

JOY'S JOINING POLITICS

AL looks divided

HASAN JAHD TUSHER, from Rangpur

Ruling Awami League leaders are apparently divided over Sajeed Wazed Joy's entry into politics and becoming the party's candidate from the Rangpur-6 constituency at the next parliamentary polls.

Some party leaders say Joy, the only son of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, should get directly involved in party politics while others think that time will bring the heir of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman into the realm of politics.

Those who think Joy should get involved in direct politics argue that he could help the party and also the country in achieving technological advancement with the involvement of educated youths as he has vast experience in the IT sector.

Several leaders, on the other hand, think that people would compare Joy with Opposition Leader Khaleda Zia's son Tarique Rahman, who is an accused in corruption cases.

Such comparison may harm Joy's image if he joins politics, they observe.

The issue came up for discussion when Momtaz Uddin, acting president of Rangpur district AL, at a press conference on Monday demanded that Joy become a candidate from a Rangpur constituency and Hasina formally announce his name at a public rally at Pirganj today.

Hasina along with Joy and her daughter Saima Wazed Putul will visit their home at Pirganj upazila in the district and offer special prayers at Dr Wazed Miah's grave here.

The premier will also inaugurate around a dozen development projects in the upazila today.

Party sources said Hasina would not introduce Joy as the party's prospective candidate from the Rangpur-6 constituency at the next general elections.

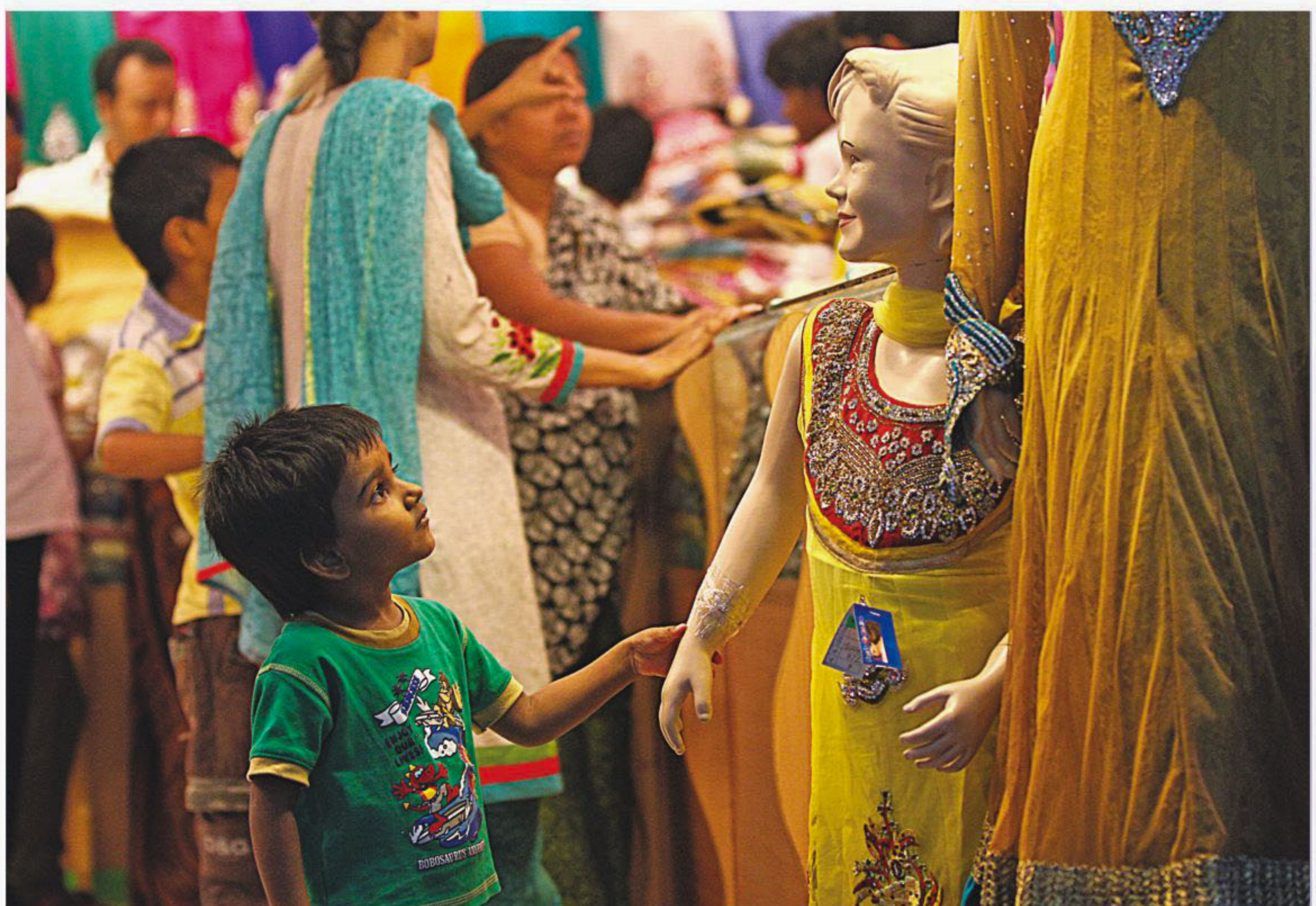
Earlier, Rangpur AL had given Joy the party's primary membership.

