

# Nepal extends deadline for parties to name lawmakers

AFP, Kathmandu

Nepal's election commission yesterday extended its deadline for parties to name proposed lawmakers, giving the routed Maoists more time to consider their options after they claimed the polls were rigged.

The November 19 elections for a constituent assembly, expected to draft a constitution, saw the Maoists emerge a distant third behind the Nepali Congress and Unified Marxist-Leninist (UML) parties.

Nepal has a dual system of both directly-elected seats and members nominated through proportional representation, with parties initially expected to submit lists of proposed lawmakers by December 10.

But the Maoists, who swept Nepal's first post-war elections in 2008, have so far refused to join the assembly without a probe into alleged poll-rigging.

"We have extended the deadline until December 18," chief election commissioner

Neel Kantha Uprety told AFP.

"We felt that the timeframe needed an extension," Uprety said, declining to explain further.

Devendra Paudel, a senior Maoist leader, said the party would not commit to joining the assembly unless its demands were met.

"A commission should investigate the irregularities during the elections," Paudel told AFP.

Sources in various parties say the Maoists' other demand is that the constitution must be approved by all parties and not just by a two-thirds majority of lawmakers -- a condition expected to prolong the drafting process.

The Maoists won just 80 of the 575 seats up for grabs in the elections, while the Nepali Congress led with 196 and the UML got 175.

Seventy-eight percent of registered voters cast their ballots in the polls, which received a clean bill of health from foreign observers.

The new government will nominate a further 26 members to join the 601-member

# Obama hires Democratic heavy-weight Podesta

AFP, Washington

President Barack Obama has hired senior Democratic strategist John Podesta to try to get his troubled second term back on course, The Washington Post reported late Monday.

Podesta, 64, served as chief of staff to Bill Clinton when he was president and will work for Obama for a year as an adviser in his inner circle, the Post said, quoting sources familiar with the move.

Podesta will return to the White House as Obama tries to regain his political footing and popularity following the very messy rollout of his signature achievement, the health care reform known as Obamacare.

Besides that key program, Podesta's brief will be broad and include climate change issues and executive actions, the Post quoted its sources as saying.

Podesta was Clinton's chief of staff during the Monica Lewinsky scandal and impeachment process during his second term.

Podesta is considered one of the Democratic Party's most experienced strategists and political operatives.

## UN official

FROM PAGE 2

and considers that its use undermines human dignity and that there is no conclusive evidence of its deterrent value.

"We further note that Abdul Quader Mollah was sentenced to death following an appeal permitted under retrospectively applied legislation, and that he was not permitted to review his sentence before the Supreme Court," she added.

Warsi said Bangladesh's commitments under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights require that all citizens be treated equally before the law.

In a statement last month, Navi Pillay had urged the Bangladesh government not to proceed with the death penalty in cases before the International Crimes Tribunal, particularly given concerns about the "fairness of the trials."

The UN opposes the imposition of death penalty under any circumstance, even for the most serious international crimes.

## Animal

FROM PAGE 16

people can cuddle up with, but it is almost completely unaffected by the ageing process.

Evolutionary biologist Dr Owen Jones, from the University of Southern Denmark, said: "The diversity of mortality and fertility patterns in these organisms surprised us and there is clearly a need for more research before we fully understand the evolutionary causes of ageing and become better able to address problems of ageing in humans."

The freshwater polyp Hydra magnipapillata has constant low mortality and in laboratory conditions its risk of dying is so low that it is effectively immortal.

"Extrapolation from laboratory data show that even after 1,400 years five percent of a hydra population kept in these conditions would still be alive," said Dr Jones.

The scientists concluded a species can have increasing mortality and still live a long time, or have declining mortality and still live a long time.

## Burn victims

FROM PAGE 16

shifted from the ICU to general wards, while condition of four other victims in the ICU -- Abdul Aziz, Nurun Nabi, Saiful Islam and SI Ripon -- improved a bit.

"As long as they are in ICU, it cannot be said that they are out of danger. Moreover, all of them are suffering with damaged respiratory organs," said Rebeka Sultana, an anaesthesia consultant at DMCH burn unit.

Meanwhile, speech-impaired truck helper Mujibur Rahman, who received 20 percent burn injuries to the face, hands and thighs in an arson attack in Comilla early Monday, has been admitted to the paying ward.

Mujibur's mother Aleya Begum said he was in intense pain and was only able to show his tongue if he was thirsty.

