

Stay alert against rumours

PM urges journos

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has asked the journalist community to remain alert against rumours and misleading information.



She said this when two delegations of BFUJ and Editors Guild Bangladesh met her at Gono Bhaban yesterday.

Hasina described various measures taken by her government for the development of the journalist community.

She said her government has formed Bangladesh Journalists Welfare Trust by giving the seed money. "If I'm voted to power, I will again donate money to it."

Hasina reiterated her call upon the media house owners to donate to the fund.

The journalists forwarded several demands that included forming the 10th wage board in accordance with the Awami League's election manifesto.

BFUJ President Omar Faruque led the delegation. Other members included former BFUJ presidents Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, Abul Kalam Azad and Monjurul Ahsan Bulbul; Jatiya Press Club general secretary Shyamal Dutta and former president Saiful Alam; and DUJ president and general secretary Sohail

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As water recedes in Fukria Haor of Sylhet Sadar, farmers get busy with Boro cultivation. With single-reap a year being the farming trend in these lowlands, the cultivators have to wait for winter to plant paddy saplings, harvesting the crop before the area goes back under water during monsoon.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Govt office or campaign headquarters?

Ex-mayor using municipality office for electioneering in Munshiganj-3

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Independent candidate Mohammad Faisal in Munshiganj-3 has raised eyebrows by using the municipality office for his campaign activities.

Despite regulations prohibiting the use of government establishments like circuit houses, bungalows, or offices for political campaigns, Faisal has been conducting meetings and gatherings at the municipality office, giving instructions to his loyal councillors.

Having previously served as the municipality's mayor for two terms, Faisal resigned from his post on November 28 to participate in the upcoming elections.

On the evening of December 25, this correspondent saw a procession parading through the town's main streets.

Following that, supporters of Faisal returned to the municipality office premises. Four motorcycles with stickers showing Faisal's face and an image of his election symbol -- a pair of "scissors", were parked on its premises.

Faisal then led a gathering where he instructed his supporters to campaign for him actively. The meeting was attended by two ward councillors, where strategies to boost voter turnout were also discussed.

After spending over 30 minutes at the office, the independent candidate took photos with his supporters.

Khayrul Islam, ward-1 councillor of Munshiganj

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HC defers Fakhru's bail hearing till next week

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday deferred till next week the hearing on the rule regarding BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir's bail in a case filed over vandalising the chief justice's residence on October 28.

The HC bench of Justice Md Salim and Justice Shahed Nuruddin passed the order following a time petition by Fakhru's lawyer Waliur Rahman.

No senior lawyer backed by BNP appeared for Fakhru as they were observing a court boycott across the country since January 1 on different demands. On December 7 last year, the HC bench issued the rule asking the state to explain in seven days why Fakhru should not be granted bail.

On December 3, Fakhru filed the bail petition with the HC through his lawyers, saying he was not involved in the vandalism of the chief justice's residence in any manner.

1,970 candidates now vying for 300 seats

EC reinstates candidacy of 77 for upcoming polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The total number of candidates for the January 7 polls now stands at 1,970 as the Election Commission reinstated the candidature of 77 aspirants until yesterday following the order of the High Court.

The candidates who got back candidacy include three from Awami League and 10 from Ganotantri Party.

As the candidates of Ganotantri Party got back their candidacy, the total number of political parties joining the national polls is now 28.

EC sources said they have also restored the candidacy of two aspirants each from Trinamool BNP, Bangladesh Nationalist Movement, and Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (Inu), and one each from Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Janata League and Bangladesh Congress, along with 56 independent candidates, EC sources said.

Among the 1,970 candidates, 266 are vying for the polls with the "boat" symbol of the ruling AL.

Meanwhile, Jatiyo Party nominated 265 candidates to run the electoral race. However, around 26 JP candidates have withdrawn so far.



NATIONAL POLLS 2024

Total number of candidates 1,970

Total number of parties 28

Awami League candidates 266

Number of female candidates 90

Religious, ethnic minorities 79

EC reinstates candidature of 77 aspirants so far after HC order

The number of women candidates is now 90, while 79 candidates from religious and ethnic minorities are contesting the polls.

These candidates needed

to move to the HC as their candidacies were rejected by either the Returning Officers or the Election Commission during the hearing of appeals.

