

Laws still lax to keep corrupt people away from polls

Speakers tell Sylhet workshop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Laws are still inadequate to keep corrupt people away from contesting elections.

This view was expressed by speakers including lawyers, university teachers, journalists and NGO executives at a workshop here yesterday.

Although a drive against corrupt people and criminals are on and many of the once-elected people are now behind the bar or are on trial, most of those are again trying to come back to the polls race due to lax laws or lack of their strict enforcement, they said.

Sushashoner Jonjo nagorik (Sujon) organised the workshop, held at Sylhet Press Club.

Sujon central secretary Dr. Badiul Alam Majumder conducted

workshop. The participants included, among others, Prof Syed Anwar Hossain and Prof Shaokat Ara Hossain of Dhaka University, Prothom Alo Associate Editor Mizanur Rahman Khan and Sylhet Press Club vice-presidents Al-Azad and Ataur Rahman Ata.

Eminent educationist Prof Md. Abdul Aziz chaired it.

They said a massive campaign should be launched now to create public opinion so that the so-called elected people who plundered national wealth and resorted to politics of money and muscle power to cling to power can not take part in the upcoming local body and parliamentary elections.

The media should come up in a bigger way now to meet the demand of time and put such dishonest aspirants face to face to

voters. This will create the way for people's representatives to become accountable to people in real sense.

Prof Syed Anwar Hossain said the people who will rule the country or formulate law must be honest first. Politicians having no ideology and a desire to serve the people should be given a good lesson through ballot, he said. A campaign to this effect is a pre-requisite for establishing effective democracy, which will benefit the people and lead the country towards peace and progress, he said.

Seeking all out co-operation and an effective role by the media, he said past records of aspirants should be made known to voters as this is the time to make changes, he added.

Dr. Shaokat Ara Hossain said,

people are conscious now about their rights but they are left with no choice when corrupt and dishonest people get chance to be in the polls race.

It is the duty of the government, Election Commission and the media to unmask their faces and bar them from being involved in politics. People now want a change for the better but it is the duty of the government and political parties to free politics from money, muscle power and corrupt people, she said.

Dr. Badiul Alam Majumder said, those who plundered people's wealth and did terrorism in the name of politics in the past should be rejected this time. He urged the media men to project polls aspirants' past records, so that voters can take decision to select good representatives.

2 hurt in Dinajpur bomb blast

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Two people including a minor boy were injured as a bomb wrapped in a jute bag exploded at Hajapur graveyard in Awaliapur union of Dinajpur Sadar upazila Saturday, police said.

Injured Md Mominur Rahman, 9, and Md Rezaul Karim, 24, were admitted to Dinajpur Medical College Hospital for treatment. But they allegedly fled away from the hospital while taking treatment.

The two came to the graveyard to graze their cattle, police said. Suddenly, a jute bag lying on the ground drew their attention. As they were examining the bag, a bomb kept inside it exploded with a big bang leaving them injured.

Later, police brought the bag with the bomb to Dinajpur Police Station.

While contacted, officer-in-charge Md Motiar Rahman confirmed the incident.

ALLEGED LINK WITH JMB

Memo to Rangpur DC to close down orphanage in Gangachhara

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

A memorandum was submitted to Rangpur deputy commissioner yesterday seeking action against some teachers and managing committee members of an orphanage in Gangachhara for allegedly running activities of banned Islamist militant organisation Jamat-ul Mujahdeen, Bangladesh (JMB) in the area.

The memorandum submitted by some people of Kochua village in Nohali union in Gangachhara upazila said the teachers and managing committee members of Kochua Orphanage hold secret meetings at night with unknown visitors. Their activities are mysterious, it added.

The orphanage was earlier run by Al-Haramine, a Saudi based

NGO, which withdrew from Bangladesh in 2004.

The memorandum alleged that the orphanage people have links with JMB.

Imams of two local mosques are also involved with the suspicious activities of the orphanage, men, it added.

A son of one of the imams was arrested in 2005 for involvement in Islamist militancy and is now in Nilphamari jail and the other is absconding to evade arrest on the same charge, it said.

Police earlier raided the house of one of the imams and arrested his nephew with some jihadi books.

The memorandum stated that the orphanage authorities show 400 inmates on roll but the actual number is less than 300 and the money allocated for them is spent

to spread militancy in the area.

