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BABA GONE, FOR GOOD!

The daughter of Md Badshah, 32, a tailor of Kajla, breaks down in tears at the Wari Police Station after being told that her father is no more. Badshah and another pedestrian were presumably dropped off by a bus near the Gulistan exit ramp of Mayor Hanif Flyover yesterday morning. As they were walking down the ramp, another bus ran them over. Story on page 2.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN



AL focuses on polls, tackling demos

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

The ruling Awami League is reorganising itself to be in a stronger position ahead of the next parliamentary polls and weighing options for expanding its electoral alliance.

It is also gearing up for tackling any possible movements over Election Commission's formation and polls-time neutral government which have been demanded by several parties.

AL insiders say 2022 will be the party's "year of conferences" as it aims to increase organisational strength and prepare its leaders and activists for the election through those programmes.

In the build-up to the polls, slated for next year, the party has already started holding conferences at the grassroots levels. It wants to wrap those up before its 22nd national council in December when the current central committee's tenure

expires, they said.

"We will go for a revamp of the party -- from the central to the grassroots -- by the end of this year. After finishing all conferences, we want to take part in the polls as a stronger and more organised party," AL Joint General Secretary Mahbubul Alam Hanif told The Daily Star.

The party has also set its sights on upcoming upazila and city corporation polls after facing troubles in the ongoing union parishad elections.

In the absence of the BNP, the AL has taken majority of chairman posts in its grip, but the UP polls exposed internal feud and lack of command within the party.

AL high-ups have failed to stop many of its leaders from contesting as independents even after issuing a strong warning.

Insiders said the more damaging

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BNP shoring itself up for movement

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Even though the BNP's official stance is that it is yet to decide if it will run in the 2023 national polls, its focus for this year is to complete the party reorganising process and ready itself for the elections.

The rationale behind reorganising is that the party wants to be in a stronger position with which it can mount pressure on the government to hold the polls under a non-partisan interim government, a demand it has been making since the system was abolished 10 years ago.

The other headache the BNP has is that it has been unsuccessful in getting its Chairperson Khaleda Zia released and sending her abroad for better medical treatment. Khaleda has been at the capital's Evercare Hospital since November.

"Our main target in the new year is to restore democracy. Party reorganising process will continue and at the same time movement for restoring democracy will go on," Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, secretary general of BNP, told The Daily Star.

Fakhrul emphasised that the main problem of the country was that "democracy has been destroyed" and that there was no way out but to restore the electoral system with polls under a caretaker non-partisan government.

Party insiders said they were planning to mobilise public opinion and heat up the ground for a movement centring the Election Commission. They said the movement would be launched at the end of this year.

In the meantime, the party would

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Man dies in police custody

Family alleges he was tortured to death; cops deny

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A tea stall owner died while he was being interrogated in a room of Hatibandha Police Station in Lalmonirhat on Friday. The CCTV camera in that room was not working when it happened.

Relatives and locals alleged that the man, Himanshu Roy, 36, was tortured to death.

Hatibandha police denied the allegation and said he died by suicide as he hung himself from the window grilles using a cable.

Himanshu was taken into custody for questioning after law enforcers recovered the body of his wife Sabitri Rani, 30, in Purba Kadma Maldahpara village of the upazila on Friday morning. Sabitri allegedly died by suicide.

"He was only interrogated. He was not tortured in any way," Ershadul Alam, officer-in-charge of the police station, said, adding that he was kept in the women and children help desk's room.

Replying to a question, he said 10 CCTV cameras were installed in and outside the station, but only three were functional. "One of them is in my room while the other two are in the duty officer's room and outside the station."

He said all the other cameras had been out of service since he joined the station one and half years ago. "I had alerted the higher authorities about this, but no steps have been taken."

Abida Sultana, superintendent of police in the district, said she knew that the station had 10 CCTV cameras.

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Fishermen with their gear on a boat race to their favourite spot to catch fish. The photo was taken on the Sugandha river in Babuganj upazila of Barishal.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

Govt to issue circular on Covid curbs in days

Decision on in-person classes today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Health Minister Zahid Maleque yesterday said the government would implement the latest recommendations of the National Technical Advisory Committee (NTAC) on Covid-19 regarding restrictions on public movement.

"We have to abide by the directives of the government as well as the technical committee [NTAC]. The directives will be published [as circular] within a couple of days," he said while addressing an event in Manikganj.

Meanwhile, Education Minister Dipu Moni yesterday said they would come up with a decision about in-person classes at educational institutions

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