

MUNICIPAL POLLS IN KHULNA, BARISAL DIVISIONS

Mayor, councillor candidates submit nominations

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Mayor and councillor candidates in municipal elections scheduled for January 13 in Khulna and Barisal divisions submitted nominations papers yesterday, report our correspondents.

KHULNA DIVISION

Chalna: Five people filed nomination papers for the mayoral post of Chalna municipality under Dakope upazila of Khulna district. They are Publicity Secretary of Dakope upazila Awami League Sanat Kumar Biswas, President of upazila BNP Abdul Khayer Khan, President of upazila Jatiya Party Sheikh Abdul Hamid, independent candidates Prof Dr Achinta Kumar Mondol and Kumaresh Biswas.

Paikgachha: Six people submitted nominations for the mayoral post of the municipality. They are President of BNP Paikgachha

pourasava unit advocate Maftun Ahmed, advocate Abul Hossain Joarder, Selim Jahangir and Sheikh Kamrul Hassan Tipu of Awami League, Shahidul Islam Khokon of Jatiya Party and Gazi Abdus Salam of Islami Shasantantra Andolan Bangladesh.

UNO Kazi Atiur Rahman received the nomination papers as returning officer.

Satkhira: Five mayor aspirants, 45 councillor candidates and 15 candidates for women reserved seats submitted their nominations in Satkhira municipality.

Kalaroa: Nine mayor aspirants, 51 councillor candidates and 12 candidates for women reserved seats filed their nomination papers in Kalaroa municipality.

Fourteen mayor aspirants, 86 councillor candidates and 25 candidates for

women reserved seats submitted nomination papers in two municipalities of Narail district yesterday, election office sources said.

Narail Sadar: Eight people submitted nominations for the mayoral post, 55 for councillor posts and 11 for the reserved seats.

Kalia: Six people filed nominations for the mayoral post of the municipality, 31 for councillor posts and 14 for women reserved seats. Several candidates from both AL and BNP submitted their nominations for the mayoral posts in the two municipalities.

Benapole: Awami League candidate Ashrafur Alam Liton, BNP candidate Nazim Uddin and Jamaat candidate Abdur Razzak filed nomination papers to contest for the mayoral post of the municipality. AL, BNP and Jamaat formally declared the names of the three as their candi-

dates prior to submission of the nominations.

BARISAL DIVISION

Borguna District: As many as 25 people submitted nomination papers for mayoral posts, 137 for councillor posts and 37 for women reserved seats in four municipalities of the district yesterday.

Bhola District: Thirty-five people filed nominations for mayoral posts, 177 for councillor posts and 55 for the reserved seats in four municipalities of the district.

Pirojpur District: Fourteen people submitted nomination papers for mayoral posts, 125 for councillor posts 29 for women reserved seats in three municipalities of the district.

Jhalakathi District: Seven people filed nominations for the mayoral post, 40 for councillor posts and 13 for the reserved seats in

Jhalakathi municipality.

Patuakhali District: Nine people submitted nomination papers for the mayoral posts, 76 for councillor posts and 18 for women reserved seats in Patuakhali and Kalapara municipalities yesterday, the last day of submission of nomination papers.

Our Rangpur correspondent reported that nomination papers of seven mayor and 47 out of 54 councillor candidates in Baderganj municipal election were declared valid after scrutiny yesterday.

In Haragachha municipality, nominations of one mayor and three councillor candidates were declared cancelled after scrutiny yesterday. Election to Baderganj and Haragachha municipalities will be held on January 12. (Incomplete).



A 15-day victory fair that began on Monday on the premises of Manikganj Government High School has started attracting a good number of locals every day.

PHOTO: STAR

Scientific instruments stolen from RU lab

RU CORRESPONDENT

Scientific instruments, chemicals and other goods worth Tk. 18 lakh were looted from the lab of Genetics Engineering and Biotechnology department of Rajshahi University (RU) on Tuesday night.

Sources said, criminals took away the valuables breaking the locks of 'DNA and Chromosome Research Lab' at Third Science Building at dead of night.

Department sources said, one 4-digit valance (an instrument for measuring weight), two 3-digit valances, one 2-digit valance, four pH meters, six microscope lances, six micro pipettes, spectrophotometer lance,

chemicals and some other instruments were looted from the lab.

The stealing came to light yesterday morning when the teachers and students of the department went to the lab for research work.

Sources said guards Selim Reza and Abdur Razzak, who were on duty in front of the Third Science Building on the night, went into hiding after the incident.

Prof Dr Biswanath Shikdar, chairman of the department yesterday filed a general diary (GD) with Motihar police station in this connection.

The academic committee of the department also held an emergency meeting with Prof Shikdar in the chair at around

11.30am.

At the meeting, the department demanded compensation for the looted instruments and other valuables from RU authorities.

It also urged the university authorities to identify the culprits investigating the matter with the help of law enforcers as soon as possible and to strengthen the security at the department.

