

‘Trinamool BNP’ gets EC registration

‘Golden fibre’ its electoral symbol

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Trinamool BNP established by former BNP leader Nazmul Huda got registered with the Election Commission as a political party following a court order.

EC Joint Secretary Abdul Baten said they issued a circular in this regard yesterday. “In line with a court order, we announced that the party is registered.”

The EC said electoral symbol of the party will be “golden fibre”.

Huda, also former communications minister, founded the Trinamool BNP and sought its registration in December 2017.

But the EC did not register it as its application was filed after a deadline, EC officials said. The party leaders then filed a writ with the High Court challenging the EC’s decision.

In November 2018, the HC, in a ruling, directed the EC to register the Trinamool BNP as a political party immediately.

In 2019, the EC appeal against the HC verdict but the Appellate Division upheld the HC decision in December last year.

Asked if there would be any problem as there are two parties with similar names, Election Commissioner Md Alamgir on February 9 said, “No. There are many other political parties with almost similar name like Jasad [Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal].”

A party must be registered with the EC to take part in election. The EC has been providing registration to

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4 killed in road accident

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Four persons were killed as a bus turned turtle on the Dhaka-Sylhet highway in Habiganj’s Bahubal upazila around 6:30pm yesterday.

Of them, three died on the spot while another at a local hospital, said Maynul Islam Bhuiyan, officer-in-charge of Sayestaganj Highway Police Station.

Their identities could not be known immediately, he added.

On information, three fire engines rushed to the spot and rescued the passengers. Many passengers suffered injuries, he further said.

The bus was going to Habiganj from Sylhet, said Shankha Suvro Roy, general secretary of Habiganj Bus Owners’ Association.

Hit by bike

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Critically injured, Mazeda, 50, died at Uttara Adhunik Hospital around 1:45am and Rafia died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital around 2:30am.

Witnesses said the motorcycle was so fast that the impact threw Mazeda and the baby several metres away.

Arafat Hossain, a private employee, who was riding the bike was arrested, said Moudut Hawlader, officer-in-charge of Turag Police Station.

He added that the grieving family had not filed a case until the evening.

Mazeda, her son, daughter-in-law, granddaughter and four others were walking to Uttara-18, said Rafia’s mother Noorjahan Begum, adding that the tragedy happened when they were walking across the road.

Mazeda’s nephew Mohammad Uzzal said she raised her two sons as a single mother.

She had a small cattle farm.

Armenia offers peace treaty project to Azerbaijan

AFP, Yerevan

Armenia has presented to arch-foe Baku a project for a full peace treaty to end the Caucasus neighbours’ decades-long dispute over the Nagorno-Karabakh region, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said yesterday.

The two countries have fought two wars for control of Azerbaijan’s Armenian-populated enclave that have claimed tens of thousands of lives.

Internationally-mediated peace talks between the ex-Soviet republics have since produced little if any result.

Pashinyan said Yerevan had completed on Wednesday “another stage of working on a project of a peace treaty and on establishing (diplomatic) relations” with Baku.

“A project of a comprehensive agreement had been handed to Azerbaijan,” he told a cabinet meeting in Yerevan.

“The document has to be acceptable to Azerbaijan... its signing must bring about a lasting peace.”



PHOTO: REUTERS

People queue for free food served amid the rubble following the deadly earthquake in Kahramanmaraş, Turkey, yesterday.

TURKEY-SYRIA EARTHQUAKE

Teenager pulled from rubble

Anger as hopes fade of finding more survivors; death toll passes 41,500

REUTERS, Kahramanmaraş/Antakya

A teenage girl was pulled alive from the rubble in Turkey yesterday more than 10 days after a devastating earthquake hit the region, but such rescues have become increasingly rare, leaving sorrow and anger to mount as hope dies.

The 17-year-old was extracted from the ruins of a collapsed apartment bloc in Turkey’s southeastern Kahramanmaraş province, broadcaster TRT Haber reported, 248 hours since the 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck in the dead of night on February 6.

Footage showed her being carried on a stretcher to an ambulance covered with a gold-coloured thermal blanket.

The quake killed at least 36,187 in southern Turkey, while authorities in neighbouring Syria have reported 5,800 deaths - a figure that has changed little in days.

While several people were found alive in Turkey on Wednesday, the number of rescues has dwindled significantly.

Neither Turkey nor Syria have said how many people are still missing.

For families still waiting to retrieve their lost relatives, there is growing anger over what they see as corrupt building practices and deeply flawed urban development that resulted in thousands of homes and businesses disintegrating.

“I have two children. No others. They are both under this rubble,” said Sevil Karaabdüloğlu, as excavators tore down what remained of a high-end block of flats in the city of southern city of Antakya, where her two daughters had lived.

Around 650 people are believed to have died when the Renaissance Residence building collapsed in the quake.

“We rented this place as an elite place, a safe place. How do I know that the contractor built it this way? ... Everyone is looking to make a profit. They’re all guilty,” she said.

Some 200 km (125 miles) away, around 100 people gathered at a small cemetery in the town of Pazarcik, to

bury a young family of four -- Ismail and Selin Yavuzatmaca and their two young daughters -- who had died in the doomed Renaissance building.

“This should have been the fate of the Renaissance constructor, not of Ismail!” his sister-in-law yelled.

Turkey has promised to investigate anyone suspected of responsibility for the collapse of buildings and has ordered the detention of more than 100 suspects, including developers.

Across the border in Syria, the earthquake slammed a region divided and devastated by 12 years of civil war.

The Syrian government says the death toll in territory it controls is 1,414. More than 4,000 fatalities have been reported in the rebel-held northwest, but rescuers say nobody has been found alive there since February 9.

The aid effort has been hampered by the conflict and many people in the northwest feel abandoned as supplies almost invariably head to other parts of the sprawling disaster zone.

Momen likely to visit US

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lecture on climate change.

On February 23, he will attend several meetings at the UN headquarters in New York, added Seheli.

Meanwhile, the foreign minister yesterday said the US wants to have good relations with Bangladesh and clear up all misunderstandings.

“Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had a discussion with the US State Department counsellor in this regard,” he added.

Momen made the comment while replying to journalists’ queries after attending an orientation programme at the Sylhet Agricultural University as the chief guest in the morning, reports our Sylhet correspondent.

“The United States wants to work

with Bangladesh. Bangladesh has a multi-dimensional relationship with the US and the issue of sanctions on the Rab is very minor. The US delegation discussed the matters with the prime minister,” Momen said.

He added, “China also wants to develop an intense relationship with Bangladesh and explore all possibilities.”

The minister further said Washington will help Dhaka with the Rohingya crisis, and many countries, including the US, have responded positively to the request to take in the displaced refugees.

Several foreign diplomats, including India’s foreign secretary, have pledged to work together with Bangladesh, he told the journalists.

Child killed in clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A three-month-old child was killed in a clash between two neighbours in Mymensingh’s Dhobaura upazila yesterday.

The victim is Ishaq Mia, son of Rahmat Ali Bhuiyan and Shilpi Akhter of the upazila’s Sanandakhila village.

The child accidentally received a serious blow to his head during the clash, said police.

Doctors at Dhaka Medical College Hospital declared him dead around 9:30pm.

A case was filed against a couple in this connection, said Tipu Sultan, officer-in-charge of Dhobaura Police Station.

Rozina, a neighbour of the victim, was arrested and sent to jail via court whereas her husband Rony was on the run, he added.

The body was sent to the DMCH morgue for autopsy, he further said.

HC orders demolishing 27 brick kilns in Bandarban

STAR REPORT

The High Court yesterday ordered the government to immediately demolish 27 illegal brick kilns in Bandarban.

The court delivered the verdict after lifting its earlier order that in 2014 gave two years’ time for relocating the brick kilns.

The HC bench of Justice Farah Mahbub and Justice Ahmed Sohel came up with the judgment following a petition filed by Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB) for withdrawing its 2014 order.

In the verdict, the HC also rejected a writ petition filed by the owners of 27 brick kilns in 2014 seeking time from the court for relocating those, said Deputy Attorney General Samarendranath Biswas.

Rohingya woman shot dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox’s Bazar

A Rohingya woman was shot dead and two men sustained bullet injuries in separate gun attacks at two refugee camps in Cox’s Bazar’s Ukhia upazila yesterday.

The dead is Noor Kayes, 25, of Balukhali Rohingya refugee camp.

Some unidentified criminals opened fire at the room of Noor Kayes at Block- B-57 of Balukhali camp-8 around 10:00am and escaped, said Sheikh Mohammad Ali, officer-in-charge of Ukhia Police Station.

The incident left Kayes and his fellow camp inhabitant Arafat Hossain injured. Kayes was declared dead at Kutupalong MSF Hospital where doctors were still treating Arafat, the OC said.

In another shooting incident, Md Abdur Rahim, 38, of Block G-1 at Moynarghona camp-12, and also the chief community leader (head Majhi) of the camp, received bullet injuries to his head.

He was receiving treatment at Cox’s Bazar Sadar Hospital.

Four Iraqi soldiers killed in raid on suspected IS fighters

AFP, Baghdad

Four Iraqi soldiers were killed yesterday during a counter-terrorism operation north of Baghdad, security forces said, as the majority-Shia country marks a key religious rite.

Clashes broke out in Tarmiya, an agricultural area about 30 kilometres (19 miles) from the capital where Islamic State group fighters operate.

The raid came as hundreds of thousands of pilgrims descended on the Kadhimiya shrine in north Baghdad of Mussa Kadhim, seventh of the 12 imams revered by Shias.

An army unit launched a “raid on a hideout of IS terrorists”, the Iraqi government’s security media cell said, adding that “three terrorists were killed, one of whom was wearing an explosive belt”.

“Two officers and two soldiers” were also killed when the device was detonated, the statement said.

An interior ministry official speaking on condition of anonymity said seven other soldiers had been

wounded during the raid.

There was no immediate statement from IS claiming the deaths on the group’s usual Telegram channels.

Iraq declared in late 2017 that the militant group had been defeated but members and sleeper cells continue to operate in various parts of the country.

On December 19, the group launched an attack on the village of Albu Bali north of Baghdad, killing eight civilians.

Days earlier, a roadside bomb hit a military vehicle and killed three soldiers in farmland north of Baghdad.

The United Nations has said that despite setbacks, the group has “maintained its ability to launch attacks at a steady pace”.

It estimates the jihadist group maintains between 6,000 and 10,000 fighters inside Iraq and Syria, exploiting the porous border between the two countries and concentrating mainly in rural areas.