UP POLLS PHASE-3

No contestant against 25 AL candidates

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Twenty-five ruling Awami League chairman candidates are set to be elected unopposed in the third phase of union parishad polls scheduled to be held on April 23.

Neither any political partynominated nor any independent candidate is contesting the election to the UPs, which are mostly in Munshiganj, Comilla, Khagrachhari, Jamalpur, Jhenidah, Narayanganj, Shariatpur and Laxmipur.

Besides, the BNP has no candidates in 81 UPs to run for the eletions in the third phase, according to an Election Commission document released yesterday, a day after the deadline for withdrawal of nominations ended.

Around 620 UPs are going to the polls this time. Fourteen registered political par-

ties, out of 40, are participating in the third phase of elections and there are 2,672 chairman aspirants, according to the EC document.

Elections to 1,364 UPs were held in the first and second phases on March 22 and 31.

In the two phases of polls, the AL candidates secured a landslide victory by winning in 991 unions. Eighty-five of them were elected uncontested. On the other hand, the BNP-

nominated chairman candidates won in 109 UPs, while independent and other political parties' aspirants became successful in 233 union parishads, according to the EC and the media.

Polls to around 743 UPs are slated for May 7 in the fourth phase, and around 1,400 more UPs in two other phases until June, according to EC officials.

Decision final

FROM PAGE 20 organisations.

Asked what would happen to the legal commercial entities, Mosharraf said, "If the entity is commercial then it is illegal from today."

no longer run in the residential areas even if they had the approvals. He reiterated that the eviction drive would be against both the

He said business activities could

legal and illegal commercial entities in residential areas. The minister then made different

statements about educational institutions and hospitals in residential

Referring to schools, he said measures would be taken based on the opinions of the locals. "If the school is service oriented, we will have no objection. If they [the local people] say they have objection [to it], and the school is running commercially, action will be taken accordingly."

About hospitals and educational institutions, he said they could be termed "both service oriented and commercial entities."

"We will discuss it [the matter] with the local communities and know whether they fall into [the category of commercial or serviceoriented organisations. They will be removed if we find that they fall into the commercial category."

Asked how they would identify the entities as commercial or service-based ones, both the minister and the secretary said they would

"examine" the organisations. The minister also said, if necessary, laws would be amended and

changed if there is any problem in the implementation of the cabinet decision. The secretary said there are 5,093

holdings in the five residential areas in the capital -- Dhanmondi, Gulshan, Banani, Baridhara and Uttara -- and the drive would be limited only to these areas to

The minister said 5,488 entities have been running commercially in the capital's residential areas. Among them 568 are legal and 4,920 are illegal, he said, adding that they did not know the total

ensure that no one is harassed.

number of illegal commercial entities across the country.

electricity, gas, water and telephone

with VAT and TAX registrations with

2 wives, daughter

nearby her, also suffered acid burns.

Syed Shaheed Alam, officer-in-

charge of Rupnagar Police Station,

said in primary investigation, they

found Suruj's involvement in the

Police arrested him, the OC said.

Sources said Suruj has three wives.

attack over family feud.

connections would be cut and city

corporation trade licences along

the NBR would be cancelled.

FROM PAGE 2

He also said if the commercial entities failed to relocate to other places within six months from April 4, their utility services including

over the phone.

that truckloads of armed police, Rab and BGB would conduct drives in the village at night to arrest Liakat and villagers. A youngman from Gondamara

union left the village a day after the killing fearing police harassment. He is

now staying in the port city. He said most men of Charpara

on Monday, are living outside their homes fearing police harassment.

Regent Airways flies to Muscat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

from Dhaka and Chittagong.

two Bombardier Dash-8s.

Muscat will be the fifth interna-

tional destination of Regent after Kuala

Lumpur, Singapore, Bangkok and

Kolkata. It also flies to Chittagong and

Cox's Bazar from Dhaka with a fleet of

five aircraft; a newly procured Boeing

737-800, two Boeing 737-700s, and

Chittagong-Muscat flights at a

programme at Hazrat Shahjalal

International Airport yesterday, Civil

Aviation and Tourism Minister Rashed

Khan Menon hoped that the airlines

Civil Aviation Secretary Ghulam

Farooque suggested that the carrier

strictly maintains flight schedule and

provides all other services to the pas-

sengers. "I've seen that proper atten-

tion is not often given to the

[Bangladeshi] expatriates in the mid-

dle-east countries, even though they

contribute a lot to the foreign currency

flying the route on Wednesdays,

would fulfil the desires of passengers.

