

CHT REGIONAL, DISTRICT COUNCILS

No election in two decades

SANJOY KUMAR BARUIA, BANDARBAN and JAMIL MAHMUD

The lack of government will over holding elections to the regional council and the three district councils in Chittagong Hill Tracts has long been depriving indigenous people of their right to have elected representatives in those local bodies.

For almost two decades, the district councils have been running by those chosen by the ruling parties.

The absence of elected public representatives in the councils and lack of accountability keep hampering the public-oriented services in the region, said local government experts and others concerned.

Besides, the promotion of political rights and progress of socio-economic development of the indigenous people, as promised in the the 1997 CHT Peace Accord, have also slowed down, they said.

The experts said election to the councils should be held within the "shortest possible time" to help fully implement

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Electoral Cycle: Elections are supposed to be held every 5 years

Current Status: CHT ministry takes no initiative to hold elections

Current Practice: Councils being run by representatives selected by ruling party

Government Stance: Government will stand in the way of holding elections



Saleha Begum, mother of arrested quota movement leader Muhammad Rashed Khan, breaks down in tears as she pleads for the release of her son during a human chain in front of the Jatiya Press Club yesterday. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

A mother's appeal to another

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A distressed Saleha Begum struggled to hold back tears as she begged for the release of her only son Muhammad Rashed Khan, a quota movement leader under arrest since July 1.

"Please release my son. I will take him in my arm. I don't have anything else. Just bring him back..." Saleha pleaded with the prime minister from a human chain in front of Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

"He was not involved in politics. He was never against the government. He is just a general student. What has he done to be put on 15 days' remand?"

The demonstration was organised by Jatiya Oikya Prokriya, a citizen's platform.

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CONTESTING NEXT JS POLLS

Khaleda's release 1st condition: BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP yesterday said Khaleda Zia's release was the number one precondition for its participation in the upcoming general election.

"We have made clear our demands that the number one precondition for holding any election in Bangladesh is that Khaleda Zia must be released. No election would take place while she is in jail and the people of the country will not allow it," BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir told a rally.

The party has been able to hold the rally in the capital yesterday for the first time in two and a half years, fulfilling

PHOTO ON PAGE 16

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Anomalies aplenty

Mayor candidates in Rajshahi, Barisal, Sylhet cities breaching election codes; EC taking little action

ANWAR ALI, DWOHA CHOWDHURY and JAHIR JEWEL

Mayoral candidates and their supporters have been conducting campaigns in three cities flouting the electoral code of conduct, but the Election Commission is hardly taking any action to stop this.

Some candidates have lodged written complaints with the returning officers concerned about the violation of the electoral code. Election officials, however, said they were investigating the complaints and



would take action accordingly.

Loudspeakers have been used indiscriminately, billboards set up and processions brought out in Rajshahi, Barisal and Sylhet cities since the electioneering began on July 10.

The election campaign is gaining momentum every day as July 30, the polling day, is getting closer and the violations of the electoral code are also on the rise.

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ANTI-DRUG DRIVE 3 more killed in 'gunfights'

STAR REPORT

Three more suspected drug peddlers were killed in "gunfights" with law enforcers in Chittagong and Comilla yesterday.

At least 191 individuals, who according to Rab and police were involved in drug trade, have been shot dead since an anti-narcotics crackdown began on May 4. Most of the individuals were killed in what police

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NO-CONFIDENCE MOTION

Modi survives

THE HINDU

The BJP-led NDA government yesterday defeated the no-confidence motion moved against it by the Opposition and initiated by the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) after a 12-hour debate that sketched the contours of the 2019 electoral face-offs.

The final figures, subject to correction, stood at 325 with the government and 126 against, with no abstentions. The figures indicate that even without the Shiv Sena, the BJP got support from non-NDA parties.

From Congress president Rahul Gandhi's sharp attack over defence deals and crony capitalism which, however,

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