



Weighed down by cases

In fear of police harassment, BNP nominees doubt if they'll be able to campaign freely

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Saiful Alam Nirob could not even appear at the returning officer's office to file his nomination papers fearing police harassment.

A BNP nominee for Dhaka-12, he is currently facing the highest number of cases -- as many as 267 -- filed against anyone from his party.

He is also on top of all the 3,065 aspirants, who submitted nomination papers for the December 30 polls, in terms of number of cases against any hopeful.

Sent by aides, his nomination papers were accepted by the RO. His main challenger in the polls is Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, the current lawmaker of the constituency from the ruling Awami League.

"When the electioneering will begin, I don't know how I would conduct my campaign because police are raiding my area regularly. Neither me nor my party leaders in my area are staying at home," he told this newspaper.

Nirob, president of Jubo Dal, had got entangled in controversies because of many wrongdoings and unlawful activities when the BNP-led alliance was in power in 2001-06.

Now on bail, he has been facing criminal cases on various charges since 2010.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Ahead of the December 30 polls, many printing presses in the capital pass busy hours bringing out leaflets and posters of political leaders and their parties. Some of them are running throughout the night to hit the production target. The photo was taken in Babu Bazar area of old Dhaka on Sunday. Related story on page 5.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Story of six seats

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The strategy of fielding candidates by the members of the major opposition alliances led by the BNP saved them from having no candidate in three seats -- Bogura-7, Jamalpur-4 and Rangpur-5.

During the scrutiny on Sunday, nominations of all BNP candidates in six constituencies were rejected by the returning officers on different grounds. The seats are Bogura-7, Jamalpur-4, Rangpur-5, Manikganj- 2, Dhaka-1 and Shariatpur-1.

In Jamalpur-4, nomination paper of Rabiul Islam Tarafder of Gonoforum, a component of Jatiya Oikyafront, was accepted.

The nomination paper of BNP candidate Shamim Talukdar, a local upazila chairman, was rejected as the returning officer

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

JP grows restive as polls near

Replaces Hawlader with Ranga as its secretary general

RASHIDUL HASAN

Less than four weeks before the December 30 election, the Jatiya Party in a sudden move yesterday removed Ruhul Amin Hawlader from the secretary general's post and replaced him with State Minister for LGRD Moshirur Rahman Ranga.



Ranga



Hawlader

SEE PAGE 10 COL 5

64pc polling centres risky

Dhaka div has highest number of such centres, say police

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Sixty-four percent of the polling centres across the country are vulnerable to violence, with the highest number of such centres in Dhaka division, and police have finalised an elaborate security plan giving importance to those.

Out of the 40,273 polling centres for the December 30 national election, police have identified 25,827 as "important".

PHOTO ON PAGE 2

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

NOMINATIONS REJECTED

BNP 141, AL 3

84 file appeals with EC; hearing starts on Thursday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP had as many as 141 nominations rejected while their rival the ruling Awami League only had three, sources in the Election Commission said.

The BNP nominated 696 leaders in 295 seats as part of its strategy to field multiple candidates in almost all constituencies. It opted for this strategy fearing some candidates would be rejected by the EC on various grounds, including conviction in cases and

defaulting on loans.

The ruling AL fielded 281 candidates in 264 constituencies with multiple candidates in 17 seats.

According to an EC statement, the returning officers during scrutiny on Sunday rejected 786 (25.64 percent) of the 3,065 nominations on the grounds of being convicted, defaulting on loans, and non-payment of utility bills.

In the 2008 parliamentary polls, the ROs

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

2 AL men killed in factional clash

STAR REPORT

At least two Awami League men were killed and 10 others injured in a factional clash in Pabna yesterday, following previous rivalry over establishing supremacy in an area.

The dead are Lashkar Khan, 65, father of AL leader Sultan Khan of Khan Para village, and Abdul Malek Sheikh, 45, son of late Ahed Sheikh of Aurangabad village of Sadar upazila.

The clash took place around 6:00pm, in Khan Para under Sadar upazila, between supporters of Varara union parishad's incumbent chairman Abu Sayed, also

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2
SWECHCHASEBAK LEAGUE LEADER MURDERED -- PAGE 10



Sitting by a walkway on the High Court premises, some BNP men are having lunch they bought from nearby food stalls. Around 200 people from Cumilla's Brahmanpara appeared before the court yesterday and sought anticipatory bail in a case filed with the local police station. Many of them got bail.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Separate Ijtema can bring peace

Says leader of one of the two feuding Tabligh factions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After Saturday's factional clash of Tabligh Jamaat at the Ijtema ground, one group yesterday suggested that separate Biswa Ijtema could be arranged for the feuding factions.

It said peace between the two groups could be achieved if Tabligh was reunited or the country's largest Islamic congregation was held separately.

Both groups can hold the Bishaw Ijtema at Tongi separately in a specified time if unity is not possible, said Maulana Ashraf Ali, a murubbi (leader) of Tabligh men loyal to Indian scholar Maulana Saad Kandhalvi.

He was addressing a press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity to describe Saturday's infighting that left one person killed and more than 200 injured.

Two cases have been filed with Tongi West police over the clash in the last two days.

SEE PAGE 13 COL 1

ILLEGAL ARMS TRADE

Lot of chatter ahead of polls

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Law enforcers on surveillance have been picking up a lot of chatter on illegal arms trade ahead of the national election.

Mobile surveillance led law enforcers to several such gangs which have been active lately, said officials of Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CITC), adding that criminal groups were using codenames for different explosives and firearms for communication.

They are using "mud" for explosives, "chakti" for revolvers and "shaater maal" or "paacher maal" for pistols.

Police sources said "shaater maal" can be loaded with seven bullets at a time while "paacher maal" with five.

However, the use of codenames for firearms is nothing new. In the past, criminals used "elephant" to refer to big firearms, "horse" for revolver and "banyan tree" to mean bullets.

Codename "mud" has replaced "sound box", a popular codename used in the past for explosives in the underworld, CITC officials said.

The counter-terrorism unit came to know about the latest use of codenames following the arrests of four people earlier this year.

Three of the arrestees -- Anwar Hossain Babu of Sarker Arms Company,

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



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