Inaugurating the Dhaka-

and 15 minutes stop over.

It will fly from Muscat at 12:45am Regent Airways will fly four times a for Chittagong and then fly to Dhaka. week to Muscat, the capital of Oman, The minimum one-way fare, inclu-

sive of all taxes, has been fixed at Tk 20,565 and Tk 39,478 for a return trip form Dhaka. The one-way Chittagong-Muscat fare is Tk 19,005 and return trip is Tk 39,244, said Regent officials.

Each passenger would be allowed 20kg of free checked-in luggage from Bangladesh and 45kg of free checkedin luggage from Oman.

Chairman of Regent Airways Yasin Ali demanded reduction of high fuel cost, landing charges and surcharge so that the aviation sector could flourish further.

He said they could buy the same amount of fuel from outside the country for half the price of that in Dhaka.

10th of the amount charged to foreign carriers, but in Bangladesh the landing charges were the same for local and international carriers. The minister and Chairman of Civil

Aviation Authority of Bangladesh Air-Vice Marshal Ehsanul Gani Choudhury assured the Regent chair-Regent's Boeing 737-800 will be man of considering the issues. Ambassador of Oman in

Fridays, Saturdays and Mondays. The Bangladesh Omar bin Mohamed bin aircraft would leave Dhaka for Ramdhan Al Balushi and Regent Chittagong at 7:15pm and then from Airways Managing Director Mashruf Chittagong for Muscat after an hour Habib also spoke on the occasion.

Govt rejects HRW report

FROM PAGE 20 poisoning recently.

earnings," he said.

"We are strongly protesting this

report," he said at a press conference at the local government and rural development ministry. Citing a 2012 study, the HRW in its

report said an estimated 43,000 peo-

ple had die each year from arsenicrelated illness in Bangladesh. The minister asked journalists whether they could cite examples of

people dying after drinking arsenic contaminated water. "I myself am an inhabitant of the worst disaster-prone area, Faridpur. In the last seven years, four people died in my neighbourhood, but none of them

died from arsenic [poisoning]," he said. Asked about arsenic-affected people, he said no one is affected by arsenic contamination now. "There are some old people who were affected by arsenic [poisoning] earlier. We are not getting new arsenic-affected people."

It is false that 40,000-45,000 people die from arsenic poisoning every year,

said the minister.

"Some NGO might do it. We are protesting it."

Citing different initiatives taken since the disease first emerged in late 1997, Mosharraf said, "We are providing people, mostly the old in rural areas, with treatment for arsenic contamination. But we do not find any evidence of new case of arsenic [poisoning]. So the claim of 40,000-45,000 people's death from arsenic [poisoning] is false. We can't accept it."

Referring to surveys conducted by the government in 1997 and 2000, the minister said after examining 51 lakh tube wells in 270 upazilas of all districts, it was found that 29 percent of tube wells are arsenic contaminated and there were some 38,000 arsenicaffected patients in the country.

Out of 1,56,000 water sources tested between 2006 and 2012 to find the levels of arsenic, 6,700 sources were found to have more than tolerable level of arsenic, he added.

Hurt, handcuffed

Khalek, a salt producer, said he was at a villagers.

bazaar in Gondamara during the incident.

"I was informed by a cousin that two of my uncles were hit by bullets. So I rushed to the spot," he added.

Khalek said when he reached the spot, police had opened fire again and hurled tear-gas canisters to disperse the locals. Amid the chaos, he too was hit by a bullet and lost consciousness.

"When I regained consciousness, I found myself in the hospital bed," he said, adding that he was arrested the following day.

"I do not know what my fault is and why police arrested me," he said.

Khalek's father Bodi Ahmed said, "I have lost my two brothers. My son was also wounded. Now they [the police] are saying we are the criminals."

Fearing arrest, Bodi and his relatives cannot go to the hospital to visit his son. Only the family's women are looking after the wounded.

