

City corporation elections before JS polls if EC is ready

Says LGRD adviser

UNB, Bhaluka

LGRD Adviser Anwarul Iqbal has said the election to some local government bodies, including the city corporations, could be held before the parliamentary polls if the Election Commission can complete its preparations, including the voter list.

He said the tenures of some city corporations will expire in June this year. "If the Election Commission can complete its preparations, election to Dhaka, Rajshahi and Khulna City Corporations could be held."

Talking to journalists after inaugurating a new programme styled "Police Open Day" and Bhaluka Model Thana in Mymensingh yesterday, he said parliamentary elections will be held as soon as the Election Commission could complete its preparations.

Bhaluka Model Thana is part of the police reform programme being implemented with financial support from the European Commission, UNDP and DFID.

Replying to a question, Anwarul

Iqbal said like any other Third World countries, political governments in Bangladesh had influenced the police department. On completion of the Police Reform programme, he believes, police would be independent and be able to work in an atmosphere to be free from political interference.

British High Commissioner Anwar Choudhury who was present on the occasion said the UK and the European Commission will provide financial support to the Election Commission unconditionally.

The British envoy said he believes that the EC is working independently and working very hard.

About the time for the general election, he said the polls should be held as soon as possible. The chief adviser earlier stated that it would be held by the end of 2008, he said.

The High Commissioner said, "Not necessarily the election will be held by December next. It could be held in January next, it could be held in March, September or June."

Earlier, the LGRED adviser addressed the inaugural ceremony

of the Police Open Day and Bhaluka Model Thana as chief guest on the police station premises.

Anwar Choudhury, Head of the European Commission Delegation to Bangladesh Stefan Frowein, Home Secretary Abdul Karim, IGP Noor Muhammad and National Director of Police Reform Programme and Additional IGP NBK Tripura also addressed the function.

Mymensingh Police Super Rafiqul Islam presided.

Anwarul Iqbal emphasised friendly relations between the communities and the police based on mutual understanding, trust and cooperation to prevent crimes.

He said partnerships between the police and the communities, especially vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, can pave the way for the general people to voice their grievances as well as their suggestions to improve the police service.

Saarc Youth Camp in Bangladesh this year

UNB, Dhaka

The first Saarc Youth Camp-2007, rallying the youths aged 18-24 from the eight member-countries of the forum, will be held in Bangladesh at this year-end.

A total of 120 youths, including 50 from the host-country Bangladesh, will join the maiden meet of this kind. Of the rest 70 participants, 10 each will come from the seven other Saarc member-countries.

The programme was disclosed at a meeting in the city yesterday with acting secretary of Youth and Sports Dr M Golam Mostafa Talukder in the chair.

A national organising committee, headed by the secretary, was formed for successfully holding the Saarc Youth Camp.

Poet Nazrul's birth anniversary programmes

BSS, Mymensingh

Mymensingh district administration has taken up a three-day programme to observe the 108th birth anniversary of National Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam at Darirampur in Trishal.

The celebrations will begin tomorrow. All necessary preparations in this regard have been completed, said district administration sources.

The programme will begin with a colourful procession.

Dhaka Divisional Commissioner Ekram Ahmed will inaugurate the programme as the chief guest, with Deputy Commissioner of Mymensingh Md Shamsul Alam in the chair. Mymensingh Police Superintendent Md Rafiqul Islam will attend the programme as special guest.

Nazrul spent a few years at Darirampur and studied at Darirampur High School.

Our DU Correspondent adds: The Dhaka University (DU) authorities have also taken up an elaborate programme to mark the birth anniversary of the poet tomorrow.

Teachers, students, officials and employees will place floral wreaths at the grave of the poet beside the DU central mosque at 6:15am on the day, a DU press release said.

Later, a discussion will also be held on the grave premises, with DU Vice-chancellor Prof SMA Faiz in the chair.

Nazrul was born on May 25 in 1899 at village Churulia of 24 Parganas district in West Bengal, India. Through his powerful poems, Nazrul had inspired people to fight against injustice and repression of the British colonial rule.

Nazrul's songs and poems were also a great source of inspiration for freedom fighters during the Liberation War in 1971.

One killed in Satkhira blast

UNB, Satkhira

One of the miscreants was killed while blasting a series of bombs at a house at Magura village in Tala upazila, leaving four house inmates injured on Tuesday midnight.

