

INAUGURATING DEV PROJECTS PM, others can't do it until polls results out

UNB, Dhaka

Election Commission Secretary Helal Uddin Ahmed has said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and other ministers cannot inaugurate any development project or lay any foundation stone until the results of the upcoming general election are announced.



allocation of election symbols to the candidates for holding the upcoming general election in a free, fair and credible manner.

He also said adequate policemen will be deployed so that executive magistrates can smoothly operate mobile courts in order to enforce the electoral code of conduct.

Special police protection would also be provided during the transportation of election materials.

Replying to a query, he said special attention would be given to maintain peace and discipline in frontier and remote areas.

The election commission secretary also mentioned about separate instructions given to law enforcers to take steps so that any militant groups cannot rear their ugly heads on the eve of the election.

"As per the electoral code of conduct, persons enjoying government privileges, prime minister, ministers, MPs, deputy leader and others can't inaugurate any development project, lay any foundation stone and make any donation and assistance during the election time," he said while talking to reporters at his office at the Nirbachan Bhaban on Wednesday, reports UNB.

The EC secretary said his office will ensure level playing field before the



BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir addresses a seminar at a city hotel yesterday. Speakers at the programme, organised by Jatiya Oikyafront, demanded that electronic voting machines (EVMs) must not be used in the upcoming national election.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

RACE IN BOGURA Khaleda vs 32

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogura

At least 32 aspirants want to take on BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia in Bogura-6 and-7 constituencies in the upcoming parliamentary election, scheduled to be held on December 30.

Of them, 23 are from the ruling Awami League, five from the Jatiya Party, and four from the Left Democratic Alliance. They collected nomination forms from their parties.

On November 12, BNP senior leaders collected three nomination forms on behalf of Khaleda, who is now in jail, for Feni-1 and Bogura-6 and-7. These constituencies are considered BNP's strongholds.

They fill the void

Family members of 25 dead BNP men likely to get party ticket

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Family members of at least 25 BNP leaders who died in the last 10 years are likely to get party tickets.

Top leaders as well as the ones in the grassroots agree that nominating the family members of the deceased leaders will help the party avoid rifts, senior BNP leaders said.

A total of 2,420 aspirants were interviewed by the party's acting chairman, secretary general and standing committee members until Tuesday.

The BNP is likely to finalise its picks by tomorrow, BNP Standing Committee Member Moudud Ahmed told The Daily Star.

"It remains a deep concern that a number of seasoned politicians have already died. I think most of the nominations will be given to the family members of the dead leaders. Party leaders and activists also want this," he added.

A BNP team, including Standing Committee Member Khandakar Mosharraf Hossain, is negotiating

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Withdraw over 90 partisan officials

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Two of them contained names of 22 civil servants and 70 senior police officials.

The letters, signed by BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, made allegations on different issues.

Talking to reporters after submitting the letters, Alal said, "We didn't make wholesale allegations. Today [yesterday], we have submitted all the evidence in written form."

He said a level playing field has not yet been created.

"All the elements are there so that we stay away from the election. The Election Commission gave many directives, but none of those has yet been implemented. We want implementation of all its orders.

"We demand withdrawal of more than 60 top police officials, including the deputy and additional inspectors general of police. In the list, we have mentioned the names and other identities of the officials who are involved in

making the ground even more uneven," he said.

In one of the letters, the alliance alleged that the ruling party-backed civil servants, who were in different tiers of the civil administration before the announcement of the polls schedule, were still in office. It termed the incident unexpected.

The Oikyafront said the EC secretary cannot be kept in any post relating to the parliamentary polls during the election period as his "neutrality was questionable."

Helal Uddin served as the deputy commissioner of Faridpur for four years after the Awami League had assumed office in 2009. After being promoted to joint secretary, he joined as divisional commissioner of Rajshahi in 2012, the alliance said.

During the 2014 national election, he performed as the coordinator of Rajshahi division and was promoted to additional secretary "as a reward". He worked as the divisional commissioner

of Dhaka before joining the EC as its secretary.

"More than 100 officials of BCS '82, '82 (special) and '84 batches were superseded to make him secretary," said the letter, adding that the alliance came to know from sources that the EC secretary was showing intelligence reports to commission officials and threatening them.

The Oikyafront alleged that Faiz Ahmed was made public administration secretary to "arrange" the field level administration as per the government's "evil design".

"He became the junior-most secretary in the history of the public administration ministry," the letter said.

Faiz was involved in Chhatra League politics and was the PS to former state minister KM Jahangir, read the letter.

The opposition alliance also raised question about the neutrality of Home Secretary Kamal Uddin Ahmed, saying that he was a "revengeful" official and that he too was involved in Chhatra

League politics.

Apart from the secretaries, the alliance demanded withdrawal of two divisional commissioners and 17 deputy commissioners who have been made returning officers for the December 30 polls.