Later, the academic committee submitted a memorandum to the university vice chancellor Prof Abdus Sobhan in this regard.

Prof Biswanath Shikdar, told this correspondent that the looted valuables would be worth Tk. 18 lakh.



PHOTO: STAR

Mass graves of Liberation War martyrs at Tebunia and Nazirpur in Pabna Sadar upazila remain without any memorial.

Mass graves in Pabna remain neglected, poorly maintained

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, Pabna

The freedom fighters of Pabna district have demanded steps for proper maintenance of 27 identified mass graves in the district where Liberation War martyrs were buried.

Most of the mass graves are without any memorial while the memorials at a few places are lying neglected, said leaders of Pabna district unit Muktiyoddha Sangsad in a proposal submitted to the Liberation War Ministry last week.

They demanded building memorials at the mass graves for keeping the memory of the heroic sons of the soil alive in the mind of future generations.

Thousands of people including freedom fighters who were martyred at the hands of Pakistan occupation forces and their local collaborators during the Liberation War were buried at these

spots but the mass graves have still remaining neglected.

"Twenty-seven mass graves have been identified following information from the freedom fighters and locals. We are trying to detect all the unidentified mass graves in the district," said Md Abdul Baten, the deputy commander of Pabna district unit Muktiyoddha Sangsad.

According to the list of Muktiyoddha Sangsad, there are five mass graves in Pabna Sadar upazila, eight in Ishwardi upazila, four each in Faridpur, Sujanagar and Santhia upazilas and one each in Bera and Atghoria upazilas.

"Most of the mass graves around the district are lying uncared. Due to lack of maintenance, some of the identified mass graves give the look of abandoned places," said Habibur Rahman Habib, commander of Pabna district unit of Muktiyoddha Sangsad.

No memorial have been built in Nazirpur mass grave, Nurpur Power Station mass grave near a torture camp of the Pakistan army, Tebunia mass grave, Kunchiamora mass grave and Gafuriabad mass grave in Pabna Sadar upazila.

In last year, Pabna Zila Parishad has built a memorial at Demra mass grave in Faridpur upazila. Over 900 people were martyred at Demra in a day during the Liberation War.

But there is hardly any sign to identify three other mass graves at Chakchakia, Gopal Nagar and Hadol in the upazila.

Memorial at Bagshipara mass grave in Atghoria upazila has remained incomplete.

Khanpura mass grave in Bera upazila give the impression of an abandoned place.

In Sujanagar upazila, mass graves at Satbaria, Shannagar, Naruhati and Gupinathpur are lying

neglected, without memorial of any kind.

In Santhia upazila, memorials at Dab Bagan mass grave and Dhulauri mass grave lack proper maintenance while two other mass graves at Bausghari and Karamja have remained without any memorial.

The mass grave adjacent to Ishwardi Press Club, three mass graves at Fotemohammadpur village, loco shed pump house mass grave, Baghail Khanpara mass grave, Pakshi Railway mass grave and Pakshi Jhautala mass grave have been detected recently.

"In last week, we submitted the list of the mass graves to the Liberation War Ministry through the district administration, urging the government to take step to establish memorials in the mass graves and maintain them properly," Pabna district unit Muktiyoddha Sangsad Commander Md Habibur Rahman Habib said.



PHOTO: STAR

The memorial at Atghoria mass grave remains incomplete while the memorials at Dhulauri and Dab Bagan mass graves show signs of all neglect.

Feud grips BCL factions over new body at SUST

A SUST CORRESPONDENT

Internal feuds have gripped Chattrra League (BCL) factions at Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST) as new committee is in the making.

Chaos and confrontation are also rife on the campus. Frequent clashes are taking place over establishing supremacy by the rivals.

"Scrutinising of candidates is at last stage, the committee will be

announced within a short time," said vice-president of BCL Golam Sarwar Kabir, who is supposed to do the job of forming SUST BCL unit committee.

SUST BCL unit committee, formed in 2003, expired on July 13, 2010.

Factions are increasing as the tenure of SUST BCL unit committee expired long ago while new committee is yet to be formed, sources said.

There are several groups

involved in clashes now and then and even over trivial matters on the campus. Most of the aspirant leaders are maintaining liaison with the seniors and central leaders, they said.

"Young, meritorious and those who belong to freedom fighters' family must get priority in the committee" said Abdul Awal, president of 'Amra Muktiyoddher Santan' and also a potential candidate.

According to sources, potential president candidates are Mahibul Hasan Mukit, Asaduzzaman Asad, Naem Hasan, Samsuzzaman Chowdhury Suman, Salaudhin Manju and Atikur Rahman.

The aspirants for general secretary post are Hafizur Rahman Hafiz, Saidur Rahman Mithu, Anjan Roy, Rabiul Islam Jewel, Majed Sayed Abee and Rasedul Islam Rased, they said.

