



PHOTO: STAR

Mayor and councillor aspirants of Dhaka city corporation polls crowd the returning officer's office to prepare checklists and fill up nomination forms yesterday. Twenty-two mayoral aspirants have so far collected nomination papers. Besides, 985 councillor aspirants have collected nomination forms as of yesterday.

ETV chairman denied HC bail again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday again denied bail to Ekushey TV Chairman Abdus Salam in a sedition case.

The HC rejected the bail petition of Salam, saying it had earlier refused to grant him bail in the same case, and there was no new ground in his fresh petition, Deputy Attorney General Bashir Ullah told The Daily Star.

He said police filed the case with Tejoan Police Station on January 8 after ETV had broadcast BNP Senior Vice-Chairman Tarique Rahman's speech from London live on January 5.

The case says Salam in collusion with some others of ETV broadcast Tarique's statement which created an anarchic situation as it involved the chief justice, army and law enforcers, he said.

In the speech, telecast several times on ETV, BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's son called upon supporters not to return home until the present government had been toppled.

Salam was arrested in front of ETV's Karwan Bazar office in connection with another case on January 6, and later he was shown arrested in the sedition case.

Yesterday, the HC bench of Justice Quamrul Islam Siddique and Justice Amir Hossain rejected the bail petition after hearing arguments from Salam's lawyer Abdur Rab Chaudhury and DAG Bashir Ullah.

Citing a statement made by Salam before a magistrate, Abdur Rab Chaudhury told the court that his client was not responsible for broadcasting Tarique's speech, since he is merely the chairman of ETV, not the editor.

DAG Bashir opposed the bail petition, saying there are specific allegations against Salam of broadcasting the speech of Tarique.

He told this correspondent that Salam can move a fresh bail petition to another bench, if he can mention new grounds in it.

Tough time

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what it was in 2010. "The present political situation is very critical. All the Awami League leaders and activists are united now to ensure win for party favourites."

Wishing anonymity, a central Chhatra League leader from Chittagong said Nasir was yet to have a strong popular base in the port city.

Former mayor Mohiuddin would have won some swing voters in the polls. But it would be difficult for Nasir to win the election if the BNP backs a heavyweight mayor candidate, he added.

MANJUR FOR SECOND TERM! Incumbent Mayor M Manjur Alam might again get BNP backing if the party decides to contest the polls, said BNP sources.

The party high command wanted to back Abdullah Al Noman, Ameer Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury or Mir Mohammad Nasir Uddin for mayor of Chittagong. But none of them agreed to join the electoral race.

Manjur, also an adviser to the BNP chairperson, yesterday claimed that the three leaders supported him for mayor. "Although I am yet to have BNP's backing officially, I am confident that the party would support my candidature."

Former minister and city BNP President Ameer Khasru said he had been to parliament and would not contest a local government election.

"The BNP chairperson will have the final say on joining the city polls and picking the party favourites," he added.

Nine pro-BNP incumbent ward councillors collected nomination papers till yesterday. The last day for filing nomination papers is March 29.

Myanmar students seize political freedom on campus and in streets

AFP, Yangon

Every morning Su Wai Phyo wakes before dawn to do something that was until recently banned in Myanmar: study politics.

The 23-year-old is one of a handful of students taking part in a new political science diploma for postgraduates at the University of Yangon -- a course that would have been unthinkable under Myanmar's brutal junta.

"Young people need to understand politics," she enthuses after a recent

early morning class. "They need to know about those who are ruling us -- whether those in power are doing good things for us or doing bad things."

She will be among millions of new voters able to choose who governs them for the first time in decades when Myanmar goes to the polls later this year.

It is a decision she will exercise amid a huge flowering of public political discussion after harsh military rule gave way to a quasi-civilian reformist government in 2011.

Restrictions in CHT to go

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20 days before their visit," he said.

However, the foreign tourists will have to inform the home ministry about their visit so that law enforcers could ensure their security.

Before the January circular was issued, foreigners needed permission only from the district administration and there was no timeframe for submitting the applications. On the contrary, the January circular made it mandatory for all foreign nationals to submit an application to the home ministry at least a month before the intended visit.

However, the decision to lift the restriction is yet to reach the district administrations of the three hill districts: Rangamati, Bandarban and Khagrachhari.

Contacted, two deputy commissioners said they haven't been informed of any such decision yet.

"I have not received any circular regarding cancellation of the home ministry's restriction upon visits of Bangladeshi and foreign nationals,"

said one of the deputy commissioners requesting anonymity.

Indigenous community and eminent citizens slammed the January circular, terming it unconstitutional and undemocratic.