## Bogra teacher

FROM PAGE 16

morgue for an autopsy. Injured Kafi was also taken to the hospital.

Freedom fighter Masudur Rahman Helal, convener of the district unit of Sector Commanders' Forum, said he along with Babu was having a chat inside his [Masudur] shop at Shapla Market.

Jamaat-Shibir men stabbed Babu soon after he had come out of the shop, he added.

Shibir's publicity secretary of the town unit Mizanur Rahman refuted the allegation.

The deceased was laid to rest after namaz-e-janaza yesterday.

Masudur said they would hold a mourning procession today in protest against the killing, and decide the next course of action.

# Indonesian court jails ex-Islamic party head

AFP, Jakarta

An Indonesian court has jailed the disgraced former head of the country's biggest Islamic party for 16 years over a scandal in which bribe money was laundered as gifts for dozens of women, including an adult magazine model.

The controversy, which erupted when an aide was discovered in a hotel room with a naked college student, has shattered the clean image of the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), damaging its chances at polls next year.

Luthfi Hasan Ishaq, who was president of the PKS when the scandal emerged, was found guilty late Monday by the anti-corruption court in the capital Jakarta of accepting bribes from a meat import company.

Anti-graft investigators seized 1.3 billion rupiah (\$110,000) in bribe money as well as six luxury cars from Ishaq during the investigation.

The meat company, Indoguna Utama, had pledged to give him 40 billion rupiah in kickbacks to use his influence with the government to have its beef import quota raised, the court heard.

"Luthfi Hasan Ishaq was proven legally and convincingly guilty of conspiring in crimes of corruption and money laundering," chief judge Gusrizal Lubis told the court.

He was found guilty of corruption and money laundering and jailed for 16 years. He

was also ordered to pay a one-billion-rupiah fine. Ishaq said he did not accept the verdict and would appeal.

Two executives from Indoguna Utama were previously found guilty and jailed over the case.

The scandal emerged in January when anti-corruption agents raided a hotel room and discovered Ishaq's aide, Ahmad Fathanah, with the naked student shortly after receiving bribe money.

It snowballed into a huge controversy, even by the standards of graft-ridden Indonesia.

Fathanah was found to be the main conduit for the bribe money. Evidence emerged he bought gifts for 45 women -- including an adult magazine model -- to launder the cash.

He was jailed for 14 years in November over the scandal.

Ishaq, the former head of a party that trumpeted its conservative Islamic credentials to win votes, was found to have lavish spending habits and evidence emerged he had multiple wives.

The PKS was already facing a tough fight to win votes at elections next year as the popularity of Islamic parties wanes in Muslim-majority Indonesia.

The case also comes as the coalition government -- of which the PKS is a member -- struggles to recover from a string of scandals

## Stay stops Mollah execution

FROM PAGE 1

SC Registrar AKM Shamsul Islam said the hearing on the review petition would be held at a five-member bench of the Appellate Division at 10:30am today.

He said the chamber judge has the jurisdiction to hear any petition at any place and to pass any order.

The registrar, however, could not say how long it would take to complete the procedures.

Khandker Mahbub Hossain, another counsel for Mollah, told The Daily Star that the jail authorities cannot execute his client till 10:30am today following the chamber judge's order.

"In the meantime [by 10:30am] we will place the review petition before the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, and then the apex court may fix a date for a hearing on the review petition," he said.

He said the hearing on the stay petition was held at Justice Hossain's residence and none from the attorney general's office was present there.

Justice Hossain was one of the five members of the Appellate Division bench that sentenced Mollah to death, overruling the judgment of International Crimes Tribunal-2 that had earlier awarded him life imprisonment.

Justice Hossain agreed with three other judges, including the chief justice, on handing down capital punishment to Mollah.

Meanwhile, Attorney General Mahbubey Alam told The Daily Star that he had not been informed about the filing of the stay petition, its hearing or the stay order.

"I am still at United Hospital to see one of my relatives. I cannot say whether the jail authorities will accept the chamber judge's order," he said around 11:00pm.

If the prison authorities are satisfied with the order, they will stay Mollah's execution.

"We will strongly oppose the petition filed by Quader Mollah," he said.

The attorney general, however, refused to comment on whether the chamber judge can hear a petition at his residence without consulting the chief justice and in the absence of state counsels.

Earlier in the day, chief defence counsel Abdur Razzaq and another defence counsel Tajul Islam met Quader Mollah at Dhaka Central Jail, when Mollah instructed them to file a review petition with the apex court.

