

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The prosecution has pressed five specific charges in a case filed against three Moulvibazar men for allegedly committing crimes during the Liberation War in 1971.

The charges include abduction, torture, looting, arson, rape, killing and acts of genocide committed under Barolekha Police Station in the district, the prosecution said.

After receiving the documents yesterday, the International Crimes Tribunal-1 fixed March 5 to decide whether it will take the charges into cognisance, and ordered the superintendent of police in Moulvibazar to submit a report on that day about a fugitive accused in the case.

Among the accused, Abdul Aziz alias Habul, 64, and Abdul Mannan alias Monai, 64, were arrested on March 2 last year and are now in jail, while Abdul Matin, 63, brother of Habul, is on the run. All the accused are from Barolekha upazila of the district.

Tribunal's investigation agency on November 14 last year completed investigation against the three and handed over the probe report to the Chief Prosecutor Office saying that they had found evidence over the involvement of the three in war-time offences.

Prosecutors Mukhlesur Rahman Badal and Sabina Yesmin Khan Munni on Thursday submitted the formal charges, statements of the witnesses and other documents to the tribunal through its registrar office.

According to the investigators, Aziz and Matin took training in India to take part in the Liberation War but surrendered to the Pakistani occupation army in Barolekha on their return and joined the Razakar Bahini.

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina along with dignitaries at the inaugural session of the E-9 Ministerial Meeting on Education 2030 at a hotel in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: BSS

Bangladesh can achieve equitable quality education by 2030

Says Hasina at inaugural session of E-9 ministerial meeting

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said Bangladesh can achieve inclusive and equitable quality education by 2030 braving all the challenges.

"Education is one of the areas receiving my government's highest budgetary allocation," she said while addressing the inaugural session of the E-9 Ministerial Meeting on Education 2030 at a hotel in the capital.

The premier also mentioned that the challenges of terrorism, violent extremism and armed conflicts affecting human rights and peace and stability of the world can be addressed with innovation, understanding, right attitude and farsighted policies. "We're reforming our curricula and learning materials keeping peace building in view."

To improve the quality, she said, a special emphasis must be given on teachers' education and training programmes.

She further said, "Learning environment in educational institutes, a component for sustainable development,

should be ensured by improving sanitation, water, hygiene and infrastructure..."

"I hope this meeting will start the process of sharing our best practices, devising action plan and programmes, finding new modes of partnership as well as welcoming regional and international dialogues on education."

"...our journey towards quality with quantity in attaining SDG-4 will start from this meeting and 'Dhaka declaration' would come to be a source of our inspiration," she added.

Noting that inclusive education by 2030 might prove challenging to achieve, Hasina said, "But, we've to overcome that by sharing our respective initiatives, practices and plan of action for future. Concerted efforts would give us the most effective results. E-9 has to work in close cooperation for that."

Hasina said the era of SDGs makes it very timely and meaningful now to hold this E-9 ministerial meeting, and integrate SDG-4 on education with E-9 initiatives and strategies taking along the lessons and achievements of

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and education for all (EFA).

Created in 1993, the E-9 initiative is still working on the common educational goals of nine countries (Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria and Pakistan) representing more than half the world's population.

She hoped the educationists and policy makers present at the meeting will revitalise the past efforts, and deliberate adjustments and new orientations for the nine countries sharing their aspirations, commitments, and priorities based on SDG-4 Education 2030.

Primary and Mass Education Minister Mustafizur Rahman Fizar delivered the welcome address.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid, Director General of Unesco Irina Bokova and Minister of State for Federal Education and Professional Training of Pakistan Muhammad Baligh-ur-Rehman spoke on the occasion.

Baligh formally handed over the chairmanship of E-9 to Nahid.

RU evades tax, fees in land purchase

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

The Rajshahi University authorities have allegedly violated rules and resorted to corrupt practices to evade Tk 82.5 lakh in taxes and fees in a Tk 14 crore procurement of a land with a high-rise for the institution's guesthouse in Dhaka.

A committee headed by the pro-vice chancellor bought the land avoiding inviting fresh bids after canceling the tender twice before and showing a low price in the deed, according to documents and officials.

The committee, rather, negotiated with Khalid Mahmud, managing director of El Dorado Development Ltd, the highest bidder of the cancelled tender, for buying 3.5 Kathas of land with a seven-storey building in Hatirpool area in Dhaka city at Tk 13.25 crore.

A procurement expert said the authority violated the Public Procurement Rules of 2008 by avoiding the tender process.

"They have no authority to engage in negotiation with a bidder after cancelling his bid. They could have negotiated for asking him to participate in the next tender at the desired price," he said, seeking anonymity.

After canceling the first tender, the authority invited bids for a second time on June 22. Out of two bidding developer companies, they selected the highest bidder, El Dorado Development Ltd, which offered Tk 13.65 crore. Other bidder, Metro Homes Ltd, offered Tk 11.95 crore.

However, the authority cancelled the bid of El Dorado after a legal adviser, Rafiqul Hasan, opined that the authority must buy the land showing the actual price.

As per the negotiation, the treasurer and the registrar hid the land's actual price and got it registered at Dhanmondi sub-registrar's office at Tk 3.5 crore on October 20.

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All polls were fair

Claims CEC UNB, Dhaka

Outgoing Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad yesterday said they are clear to their conscience that all the elections held during their tenure were free, fair and neutral.

"When we assumed office we took an oath that we would hold all the elections neutrally, and we've been able to live up to our promise by holding all the elections in a free, fair and neutral manner...we're clear to our conscience," he said.

The CEC said this when he and other outgoing election commissioners met Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her Jatiya Sangsad office.

PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim briefed reporters after the meeting.

The CEC thanked the prime minister for not interfering in the Election Commission and not violating the election code of conduct during any election held during the outgoing commission's tenure.

Rakibuddin mentioned that the BNP won five city corporation elections and thanked the Election Commission for holding those polls neutrally.

About the last general election, he said 12 political parties joined the polls and the Election Commission completed the elections with firm steps.

"Despite severe violence unleashed by the political parties which boycotted the polls, we completed the January-5 polls with firm steps to uphold the constitution," he said referring to the killing of policemen, election officers and torching of 582 polling centres by the parties that boycotted the elections.

On local government body polls, the CEC said those elections were held in a free, fair and impartial manner except some stray incidents.

The prime minister thanked the Election Commission for working courageously to hold the elections in a free, fair and neutral manner.

Humayun still shines brighter

MAHDI AL MUHTASIM

He always knew how to tell a story.

Let it be fiction or non-fiction, his unorthodox approach in introducing a character, starting or finishing a narrative, always cast a spell on readers' imaginations and beckoned them to partake on a literary journey.

For over two decades, Humayun Ahmed's works have been enchanting readers of all ages.

Every year, a new generation of readers gets introduced to his works, while his fans fall in love with the eternal characters like "Misir Ali", "Himu" and "Shuvra" all over again.

This Ekushey book fair was no different as flocks of young bookworms were seen thronging the stalls looking for his books or books written on the life of the versatile writer.

Even after four and a half years of passing, Humayun Ahmed still has a powerful presence at the book fair.

Saif, Rezwan and Ehsanul rushed to the fair in the afternoon after completing their classes. The students of Notre Dame College were searching for "Krishnapakha" and

"Misir Ali Somogro".

Tahsin Binta Anis, a master's student of economics, was buying a new book "Humayun Ahmeder Humour" by Humayun's younger brother cartoonist Ahsan Habib.

The book, published by Abosor Prokashoni, contains various jokes written by Humayun.

"I still buy his books to get away from all the troubles of life and to laugh and enjoy reading," said the



Dhaka University student.

Abosor also published various collections of Humayun Ahmed's novels like "Sera Sat (seven best) Misir Ali", "Sera Sat Premer Upanyas", "Sera Sat Kishor Upanyas", "Sera Sat Himu", and "Sera Sat Science Fictions".

Mohsen Hasan, a staff of Ananya Prokashani, was showing "Nirbachito Bhut" (Selected Ghosts) by Humayun Ahmed to a young

booklover. "The book is selling well among the young readers," he said.

Golam Robbani, a businessman from Thakurgaon, bought a book titled "Adh Dozon Vai Bon" (half dozen siblings). "The book is written by Humayun Ahmed's younger sister Momtaz Shahid. I bought it as I wanted to know more about my favourite writer's personal life," he said.

On the fifth day of the fair, 27 new books arrived and seven were launched.

Among the new arrivals, "Bhuter Nam Ramakanta" by Imdadul Haq Milon from Ananya; "Abaro Tuntuni o Abaro Chotochachu", by Muhammad Zafar Iqbal from Pearl and "Hashir Golposamagra" by Anisul Hoque from Annesha Prokashon, are notable.

A discussion was held at the Bangla Academy marking 100th birth anniversary of poet Ahsan Habib. Poet Tushar Das presented the keynote while Prof Julfikar Matin presided over the programme.

"A century has passed but literary works of Ahsan Habib still remains relevant," said Tushar.



A pedestrian sidesteps a motorbike rider who tries to get on a footpath to avoid traffic in the capital's Farmgate area yesterday. The footpath is also being occupied by vehicles parked there, a trend on the rise, causing immense discomfort to commuters.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



Law enforcers seize bundles of cloth, resembling those used for making uniforms for law enforcers, at Terri Bazar in Chittagong city yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Jubo Dal leader shot dead in Khulna

UNB, Khulna

A local leader of Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal was shot to death by miscreants at Amirpur in Batiaghata upazila yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Nazrul Islam, general secretary of Amirpur union unit of Jubo Dal and son of M Hashim.

Sources at Batiaghata Police Station said miscreants opened fire on Nazrul when he was standing in front of his fish enclosure at Amirpur around 7:30 pm, leaving him injured.

Nazrul was sent to Khulna Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead.

Nazrul was at loggerheads with a local group over the fish enclosure, said general secretary of Khulna district unit of BNP Advocate Shafiqul Alam Mona, adding that Nazrul's rival might have killed him.

RUET '33 CREDIT SYSTEM' CANCELLED

Now teachers go on strike for action against agitators

A CORRESPONDENT, RU

Though Rajshahi University of Engineering and Technology (RuEt) authorities yesterday cancelled the "33 Credit System" in the face of student protest, teachers of the university declared an indefinite strike demanding punishment for the students who confined them for around 20 hours starting from Saturday evening.

Teachers will not take any class and examination from today. The decision came following an emergency meeting of RuEt Teachers' Association yesterday.

On Saturday, students staged a demonstration in front of the VC office confining VC Rafiqul Alam Beg, 15 teachers and deans of different faculties inside the office from 6:00pm Saturday to 1:00pm Sunday.

Meanwhile, the decision to scrap the system was taken at an academic council meeting held at the vice-chancellor's office, said Prof Iqbal Matin, a member of the council.

Mentionable, a section of students of 2014-15 and 2015-16 sessions had been demonstrating since January 28 demanding cancellation of the "33 Credit System."

A series of protest programmes -- including class and examination boycott, sit-ins and besieging the VC office and confining teachers -- were held since the students called

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Gaibandha-1 by-polls on March 22

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The by-election to Gaibandha-1 constituency that fell vacant following the murder of ruling Awami League lawmaker Manzurul Islam Liton in December last will be held on March 22.

The last date for filing and withdrawal of nominations are February 19 and March 1 respectively, while nomination papers would be scrutinised on February 22, the Election Commission (EC) announced the schedule yesterday.

Liton was killed after unknown assailants opened fire on him inside his home at Sundarganj upazila in the district on December 31 last year.

Regional Election Officer (REO) of Rangpur zone will act as the Returning Officer (RO) for the by-polls to the parliamentary constituency that has 3,02,853 voters.