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BNP touches problems, skirts detailing solution

Observe economists

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and SOHEL PARVEZ

Renowned economists of the country yesterday said the electoral manifesto of BNP touches all aspects of economic problems but lacks any time-bound strategic plan to solve those.

They termed BNP's giving prominence to economic issues, like the Awami League (AL), praiseworthy in these challenging times.

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia announced her party's election manifesto on Saturday. Earlier on Friday, Awami League President Sheikh Hasina

unveiled her party's polls manifesto.

M Hafizuddin Khan, former finance and planning adviser to a caretaker government, told The Daily Star that it would have been better if the BNP spelt out timeframes and manners to solve economic problems like the AL, which has given short and long-term plans in its manifesto.

It would have been easier then to monitor the performance of whichever party goes to power, he said.

Hafizuddin said one of the main focuses in BNP's manifesto is on reducing prices of essentials, but the party does not detail how it would accomplish that goal.

The BNP, which had no significant achievement in power generation during its last rule, has pledged to increase power generation, which requires gas and coal. However, it does not specify the source of gas—whether it would be bought from the international oil companies or Bapex, Hafiz said.

Also there should have been a guideline regarding the method of coal extraction, which has caused some controversy lately, he added.

The former adviser said manifestos of neither the AL nor the BNP contain any guideline for resource mobilisation

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Book selling makes Sircar rich

M ABUL KALAM AZAD

Speaker Muhammad Jamiruddin Sircar's major share of income comes from book selling, says the wealth statement he submitted along with his nomination paper.

In the affidavit he submitted with his nomination, he says he earns about Tk 11.67 lakh a year and about Tk 6.79 lakh of the amount he gets from selling books.

Sircar also mentions two other sources of income as house rent and agriculture, from which he annually earns about Tk 4.1 lakh and Tk 78,000 respectively.

Sircar, who is contesting

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CG conspiring to make country a failed state

Khaleda tells rallies on road to Jessore, seeks vote to foil conspiracies

RASHIDUL HASAN and AMANUR AMAN from Kushtia

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday urged people to foil all conspiracies by voting for four-party alliance candidates in the upcoming national polls. She blamed the caretaker government for hatching conspiracies to make the country a failed state.

"We need to form an effective parliament and work together to make Bangladesh a strong state," she said addressing different rallies on her second day of election campaigns outside the capital.

The former premier yesterday addressed at least 10 election rallies on her way to Jessore from Dhaka. She is on a two-day tour of south-

ern Bangladesh. She is to campaign in Jessore, Khulna and Satkhira districts today.

She was holding a rally at Alamdanga as this report was filed at 1:00am today. She was scheduled to visit Magura and then travel to Jessore around 3:00am.

Blasting the caretaker government for "destroying" the country, the BNP chief said only BNP can save the country if voted to power. She promised that BNP will change the face of the country once in power.

She urged people to join the battle to save the people and the country.

"To get rid of the present situation, a people's government is a must and only elections can ensure this," she said.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

Religion exploiting leaflets ask to vote against non-Muslims

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

A vested interest group is distributing three types of leaflets among villagers of Thakurgaon-1 constituency using religious sentiments to apparently persuade Muslim voters to vote against Awami League-led grand alliance candidate Ramesh Chandra Sen.

The leaflets—one containing verses from the Quran and their translation, another a parody of a popular song and the other a few short Bangla verses, bear the name of Bangladesh Muslim League presidium member M Shamsul Haque.

The leaflet titled "Al-Quraner Bani" (teachings of the Quran) quotes different verses and clearly asks Muslims not to cast votes for a non-Muslim candidate in the December 29 parliamentary elections.

The leaflet also says Islam does not accept the idea of secularism, which it says is a complete deviation from Islamic ideology.

Another leaflet titled "Voter Panchali" urges people to elect the BNP-led four-party alliance candidate, Mirza Fakhrul Islam.

When the leaflets were shown to Thakurgaon district Election Officer Md Saiful Islam, he told The Daily Star that the quotations from the Quran printed in the leaflet are not false.

"It is not a violation of electoral rules since no Muslim League candidate is participating in the election from this constituency," he said.

Grand alliance candidate Ramesh Chandra Sen, however, claimed it to be a clear violation of the electoral rules as the Election Commission has strictly prohibited the use of religious sentiment in electoral campaigns.

"Traditionally, a communal harmony has existed in this area

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T-shirts inscribed with 'Saleha-Imarat', a real estate company of Enamul Haque, a grand alliance candidate in Rajshahi-4, were distributed on Saturday at Bhabaniganj in the district in violation of the RPO.

LIBERATION WAR Why cancelling acquisition of killing field Ctg land

HC asks govt
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday issued a rule upon the government to show cause within four weeks as to why its cancellation of acquiring land of the Liberation War killing field at East Pahartali in Chittagong should not be declared illegal.

