BNP opposes UP polls with party symbol

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP yesterday said holding Union Parishad (UP) polls on partisan lines might create unrest at the grassroots level and wreak havoc on public life.

The party, however, would participate in the upcoming UP polls for the sake of democracy.

The BNP yesterday wrote a letter to the Election Commission, mentioning this. A four-member BNP delegation, led party's Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi Ahmed, submitted the letter to EC Secretary Sirazul Islam.

posts of UP chairman would be held on partisan lines, and chairman aspirants would be able to contest the polls, using party symbols or independently. Aspirants for other posts could run independently. Elections to 752 UPs would be

For the first time, elections to the

held in the first phase on March 22, while over 3,500 more UPs would go to polls in phases until June 4, according to the polls schedule announced by the EC on Thursday. "It is illogical to hold the Union

Parishad polls on partisan lines. It will have a negative impact on the society...it will wreak havoc on public life," Rizvi told reporters after the meeting with the EC secretary. As the polls would be held at the grassroots level, personal popularity

and image of the candidates were more important than their political identity, he viewed. "We had similar reservation about

the partisan municipality polls. But the Election Commission did not pay heed to us," mentioned Rizvi. In response to the BNP's objection

to the partisan polls, EC Commissioner Shah Nawaz said the commission had nothing to do about it because the law was amended in parliament.

"We don't think the partisan elections will affect harmony at the grassroots level. The recent partisan municipality polls were held in a peaceful manner," Nawaz claimed before reporters at his office.

18 promoted to DIG rank

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eighteen additional deputy inspector generals or equal rank officials of police have been promoted to the rank of deputy inspector generals (DIG).

The home ministry yesterday issued an order in this regard.

The promoted police officials are: DIG (current charge) Lutfar Rahman Mandal of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), Additional Commissioner Mohammad Ibrahim Fatemi of DMP, DIG (current charge) SM Ruhul Amin of Railway range, Dhaka, DIG (current charge) Mallick Fakhrul Islam of Highway Police, Dhaka, DIG (current charge) Mizanur Rahman of Sylhet Range,

Commissioner (current charge) Kamrul Ahsan of Sylhet Metropolitan Police (SMP), Additional DIG Mazharul Islam of Special Branch of Dhaka, Additional DIG Khandaker Golam Faruq of Dhaka Range, Additional Commissioner Didar Ahmed of DMP, Joint Commissioner Jamil Ahmed of DMP, DIG (current charge) Atiqul Islam of Police headquarters, Additional DIG M Khurshid Hossain of Police headquarters, Additional Commissioner AKM Shahidur Rahman of Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP), Additional DIG Abdullah Al Mahmud of Rajshahi range, Additional DIG Shafiqul Islam of Dhaka range, Additional Commissioner Banaj Kumar

20 nations join military manoeuvre in Saudi

Majumder of CMP, Additional DIG

Golam Kibria of Police headquarters

and Joint Commissioner Monirul

AFP, Riyadh

Islam of DMP.

Armed forces from around 20 countries were gathering in northern Saudi Arabia yesterday for "the most important" military manoeuvre ever staged in the region, the official news agency SPA reported.

The "Thunder of the North" exercise involving ground, air, and naval forces sends a "clear message" that Riyadh and its allies "stand united in confronting all challenges and preserving peace and stability in the region", SPA said.



To strengthen confidence between the police and citizens, Abdul Jalil Mandal, commissioner of Chittagong Metropolitan Police along with other members of the force distribute flowers among many in New Market area of the port city on Valentine's Day yesterday.

PHOTO: **ANURUP KANTI DAS**

2 kids tortured inhumanly

FROM PAGE 1

Zahid, a class-ten student at Bagsara High School, was admitted to Poba Upazila Health Complex and Emon, an orphan, went into hiding in fear, said Shariful Islam, officer-in-charge of Poba Police Station.

The incident happened at Chowbaria village in Poba upazila on Friday.

Someone among the crowd filmed parts of the disturbing incident and shared it on social media, triggering an outcry. Police constable Sagar, who is cur-

rently with Rab, and a member of Bangladesh Army, Nasir Uddin, also took part in the beating and were seen in the footage, said the OC, quoting locals. Both Sagar and Nasir were on leave

and were supposed to join their workplaces yesterday, he added. Zahid's father Emran Hossain filed a case against 13 people, including Nasir

and Sagar. Police arrested one villager, Azizul Islam, in this connection.

