

Law, order drive has nothing to do with poll: CEC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad yesterday said there was no association between the upcoming national election and the drive of law enforcement agencies against opposition party activists for their violent activities.

"It is a matter of law enforcement agencies. They are taking necessary measures to maintain law and order. They can explain it better," he told reporters at the EC Secretariat last evening.

His remarks came in response to reporters' query on BNP standing committee member Nazrul Islam Khan's claim that the EC will have to take the responsibility of killing and forced disappearance of many party men by law enforcement agencies.

About the allegation of irregularities against returning officers over withdrawal of nominations, the CEC said, "If any aggrieved candidate has proof of this, the person can go to court."

Meanwhile, Election Working Group (EWG), a network of 29 non-government organisations, yesterday informed the CEC that if the ongoing violence continues it might not deploy observers in the 10th parliamentary election considering their security, EWG steering committee member Taleya Rehman told reporters after a meeting with the CEC at the latter's office.

Meanwhile, the EC has decided to meet security agencies and returning officers on Friday instead of Thursday because of the BNP-led 18-party's ongoing blockade.

Top officials of the Armed Forces Division, police, Border Guard Bangladesh, Rapid Action Battalion, Ansar, intelligence agencies will attend the meeting scheduled for 3:00pm Friday to decide how many law enforcers the EC will deploy for how much time, said EC sources.



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Large stretches of the bank of Sondhya river in Pirojpur's Kaukhali upazila are eroding every day. Locals said the erosion took a serious turn due to high tide in the last few days. The photo was taken at Palpara in Sonakur village yesterday.

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Deal inked to build approach

FROM PAGE 5

completed all primary works for the project like land acquisition, rehabilitation and resettlement spending around Tk 1,500 crore. It, however, failed to start construction of the bridge.

On June 26 this year, the

government floated tender for construction of the main bridge and asked the pre-qualified firms to submit bids by November 4. Later, the deadline was extended till December 19.

The estimated construction cost of the main bridge is Tk 11,829 crore.

Hannan Shah gets bail

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November 26 placed Hannan on a two-day remand.

On December 9, the CMM court allowed police to interrogate him at the jail gate after investigators sought a 20-day remand in the cases.

Also yesterday, detectives sought to take Hannan on a 27-day remand in three cases filed over the May 5 Hefajat-e Islam mayhem in the capital's Motijheel.

The court fixed December 24 for hearing of the remand petition.

Bangladeshi man to be

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Star yesterday.

The Strait Times of Singapore reported that the 53 will be repatriated soon for participating in the riot and some 200 others will be further interrogated.

"We have taken a strong and decisive action to charge, and repatriate those who took part in the riot to send a strong signal that we will not tolerate actions by anyone which threaten law and order in Singapore," Home Affairs Minister Teo

Chee Hean told a news conference yesterday.

Besides, a total of 28 individuals, all Indian nationals, will be charged for their involvement as "active participants", he said, adding that no more arrests or repatriations are expected.

The riot, which erupted after an Indian worker was killed by a bus in a district known as Little India in Singapore, saw 39 people injured, including police officers, and 25 vehicles destroyed.

BNP can't join 10th

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presidium member, said BNP could not participate in the January 5 election as per law and the statement of the Election Commission.

Responding to a query, he said the ongoing AL-BNP dialogue was a process for forging consensus and he

could not predict its outcome. "If any solution comes, that will be for the 11th parliamentary polls," Quader said after the signing of a deal at Setu Bhaban for constructing the approach road of the proposed Padma bridge on the Mawa end.

It's interference

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Lohani said execution of Mollah had been possible because of a mass demand and the activities of the anti-war criminal campaign platform Gonojagoron Mancha.

Explaining the process of the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT), former law minister and prime minister's law adviser Shafique Ahmed said confusion had been emerged both nationally and internationally over the trial of the accused persons and their identities.

"If we see the ICT act, then it becomes clear that the trial is going on against those who committed crimes against humanity such as rape, genocide and looting during the Liberation War," he said.

"The ICT is not an international court. Through adopting the ICT act, we are trying them under our domestic law."

Justice Syed Amirul Islam and Gonojagoron Mancha spokesperson Imran H Sarker, among others, also spoke at the discussion.

Mosharraf denies impact

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The impact of political unrest has also already been manifest in the remittance inflow which fell to \$1.05 billion in November, a 14.55 percent drop from a month ago, according to Bangladesh Bank.

When reporters cited that only 1,300 people were sent to Malaysia under the government's arrangement since April this year against the target of 10,000, the minister said introduction

of the new process was the main achievement.

As per the agreement signed between Bangladesh and Malaysia in November last year, a worker would get minimum 900 Malaysian Ringgit per month but some migrants working in Malaysia claimed that they were getting 600 to 700 Ringgit only.

Regarding this, he said the workers were getting salaries according to their skills.

IT in health

FROM PAGE 5

of danger signs during pregnancy and child birth especially convulsions, high fever and prolonged labour, she claimed.

The e-toolkit featured graphic representations of basic knowledge on nutrition, hygiene, and birth control.

Prior to giving the technology-based health education, the level of knowledge of 674 mothers of children under two in Sylhet and Chittagong were surveyed as a baseline regarding health, nutrition and family planning issues.

MM Neazuddin, secretary of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare; AKM Amir Hossain, director general of Directorate General of Family Planning; Stephen Herbaly, deputy director of USAID Bangladesh, among others, spoke at the event.

They praised the technology-based health education.





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