The HC bench of justices Syed Mahmud Hossain and Quamrul Islam Siddiqui also asked the government to maintain a status quo in this regard following a writ petition filed by eight family members of freedom fighters and martyred intellectuals.

Famous writer and scientist Mohammad Zafar Iqbal, Gazi Salehuddin, Md Azizur Rahman, Sheikh Mohammad Mainuddin, Khairul Uddin Ahmed, Rafikul Islam Mukul, Milly Rahman, widow of Bir Shrestha Shaheed Matiur Rahman and Muntasir

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

HC hands over Humayra to British High Commission
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday handed over Humayra Abedin, 33, an expatriate trainee doctor in London, to the British High Commission in Bangladesh for sending her back to London as per her will.

Humayra was kept detained forcibly against her will by her parents for the last five months.

An HC bench comprising Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain and Justice Quamrul Islam Siddiqui sent Humayra to the British High Commission through the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) and requested the High Commission to arrange her safe custody until her departure for London.

The court annexed with its order a copy of a British court order directing her parents to disclose her whereabouts immediately and produce her to Ain O Shalish Kendra (ASK), a human rights organisation, or the British High Commission (HC) in Bangladesh.

The bench fixed Thursday for further order on the matter.

Humayra's father

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Bush sneaks into Iraq, faces shoes

AP, Baghdad

President George W Bush yesterday made a farewell visit to Iraq, a place that defines his presidency, just 37 days before he hands the war off to a successor who has pledged to end it.

An Iraqi journalist hurled his shoes and an insult at Bush, without hitting him, as the US president was shaking hands with the Iraqi premier at his Baghdad office.

As the two leaders met in Nuri al-Maliki's private office, a journalist sitting in the third row jumped up, shouting, "It is the farewell kiss, you dog," and threw his shoes one after the other towards Bush.

Maliki made a protective gesture towards the US president, who ducked and was not hit.

The journalist, Muntazer al-Zaidi from Al-Baghdadia channel which broadcasts from Cairo, was frogmarched from the

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Ctg jives with polls beat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chittagong city is vibrant with electoral campaign as candidates are busy making door-to-door visits, bringing out processions and holding rallies to drum up support.

Grand alliance candidate and Awami League (AL) leader Nurul Islam of Chittagong-8 constituency met locals of Alkaran area in the morning and people of Firingee Bazaar in the afternoon. He also carried out mass contacts at Bakolia Miakhan Nagar and held a views-exchange meeting with Andarkilla Teachers Samity last evening.

His rival four-party alliance candidate from BNP Shamsul Alam carried out mass communication drives in different areas of Enayet Bazaar, Nandan Kanan, Jubilee Road, Reazuddin

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Britain pledges \$9m to help Pakistan tackle militancy

AFP, Islamabad

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown pledged yesterday to help Pakistan "break the chain of terror" after holding talks with President Asif Ali Zardari on security in the wake of the Mumbai attacks.

Brown's visit to Islamabad was the last leg of a tour of South Asia aimed at calming tensions between nuclear-armed Pakistan and India, which have been running high since the attacks last month which left 172 dead.

He said Britain would work with the government in Islamabad to ensure that terrorists were denied safe havens in Pakistan, pledging six million pounds (nine million dollars) to help it tackle militancy.

"Through these measures we hope to do more to break the chain of terror that links the mountains of Afghanistan and Pakistan to the streets of the UK and other countries around the world," Brown told reporters with Zardari at his side.

The British leader stressed that terrorism was a global problem and said three-quarters of the most serious terror plots investigated by British authorities had links to al-Qaeda in Pakistan.

Earlier in New Delhi, he met Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to discuss security in the region after the Mumbai attacks, which New Delhi has blamed on "elements" in Pakistan.

Brown said his meeting with Zardari had reassured him of Pakistan's determination to act against those responsible for what he called a "human tragedy on a terrible scale."

He also stressed that Pakistan was itself a victim of terrorism, having suffered 50 suicide attacks this year alone.

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Mohiuddin takes mayoral charge after 21 months

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury took charge of office yesterday after 21 months following a recent High Court verdict that gave clearance for his taking office.

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Announcement

The Daily Star publishes tomorrow the full text of election manifestos of Awami League and BNP, and the final list of candidates contesting the 9th parliamentary elections from 299 constituencies.

Prayer Timing
December 15

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-20	5-55
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	3-45	4-00
Maghrib	5-22	5-25
Esha	7-00	7-30

Source: Islamic Foundation



BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia introduces four-party alliance candidates Afroza Khan Rita and her father Harunar Rashid Khan Monno in Manikganj-2 and 3 at a rally on Debendra College ground in Manikganj.

PHOTO STAR

Bus crash kills 4 of a family

UNB, Comilla

Four members of a family and a UP chairman were killed and two others injured as a bus dashed a CNG-run autorickshaw at Rajnagar in Muradnagar upazila yesterday morning.

Police said a Chittagong-

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