

Stray incidents mark UP polls in Barisal, Khulna

Polls cancelled at a Bhola centre; 7 jailed; 16 agents expelled for violating code of conduct

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Stray incidents marked the elections to union parishads under different upazilas in Barisal and Khulna divisions yesterday.

Vote casting at Muhammad Hossain Registered Primary School Vote Centre at Dakkhin Veduria under Veduria union of Bhola Sadar upazila was cancelled at about 9:30am following clashes between followers of rival UP member candidates, reports our Barisal correspondent.

Law enforcers arrested three UP member candidates and three election workers and a mobile court led by a magistrate awarded them two years' jail for violence and violating election rule, said Sukharanjan Sammadar, additional police superintendent of Bhola.

The convicts are UP member candidates Shafikul Islam Patwari, Md Sadek and Lokman Hossain Patwari and their workers Md Manzur Alam, Nure Alam and Md Suman.

"When the workers of the rival UP member candidates engaged in clashes with lethal weapons, hurled bombs and snatched ballot boxes, I postponed vote casting and informed the higher authorities," Rafikul Islam, presiding officer of the centre, said.

Hasanuzzaman, Bhola district election officer, said, "The higher authority declared vote casting of that centre (bearing serial No 92) having 1,791 voters cancelled."

Saifur Rahman Kochi, upazila BNP

assistant organizing secretary and chairman candidate of Chandshi UP under Gournadi upazila of Barisal at a press conference at his residence at 1:00pm yesterday said he submitted written allegations to the returning officer and presiding officers concerned and boycotted the election, alleged that a ruling party backed chairman candidate took control of all of the nine vote centres and ousted polling agents of the rivals and rigged ballots openly.

Election officials could not be contacted for comment as of filing this report.

Polls in 93 unions of 12 upazilas under Barisal division yesterday were held peacefully except some stray incidents, said Manirul Islam, acting deputy election commissioner in charge of Barisal division, and Dr Abdur Rahim, deputy inspector general of police (Barisal Range).

Our Patuakhali correspondent reports: An executive magistrate awarded a member candidate one month's jail on charge of giving threat to voters and creating obstacle on the way of minority voters' going to the polling centre during vote at south Kanakdia Government Primary School Centre at about 3:00pm yesterday.

The convict, Moniruzzaman, is a member candidate for ward No 9 in Kanakdia UP.

Executive magistrate expelled all 16 polling agents of different candidates of Fazlul Haque Dakhil Madrasah cen-

tre at about 11:00am on charge of doing irregularities including use of cell phones inside the centre, said Mahmudur Rahman, UNO of Bauful.

The polls, however, continued following appointment of 18 new polling agents, he added.

Another executive magistrate fined Tk 5,000 to Nazrul Islam, 35, husband of a female member candidate for reserved seat of Rajnagar area in Boga UP, at about 12 noon as Nazrul was carrying voters by his motorbike, violating code of conduct.

A voter was injured in a clash between supporters of two rival member candidates at south Shoula Government Primary School in Kalaiya UP under the upazila.

Our Satkhira correspondent adds: Three people including two army personnel were detained on charge of distributing sarees and lungis among the voters to coax them to cast vote in favour of a chairman candidate from village Nangla under Anulia union in Assasuni upazila on Monday afternoon.

The arrestees are army personnel Ishaque Sana and Ershad Sana and Toyebur Rahman Sana of village Nangla.

"As the three were allegedly distributing sarees and lungis among the people urging them to cast vote in favour of chairman candidate Ruhul Quddus contesting from Anulia Union parishad election, villagers caught them. The UP election was held yesterday.



PHOTO: STAR
Women voters stand in a queue on the ground of Kashipur Government Primary School in Baintala union under Rampal upazila of Bagerhat district during yesterday's union parishad election. Inset, octogenarian Hazera Begum takes the trouble to walk towards Shanuar High School polling centre in Bamrail union under Uzirpur upazila of Barisal to exercise her right to franchise.