When asked about the withdrawal of the circular, several indigenous leaders said they were not informed of the decision yet.

Govt to set up

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would be affiliated with the universities.

He said the public universities would be autonomous in terms of administrative and financial management.

The President of the country would be the chancellor of the universities and the tenure of the vice-chancellor and pro-vice-chancellors would be four years, which would be extendable for a second term.

War at the Eden

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memories of a bitter quarter final at Dhaka in the 2011 tournament.

Such is the passion generated in New Zealand by their cricketers' unbeaten run through the tournament that they have been elevated in the public eye from second best to be on a par with the reigning rugby world champion All Blacks.

"I've never been compared to an All Black," a stunned Trent Boult, the leading wicket-taker in the tournament, exclaimed.

According to Kane Williamson there is only one difference in the intensity of New Zealand's rivalry with South Africa in cricket and rugby.

"We've never tackled them on the cricket field," he quipped.

There may have been no tackling in the 2011 quarterfinal but there were eyeball-to-eyeball confrontations which boiled over with New Zealand's verbal spray targeted at Faf du Plessis when AB de Villiers was run out.

Du Plessis shoved Kyle Mills, who had brought drinks on to the field, de Villiers returned to support his teammate and eventually the umpires had to separate them.

There are six survivors from that New Zealand squad and seven in the South African squad who will reappear at Eden Park, including de Plessis who has relished the prospect of a rematch.

"This time it will be the other way around. We'll be the team that's on top, and we can do the same to them," he said ahead of the World Cup.

While South Africa started the World Cup justifiably as one of the tournament favourites, despite also wearing the chokers tag from past failures, New Zealand were rated underdogs.

But that has turned around after South Africa lost to India and Pakistan in pool play while New Zealand cap-

tered the imagination of the tournament with an unbeaten run to their seventh semifinal, drawing packed stadiums wherever they have played.

When Tim Southee ripped apart England with 7-33, Wellington's Westpac Stadium echoed with unprecedented chants of "Sou-thee, Sou-thee" which became "Mar-tin Gup-till" when the New Zealand opener smacked his record double century against the West Indies.

South Africa meanwhile were made to feel most unwelcome by the crowd when they turned up in Auckland to play Pakistan who won extreme support from a supposedly neutral New Zealand horde.

South Africa lost that match by 29 runs while New Zealand's one previous World Cup outing at Eden Park was their cliffhanger one-wicket win over Australia.

South Africa have won 36 of the completed 56 ODIs between the two but the record at Eden Park is an even 3-3.

New Zealand holds the edge 4-2 in the six times they have clashed at the World Cup including a 49-run win in the spiteful Dhaka quarterfinal.

In rugby history, the All Blacks have won seven of their 10 Tests against the Springboks at Eden Park but overall it drops to a 59 per cent winning margin with the All Blacks claiming 51 of their 89 Tests against the Springboks.

At the World Cup, they have met three times with South Africa winning twice including the 1995 final which went to extra time before Joel Stransky's dropped goal put his side ahead 15-12.

If they manage to follow the blueprint for the 2015 Rugby World Cup, New Zealand and South Africa will meet in a semifinal at Twickenham on October 24.

Nur Hossain's accomplice held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

Police arrested an accomplice of Nur Hossain, the prime accused in the sensational seven-murder in Narayanganj, from Burichang upazila in Comilla yesterday.

The arrestee is Raham Ali, son of Bahadur Biswas of Demra in Dhaka.

On information, a team of Burichang police launched a drive at Debpur area in the upazila around 6:30pm and arrested Raham, said Zahirul Islam, officer-in-charge of Burichang Police Station.

Mamunur Rashid Mandal, officer-in-charge of Narayanganj Detective Branch of police, said Raham was one of the aides of Nur Hossain. He went into hiding after the seven murder incident came to light, he added.

"He is being taken to Narayanganj from Comilla. He may give important information about the incident," Rashid, also the investigating officer of the case, said.

Narayanganj city panel Mayor Nazrul Islam, his driver and three associates, and senior lawyer Chandan Sarker and his driver were abducted separately but around the same time on April 27 last year from Dhaka-Narayanganj Link Road.

Their bodies were found floating in the Shitalakkhya a few days later.

Ctg city's potentials

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There has been a lack of good will in the last five years, he said.

Chittagong city, north and south district units of AL organised the meeting, presided over by President of Chittagong city AL and ex-mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury.

In reply to a question, Mohiuddin said usually many activists were aggrieved since he was not chosen by the party. "But we are working to calm them and make them understand," he said. "All misunderstandings will be resolved soon."

