



AL calls for 5 rallies in Oct

Four centring opening of mega projects

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League will hold four rallies in October to mark the inauguration of four mega projects, highlight the country's development, and successes of the government.

Prime Minister and AL President Sheikh Hasina will open the projects and be the chief guest at the rallies.

On October 7, the party will organise a public meeting at the Uttara aviation field to mark the inauguration of the third terminal of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport.

The second rally will be on October 10 at the Mawa end of Munshiganj to mark the opening of the Padma Bridge rail line.

On October 23, another one will be organised at the Shapla Chhatar in Motijheel on the occasion of the inauguration of the Agargaon-Motijheel section of the metro rail.

The fourth rally will on October 28 in Chattogram marking the opening of the Bangabandhu tunnel under the Karnaphuli river.

AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader announced the programmes

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Occupying a pavement, battery-run rickshaws and rickshaw-vans are being charged in the Tejgaon Industrial Area in the capital yesterday. Such an activity obstructs pedestrians and puts them at risk of electric shocks.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Govt violating Khaleda's rights

Says BNP leader Moyeen after Mymensingh road march

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

BNP standing committee member Abdul Moyeen Khan yesterday accused the government of lying about issues related to sending party Chairperson Khaleda Zia abroad for treatment and vowed not to leave the streets until the government steps down.

"Depriving Khaleda Zia of proper treatment is a gross violation of her fundamental rights guaranteed by the constitution. If the government follows the constitution, why are they not sending Khaleda Zia abroad for treatment?" he said while speaking at a rally at the Latibabad Eye Hospital ground in Kishoreganj.

The rally was held after the party's Mymensingh road march ended in Kishoreganj yesterday evening.

"They [AL government] are lying. Our movement will continue until this government falls," Moyeen added.

The opposition party held the 114km road march to press home its one-point demand that seeks the resignation of the government and the next national election under a non-party interim government.

The column of vehicles carrying the BNP leaders and activists left Trishal of Mymensingh district after a brief rally at 11:30am. It reached Kishoreganj around 7:30pm.

On the way to Kishoreganj, the vehicles stopped in Churkhai, China Mor, and Shambhuganj Bazar areas of Mymensingh and Kishoreganj where brief rallies were held.

Hundreds of BNP leaders and activists, carrying posters and banners, took position along the highway to cheer the

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12 containers sink twice



STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

After 23 shipping containers were salvaged from the sunken vessel Pangaon Express, a barge carrying 12 of those ended up tilting and sliding them back into the water in the Karnaphuli channel on Thursday night.

Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) officials said all 12 containers were under water and only five of them could be fished out as of yesterday afternoon.

The CPA formed a two-member probe body, led by Deputy Conservator Captain Faridul Alam, to investigate the matter.

Sources said a crane vessel was towing the barge "Terminator" loaded with the salvaged containers to a jetty at the New Mooring Container Terminal of the port on Thursday morning.

Salvage firm PS Salvage, tasked with recovering the containers from Pangaon Express that sank near Bhasan Char coast on July 6, was in charge of bringing the 12 containers ashore.

Ashrafal Alam, managing partner of PS Salvage, said both the crane vessel and the barge were anchored near canal-14 of the Karnaphuli channel that morning and waiting for port clearance to berth at the NCT jetty.

However, around 9:00pm, a large vessel passed by, and its wave and the strong current caused

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FOREIGN CONCERN OVER POLLS

Geopolitics, trade interests key drivers

Speakers at webinar put it down to distrust between political parties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The concerns of some foreign powers over the upcoming national election in Bangladesh are driven mainly by their geopolitical and trade interests, political analysts and governance experts said yesterday.

However, they said, the growing distrust among the country's political parties is to blame for this.

They were speaking at a webinar titled "Influence of Foreign Powers in Bangladesh's election", organised by Forum for Bangladesh Studies – a platform for academics and analysts working on the country's contemporary issues.

The speakers said such concerns should not be overlooked and denounced with negative remarks since Bangladesh, as a member state of the UN, is obliged to uphold human rights and democracy.

Keynote speaker at the webinar, Ali Riaz, distinguished professor of political science at Illinois State University in the US, said the concerns of foreign nations over the upcoming polls have been growing since May when the US announced its visa policy for Bangladesh "to promote democratic elections".

However, this visa policy did not come out of the blue as the US has been voicing doubts about

Bangladesh's electoral system for over two years, he said.

"[The message was] they want a free, acceptable and peaceful election."

In the past, whenever opposition parties found themselves unjustly cornered by the ruling party, they sought solutions from foreign diplomats, citing an absence of democracy, he said.

"Human rights issues can be better addressed with a stable political situation and an inclusive government structure..."

M Humayun Kabir, former Bangladesh ambassador to US

The first such instance was in 1982, when the country was under military rule and most of the political parties were waging a movement for democracy.

Experiences from 1996, 2006, and 2013 suggest that Awami League benefited most from foreign nations' mediation in disputes over national polls, he

added.

Political parties in Bangladesh, mainly AL and BNP, never expressed their reservations about the involvement or mediation of foreign nations before, he observed. "The recent reservations expressed by Awami League are only targeted at the west."

M Humayun Kabir, former Bangladesh ambassador to the US, said there has recently been a sharp polarisation in global geopolitics and Bangladesh holds a significant position in this regard.

"How the country will utilise its geopolitical position or what the other countries expect from Bangladesh in such circumstances are issues that need further discussions."

On the other hand, Bangladesh has been heavily involved in global trades over the past three decades or more, he said, adding, when a country's trade is connected globally, it is obvious that its politics will also come into play.

Moreover, the country is socially connected to the rest of the world thanks to its about 1.25 crore expatriates who uphold and exchange social values in different countries, Humayun said.

"Our exposure to the outside world is increasing ... It has been

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DENGUE OUTBREAK

Deaths cross 1,000 mark

2,882 admitted to hospitals in a day

DIPAN NANDY

Deaths confirmed to have been caused by dengue this year have crossed the 1,000 mark as the health directorate yesterday reported 17 fatalities.

The death toll from the mosquito-borne disease stood at 1,006 yesterday.

This has been the deadliest year since the disease was first detected in the country in 2000. The combined death toll from the disease in the previous years is 853.

At least 2,06,288 cases of the disease were detected this year.

In the 24 hours preceding 8:00am yesterday, 2,882 people were hospitalised, according to DHGS data.

Mushtaq Hussain, a consultant at the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control, and Research, said, "All our efforts to control the mosquito population have been ineffective. This led to the rise in the number of cases and deaths."

The extended monsoon is another reason why dengue cases are persisting this year, he said.

"Aedes mosquitoes have found conditions conducive to breeding because of the rain. This resulted in a surge of dengue cases," he told The Daily Star.

Entomologist Manzur A Chowdhury said, "Over the last two decades, we observed that efforts to eradicate Aedes mosquitoes intensify when there is a dengue outbreak, but the initiatives fizzle out when there are fewer cases."

He added that an integrated vector management system should ensure round-the-year surveillance of Aedes mosquitoes and the city corporations should run anti-mosquito campaigns from January to April to destroy the active Aedes clusters.

Meanwhile, Local Government Minister Tazul Islam yesterday said, "It is not possible to prevent dengue spread without keeping the homes clean. Public awareness is crucial in combating dengue and other mosquito-borne diseases."

MALDIVES PRESIDENTIAL VOTE

Pro-China winner Muizzu vows to unite archipelago

Secures release of his jailed mentor

AFP, Male

The president-elect of the Maldives, Mohamed Muizzu, secured the release of his jailed mentor yesterday, a day after divisive polls that saw the pro-Beijing leader vow to rebalance relations with New Delhi.

Bowing to Muizzu's request, outgoing president Ibrahim Mohamed Solih ordered the transfer of his predecessor Abdulla Yameen from a high-security prison island to house arrest in the capital Male.

Hundreds of supporters cheered and waved pink flags of their Progressive Party of Maldives (PPM) as Yameen arrived at his home, party officials said.

Muizzu was a proxy candidate of Yameen, who is still serving an 11-year sentence for corruption carried out when he was in power between 2013 and 2018.

Officials said Solih did not have

"No matter their political affiliation, they are all Maldivian citizens in front of me...They are entitled to the same rights."

Mohamed Muizzu



powers to pardon Yameen, but the only concession he could make was to transfer the convict to house arrest. Solih, 61, will serve as caretaker president until his successor is inaugurated on November 17.

Shortly after he was declared the winner, Muizzu, the current mayor of Male, urged unity in the politically divided, Sunni Muslim-majority nation.

"No matter their political

affiliation, they are all Maldivian citizens in front of me," Muizzu told supporters after his win late Saturday. "They are entitled to the same rights. They are entitled to equality in everything."

Before his jailing, Yameen had led an "India out" campaign to remove New Delhi's deployment of a small detachment of security personnel to operate four reconnaissance aircraft gifted to the archipelago.

Jubo league leader among 2 killed in clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Two people were killed and 25 others injured in a clash between two rival groups over a land dispute in Habiganj's Bahubal upazila on Saturday night.

The dead were identified as Yusuf Mia, 40, an organising secretary of Bahubal Jubo League, and Ustar Mia, 42.

Police and locals said there was a longstanding dispute between both the deceased over a piece of land in Mirpur village in the upazila, where they both resided, and have engaged in clashes several times before.

Around 10:00pm on Saturday, both men's respective groups engaged in a clash in which they used sharp weapons. At least 27 people, including

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