"The party chief may tell the people of Pirganj that from now on, Joy will stay beside you and work with you while introducing him as an MP candidate," an AL lawmaker told The Daily Star, preferring not to be named.

However, a top official at the Prime Minister's Office said Joy would work for the party at the next election. "He will in no way be a candidate for any constituency," he added.

Contacted, AL Organising Secretary Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury said there was strong aspiration from local people as well as leaders and workers of the AL to get him nominated as the party's candidate from Rangpur-6 constituency.

Khalid, who is in charge of looking after the AL's Rangpur division activities, also said Joy himself would finally decide whether he wants to take part in the election or not.



A kid, out with parents for Eid shopping, curiously touches a dummy model at Bashundhara market in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Big parties

FROM PAGE 1

registered political parties are supposed to have audited their last year's income and expenditure and to submit reports between January and July.

The EC Secretariat issued letters to the political parties on July 11 asking them to submit their reports within the deadline.

The parties that have already submitted their reports are Biplobi Workers Party of Bangladesh, Islami Andolan Bangladesh, Bangladesh Muslim League, Jamaat-e-Ulema-Islam Bangladesh, Khelafat Majlish, Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami, Ganotontri Party, Liberal Democratic Party, Jatiya Ganotantrik Party, Zaker party, National People's Party, Ganoforum, Bangladesh Kalayan Party and Bangladesh National Awami Party - Bangladesh Nap.

The Workers' Party of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Sammabadi Dal and Jatiya Party (Monju), meanwhile, sought more time from the EC to submit their reports.

2 'carjackers'

FROM PAGE 1

Wahiduzzaman Mia.

Rouf quoted Wahiduzzaman as saying that the car was hijacked around 9:00pm on Monday from near the Shahjalal International Airport.

Rab officials recovered a pistol with two bullets and four bullet shells from the shootingspot.

They also recovered four mobile phones, a knife, a machete, a vanity bag, four money bags, a make-up kit, a pair of gold earrings, a gold chain, four gold bangles, a grill cutter and a rod from the car.

Officer-in-Charge Shawkat Hossain of South Keraniganj Police Station said they would send the bodies to a morgue after preparing the inquest report.

Rony's claim

FROM PAGE 1

In the probe report, the IO said he had visited the place of occurrence and tried to record statements of witnesses, but no one stood for Rony. Rather, he came to know that on that day Rony had indeed been beaten up by Imtiaz and Mohsin, members of crime-investigation show Talash, at his Tophkana Road office in the capital.

The journalists had gone there on information that the lawmaker was about to receive as bribe more than Tk 1 crore sent from Patuakhali, the IO said.

Soon after the assault, Yunus Ali, an assistant manager of Independent TV, filed an attempt to murder case against Rony and 20 others unnamed with Shahbagh police.

On July 21, Rony obtained bail from the court. But it was cancelled on July 24 and he was arrested. Since then he has remained in jail custody.

Death spreads

FROM PAGE 16

Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) likened the spread of the blue glow travelling through the worm's body to that of the Grim Reaper, stalking death.

They believe that the research could eventually prove to be a useful model to understanding death in people and perhaps even lead to an increase in life expectancy.

When individual cells die, they trigger a chemical chain reaction that leads to the breakdown of cell components and a build-up of molecular debris.

The molecular mechanisms of this are reasonably well understood at a cellular level but we know much less about how death spreads throughout an organism at the end of its life.

In worms, the spread of death can be seen easily under a microscope as a wave of blue fluorescence travelling through the gut of the worm.

The study, published in PLoS Biology, reveals that this fluorescence is caused

by a cell death pathway called necrosis and its spread throughout the organism is dependent on calcium signalling.

Professor David Gems from the Institute of Health Ageing at University College London, who led the study, said: "We've identified a chemical pathway of self-destruction that propagate cell death in worms, which we see as this glowing blue fluorescence travelling through the body."

"It's like a blue Grim Reaper, tracking death as it spreads throughout the organism until all life is extinguished."

"We found that when we blocked this pathway, we could delay death induced by a stress such as infection, but we couldn't slow death from old age. This suggests that ageing causes death by a number of processes acting in parallel."

The mechanisms involved are similar to those that are active in mammals, confirming that the worm can provide a useful model to understand cell death in people.

100 war crimes

FROM PAGE 16

The figures emerged from a Freedom of Information request made by the BBC.

They show that, in the 15 months from January 2012, the Home Office researched nearly 800 cases where individuals were suspected of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

It made "adverse recommendations" against 99 people who had applied for British citizenship, asylum or leave to remain in the UK.

A further 16 war crimes suspects had applied to enter the UK.

It follows earlier figures suggesting more than 700 suspected war criminals were identified by UK immigration officials between 2005 and 2012.

Michael McCann MP, chairman of a cross-party parliamentary group to prevent genocide, says the figures reveal the need for greater transparency from the government in cases where war crimes suspects are in the UK.

"The organisation in the Home Office that used to

deal with this -- the UKBA (UK Border Agency) -- was a basket case. It had failed on so many different levels I've lost count," he said.

"I have deep concerns that the Home Office isn't being as forthright as it could be and I think we should be drilling down into these cases in order to give the public of our country that security."

Of the 99 suspects, three were deported last year, 20 were refused asylum and 46 had their citizenship bids turned down but are likely to have remained in the UK. The fate of the remaining suspects is unknown.

The Metropolitan Police says 56 people in the UK are currently subject to war crimes inquiries, although only nine cases were passed on to them by the Home Office.

A Home Office spokesman said: "Anyone accused of these crimes should be put on trial in their home country and we will always seek to return them to face justice."

12 killed in Nigeria blasts

AFP, KANO, NIGERIA

The death toll from a series of bomb blasts that rocked a mainly Christian area of northern Nigeria's largest city of Kano has risen to 12, the military said on Tuesday, blaming Islamist group Boko Haram for the attacks.

"Twelve persons were confirmed to have died ... while a couple of others who sustained various degrees of injuries were rushed to hospital for medical attention," a military statement said of Monday night's explosions.

The statement blamed the attack on suspected Boko Haram members and said packages that caused the explosions were left in the mainly Christian Sabon Gari area of Kano.

Soldier of freedom

FROM PAGE 16

night of 25 March, continuing well into the next day, Belal Mohammad and his dedicated band of colleagues at the Kalurghat station of Radio Pakistan (which by then no more went in the name of Pakistan) knew what they needed to do. It was that dark hour when the lights were beginning to be snuffed out by the hordes let loose by Yahya Khan and Tikka Khan.

And yet it was a moment that would soon turn into Belal Mohammad's finest hour. For the people of Bangladesh, shock and misery were soon to give way to hope and a demonstration of necessary courage.

It was hope, with large dollops of courage, that Belal Mohammad personified in those early hours of an expression of the national resolve for freedom. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, by then in military custody, had already passed on his declaration of freedom to MA Hannan, the prominent Awami League political figure in Chittagong. It was to the Biplobi Swadhin Bangla

Betar, which Kalurghat had swiftly been turned into by Belal Mohammad and his fellow officers at the radio station, that Hannan went with Bangabandhu's message of liberty.

