

Campaign scenes : Munshiganj Triangular fight for 4 JS seats likely

By A K M Mohsin back from Munshiganj

All the four Jatiya Sangsad constituencies in Munshiganj district are likely to witness triangular fights in the June 12 elections with some heavyweights in the race.

As many as 35 candidates of different political parties including the three major parties - BNP, Awami League (AL) and Jatiya Party (JP) - are contesting for the four JS seats there.

Former deputy leader of the fifth parliament Prof A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury will face tough rivals like AL central leader Barrister K S Nabi and JP president member Shah Moazzem Hussain in the fray in Munshiganj-1. There are also six other candidates in the race there.

In Munshiganj-2 constituency, six candidates are contesting. Of them, Nazrul Islam Khan Badal of AL, Mizanur Rahman Sinha of BNP and Alhaj Abul Bashar of JP are prominent. Sinha, an industrialist, got BNP ticket for the first time. Wing Commander (ret'd) Hamidullah Khan, who was aspirant for the BNP ticket for this seat, left BNP and joined Awami League recently.

Shamsul Islam Khan, a former commerce and information minister, is the BNP nomination in Munshiganj-3 constituency where his main challenger is AL candidate Md Lutfar Rahman and JP nominee Md Jamal Hussain. There are eight other contestants.

Of the nine candidates vying for the Munshiganj-4 seat, names of Abdul Hye (BNP), Mohammed Mohiuddin (AL) and Alhaj Kalimullah (JP) are being heard frequently.

During an extensive visit to the constituencies this correspondent observed that a poll fever has gripped the people. Candidates and their workers and supporters are doing tireless campaign to draw voters' attention.

Some candidates were seen making door-to-door campaign, even making down crop lands to meet voters fields.

Expansion of irrigation and cold storage facilities in the predominantly potato growing district and protection of lands from erosion by rivers are the two main pledges made by the candidates in the campaign.

Shawkat blames Salman's men for Agargaon killing

BNP leader Lt Gen (Retd) Mir Shawkat Ali yesterday denied the allegation that he and his party were involved in the killing of Ward Commissioner Shahabuddin, reports UNB.

Shahabuddin, commissioner of ward number 41 and a City Awami League leader, was shot dead near his residence at West Agargaon in the city on Friday.

Shawkat, president of the City BNP and a candidate from Dhaka-9 constituency, blamed the Awami League for trying to capitalise on the killing to achieve its political ends.

Addressing a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday evening, he said the accused in the murder case are activists of Samridha Bangladesh Andolon of Salman F Rahman, a candidate from the same constituency.

Four armed terrorists, rounded up from a workshop behind the office of Shahabuddin on May 30, also belong to that organisation, he added.

The BNP leader alleged that a certain quarter is active to conceal the facts to save the real killers.

Mother kills her son

KHAGRACHHARI, June 1: A 5-year-old boy was killed on Friday night, allegedly by her mother, at Gumti village in Matiranga thana of the district, reports UNB.

Police said Shahina Begum strangled her minor son Nurul Alam Mohsin at dead of night after her former husband Hashem Jahan Chowdhury wanted his son to be returned to him.

Shahina Begum recently got married to a co-villager Soleman, abandoning her former husband who lives in Pakistan.

Enquiry report

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viornment of a free and fair election".

They said, "we believe that the publication of the report of enquiry just seven days before the election will adversely influence it in some or other way. On the other hand if the enquiry is completed ten days later, heavens will not fall and no interest will be harmed."

The signatories to the statement are:

Professor Anisuzzaman; AM Anisuzzaman, former adviser and secretary; Borhanuddin Ahmed, former secretary; Professor Muzaffar Ahmed, former adviser; Professor Salah Uddin Ahmed; Monzurul Karim, former secretary; Professor Serajul Islam Chowdhury; Professor Anisur Rahman; Kazi Fazlur Rahman, former adviser and secretary; Mujibur Haque, former cabinet secretary; Syed Nazimuddin Hashem, former minister and ambassador; Professor Moazzam Hossain; Professor Zillur Rahman Siddiqui, former adviser & Vice Chancellor; M Syeduzzaman, former minister and secretary; Abul Mal Abdul Muhiy, former minister and secretary.

Ctg violence

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the supporters of BNP and JP that left another 10 people injured.

JP leader Shamsul Alam Master filed a case with Patiya thana accusing some BNP activists in this regard.

In another incident on Thursday at Rangunia, an election camp of the BNP candidate came under attack by the supporters of a rival party near Rangunia college, police said.

