

‘His remark doesn’t reflect people’s desire’

Rizvi on Chinese envoy’s comment about polls as per constitution

UNB, Dhaka

BNP senior joint secretary general Ruhul Kabir Rizvi, in a statement, urged China to give importance to the desires and interests of the people of Bangladesh.

“In fact, Ambassador Wen’s comment that China wants to see the upcoming elections in Bangladesh as per the constitution does not reflect the will or aspirations of people,” he said.

The BNP leader said a large section of the people in Bangladesh have not had a chance to vote in the past ten years.

“So, the country’s vast population wants a free, fair, inclusive and credible election not under the authoritarian Sheikh Hasina regime, but under a polls-time neutral government,” he said.

Rizvi said the Chinese ambassador’s remarks come at a time when the entire nation in unison is demanding the installation of a polls-time impartial government and BNP is carrying out a peaceful movement in an effort to restore people’s voting rights and democratic values.

“We welcome his concern about Bangladesh. At the same time, we would like to remind [him] that BNP, the party that introduced multi-party democracy in Bangladesh, is always committed to the constitution, which is approved and accepted by people,” he said.

PM to open Ghorashal urea fertiliser plant today

STAR REPORT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is set to inaugurate the newly built Ghorashal-Palash Urea Fertiliser Factory in Narsingdi today.

The factory, the largest of its kind in Southeast Asia, will slash fertiliser imports and create 30,000 jobs, said a press release of Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation.

Bangladesh has an annual urea demand of 26 lakh tonnes. Currently, local factories produce about 10 lakh tonnes, and the rest is imported to meet the demand.

The GPUFF alone will contribute 9.24 lakh MT, significantly reducing the need for imports. The previous factories in Ghorashal and Palash produced 2.5 MT urea.

The factory, built at a cost of Tk 15,500 crore on 110 acres of land, will produce about 2,800 MT of fertiliser daily.

Of the total cost, the government provided Tk 4,580.21 crore, and Tk 10,920 crore was obtained through business loan schemes from Jica, HSBC, and Bank of Tokyo Mitsubishi UFJ Limited.

PRAYER TIMING
NOVEMBER 12

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 5:00	12:45	3:45	5:22	7:00
JAMAAAT 5:35	1:15	4:00	5:25	7:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Condemning and protesting the indiscriminate killing of children, women and innocent people in Gaza, Palestine by Israeli forces, a human chain was formed at Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka yesterday. Manusher Jonno Foundation organised the event.

PHOTO: STAR

PREVENTING SNATCHING OF MILITANTS

Measures not fully implemented yet

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN and EMRUL HASAN BAPPI

The Police Headquarters in August asked all its units to implement a set of measures by September 15 to prevent recurrence of militants or criminals getting snatched away.

Some of the vital measures, however, are yet to be implemented.

The measures were adopted based on 14 recommendations placed by a high-powered committee formed to investigate the incident of two death-row convicts in publisher Faisal Arefin Dipan murder case getting snatched away from Dhaka court premises on November 20, 2022.

Nasian Wazed, additional DIG (operations) of PHQ, later issued a letter mentioning the 14 recommendations.

The key recommendations include installing CCTV cameras in each prison van to monitor movement of accused; carrying members of banned militant outfits in separate prison van if possible; installing and monitoring CCTV cameras on court premises; arranging online attendance for risky and convicted accused before producing them in courts; keeping high risk criminals at the Dhaka Central Jail in South Keraniganj instead of Kashimpur after arrest; using prison vans to carry top terrorists, militants and notorious criminals instead of taking other transports; and developing a software for management of accused in prosecution division.

Talking to officials concerned and visiting courts, this newspaper learnt that no CCTV camera was set up in prison vans except one, none of the high-

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- ➡ Installing CCTV cameras in prison vans
- ➡ Carrying members of banned militant outfits in separate prison van
- ➡ Setting up, monitoring CCTV cameras on court premises
- ➡ Online attendance for risky, convicted accused before producing them in courts
- ➡ Keeping high risk criminals at Dhaka Central Jail in South Keraniganj
- ➡ Prison vans to carry top terrorists, militants, notorious criminals
- ➡ Developing software for managing accused in prosecution division

risk accused was shifted to the central jail in Keraniganj from Kashimpur jail, while online hearing arrangement is yet to be taken at all Dhaka courts.

Online attendance management for risky and convicted accused is now available at seven Dhaka courts, said the staffers concerned.

The situation is the same, perhaps even bleaker, in Chattogram.

Five police officials, deployed at the lockups of the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate’s Court and the Metropolitan Sessions Judge’s Court in Dhaka, said only one prison van has CCTV camera facilities, which comes to the court from Gazipur carrying both risky accused as well as regular ones.

“We have sent a report to the PHQ,

mentioning what steps we have already taken based on its recommendations,” Mohammad Anisur Rahman, deputy commissioner of DMP’s prosecution division, told The Daily Star on October 23.

The authorities of Dhaka Central Jail and Kashimpur High Security Jail did not get any letter yet regarding implementing the PHQ’s recommendations.

