### Chattogram BNP leader dies in Kashimpur prison

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Chattogram BNP leader, who was arrested in Dhaka on October 27, died in Kashimpur High Security Central Jail in Gazipur yesterday.

Golapur Rahman, 63, vice president of Mohora ward BNP in the port city, died at the prison hospital at 2:40pm, said Sheikh Md Russel, deputy jailer of the prison.

He fell ill after complaining of chest pains around 2:00pm. Golapur was taken to the prison hospital, where he died while undergoing treatment, he

He has been receiving treatment at the prison hospital since Thursday,

"I met my father the last time in Kashimpur prison on November 4 and he was fully Ok. He had no health complications..."

Golapur's son **Mizanur Rahman** 

the deputy jailer said.

Golapur was brought to Kashimpur prison from Dhaka Central Jail in . Keranigani on November 2.

Prison authorities informed family members of his death over the phone around 7:30pm, Idris Ali, former office secretary of city unit BNP, told the Daily Star.

His body will be handed over to family members today following an autopsy and other legal procedures.

Golapur, along with other BNP leaders, went to Dhaka to attend BNP's October 28 rally.

He was arrested along with Mohora ward BNP president Mohammad Azam and six others in front of BNP's Nayapaltan party office.

Golapur's son Mizanur Rahman told The Daily Star, "An unknown person called our family and said my father passed away in the jail."

"I met my father the last time in Kashimpur prison on November 4 and he was fully Ok. He had no health complications. ... We are on the way to bring back his body," he added.



In clear violation of the electoral code of conduct, politicians have started pasting posters to seek votes in the coming national election even though campaigning is not allowed until December 18. The photo was taken at the capital's Azimpur yesterday.

# People turning away from one-sided polls

Says speaker at roundtable, only people's participation ensures inclusive polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

If the BNP does not participate in the upcoming election, the polls will turn into a costume party, said a speaker at a roundtable yesterday.

They said people were turning away from such kind of one-sided elections.

The Hunger Project organised the roundtable titled "Environment for a free, fair and competitive election: Expectation, reality and what to do" at the YWCA conference hall in the capital yesterday.

Speaking at the discussion, former election commissioner Brig Gen (retd) M Sakhawat Hussain said, "There is no doubt that the country is developing. But the end situation will be seen in next year... We have almost a \$100 billion in loans. We are going to see another unique election this time, which the ruling party does not wish to be inclusive.

"An election is going to be held which

will be like our childhood game of 'dress as you like'. But I really don't know what will be the situation after the election. We are in a crisis," he added.

Sakhawat said there were two kinds of polls -- a participatory and acceptable one or a flopped and failed one. "Some are giving a new definition to participatory election by saying that if most political parties join a poll, it will be participatory. But they forget about the people.'

The country director of The Hunger Project, Badiul Alam Majumder, said people should have a choice in an election.

"If the BNP does not join the polls, there would be no chance for the people to have a choice. Moreover, this election is not a simple election," he said.

Brotee CEO Sharmeen Morshed said, The government said there is no time for dialogue but we have seen that it is possible to have understandings between two parties even in a war.

"We don't want any election without a national agreement. We don't want such a polls schedule. Our whole electoral system has become as spoiled as the society. We need reforms first," she added.

She emphasised the role of civil society in ending the uncertain situation.

Dhaka University Prof Robaet Ferdous aid, "There is no alternative to discussion. If a dialogue fails, we will need another, but the political issues should be settled

In a keynote paper, Central Coordinator of Shujan Dilip Kumar Sarker said it was the aspiration of the people to have a free, fair, impartial and competitive election.

"But the prediction is that the upcoming election will be one-sided and violent. We think if there is no agreement among the political parties, we will see violence in the coming days, which will push the country towards an uncertain future," he said.

### HSC results out today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The results of this year's Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) and its equivalent examinations will be published today.

The copy of the results will be handed over to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina this morning.