It all began on Thursday night.

Fazlur Rahman, an influential farmer ture on a blank paper. Fazlur's men of the village, found his son's mobile also threatened him against telling it to phone went missing and suspected that Emon stole it, said Emran, a rickshaw puller.

Fazlur's men picked up Emon from his house on Friday morning and tortured him. At one point, Emon said his playmate Zahid might have taken it. They then picked up Zahid from Naogaon-Rajshahi road around 3:00pm, he said.

They kept the kids confined in a room of Fazlur's where the torture took place.

On returning home in the evening, Emran did not find his son. Later he came to know that his son was at Fazlur's house.

"But I could not imagine that they were torturing him ... Later, we went to the house and begged for mercy. They returned my son with his face, hands and legs swollen. There was clotted blood in many parts of his body," he said.

They let go of the kids around 10:00pm, after taking Emran's signaanyone or going to the police. The 1:14 minute footage available

Zahid and Emon being beaten indiscriminately by two men as others tightly held their hands. As the kids screamed in pain, the tormentors said: "Hold his hand, turn

on Facebook and YouTube shows

him", "Beat...beat," "Tell us who stole the mobile phone". Footage shows one of the two men

was wearing a maroon shirt. On the back of the shirt was written: Nasir.

But this is no isolated incident of child abuse.

On July 8 last year, 13-year-old Samiul Alam Rajon was beaten to death by a group of men in Sylhet Sadar allegedly for trying to steal a rickshaw van.

That incident too was filmed and posted on social media, sparking an outrage and call for justice. On November 8, a Sylhet court handed

the killing. The court also ruled out that the boy tried to steal a rickshaw van; rather it was a misconception of an accused. Then on August 13, Rakib, 13, was

down death penalty to four people for

tortured to death in Khulna, by his former employer just because the boy quit the job and started working elsewhere for better pay.

Rakib's killing was extremely brutal His former employer Md Sharif and his uncle Mintu Mia stripped the boy naked, inserted a high-pressure air pump nozzle into his rectum and filled the body with air. Rakib's intestines tore apart and his lungs burst as air filled the abdomen, killing him.

A Khulna court sentenced Sharif and Mintu to death for the murder.

In the first 10 months of last year, 261 children were murdered while 32 others were killed after being kidnapped, according to Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum, a leading network of child rights organisations.

Of love and living

FROM PAGE 1

intersection, considered the gateway to the DU campus for most of the city dwellers.

DSCC Mayor Sayeed Khokon inaugurated the programme that calls for a collective effort to keep the city clean and beautiful.

"You all should think yourselves as the mayor and do your duties accordingly," Khokon urged an audience of

more than a thousand people. Many couples, who had came to the DU campus to celebrate the day, also

joined the programme. Shykh Seraj, director and head of news of Channel-I, at the programme said, "When I visited Uganda, a thirdworld country, I saw people observing community day for cleaning their

houses for three hours every Saturday."

"It is mandatory for all of them," he said suggesting that the government do something similar in Bangladesh. Litterateur Syed Shamsul Haque

urged everyone to work together to restore the long lost glory of the 400year-old city.

Nasrin Ahmed, pro-vice chancellor of Dhaka University, too spoke on the importance of the general people's awareness and efforts in keeping the city clean.

Court sentences 4 Emiratis to death for joining IS

AFP, Abu Dhabi

A top court in the United Arab Emirates yesterday sentenced four Emiratis to death after convicting them of joining the Islamic State jihadist group in Syria, local media reported.

The four, who were tried in absentia, are part of a group of 11 defendants accused of "joining the terrorist Daesh group in an Arab country", the official WAM news agency said, using an Arabic acronym for IS.

Local newspapers said that the group had travelled to Syria.

They were also charged with "promoting" IS online, helping to finance the group and insulting UAE leaders, WAM said.

Three other Emiratis, a Bahraini, a Mauritanian and a Syrian were handed jail sentences of between three and 10 years, the local Gulf News daily reported. Another Emirati was acquitted.

