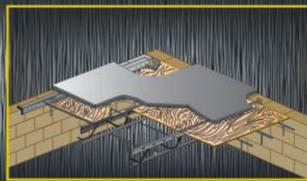


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For Rohingyas, little to cheer about polls

REUTERS, Sittwe

In a refugee camp outside Myanmar's provincial capital Sittwe, Soe Hlaing was holding a pink card, the most coveted of the rainbow of documents indicating citizenship status, which gives him a vote in today's historic election.

But the 44-year-old Muslim said he will not be exercising the right, in protest against the disenfranchisement of most of the 1.1 million Rohingya Muslims amongst whom he lives.

Soe Hlaing is a Kaman Muslim, not a Rohingya. The Kaman are one of Myanmar's recognised 135 ethnic groups and entitled to full citizenship rights by birth, unlike the persecuted Rohingya.

But Soe Hlaing ended up in a refugee camp with mainly Rohingya during brutal anti-Muslim violence in 2012. Since entering the camp, the authorities have subjected him to the same restrictions on freedom of movement as his Rohingya neighbours.

"Unless everyone can vote, I will not vote," he said, sitting outside his rattan home in the Ohn Daw Gyi camp on the outskirts of Sittwe. Even his wife, he said, was left off the camp's short voter list.

As Myanmar goes to polls, the plight of its Muslim minority remains a blot on what is billed as the country's first free and fair election for 25 years.

The opposition National League for Democracy (NLD) is widely expected to do well in the election, but the milestone for political reforms an NLD victory would represent will be lost on much of the Buddhist-majority country's Muslims.

MORE STORIES ON PAGE 8 SEE PAGE 10 COL 5



Women look at names on a list outside a polling station in Myanmar's Mandalay yesterday. Myanmar today is holding its first 'freest' and 'contested' election in 25 years in which democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi is pitted against the ruling party comprised of former members of a military junta.

Unease, hope as Myanmar votes today

AFP, Yangon

Final preparations were under way yesterday for Myanmar's first meaningful election in a generation, the day before a historic poll that could see Aung San Suu Kyi's opposition launched to power after decades of army rule.

Her National League for Democracy party is tipped to emerge as the largest party in parliament, a result that would upend Myanmar's political landscape, which has been dominated by the military since independence.

President Thein Sein, a former general who has led reforms since the sudden end of outright junta rule in 2011, insists his government -- and the powerful army -- will respect the outcome of the vote.

He has also urged the public to cast their ballots in an election billed as the centrepiece of reforms.

But tens of thousands of MORE STORIES ON PAGE 8 SEE PAGE 10 COL 5

CUSTODIAL TORTURE Amend law, make judicial enquiry mandatory

Speakers urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Anyone who protests against injustice may go missing, and no one is safe these days, National Human Rights Commission member advocate Fawzia Karim Firoze said yesterday, referring to custodial tortures and deaths.

Also, the protester may be detained or implicated [in false cases] by law enforcers in a way that his or her life will simply get ruined, she said.

The NHRC commissioner was speaking at a discussion on the review of Torture and Custodial Death Prevention Act, 2013, organised by Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) in the capital's Biam auditorium.

BLAST Director SM Rezaul Karim called for an amendment to the law for making judicial enquiry into allegations of custodial tortures and deaths mandatory.

He said common people were not fully aware of the law passed in line with the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment adopted in 1984.

Talking about limitations of the law, he said it lacked specific definition of

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

HARTAL NOW, THEN Cause is lost

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hartal has long been a means to protest and realise democratic demands in the Indian Subcontinent and Bangladesh in particular. But while hartals used to be enforced peacefully and observed spontaneously in the past, they are forcible, violent and deadly now.

This contrasting picture of past and present shut-down has been documented in a study titled "Hartal of seven decades (1947 to 2015): Bangladesh politics".

Ajay Dasgupta, associate editor of Bangla daily Samakal, yesterday presented the findings of his research done over 15 years.

In the seven decades from 1947 to 2015, as many as 605 nationwide hartals (not necessarily days) have been called. Of them, 47 were called between 1947 and 1971 and the rest 558 between 1972 and 2015, the study shows.

In the pre-independent Bangladesh, hartals used to be called over pro-people issues and people observed those willingly because they could connect with the hartal call. But now, political parties have to carry out subversive activities to

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

ATTACK ON TAIWAN COUPLE

The 'robbery' planned 3 months back

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The alleged robbers, who attacked a Taiwanese couple in the capital's Uttara area, had planned to rob their flat three months ago, according to police.