Additional Superintendent of Police (special branch) Abdul Awal of Chittagong district police said six people admitted to the CMCH were shown arrested in the case filed by police. Asked whether innocent people

were being harassed, he said the police only arrested those involved in the clash. "No one is being deprived of proper treatment in the hospital."

While the fear of arrests hangs over the villagers, apprehension of attack from S Alam Group's hired goons is not to be dreaded less, villagers said. Abu Ahmed, a close aide to former

union parishad chairman and BNP leader Liakat Ali, who was leading the protest, said the people working for S Alam Group were threatening villagers He said they told villagers on the phone

village, home to the four people killed

Meanwhile, Chittagong district

(South) Awami League Leader Abdullah Kabir Liton yesterday visited Charpara and talked to the family

members of the four deceased and

There was a lack of co-ordination in the actions of the law enforcers and there was no need to impose section-144 (ban on gatherings) in the area when the villagers decided to hold the

protest rally, he said. There would not have been a problem had the villagers were allowed to

hold the rally, he said. Liton also claimed that people working at the S Alam Group's site were not informing their higher authorities properly about the steps they were taking.

"For example, a day before the incident, S Alam [Group] officials seized two auto-rickshaws being used for announcing the protest rally, and handed over the drivers to the police. The incident angered the locals," said Liton.

Chittagong-16 constituency (Banshkhali) lawmaker Mostafizur Rahman yesterday morning in a press conference at his Nasirabad home claimed that political instigation by BNP leader Liakat led to the shooting incident.

He said Liakat with a group of goons armed with sharp weapons and firearms attacked and opened fire on local administrative officials, police and the people.

The MP said he took an initiative to ensure Tk 10 lakh in compensation for the families of the deceased.

BELA STATEMENT In a press statement yesterday,

Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (Bela) demanded a fair probe into the Banshkhali incident. It also urged the government to

cancel any projects like the power plant that would be harmful for the locals, their lives and livelihoods. According to the law, it said, any

coal-based power plant requires environmental approval. It said prior to that a public hearing should be held. The statement signed by Syeda Rizwana Hasan, executive director of

Bela, noted that the protest by the locals proved that coal-based power plants lacked public support. In December 2013, S Alam Group

struck an agreement with SEPCO3 Electric Power Construction Corporation of China to set up the power plant in Banshkhali. The plant is being implemented on

a 600-acre site.

reduced if fuel price cut

Says transport minister UNB, Dhaka

The transport fare will be reduced by 1 paisa per kilometre if the government brings down fuel prices by Tk 1 a litre, says Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader. He announced this while talking

to reporters after a meeting with Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) employees of different circles at its headquarters yesterday. The BRTA transport fare committee

will finalise the rate of fare after the

gazette notification over fuel price

cut, the minister said. Quader said the BRTA again extended the deadline for the registration of digital number plates of all He also claimed that landing charge vehicles until June 30. It was of any country's local airlines was one

extended twice earlier. The government in the new transport law will set limits of private cars

for a family. The minister said the BRTA mobile court drive will be strengthened to stop plying unfit vehicles and charging extra from passengers.

According to him, the BRTA mobile court, meanwhile, filed 7,750 cases against vehicles for violating rules, sentenced 301 people to different terms of imprisonment, fined Tk 83.54 lakh and dumped 712 vehicles.

ACC launches probe over Panama leak

To check whether any Bangladeshi on list STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday formed a committee to find whether there is any Bangladeshi citizen with offshore accounts mentioned in the leaked Panama Papers.

ACC Deputy Director SM Akhtar Hamid Bhuiyan leads the threemember committee.

If the committee finds names of Bangladeshi citizens in the leaked Panama Papers, it would gather detailed information about their accounts and money kept there, said Pranab Kumar Bhattacharjee, public relations officer of the ACC.

It will also work to find what legal steps are needed to be taken in the light of the findings, Bhattacharjee added. A leak of confidential documents

has revealed how the rich and powerful use tax havens to hide their wealth. Eleven million documents were

leaked from one of the world's most secretive companies, Panamanian law firm Mossack Fonseca.

They show how Mossack Fonseca had helped clients launder money, dodge sanctions and evade tax.

Sir Abed

FROM PAGE 2

of coverage, in the 1970s pioneered a new approach to treating diarrheal disease in Bangladesh known as Oral Rehydration Therapy. The NGO reached 12 million mothers almost entirely through person-to-person education, revolutionising health delivery in the country, said the statement.