15 injured as PCP, police clash in Khagrachhari

A CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

At least 15 people including police were injured as hundreds of indigenous youths fought with police in Sanibir Bazaar area yesterday.

Police fired rubber bullets to disperse the youths and arrested 15 from the spot.

Police sources said, Pahari Chhatra Parishad (PCP), the student wing of United Peoples Democratic Front (UPDF) took permission from the Deputy Commissioner (DC) to hold its 15th council at Swanirvor Centre.

But after the council the PCP leaders and activists tried to march towards Khagrachhari bazaar chanting slogans.

Witnesses said, the clash started as police put up a barricade in front of Khagrachhari Hill District Council saying the PCP had no permission to bring out procession. At this, the angry indigenous youths threw bricks and stones on police leaving ten policemen and five passers-by injured.

Deputy Commissioner Anisul Hoque Bhuiyan said, "the administration imposed ban on non-registered regional political party UPDF and its three front organisations -- PCP, Hill Women's Federation (HWF) and Democratic Youth Forum (DYF) on February 26, 2010 as they were responsible for last February 23 Khagrachhari violence that left 3 people killed".

"PCP violated the ban yesterday", he added.

Superintendent of Khagrachhari district police Abu Kalam Siddiq said, police arrested 15 leaders and activists of PCP from the spots. Injured cops were admitted Khagrachhari Adhunik Sadar Hospital while the passers-by given first aid, he added.

Documents stolen from govt offices

UNB, Benapole

Burglars took away important documents and other valuables from four government offices in Sharsha upazila headquarters on Monday night.

Police and upazila administration sources said, important documents, computers and other valuables worth about Tk 3 lakh were looted by the burglars from upazila sub-registry office, land office, settlement office and VDP office breaking the locks of the doors of the offices.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Kamrul Arif filed a case with the Sharsha police station in this connection Tuesday morning.



Children of poor families, enthusiastic over the prospect of celebrating nabanna utsab, a traditional festival of rural Bangladesh marking the harvest of new amon paddy, gather fallen paddy at a field in Nilphamari Sadar upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

Nabanna: The poor share the joy in their own way

EAM ASADUZZAMAN, Nilphamari

An aroma of new paddy fills the air as amon crops harvesting season is going on in full swing in the district.

Families of farmers are now preparing to celebrate 'Nabanna Utsab,' the festival of new paddy harvest, throughout the country.

'Nabanna Utsab' is arranged while bringing the new amon paddy home from fields after harvesting. It is usually held from last week of Bangla month Agrahayan and continues till mid Poush (December).

During the time, different kinds of cakes, milkrice etc. are prepared with new paddy. Folk songs are sung by female members of family. Children enjoy the day singing and dancing.

Mojibur Rahman, convenor of Nilphamari committee on culture and heritage said 'Nabanna Utsab' is part and parcel of Bangalee life. People celebrate it in many ways to uphold the heritage.

Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) sources said that harvesting has been completed in 75 per cent paddy fields.

On a recent spot visit, it was found that vast paddy fields in villages were golden

colour. Different kinds of paddy with different names and sizes like B.R-11, swarna, pajama, nenia, kalogira and katari vogue have covered the entire area.

The poor and marginal families were also trying to share the joy of the festivity but with a difference.

At time of cutting and carrying paddy from fields to farmers' houses on shoulder or by push cart, a good amount of paddy corns fall off and scatter on the ground.

Children of the marginal families collect the scattered paddy from fields to arrange 'Nabanna Utsab' at their houses.

They go to the paddy fields after the harvesting is over with small jute or polyethylene bags, plates, bamboo made baskets to collect paddy from croplands.

Poor children like Nazmul, Rabbani and Beauty of Monthna village in Kishoreganj upazila Rahima, Kazol, Nour Alam and others of Bogulagram village in Jaldhaka upazila said that they will also arrange 'Nabanna Utsab' at their houses. They said they get 20 kg to 40 kg paddy each throughout the season.

They also said that they sell a portion of the collected

paddy to buy other ingredients to prepare cakes.

DAE sources said that during harvest, around 4 per cent paddy usually gets wasted amounting to about 12,000 metric tonne (MT) as 3 lakh MT is estimated to be produced in the district this year.

A good portion of the wasted paddy is sorted by children from fields to use in arranging 'Nabanna Utsab'. The rest are wasted completely or eaten by rats and insects, they said.

According to DAE, there are 70 thousand landless families in the district. They belong to low income groups. Usually, children of those families gather scattered paddy from fields.

"Our children are so enthusiastic to collect scattered paddy that they go to fields at dawn and return in the evening," said Ramzan Ali.

District Primary Education Office (DPEO) sources informed that there are about 2.57 lakh school going children in the district. During harvesting season, attendance rate drops to 50% to 60% although it is 98% in other time of the year, said Mizanur Rahman, monitoring officer of DPEO.