

Voter roll work begins in Rangpur Aug 19

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Work on preparation of voter list and national ID card registration begins in the district town on August 19, district EC office sources said.

Fifteen assistant registration officers (AROs), 120 supervisors and 565 fieldworkers (enumerators) have been appointed to collect information of voters. Army will provide technical support to the project work.

Rangpur District Election Officer (DEO) Subash Chandra Sarker said, a three-day training course for AROs, supervisors and field workers ended on August 9.

As many as 1, 74,746 voters were registered in Rangpur municipality area last year, district EC office sources said. At least 15 to 20 percent of voters who were registered during the period were fake, an ARO said on condition of anonymity.

In reply to a query, the DEO said, 'There is a gadget for appointment of AROs, supervisors and fieldworkers. We can not go beyond rule.'

He said, this time army will supervise the total process. So there is no possibility of voter manipulation, he firmly said.

Dredge Kobadak to stop recurring flood in Satkhira, Jessore

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Leaders of the newly formed Kabodak Basin Union Parishad (UP) Forum in Satkhira and Jessore districts at a meeting here yesterday urged the government to re-excavate silted Kabodak river to free the area from flooding in rainy season and water-logging in dry season.

The meeting attended by Union Parishad (UP) chairmen and members of 28 unions in Kabodak basin area in the two districts threatened of agitation if a comprehensive plan is not taken up immediately to dredge the river to address the persisting problem.

They said people of the area do not want relief from the government. They want removal of the years-long problem affecting

several lakh people. Kobadak is the lifeline in the area and if it is dredged, recurring floods and water-logging will be solved and people's miseries will end, they said.

Kabodak is the lone outlet for draining out water in the areas, they said. Due to water logging, crops and dwelling houses are being damaged and suffering of people are increasing, they said.

The meeting held at Sarulia Union Parishad auditorium was presided over by Sarulia UP chairman Matiar Rahman.

It was addressed by UP chairmen Nazrul Islam, Lokman Hossain, Rafiqul Islam, Sabbir Hossain, Mohabbat Ali, Sajjad Hossain Sekendar Ali, Kamruzzaman, Rahaj Uddin,

principal Safiqul Islam and Hashem Ali.

They said as the river is dying, encroachers have grabbed shore lands, aggravating the problem. The encroachers have built houses, shops, clubs, factories and fish farms on its banks and shoals.

They alleged that successive governments did not take any step to free the river from encroachments despite repeated demands by people of all classes in last five years.

In the face of people's demand, Water Development Board (WDB) took up a Tk 26 crore project last year to dredge the river. But it was partial and it did not bring the desired result, they said.

They also demanded immediate demolition of all illegal structures along the riverbank.

Verdict in Nadim Mostafa's case today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Verdict in the case against former BNP lawmaker Nadim Mostafa and 17 others for alleged extortion and terrorising people during Union Parishad election in Durgapur upazila will be delivered today.

The second court of Additional Sessions Judge Rejaul Islam fixed the date on August 8 after completion of argument by defense and state lawyers.

Seventeen witnesses were examined during the trial. Twelve of the accused including Nadim Mostafa are absconding, court sources and police said.

Five of the accused are in jail. They are Durgapur municipal chairman Saidur Rahman Mantu, BNP activists Babul, Ansar, Shamsul and Abdul Gaffar.

One Sekandar Ali lodged the case with Durgapur police station on April 24.

Sub Inspector Golam Mohammad of Durgapur police station submitted the charge sheet with a first class magistrate court on May 18.

Observe Aug 15 at state level, declare it a public holiday

RU teachers urge govt

RU CORRESPONDENT

Over 150 teachers of Rajshahi University under the banner of Progressive Teachers Society (PTS) in a statement yesterday called upon the caretaker government to observe the 32nd death anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on August 15 at state level with due respect and honour.

The PTS, aligned with Awami League, also demanded declaration of August 15 as a public holiday.

In a statement, the teachers said distortion of the history of Liberation War at state level started after Bangabandhu and most of his family members were assassinated on the fateful night of August 15, 1975.

'We think Bangabandhu, as father of the nation, is above all political controversies', they said adding, all citizens as well as the

state should pay due respect to him and observe his death and birth anniversaries in a befitting manner.

