

Ruling party men chosen for making voter list

Opposition kept in dark, Khulna political leaders allege

QUAZI AMANULLAH, Khulna

The lists of supervisors and enumerators have been finalised for preparation of voter list in Khulna without consultation with opposition parties. Training workshop of field level official will be held next month. The work on preparation of voters' list will begin on January 1 next year.

According to sources at Khulna District Election Office, two Registration Officers and 106 Assistant Registration Officers have already been appointed for Khulna district to assist the work. Two Election Officers will act as ex-officio Registration Officers, while Upazila Election Officers have been made Assistant Registration Officers.

District Election Officer ATM Mahbuzur Rahman told The Daily Star that none of the opposition parties raised any verbal or written

objection regarding preparation of the list of supervisors and enumerators.

A total of 3,767 enumerators and 950 supervisors have already been appointed for Khulna district, he said.

Khulna city Awami League president and former state minister Talukder Abdul Khaleque MP, when contacted on Tuesday, alleged that most of the supervisors are supporters of either BNP or Jamaat-e-Islami and are teachers of primary schools or madrasas.

The Awami League lawmaker said officials of Khulna District Election Office did not consult with local opposition leaders before finalising the lists. "So, we can not expect a correct voters' list and free and fair election", Talukder Khaleque said.

He said choosing ruling party

men is part of a blue print to rig the next parliamentary election to cling to power.

The Election Commission is a constitutional body and it is supposed to work neutrally. We do not feel the necessity to interfere in its activities and if it does anything in a biased way, it would be unfortunate for the nation, he said.

He further said political leaders are not suppose to keep in mind when the Election Commission prepares the list of enumerators. Central vice president of Jatiya Party (Ershad) Alhaj Sheikh Abul Hossain said that a correct list of voters can not be expected from politically biased supervisors.

Another JP leader who is a former lawmaker said most of the listed supervisors and enumerators are school teachers appointed under political influence in the last

three years. They can not perform neutrally, he said. This is part of the alliance government's plan to retain power, he said.

Both the AL and JP leaders said they are watching the situation. Protests will be lodged after reports of getting anomalies at grassroots level when preparation of voter list begins, they said.

Denying the allegation, the District Election Officer said none of the local leaders of opposition parties submitted any objection in writing regarding appointment of supervisors for making the fresh voter list.

"We do not know who is politically biased or not among the supervisors appointed. We are committed to make a correct list of voters", he said.

Wave of protests against bombings



Political parties yesterday protested Tuesday's bombings of Gazipur and Chittagong court compounds. Photos (clockwise from top) show demonstrations by 14-party alliance in Satkhita, Chittagong, BNP in Magura, Awami League in Rangpur, 14-party in Gaibandha, BNP in Pabna, AL in Pabna, and 14-party in Tangail.

Parties protest bombings by JMB militants

STAR NATIONAL DESK

The opposition 14-party alliance led by Awami League staged demonstrations in districts across the country yesterday protesting Tuesday's JMB bombings of Gazipur and Chittagong court compounds and demanding the government's resignation, holding it responsible for the carnage.

They marched streets chanting anti-government slogans, held rallies and besieged Deputy Commissioners' offices demanding an end to such dastardly acts by Islamist militants, alleging that these are being perpetrated under the protection of a ruling coalition partner.

In Bogra, the opposition's siege programme was foiled by police, where at least five of its activists were injured in baton-charge.

In several districts, lawyers' protests continued for the second day yesterday against the carnage that killed nine people including lawyers and policemen and injured 78 others.

Alongside the opposition alliance, ruling BNP also brought out processions and held rallies in Pabna and Magura condemning the attacks by zealots, our correspondents reported. Besides AL and BNP, Jamaat-e-Islami also brought out a procession in Mymensingh.

Our RU Correspondent reports: Lawyers joined by opposition political activists held a 'gayebana janaza' in the court area yesterday morning.

The congregation later turned into a huge protest meeting, largely attended by 14-party alliance leaders and activists, where speakers demanded resignation of the gov-

ernment for failing to protect life of citizens.

After the rally, the protesters marched main streets of the city, chanting slogans urging the people to topple the "protectors of bombers".

