

# Two killed, 86 injured in post-UP poll violence

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Post-union parishad (UP) election violence in Tangail, Gaibandha, Kishoreganj and Khagrachhari left two people dead and at least 86 others, including 10 policemen, injured on Saturday night.

In Tangail, two people were killed and at least 50 others, including four policemen, injured in a clash between police and the supporters of a member candidate at Chhunatia Primary School polling centre in Shohodevpur Union of Kalihati upazila, reports our correspondent.

The dead were identified as Kawser Miah, 18, and Kalu Miah, 38, of Chhunatia village. The clash ensued when counting of votes was going on at the centre at around 9:00pm.

The supporters of member candidate Amjad Hossain equipped with lethal weapons entered the polling centre, swooped on the law enforcers, leaving four cops injured.

As they tried to snatch ballot boxes, police charged batons and opened fire, leaving at least 46 people injured. Kawser received bullets and died at Tangail General Hospital while Kalu, injured by sharp weapon, died on the

spot, local people said.

According to our Gaibandha correspondent, post-poll clashes in Fulchari upazila left at least 18 people injured.

The supporters of defeated member candidate Agu Mia attacked police and election officials while they were returning to upazila headquarters after the announcement of election results at Char Jamira Government Primary School Centre at around 11:00pm.

Police charged batons and fired blank shots to disperse the unruly people, leaving at least six people injured.

At Deluabari Primary School centre, the supporters of defeated member candidate Tofa Ali clashed with member-elect Emdadul Haq's men after the announcement of results. At least five people from both sides were injured in the clash.

Seven people were injured as the supporters of rival member candidates clashed at Kaiyerhat Government Primary School centre at around 9:00pm on Saturday.

Our Kishoreganj correspondent reported that unruly people attacked election officials and police personnel at Khairat in Gundar Union of Karimganj upazila at around 10:00pm on Saturday and tried to snatch ballot

boxes from them.

The election officials and cops were returning to the upazila headquarters after the announcement of results at Khairat Government Primary School centre. During the scuffle, 10 people, including two cops were injured.

In Khagrachhari, six police men were injured in post-UP poll violence at Muslimpara in Guimara Union of Matiranga upazila.

Of them, injured Assistant Superintendent of Police (Khagrachhari Sadar Circle) Al Asad Mohammad Mahfuzul Islam was admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital in a critical condition while the rest five were admitted to Khagrachhari Adhunik Sadar Hospital.

Our correspondent quoted police as saying that the incident occurred at around 8:00pm on Saturday as the supporters of a defeated member candidate intercepted the election officials and police personnel on their way back to the upazila headquarters from a centre demanding a recount of votes at the centre.

At one stage, they swooped on the police personnel, leaving six of them injured. Police fired 10 to 12 blank shots and dispersed the unruly people.



PHOTO: STAR  
Businessmen of AR Plaza Shopping Complex at Pabna barricaded Abdul Hamid Road in the town yesterday demanding punishment to the attackers who beat up two shop owners and several employees at the market.

## Pabna shop owners protest attack by criminal gang

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Shop owners of AR Plaza Shopping Complex in the town yesterday staged a demonstration protesting attack on two shops and their owners at the market by a gang of criminals in the morning.

Police and market sources said a gang of 15 to 20 attacked 'Path-Finder', a computer wholesale shop, and 'DTS Mobile Zone', a mobile shop, at around 10:00am. They ransacked the shops and assaulted shop owners Md Abdul Mannan and Md Anwarul Islam.

The criminals also beat

up the employees of the shopping complex as they tried to resist them. Soon after the incident, the shop owners and employees barricaded Abdul Hamid Road in front of the market, halting traffic on the busy road of the district town.

They withdrew the barricade at around 11:30am after local police administration assured them of taking necessary actions against the culprits.

Later, the shop owners and employees held a protest rally on the market premises with Md Zakir Hossain, president of the market committee, in the chair.

They urged the local administration to ensure security of the shop owners and employees at the market and demanded immediate arrest of the culprits.

Contacted, Officer-in-Charge of Pabna Sadar Police Station Md Enayet Uddin police have been deployed at the market. "We are looking for the criminals responsible for the attack on the market," the OC added.

Md Mahabubul Alam Mukul, acting president of Pabna Chamber of Commerce, condemned the incident. He also demanded immediate arrest of the culprits.

## Robbers kill teenage boy

UNB, Laxmipur

A teenage boy was shot dead and his uncle injured by robbers at North Hamchadi village in Sadar upazila early yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Dipta Pal, 17, son of Kartik Pal of the village.

Police said breaking the collapsible gate, a gang of armed robbers entered the house of Kartik Pal and took the members of the house hostage at gunpoint at around 3:00am.

When Dipta and his uncle Kanchan Pal tried to resist the robbers they shot at them, leaving them critically injured. They were rushed to Sadar hospital where the attending doctor declared Dipta dead.

In Faridpur, an alleged burglar was killed in mob beating at Char Pukuria village in Alfadanga upazila early Friday.

The deceased was identified as Mozaffar alias Musai, 28, of the village.

Police quoting locals said, cutting fence of the house of Rawshan Molla of the village, Musai entered into the house late at night in a bid to steal valuables.

Sensing the presence of the burglar, housewife Rokeya Begum informed the matter to the neighbours over cell phone.

