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NEW EC GUIDELINE

Controversial posts stay, pay rises too

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The Election Commission has drafted a guideline for imparting training to polls-related officials, keeping in it controversial positions like "special speakers" and "course advisers" amid allegations of financial corruption through such posts.

In the draft guideline, it has also suggested raising allowances for those positions.

Chief Election Commissioner KM Nurul Huda, election commissioners and top officials of the EC secretariat attended training programmes as "special speakers" ahead of the 2018 national election and the fifth upazila polls in 2019.

Election commissioners and the EC secretary also attended the training programmes as "course advisers" and the director general of Electoral Training Institute (ETI) as "course director", according to EC officials.

The EC has been facing criticism from many eminent citizens and left-leaning political parties over alleged financial and other irregularities.

Forty-two noted citizens of the country have written twice to President Abdul Hamid, demanding formation of Supreme Judicial Council to probe allegations of "serious financial corruption and gross election-related misconduct" against the EC.

They said members of the EC under Huda's leadership indulged in misconduct and irregularities, including

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A banner, asking not to dump waste, was hung by the Dhaka South City Corporation over the second channel of the Buriganga in Kamrangirchar two years ago citing ongoing clean up work. The cleanup work stopped within a few days and the channel now overflows with waste discarded by the public. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Fix errors in textbook regarding Jamaat

21 eminent citizens ask govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Twenty-one eminent citizens yesterday called upon the authorities concerned to rectify some errors in a chapter on political parties in the "Civics and Citizenship" textbook of grades IX and X.

In a joint statement, they said the errors need to be corrected in order to present the true history of the country's Liberation War before the students.

"We have noticed some serious discrepancy in the facts presented in the grade IX and X textbook of Civics and Citizenship," the statement read.

"In the chapter on the 'Political Parties of Bangladesh', Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami has been mentioned as one of the political parties, but its crimes against humanity during the 1971 Liberation War have not been

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SAGAR-RUNI KILLING

No headway in nine years

Investigators seek time for 78th time

MUNTAKIM SAAD

Another year of hopelessness passes for the families of journalist-couple Sagar Sarwar and Meherun Runi. Nine years on, justice still remains a far cry.

So far, the investigators have been approached at least 78 times to submit probe reports, but they could not make any headway in the sensational case.

Sagar, news editor at private TV channel Mastranga, and Runi, a senior reporter at ATN Bangla, were killed in the early hours of February 11, 2012, at their rented flat in the capital's West Rajabazar.

The couple's only child Mahir Sarwar

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Bus-truck collision takes 10 lives

Six more killed in other road crashes

STAR REPORT

At least 10 people were killed and 14 others injured in a head-on collision between a bus and a truck in Jhenaidah, while six others died in separate road accidents in three other districts yesterday.

The death toll in Jhenaidah may rise, said Sheikh Mamunur Rashid, station officer at Fire Service and Civil Defence office in Kaliganj upazila last evening.

Of the dead, seven were men, two women and one girl child, said police. So far, the identities of only five victims were found. They are Reshma Khatun, 25, from Chuadanga Sadar upazila, the bus driver Uzzal Hossain, 48 and another bus passenger Mostafizur Rahman, Younus Ali, 27, from Jhenidah Sadar upazila, and Waliul Ali, 26, from Alamdanga upazila in Chuadanga.

The accident occurred in Barobazar area around 3:00pm when a Jhenaidah-bound bus collided head-on with a Jashore-bound truck, said Mahfuzur Rahman, officer-in-charge (OC) of Kaliganj Police Station.

After the collision, the bus turned turtle on the road, leaving nine people dead on the spot. Around 15 injured were rushed to different local hospitals.

One of them succumbed to injuries at a local clinic, raising the death toll to ten. Of the other injured persons, the conditions of four to five people were very critical, the police officer added.

An eyewitness Shamsul Islam said, "I was working on a nearby cropland when I suddenly heard a bang and saw that a speeding truck rammed a passenger bus."

"Some other locals and I rushed to spot and found the passengers were screaming out. We then started recovering bodies and rescuing the injured," he told The Daily Star.

Vehicular movement on the road was halted for around an hour and

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Court orders further probe in DSA case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Just days after police cleared Swedish-Bangladeshi journalist Tasneem Khalil, Hungary-based entrepreneur Zulkarnain Saer Khan and six others of all charges in a case filed under the Digital Security Act (DSA) last year, a Dhaka tribunal yesterday ordered further investigation into them.

Tasneem and Zulkarnain were featured in a recent Al Jazeera report, titled "All the Prime Minister's Men". The report caused a stir in the country and received a major backlash from the government.

A total of 11 people, including the two, cartoonist Ahmed Kabir Kishore, writer Mushtaq Ahmed, Rashtrachinta activist Didarul Islam Bhuiyan were prosecuted under the DSA by Rab-3's Assistant Director Abu Bakar Siddique on May 6 last year.

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UAE's Hope Probe enters orbit in first Arab Mars mission

REUTERS, Dubai



The United Arab Emirates' first mission to Mars reached the red planet and entered orbit on Tuesday after a seven-month, 494 million-km (307 million-mile) journey, allowing it to start sending data about the Martian atmosphere and climate.

The Mars programme is part of the UAE's efforts to develop its scientific and technological capabilities and reduce its reliance on oil. The UAE Space Agency, the fifth globally to reach the planet, even has a plan for a Mars settlement by 2117.

"Contact with #HopeProbe has been established again. The Mars Orbit Insertion is now

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Tigers seek turnaround in decider

SPORTS REPORTER

Changes in attitude are imperative for Bangladesh as they try to salvage a drawn series with a win in the last of two Tests against the West Indies, starting at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur today.

Despite dominating proceedings for the first four days, Bangladesh suffered a shocking three-wicket defeat -- courtesy of Kyle Mayers' brilliant double ton on debut -- in the first Test against the Windies at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chattogram last Sunday.

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PRAYER TIMING FEBRUARY 11

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 5:25	12:45	4:30	5:57	7:15
JAMAAT 6:00	1:15	4:45	6:01	7:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

WRIT ON AL JAZEERA BAN

HC seeks six legal experts' opinions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Questioning the acceptability of a writ petition seeking a ban on the broadcast of Al Jazeera and the removal of its report "Al the Prime Minister's Men" from digital platforms, the High Court yesterday wanted to hear opinions from six legal experts as amici curiae (friends of court).

The court requested six amici curiae (friends of court) to state their opinions on the issue on February 15.

The legal experts are: AJ Mohammad Ali, Fida M Kamal, Abdul Matin Khasru, Kamal Ul Alam, Prabir Neogi and Shahdeen Malik.

Writ petitioner Supreme Court lawyer Anamul Kabir Emon sought the court's directive on the government over the matter.

The HC bench of Justice Md Mozibur Rahman Miah and Justice Md Kamrul

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People gathered around a passenger bus, which turned turtle after a head-on with a truck, to rescue injured passengers and recover bodies of the dead. The accident resulted in the death of at least 10 people. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: AZIBOR RAHMAN

TRUMP IMPEACHMENT

Senate votes to proceed with trial

Republicans signal likely acquittal as Democrats set to detail case against ex-president

REUTERS, Washington

A divided US Senate voted largely along party lines on Tuesday to move ahead with Donald Trump's impeachment trial on a charge of inciting the deadly assault on the Capitol, but Republican senators made clear how difficult it will be to win a conviction.

The Senate voted 56-44 to proceed to the first-ever trial of a former president, rejecting his defense lawyers' argument that Trump was beyond the reach of the Senate after having left the White House on January 20.

Democrats hope to disqualify Trump from ever again holding public office, but Tuesday's outcome suggested they face long odds. Only six Republican senators joined Democrats to vote in favor of allowing the trial to take place, far short of the 17 needed to secure a conviction.

Convicting Trump would require a two-thirds majority in the 50-50 Senate.

Democratic lawmakers were set to detail their case against him yesterday. Under impeachment rules, each side is allowed up to 16 hours over two days to present their case. Senators will also be given a total of four hours for questioning.

Tuesday's vote capped a dramatic day in the Senate chamber. Democratic lawmakers serving as prosecutors opened the trial with a graphic video interspersing images of the January 6 Capitol violence with clips of Trump's incendiary speech to a crowd of supporters moments

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