

BNP leader dies in police custody

A CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Acting convenor of BNP Siddhiganj thana unit Ali Hossain Prodhan, who had been in prison in a subversive case, died early yesterday. He was 65.

Around 3:00am Ali complained about chest pain and he was admitted to Narayanganj Sadar Hospital within half an hour. At 5:00am, doctors declared him dead and as per the death certificate he died of heart attack, said Jailer of Narayanganj District Jail Asaduzzaman.

His family claimed that Ali died due to the jail authorities' negligence.

But, the jailer said Ali had been suffering from diabetes and heart disease. Once before on December 13 he was taken to the hospital as he fell sick but he was brought back with a doctor's prescription. Since then he had been under regular medication at the jail. "We offered him to be sent to Dhaka for better treatment but he refused," he added.

Ali was arrested at Jalkuri Majhpara in Siddhiganj on November 3.

Over 6kg of gold seized at Shahjalal Airport

UNB, Dhaka

Customs intelligence officials seized 57 gold bars weighing 6.650kgs from a flight at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in the capital yesterday.

Assistant Revenue Officer of the airport customs Enamul Haque said the flight, RX74, of Regent Airways from Muscat landed at the airport around 9:15am.

Acting on a tip-off, customs officials launched a drive in the flight and recovered the 57 gold bars, worth Tk 3.32 crore, which were hidden under a seat, he added.

However, none was arrested.



A boat snakes its way on its cumbersome route taking way more than the travel time of the monsoons through the once mighty Jamuna river, now full of large tracts of sand exposed by the receding waters, a phenomenon apparently triggered by the dry winter season. Inset, these people have walked around seven to eight kilometres, as do other people who reside in chars to reach the nearest boat or locality, as conventional wheels of transports are unable to roll over the fine sand particles. The photos were taken in Gohaili union of Sariakandi upazila in Bogra recently.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

N'ganj defeat moves BNP into soul-searching

Fakhruл claims that its partial victory of party's movement for fair polls

RASHIDUL HASAN

party's movement for ensuring fair

A day after the massive defeat of its mayoral candidate in the Narayanganj City Corporation (NCC) election, BNP yesterday started soul-searching to find causes behind the frustrating results and other factors.

Apart from the party leaders, BNP also assigned experts and professionals to do the analysis, according to party sources.

Shakhawat Hossain Khan, who was outplayed by Awami League's Selina Hayat Ivy by about 80,000 votes, is also working to send an assessment report about his defeat to the party chairperson, Khaleda Zia, a close aide of the BNP candidate said.

Meanwhile, breaking his silence over the party's defeat, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhruл Islam Alamgir yesterday said they took the NCC election as a partial victory of the

election, and it was wrong to predict the national election results based on this.

National issues did not reflect prominently in the local body election.

Another BNP senior leader, Moudud Ahmed, said the Awami League should hold the national election under a non-party government right now if they thought that people really voted for them in the Narayanganj polls.

"Those who will win will rule the country. This is certainly the greatest opportunity for the government," he told a discussion of pro-BNP organisation Nagorik Forum, at the capital's Jatiya Press Club.

He also alleged that there was no level playing field for all major contestants of NCC.

Moudud said the BNP candidate

faced many problems in the election,

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NCC polls EC's fairest

Says Election Working Group about its observations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Narayanganj City Corporation (NCC) elections was the fairest amongst all held under the incumbent Election Commission, headed by Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad, said Election Working Group (EWG) yesterday.

"The EWG did not observe any incident of violence or vote rigging and found voter participation substantial amid multiple layers of tight security," it said.

The EWG, a platform of 27 civil society organisations working for promoting fair elections and good governance, revealed its findings at a press conference at the capital's Cirdap auditorium yesterday.

"In general, polling officials were neutral, voting took place in an efficient and professional manner, and voters were able to cast their votes in an orderly manner," said EWG Director Abdul Alim while reading out a written statement.

In the NCC elections, the EWG observed voting in 31 out of 174 polling stations. Its observation covered preparation and opening of polling stations, voting operation and

procedures, closing and counting, and overall environment inside polling stations.

The EWG found that all polling stations were equipped with necessary equipment and opened on time, and ballot boxes opened in front of polling agents and observers to demonstrate that the boxes were empty, said the statement.

Voting took place peacefully from polls opening to closing. No incident of ousting of polling agent was recorded and no complaint on electoral irregularities was made by candidates and their polling agents.

The EWG observers found no violence in polling stations. There was no intimidation of voters, ballot stuffing, attacks by miscreants and vote rigging.

Vote counting started immediately after the voting ended. The EWG found no unauthorised person present in the counting room.

Speaking at the function, EWG member Prof Nazmul Ahsan Kalimullah said ruling Awami League lawmaker Shamim Osman violated the electoral law by voting publicly instead of inside a polling booth. It is a

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Distorted history reason behind rise of militancy

Bangladesh Itihas Sammilani confce told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Teaching youths distorted history of the independence of Bangladesh is one of the major reasons for the rise and spread of militancy across the country, speakers told a conference yesterday.

The result of teaching such history was seen after the Gulshan cafe attack where five youths brutally killed 20 hostages, said Cultural Affairs Minister Asaduzzaman Noor.

"At the same time, a youth like Faraaz Ayaaz Hossain sacrificed his life to save his friends. It is our power, and it is the non-sectarian Bangladesh," he said speaking as the guest of honour at a triennial conference of Bangladesh Itihas Sammilani held at Dhaka University's Teacher-Student Centre (TSC). "Therefore, our historians have to take the responsibility of correcting the country's history so that the new generations can know the truth," he added.

Bangladesh Itihas Sammilani (BIS), a platform of academics, organised the programme to motivate other academics into helping to write the true history of the Liberation War.

Addressing the distortion of history as "traitorous" work, historian Prof Dr Muntasir Mamun, also the president of BIS, urged all historians and academicians to cooperate with BIS to stop the distortion. Prof Mesbah Kamal, general secretary of BIS, and artist Hashem Khan also spoke.

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UN adopts Bangladesh's resolution on 'Culture of Peace'

Bss, Dhaka

The United Nations (UN) General Assembly has unanimously adopted a resolution titled "Culture of Peace" proposed by Bangladesh at a meeting of the UN General Assembly yesterday, according to a release of the Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the UN.

"The objectives of the resolution are to promote peace and get rid of the hatred and intolerance," said Ambassador Masud Bin Momem, permanent representative of Bangladesh to the UN.

This year 100 countries, including some European states, were the co-sponsors of the resolution while representatives of 20 countries spoke on it. The resolution was introduced in the assembly in 1999, followed by observation of the "Decade for Culture of Peace" across the world.

Bangladesh's Permanent Mission in the UN has been placing the resolution every year since 2001, and it is also being adopted unanimously each year.