

AL, BNP MEN TO PARTICIPATE IN AUG 4 MUNICIPALITY POLLS

71 file nominations for mayors

472 for councillors and 125 for reserved seats for women

STAR REPORT

Some 71 candidates for mayoral posts, 472 for councillors and 125 for reserved seats for women submitted nominations to the returning officers yesterday for elections in nine municipalities.

The elections will be held on August 4. The Election Commission has fixed July 6 and 7 for scrutiny and July 13 for withdrawal of candidature.

MANIKGANJ
Our correspondent from Manikganj adds: Ten candidates submitted their nomination papers for the mayoral post of municipality yesterday, the last date of submission.

The candidates are detained Mayor Rajan Ali, his wife Afroza Akter, acting Mayor Sudeb Saha, Ward Commissioner Nasir Uddin Ahmed Jadu, former mayor Mosharraf Hossain Babul, GM Rafi Apu, SM Islam Hossain Liton, Billal Hossain, Ehtesham Hossain Khan and Syed Abul Kashem Chowdhury.

Fourteen women submitted their nomination papers for three reserved seats, while 81 candidates, including two journalists Abul Kalam Biswas and Zahid Hossain, submitted for nine ward councillor posts.

Local BNP party men are taking part in the Manikganj municipality election, though the party's high command declared boycott of the election.

Election Commissioner Brig Gen (ret) M Sakawat Hossain will attend the view exchange meeting on the election with returning officer, assistant returning officer and candidates at Govt Devendra College auditorium tomorrow.

A total of 41,871 voters will cast their votes in the Manikganj municipality election, district election officer sources said.

SREEPUR
Our Gazipur correspondent reports: Seven candidates submitted nomination papers for the mayoral post of Sreepur municipality election. A total of 49 candidates submitted nominations to vie for councillorship, while 11 women for three reserved seats.

NAWHATA
Staff correspondent from Rajshahi reports: Eight candidates yesterday submitted their nomination papers

for the mayoral post of Rajshahi city's neighbouring Nawahata municipality.

The mayoral candidates include three each from BNP and Awami League, one from Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh and an independent candidate.

Some 45 aspirants submitted their nominations for nine councillor posts and 18 for three reserved seats for women.

Nawahata municipal BNP President and the incumbent municipal administrator Mokbul Hossain and BNP adherents Rafiqul Islam and Enayetullah Sabuj have become candidates.

Awami League municipal unit President Abdul Gafur and AL adherents Probbat Bhusan Saha and Abdul Bari Khan submitted their nominations.

Jamaat member Rafikul Islam Bokul and independent candidate Feroza Begum also submitted their nominations.

GOLAPGANJ
Staff Correspondent from Sylhet adds: Eight candidates filed their nomination papers for the mayoral posts in Golapganj municipality.

Besides, 49 candidates filed nominations for councillors and 14 for three reserved seats for women.

Mayoral candidates are incumbent chairman and upazila AL Organising Secretary Zakaria Ahmed Paplu, upazila AL Joint Secretary Sirajul Jabbar Chowdhury, former Sadar UP chairman Fazlur Rahman, Poura BNP General Secretary Moshirur Rahman Mohi, Upazila Jatiya Party Vice President Mamunul Islam Mamun, Upazila Jubo Dal President Alekuzzaman Alek, Expatriate Aminul Islam Rabel and Haji Abul Hossain.

PHULBARIA
Our Correspondent from Mymensingh adds: A total of 70 candidates yesterday submitted their nomination papers on the last day of submission for Phulbaria Municipality polls.

The candidates, which include 12 for mayoral post, 12 for three reserved seats for women and 46 for nine councillor posts, submitted their nomination papers to the local election office.

The mayoral candidates who submitted their nomination papers are Abdullahul Mustaq, senior vice president of Poura BNP; Md Kabir

Hossain, ex-joint convener of Poura BNP; Mujibur Rahman, incumbent chairman of Phulbaria municipality; Chand Mahmud Sarker of local BNP; Golam Kibria, Organising Secretary of Phulbaria upazila Awami League (AL); Md Nurul Islam, vice president; Md Yunus Ali, Dr Md Rafiqul Islam, Shaiful Islam, AKM Abdur Rahman, Md Abdur Rahim and Md Omar Faruq.

