

Revise Digital

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also penalised the legitimate exercise of the right to freedom of expression by any individual, including on social media.

The European Parliament appreciated the government's decision to host the Rohingya refugees, calling on the EU and other international donors to step up their efforts in providing the necessary financial and material aid to Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh.

It also reiterated its call for the abolition of the death penalty in Bangladesh.

Expressing serious concerns at the annulment of the Transition Accord, it urged the the government to immediately recognise and implement the Transition Accord and show greater readiness to take over all of the functions of the accord.

In addition, it called on the government to adopt legislative changes to the Labour Act and its implementing rules to bring them into line with the ILO's international labour standards.

It also urged the government to take the necessary steps to effectively address all acts of anti-union discrimination, including acts of violence and intimidation.

UK PM

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One eurosceptic lawmaker said more colleagues were either putting in letters or were increasingly minded to do so.

But the prime minister showed little sign of backing down. She told parliament: "The choice is clear. We can choose to leave with no deal, we can risk no Brexit at all, or we can choose to unite and support the best deal that can be negotiated."

Her spokesman said May would fight any confidence vote and she intended to be prime minister when Britain leaves the bloc next year.

Boris Johnson, a leading critic of May's Brexit plans who has done little to hide his political ambition, attended a meeting of the European Research Group, where Rees-Mogg and members discussed how many no-confidence letters had gone in.

Rees-Mogg told journalists the next prime minister should be a person who believed in Brexit.

In the markets, sterling fell to a day's low against the euro and shares in British companies were hit.

In parliament, lawmakers from the ruling and opposition parties spent three hours mostly rubbishing the draft deal, agreed with the EU on Tuesday, which May must get approved by the House of Commons. Many said it made Britain a "vassal" state, beholden to the bloc's rules even after leaving.

Others said an agreement on the so-called backstop would tear Britain apart, leaving Northern Ireland all but in the EU's single market.

"It is ... mathematically impossible to get this deal through the House of Commons. The stark reality is that it was dead on arrival," Conservative lawmaker Mark Francois said.

It was the backstop arrangement, which would see Britain and the EU establishing a single customs territory, that spurred most of the criticism.

"I cannot reconcile the terms of the proposed deal with the promises we made to the country in our manifesto at the last election," Raab said.

EU leaders are ready to meet on Nov 25 to sign off on the divorce deal, or Withdrawal Agreement, but French Prime Minister Edouard Philippe summed up the uncertainty when he said events in London raised concerns about whether it would be ratified.

"We need to prepare ourselves for a no-deal Brexit," he said.

A group of EU states also raised objections to what has been agreed so far on fishing between the EU and UK after Brexit, diplomatic sources said.

Britain's opposition Labour Party said the government was "falling apart". Raab, 44, was appointed to the role of Brexit secretary in July after the resignation of his predecessor David Davis, who also quit in protest at May's Brexit strategy.

At the heart of Raab's criticism of May's deal was the belief that the pursuit of a customs union with the EU would be the "starting point" for talks on the future relationship with the bloc, "severely prejudicing" what Britain could achieve.

He said May's plan threatened the integrity of Britain and he could not support an indefinite backstop arrangement.

High Court yet

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strengthening a sense of patriotism among people.

The second inquiry, led by the police, highlighted failures of erstwhile Cox's Bazar SP Selim Md Jahangir and former Ramu OC AK Nazibul Islam. The committee, however, recommended action against Nazibul only.

The third report submitted by the home ministry claimed that 205 people were behind the mayhem which was designed in four phases at least 10 days before the attack.

A mob destroyed 12 pagodas and more than 50 houses in Ramu on the night of September 29 in 2012. The violence was apparently triggered by the image of a Buddhist youth's Facebook page that had been photo-shopped, revealed The Daily Star investigation. The page contained an anti-Islam picture.

The investigations were carried out on HC orders over writ petitions filed by Supreme Court lawyers, Jyotirmoy Barua and Eunus Ali Akond, on October 2 and 3 that year, seeking action against the perpetrators and the local administration.

The High Court is yet to hear the petitions due to reconstitution of its benches, according to the petitioners.

The probe reports were submitted to the High Court bench led by Justice Mirza Hussain Haider, now a justice at the Appellate Division of the Supreme

Court. The then chief justice had reconstituted the bench before his promotion.

