

CONSTITUENCY DEMARCATION BNP forms committee to work on it

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP has formed an 11-member special committee to work on constituency demarcation as the election commission has started exchanging views in this regard ahead of the next general election.

The party's standing committee member and lawmaker MK Anwar will lead the committee as convener, said sources.

Other members are Ruhul Kabir Rizvi, Zainul Abedin, Monirul Haque Chowdhury, Fazlul Haque Milon, Golam Akbar Khandakar, Moshir Rahman, Harun or Rashid, Mujibur Rahman Sarwar, Asadul Habib Dulu and Shakhawat Hasan Jibon.

The committee will start its works soon.

Death anniversary

METRO DESK



Today is the 24th death anniversary of former secretary Alhaj MA Rashid.

A doa mahfil will be held at his 2nd son's residence at Gulshan in the capital today.



Rickshaw-pullers painstakingly move through a rainwater inundated Probartak Mor of Chittagong city after a sudden rainstorm yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Obituary

METRO DESK



Abdus Raquib, son of late Khan Bahadur Abdus Sattar of Jalpaiguri, passed away at 2:30pm yesterday.

He was former managing director of Hotel Shahbagh in erstwhile East Pakistan, says a press release.

His namaz-e-janaza will be held at Eskaton Garden Mosque in the capital after Juma prayers today.

Doa mahfils for Ataus Samad today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three doa mahfils for noted journalist Ataus Samad will be held in three mosques of the capital today.



The first doa mahfil will be held at Baitul Aman Jame Masjid in Dhanmondi after Juma prayers, says a press release.

The two other mahfils will be held respectively in Paltan Mosque and Azad Mosque at Gulshan-2, both after Asr prayers.

Ataus Samad, a pioneer of the country's journalism and lifetime member of Jatiya Press Club, passed away on September 26.

He was advisory editor of the Bangla daily Amar Desh, and chief executive officer of private TV channel ntv.

Between 1982 and 1994, Ataus Samad was the BBC's special correspondent in Dhaka.

Chehlum

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Chehlum of Md Moslem Ali Hawladar, a teacher and businessman, will be held on Sunday.

On the occasion, Qurankhwani and a milad mahfil will be held on the day. A doa mahfil and food distribution programme will also be held at Banaripara Bazar orphanage, Barisal after Esha prayers today.

His relatives, friends and well-wishers have been requested to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

Moslem Ali died on August 27 due to old age complications at the age of 85.

Two killed in mob beating in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Two alleged criminals were killed in mass beating at Sitakunda upazila of Chittagong yesterday.

One of the deceased was identified as Anwar, 22, of Brahmanbaria, while the identity of the other could not be known immediately.

The enraged mob also torched a microbus that was used for committing the crime.

Samiul Alam, officer-in-charge (OC) of Sitakunda Police Station, said one from the criminal group stopped Md Alam in front of "One Bank" at Kashabpur around 11:30am as he came out of the bank after withdrawing Tk 50,000. The criminal, claiming himself as a Rab member, asked Alam to get into their microbus.

When he refused to do so, around six men came out of the vehicle and forced Alam into the microbus and set it rolling. Alam called out for help.

Hearing Alam, locals chased the microbus with motorbikes and finally caught it in Barokunda area.

They gave a good beating to the duo, who were later sent to Chittagong Medical College Hospital, where doctors declared the unidentified man dead around 4:00pm. Anwar died around 7:00pm, the OC added.

The mob handed over Abu Al Kaiser Khan, 25, hailing from the capital's Bangshal, to the police. However, the rest of the gang managed to flee.

Quoting Alam, the OC said the criminals had also assaulted him physically.

Bullet 'mysteriously' hits woman

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narsingdi

A woman was "mysteriously" hit by a bullet in Basail area of the district town yesterday.

The victim Papya Chowdhury was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital last evening with the bullet on the right side of her chest.

Papya is wife of Mafizul Islam, a local leader of Bangladesh Chhatra League.

The source of the firing was "not known".

Mafizul said someone fired at him to kill him in front of the Narsingdi municipality mayor's residence, but the bullet mistakenly hit his wife.

Locals said the bullet might have come out of Papya's own pistol which she used to always keep in her vanity bag.

SC judges should

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the law and the constitution. The attorney general said this while placing his arguments during the hearing of an appeal before the Appellate Division. The appeal was about a High Court verdict on Speaker Abdul Hamid's ruling on June 18 this year.

It all began on May 29 this year.

