



Clockwise from left, With only a few days left, preparations for the month-long Amar Ekushey Grantha Mela in full swing at Suhrawardy Udyan. Workers setting up stalls at the venue. Wheelchairs being cleaned at Bangla Academy, to provide assistance to people with disabilities at the book fair. The photos were taken yesterday.



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED, RASHED SHUMON

ROHINGYA CRISIS Lot of challenges still there for Bangladesh Says disaster management expert

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Greater level of coordination and accountability are imperative to address the complex humanitarian crisis of the Rohingya, said Dr Alistair Cook, a disaster management expert, yesterday.

He said while Bangladesh has been a champion in managing natural disasters like floods and cyclones, the experience of handling humanitarian emergency created by the massive influx of Rohingyas to Cox's Bazar since August 2017 is new, which has created a lot of new challenges.

Addressing the crisis involved a number of organisations -- local and central, civil and military -- as well as many UN agencies and international and local NGOs, Dr Cook said in a public lecture organised by the Centre for Peace and Justice, Brac University at the Brac Centre Inn in the capital.

Alistair Cook, coordinator of Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Programme and research fellow at the Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, said in the early days of the influx, it was local people and individuals who provided food to the Rohingya, and eventually the government, UN and other actors stepped in.

Over the subsequent months, many of the issues including food, water, health, sanitation and infrastructure were managed. However, a lot of challenges remain in terms of coordination, funding, accountability and localisation.

"Effective coordination between different actors in this emergency response is made more challenging with the

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DNCC BY-POLLS
JP starts
nomination
process

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Party (JP) yesterday started distributing nomination forms to its mayor and councillor aspirants in the upcoming Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) by-election scheduled for February 28.

JP presidium member SM Fayzal Chisti distributed the forms at the party chairman's Banani office.

"The party participates in every election as it is an election-oriented political organisation," said Fayzal Chisti, president of Dhaka (North) city unit of JP.

MA Razzak Khan, joint office secretary of JP central committee, was present, along with leaders of Dhaka (North) unit.

Allow journos, CCTV inside polling centres

Demand student orgs in recommendation for Ducsu electoral code of conduct; BCL doesn't want former leaders in campaigning

DU CORRESPONDENT

All students' organisations except for Bangladesh Chhatra League, a pro-Awami League student body, have demanded that the Dhaka University authorities allow former leaders of the organisations to take part in the electioneering in the upcoming Dhaka University Central Students' Union (Ducsu) polls.

They raised the demand in their recommendations for formulating electoral code of conduct. They also demanded unrestricted movement of journalists inside polling centres and CCTV cameras.

To formulate the code, DU Vice-

Chancellor Prof Md Akhtaruzzaman on January 19 formed a seven-member committee, with Pro-VC (academic) Prof Nasreen Ahmed as convener.

On Thursday, the committee formulated a draft code and sent it to all active campus-based student organisations. It also sought their recommendations by Saturday for bringing amendments.

BCL leaders notified DU authorities about their recommendations verbally while others submitted theirs to the proctor's office in writing on Saturday.

Leaders of the recent quota reform movement, who expressed their desire to contest the Ducsu polls, also submitted their propositions.

Talking to The Daily Star, BCL DU

unit general secretary Saddam Hussain said they have demanded that loud-speakers should be used only inside the auditorium and during rallies.

Besides, electioneering should be controlled centrally to maintain a congenial atmosphere on the campus, he added.

Asked about the demand of allowing former leaders to take part in the election campaign, he said students of the university will not allow any outsiders.

Recommendations of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal include bringing polling booths under CCTV surveillance, not arresting any candidates after announcing election schedule and unrestricted

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ASK concerned over 'vigilante' killings of two rape suspects

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) yesterday expressed concern over the recent recovery of bullet-hit bodies of two accused in rape cases along with notes -- citing their identities and the rape incidents -- found beside them.

In a statement, the rights group called for reviewing the incidents immediately and strengthening lawful punishment process for any offense.

Police recovered the bullet-hit body of Ripon, a main accused in a case for raping a girl, in Ashulia outside the capital on January 17, ASK said citing media reports.

A piece of paper citing Ripon's identity and rape incident was tied to his throat, it said.

His family claimed some men in plainclothes identifying themselves as detectives picked him up. However,

Detective Branch of Police has denied the claim.

In a separate incident on Saturday, a bullet-hit body of an accused in a rape case was recovered in Kathalia of Jhalakathi. A similar note was strung to the corpse's throat.

ASK is concerned over two similar incidents taking place within the span of a short time, the statement said.

"ASK thinks fair investigation into both the incidents is required that will unearth the truth," it said.

According to the country's constitution and basic principles of human rights, any individual has the right to get justice in lawful way, ASK said.

"Such extra-judicial killing sends wrong message to the society. It also creates distrust in people's mind over rule of law, law enforcement agencies, the judiciary and above all the state which is not good for the state at all," it said.