The organisation breaks the cycle of contamination caused by limited access to toilets, latrines and safe water sources, especially in rural areas.

By focusing on innovation, technical assistance, and community-based education, Brac water and sanitation for health committees have reached 38 million people, largely in rural areas of the country, according to the statement. Sir Abed has been honoured with

numerous national and international awards for his achievements in fighting poverty. The awards include the World Food Prize, the Trust Women Hero Award, the Spanish Order of Civil Merit, the Leo Tolstoy International Gold Medal, the WISE Prize for Education, the Entrepreneur for the World Award, and the Clinton Global Citizen Award.

Cabinet body FROM PAGE 5

be brought under control in the next phases.

of four people in a clash between law enforcers and locals in Chittagong's Banshkhali upazila, Amu said investigation is underway and everything will be unearthed. He also added that CID has been

Replying to a query about killing

asked to probe into the recent killing of some children across the country. Amu informed that law enforcers

recovered Yaba tablets and brought 200 drug peddlers under trial in the first three months of the current year and law enforcers rescued 206 males, 35 females and 24 children from human traffickers and filed 29 cases against the traffickers during the same period.

Bus fare to be Rights boss doubts first

FROM PAGE 1

body of Tonu, a second-year history student of Comilla Victoria Govt College, and failed to ascertain the cause of her death. The report was made public on Monday two weeks after she was found dead in Comilla Cantonment area, raising questions about the credibility of the autopsy. Kamoda Prosad Saha, head of the

forensic medicine department at Comilla Medical College where the first autopsy was done, however, said such results might come in 2 to 5 percent autopsies. Now a three-member board led by

Saha will submit the report of the second autopsy done on March 30.

to the home ministry with some recommendations to make sure that the investigation into the murder did not get derailed. The ministry is yet to reply to the letter. In the letter, the rights body said the

second autopsy should give answers to the questions aroused following the recovery of Tonu's body for the sake of justice. Whoever tried to influence the first

post-mortem report must be brought to justice, it added. Prof Mizanur yesterday said the NHRC has some limitations by law but

would do its best to ensure justice for Tonu. He urged all involved in the investigation to perform their duties with care

and honesty. "Being a doctor if I do not mention facts in the autopsy report, it is not only that I am doing injustice to a justice seeker, I am also tarnishing the

Mizanur expressed similar views regarding the role of the law enforcement agencies in the investigation.

image of the noble profession."

It is not a matter that the crime was committed inside the cantonment. A crime may take place anywhere in the country but It will be praiseworthy if justice is ensured through a proper

investigation, he said.

arrested by the time.

The Criminal Investigation Department took over the charge of the case from the Detective Branch of police on March 29. Earlier, Kotwali

police probed the murder. Meanwhile, protests across the country have raged as the investigators are taking more time to identify the

killers, let alone arrest them. Students yesterday threatened to enforce a half-day countrywide hartal on April 25 if the killers are not

Two major left-leaning alliances --Progressive Students' Alliance and Anti-Imperialist Students' Union -threatened to wage a movement to

home ministry around 12:15pm.

Doyel Chattar and High Court road in the capital.

Meanwhile, the CID interrogated two army men over the killing of Tonu.

The army personnel had been on duty near the site of the crime on the fateful night. A CID team, headed by Abdul Kahar Akand, Dhaka senior police super, took them to Comilla CID

Hossain found her lying senseless with severe injuries in a bush near the house. She was whisked off to Combined Military Hospital where doctors declared her dead.

Listing various successes and achievements of her government, the PM said

vegetable by five times during the last decade. Besides, fish production has gone up almost five times during the last three decades, Hasina mentioned.

Bangladesh Agriculture Minister Matia

The agriculture and foreign ministries of Bangladesh jointly organised

BETTER FOOD SECURITY PLEDGED The agriculture ministers of the Saarc nations have agreed to strengthen cooperation among the South Asian countries to boost agricultural production and

"The commitment for enhancing cooperation will help us ensure better food security, nutrition and end hunger in the region," Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury told a press conference after the meeting of Saarc agricul-

The third meeting of the agriculture ministers was held at the city's Hotel Sonargaon yesterday, eight years after

Earlier, official level meetings were held from April 4 to 6.