Golam Kibria told this correspondent that Phulbaria upazila AL unit at an extended meeting on Wednesday night fielded him as the party candidate and following the decision, he submitted the nomination paper yesterday.

But another AL candidate Md Nurul Islam claimed that no final decision was taken on that night. The Poura committee has the authority to take such decision but it was ignored.

He has been working in the field for more than three months according to the public demand and he will wait for party decision, said a hopeful Nurul Islam.

The number of voters is 17266 in Phulbaria. Some 5000 voters decreased in the fresh voter list this year.

SITAKUNDA
Staff Correspondent from Chittagong adds: Seven aspirants, having link with major political parties, submitted nomination papers for mayoral posts yesterday for August 4 municipality polls in Sitakunda amidst much enthusiasm and brazen inclement weather.

The key mayor aspirants are AL leader Ahmedur Rahman Biplab, detained BNP leader Zabangir Alam, Jatiya Party leader Abdus Samad, independent candidates Nurul Islam and Belal Hossain.

There are 13,213 voters in the municipality.

SHARIATPUR
UNB from Shariatpur adds: Eight candidates submitted nomination papers for the mayoral post of Shariatpur municipality yesterday.

The candidates are Abdur Rak Munshi (AL), Sardar AKM Nasiruddin (BNP), Abdus Samad Talukdar (AL), Mosharraf Hossain Tota Majhee (AL), Abdur Jabbar Khan (BNP), Mahubul Alam Talukdar (BNP), Advocate Amit Ghatak Chowdhury (Independent) and Kamaluddin Howlader (Independent).

Besides, 42 candidates submitted nominations for councillors and 13 for the reserved seats for women.

CHUADANGA
Our Correspondent from Kushtia

adds: Eighty-six nomination papers have been submitted for the posts of mayor, councillor and the seats reserved for the women in Chuadanga municipality yesterday.

Of them, five for the post of mayor, 67 for councillors and 14 for the seats reserved for women, district election commission officer sources said.

The mayoral candidates are Riazzul Islam Jordan Toton and Ekramul Haq Mukta (AL), Abdul Zabar Sona (BNP) and independent candidates businessman Syed Faruk Uddin and journalist Anwar Hossain.

Toton is brother of AL Chuadanga district president Solaiman Haq Hoardar Selun and leader of district Jubo League while Mukta is the organising secretary of Poura Awami League.

Sona is general secretary of Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal Chuadanga district and office secretary of district BNP.

DUPCHACHAIYA
Staff correspondent from Bogra adds: Six mayoral candidates yesterday submitted their nomination papers to vie for the post of Dupchachaiya municipality.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer Manirul Huda, also returning officer, said a total of 17 female candidates submitted their candidature for three reserved seats and 50 candidates for ward councillor posts.

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Winners of ASF Media Award 2007 pose with the guests at the award giving ceremony at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the city yesterday. Sitting from left are Parveen Mahmud, Monira Rahman, Adviser Rasheda K Chowdhury, IGP Nur Mohammad, SAM Shawkat Hossain, Mahubul Alam and singer Shuvro Deb.

SIX GET ASF MEDIA AWARD 2007 Pledge to eliminate acid violence by 2015

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Acid Survivors Foundation (ASF) yesterday awarded six journalists in recognition of the role of the media in curbing acid violence.

The ASF Media Award 2007 ceremony was held at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the city with a vow to eliminate acid violence from the country by 2015.

The six winners are Syed Zakir Hossain of The Daily Star (best photography), Moniruzzaman Uzzal of the daily Jugantar (best report), Manzurul Karim of Ntv (best report), Rita Bhownick of the Samakal (best feature), Kishower Laila of Bangla Vision (best programme) and Md Aminul Islam of the Jamuna Prabaha from Sirajganj (best in local journalism).

Besides, The Daily Star was awarded for its outstanding role in the media in fighting acid violence.

Shafiqul Alam Kiron, a photographer who has been working for the welfare of acid survivors, was also awarded at the ceremony.

Speaking on the occasion, ASF Executive Director Monira Rahman said acid violence has started to decline since 2003 due to growing social awareness and increasing media coverage of the issue.

She also said that land dispute was the main reason behind acid attack in 50 percent of cases. Although men are involved in the land dispute, women fall victim to acid attacks by the rival parties, she added.

Speaking as the chief guest, Women and Children Affairs Adviser Rasheda K Chowdhury said that although the acid violence has declined, it is shameful that such incidents are still taking place in society.

Even educated people are sometimes involved in such heinous act, which calls into question the quality of education, she added.

She also stressed more active role of the law enforcement agencies in preventing such crimes, and urged the private hospitals with burn units to provide treatment for the victims of acid violence.

Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star, said there are very few countries in the world where shameful incidents like acid violence take place. "If we really want to be proud of our country, nation and culture, we must eliminate acid violence," he added.

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Nur Mohammad was present as the special guest.

Deputy Managing Director of Prime Bank Mahubul Alam, President of Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) Shah Alamgir, singer Shuvro Deb, ASF Chairperson SAM Shawkat Hossain, Treasurer Parveen Mahmud and Fazilatunnessa also spoke at the programme.

Time for depositing money for haj extended to July 13

UNB, Dhaka

The time for depositing money for this year's haj under both government and private management has been extended by one week to July 13.

The previous deadline was July 6, a Press Information Department statement said yesterday.

UPCOMING SAARC SUMMIT

'Make climate change main agenda'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

People's Forum on MDGs (PFM) yesterday urged the governments of Saarc countries to make the climate change and its effects the main agenda of the upcoming Saarc summit.

At a press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU) auditorium, PFM also called for raising a common voice of South Asia on climate change.

Placing a 14-point demand, Tasneem Athar of PFM said climate change, its effects and immediate remedies should be the key agenda at the Saarc summit in Sri Lanka, and there should be a common voice of South Asia in all regional and international forums.

Dr Quazi Kholiqzaman Ahmed, president of Bangladesh Economic Association, said climate change is a key component of MDGs to ensure environmental sustainability.

In another press conference at DRU, Equity and Justice Working Group demanded formation of a fund under the UNDP to tackle climate change.

The group also demanded writing off all debts of least developed countries.

Navy new entry sailors passing out parade held

UNB, Chittagong

The passing out parade of new entry sailors of Bangladesh Navy was held at BNS Shaheed Mozammam parade ground in Kaptai yesterday.

A total of 221 new entry sailors were inducted in this batch in different trade group of Navy, which included seaman, engineering, electrical engineering and radio electrical engineering.

Commodore Commanding Chittagong Commodore M Nasir reviewed the smartly turned out parade and took salute of the impressive march past. He also distributed awards among the outstanding new entry sailors.

MR Karim, OD/UT was adjudged the best all round new entry sailor and awarded the coveted Cup of the Chief of Naval Staff. He also claimed the Admiral Mahubul Cup securing the top position in the seaman branch.

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Programme to raise funds for Samudra Gupta

Scholars Publishers and Sangbrita will jointly organise a cultural programme at Public Library auditorium in the city at 7:00pm today with a view to raising funds for poet Samudra Gupta, who has been suffering from cancer, says a press release.

The programme will feature a musical performance by Dilara Khan Rupa and recitation by Mahidul Islam.

DHAKA TODAY

Photography Exhibition
The inaugural ceremony of the 1st Tourism Photography Exhibition 2008 will be held. Venue: Shilpakala Academy. Time: 10:30am.

Film show
Bangladesh Film Centre will screen 'Tajuddin Ahmed: Nishango Sarathi' directed by Moshedul Islam. Venue: 160 Lake Circus, Kalabagan. Time: 5:00pm and 7:00pm.

Condolence meet
Jatiya Gonotrik Front organises a condolence meeting in memory of peasant leader Master Inan AL. Venue: Mori Singh-Farhad Trust Bhaban. Time: 4:00pm.

Discussion
Bangladesh Jute Mill Owners' Welfare Forum will hold a discussion titled 'Bright future of jute industry'. Venue: Photojournalists' Association auditorium. Time: 4:00pm.

Memorial meet
Ekatturer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee organises a memorial meeting to pay tribute to Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw. Venue: WVA auditorium. Time: 4:00pm.

Roundtable
Dhaka Union of Journalists organises a roundtable titled 'The role of mass media in establishing sustainable democracy'. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 3:00pm.

Birth centenary
Dhaka University Philosophy Department Alumni Association organises a programme to mark the birth centenary of Dr GC Dev. Venue: Teacher-Student Centre (TSC). Time: 10:00am.

Launching ceremony
Khela Ghar Kendriya Committee will unveil the cover of a CD titled 'Shantrish Shoinik'. Venue: Mukti Bhaban, Purana Paltan. Time: 4:30pm.

Tabla Festival
Padakkhep Bangladesh organises the National Tabla Festival 2008 and accords a reception to eminent citizens. Venue: 185 Elephant Road. Time: 4:30pm.

2ND BIRTH REGISTRATION DAY OBSERVED Free registration for children until Dec 31

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will extend the timeline for free birth registration for the children under 18 years of age to December 31 and set a fixed fee for registration of adults at Tk 50.

It will make a few corrections to some provisions of the Birth and Death Registration Act 2004 in order to bring the changes. The timeline for free birth registration ended on July 2.

LGRD and Cooperatives Adviser Mohammad Anwarul Iqbal said this yesterday at a ceremony for the observance of 2nd Birth Registration Day at Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the city.

Anwarul Iqbal said, "As some calls came for extending the timeline for free birth registration for all, the government will extend the timeline only for the children below 18 years and for adults the fee will be at a fixed rate of Tk 50."

"The government will not change the law to extend the timeline, but will make a few corrections to some provisions of the Birth and Death Registration Act 2004 to make the changes," said the adviser, adding that the government is going

to create a database of information of birth registration and a software was developed as Birth Registration Information System (BRIS) that had already started working in the city corporation areas.

This birth registration certificate will enhance our vigilance to stop child trafficking, child marriage and abuse to them," the adviser added.

The Birth Registration Day has been observed at the national level to create awareness among the people to fulfil the government's task of 100 per cent birth registration within December 2008.

Birth certificates will be compulsory to obtain access to 16 essential services, including issuance of passports, marriage registration and admission to educational institutions.

Unicef Representative in Bangladesh David Bassiouni said, "This year Unicef is particularly focusing on vulnerable children such as children living on the streets, working children, children of sex workers, indigenous children and refugee and displaced children as they are more likely to be missed out. The absence of a birth certificate puts them at greater risk of discrimination, abuse and neglect"

headed. Local Government Division Secretary Sheikh Khurshid Alam presided over the meeting.

Around 60 per cent people of the country, who failed to get their birth registered by July 2, will have to pay fines and fees for the registration purpose from Wednesday.

AKM Saiful Islam Chowdhury said this at a view exchange meeting with journalists at a city hotel on Wednesday, adding that a total of 5.87 crore (around 40 percent) people of the country till March 31 came under the birth registration project which is unsatisfactory.

Fobana confce begins in US today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fobana Bangladesh Conference, popularly known as the bridge of unity among the Bangladeshis in the US, begins today at three different places in the US.

A conference titled Fobana Bangladesh Conference will be held at Dallas in Texas.

Another two conferences will be held in New York, but they had to remove Fobana from the title due to some legal barriers, reported the NewsWorld.

Jubo Parishad council today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 4th biennial national council of Bangabandhu Jubo Parishad will be held in the city today, says a press release.

Awami League (AL) presidium member Motia Chowdhury will be present as the chief guest at the council at the National Press Club at 4:30pm.

Former president of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) Habibur Rahman Milon will inaugurate the council.

Former president of Dhaka University Teachers' Association (Duta) Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique, Women Secretary of AL Dr Dipu Moni, former president of BFUJ Abul Kalam Azad and adviser of the organisation Akram Hossain Humayun will also take part in the council as the special guests.

President of the Parishad Akhter Ahmed Khan will preside over the meeting.



Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at most places over all the six divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy to heavy rainfalls are also likely at places. Met Office said, predicting nearly unchanged day temperature over the country.

Highest temperature 33.6 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 23.5 degrees Celsius at Sandwip.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:50pm today and rises at 5:16am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	29.5	27.0	87	93
Chittagong	29.2	24.5	97	93
Rajshahi	30.6	25.5	98	82
Khulna	32.7	27.5	84	93
Barisal	30.5	26.0	88	98
Sylhet	30.0	25.3	97	92
Cox's Bazar	28.7	24.4	100	94

HC rejects writ petitions against cancellation of recruitment of policemen

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday rejected 19 writ petitions challenging the legality of a government decision cancelling the recruitment of 757 policemen, including sub-inspectors (SIs) and sergeants.

After hearing the submissions from the counsels for the petitioners and the government, a HC bench of Justice Mohammad Abdur Rashid and Justice Md Ashfaque Islam delivered the judgment.

The lawyers said the HC verdict means that the government decision to cancel the recruitment of the policemen would remain valid and there are now no restrictions on fresh recruitments for the posts of SIs and police sergeants.

On February 10 last year, the government cancelled the selection of 757 sub-inspectors (SIs) and sergeants for recruitment as the selection process was fraught with gross irregularities, including bribery, political consideration and nepotism, which took place in the lag end of BNP-led four-party alliance rule.

Some 536 of the selected candidates filed the writ petitions with the HC.

They stated in their petitions that the recruitment was made through due processes and that the cancellation of their selection was illegal.

Responding to the petitions, the HC issued a rule upon the government on February 19 last year to explain why its decision should not be declared "unlawful".

Upon another writ petition, the HC on February 27 last year stayed the process of fresh recruitment for the posts of SIs and sergeants.

The HC recently started the final hearing of the writ petitions and delivered the judgment yesterday.

Advocate Abdur Rab Chowdhury, Barrister Abdur Razzak and Barrister Mahubuddin Khokon appeared for the petitioners while Additional Attorney General (AAG) Mansur Habib stood for the government.

Obituary

Alfred Josheph Prescher, a German national and former chief delegate for Bangladesh of Panalpina Management, an International Freight Forwarding Company of Switzerland, passed away due to a massive cardiac arrest at Gulshan in Dhaka on June 29 at the age of 50, says a press release.

He served in Bangladesh from 2004 to 2007.

He left behind his mother and a sister in Germany, and number of friends and colleagues both in Germany and Bangladesh.

Shahab Uddin Ahmed
Shahab Uddin Ahmed, executive member of Hajj Agencies Association of Bangladesh (HAAB) and the owner of Alam Travels, passed away due to kidney and liver diseases at a city hospital yesterday at the age of 57, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, three sons and three daughters.

His namaz-e-janaza will be held at Shahjalal Jame Mosque in Sylhet after Juma prayers today.

Kazi Abu Taher Manoj
Kazi Abu Taher Manoj, a Bangladeshi community leader in New York, passed away on Wednesday at the age of 52, in his residence.

New York-based Bangla news agency News World said police recovered his body from his room on Wednesday.

Manoj was suffering from various diseases for a long time.

Qulkhwani

Qulkhwani of MB Chowdhury (Telu) will be held at Jame Mosque of Sector No. 7 of Uttara in the city after Asr prayers today, says a press release.

Chowdhury, former adviser of the United States Information Services (USIS), who hails from South Bhodshar of Golapganj under Sylhet, passed away at Lab Aid Hospital in the city on July 2.