Tala Police Station Officer-in-Charge (OC) Abdur Razzak said a conflict was on between Abdur Majid and his stepbrother Taibur Rahman over the ownership of a piece of land.

Taibur along with his supporters came to the house of Majid and tried to kidnap him around midnight. At one stage of scuffle with Majid and his family members, Taibur's men exploded 7-8 bombs, leaving one of their members dead. The identity of the deceased could not be known immediately.

Abdul Majid, his wife Shahanur Begum, sister-in-law Zahura Khatun and Abdul Aziz were injured during the bomb blasts. They were rushed to a local hospital.

New chairperson of Lions Multiple District 315



Md Omar Shafayat Kawsar M.J.F., district governor, Lions District 315 B-2 Bangladesh, has been elected the council chairperson of Lions Multiple District 315 Bangladesh for the year 2007-2008, says a press release.

The election was held at the 20th Annual Multiple Convention 2007 at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the city on Friday.



PHOTO: AL

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina listens to song performed by Chaitanno Shilpi Gosthi when leaders of Shariatpur district Jubo League meet her at Sudha Sadan in the city yesterday.

MoU to have positive impact on Bangladeshi workers

Says UAE minister

UNB, Dhaka

UAE Labour Minister Dr Ali bin Abdullah Al Kaabi yesterday said the memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed with Bangladesh would have a positive impact on Bangladeshi workforce in the UAE labour market.

"This is the beginning of a long lasting relations in terms of Bangladeshi manpower and the UAE," he told reporters at Zia International Airport prior to his departure ending his three-day official visit to Dhaka.

The MoU signed by the two governments is aimed at ensuring the rights and interests of Bangladeshi workers in the United Arab Emirate (UAE). Presently, more than 400,000 workers are employed in the oil-rich Gulf country.

Replying to a question, Dr Al Kaabi said although his ministry has no control over the recruitment of workers, which is done by the private sector on its requirements, "we're looking forward" to see more skilled and semi-skilled workers from Bangladesh.

He, however, said the Bangladeshi workers would have to make their presence felt in the UAE labour market by improving their skills and efficiency.

Dr Al Kaabi, who visited some technical training centres in Dhaka, said Bangladeshi workers having technical and computer training would have an edge over others in the UAE labour market.

He pointed out that the UAE government has recently changed

some laws ensuring timely payment of salaries to overseas workers as well as standard housing and accommodation and compulsory health insurance for them.

"I like to say that all workers should respect the laws. Otherwise, they will jeopardise their contracts and put them in illegal status," the UAE labour minister said, adding that once a worker is banned for breaching his contract, he would be banned in all other GCC countries.

He said: "As we protect their rights, they should not breach the laws."

The UAE government, he said, has also taken some measures to establish direct coordination between the ministries of labour and justice so that the court cases relating to disputes between workers and employers could be settled quickly.

About the use of children as camel jockeys in the UAE, Dr Al Kaabi said the UAE government has banned the practice last year and restricted the entry of children under the age of 18.

He also said the UAE has signed agreements with UNICEF and put US\$ 20 million for rehabilitation of the children used earlier as camel jockeys. Under the agreement, UNICEF will provide 10,000 Dirham

for each child.

Expressing satisfaction over his visit, Dr Al Kaabi said: "We feel like we are at home. Bangladesh is a sister country for us."

Foreign Affairs Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, who saw off the UAE minister at the airport, said the remittance from the expatriate workers would exceed US\$ 6 billion this year. A record number of 65,000 workers went abroad only in April, he added.

He said 2,000 to 3,000 workers would go abroad everyday in the last week of this month. Of them, 800 to 1,000 will go to Malaysia.

"Since the remittance from our workers constitute a major part of our foreign exchange (earnings) and makes a great contribution to our development, we need to ensure the rights and interests of these poor workers and use their hard-earned money in organised fashion," Iftekhar Chowdhury said.

The government would try to sign MoUs with other countries where Bangladeshi workers are going for jobs, he said, adding that a MoU would be signed with South Korea during his visit to Seoul early next month.

Fish oil treatment for heart attack victims

BBC ONLINE

Doctors are being advised to prescribe oily fish or omega-3 fatty acid supplements to heart attack patients.

