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‘More reserved seats for women, direct presidential polls’  
Women activists, TV journos propose reform commission

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Women rights activists and senior television journalists yesterday proposed increasing reserved seats for women in the parliament, alongside a direct presidential election.

While holding separate views exchange meetings with the Electoral Reform Commission, they also proposed direct polls for the reserved seats for women, reintroduction of the no-vote option, and having a mechanism that none can get elected uncontested.

Both the meetings were held at the Election Commission office.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

New Age editor harassed at airport

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Editor of New Age Nurul Kabir yesterday said he faced harassment at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport twice this week while flying to and from Colombo to attend a media conference.

Prominent journalist Kabir went to Colombo on November 18 to attend the Asia Media Forum 2024 and arrived in Dhaka yesterday.

“The country’s immigration authorities have been harassing me at the Dhaka airport every time I go abroad for more than two decades,” Nurul Kabir wrote in a

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

61pc want polls within a year, 65.9pc prefer reforms first  
Reveals VOA survey

STAR REPORT

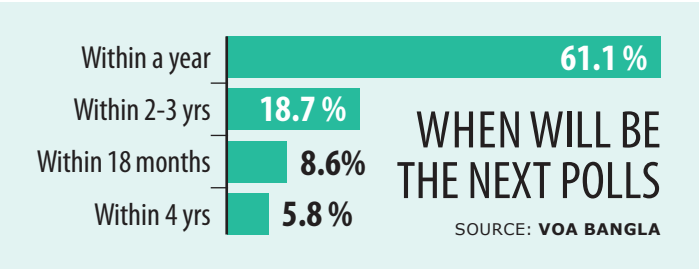
More than three out of every five (61.1 percent) Bangladeshis said they wanted elections within a year, while almost 66 percent said they wanted necessary reforms before the elections, as per a survey by the Voice of America’s Bangla service.

Most of the respondents who prioritised reforms before elections were lenient with the election deadline, but some of them said they still prefer

elections within two and three years, and 8.6 percent believe polls should happen within 18 months. A minority of 5.8 percent want the elections postponed for four years or more.

Interestingly, 4.6 percent respondents did not have a specific preference for an election deadline, while 1.1 percent declined to answer.

The survey highlighted slight variations in preferences between urban and rural populations, with 60.4 percent urban



elections within a year, reports UNB citing VoA.

The survey was conducted across Bangladesh and included 1,000 participants during October 13-27.

**DIVERSE OPINIONS ON ELECTION TIMING**

While a majority prefer elections within a year, 31.9 percent favour elections only after urgent electoral reforms are implemented.

Meanwhile, 18.7 percent prefer

respondents and 61.4 percent rural participants supporting elections within a year.

Gender differences were also evident, as 65 percent women preferred elections within a year compared to 57.3 percent men.

**SUPPORT FOR COMPREHENSIVE REFORMS**

A vast majority (65.9 percent) of respondents believe all necessary reforms identified by the interim government should be

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

POST-AUG 5 PROBES  
Ensure no innocent is harassed: IGP

UNB, Dhaka

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Baharul Alam yesterday instructed field-level officers to properly investigate cases filed after August 5 to ensure no innocent person is harassed.

The IGP further stated that even if a case is filed against an innocent person, steps should be taken to withdraw it through the proper legal process.

The police chief issued these directives to senior police officers while presiding over a meeting on the country’s overall law and order and security at the Police Headquarters.

DIG (Operations) Md Rezaul Karim chaired the meeting.

The IGP instructed metropolitan police commissioners, Range DIGs, and district SPs to hold regular exchange meetings with their forces to boost morale.

He added that no police officer should be unnecessarily victimised.

He urged field-level officers to strengthen public relations, emphasising that police

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

A person from the hijra community light up the stage as part of a cultural programme held during a rally titled “Unity in Diversity”. Gonetantrik Odhikar Committee organised the event at the Central Shaheed Minar in the capital yesterday.

Form resistance against discrimination  
Prof Anu Muhammad tells rally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To create a discrimination-free Bangladesh, resistance must be built against those promoting inequality, said Prof Anu Muhammad yesterday.

He also said inclusivity cannot be achieved by exploiting and depriving the working class people.

Anu Muhammad, former professor of economics at Jahangirnagar University, made the remarks during a rally, titled “Unity in Diversity,” organised by civic platform Gonetantrik Odhikar

Committee at the Central Shaheed Minar in the capital.

“We have seen garment workers fighting for their arrears for a long time, which is a just demand. There has also been unrest over battery-run auto-rickshaws, which provide livelihoods to a large number of people. The government can take the initiative to fix the defects in these vehicles. But why will those be banned?” said Anu Muhammad.

“We know this government has an anti-discrimination stance, but we have

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JAPAN GARDEN CITY  
Complaint filed over poisoning of stray animals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The People for Animal Welfare (PAW) Foundation, Bangladesh, yesterday filed a complaint with Adabor Police Station after carcasses of three stray dogs and a cat were found in Mohammadpur’s Japan Garden City on Friday night.

In the complaint, the organisation alleged that six more dogs were poisoned but the carcasses were hidden away before they arrived at the scene.

PAW Foundation accused Shahanur, secretary of the Japan Garden City Committee, along with other committee members, of culling the animals, alleging that it was a violation of the Animal Welfare Act 2019.

According to the foundation, some residents witnessed stray dogs and cats running in distress around 9:00pm after being poisoned and later died.

Residents and animal rights activists alerted

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

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