

DEATH IN CCC ELECTION VIOLENCE

Victim’s family says thugs used police’s firearms in shooting

MOSTAFA YOUSUF, Chattogram

The family of the youth who died in gunfight between supporters of two councillor candidates alleged that the miscreants used police’s firearms to shoot the victim.

Alauddin Alo (28), a construction worker, died in a clash between supporters of Awami League-backed candidate Wasim Uddin Chowdhury and opposing candidate Mahmudur Rahman yesterday morning.

Jahanara Begum, elder sister of Alauddin told The Daily Star that her brother suffered this tragic fate just after stepping out of home for work at 8.30 am in the morning.

She said her brother was not involved in any politics. He had a family dependent on him.

“The clash originated in the morning not far from our home. When my brother reached ‘Ershader Dokan’ area, the thugs, accompanied by police, opened fire on my brother,” she said.

“The thugs took the firearms from force members of Khulsi police station and shot my brother,” said Jahanara.

Alo’s mother had a heart attack upon learning about her son’s death. The police who were discharging election duty were siding with Awami League supported candidate Wasim Uddin Chowdhury, claimed Jahanara.

As they [Jahanara and family] were supporters of former councillor Mohammad Hossen Hiron, police were hostile towards them since the beginning of the election, she said.

“My brother’s family has been ripped apart by this killing. His wife and one-year-old child have no one to provide for them now,” Jahanara said.



Alauddin Alo



Clockwise from top, at a polling centre in Shahid Nagar City Corporation Girls’ High School in the port city’s Lalkhan Bazar area, two youths appear to be inside a voting booth simultaneously, while another peeks from behind, around 11am. While only one person is supposed to be permitted into the booth at a time, the polling officer is seen quite literally turning the other way. A woman wraps her head in gauze after being hacked in the head with a sharp weapon, in front of Ambagan UCEP school where clashes left a man dead. The voting centre at Dr Khastagir Girls’ High School sees no queue of voters around 10am; the situation remained the same for the next few hours. Outside the Pathaghata Girls’ High School polling centre, a man picks up broken glass from the windshield of a vandalised bus.



PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN, PRABIR DAS

1.67cr people to get vaccine on a priority basis: PM tells House

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday informed the parliament that about 1.67 crore people, from around 20 different sectors of the country, will receive Covid-19 vaccine on a priority basis.



“In the first phase, 1.50 crore people, which is 8.68 percent of the country’s population, will be vaccinated. They will receive two vaccine shots in the span of two weeks,” Hasina said.

All three crore doses of the vaccine manufactured by Serum Institute of India (SII) will be delivered to Bangladesh within six months, she said.

She made the comments while answering a query of a lawmaker. The PM’s answer was tabled at the beginning of the day’s sitting at the House.

The prime minister said the groups to be vaccinated on a priority basis were identified as per the guidelines from the World Health Organization’s Scientific Advisory Group of Experts, and the situation in the country.

A total of 4,52,027 frontline government health workers will be in the priority list, she said.

Besides, a total of 6,00,000 non-government health workers, 2,10,000 freedom fighters, 5,46,620 frontline law enforcers, 3,60,913 military and civil defense forces, 50,000 government officials essential to run the administration, 50,000 frontline media workers, 178,298 elected

representatives, 150,000 staff members of city corporations and municipalities will be on the priority list.

Hasina also said that 5,41,000 religious representatives, 75,000 people involved in funeral services, 4,00,000 emergency service providers for water, electricity, fire service and

others, 1,50,000 staffers of air, land and sea ports, 1,20,000 unskilled expatriate workers, 4,00,000 field level government officials, 1,97,621 bankers, 6,25,000 low immunity people (tuberculosis, AIDS and cancer patients), 1,03,26,658 people aged between 64 and 79 years, 13,12,973 people aged over 80 years, and 21,863 players of the football, cricket and hockey national teams and others, will be on the list also.

Besides vaccine will be kept for 170,000 people for buffer, emergency and outbreaks.

Bangladesh would get 6.80 crore doses of vaccine for 3.40 crore people, from the World Health Organization’s COVAX facility. The vaccine will be preserved in 64 district EPI stores and 483 EPI stores of the country, said the prime minister.

Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the pilot vaccination virtually yesterday.

