

CARETAKER GOVT BNP believes in open discussion

Says Khaleda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP does not believe in any backdoor dialogues rather it demands open discussions only on reinstatement of a nonpartisan government system to hold credible parliamentary elections, said BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia last night.

Elections under the Awami League-led government will not be credible or fair, she told some Awami League defectors at BNP's Gulshan office in the capital.

BNP, through a movement, will compel the government to amend the constitution to reintroduce the system and her party has no problem if the present government completes its full tenure, she said.

Senbagh upazila Jubo League President Ali Akkas with around 100 followers joined BNP on the eve of the prime minister's scheduled visit to Noakhali.

On the occasion, Khaleda also said the government was killing opposition leaders and good organisers who were vocal against the misdeeds of the government.

In this regard, she cited the names of BNP leader Ilias Ali, president of BNP's ward-56 unit of Dhaka City Corporation Chowdhury Alam Mazumdar and general secretary of the ward Rafiqul Islam.

Among others, BNP leaders Moudud Ahmed and Zainul Abidin Farroque were present on the occasion.



PHOTO: STAR

A fire razes more than 100 tin houses in the capital's Lichu Bagan area of Purba Nakhla Para last night. The cause of the fire, which started around 7:45pm and lasted more than an hour, could not be ascertained. Some 400-500 low income people used to reside in the small houses.

Blogs for govt officials mulled

BSS, Dhaka

The government is planning to introduce departmental blog, an online platform, under its different ministries to enable information sharing and interaction among officials from lower to upper tier of the administration with an aim to get solutions to various issues, said officials of Access to Information (A2I) Programme.

They said the departmental blogs of the Ministries of Health and Population Welfare; Social Welfare; and Women and Children Affairs have already been developed by A2I Programme and are now on test run.

The same blog would be replicated for other ministries after successful completion of the test run, they added.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Secretary and National Project Director Md Nazrul Islam Khan said all officials and employees would be soon using the blogs for writing about various issues, making their respective websites virtual networks of interactive communication.

The blogs are being designed following the model of the Union Information Service Centre (UISC) that has emerged as an effective platform to troubleshoot various types of issues, including technical, official, socio-economic and employment issues, he said.

Nazrul said currently more than 10,000 entrepreneurs of different UISCs and officials of government are regularly writing for the blogs, offering the public necessary information and solutions to various issues.

A2I Local Development Expert Manik Mahmud said different ministries and departments could post notices and annual reports on their respective online blogs to share with others that would save both time and money of the government.

8 die in road crashes

METRO DESK

Eight people were killed and seven others injured in separate road accidents in the capital, Mymensingh, Dinajpur, Jhenidah, Keraniganj and Netrakona yesterday.

Our staff correspondent reports, a woman was killed after the rickshaw she was traveling in was hit from behind by a bus, Brother Paribahan, in Lalbagh area of Dhaka around 4:30pm.

The deceased is Kawsari Begum, 40, wife of Anwar Hossain, a resident of Jinjira in Keraniganj area.

Protesting the accident, several hundred people blocked the road and set the bus on fire, causing heavy traffic jam in the area. No one was hurt in the aftermath. The road was freed after an hour.

Our Mymensingh correspondent reports, a man and a woman were killed in two road accidents in Mymensingh yesterday.

Monjur Rahman, 34, an NGO worker, died after a truck rammed his motorbike on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway at Mashkanda in Mymensingh around 11:00am.

Meanwhile, on Zila School Road in the district town, Nadira Jahan, 30, wife of Azhar Ali of Shankipara area was killed in an accident.

The incident occurred when Nadira got off an auto-rickshaw but fell down due to the pull of her cloth that was stuck with the wheel and the vehicle started rolling over her.

She died at Mymensingh Medical College and Hospital around 1:30pm.

Our Dinajpur correspondent reports, a pedestrian was killed while another injured in front of Moharaja Girijanath High School in Dinajpur town yesterday morning.

The deceased is Md Abdul Latif, 52, of Uttar Balubari under Dinajpur municipality. A truck hit Latif from behind killing him instantly and then hit the other who was ahead of Latif.

Our Jhenidah correspondent adds, a man was killed when a truck ran him over while he was crossing Hamdah bus stand in Sadar upazila of Jhenidah around 12:30pm yesterday.