With Rajshahi district AL president Masudul Haque in the chair, speakers at the rally called upon the people to observe hartal today called by the lawyers to express their 'no confidence' in the government.

They also demanded a ban on politics based on religion and stern action against Islamist zealots who are "misinterpreting" Islam and defaming Bangladesh abroad.

Rajshahi Advocate Bar Association (RABA) also brought out a mourning procession in the city wearing black badges.

The Progressive Teachers Association (PTA) at Rajshahi University yesterday took out a mourning procession, paraded different the campus and held a rally demanding resignation of the government for protecting Islamist militants.

Speakers at the rally accused Jamaat, a component of the ruling four-party alliance, of harbouring militant outfits from behind the screen.

Our Gaibandha Correspondent reports: Speakers at a protest rally held at the Shaheed Minar called upon the people to intensify the on-going agitation to oust the government for sheltering militants who are blasting bombs one after another and killing people.

The protesters led by the 14-party alliance unit marched streets and laid a siege to the Deputy Commissioner's office demanding

arrest of JMB (Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen, Bangladesh) militants, responsible for the carnage in Gazipur and Chittagong.

Our Bogra Correspondent reports: The opposition programme to besiege the Deputy Commissioner's office was foiled when police charged batons on the procession on Temple Road on its way to the DC's office.

At least five activists were injured in the police action, opposition leaders claimed. Police arrested one person from the spot.

Intercepted, the 14-party alliance held a rally there.

Speakers at the rally alleged that the Islamist militants who are bombing court compounds are sheltered by a ruling coalition partner.

They called upon the people to observe hartal today and other agitation programmes to compel the government to step down.

In Satkhira and Kishoreganj, opposition processions were also intercepted near the Deputy Commissioner's offices, our correspondents reported.

The opposition parties held rallies there condemning the bomb blasts and demanding government's resignation for failing to protect people's life.

Demonstrations were also held in Natrakona, Moulvibazar, Mymensingh, Brahmanbaria, Comilla, Rangpur, Dinajpur, Gopalganj, Faridpur, Barisal and Patuakhali.

DINAJPUR-1 POLLS 4 ministers to campaign for Jamaat man

A CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Three ministers and a State Minister are coming to Dinajpur today to campaign for Jamaat-e-Islami leader Maulana Aftab Uddin Mollah, a candidate of the ruling alliance in the by-election in Dinajpur-1 constituency, scheduled for December 5.

They are LGRD Minister Md Abdul Mannan Bhuiya, Women and Children Affairs Minister Khurshid Jahan Haque, Social Welfare Minister Ali Ahsan Mujahid and State Minister for Aviation and Tourism Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir.

Talking to this correspondent yesterday, sources in the district administration confirmed their arrival in Dinajpur today.

They will address two public meetings today, one at Kaharal Degree College ground at 10 am and the other at Birganj High School ground in the afternoon.

Five other candidates are participating in the by-polls. They are Awami League leader Nasirul Hoq Rustom, contesting as a nagoric committee (citizens committee) candidate; Jubo League leader Shibli Sadek; Abdul Makel Sarker of Jatiya Party (Ershad); Krishok Front leader Krishar Mohammad Sadek and independent candidate Monoranjan Shil.

Meanwhile, Shafiq Alam Proddhan, who resigned from Jatiya Party, now campaigning for Monoranjan Shil, alleged at public meetings that the ruling alliance has mobilized JMB (Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen, Bangladesh) activist to rig the polls.

Robbers loot 3 night coaches, two cars

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Highway robbers looted cash and valuables worth Tk 20 lakh from three night coaches, two private cars and three trucks on the Barisal-Dhaka highway near Talma of Nagarkanda in Faridpur district in the early hours of Monday.

The robbery was committed when three Barisal bound buses coming from Dhaka reached Talma at about 3 am, according to police, passengers and eye-witnesses.

About 25 highwaymen equipped with firearms and sharp weapons

stopped the buses by blocking the highway with timbers and committed the robbery for about one hour.

The criminals also looted valuables from two cars and three trucks which reached the spot at the same time.

Meanwhile, a night coach fell into a roadside ditch as the driver drove the vehicle in back gear to avoid the robbery.

At least 20 passengers were injured in the accident and all their valuables were looted by robbers.

3X3

4X3

5x2

8X3