

Jubo League to the rescue?

AL involves its youth wing to resolve ‘uncle-nephew row’ in Barishal

MD ABBAS and SUSHANTA GHOSH

To resolve the conflict between Awami League mayoral candidate Abul Khair Abdullah and the incumbent mayor Serniabat Sadiq Abdullah, Awami League is actively engaging its different branches.

As part of this initiative, the central Jubo League, an associated body of the ruling AL, yesterday conducted a views-exchange meeting. The meeting brought together members from the local AL, Golpalganj, and Madaripur units of Jubo League, as well as the Barishal division of Jubo League.

Jubo League Chairman Sheikh Fazle Shams Parash, General Secretary Mainul Hossain Khan Nikhil, and central AL leaders AFM Bahauddin Nasim and Afzal Hossain attended the meeting, among others.

Despite the explicit directives from the AL high command and the involvement of central AL leaders, the feud between Khair and Sadiq continues to persist within the Barishal unit of AL. This internal conflict is considered a major obstacle to the

AL-nominated candidate's chances of securing victory.

On May 26, a crucial meeting was held between central and local AL members in an attempt to mitigate the ongoing dispute.

During yesterday's meeting at the district's Shilpakala Academy, the number of participants from Khair's loyalists, including Khair himself, was notably higher. However, only a few individuals loyal to Sadiq participated in the meeting.

The speakers emphasised the need to change the election strategy to secure victory for the AL candidate. They called for unified electioneering and the resolution of disputes within Barishal AL.

Denying the conflict between Khair and Sadiq, Jubo League Chairman Parash said the conflict is imaginary and both groups are successors to Serniabat.

Parash highlighted the lesson learned from the Gazipur City polls and its relevance to the upcoming Barishal city polls scheduled for June 12.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



Leaders and activists of Awami League and its youth front Jubo League brought out a procession in Barishal city yesterday as a sign of unity in the ruling party ahead of the polls. Inset, a meeting was also held at the city's Shilpakala Academy in this regard.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

SYLHET CITY POLLS

After incumbent Mayor Ariful Haque Choudhury quit the race, the major mayor contenders for the city polls are Awami League's Md Anwaruzzaman Chowdhury and Jatiya Party's Md Nazrul Islam. The Daily Star's Dwaha Chowdhury talked to them about their aspirations and plans.

I'm a Sylheti, not an outsider

DS: How will you approach voters ahead of the city polls?

Anwaruzzaman: It is tough to reach all the voters in person but we have divided the city into four zones and formed ward and centre committees to reach every voter. I'm also meeting different groups of professionals and notable personalities of the city.

DS: Senior Awami League leaders, even the voters, mentioned you as an "outsider". What do you think about that?

Anwaruzzaman: My home is in Sylhet's Osmaninazar upazila, which is just 17 kilometres away from the city. The two previous mayors are originally from other districts, while I have been a Sylheti for generations.

I started my political career in Sylhet City in 1985. For decades, I was involved with AL's politics in the country and abroad. In the previous national election, I campaigned for AK Momen and I was the coordinator of the electoral campaign for the AL candidate in the 2018 city polls. I don't believe for a moment that I'm the outsider here.

DS: In the 2018 city polls, AL was faced with an internal

Polls environment still not fair

DS: How are you approaching the voters ahead of the city polls?

Nazrul: We are still preparing a plan for the campaign to reach all voters.

DS: You have recently alleged an unfair electoral environment. What were the reasons and how is the situation now?

Nazrul: The election is supposed to be free and fair. However, in Gazipur City Polls, we saw that the polls ended at 4:00pm but the result was declared at 1:30am. Such delay creates a suspicion.

My competitor AL candidate has been violating electoral rules. He appeared with around a hundred leaders while submitting nominations. Even though I filed a formal complaint to the Returning Officer, no action was taken.

The AL candidate was also seen moving with uniformed police escorts which shows the partiality of the administration.

DS: After you were nominated by the party, another aspirant in a press conference alleged that you bought the nomination for Tk 1 crore. Do you think such an allegation will impact the unity of the party?

Nazrul: The aspirant is a US expatriate and he has already been



ANWARUZZAMAN

The city is still plagued with flooding and waterlogging. One of my major plans is to dredge the Surma as well as the construction of a city-protection dyke.

candidate which supposedly led to its candidate's defeat. What is your opinion on the matter?

