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in couple of days

HASAN JAHID TUSHER

The Awami League (AL) will announce their candidates for the December 18 general election from the 14-party platform in a couple of days if the BNP keeps from the polls in the event.

The combine will take in a few more parties in their fold to forge a grand alliance in case the BNP

agrees to go to the polls. The last date for filing nominations with the Election Commission is November 20.

AL spokesman Syed Ashraful the jail code. Islam had earlier said they will announce their candidates on Saturday (today).

AL insiders said nominations for 300 constituencies from the combine are almost final. This time the AL may give its partners fewer seats, they said.

The list is being prepared keeping in mind the matter that the Jatiya Party, Liberal Democratic SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

AL nomination to be announced Party meeting in jail

Moudud, Huda, Abbas, Wadud showcaused; 28 jail guards suspended

KAILASH SARKAR

The jail authorities yesterday issued show-cause notices upon detained former BNP ministers Moudud Ahmed, Nazmul Huda, Mirza Abbas and ex-MP Abdul Wadud Bhuiyan in connection with holding meetings in the prison cells of BSMMU with their party men and relatives violating

The authorities also suspended tomorrow afternoon [Saturday]." 28 of their jail guards posted at the prison cells of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) in connection with negligence of duty. They were also issued notices to explain as to why further actions would not be taken against them.

Inspector General of Prisons (IG-Prisons) Brig Gen Zakir Hassan told The Daily Star, "The three

former ministers and the exlawmaker were asked to explain within 24 hours as to why their division status should not be cancelled and other punitive measures taken against them for violat-

ing the jail code." Talking to The Daily Star, Superintendent of Dhaka Central Jail Towhidul Islam said, "I served the notices in the afternoon asking them to explain in writing by

"I have also talked to the Vicechancellor of BSMMU about sending them back to the jail immediately," he said.

"The three ex-ministers and the ex-MP had been holding meetings with their party men who entered the prison cells claiming to be BSMMU staffers," the IG-Prisons said, adding, "It proves that the BSMMU authorities are not coop-

erating with the jail authorities." The jail intelligence wing discovered the matter.

He said the jail code allows prisoners to meet their relatives once every 15 days but the four had been meeting their party men and relatives everyday.

"If the explanations of the former ministers and the MP are not satisfactory, their division statuses would be cancelled and other punitive measures would be taken against them," IG-Prisons Zakir Hassan said

Jail sources said among the 28 jail guards, 26 were suspended Friday and two others on Thursday in connection with arranging meetings between the VIP prisoners and their relatives and party men and for providing food to the prisoners skirting the jail code.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Pak envoy meets Khaleda

BNP says polls issue not discussed

UNB, Dhaka

Pakistan High Commissioner in Dhaka Alamgir Babar called on BNP Chairperson and former prime minister Khaleda Zia at her Gulshan office yesterday

Briefing newsmen after the meeting, former foreign secretary Shamsher Mobin Chowdhury said they discussed how to strengthen bilateral relations between Dhaka and Islamabad.

friend of Bangladesh, Pakistan hopes that the stability will be maintained here.

election issues were not discussed since these are Bangladesh's internal matters.

INDIAN FOOD ITEMS

Import at Benapole stops as BSTI goes for check

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A recent Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI) move to check the quality of processed food items being imported from India has almost brought import of these through Benapole Land Port to a halt.

BSTI in a letter issued on Gobeshona Parishad. October 28 asked importers to have a complete quality check by BSTI before offloading processed these reach any land ports in the bribed. food items at the port. This led to country to two organisations, a suspension of offloading pro- BSTI and BCSIR, to get the final Chowdhury said as a true cessed food items since approval. Wednesday.

about the capability of BSTI to In reply to a question, he said | check the quality of a large number of food items. It takes 15 to 21 days to receive certificates of quality to reach the importers.

to face loss in crores of taka due to the suspension of offloading food items at the port.