"I am not pushing further as the High Court is overburdened with cases. I will pray to the chief justice for constitution of another bench after the court reopens," Jyotirmoy Barua told The Daily Star recently.

The court, which went on annual vacation on August 15, reopened on October 1.

The lawyer further told this newspaper that most of the accused in the Ramu violence cases were out on bail.

Advocate Md Eunus Ali Akond said the HC bench headed by Justice Mirza Hussain Haider was reconstituted before his petition could reach it following a long serial. He expressed unwillingness to pray before a new bench citing "overburden of cases".

Eunus believes that at least 1,000 more judges need to be appointed to the HC for prompt hearing and disposal of cases.

The police have submitted seven charge sheets to a court in Cox's Bazar accusing 385 people over the Ramu mayhem cases filed with the Ramu Police Station.

However, none from the police or the local administration was named.

Prime accused Tofail Ahmed, chairman of Bandarban's Naikhyangchhari upazila, was detained in January 2016. He is now on bail.

Tigers save face

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Tigers at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

It was Bangladesh's second-biggest win in terms of runs after their 226-run victory against the same opposition in Chattogram in 2005.

However, when Mehedi dismissed the last Zimbabwe batsman, Kyle Jarvis, the body language from the hosts suggested the feeling was more of relief rather than joy after their 151-run defeat in the first Test in Sylhet.

Chasing a huge 443-run target, Zimbabwe resumed the fifth day on 76 for two and their main aim would have been to bat out the day and finish with a draw.

It proved to be a huge challenge for the bowlers as the Mirpur pitch did not break up as much as expected. However, it was always going to be tough for the batsmen to survive on a surface where the ball had been doing something throughout the Test.

Left-arm pacer Mustafizur Rahman provided the breakthrough -- his only wicket of the game -- with a beautiful delivery that went through left-hander Sean William's defence and struck timber.

Left-arm spinner Taijul Islam then removed Sikandar Raza for 12 by taking a return catch before the post-lunch session became a battle between Mehedi and Taylor.

21-year-old Mehedi, who played the support role with three wickets and hit

his second Test half-century in the first innings, began to pluck wickets at regular intervals. On the other hand, Taylor, without any support from the other end, was left fighting alone.

The right-hander eventually reached his sixth Test century off 164 balls, becoming the first Zimbabwean to twice score hundreds in both innings of a Test match. He had previously done it against the same opposition in Harare in 2013.

The 32-year-old held firm at one end, unbeaten on 107 off 167 with the help of 10 fours, but Mehedi's loop and sharp turn was enough to rattle through Zimbabwe's lower-order at the other as they lost their last six wickets for 38 runs before tea.

Man-of-the-series Taijul picked up 18 wickets in the series, falling just one shy of equalling Mehedi's haul of 19 wickets in a series against England in 2016 -- the most by a Bangladeshi bowler in a two-match Test series.

The second Test was significant for Bangladesh in that it was a chance for them to improve on the disastrous batting performances which saw them unable to post more than 200 runs in their last eight innings.

Mushfiqur Rahim's double hundred also elevated him to another level as he became the first Bangladesh player to score two double-tons as well as the first wicketkeeper in the world to achieve the feat.

KSA seeks death

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"negotiations" for his return to the kingdom failed, and that the killing was ordered by the head of a negotiating team sent to repatriate Khashoggi after he decided it was unfeasible to remove the journalist from the consulate.

The order to repatriate Khashoggi had come from former deputy intelligence chief General Ahmed al-Asiri, Shalaaan added. Asiri was sacked last month following an initial investigation.

Asked if Prince Mohammed played a role in the murder, he said: "He did not have any knowledge." That stance was reiterated by Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeiri, who said the prince had absolutely nothing to do with the case and accused Turkey of ignoring Saudi requests for information.

Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan has said the order for the operation came from the highest level of Saudi leadership but probably not King Salman, putting the spotlight instead on his 33-year-old heir. US President Donald Trump has suggested ultimate responsibility lies with the prince as de facto ruler.

Riyadh initially denied any knowledge of Khashoggi's disappearance, then offered contradictory explanations including that he was killed in a rogue operation. The case has sparked a global outcry, opened the kingdom to possible sanctions and tarnished the image of Prince Mohammed.

US Democratic Senator Chris Coons dismissed the idea that a rogue team carried out the killing. "I find that utterly incredible," he said on CNN, calling for a US investigation using information from Turkish intelligence and other sources.