Later in the day, the results will be officially announced by Education Minister Dipu Moni at a press briefing. HOW TO GET RESULTS

Candidates can get their results online or through

To get the results under general boards through SMS, candidates have to type HSC, the first three letters of the board name, followed by the candidate's roll number and the year, and send it to 16222.

For example, a candidate who sat for this year's exams under the Dhaka board with a roll number of '123456' will have to send: HSC(space) Dha(space)123456(space)2023 and send the SMS

Alternatively, the candidates can also get their results from http://www.educationboardresults.

#### Ruling party men surround BNP leader, hand him over to police

A CORRESPONDENT, Feni

Jubo League and Chhatra League activists surrounded a BNP leader and then handed him over to police in Feni yesterday.

Locals and police said Akbar Hossain, president of Dagonbhuiyan upazila BNP and younger brother of BNP central committee vice-chairman Abdul Awal Mintoo, led a group of BNP activists in a torch procession in Tulatuli area of Dagonbhuiyan vesterday evening.

Afterwards, when Akbar was returning home, Jubo League and Chhatra League activists surrounded him in Muktarbari area and called in the police.

Police went to the spot and detained Akbar, said Nizam Uddin, officer-in-charge (OC) of Dagonbhuiyan Police Station.

### 3.5kg cocaine seized

UNB, Dhaka

Members of Border Guard Bangladesh vesterday recovered 3.485kg of contraband cocaine from a bus in Cox's Bazar Sadar upazila.

Acting on a tip-off that a consignment of cocaine would be taken to Cox's Bazar from Kushtia by a bus, a BGB team conducted a drive in the Banglabazar area around 8:10am, said a media release issued by the BGB.

As the bus reached Banglabazar, the BGB personnel searched for the drug in the vehicle and found it in a bag, according to the release.

#### Rohingya leader hacked to death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

A Rohingya community leader was hacked to death by unidentified criminals at a refugee camp in Ukhiya upazila of Cox's Bazar yesterday.

The incident took place Rohingya Camp-19 around 11:30am. The deceased Ata Ullah, 34, was a community leader (Sub-Majhi) of A/1

Block in Camp-19. Shamim Hossain, officer-in-charge (OC) of Ukhiya Police Station, said Ata Ullah was taken from A/1 block to A/9block and hacked indiscriminately.

Armed Police Battalion personnel rescued him and took him to an NGO run hospital adjacent to the camp and later to Ukhiya Upazila Health Complex, where doctors declared him dead, the OC added.

Initially, the police presume that he was killed over establishing

supremacy in the camp. The body has been sent to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital morgue for

Legal action is being taken in this connection, the OC added.

#### GM Quader, Raushan discuss

FROM PAGE 1

After the meeting, Raushan met with her loyalists.

A JP leader loyal to Raushan said election-related issues were discussed in the meeting.

The issues of Quader's move to run from Rangpur-3, where Rahgir is the incumbent MP, and the buying of a nomination form by Quader's nephew for Rangpur-1, where opposition chief whip Mashiur Rahman Ranga is the sitting MP, were also discussed in the meeting, the JP leader told this correspondent wishing anonymity.

The meeting discussed making the party's election-related decisions in consultation with Raushan.

The Daily Star could not reach Quader over phone for comments as he did not answer the calls.

Earlier in the day, JP Secretary General Mujibul Haque Chunnu said Raushan called him on Friday and said she would collect three nomination forms -- one each for herself, her son and her family physician KR Islam. But she did not collect the forms, he added.

The JP continued interviewing the nomination seekers for the second consecutive day yesterday.

The party is likely to make the final list of its nominees public today, JP sources said.

## 4 more bridges planned over Buriganga

Daily Star recently, Sharif Jamil, coordinator Waterkeepers of Bangladesh, a non-government organisation working to protect water bodies, said "unplanned projects" have been killing rivers across the country.

'Different implementing agencies constructed low-height and short bridges and they proved to be the main reason behind the death of rivers."