'Anamosity'

FROM PAGE 1

truth and are determined not to be constrained by facts. "Evidence" or "proof" to bear out the claims made in those shows, however outrageous, are things that these "Guardians of Ethics" would not be bothered with. After all, in exposing a pretender to journalism, issues like truth, fact, proof and logic are mere impediments. All this must be dispensed with when journalistic ethics need to be restored. For a good cause, sacrifices need to be made.

These Guardians have been so uncompromising in their task to free journalism of such a disgraceful element that they made sure no one from the newspaper in question participated in the talk shows, lest they raise such irrelevant questions as "where is the proof of what you say?" So, what if the editor in question is misquoted, his "admission" taken out of context and the meaning of what he said twisted? What if things are falsely attributed to him? That is of no concern to them because when the cause of ethical journalism is at stake, everything goes, including abandoning

those very ethics. These TV talk show series that ran

writers to shame in terms of its breadth of imagination. It was nothing short of a chief adviser. stroke of genius to link an introspective of an editor -- admitting his lapse in editorial judgment -- to a grand conspiracy to destroy democracy, bring in the military, implement "minus-two" and then grab power, all the while being just an editor. Hats off to these scriptwriters for no ordinary mind could have woven

such a thrilling plot. "Anamosity" talk show series claims to "reveal" how this "politician masquerading as a journalist", to realise his personal goal of bringing in the army, cleverly created the political crisis that led to 1/11. The plot implies that he first convinced the BNP to change the retirement age of judges, then he convinced the AL to reject the particular judge who was to be the next chief adviser and thus ignited two years of political agitation by the then opposition party.

This pretender of a journalist worked hard so that the political crisis could not be solved and when the time came, he influenced the then President

Advocate Jamal Abdun Naser, general

secretary of the district lawyers' associ-

ation, filed a case with the court of

senior judicial magistrate (cogni-

all very creative and can put most fiction natural steps of the constitutional have the opportunity for fictionprovision, and declare himself the writing?

and self-assessing voluntary comment enough for the army to come. He then lated all norms of decency and per- editor" and yet, no one bothered to persuaded the four advisers of the first caretaker government to resign. Still, the crisis was not coming to a head. Finally, he persuaded the EC to reject Gen Ershad's nomination at which point the AL finally declared that it would not participate in the coming election. That's how the "plotter" journalist's dream came true and the ground was created for the army to step in. And all this was done only to prevent Sheikh

Hasina from coming to power. The irony is that it was that very army-backed caretaker government, which this editor is thought to have conspired to bring in, that held a free and fair election paving the way for Sheikh Hasina's historic electoral victory and return to power.

You have to compliment the "Anamosity" scriptwriters for having woven such a complex and totally original plot, however contrary to history it may be. After all, imagination should not be constrained by history.

It is of no consequence that

sonal dignity. So what if some participants in these progarmmes resorted to blatant falsehood and most defamatory lies without bothering to cite a single evidence of any sort?

In most of the talk shows, there were some common faces who repeated their views ad nauseam holding the paper, especially its editor, guilty of the "grossest of violation of journalistic ethics" and demanded legal action against him and at least his resigna-

For effect they brought in a few participants who desperately tried to say something in defence of the targeted editor but whose arguments were either ignored or drowned out by louder voices.

One participant did mention that he was uneasy speaking about a fellow editor without his presence but that uneasiness did not prevent him from stating that the editor in question personally had declared he was the

only in a select number of channels are Iajuddin Ahmed not to follow the And why should only the litterateurs member-secretary of a political party being formed then, which is a totally

baseless claim. Most of the participants claimed Even then, the crisis did not mature "Anamosity" talk shows grossly vio- they personally knew the "pretendercheck their facts by a simple phone call to him or any of his colleagues before speaking out in public. It went for days but a phone call would have taken only

> a minute. "Anamosity" will definitely find a pride of place in the annals of our TV talk show for its creativity and imagination, if not for its fairness and

> authenticity. An editor's introspective selfassessment and his voluntary admission of editorial lapse should ordinarily have led to a serious discussion in both the print and electronic media about the weaknesses in the profession and how to guard themselves in the face of intrusion in their daily work