However, Saudi foreign minister yesterday dismissed demands for an international inquiry into the murder.

Some details provided on Thursday again contradicted previous versions, none of which mentioned a drug-induced death and one of which called

the killing premeditated based on information provided by Turkish authorities.

An adviser to Erdogan said the Saudi comments were meant to cover up the murder. "I don't believe the real perpetrators will be found through Saudi Arabia's investigation," Yasin Aktay said.

Shalaaan said 11 out of 21 suspects have been indicted and will be referred to court, while investigations of the remaining suspects will continue to determine their role in the crime.

A travel ban has been imposed on a former top aide to the crown prince, Saud al-Qahtani, while investigations continue over his role, Shalaaan said.

He said Qahtani had coordinated with Asiri, meeting the operatives ahead of their journey to Istanbul to brief them on the journalist's activities.

Qahtani has already been fired from the royal court, but four sources based in the Gulf told Reuters this week that he was still at liberty and continued to operate discreetly.

A senior government official previously identified the head of the negotiating team as Maher Mutreb, an aide to Qahtani who has appeared in photographs with Prince Mohammed on official visits this year to the United States and Europe.

Six weeks after the murder, Turkey is trying to keep up pressure on Prince Mohammed and has released a stream of evidence that undermined Riyadh's early denials of involvement.

Turkey says it has recordings related to the killing which it has shared with Western allies. One Turkish official told Reuters that officials who heard the recordings, which include Khashoggi's killing as well as conversations leading up to the operation, were horrified but their countries had done nothing.

Last month two intelligence sources said that Qahtani gave orders over Skype to Khashoggi's killers. More recently, a government source familiar with the matter said Qahtani featured prominently throughout the recordings.

Don't plot

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said BNP wanted to spoil the country's progress.

The AL President also criticised BNP for dropping article 7 from its charter to "pave the way for keeping corrupt persons" at the party helm. "Through dropping article 7, they've proved that killers, dacoits and corrupt elements can be the leader of their party," she said.

She urged the country's people to resist any sort of violence, arson attack and terror activities.

Termining vote as people's democratic and constitutional right, she emphasised protecting it, saying her party would stand by them to this end. "We'll always stand by people and definitely protect their rights. The democratic trend must be upheld to continue the country's development."

'Super Earth'

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"Barnard's star is an infamous object among astronomers and exoplanet scientists, as it was one of the first stars where planets were initially claimed but later proven to be incorrect," said Dr Guillem Anglada Escude from Queen Mary University of London.

"Hopefully we got it right this time." Reporting their findings in the journal Nature, the scientists said that after careful analysis of nearly two decades' worth of data they are 99 percent confident the exoplanet they have identified is there.

It is located beyond the habitable zone for its star, at a distance beyond the so-called "snow line" at which liquid water and any possible chance of life cannot exist.

Planets beyond our solar system are extremely faint compared to the stars they orbit, meaning they are difficult to identify even using the largest telescopes currently available.

As a result, most of what astronomers know about the mysterious worlds comes from indirect measurements of variations in light beamed down to Earth from the exoplanets' host stars.

One technique that uses such measurements is known as radial velocity, which can be used to assess wobbles the planet's gravity creates in the star's orbit. These wobbles affect the light coming from the star, which can then be detected by astronomers.

"This technique has been used to find hundreds of planets," said Dr Paul Butler, a team member from the Carnegie Institution for Science who helped pioneer the method.

488 sued

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Meanwhile, detectives last night arrested Nipun Roy, BNP executive committee member, in Kakrail area. Like many other BNP leaders, she has been accused in all the three cases.

Nipun was picked up with singer Baby Naznin who was released later, said Mahubub Alam, joint commissioner of Detective Branch of police.

According to the statements of the cases, the accused had assembled illegally with dangerous weapons. They hurled brick chips and grievously injured policemen by attacking them with sticks with a motive to kill the law enforcers.

BNP leaders Afroza Abbas, Maj (ret'd) Akhtaruzzaman, Kaflluiddin and Nabiullah Nabi were accused in all three cases.

The cases were filed under the Explosives Substances Act, Special Powers Act, and on charges of attacking police with an intention to kill them and obstructing them from discharging their duties.