In another letter, it demanded withdrawal of 70 officials of the law enforcement agencies, including Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Asaduzzaman Mia and Director General of Rab Benazir Ahmed. It demanded the EC keep the officials away from election duties.

The Oikyafront also called for stopping the publicity of "so-called development works" with photographs of the prime minister, ministers and lawmakers on the electronic and digital display boards of government establishments.

Terminating harassment of possible polling officials by police unprecedentedly, the alliance asked the EC to take strict measures to stop it.

Stay alert

FROM PAGE 1

After December 15, small teams of the armed forces will visit district towns to recce where they will stay and how they will travel to remote areas, said the CEC.

At the meeting attended by the inspector general of police, metropolitan commissioners, deputy inspectors general, and superintendents of police of districts, Huda asked police to ensure coordination with the armed forces.

The CEC issued 12 directives to the law enforcers, including providing other forces accurate information about political and social situation in the districts.

Huda said the EC alone cannot hold a fair election. "The safety of the people, polling agents, polling centres, and all other kinds of safety depend on you. You've lots of responsibilities."

He asked them not to arrest anyone without warrant or file any case to harass anyone.

At a closed-door session of the meeting, Election Commissioner Mahub Talukder in a statement said they cannot allow the election to be made questionable by anyone. "If we became questionable, the responsibility will lie with the law enforcers," a meeting source quoted Mahub as

saying.

The DMP commissioner directed police not to file "ghost cases" but it continued, Mahub was quoted as saying.

"How will police become neutral overnight when they had been filing ghost cases before the polls schedule was announced?" he asked.

As the meeting was going on yesterday, a delegation of the BNP submitted to the CEC's office a list of 70 top police officials it deemed "partisan" and demanded they be withdrawn.

Huda said the EC has been receiving complaints about police officials. "We have faith in you. That doesn't mean you won't be monitored. But don't be scared of that," said the CEC.

"No innocent person will be punished. If any complaint is lodged against any member of law enforcement agencies, the commission will investigate it first," he added.

At the close-door session, several SPs drew the ECs attention to political parties' demand for "wholesale transfers" of police officials.

The EC assured them that no such measure would be taken without investigation, meeting sources said.

They quoted an SP as saying, "The way the BNP and the Oikyafront are getting organised, they will be more

powerful and we need to be watchful."

None of the election commissioners commented on the SPs observation.

Several other SPs said they had intelligence information that in some districts, Oikyafront candidates and their supporters would create chaos at targeted centres. In response, the EC asked them to be alert.

"A list of those probable troublemakers might be made," said an SP wishing anonymity.

The CEC directed police to keep an eye on "listed goons" irrespective of their political affiliation and provide necessary assistance to magistrates in running mobile courts.

He also asked police to ensure safety of minority communities so that they could cast their votes safely.

EC Secretary Helal Uddin Ahmed at the meeting asked top police officials to expedite drive against illegal arms. He proposed banning brandishing of legal arms.

"You should keep in mind that all candidates get equal opportunities during the campaign and you should ensure a level playing field for them," he said.

BNP'S CASE LIST

The CEC said the BNP did not provide a list of the cases filed against their

Provide loan info to ROs

BB asks banks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Bank yesterday asked all banks to submit to returning officers the loan statements of the defaulters seeking to contest the December 30 national polls.

As there is no scope for defaulters to take part in the parliamentary election as per the Representation of the People's Order 1972, banks must take required measures in this regard, according to a central bank instruction given to all lenders.

Banks have been asked to collect detailed information of candidates from the returning officers after submission of the nomination papers.

All contestants will have to submit their nomination papers within November 28 in line with the Election Commission's directives.

Banks will have to deploy their officials concerned at the returning officers' offices the day candidates' nomination papers are scrutinised.

Information pertaining to the defaulted loans should be provided before the scrutiny of the nomination papers, if required.

Tasty fruit

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Moharaj Chakma last year planted 1,500 trees on five acres of land. He hopes to see profit pouring in within a few years.

Oranges produced in Naniarchar are sweeter and popular among customers, Priti Moy Chakma, a trader who buys oranges from the upazila every year, told this correspondent.

Officials at Rangamati Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) said oranges produced at Sajek in Baghaichhari upazila were once famous not only in the Chattogram Hill Tracts but all across the country.

Naniarchar upazila has recently gained name for orange production, they said.

This year, 8,000 tonnes of oranges were produced on 745 hectares of land in the hilly district, according to the DAE.

Paban Kumar Chakma, deputy director at Rangamati DAE, noted that weather condition had been suitable for production this year.

Tigers edge dramatic day

FROM PAGE 1

On what looks likely to become a raging turner over the next four days at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium, and with four spinners in the Bangladesh lineup, the score may already have become a touch too hot to handle for the visitors who are known to be vulnerable against spin.

But half an hour into the last session, which started with Bangladesh on a formidable 216 for three, a four-wicket burst from fast bowler Shannon Gabriel promised a happier end to the day for the visitors.

