

Polls schedule before meeting our demands to mean CEC's farewell

Jalil tells mourning rally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of the Awami League-led 14-party alliance yesterday alleged that the chief election commissioner (CEC) is preparing to announce the election schedule before realising their demands for reconstitution of the Election Commission (EC).

"Announcing the election schedule before meeting our demands will see the chief election commissioner's own farewell," Jalil said at a mourning rally organised by city Awami League (AL) in front

of the Nabisco factory at Tejgaon in protest of the killing of Wajullah.

CEC MA Aziz and three other commissioners must be removed for the sake of holding a free and fair election, Jalil, also AL general secretary, told the rally.

Accusing the president of failing to act neutrally as the chief of caretaker government since assuming office, he urged the people to strengthen their movement for implementation of the 11-point task.

Speaking at the rally, AL President Member Tofail Ahmed

said the president, who was sworn in as the chief of a non-party neutral caretaker government, through his activities in the last 17 days has turned the caretaker government "partisan".

It is regretful that the CEC and other commissioners, who have been publicly despised, met the president to discuss election schedule ignoring the caretaker government advisers' proposal, Tofail said.

"Wajullah's sacrifice will not go in vain. We will realise the demands Wajullah and others gave their lives

for and this should be our oath today," he said.

Wajullah was killed at the Sonargaon intersection at Karwan Bazar on November 13 when a police truck drove through a group of 14-party activists on the second day of their countrywide blockade programme demanding implementation of the alliance's 11-point task.

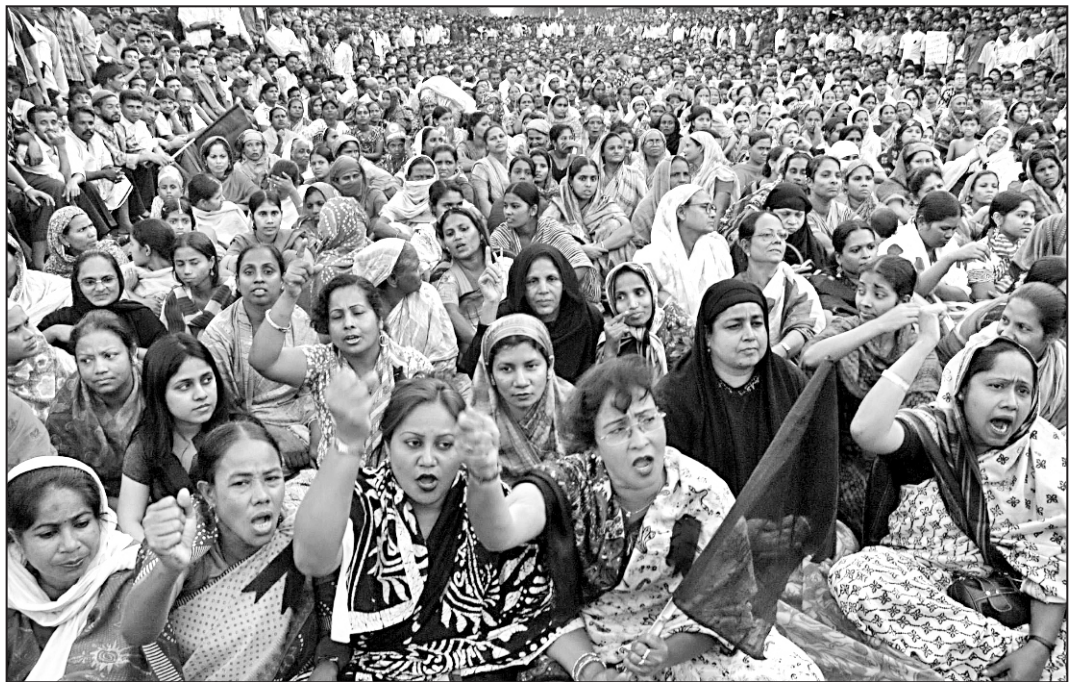
Tofail urged the president to meet their demands within the stipulated time—"before the ongoing movement turns into one for the president's resignation".