Subash Kumar Ghosh, senior jail superintendent (in-charge) of Dhaka Central Jail, and Subrata Kumar Bala, senior jail superintendent of Kashimpur High Security Jail, confirmed this.

Both of them said they installed equipment for online attendance in some special cases for risky and convicted accused before producing them to court.

While the Chattogram Metropolitan Police claimed to have made some progress regarding implementing the recommendations, the range police refused to disclose their process.

Contacted, Mustafizur Rahman, deputy commissioner (south) of CMP, said, “Our teams have started working to collect information about the high profile banned militants who are now in Chattogram prison.”

“Considering the incident last year, we are arranging special security in court and prison vans while transporting banned or convicted militants from prison to court. Jail authorities can talk about the virtual court or online hearing process as they are working on it,” he added.

Nessar Uddin Ahmed, superintendent of police (operations) at Chattogram Deputy Inspector General’s office,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Raise your voice against atrocities in Gaza: speakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a rally yesterday condemned and protested the indiscriminate killing of children, women and innocent people in Gaza, Palestine by Israeli forces.

Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) organised the rally at Central Shaheed Minar. Speakers urged for immediate actions to implement a ceasefire and ensure safety and security of women, children and innocent civilians in the conflict-ridden area.

Shaheen Anam, executive director of MJF, said, “Today we are joining with the voices of millions across the world demanding an end to this atrocity against children and innocent civilians, which is nothing less than genocidal.”

“Although we are against attacks on innocent civilians by Hamas, the present disproportionate response of Israel towards the people of Gaza has left us shocked,” she said.

She said it is horrific to see images of bodies of small children wrapped in shrouds and the heartrending wails of the mothers every day.

Rasheda K Choudhury, executive director of Campaign for Popular Education and former advisor to a caretaker government, emphasised the urgent need to halt the ongoing war.

With three generations having already witnessed

750,000 women and girls have been displaced, including around 50,000 pregnant women.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

A BCL leader’s controversial rise

ASHIK ABDULLAH APU AND SIRAJUL ISLAM RUBEL

Not so long ago, Mostafa Hossain Helal used to run a small mobile recharge shop in Moddho Badda area in the capital.

However, after becoming the president of Gulshan thana unit Chhatra League in 2019, Helal’s lifestyle changed overnight.

This position in the ruling Awami League-backed student organisation has appeared to be his Aladdin’s lamp. Overnight, Helal transitioned to a more luxurious lifestyle, residing in his own luxurious apartment in Natun Bazar and commuting in a Toyota Noah car.

He, however, sold his flat four months ago.

Helal’s social media photos also show he frequently travels to different countries, including Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia.

The Chhatra League charter does not allow its activists to have any job or be involved in any business. Helal has breached several clauses of the BCL charter.



Mostafa Hossain Helal

A complaint was lodged against Helal with the Anti-Corruption Commission in January where the complainant alleged that he has illegal assets worth Tk 42 crore.

Helal completed his post-graduation in Physics from Government Titumir College in 2011, according to documents obtained by The Daily Star.

The BCL constitution states that leaders should be under 29 years old, but Helal assumed leadership at the age of 30 on July 30, 2019, as per his NID card. Presently, he is 34 years and seven months old. Besides, he got married twice and has two children, further breaching the organisation’s rules.

The fifth (Ga) section of the BCL charter prohibits married persons from being eligible for BCL membership.

Helal was married even before assuming the BCL post. His eldest son is a third grader at a private English-medium school.

He is also accused of extorting Tk 20,000 per month from each of the 25 spa centres in Gulshan area.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Hajj registration begins Nov 15

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hajj registration for 2024 under government and private hajj management will begin on November 15, said the Ministry of Religious Affairs in a circular on Thursday.

The registration for hajj, likely to be held on June 16 next year, is open till December 10.

Around 1.27 lakh Bangladeshis will be able to perform hajj in 2024. Among them, 10,198 can avail this facility under the government management while the remaining 1,00,017 will be under private hajj management, according to the ministry.

The hajj fee is estimated at Tk 5.78 lakh for general package while the special package will cost Tk 9.36 lakh.

The Hajj Agencies Association of Bangladesh will announce the hajj package in coordination with the government hajj package.

According to the circular, the pre-registration fee is set at Tk 29,000.

The package information will be provided prior to the registration and once registered, there will be no scope for a change. However, if one fails to make the trip, the amount will be refunded after deducting the amount already spent in the process.

Hajj agencies will provide a written contract for each pilgrim, specifying the package facilities and programmes.

The notification also informed that if the cost of hajj increases for any reason, it will be considered as part of the package and the pilgrim will have to pay it.

The hajj fee is estimated at Tk 5.78 lakh for general package while the special package will cost Tk 9.36 lakh.



To protect himself from stench and smoke, a rickshaw-van puller covers his nose as he cycles past heaps of burning garbage on the Dhaka-Aricha highway in Savar’s Baliapur area.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN