

Political parties urged to nominate minority candidates in election

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of minority communities yesterday urged major political parties to field representatives of minority communities as candidates based on their population in at least 60 parliamentary seats in the upcoming national election.

the three presidents of the organisation, who had also been a sector commander in the liberation war, said around 2.5 crore people belong to minority communities in the country but they do not have enough parliamentary representation.

professor of Dhaka University, read out a written statement at the press conference.

In the statement, he said there is not enough representation of minority communities in the Jatiya Sangsad and other bodies although minority people constitute about 15 percent of the population and voters.

Prof Nim Chandra said democracy in the country often suffers setbacks, as equal rights and respect for all are yet to be established.

The EC has imposed a ban on communal slogans during election campaigning, he said, adding that they want its proper implementation.

40 BCL activists injured in clash at Kushtia University

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

At least 40 activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) were injured when its two factions were locked into a clash on the Kushtia Islamic University campus yesterday.

Sources said the clash was a sequel to Wednesday's incident when BCL President Saharur Alam Keramat was assaulted by the rival faction.

Sources said dogged by two factions, the university BCL unit was facing troubles after expiring the date of its present committee two years ago.

The factions -- one led by its present President Keramat and General Secretary Sazzad Hossain, who is now central joint secretary, while the other by Saiful, Idrish and Khasru, who are influential activists of the unit.

When Keramat was holding a rally on Wednesday to celebrate the return of Awami League President Sheikh Hasina, the other faction attacked the programme. They also assaulted him and chased his group out of the campus.

Keramat entered the campus with a showdown yesterday and brought out a procession welcoming Hasina's return home at around 11:00am.

The rival faction further attacked the rally at the main gate that ensued a clash between the groups leaving the university from both the groups injured.

They used iron rods, bamboo sticks and lethal weapons during the clash. Three of the injured -- Jahidul Islam, Uzzal and Sahinor Rahman -- received stab injuries.

Local police brought the situation under control. Additional police forces were deployed on the campus as a tense situation was prevailing here.

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) units brought out separate processions on the campus and protested the incident.

ACC recommendations by this month to curb institutional graft

UNB, Dhaka

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) will formulate its recommendations this month aimed at preventing corruption in the ministries.

ACC Chairman Lt Gen (ret) Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury said this while talking to reporters after a meeting at the Secretariat with senior officials of the Local Government Division and its departments.

As part of its campaign to curb institutional corruption, the ACC held the meeting to find out the causes of corruption in the Local Government Division. Earlier, the commission also held meetings with the officials of the land ministry.

The ACC will hold such meetings with two more ministries this month before finalising the recommendations.

Lt Gen (ret) Mashhud said the commission would also hold meet-

ings with government hierarchies about implementation of the recommendations.

He said the Local Government Division has been requested to open a cell to receive corruption-related allegations. The issue of opening such cell in every ministry will be included in the ACC recommendations.

During the meeting, the ACC chairman urged the Local Government Division officials to take initiatives to stop such corruption that could be stopped forthwith. He also called for intensifying high-level monitoring to stop all kinds of corruption.

ACC Commissioners Habibur Rahman and Abul Hasan Manjur Mannan, Local Government Division Secretary Sheikh Khurshid Alam and other senior officials attended the meeting.

The anti-graft watchdog will soon hold meetings with the ministries of health and communication.

100 Indian snakes to be released in Sundarbans

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The authorities yesterday decided to release about 100 Indian snakes, seized by the BDR members recently, in Sundarbans as two snakes died on Tuesday.

The officials of customs and forest departments started for the Sundarbans with the snakes in eight boxes.

The snakes were lying uncared for since the BDR men seized them at Char Majhardiar border point on November 2 when a snake charmer was smuggling them into the country from India.

Land Customs Officer of Rajshahi Customs Godown Hasanuzzaman said the forest department at first denied to accept them but agreed to release them in Sundarbans after two snakes had died, he added.

BDR men said Mohammad Hossain, a snake charmer of Savar in Dhaka, collected the snakes from Bardwan district of West Bengal.

Robber, two policemen injured in gunfight

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

A leader of a robbers' gang and two policemen were injured in a gunfight at Sangsardighi in Shibganj upazila in the early hours of yesterday.

The injured policemen -- Ali Hossain and Dulal -- and the gang leader, Tarazul Islam, were admitted to a local hospital.

The police said Tarazul had been arrested on Wednesday in

connection with the hijacking of a motorbike. To arrest other gang member, the police took him to Sangsardighi in the early hours of yesterday, but the gang members opened fire on the police.

The police then retaliated with fire, triggering a gunfight, said Zahidul Islam, officer-in-charge (OC) of Shibganj police station.

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