury, advisor of the caretaker government, deposits his licensed pistol at the Gulshan police station yesterday.

Aman to face stiff challenge

ELECTION 2001

NAZRUL ISLAM, back from Keraniganj

BNP frontrunner Amanullah Aman, who was elected from Keraniganj for three consecutive terms, will face a challenge from Awami League nominee Nasrul Hamid Bipu in the coming parliamentary election, according local people and political circles.

They have differing opinions about the two main contestants in the Dhaka-3 constituency comprising Keraniganj upazila on the outskirts of the city across Buriganga river. But, they would not comment on the prospect of the two candidates.

The other candidates are far behind in the campaign, according to local people. They are Mohammad Saitul Islam of Jatiya Party (Ershad), Habibur Rahman Chancal of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, Mawlawi Abu Zafar Kashem of Khelafat Andolok and Moniruzzaman Rubel, an independent candidate.

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Campaign gathers impetus in Jessore

ELECTION 2001

ROVING CORRESPONDENT

in Jessore

Amid strict implementation of the electoral code of conduct, campaign for the October 1 parliamentary election is going on in full swing in this district town.

With 3.6 lakh voters in Jessore-3 constituency, the largest of the six constituencies in the district, a total of eight contestants under different banners are campaigning here.

But unlike the usual practice, the authorities here have strictly enforced the code of conduct. Use of loudspeakers is only allowed between 2 pm and 8 pm. All ban-

ners, colour posters and any other campaign material that violates electoral rules are non-existent.

Any complaint regarding breach of the code of conduct is promptly dealt with by the local Electoral Enquiry Committee (EEC).

Kazi Shahid Ahmed, an independent candidate from the constituency, was summoned before the EEC comprising Joint District Judge Mohammad Motahar Hossain and Asst. Judge Sheikh Hafizur Rahman yesterday (Thursday).

Ahmed denied allegations brought against him by Awami League candidate Ali Reza Raju that he was luring voters by offering cash, gifts and building materials for

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Response from rich nations on global warming demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Experts and journalists from 20 countries and development agencies yesterday at a global conference demanded effective responses from the developed nations to stave off the worst impact of global warming on the developing countries like Bangladesh.

On the first day of the four-day conference on 'Climate change, sea level rises and water for people' at the CIRDAP auditorium in the

city, speakers stressed the need for creating awareness to combat the impending threat and to address the problem in an international forum.

Although Bangladesh is responsible for only 0.5 per cent of such harmful contribution against Australia's 32.2 per cent and USA's 20.4 per cent, about 3,500 square kilometres of the coastal area is at the risk of inundation.

The conference was told that one metre of sea-level rise would inundate 16 per cent of landmass of

the country and trigger frequent cyclones, severe floods, salinity intrusion and desertification besides related socioeconomic problems.

The Dhaka-based World Water Forum of Journalists (WWF) organised the conference in collaboration with Forum of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh (FEJB), Ministry of Environment and Forest and UNDP.

The conference observed a one-minute silence in the memory of those who perished in the terrorist blitz in the United States on September 11.

Abdul Muyeed Chowdhury, advisor to the caretaker government for Ministries of Information, Housing and Public Works, Food, Forest and Environment and Land, was the chief guest at the inaugural session, which was presided over by FEJB Chairman Quamrul Islam Chowdhury, also the secretary-general of WWF.

Among others, Environment and Forest Secretary Mafuzul Islam, Information Secretary Syed Marghub Morshed, Secretary

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Police asked to take legal action against communal campaign

BSS, Khulna

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Muhammad Nurul Huda yesterday directed field level police officials of the region to take legal steps against those who are carrying out communal campaign.

"There is no scope for making propaganda in the polls campaign by using religious sentiments. If anyone is found violating the code of conduct for the 8th Jatiya Sangsad elections, he or she must have to face punitive measures," he told journalists after reviewing the law and order situation of the greater Khulna district with top police officials.

Huda said effective precautionary measures have been taken to hold the elections peacefully in the region.

None, who would created trouble in holding the elections peacefully, would be spared, said the IGP.

Expressing satisfaction at recovery of illegal arms in the southern region, he said no major untoward incident took place after the caretaker government took office on July 15.

Germany may be home to as many as 100 "sleepers" terrorists -- militants disguised as ordinary people but waiting, sometimes years, before attacking, a state official said yesterday.

Authorities believe the "sleepers" have been trained at camps operated by Osama bin Laden, the prime suspect in last week's terrorist attacks on the United States, said Fritz Behrens, the interior minister of North Rhine-Westphalia state.

Behrens, presenting a regular

report by the state branch of Germany's domestic intelligence agency, gave no details on how estimate was reached. But he added: "We think we know some of them."

According to Stern magazine, the number of these "sleepers" could be up to 30. It cited German intelligence service sources saying they could become active at any moment.

It said the sources had calculated, after talks with other Western intelligence services, that terrorist groups linked to Islamic organisa-

tions were ready to carry out 20 to 30 attacks after the suicide bombings in New York on September 11 that left over 5,000 people presumed dead