

# RIFT IN EC AL not for Mahbub's resignation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League does not want Election Commissioner Mahbub Talukdar to resign, said party's General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday. His remarks came a day after AL-led 14-party alliance coordinator Mohammed Nasim said Mahbub should quit as he "violated his oath of secrecy". "It [resignation] is an internal matter of the

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# Oikyafront denied nod for first rally

*Uncertainty over planned public meetings; leaders brief foreign diplomats about goals, demands over polls*

SHAKHAWAT LITON and MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Jatiya Oikyafront, the newly floated alliance of the BNP and several other parties, suffered its first big blow yesterday as police denied the platform permission to hold a planned rally in Sylhet on October 23. Sylhet Metropolitan Police (SMP) turned down the application seeking police clearance, which is mandatory, for its maiden public programme. Sylhet BNP filed the application on Wednesday on behalf of the alliance, which also includes Dr Kamal Hossain's Gonoforum, ASM Abdur Rab's

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal and Mahmudur Rahman Manna's Nagorik Oikya.

"The officer-in-charge of Kotwali Police Station informed me by phone that permission cannot be granted," said Ali Ahmed, general secretary of Sylhet district BNP.

"Police did not give any reason for the rejection," he told The Daily Star.

Contacted, OC Selim Miah said the application was turned down on "security grounds", but declined to elaborate.

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# AL to step up campaign in next 2 weeks

SHAKHAWAT LITON and MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

The ruling Awami League is preparing to beef up electioneering across the country in the next two weeks before the Election Commission announces the schedule of the upcoming parliamentary polls.

The secretary to the EC Secretariat yesterday said the schedule would be announced in the first week of next month.

The electoral code of conduct will take effect with the announcement of the schedule imposing restriction on electioneering by parties and their MP candidates.

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A train and a lorry, *inset*, cross the Kalurghat Bridge in Chattogram recently. Declared risky by a Cuet team, the 239m bridge, built over the Karnaphuli in 1930, is dotted with pot-holes and it shakes whenever heavy vehicles or trains cross it.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN



# Bijoya Dashami today

BSS, Dhaka

Bijoya Dashami of the five-day Sharadiya Durga Puja, the biggest religious festival of the Hindu community, will be observed today.

The festival will come to an end with the emersion of the idols of goddess Durga in the rivers and water bodies today.

Durga Puja began on October 15 with the incarnation of the goddess Durga on the day of Maha Shashti at temples across the country.

Maha Saptami puja was observed on Tuesday, Maha Ashtami, Kumari Puja and Sandhi Puja on Wednesday

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# AYUB BACHCHU 1962-2018

# STRINGS fall silent

KARIM WAHEED

Music was not just a passion for the self-taught guitarist, it was his lifelong love, and fortune did not let him down. The word "legend" is used generously to refer to celebrities nowadays, but Ayub Bachchu was, and remains, a legend in the truest sense.

The bona fide rock legend and founder of the musical band LRB died of a heart attack in Dhaka yesterday at the age of 56. He was taken to Square Hospital around 9:15am when doctors declared him dead. Earlier in

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# Of strange shootouts

*Families look for answers as 'new pattern of extrajudicial killings' emerges*

RAFIUL ISLAM

Ever since her husband was killed four months ago, one question has been bothering Nazma Khatun – "how does a person in police custody get killed by others?"

Anisur Rahman of Satkhira's Kolaroa upazila was taken away on May 28 by two police officials Nazma knew. She watched as her husband was handcuffed and blindfolded, claimed the widow.

The next day, he was said to have been killed in a "gunfight" between two groups of drug traders.

"... police cooked up the story to cover up the killing," Nazma told The Daily Star recently.

The cops in question denied picking up Anisur.

For the last four months, the mother of two has been looking for answers.

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# Dhaka-Delhi ports deal next week

*India to use Ctg, Mongla ports to transport cargo to its northeastern states*

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Dhaka and New Delhi are going to sign next week three important agreements, including one allowing India to use Chittagong and Mongla ports to transport cargoes to its north-eastern states.

The deals related to shipping will be inked at a secretary-level meeting in New Delhi from October 24 to 26.

A 14-member team led by Shipping Secretary Abdus Samad will fly to the Indian capital on October 23. Shipping Minister Shajahan Khan may join the deal-signing ceremony, shipping ministry officials told this newspaper yesterday.

The agreement on the use of the two ports will be valid for five years and be renewed automatically for another five years. Any of the two sides can cancel or suspend it on six months' notice.

If any problem arises regarding the deal's implementation, both countries will form committees to resolve it, they said.

As per the draft of the deal, Indian goods can be transported through four entry points: Akhaura in Bangladesh and Agartala in India; Tamabil in Sylhet and Dauki in Meghalaya; Sheola in Sylhet and Sutarkandi in Assam; and Bibirbazar in Cumilla and Srimantapur in Tripura.

Shipping Secretary Md Abdus Samad said Dhaka and Delhi have to sign

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Classmates take care of Akhtar Hossen, a Dhaka University student who has been on hunger strike since Tuesday demanding a fresh DU "Gha" unit admission test, at the foot of Raju Memorial Sculpture on the campus yesterday. He was later taken to DMCH as his condition worsened. Story on Page 3.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

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