Nasir thanked his party and party chief for deciding to back him in the April 28 election.

Bus torched

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The detainees Shahjamal alias Boma Dilip and Tajul Islam Rony are activists of the BNP. Shahjamal has been accused in three cases and Tajul in two cases, said a BGB official.

During the drive at Jhaotala in the city, the BGB men recovered two locally made pistols, 10 bullets and a machete from their possession.

A process is underway to hand over the duo to Khulshi police, said Major Tanveer Mahmood, deputy commander of BGB 28 Battalion.

Meanwhile, police recovered two petrol bombs that were kept hidden under a haystack at Kewa in Sreepur upazila of Gazipur yesterday. None was arrested in this connection.

The BNP-led 20-party alliance has been enforcing hartals on every workday since February 1 in addition to its indefinite blockade announced on January 5.

At least 92 people have been killed, mostly in arson attacks, so far in political violence since January 5.

Return of woolly

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A new method known as 'Crispr' - helping scientists make accurate changes to DNA - was used by genetic professor George Church, who replaced parts of elephant DNA with the mammoth genes.

He said: 'We prioritised genes associated with cold resistance including hairiness, ear size, subcutaneous fat and, especially, haemoglobin (the protein that carries oxygen around the body).'

'De-extinction' enthusiast Mr Church, who was speaking to The Sunday Times science editor Jonathan Leake, added: 'We now have functioning elephant cells with mammoth DNA in them.'

Mammoths co-existed with early humans who hunted them for food. They are the best studied of all prehistoric animals thanks to the discovery of frozen carcasses, as well as dung and skeletons.

The mammoth was roughly the size as a modern African elephant, standing up to 11ft tall and weighing about seven tonnes, and its fur and long hair protected it from severe winters.

There are at least three teams trying to rebuild the whole mammoth genome - which could one day become a template to recreate actual mammoths, reported The Sunday Times.

NBR member

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Police Station, said Jahangir was walking in the compound of Customs Officers' Quarters in Banani around 7:30pm when four criminals went there by a private car. They then opened fire on him and left.

Two security guards at the quarters did not dare challenge the assailants, added the OC.

Police launched an investigation to identify the attackers and find out their motive.

Passing of a great leader

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whose advice on governance and economic development had been sought by other world leaders down the years.

In his lifetime, Lee drew praise for his market-friendly policies, but also criticism at home and abroad for his strict controls over the press, public protest and political opponents.

Lee had receded from public and political life over the past few years, but was still seen as an influential figure in the government of Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, his eldest son.

"The first of our founding fathers is no more. He inspired us, gave us courage, and brought us here," a choked Prime Minister Lee said in a live television address. "To many Singaporeans, and indeed others too, Lee Kuan Yew was Singapore."

The government declared a period of national mourning until his funeral on Sunday.

Singaporeans had been bracing for the news for days, and a sea of flowers had already piled up at the Singapore General Hospital where he was being treated for pneumonia.

"I'm so sad. He is my idol. He is so good to me, my family and everyone," said Lua Su Yean, 64. "His biggest achievement is that from zero he's built up today's Singapore."

In keeping with Lee's famously non-nonsense, pragmatic approach, business carried on as normal throughout the city, one of the world's leading wealth management centres.

Hundreds of office workers queued at lunchtime in the central business district to buy a commemorative issue of the Straits Times newspaper.

At the stock exchange, the message "Remembering Lee Kuan Yew, 16 September 1923 to 23 March 2015" replaced the normal stream of news and market prices displayed on a bank of video.

WEALTHY NATION

Lee, a British-educated lawyer, is credited with building Singapore into one of the world's wealthiest nations on a per capita basis with a strong, pervasive role for the state and little patience for dissent.

He was unapologetic for clamping down fiercely on his opponents, saying it was essential for the country's security.

"We have to lock up people, without trial, whether they are communists, whether they are language chauvinists, whether they are religious extremists. If you don't do that, the country would be in ruins," he said in 1986.

Among other headline measures, long hair for men was outlawed in the 1970s -- the Bee Gees and Led Zeppelin cancelled gigs due to the ban -- and the sale of chewing gum remains forbidden. Graffiti is punishable by caning.

"He managed to create a system out of chaos when Singapore was starting out," said Isaac Seow, 29, outside the hospital. "For me, his most defining trait was his iron will. Love him or hate him, he's got the job done."

Tributes poured in from around the world heralding the statesmanship of a man who had the ear of policymakers in both Washington and Beijing.

