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Jamaat forms all-Hindu union committee in Rangpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinaipur

In a first, Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islam has formed an all-Hindu committee in a Rangpur union yesterday.

Jamaat's Pirgachha Sadar Union Ameer Abdur Jabbar disclosed the names of the committee members at the party's union office. Pirgachha Upazila Jamaat chief Maulana Mostaq Ahmed also confirmed this to The Daily Star.

All 11 members of the committee are Hindus.

Bhabesh Chandra Barman, an assistant professor at Mirzapur Degree College in the district, has been made president and Bijon Chandra Das, a local pharmacy owner, general secretary of the unit.

Bhabesh did not pick up the call. Bijon confirmed his selection as general secretary.

Other members of the committee include Taposh Chandra Roy, a lecturer at Devi Choudhuran Degree College; Sudharanjan Barman, president of Kismat Jhinia Sanatan

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A man carries away a child who was rescued following Israeli bombardment on the four-storey Muqat family house in the Zargha neighbourhood in the north of Gaza City yesterday amid the ongoing war in the Palestinian territory between Israel and Hamas.

PHOTO: AFP

Female students recount years of torment

Discussion held at DU on discrimination-free educational environment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Qazi Farzana Mim's time at Jagannath University (JnU) became an eight year ordeal after she faced sexual harassment from a teacher.

In her second year, she rejected an inappropriate proposal from him. Upon being rejected, he failed her in his subject and used other intimidation tactics.

Lacking an institutional support, Mim endured constant anxiety, which significantly impacted her mental health and academic progress.

In 2021, when she sought help from the university registrar, he discouraged her and said "those who complain often see their academic life ruined," and then offered her a meal instead.

Disheartened, she left without filing a complaint. However, after being encouraged by her proctor, she eventually submitted a formal complaint.

"After I staged a public protest with a placard near our campus Shaheed Minar, the university finally formed a probe committee," she said.

"Despite the probe report being due in 90 days, the committee contacted me eight months later just to retell

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CRIME IN MOHAMMADPUR 3 shot as drug gangs clash

45 detained in joint drive; locals demonstrate demanding security

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three people, including a child, were injured in clashes between armed gangs inside Geneva Camp in the capital's Mohammadpur yesterday.

According to locals and police, clashes broke out between several drug dealing gangs around 5:00pm and continued for about three hours, leaving the three shot.

The child, Sajjen alias Rahmat, 13, was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Hafizur Rahman, inspector (investigation) of Mohammadpur Police Station, said they deployed a large number of police personnel in the camp area.

"If necessary, additional police members will be sent there. We will soon carry out combing operations in the area to detain the criminals," he added.

Shamsher Ali, father of Sajjen, said his son went out of home to fetch water from a pump. "He was caught in the gunfight and hit by a bullet on his way back home."

He said that an armed gang, led by Chua Selim, has a longstanding feud with another one led by Bunia Sohel over drug trafficking and establishing supremacy inside the camp.

The Geneva Camp and its adjoining areas have recently become a hotspot of criminal activities such as gunfights, mugging, drug peddling, and murder.

On October 17, one Shanemaj, 37, was shot dead during a gunfight between two feuding groups in Geneva Camp.

On September 29, a joint team of Bangladesh Army, Rab, and police arrested 35 people, including a top drug dealer, and recovered arms and ammo from the camp.

Police and locals say gunfights have been taking place inside the camp almost every day as rival groups are fighting to control the drug sale spots. Many criminals

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Shanto 'wants' to relinquish captaincy



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh cricket team reached Chattogram yesterday ahead of the series deciding second Test against South Africa starting on Tuesday which could also be the last outing for Najmul Hossain Shanto as the Tigers' skipper.

On Saturday, it was reported by Cricbuzz, a cricket website, that Shanto is unlikely to lead Bangladesh after the conclusion of the ongoing home Test series against South Africa.

However, Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB) chief executive officer Nizamuddin Chowdhury, when contacted, said that he had no knowledge about Shanto wanting to step down nor has he received any official letter from the captain in this regard.

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Mega power deals must be amended

Energy rights group says criminals in sector have to be tried

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The mega power purchase agreements signed for the Rooppur, Matarbari, Payra and Adani power plants by the immediate past Awami League regime must be scrutinised and amended, said the National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources, Power and Ports.

There is an opportunity to save the predatory cost of Tk 40,000 crore in the power sector, said M Shamsul Alam, energy adviser to the Consumers Association of Bangladesh, at a roundtable organised by the committee.

"Of them, Tk 26,000 crore would be possible within a very short period by changing the clauses of paying the payments of the plants with taka instead of US dollar."

The energy criminals must be tried and punished for their crimes under a special tribunal, said Alam, also the dean of the faculty of engineering at Daffodil International University.

"You [the national committee] demanded a trial for Golam Azam [former Jamaat ameer], then why are you not vocal for the prosecution of Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury, Ahmad Kaikaus,

Abul Kalam Azad [former leaders of the government who engaged with the energy sector]?" he said at the roundtable styled "Power and Energy Sector: Current Situation and What to Do".

The committee -- which was formed in 1998 and was vocal about

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safeguarding peoples' interests in the power sector, natural resources and environmental issues -- was almost inactive after the Awami League government took power in January 2019 except for issuing some statements.

Yesterday, the committee organised the roundtable at the Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium and placed its six-point demand.

The six-point demand includes bringing down power and energy prices within a short period, enhancing institutional capacity in the power and energy sector through reforms, enhancing capacity building in producing local gas resources and ensuring a competitive bidding process for all renewable energy projects.

To press home the six-point demand, the national committee announced countrywide rallies on November 4.

Moshahida Sultana, an associate professor of the University of Dhaka, presented the demands at the roundtable chaired by Julfiqar Ali, Dhaka City Unit coordinator of the national committee.

"Peter Haas [former US envoy to Bangladesh] has proved that the ambassadors basically work for their multinational companies' interests by joining Excelsior Energy as their strategic adviser after his retirement," said Anu Muhammad, former professor of Jahangirnagar University.

The vested groups always try

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Tabith takes over the reins at BFF



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Tabith Awal, a businessman and politician, swept to a landslide victory in the president's position in the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) elections held at a hotel in the capital yesterday.

Tabith, a two-time former BFF vice-president and leader of Bangladesh Nationalist Party, secured 123 votes out of 128 cast for the top post, with his only competitor, AFM Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, bagging five votes.

Tabith became the fourth elected president of BFF following Golam Mostafa, SA Sultan and Kazi Salahuddin. It was an expected result as Tabith, a former professional footballer himself, faced little challenge from Mizanur Rahman,

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EU stresses polls after reforms

Its new envoy in Dhaka says in interview

UNB, Dhaka

Acknowledging the broader support and popularity of the interim government, European Union Ambassador to Bangladesh Michael Miller has said there has to be democratic elections at the end of the process, leading to a new parliament and a government with people's mandate staying mindful of the "rule of law and respect" for fundamental rights.

"For us, these are principles that are at the core of the relationship between the European Union and Bangladesh," the head of the EU Delegation told UNB in an interview after his arrival in Dhaka.

The Bangladesh-EU partnership is seen as fast-evolving and dynamic, and last year, two sides celebrated 50 years of relations.

Miller said the popularity of the chief adviser and interim government is very clear, and the sense of common support across party lines is really very strong.

He said it is a difficult moment and perhaps not everything -- not all reforms -- can happen all at once, but there has to be delivery of some "quick wins".

The EU ambassador said the government has to

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The wreckage of an auto-rickshaw after it collided head-on with a truck on Itakhola-Monohardi Road in Narsingdi's Shibpur upazila yesterday. The accident left six people dead.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Six die as truck, three-wheeler collide

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narsingdi

Six people were killed as a CNG-run auto-rickshaw collided head-on with a truck on Itakhola-Monohardi road in Narsingdi's Shibpur upazila yesterday afternoon.

The accident took place in the Pacharbari area around 1:00pm when the three-wheeler was trying to overtake another auto-rickshaw, said Md Afzal Hossain, officer-in-charge of Shibpur Police Station.

The deceased are Abu Bakkar Siddique, 40, of Bailabo village in Shibpur upazila; auto-rickshaw driver Shaheen, 35, of Satapara village in Shibpur; Marufa, 23, of Chakhobdi village in Monohardi upazila; and Mostafa, 48, Faruk Miah, 55, and his wife Nayantara, 50, of Mirzarchar area in Raipura upazila.

All the six were passengers of the auto-rickshaw. They died on the spot.

On information, fire brigade members rushed to the scene and recovered the bodies.

Police seized the truck, but its driver managed to flee, said the OC.

He said the bodies will be handed over to the victims' families after autopsies.