

Rangpur City Corporation goes to maiden election today

MEHEDY HASAN, Rangpur

The voters of newly formed Rangpur City Corporation (RCC) will today exercise their right to franchise to choose a mayor and 44 councillors in its maiden election today.

"Polls will be conducted at 1,070 booths of 178 polling centres in 33 wards under the city. We have already provided training to 178 presiding officers, 1,070 assistant presiding officers and 2,140 polling officers for the purpose. Ballot papers, boxes and other materials will be sent to the centres by today (Wednesday) evening," said Rangpur Zonal Election Officer Md Monirul Islam, also returning officer of the RCC polls.

There 3,57,742 voters under RCC, including 1,79,128 male and 1,78,614 female, sources at the zonal election office said, adding that the vote casting will continue from 8:00am to 4:00pm.

Saleh Mohammad Tanvir, superintendent of police of Rangpur, said 2,750 police personnel, 550 Ansar, 300 Rapid Action Battalion and 100 Border Guard Bangladesh members will perform their duty to ensure peaceful polls in the 203 square kilometre area. Besides, there will be striking forces for immediate action in case of urgency."

"Thirty-three executive magistrates, each for one ward, six judicial magistrates and fifteen mobile courts will also work to maintain peace during the RCC polls.

The zonal election office



Shorfuddin Ahmed Jhantu



Mostafizar Rahman Mostafa



AKM Abdur Rauf Manik

Fact Box

- * 12 mayor candidates, 418 councilor aspirants including women in reserved seats.
- * Voters to choose one mayor, 44 councillors.
- * 178 polling centres in 33 wards.
- * 104 centres 'vulnerable'.
- * Total 3,57,742 voters including 1,79,128 male and 1,78,614 female.
- * Around 5,000 law enforcers.



has also identified 104 polling centres as vulnerable and special security measures have been taken there," said the returning officer.

The Election Commission will use electronic voting machines in four polling centres under ward No 11 in the RCC polls, he added.

Earlier on November 5, the Commission announced their schedule for the Rangpur City Corporation (RCC) polls to be held on December 20.

November 18 was the last date of filing nomination papers while that of withdrawing candidature was November 29.

After withdrawal of former lawmaker and Jatiya Party (JP) presidium member Moshiur Rahman Ranga's candidature for the RCC mayoral post, 12 candidates are in the final race for it, said sources of Zonal Election Office of Rangpur.

The candidates are AKM Abdur Rauf Manik, former organising secretary of JP central committee and former Rangpur municipality mayor, Mostafizar Rahman Mostafa, former chairman of Rangpur Sadar upazila parishad and former member secretary of JP Rangpur district unit, Shorfuddin Ahmed Jhantu, former lawmaker and pres-

ent member of the advisory committee of Rangpur district unit of Awami League (AL), Firoz Kabir Chowdhury Gunjan, former general secretary of AL Rangpur Sadar upazila unit, Shafiq Rafman Shafi, president of AL Rangpur city unit, Mehedy Hasan, Ali Haydar Dulu, Kaiser Zaman Babla, former president of Rangpur municipality unit of BNP, Majirul Islam Liton, general secretary of Workers Party Rangpur district unit, Faruk Aziz Shahin of Nagerik Oikyo, ATM Golam Mostafa of Islami Shashontantra Andolan and Abdul Quddus of Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal.

Shorfuddin Ahmed Jhantu, Mostafizar Rahman Mostafa and AKM Abdur Rauf Manik appear as the most potential contestants, said observers.

As many as 327 candidates are contesting for 33 councillor posts in the polls while 91 candidates will contest for 11 women's reserved seats of councillors.

The candidates held rallies and conducted door to door campaign during the 20-day campaign ending Tuesday.

The ruling Awami League has refrained from supporting any mayoral aspirant in the local government election.

The main opposition BNP and their 18-party alliance partner Jamaat-e-Islami did not express any interest to contest in the polls.

The government on June 28 this year upgraded former Rangpur municipality, announcing it as the 10th city corporation of the country.

The electioneering came to an end on Tuesday midnight when the 'outsiders' had to leave Rangpur city and movement of motorcyclists was restricted.

Authorities also suspended movement of motor vehicles in the city corporation area from last night.

However, emergency transports and the vehicles plying Rangpur-Dhaka, Rangpur-Dinajpur and Rangpur-Kurigram highways have been kept outside the ban.



PHOTO: STAR
Workers busy cleaning the precincts of Bangabandhu's mural as Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the mural at Bakultola in Jessore town today.

PM to declare Jessore first digital dist today

Addresses rally in the afternoon

A CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to visit Jessore today.

district at the rally.

Shaheen Chakladar, general secretary of Jessore district Awami League,



said preparations have been completed to make PM's public rally a success.