The deceased is Abdul Alim, 55, of Beparipara village of the district.

UNB reports from Keraniganj, a man was killed when a truck hit him on Hasnabad Port road while crossing the road near Al-Baraka store of Keraniganj yesterday morning.

The deceased is Abdul Goni, 50, of Kotwali in Mymensingh.

UNB adds from Netrakona, two people were killed and six others injured when a Netrakona-bound bus plunged into a roadside ditch at Kandunia in the Sadar upazila as its driver lost control over the bus on Netrakona-Kalmakanda road around 5:30pm yesterday.

The dead could not be identified immediately. Police rushed the injured to sadar hospital.

6 held for killing Ctg student

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Six people including a woman were arrested yesterday on charges of murdering Saidul Islam, a student of Chittagong Polytechnic Institute in the port city.

The six are "professional muggers" who were released on bail about four months ago, Inspector (Investigation) Sadip Kumar Das of Kotwali Police Station yesterday told The Daily Star.

The arrestees are Delwar Hossain, 27, his wife Reshma Begum, 22, Mamunur Rahman, 22, Akhter Hossain, 23, Monir Hossain, 28, and Jahirul Islam, 38.

Police made the arrests early yesterday at Burma Colony in Bayazid area.

Saidul Islam was stabbed by Akhter during a mugging on December 31 last year when Saidul caught hold of their team leader Delwar, Md Kamruzzaman, investigation officer of the murder case, quoted three of the arrestees as saying.

The inspector said Reshma was arrested as she tried to hide evidence and had been involved in several mugging activities.

Police seized a mobile phone that belonged to Saidul, two knives, a toy pistol and a CNG-run auto-rickshaw, which Jahirul drove on the night of the incident, Sadip added.

Saidul, 25, was a fourth-year student of the electrical engineering department and the lead guitarist of a local band named "Chhuti".

He was attacked on a road at Mehedibagh near his house around 2:30am when he was returning home at CDA Colony after performing at a programme.

Saidul was stabbed in the chest and abdomen.

Magistrate records victim's

FROM PAGE 20

They went to a flat on the fourth floor of a building near Chhapra mosque in Bank Colony area of Savar where some young men awaited them.

As soon as Liza left, the victim understood that she had been trapped. A man she had never met pounced on her. She let out a scream at which another man named Shaheen beat her up and clapped his hands on her mouth.

Then, a man called Jahed alias Rasu raped her while the others recorded the footage of the harrowing incident. They even turned up the volume of the music to mask her screams, the victim added.

The culprits had threatened her of leaking the footage if she ever spoke of the incident, she told the magistrate.

Earlier on Friday, police arrested four of the culprits including Rayhan, Mohidur Rahman, Danesh and Liza and took them on remand.

Danesh was beaten up by the locals for stalking the victim a few months ago

which is why he set his nephew Jahed to rape her," the victim said.

Danesh even showed her mother the disturbing footage shortly after the incident.

Senior Judicial Magistrate Lubna Jahan recorded the victim's statement and ordered to keep her under the custody of Bangladesh Jatiya Mahila Ainjibi Samity due to security reasons.

TANGAIL RAPE
The gang rape victim of Tangail is improving.

Doctors have asked police, visitors and relatives of the victim not to ask her any question on the heinous incident or discuss anything related to that in front of her.

"She can talk now. But forced-recalling can lead her to grave mental illness or shock," said Bilkis Begum, member of the seven-person medical team for the victim, and also the coordinator of One-Stop Crisis Centre (OCC) at DMCH.

She said, "It is better to wait, perhaps a few more days, until she starts talking about the incident. Now, she needs counselling to regain a steady mind."

Meanwhile, students, people of victim's village and different non-government organisations brought out processions and formed human chains at different places in Tangail demanding exemplary punishment to the culprits. They gave memorandums to the Tangail Deputy Commissioner.

Four brutes raped the 15-year-old girl confining her to a room for five days, December 6 to 10 last year, in Madhupur of Tangail. Since, the girl lost her mental balance.

Police yesterday visited the place of the occurrence -- house of Nuruzzaman at Bokarabadi village -- and talked with locals.

