

Rift in big parties

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They had also sent the names of the three to Awami League President Sheikh Hasina but she has already given the green signal to Mohiuddin, sources say.

Chittagong Awami League picked Mohiuddin as their candidate through a grass-roots poll on May 10. However, the anti-Mohiuddin faction led by Nurul Islam rejected this party support for Mohiuddin.

The Awami League central leadership is worried about the anti-Mohiuddin faction, which it believes might play a negative role in Mohiuddin's campaign.

Awami League top leaders, however, think that there is no alternative to Mohiuddin.

Three times Mayor Mohiuddin had won the last CCC mayoral poll in 2005 defeating BNP-backed Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin by 91,481 votes.

Contacted by The Daily Star, Mayor Mohiuddin said, "By the grace of Allah, my nomination is final."

When asked about his competitors for Awami League support, he refused to comment.

Awami League Joint General Secretary Mahbubul Alam Hanif said, "We will certainly try to minimise the internal conflict ahead of the election."

Our correspondent in Chittagong reports that Awami League leaders formed two committees to support Mohiuddin in his campaign. The mayor announced the formation of the committees at a discussion programme in the port city.

Chittagong city Awami League formed a 501-member Mayor Election Conducting Committee with veteran party leader Ishak Miah as its chairman and its General Secretary Kazi Inamul Haque as the committee's secretary general.

A 501-member Nagorik Committee was also formed with Engineer Mahmudul Islam Chowdhury as its chairman and Major (ret) Emdad as its secretary general to drum up support for Mohiuddin.

The surprise BNP decision to support Manzurul came as factional feud in the Chittagong BNP took a turn for worse.

On Sunday night, BNP chief Khaleda Zia held a meeting with party standing committee member Salauddin Quader Chowdhury and Chittagong city BNP unit President Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury.

Party insiders said as Khaleda sought the two leaders' opinion on Noman during the closed-door meeting, Salauddin and Khasru urged Khaleda to pick a candidate who is not affiliated with either of the factions and somebody with a clean image.

The BNP picked Manzurul yesterday.

When asked about BNP's backing Manzurul, Noman told The Daily Star yesterday evening, "I don't know anything. He [Manzurul] contested against me in last election, he even is not a BNP man as he has not joined the party." Manzurul arrived in the

capital yesterday morning as BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia asked him to meet her at her Gulshan office.

Party leaders said the chairperson called him to convey her party's support to him and suggest how to run his campaign with the feuding factions in the party.

Around 9:00pm last night senior BNP leaders of Chittagong, with the exception of Noman, started a long meeting with Khaleda at her Gulshan office. Manzurul entered the meeting around 12:30am today with a bouquet in his hand, sources said.

Around 1:10am when the meeting finally ended, Manzurul told journalist that he would run for mayor in CCC election under the banner of Chittagong Unnayan Sangram Parishad. He said he had gone to see the BNP chief for her blessings and she has blessed him and promised him support.

On May 13, Chittagong BNP leaders in a meeting in Dhaka urged the BNP high command to "take part in CCC polls".

Later, BNP standing committee in a meeting with Chairperson Khaleda Zia in the chair decided to back a candidate in the CCC election and authorised her to pick a mayoral candidate.

Tiger kills

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Attacks, locals and forest official said the tiger has become a man-eater.

The forest office made announcements over loud speakers to make locals aware of the tiger in the area.

Of the dead, Haripada and Nasima Khatun, 45, wife of Khalil Gazi of Boro Betkhal village in Shyamnagar upazila, became the victim of attack by the tiger yesterday and on Sunday.

Earlier on May 13, the tiger attacked Rahul and Ruhul, two cousins, in Tushkhali, leaving them severely injured.

The next day, the tiger killed a logger identified as Sabiruddin in the same area. On May 15, the victim was Mujibur Rahman, a fisherman, who sustained severe injuries.

The tiger dragged Sabiruddin into the deep forest. Later, locals recovered the body.

Quoting local police said the victims were attacked while they were catching crabs or when they entered the forest to collect honey in Horkhali along the river Mirgang in the Sundarbans.

Local forest official said four out of the six victims had legal permits for entering the forest.

Tiger expert Khasru Chowdhury said man-eater tiger is not very common in the Sundarbans.

He said aged tigers lose ability to prey on animals and convert into a man-eater.

"Killing a human is easier than other prey. If it is the case, it will continue to kill people due to hunger," said Khasru.

