



Mahbubul Alam Hanif, joint general secretary of Awami League, speaks at the discussion at Jatiya Press Club in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## Form separate ministry for religious minorities

Hindu Buddhist Christian Oikya Parishad urges govt on its 30th anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Minority community leaders yesterday demanded that the government form a separate ministry for religious minorities in the country before the next parliamentary polls to ensure their rights.

They also demanded a national commission and a separate act for the minorities, and urged all political parties not to nominate candidates who work against minorities in the upcoming election, slated for later this year.

The demands were made at a discussion organised by Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Oikya Parishad, a platform for religious minorities, at Jatiya Press Club in Dhaka. The programme was organised on the occasion of Oikya Parishad's 30th anniversary.

General Secretary of the platform, Advocate Rana Dasgupta, said the government should ensure security of the

minorities to protect them from pre and post polls violence.

"If any political party nominates any candidate who works against the interest of the minorities, we will not vote for them. We will even boycott election at those constituencies," he said.

The parties should give nomination based on ratio of religious communities so that minority groups are better represented at the parliament, said Rana Dasgupta, while reading a written statement.

He also demanded the election commission put a ban on using religious institutions, like mosques, temples and churches, in election activities.

Speaking at the discussion, Awami League's Joint General Secretary Mahbubul Alam Hanif said the minorities are still target of the anti-liberation war forces.

"All problems cannot be solved overnight.

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Family accuses four of killing B'baria guard

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

The family has filed a written complaint against four people as a guard died allegedly after being pushed off from a police station roof in Brahmanbaria on Monday.

In the complaint filed with Sadar Model Police Station, Amena Begum accused Asif Iqbal Khan, owner of "Swapnoloke" fashion house, and three others -- Sumon Saha, Rajesh and Saiduzzaman Arif.

Sumon and Rajesh work for Swapnoloke and Saiduzzaman Arif is president of City Center Shopping Complex committee, said Officer-in-Charge Nabir Hossain.

She brought an allegation of killing her son Rasel Mia, a guard of Shahjalal Islami Bank ATM booth at City Centre Shopping Complex in the town.

Nabir Hossain, officer-in-charge of the police station, said a burglary took place at the fashion house at City Centre Shopping Complex on Sunday night.

Following a complaint filed by the owner of theft of Tk 2 lakh, they detained Rasel and some salesmen for interrogation.

The detainees were taken to the second floor of the police station from where Rasel dodged a police constable and reached the rooftop. He later jumped from there, the OC claimed.

Rasel succumbed to his injuries at Dhaka Medical College Hospital on Wednesday.

Rahman bari a Superintendent of Police Anwar Hossain Khan had said a three-member committee was formed to investigate the matter and necessary actions would be taken in this regard soon.

## Elderly man beaten dead over Tk 2,500 his son borrowed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

An elderly man was allegedly beaten to death by the neighbours over realisation of his son's overdue loans at Baulia village of Sujanagar upazila in Pabna.

The deceased is Ohab Mondol, 60, of the village.

Faridul Islam, Ohab's son, took Tk 2,500 from one Rafikul Islam of the same village a few weeks back, said Humayun Kabir, officer-in-charge of Aminpur Police Station, quoting family members.

On Thursday night, Rafikul along with his family members came to Ohab Mondol's house at night, said OC Humayun.

Rafikul demanded the money as Faridul did not return it on time, he said. Soon, they had an argument with Ohab over the issue, he added.

At one stage of the argument, Rafikul and his family members started beating Ohab Mondol, he added.

Soon, they left the scene, leaving him critically injured, added the OC, quoting family members.

Ohab was taken to Sujanagar Upazila Health Complex the same night. He succumbed to his injuries early yesterday, said doctors at the Sujanagar Upazila Health Complex.

Ohab's family filed a murder case with Aminpur Police Station, said OC Humayun Kabir.

Police arrested Rafikul, his father Nurul Haque and mother Rokeya Begum yesterday, the OC said. "We are looking into the matter," he added.