Tajul Islam told this newspaper in the

afternoon that the defence was preparing the petition and hoped to file it "within this week."

But, within hours, defence lawyers rushed to the residences of the chamber judge and the attorney general with the stay petition for stopping his execution.

They did so after State Minister for Home Shamsul Haque Tuku told reporters around 7:30pm that Quader Mollah would be executed in the early hours today.

Bangladesh Bar Council Vice-chairman and BNP chairperson's adviser Khandker Mahbub Hossain, Abdur Razzaq and Tajul Islam went to the residence of Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain at Judges' Complex in the capital's Kakrail around 8:30pm to move the petition.

Justice Mahmud advised them to hand over a copy of the petition to the attorney general.

The defence lawyers then went to the house of the attorney general, Mahbubey Alam, at Minto Road around 9:00pm. But the chief law officer of the state was not at home at the time.

Failing to reach him over the phone, they then went to the chamber judge's residence for a second time around 9:20pm and came out around 10:30pm.

Defence counsels and an SC official then carried the stay order to the prison authorities around 11:00pm.

Earlier in the day, Tajul Islam said his client was yet to decide on whether or not to seek presidential mercy.

He said Mollah would get 15 days after receiving the warrant of execution order to decide whether he would pray for presidential mercy, as per Jail Code.

The 15-day time limit will expire on December 23 as the tribunal sent the order on December 8, he added.

But Khandker Mahbub, another defence counsel, said his client would get seven days to decide on seeking presidential mercy after the SC's dismissal.

However, Qamrul Islam said Quader Mollah in the presence of two executive magistrates had said he would not seek presidential clemency.

Asked about the next legal process, Khandker Mahbub said if the SC dismissed the review petition, the jail authorities could execute Quader Mollah after 21 days and before 28 days from the rejection order.

## Witness testifies

FROM PAGE 16

Committee meeting at Kachua upazila in 1971.

Earlier, Sunil Kumar Dakua, 15th witness in the case, testified that Razakars had killed eight to nine people, including his two maternal uncles, on the same day at the same place.

The tribunal has meanwhile closed cross-examination of Lutfar Rahman Nakib, 16th prosecution witness, as Yusuf's conducting counsel again failed to show up before the court and a junior counsel expressed his inability to cross-examine the witness yesterday.

The tribunal had earlier closed the cross-examination of 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th prosecution witnesses on similar grounds. Senior defence counsels remained absent from the tribunal during blockades and hartals enforced by the opposition alliance.

The defence have meanwhile filed petitions for recalling the cross-examination of 12th, 13th and 14th prosecution witnesses and reviewing the court's earlier orders. The three-member tribunal led by Justice Obaidul Hassan fixed today for passing orders in this regard.

During yesterday's 18-minute testimony, 85-year-old Taiyab said Yusuf was the chairman

of Khulna Peace Committee and had formed the infamous Razakar force.

The accused during the war had held a meeting in Kachua where he called for killing the Hindus as "they [Hindus] were destroying Pakistan" and taking action against Awami League supporters, the witness said. After his speech, houses of Awami League supporters and Hindus were looted, he added.

Taiyab said on the 30th day of the Bangla month of Ashwin, when he and his uncle Anwar Kha had gone to nearby Bhasa Bazar to shop, 40/50 Razakars besieged the bazaar and forcibly took 22 people to nearby Maghia Mor.

"They [Razakars] also took my uncle. As we were Awami League supporters, I hid myself in a sugarcane field," he said, adding that the Razakars had killed all but one including his uncle there. Only one Sunil had survived with injury, he added.

"When I returned with the body of my uncle, I said Maolana Yusuf Shaheb killed our people forming and ordering Razakars," said emotion-choked Taiyab.

Yusuf is facing 13 charges for his alleged involvement in crimes against humanity and genocide committed in greater Khulna during

## Angry Jamaat warns

FROM PAGE 1

It said the government was trying to "kill" Mollah to divert people's attention and fish in troubled water. The cost of this "conspiracy" would be fatal.

"The government has proved that it wants to fulfil its desire by hanging Abdul Quader Mollah, as it only issued his [Mollah's] death warrant, but did not provide him any certified copy of the verdict, which is an utter violation of human rights," read the release.

It also says the government, only out of political vengeance, was "conspiring to kill" Mollah hurriedly violating the constitution, Supreme Court rules and the jail code.

A judge late last night had stayed the execution of Mollah until 10:30am today.

