

Poll participation by enclave people remains uncertain

S DILIP ROY, *Salmonirhat*

Voters of 29 Bangladeshi enclaves under Salmonirhat district face uncertainty over taking part in the upcoming union parishad polls, as the Indian authorities concerned are yet to issue any letter allowing the enclave people to cross the border during election days June 4 and 14.

Revealing the information, Jahangir Alom Rakib, acting election officer of Salmonirhat district, said yesterday, "I have already sent all the necessary papers about enclave voters to the chief election commissioner, requesting necessary steps to enable the enclave people to cast their vote in the upcoming UP polls. But I am yet to get any response from the Election Commission as of today [Wednesday]."

"As soon as I get any positive response from the Election Commission, I will call an emergency meeting for taking necessary steps to ensure exercising voting right by the enclave people," he said.

Thirty-three Bangladeshi enclaves under Salmonirhat district are situated within the Indian Territory. Of them, only Angorpota-Dahogram is connected with the mainland through an Indian corridor and the inhabitants of this enclave have been exercising their voting right since 1992.

A good number of Bangladeshi people live in 29 other enclaves while three enclaves Bura Sarodubi and Amjhul under Hatibandha upazila and Basuya Khamar under Salmonirhat Sadar upazila are without any population.

District election office sources said 5,605 voters



PHOTO: STAR

The people of Batrigachh enclave under Durgapur union in Aditmari upazila of Salmonirhat district, who saw voter enrolment for the last time in 1990, are yet to know whether they will be able to exercise their right to franchise in the upcoming union parishad election.

were enrolled in 29 enclaves in 1990. Of them, 2,483 voters from four enclaves -- Nolgram and Folanpur of Bawar union under Patgram upazila and Kisamot Batrigachh and Batrigachh of Durgapur union under Aditmari upazila got the opportunity to franchise in the parliament and local polls in 1991. But the voters of other enclaves did not get the opportunity due to hard restriction imposed by Indian Border Security Force (BSF).

After the polls in 1991, the voters from these 29 enclaves did not get the chance to exercise their voting right in the main land as Indian authorities did not allow them to cross the border.

The 5,605 Bangladeshi voters enrolled in 29

enclaves include 157 (male 82, female 75) at Balapukuri, 56 (26 male, 30 female) at Shivnath-1, 58 (male 35, female 23) at Shivnath-2, 63 (male 33, female 30) at Jomgram, 975 (male 535, female 440) at Nolgram, 206 (male 104, female 102) at Seat Nolgram, 340 (male 176, female 164) at Folanpur under Bawra union, 147 voters (male 77, female 70) at Jot Nizzoma under Seerampur union, 476 voters (male 215, female 261) at Seat Panbari, 200 (male 104, female 96) at Panbari-1, 27 (male 15, female 12) at Panbari-2, 53 (male 25, female 28) at Kuchlibari, 672 (male 350, female 322) at Seat Kuchlibari Kuchlibari union, 25 voters (male 13, female 12) at Dhabolguri-1, four (male two, female two) at Dhabolguri-2, two (male 1, female 1) at Dhabolguri-3, 25 (male 15, female 14) at Dhabolguri-4, 52 (male 27, female 25) at Dhabolguri-5, 156 (male 75, female 81) at Kakeya Bari under Jongra union, 207 voters (male 105, female 102) at Dhabolsuti Mirgipur, 42 (male 22, female 20) at Dhabolsuti, 54 (male 28, female 26) at Mahol Dhabolsuti under Patgram union, 58 voters (male 30, female 28) at Jagotber-1, 55 (male 29, female 26) at Jagotber-2, 33 (male 18, female 15) at Jagotber-4 and 37 voters (male 20, female 17) at Vandardah under Jagotber union of Patgram upazila, 958 voters (male 543, female 415) at Kisamot

Batrigachh and 210 (male 108, female 102) at Batrigachh under Durgapur union of Aditmari upazila in Salmonirhat district, the election official added.

These voters of 29 enclaves were enrolled in 1990 and but the enclave people did not get the opportunity to become voters afterwards as the Indian authorities did not allow Bangladesh officials to enter the enclaves through Indian territory for the purpose, the election official said.

Patgram upazila parishad Chairman Ruhul Amin Babul said Bangladesh government should take necessary steps to solve the problem of enclave people through high level discussions between the two countries.

Rejoinder and our reply

ACI Motors Ltd has sent a rejoinder to a Daily Star report published on May 31 on page 9 under the headline '20 new power tillers seized on way to 'black market'.

It said ACI Motors dispatched a consignment of 20 power tillers for delivery at Golachipa in Patuakhali district but the Golachipa upazila agriculture officer (UAO) refused to receive the power tillers due to lack of storage capacity. Then as per the UAO's instruction, ACI Motors' truck carrying the tillers headed towards Patuakhali Agriculture Office for unloading.

The rejoinder signed by the company's Business Manager Subrata Ranjan Das added that the story of ACI Motors selling the product in black market was triggered by a vested quarter to tarnish the image and goodwill of ACI Motors.

OUR REPLY

The Daily Star report stated that the local farmers seized a truck carrying 20 power tillers and caught three people on suspicion as they were returning from Golachipa without unloading the tillers meant for distribution among the farmers.

After visiting several unions, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Md Abdul Mannan, told newsmen that male and female voters cast their votes in a peacefully atmosphere at every polling centres.

Law enforcers were deployed at each centre to ensure free and fair voting, the DC added.

Election in 87 more union parishads held peacefully

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Barring some stray incidents, elections to 87 union parishads in seven districts were yesterday held peacefully.

Voting took place in 15 unions in Comilla, five in Jhenidah, seven in Panchagarh, 12 in Bogra, 13 in Brahmanbaria, 18 in Madaripur, and 17 in Jessore districts, report our correspondents.