## Voters want development

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corruption, Sushanta said. Md Roman, 23, son of Md Abul Hossain, who runs a confectionery shop in Gozaripara Khalil Market area, said he wants to vote for the mayoral candidate who has good connections with the high-ups, so that he would be able to manage more funds for development of Gazipur city.

Among the seven mayoral aspirants of Gazipur City Corporation polls,

scheduled for June 26, the main battle is likely to be between ruling Awami League's Jahangir Alam and BNP's Hasan Uddin Sarker.

Both the candidates have road development as their principal electoral manifesto.

The AL and BNP mayoral candidates in Gazipur have already started their election campaigning.

Now, the voters are contemplating who seems more reliable in terms of keeping promises.

An estimated 11.37 lakh voters are likely to cast their votes to choose the mayor.

## The hellish road in Jurain

FROM PAGE 5

potholes several times as a makeshift solution to improve the condition, but after a few days the road returns to the same sorry state, they said.

Kazi Mohammad Borhan Uddin, executive engineer of DSCC (zone 5), said they are aware of the road's condition and it will be repaired before Eid-ul-Fitr.

Recently, police placed a road barrier in front of the largest potholes -- submerged for weeks under stagnant water -- on a section of the road so vehicles could avoid accidents.

But now the barrier is causing a bottleneck on the road, resulting in long tailbacks.

"The condition of this road so terrible that

it's a nightmare to drive on it. On May 19, all human haulier drivers on this route chipped in to pay for dumping some rubble on the road to make it passable," said Noor Islam, a human haulier driver on Jurain-Dayaganj route.

"But the condition didn't improve much as it was a temporary solution," he added.

"The road could be safer only if the authorities paid a little attention, but they want the condition of the road to get worse. That way, they can pocket a handsome amount of money," Noor said.

Police Sub-Inspector Nurul Islam said they also dumped brick chips on a section of the damaged road, even though it is not their duty.

## Follow Nazrul's

FROM PAGE 5

affairs ministry and Mymensingh district administration, and included a colourful procession, discussion and cultural function.

Describing Nazrul as the poet of national revolution and pioneer of Bangla literature and music, the president said the poet helped reawaken Bangalees by raising voice for independence and speaking out against fanaticism and communalism in his works.

"Nazrul is not only the national poet of Bangladesh, but also the poet of revolution and equality. His works were a protest against exploitation, deprivation, tyranny, superstition..." Hamid said.

"He even dared to stand against oppression and discrimination against Bangla and Bangalees during the British era defying all fears and threats."

The president said the poet's works inspired "us during the Language Movement and the freedom-loving people of Bangladesh in their struggle for independence from the oppressive rule of Pakistan. That's why he is very much involved in our national revolution and independence struggle."

Paying rich tributes to the poet, he said Nazrul was born at Churulia village in West Bengal but he had spent the most important time of his life at Darirampur village of Trishal since 1914.

Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu and Deputy Commissioner of Mymensingh Dr Suvash Chandra Biswas, among others, spoke at the programme.

## A case of mistaken identity

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According to police, he was accused in seven narcotics cases filed with Kotwali Police Station. Apart from that, his wife Morjina Akter is also an accused in two narcotics cases, they added.

Recently, Habib was sent to jail in one of the cases filed against him. He got out on May 14, said family members.

'PICKED UP BY PLAINCLOTHES MEN'

Abdul Ali Rabbi, eldest son of Habib, claimed that his father was picked up by plainclothes men on the day from in front of a local mosque.

"Father and I went to a mosque near our house to offer zuhr prayers on Thursday [May 17]," said the 24-year-old.

"Father was waiting for me outside. Suddenly, three plainclothes men picked him up on a CNG-run auto-rickshaw around 2:00pm," he said. They said they were from "the administration", he added.

Rabbi also claimed that the family went to Kotwali Police Station and the office of Department of Narcotic Control (DNC) to ask about his father's whereabouts. But they said they did not know about any such

incident, he alleged.

One Abdul Salam Sumon and a few others hatched a conspiracy against his father as they failed to grab his grandmother's land, he alleged.

Rabbi said they came to know about the "gunfight" incident after seeing the news on television late at night. They identified the body at Chittagong Medical College morgue.

"My father was innocent," said Rabbi. Some plainclothes men there also asked for details about his father, he added.

'MISTAKEN IDENTITY'

At the morgue, Mosharraf's (the other deceased) wife Nazma was also present, said Habib's daughter Iva.

She claimed that Nazma told them that her husband was a Rab informant. "Law enforcers picked up my father based on Mosharraf's information," she alleged.

Mosharraf mistakenly identified Habib as someone else, she alleged. "And to cover it up, they also killed Mosharraf," claimed Iva.

This correspondent could not get in touch with Nazma as her phone was turned

off. Also, while visiting the area Thursday noon, no one there was willing to speak about the issue.

Meanwhile, Habib's sister-in-law Laila said she knew Nazma as they used to work together back in 2003. She alleged that she and her sister (Habib's wife) were falsely implicated in a narcotics case in 2014.

Both were sentenced to jail for 40 days for possessing yaba pills.

Laila claimed that after coming out of jail, Abdul Salam Sumon and his men came to their house and harassed them. "We filed seven cases against Sumon and his men," she added.

When asked about the source of Habib's income, Laila said, "Habib's expatriate sister used to provide him with financial support."

Habib's wife Morjina was also present when this correspondent was speaking to the family members. She did not want to speak.

Contacted Abdul Salam Sumon, who introduced himself as a Juba League leader, alleged, "Habib, his wife and sister-in-law are professional yaba traders. In 2014, we

handed over the wife and sister-in-law to police as they were caught red-handed with the pills."

They filed the cases against him to take revenge, he alleged.

About the land allegation, he said, "Why would I want to grab their land? It's not mine. It's not a land issue, they're yaba traders and that's why they're trying to provide false information."

RAB'S VERSION

Contacted, Rab Deputy Director Lt Commander Ashequr Rahman said they did not know about the land related issues or the case of "mistaken identities".

"We went to Barisal Colony to conduct an anti-narcotics drive when Habib and his associate fired at us," he said. "At first, we did not even know who they were." Later, locals identified them as Habib and Mosharraf, he added.

Afterwards, during investigation, they found out that Habib was a "top drug dealer", said the deputy director. About Mosharraf, he said Mosharraf used to work as a "drug peddler".

## Human chain protests murder of Tripura girls

DU CORRESPONDENT

Protesting the killing of two teenage girls at Tripura Polli in Sitakunda upazila of Chittagong on May 18, Bangladesh Adivasi Chhatri Sangram Parishad, the student wing of Bangladesh Adivasi Forum, formed a human chain in front of Bangladesh National Museum yesterday.

They also demanded justice for the victims' families.

Though law enforcers have arrested the key accused, others involved in the killing are still at large, they alleged.

Speaking at the event, Prof Robaet Ferdous of mass communication and journalism department of Dhaka University said this incident was not an isolated one.

Pankaj Bhattacharya, president of Oikya Nap, said, "The government has taken a 'zero-tolerance' policy against the drug peddlers, but not against the rapists."

Prominent dramatist and actor Mamunur Rashid urged the authorities concerned to take proper steps to protect the indigenous people.

Bangladesh Adivasi Forum President Sanjeeb Drong, Jatiya Adivasi Parishad President Rabindra Nath Soren, Kapaeng Foundation Director Pallab Chakma, and Tripura Kalyan Sangsad President Barendralal Tripura were also present.

On May 18, Suklota Tripura, 15, and her friend Chhobi Rani Tripura, 13, were found dead in Chhobi's house in Sitakunda.

Abul Hossen, the key accused in the case filed by Suklota's father, confessed to killing the girls after he was arrested the next day.

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