Hannan read out the message, which of course could not be heard all across the country for reasons of the grave panic and uncertainty that gripped the nation in those wild moments. But Bangabandhu's message did go through to a goodly number of people, to inform them that Bangladesh was at war with Pakistan, that he was declaring the country's independence and that he was taking over as president of Bangladesh.

Belal knew there was something very wrong in that speech. And he told Zia so. That speech, he informed the major, would be considered as mutiny by an officer in the Pakistan army. Moreover, the speech would not likely turn things around for Bangladesh, for it was not coming from a political figure. Would Zia rephrase the speech?

Zia did. In the speech that is now an indelible part of

young Bangalee officer in the army, Major Zia. Belal roped him in, told him, half serious and half teasing, that he was a major while everyone else was minor. Would he like to go on air with a message for the country?

Zia, young and dashing and till a few hours earlier busy unloading weapons meant for the Pakistan army from MV Swat at Chittagong port, enthusiastically agreed. Jotting down a few sentences on a piece of paper, Zia went on air -- to tell a stupefied nation that Bangladesh was at war with Pakistan, that he was declaring the country's independence and that he was taking over as president of Bangladesh.

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Bangladesh's history, Zia proclaimed before the world that Bangladesh, under the leadership of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, was now a free state; that a government for the new country had already been formed; that nations around the globe should acknowledge the birth of Bangladesh.

Belal had responded to the call of history. Zia's announcement had gone out to the world. Swadhin Bangla Betar, despite the ferocity of a Pakistani attack, had informed the world in no uncertain terms that Bengal had arisen in fury -- to wrest freedom from the murderous state of Pakistan.

Before Belal Mohammad, we bow in deep reverence and abiding love this morning. He seized the moment, in March 1971, out of gathering despair, and convinced us into believing that Swadhin Bangla Betar would make a difference. It did.

This land bears your footprints on its soil, now and for all time

Rest in peace, soldier of freedom.

Prosecution's argument ends today

FROM PAGE 16

had set three days from July 28 for the prosecution to place its closing arguments.

Stating that the prosecution had been busy with pertinent matters, prosecutor Sultan Mahmud Simon yesterday prayed for the tribunal to grant it two more days to complete its arguments.

Of the 23 charges brought against SQ Chowdhury, the prosecution has so far completed placing arguments on 13 charges.

Simon argued that he had been able to prove beyond doubt the involvement of SQ Chowdhury in crimes against humanity between April 14 and July 5, 1971 in different areas of Chittagong.

According to one of the charges, the Pakistan army, as per directives issued by SQ Chowdhury, had shot dead Satish Chandra Palit of Rauzan Poursava on April 14, 1971 at about noon.

Simon told the tribunal that the victim's son Paritosh Kumar Palit, who was 27 years old in 1971, had witnessed the killing of his father from a nearby bush.

Testifying before the tribu-

nal on April 22, Paritosh said Salahuddin was standing under a tree and the Pakistani army got engaged in an altercation with his father in their yard.

At one stage, Salahuddin shouted in anger and told the Punjabi soldiers [Pakistani army], "This man is dangerous, kill him."

As Satish fell to the ground, the soldiers army men set fire to his body with some chemicals and left the scene. Paritosh then went to a relative's house and informed the family of the relative about the incident.

The next day, Paritosh's brother collected his father's remains and left Chittagong for India as they felt insecure. Paritosh returned to Chittagong after the Liberation War was over, the witness told the court.

According to charge no-11, the Pakistan army and the Razakars, who were supporters of the Muslim League, as per directives by SQ Chowdhury and his father Fazlul Quader Chowdhury, jointly had attacked people in Sakhapura village, a Hindu populated area

under Boalkhali Police Station, and fired indiscriminately at villagers and used bayonets to kill them. Later, 76 deceased persons could be identified.

Making his deposition before the court, 24th prosecution witness Babul Chakrawarty Bulbul on April 1 narrated how SQ Chowdhury and his father had led the Pakistani army to kill the witness's father Manmohan Chakrawarty.

Babul's father Manmohan was dragged out of his home and shot dead on April 20, 1971.