Bangladesh purchased 3 crore doses of Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine from Serum Institute of India (SII). The first consignment of 50 lakh arrived on January 25. Bangladesh also received 20 lakh doses of the Oxford vaccine produced in SII as gift from the Indian government on January 21.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

CCC polls stirs up the political arena

STAR REPORT

The Chattogram City Corporation polls yesterday stirred up a heated debate in the country’s political arena, with BNP alleging that the election was marred by “unprecedented vote robbery” and “violence”.

The issue of the election was discussed during the ongoing session of the parliament, when two BNP lawmakers came down heavy on the administration for favouring ruling Awami League candidate, terming the polls a “farce”.

However, ruling Awami League blamed BNP for threatening voters and creating panic, and indulging in violent and criminal activities.

During the discussion on the Civil Courts (Amendment) Bill-2021, which was passed in the parliament yesterday, a debate between treasury and opposition BNP lawmakers took place at the House.

BNP lawmaker Harunur Rashid said a “farce” was staged in the name of CCC polls.

Another BNP lawmaker Rumin Farhana alleged administration cast votes while people witnessed it.

Refuting BNP lawmakers’ claim, AL lawmaker and Law Minister Anisul Huq said, “They are talking about election; we have seen Yes-No vote of Ziaur Rahman, (we have seen) February 15 election... ballot boxes could not be found at that time.”

Opposition Jaitiya Party took stance in favour of the ruling MPs.

Elsewhere, a BNP delegation, followed by a team of AL representatives, visited the EC in the capital’s Agargaon yesterday afternoon and submitted a written complaint to the EC secretary regarding electoral irregularities.

Talking to reporters after filing the complaint, BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi yesterday alleged that the CCC election was marred by “unprecedented vote robbery” and “violence”, terming the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) KM Nurul Huda as a “killer of democracy and fair elections”.

He said, “This election is nothing but a farce on an unimaginable level. Fair elections remain out of reach to people during this regime,” reports UNB.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

MIGRANTS SENT BACK INVOLUNTARILY

Form a guideline to evaluate their cases

Rights group urges govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Civil Society for Migrants yesterday urged the government to develop a common guideline for case evaluation of migrant workers whom host countries have sent back involuntarily.

The government should look if the visas of workers were expired and if all the dues have been cleared in case of involuntary returns, the platform said.

It said with using data, the government and civil society can launch an international campaign for compensation and payment of wages.

The issues were raised during a webinar on the dissemination of the book “The Other Face of Globalisation: Covid-19, International Labour Migrants and Left-behind Families in Bangladesh”.

The webinar was part of the e-symposium series ‘Build Back Better’ of Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU).

The book, published by BCSM and its member organisation RMMRU, highlights the challenges of Bangladeshi migrants due to the Covid-19 outbreak.

The book’s content includes findings of a survey on 200 male and female migrants, interviews of 25 involuntarily returned migrants, and 30 left-behind female members of migrant households.

The study underscores the need for framing policies both at origin and destination countries to protect the

migrants during emergencies.

The platform urged the government to continue generating data on return of migrant workers on annual basis.

It said registration process following due diligence needs to be conducted by Bangladesh missions before the workers are repatriated.

If any unpaid wages and other benefits remain pending, then the missions can take the power of attorney from the migrant and pursue settlements of claims subsequently, it added.

Stressing for one-time cash grant to the left-behind migrant households, the platform urged both civil society and research organisations in Bangladesh to maintain pressure on multilateral bodies to pursue advocacy with the destination countries to suspend involuntary repatriation of migrant workers during global or regional crisis.

It urged international community to push for enactment of emergency protection guidelines mandatory for all labour-receiving and -sending countries.

RMMRU Founding Chair Prof Tasneem Siddiqui said 67 percent of the involuntarily returned migrants left behind their unpaid wages.

Hossain Zillur Rahman, chairman of Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC), said registering returnee migrants is an important issue to think about. It is also crucial to think about differentiating

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



Although it is only the middle of the Bengali winter month of Magh, mango buds are already brimming in trees across Sylhet city. Teetering to sprout into full grown mangoes over the course of the next few months, they have caught the city residents’ eyes, and have added an element of anticipation. This photo was taken yesterday from the city’s Kazitula area.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

MURDER OF AL ACTIVIST

PBI seeks seven-day remand for Cumilla city councillor

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cumilla

Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) yesterday presented Cumilla City Corporation Councillor Abdus Sattar before a Cumilla court in a case filed over the murder of Awami League activist Jillur Rahman Jilani.

“We prayed for a seven-day remand for him,” said Bipul Debnath of PBI, the investigating officer of the case.