On that day Speaker Abdul Hamid told parliament that the courts were neutral and independent but it appeared odd that they made quick decisions to solve their own problems while people had to wait years for justice.

He had said the day would come when people would stand against the courts if the trend went on. If a government became dictatorial, people would stand against it too, he said.

On June 5, Justice AHM Shamsuddin Choudhury Manik of the High Court during a hearing said the Speaker had provoked the people against the courts with the May 29 comments in parliament and it was tantamount to sedition.

In response on June 18,

Speaker Abdul Hamid in parliament gave a ruling that a High Court judge (Justice Manik) violated the constitution by making derogatory remarks about the Jatiya Sangsad and the Speaker.

Following a writ petition filed by AKM Shafiuddin in this regard, a division bench of the High Court on July 24 delivered a verdict declaring that the Speaker's observation had no legal effect and no existence in the eye of the law.

On September 1, the government filed an appeal with the Supreme Court against the High Court verdict.

During the hearing of the appeal yesterday, the bench of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court expressed apprehension that the judge concerned (Justice Manik) may face difficulties in future as the Speaker in his ruling said a judge violated the constitution and the chief justice could take steps in this regard.

Mahbubey Alam then told the court that there was nothing to be worried about since the Speaker had not sent any letter to the president or the

Supreme Court urging steps against the judge.

Shafiuddin's counsel Rokanuddin Mahmud opposed the appeal and said the Speaker provoked people with his comments against the government, which was clearly sedition.

The Speaker threatened the Sheikh Hasina-led government by saying that the people would stand against the government, he argued.

He said the Speaker had no right to make any comment about a judge and a sub-judice matter as per the rules of procedure of parliament and the constitution.

Defending the High Court verdict of July 24, Rokanuddin said there was no legal bar to challenging the Speaker's ruling if it is not in accordance with law. The Supreme Court had cancelled five amendments to the constitution in the past, he added.

After the hearing concluded, the seven-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Md Mozammel Hossain fixed October 7 for passing an order on the appeal.

Sayedee's name, age changed

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which was submitted to a parliamentary sub-committee on Wednesday.

According to the report, Sayedee, nayeb-e-ameer of Jamaat, applied for amending his name and age 51 years after his Dakhil and 48 years after his Alim examinations.

"Accepting the applications 50 years after the examination in violation of rules was an unprecedented event," the probe report says, adding, "the applications were unacceptable because affidavits were not done through his [Sayedee's] guardian which was a violation of related rules."

The report adds, the examinations controller was empowered to examine all applications seeking any amendment as per rules. But in Sayedee's case, applications were not examined.

According to the probe report, Sayedee's name was Mostafa Delawar Hossain in his original Dakhil certificate. But he entered politics as Delawar Hossain Sayedee and was elected MP in the

eight parliament by that name.

After reformation of electoral rules, he needed to submit copies of his educational certificates to contest the last parliamentary polls held in December 2008. So, he hurriedly had his educational certificates amended.

The education ministry formed the five-member probe committee in line with a recommendation of the parliamentary sub-committee. Earlier on August 12 this year, the parliamentary standing committee on education ministry formed the sub-committee to investigate the certificate scam.

The probe report says Sayedee on November 6 and 9 in 2008 submitted two applications to amend his name and age in his certificates. Deputy Controller of Examinations Abu Saleh Ahmed, who still holds the same post, accepted the applications and allowed Sayedee to get the form. The matter was placed before a meeting of the board on November 10.

Interestingly, the working paper for that meeting was prepared on November 5 before Sayedee filed his applications, says the probe report, adding, there is no similarity between the signatures put on the two applications.

A committee led by the then chairman of the Madrasa Education Board on amendment of certificates however did not raise any question about Sayedee's applications and approved those at a meeting.

The parliamentary sub-committee on Wednesday asked 10 former and incumbent top officials of the board to explain their roles in the scam in 10 days.

The officials including Madrasa Education Board's former chairman Mohammad Yusuf, former registrar Hafizur Rahman, incumbent Chairman Abdun Nur and Prof Ruhul Amin of Islamic Studies at Dhaka University were asked to come up with their replies at the sub-committee's meeting at Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban on October 14.

Cops club agitating

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government Monthly Payment Order (MPO) list.

They also hurled tear gas canisters into the agitating crowd. At least 25 teachers were injured during the incident as the demonstrators tried to surround Bangladesh Secretariat to press home their demand.