Referring to former prime minister Khaleda Zia's saying the election will be held "no matter who takes part and who does not", another AL Presidium Member Abdur Razzak said no election will be held in the country excluding the AL-led 14-party alliance.

The leaders of the 14-party alliance said a free and fair election is not possible without removal of the CEC and three other commissioners and reconstitution of the EC. They vowed to continue their movement until their demands are met.

The non-stop countrywide blockade programme will resume from Monday if the president fails to meet their demand within the period, they warned.

Senior 14-party leaders Suranjit Sengupta, Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Matia Chowdhury, Obaidul Quader, Hasanul Haque Inu, Rashed Khan Menon, Mohammad Nasim, Dr HBM Iqbal, Mofazzel Hossain Chowdhury Maya and Pankaj Bhattacharya also spoke at the rally.



City Awami League stages a demonstration in front of Nabisco factory at Tejgaon in the city yesterday protesting the killing of Wajullah who was killed under the wheels of a police van during the countrywide blockade by AL-led 14-party combine.

Act neutrally, allow advisers to function properly

Protirodh Committee urges CA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Samajik Protirodh Committee, an alliance of 38 rights organisations, yesterday urged the Chief Adviser to the caretaker government (CG) to act neutrally and allow the advisers to perform their duties properly.

At a press conference at the National Press Club in the city, the alliance leaders placed a 16-point demand to the (CG) to meet them within its tenure and if it is not possible then refer them to next government for their realisation.

The demands included removing chief election commissioner (CEC), reconstituting the Election Commission (EC), improving law and order and recovering illegal arms to hold a free and fair election.

Besides, fixing electoral expenditure and cancelling nomination if the limit is violated, declaring loan defaulters incompetent for contesting election and reshuffling the administration from central to grassroots level are also included in their demands.

The alliance also demanded ban on using religion as a tool of electoral campaign, preparing fresh voter list and cancelling recruitment of 300 election officers.

In a written statement, Rekha Chowdhury of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad demanded restoring Women's Development Policy 1997 and ensuring women's equal rights in all spheres of life.

"The present caretaker government is not acting as a collective body and as such unnecessary delay is being made in taking decisions," said Dr Hamida Hossain, a rights activist.

Quoting a remark of Adviser Yasmeen Murshed, Mahila Parishad General Secretary Ayesha Khanam said the advisers are acting irresponsibly while they should deliver balanced speech.

The president assumed the charge of chief adviser violating the constitution and recruited an information officer outside the organisational structure, journalist Nasimun Ara Huq said, adding

that he even did not give any clarification on the circular ordering for army deployment.

The speakers said the chief adviser should be neutral in performing his duty for holding a free and fair election.

Nazma Akhter of Awaj Foundation, Selina Khalek of Bangladesh Mahila Samity and Mamta Begum of Mahila Muktioddha Sangsad also spoke at the press conference where representatives of Karmajibi Nari, Bangladesh Nari Pragati Sangha, Ain O Shalish Kendra, Women for Women and Baushi were present.



Mahila Parishad General Secretary Ayesha Khanam speaks at a press conference at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

'Ensure removal of CEC'

UNB, Dhaka

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) yesterday urged the President/ Chief Adviser to Caretaker Government to ensure the removal of Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Justice MA Aziz and Election Commissioner SM Zakaria to create an atmosphere for free and fair election.

A meeting of the JSD standing committee also expressed concern at the President's "failure" in creating neutral atmosphere for elections. The meeting said it appears that the President is acting under BNP-Jamaat's blueprint and influence.

"If the President fails to understand the minds of the people, consequences will be bad," a resolution of the meeting said.

The resolution blamed the President for pushing the nation towards uncertainty. It urged the people to remain alert against any conspiracy to foil the elections and democracy.

JSD President Hasanul Huq Inu presided over the meeting.



Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said in a forecast.

