

# AL to go for polls

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Reiterating that the cases filed against Hasina are false and fabricated, he demanded immediate withdrawal of those cases and the release of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

The AL leader blamed Jamaat-e-Islami and its student front Islami Chhatra Shibir for the violence on October 28, 2006 and demanded the caretaker government bring the culprits to book.

Meanwhile, the AL's committee for dialogue with the Election Commission (EC) on electoral reforms sat at Hasina's political office at Dhanmondi to discuss different conditions set by the EC about registration of political parties with the commission.

The meeting decided that they will formally oppose a number of the EC's conditions including not using anyone's picture on posters except the party chief's, having at least 33 percent women in all unit committees, and dismantling front organisations and foreign unit committees.

The AL will also ask the EC to simplify the registration rules.

On the use of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Rahman's picture on posters, committee member Latif Siddiqui said, "If the present government declares Bangabandhu as the Father of the Nation and bestows national honour on him, then we would consider not using his picture on party posters."

AL Organising Secretary Mahmudur Rahman Manna joined the discussion and said if the party is run based on the principles of Bangabandhu then why are we not allowed to use his picture on posters?

A number of other leaders also joined the debate and said it would be tough for them to meet the EC's condition of keeping 33 percent women on all committees. Most of the leaders said they want empowerment of women but reaching such a high goal suddenly could be impossible.

# War heroes

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Outraged by the comments of Shah Abdul Hannan, Khandakar said, "There is a huge difference between a civil war and a liberation war. All the countrymen except them [war criminals] were for the liberation one way or the other."

"We fought against the Pakistani army and their collaborators and won our freedom through the sacrifice of three million lives," he said adding, "How could this be called a civil war?"

He urged the government to ban politics of Jamaat and ensure that its leaders get exemplary punishment for their involvement in war crimes.

Commander of sector 11, Maj Gen (retd) AKM Shafullah, Bir Uttam, said, "They [Jamaat] should know the difference between a civil war and a liberation war."

"Our fight aimed at freeing our country. For our liberty, we fought against Pakistani army who were aided by Jamaat leaders," added Shafullah.

"Our liberation war was, by no means, a civil war -- it was a liberation war," said the former army chief. "We are considering filing cases against them."

Gen (retd) Mir Shawkat Ali, Bir Uttam, commander of sector 5, said, "We fought against foreign [Pakistani] soldiers and they [Jamaat] and anti-liberation war forces helped the Pakistani army in committing rape, murder, arson and killing of captured freedom fighters."

"They took up this 'duty' on themselves while the Pakistani army was busy fighting the freedom fighters. So, they were equally guilty," added Mir Shawkat.

"If it was a civil war, one group would fight with the other. But during our liberation war, 99 percent of the population supported the liberation war and therefore took part in it one way or the other," he said.

"How can they term our liberation war a civil war?" Shawkat said adding that all foreign authors in their books termed the nation's struggle in 1971 a liberation war.

He also vowed to take legal steps to try the Jamaat leaders involved in war crimes.

Col (retd) Kazi Nuruzzaman, Bir Uttam, commander of sector 7, said, "We have all the evidence that proves that Jamaat leaders were involved in war crimes in 1971."

"If you conduct a survey, you will see that everyone would term it a liberation war," added Kazi Nuruzzaman.

Commander of sector 4, Maj Gen (retd) CR Dutta, Bir Uttam, said, "We are considering all possible steps to bring the war criminals to justice."

It is clear who killed our intellectuals on the eve of our victory in the war, he added.

Commander of sector 8, Lt Col (retd) Abu Osman Chowdhury, condemned the remarks made by Abdul Hannan and said, "A thief never admits that he is a thief.... They dare to make such claims because our political leaders failed to bring them to justice."

"We will take legal steps against them, if necessary, after discussing the issue with experts and lawyers," added the deputy chief.

# BSF kills 1

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) yesterday shot dead a Bangladeshi youth near Baradi border of Damurhuda upazila in Chuadanga.

The dead was identified as Aminul, 18, son of Tokab Ali at Ichhaj of Damurhuda upazila.

BDR said BSF members of Bijoypur camp fired on Aminul when he went to a field near Baradi border to graze cattle at about 5:45am.

He died on the spot.

On information, Damurhuda police recovered the body.

# Yaba business

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syndicates will soon be revealed once the interrogation is completed," said the Rab official.

Huda and Ahsanul are now on seven-day remand in two cases filed with Gulshan Police Station under the Special Powers Act and the Narcotics Control Act.

Rab busted Huda's office in Gulshan in the city on Thursday and arrested him and Ahsanul. The elite force members also seized 1.3 lakh Yaba tablets, huge amount of chemicals and a machine used to make Yaba and 5,000 ice pills.

The Department of Narcotics Control (DNC) is convinced after conducting tests at its laboratory that 1.3 lakh Yaba pills are genuine.

In another development, members of Rab-10 arrested two including a woman with 450 Yababetas in Shyampur in the city on Saturday night.

Acting on a tip off, Rab members arrested Mohammad Shahjahan in front of Amin Super Market with 43 pills and a motorcycle around 7:30pm.

Following his statement, the crime busters arrested Papia Sultana in Boubazar and seized 407 pills and Tk 80,000.

# Mobile court

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242 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) and record the statements of the accused after informing him or her of the charges, according to the ordinance.

The punishments however may be meted out only if the accused confess, and those must stay within the bounds of financial penalties only.

