

**ZAKIGANJ MAYOR POLLS**  
Defeated candidate  
declared winner  
after recount

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The electoral tribunal in Sylhet has revised the outcome of the mayoral election for Zakiganj municipality, declaring previously defeated candidate Faruque Ahmed as the winner.

Md Arifuzzaman, a judge at the tribunal and the joint district and sessions court in Sylhet, delivered the verdict on Thursday after conducting a recount of votes from five polling centres and considering a case filed in 2021.

Ali Mortuja Kibria, lawyer representing the complainant, and the public prosecutor of the Anti-Corruption Tribunal, confirmed the verdict.

According to the case details, the Zakiganj municipality election in Sylhet

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**Implement CHT**  
peace accord

**Demand speakers at**  
Sylhet rally

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord must be implemented, demanded speakers at a solidarity rally in Sylhet yesterday.

They also sought a combined movement for the implementation of the peace accord.

Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord Implementation Committee in Sylhet organised the rally at Sylhet Zilla Parishad Auditorium.

In the rally, eminent rights activist Sultana Kamal said, "...We speak very less of the accord. But this is not only a problem for the indigenous people but for all. Everyone should come forward in protest of those who violate such an accord."

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**4 BR dispensaries**  
without doctors

Staffers in Mymensingh, Jamalpur deprived  
of medical services for over a year

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

The two dispensaries of Bangladesh Railway in Mymensingh have been operating without a doctor to oversee the medical services for the staffers, for over a year. The two railway dispensaries in Jamalpur are facing a similar crisis.

Railway dispensaries are supposed to provide medical assistance to BR staff stationed in the region. However, previously, only one doctor was posted at the four dispensaries – two in Mymensingh and two in Jamalpur, sources said.

However, after the lone doctor retired last year, no one has yet been posted to oversee the four dispensaries in Mymensingh and Jamalpur.

Adding to the problems, there is also an acute shortage of necessary medicines.

Shaheen Farazi, a staffer of Railway Nirapotta Bahini (security force), who came to a dispensary in Mymensingh said he needed medicines for gastric issues, but it was not in stock. Instead, he had to leave the dispensary with allergy tablets.

Sharifa Akter, wife of a railway staffer, who needed medicine for high blood pressure, corroborated a similar ordeal. Railway staffers Mustafizur Rahman and Md Robin Ali also suffered from a similar issue.

BR authorities are yet to take any step to appoint the required number of doctors at the dispensaries, to render proper treatment for its staff. It is very difficult for one doctor to attend to the needs of the four dispensaries every week, while also being on duty at the Railway Hospital in Dhaka, said



The Mymensingh railway dispensary is set up in a century-old building beside the station. The building is in a dilapidated condition and does not have necessary arrangements for patients.

PHOTO: STAR

sources.

Previously, around 70 patients on an average would visit Mymensingh Railway Dispensary every day, but now the number has fallen to around 10-20, said Masuda Akter Mitu, a pharmacist at the dispensary.

Elevating the problems further, the Mymensingh dispensary is set up in a century-old building at Mymensingh Railway Station, which is in a dilapidated condition and does not have necessary arrangements for patients.

When visiting the dispensary recently, this correspondent saw that cracks have developed at many places of the two-storied building, with rain water seeping through the damaged roof, disrupting activities inside.

"We have written to the authorities concerned several times, regarding renovation of the dispensary, but no

steps have been taken yet due to fund constraints, added Mitu.

There is little scope for promotions and higher studies for doctors in Bangladesh Railway, so doctors have little interest in joining railway dispensaries, sources shared.

"A proposal for posting a doctor for the dispensaries in Mymensingh and Jamalpur is now pending with the Ministry of Public Administration. An assistant surgeon (Bacteriology) at Dhaka Railway Hospital has been given additional charge to visit the dispensaries," said Dr Ripon Das, Dhaka divisional medical officer of BR.

Asked about providing facilities for higher studies and training for appointed doctors, Dr Ripon said if doctors express desire, they will be provided scopes in this regard.