Bumper wheat yield expected in Jessore, Narail

PONUEL S BOSE, back from Jessore

Farmers and agronomists are expecting a bumper production of wheat in Jessore and Narail districts in this season.

Good temperature and easy availability of water have helped wheat plants to grow well in the sandy-loamy soil in this area, DAE officials said.

This season, about 6,480 hectares of land have been bought under wheat cultivation in the two district (Jessore-3730 hectares, Narail-2750 hectares) while the target was 7,913 hectares to produce 22,157 tonnes (Jessore-13,779 tonnes, Narail-8,378 tonnes) of wheat, Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) sources said.

The production target is likely to exceed much as farmers are expecting to get 31 to 32 maunds (one maund = 37.5 kg) of wheat per acre (100 deci-

mals) of land and harvesting has already started in different areas, DAE sources said.

Farmers in different areas of the two districts said they faced trouble in collecting quality seeds at the beginning of the season as Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation failed to supply sufficient amount of seeds but they overcame the situation by using locally preserved seeds and buying seeds from private companies at higher rates.

Wheat cultivation is gaining popularity in Jessore and Narail districts due to its increasing demand, good prices, easy cultivation process and lower production cost than that of IRRI-Boro paddy, said farmers and DAE officials.

"Wheat cultivation requires only three times irrigation. It is easier and more profitable than paddy cultivation. Production cost of wheat on per

acre of land is Tk 11,000 at the maximum while it needs around Tk 18,000 to cultivate IRRI-Boro crops," said Fotiq Mukherjee, 41, of Shighasolpur union in Narail Sadar upazila.

Dr Sunil Kumar Roy, regional project manager of Second Crop Diversification Project in Jessore region, said favourable weather conditions, adequate supply of necessary fertilisers and pesticides and sufficient training are the reasons behind the bumper production of wheat.

Farmers are getting more interested to cultivate wheat due to its growing demand and less cultivation cost than paddy, Narail Sadar Upazila Agriculture Officer GM Ruhul Amin said.

The farmers of Jessore and Narail districts mostly use shatabdi, prodeep, shourav, gourab and bijoy varieties of wheat seeds, DAE sources said.



PHOTO: STAR

Farmers reap wheat at a profusely yielding field at Bhadulidanga village in Narail district. A bumper production of the crop is expected in Narail and Jessore districts this season, much to the happiness of the farmers amid its good market price.

7,866 fowls culled in Dinajpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A total of 7,866 fowls were culled and 512 eggs damaged here in two days following detection of bird flu in Sadar and Parbatipur upazila.

Of them, 6,500 fowls were culled at Chehelgazi in Sadar upazila on Monday night and 1,366 culled in Parbatipur upazila on Sunday night.

Bird flu was detected at the poultry farm of Md Mosarraf Hossain at Chehelgazi on Monday, district livestock officials said. Samples of the affected birds were immediately sent to Joypurhat Livestock Research Institute for confirmation, they said. The confirmation reached here through a fax sent at night.

Dinajpur Sadar upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) Dr Mollah Mahmud Hasan and

additional district magistrate Md Azizul Islam were present during the culling operation.

Earlier, 1,366 fowls were culled and 512 eggs damaged in Parbatipur upazila after detection of bird flu at a poultry farm at Sarkerpara village on Sunday night.

Parbatipur upazila livestock officer Ambar Ali Talukder said, several fowls at a poultry farm belonging to Md Mosarraf Hossain died

on Saturday. On the same day, a carcass sample was sent to Joypurhat Livestock Research Centre. The institute confirmed bird flu on the next day.

Parbatipur UNO Mujibul Ferdous, district livestock officer Dr Md Awal, upazila livestock officer Ambar Ali Talukder and upazila health officer Dr Md Yunus were present during the culling operation at night.

Mother-in-law of UP chairman candidate murdered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Mother-in-law of an independent candidate in the union parishad (UP) election was killed by unidentified criminals at Jogipole under Digholia upazila yesterday morning.