He said the government had decided to break down low-height bridges over the rivers around the capital but the decision was not implemented.

"Now, the government is planning to build more bridges over the

He further said, "The government must prioritise rivers over such projects, and the RHD must conduct proper social and environmental studies and consider all stakeholders' opinions before taking up projects centring rivers."

Countering the concerns, Shishir Kanti said that as per their preliminary designs, two of the bridges will not have any pier inside the river while the other two will have

only two piers each.

"So, in terms of obstructing water flow, the bridges won't do much of it." WHERE THE BRIDGES WILL BE RHD has almost completed feasibility study for two of the four bridges, said Mohammad Najmol Haque, RHD's superintendent engineer

Narayanganj Circle). He said the existing bridge at Postagola had been partially damaged since June 2020 when a salvage ship hit it and it is not enough to cope with the growing traffic pressure. "So, a new four-lane bridge will

be constructed on the right side [following Dhaka-Mawa route] of the existing bridge." He added that there would be an

intersection with elevated sections in Hasnabad area for proper traffic management. "Another bridge will be built at

Fatullah's Konda area to facilitate the Pangaon Inlan Container Terminal." He added that once that bridge is constructed, vehicles from the Dhaka-Mawa expressway can go directly to

Dhaka-Chattogram highway without

entering the capital. Another would bridge constructed on the right side of

Babubazar bridge, following the Dhaka-Mawa direction, said Sabuj Uddin Khan, RHDs' additional chief engineer (Dhaka zone).

He said that as an elevated ramp from Dhaka-Mawa Expressway ends in Kadamtali area, they were planning to connect the new bridge with the RHD sources said a proposal for

studying the bridge's feasibility was sent to the RHD's Chief Engineer Office for approval. The department is planning to

build the fourth bridge beside the Basila Bridge, formally known as Martyred Intellectuals Bridge It was built at a cost of Tk 84.09 crore and opened to traffic in

have necessary vertical clearance. In July 2021, State Minister for Planning Shamsul Alam said the

December 2009. However, it does not

"faulty" bridge will be broken down. However, an RHD engineer said they were considering two options to construct a new four-lane bridge and tear down the exiting one, or to increase the height of the existing bridge, whicg would be very costly.

A study will soon start in this regard, he said.

## EC still has no means to track campaign costs

involved in the process.

According to a Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) study on the 2018 parliamentary polls, among the 107 candidates surveyed, 104 spent over Tk 74.95 lakh on an average during the period between finalisation of the nomination and the election.

One of the candidates spent Tk 4.5 crore, found the study.

Another TIB report on the 2008 election shows that 88 candidates spent over Tk 44 lakh on an average during the campaign. The cap was at Tk 15 lakh at the time.

The highest amount spent by a candidate was Tk 2.81 crore and the lowest was Tk 4.34 lakh.

According to former election Officers from the Anti-Corruption commissioner Rafiqul Islam, the Commission and the NBR must be EC had in the past tried to involve the NBR to monitor spending, but revenue officials said such work had nothing to do with what the NBR did

> This correspondent made several phone calls to NBR Chairman Abu Hena Md Rahmatul Muneem, but he did not answer. EC spokesperson Jahangir Alam

> says the Election Enquiry Committee works to ensure that code of conduct is implemented. When asked about the 2007-2012

> EC's recommendations, he says he is not aware of it.

> Election expert Alim says "The reality is, we usually don't see them [enquiry committee] work properly to carry out the responsibilities vested

## Govt luring small parties with money to join polls

politicians can join forces with the

government in this manner. BNP and its allies are enforcing a fresh 48-hour nationwide blockade starting this morning demanding under nonparty election a government.

Rizvi urged party leaders and activists to pour into the streets with "indomitable courage" to press home their demand.

