

**ELECTION fever**

**Chittagong: Raozan BNP wants deployment of army**

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) Raozan upazila unit has demanded deployment of army in Raozan municipality to ensure a free, fair and peaceful election scheduled for January 18, reports our staff correspondent.

Addressing a press conference at Chittagong Press Club yesterday, leaders of the unit alleged that the ruling party men have been creating obstacles to electioneering of their mayoral candidate and his workers for the last four days.

During election campaign on Monday, the ruling party activists physically assaulted BNP mayoral candidate Kazi Abdullah Al Hasan, they said.

The Raozan BNP leaders accused the local administration of backing the ruling party mayoral and councillor candidates and demanded immediate removal of the upazila nirbahi officer (UNO).

They also demanded immediate arrest of the ruling party cadres responsible for assaulting BNP mayoral candidate, recovery of illegal arms and security of their mayor and councillors candidate. Otherwise, the BNP leaders threatened to boycott polls.

Raozan BNP President Mohiuddin Ahmed and General secretary Salamat Ali, Vice-President of BNP Raozan municipality unit Sushil Barua and General secretary Sayed Monjurul Haque were present at the press conference.

**Natore: Army deployed in 5 out of 6 municipalities**

Army personnel have been deployed in five out of six municipalities of the district Monday morning to maintain law and order. The municipalities are Natore sadar, Singra, Gurudashpur, Gopalpur and Noldanga, reports UNB.

Of the 71 polling centres in the municipalities, 48 have been identified as vulnerable to violence.

Deputy Commissioner Mujibar Rahman said mobile teams led by nine magistrates, two Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) teams and 20 police in each centre will also be deployed to hold the elections peacefully.

The Election Commission had earlier identified 56 municipalities in 29 districts vulnerable to poll violence and announced to deploy army in those areas for peaceful voting.

**Satkhira: Candidates moving door to door to woo voters**

Mayoral and councillor candidates in Satkhira and Kalaroa municipalities are going door to door to woo voters for them.

Besides visiting the different areas, the candidates and their workers are holding rallies at important points of the two municipalities and distributing leaflets among the voters, reports our correspondent.

A total of 12 mayor aspirants, 93 councillor candidates and 27 women for the reserved are in election race in two municipalities. They are making pledges to the voters to get their supports.

Jyotsna Dutta, 35, a social worker of Satkhira municipality, said she will cast her vote for a competent and honest mayoral candidate. "I want such a candidate who will sincerely work for the development of Satkhira town".

Rezaul Islam, a trader in Kalaroa municipality, said he and his family members will cast their votes for honest and sincere candidates.

**Lalmonirhat: AL creating obstacles, says Patgram candidate**

The BNP-backed mayoral candidate in Patgram municipality has alleged that Awami League activists have been creating obstacles to his election campaign for the last four days.

The mayor aspirant, Salauzzaman Opel, submitted a written complaint to Patgram Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) on Sunday, according to our correspondent.

Opel told this correspondent that he could not enter many areas of the municipality in the face of resistance by the AL activists.

"Some of my workers were beaten up by the ruling party men while campaigning in the municipal area," he said.

The BNP candidate requested the Election Commission (EC) to deploy army in the municipality to hold a free, fair and peaceful election. He also urged the EC to take immediate action against the Awami League activists responsible for disrupting his election campaign.

Contacted, AL-backed mayoral aspirant Anisur Rahman Babu denied the allegation.

**Bogra: Army posted as 103 of 158 polling centres risky**

The district administration and election office have already taken necessary measures to maintain law and order during today's voting in nine municipalities of the district, reports our staff correspondent.

Army personnel have been deployed in Bogra and Sherpur municipalities to ensure peaceful election. Earlier, the district police administration and election office had identified 103 of 158 polling centers in nine municipalities as 'risky' and prepared a list of those.

Contacted, District Election Officer Abdul Hamid said the list of the 'risky' centers have been handed over to army.

The district administration has deployed 1366 additional police, Ansar and armed police in the



Colourful posters hung by contestants give a spectacular sight as campaign for January 17 elections in Singair municipality under Manikganj district gains momentum.

PHOTO: STAR

**Hectic campaign grips all 10 Ctg division districts**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Election fever grips all the 10 municipalities under 13 districts of Chittagong division as the candidates contesting in the poll scheduled for January 18 started round-the-clock campaign following allocation of symbols on January 3.

The ten districts are Comilla, Brahmanbaria, Chandpur, Feni, Noakhali, Laxmipur, Chittagong, Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban.

Election in a municipality in Chandpur district, another one in Feni and all the municipalities in Cox's Bazar district will be held on January 27.

As many as 223 candidates will vie for mayoral posts, 1821 for general councillor posts and 438 others for reserved seats of female councillors.

Following start of the electioneering, mobile court teams are in the field to check any violation of electoral code of conduct, said Deputy Election Commissioner of Chittagong Ezharul Hoque.

In nine municipalities under Chittagong district, 44 candidates will vie for mayoral posts, 352 for 81 general councillor posts and 85 for 27 reserved seats of female councillors.

In most of the nine municipalities, both the ruling Awami League (AL) and opposition BNP have

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failed to present single mayoral candidates.

In Raozan, Mirsarai, Baroiarhat, Patiya, Sandwip and Banskhali, several pro-Awami League (AL) candidates are contesting.

In Sandwip, Mirsarai and Baroiarhat municipalities, more than one pro-BNP candidates are vying. Jamaat-e-Islami backed mayoral candidates are contesting in Mirsarai and

municipality unit of AL Anwarul Islam and AL leaders Abu Baker Siddique and Mohammad Musa are also in the race.

In Patiya, BNP fixed Nurul Islam as its lone mayoral candidate while AL has two rival candidates including AL Patiya municipality unit Vice President Professor Harunur Rashid and central Jubo League leader Badiul Alam.

There are two other mayoral candidates including

Karim is contesting here.

In Banskhali municipality, two rival candidates from the AL are contesting, making a better scope for the lone BNP candidate and incumbent Mayor Kamrul Islam Hossaini.

Although AL nominated Sheikh Fakhrudin Chowdhury as mayoral candidate his rival Mohammad Akhter Hossain is contesting as independent candidate.

Two persons from AL and two others from BNP are contesting for the mayoral post in Sandwip.

Both the AL and BNP could fix single mayoral candidates in Rangunia, Chandanaish and Satkania municipalities. In Rangunia, Khalilur Rahman of AL, Emdadul Islam of BNP and independent candidate Bijoy Ketan Barua are contesting.

Contestants in Chandanaish municipality are Sheikh Tipu Chowdhury of AL, Nurul Anwar of BNP, Mohammad Ayub of LDP and Alamgir Islam Boidi of Islamic Front.

In Satkania, BNP backed lone candidate and former mayor Mohammadur Rahman is in quite uncomfortable condition to fight AL-backed lone candidate Mohammad Zobaer as Jamaat-backed Jafar Sadek is contesting there. Rafik Ahmad is in the race as independent candidate.

**223 to vie for mayoral and 2259 for councillor posts**

Baroiarhat.

In Raozan municipality, the lone candidate from BNP Abdullah Al Hasan, also the president of Raozan municipality unit of BNP, is enjoying a good position as five pro-AL mayoral candidates are contesting there.

AL Raozan upazila unit President and incumbent Mayor Shafiqul Islam Chowdhury and AL North district unit Environment Affairs Secretary and former mayor Debashis Palit are two potential candidates from the party, said party sources. Joint convener of Raozan

former mayor and Jatiya Party leader Shamsul Alam Master and Liberal Democratic Party leader Mohammad Ali in Patiya.

Of nine mayoral candidates in Mirsarai, three are from AL, four from BNP, one from Jamaat and the rest are independent candidates.

In Baroiarhat, AL fixed SM Abu Tayab as mayoral candidate but two more rivals from the party are contesting. BNP also is facing the same problem here with party-backed Moinuddin Liton and rival Jalal Uddin.

Jamaat-backed Fazlul

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**Majority polling centres in Khulna division 'risky'**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

The Election Commission (EC) in consultation with Khulna range police has identified 377 out of 478 polling centres of 33 municipalities in Khulna division as risky.

According to official sources at Khulna range DIG office, all the 190 polling centres have been marked risky in municipalities under Satkhira Sadar, Kalaroa of Satkhira district, Jhenidah Sadar, Shaikupa, Harinakundu, Kaliganj, Maheshpur of Jhenidah and Magura district, Kumarkhali, Khoksha, Mirpur and Bheramara of Kushtia district, Darshana and Jibonnagar of Chuadanga district, Meherpur Sadar and Gangni of Meherpur district.

On the other hand, 9 out of 15 polling centres in Bagerhat Sadar, 8 out of 9 polling centres in Morrelganj upazila and 8 out of 9 of Mongla upazila of Bagerhat district have been identified as risky. Besides, 30 polling centres out of 55 in Jessore Sadar, six out of 10 in Benapole, 7 out of 10 in Chowgacha, 5 out of 9 in Bagharpara, 7 out of 9 in Keshabpur, 10 out of 12 in Monirampur upazila and 22 out of 30 in Noapara municipality polling centres in Jessore district have also been marked risky.