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) believes this is an effective way to cut the risk of further heart attacks.

It is the first time NICE has recommended lifestyle change - alongside drugs - in guidance on preventing repeat attacks.

Patient representatives said the measures could have a big impact.

The guidelines update the previous set produced six years ago, and the new lifestyle section says patients should be advised to give up smoking, be physically active for 20-30 minutes a day, and eat a Mediterranean-style diet.

Professor Gene Feder, Chair of the Guideline Development Group, said: "The growing evidence that cardiac rehabilitation and specific lifestyle changes reduces the risk of second heart attacks, as well as improving quality of life, is not widely recognised."

He said that while drugs could make an enormous difference to patients who have had a heart attack, there is now also compelling evidence that lifestyle changes can play a role too.

Oily fish

Evidence from trials suggests that eating more oily fish can improve survival rates in heart attack patients.

The new guidelines recommend that patients who have had a heart attack in the last three months eat more oily fish or are prescribed certain preparations of omega 3 fatty acids.

Research has found that one specific omega-3 supplement - Omacor - cut the risk of a patient dying suddenly by up to 45 percent. Omacor is currently the only omega-3 supplement with a licence for post-heart attack treatment.

However, the costs of this to the NHS are likely to be quite high, as around 260,000 people have a first heart attack every year, and of those around a fifth may need supplements as they are intolerant to oily fish.

NICE estimates the cost could be around £7million in the first year.

Small changes

John Walsh, a patient representative on the Guideline Development Group, said: "There is really a lot of good advice in [the report] that we must ensure gets to patients."

He said there was good evidence that secondary heart attacks could be avoided if patients changed their lifestyles.

KCC faces crisis due to corruption by mayor, officials

Allege contractors

UNB, Khulna

Contractors Welfare Association of Khulna City Corporation yesterday alleged that the city corporation is now facing financial crisis due to corruption of its officials and employees, including the mayor.

Addressing a press conference at the local Press Club, Association President M Iskandar Ali said contractors are yet to get their bills of various development works done by them in 2004, 2005 and 2006.

They said they face harassment when they press for their due bills.

Additional manpower was recruited in different sections of the KCC while many officials and employees were suspended. But most of the suspended were reinstated in exchange of bribe, they said.

Two drown in well in Mymensingh

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Two people, including a teenage boy, drowned after they fell into a well at village Babupur in Trishal upazila here yesterday afternoon.

The dead were identified as Bilal Hossain, 15, son of Lal Miah of village Babupur and Hachu Miah, a neighbour of Lal Miah.

The villagers said Bilal fell into a well of his village accidentally. Hachu Miah fell into the well when he came to rescue Bilal hearing his cry for help.

Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Abdus Jahur, a former lawmaker and president of Sunamganj district Awami League, passed away due to a cardiac arrest at Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital on Tuesday night at the age of 85.

Jahur, also an organiser of the Liberation War, was elected a member of parliament from Sunamganj-4 constituency thrice.

He left behind his wife, two sons, four daughters and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death. He was buried at his family graveyard.

Noorjahan Begum (Jyotsna)



Noorjahan Begum (Jyotsna), wife of Mohammad G Mustapha, copy editor of The Bangladesh Today and former deputy director general (News) of Bangladesh Betar, passed away at Birdem Hospital in the city on May 5 at the age of 60, says a press release.

She was laid to rest beside the grave her father and mother in her family graveyard at Sonkanda Miabari in Sherpur.

She left behind her husband, one daughter and three sons to mourn her death.

Rawshan Ara Begum

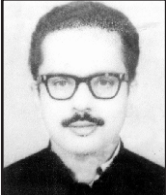
BSS, Chittagong

Mosammat Rawshan Ara Begum, mother of Chittagong South District Unit President of Awami League Moslemuddin Ahmed, passed away at a clinic here yesterday at the age of 78.

She left behind her three sons and three daughters to mourn her death.

She will be buried at Hajrat Garibullah Shah Majar graveyard after namaz-e-janaza on the Jamiatul Falah Mosque premises at 10:00am today (Thursday).

Death anniversary



Today is the 24th death anniversary of Barrister Saleh Uddin, a former lawmaker and freedom fighter, says a press release.