"Lee Kuan Yew's passing is as much a loss for the international community as it is for Singapore," China's President Xi Jinping said.

Obama said in a statement that "Lee's views and insights on Asian dynamics and economic management were respected by many around the world, and no small number of this and past generations of world leaders have sought his advice on governance and development."

Thousands are expected to pay their respects at the Istana, which means palace in Malay and is the site of the prime minister's official residence, where a condolence book has been set up.

"I came to Singapore because of LKY," said Anthony Pain, from France,

LIFE OF LEE

Sept 16, 1923 Born in Singapore, then a British colony.

1942-45 Education at Raffles College is interrupted by Japanese occupation of Singapore during World War II.

1946 Goes to England and studies law at Cambridge University, where he was known as Harry, a name his grandfather called him.

1947 Secretly marries Kwa Geok Choo, fellow student at Cambridge.

1950 Returns to Singapore.

1954 Helps form People's Action Party, becomes party's secretary-general.

1955 Wins seat in legislative assembly, starts law firm Lee & Lee with his wife.

1959 Becomes Singapore's first prime minister after People's Action Party wins decisively in general election. Britain grants Singapore self-governance in all matters except defence and foreign affairs.

1963 Declares Singapore's full independence from Britain, joins with Malaya to form Federation of Malaysia.

1965 Singapore splits from Malaysia to become independent.

1968, 1976, 1980 Under Lee, ruling party wins all seats in parliamentary elections.

1990 After Singapore enjoys more than two decades of spectacular economic growth, Lee resigns as prime minister. He is appointed senior minister and continues to wield influence.

2004 Son Lee Hsien Loong becomes Singapore's third prime minister.

2011 Lee gives up Cabinet minister post and resigns from executive committee of the People's Action Party after it fared relatively poorly in parliamentary elections.

Feb 5, 2015 Hospitalised with severe pneumonia.

March 23, 2015 Dies at Singapore General Hospital.

SOURCE: AP

who has worked in Singapore for two years as a tax consultant. "I read his book 'The Memoirs of Lee Kuan Yew' and I was so impressed I said to myself 'I have to see this country'."

STRAIGHT TALKING

Dozens of world leaders are expected to travel to the city-state for Lee's funeral at the National University of Singapore.

"His place in history is assured, as a leader and as one of the modern world's foremost statesmen," Britain's Prime Minister David Cameron said in a statement. "He was always a friend to Britain, if sometimes a critical one, and many British prime ministers benefited from his wise advice, including me."

"Harry" Lee, a fourth-generation Singaporean, co-founded the People's Action Party (PAP), which has ruled the city since 1959 and led the newly born country when it was separated from Malaysia in 1965.

Even after stepping down as leader in 1990 - signing off as the world's then longest-serving prime minister - the acerbic Lee stayed on in the cabinet until 2011 and was a member of parliament until his death.

After stepping down as prime minister he remained influential as a senior minister in the cabinet of his successor, Goh Chok Tong, and later as "minister mentor" when his son became prime minister in 2004.

7 more mayor

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The aspirants for the mayoral posts include leaders from Jatiya Party, Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) and former AL leaders.

Former AL lawmaker Kabori Sarwar collected nomination form for mayor elections to DNCC through another person on Saturday. She would file an application seeking candidacy today, Kabori, also a veteran film actress, told The Daily Star last night.

Annisul Huq while collecting the nomination paper said his main aim was to ensure overall development of the city and address the problems of its dwellers.

Pintu, who is behind bars, has been sentenced to life-term imprisonment in connection with border guards mutiny case.

RO of DSCC Mihir Sarwar Morshed yesterday said he had issued show-cause notices to 19 councillor aspirants for not bringing down their electoral posters as of yesterday.

According to the electoral code of conduct, no candidate is allowed to run any form of election campaign

before 21 days from the voting date. Besides, use of billboards for electoral campaign is completely prohibited.

The Election Commission on March 19 issued a written directive to the ROs to take necessary measures to remove billboards, posters and leaflets by the early hours of March 21. But many such posters were still on display yesterday.

DNCC RO Shah Alam claimed he had found no violation of the electoral code of conduct in his electoral area, but posters were seen at different spots in the north.

Besides, the EC yesterday directed the ROs of Dhaka and Chittagong city corporations polls to send a draft list of polling stations to the commission by tomorrow.

The EC has also sent letters to the Bangladesh Bank to know if any of the councillor and mayor aspirants was loan-defaulters.

In a separate letter, the EC requested the public administration ministry to take consent of the commission before transferring any officials involved in the DCC and CCC polls during the election time.