For the first two sessions, Gabriel was the proverbial sleeping giant as he was a touch wayward in his quest for extra pace and came in for punishment, particularly from Mominul. But after the tea break the big fast bowler found his radar and a bit of reverse swing. Mominul started the slide by succumbing to the temptation he had avoided for 166 prior deliveries as he chased after a wide ball from Gabriel in the 60th over to give wicketkeeper Shane Dowrich his third catch of the innings. Mominul walked back for 120 -- which included 10 fours and a six --

but at 222 for four Bangladesh were still in charge.

That changed in the same over when a sharp inswinger caught Mushfiqur Rahim in front, and Gabriel completely changed the complexion by getting Mahmudullah Riyad and Shakib Al Hasan in his next two overs, completing a collapse of four wickets for 13 runs in 4.3 overs. Mahmudullah was beaten by pace and inward movement to be bowled for three and Shakib failed to get behind the line of the ball as he too was bowled, albeit with the help of an inside edge. Mehedi Hasan Miraz was then bowled with the score on 259 for eight, completely squared up by a big turner from left-arm spinner Jomel Warrican. By the end of the day, however, that sharp turn will give off-spinner Mehedi more encouragement for today's ventures.

Earlier, Shakib won the toss and gave his team first use of a pitch that looked likely to deteriorate as the match wore on. However, Bangladesh's opening trails continued as a ball just outside off stump from Kemar Roach, the third of the

match, took a thin edge off Soumya Sarkar's bat and nestled in keeper Shane Dowrich's glove, ending the left-hander's first innings back in Test cricket after more than a year for a three-ball duck.

Roach could also have accounted for Imrul Kayes in the fifth over when the opener, on three, defensively chased at a ball that started outside off stump and edged it to second slip, where Roston Chase dropped a simple chance. Even as Imrul looked unsure, Mominul proved equal to the task, hitting a brace of boundaries in the sixth over from Gabriel to get moving on his favourite ground. The intent was to play the ball on merit and cash in on anything loose and despite leaving many more balls, he reached his fifty off just 69 deliveries in the 24th over.

Imrul enjoyed another life on 17 when he was caught off a no-ball in the 13th over off left-arm spinner Warrican, but his good fortune ran out when he was caught at short leg off the same bowler for 44, ending the 104-run stand as Bangladesh went to lunch on 105 for two in 27 overs.

After the break, it was Mominul's turn to enjoy the rub of the green when he pushed forward to leg-spinner Devendra Bishoo in the 35th over only for Dowrich to drop the edge behind the stumps. That shot and the one he eventually fell to were exceptions to the norm of playing on merit. That much could not be said of Mohammad Mithun, who proved that he was not yet ready for a top-order position when he went for a wild heave off Bishoo in the 43rd over. The resultant top edge was gratefully accepted by Dowrich as Bangladesh lost their third wicket with 153 on the board.

In the company of Shakib, Mominul carried on in serene fashion even as Bishoo started getting sharp turn. On 91 in the 49th over, he hit Bishoo for a big six over wide long on and brought up his eighth Test century with a cut past point for four off Chase. The duo played out the next seven overs without trouble as the hosts went in for a relaxing cup of tea on 216 for three, with little clue about the drama to follow.

TIB calls for climate

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TIB official said. Iftekhazaman suggested that the government should work in concert with non-government climate actors at the negotiation stage in the national interest, as done by Sri Lanka and India.

The TIB organised the press conference ahead of the 24th Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Poland next month.

The programme is expected to finalise the outline of the rulebook on implementing the 2015 Paris Agreement for making disbursement of climate fund tangible.

Iftekhazaman said it was imperative to enhance the ability and good governance in spending climate fund as the governance was not at desirable level.

Sumaiya Khair, adviser to TIB executive management, said, "Bangladeshi organisations do not yet fully meet the standards required by the Green Climate Fund [GCF] for allocation of fund. So, the government has to come forward to enhance organisational efficiency and ability to utilise climate fund." Lack of public participation, availability of information, accountability,

fair practice and independent auditing in utilisation of climate fund remain as the key challenges to climate adaptation, said M Zakir Hossain Khan, head of TIB Climate Finance Governance, while reading out a written statement.

Bangladesh alone needs \$2.5 billion annually for climate adaptation measures to combat climate change impacts. The country, however, has so far received \$85 million from the GCF to finance three projects.

Though Bangladesh has instituted a Climate Change Trust Fund with an allocation of Tk 3,500 crore from its domestic sources, the allocation has decreased over the years.

Zakir said as per 2009 Copenhagen climate agreement, the industrialist countries under "polluters pay policy" were pledge-bound to pay into the fund which would increase to \$100 billion by 2020.

As per the 2015 Paris Agreement, the industrialist countries made a commitment to continue the compensation at the same rate until 2025, he added.

But the GCF, the key climate fund channel, has so far received only \$7 billion from the developed countries since 2010 for climate adaptation, said Zakir.