

CITY CORPORATION



ELECTIONS 2015



Polythene used to wrap posters may end up clogging drains after polls

Say urban experts

PORIMOL PALMA

Mayoral and councillor aspirants of the two city corporations in the capital were seen cleaning roads and riding bicycles, emphasising their pledges to turn Dhaka into a clean and green city.

The pledges, without a doubt, have been welcomed with open arms by residents who live a chaotic life amid traffic jam and air, sound and water pollution.

Interestingly, contrasting sharply with pledges of the aspirants of making Dhaka into a green city, their posters hung from ropes are covered in polythene bags, an action banned under the Bangladesh Environment Conservation Act-1995 (amended in 2010).

When walking through mahallas, one can find thousands of posters of 36 mayoral and 671 ward councillor candidates hung from ropes. Most of these posters are covered by polythene.

Amid weak law enforcement, polythene bags have been used mostly in shops, but with such a massive use of these bags, danger of environmental hazards has been amplified.

"If the bags are not removed immediately after the elections, they will end up clogging the drainage system of Dhaka," said urban expert Prof Nazrul Islam, terming use of the bags a new phenomenon in campaigning.

Several lakhs of non-degradable poly bags were estimated to have been used in the campaigns.

Dr Abdul Matin, general secretary of Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon, said if not removed and recycled, polythene bags will clog the sewerage systems, which will result in water logging. Subsequently, these wastes will get into the rivers.

Experts say such non-degradable products like polythene can unfavourably affect land, waterways and oceans. Living

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(Clockwise from bottom right) An election official at Mirpur University yesterday sorts out materials required for the April 28 elections to the two city corporations in Dhaka. Completing their campaigns yesterday on the last legally-stipulated day -- Awami League (AL)-blessed mayoral aspirant Annisul Huq of Dhaka North City Corporation polls waves at people in Mohakhali bus terminal area; BNP-endorsed contender Tabitha Awal seeks blessings in New Eskaton Road near Banglamotor intersection; Afroza Abbas, wife of BNP's mayoral favourite for Dhaka South, Mirza Abbas, who could not campaign in person for himself even on the last day due to pending bail hearings in two criminal cases against him, distributes leaflets in Motijheel; his AL-backed rival Sayeed Khokon seeks votes in Sayedabad; and mayor candidate Zonayed Saki of the north shakes hands with a rickshaw-puller at College Gate, Mohammadpur.

PHOTO: STAR

Last campaign buzzes with promises

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

On the concluding day of electoral campaigns, mayoral aspirants of Dhaka and Chittagong city corporations sought votes pledging an array of developments for the cities.

The 21-day long campaign ends early today, 32 hours prior to beginning of voting, as per the electoral code of conduct.

Awami League (AL)-backed mayoral

aspirant for DNCC Annisul Huq at a press conference yesterday in Mirpur once again vowed to establish Dhaka as a "green, clean, safe, healthy and active" city.

He also vowed to combat corruption and ensure accountability and good-governance in city administration.

Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB)-backed mayoral aspirant for Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) Mahi B Chowdhury conducted campaign at

Tejgoan, Kalnibazar, Moghbazar, Modhubagh and other areas.

AL-backed mayoral candidate for Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) Sayeed Khokon promised to work together with others, irrespective of the political parties they supported, for development of the city.

He was addressing a press conference at his electoral office on Bangabandhu Avenue.

Afroza Abbas, wife of BNP-backed

mayoral aspirant for DSCC Mirza Abbas, sought votes for Abbas to get rid of torture and repression that the city dwellers are facing.

In Chittagong, AL-backed mayoral candidate AJM Nasir Uddin and BNP-backed candidate Manjur Alam mainly visited areas where they felt their standing was weaker than their rivals.

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Confusion over army deployment may keep voters at bay

Anticipates Election Working Group

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Confusion about whether the army would patrol polling centres or stay in their barracks on election day may increase chances of violence on the day and decrease voter turnout, anticipates Election Working Group.

The group had appointed 67 persons to monitor election campaign of mayoral and councillor aspirants for the polls to the two city corporations in Dhaka and the one in Chittagong between April 7 and 23, said the group's Director Abdul Alim at a press conference at Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

The observers collected information using a checklist covering issues such as violation of the electoral code of conduct during campaigning and violence centring the polls, he said.

"Both mayor and councillor aspirants violated the electoral code of conduct when campaigning in all three elections," said Alim of the group which is a non-partisan network of civil society organisations. He further said some aspirants conducted small or even no campaigns due to "a lack of favourable environment".

According to the code of conduct, aspirants are not allowed to use pictures or the names of political parties backing them in the campaigns. However, in campaigns for Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC), the code was violated through the use of 17 kinds of campaigning tools that bore such names, while the number was eight for Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) and four for Chittagong City Corporation (CCC).

To prevent violations of the code of conduct the Election Commission appointed nine mobile courts for DNCC, 14 for DSCC and 10 for CCC.

"But actions taken by the courts were limited to slapping small fines and issuing cautionary notices," said Alim.

ONE YEAR INTO N'GANJ-7 MURDER Fugitive Nur Hossain still ward councillor

LGRD ministry yet to issue directives to remove him; Home boss says Nur to be extradited from India any day; victims' families want investigation again

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj



Despite being a fugitive and charge-sheeted accused in Narayanganj seven-murder case and facing prison sentence for one year in another case, Nur Hossain still remains as a ward councillor at Narayanganj City Corporation.

Ever since Nur fled the country in April last year, he did not attend six consecutive meetings held by the NCC.

He is now in an Indian jail for entering the country without valid documents.

According to the section 13 of the Local Government (city corporation) Act 2009, a councillor can be removed from the post if the person remains absent in three consecutive meetings without logical grounds.

Also he or she will be removed if convicted by a court on the ground of moral turpitude, says the act.

An NCC staff said the city corporation sent a letter in October last year to the division concerned of the LGRD ministry informing of Nur's absence and seeking

direction in this regard.

But the ministry is yet to communicate with its directives, added the staff wishing not to be named.

Apart from a charge-sheeted accused in the seven-murder case, Nur has also been sentenced to jail for a year by a Narayanganj court for illegal possession of wild animals.

Meanwhile, the victims' family members rejected the charge-sheet in the seven-murder case terming it "incomplete" and also demanded further investigation into the killings after withdrawal of the present investigation officer in the case.

Investigators of the seven-murder case have submitted the charge-sheet without grilling Nur.

Against such a backdrop, today marks a year into the seven-murder incident that had sent a chilling message due to its gruesomeness. Alleged role of Rapid Action Battalion members in the killings was criticised at home and abroad.

Nur Hossain masterminded and

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N.B: The position must be clearly mentioned on the email subject line.
Application Deadline: May 07, 2015

WHAT TO DO DURING AN EARTHQUAKE

DROP!

COVER!

HOLD ON!

CALM DOWN
Try to stay as calm as possible

INSIDE
Stay away from furniture, windows and lamps

OUTSIDE
Stay away from buildings, walls and power poles

STOP
If you are driving stop in a safe place, turn on the hazard lights and stay inside the vehicle

If you use a wheelchair, put the brakes on in a safe place and protect your arms

If you are in a crowded place, protect your head with your arms or take cover under seats and tables

Source: http://www.gpn.in.gov/resources/ism/logo/ahem/ahem_en.html