Local people are apprehending further outbreak of violence in those areas if adequate security measures were not taken.

Sources said the activists of NDP in Raoson had recently split into two groups and one group joined BNP supporting Salauddin Qader Chowdhury and his younger brother Ghiasuddin Qader Chowdhury while another group joined Awami League supporting Faze Karim, a former NDP leader, who is contesting from Raoson with AL ticket.

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Govt seeks bids for Meghna ghat power project

Star Report

The government is seeking bids for development of the 300-450 Megawatt (MW) gas-fired Meghna ghat Combined Cycle Power Project on build-own-operate-transfer (BOOT) basis, sources concerned said.

A US company, K and M Engineering and Consulting Corporation, has been appointed an adviser by the Power Development Board (PDB) to select a sponsor through international competitive bidding based on a request for Proposal (RFP) and negotiate the agreement for the Project. A UK company, Mott Ewbank Preece, has been appointed engineers, the sources added.

The Project, now being assisted by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), is expected to receive 50 million US dollars in equity and long term concessional loan from the multilateral agency. Power evacuation facilities are proposed to be implemented with the ADB's financial assistance under the Bank's Ninth Power Project.

The total cooperation period is envisaged to be about 23 years, comprising a construction period of about three years and an operating period of 20 years.

To speed up implementation, a project company is being constituted by PDB, to which land and other rights for project development will be assigned.

Simple cycle cooperation of the project would commence by December 1998 while combined cycle operation would start by December 1999, the sources mentioned.

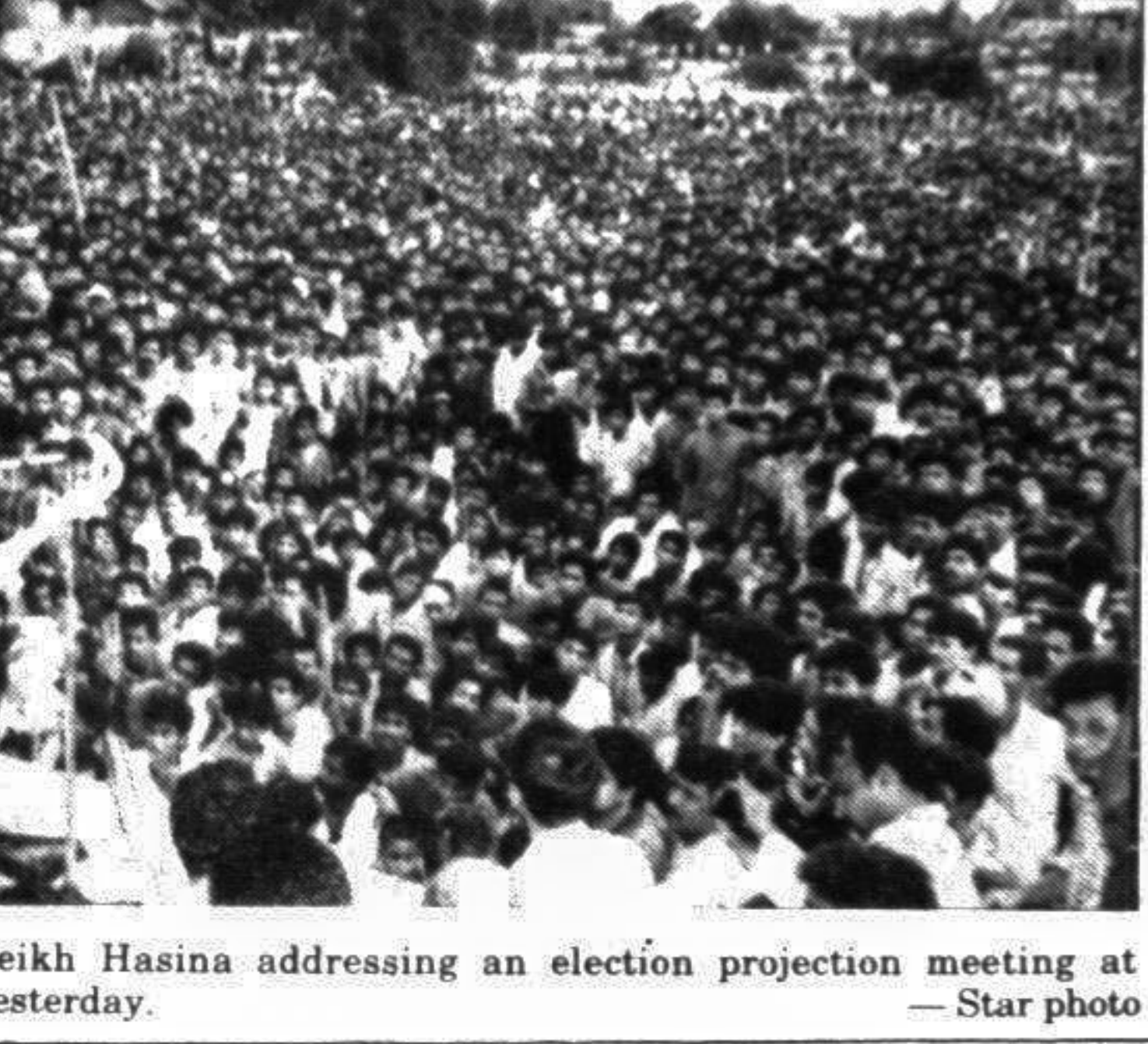
Campaign may extend to the skies!

By Staff Correspondent

Election campaign may now extend to the skies as an independent candidate is likely to be allowed by the Election Commission (EC) to drop leaflets from an aircraft, EC sources said.

Tanvir Haidar, a candidate from the Dhaka-6 constituency, has sought EC's permission to drop leaflets from the sky. If the candidate satisfied the EC as regards expenses, he would be given permission, the sources said.

The candidate, in his application to the EC, said that the cost of dropping the leaflets would be Tk 10,000 and a light aircraft of the flying club would be used for this, one source said.



Awami League President Sheikh Hasina addressing an election projection meeting at Kamrangirchar in the city yesterday. — Star photo

Hasina

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the AL had fought a sanguinary battle to wrest independence from an unwilling hand. After independence Bangabandhu's government during its three and a half years tenure rehabilitated the war-ravaged country.

The BNP brought in its train of cyclone, tidal bore, famine, killing of peasants and all kind of disasters, natural and man made, she charged. Hasina said the BNP had let loose a reign of terror in the country by killing peasants and workers only to perpetuate its rule.

She said economic development will not be possible unless and until we can ensure political stability in the country. Awami League stands for peace and political stability in the country.

Sheikh Hasina introduced her party candidate Haji Mohammad Selim for Dhaka-8 to the vast multitudes who thronged from far and near with boats, banners, festoons and placards inscribed with welcome slogans to attend the meeting and listen to her.

The meeting was presided over by thana AL president Abul Hasnat and was addressed by Dr Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin and Rezauddin Ahmed.

Our Staff Correspondent adds: Sheikh Hasina yesterday offered *fateha* at the grave of Moulana Hafeji Hujur in the city.

Deve Gowda

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former prime minister refused to take up the mantle.

Twelve cabinet ministers and eight ministers of state were sworn in along with Deve Gowda, an unassuming politician who has vowed to provide a stable administration after the April-May elections produced a fractured parliament.

The new two-tier cabinet is a mixture of veterans and first-timers, and draws its members mainly from the populous north and the sprawling south from where the United Front draws its strength.

The 12 cabinet ministers sworn in today were Balwant Singh Ramoowalia, CM Ibrahim, Devendra Prasad Yadav, IK Gujral, M Arunachalam, Mulayam Singh Yadav, Muralosi Maran, Palanippa Chidambaram, Ram Vilas Paswan, SR Bommal, TK Venkataraman and Yaaram Naidu.

The ministers of state were Beni Prasad Verma, Chandradev Prasad Verma, Jainarain Nishad Kanti Singh, Mohammed Taslimuddin, S Venugopalachari, Saleem Sherwani and V Venkateswarulu.

Their portfolios were not disclosed and officials said the announcement was expected later today or on Sunday.

The swearing in ceremony was televised live from the downtown presidential palace and attended by four former prime ministers.

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Terrorism threat to polls: AL

The Awami League yesterday said acts of terrorism were posing a threat to the smooth holding of the next general election, reports UNB.

"If illegal arms are not recovered, the coming polls will be jeopardised," said SAMS Kibria, the chairman of Awami League's Election Steering Committee.

Briefing newsmen in the afternoon, Kibria charged a political party with conspiring to sabotage the June 12 election.

He said at a time when the drive was continuing to recover illegal arms before the polls, the BNP was putting pressure on the caretaker government. This proves that the BNP is patronising the armed terrorists and trying to save them from the iron fist of law, he added.

