



PHOTO: STAR

Candidates running for ward commissioner of the Dhaka City Corporation parade through their respective wards yesterday, carrying banners and election symbols. Elections to the local government body will be held on April 25.

Golam Rasul Nabu murder Order on prayer for remand of 3 BCL leaders Apr 29

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) Court, Dhaka yesterday fixed April 29 for issuing an order on prayer for remand of the three Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) leaders in connection with the murder of Golam Rasul alias Rabul Hasn alias Nabu.

The three -- newly elected president of BCL central unit Liaquat Sikdar, general secretary Nazrul Islam Babu and vice president Rafiqul Islam Kotwal, were produced before the CMM's Court at 12 noon yesterday where the hearing on the remand prayer was held.

The defence lawyers -- Advocate Shaha Khutun, SM Altaf Hossain, M Sajwar Hossain, Abu Syedagar, Abdulla Abu and Abdur Rahman Hawlader submitted a petition seeking bail along with cancellation of the remand prayer.

They maintained that the names of the accused were not in the FIR of the murder case and that they were shown arrested on April 4 in connection with the case. As they were implicated in the case as part of a conspiracy to harass them politically, they were praying for bail and seeking cancellation of the remand prayer, the lawyers added.

The prosecution side opposed the bail petition and prayed for a five-day remand.

After hearing both sides, the court fixed April 29 for ruling on the matter. Magistrate Mohammad Shahidul Islam also directed the authorities concerned to place the

Hasina leaves

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contact tours across the country.

Eighteen teams consisting of AL leaders and lawmakers left Dhaka yesterday on a visit to all districts to rally public opinion against the 'repression let loose by the ruling coalition'.

Hasina's visit to the UK has coincided with the April 25 polls to three city corporations Dhaka, Khulna and Rajshahi -- which her party boycotted, demanding resignation of the chief election commissioner.

The autopsy report of Jamal was not submitted yesterday.

Speedy trial courts

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The magistrates themselves have repeatedly informed the higher authorities in the past that cases were piling up due to manpower shortage.

Asked to focus on and dispose of trials quickly in the speedy trial courts, the magistrates now fear they would be made to pay little attention to the affairs at the magistrate courts, leading to further rise in the pending cases there.

"There is no doubt that there will now be more pending cases in the magistrate courts," lawyer Dr M Zahir said.

The government so far did not seek the Supreme Court's suggestions in appointing and transferring the magistrates to the speedy trial courts.

Law Minister Moudud Ahmed told the BBC Radio Sunday that it was not mandatory to seek the Supreme Court's advice to this end. But the Constitution experts say it is mandatory.

"This violates Article 116 of the Constitution that suggests the government must obtain the Supreme Court's advice in this regard," Dr Zahir pointed out.

"If the government argues that it is not required then it must declare that these magistrates have not been appointed to perform judicial tasks."

"The government can say that these magistrates have been appointed earlier through appropriate procedures. However, the argument would not count, for although they were appointed earlier they have been given new judicial tasks. This violates the spirit of Article 116," he concluded.

Dr Shadim Malik, also a lawyer, yesterday said the speedy trial courts are in violation of the

JCD cadres kidnap school girl in Natore

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

case diary (CD) on the fixed date.

Nabu was shot dead behind a mosque at Khejurtola in Mirbagh under Ramna thana on January 15. Victim's mother Gulia Begum filed a murder case with Ramna thana on the following day accusing unidentified people for the killing of her son.

The three BCL leaders were arrested from in front of the Dhamondi residence of Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina on the night of February 26 as they were coming out of the house after exchanging Eid greetings with the opposition leader.

Probe ordered

FROM PAGE 1

to death in the river, family members alleged. Kapasia police then claimed that Jamal was missing after he had jumped into the river while trying to flee from the police station.

Suba divers of the Fire Brigade trawled the river on Saturday and recovered Jamal's body at around noon. There were marks of torture on his body.

Jamal, who obtained first division with star marks in the SSC exams and first division in HSC exams, was doing his graduation at the Alam Government College.

His namaj-e-janaj was held at Targaon village yesterday and he was buried at his village home. More than 2000 people attended the janaj.