On contact, Shyamnagar thana Officer-in-Charge Abdul Hai Sarkar confirmed the incidents.

PM's adviser

FROM PAGE 1
educational institutions.

A source in the adviser's office said several hundred institutions will be included in the fresh list. Besides, many institutions which were included in the list "indiscriminately" will be excluded, he added.

The adviser gave assurance that no institutions will be excluded without enough reasons.

The institutions will be adjusted so that people's aspiration can be fulfilled as demanded by most lawmakers, said Alauddin.

Meantime, around 200 members of parliament have already placed their Demand Order (DO) letters to the adviser's office giving their opinions on the announced list, sources confirmed.

They also gave a priority list of educational institutions of their respective constituencies to be brought under MPO facilities, the sources added.

The adviser has already asked the officials concerned to arrange the institutions that were included in the new list as per constituency and upazila, they said.

On Sunday, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid sent all necessary documents and papers to the education adviser and asked him to take the responsibility to prepare

the list.

The minister said he will give all-out support to the adviser in preparing the list.

The education ministry yesterday dropped Shaheed Abul Qasem College at Lalmonirhat, which was established by BNP leader Asadul Habib Dulu, from the newly announced MPO list.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid last night told The Daily Star that they dropped it while scrutinising during the last several days. But the ministry issued an order to this end yesterday.

After a gap of six years the government on May 7 published the list of 1,022 non-government secondary and higher secondary institutions for giving MPO facilities on the basis of the guidelines recommended by a high-powered committee.

But in the face of vehement opposition from some lawmakers, the prime minister directed the education ministry to suspend the new inventory and asked for a review.

The premier at the same time asked Alauddin to revise the list.

Currently, around 26,340 institutions including 2,386 colleges, 15,515 secondary schools, 7,344 madrasas and 1,095 technical institutions are receiving MPO facilities.

5 warehouses gutted in fire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fire gutted at least five warehouses storing garment scraps and seven shanties at Jhut Patti in city's Mirpur-10 while another fire broke out at a building of Bangladesh Secretariat in the capital yesterday.

At Mirpur, The fire may have originated from an electric short circuit at a warehouse around 1:30am and rapidly spread to the adjacent stores and shanties in the vicinity, suspect the firefighters.

Witnesses said the slum dwellers could not save their belongings as the flames surrounded their homes in no time.

Seven firefighting units from Mirpur, Mohammadpur and Kurmitola rushed to the spot and doused the fire around 2:30am, said Mohammad Tasharruf Hossain, station officer of Mirpur Fire Brigade.

Hossain said three warehouses owned by Zakir Hossain Khandaker, one by Nazrul Islam and one owned by Shah Alam were burnt down, adding, the unlicensed warehouses were small and built in an unplanned manner.

The fire at Bangladesh Secretariat broke out from an electric short circuit in a room on the third floor of building-7 around 10:25am yesterday, said a press release of Press and Information Department.

Huge clouds of smoke billowed out into corridor and engulfed the entire floor. However no losses were reported as fire fighters rushed in immediately and doused the flames, according to the press release.

Life took on its usual pace half an hour after the fire was extinguished.

CANTT HOUSE

Hearing on Khaleda's plea adjourned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A High Court bench yesterday further adjourned till May 24 the hearing on a writ petition filed by BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia challenging a government notice that asked her to vacate her Dhaka cantonment residence.

The HC bench of Justice Md Imman Ali and Justice Obaidul Hasan, which earlier adjourned the hearing of the petition for three times, yesterday put off the hearing following a prayer moved by Khaleda's counsel Moudud Ahmed.

The court also directed Khaleda to inform it by May 24 about the chief justice's decision on shifting the writ petition to another HC bench for hearing.

Deputy Attorney General Motaahar Hossain Sazu told The Daily Star yesterday that the HC bench in its order said if the chief justice asked this bench to continue the proceedings of the writ petition, it would hold hearing till disposal of the matter.

The order also said the bench would not hear the petition, if the chief justice asked it to drop the matter from hearing, Motaahar added.

Moudud Ahmed yesterday told the bench that Khaleda on May 11 submitted an application to the chief justice to shift the writ petition to another HC bench.

He also said as the chief justice has not given his decision on the matter the hearing should be adjourned.

Opposing the adjournment prayer, Attorney General Mahbubey Alam said Khaleda and her counsel are trying to delay the disposal of the writ petition.