Saleha Begum, 60, mother-in-law of Abdus Sattar Morol, an independent chairman candidate of Jogipole UP election was strangled and hacked to death by unidentified criminals at about 11:00 am yesterday.

Police said, the murder was committed when there was none but the victim at the house. All of the family members were away from the house as they were busy in the electioneering, they said.

Contacted, Khanjahan Ali police station OC Humayun Kabir said, the victim was widow of late Abdul Aziz of Charhokkhal village under Mathbaria upazila of Pirojpur district.

She came to Jogipole last month for helping her son-in-law in polls campaign, he said.

Contacted, the chairman candidate, Abdus Sattar Morol, termed the murder 'a conspiracy by his rivals to foil his certain victory in election'.

1,870 bullets found in Kishoreganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

Police on Sunday recovered 1,870 bullets from a pond at Kadirjangan Pitua Purbapara village in Karimganj.

Police and locals said, the bullets were recovered from the pond belonging to Abdul Huq, son of late Syeed Ali of the same village. While digging the pond, some labourers found the bullets contained in two wooden boxes.

On information, police rushed there and took the boxes containing the bullets to Karimganj police station. Kishoreganj SP could not say precisely whether the bullets were fresh or abandoned.

OMS rice seized in Khulna, one sued

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Police seized 62 bags of OMS (Open Market Sale) rice from a shop at Housing Bazar under Khalishpur Police Station of Khulna city on Monday night.

Being tipped-off, law enforcers led by Assistant Police Commissioner Mirza Abu Sayem raided the shop named Jamuna Traders at 10:30pm and seized the OMS rice.

Proprietor of Jamuna

Traders Abu Taher fled the scene, getting advance information of police raid. "We had to break lock of the shop as its proprietor did not turn up despite repeated calls over cellphone," AC Abu Sayem said.

He said they raided the shop on allegation that its proprietor Abu Taher purchased 62 bags of OMS rice from dealer Kamal Chowdhury for selling it on black market.

Officer-in-charge of

Khalishpur Police Station said they launched the drive to recover the OMS rice on the basis of several allegations from ration card holders of ward No-12 under the police station that they were being deprived of buying rice at the rate of Tk 24 per kilogram.

Sub Inspector Shafiuddin lodged a case against Proprietor of Jamuna Traders Abu Taher for keeping OMS rice in his possession.

Arrest killers of Liza

Demand teachers, students of Phulbari college

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Teachers and students of Phulbari Women's Degree College yesterday formed a human chain in the upazila town and submitted memorandums to the home and education ministers through UNO Protap Chandra Biswas.

The one-hour human chain was formed at Neemtola intersection of Phulbari town. This was followed by a rally where the speakers said that Liza, a brilliant student of the college, was tortured to death by her in-laws. They demanded immediate arrest and capital punishment to the culprits so that such incident do not occur again

in future.

Family members alleged that Liza's in-laws used to torture her frequently as they could not take her love marriage with Shamim Kabire easily.

The one-hour human chain was formed at Neemtola intersection of Phulbari town. This was followed by a rally where the speakers said that Liza, a brilliant student of the college, was tortured to death by her in-laws. They demanded immediate arrest and capital punishment to the culprits so that such incident do not occur again

Later, the teachers and students of the college submitted memorandums to the home and education ministers through UNO Protap Chandra Biswas.

Victim's father Moiz Uddin, assistant professor of the college Kaiser Parvez Nanu, SM Abdullah, Md Aktaruzzaman, Azizul Sarker, Masuma Pervin and victim's classmates Jannatun Ferdous, Sweet Akter, Tania Yasmeen, Khurshida Begum and Mukta Banu spoke.

A case was filed but police are yet to arrest anyone in this connection.



PHOTO: STAR

Teachers and students of Phulbari Women's Degree College in Dinajpur form a human chain yesterday demanding punishment to the killers of Rehena Parvin Liza (inset), an HSC candidate from the college.