The AL and the BCL leaders alleged that people belonging to the ruling BNP barred many villagers from attending the janaj. A tense situation has been prevailing at Kapasia since the incident.

Two policemen -- Assistant Sub-inspector of the Kapasia Police Station Abu Bakar Siddique and guard Altaf Hossain -- were suspended for negligence of duty on Friday.

In protest against the police excess, the AL brought out a mourning procession in Kapasia yesterday. It was attended by AL presidium members Tofail Ahmed and Advocate Zohra Tajuddin. Zohra Tajuddin also met the victim's family members.

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Shazneen

FROM PAGE 1

overnment's list of 100 most sensational cases for speedy trial.

Meanwhile, cross-examination of the first prosecution witness in the case, Additional SP of CID Mojibur Rahman, was completed yesterday.

Mojibur Rahman, also the complainant in the case, framed charge against the accused on May 28, 2000. His cross-examination began on July 9 the same year.

Cross-examination of only one witness has been completed in the last 23 months although the Women And Children Repression Prevention Act provides for trial of such a case in 90 days. According to Sharifuddin Khan Mukul, Special PP in the case, the prosecution is taking long time due to delay in cross-examination of the complainant.

Among others, Special PP Arfanuddin Khan, ABM Sharifuddin Khan Mukul and Advocate Mahbub Ahmed appeared for the state while Advocate Moshafe Hossain Kajal and MA Kamrul Hossain Khan Aslam appeared for the accused.

Judge Mohammad Shah Alam Mia of Special Court for Women and Children Repression Prevention, Dhaka framed charges against the accused.

Shahidul Islam alias Shahid is the prime accused in the case. Syed Sajjad Mainuddin Hasan alias Hasan, Badal, Shaniram Mandal, Parveen and Minu have been charged with abetting the crime.

The murder case, pending with the First Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka was earlier stayed by an order of the Supreme Court. The order will remain valid till disposal of the rape case.

Rare bird

FROM PAGE 1

grove pitta in his bird book and their residential status in the Sundarbans is a question mark.

The bill of this mangrove pitta (Pitta megarhyncha) is little longer and their uniform brown crown with narrow buffish supercilium and deeper blue wing coverts and rump are more prominent than that of the Indian pitta.

This bird was photographed at Jantali Khal near Katka Sanctuary office of the Sundarbans early morning when it was singing perched on a kewra tree.

Armed forces

FROM PAGE 1

The EC will deploy five companies of army personnel in Khulna city and four in Rajshahi city. The other arrangements will be the same as the capital's. The EC sources said that 150 of the 241 polling centres are vulnerable, while it did not identify any centre as vulnerable in Rajshahi city.

In running summary trials, the EC has planned to deploy 45 magistrates in the three metropolises. They will try election-related offenders. As many as 505 magistrates will be attached with the army and BDR teams.

"The fresh deployment of security forces three days ahead of the election would help shore up confidence among voters," said an election official justifying the deployment.

The EC has asked the law enforcers to take necessary steps against any suspected of visiting the election atmosphere. The authorities have also been asked to drag the listed criminals and recover the illegal arms.

The ruling party-backed candidates are intimidating their rivals, and to make things worse, the law enforcers are siding against them, some independent ward commissioner candidates in Dhaka alleged.

With the exception of a few independent and ruling party candidates, most aligned with the Awami League are facing intimidation.

"As the city election is being dominated by money and muscle-flexing, we feel that the election is going to be a mockery," said a senior citizen in the city's Khilgaon area yesterday.

According to the statement, the BNP secretary general returned to Dhaka in a private car with no National Flag.

"We want to make it clear that BNP as well as the four-party alliance is fully respectful to the Election Commission and these parties have been extending the best cooperation towards the EC to hold the elections in a free, fair and neutral manner," it said.

BNP called upon all concerned not to mislead the people as well as the EC by making such false, fabricated and baseless allegations in future.

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Under this programme, introduced marking 30th anniversary of Japan's diplomatic tie with Bangladesh, 30 professionals, 14 from government jobs, will go to Japan for one to two years higher studies.