1,974 more

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people, a RAB team and police recovered the bullets of SLR and MG kept in two sacks in an abandoned condition from near a graveyard of the village.

With this, 10,164 rounds of bullet were seized from the same village in four phases.

HC asks

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Uddin Ahmed and Justice Naima Haider.

Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh, a rights body, filed the writ petition on April 25.

Petitioner's counsel Manzill Murshid told the HC that house owners in the capital arbitrarily increase rent and evict tenants without notice defying the rent control law.

The counsel mentioned that as per law house owners have to sign agreements with tenants before renting their houses, and have to give written receipts against payment of rent by tenants. And they cannot take advances exceeding one month's rent from tenants, he added.

Deputy Attorney General Mostafa Zaman Islam appeared for the government.

ESCAP Meet

FROM PAGE 1
Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals: Promoting a Stable and Supportive Financial System and Green Growth."

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon gave a speech at the session through video technology.

Hasina urged the development partners of the LDCs to work with and fulfil their promises to the LDCs to sustain the momentum so far achieved in the development sectors.

She demanded adequate representation of the LDCs in the governing structures of multilateral institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

The premier further said much needs to be done to increase the quantity of assistance as well as to improve its quality while foreign direct investments need to flow more to the LDCs' productive sectors to generate more employment for the local populace.

"We need to build strong partnerships amongst LDCs and with the development partners for coherent and coordinated action for a happy future and better world."

She said the discontents of the developing countries--of the LDCs in particular--have to be addressed for achieving a sustainable open world trade regime.

Hasina observed that development efforts within the LDCs need to be sustained to address widespread poverty, as the performance of the LDCs remains fragile.

Regarding policy priority, she stressed "investment in people" for enabling them to realise a society free from poverty, hunger, ill-health and illiteracy.

"Special attention is needed to empower the weaker segment of people in the society and to remove gender discrimination and inequity," she said.

In her speech, the PM strongly urged for favourably considering the Dhaka Outcome Document and endorsing it in the Fourth UN Conference on LDCs.

"We need to speak with a single voice to articulate our development aspirations for the decade 2011-2020. Solidarity gives strength," she said.

Hasina said one significant conclusion reached by the Dhaka Outcome Document is that the Brussels Programme remained an unfinished agenda for the Asia-Pacific LDCs, despite significant progress in several areas such as targeted growth rate and increased investment in productive sector for a number of countries.

She further said the LDCs have also generally lagged behind others in the region in achieving the millennium development goals and other internationally agreed development goals.

The PM said the 66th session of the Escap was requested to endorse the Dhaka Outcome Document and transmit it as the regional input to the global review to be conducted by the Fourth United Nations Conference on the LDCs to be held in Istanbul in May 2011.

About the outcome of the Copenhagen Climate Meet in December 2009, the PM said Bangladesh endorsed the Copenhagen Accord, hoping that it would serve as a building block towards a legally binding agreement in COP 16 scheduled this year in Mexico City.

"We hope that the COP 16 outcome will address our critical concerns--particularly those of the LDCs like Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives

85 election

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their posts during the office hours of yesterday. Their training starts from today at the Election Training Institute.

The notice also reads the officers will be deemed to have served the office from September 6, 2007 to Sunday last. They will be entitled to benefits, salaries and other allowances for that period.

A total of 303 upazila election officers were recruited during the tenure of BNP-Jamaat led government in 2005. The appointments sparked controversy as the fresh recruits were considered partisans.

Reconstituted in February 2007, the commission decided to take efficiency tests of those recruited.

Of them, 218 people passed the examination held on May 18, 2007. The EC secretariat cancelled appointments of the rest.

The 85 officers challenged the decision with the administrative appeal tribunal that gave verdict in their favour on April 12.

and Nepal--and will give adequate consideration to the Kyoto Protocol and the Bali Plan of Action."

She said the world needs to see an early, fair and satisfactory conclusion of the Doha Development Round and a trade regime that ensures effective access of products and services of LDCs to the market of the developed economies.

"Globalisation has increased world trade on the aggregate, but the share of the benefits to the low income countries has been anything but equitable," she said.

At the 66th Session of Escap, the political leaders of Asia and the Pacific meet in the Republic of Korea to agree on the next steps in Asian economic recovery and strategies for sustainable and a green future.

On the sideline of the Escap session, Hasina also inaugurated a wall exhibition at the convention centre.

Chung Un-chan, Prime Minister of South Korea; Edward Natapei, Prime Minister of Vanuatu; and Dr Noeleen Heyzer, Under Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of Escap also spoke at the session.

