

No more walkover

Nasim says AL not interested in polls win without Khaleda and BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Health Minister Mohammad Nasim yesterday told parliament that they were not interested in winning the national elections without BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and her party taking part.

"We want Khaleda Zia to remain safe and sound so that she can take part in the 2019 elections. The game will be held Insha Allah in 2019. Who will we contest if you [Khaleda] are not in the field? We are not interested in a walkover. We are players and want to score by playing," Nasim said while speaking on the proposed budget for 2015-16 fiscal year.

"We will whitewash you in that battle of ballots," he added amid thumping of desks by the treasury and the opposition bench.

He also noted that the next general election would not be held even a day before its scheduled date.

Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed has meanwhile told the House that Khaleda would have to stand in the dock one day for killing innocent people including women and children in the name of hartals and blockades.

"Khaleda has conceded defeat in all fronts; she has been defeated in movement, election and politics as she had

earlier insisted that she would not leave her office until defeating Sheikh Hasina and her government. But, the entire world witnessed with surprise that she returned home after staying at her office for 92 days," Tofail said while taking part in the discussions.

Meanwhile, BNP yesterday alleged that the government had been hatching a conspiracy to make party chief Khaleda and other top leaders disqualified from contesting the next parliamentary polls.

"A blueprint is on to keep the BNP leaders including Khaleda Zia away from the elections by filing false cases against them," said BNP spokesperson Asaduzzaman Ripon at the party's Nayapaltn headquarters in Dhaka.

He also expressed concern over getting justice in the cases.

"If the government executes such a blueprint to keep the BNP leaders away from the polls, they [government] will have to face dire consequences," he warned.

The BNP leader also lambasted Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu for his comment that "Khaleda Zia, the queen of arson, won't get any chance to contest the 2019 elections".

He also criticised the government for building a car park at the centuries-old Lalbagh Fort by demolishing a part of its wall.



Arrested members of a counterfeit money racket are paraded before the press at the Rab headquarters in the capital's Uttara yesterday. The elite force also seized fake notes along with equipment for printing fake money.

PHOTO: STAR

Nahid bemoans

FROM PAGE 1

money will go to the primary and mass education ministry.

"What will I do with this amount of money? Will I spend it over giving salaries of teachers and staffs or building infrastructures?" Nahid said.

In the revised budget of the 2009-10 fiscal year, the allocation for the education sector was 14.3 percent of the total budget. It has since continued to drop, he observed.

Demanding more allocation for his ministry, he said, "Honourable Speaker, I urge the finance minister through you to allocate more money for education to turn students into human capital."

"The education ministry stands eighth in the list of ten top prioritised ministries in terms of allocation," he lamented.

Pointing to the need for various changes in universities and colleges, he pleaded, "We need to develop infrastructures and increase salaries of staffs. The number of total students and people involved in this sector is more than 5.5 crore. Please tell me if I should prioritise building infrastructures or increasing salaries."

He also highlighted lawmakers' demand for building schools and colleges in their respective areas as well as bringing more educational institutions under the MPO.

"I wholeheartedly support your demand. But how will I do that with this little sum of allocation?" he questioned.

Nahid said even a country like Kenya allocates 31 percent of its total budget for education.

Nahid said Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had said the education sector should get at least six percent of the country's GDP. "But in the proposed budget we have got only 4.03 percent."

In his speech, Nahid strongly objected to the finance minister's budget speech in which he mentioned that although education at primary

and tertiary levels has improved, the picture is not bright at secondary level.

Nahid said even the government's opposition will not make such statements.

Nahid said development of our education at any level should not be compared with the USA, rather it should be compared to that of the previous BNP government."

LAWMAKER'S SON

Police seek seven-day remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Detectives yesterday sought a seven-day fresh remand for Bakhtiar Alam Rony, son of ruling Awami League lawmaker Pinu Khan, for gathering more information about the double murder in the city's New Eskaton on April 14.

The court, however, fixed June 30 for hearing the prayer and asked investigation officer of the case to appear before it on the day with the progress report on the probe.

The court also sent Rony to jail and asked the jail authorities to produce him before it on June 30.

Earlier in the day, Dipak Kumar Das, a sub-inspector of Detective Branch of police and also the investigating officer of the case, produced Rony before the court on completion of his second phase four-day remand.

On June 13, Rony was sent to jail on expiry of an earlier remand for four days.

Three friends of Rony and his driver in their statements before metropolitan magistrates said Bakhtiar lowered the window of his sport-utility vehicle (SUV) after it got stuck in a traffic jam in New Eskaton and fired four to five shots around 1:30am, hitting rickshaw-puller Abdul Hakim and CNG-run auto-rickshaw driver Yakub Ali. They died in a hospital later.

Counterfeit note gangs on the go again

FROM PAGE 1

According to law enforcement agencies, about 15-20 such gangs are active in Dhaka while many others are busy faking notes in other cities to cheat shoppers.

Over the last few weeks, at least seven gangs were busted in Dhaka, Chittagong, and Sylhet with a huge amount of fake money, of Tk 500 and 1000 denominations, and equipment used for printing those.

In the latest bust, Rab seized around Tk 1.05 crore fake notes and equipment used for making the notes in Banashree area yesterday.

The Rab also arrested five members of the gang which was planning to make fake notes worth Tk 10 crore and circulate them across the country.

Maj Maksud said they have already alerted all Rab units about the counterfeiters and asked them to launch drives.

Bangladesh Bank officials held a meeting with law enforcers recently and asked them to go extremely tough on the gangs.

"We'll give 200 fake currency detecting devices to the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) so it might put the devices at key points of monetary transactions," BB Executive Director and spokesperson Mahfujur Rahman told The Daily Star yesterday.

Earlier this month, two more gangs with spurious notes worth about Tk 1 crore were captured by detectives in separate drives in Dhaka. They were set to circulate the notes worth Tk 9 crore this Eid. The materials and equipment needed for producing the notes were found in the gangs' possession, DB officials said in separate briefings recently.

PRINTING TO CIRCULATION

Printing and circulation of fake notes

take place in three phases, said law enforcers.

One group prepares and supplies the special paper while another group prints the counterfeit notes. A third group circulates them, according to DB investigators who quizzed the criminals.

The production cost of fake notes worth Tk 1 lakh ranges between Tk 3,000 and Tk 3,500, said DB Joint Commissioner Monirul Islam recently.

The fraudsters sell the notes to wholesale buyers for Tk 7,000 to Tk 10,000. The wholesalers then sell them to retailers across the country for Tk 15,000 to Tk 25,000.

The retailers circulate the notes when buying goods while some of them circulate the notes through a section of unscrupulous staff of banks and ATM booths, Monirul claimed.

YESTERDAY'S SEIZURE

Acting on a tip-off, a team of Rab-3 raided Banashree in the capital around 6:00am and detained Abdur Rahim Sheikh, 35, an alleged ringleader of the fake currency making syndicate, Rab officials said during a media briefing at Rab headquarters.

Following his information, the Rab team detained four of his alleged associates and seized fake notes worth around Tk 1.05 crore from them.

The arrestees were Rahim's first wife Fatema Begum, 24, his second wife Rubina Khatun, 19, Mohammad Asad, 22, and Tajim Hossain, 26.

They also seized fake currency making equipment including 11 money making screens, three boards, two high performance colour printers, two laptops, four rolls of security threads to put inside the notes, eight reams of special paper, two jars of ink, and a high-end scanner.

Catch the perverts!

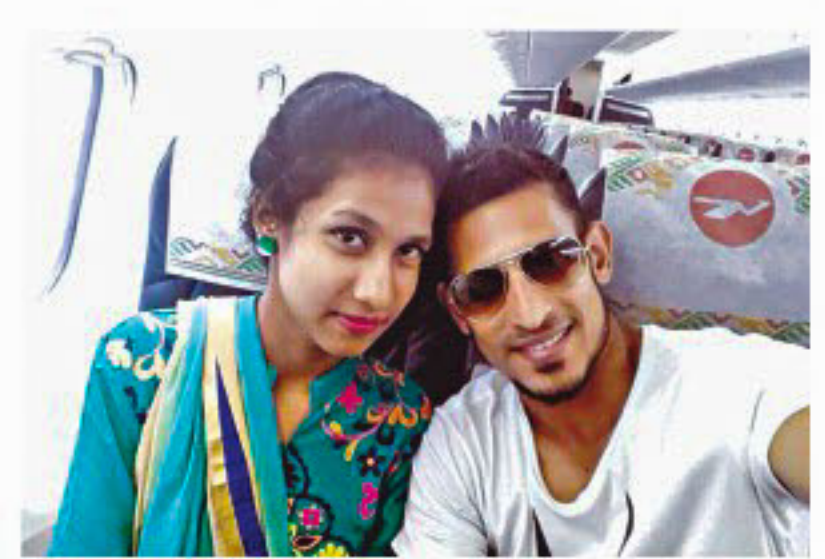
FROM PAGE 1

gropers and molesters. His post was flooded with lurid and mindless comments and finally he had to pull it down.

A hurt Nasir then put up a post saying Don't Follow Me. He wrote: "Dear fans, I really get hurt by your comments. I posted this pic on request of my younger sister; many of you put bad comments on it. And some of them made fun posts with it. I have removed the picture."

What a shame for us! What a disgrace!

We believe those who made such comments would not understand a dot of the trauma Nasir and his sister had gone through because no-one apologised. These are the bunch we have seen at TSC on the Bangla New Year's day groping women. These are the ones who rape and molest our women. And yet they are not caught and handed the harshest kind of punishment.



Cricketer Nasir and his sister

Something has fundamentally gone wrong with our society. We tend to look down on the females as sex objects. We tend to suppress women in any way we can. We hear speakers blaring invectives against women from Urs (religious gathering). Nobody minds.

But we feel that Nasir should stand up and catch these criminals. He should file a case of cybercrime against them and get these criminals arrested and punished.

Go ahead Nasir, catch them!

Liquid cocaine

FROM PAGE 1

Revenue, a Bolivian company -- Import Export Vaiven SRL -- shipped the consignment from Montevideo Port in Uruguay.

Based on intelligence from a British agency, Chittagong police on June 6 detained Golam Mostafa Sohel, finance manager of a sister concern of Khan Jahan Ali Ltd.

On Sohel's information, they with the help of Customs Intelligence identified the container and sealed it that very night.

On June 8, the container was opened and primary tests were done by Narcotics Control Department. But it found no cocaine substance in the liquid.

Customs Intelligence later had the liquid samples tested at Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, and Drug Testing Laboratory in Dhaka. These tests on Saturday confirmed the presence of cocaine in the barrel.

ATTEMPTS TO GET THE CONSIGNMENT RELEASED

No letter of credit (LC) was opened for importing the consignment from Bolivia, said a top police official involved in the investigation.

This was perhaps one of the reasons why consignment could not be released in more than two weeks after its arrival at the port.

And it's then Bakul Mia his two relatives entered the scene, according to investigators.

"Bakul first called me on May 31 and requested me to help release the consignment," Mostafa Kamal, Bakul's cousin living in Dhaka, told The Daily Star yesterday.

"He [Bakul] told me that the consignment belonged to a friend of his and he didn't know about the contents of shipment."

Kamal engaged his nephew Atiqur Rahman, who works for an apparels company in Dhaka, in the job.

However, Atiqur failed to do so as necessary documents were not submitted yet to the Chittagong Customs House by the consignee, Khan Jahan Ali Ltd, Atiqur told this newspaper a day after the seizure.

He then wrote to the shipping agent -- Cosco (Bangladesh) Shipping Lines Ltd -- either to "re-export the consignment to the port of origin or to forward it to any Indian port", according to an email correspondence between Atiqur and a representative of the shipping agent. The Daily Star has obtained a copy of the correspondence.

"Then I contacted my uncle Bakul Mia in England. He told me to get in

touch with Sohel of Khan Jahan Ali Ltd," Atiqur added.

Sohel told police that one of his relatives from the UK had sent the consignment to him. Instead of using his own name, he used the name of Khan Jahan Ali Ltd as the consignee, said SM Tanvir Arafat, additional deputy commissioner of the Detective Branch of Chittagong Police.

Police filed a case against Sohel; Nur Mohammad, chairman of Khan Jahan Ali Ltd, and some unnamed people on Saturday night in this connection.

However, Nur Mohammad claimed that his company was not involved in importing the consignment.

"We never had any trade with Bolivia. We do not import edible oil ... We want to know how our name came up," he told a private television channel yesterday.

'WORTH TK 300 CRORE' Moynul Khan, director general of Customs Intelligence and Investigation Directorate, said about 60kg pure cocaine can be extracted from the barrel.

Price of cocaine varies between Tk 5 crore and Tk 6 crore per kg, according to him.

This means the cocaine consignment is worth at least Tk 300 crore.

Ruling party link a must for civil service jobs

Claims Khaleda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday accused the government of "politicising the judiciary" and other institutions.

She also said the ruling Awami League supporters were enjoying amnesty committing all sorts of crimes, including murders and robberies.

The BNP leader said political affiliation with the ruling party has become the main thing for getting into the public service.

"Now, neither merit nor seniority is considered for getting recruited," she said while addressing an iftar programme of pro-BNP Doctors Association of Bangladesh (DAB) at the Dhaka Ladies Club.

The former premier alleged that many senior doctors had been "forced to leave their jobs" for supporting the BNP.

Khaleda also alleged that the "police have gone out of the government's control". "The arms of police are longer than that of the law."



Auto-rickshaws going through a pool of knee-deep water on a road in Matuail of Dhaka yesterday. Like this part of the capital, many other areas have become waterlogged due to monsoon rain of the last few days.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN