

People outside Dhaka more concerned about local polls

Says Prof Tofail Ahmed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

People outside the capital are more concerned about local government elections, while national-level politicians remain largely silent on the issue, said Prof Tolail Ahmed, chief of the Local Government Reform Commission, yesterday.

He was speaking at a views exchange programme with journalists at the National Institute of Local Government in Agargaon.

"Local leaders of the parties advocating for early national elections are discussing two elections: local government elections and national polls. Some are proposing local government elections first, while others are calling for both elections to be held the same day," he added.

The interim government formed the reform commission on November 18, tasking it with submitting reports within 90 days.

Speakers also proposed non-partisan local elections, increased benefits for representatives, limiting MPs' control over local bodies, introducing a "no" vote option, and conducting local elections under a caretaker government, like national polls.

Tofail said locals feel a void in governance, with services disrupted as many representatives went into hiding or were later dismissed post-Hasina's fall on August 5.

These include holding direct election for only member or councillor posts in local polls. These elected representatives will then select or elect the chairmen or mayors in local government institutions among themselves.

The commission is also considering holding local government elections without party symbols, creating a unified law for all local government institutions, and conducting all such elections on a single day to reduce costs.

Special attention is being given to the hill districts, where Hill District Council elections have not been held since 1989, with obstacles under review.

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BAHARCHHARA IN SREEMANGAL

Illegal sand extraction threatens livelihood

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

An influential group, allegedly led by a local Juba League leader, has been engaged in illegal sand extraction near a sluice gate in the Baharchhara area of Sharsharshee village, located in Moulvibazar's Sreemangal upazila.

The sluice gate, constructed during the 2006-07 fiscal year with support from the World Bank, was intended to provide irrigation water for local farmers.

This illegal activity has severely compromised the sluice gate's functionality, endangering a nearby tea garden hill, and jeopardised the agriculture and livelihoods of around 25,000 farmers across seven villages.

Locals reported that parts of the sluice gate have already sunk, sinkholes have appeared in sections of the Dinarpur Tea Garden, and rural roads are being damaged

by heavy vehicles continuously transporting sand.

Despite a High Court order that banned sand extraction in the area for six months, following a petition by the Barachhara Water Management Cooperative Society



Limited, the group has continued its activities.

Residents allege that Jewel Mia, a Mirzapur union Juba League leader, is orchestrating the illegal sand extraction.

Jewel, who faces several criminal charges, including violations of the

Explosives Act and the Balumahal and Soil Management Act, has reportedly used his political influence to carry out various illegal activities in the area.

During a recent visit to Sharsharshee village, this correspondent observed sand being extracted and stockpiled for sale at different points in Barachhara. Rural roads were found in poor condition due to the constant movement of sand-laden trucks and tractors.

A significant portion of the sluice gate's rear side has collapsed, while roads and bridges connecting to the Dinarpur Tea Garden hill are at grave risk of damage.

Local farmer Shafiq Mia said, "The sluice gate's present condition puts our livelihoods in jeopardy, while destroying the canal and endangering our homes."

Sheikh Sabuj Alam, general

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Cauliflower now a burden for farmers

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

Farmers in the Rangpur region are facing significant losses despite a bumper cauliflower harvest this season.

Each cauliflower, weighing around 1 kilogramme, is being sold wholesale for just Tk 2-3, while the cost of production is Tk 5-6.

Last year, during the same period, each cauliflower fetched Tk 10-12.

Unable to cover even the cost of production, many farmers are leaving their cauliflower in the field instead of harvesting them.



According to the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE), cauliflower was cultivated on 20,000 hectares across five districts in Rangpur division - Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, Rangpur, Gaibandha, and Nilphamari. Early variety cauliflower was grown on 3,000

hectares, with the rest devoted to winter variety cultivation.

Officials noted that farmers who cultivated early variety cauliflower managed to make a profit.

Sekender Ali, a 50-year-old farmer from Fulgachhi village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila, said he cultivated early variety cauliflower on one bigha and winter variety on four bighas.

"Around 4,000-4,500 cauliflower can be grown on one bigha at a production cost of Tk 5-6 per piece. I sold the early variety at Tk 60-70 apiece

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

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ঢাকা-১০০০

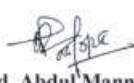
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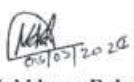
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Bangladesh Institute of Governance and Management (BIGM), a premier knowledge hub in Dhaka conducts academic, research, training and intellectual capacity building activities on broad areas of governance and public policy discourse, is inviting scholarly papers for its journal named 'BIGM Journal of Policy Analysis'. Manuscripts must be original and preferably, be of quantitative nature following interdisciplinary perspectives and approaches in areas of public policy, development, economics and adjacent fields. Papers that describe experimentation are earnestly encouraged.