HASINA-LEE SUMMIT MEET IN SEOUL TODAY
PM Sheikh Hasina will hold a summit meeting with South Korean President Lee Myung-bak at Cheong Wa Dae presidential palace today.

"I intend to have a frank discussion with President Lee on all areas of our cooperation ranging from trade, investment, development cooperation, cultural exchange and ways and means to further expand these relations," she told the South Korean media.

"We will also discuss how Bangladesh can benefit from Seoul's green technology and expertise to develop renewable sources of energy," she said.

Ways to foster bilateral partnership on green growth and climate change are expected to be high on the agenda at the summit meeting.

BANGLADESH-KOREA SIGNS MOU ON ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION

Bangladesh and South Korea have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Environmental Protection yesterday.

The MoU was signed when Environment Minister of Republic of Korea Lee Mae Nee met the PM Sheikh Hasina at her hotel suite in the afternoon, said Press Secretary to the PM Abul Kalam Azad.

From the Bangladesh side, the MoU was signed in advance by the State Minister for Environment Hasan Mahmud in Bangladesh.

6 wounded in new China rampage

AP, Beijing

A clever-wielding man attacked and wounded six women before jumping to his death, police said yesterday, in the latest in a series of such rampages in China.

The attack follows five separate assaults by lone assailants against schoolchildren in recent weeks that have left 17 dead and more than 50 wounded.

According to a police news release, Sunday night's attack began around 7:00 p.m. when a 20-year-old man identified only by his surname, Xie, hacked at a woman outside a restaurant in the southern city of Foshan.

He then rushed into a crowded market and wounded five other women before climbing the stairs of a residential building and throwing himself off the fourth floor.

While Xie appeared to have deliberately targeted women, it was not immediately clear what triggered the attack.

Sociologists attribute the recent attacks mainly to a failure to diagnose and treat mental illness, rage and frustration among people who feel victimized by China's highest-stress, fast-changing society.

At least three of the attackers in the early assaults had prior mental health histories and two committed suicide after the attacks. That included the killer in last week's assault on schoolchildren in Shaanxi province in which seven preschoolers and two adults were killed the deadliest single attack in the recent series.

The attackers have mostly been men in their 30s or 40s who used knives and hammers. Guns are tightly controlled and difficult to obtain in China.

PCJSS leader killed in gun attack

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

A leader of Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) was killed and another injured in a gun attack in Rajasthali upazila of Rangamati Sunday night.

The deceased, identified as Uchinu Marma, 28, son of Thuilha Prue of Krangsai Para village under Rajasthali upazila, was an organising secretary of PCJSS, Gaiyandya union unit of the upazila. The body was sent to Rangamati General Hospital morgue for autopsy.

The injured, Ubaching Marma, 28, of Jagonachhari village in Rikhalhi union of Kaptai upazila, was rushed to Chittagong Medical College Hospital yesterday.

Locals said a group of activists of anti-peace treaty group United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) fired on PCJSS men at about 11:00pm over the issue of PCJSS capturing the new UPDF office in the upazila.

Earlier, members of UPDF opened a new party office at Rajasthali sadar but PCJSS men grabbed it around 12 days back and named it Rajasthali Kriya and Sangskritik Club. Since then PCJSS members have been using it as their party office.

About 15 to 20 PCJSS men were present at the club when the UPDF armed men attacked them leaving Uchinu dead on the spot, PCJSS sources said.

Michael Chakma, Rangamati district unit leader of UPDF, yesterday denied the allegation, and said internal conflict might be the reason behind the attack.

He, however, acknowledged the seizure of their party office by PCJSS, the organisation in favour of Chittagong Hill Tracts peace treaty.

Officer-in-Charge of Rajasthali police Rezaul confirmed the incident, and said police were out to nab the killers.

Meanwhile, the PCJSS unit yesterday brought out a procession in the town in protest at the attack, and held a rally at Rangamati deputy commissioner's office.

PCJSS leaders held government responsible for not banning the UPDF, which they call "terrorist organisation".

On Saturday, the same group allegedly gunned down two activists of PCJSS in Jurachhari upazila of the district.

E-voting

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Over 25,000 voters in the area will be able to cast three votes each by the new method -- one for mayoral candidate and two for ward councillors.

A technical committee would be formed with EC officials and IT experts from Buet, Dhaka University and Bangladesh Computer Council to ensure smooth operation of e-voting machines on the polling day, the official said.