On the occasion, Qurankhwani and milad mahfil will be held at his son's house at 131/1, North Bashabo after Asr prayers. Barrister Saleh Uddin Smriti Sangsad will hold a milad mahfil in his village home at Bonomalidia at Modhukhali in Faridpur.

All have been requested to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Dr Maliha Khatun



Today is the 5th death anniversary of Dr Maliha Khatun, founder-chairperson of Bangladesh Development Partnership Centre (BDPC), says a press release.

She was an educationist and recipient of the Ekushey Award.

The BDPC will hold a discussion at its office in Jessore today and a doa mahfil at the Jame Masjid at Block # K, Pisciculture, Shyamoli in Dhaka after Asr prayers on May 28.



PHOTO: PID

Law and Information Adviser Barrister Mainul Hossain presides over a meeting of the Central Land Allocation Committee at secretariat in the city yesterday.

Concern over killing of six of a family

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad yesterday expressed concern over killing of six people, including four women of the same family at Narsingdi and demanded exemplary punishment to the responsible people.

In a statement, it said police recovered the decomposed bodies from a house in Bheyanagar of the district town on Tuesday.

The murderers according to pre-plan entered the house cutting open the grills of a window and killed Rais Uddin, 52, his wife Salma Begum, 46, their son Rajib, 24, and daughters Yuona, 28, Swarna, 18, and niece Urmi, 8, who was also adopted as a daughter.

Police picked up Abul Kalam, a nephew of Rais, for interrogation.

The parishad urged the caretaker government to take necessary steps to bring the criminals to book.

Bangladeshi journo wins UN MDG award



Khawaza Main Uddin, special correspondent of The New Age, has won the Asia-Pacific Millennium Development Goals Media

runners-up award for his article that looked into the country's performance in achieving the UN social targets, says a press release.

The announcement was made in Almaty, Kazakhstan, during the annual session of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) on Tuesday.

Main Uddin's article, headlined 'Slow and Unsteady on MDG path', was selected for the runners-up award in the print media category in the Asia-Pacific region.

The competition, organised by the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD) and judged by an international panel of media professionals, attracted over 100 entries from 23 countries.

Road crashes kill 2

STAR REPORT

At least two people were killed in separate road accidents in Kishoreganj and Rajbari yesterday.

Our Correspondent from Kishoreganj adds: A minor girl was killed in a road accident on Kishoreganj-Dhaka highway at Jagathor area of Koliarchar upazila yesterday.

The victim was identified as Sharmin Akter, 8, daughter of rickshawpuller Bachchu Mia of

Agorpur Paschimpara village of the upazila.

Police and locals said Sharmin was crushed under the wheel of a Dhaka-bound bus from Kishoreganj Sadar while she was crossing the road, leaving her dead on the spot.

Koliarchar Police Station Officer-in-Charge (OC) Harun-or-Rashid said none was arrested yet in connection with the accident as the driver of the bus managed to escape.

The body sent to Kishoreganj Sadar Adhoni Hospital for autopsy, Harun said.

BSS from Rajbari adds: An elderly woman was killed in a road accident on Pangsha-Bahadurpur Road at Raghunandanpur village in Pangsha upazila of the district yesterday, police said.

The dead was identified as Kohirun Nessa, 65, wife of Abdur Rahman Pramanik.

The sources said, Kohirun was hit by a three-wheeler (locally known as Nachhimon) while she was crossing the road.

Local people rushed her to Pangsha Upazila Health Complex where doctors declared her dead. The body was sent to Rajbari Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

Police seized the vehicle, but its driver managed to escape.

WEATHER TODAY

Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at a few places over Sylhet, Chittagong and Barisal divisions and at one or two places over

Rajshahi, Dhaka and Khulna divisions in next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Mild heat wave that is sweeping over Rajshahi division may continue during the period, Met Office said.

It also said that day temperature may rise slightly over the country.

Highest temperature 37.8 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest 22.2 degree Celsius at Sylhet.

The sun sets in the capital at 6.39pm today and rises at 5:12am tomorrow.

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

City/Town	Temperature in celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	35.7	29.2	74	70
Chittagong	32.5	27.3	86	84
Rajshahi	37.8	25.4	75	51
Khulna	33.6	28.0	--	63
Barisal	33.4	28.5	84	80
Sylhet	26.8	22.2	98	77
Cox's Bazar	32.2	25.6	83	88