



In the scorching heat of Bhadra, a pigeon quenches its thirst from a pipeline. Yesterday, Sylhet recorded 35°C, which felt like 43°C. The photo was taken at Sylhet Railway Station.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

## STUDENTS' UNION ELECTIONS

### 26 minority candidates among 179 in Jucsu polls

SAKIB AHMED

Among the 179 candidates contesting 25 posts in the Jahangirnagar University Central Students' Union (Jucsu) polls, 26 are from minority backgrounds.

The election, scheduled for September 11 with 11,919 registered voters, is the first in 33 years since it was last held in 1992.

However, while the university is preparing to hold the much awaited election, it has drawn little interest from minority communities.

Of the 26 candidates, eight are from indigenous communities, 13 from the Hindu community, three from the Buddhist community, and two from Christian backgrounds.



First Jucsu polls in 33 years set for Sept 11

Cyberbullying and online abuse cited as key barriers

Moreover, most of them are contesting from a single panel.

Seven indigenous candidates are contesting from "Sompritir Oikkyo", a panel backed by a faction of Chhatra Union, Biplobi Chhatra Maitri, the Indigenous Students' SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

### Brent Christensen next US envoy to Bangladesh

#### Ariful Islam new ambassador to US

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

US President Donald Trump has nominated Brent Christensen, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, to serve as the next US ambassador to Bangladesh.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh has appointed Tareq Md Ariful Islam, a career diplomat, as Bangladesh's next ambassador to the US.

Brent Christensen, hailing from Virginia and holding the class of Counselor, has been chosen to assume the role of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Bangladesh, according to a White House statement. The appointment is finalised after the Senate hearing.

The post of US ambassador remained vacant for more than a year after the SEE PAGE 9 COL 5



Brent Christensen Tareq Md Ariful Islam

## Country sliding backward amid democratic delay

Says Khosru

UNB, Dhaka



BNP senior leader Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury yesterday said Bangladesh is gradually going downhill as it has failed to move to a democratic order even a year after the mass uprising.

"One year is actually a long time. The country should have transitioned to a democratic order through the electoral process long ago. Because of this delay, Bangladesh is going downhill day by day," he said while speaking at a seminar.

Historically, Khosru said, countries that quickly established a democratic system through elections after a revolution or mass uprising tended to fare better.

Khosru, a member of the BNP standing committee, said the situation SEE PAGE 9 COL 6



Fishermen return from the Bay of Bengal after a good catch. They go to sea twice a day in small boats but face difficulties at other times of the year due to various reasons, including fishing bans. During the monsoon, however, they are managing good catches, with daily earnings ranging from Tk 1,200 to 5,000 by selling fish. The photo was taken at Rani Rashmoni Ghat in Chattogram city recently.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

## Govt must focus on urgent reforms, smooth transition

Says South Asians for Human Rights

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government must ensure a conducive environment for elections and a smooth transition of power amidst "a complex landscape of governing and administrative requirements", said South Asians for Human Rights (SAHR) yesterday.

It is also essential that urgent short-term reforms are immediately implemented to regulate administrative processes following the July uprising, it added. SAHR's secretariat is based in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

The remarks came at a press conference at the capital's Drik Gallery, held at the end of a week-long visit by a SAHR delegation to assess the interim SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

## Ensure one-third seats for women in parliament

Speakers tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Increasing parliamentary seats in line with the country's population and guaranteeing at least one third women's participation through direct elections are crucial for effective representation, said speakers at an event yesterday.

To safeguard existing constituencies, they recommended forming each reserved women's seat by combining two general seats without disrupting the electoral bases already established by political parties.

Although each reserved constituency would be larger, the system is proposed to remain in force for only two to three terms, giving women candidates the opportunity to build their own constituencies and play a stronger role

in law-making and political decision-making, they added.

The observations came at a roundtable titled "Effective and Meaningful

- Speakers call for direct polls for women seats
- More seats needed for fair representation
- Women urged to contest both general, reserved seats
- Parties must act to ensure women's role in politics
- CEDAW compliance responsibility of govt

Representation of Women in Parliament: Direct Elections to Reserved Women's Seats", organised by the Members of

the Social Resistance Committee -- a platform of 71 women, human rights and development organisations -- at the CIRDAP auditorium in the capital.

The discussion was organised on the occasion of CEDAW Day (September 3), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, an international treaty aimed at ensuring women's rights and eliminating gender-based discrimination.

Nijera Kori coordinator Khushi Kabir delivered the keynote, urging that both men and women be allowed to contest general seats while reserved seats for women continue.

She proposed increasing the total number of parliamentary seats to 450, comprising 300 general seats and 150 SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

## TK 75CR TAX EVASION ACC to sue two sons of S Alam Group chairman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission has approved a case against 10 individuals, including two sons of S Alam Group Chairman Saiful Alam, over allegations of evading nearly Tk 75 crore in taxes.

Saiful's sons Ashraful Alam and Asadul Alam Mahir, former deputy tax commissioner Aminul Islam, and seven officials of First Security Islami Bank are among the accused, said ACC Director General Md Akther Hossain yesterday.

According to ACC, the accused colluded in forgery and fraud by using fake pay orders. They were supposed to pay Tk 125 crore in taxes to legalise Tk 500 crore of undisclosed income but instead deposited only Tk 50 crore, depriving the government of Tk 75 crore in revenue.

In October last year, three senior officials of the NBR's income tax division were suspended over allegations of receiving bribes and granting undue tax benefits to the two sons. The ACC later launched an inquiry based on those allegations.

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