> that still continues. Instead, it has led to 16 cases and counting till last night and a motivated and determined "witch hunt", which is bound to lead to severe stifling of the free media, especially to self-

12 more defamation suits filed against Star editor

FROM PAGE 1

connection with the defamation suits. In some cases, the courts asked the complainants to submit documents in support of their allegations. At a talk show on a private TV chan-

nel on February 3, Mahfuz Anam made an introspective comment about a lapse in his editorial judgement in publishing a few reports that the newspaper could not independently verify during the last caretaker government's tenure. DHAKA

The organising secretary of Bangladesh

Projonmo League's central committee filed a libel case with the court of Metropolitan Magistrate Pranab Kumar Hui in Dhaka, claiming Tk 10,000 crore in compensation for publishing unverified news "against Awami League President Sheikh Hasina during the 2007-08 tenure of the caretaker government".

the officer-in-charge of Mugda Police Station to investigate the matter and take necessary steps. **JAMALPUR**

sance), seeking to bring sedition charges against The Daily Star editor for publishing unverified reports on Hasina in 2007. The editor proved himself as an anti-state individual through his recent statement on the issue in a TV talk show, said the plaintiff.

Senior Judicial Magistrate AKM Moyeen Uddin Siddiki took the plea into cognisance and directed the officer-in-charge of Sadar Police Station to seek permission from the government for investigating the charge. SYLHET

Sylhet city BCL unit President Abdul Basit Rumman and its ex-president

Rahat Tarafder filed two defamation cases with the Court of Sylhet Chief After the hearing, the court ordered Metropolitan Magistrate Saifuzzaman. They alleged that The Daily Star reports on June 2, 3, 13 and 14 in 2007 tarnished

the image of their leader Sheikh Hasina,

and demanded Tk 100 crore in compensa-

tion in each case, said Additional Public Prosecutor Humayun Kabir. The court took the cases into cogni-

editor. PATUAKHALI Uzzal Kumar Basu, secretary of the

district unit of Awami Swechchhasebak League, filed a defamation case with the court of Senior Judicial Magistrate SM Tareq Shams, seeking Tk 5 crore in compensation. Upon receiving the complaint, the

court issued a summons on Anam, asking him to appear before it on April 5, according to court source. **NETRAKONA**

GM Khan Pathan, public prosecutor and general secretary of Sadar upazila AL unit, filed a defamation case against Mahfuz Anam with the additional chief judicial magistrate's court.

After recording the plaintiff's statement, the court ordered the OC of Netrakona Model Police Station to it on March 29. The cases were lodged around five

probe the allegation. RANGAMATI Nasir Uddin, president of Kaptai

upazila unit of Jubo League, filed a defamation case against The Daily Star editor with the Chief Judicial sance and summoned The Daily Star Magistrate (cognisance). Magistrate Shams Uddin Khaled

> ordered the OC of Rangamati Kotwali Police Station to investigate the matter and submit a report by March 31.

DINAJPUR Advocate Samsur Rahman Parvez, law

affairs secretary of Khansama upazila AL unit, filed a defamation case with the Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court. The court recorded the compliant.

KHULNA

Khulna district unit BCL Joint Secretary Parvez Howlader and its Office Secretary Taslim Hossain Taj filed two defamation cases with two Khulna courts.

One of the two courts asked police to probe the case, and set March 28 for the next hearing, while the other summoned Mahfuz Anam to appear before

managed to flee the scene.

The Daily Star editor. SHARIATPUR

Ex-president of district unit BCL Nurul Amin Kotwal, organising secretary of Awami Muktijuddho Prajanma League Hasibul Islam and Jajira upazila unit BCL General Secretary Hanif Mia filed three defamation suits with the chief judicial magistrate's court against The Daily Star editor.

5 of a family FROM PAGE 1

was undergoing treatment at Mymensingh Medical College Hospital. Police and the fire brigade from

said Sub-Inspector Muklesur Rahman who visited the spot. Police seized the truck but its driver

Mymensingh recovered the bodies,

The victims were heading for their home in Durgapur upazila of

Netrakona after treating a family memdays after another BCL leader in the ber at a hospital in Mymensingh town, district filed a defamation suit against police said quoting family members.