They took advantage of being employees of a firm run by the couple -- Wang Ming Chee and Lily Hawa -- and went to their flat on several occasions as it is located upstairs of the office on Road 4, said Abu Bakar Miah, officer-in-charge of Uttara Purbo police.

"They even made duplicate keys of the collapsible gate and the flat door and entered the couple's house using those keys," he added.

Ming and Hawa came under attack allegedly by three former employees at their house in the early hours of Friday. They are receiving treatment at the Apollo Hospitals.

Neither police nor SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

HARTAL COUNT

1947 to 1971	47
1972 to 2015	558
172 [81+91] hartals enforced by AL in 1991-1996, 2001-2006 (BNP rule)	
59 by BNP in 1996-2001 (AL rule)	
243 by BNP, Jamaat, others in 2009-2015 (AL rule)	
72 by BNP, AL and others in 1982-1990 (Ershad regime)	
11 by others at different times	

Gadget for fancy dishes at the touch of a button

ODDITYCENTRAL.COM

ChefCuisine is a new kitchen gadget that's all set to revolutionise home cooking. Thanks to this offering from Swiss startup Nutresia, pretty much anyone can produce restaurant quality food at the touch of a button!

The machine, inspired by Nestle's coffee capsule Nespresso machines, is capable of preparing fancy dishes from vacuum packed capsules or sachets. Each sachet contains a microchip that tells ChefCuisine the exact cooking time and temperature.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2



MUNICIPALITY POLLS BNP hints at participation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP yesterday hinted at participating in the municipality polls, likely to be held by the end of this year.

"The BNP won't let the Awami League to score goals on an empty field," party standing committee member Moudud Ahmed told reporters in the capital.

He was talking to newsmen after laying a floral wreath at the grave of late president Ziaur Rahman at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar on the occasion of National Solidarity Day.

Moudud also said the final decision in this regard will be taken after the party chairperson returns home from London.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

Family attacks cops, snatches convict

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

Relatives of a man convicted in a drug case attacked policemen and snatched him from them in Sharishabari upazila of Jamalpur yesterday.

The convict, Hafizur Rahman, was sentenced to six months in jail, said Shahed Al Mamun, sub-inspector of Tarakandi Police Investigation Centre under Sharishabari Police Station.

A judicial magistrate court issued an arrest warrant against Hafizur a few days ago.

Yesterday, a four-member team, led by SI Abu Sayed, raided Hafizur's house in

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

7 killed as bus hits truck, falls into ditch

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

At least seven people were killed and as many injured when a bus crashed into a roadside ditch after hitting a stationary truck at Meherbari on the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway in the district's Bhaluka upazila early yesterday.

Six of the dead are Fazlul Haque, 47, and Mofizul Islam, 26, of Bhaluka; Motaleb Hossain, 29, Wahidul Islam, 45, and Kajol Miah, 45, of Trishal upazila in Mymensingh; and Naushed Alam, 35, of Nilphamari.

The identity of a woman aged about 30 could not be confirmed.

Mamun-or-Rashid, officer-in-charge of Bhaluka Police Station, said the Dhaka-bound bus of SM Paribahan from Netrakona crashed into the ditch after hitting the sand-laden truck around 5:45am.

Two of the victims died SEE PAGE 10 COL 4



A dry fish shop at Asadganj in Khatunganj of Chittagong. As winter approaches, freshly dried fish comes pouring in at the country's largest dry fish trading hub.

PHOTO: MINHAJ UDDIN



Shutki safe

Use of chemical drops in processing dry fish items

MINHAJ UDDIN, Chittagong

Your nose will tell you where you are. Your eyes will have a hard time to take in all the different varieties. And the names will leave you wondering why you have not heard of them before. But if you are a shutki lover, then Chittagong's Asadganj dry fish market is the place for you.

Sellers display almost all kinds of dry fish. The most popular ones are the Chhuri, Loitta, Icha (shrimp), Lakka, Rupchanda, Poa, Painshha, Rita/Kata, Uluu, Hilsa, Shurma, Moilla etc. You can find "Balachao", the ever popular dry fish savoury, here too.

The centuries-old famous Asadganj Shutki Mokam has returned to its previous glory of quality dry fish because there are a few cold storages here now that help traders preserve the fish without pesticide or dyes.

"The use of harmful chemicals has come down to around 10 percent due to the cold storage facilities,

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

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PRAYER TIMING

NOVEMBER 8

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN 5-00 12-45 3-45 5-25 7-00

JAMAAT 5-35 1-15 4-00 5-30 7-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION