

List of relatives of MPs, ministers who are still in UZ polls underway: Quader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League will not hold councils and form committees at all levels during the upcoming upazila parishad elections, said party General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday.



He was addressing a press conference at the AL president's political office in Dhanmondi, Dhaka.

Regarding the participation of close relatives of ministers and AL lawmakers in the upazila elections, Quader said they will have to refrain from taking part in the polls.

"Directives have been given to prepare a list of those who are still in polls. It is being prepared accordingly," he said.

When asked why many of them are still in the election process, Quader said, "Let the date of withdrawal [of nomination papers] be over; then we will see."



Teens take a dip in the Kirtankhola river to get some respite from the sweltering heat. A severe heatwave is disrupting the lives of people in different parts of the country. The photo was taken in Chadmari area of Barishal city yesterday. PHOTO: TITU DAS

Felling of old trees stopped for now

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Environmental activists in Tangail yesterday gathered near Shaheed Smriti Pouro Udyan in the town and stopped loggers from felling six old trees there.

The authorities of Tangail municipality recently took the decision to fell the six trees for widening the town's Club Road.

The activists said there are just a few remaining old trees at Shaheed Smriti Pouro Udyan, the only place in Tangail town where residents can sit in the shade.

They requested the municipality authorities to find

a way to keep the trees while widening the road.

Mayor SM Sirajul Haque Khan Alamgir told reporters that they decided to fell the trees after discussing with all the relevant authorities and with permission from the Forest Department.

He mentioned that they have a plan to plant more trees after the road is developed.

Md Shihab Raihan, deputy director of Tangail LGD, said, "Even if the Forest Department gave permission the municipality authorities will still require permission from the local government ministry. So, tree felling will be halted for now."



It's time to shake up state apparatus

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He also said it is time to not only protest on the streets but also to shake up the state apparatus.

"The country's facing a severe economic crisis. There is a political vacuum... there is no proper electoral system. There is nothing left now. Not even the spirit of the Liberation War," the BNP leader said, reports UNB.

He called upon all to raise their voices against repression and work towards reforming the state apparatus. "Only then we might be able to fulfill Zafrullah's dream."

Speaking at the event, former adviser to a caretaker government Hossain Zillur Rahman said Zafrullah pursued his goals relentlessly until his last day, aiming for policy reform, sovereignty and justice for all. Some of his aspirations are still unfulfilled.

Now, there is a need for a tide of changes, goodwill and righteous indignation, he added.

Dhaka University Law Department Prof Asif Nazrul said Zafrullah remained imbued with the spirit of Liberation War till the last

day of his life. He criticised all governments but he also appreciated good works.

Syeda Rizwana Hasan, chief executive of Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association, said revolutionaries like Zafrullah cannot belong to any particular party. "Unfortunately in our country, we have given revolutionaries political tags," she said.

Rizwana said Zafrullah proved that medicine is a service, not business.

Badiul Alam Majumdar, secretary of Citizens for Good Governance, said Zafrullah was a fearless and selfless man. He also highlighted Zafrullah's lifelong commitment to the struggle for political and economic emancipation.

Among others, Ishtiaq Aziz Ulfat, president of Muktiyoddha Dal; AZM Zahid Hossain, vice chairman of BNP; Mostafa Jamal Haider, president of Jatiyo Party (Kazi Zafar); Saiful Haque, general secretary of Biplobi Workers' Party; Subrata Chowdhury, general secretary of Gono Forum; Zonayed Saki, chief coordinator of Ganosamhati Andolon; Hasnat Kaiyum, chief coordinator

of Rastra Sangskar Andolon; Sheikh Rafiqul Islam, convener of Bhasani Anusari Parishad; Shahidul Alam, internationally acclaimed photographer; Tania Rab, senior vice president of Jatiyo Samajtantrik Dal; Sharmeen Murshid, chief executive officer of the election observation group "Brotee"; and Sara Hossain, rights activist, spoke at the programme.

Zafrullah's wife Shireen Huq, his son Barish Chowdhury and daughter Brishti Chowdhury were also present.

Bus driver

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engineer at the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh.

Yasir Arafat Khan, officer-in-charge of the Airport Police Station, had said the incident occurred around 10:00am when the Raida Paribahan bus lost control and rammied Muidul's motorcycle as he was heading to work before crashing through the boundary wall around Dhaka airport's third terminal.

Critically injured, Muidul was rushed to Kurmitola General Hospital, where doctors declared him dead, the OC added.

CHT PEACE ACCORD 65 out of 72 provisions fully implemented

Bangladesh tells UN

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has told the United Nations that the ethnic communities of the CHT region have been engaged in the country's mainstream development through the Peace Accord signed in 1997.

The accord had also ended decades old conflicts in the region, said Md Mashur Rahman, secretary to the CHT affairs ministry, while addressing the 23rd session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in New York on Friday.

"Implementation of the Peace Accord's provisions is ongoing through an inclusive and participatory process. So far, 65 of the total 72 provisions have been fully implemented, three have been implemented partially and four are under implementation," he said.

Mashur informed the UNPFII about the government initiatives for development of the region's communities and preserving their traditions and cultures, as well as steps towards ensuring security, digital land management and overall development, according to a statement of the Bangladesh's Permanent Mission to the UN.

SC resumes today after Eid vacation

BSS, Dhaka

Regular judicial proceedings of the Supreme Court is scheduled to resume today after the Eid-ul-Fitr vacation starting from March 24.

A notification, signed by SC Registrar General Golam Rabbani yesterday, stated that the SC administration has relaxed the obligation of lawyers to wear black gowns during the hearing of cases in the Appellate and High Court Divisions of the Supreme Court, as per the instructions of the chief justice.

Address concerns

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needs attention. And the attention is, you need to check the gaps and make sure that you don't have potential for premature failure."

He detailed his concerns later on April 17 in a hearing in the US Senate, claiming Boeing had used excessive force to help close gaps between fuselage sections before adding shims, or thin strips of metal.

Such force is known to cause fatigue in composite materials such as those

used on the Boeing 787 that cannot be detected visually, he also said.

This week, Boeing claimed the allegations to be inaccurate, adding that they have full confidence in the aircraft based on the work done to ensure its quality and long-term safety.

A Boeing official said the model has been stress-tested for 165,000 flight cycles, beyond its expected lifespan, and that no aircraft has shown evidence of fatigue.

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Govt agencies can't

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director (road safety), said drivers are mostly not responsible for road crashes. "The country's drivers are skilled. Non-motorised three two wheeled vehicles are mainly responsible for accidents. Authorised drivers are well-trained," he said.

Osman Ali, general secretary of Bangladesh Road Transport Workers Federation, said blaming only drivers will not fix the road accident problem.

"Out of 105 reasons for accidents, only four relate to transport workers -- speeding, risky overtaking, overloading and reckless. Avoiding these will reduce crashes," he said.

"Transport workers provide services to passengers, but today, they are being termed killers. Some people want to portray transport workers negatively by spreading misinformation against us," he added.

He urged the government to arrange training for transport workers across 64 districts and shut down illegal driving schools.

A joyride turns tragic

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They left home for a family outing, said OC Zainal Abedin.

The accident happened when Shakil lost control of the vehicle, said the police officer.

Meanwhile, a milkman was killed when a sand-laden tractor collided with his motorcycle from the opposite direction in Panchbibi upazila of Joypurhat on the same

"If accidents occur due to problems with the road, the Roads and Highways Department officials should also be punished," he added.

Osman, also executive president of Dhaka District Bus-Minibus Workers Union, requested people to show "positive behaviour" towards transport workers, as they play a significant role in the country's economy.

Sadiqur Rahman Hiru, vice president of the Bangladesh Road Transport Workers Federation, called on the BRTA chairman to expand the Mohakhali bus terminal area to stop buses from being parked on the main road.

"Transport workers face mistreatment and insults from BRTA staff when obtaining their driving licences. They deserve respect, so please stop this," he added.

Abul Kalam, president of the Mohakhali Bus Terminal Owners' Association, suggested that regular awareness campaigns and monthly discussion programmes could better educate drivers.

Mahbub Hossain, 35, died on the spot.

Habibur Rahman, inspector (investigation) of Panchbibi Police Station, said Mahbub was en route to a local market to sell milk. Locals apprehended the tractor, but its driver managed to flee.

[Our correspondents from Munshiganj and Dinajpur contributed to this report]

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