

CONTROVERSIAL ACTIVITIES

# BCL removes 21 from central body

## 11 others resign

DU CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chhatra League, the pro-Awami League student organisation, last night relieved 21 members of its central executive committee of their posts.

The move comes after 11 others submitted their resignation at different times, amid allegations that some members of the committee were involved in various irregularities and misdeeds, including being non-students, alleged extortionists, drug dealers, and former expelled BCL members.

The 21 were relieved of their duties after allegations brought against them were found to be true, read a press statement from the BCL.

The committee has 301 members. The now-vacant posts include those of 18 vice-presidents, three assistant secretaries, an office secretary, a religion affairs secretary, a health affairs secretary, two deputy office

secretaries, two deputy health affairs secretaries, two deputy agricultural affairs secretaries, two deputy cultural affairs secretaries, one deputy library affairs secretary, and one deputy publication affairs secretary.

Earlier, a faction of BCL leaders began an agitation alleging that the new central committee included a few married people, non-students, extortionists, expelled BCL men, drug dealers and addicts.

At a meeting in May, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina instructed the then BCL president and general secretary to drop the controversial leaders from the central committee.

Later, Chhatra League revealed a list of 16 "controversial leaders" who were awarded different posts in the committee.

On May 28, the student wing announced that it would vacate 19 posts primarily, in the face of the protests.

### ROHINGYAS REFUGEES

# Myanmar seizes boat carrying 173

AFP, Yangon

Myanmar detained 173 Rohingyas on a boat off the southern coast, authorities said yesterday, amid signs that more members of the minority group are making perilous sea voyages to escape persecution.

The boat seizure came just days after Myanmar's leader and Nobel peace laureate Aung San Suu Kyi addressed the UN's top court to deny allegations of a genocidal campaign against the ethnic minority.

With the monsoon over and seas relatively calm, increasing numbers of Rohingya Muslims are once again risking their lives attempting to reach Malaysia or Indonesia.

Bangladeshi authorities say they are stopping one or two boats a week leaving the country's shores, and many more are thought to evade patrols.

Few make it as far south as Kawthung, Myanmar's southernmost tip, where on Sunday the country's navy picked up the 173-strong Rohingya group, including 69 women and 22 children, a military spokesman told AFP.

"We will hand them over to immigration authorities and police to take action," said Zaw Min Tun, adding they had come from camps in Bangladesh and were heading to Malaysia.

Seven boatmen were also arrested

in the vessel's seizure some 135 miles (217km) off Myanmar's coast, he said.

Life is becoming increasingly difficult in the sprawling camps that are home to nearly one million Rohingyas, around 750,000 of whom fled a crackdown by Myanmar's military in 2017.

Officially they are forbidden to leave the settlements, but the camps' vast size means they are difficult to police.

Bangladesh has stoked fear among the Rohingyas by erecting barbed-wire fences around the sites and installing checkpoints on nearby roads.

Rights groups condemn the move, saying it transforms the camps into a "big prison".

An internet blackout, the confiscation of SIM cards and phones, and a clampdown on illegal documentation papers are also making refugees' lives even less bearable.

Frustration is also growing in Bangladesh about hosting the refugees, especially after failed attempts to repatriate them.

The Rohingyas refuse to return to Myanmar until their security and rights are guaranteed.

Last week Suu Kyi rejected allegations of genocide against Myanmar at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), despite admitting the army may have used excessive force against the Rohingyas.



Chief minister of West Bengal state and leader of the Trinamool Congress (TMC) Mamata Banerjee, along with party supporters, walks in a mass rally to protest against the Indian government's Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) in Kolkata yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

# 'No CAB, no NRC'

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As the situation remain volatile, Congress chief Sonia Gandhi yesterday met President Ram Nath Kovind as the head of an opposition delegation and demanded that the Centre's new citizenship law be repealed, reported our New Delhi correspondent.

If he doesn't intervene the violence may spread further, the delegation told the president. Kovind has reportedly assured them of appropriate action.

In the eastern city of Kolkata, more than 20,000 protesters yesterday joined a fresh march led by West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, a fierce critic of Modi.

Banerjee, who also led protests on Monday, told the crowd the law would not be implemented "for as long as I am alive".

Addressing a rally in Jadavpur, she reiterated: "Our slogan is 'No CAB, No NRC in Bengal'."

She is among at least five state chief ministers who have vowed to reject the implementation of the CAA in their respective states.

Hardening her stand on the NRC, the Mamata government on Monday night ordered a halt to work on the National Population Register which is likely to do the spadework for NRC in the future, a move the central government says is aimed at weeding out illegal immigrants.