Exercising its authority under the Local Government (City Corporation) Act 2009, the EC made rules on April 6 detailing the use of e-voting machines in election for the first time in Bangladesh.

It earlier decided to introduce e-voting system in the Dhaka City Corporation election that was supposed to be held on May 31. But the EC could not proceed with its decision as the government expressed reservations about the election date.

Introduction of e-voting is another step forward to modernisation of the country's election process, which began through the preparation of voter list with photographs before the ninth parliamentary election.

On EC's requisition, the Institute of Information and Communication Technology (IICT) of Buet had produced 130 e-voting machines for casting and counting votes.

IICT experts will provide the commission with technical assistance on the polling day in line with an agreement signed between the EC and the IICT, said EC officials.

Each machine has control, ballot and display units, which are interconnected and run by batteries.

On completion of polling, presiding officers will send the machines to returning officers. If there is no need to preserve the machines to settle any electoral disputes, they will be used for polling again after six months, says the rule on use of e-voting machines.

The election tribunal might ask for a recount of votes stored in the machine's memory, if necessary, it says.

Philippine president swears in new CJ

AP, Manila

Outgoing Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo swore in a new chief justice yesterday whose appointment has been questioned by her apparent successor, sparking fears of a constitutional crisis.

Opposition Sen Benigno Aquino III, who is set to become the president-elect in an almost-complete vote count of May 10 elections, has vowed not to take his oath of office before newly-appointed Supreme Court Chief Justice Renato Corona, who once served as Arroyo's chief of staff and spokesman.

Aquino has said he preferred to take his oath before a village leader in Tarlac, his northern home province, when Arroyo's term ends on June 3. The constitution does not say the oath must be taken before the chief justice and any official can administer it.

Arroyo's action has brought the Supreme Court on a possible collision course with the incoming administration, said Aquino's political adviser Florencio Abad.

"She's really pushing us to the brink of a crisis here," Abad told The Associated Press.

Arroyo, who ran successfully for a seat in House of Representatives, may have been appointing friendly justices to fend off possible legal action that Aquino has said his new administration would initiate against her, Abad said.

Aquino has said that he planned to form a commission to investigate allegations of massive corruption and vote-rigging involving Arroyo, who faced several failed opposition impeachment bids, coup attempts and political unrest during her turbulent nine years in office.

In a news conference, Corona said his appointment was legal and rejected perceptions that he will be biased in favour of Arroyo. "Watch me," Corona said. "Don't judge me now."

Asked if he will inhibit himself from any future case involving Arroyo, Corona refused to reply. Aquino's rejection of his appointment may or may not lead to a crisis, he said.

The son of two revered democracy icons, Aquino has questioned Arroyo's appointment of Corona last week, citing constitutional prohibitions on appointments two months before the end of a presidential term. However, a majority of Supreme Court justices all appointed by Arroyo ruled in March that the two-month ban does not apply to the position of chief justice.

Aquino has ordered his lawyers to study how the Supreme Court ruling, which he deemed unconstitutional, can be challenged, said Abad.

2 brothers

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flee the scene.

Meanwhile, bus conductor Babu, 19, died when another bus hit him at the city's Gulistan yesterday evening.

Seoul to legalise

FROM PAGE 1
and hoped that the Korean government will take all necessary measures for legalising all Bangladeshi expatriates living in Korea.

She invited Korean investment in large number in Bangladesh's various development sectors like power, gas, shipbuilding, infrastructure and agro-based industries.

She also urged the Korean government to import leather goods, footwear, frozen food, garments and knitwear from Bangladesh.

40 killed

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The attack came a day ahead of the 48-hour strike called by Maoists in five Indian states -- Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Bihar and Orissa -- from tomorrow to protest against military operations against them.

Maoists ambushed and killed 75 policemen in Chhattisgarh on April 6 in the worst ever massacre of security forces by the ultra-left extremists.

The Maoists killed eight villagers in Rajnandgaon of Chhattisgarh on Sunday suspecting them as informers.

On May 8, Maoists shot dead seven paramilitary personnel in Bijapur district of the state.

AFP adds: The guerrillas have stepped up attacks in response to a government offensive against them that began late last year in the forests of the so-called "Red Corridor" that stretches across north and eastern India. The insurgency began in

Gary Olivar said Arroyo's actions were legal and admonished Aquino, asking that he adhere to the constitution by recognizing Corona's authority.