The EC and Khulna police have listed six out of 14 polling centres in Narail Sadar, two out of 10 in Lohagarha upazila and six out of 9 polling centres in Kalia upazila of Narail district as vulnerable.

DIG of Khulna Range police told this correspondent that apart from police and Ansars, the risky centres would also be patrolled by army and Rapid Action Battalion forces.

Meanwhile, nine candidates have finally remained in the race to capture the mayoral post of Chalna under Dakope upazila and Paikgachha of Khulna.

Of them, five are contesting for Chalna mayoral post. They are Sheikh Abdul Hamid, Abul Khair Khan, Sanat Kumar Biswas, Kumaresh Biswas and Achinta Kumar Mandal.

Sheikh Abdul Hamid, president of Dakope upazila unit of Jatiyo Party has got nomination to contest for mayoral post on behalf of 14-party alliance. But assistant publicity secretary Sanat Kumar Biswas and ward level leader Kumaresh Biswas of Dakope upazila Awami League have not withdrawn from the race.

The two other candidates contesting for Chalna mayoral post are president of Dakope upazila BNP Abul Khair Khan and principal Achintya Kumar Mandal.

According to affidavit, Abul Khair Khan read up to class seven while 14-party alliance candidate Sheikh Abdul Hamid read up to class nine.

On the other hand, Sanat Kumar Biswas did not continue his education after passing HSC examination while Kumaresh Biswas passed only SSC examination.

Awami League leader and acting mayor of Paikgachha municipality Sheikh Kamrul Hasan Tipu who is contesting for mayoral post has passed HSC examination.

On the other hand, leader of Islami Andolan Bangladesh Gazi Abdus Salam read up to class eight. The other candidate contesting for mayoral post is HSC passed AL leader and shrimp trader Selim Jahangir.

BNP candidate Maftun Ahmed, however, is an MA and also has LLB degree.

The authorities have declared 10 out of 18 polling centers risky in Paikgachha and Chalna municipalities.

Chalna municipality of Dakope upazila will have its first election for mayor and councillor posts with a total of 9,481 voters including 4,791 women and 4,690 men.

On the other hand, Paikgachha poushava will have its election for the third time on Thursday to elect mayor and councillors from nine wards with a total of 11,173 voters including 5,583 males and 5,590 females. The first election of Paikgachha municipality was held on March 15 in 1999 and second election on June 2 in 2004.



Staffs of district election office in Chapainawabganj town spend a busy time preparing polls materials yesterday, right, a press worker printing election posters in Jamalpur town.

PHOTO: STAR

**Rebel candidates dim grand alliance's prospect**

**Thakurgaon and Panchagarh**

QUAMRUL ISLAM RUBAIYAT, Thakurgaon

Rebels have weakened prospects of the candidates backed by Awami League (AL)-led grand alliance in the municipal polls in Thakurgaon and Panchagarh districts.

The election will be held today in four municipalities of the districts with as many as 15 candidates contesting

for mayoral posts.

In Thakurgaon, five candidates are contesting for the post of mayor. A triangular contest is evident between SMA Moin, backed by grand alliance, BNP backed candidate Golam Sarwar Chowdhury Ranju and rebel candidate from Awami League former municipality chairman Solaiman Ali Sarcar.

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In Pirganj, three candidates are contesting. Grand alliance backed Ekramul Haque is facing stiff resistance from BNP backed candidate Rajiur Rahman Raju.

In Ranishankoil, grand alliance backed candidate Jatiya Party leader Md Toha

will face a tough challenge from BNP backed candidate Mokhlesur Rahman.

Rebel candidate of AL and also general secretary of Jubo League of Ranishankoil upazila Alamgir Sarker is also contesting the race.

AL expelled Alamgir Sarker

as he is contesting election instead of backing grand alliance candidate Md Toha violating party decision.

In Panchagarh, three candidates are contesting for mayoral post. Grand alliance is backing Johirul Islam while BNP is supporting current chairman Touhidul Islam.

Rebel candidate and also president of Panchagarh municipal Awami League freedom fighter Abdul Quader,

who was also expelled from party on Monday, is also contesting in the election ignoring party decision.

Abdul Qader said, "I am a freedom fighter and dedicated leader of the party. I was also elected commissioner of the municipality for consecutive two terms."

"I didn't accept the party's undemocratic decision as they nominated an outsider Jahirul Islam who is not active in party."