Election would not be fair if illegal arms were not recovered, the Awami League leader said and called upon the people to build up united resistance against the "conspiracy to spoil the election."

EC requests CA to settle dispute over June 10 meet

The Election Commission yesterday requested Chief Adviser Muhammad Habibur Rahman to settle the dispute over public meetings convened by the Awami League and the BNP on the same day at Manik BIA Avenue in the city, reports UNB.

The Commission sent a letter to this end to the Chief Adviser along with a report of Dhaka District Electoral Enquiry Committee on the matter, official sources said.

The two major parties had convened their meetings on June 10, the last day of electioneering for the June 12 polls.

Hearing on Salman's petition for stay of HC verdict today

By SC Correspondent

The hearing on Salman F Rahman's application for stay of the High Court Division's verdict setting aside the order of the Returning Officer accepting Salman's nomination paper will be held by the Appellate Division today.

Justice Latifur Rahman of the Appellate Division on May 30, upon an application, passed a provisional order staying the HC verdict till today and also fixed today for hearing the application in the full bench of the Appellate Division.

The division bench of the HC comprising Justice Qazi Shafiqul Islam and Justice Syed J R Modasser Hossain gave the verdict on Dr Kamal Hossain's writ petition setting aside the order of the Returning Officer accepting the nomination paper of Salman F Rahman and the order of the Election Commission expressing its inability to review the said order of acceptance in the plea of having no jurisdiction.

The HC also ordered the matter to be sent back to the EC on remand for its disposal in accordance with law.



BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia addressing an election meeting at Savar yesterday. — Star photo

Khaleda

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who are unable to earn a living and channel credit to the educated jobless and women for generating self-employment.

She pledged that the farmers would be provided with adequate assistance, including agricultural credit and inputs at cheaper rates, so that they could produce more to make the country self-reliant in food.

These are a few programmes of the BNP which, during its five-year rule, brought about a radical change in the lifestyle of commonman. If any other party is voted to power, they won't implement these programmes, she said, calling upon the people to vote for 'sheaf of paddy, the election symbol of the BNP.'

During her day-long tour of the surrounding thanas of the capital, Begum Zia addressed a number of projection meetings at Savar, Kaliaokor, Konapara bus-stand in Gazipur, Pubail and Tongi.

CEC unhappy

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groups in the meeting at the auditorium of Mongla port at Khalishpur, the CEC said there remained question-marks in public mind about all the elections held in the country excepting the one held in 1991.

"That is why," he told the meeting, "to make this year's election a free and fair one is the responsibility of all of us." There is no alternative to fair election for giving the democracy an institutional shape.

Khulna divisional administration organised the meeting with Divisional Commissioner K M Nazmul Alam Siddiqui in the chair.

Five arrested

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prayed for seven days remand for each.

The motive behind the killing could not be ascertained as yet, a senior police official said, adding that there might be political motives.

Detective police yesterday took over the investigation of the case, police sources said.

Shahabuddin, Information Secretary of the city AL, was shot dead by a group of young men at Agargaon Friday afternoon.

Mohammadpur police recovered foreign made revolver with five bullets from the possession of arrested Salimuddin, police said. A police official said last night they were trying to recover the firearms used in the killing.

Meanwhile, Shahabuddin's wife Rokeya filed a case with Mohammadpur thana in this connection, police said.

Satinelle (Ladyshave)

For a Closer shave

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The Midnight File

Chechen rebels capture 26 Russian troops

MOSCOW, June 1: Chechen rebels captured 26 Russian troops when they attacked federal units in the Nozhai Yurt district of southeastern Chechnya today in breach of a ceasefire, Russian official said, reports AFP.

Operation at DMCH

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necks, observed the DMCH officials.

Surgeons at the DMCH at a meeting last Thursday had decided not to conduct scheduled operations excepting the emergency cases, said some doctors. The Director of the hospital, attended the meeting.

The OTs at the DMCH are in a deplorable condition for the last couple of months due to irregular supply of water and electricity.

Sources at the DMCH complained that the issue was extensively reported in the newspapers and the Director of the hospital also took up the matter with the government. But no positive steps were taken so far to resolve the crisis in the largest hospital of the country.

The Daily Star had, earlier, reported in its issue on April 2 that the doctors were facing acute problems to conduct major operations at the hospital as the supply of electricity was disrupted very frequently and the conditions of some OTs were not suitable for major operations.

AL, BNP clash

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Abdul Alim Swapon and Jahangir Alim were admitted into the Chittagong Medical College Hospital. Alim was later shifted to a private clinic. Other injured were also admitted into private clinics.

Alim was identified as an activist of BNP.

During the clash the residence of Lalkhanbazar ward commissioner Badul Alam, was ransacked by a group of unruly mob, police said. Commissioner Badul Alam is the co-chairman of election conducting committee of AL candidate in Doublemoring constituency Dr Afzarul Amin and Chittagong city AL's education and cultural secretary.

Police said the trouble had begun at Lalkhanbazar area from 12 noon after the arrest of a BCL activist Abul Kalam Azad in connection with some specific cases filed with Doublemoring thana.

Witnesses said BNP supporters cooperated with police in arresting Azad, which angered the supporters of Awami League.

As a result, immediately after the arrest a gunfight between the supporters of Awami League and BNP started. Some shops and the local BNP office were ransacked, police and witnesses said.

A series of cocktails were blasted during the clash, spreading panic among the residents, witnesses said.

At one stage, an unruly mob attacked the residence of ward commissioner Badul Alam who was not inside the house at that time, police and witnesses said.

Over one hundred police rushed to the spot and chased the clashing groups.

Both BNP and Awami League blamed each other for instigating the clash.

Khaleda's polls campaign tour

BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia will leave Dhaka today for the north-eastern parts of the country on a 3-day electioneering for the June 12 parliamentary polls, reports UNB.

According to party sources, Begum Zia will address a series of public meetings in the districts of Netrakona, Brahmanbaria, Habiganj, Moulvibazar and Sylhet.

15 electrocuted

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45, Rahim, 15, Dukhu Mia, 25, Golam Mostafa, 16, Mokbul Hossain, 16, Hazrat Ali, 20, Aurad Khan, 15, Obaidur Rahman, 20, Holud, 24, Upen, 40, Abu Bakkar Siddiqui, 30, Idris, 19, Gias, 18, Mokbul, 25 and Bopon, 16.

Of the injured, 31 in serious condition were admitted to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital.

The two buses were carrying the workers and supporters of Khurram Khan Chowdhury, the BNP candidate for Mymensingh-9 constituency. They were to attend a workers' rally at Chowdhury's village home at Moazzempur in Nandail.

On hearing the tragic news, Khurram Khan Chowdhury got fainted. He was sent to Dhaka for treatment.

30 killed, 60 hurt

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Das (45) of village Baratia under Ghor thana, Proshenjit (8 months) of village Dighi under Manikganj thana and Siddique (20) of Gaibandha district. Other 14 victims could not be identified.

Hearing the hue and cry, the villagers rushed to the spot and began rescue operation. Firebrigade personnel and police, with the help of the local people took out the injured passengers from the damaged bus and rushed them to hospitals.

Deputy Commissioner of Manikganj Md Abdur Razaque, and Police Superintendent S M Khorsheed Alam visited the spot of the accident and the injured persons at Manikganj and Uthuli hospitals.

Thousands of people gathered at the hospitals in the evening after the news of the disaster spread.

Bodies of 25 victims were lying at the Manikganj Hospital morgue in the evening. Only 3 bodies were handed over to their relatives.

Those under treatment at Manikganj hospital now are Asgar (45), village Tetulia, district Rangpur; Chunnusia, Rajbari; Milton (25), Abdul Hye (28), Mohammadpur, Rajbari; Volanath (35), village Dighi, Manikganj; Proshanto Kumar (30), Kalliganj, Jhenidaha; Chand Mia (26), Daulatpur, Manikganj; Mia Chand (60), Monohardi; Kubbat (25), Manikpur, Pabna; Rico (18), Tepra, Shibhalaya; Arfan Khan (45), Vadra, Nagarpur, Tangail; Rabul (18), Madhabpur, Gaibandha; Makbul (24), Gauriganj, Shibhalaya, Pabna; Ruhul Amin (18), Mohadepur, Shibhalaya; Mannan (20), Shampur, Daulatpur; Shihab (20), Saidabad, Shibhalaya. Abul Kalam (20) Malanci, Pangsha, Rajbari; Janab Ali (25), Barangal, Shibhalaya, A Rashid (22), Beotha, Manikganj; Shefali (35), Butuni, Shibhalaya; Premananda (40), Pabna, Sulia (50), Rajbari.

A case has been registered with the Ghor police station in this connection. The whereabouts of the bus driver and helper could not be known. Police suspected both of them were killed while some local people said they saw some persons leaving the spot with minor injuries soon after the accident.