Policemen don't take bribes openly anymore

Says DMP chief

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Commissioner Asaduzzaman Mia yesterday said police used to extort people earlier, tortured them and produced them to courts after arresting them in pending cases filed under Section 54 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC), but the scenario has changed.

"Police used to take bribe openly. Some journalists were involved in this crime, but now all these have stopped. Yellow journalism has now gone to museum," the DMP commissioner said while exchanging views with newly-elected leaders of Crime Reporters Association of Bangladesh (CRAB) yesterday.

He said now if any policeman takes bribe, they do it very secretly, as proper punitive measures are taken against them if higher official come to know about it.

Asaduzzaman Mia also said he has directed officials to find out whether any fake case has been filed with any police station in DMP in the last six months. "If

anyone is found to be accused in any fake case, the person will be released," he said.

The DMP chief also said police members have to shun the tendency of using force and high-handed attitude.

"Do not arrest people and send them to court just because you have the power," he said, adding that power is not permanent.

Asaduzzaman Mia also said terrorism, militancy and drugs are the main obstacles in establishing good governance in the country.

"Now it is our prime challenge to root out terrorism, militancy and drug-smuggling for establishing good governance," he said.

The DMP chief said the working pattern of the crime reporters and police is similar, as both sides want to serve the people's interest. The congenial relationship between the two will remain uninterrupted, the DMP commissioner hoped.

CRAB President Abul Khair, General Secretary Dipu Sarwar and other leaders of the association were present at the meeting held at the commissioner's office.

Follow sustainable rural dev plan

Green activists urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Environmental activists yesterday urged the government to follow a sustainable development plan while modernising the village areas, so that rural biodiversity and ecosystem remain unharmed.

Speaking at a seminar in the capital's Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU), they said the government's commitment to modernise villages is appreciating. But if a proper and sustainable plan is not followed, the development scheme will not be beneficial.

Poribesh Bachao Andolon (Poba), an organisation of green activists, and Bangladesh Resource Center for Indigenous Knowledge (BARCIK) jointly organised the seminar.

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A motorbiker gets on a busy footpath at Banglamotor intersection in the capital yesterday, with the Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue packed with bumper-to-bumper traffic, halted on a red light. Motorcyclists invading the footpaths to make their way past traffic jam continue to be a nuisance, despite a traffic discipline fortnight currently underway.



Newly appointed Chief of Bangladesh Naval Staff Vice Admiral Abu Mozaffar Mohiuddin Mohammad Aurangzeb Chowdhury being adorned with the rank badge yesterday by Bangladesh Army Chief of Staff Gen Aziz Ahmed and Bangladesh Air Force Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Masihuzzaman Serniabat. The ceremony was held in presence of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office.

PHOTO: PID

British envoy praises govt's efforts for political dialogue

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

British High Commissioner in Dhaka Alison Blake has highly appreciated the government's offer to hold a dialogue with other political parties.

She said the UK welcomes the government's move to establish a dialogue with all political parties as Bangladesh has set a very ambitious target of becoming a fully developed country by 2041.

Talking to reporters after a meeting with Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen at Foreign Ministry yesterday, Blake lauded Bangladesh's tremendous development in various sectors.

The High Commissioner said the UK will work with Bangladesh to counter terrorism, improve conditions of trade, and continue to support Bangladesh's readymade garments sector.

Recalling the statement made by British Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific Mark Field after the December 30 parliamentary elections, she said the British government is hopeful that "violence and credible reports of irregularities" will be investigated.

On the question of whether they discussed the issue of sending back BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman since he has been convicted in cases, the British envoy said they talked about an entire range of bilateral issues and it wouldn't be appropriate to go into details.

Blake also praised the government for their work in the fields of women empowerment, poverty reduction, and economic and social development.

The British High Commissioner said British investors are very interested to do business in Bangladesh, particularly in the infrastructure sector.

The foreign minister thanked the UK for extending support during Rohingya crisis, and urged the ambassador to assist in Rohingya repatriation initiatives.

CHINESE AMBASSADOR MEETS FM
Meanwhile in another meeting yesterday, the Chinese envoy to Bangladesh wished to strengthen practical cooperation between two countries and accelerate implementation of projects for common development and prosperity under the Belt and Road Initiative.

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GRAFT CHARGES Kaiser Hamid gets bail in two cases

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted bail to former footballer Kaiser Hamid in connection with two cases filed over "fraudulence of money".

Metropolitan Magistrate Md Mamunur Rashid passed the order after his lawyer submitted two petitions seeking bail in the cases.

However, Kaiser could not be freed as another case filed against him on similar charges is still pending with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's court in Dhaka.

The three cases were filed with the Dhaka CMM court in July and August in 2014. The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of police is investigating all the three cases.

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