



"We have a ministry of religious affairs which allocates Tk 11 for a Muslim and Tk 2 for a Hindu, Buddhist or Christian."
SHAHRIAR KABIR, PRESIDENT OF GHATAK DALAL NIRMUL COMMITTEE (PAGE 3)

"The High Court order ahead of the national election will undoubtedly raise many questions in the public mind. It was passed so that the BNP chief cannot join the election."
BNP SECRETARY GENERAL MIRZA FAKHRUL ISLAM ALAMGIR (PAGE 1)

"I don't believe it."
US PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP REFUSES TO BELIEVE HIS OWN GOVERNMENT'S CLIMATE REPORT (PAGE 8)

CANDIDATES OF MAJOR ALLIANCES Discords delay finalising lists

1,700 filing nominations from ruling, opposition camps; last day for submission today

SHAKHAWAT LITON and WASIM BIN HABIB

Around 1,700 aspirants from alliances led by Awami League and BNP are filing nominations in 300 constituencies as both the camps failed to pick a single contender in every seat for the upcoming parliamentary election. The two major political parties held a series of meetings with their allies for more than a week but the seat-sharing could not be settled, delaying the unveiling of the final list of candidates. The discord caused the AL and BNP to let their partners file nomination papers as many as they want. Today is the last day for submission. The alliances now look to resume the seat-sharing talks after getting results of the scrutiny of nomination papers by the ROs on December 2. They will have more than a week to settle the disputes as the final candidate in a constituency must be picked by December 9, the last date for withdrawal of nomination papers. But for now, the grand alliance led by the ruling AL is allowing 663 aspirants to file nominations. And the BNP-led 20-party alliance and Jatiya Oikyafront have 1,023. Once they finalise the candidate in a constituency, other aspirants either will have to quit the race or their candidacies will automatically be void as they will not get electoral symbols of the respective parties. The alliances will then formally disclose the lists of their nominees.

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Ballot boxes and other polling materials are being sent to districts in Barishal division as part of preparations for the December 30 national election. The photo was taken in front of the senior district election officer's office in Kashipur area of Barishal city on Monday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

Hasina files nominations for 2 seats

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday had her nomination papers submitted for Rangpur-6 and Gopalganj-3.



Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury filed nomination papers on the PM's behalf in Rangpur-6. Later, the Speaker filed her nomination papers in the same constituency. The nominations were submitted to TMA Momen, assistant returning officer and also the Pirganj upazila nirbahi officer, around 12:15pm.

Talking to The Daily Star over the phone, the Speaker said, "The Awami League and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will decide who will contest the national election from the constituency." Chairman of the

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BNP puts trust in 60 new faces

Former student leaders, members of minority communities among them

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Around 60 new faces got BNP tickets for the December 30 parliamentary election and most of them are former student leaders and family members of veteran or deceased party leaders. The BNP handed out nominations for 280 constituencies over the last two days. It picked some young female aspirants, including popular singer Kanak Chapa. About a dozen people of religious and ethnic minorities received the party nomination. "We tried to bring diversity in nominating candidates. We tried to give nomination to a good number of candidates of

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ELIGIBILITY FOR CONTESTING ELECTION HC ruling apparently a blow to Khaleda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A High Court ruling yesterday apparently dealt a blow to BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's bid to contest the December 30 polls as it rejected five applications seeking suspension or a stay on conviction and sentences. The applications were filed by five BNP leaders, including AZM Zahid Hossain, who wanted a stay or suspension so that they can contest the upcoming election. While delivering the order, the bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice KM Hafizul Alam said a person sentenced to more than two years in jail cannot contest any election unless five years have passed after serving the sentence even if an appeal against the conviction is pending. This means Khaleda, now in jail after being convicted and sentenced to 17 years in jail in two graft cases, may not be allowed to contest the upcoming election. A clearer picture of the former prime minister's participation in the polls could



emerge following a hearing on a stay petition at the Supreme Court today.

Zahid, a leader of pro-BNP Doctors' Association of Bangladesh, who was convicted and sentenced to 13 years' imprisonment in a corruption case, filed the petition immediately after the HC passed the order yesterday. The petition was included as "item no-4" in today's cause list of the SC for hearing. Zahid's lawyer Ahsanul Karim told The Daily Star that in the past, the Indian Supreme Court suspended conviction and jail sentences of some people and allowed them to contest elections there. Khairul Alam Chowdhury, another counsel for the BNP leader, said his client in the petition also challenged the HC order that rejected his application seeking suspension of his conviction and sentence.

Citing from the stay petition, Khairul mentioned that it would not be unconstitutional if Zahid's conviction and sentence are

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Maya's ticket cancelled

PM consoles 4 leaders who were denied nomination

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina yesterday cancelled the AL nominations for Disaster Management Minister Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya and incumbent Mohammed Shamsul Hoque Bhuiyan of Chandpur, AL sources said. Maya's nomination for Chandpur-2 was given to local AL leader Nurul Alam Ruhul while Shamsul's ticket for Chandpur-4 was given to Jatiya Press Club President Muhammad Shafiqur Rahman.

Hasina handed over the nomination papers to Nurul and Shafiqur after calling them to the Gono Bhaban yesterday.

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LAW AND ORDER IN POLLS

Police, Rab seek Tk 462cr from EC

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The police and Rapid Action Battalion have sought more than half of the total election budget of Tk 700 crore for maintaining law and order during the upcoming national polls.

"We have received a proposal from the police and Rab seeking Tk 462 crore for carrying out election duties," Abdul Momin Sarkar, senior assistant secretary (budget) at the Election Commission, told The Daily Star.

He said Border Guard Bangladesh asked for Tk 73 crore for the same purpose. Members of the police, Rab, Ansar & VDP, BGB, Coast Guard and several intelligence agencies will be deployed during the December 30 election. Besides, the army will also be deployed.

"We are yet to receive a budget proposal from the army," Momin added.

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Jamaat men to use 'sheaf of paddy'

RASHIDUL HASAN

Jamaat has finally decided that its aspirants will contest the December 30 parliamentary election with "sheaf of paddy", the electoral symbol of BNP, party insiders said.

Jamaat-e-Islami, a key partner in the BNP-led 20-party alliance, has so far got 25 seats to run under the banner of the combine, claimed Syed Abdullah Md Taher, a member of the party's central executive council.

Talking to The Daily Star last night, Taher, who has been picked for

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Accord: blessing turns burden?

REFAJET ULLAH MIRDHA

The call for suspending the operations of the Accord, an inspection and remediation platform of more than 200 global clothing retailers and brands, has been getting louder as garment factory owners are being forced to spend several billion dollars to improve workplace safety.

It comes despite international community's call for its continuation.

The platform was set up to streamline Bangladesh's apparel industry after the Rana Plaza disaster that claimed more than 1,100 lives in 2013.

But over the years, it has turned into "a nightmare from a blessing," putting "excessive" pressure on factories to spend billions

of dollars on compliance issues even as apparel prices fall, exporters say.

Just two weeks ago, the platform sent letters to its signatories (buyers) to sever business ties with 532 RMG factories in Bangladesh for their "slow progress" in upgradation.

The Supreme Court is expected to deliver a verdict on an Accord petition for extension tomorrow.

After an initial five-year term that ended in May this year, the High Court extended its contract by six months until November 30. The Netherlands-based watchdog now wants another extension until 2021 to "complete its unfinished work".

Recently, the European Parliament

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Wearing a hat covered with sheaf of paddy, the BNP's electoral symbol, a man sells campaign materials at a shop at the party's Nayapaltan central office building in the city yesterday. The prices of the items range from Tk 30 to Tk 300. With the national election just over a month away, sales of such materials are growing.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

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