

Three women contesting for JS seats from Mymensingh

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Mymensingh*

Three women are running for the Jatiya Sangsad (JS) from different constituencies of Mymensingh.

Of the three, two are contesting from Mymensingh-4 (Sadar) constituency while another from Mymensingh-5 (Muktagachha).

Of them, two are party nominees. One candidate is contesting with Awami League (AL) ticket, one is contesting with Jatiya Party (E) ticket while the rest one is



Rashida Mohiuddin (AL)



Rawshan Ershad (JP-E)



Nasreen Monem Khan (Ind)

independent candidate.

Begum Rawshan Ershad, Presidium member of JP (E), is contesting from Mymensingh-4 constituency. This year she submitted nomination papers from three constituencies, but later on she withdrew her candidature from two constituencies.

Rawshan Ershad became a member of parliament (MP) following polls victory from Mymensingh-4 constituency in the last general election. She bagged 72,130 votes.

However, she was defeated by a margin of 1,121 votes by Awami League candidate Md Abdus Sattar from Mymensingh-8 (Iswarganj) constituency.

She is very hopeful of winning the coming general election from Mymensingh-4 (Sadar) constituency.

Awami League has nominated a newcomer, Rashida Mohiuddin, a leading cultural personality of the country

from Mymensingh-5 (Muktagachha) constituency. Leaders and activists of Awami League of this constituency welcomed her warmly. She also threw a tough challenge to immediate past BNP MP AKM Mosarrat Hossain.

Awami League lost the seat by a margin of 2,624 votes to BNP in the 1996 general election.

The lone independent woman candidate in the district is Nasreen Monem Khan, daughter of late Abdul Monem Khan, Governor of former East Pakistan during

Pakistani President Ayub Khan's regime.

Nasreen Khan is the Principal of Onnesha International School and College in Mymensingh and Dhaka.

While talking to the journalists of different dailies at Mymensingh Press Club on September 18, she informed that she had to wait till distribution of the election symbol. For this reason she is a bit late in her election campaign, she added. Heavy rainfall also disrupted her election campaign, she disclosed. 'But now I am conducting the election campaign at the grass roots level, she revealed.

She is contesting from Kishoreganj-6 (Bajitpur) constituency, the place of birth of her father as an independent candidate.

In Mymensingh, there are 12 constituencies with one in Netrakona.

Trading of illegal drugs goes on unchecked in two dists

UNB, *Jhenidah*

Trading of spurious drugs is going on almost openly in Kaliganj upazila with the help of a section of law enforcing agency personnel giving rise to number of drug addicts.

A recent survey revealed that at least 10 people died after taking spurious drugs in last few years, half of them in one month.

The deceased were Fani Das, 45, Anna Das, 43, Shibu Das, 55, Bisharat Ali, 23 and Dibakar Sheha, 40.

A local source said at present trading of illegal drugs is going on through 30 points of the upazila. They also said a huge quantity of drugs is coming from India through the bordering district of Chuadanga and Jibannagar and Darsana upazilas.

Recently 5,497 bottles of phensidyl were seized and three people arrested.

It is learnt that plain-clothes police and so-called cashiers are engaged in helping carry the drugs to different areas inside the country by taking bribe.

Local sources said phensidyl of 120ml is being sold in the area

between Tk 90 and Tk 140, per 100-gram hemp between Tk 1200 and Tk 1400 and per puria (mini-packet) heroin Tk 60 and Tk 70.

The survey conducted by a non-government organisation also found that among the drug addicts, 80 per cent are addicted to phensidyl and 20 per cent to other drugs like wine, hemp, heroin and rectified spirit.

Seventy per cent of the addicted people are youth who are also involved in various anti-social activities.

Many of them have already turned infirm and are suffering from various diseases, it added.

Another report from Narail says: The number of drug addicts is on rise alarmingly in the district causing concern among the peace-loving people.

The district town has virtually become a den of drug addicts claiming at least 200 lives and destroying the lives of thousands of youths over the years.

According to a survey conducted by Proshika, an NGO, at least 20,000 youths have become addicted to drugs, including hemp, heroin, pathedyn, phensidyl and country made different types of

wine, giving rise to crimes and anti-social activities.

Officials of local Narcotics Control Department admitted the drug-related deaths, but they could not give the actual figure.

Labourers, rickshaw-pullers, bus and truck drivers and other transport workers, students and upper-class people and even some of the members of law enforcing agencies are becoming addicted to drugs day by day.

Drugs are being sold at different corners of markets and grocery shops in lanes and by lanes so openly that it is easier to collect any kind of drugs, than that of betel nuts, it is alleged.

Such rising trend of drug addiction is causing deterioration of the law and order situation in the district. But the members of law enforcing agencies are found not so serious in taking steps in this connection.

A social worker, on condition of anonymity, said a section of influential people and musclemen are engaged in drug trading while the law enforcers help them in exchange of bribe.

NEWS SNAPS

Outlaws gear up activities

UNB, *Narail*

Armed activists of different underground parties including Purba Bangla Communist Party and Sharbahara Party have geared up their activities in the district ahead of October 1 general election.

Locals said the masked men of Sharbahara Party and other groups after sundown are going from door to door in remote villages and threatening them not to go to polling centres to cast their votes. They are also collecting tolls at gunpoint and assault the villagers for failing to realise the money. They villagers have virtually become hostages at the hand of extremists. Local leaders urged the authorities concerned to take immediate steps to nab the extremists to create an atmosphere congenial to hold the upcoming election in a peaceful manner.

Six AL leaders expelled

UNB, *Bogra*

Dhunat upazila Awami League (AL) has expelled six of its top leaders and issued show cause notices to four others for campaigning against party nominee Mojibur Rahman Moju.

The expelled leaders are AL Dhunat upazila general secretary Alimuddin Harun and assistant secretary Mostakul Haque Rubel, Mozammel Haque Moni, Mahe Alam, Afsar Alin and Shah Alam. The leaders against whom show cause notices issued were identified as Mozaffar Hossain, Osman Ali, Joynal Abedin and Abdur Razzak. The action against the rebel leaders was taken at a meeting in the upazila on Thursday as they were campaigning in favour of dissident AL leader Ferdous Zaman Mukul who is contesting as an independent candidate from Bogra-5 constituency. The meeting presided over by upazila AL president TIM Nurunnabi Tareq also asked joint secretary Kudrat-e-Khuda Jewel to act as general secretary of the upazila.

Govt urged to check terrorist acts

UNB, *Chandpur*

Former Home Minister and candidate of Chandpur-5 constituency Major (Retd) Rafiqul Islam has expressed concern at the increasing terrorist activities in his area.

He is a press conference on Saturday, said the terrorist activities in the area are going on like the way the Pak army and Rajakars launched attack on the innocent people during the Liberation War. The Awami League candidate apprehended that the voters wouldn't dare to go to the polling centres to cast their votes if the situation is not improved. He called upon the caretaker government to take immediate steps to check the terrorist acts in his constituency to hold the upcoming general election in a free and fair manner.

Pre-poll clash leaves 30 injured

UNB, *Narail*

A violent pre-election clash between Awami League (AL) and 4-party alliance left at least 30 people including ASP Aminul Islam injured near Lohagora Upazila Pilot School on Thursday.

Police and witnesses said at around 10 am an electioneering procession of AL came face to face of 4-party alliance procession at the point and the clash erupted after a hot exchange of words between the two rival groups. The ASP who rushed to the spot to bring the situation under control came under attack and sustained serious injuries. Police arrested five activists of 4-party alliance in this connection. Police filed a case against 14 activists of the alliance. Additional police forces were deployed in the area in the face of mounting tension. Witnesses also said AL activists on the night of September 19 ransacked four offices of 4-party alliance at Kundashi, Kalna, Kotakol, Boira and Joppur in the upazila.

140 centres in Bagerhat vulnerable

UNB, *Bagerhat*

At least 140 polling centres out of 373 in four constituencies of the district have been identified as vulnerable for the upcoming October 1 general election.

Official sources said of them, 37 out of 96 are located in Bagerhat-one, 29 out of 93 in Bagerhat-two, 35 out of 69 in Bagerhat-three and 39 out of 115 in Bagerhat-four constituencies. Some 90 centres were identified as most vulnerable. They said necessary measures have already been taken to ensure security of these vulnerable centres in order to hold the parliamentary election in free, fair and impartial manner.

Workshop on election

UNB, *Manikganj*

A daylong workshop on election was held at the auditorium of National Life Insurance Company in the town on Thursday.

Some 121 election observers of 11 NGOs took part in the workshop, organised by the Khan Foundation. Chief coordinator of the foundation Monjur Alam was the chief guest in the workshop presided over by district election officer Bivor Kumar Biswas.

Seminar on political reform campaign

UNB, *Shariatpur*

A seminar organised by the local NGOs on political reform campaign and violence-free politics was held at Shariatpur Development Society (SDS) training centre here on Saturday.

Director of BODC, and NGO, Jagadish Chandra presided over the seminar and Director of SDS Mazibur Rahman Matbar presented the keynote paper on political reform. Correspondents of national dailies and news agencies and editors of local newspapers and elite were present.

Acute crisis of fish in Rangamati

UNB, *Rangamati*

Acute scarcity of fish has been prevailing for long in 10 upazilas of the district depriving the local people of necessary protein and forcing the fishermen to remain jobless.

About 15,000 fishermen of Rangamati sadar, Naniarchar, Longadu, Barkal, Bilaichhari, Baghaichhari, Jurachhari, Kaptai, Rajasthali and Kaukhali upazilas, who were once solvent and led a happy life, are now passing their days in great hardship and struggling for their survival.

Siltation of river bed, control over jalmahal by non-fishermen, large scale fishing of fries indiscriminate use of chemical fertilizer on land, diseases of fish, lack of necessary measures for remedy of the diseases and lack of initiative for popu-

larising pisciculture are the main reasons behind the fish crisis.

On the other hand, corruption by the authorities concerned in giving lease of jalmahal water body and price-hike of fishing equipment, lack of capital and unplanned fish, farming have also contributed to the uncertainty in the fisheries sector.

Finding no other alternative, many fishermen were forced to leave the age-old profession.

Local people alleged that fisheries officials resorted to corruption while sanctioning loan to the so-called rich fishermen depriving the genuine ones.

Local elite called upon the authorities concerned to extend financial assistance to genuine fishermen for their survival and development of fisheries sector.

Telecom system in Narail on verge of collapse

UNB, *Narail*

Telecommunication system in the district is on verge of collapse due to age-old equipment and lack of proper maintenance of the telephone exchange.

Besides, the technicians as well as the linesmen and other employees were always found unconcerned to take necessary steps regarding the connection of the subscribers despite complain against the particular set.

Local people said they find it difficult to contact any place in the country or locality over telephone.

There are about 800 telephone connections in the district analog telephone exchange, which is much lower than that of the current requirement.

The trunk boards set up in the exchange have gone out of operation. The subscribers are to wait for hours together for getting a distant call, which ultimately ends in despair.

The NWD system is also now on verge of collapse. The outgoing channels of NWD remain inoperative most of the time.

Though the telephone network has been brought under digital ISD system at Narail as one of the development programmes of the immediate past Awami League government, it has not been introduced causing suffering to the people.

A few years back the authorities opened five booths of card phones in Narail sadar, Lohagara and Kalia, but all the card phone booths remained out of order for a long time.