Quoting Babul's testimony, Simon said during the cross-examination of the witness, the defence did not ask any question contesting the charge.

Simon also pointed out two instances of material evidence which corroborate the incident of Sakhapura village.

KHOKON'S CASE
The same tribunal yesterday ordered its registrar's office to publish advertisements in two national dailies asking MA Zahid Hossain Khokon to appear before it by August 14

in a case for committing crimes against humanity during the Liberation War.

If the fugitive, the incumbent mayor of Nagarkanda Municipality in Faridpur, does not appear before it by the time frame, the court will appoint a defence lawyer for him on August 14.

While passing the order, the three-member tribunal headed by Justice ATM Fazle Kabir directed the registrar's office to publish the advertisement in The Daily Star and Bangla daily Janakantha.

The court on July 18 accepted 11 charges against the BNP leader in the case.

On the same day, the tribunal also issued an arrest warrant against Khokon and had fixed yesterday (July 30) for charge framing hearing.

Khokon, now 70, was a local leader of Razakars, an auxiliary force of the Pakistani army, in Faridpur in 1971.

He was involved in at least 13 incidents of crimes against humanity, which had left at least 50 people dead and eight others seriously injured and two women raped, according to probe findings.

Court opts to see scientific documents

FROM PAGE 16

General Momtajuddin Fakir said Bt brinjal is not harmful. Rather, it is a high yielding crop which does not need insecticides, he added.

He prayed to the HC bench of Justice Quazi Reza-Ul Hoque and Justice ABM Altaf Hossain to summarily reject both the petitions.

During hearing, the presiding judge told the lawyers that they did not get any definite information on whether Bt brinjal is harmful or not from them and their arguments were not based on scientific documents.

The writ petitions are quite premature since these were based on assumption,

the judge said. The court will consider giving an order on the petitions, if the petitioners and the government could produce scientific documents before it, he added.

On July 15, Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI) applied to the National Technical

Committee for Crop Biotechnology seeking commercial release of Bt brinjal next month.

Earlier, Bangladeshi scientists had readied the country's first GM crop -- brinjal infused with pest-resistant genes -- which could see a drastic fall in the use of harmful pesticides in the crop.

Retailers

FROM PAGE 1

The signatories to the legally-binding accord will inspect around 1,500 garment factories, and provide funds for repairs of risky factories or their relocation out of Dhaka.

"In the first meeting, we discussed how we will implement the accord. We have also discussed the funding for implementing the accord," said Roy Ramesh Chandra, general secretary of IndustriALL Bangladesh Council.

Garment factory owners and IndustriALL are trying to have a unified code of conduct, as three parties -- IndustriALL, North American Alliance and National Action Plan -- have their own inspection codes he said.

Ramesh was speaking at a press briefing after a meeting between factory owners and representatives of IndustriALL and retailers at the BGMEA office in Dhaka.

He, however, did not say from when the factory inspection will start.

Philip Chamberlain, head of Sustainable Business Development of C&A Buying, said, "We have discussed a whole range of issues to make the RMG [ready-made garment] business sustainable in Bangladesh."

Chamberlain represented the delegation of retailers and brands in the meeting.

Referring to the newly amended labour law, Chamberlain said, "I do not want to comment on the amended labour law of Bangladesh as it is yet to be signed by the president of Bangladesh."

A unified code of conduct for factory inspection is needed to spare a factory from being inspected twice, said Atiqul Islam, president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association.

"We are trying to include representatives of the BGMEA, the BKMEA and the government in the steering committee on the accord because if they [retailers and brands] want to implement the accord, they will need cooperation from the government and the two trade bodies," said Islam.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Employers Federation urged the International Labour Organisation to engage in both the accords -- one signed by North American buyers and the other by European buyers -- for garment factory inspection in Bangladesh.

The BEF made the appeal at a meeting with Yoshiteru Uramoto, regional director of ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, at Sonargaon Hotel in the capital.

Bangladesh's garment industry now faces tremendous pressure over the implementation of the two accords and the ILO's better work programme following the Rana Plaza collapse, said BGMEA President Atiqul Islam.

"We seek the ILO's support in all these issues," said Islam.