# Electioneering frenzy devours Gulf war gloom

The dampening effects of the Gulf war on the electioneering in Bangladesh are fast disappearing with the polls date drawing nearer and the countryside buzzing with election campaign to choose an elected government.

A BSS Special Correspondent visiting several districts found that the electioneering for the February 27 polls is steadily warning up as the polittical activists have intensified their efforts to woo the electorate. Canvassing for the candidates is fast intensifying as the few days before the polling are seen as crucial to muster support.

Occasional minor disturbances notwithstanding, the election atmosphere appeared to be healthy in the district towns and interior. Arches, makeshift election camps. banners and posters, have turned Sirajganj, Pabna, Faridpur, Tangail, and Manikganj district towns into lively vast election camps.

The election waves have also shaken many of the otherwise sleepy hamlets along the banks of the rivers Padma and Dhaleswari. Small tea stalls, hats, serpentine dusty village roads--all are charged with polls atmosphere. Never before, an election in history of independent Bangladesh had stirred so much of interest, mainly because the polls are now taking place under a government which has no stake in the elections and the background against the scarf being

In Sirajganj, posters, buntings, banners and arches of different political parties have lent lustre to the small district town. Two main political parties vying or power, the Awami League and the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), are leading the campaign offensive. Also in cvidence, are the Jamaat-c-ls-

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lami, the Gonotantrik Oikya Jote of Five and Eight-Party Al-

The Gulf war did cast a shadow on the electioneering as the focus shifted to the conflict and the battlefronts in the Gulf from the country's electoral field. But the scenario is changing as the voters realise that they must act on issues that involve them directly. Consequently, the dampening mood is evaporating giving way to election fervour.

Among the notable candidates in Sirajganj, Awami League central leader and Party Publicity Secretary, Mohammad Nasim is locked in one of the district constituencies. Awami League sources say Nastm, who won comfortably in 1986, would repeat the feat this time too. But BNP workers seek to nullify the assertion, saying their party might spring a surprise. Also in the fray are two other candidates of Zaker Party and the Jamaat-e-Islami.

In the Sirajganj proper constituency, Awami League's Motahar Talukder faces Mirza Muraduzzaman of BNP while Jamaat's Maulana Azad is also a potential candidate.

Voters are reticent about their choice but certainty not unconscious about the importance of the coming elections. "We feel this time polling will be held in a real free and fair atmosphere" said a villager.

The sound and fury of elections are palpable all over. Judging by the mood of the people and indications, the turn-out could surpass the earlier percentages.

Among the prominent figures. Baksal leader Abdul Momin Talukdar is seeking polls from another seat in Siraigani with boat as his symbol and he faces, among others,

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Shahidullah Khan of BNP and Muslim League leader, M A

Educationist and former Vice-Chancellor of Rajshahi University Dr Mozharul Islam is the Awami League nomince in one seat and his opponents include former Deputy Prime Minister of Ershad government. Dr M A Matin, who is contesting as an independent candidate.

In Pabna, Professor Abu Saced of Baksal seeks mandate with "boat" as his symbol and his rivals include Major (Retd.) Manzur Qadir, a State Minister of Ershad government, and Jamaat leader Mattur Rahman Nizami. Former Defence Secretary Osman Ghani Khan is the BNP nominee in another Pabna seat where he faces Tafizuddin of Awami League and Advocate Ranesh Maitra of National Awami Party.

Traditionally, Faridpur is politically lively and several prominent leaders are in the race there. Awami League General Secretary Begum Sajeda Chowhdury is locked for a seat here with Janata Dal President K M Obaidur Rahman where BNP's Abul Hossain is also in to be reckoned with in Faridpur proper, Obaidur Rahman faces Awami League's Imamuddin Ahmed and BNP's Kamal Yusuf. Rahman's thrust is discernible in both the seats he is contest ing. Wall graffiti, slogans and posters have filled all the available places in the Faridpur

In Tangail proper, two former Home Ministers are facing each other they are Awami League leader Abdul Mannan and Ershad government's Major General (Retd) Mahmudul Hasan, Babul Chowdhury of BNP is also in the race there.

# Bangladesh Bank recruitment test

The Board of Directors of Bangladesh Bank has cancelled the recruitment test on February 8 under disturbed circumstances in some centres. Bank press release said in the city Saturday, reports BSS.

release said.

# cancelled

The test for Assistant Director. Manager and Officer for the Bank could not be held properly because of indiscipline in some centres. The board discussed the matter elaborately on February 12 and decided to cancel it, the press

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# PUT ERSHAD INTO CENTRAL JA

Jativa Chhatra Dal held a demonstration in city on Saturday demanding shifting of deposed President H.M. Ershad to Central Jail. -Star photo

# Samajbadi Dal for '72 Constitution

Mr Nirmal Sen, Acting First Secretary of Sramik Krishak Samajbadi Dal, Saturday announced the manifesto of his party emphasizing the restora tion of the Constitution of 1972, return to parliamentary form of government, restructuring of administrative system and a neutral foreign policy. reports BSS.

Addressing a press conference at the party offices in the city Mr Sen said a list of sha heeds who were killed since the independence to the autocratic regime of Ershad should be prepared and the shaheeds' family members should be

provided with financial help. He said they would revoke all anti-people laws including Special Powers Act and efforts would be made for encouraging the setting up of small and cottage industries.

Referring to the industrialisation of the country, Mr Scn

said his party supported retaining basic and heavy industries including textiles and jute mills in the public sector and creation of a separate ministry for weaving and cottage industries in the country. He said his party would take steps for introducing a separate import policy for the development of the weaving and cot tage industries and make them export oriented.

The SKSD party leader said for boosting the rural economy and rejuvenating administration, his party would form gram panchayat.

Central leaders of the party Mr Siddigur Rahman and Mr Khurshid Alam were present at the press conference.

Mr Nirmal Sen said the SKSD would formulate people's oriented education policy which was necessitated for building an independent econ-

# begins

day sixth national conference Saturday, reports BSS.

Acting Chief-Justice of of the Association.

Speaking on the occasion commonman".

# Political Science Assoc Confce

SAVAR, Feb 16: The two-

Bangladesh Political Science Association' began at the social science gallery of Jahangirnagar University

Bangladesh Supreme Court, Muhammad Habibur Rahman inaugurated the conference as chief guest. Prof. Kaji Saleh Ahmed Vice-Chancellor of Jahangirnagar University attended the conference as special guest. The inauguration ceremony was presided over by Dr. Azizul Haque, Chairman

the Acting Chief Justice focused on the history of Political Science and hoped that the conference would be a success and helpful for the socicty. He said, "We will not be able to achieve progress, if fail to communicate with the

# Dateline Chittagong

# NAP's plea to abide by EC code of conduct

CHITTAGONG, Feb 16: The National Awami Party (NAP) leaders here called upon the voters to elect honest and noncommunal candidates in the February 27 election, reports

The leaders also called upon the political leaders and supporters to abide by the code of conduct and intensify the recovery of arms to ensure a fair election.

Addressing projection mee tings at Kanungopara, Kalaiyarhat, Kadurkhi, Mohra and Bibirhat under Chittagong-10 constituency Friday . The NAP leaders said that only honest dedicated and non-communal persons could ensure the establishment of a corruption free society and as such the voters had a great responsibility in excercising their franchise, a party press release said.

The meetings were addressed by Chittagong-10 constituency NAP candidate Advocate Chittaranjan Dasgupta. Satesh Chandra Chanda, Shanada Sharma, Alhaj Danesh

Ahamad Chowdhury, Dr. Amulya Acharya, Advocate Emdadul Islam and others.

### Peace procession

Bishwajanin Shanti Sangha world- peace organisation Friday brought out a peace procession in protest against bombing on civilians by the allied forces in Baghdad

The procession began from Shahid Minar and concluded in front of Chittagong Press Club following a rally with Dr Chandra Shekar Das in the chair. Among others Narayan Chandra Rudra Pal, Moulvi Abdul Motalleb, Sukamoy Chakraborty and Alauddin

Ahmed addressed the rally. The speakers demanded immediate cessation of bombing on civilian targets, stop genocide and restoration of peace in the Gulf region.

### Death anniversary

The eighth death anniversary of Mozammel Hussain, a final year science student of Chittagon's University and a

martyr of democratic movement was observed here Friday

He was killed in police fir ing while agitating against the autocratic government of now fallen Ershad.

Chittagong University Central Students Union held milad mahfil. Quran khani and discussion meeting to pay homage to his departed soul.

### **Ekushey programme** from today

Chittagong branch of Bangla Academy will begin a three-day programme at the Shilpakala Academy here today in observance of Ekushey February, an Academy press release said.

The programme to be inaugurated by the Director General of the Academy, Prof. Harun-ar-Rashid include discussion on Cultural Movement by Chittagong Poetry Recitation session, seminar on newspapers and periodicals of Chittagong, discussion on history of Bangla Academy and cultural function.

### Khulna Dateline

Oppression on women rising

# 128 cases filed so far

Our Staff Correspondent

went to his home for launch

people to come forward for

establishing an Islamic rule

through next polls for

Maulana was speaking at a

eradicating all the social vices.

loaded in it.

KHULNA, Feb 15: The oppressed women of Khulna district filed 128 allegations so far with local 'Nari Nirjatan Protirodh Cell' of the government. Of them 90 cases had been settled during the last one year but women's oppression was reportedly increasing in the greater Khulna district. 111 cases were filed with the

cell from Dumuria Upazila alone. According to a social worker of the city, women's oppression was also increasing in Khulna city. During the last one year-14 cases had been lodged with the local NNP Cell but only one case was settled.

According to informed sources, only three cases had been filed with Sathkhira and Bagerhat districts during the last one year which were duly solved. Due to absence of proper publicity of the existence of such an organisation, the oppressed women could not lodge their complaints to the cell.

Revolver stolen A revolver of the Khulna

Sadar Tahshilder, Shamsul

public meeting under the auspices of local Islamic Oikya Jote at local Shahid Hadis Park on Thursday. The M P candidate of the Jote from Khulna two con-

stituency, Maulana Ali Ahmed also addressed the meeting which was presided by Maulana Rafigur Rahman. Basanta Mela

A week-long Basanta Mela

organised by the local branch Haque was stolen from his ofof Bangladesh Small and Cotfice here on Thursday with three rounds of live bullets tage Industries Corporation began here on Friday at the Khulna Zila School ground, Mr. It happened when Haque Shafful Alam, Secretary for in-

dustries inaugurated the fair. and unearthed the incident In his inaugural speech the after the table drawer was no-Industries Secretary stressed ticed unlocked. A case has the importance of small and been registered with Khulna cottage industries with the simultaneous establishment of Call to establish large scale industries for the Islamic rule rapid economic development of the country. He also called The Central Convener of Isupon all banking organisations lamic Oikya Jote Maulana Azto provide loan facilities for izul Haque called upon the

> the purpose. A total of adequate 250 stalls of handierafts were opened at the fair which the Industries Secretary and other dignitaries visited.

### Lawyer of alleged killer summoned

The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate of Khulna has summoned the lawyer of accused Shahid Morol, the alleged killer of a local Bangladesh Chhatra Union activist, Azahar to put forward to the court cancelling his interim bail.

## Dhaka expresses views

# Iraq's offer has to be followed by pullout

Bangladesh views that Iraq's pull out offer has to be followed by immediate unconditional withdrawal of troops from occupied Kuwait for a cessation to hostilities in the Gulf, said a Foreign Ministry spokesman in Dhaka on Saturday, reports UNB.

### Guard against trouble makers: Jamaat

Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Mattur Rahman Nizami warned that those who would divrupt the holding of free and fair polls would be branded as collaborators of autocracy, reports UNB. Addressing an election rally

at Jessore Town Hall Saturday afternoon, he cautioned the people to guard against the trouble makers.

Nizami also urged the interim government as well as all political parties to come forward in holding free, fair and violence-free election.

The Jamaat leader said if elected, his party would take steps to turn the country's youth force into productive manpower and create employment opportunities.

He said they would introduce interest free Islamic economy to free the country from the curse of poverty.

The Jamaat will modernise the agricultural system and take steps to increase agricul tural production and provide interest free loan to the farmers, he said.

Complain.....

WASA....

Briefing newsmen on the Iraqi proposal made Friday. Additional Foreign Secretary Rtaz Rahman expressed satis faction over Iraq's change of

"It's a positive step towards end of the crisis caused by the August 2 occupation of Kuwait by Iraq."

Definitely, it's encouraging that Iraq has expressed its willingness to pull out responding to UN resolutions' that calls for Baghdad's total withdrawal from Kuwait and restoration of the legitimate government of the tiny Shetkhdom, he said.

The official stressed that efforts should be intensified to quicken the end of war. "Iraq must have to comply

with the UN resolutions through an unconditional and total withdrawal from Kuwait to end the erisis". Regarding Dhaka's stand on the Gulf conflict, the

Additional Foreign Secretary said "we're always committed to support all peace initiatives for a diplomatic and political solution of the problem." Bangladesh seeks a comprehensive solution of the

problem including cessation of the conflict, peace, stability, prosperity, reconstruction and rehabilitation in the entire region. Riaz Rahman told reporters.

Responding to a question on the move being initiated by the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), Riaz Rahman, a top diplomat of the country, said Iraqi offer to withdraw had "overtaken the effort."

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