In the afternoon, the teachers suspended the agitation programme after the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) had assured them that the PM would talk to them regarding their demand.

On the fourth consecutive day of the programme, several thousand teachers and employees under the banner of Non-MPO Shikkha Pratisthan Shikkhak Karmachari Oikyajote gathered in front of the Jatiya Press Club in the capital around 9:00am.

After holding a rally there, they around noon marched towards the secretariat along the eastern side of the press club. Intercepted by police after a while, they changed their direction and headed towards the High Court.

Police obstructed them as they reached Kadam Foara around 12:20pm. Here the agitators scuffled with the law enforcers and tried to proceed removing police barricades. The law enforcers baton-charged them and fired at least 15 tear gas canisters to disperse them.

At that time, some agitators broke down in tears while some shouted at police with fury.

"Are we [criminals]? What wrong have we done... We are placing our lawful demands," said a teacher.

SM Shiblee Noman, assistant commissioner of police (Ramna Zone), denied the allegation of baton-charging the agitators.

He, however, admitted that police had hurled tear gas shells at the protesters. The law enforcers

were compelled to do so when the demonstrators removed the barricades near Kadam Foara and pelted them with brick chips.

"We had to do that for ensuring safety of public life and property," said the AC.

Around 1:00pm, the teachers paraded back from the Paltan intersection to the press club and held a rally in front of the secretariat gate on the eastern side of the press club. At the rally, they demanded resignation of the education minister, saying he had failed to meet their demands.

Around 4:00pm, they suspended their agitation programme on receiving the assurance of the PMO.

Tapash Kumar Kundu, general secretary of the Oikyajote, told The Daily Star that Saifuzzaman Shekhor, assistant personal secretary-2 to the prime minister had called him up and asked them to meet the prime minister on Sunday or Monday.

Depending on the outcome of the meeting, the teachers would decide whether to re-launch the agitation, he said.

Meanwhile, traffic movement on the road stretching from Kadam Foara to Purana Paltan remained suspended until 4:00pm due to the agitation, which increased the pressure of traffic in adjacent areas. Besides, the law enforcers kept barbed-wire barricades at some intersections leading to the secretariat for most of the day.

Earlier on Wednesday, they submitted a memorandum to the PMO, mentioning their five-point demand, including bringing all government-approved educational institutions under the MPO system in this fiscal year and ending the practice of Demand Order letter (D/O), a sort of recommendation by lawmakers needed for enrolment under the MPO.

UAE stops giving

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visa, tourist visa or any other kind of visa for Bangladesh nationals.

"The situation will return to normal once a number of issues are resolved by the Bangladesh government. The suspension of issuing visas is not permanent and is not a ban," he was quoted as saying by Gulf News on Wednesday.

But Md Nazrul Islam, director general (West & Central Asia Wing) of the Bangladesh foreign ministry, said: "We do not have any information on the suspension of all types of visa issuance for the Bangladeshis."

"Our embassy in the UAE or the foreign ministry has not received any letter or notification from them [UAE]."

However, Nazmul Quanine, Bangladesh ambassador to the UAE, told The Daily Star over the phone that the UAE government had not stopped issuing visas to Bangladeshis.

Asked whether the UAE government had imposed any restrictions on Bangladeshi workers, he said, "We cannot say it because we have not received anything officially."

When his attention was drawn to the Gulf News report, the ambassador said the newspaper had published a similar news report a couple of months ago, but "there has been no official confirmation till date."

Gulf News that the current Bangladeshi visa holders in the UAE would not face any difficulties at the time of extending their visas or renewing residency permits.

"We are not issuing any new visas to Bangladeshis but we are renewing for those who already have residence visas," he said.

Ali Haider Chowdhury, secretary general of Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (Baira), told The Daily Star that they had come to know from the UAE media that the authorities there had stopped issuing all kinds of visas for Bangladeshis.

"We have long been asking the government to address the concerns of the UAE when the restriction was imposed over a month ago," he said.

But the government did not pay attention to the UAE's concerns, and even ruled out the fear that the country many impose some restrictions.

"Now, finally the UAE has stopped issuing all kinds of visas," he added.

The restriction, a month ago, caused a drastic fall in manpower export to the UAE. In June, Bangladesh exported 23,025 people and in July 27, 535. But the figures came down to 15,771 in August.

The UAE, which now hosts about 10 lakh Bangladeshi workers, the second highest number after Saudi Arabia, has been a sustained labour market for the last couple of years despite the global economic recession.

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