Highest temperature 32.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Cox's Bazar and lowest 16.5 degree Celsius at Rajshahi.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:12pm today and rises at 6:16am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature	Humidity in percentage
	Max	Min
Dhaka	30.2	20.5
Chittagong	31.7	21.5
Rajshahi	29.6	16.5
Khulna	30.5	19.0
Barisal	30.5	18.5
Sylhet	31.5	18.8
Cox's Bazar	32.0	22.8

'Cancel contractual appointments in edn sector'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Front of Teachers and Employees (NFTE) yesterday demanded cancellation of all contractual appointments in the education sector.

Leaders of NFTE in a statement alleged that wives of several former ministers still hold different key posts and demanded their removal from the posts.

Besides, they also demanded removal of the vice chancellors of National University, Open University and chairs of all education boards.

FIRE AT EC'S RESIDENCE None held yet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

None has so far been arrested in connection with the firing of several shots at the residence of Election Commissioner Mahmud Hasan Mansur at Mohammadpur in the city on Thursday.

Different branches of police and members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) are investigating the incident to find out the masterminds behind the attack, said a police source.

Police believe that the attack was carried out to create panic among the election commissioners and other political leaders living in the area.

Additional police have been deployed and different security measures taken around the house along with other houses of election commissioners, judges and political activists to avoid further untoward incident.

Obituary

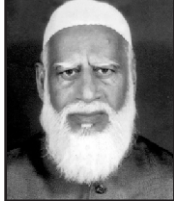
Khondoker Abu Taher, former lawmaker from Tangail, passed away due to old age complications last night.

He is survived by his wife, two sons and a daughter.

His namaz-e-janaaza will be held at Dhanmondi Road 7 mosque after Zohr prayers today.

Admirers have been requested to pray for salvation of his departed soul.

Shafiuddin Dewan



Birdem Hospital in the city on Thursday at the age of 76, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, two sons and three daughters.

Prof ANMA Zaher, chairman, board of directors, Principal Maulana Zainul Abedin, vice chairman and ATM Harun-ur-Rashid Chowdhury, executive president of Islami Bank Bangladesh Limited condole the death of Shafiuddin Dewan.



Immigration police rescue 31 women at Zia International Airport in the city yesterday, who were reportedly being trafficked to Libya. (Story on Page 1)

Six killed in road accidents

STAR REPORT

At least six people were killed and 45 others injured in separate road accidents in Habiganj, Satkhira, Brahmanbaria, Mymensingh, Barisal and Khagrachhari yesterday.

UNB from Habiganj reports: Two people were killed and 30 others injured when a bus fell into a roadside ditch on Dhaka-Sylhet highway in Brahmanbaria area of Sadar upazila early yesterday.

Nadera Begum, 18, daughter of Shamsur Ali of Mirpur in Dhaka, was killed on the spot while Dulal Miah, 30, of Lakshara village in Sylhet, succumbed to his injuries at the Sadar Hospital.

Police and local sources said the accident occurred at 5:00am when a Sylhet-bound coach hit a roadside tree and fell into the ditch as its driver lost control over the steering.

Of the injured, two were rushed to the Sadar Hospital.

Police seized the bus, but the driver was absconding.

Another report adds: A truck hit a bicyclist identified as Abdul Karim Sarder, 55, from behind at Thirishmat Crossing on Satkhira-Khulna Highway in Satkhira yesterday morning, leaving him dead on the spot.

In Bahmanbaria, one Khurshid Miah, 47, was crushed under the wheels of a microbus at Khoriala Bus Stand in Ashuganj upazila yesterday.

Later, local people put up barricade on the road for half-an-hour demanding a speed breaker in front of the bus stand.

Our correspondent from Mymensingh adds: A truck driver was crushed under the wheels of his own vehicle on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway at Bailor in Trishal upazila yesterday morning.

The deceased was identified as Abdus Shahid.

The accident occurred when a aubergine-laden Dhaka-bound truck from Jamalpur skidded off the road as its driver lost control over the steering. The driver was crushed under the wheels of the truck when he tried to flee the scene at around 7:00am. He died on the spot. Road communication on this highway was disrupted for an hour.

The body was sent to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH) morgue for autopsy.

Our Correspondent from Barisal says: A bicyclist crushed under the wheels of a passenger bus on the Barisal-Banaripara-Swarupkati road yesterday.