However, Salauddin Al Mahmud, the court inspector, said no bail prayer or hearing for remand was held due to some

document-related issue. The hearing will be held at a later date, he said.

Additional chief judicial magistrate Masudur Rahman sent Sattar to jail.

On Tuesday, PBI Cumilla arrested Sattar from the capital’s Shahbagh.

On November 11 last year, Jillur Rahman Jilani was beaten, hacked and shot before being killed by helmet-wearing miscreants in Cumilla city. A case was later filed accusing several people.

Zilani’s family and villagers arranged a human chain at Cumilla city’s Chawara Bazar area last week.

Biker run over by bus in the capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A video editor of Ekattor TV was killed after a bus of Victor Classic Paribahan hit his motorcycle and dragged his body for some distance near Jamuna Future Park on the capital’s Pragati Sarani yesterday afternoon.

Gopal Sutradhar (40) was on his way home from Ekattor TV’s Baridhara office to Nikunja area from work around 5pm. As he reached Jamuna Future Park, the Uttara-bound bus rammed into his motorbike from behind and dragged his body for a few yards, Nadia Sharmeen, a senior reporter of Ekattor TV, told The Daily Star, quoting witnesses.

Gopal was taken to a local hospital, and then to National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation, where the doctor declared him dead.

Abul Hasan, officer-in-charge of Gulshan Police Station, said they have seized the bus but the driver fled.

ASSAULT CASE

HC denies bail to Erfan Salim

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday refused to grant bail to Erfan Salim, son of Dhaka-7 lawmaker Haji Salim, in a case filed on charge of attacking Lt Wasif Ahmed Khan of Bangladesh Navy in Dhanmondi area of Dhaka in October last year.

The court, however, issued a rule asking the state to explain in two weeks why Erfan Salim, now in jail, should not be granted bail in the case. The HC bench of Justice Jahangir Hossain Selim and Justice Md Badruzzaman came up with the rule after hearing a petition filed by Erfan Salim seeking bail in the case.

Lawyer Sayed Ahmed Raza appeared for Erfan while Deputy Attorney General Dr Md Bashir Ullah represented the state at the hearing.

Lt Wasif had filed the case with Dhanmondi Police Station on October 25, naming four accused including Erfan Salim (37) and three others -- AB Siddique Dipu (45), Md Zahid (35) and Md Mizanur Rahman (30) for attacking him on October 25.

A team of Rapid Action Battalion conducted a drive at Erfan’s house in Old Dhaka and arrested him the same day.

Jurisdiction of lower court judges increased

Civil Courts (Amendment) Bill passed in parliament

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Civil Courts (Amendment) Bill, 2021 was passed in Parliament yesterday with a provision to raise the financial jurisdiction of lower court judges for disposal of civil cases.

Law Minister Anisul Huq moved the bill and it was passed by voice vote.

According to the bill, higher threshold of pecuniary jurisdiction was increased to Tk 15 lakh instead of the existing Tk 2 lakh for an assistant judge, while Tk 25 lakh is now in place of Tk 4 lakh for a senior assistant judge when trying civil suits, according to the bill.

For hearing appeals of civil suits, the financial jurisdiction was raised to Tk 5 crore from the existing Tk 5 lakh for a district judge.

With the passage of this bill, an assistant judge can try civil cases with asset value of maximum Tk 15 lakh each, while a senior assistant judge can try a civil suit with asset value of maximum Tk 25 lakh.

A provision was incorporated in the law to transfer to the district judge court appeals which are pending with the High Court against the decree or order made by joint district judges in civil suits involving maximum Tk 5 crore.

Tribute to Tauhida Hossain



Tauhida Hossain, a female entrepreneur at a time when there were only few, departed peacefully in her sleep on the 24th January at the family residence of Nikunja in Dhaka. She was the director of the first Poultry breeder farm of Bangladesh named, Eggs and Hens. She was dedicated and committed to promoting modern poultry practises in Bangladesh alongside her husband. She worked tirelessly for women’s liberation. She provided hands on training to the members of Nari Punorbashon, Food for the Hungry and Shonirbhor Bangla. We are saddened by the loss but will treasure the wonderful memories we have with her.

She left three children, daughter in laws and grandchildren. Please join the dua after Asar prayers in family home (House 22, Road 9C, Nikunja 1) on the 29th January (Friday). Family members and employees, Eggs and Hens Limited Quick Chicks Limited Building Blocks Limited