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WITH TODAY'S ISSUE

SHOUT



GATES PLAYS OBAMA

The ex-Pentagon boss' memoir reveals tension between the White House and military leaders

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BACK TO LONG FORM

Mashrafe is picked for BCL team East Zone after stating his desire for a Test return

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OLD+NEW MPs=638!

MPs-elect take oath today amid new constitutional debate; two parliaments to coexist till Jan 24

HASAN JAHIID TUSHER

The newly-elected lawmakers take the oath of office today, sparking off a debate whether the constitution allows them to do so with the current parliament still in existence.

A section of legal experts claim that there is no constitutional bar for the MPs-elect to taking the oath, while another disagrees with it, saying an MP-elect takes charge once he is sworn in.

Legal expert Anisul Huq told The Daily Star yesterday that there was no constitutional provision that prevents the lawmakers-elect from taking the oath.

"But the MPs won't be able to take charge

until the ninth parliament is dissolved or its tenure expires on January 24."

Huq, also an MP-elect from the AL, said the new parliament would sit on January 25.

Contradicting Huq's claim, eminent Jurist Shahdeen Malik said, "Such an interpretation shows a lack of understanding of the constitution."

A lawmaker takes office immediately after he is sworn in, according to Article 148 (3) of the constitution, said Malik.

He said once the newly-elected lawmakers were sworn in, there would be two MPs in a single constituency, which is unprecedented anywhere in the world.

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Low turnout, poor reflection of voters' will Germany, France on Bangladesh polls

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The influential countries have continued to express their concern over the violence centring the just-concluded national elections in Bangladesh, noting that the polls were an extremely poor reflection of voters' will.

In separate statements on January 5 polls, France and Germany strongly regretted the violence, especially against religious minorities, surrounding the elections.

They stressed the need for resuming dialogue among political parties to resolve the current crisis and bringing about inclusive, peaceful and credible democratic elections.

The Federal Foreign Office of Germany yesterday said, the federal government had noted with

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I will lead opposition

Says Raushan, claims Ershad to take oath today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Party's senior presidium member Raushan Ershad yesterday claimed party chief HM Ershad had asked her to be the "leader of the opposition" in the upcoming 10th parliament.

"How would it look if I, who was once the president of the country, become the leader of the opposition? So, you'd better become the opposition leader and I will be with you," Raushan quoted Ershad as saying at a press briefing at the media centre of Jatiya Sangsad.

Raushan, wife of Ershad, also said the newly elected lawmakers of the party yesterday selected her as the chief of the Jatiya Party Parliamentary Party at a meeting held at Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban and they would take the oath today.

Raushan was flanked by several high-profile leaders including party's Secretary General Ruhul Amin Hawlader and minister of the interim cabinet Anisul Islam Mahmud and adviser Ziauddin Bablu.

After declaration of Ershad that he would not contest the

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A crying Halima holds back her son Liton from running after the stretcher taking his father Farid's body to the morgue from DMCH burn unit yesterday. Halima had feared the worst on Friday, inset, when criminals hurled a petrol bomb at Farid's bus near Ruposhi Bangla Hotel burning him fatally. More on page 2.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN/FILE



Free of searing pain, finally

Two more burn victims die

ZYMA ISLAM

For the last few days, the arson victim had been crying out in pain: "Kill me please. I don't want to live anymore." He was relieved of his excruciating pain in death yesterday.

Farid Miah is the latest victim of arson attack on innocent civilians by the opposition men. With him, at



least 22 arson victims have died at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital alone since October last year.

When he was brought to the DMCH with 48 percent burns on

January 3, he broke down in front of doctors and nurses, pleading to them to kill him and stop his pain.

His cries had made the air inside the Intensive Care Unit heavy for

the past five days, reminding everyone of the kind of sufferings an arson victim goes through.

And yesterday, as his body was being carted away to the morgue, the cries of Liton, the 10-year-old son he left behind, reminded everyone of the heart-rending pain of seeing a father die a horrifying death.

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ATTACKS ON HINDUS

Govt mulls forming spl tribunal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The home ministry yesterday prepared a draft for forming a permanent special tribunal to deal with polls violence cases, particularly the atrocities on the minorities.

"We have prepared the draft which will be placed before the state minister

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MORE STORIES ON PAGE 16

DISTORTED REPORT ON MAY 6

Odhikar secretary, director indicted

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Two officials of the rights body Odhikar were indicted yesterday for running "a distorted report and doctored images" on the May 6 police action on a Hefajat-e Islam rally in the capital's Motijheel.

The two are Odhikar secretary Adilur Rahman Khan and its direc-



Adilur Rahman

tor ASM Nasiruddin Elan.

On June 10 last year, Detective Branch (DB) of police filed a general diary (GD) with the Gulshan Police Station in this connection, which was later converted into a case.

Rejecting the discharge petitions of the two accused in the case, Judge KM Shamsul Alam of the Cyber Crimes Tribunal in Dhaka yesterday

'ATTEMPTED MURDER' CASE

Mahbub, Milon remanded

Selima sent to jail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed BNP leaders Khandaker Mahbub Hossain and Fazlul Haque Milon on a two-day remand each in an "attempted murder" case.

The court also sent the party's vice-chairperson Selima Rahman to jail after rejecting her remand and bail prayers.

Earlier in the day, the BNP leaders were shown arrested in the case filed for "attempted murder" of a deputy

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