Local people later encircled the house and caught Musai red-handed and gave him a good beating, leaving him critically injured.

On information, police rescued Musai and admitted him to the upazila health complex where he succumbed to his injuries early in the morning.



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA  
Huge jackfruits and pineapples being loaded onto trucks at Garitana in Manikchhari upazila of Khagrachhari district for transport to other areas. Khagrachhari and two other hill districts Rangamati and Bandarban produce large quantities of fruits but steps for smooth marketing and transport are required for ensuring fair prices to the growers.

## Salma traceless for over 3 months

Her abductors moving freely, alleges family

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narail

Class nine schoolgirl Umme Salma Pipasha is yet to be rescued about four months into her abduction.

Narail police could not arrest any of kidnapers. Rather there is allegation that the culprits are moving freely while the aides of the abductors are pressing the victim's family to withdraw the case.

According to the case filed on March 19, the incident took place when Umme Salma, daughter of Badsha Mia of Uzirpur village under Sadar upazila was going to a private tutor.

On March 16 morning, local criminals Abbas Fakir, Mizan Fakir, Champa Begum of Mothurapur village and Momotaz Begum of Chakoi village forcibly picked up Salma into a private car and took her to an unknown place. Since then she remained traceless.

Salma's Mother Rokeya Begum filed a case against the aforesaid people with Narail Sadar police station.

But police failed to rescue Salma, a student of Uzirpur High School, or arrest any of the kidnapers in over three months for mysterious reasons, said the family members.



Umme Salma Pipasha

Salma's mother Rokeya alleged that Abbas Fakir often teased her daughter on her way to school and accused police of making dilly-dally and showing indifference to the case.

Salma's father Md

Badsha Mia alleged that the culprits were pressing and threatening him and his wife Rokeya Begum to withdraw the kidnapping case.

He added that a few days ago Abbas Fakir called his wife over mobile and demanded Tk3 lakh ransom.

Abbas also threatened that if they failed to pay the ransom Umme Salma's body would be sent to them (her parents), he said.

Contacted, investigation officer SI Manik Chandra Saha said that 'a vigorous drive' is on to arrest the accused. "We are trying our level best to rescue the victim," he added.



PHOTO: STAR  
Hindu devotees join a jubilant procession marking their traditional rathjatra utsab (chariot festival) from Kalibari Natmandir in Manikganj town yesterday.

## 50 hurt as rival villagers clash

UNB, B'baria

At least 50 people were injured in a clash between two rival groups at Bitghor village in Sharail upazila yesterday.

Police said there was a longstanding conflict between newly elected member of Panishwar union parishad Izzat Ali and ex-member Mobarak Ali over establishing supremacy in the area.

On Saturday, Mamun Mia, supporter of Izzat, was beaten up by his rivals.

As a sequel to the incident, supporters of both the groups equipped with homemade lethal weapons attacked each other yesterday morning leaving 50 people injured from both sides.

Police lobbed 16 rounds of tear gas shell to quell the situation.



PHOTO: STAR  
A dredger sits idle on Rampal River in Bagerhat district as work to remove silt from the important river route to Mongla Port has remained suspended since early June.

## Dredging of river route to Mongla port stalled again

QUAZI AMANULLAH, Khulna

Dredging on 31-kilometre-long river route between Mongla and Ghoshiakhali, a channel that shortens distance to Mongla port, has remained suspended since early June, only one and a half months after start of the second phase of work.

The route is facing navigation problem as silt carried by Pashur and Bareshwar rivers during high tide fast settles in Rampal River of Bagerhat district, said sources of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA).

If Mongla-Ghoshiakhali river route is closed down, it will leave negative impact on the entrance of local and foreign ships to Mongla Port, affecting the country's economy, especially in the south-western region.

The authorities took a project to remove seven lakh cubic feet of silt deposit caused mostly due to existence of fish enclosures, embankments and

illegal structures along the channel, said BIWTA sources.

The government allocated Tk 14 crore for the purpose, said Habibun Nahar, lawmaker elected from Bagerhat-3 (Mongla-Rampal) constituency.

Accordingly, BIWTA started dredging right from Rampal River in April last year but the work was suspended the next month as it did not bring any fruitful result.

BIWTA resumed the dredging on April 18 this year but it again failed to achieve the desired result and the work was suspended after one and a half month, said Md Maruful Alam, superintending engineer of BIWTA.

Under the circumstances, BIWTA authorities organised a meeting on June 6 this year at Rampal upazila parishad auditorium to exchange views with cross sections of people about various impediments to the continuation of dredging work.

Talukder Abdul Khaleque, mayor of Khulna City Corporation, Md Abdul Malek, chairman of BIWTA, Dr Mominul Huq, deputy executive director of Centre for Environment and Geographic Information Services, an experts' organ under the water resources ministry assigned to oversee the effectiveness of dredging in the river route, and Md Akram Hossain, deputy commissioner of Bagerhat attended the meeting, among others.

Speakers at the meeting opined that early removal of embankments, shrimp enclosures, unauthorised structures and eviction of illegal occupiers on the Ghoshiakhali-Mongla river routes will positively contribute to the implementation of the dredging project by removing the impediments to water flow.

Mongla-Ghoshiakhali canal route was first excavated in 1974 to reduce distance to Mongla port, said the superintending engineer of BIWTA.