

## Stop exploiting religion in politics before nat'l polls

### Demands Nirmul Committee

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ektattor Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee yesterday called on the Election Commission to stop political parties from exploiting religion in campaigns ahead of the next parliamentary election.

The 1972 constitution, written in the light of the spirit of Liberation War, forbade the use of religion as a political tool, said Shahriar Kabir, president of the forum that has been waging a campaign for trial of war criminals.

Following the assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Maj Gen Ziaur Rahman rehabilitated those who had opposed liberation and formed religion-based parties to enter the political arena of the newly-independent nation.

All that was done in the name of establishing multi-party democracy, said Shahriar at a discussion organised at the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh to mark the 24th death anniversary of Shaheed Janani Jahanara Imam.

Twenty-seven years ago, a national movement came into being under the leadership of Jahanara Imam demanding trial of war criminals and banning of fundamental and communal politics.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 8



(Clockwise from top) An elderly woman being helped to a polling centre at Pubail Adarsha University College in Gazipur yesterday. Though it's against the rules, no one seems to be noticing this man talking on mobile phone inside Ashraf Textile Mills High School. A police official detains a man for the same reason at Kalameshwar Government Primary School.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN, AMRAN HOSSAIN

## Training at primary level needed to identify disability properly

### Speakers say at workshop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Primary-level [upazilas] healthcare workers and doctors need to be trained to identify disability properly, to ensure better health services, said speakers at a workshop yesterday.

They also said differently-abled people should be given priority in healthcare.

Non-Communicable Disease Control (NCDC) Programme, Disabled Rehabilitation and Research Association (DRRA) and Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) jointly organised the workshop at Brac Centre in Dhaka.

Presenting the keynote speech, Dr Khaleda Islam, former director (Primary Health Centre) of DGHS, said, "Primary healthcare system needs to be strong to identify the problem of disability."

To identify disabled people properly, it is important to train healthcare workers at the community level, she said, so that they can primarily detect disabled individuals, refer them to upazila doctors to specify the disability, and subsequently the doctors can send them to a specialised institution for better treatment.

Giving various definitions of disability, Rifat Shahpar Khan, independent consultant and director, Creative Pathways, said that according to WHO, 15 percent of the global population are disabled, and the issue needs to be addressed properly.

She also emphasised on talking to the disabled person directly instead of talking to his or her aide. "Or else, they will feel neglected," she added.

Farida Yesmin, executive director of DRRA, said there are different types of disabilities and they need to be treated differently by specialised doctors.

Sometimes, disabled people are unsure of where to get treatment and therefore, they move from one healthcare centre to another without knowing where to find proper treatment, which costs them a lot, she alleged.

If community clinic workers are trained, they would know where disabled patients should be referred to, she said.

Dr Abul Kalam Azad, DG of DGHS, said the government is working to ensure proper healthcare facilities for differently-abled people and is trying its best to address the issue.

Prof AHM Enayet Hussain, ADG (P and D) of DGHS also spoke at the workshop.

# 80pc cholera infections in Dhaka spread within household

Says new research study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around 80 percent of cholera infections in Dhaka contract through members who share a household, cooking pot and eat together, according to a new study published in US-based science journal Nature Genetics on Monday.

"Once cholera entered the household, it was spreading between household members, rather than repeatedly coming in from outside, within this critical time period [in first five days]," said the study conducted by icddr, Wellcome Sanger

- 25% diarrhea patients at icddr, Dhaka had cholera (April-June '18)
- 80% infections occur through household members
- 3,000,000-5,000,000 suffer from cholera each year globally
- 1,20,000 of them die from the disease

Institute, UK, and other collaborators.

The findings suggest that household control measures, including better sanitation and hygiene, water chlorination and vaccinating house-

hold members could help reduce cholera spread, researchers said.

The findings are important as Dhaka, a megacity in Bangladesh, experiences two seasonal outbreaks of cholera each year – one in April-

May and the other in August-September. It is considered hyper-endemic for the disease, icddr, said.

There is no prevalent data of cholera in Dhaka. However, on an average 700 diarrhoea patients who took admission at the icddr, Dhaka hospital between April and mid-June. Of them, around 25 percent had cholera infection, an icddr, spokesman told The Daily Star.

Globally, around 1.4 billion people are at risk in endemic countries, with an estimated 3 to 5

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

# Submit test report on pasteurised milk

High Court directs food secretary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the food secretary to get the test report on pasteurised milk from the expert committee and to submit it (report) before the court in a month.

The court passed the order after food secretary's lawyer Barrister Md Faridul Islam informed that the government has formed a 10-member expert committee in order to examine the pasteurised milk available in the market as per its earlier directive.

The lawyer also sought six months' time from the HC for submitting the test report to the court.

The HC bench of Justice Syed Muhammad Dastagir Husain and Justice

Md Iqbal Kabir, however, gave one month's time to the food secretary to place the test report before it.

Following a writ petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer Tanvir Ahmed on May 21, the HC ordered the food secretary to form an expert committee to test the pasteurised milk available and submit a report before it in a month.

The expert committee would include representatives from the food and health ministries, Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI), and other experts and researchers concerned, the court said.

The HC also issued a rule asking the authorities concerned to explain why their

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

# Ecneec approves 14 projects

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecneec) yesterday approved 14 projects, at a total cost of Tk 16,147 crore taka.