After Al-Haramine withdrew from the country, Nobel Institute for Rural Reforms, an NGO, took the responsibility to run the orphanage.

Chairman of Nohali Union Parishad Abdul Qader said, "We informed the local administration about their activities."

Contacted, Gangachhara UNO Abu Nasher Abdullah, said he asked authorities of Nobel Institute for Rural Reforms to drop the teachers, director and managing committee members of the orphanage who had JMB connection.

When asked, director of Nobel Institute for Rural Reforms Atiqur Rahman said, they have formed a managing committee excluding the controversial persons.

VIOLENCE ON OCT 30, 2004 2 cases against 64 RU students dismissed

RU CORRESPONDENT

A Rajshahi court yesterday dismissed two cases filed by Rajshahi University registrar and Motihar police against 64 students in connection with daylong violence on the campus on October 30 in 2004.

On that day, at least 200 students, teachers and journalists were injured in the daylong clash among general students, cadres of Islami Chhatra Shibir and police.

Female students of Tapasi Rabeya Hall brought out a protest procession following three youths' intrusion into the female dormitory early morning and general students staged angry demonstration in front of RU vice chancellor's residence demanding female students' security inside the dormitories.

During the clashes that fol-

lowed, police beat up general students and arrested 54 of them.

RU Registrar Prof Abdus Salam filed a case that day against named and unnamed general students while Motihar Police Station Sub-Inspector Kafil Uddin filed another case against around 400 unnamed students.

Rajshahi Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Ruhul Amin heard the two cases and ordered dismissal of the cases yesterday, the scheduled date for charge framing in the cases.

Expressing satisfaction over the court verdict, the 64 students of RU criticised police and university authorities for harassing general students during the last three years.

The also demanded immediate withdrawal of the case filed by RU authorities against two students.

Licence of 188 rice mills cancelled in Pabna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Authorities have cancelled licences of 188 rice mills in Pabna district for they failed to supply rice and paddy to the government godowns at official rate under the ongoing food procurement drive.

The cancellation order, issued on July 1 from the district food control office in Pabna, has been sent to the concerned millers, said official sources.

Of the 188 mills, 161 are in Ishwardi upazila, 15 in Pabna Sadar upazila, five in Atghoria upazila, three in Chatmohar upazila, two in Bera upazila and one each in Bhangura upazila and Sujanager upazila.

"Following their refusal to supply rice at the government fixed rate, the district food procurement committee recommended cancellation of licences

of 188 rice mills in Pabna," Md Jahangir Alam, Pabna district controller of food, told this correspondent yesterday.

The government procurement rate is Tk 28 per kg for rice and Tk 18 for paddy in the current Irrigation season.

Procurement of rice in the district, targeted at about 53,705 tonnes this year, will continue till August 31, official sources said.

"The mill owners who earlier signed contact with the government for supplying rice are now failing due to its high price in the market. We have urged the government to sanction incentive bonus for the millers to enable them to cope with the loss," Md Idris Bishwas, president of Rice Mill Owners Association Pabna district unit, told this correspondent over phone yesterday.

Areas of Patuakhali town, many shoals inundated

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Rains in last five days and tidal water have inundated vast coastal areas including Patuakhali town.

Local meteorological office recorded 260 mm rainfall in last five days since July one. The bad weather have also turned tourist spot Kuakata a desolate place.

Patuakhali town inundates even after normal rise in the river water. Life in Patuakhali town has been paralysed as most areas are under two to three feet water. The worst affected areas include Pura Bazar, Nababpara, Shimul Bagh, Katpatti, Collage Road, Adalat Para, Muslimpara, Sabujbagh, Arambagh, Charpara, Girls School Road, Chawkbazar, Munsef Para. Once inundated, water remains stagnant in most of the areas for days, locals said.

About 50,000 people have been affected in the areas.

Official sources said low lying areas and different shoals in the district have reeled under 3-5 feet water. The affected shoals are over 30 in Galachipa, 10 in Dasmina, five in Kalapara and four in Baufal upazila.



Inundated SDO Road in Patuakhali town.

PHOTO: STAR



DANGEROUS LIVING ON FOOTHILLS... Houses built after cutting hills at Nenshipur in Khagrachhari Sadar upazila.