According to one of the cases, the two police cars vandalised and torched were worth around Tk 95 lakh. Another car and an APC of police were also attacked, it added. Meanwhile, Asaduzzaman Mia, commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police yesterday told reporters that police identified 30 others involved in the violence from video footage.

"We have come to know from sources that all the accused and identified ones are leaders and activists of BNP and its front organisations," he said, adding, "The attack on police was preplanned."

On Tuesday, the Election Commission asked law enforcers to take steps against the nomination seekers staging showdowns during collection or submission of nomination forms.

Mishu Biswas, assistant commissioner of DMP (Motijheel zone), said the young man, who set fire to the police vehicles was Shahjalal Khandaker, a convening committee member of Paltan Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal. Another young man who was seen damaging a police vehicle was Shohag Bhuiyan, a JCD activist.

It's a mistake

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But the EC's claim is not in conformity with the section.

The restriction imposed by the section is only applicable to the political parties and nominated candidates to prevent them from electioneering. However, as of now, neither the Awami League nor the BNP has nominated a single candidate to contest the polls with party's symbol.

So, the question of electioneering does not even arise in this case.

In such a situation, the EC suddenly issued the instruction drawing a lot of flak from different quarters.

Besides, Tuesday's instruction came after the ruling Awami League had already completed selling forms among its MP aspirants while the BNP had just begun the sale of forms on Monday.

Strangely, the EC did not find anything wrong with the gatherings in front of the office of the parties until Tuesday evening.

"The timing of the letter issued to the police was inappropriate," said Election Commissioner Mahubul Talukdar while talking to this correspondent yesterday morning in his office at the EC Bhaban.

"We can't shrug off the responsibility caused by our mistake," he said.

He referred to the remarks made by one of his colleagues and echoed his views.

Hours after the EC secretariat issued the instruction, Election Commissioner Rafiqul Islam on Tuesday night told the press that the gathering in front of the BNP headquarters by nomination aspirants and activists did not violate election regulations, according to a Dhaka Tribune report published the following day.

"It's not a violation of the election code of conduct as people are coming to take the nomination form from their party headquarters," said Rafiqul, adding, "This is quite normal. The activists and supporters, along with the nomination aspirants, gathering in front of their party office is by no means violation of the electoral code of conduct."

He even criticised a section of the media that claimed in their reports that the gathering was a violation of the electoral code of conduct.

"If the press decides to call this a violation, then they will be lying to the general people of Bangladesh. This will also be unjust for the parties participating in the upcoming general polls," Dhaka Tribune quoted Rafiqul as saying.

The AL started selling nomination papers on November 9, a day after the EC announced the polls schedule. A large number of nomination seekers and their followers gathered in front of the AL office on Dhanmondi Road 3/A. Many reached there in processions with motorcycles and other vehicles. All three days of nomination form sale since November 9 saw significant traffic gridlock due to the processions that blocked parts of the street in front of the office.

In response to a question on the gathering, EC Secretary Helaluddin Ahmed, on November 10, said: "Any election in our country is like a festival. As all the parties are selling nomination forms centrally, this does not violate our regulations."

The explanation made by Rafiqul Islam and Helal Uddin was in conformity with the electoral code of conduct.

Bail at last

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The bench of Justice Sheikh Abdul Awal and Justice Bishmadev Chakraborty delivered the verdict after the final hearing on a bail plea filed by Shahidul.

"There is now no legal bar for Shahidul to walk out of jail following the High Court verdict," Jyotirmoy Barua, a lawyer for Shahidul, told The Daily Star.

Shahidul is now at Dhaka Central Jail in Keraniganj.

He will be released after the copy of the HC verdict reaches the jail authorities through the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Jyotirmoy added.

As of filing of this report at 9:30pm, the jail authorities were yet to receive the copy.

Shahidul, also the founder of Drik and Pathshala South Asian Media Institute, was picked up by law enforcers on the night of August 5 from his Dhanmondi residence during the student demonstrations for safe roads.

Police filed the case and produced him before a Dhaka court the following day. He was then placed on a seven-day remand.

His arrest sparked outrage and condemnation at home and abroad with media and rights bodies, including Amnesty International, Committee to Protect Journalists and PEN International, demanding his release.

Nobel laureate Amartya Sen and 11 other Nobel prize winners, film directors, actresses, artists, authors and billionaire businessmen called for his immediate release.