Meanwhile, Chairman of National Human Rights Commission Mizanur Rahman yesterday went to see the victim in the hospital. There he urged the judiciary to come forward to ensure justice for rape victims.

He said the judiciary needed to prove that justice is there for the poor.

Good start, bad ending

FROM PAGE 1

managing director of the Grameen Bank on March 2, 2011 and Dhaka's poor handling of some human and labour rights concerns.

In the recent months, Hasina's government has cold shouldered some of the US officials during their visits to Bangladesh. In the latest example, visiting US state department official Robert Blake failed to make a call-on with the prime minister despite requests from the US embassy.

While on the other hand, ties with countries like Russia, China, Japan and European countries have improved greatly. However, relations with Germany deteriorated after the government had summoned its diplomat and protested German foreign minister's remarks during his visit to Bangladesh last June.

Critics say the government has utterly failed to prove its skill and efficiency in negotiations and protecting the interest of Bangladesh while dealing

with bilateral issues with neighbouring countries, especially with India, as the common feeling is Bangladesh gave much more than India did to Bangladesh.

Besides, the government could not convince Myanmar, Bhutan or Nepal of exporting hydroelectricity to meet the shortage in Bangladesh, and had to be satisfied with mere assurances.

With Myanmar, the long-standing issue of repatriation of Rohingya refugees still remains unresolved. The Myanmar president, who was scheduled to visit Bangladesh in July, last year, first cancelled the tour and now it has become totally uncertain.

Rather, the government was severely criticised when it totally ignored international calls to allow Rohingyas into Bangladesh during last year's sectarian violence in Myanmar.

Dhaka's relations with Islamabad has plunged into all-time low since the

Awami League-led grand alliance came to power four years ago, mainly on the issue of the genocide the then Pakistani troops had carried out during Bangladesh's War of Liberation in 1971.

Despite volatile Middle Eastern political situation as well as economic recession, and some restrictions in UAE and Saudi Arabia, Bangladesh's manpower export to several countries has increased mainly in the last two years. This year it marked a growth by 11 per cent from the previous year.

Meanwhile, the remittance in 2012 is expected to hit US \$ 14 billion whereas it was \$ 12.17 billion in 2011. Last year's remittance was considered as the preceding decade's highest.

A diplomatic tension has been created with Turkey over the Turkish president's letter to Bangladesh government calling for clemency to the accused of war crimes, and the visit by an NGO delegation misusing on arrival visa facility.

In the last four years, the Awami League government had made a considerable number of attempts to reach different nations. But all in all, it appeared to be very India-centric.

Critics say the last four years of Hasina-led grand alliance government witnessed a monotonous performance because of excessive visits by the PM herself and her Foreign Minister Dipu Moni, as they hardly miss any foreign trip.

They said the government had achieved some degree of success in multilateral diplomacy, but it has a very few success stories to pursue its agenda through bilateral diplomacy.

On some vital issues, the foreign minister failed to remove jolt while Prime Minister's International Affairs Adviser Gowher Rizvi played a vital role in various bilateral settlements, especially with India and the US.

In multilateral level, Bangladesh was elected to different important bodies under the UN systems,

Obituary

METRO DESK

Lutfur Rahman, father of senior sub-editor of the daily



Samakal Khairul Alam, passed away at his Rosulpur village residence in Nandail upazila of Mymensingh yesterday morning.

He was 52. He had been suffering from jaundice.

He left behind his wife, two sons and one daughter to mourn his death, says a press release.

Lutfur was buried in his family graveyard in the village after Zohr prayers.

Khairul, also former treasurer of Dhaka Sub-Editors Council, has requested all to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

BSS adds, the local lawmaker and leaders of different political parties, including Awami League, Bangladesh Chhatra League, BNP, Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, and Muktiyoddha Command Council expressed deep shock at the death of Lutfur.

Md Atiar Rahman

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

Md Atiar Rahman, a freedom fighter, politician and former headmaster of Rampal NBM High School in Munshiganj, passed away due to a cardiac arrest in the capital early yesterday. He was 60.


He left behind his wife, a daughter and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

Family sources said he felt severe chest pain at around 1:00am and was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Later, he died on the way to Square Hospital in the capital.

Atiar Rahman was the president of Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), Faridpur district unit.


He was also the central president of Bangladesh Shikshok Samity.




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