Filmmaker Gautam Ghosh, also at the march, told AFP the law would "divide the country".

"If the federal government tries to implement the law, there will be more bloodshed. People will not accept it," he added.

Train services were disrupted after railway tracks were blocked by protesters, while nearly 700 people have been arrested, Mamata said.

Authorities have imposed internet blackouts and used force to shut down rallies and sit-ins across several states, more specifically in the northeast region of the country.

In the northeastern state of Assam, the epicentre of the protests where four people died after being shot by police, a curfew imposed in some regions was lifted early yesterday.

The new round of rallies came as the Supreme Court yesterday referred petitions calling for a probe into allegations of police brutality to the states' High Courts.

Rioters had torched vehicles while police with batons fired tear gas and charged protesting students before storming Delhi's Jamia Millia Islamia university late Sunday.

The university's vice-chancellor said Monday 200 people were injured but police put the number at 39 students hurt with 30 officers also injured, one of them critically. Ten people had been arrested for rioting and mob violence but none of them was a student, police told the Hindustan Times yesterday.

Human Rights Watch called for police to show restraint, amid claims authorities were using unnecessary or excessive force to quell the unrest in several cities. Amnesty International also called for police to be investigated over allegations student protesters from Aligarh Muslim University in Uttar Pradesh state were beaten up by officers.

The ripple effect of protests on Indian universities campuses reached top educational institutions in the world including Oxford, Harvard and Yale and MIT where Indian students and scholars studying there staged demonstrations against the police crackdown on students of Jamia Millia University and Aligarh Muslim University (AMU).

Over 400 students from different US universities have issued a joint statement expressing solidarity with Jamia and AMU students baton-charged by the Delhi Police during protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act that turned violent.

# Protests spiral over flawed Razakars' list

STAR REPORT

People in several districts of the country protested the inclusion of freedom fighters' names in the controversial list of Razakars published by the Liberation War affairs ministry.

In Barishal, people set copies of the list on fire, while some, under the banner of Bangladesher Samajtantrik Dal (BSD), formed a human chain in front of Ashwini Kumar hall and brought out a procession in the city.

Manisha Chakrabarty, daughter of Tapan Kumar Chakrabarty, a freedom fighter whose name was included in the Razakars' list, yesterday at a press conference said Pakistani army brutally killed her grandfather during

the Liberation War.

"This humiliation is not only for my family, but also for the whole nation," said Manisha, who is also member secretary of Barishal unit BSD.

"The same ministry who recognised my father as a freedom fighter, how could they enlist him as a razakar?" Manisha asked.

She demanded punishment of those involved in the process.

Locals spontaneously kept their shops and businesses around Russel Square in Patharghata of Barguna closed off for six hours from 10:00am in protest of having names of freedom fighters, including Majibul Haq (Naya Bhai), on the list.

Locals and freedom fighters also held human chain and brought out procession in the area, after holding a press conference.

They also handed over a memorandum to the Prime Minister through Patharghata UNO Humayun Kabir, demanding that the names of freedom fighters in the upazila be dropped from the list.

Awami League Patharghata upazila unit also held a protest meeting in the same place. The upazila AL general secretary Jabir Hossain warned that they will hold tougher protest programmes if Majibul's name was not dropped from the list.

Majibul had also been the president

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# Outrageous blunder

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Al-Shams and anti-liberation elements who collaborated with the Pakistan occupation army in 1971.

At a press briefing that day, Mozammel said the list was based on records preserved at the home ministry, and that it was the first of the phases in which the government will make public the names of Razakars.

MINISTERS TRADE BLAME

Amid huge criticism in the media and the social networks, Mozammel yesterday morning said his ministry would withdraw the list if the number of mistakes in it is huge.

Talking to journalists after a programme in the capital, the minister said he accepts the responsibility though his ministry didn't prepare the list, and that they just published it.

"We did not edit the list, which was provided by the home ministry. We published it as it was," he added.

Earlier on Monday, Mozammel told this newspaper that the question of any mistake in the list did not arise.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan yesterday said his ministry provided the Razakars' list following a request from the Liberation War affairs ministry.

"The Liberation War affairs ministry didn't scrutinise the list before publishing it... The list should have been scrutinised," he said at a programme organised by Bangladesh Krishak League on Bangabandhu Avenue.

The home boss said the Liberation War affairs ministry didn't take into consideration the home ministry's "note" to scrutinise the list.

"In the note, we mentioned that cases [filed under the collaborators act] against many have been withdrawn. But the ministry didn't take it into consideration.

"I hope the Liberation War affairs ministry will publish a fresh list after thorough scrutiny," he added.