AL candidates who regained candidacy are Enamul Haque Babul from Jashore-4, Abdus Salam from Mymensingh-9, and Shahmim Haque from Faridpur-1.

The EC during the appeal, cancelled the candidature of Babul and Salam on the allegation of loan defaulting, while Shamim's candidacy was cancelled for having dual citizenship.

The EC on December 12 decided to cancel the candidature of all aspirants of the ruling alliance member Ganotantri Party as the party has no commission-approved central committee.

The party moved to the HC against the decision.

The Supreme Court on December 26 ordered the EC to allow the participation of Ganotantri Party in the upcoming 12th parliamentary elections.

Meanwhile, 16 political parties, including the major opposition BNP and its allies, are boycotting the upcoming polls, saying a free and fair election is not possible under the current government.

President casts vote thru postal ballot

BSS, Dhaka

President Mohammed Shahabuddin yesterday exercised his franchise through postal ballot for the January 7 election, urging all to fulfil their civic duty by voting.

"Let's vote ourselves and encourage others to cast vote," he told journalists after casting his vote at Bangabhaban.

President's wife Rebeka Sultana also voted through postal ballot there as they are voters of Pabna.

Voting is the most acceptable method in selecting leadership in a democratic manner, the president pointed out.

According to the Article 27 of the Representation of the People Order (RPO), the head of the state is able to cast the vote through the postal ballot.

Registered voters, those imprisoned or in legal custody, Bangladeshi expatriates and polling officers, can exercise their rights to vote through postal ballots in the upcoming general polls as well.



TALKS WITH DMP, DB CHIEFS US team enquires about polls, arrests of BNP leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A joint team of US-based National Democratic Institute (NDI) and International Republican Institute (IRI) yesterday held meetings with the Dhaka Metropolitan Police commissioner and Detective Branch chief at their respective offices.

They enquired about security plans for the January 7 national elections and their "actions on opposition leaders".

The meeting between the joint technical assessment team and DMP chief was held around 1:00pm.

While speaking to The Daily Star, DMP Commissioner Habibur Rahman said the joint team members enquired on how the election is going to be conducted, the security surrounding polls, security arrangement taken for the candidates and whether any of them complained about the election and if so, how their complaints have been addressed.

They also enquired about security measures for women, and whether there is any possibility of violence.

"They asked these kinds of questions, one after another, and we replied to every one of them. We told them that police are working with utmost professionalism and there is no scope for raising questions about it. I think they were satisfied with our answers," said the DMP chief.

The NDI-IRI joint delegation included Natasha Rothchild, mission coordinator; Ivaylo Pentchev, information environment analyst; Mariam Tabatadze, gender and inclusion analyst; Crispin Kaheru, security and state response analyst, and Nenad Marinkovic, security and physical violence analyst.

Kazi Shahidul Islam, Bangladesh representative and Mir Nurani Rupoma, senior assistant secretary

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Strings of posters kept in queues at a basement of a shopping mall in Chattogram city's Chawk Bazar area. According to the Election Commission, the posters have to be hung instead of being pasted. Thus, the workers clip the posters to ropes to expedite the process of setting those up in different areas of the city. With the January 7 polls drawing closer, campaigning is going on in full swing. Many streets and alleys of the port city have already been covered in posters seeking votes for aspirants. The photos were taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN



One more dies of dengue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The dengue death toll rose to two this year as the country witnessed one more death in the last 24 hours, according to the Directorate General of Health Services.

A total of 70 new infections were reported during this period, taking the number of cases this year to 215.

At least 561 dengue patients are still under treatment at different hospitals across the country, 259 of whom are from Dhaka. Meanwhile, 379 patients, including 114 from Dhaka, have already been released.

Last year, the country witnessed 1,705 dengue deaths while 3,21,179 cases of the mosquito borne disease were reported.

PRAYER TIMING

JANUARY 4



Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 5:30 12:45 4:00 5:30 7:00
JAMAAT 6:05 1:15 4:15 5:35 7:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Fazlur Rahman

1947-2023

Founder of

“A true visionary who had helped the progress of both the economy and people of Bangladesh”

He will be missed and will always be in remembrance.