Meanwhile, pro-Jamaat online activists have started posting instigating remarks on social networks, like Facebook and Twitter, since the jail authorities sent Mollah's family a letter asking them to meet the condemned war criminal for the last time.

In Rajshahi city, Jamaat-Shibir activists last night torched the house of former state minister for industries Omar Faruk Chowdhury protesting the government move to execute Mollah.

They also charged petrol bombs and vandalised 30 houses during their attack in Sagorpara area around 9:00pm. No casualties were reported.

In Gaibandha, following the announcement of the move to execute Mollah, Jamaat-Shibir activists vandalised the houses of Palashbari upazila unit Awami League president and five of its AL leaders in the town.

They swooped on the houses, including that of AL upazila unit president Tofazzal Hossain around 8:00pm. They also torched two vehicles of upazila chairman AKM Maksud Chowdhury Bidyut.

Several crude bombs were exploded during

the attack.

Gaibandha Station Master Abdul Wahed Mondol told The Daily Star that the Railway authorities had suspended all five incoming and outgoing trains scheduled for last night.

In Satkhira, criminals kidnapped AL activist Abdul Hamid around 8:00pm and broke both his legs and left hand.

Hamid told The Daily Star that he was abducted from Madhabkathi bazar by a group of seven to eight people, all wearing masks. After beating him up they left him near Panchrakhi Beel.

Additional police superintendent of the district said five platoons of border guards and 200 police personnel had been deployed in the town.

Around 7:45pm, several hundred Jamaat-Shibir activists went wild in different places, including Nalta, Talali and Kaliganj bazars in Kaliganj upazila last night.

They vandalised six shops and several motorised three-wheelers and motorbikes, said witnesses, adding that the attackers blasted several crude bombs to panic the locals.

Senior Assistant Superintendent of Police (Kaliganj Circle) of Satkhira Monirul Islam, however, said a group of people exploded homemade bombs and burnt tyres on a road in Nalta.

They also attempted to vandalise two motorcycles at Moutola.

Jamaat-Shibir men late last night attacked the home of Shaifular Rahman Chowdhury, principal of Palashbari Adarsa College and vice-president of local Awami League unit. They beat up his wife and two children and looted Tk 1 lakh and a goat from the house before going on the rampage inside the house.

In the capital, about 10 to 15 crude bombs were exploded in Shantinagar, Kakrail, Paltan, Fakirerpool and Rajarbagh intersections

come to pass and the nation will start to have a sense of closure over the atrocities these heinous criminals committed in 1971."

After news broke that the execution had been stayed, Gonojagoron Mancha activists once again occupied the Shahbagh intersection, demanding immediate cancellation of the stay.

Imran H Sarker, spokesperson of the Mancha, said they will remain there until Mollah's execution.

"We will not allow any decision that creates confusion over the verdict. We will continue the movement," he added.

Activists also chanted slogans denouncing any "compromise" over the verdict.

They took to the intersection around 10:30pm and continued their occupation, halting vehicular movement through it till the filing of this report around 2:00am.

## Disappointment all around

FROM PAGE 1

to disappointment.

"For the last 42 years, the nation had been waiting to see war criminals like him [Mollah], who evaded justice, get punished for the crimes they committed during the birth of the nation. But we are utterly frustrated over the last-minute drama over his execution," fumed Ayon Rahman, a Dhaka University student.

Abu Raihan, a businessman from Kakrail, said, "We don't know how long we have to wait for justice. We are afraid whether the execution will be delayed further."

Tawhida, a housewife in Mirpur-11, was in front of the TV set throughout the evening. She felt let down when she heard the news of the chamber judge's stay on the execution less than two hours before the war criminal was to walk the gallows.

She, however, would not give up on it yet. "I believe it's only a matter of a day or two. The execution will eventually



# EBL BTTF 2013

## Bangladesh Travel and Tourism Fair 2013

The Largest International Travel Event of Bangladesh

**Title Sponsor**



**Co-Sponsor**




**DAILY RAFFLE DRAW**

- \* Dhaka-Myanmar-Dhaka Air Ticket
- \* Dhaka-Bangkok-Dhaka Air Ticket

**DAILY CULTURAL PROGRAM**

**ROUND TABLE**

Discussion

**Venue**

**Bangabandhu International Conference Center , (BICC)**

**Date : 12, 13 & 14 Dec 2013**

**Time : 10.00am to 8.00pm**

Organized by :





Event Manager