FURTHER CONTROVERSY

This newspaper found the names of 17 freedom fighters and Liberation War organisers on the Razakars' list. Of them, eight are from Bogura, two each from Jhalakathi, Barguna and Sunamganj, and one each from Barishal, Sirajganj and Chandpur.

Abdul Hye Semiabat, elder brother of former minister and Awami League leader Abdur Rab Semiabat, is on the list of Razakars from Barishal zone.

Expressing utter disappointment over it, Aman Semiabat, son of Abdul Hye Semiabat said, "How is it even possible? ... We don't understand. We strongly protest it."

MAG Kabir Bhulu, a veteran freedom fighter from Barishal, said, "I personally knew Abdul Hye Semiabat, who never had any links to anti-Liberation War elements. I knew him as a very good and gentle person."

The list also carries the names of freedom fighter Subhash Bakh and his relative Nazir Bakh, a Liberation War organiser, said freedom fighter Ali Amzad, also a senior lawyer at Sunamganj court.

"Subhash and I fought on the same front and risked our lives for the nation's freedom. Now his name is on the list of Razakars," said Amzad.

The list carries the name of Mirza Abdul Latif, who led the "Polashdanga Youth Camp", a group of freedom fighters.

He had been elected lawmaker from Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) in 1979 and from the Awami League in 1996 from Sirajganj.

"This is frustrating and humiliating," Hosne Ara Mirza, the wife of Latif and vice president of Sirajganj district AL, told local journalists.

Besides, two freedom fighters from Jhalakathi are on the list, said Dulal Saha, acting commander of Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Sangsad in the district, told this newspaper.

They are Shamsul Alam of Rajapur upazila, former president of the district Muktiyoddha Sangsad, and Matiar Rahman of the same upazila, a freedom fighter and organiser of the Liberation War, Dulal said.

The names of eight listed freedom fighters and organisers of the Liberation War are also on the list of Razakars from Bogura zone.

Of them, Kasim Uddin Ahmed and Mojibur Rahman were freedom fighters.

The rest -- Forez Uddin Ahmed, Taher Uddin Sarkar, Mohsin Ali Mollik, Habibur Rahman, Nojibur Rahman and Abdus Sukur -- were organisers of the Liberation War.

Abir Uddin, former deputy commander of Muktiyoddha Sangsad's Adamdighi Upazila unit, said all the eight had worked for the country's liberation.

"We are outraged, deeply shocked. We demand immediate correction of the flawed list."

Moreover, freedom fighter Md Humayun has been included in the list of Razakars from Chandpur zone.

He is the commander of Muktiyoddha Sangsad's Matlab Upazila Dakkhin unit.

Talking to The Daily Star, Abul Ahad Chowdhury, former three-time chairman of the Central Command Council of Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Sangsad, said, "Any list of Razakars must be prepared after thorough verification.

"Preparation and publication of such a list without scrutiny is a big blunder."

At first, it needs to be found out how the names of freedom fighters got included in the list and who were behind this.

"One should be extremely cautious while doing any work on the Liberation War," he stressed.

# 14 die in China mine blast

AFP, Beijing

Fourteen miners were killed yesterday in a coal and gas blast at a mine in southwest China, leaving two people still trapped underground, authorities said.

The accident in the early hours of yesterday was the latest in a series of mining incidents in China, where safety regulations are often poorly

enforced.

Two people were still trapped underground after the blast at Guanglong coal mine in Anlong county, Guizhou province, said the Southwest Guizhou Autonomous Prefecture government.

Seven workers were lifted to safety after the accident and rescue work was ongoing, according to local authorities.

# Mushfiqur kicks off

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however been a fitting end to a stroke-filled innings had he not been caught at long-on by Shoaib Malik off a Ravi Bopara delivery in the final over, when he tried to finish the game off with what could have been his fifth six of the game, which would also have given him his first T20 century. Khulna then reached the target with two balls to spare.

Before Mushfiqur, Pakistani batsman Shoaib's 50-ball 87 and an unbeaten 26-ball 40 from Bopara kept the fans entertained as Rajshahi posted a challenging total.

In the following game, Chattogram Challengers won by four wickets but were made to toil

by Sylhet Thunder to chase down a modest 129 for eight.

Chattogram's left-arm pacer Mehedi Hasan Rana's impressive four for 23, which included one maiden, kept the Sylhet batsmen at bay. For Sylhet, opener Andre Fletcher's unconvincing 32-ball 38 was the highest score as only three other batsmen crossed the double-figure mark.

Disciplined bowling from Sylhet, led by Krishmar Santokie who returned economical figures of three for 13, made it difficult for the home side. However, a late flurry from wicketkeeper batsman Nurul Hasan, who remained unbeaten for a 24-ball 37 ensured Chattogram get over the line with 12 balls to spare.

# JRC meeting postponed

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the matter could not immediately be known.

According to a senior official of the Indian Jal Shakti Ministry (formerly water resources ministry), it was Bangladesh which had sought postponement of the JRC meeting, our Delhi correspondent reports.

The two-day talks were scheduled last August when the water resources secretaries of Bangladesh and India met in a JRC meeting in Dhaka. It was decided there that the technical committee of the two countries would sit on December 18 to exchange updated data on six common rivers and discuss the framework for sharing water of those.

The six common rivers are Muhuri,

Monu, Dharla, Khowai, Gumti and Dudhkumar.

Earlier in 2011, water-sharing agreements of the Teesta and Feni rivers were finalised, but no comprehensive agreement was signed.

The talks on sharing the water of the six common rivers started in 1985. Since then, delegations from the two countries sat many times, but could not reach an agreement how the water was to be shared.

Bangladesh and India share 54 rivers. The two countries, however, have only one relevant treaty signed in 1996 which oversees the sharing of the Ganges river water.

The JRC was formed to resolve conflicts arising from the sharing of water of transboundary rivers.

# Musharraf gets death penalty

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and did not comment on a ruling widely seen as part of a standoff between the judiciary and military over the rule of law.

"Pervez Musharraf has been found guilty of Article 6 (of the constitution) for violation of the constitution of Pakistan," government law officer Salman Nadeem said.

The full ruling by a special anti-terrorism court was not immediately available but the three judges reached a majority verdict, with two of them deciding against Musharraf.

Musharraf, 76, is the first former army chief to be charged with treason in Pakistan and has said the powerful military helped him get out of the country.

In a strongly worded statement, the army said the ruling had caused "pain and anguish" in the ranks and added: "The due legal process seems to have been ignored."

It said the case had been concluded in haste and that Musharraf "fought

wars for the defence of the country (and) can surely never be a traitor."

Musharraf imposed a state of emergency at a time when he faced growing opposition to his rule. All civil liberties, human rights and democratic processes were suspended from November 2007 to February 2008.

The final years of his rule were marked by struggles with the judiciary over his wish to remain head of the army while president. He quit in 2008, after a political party that backed him fared poorly in a national election.

In a video recording issued from a hospital bed in Dubai, Musharraf said last month he was not being given a fair hearing in the case, filed in 2013 by former prime minister Nawaz Sharif, whose government was ousted by Musharraf in 1999.

"I served the nation and made decisions for the betterment of the country," Musharraf said.

A lawyer representing Musharraf said he would challenge the court ruling.

# Man killed in 'gunfight' with police

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

An alleged robber was killed in a "gunfight" with law enforcers in Jhenidah's Maheshpur upazila early yesterday.

Shaharul Islam Khokon, 36, of Jashore's Chowgachha upazila, was accused in seven robbery cases filed with different police stations, claimed police.

On information that a robber gang had blocked Khalishpur-Jibonnagar road with tree trunks to rob passengers of their valuables on inter-district buses around 2:00am, a patrol team of Maheshpur Police Station went there.

Rashedul Alam, officer-in-charge of the station, said as soon as the team had reached the spot, the gang members started firing on them forcing them to retaliate.

At one point the robbers fled the scene. Police found bullet-hit body of Shaharul on the ground, said the OC, adding that they also recovered a firearm, bullets, and a sharp weapon from there.

The body was sent it to Jhenidah General Hospital morgue for an autopsy.

# FIFTH AMENDMENT CASE: Moon Cinema owner gets Tk 100 crore

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday gave around Tk 100 crore to the owner of the then Moon Cinema Hall at Waiz Chat area in Old Dhaka in line with a Supreme Court directive.

The cinema hall issue involves a case regarding the constitution's fifth amendment which had legitimated the then governments of Khandker Mushtaque Ahmed, Abu Sadaat Mohammad Sayem and General Ziaur Rahman.

The ownership of all properties of Moon Cinema Hall was handed over to Muktiyoddha Kalyan Trust (Freedom Fighters Welfare Trust) as an abandoned property during the martial law regime between August 15, 1975 and April 9, 1979. The move was taken after a ban was imposed saying that the legality of the government's decision to declare any property abandoned cannot be challenged before any court.

In August 2005, the High Court lifted the ban by scrapping the fifth amendment of the constitution. The Appellate Division of the SC upheld the HC order.

Delivering a verdict on the case against the fifth amendment, the apex court on May 11, 2011 directed the authorities concerned of the government to return the properties of Moon Cinema Hall to its owner Bangladesh Italian Marble Works Ltd (BIMWL), a private company.

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