"Our blockade will be peaceful. People along with BNP activists of every tier would take to the streets without fear to establish their democratic rights," Rizvi said. Rizvi termed the upcoming

election a "laughing stock" as people have "lost their rights to pick their representatives". He alleged Awami League wants to

stage a "selection" through rigging, like it did in 2014 and 2018 polls. He also told the press briefing that law enforcers arrested more than 16,215 leaders and activists

in 407 cases across the country from October 28 until yesterday afternoon. At least 325 party leaders and

activists were detained and 13 cases were filed against 1,435 named and many unidentified party activists in 24 hours preceding yesterday evening

Rizvi also criticised the statement Russian foreign ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova regarding "US interference Bangladesh's internal affairs".

In a statement released to the media yesterday, Rizvi said Maria's statement hurt the sentiment of the democracy-aspiring people of Bangladesh.

"The Russian spokesperson's statement contradicts people's aspiration for a fair and participatory election," the statement said.

Russian Terming the spokesperson's statement wrong, the BNP leaders said, "Awami League has snatched people's right to vote through farcical elections in 2014 and 2018 and wrote a tainted history in the national and international arena. It is not possible to hold a participatory and credible election under any government led by the

current prime minister. "The people of the country have moral support for peaceful and nonviolent programmes. The allegation of a foreign diplomat helping BNP in organising rallies is completely unexpected and unprecedented. Such an unrealistic statement goes against the people's wish to restore democracy."

## AL allies to seek more but may get less

candidatures of its nominees signed so that the candidates can be withdrawn from those constituencies which would be set aside for its partners, said sources.

However, AL General Secretary

Obaidul Quader's remarks on the

necessity of seat-sharing has created unease among the 14-party alliance Speaking to reporters at the AL president's Dhanmondi office, Quader yesterday said the party was yet to make any decision on forging

an electoral alliance for the January 7 national election. "An alliance is forged against another one. If our opponents form a coalition, we will forge one. But if it is not needed, we will not form an

He said the AL will not forge any alliance without a strategic purpose.

Sources said some top leaders of the 14-party alliance have communicated with each other over Quader's remarks. They also contacted veteran AL leader Amir Hossain Amu, also the coordinator of the alliance.

Amu assured them that the AL will run under the banner of the 14-party

Earlier, the AL in a letter to the Election Commission had informed it that the party would contest the parliamentary polls under an alliance. Speaking to The Daily Star, some

alliance leaders said Quader made the remarks in an effort to "make a settled issue unsettled". Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon said there was no logic

behind Quader's comments as AL

President Sheikh Hasina informed

the EC in a letter that the party would

take part in the election under an alliance and the alliance partners could run with "boat" symbol. JSD General Secretary Shirin Akter said the alliance partners will sit with the AL chief soon. If that meeting decides that the ruling party won't run under the banner of the alliance, the JSD will contest the polls

she added. AL sources said Quader's remarks gave the hint that the ruling party would set out fewer seats for its allies compared to the last election.

with its own electoral symbol "torch",

Sources said the 14-party alliance partners have sent lists to the AL of their desired constituencies. According to them, Workers Party demanded 30 seats, the JSD 10 and Bangladesh Tarikat Federation 13 seats. Also, Samyabadi Dal General Secretary Dilip Barua wants to run from Chattogram-1. The alliance partners will bargain

with the AL for 18 seats, but the ruling

party may assign fewer seats to them compared to the last election. In the 2018 elections, the 14-party allies got 11 seats, down from 15 in the 2014 polls.

Currently, there are eight lawmakers from the AL's alliance partners -- three each from the JSD and Workers Party, one from Jatiya Party (Manju) and one from Tarikat Federation. Besides, two more MPs were elected in the 2018 elections with "boat" symbol from Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh, a partner of the

AL-led electoral alliance. According to sources, the JSD has finalised a list of its 40 candidates, Workers Party 21 candidates, and JP (Manju) 15 candidates. Besides, over 100 candidates from Tarikat Federation are preparing participate in the election.

Workers Party President Menon said his party prepared a list of 21 candidates, but it would bargain with the AL for seven seats. He said the party candidates will run with its own symbol "hammer" in the rest of the 14 constituencies.