The dead was identified as Firoz, 22, a bicyclist.

Witnesses and hospital sources said, the accident occurred when a Barisal-bound passenger bus from Banaripara hit Firoz from behind near Guthia Baitul Aman Mosque at about 3:00pm while he was going to

Raipasha.

He was rushed to Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital in critical condition where he succumbed to his injuries at 4:30pm.

His body was handed over to relatives after lodging a case with Uzirpur Police Station.

The agitated mob put up barricade on the Barisal-Banaripara-Swarupkati road since the afternoon and was continuing till filing of this report.

The victim's relatives said Firoz died without treatment as there was no doctor to attend him at the hospital.

Our correspondent from Khagrachhari adds: At least 15 people were injured, 10 of them critically, in a road accident while a passenger Zeep collided head-on with a truck at Champaghat under Khagrachhari Sadar upazila here at around 11:00am yesterday.

The injured are Zaitishar Chakma 47, Sunity Bikash Chakma 40, Zaitindra Tripura 40, Sekander Ali 28, Hemal Chakma 10, Subrata Chakma 40, Bijoy Kumar Chakma 55, Safiqul Islam 35, Zaman 45 and Abul Hashem.

The critically injured were rushed to the Khagrachhari Adhunik Sadar Hospital while five others to Mohalchhari upazila health complex.

Reception to mountaineers

DU CORRESPONDENT

Bangla Mountaineering and Tracking Club (BMTCC) yesterday accorded a reception to three Bangladeshi mountaineering teams, including a female one, who successfully finished three expeditions to the Himalayas recently.

At the ceremony held at the National Press Club in the city, the BMTCC also presented a slide show and video clips of the three expeditions.

The five-member female team led by Sadia Sultana Sampa completed a 15-day tracking at Everest Base-camp on October 10, while two other teams finished their expeditions, one to Tharphuchi and the other to Khang-giakse.

Sampa described their experience of tracking to the audience saying, "It is a great success that we reached the Everest Base-camp but this is not the end. We will have to climb to the Everest summit."

The other members of the female tracking team are: Badrunessa Ruma, Afrin Khan, Jesmin Ali and Nishat Mojmudar.

Sirajul Haq Sagar depicted his lone experience of 18,580-feet high Tharphuchi summit expedition on October 13, 2006.

Sajal Khaleid, leader of the three-member Khang-giakse tracking team, who started tracking on October 11 from Leho, described their experience.

His other team members are Reaz Ahmed and Saeed Nazim.

All the climbers are members of the BMTCC.

BMTCC expedition planner Musa Ibrahim presided over the function while daily Prothom Alo Deputy Editor Anisul Haque was present as special guest.

Renowned writer and scientist Professor Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, who was invited to the function, could not attend. However, he sent a letter, which was read out by the founder of the BTMC Inam Ali Haq.

Addressing the function, Musa Ibrahim envisaged that Bangladeshis would conquer the Everest by the year 2010.

Chehlum

BSS, Dhaka

Chehlum of Alpha Ali, daughter of Akbar Kabir, will be held at her 44, Park Road residence at Baridhara in the city after Asr prayers today.

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to attend the mahfil to pray for salvation of the departed soul, said a press release.



Mountaineers pose for photograph with the guests at a reception at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

Sack 4 advisers for holding talks with political parties

Demand Pro-BNP professionals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pro-BNP professionals at a roundtable yesterday urged President/Chief Adviser to caretaker government Iajuddin Ahmed to sack four advisers who held dialogue with different political parties "violating the oath to the constitution".

The roundtable on Ninth National Election 2007-Present Political Climate was organised by Bangladesh Sammlita Peshajibi Parishad at the National Press Club in the city.

The professionals said the Awami League-led 14-party coalition is now hatching conspiracies so that the Election Commission and the caretaker government cannot conduct the coming general election in January.

They called upon the president to make arrangements for announcing the election schedule and take stern action against those who are demanding the removal of Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) MA Aziz and other election commissioners.