Economic Relations Division (ERD) Secretary Anisul Huq Chowdhury and Ambassador of Japan in Dhaka Jiro Kobayashi also spoke at the function.

The minister expressed his reservations about some emerging terms such as civil society, ombudsman and human rights commission, saying these are external concepts with less applicability and relevance to Asian practices.

"The term ombudsman is not known to many countries, perhaps not heard in Japan also. It's a Scandinavian concept," the minister said, citing the hollowness of the

post in a South Asian country.

Referring to Bangladeshi experience about sweeping skepticism, he asked how the post of ombudsman or Human Rights Commission could be accepted to all since the reputation of a former chief justice and that of a chief election commissioner could be questioned by certain quarters.

"Then who will chair those posts? I could not choose persons for proposed commissions for income and expenditure," the minister told his audience, saying that the country's constitution and laws safeguard human rights well enough.

The minister regretted how bad management wastes huge investments in education and health sectors in Bangladesh. Despite

government spending 60 to 65 per cent of education budget at primary level, teaching is not up to the mark.

Bangladesh has got the best health structure in Asia having network up

Extortionists attack LGED office at Mymensingh

OUR CORRESPONDENT, M'singh

A group of extortionists attacked the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) office Saturday evening as the executive engineer of LGED refused to pay a toll of Tk 10,000 demanded by the group.

According to the FIR filed yesterday with Kotwali thana by executive engineer Md. Shahidur Rahman Pramanik, a group of extortionists allegedly demanded a toll of Tk 10,000 from quality control engineer Md. Ashraf Ali Khan on Saturday, upon which he paid them a sum of Tk 3,000.

Later, they forcibly entered the room of executive engineer and demanded the same amount of money from him. But as he refused to pay, the extortionists tried to physically assault him.

The group also ransacked his room, damaging an air-conditioner and windowpanes, and the glasses of three official vehicles. They also cut off the phone connection in the building.

Being informed, police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control after baton-charge and firing from a shotgun.

Three people were injured in the incident.

Sandwip tense: Some documents shifted from UNO office

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Sandwip thana administration yesterday shifted some documents and papers from the old UNO office complex at Harishpur to the new one at Haraonam amid tight security.

A contingent of over 200 policemen, deployed in the offshore island on Friday following violent resistance to the shifting, maintained a tight security during the shifting.

The situation was calm yesterday as there was no more resistance by people of Harishpur and Kuchiamora areas in the old part of the town.

At least three persons were killed and over fifty injured as people of the old part of the town, resisting the shifting, clashed with those of the new part of the town and police on Thursday and Friday.

When contacted yesterday, local MP Mostafa Kamal Pasha told this correspondent that the situation was calm.

He claimed that the issue has been settled through talks with representatives of the old part of the town.

"Twelve Union Parishad chairmen agreed to give statement supporting the shifting", the MP said.

But some local people denied that there was a settlement through talks and that the 12 UP chairmen supported the shifting.

Saifur: Donor 'excesses'

FROM PAGE 12

for Human Resource Development scholarship at the NEC auditorium yesterday.

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And Awami League has already become frustrated seeing massive development done by the four-party government. "Because," she told the gathering, "while in power they looted everything and now were out to destroy public property."

Khaleda Zia criticised the opposition MPs for enjoying all facilities, including red passport, without going to parliament. She also referred to an absentee Awami League lawmaker's fraudulent act to secure visa from a foreign embassy.

She told her audience that the opposition did not want development. "They did nothing for development while in power and now they were disrupting government initiatives to ensure massive development across the country."

"Not only this, they are tarnishing our image abroad by branding the country as Taliban and fundamentalist. They are launching a campaign to stop foreign aid," she said accusing the opposition of "anti-state activities".

Khaleda Zia reassured that Bangladesh is not a fundamentalist country and there is no Taliban here. People of all religions, including Hindus, Buddhists and Christians, are living here in peace and communal harmony.

She reminded that people of all faiths unitedly fought for the country's independence and they were determined to build Bangladesh as a developed and prosperous country in future through combined efforts.

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