The biggest of the projects involves building 560 model mosques in district and upazila towns across the country, spending Tk 8,722 crore from its own resources as the promised funds for the project from Saudi Arabia are not available yet.

Ecneec held a meeting with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair at the NEC auditorium of the planning ministry.

Planning minister AHM Mustafa Kamal is, however, still hopeful about getting the previously promised Saudi fund for the project. After the meeting, the planning minister told the reporters they have got around Tk 83 crore for the project.

Replying to reporters' queries, he said after the change of king in Saudi Arabia, getting the fund has been delayed, but they are still hopeful to get

more funds from Saudi Arabia. If the fund is not available the project will continue with own resources, he said.

The government also approved 13 more projects at a cost of Tk 7,425 crore, which include foreign funds of Tk 2,839 crore.

One of the projects is for collecting new engines and compartments for Bangladesh Railway, at a cost of Tk 3,602 crore, of which the Asian Development Bank (ADB) will finance Tk 2,839 crore.

Under the project, 40 broad gauge (BG) diesel engines, 75 meter gauge (MG) and 50 BG luggage vans, 400 MG and 300 BG bogey-covered wagons, and 180 MG and 120 BG bogey open wagons will be purchased.

Ecneec also approved a Tk 173-crore project for modernisation of three mills under Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC). The three mills are UMC Jute Mills in Narsingdi, Jessore Jute Industry Ltd in Noapara of Jessore and Gulfra Habib Ltd in Sitakunda of Chittagong.



Newly-appointed Chief of Army Staff General Aziz Ahmed being adorned with the rank badge of general in presence of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. The ceremony was held at the premier's official residence, Gono Bhaban, yesterday. Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Nizamuddin Ahmed and Chief of Air Staff Air Marshal Masihuzzaman Serniabat adorned the new army chief with the rank badge.

# Nurture tolerance among youths

Speakers say at Prothom Alo roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday said that fundamentalists are more prone to terrorist activities.

Abdul Mannan, Assistant Deputy Commissioner of Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) Unit of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, however, suggested not to hate those who are motivated towards the path of fundamentalism.

"Rather, prevent them from the path of fundamentalism through affection," he said.

The roundtable, titled 'Peace and Tolerance: Hindrance and Way Forward', was organised at the Dhaka office of Bangla daily Prothom Alo.

"The main risk lies with fundamental-

ism. There is fundamentalism in every religion," Abdul Mannan said.

"There are major fundamentalist groups that are expanding day by day. Intolerance is also on the rise," he said.

"In such circumstances, families have to teach children morality and social values," he said, adding it is important to guide the youth on the right track through nurturing the spirit of Liberation War in them.

Mannan paid tribute to Faraaz Ayaaz Hossain, who demonstrated courage during the July 1 terror attack at Holey Artisan Bakery in Dhaka.

Kabir Hossain, who was a public prosecutor of August 21 grenade attack, said during interrogation criminals admitted they

# ACC sues Al-Arafah Islami Bank director

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday filed a case against an incumbent director of Al-Arafah Islami Bank Limited for allegedly laundering Tk 1.68 crore in Singapore.

ACC filed the case against Badiur Rahman, who was also chairman of the bank's board of directors between 2008 and 2016, with Motijheel Police Station.

According to the case statement, Badiur, who has been a director since 1995, set up a company, Ariel Maritime (Pvt) Ltd, in Singapore with three directors.

The authorised capital of the company was SGD 1 million and the paid-up capital was SGD 50,000. Badiur's invested capital was SGD 25,000 in 2003 and he has been operating the company since then. His investment increased to SGD 0.5 million, equivalent to Tk 1,68,38,800.

According to ACC, Badiur could not show any acceptable documents to prove legitimacy

of the source of income that he invested in the company.

"His claim of collecting capital from abroad soon after visiting Singapore in 2003 is also not acceptable," reads the case statement. To conceal the source of income, he misused his power as a director and secretly transferred the money, it adds.

**WASA OFFICIAL ARRESTED**

Meanwhile, an ACC team yesterday caught a field officer of Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa), Jahidur Rahman, red-handed while taking Tk 2 lakh bribe from a person, said Pranab Kumar Bhattacharya, ACC's public relations officer.

He said Jahidur demanded Tk 5 lakh from Ashek Sadeq Chowdhury, manager of Goldcoast International, for regularising monthly bill of a deep tube-well set up in 2015.

Jahidur threatened to disconnect the water connection if he was not given the money.

Later, Ashek agreed to give him Tk 2 lakh

and decided to meet Jahidur at his office at Wasa's Revenue Zone-9 at Uttara (sector-6) yesterday.

Meanwhile, Ashek informed the matter to ACC, which following all legal procedures arrested the field officer. A case was filed with Uttara (east) Police Station.

**REB GM SUEED**

ACC yesterday filed a case against the general manager of the Rural Electrification Board (REB), Nitai Kumar Sarkar, for allegedly misappropriating Tk 10 lakh. A case was filed in this connection with Santhia Police Station.

According to the case statement, while working as the general manager at REB-2 of Pabna, Nitai borrowed Tk 10 lakh from REB by submitting false documents in September 2011.

Nitai, who is now the general manager of REB in Natore, "did not repay the loan fully; misused his power and misappropriated the money," reads the case statement.