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## BNP aiming for endgame before polls schedule

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Opposition BNP plans to take its movement to a climax before the announcement of the election schedule, party insiders say.

Formal electioneering will kick off after the announcement of the polls schedule. So, BNP wants to achieve its goal before that, as the party fears that the government may try to imprison its leaders and activists through quick disposal of the cases against them in the coming months.

Secondly, the party also worries that the government may entice some BNP leaders into joining the election to make it look inclusive.

"The formal electioneering will start soon after the announcement of the election schedule. Therefore, it will be difficult for our movement to gain momentum at that time. So, before that, we will have to force the government to accept our demand for holding the election under a nonparty interim government," said a BNP standing committee member, wishing to remain unnamed.

The Election Commission has already hinted that the polls schedule will be unveiled in November, and the general election will be held in early January.

Keeping these in mind, BNP has announced a series of protest programmes, including road marches, starting today. These programmes will continue till October 3.

Party insiders say that through these programmes, they seek to build momentum before launching the final phase of their one-point movement to unseat the government and force it to install an interim administration.

Meanwhile, BNP leaders say, the cases filed against the opposition leaders and activists are being disposed of quickly. They fear some of their seniors may be convicted before the national election so they cannot participate in the polls.

"The government plans to keep the opposition leaders and workers in prisons so that they can't take part in the movement for a neutral government," BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir told a rally recently.

Another senior leader said the government may lure some opposition leaders into the election.

Referring to former BNP lawmaker Ukil Abdus Sattar, the BNP leader said the government will surely make such an attempt in the upcoming election too.

"We must wage the movement on such a scale that the Election Commission keeps from announcing the polls schedule. If we can pull that off, the door will open for negotiations to hold the polls under a caretaker government," he said.

Ukil Sattar was elected in the 2018 election from

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**"The government plans to keep the opposition leaders and workers in prisons so that they can't take part in the movement for a neutral government."**

Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir  
BNP Secretary General



PHOTO: SHEIKH ENAMUL HAQ

**A BRTC bus plying the Dhaka Elevated Expressway, as Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation launched its bus service on the expressway's Uttara-Farmgate route on a trial basis yesterday morning. Story on page 12.**

## Now inspectors too want promotions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With the general election a few months away, inspectors of Dhaka Metropolitan Police and police stations adjacent to the capital yesterday demanded promotions like their higher officials got through creation of supernumerary posts.

The government has recently created 342 supernumerary posts for the promotions of top police officials like additional inspector generals, deputy inspector generals, and superintendents of police.

The tenure of these supernumerary posts (officials who hold the same position and perform the same duties after their elevation) will be one year from the day of the creation.

In a meeting with Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan yesterday, the inspectors demanded that they be promoted through the creation of supernumerary posts.

Majharul Islam, general secretary of the Bangladesh Police Association, claimed that the meeting was fruitful.

He said their demands included promotion of police inspectors to the 6th grade after 10 years of service, automatic grade changes in their

rank badges after the same time, and promotion to the supernumerary rank if they are not promoted within 10 years. Similar proposals were put forth for sub-inspectors.

He added that they also demanded a prompt resolution to the issue of upgrading the rank badges of SIs and inspectors. They also sought gradual promotion of constables after preparing a list of those who would pass the departmental examination.

Earlier in the day, OCs from 50 police stations in the DMP and from surrounding districts held a meeting at the DMP conference room.

In the meeting, DMP Commissioner Khandker Golam Faruq said law and order in the capital is now stable because the DMP is working as a team, and "Team DMP" is ready to face any situation in the future, reports UNB.

He added that all police officers should perform their duties with professionalism to maintain law and order.

He asked them to give more importance while executing arrest warrants, investigating theft and robbery cases, as well as recovering stolen vehicles and drugs.



## Action to be taken if any DC shows bias: CEC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Habibul Awal yesterday said the commission does not want the deputy commissioners to have any bias while discharging their duties.

Speaking to reporters at the EC office in the capital's Agargaon, he said the commission will definitely take necessary action if it finds any DC working with any bias.

He said the government recently removed the Jamalpur DC after the EC requested the cabinet secretary to withdraw him.

Speaking at an event on September 11, in the presence of local MP Mirza Azam, Jamalpur DC Imran Ahmed urged people to re-elect the AL government for the continuation of the ongoing development work.

The next day, the EC

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## AL won't let BNP take control of the capital

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

As the BNP plans to intensify its movement for polls under a non-partisan administration, the Awami League and law enforcement agencies are determined to keep the capital under their control.

The government will allow the BNP and its allies to hold peaceful programmes like rallies and processions but will not permit programmes like blockades and sit-ins that might lead to violence or end up paralysing the city, said sources.

Ruling party leaders said the BNP announced several road marches and rallies outside the capital but the AL is not worried about those.

They believe that the main thrust of the BNP's movement will be Dhaka-centric so that the capital gets isolated from the rest of the country.

The AL will not allow the streets of the capital to go into the hands of the BNP activists and that is why AL high-ups are keeping a close eye on the opposition's capital-centric programmes, the AL leaders said.

According to party insiders, the ruling party will not confront the opposition on the streets as it does not want any untoward incidents before the polls, slated for January.

They said law enforcement agencies will deal with the BNP if it goes for any "violent programmes".

They said the AL will hold rallies with the theme "peace and development" to counter the BNP's programmes in the capital and to show off AL's strength.

Sources in law enforcement said they have been asked not to obstruct any peaceful programmes of the BNP and its allies but take action only when the opposition goes for programmes like blockades and sit-ins.

In the days to come, police will be intensifying the monitoring of hotels, inns, the entrances to the capitals, and opposition party activists and leaders. They will set up checkpoints in the city.

According to sources, police already made a list of leaders and activists of the BNP and its allies who have outstanding arrest warrants against them. They said the police would round them up if the BNP and its allies go for "violent" programmes.

"We will be on the streets until the next election and we will not allow anyone to hold any programme in the name of a movement that may lead to violence," AL praesidium member Abdur Razzaque told The Daily Star.

"We will guard the capital so that no unwanted situation arises due to the BNP's programme. We will not allow the BNP to take control of Dhaka and isolate the capital from the rest of the country," he added.

As AL's MPs and nomination seekers are now in their own areas for campaigning, Dhaka city units (North and

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**The ruling party will not confront the opposition on the streets as it does not want any untoward incidents before the polls, slated for January**

## BANKING SECTOR

## Female workforce rises but slightly

Their number in top, mid-level posts also up, shows BB data

MD ASADUZZAMAN

The number of women bankers has gone up slightly over the last three years, after it saw a drop during the Coronavirus pandemic in 2020.

As of June this year, 16.32 percent of the bank employees are women, up from 16.28 percent a year ago, according to data from Bangladesh Bank.

Similarly, the proportion of female bankers at the top-level and mid-level posts has increased, albeit at a slower pace, while the primary level's entry has decreased slightly, according to Gender Equality Report of Banks and Financial Institutions released by the central bank yesterday.

"The rising participation of women in the banking sector in Bangladesh reflects two things -- a higher level of tertiary education by female students and the overall

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**Unloaded from a fishing trawler, hilsa being taken to the wholesale market at Uthan Majhir Ghat of Chattogram's Anwara upazila yesterday. Fishers say they are not getting good catches this year compared to previous years. The national fish was selling for Tk 15,000 to Tk 60,000 per maund depending on size.**

PHOTO: RAJIB RATHAN

## Stop using labour law to harass Prof Yunus

Amnesty urges authorities here

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amnesty International yesterday said that authorities in Bangladesh must stop weaponising labour laws and immediately end their harassment and intimidation of the Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus.

Prof Yunus, chairman of the board at Grameen Telecom, is accused of employment-related violations and faces a criminal case in Bangladesh under the Labour Act 2006. Three other board members, Ashrafur Hasan, Nur Jahan Begum and Mohammad Shahjahan, face the same charges, it said.

The ongoing trial is just one of more than 150 cases filed against him after the ruling Awami League

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