Talking to this correspondent, Sara Hossain, the principal lawyer for Shahidul, said the HC granted bail to Shahidul, considering that he was 63-year-old and had been in jail for over 100 days.

Besides, the case filed against him is under investigation and he would face trial at the lower court concerned, she added.

Attorney General Mahubey Alam told this newspaper that his office would move an appeal before the Supreme Court's Appellate Division, seeking a stay on the HC verdict.

During yesterday's hearing, Sara

In terms of the electoral codes, the gathering of party men while collecting nomination forms and bringing out procession on the day of filing nomination papers to the Returning Officers are completely two different things.

One is banned, the other is not.

Section 8 (b) of the electoral code of conduct states no procession or show-down is allowed during filing of nomination papers to the ROs seeking candidacies to contest parliamentary polls.

But those who gathered in front of the AL and the BNP offices were not filing nomination papers, they were just collecting it.

This is why the restriction in no way was applicable to the nomination seekers who, along with their followers, had gathered in large number in front of their respective party offices, a number of present and former senior EC officials said.

They only collected forms from their respective parties wishing to contest the polls as party candidates with party's symbol. On getting their party's nod, they will collect official forms from the ROs' or assistant ROs' offices across the country and fill out those with necessary information and attach copies of other documents required to become candidates in the polls.

Then they will go to the offices of the ROs or assistant ROs to file the applications, known as nomination papers. They cannot bring out any procession or showdown that day.

The EC in the second part of its letter correctly cited section 8 (b) in this regard. Copies of the instruction were sent to all returning officers and other departments concerned.

Senior leaders of Jatiya Oikyafront, the alliance of BNP and several other opposition parties, who sat at a meeting with the EC after the violent incident in Nayapaltan, raised the issue. In response, the EC informed them that they were saddened by the unwarranted incident, sources said.

After the meeting, the EC secretary told reporters that the EC hoped such incident would not be repeated. "The EC will investigate the incident and seek to know about it from the police department," he said in a press briefing.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, former election commissioner Brig Gen (ret'd) M Sakhawat Hussain strongly criticised the EC for issuing the instruction all of a sudden.

If it had planned to issue such an instruction considering people's suffering, it should have been done so immediately after announcement of the schedule, he said.

But, its move raised question as it issued the instruction to the law enforcement agencies to thwart the gathering and procession in front of party offices after another party had already completed the sale of nomination forms.

"Police took actions on instruction of the Election Commission. Therefore, it must bear the responsibility for the incident that took place in Nayapaltan,"

The EC should be seen and presumed to be as neutral, he said, but its role regarding the issuance of the instruction appeared biased. "The EC should learn lesson from this incident and it has to handle everything even-handedly."

told the court that the statement mentioned in the first information report of the case and those made by Shahidul in Al Jazeera TV interview and on Facebook live post did not corroborate.

The HC may grant Shahidul bail as he has been in jail for 103 days without trial.

Shahidul has been suffering from an eye problem, she said, adding that he would face the trial at the lower court concerned if he is granted bail.

Mahubey Alam opposed the bail petition, saying the FIR's statement corroborated the statements made by Shahidul in the TV interview and Facebook post, as Shahidul uttered words like "disappearance," "looting of bank," "non-elected government," "judicial killing" and "bribery at all levels."

Shahidul has damaged the image of the country by uttering such words and therefore, he cannot get bail, he argued.

Shahidul filed the bail petition with the HC on September 18 through his lawyers, saying that he was ill and he would not leave the country if granted bail. In the petition, he also said the allegations brought against him do not fall under section 57.

On completion of his remand, he was denied bail and sent to jail by a Dhaka court on August 13. On September 4, a judge of another HC bench felt "embarrassed" to hear Shahidul's bail petition, and forwarded the appeal to the chief justice for decision.

On November 1, another HC bench of Justice AKM Asaduzzaman and Justice SM Mozibur Rahman dropped the same bail petition from a hearing list.

Then Shahidul's lawyers placed the bail petition before the bench led by Justice Sheikh Abdul Awal.

Earlier on October 7, the HC bench led by Justice AKM Asaduzzaman issued a rule asking the government to explain in a week why Shahidul should not be granted bail.

Yesterday, the HC bench led by Justice Sheikh Abdul Awal made the rule absolute and granted permanent bail to Shahidul.