In Jhenidah, elections to five union parishad under Kotchandpur upazila were held peacefully.

District election office sources said 14 magistrates, three ASP, and law enforcers were deployed to ensure peaceful UP elections in the upazila.

Voters were seen standing in queues at 49 centres in five unions to cast their votes.

In Panchagarh, barring some stray incidents, elections to seven union parishads in Tentulia upazila were held peacefully.

Ansars and local people clashed at Nandagoch Registered Primary School centre at around 10:00am, leaving at least six people, including two Ansars, injured. Striking force rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control.

Incidents of chase and counter chase between the supporters of rival candidates took place at four polling centres in Bhajanpur, Shalbahan and Buraburi unions.



PHOTO: STAR

Octogenarian Saira Khatun of Alukdia village under Dora Union of Kotchandpur upazila of Jhenidah district arrives in front of Horindia polling centre in a rickshaw van to cast her vote in the election to the union parishad yesterday.

Mobile court sentenced one Hatem Ali of Buraburi Union to six months imprisonment for violating code of conduct during voting.

In Bogra, peaceful voting took place at 76 centres in 12 unions of Sariakandi upazila.

Arifur Rahman, additional superintendent of police (A Circle) said 2,446 members of law enforcement agencies were deployed at the polling centres to maintain peace during polling.

Polling in 17 other unions of the upazila were largely peaceful. According to dis-

trict election office, 11 magistrates, Rab and police teams patrolled the centres during voting.

In Brahmanbaria, 2446 mem-

bers of law enforcement agencies were deployed at the polling centres to maintain peace during polling.

Law enforcers were deployed at each centre to ensure free and fair voting, the DC added.

MISAPPROPRIATION OF AROUND TK 5 CR ACC sues 2 bankers, 2 grain importers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

Two officers of Khulna branch of Prime Bank and two local importers have been sued on charge of misappropriating Tk 4 crore 92 lakh and 5,386 through forgery.

Deputy assistant director of Anti Corruption Commission (ACC) Aminul Islam lodged two separate cases in this connection on Sunday with Khulna Sadar police station.

The four FIR-named accused in the two cases are manager Syed Zahirul Huq and foreign exchange in-charge Kazi Robiul Islam of Khulna branch of the bank, importers Sheikh Abu Rashed and Sheikh Abdur Rahman.

The two officers have been accused in both the cases while the two importers sued separately in two cases.

Importer Sheikh Abu Rashed is proprietor of Messers Ming Hua Trade International and Messers Sajeda Wahab and Sons while importer Sheikh Abdur Rahman is proprietor of S.R. Enterprise of Khulna city.

The complainant stated in his cases that Messers Sajeda Wahab and Sons withdrew Tk 41,17,908 from Khulna branch of Prime Bank on November 16 in 2005 for opening Letter of Credit (LC) to import foodgrains from India.

On the same day, Messers Ming Hua Trade International withdrew Tk 2,75,41,947 from the same bank also for opening LC to

import foodgrains from the same country.

These two firms withdrew the aforesaid amounts against a deposit of only Tk 94,295 as security money.

But none of the importers repaid the amount to the bank after selling the imported foodgrains and thus misappropriated Tk 3 crore 15 lakh and 65,560 through forged means.

In the second case, importer S.R.

Enterprise withdrew a sum of Tk 1,76,39,826 from the same bank from March 31 till November 16, 2005 in the name of opening 10 LCs to import foodgrains from India. But this importer also did not repay any amount after selling the imported foodgrains.

The complainant stated in his FIRs that the two bank officers helped the importers misappropriate this huge amount of money by forged means.

The complainant further said that these two bank officers were suspended from their services in 2006 after their involvement in the misappropriation came to light. They are now on the run.

Contacted, the complainant said that he filed the cases against the absconding bank officers and the importers with the Khulna Sadar PS under Sections 409 and 109 of BPC and also under section 5 (2) of Anti-corruption Act-1947 as their involvement in the crime was confirmed after vigorous investigation.

5 fresh anthrax cases in Sirajganj, Pabna

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Five more people have been infected with 'anthrax' in Shahjadpur upazila of Sirajganj and Faridpur upazila of Pabna, health officials confirmed yesterday.

The infected persons are Kadbanu, 47, Sirajul Islam, 28, and Saiful Islam, 26, of Soratoil village and Lalbibi, 45, of Kuthibibi village in Shahjadpur upazila of Sirajganj and Md Sharafat Ali, 12, of Raut Nagdapara village in Faridpur upazila of Pabna, report our correspondents.

Ram Chandra Saha, sanitary officer of Sirajganj Civil Surgeon office, said a three-member team of Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) led by Dr Apurba Chakraborty has already collected blood and other samples of the infected people in the upazila and sent those to Dhaka for test.

A total of 43 people in Shahjadpur and Ullapara upazilas have been infected with anthrax since Friday.

Anthrax is a disease caused by the bacterium called bacillus anthracis. Most forms of the disease are lethal, and it affects both humans and other animals.

There are effective vaccines against anthrax, and some forms of the disease respond well to antibiotic treatment, health officials said.

In Pabna, an elderly man in the district's Faridpur upazila died on Tuesday night at Dhaka Medical College Hospital due to 'meningitis.'

Victim Shahid Ali, 70, of village Raut Nagdapara was admitted to Pabna Medical College Hospital with high fever a few days ago but the doctors shifted him to DMCH on Tuesday as his condition deteriorated.

Asked Dr. Md. Iftekhar Mahamud, consultant of Pabna Medical College, said "Shahid Ali was attacked with meningitis, a disease of brain disorder. We gave him treatment but as his condition deteriorated we referred him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital. He died there on Tuesday night."

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