**Govt land grabbed**  
to 'rehabilitate'  
hawkers in Noakhali

ANWARUL HAIDER, Noakhali

A group of people under the banner of Khudra Hawkers Somobay Samity Limited have illegally occupied around 65 decimals of public land in Noakhali town and are now constructing a two-storied wooden structure on the land for making commercial shops.

According to Noakhali district administration, the land at Old Bus Station area is owned by the government's Department of Public Works.

The land remained abandoned for a long time, but recently the district administration and police verbally allowed local CNG-run auto-rickshaw owners to use the space as a parking lot to ease the town's traffic congestion, said locals and auto-rickshaw drivers.

Around 10 days ago, the "hawker association" forcibly occupied the land and started constructing the structure there.



Work continues on this government land to illegally construct a building to "rehabilitate" hawkers in Noakhali. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: STAR

On information, an executive magistrate of the district administration rushed to the spot and stopped construction works. The people, however, resumed construction works after the magistrate left the spot, said locals and witnesses.

Noakhali Super Market, a popular shopping mall in the town, is located just adjacent to that space.

"The illegal construction works are going on without following proper planning and safety

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Sporting yellow t-shirts and red shorts, the four young lifeguards act as guardian angels for visitors at the beach, ready to help if any danger befalls them in the water. Since 2014, these lifeguards have saved many a life and have established themselves as an essential presence in Cox's Bazar. The photos were taken recently.

PHOTO: STAR

**COX'S BAZAR BEACH**

**Lifeguard service**  
likely to end in Dec

Fund crisis forcing SeaSafe to pack up operation

MOKAMMEL SHUVU

Tourists who recently visited Cox's Bazar have likely seen a few young men, in yellow t-shirts and red shorts, keeping a close eye over them as they ventured out into the waters. They only have a ring buoy on their backs and constantly roam the beach or survey it from mobile watch towers, keeping visitors safe from drowning, between the morning and evening.

Even with minimal equipment, their dedication has helped them serve efficiently as lifeguards. However, soon, their operations at the sea beach will likely come to an end by this December.

SeaSafe, the largest lifeguarding project in Cox's Bazar, is run by Centre for Injury Prevention and Research Bangladesh (CIPRB) – a non-government organisation. They are now packing up their operations, due to a lack of funding.

If their services are shut down, the lives of tourists visiting Cox's Bazar will be at stake, said individuals related to the tourism industry.

Princess Charlene of the Monaco Foundation and Royal National Lifeboat Institution provides funds for the project, said Imtiaz Ahmed,

field team manager of CIPRB. "The activities of lifeguards will halt after the tenure of the project ends on December 31, since we haven't gotten any funds yet," he added.

"After starting operations in 2014, SeaSafe lifeguards saved over 585 people. Meanwhile, 38 tourists lost their lives to the sea. If there are no lifeguards at Cox's Bazar, the death toll will surely increase," the CIPRB official said.



Moreover, 27 lifeguards are not enough to save the lives of tourists at all three beaches in Cox's Bazar, he said.

Cox's Bazar Beach Management Committee sources said lifeguard services are provided by two organisations – SeaSafe and Yasir Lifeguard, with the latter only having five lifeguards.

"SeaSafe is the main organisation

providing lifeguard services here. The lives of tourists will be at risk if their service ends," said Selim Newaz, secretary of Cox's Bazar Hotel Motel, Guest House and Cottage Owners' Association.

"We have saved the lives of tourists at three beaches – Kolatoli, Shughandha and Laboni. Our international standard rescue training has helped us greatly. If we have modern equipment, it will help save even more lives," said Rashid Ahmed, a lifeguard of the SeaSafe project.

Equipment like jet skis, lifeboats, medical emergency equipment, medical sub centre near the beach, and modern ambulances are used to save the lives of tourists in the modern world. But they lack such equipment, said CIPRB official Imtiaz.

Contacted, Md Yamin Hossain, additional district magistrate of Cox's Bazar, said, "The lifeguard service at Cox's Bazar beach will not end after December. We are trying to manage the fund or we will arrange other alternatives to continue the service, since it's an important issue for the safety of tourists."

Moreover, they are thinking of improving their service with modern equipment, he added.

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**”**  
IMTIAZ AHMED  
Field team manager of CIPRB

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