"We appreciate the activities of the president. He is performing his duties under heavy pressure. We thank him as he did not compromise with the demands of Awami League," said Sadek Khan, chairman of the Press Institute of Bangladesh.

Prof Dr MA Majed, former adviser to caretaker government, said it is the first and foremost duty of the chief adviser and other advisers to hold election in time for safeguarding the democracy.

Senior lawyer TH Khan urged the caretaker government to arrest misinterpreters of the constitution to protect democracy.

He alleged that pro-Awami League lawyers have been misinterpreting the constitution under the banner of Supreme Court Bar Association and forming human chains and chanting slogans on the Supreme Court premises for long.

"It is completely illogical to demand

Tributes paid to Bhasani

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

The 30th death anniversary of veteran political leader Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani was observed yesterday.

To mark the day, different political, social and cultural organisations organised various programmes at the mazar of the great leader at Santosh in Tangail.

The Santosh Islamic University Trust Board and Maulana Bhasani University of Science and Technology jointly organised a two-day programmes to pay homage to the legendary leader.

The programmes included placing wreaths, offering fateha and holding milad mahfil at his mazar, special prayer, destitute feeding, discussion meeting, blood donation, painting competition for children, session of spiritual songs, photo exhibition and handicrafts exhibition.

Thousands of admirers of Maulana Bhasani from different parts of the country and outside came to his mazar at Santosh and paid tributes to the leader of the oppressed people.

Different social and cultural organisations also placed wreath at the mazar.

These included Maulana Bhasani University of Science and Technology, Santosh Islamic University Trust Board, Maulana Bhasani Foundation, International Farakka Committee and Khoda-e-Khedmatgar.

Different political parties also placed wreath at the mazar. These included Awami League (AL), Jatiya Party (Ershad), Jatiya Party (Manju), Krishak Samik Janata League (KSJL), NAP (Bhasani), Workers' Party and JSD.

Tangail district BNP organised a memorial meeting at Santosh.

Former minister for environment and forests and BNP leader Tariqul Islam attended the meeting as chief guest.

With Tangail district BNP Vice-president Shamsul Haque in the chair, the meeting was addressed by former minister for jute and textiles Shajahan Siraj, former state minister for civil Aviation Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, former state minister for expatriate's welfare and overseas employment Lutfur Rahman Khan Azad, former deputy minister for information Abdus Salam Pintu.

Five held in murder case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detective and Criminal Intelligence branch of police, formerly known as Detective Branch, arrested five people accused in Awami Swechhasebak League leader Haji Manir Uddin Manu murder case from Plierbagh area in Mirpur on Thursday.

The arrestees are Noman Ibn Bashar alias TVS Babu, Nazmul Huda alias Naju, Jashim, Mahfuz and Hafiz.

Police said the arrestees are killing-squad members of the infamous Shahadat Group, which allegedly carried out the murders of several businessmen of Mirpur area after failing to get tolls from them.

Police said they also seized a motorbike used in Manu's murder at Faridpur Cold Storage Ltd compound near Rajbari crossing in Faridpur district.

They said Babu and Nazmul top the list of criminals in Faridpur and they are accused in seven criminal cases including the sensational Ali and Karnize murder cases.

A gang shot Manu, a businessman, dead as he was supervising a feast for destitute people on the 31st death anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in the city's Mirpur area on August 15. A bystander rickshaw-puller was also injured in the incident.

Qulkhwani



at Mohammadpur in the city after Asr prayers today, says a press release.

Ali Tareque, also a journalist, passed away due to a massive brain stroke on Thursday. He was laid to rest with state honour at the Mirpur Martyred Intellectuals' Graveyard after Juma prayers yesterday.

Admirers and friends have been requested to attend the qulkhwani and pray for salvation of the departed soul.

DHAKA

TODAY

Discussion

Jatiyatabadi Peshajibi Parishad will hold a discussion on 'Neutral general election and the contemporary politics'. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 3:00pm.

Rotary Dhaka Central

The regular meeting of Rotary Club of Dhaka Central will be held. Venue: Dhaka Club. Time: 1:30pm.