LANDSLIDE 2,000 people most vulnerable in Khagrachhari Sadar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

The district administration has made a list of about 2,000 people belonging to 140 families, identifying them as most vulnerable to landslide in Sadar upazila in hill district Khagrachhari.

A seven-member committee led by Additional Deputy Commissioner (Revenue) Mohammad Masud Ahmed started the survey in Khagrachhari district on June 12.

Earlier on June 10, The Daily Star ran a report on the people vulnerable to land slides in the district.

The survey committee would sit today or tomorrow at the office of ADC (Revenue) for next decision, member secretary of the survey committee, Sadar upazila Assistant Commissioner (Land) Mohammad Kawsar Hossen said.

Jute workers announce fresh agitation programme

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Newly formed "State-owned Jute Mill Workers' Development Committee" has announced a fresh agitation programme for implementation of their eight-point demand.

The programmes include demonstration in front of respective jute mills, work stoppage, rally, procession and daylong hunger strike at Khalishpur and Platinum Jubilee Jute Mills labourers' colony. Committee convenor Gazi

Mohammad Masum, in a press statement issued yesterday, said workers will have no other alternative but to go for tougher agitation if their demands are not implemented.

The eight-point demand include allocation of fund in national budget to revitalise sick jute industries, withdrawal of false cases filed against workers of Platinum Jubilee Jute Mills, payment of all arrears and increase in dearness allowance considering

price-hike of essentials, reinstatement of retrenched workers with full payment of their arrears, payment of overtime allowance, installation of electric sub-metre in all labour colonies, arrest of corrupt CBA leaders and declaration of wealth statements of corrupt officials, employees and CBA leaders.

Police intercepted as workers of Platinum Jubilee Jute Mills tried to bring out a procession yesterday morning.

2 boys missing in Bay

CU CORRESPONDENT

Two boys went missing when a trawler turned aside in the sea near Ghoramara under Sitakunda upazila in the district yesterday afternoon.

The boys were identified as Khush Jaladas, 15, son of Balaram Jaladas of Ghoramara and Sujan Jaladas, 10, son of Nipati Jaladas of Muradpur under the upazila.

Some 30 people including eight to ten boys went into the sea with a newly made trawler. The boys were missing as the trawler turned aside due to rough tides.

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2 fugitive life-term convicts held in Satkhira, Thakurgaon

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Police arrested two fugitive convicts, who earlier got life-term imprisonment under Women and Children Repression Prevention Act, from Rangpur and Satkhira on Saturday.

Anwar Hossain of Ghidhop village under Pirganj upazila in Thakurgaon, who got life-term imprisonment for raping a teenage girl at Bandighar village under Thakurgaon Sadar upazila on July 17 in 2001, was arrested from Rangpur, reports a correspondent from Thakurgaon.

Afflicted with torture and humiliation, the girl committed suicide after a few days.

Anwar, who went into hiding after the incident, was awarded life term rigorous imprisonment on August 30 in 2006 by Thakurgaon Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal.

Our Satkhira correspondent adds: Police arrested a female fugitive who was sentenced to life-term imprisonment in a case under Women and Children Repression Prevention Act from village Bharashimla in Kaliganj upazila on Saturday night.

Safura Khatun, 35, of Shyamnagar, who was awarded life term imprisonment in a case filed with Shyamnagar Police Station in 1994, went to India to evade arrest,

sources said. She came to her relative's house at Bharashimla on Friday and police arrested her from there following a tip. She was sent to jail.

CASE AGAINST ARIFUL Defence witnesses' deposition now on Wednesday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A trial court in Sylhet for the second date yesterday deferred recording of deposition of the defence witnesses in the much-talked extortion case against Sylhet city BNP chief Ariful Haque Chowdhury, fixing it for Wednesday.

Additional District and Sessions Judge Md Amir Uddin, also the judge of anti-smuggling court in Sylhet, fixed the new date on July 9 as the defence lawyers prayed for. On July 2, it was deferred to yesterday.

The court completed recording deposition of seven prosecution witnesses on July 30 this year.

One of the 50 people included in the ACC's first list of corruption suspects, Arif was awarded 10 years RI on June 19 in the case filed by the ACC for amassing wealth through corruption and illegal means.

Advertisement for Dhaka City Corporation Ordinance 1983 (XL of 1983) Section 154(1), listing various officials and their names.