2006-2009, an importer wishing to import processed food items has to give all necessary information in a BSTI form to Shilpa O

samples of the food items after in sending reports if they are not

After running tests on the food Benapole. The move raised questions items, the BSTI or BCSIR may take legal actions against the importer if they are not happy with the test results.

According to importers, they bring in a large quantity of food

Importers said they are going items including powdered health drinks, chocolates, crisps and dry fish. Due to the delay in getting BSTI approval, feeding the mar-According to import rules ket is being hampered.

They alleged that the officials and employees of BSTI do not do their duty properly which contributes to more delays in getting the test results. They even The importers have to submit alleged that officials waste time

> Matiur Raham, an importer, said it is necessary to set up a branch office of BSTI in

> An assistant commissioner of customs said they would take initiatives to offload the food items after payment of customs duty as it is taking a long time to get the BSTI quality certificates.

3 die, 12 sick

rectified spirit

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Three people died and 12 others became sick Thursday after drink-

ing rectified spirit in different areas

Samsuddin, 52, of Bara Jethail,

Khabir Uddin, 37, of Nabagram and

Mozammel Haque, 55, of

Kawalipara of Dhamrai, police

Samsuddin, Mozammel, Khabir,

Nizam, Inam Ali, Abed Ali, 40 and

15 others took the rectified spirit

Khabir died on the way to a clinic in

Savar Thursday afternoon.

Mozammel died on the way to

Dhaka Medical College Hospital

were moved to DMCH from Saturia

Upazila Health Complex as their

died and fell sick after drinking

spirit bought from Nitya Gopal

Saha of Saturia Bazar and from

However, Officer-in-charge of

Dhamrai Police Station Chowdhury Tarikul Alam said the victims died

after drinking the spirit bought from Nitya Gopal Saha at Saturia Bazar and Khabir's father filed an unnatu-

ral death case with the police station

another place in Amta Bazar.

They said Inam Ali and Abed Ali

Sources claim that the people

Thursday night, the sources said.

Samsuddin died at home and

and fell sick after an hour.

condition deteriorated.

in this connection.

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Police and family sources said

The dead were identified as

of Dhamrai, Dhaka.

sources said.

Call to relocate courts, sub-jails from JS arena

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The Supreme Court (SC) lawyers call for immediate relocation of the special courts and sub-jails from the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban compound to uphold the dignity of parliament as the next general election is very near.

The government set up 10 special courts on the parliament premises to speed up the trial of highvolume corruption cases. Two buildings designated as the residence of the Speaker and deputy Speaker were turned into sub-jails after former premiers Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia were arrested on graft charges.

The lawyers say as prevention of corruption is a continuous process the courts dealing with the scourge should be relocated to a perma-

"Now that there are no inmates in the sub-jails, the two buildings should be brought back to its previous status," renowned SC lawyer Dr M Zahir said.

Former SCBA secretary advocate M Enayetur Rahim said, "According to a High Court judgment, the Sangsad Bhaban is our national pride and a national heritage site. Bringing graft accused in there for trail compromises the dignity of parliament.

Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) President barrister Shafique Ahmed alleges that the special courts and the sub-jails have damaged the sanctity and dignity of parliament.

"According to the Constitution, parliament is the legislative organ SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Farmers' fate never changes for land graft

Says Prof Muzaffer

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The farmers cannot improve their economic status because of various forms of corruption in land and agriculture sectors, Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) Chairman Prof Muzaffer Ahmad said yesterday.

"Farmers work heart and soul but can't sustain their achievements. It's the traders and middlemen who get the cream," he said while speaking as the chief guest at a seminar on food security organlsed by Diploma Krishibid Institution (DKI) at the National Press Club.