'But we are witnessing that the non-party caretaker government is not considering the issue with due importance. The government changed the name of Navy Frigate BNS Bangabandhu to BNS Khalid, which expresses its attitude, the statement added.

As the caretaker government is non-partisan, the people hope that the death anniversary of Bangabandhu would be observed this year with state honour in a befitting manner, the statement said.

It is a matter of great regret that the authorities have not yet made any announcement in this regard, the PTS said.

The signatories to the statement include former Rajshahi University vice chancellor Prof

Siadur Rahman Khan, PTS convener Prof Abdus Sobhan, Prof Muhammad Nurullah, Prof Muklesur Rahman, Prof Mijan Uddin, Prof Entajul Haque, Prof Jalal Uddin, Prof Mahabubur Rahman, Prof Abdul Latif, Prof Sheikh Muhammad Nurullah, Prof Anando Kumar Shaha, Prof Moloy Kumar, Prof Shamsuddin Ila, Prof Fayekuzzaman, Prof Abul Kashem, Prof Sarker Sujit Kumar, Prof Shah Newaz Ali, Prof Sarker Ali Akkas, Prof Khairul Alam, Prof Abdul Jalil Mia, Prof Sayed Shamsuddin Sheikh, Prof Zulfiker Ali, Prof Golam Kabir, Prof Farhad Hossain, Prof Habibur Rahman, Prof Zulfiker Matin, SA Haider, Khalilur Rahman, ABM Zaharul Haque, Abdul Halim, Rakib Uddin, Shafiqunabbi Samadi, Hasibul Alam and Rabiul Islam.

Former Satkhira Jamaat MP remanded in two cases

Faces Tk 5 lakh extortion charges

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Former Jamaat-e-Islami lawmaker Gazi Nazrul Islam, arrested on March 9 by joint forces, was placed on a five-day remand yesterday for interrogation in two extortion cases.

He faces three extortion cases, filed after his arrest. He is now in Satkhira jail.

Gazi Nazrul Islam was elected from Satkhira-5 (Shyamnagar) constituency in 2001 election as a candidate of BNP led 4-party alliance.

The investigation officer (IO) of the two cases submitted two prayers before the cognizance court seeking 10 days' remand. First Class Magistrate Hemayet Hossain of the cognizance court placed the former lawmaker on five days' remand.

S M Abdur Rashid of Chakbara village in Shyamnagar upazila on April 16 filed one of the extortion cases with Shyamnagar police station accusing Nazrul Islam and his uncle Abdus Sobhan.

The complainant alleged that the former lawmaker implicated his son



Gazi Nazrul Islam

Rabiul Islam and Amzad Gazi of the same village falsely in the Mizan Gazi murder case by influencing the complainant, Arab Ali, to harass them. The murder case was filed in 2005.

The lawmaker on May 7 in 2005 demanded Tk 50,000 from him through his uncle Gazi Abdus Sobhan as a condition for dropping his son's name from the case, the complainant said in the case.

Abdur Rashid went to the former lawmaker's house at Islampur at Shyamnagar upazila headquarters and gave him Tk 50,000 Abdur Rashid alleged.

Another extortion case was filed on April 22 by Jalal Uddin Sardar of Datpur village in Shyamnagar upazila accusing Nazrul Islam, his private assistant Gausul Azam and Jamaat leader Mahfuzur Rahman of Nurnagar village in Shyamnagar. The case was filed with Shyamnagar police station.

Plaintiff Jalal Uddin Sardar alleged that a group of local Jamaat leaders and activists led by Mahfuzur Rahman on April 22 last year beat his men drove them out of his shrimp farm at Nidaya village and occupied it.

Next day, as he went to the former Jamaat lawmaker to recover his shrimp enclosure from illegal occupation, he demanded Tk 3 lakh from him through his PA Gausul Azam, jalal Uddin alleged in his complaint.

Jalal Uddin went to the former lawmaker's house on May 2 and gave him Tk 2 lakh, the allegation said.



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Low lying areas of Chittagong city near Patenga were inundated yesterday by tidal surge whipped up by strong winds due to depression in the Bay.

38 pc clients bribe officials for power in Jhenidah

TIB survey says

AZIBOR RAHMAN AND HOSSAIN SERAJ, Magura

At least 38.2 per cent subscribers in Jhenidah Sadar upazila have to bribe officials of Power Development Board (PDB) and Rural Electrification Board (REB) to get power connection to their residences or business establishments.

Fifty-four per cent of the subscribers do not get proper attention by officials despite complaints about problems, according to a survey by Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB).

The survey done recently by Sacheton Nagorik Committee, affiliated with TIB, covered 500 families in Jhenidah Sadar upazila, according to TIB sources.

On an average, a PDB subscriber has to bribe officials Tk 749 to get power connection. AREB subscriber has to pay Tk 579 as bribe for the same purpose, the report claimed.

TIB suggested a 13-point rec-

ommendation to ensure better service to subscribers. These include introduction of complaint boxes and formation of monitoring cells at PDB REB offices.

Cops suspended in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Two police constables were suspended temporarily yesterday for negligence in duty leading to escape of a criminal from their custody in Satkhira.

Satkhira police superintendent (SP) Mirza Abdullahel Baki ordered the suspension of constable Zakir Hossain and Sher Mohammad of Sadar thana.

Sources said, keeping one arrestee Mizanur Rahman Mukul in custody police went to arrest another criminal of a robbery incident and at one stage Mukul fled away with handcuff.

However, Mukul surrendered to Sadar thana police yesterday morning.

On contact, SP Mirza Abdullahel Baki confirmed the incident.

RELIEF DISTRIBUTION BY PARTIES Govt playing dual role, Menon alleges

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon yesterday alleged that the government was playing a dual role by allowing a political party leader to distribute relief under party banner while barring others from doing so.

Progressive Democratic Party leader Ferdous Ahmed Koreishi was escorted by motorcycle-mounted party men in a procession when he distributed relief but leaders of other parties were not allowed such things on different excuses, he said while exchanging views with newsmen at party office in Barisal.

Menon claimed that black money holders are making donations to the government relief fund, thereby legalising their money. "Then why it would not be the same about donations to funds of political parties, private and non-government organizations?" he posed the question.

Menon said government can not face any national disaster without participation of people.

Political parties organised massive relief operations by mobilising people and successfully faced disasters in 1970, 1988 and 1996, the Workers Party leader said.

"They are telling political parties to swim with hands and legstied", he said.

Quoting media reports Menon said about 68 per cent area of the country is flood-affected and at least one million tonnes of food grains are needed for post flood relief operation but the government still says they do not need any foreign aid.

Replying to a question he said China wants to help Bangladesh in exploring oil, gas, coal and other natural resources and generate electricity without interfering in our internal affairs.

Barisal district president of Workers Party Prof Abdus Sattar and party leaders Prof Nazrul Huq Nilu, Master Bazlur Rahman and Shanti Das were also present at the press briefing.

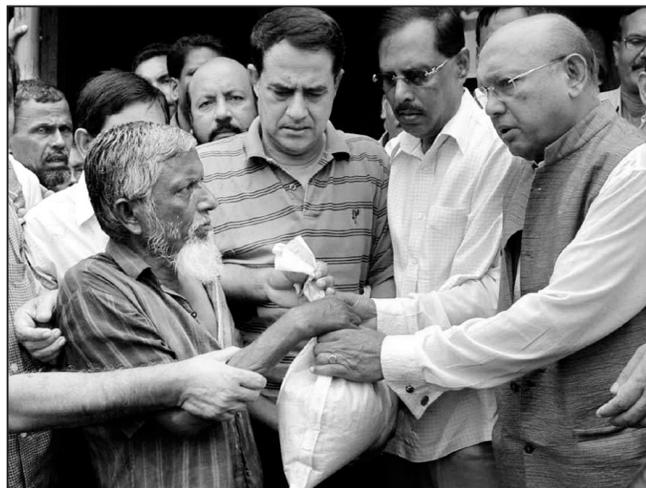


PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Awami League Presidium Member Tofael Ahmed (left) and BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan distribute relief among flood victims in Sirajdikhan in Munshiganj and Sarsingdi Sadar upazila respectively yesterday.

9x3