Yesterday's meeting adopted a 12point "Dhaka Statement on Agriculture and Rural Development" for exchange of technical expertise in agriculture and livestock, disease control, removing trade barriers and activating Saarc Food Bank and Saarc Seed Bank.

"Bangladesh had always been in a position of food shortage, but now we are self-sufficient. We are showcasing innovative agriculture practices like floating vegetable gardens to others,'

Saarc Agriculture Centre will work on how to create market for the agri-

South Asia, said the minister, who has been elected chair of the Saarc Agriculture Ministers Committee for the next two years. Agriculture Secretary Moinuddin Abdullah said the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Economic and Social Commission for

culture products within and beyond

to provide financial and technical assistance in activating Saarc Food Bank. The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) in 1987 had agreed to establish a food bank for meeting emergency needs of any of the

Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) have agreed

regional countries. "Now that the FAO and ESCAP are going to help us, its effectiveness will

be visible soon," the secretary said.

Pakistan wants to upgrade its fighter jets

REUTERS, Paris Pakistan wants to upgrade its aging fleet of fighter jets in anticipation of a prolonged battle against Islamist militants, although the purchase of fifthgeneration planes would only be a last

resort, a senior air force official said. US ally Pakistan, a nuclear-armed nation of 180 million people, is fighting a Taliban insurgency in its northwest, a separatist insurgency along its Iranian border in the west, and has a heavily militarised and disputed bor-

der with arch rival India in the east. In 2014, the military launched a crackdown in the northwestern areas of North and South Waziristan and has managed

to push back militants into a few pockets. But its air force, which will need to retire dozens of jets over the coming years, lacks the latest technology and relies heavily on a fleet of about 70 USmade Lockheed Martin F-16s.

records of the Folio and it was not

included in Sidney Lee's 1906 census

two dates that Mount Stuart acquired

the Folio because it is mentioned in a

because it was bound in three volumes

with many blank pages which would

have been used for illustrations.

Professor Smith said: "When we think

of Shakespeare we usually think of his

"But the written word and the First

catalogue of the Bute library in 1896.

It was at some point between these

The Mount Stuart edition is unusual

of First Folios.

Shakespeare's First

The book, which has languished in the library of Mount Stuart House on the Isle of Bute for more than 100 years, was confirmed as genuine by Emma Smith, Professor of Shakespeare Studies at Oxford University.

Shakespeare's plays and without it there would be no copies of more than half of them, including Macbeth or The Tempest. The confirmation brings the total

belonged to Isaac Reed, a well-

texts of his work."

Folio is central to our understanding of Shakespeare. I hope this anniversary year encourages people to reread the The discovery will form the focal

plays being performed on stage.

point for a new education programme and will go on display from April 7 at Mount Stuart House as part of an exhirecords indicate it was sold after Reed's bition that will run until October 30.

On April 3, the NHRC wrote a letter oust the government if it remains indifferent to the issue. Ashraful Alam Sohel, coordinator of the first alliance, spoke of announcing such movement after police foiled demonstrators' attempt to besiege the

Prior to that, students marched in procession through the Dhaka University campus and broke through three layers of barricades between

office yesterday and quizzed them. Tonu, 19, a member of Victoria

house at Comilla Mainamati Cantonment for giving private tuition. Later that night, her father Yaar

Hasina pushes FROM PAGE 20 said Matia Chowdhury.

after achieving remarkable success in Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the government adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) last year. Rice and wheat productions have increased by three times while that of

Radha Mohan Singh, minister for agriculture and farmers welfare of India, and Arjun Bahadur Thapa, secretary general of Saarc, among others, addressed the programme, with

Chowdhury in the chair. the event.

trade within the region and beyond.

ture ministers.

the last ministerial meeting in India.

FROM PAGE 20 After this sale there are no public

Published in 1623, the First Folio brought together the majority of

known number of copies to 234 ahead of the 400th anniversary of the playwright's death on April 23. Mount Stuart House's copy

connected literary editor working in London in the 18th Century, Professor Smith confirmed. A letter from Reed shows that he acquired the Folio in 1786 and further

death in 1807 to a "JW" for £38.

College Theatre, went missing on March 20, hours after she left her