Corruption in the land offices hugely affects farmers' interests, Ahmad said. He suggests land reforms and computerised land management system to ensure rights of the landless people and checkland-related corruption. He also recommended reforms

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Prices of onion, potato on rise

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The prices of onion and potato witnessed a sharp rise in the city markets in the last week. Onion price increased by Tk 5-

10 a kg while the price of potato rose by Tk 4 per kg. Local variety of onions was sold vesterday for Tk 42-48 a kg while

the price of the imported ones went up to Tk 32-36 from Tk 25-30 in the capital's retail markets. Onion wholesalers in the city's

Karwan Bazar said the fall in supply of Indian variety of onion recently resulted in the sudden hike in the prices of both local and Indian variety of onions.

Potato was sold yesterday for Tk 18-20 a kg, which was sold for Tk 14-16 per kg a week ago.



Housewives thrash and winnow Aman paddy at Char Isli village, a Monga-prone area, in Rangpur. Farmers say the harvest is better this year.

US missile strike kills 12 in Pakistan

AP, AFP, Islamabad

A suspected US missile strike killed at least 12 people in a village near the Afghan border yesterday, including several suspected foreign militants, Pakistani officials

The attack happened in North Waziristan, a Pakistani tribal region and stronghold of Taliban and al-Qaeda fighters suspected of mounting attacks on US troops in neighbouring Afghanistan.

Two missiles apparently fired from a drone aircraft demolished a house in North Waziristan, part of Pakistan's lawless tribal regions along the border with Afghanistan.

"Nine foreigners were among ten killed," a top security official told AFP. Pakistan officials normally use the term "foreigners" to describe al-Qaeda militants.

Up to 14 militants were killed last Friday in a US missile strike, which destroyed an al-Qaeda in North Waziristan.

A series of recent strikes against suspected al-Qaeda and Taliban hideouts in Pakistan's tribal areas, all blamed on unmanned CIA drones, have raised tensions between Washington and Islamabad.

Pakistan's tribal belt is considered a likely hiding place for Osama

bin Laden and al-Qaeda No. 2 Ayman al-Zawahri. Missile attacks from unmanned US aircraft in the region have increased dramatically in recent months. Several Pakistani intelligence

officials told The Associated Press that at least two missiles hit a house training camp in Kumsham village in Ghari Wam, a village about 18 miles from the frontier, at about 2 am on Friday morning. Two officials said put the death

toll at 12 and said they included several suspected foreign militants. Their exact identity was not immediately clear. Taliban gunmen had cordoned the area and removed the bodies, one official said.

Indian probe

AFP, Bangalore

lands on moon

An Indian probe landed on the

moon on Friday, the Indian Space

Research Organisation

announced, in a milestone for the

country's 45-year-old space

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

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3 killed in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three people including two alleged listed criminals were killed in two separate incidents in the city yesterday. Mohammadpur police yester-

day recovered the bodies of Alam Yamin alias Ablan, 32, and Sirajul Amin alias Linkon, 30, from a field at Dhaka Housing of Mohammadpur around 7:00am. Both of them had bullet marks in theirheads. Police said Ablan, a listed crimi-

nal of Kathalbagan area, had records of seven cases including two for murder while Linkon, a criminal of Adabor, had five cases against him.

Family members said a few people introducing themselves as

members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) called out Ablan from his Adabor residence around 4:00pm on Thursday. Linkon had also been missing since that morning, his family said. The two could have been killed

over previous enmity, police said but refused to elaborate. The bodies were sent to the Dhaka Medical College for autopsy. Meanwhile, police yesterday morning recovered the body of

Parul Bala Das, 55, from a sack at Kajla in Jatrabari. Son of the deceased, Indrajit Das, told reporters that she had been missing since 3:00pm

Wednesday after she set out for

Shiddhirganj, Narayanganj to

collect a debt-payment of Tk 3,000

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

programme. The probe touched down on the SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Prayer Timing

November 15 Jamaat Azan 5-35 5-00 12-45 3-45 5-22 Maghrib 7-00 Esha Source: Islamic Foundation

1-15 4-00 5-25

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