

## UP POLLS IN KHULNA DISTRICT

# 485 out of 656 centres identified as risky

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Khulna district police have identified 485 out of 656 polling centres in 68 unions of nine upazilas as vulnerable as they are all located in outlaw-infested areas.

Thirty-nine union parishads under five upazilas of the district will go to polls on March 29 while the remaining 29 unions in four upazilas on April 3.

The total number of voters in 68 unions now stands at 10,74,249, said District Election officer Bibhore Kumar. The last UP elections in the district were held from January to March in 2003.

As many as 1200 policemen will be deployed in 39 unions of five upazilas of the district during voting on

March 29 while 900 policemen will remain on duty in the polling centres during elections to 29 union parishads under four other upazilas on April 3.

Meanwhile, law and order situation in Khulna district is gradually deteriorating centring the upcoming UP elections.

Some UP candidates on condition of anonymity told this correspondent that many outlaws wanted by police are still at large. Besides, many outlaws have come out of Jail on bail under political influence centring UP elections, they said.

Fakir Imran Hossain, general secretary of BCL Terokheda upazila unit, was killed in an armed attack by the supporters of a UP

chairman candidates on March 19.

On March 15, businessman Jinnat Bhuiyan was killed in an armed attack near his house at Damodar Union under Phultala upazila of Khulna district.

Sardar Abu Saeed Badal, chairman of Damodar Union Parishad under Phultala upazila, was killed in a bomb attack near his house on August 16 last year.

On February 11, two people--Nihar Ranjan Bala and Nilkamol Mondol--were killed in a fierce clash between two rival factions of the ruling party at Magurkhali Union under Dumuria upazila of Khulna district.

According to the sources in intelligence agencies, fugitive outlaws have started

reappearing in the district and elsewhere in the southwestern region.

Over 2,000 outlaws are active with their arms and ammunition in ten districts of the southwestern region. They belong to Janajuddho faction of outlawed PBCP, New Biplobi Communist Party, M-L faction of PBCP, Chinnomul Communist Party and Lalpataka faction of PBCP, sources added.

On the other hand, the total number of criminals listed with Khulna district police and Khulna Metropolitan police now stands at 3,600.

The listed criminals include professional killers, bombers, outlaws, arms traders and drug traffickers, police said.

## Boro farmers agitate for smooth power supply

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Farmers brought out a procession at Aghoria upazila headquarters on Friday demanding uninterrupted power supply for irrigation of their boro fields.

Several hundred people, including power pump owners joined the demonstration led by local unit of the ruling Awami League.

Farmers alleged they cannot supply water to their fields due to erratic electricity supply and boro plants on around eight thousands hectares of land have turned yellowish.

"Boro fields in the upazila are drying up as farmers cannot operate pumps even

for two hours at night for lack of electricity," said Md Ashraf Alam, one of the agitating farmers.

"We have informed the REB (Rural Electrification Board) officials of the matter several times, but to effect," the farmers alleged. They urged the authorities concerned to take immediate measures to improve the situation. Otherwise, they said boro cultivation in the upazila will face a setback

Sources in the Agriculture Extension Department (AED) said a total of 7,020 hectares of lands have been brought under boro cultivation in Aghoria upazila. Farmers cannot irrigate their boro fields properly due to power crisis, sources

added.

After parading Atghoria-Chatmohar road, the farmers held a rally at upazila bazar area which was addressed, among others, by upazila AL General Secretary Shahidul Islam Ratan, Organising Secretary Mohaimanul Islam and upazila BNP leader Baten. The speakers demanded a smooth power supply in the upazila so that the farmers can properly irrigate their boro fields.

The agitating farmers said, "We did not get expected boro yield last year due to irrigation problem caused by power crises. We may face the same fate this year."

## Six alleged pirates held in Bhola

UNB, Bhola

Police arrested six alleged pirates from Meghna Char in Daulotkhan upazila on Friday.

The arrestees are Mostafa, 50, Julhas, 27, Oliullah, 32, Sumon, 24, Bhuttu Majhi, 34 and Kalu, 35. They are wanted in a police assault case.

Bhola thana OC Enayet said they launched a drive and arrested the pirates from the election office of a UP candidate at Meghna char the same day.

He said three months ago, police had launched an anti-pirates drive in the area when a gang of pirates attacked them, leaving three cops injured.

## UP candidates pledge to fulfil commitments

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Chairman and member candidates in the upcoming election to Joynagar Union Parishad (UP) under Kalaroa upazila in Satkhira district have pledged to remain corruption free and stand by the people to meet all their demands.

At a programme styled 'face to face with people' on the premises of Sarashkati Dakhil Madrasa in Kalaroa upazila on Friday, four chairman and 22 member candidates also responded to voters' queries.

Sushashoner Jonney Nagarik (Sujan) and local NGO Kapotakkho Samaj Unnayan Sangstha jointly organised the programme aimed at bridging the gap between the can-

didates and the people about electoral commitment and their implementation.

Teachers, religious leaders, students, businessmen, representatives from socio-cultural-professional and human rights organisations exchanged views with chairman and member candidates at the discussion with Kapotakkho Samaj Unnayan Sangstha president Afsar Uddin in the chair.

Chairman candidates Tapan Kumar Saha, Safiqur Rahman Mali, Mahfuzur Rahman Alamgir and Maulana Kamruzzaman spoke on the occasion and replied to the queries.

They assured the people that their fight against corruption, narcotics and drug peddlers and addicts and also extortion would continue.

If elected, they will focus on the development of roads, drainage system and educational institutions and all the development works will be focused on the opinion of the people, they said.

They also vowed to work together for the development in the areas barring all differences.

Emphasizing more power for union parishad, the lowest tier of local government, Kapotakkho Samaj Unnayan Sangstha leaders called upon the voters to elect honest and competent candidates to strengthen democracy and help sustainable socio-economic development of the country and overall well-being of the nation.

The voters urged the candidates to fulfil their commitments after being elected.

## 35 injured in pre-election clashes in 2 districts

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

At least 35 people were injured in clashes between the supporters of rival candidates in the upcoming elections to union parishad in Patuakhali and Barguna districts on Friday.

In Patuakhali, the supporters of two member candidates for Kalishury Union Parishad under Baulal upazila clashed at Hizbillah Bazar at around 6:00pm, leaving at least 10 people from both sides injured.

Locals said Hiron Mridha's men swooped on his rival candidate Kazi Shawkat while he was addressing a rally at the bazar. His supporters made a counter attack, leading to a clash between the two sides.

Eight of the injured, including Kazi Shawkat, were admitted to Baulal Upazila Health Complex while the rest

given first aid. Kazi Shawkat was later shifted to Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College and Hospital as his condition deteriorated.

In Barguna, the supporters of two chairman candidates in the election to Charduani Union Parishad under Patharghata upazila locked in a clash during campaign at South Charduani village at around 8:00pm.

Police and locals sources said when the ruling party backed candidate Firoz Alam along with his supporters were seeking votes at south Charduani village, his rival BNP backed candidate Kamrul Islam accompanied by his supporters went to the same area to woo votes.

Locals said the supporters of the two chairman aspirants chanted slogans and counter slogans during the cam-

paign and at one stage they attacked each other, leaving at least 20 people from both sides injured.

Of the injured, Kalam Mridha, 45, Shahjahan, 35, Amir Ali, 40, Kanchan Ali, 38, Rafiqul Islam, 32, Mujibur 22, Malek, 29, Salam, 25, Zakir, 33 and Hanif, 30 are undergoing treatment at local hospitals while the rest took first aid.

In Kathaltali Union under the same upazila, at least five people were injured as the supporters of chairman candidate Habibur Rahman attacked his rival candidate Shahidul Islam's men at 6:00pm. Two of the injured--Badsha, 35, and Khaleq Khalifa, 36, admitted to Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College and Hospital while the remaining two given first aid at a local clinic.

## INDEPENDENCE DAY IN FRAME



PHOTO: STAR

1) Children at Satkhira Stadium make a representation of climbing the Everest by Musa Ibrahim, the first Bangladeshi to do the astounding feat, 2) a kid comes to pay homage to the martyrs at the Shaheed Minar in Chittagong, 3) an attractive display by children at Birshreshtha Nay Mohammad Stadium at Narail, 4) students of Madaripur Girls' High School present a theme of Liberation War at Madaripur Stadium, 5) child artistes perform at Magura Stadium, 6) schoolchildren stage a drama at Shankar Gobinda Stadium in Natore town, 7) display of schoolchildren at Shaheed Miraj-Tapan Stadium in Manikganj town, and 8) freedom fighter Watir Ali inaugurates a mass signature campaign organised by Electronic Media Journalists Association on the premises of Central Shaheed Minar in Sylhet city demanding early trial of war criminals.

## 29 intruders arrested at Benapole

A CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) arrested 29 people, including nine children, while entering Bangladesh illegally from India through Bara Achra border early yesterday.

Tipped off, a team of BGB members raided the area at about 7:00 am and arrested eleven women, nine men and nine children, said Liaquat Ali Khan, camp-in-charge of 22 Rifles Battalion of BGB.

The arrested include Shampa Mandal, 27, Shukla Biswas, 13, Mariom Biswas, 17, Moushomi Biswas, 18, Chandra Banik, 18, Kamala Biswas, 17, Tinku Dhar, 15, Sanjay Mondal, 19, Abdul Mannan, 17, Taposh Shaha, 36, and Prabir Bonik, 24.

They, most of them hailed from Bagerhat, Faridpur and Gopalganj districts, were handed over to Benapole Port Police Station.

A case was filed with the police station in this regard, Liaquat Ali added.

They were returning home after being taken to India with promises of jobs there in exchange of hand-some amount of money, said Minu Begum, one of the detained.

### শাখা স্থানান্তর

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