But, if a confessed violator of law does not want to pay the penalty he or she may be sent to a maximum of three months of imprisonment.

And if the accused intends to dispute the allegations, he or she will be sent to the judicial magistrate for investigation and trial.

The accused may also file an appeal with the district and sessions judge.

Talking to reporters at the Bangladesh Secretariat before the approval of the ordinance, Law Adviser Mainul Hossain yesterday said the government is not bringing any change to the CrPC while introducing the new law.

"It's going to be an independent, stand alone law," he said.

"If anyone is fined wrongly by a mobile court, there will be provisions for appeal against it," the law adviser told reporters after a meeting at the housing and public works ministry.

"The government has a responsibility to separate the judiciary from the executive, and it also has the responsibility to keep the administrative service efficient and active for good governance," Mainul said.

The law is to ensure that the administrative service cadres are properly equipped to carry out the necessary preventive measures like imposing section 144, convening mobile courts, and running anti-adulteration drives, he said.

"These powers have been there for administrative cadres in some other laws including in the customs laws. Those are now just being incorporated in the new law."

The decision to empower the executive magistrates with some judicial powers came following an outburst by the admin cadres at a seminar which was then followed by a negotiation between the government and the leaders of Bangladesh Administrative Service Association.

# Iajuddin

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peace and harmony among the people of various faiths of its land and has emerged as a country of communal harmony in the world," Dr Iajuddin apprised the envoy.

Stating that Islam is a religion of peace and committed to upholding humanity around the world, the president said that the people of Bangladesh are very simple, peace-loving, tolerant, pious and hard-working.

He informed the envoy that the government of Bangladesh has taken up various measures in the field of education for raising the level of literacy rate in the country.

President Secretary to the President Major General M Aminul Karim, Secretary M Sirajul Islam, Press secretary Abdul Awal Howlader and officials concerned from both the sides were present on the occasion.

# Hasina files

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under sections 161/ 163/ 164/ 165/ 165 (Ka) / 109 of the Penal Code and section 5(2) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1947.

The foreign company Wartsila Power Development Ltd Consortium and its partners Summit Group and United Group won the deal during the tenure of Hasina-led government from 1996 to 2001.

According to the case statement the former prime minister had received the kickbacks from the three companies between October 7, 1997 and November 24 that year in exchange for the permission to set up the power plant.

A number of other cases against her have long been pending from the tenure of the immediate past BNP-led coalition government. The cases include frigate and MiG-29 purchase cases.

# CNG stations

FROM PAGE 16

for a refill. This situation could be improved significantly if the government approves the mobile CNG filling stations, said MF Kamal, managing director of the company.

To improve the ongoing crisis of CNG, the portable filling stations could be placed at any convenient locations inside the city as well as at the entry or exit points of the city, Kamal added.

He said the project would be very suitable for Bangladesh as the country lacks adequate funds to link all districts to its network of gas pipeline.

Speaking of the advantages of such portable filling stations, Kamal said the units do not require any permanent land and can supply the fuel during crisis situation when natural gas supply through the national grid is breached for any reason.

The proposed unit has a control panel, a dispenser and 14 CNG storage cylinders to carry 6,000 cubic metres of compressed natural gas. A fully loaded unit can fill up 600 vehicles, said the sources.

Similar portable filling stations are popular in remote areas of Germany, USA and Argentina where gas supply is not available through pipelines.

In the project proposal submitted to power, energy and mineral resources ministry, the firm proposed that the government pay them a service charge for every cubic metre of CNG dispensed.

Since the government policy would require them to purchase and sell each cubic metre of CNG at the same rate, Tk 8.50, they asked the government to pay the service charge, Kamal said.

The firm also sought permission from the National Board of Revenue to allow duty-free import of parts and machinery of the portable CNG units.

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# Potato farmers

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this year, encouraged by last year's Tk 10 lakh profit from 22 bighas.

He said his expansion plan is now in uncertainty as he has got only 13 sacks of urea whereas some 80 sacks of urea, 80 sacks of TSP, 40 sacks of potash, 1000 kgs of gypsum, 50 kgs of zinc and 50 kgs of Boron or 150 kgs of Sohag are needed for potato farming on 30 bighas of land.

Other farmers gave vent to the same frustration, seeking intervention of the agriculture adviser to end the crisis.

The shortage of urea is also affecting cultivation of Rabi crops in most areas of Manikganj district, farmers said.

It is many areas farmers are returning home disappointed after waiting in vain in long queues at dealerships.

This correspondent, who visited different areas of Manikganj, Sagar, Ghor and Shibalaya upazilas in last couple of days, saw a long queue of farmers in front of the dealer shop at Tarail Bazar in Shibalaya upazila, where authorities have deployed police to prevent any untoward incident.

Farmers at Betila Mitorea union accused the local dealer of selling fertiliser at a price higher than that fixed by the government.

Angry farmers at Rajibpur Bazar in Sagar upazila beat up a dealer and assaulted four sub-assistant officers of agricultural department on Tuesday.

Deputy director at Agriculture Extension Department, Mokbul Hossain, blamed the farmers for the problem as he said they, fearing crisis in the coming days, tend to buy more fertiliser than what they really need.

The agriculture official said he got 2,135 tonnes of fertiliser he asked for October, adding that the authorities have also allocated the department 4000 tonnes for November.

Deputy commissioner Manikganj, Ataur Rahman, denied any fertilizer crisis in the district and claimed that management and distribution of fertiliser is good and there will be no problem.