

Bhola-3 by-polls today amid high tension

SHAKHAWAT LITON

All eyes are on Bhola-3 constituency that goes to poll today amid high tension and tight security, generating much heat in the country's politics since the by-election appears to be a crucial test for the Election Commission as well as the Awami League and BNP.

Over 2.34 lakh electorates in the constituency are entitled to exercise their franchise, in the duel between the AL and BNP again after December 29, 2008 parliamentary election.

Both the camps are desperate to win the poll and bank on it the coming days' domestic politics, putting the EC on a tight rope to maintain its credibility by holding the election in a free and fair manner.

The BNP high command plans to wage a wave of anti-government agitations, whatever the result, in the wake of serious crises of power, water and gas and soaring prices of essentials.

BNP policymakers say if their candidate comes out victorious, it will prove

HIGHLIGHTS

No of polling stations	86
Total voters	2,34,926
Male voters	1,14,880
Female voters	1,20,046
Total candidates	2
Total polling officials	1,730



Bhola

that the government is losing popularity for its failure to run the country properly. In case of his defeat, the party will reject the result on grounds of rigging, if there is

any anomaly. The BNP has already declared that it will launch a movement against the

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The crucial five unions

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN, from Lalmohan

Five unions under Bhola-3 constituency are being considered to be most crucial with over 70,000 voters in determining the winner in today's by-election.

Locals yesterday said both the Awami League and BNP tried to "capture" Badarpur, Kalma and Farashganj unions in Lalmohan upazila and

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30 hurt in violence

BNP polling agents stabbed; AL election offices ransacked; shops looted; central BNP leaders barred from entering constituency

M ABUL KALAM AZAD and RAKIB HASNET SUMAN, from Lalmohan

The eve of today's Bhola-3 parliamentary by-poll was marked by violence in the constituency, while law enforcers barred a group of BNP leaders led by Standing Committee Member Moudud Ahmed from entering the electoral

The situation turned volatile yesterday evening as two polling agents of the BNP candidate were hacked, two election offices of the ruling Awami League were ransacked, several shops and houses were looted, and the motorcade of AL Chief Election Coordinator Tofail Ahmed was intercepted in Lalmohan upazila.

A sense of fear was palpable in the whole

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STRANDED OFFSHORE BENIN Woes worsen for 31 Bangladeshis

PORIMOL PALMA

The employer of the stranded Bangladeshi crewmembers of the eight ships offshore Benin has expressed inability to provide them with food, water or fuel due to financial constraints, leaving them in uncertainty.

"I talked to Michael of supply department of Golden Shipping SA in Greece today [April 23]. He said they cannot provide us with food because of financial problem," said stranded Ashraf Alam, a nautical officer of the ship anchored about 10 miles off the Port of Cotonou in the West African country.

At least 31 Bangladeshi crewmembers have been stranded there for more than a month. But their employer neither paid them nor gave them air tickets to return home.

They went to Benin in December last year to work in ships owned by the Greece-based company that has 37 ships there. The vessels are used to transport oil to Europe from Nigeria, said marine engineer Zahirul Islam, who returned from there recently.

Attempts to contact the supply department of the company in Greece were unsuccessful.

Over the phone, Ashraf Alam told The Daily Star, "We received potato, rice and eggs two weeks ago. The food has been exhausted. We have been starving for the last two days."

He said the generators could stop any moment as no fuel is left in the ships. The ship might sink if the motors for pumping out water from the engine room stop.

They would be cut off from the outside world, if they cannot charge their cell phones, Alam said.

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20 injured in fire at RMG factory

A CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

A devastating fire broke out on the ground floor of Tung Hi Knit and Sweater factory at Zirani in Gazipur yesterday morning, injuring at least 20 people including fire fighters.

Garment workers said the fire broke out on the ground floor of the seven-storey building around 7:30 am and raged through the first and second floors when a few workers were working there.

Dyeing division, chemical and yarn warehouses are located on the ground floor of the building, they added.

On information 10 fire fighting units from Gazipur Sadar, Tongi, Savar EPZ and Mirpur rushed to the spot and brought the blaze under control with the help of workers after four-and-half-hours long hectic efforts.

The wounded include fire fighters Akhtaruzzaman, Ratan Kumar Sarkar, Nurul Islam and Payel Hossain and garment workers Badshah Miah, Atikul Islam, Sohel Miah, Md Mostafa, Kamal Hossain, Saiful Islam and Aslam.

They were admitted to local hospitals and clinics. People who live in the houses adjacent to the factory were seen leaving their houses due to huge smoke emitting from the burning factory.

Abdur Rashid, deputy director of fire service and civil defence of Dhaka division, said the fire might have originated from a room beside the warehouse of the garments factory.

21 grenades found while digging hill

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

Twenty-one grenades and 18 mortar shells were found when labourers were digging into a hill at Ghagra Bazar under Kaukhali upazila of the district Thursday evening.

A military team from Rangamati district headquarters went to the spot that night and recovered the ammunition from the spot.

Later, they exploded all the grenades at Manikchhari yesterday afternoon.

Locals said the mortar shells and grenades were found when the labourers dug into about five feet for setting up a tower for a mobile company on the hill.

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AGITATION FOR WATER, ELECTRICITY 25 hurt as BNP, AL clash in city

2 DCC councillors among 76 detained

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police detained about 76 BNP activists including two ward councillors during a clash between Awami League and BNP that left 25 people injured at Mirpur-6 in Pallabi.

The clash erupted as both the organisations brought out processions in the same area almost at the same time.

BNP brought out its procession around 3:00pm protesting power, water and gas crises. Awami League had begun to march in procession before them resulting in the clash, locals said.

Activists from both the parties chased each other and hurled brickbats. About 10 shops were looted during the clash, locals said.

The injured were admitted to different clinics and hospitals in the city.

The two ward councillors are Masud Khan of ward-9 and

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SAARC SUMMIT PM leaves for Bhutan on April 27

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina leaves here for Bhutan on April 27 to attend the 16th South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) summit in Thimpu.

The two-day summit with "Climate Change" as its theme

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Notice

The supplement on The Daily Star-DHL Bangladesh Business Awards 2009 could not be published today for technical reasons. It will come out on Monday. We regret any inconvenience to readers.

Poor public services make upazila people suffer

Service delivery system ineffective due to graft, red tape, influence, people's little access to info: Study

SHAKHAWAT LITON

People in upazilas get very poor public service due to negligence and corruption of government officials, bureaucratic tangles, political influence and little access to information, says a recent study.

The rural poor either have the least access to government services or the public service delivery system largely fails to attract them to it, says the study of Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD), an autonomous

institution dealing with research and training on rural development.

As the country's biggest service provider, the government has established a huge infrastructure countrywide employing around 10 lakh staff at various levels. It spends huge amount of public money every year for their salaries and other facilities.

As many as 37 ministries at the centre and 24 different government departments in upazilas are supposed to provide a wide range of services in various

sectors including health, education, agriculture, social welfare, fisheries and livestock and land.

But an ineffective system of these offices jeopardise government efforts to serve citizens and to ensure good governance, according to the study.

"It was found [in the study] that public service delivery system in Bangladesh suffers from several institutional, managerial, governance and behavioural weakness," said Aatur Rahman, director

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THE HEART AND HOW IT WORKS

The normal human heart is a strong, muscular pump a little larger than a fist. Each day, an average heart beats (expands and contracts) 100,000 times and pumps about 2,000 gallons of blood. In a 70-year lifetime, an average human heart beats more than 2.5 billion times. The heart pumps blood continuously through the circulatory system. The circulatory system is the network of elastic tubes that carries blood throughout the body. It includes the heart, lungs, arteries, arterioles (small arteries) and capillaries (very tiny blood vessels). These blood vessels carry oxygen-rich and nutrient-rich blood to all parts of the body. The circulatory system also includes venules (small veins) and veins. These are the blood vessels that carry oxygen-depleted and nutrient-depleted blood back to the heart and lungs. If all these vessels were laid end to end, they'd extend for about 60,000 miles. That's enough to encircle the earth more than twice. The circulating blood brings oxygen and nutrients to all the body's organs and tissues, including the heart itself. It also picks up waste products from the body's cells. These waste products are removed as they're filtered through the kidneys, liver and lungs.

RISK FACTORS FOR HEART DISEASE

Risk factors are traits and lifestyle habits that increase the risk of disease. Extensive clinical and statistical studies have identified several risk factors for

coronary heart disease and heart attack. Most of them can be modified, treated or controlled. The more risk factors a person has, the higher the chances that he or she will develop heart disease. The best way to prevent a heart attack is to reduce heart disease risk factors.

WHAT SHOULD YOU LIMIT?

- Whole milk, cream and ice cream
- Butter, egg yolks and cheese - and foods made with them
- Organ meats like liver, sweetbreads, kidney and brain
- High-fat

- processed meats like sausage, bologna, salami and hot dogs
- Fatty meats that aren't trimmed
- Duck and goose meat (raised for market)
- Bakery goods made with egg yolks and saturated fats
- Saturated oils like coconut oil, palm oil and palm kernel oil
- Solid fats like shortening, partially hydrogenated margarine and lard fried foods.



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