All submitted papers will be considered based on the outcome of a double-blind peer review process. Aside from peer review, submitted manuscripts may undergo procedural review within the reviewer referee/ expert network of the Journal.

BIGM Journal of Policy Analysis follows the APA referencing style. The desired style of formatting is: Times New Roman font in 12 font sizes and 1.5 line-spacing in A4 size paper. Only a soft copy of the article, both in word and pdf format, should be submitted by email at journal@bigrm.edu.bd on or before **March 31, 2025**. Every submission must be accompanied by a cover letter and should include contact details, institutional affiliation of author/authors and other relevant information, such as, non-submission of the article in other journals, funding information (if any), and authors' contribution in case of multiple authors.


Dr. Mohammad Tareque
and
Director, BIGM Editor-in-Chief,
BIGM Journal of Policy Analysis

বাংলাদেশ পানি উন্নয়ন বোর্ড					
নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর দণ্ডন সিরাজগঞ্জ পানি উন্নয়ন বিভাগ বাপ্পড়বো, সিরাজগঞ্জ ফোন: অফিস-০২৫৮৮৩০৩৬৮ বাস-০২৫১-২৫৬৮					
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1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	1056391	Renovate of water supply line of BRE Colony under Sirajganj WD Division BWDB, Sirajganj during the FY-2024-2025.	BRE Colony, Sirajganj.	21-Jan-2025 17:00	22-Jan-2025 13:30 Hours
2.	1056392	Repair of Residential Building of Executive Engineer under Sirajganj WD Division, BWDB, Sirajganj during the FY-2024-2025.	Amlapara, Sirajganj.	21-Jan-2025 17:00	22-Jan-2025 13:00 Hours
3.	1056393	Residential repair work at Amlapara Colony under Sirajganj WD Division, BWDB, Sirajganj during the FY 2024-2025.	Amlapara, Sirajganj	21-Jan-2025 17:00	22-Jan-2025 12:30 Hours
4.	1056394	Supply and Installation of CC Camera at Hard point under Sirajganj WD Division, BWDB, Sirajganj during the FY 2024-2025.	Hardpoint, Sirajganj	21-Jan-2025 17:00	22-Jan-2025 12:00 Hours
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পানি-৪৯৭/২০২৪-২০২৫ (৭'X৩)

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Teen's body found in Rangpur pond

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Police recovered the body of a teenager floating in a pond in Rangpur's Sadar upazila around noon yesterday.

The deceased was around 16 to 17 years old, said police. Locals found the body in a pond near Basunia's Chatal in Janaki Dhap area under Sappadushkarini union. They then informed police, said Sappadushkarini Union Parishad member Saiful Mia.

The hands and legs of the victim were tied with a rope, he added. Police sent the body to Rangpur Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

Olib Mahmud, officer-in-charge of Kotwali Police Station, said they are looking into the incident.

2 killed in road crash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Two motorcyclists were killed in a head-on collision with a CNG-run auto-rickshaw in Sunamganj yesterday morning.

The accident took place around 10:30am in the Sichni area of Dargapasha under Shantiganj upazila, said Md Akram Ali, OC of Shantiganj Police Station.

The deceased are Amirul Islam, 50, of Nurpur village in Derai upazila, and Rajin Ahmed of Aktpara village in Shantiganj upazila.

The OC said the bodies have been sent to Sunamganj District Hospital for autopsy.

Two die of dengue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two patients died from dengue while 70 others were hospitalised in the last 24 hours till yesterday morning.

With the latest, the death toll rose to three this year while the number of cases reached 357, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Currently, 400 dengue patients are undergoing treatment across the country. Of them, 198 are from outside Dhaka.

RAMU IN COX'S BAZAR

Allotment of forest land to school cancelled

MOKAMMEL SHUVO

The government has cancelled the allotment of 155.7 acres of reserved forest land allocated to Shaheed ATM Zafar Alam Cadet College in Ramu upazila of Cox's Bazar.

The Ministry of Land revoked the allotment on December 10 in favour of the Additional Deputy Commissioner (ICT and Education) and the principal (in charge) of Shaheed Zafar Alam Cadet College.

The cancellation order, signed by Deputy Secretary Masud Kamal, was issued following objections from the adviser of the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change.

Md Rashidul Islam, upazila nirbahi officer of Ramu, said the institution's name was previously changed to Shaheed ATM Zafar Alam Multidiscipline Academy.

The UNO confirmed receiving the cancellation letter and stated that the land would be brought under their supervision.