Anwaruzzaman: I don't believe that any AL leader or activist will ever betray me. Those who spoke against me in the early days are with me now.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



MD NAZRUL ISLAM

The election is supposed to be free and fair. However, in GCC polls, we saw that the polls ended at 4:00pm but the result was declared at 1:30am. Such delay creates a suspicion.

expelled from the party for his false allegation. These people should be expelled from the party and their stand will not impact the party unity in any way.

DS: You have recently visited Mayor Ariful Haque Choudhury at his residence. Were you trying to seek his support?

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

POLLS CODE BREACH 2 SCC mayor candidates show-caused

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The Election Commission has issued show cause notices to the mayoral candidates of Awami League and Jatiya Party for campaigning before the allocation of symbols, violating electoral code of conduct in Sylhet.

Sylhet Regional Election Officer and Sylhet City Corporation Election's Returning Officer Faysal Kader sent show cause notices to the candidates yesterday afternoon.

In the notices, AL's Anwaruzzaman Chowdhury of JP's Nazrul Islam have been asked to respond in written within the next three working days.

The notices mentioned that the national daily Prothom Alo published a report that shows that these candidates are distributing leaflets with party symbols and campaigning, which is a violation of section-5 of the City Corporation (Election Conduct) Rules 2016.

According to the section, no candidate or any political party on his behalf, or any other person, organisation or institution shall start any kind of election campaign before symbol allocation.

The Sylhet City Polls is slated for June 21 and the symbols will be distributed on June 2. Candidates are entitled to start campaigning after that.

New US visa policy made BNP nervous Says Quader

UNB, Dhaka



Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said BNP has become nervous after the US announced the new policy.

He also said BNP is irritated by the rise in remittance inflow.

"It is very natural that those who always wait for sanctions against the country and its people from their foreign lords cannot be happy with such positive news," Quader said in a statement.

He said the prime minister's decision to provide 2.5 percent hassle-free incentive for remittance is the reason behind such increase in remittance flow. Quader said the government has taken stringent measures to tackle money laundering and corruption while those were institutionalised during the tenure of BNP-Jaamat coalition.

Now govt trying to suppress movement Claims Fakhru

UNB, Dhaka



BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Alamgir yesterday alleged that the government is trying to suppress the ongoing movement of people by sending opposition leaders and activists to jail.

He also said a fierce movement is the only option for the BNP to realise its 10-point demand as there is no chance of good sense prevailing upon the current regime.

He said this while talking to reporters after placing wreaths at the grave of BNP founder Ziaur Rahman. Fakhru made the remarks while giving the party's reaction to the High Court verdicts that upheld the jail term of BNP leaders Iqbal Hassan Mahmood Tuku, Amanullah Aman and his wife Sabera Aman in corruption cases.

CEC warns of action against rule violation

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Habibul Awal yesterday warned that actions would be taken against any violations of the electoral code of conduct.

He was addressing a views-exchange meeting with candidates of Khulna City Corporation polls scheduled to be held on June 12, at the city's Shilpakala Academy Auditorium.

He also said the election process would be monitored through CCTV cameras.

CEC Awal assured that the elections would be conducted in a free, fair, and impartial manner and a level playing field would be maintained.



Election officials in Khulna held a workshop yesterday to teach voters how to use the electronic voting machine. The photo was taken in the city's Pabla area.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

EC to finalise delimitation next week

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Election Commissioner Md Alamgir yesterday said the commission would publish the gazette notification of delimitation of constituencies next week.

A total of 186 claims and objections were filed regarding boundaries of 38 constituencies. According to the EC's work plan for the 12th parliamentary polls, likely to be held in late December this year or January next year, it has targeted to prepare a new policy to demarcate constituencies by June.

He also said election schedule of by-polls to the Dhaka 17 constituency will be announced on June 1.

The seat fell vacant following the death of lawmaker and actor Akbar Hossain Pathan (Farooque) on May 15.

New visa policy can help ensure fair polls: GM Quader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Jatiya Party Chairman GM Quader yesterday said the party is taking the new visa policy of US in a positive way because they want to see a free, fair and acceptable elections in Bangladesh.

"Those who are involved in elections or can influence the electoral system have their interests in Europe and America. Some of their children study there and some want to live in those countries after retirement. So no one would want them to be blacklisted along with their families. Hence, they will hesitate to obstruct the elections."

The JP chairman said this while talking to reporters at his Banani office.

GM Quader said the US visa policy will be helpful for an acceptable election in Bangladesh.

"We depend on different countries. So there is a scope for foreigners to influence. On the other hand, we cannot come up with solutions on many issues by ourselves," he added.