According to BSS, 231 public offices in the district have already been automated within a month.

mated under a pilot project of National E-service System (NESS).

Farhad Jahid Shaikh, system analyst of Access to Information (A2I) Programme at Prime Minister's Office, said 231 out of 240 public offices in the district have been automated under the NESS aimed at ensuring people's access to public services.

After the inauguration, it would be possible to submit online application through 231 public offices in the district, Deputy Commissioner Mostafizur Rahman said, adding the remaining nine offices will be automated within a month.

Month of Victory



PHOTO: STAR

Though the freedom fighters covered up the names of two razakars on the victory memorial plaque at Bhaina Square in Magura town with black paint in 2007, the authorities concerned are yet to erase the names of the two collaborators of Pakistani occupation forces from the memorial plaque.

Razakars yet to be wiped out

HOSSAIN SERAJ, Magura

This year's Victory Day has also passed off but the names of two razakars (collaborators of Pakistani occupation forces) and a few fake freedom fighters still remain engraved on the victory memorial plaque in the district town.

Aggrieved freedom fighters, who boycotted several Victory Day and Independence Day programmes in last nine years, in their own initiatives covered up the names of razakars on the plaque with the help of black paint in 2007.

The liberation war affairs ministry, however, is yet to take any step to erase the names officially despite submission of applications by the district unit of Mukti Joddha Sangsads, sources said.

"In the last nine years we submitted several petitions to the ministry concerned through the deputy commissioner (DC) in Magura, requesting to erase the names from the plaque, but unfortunately all our efforts went in vain," commander of district unit

Muktijoddha Sangsads Nabuati Ali told this correspondent.

"The freedom fighters in Magura were compelled to attend the Independence Day and Victory Day programmes with heavy hearts," said valiant freedom fighter Zahidul Islam.

"The spirit of liberation war cannot be upheld keeping the names of razakars or any anti-liberation people on any victory memorial plaque in the country," Zahidul observed.

The memorial was built by the Zila Parishad at Bhaina Square in Magura town at a cost of Tk 14.10 lakh and was formally opened by then BNP lawmaker of Magura-2 Quazi Saleemul Haque Kamal in 2003, official sources said.

Former commander of Magura district unit Muktijoddha Sangsads Khan Ali Reza Raja, on behalf of freedom fighters, submitted a petition to the secretary of the liberation war affairs ministry on January 1, 2004, for erasing the names of controversial people

from the plaque. But no initiatives were taken in this regard in the last nine years, local freedom fighters told this correspondent.

"It is a matter of great regret that names of razakars Aminuddin and Khater Ali still remain inscribed on the victory memorial," freedom fighter Dulal Chandra Biswas said.

"The two were killed during a gun battle between the freedom fighters and Pakistani occupation army at Kamanna village in Jhenidah district. At that time they (Aminuddin and Khater Ali) were caught and tied to a tree by the freedom fighters," he said.

"The supreme sacrifices of the freedom fighters have been disregarded by putting the names of razakars on the victory memorial plaque. The ministry should take immediate initiatives to remove the names from there," Dulal said.

"Apart from the names of razakars, there are names of a few other people on the memorial who had no contribution to the liberation war," he added.

PIO beaten up over share of test relief

Protest by UNO, other officials

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

A government official was beaten up allegedly by the upazila vice chairman and her husband in Muladi over distribution of test relief (TR) on Tuesday.

The incident triggered instant protest by administration officials.

Seriously injured Akhtar Hossain, project implementation officer (PIO) of Muladi upazila, was admitted to Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College and Hospital.

Akhtar filed a case accusing vice chairman Shamima Nasrin, also upazila Mohila AL secretary and her husband Sirajul Islam, upazila AL secretary yesterday.

Sources said that the government recently sanctioned 105 tonnes of rice under test relief for the

upazila.

Nasrin and Sirajul came to the office on Tuesday morning and demanded a large portion of sanctioned TR, they said.

As the PIO expressed his inability to do that, the duo ransacked the office and beat him up mercilessly, leaving him seriously injured.

The PIO sustained severe injuries in his left eye, said doctors at the hospital.

Officials and staffs at the upazila offices wore black badges and held a protest rally yesterday, demanding immediate arrest and punishment of the attackers, said upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) Mostafizur Rahman.

The UNO, who presided the programme, also threatened to continue the protest until the demand was met.

SNAPS AND SNIPPETS



PHOTO: STAR
A fisherman in Bhola netted this huge turtle while fishing in Charmatha point of the Meghna in Sadar upazila on Tuesday. They brought it to local market to sell. But forest officials rushed in, rescued the 30kg turtle and released it in the river.

Boiler blast kills two

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Two workers were killed as a boiler went off at a rice mill in Ishwardi upazila yesterday morning. The deceased are Md Sajedul Islam, 30, of Shibnagar village in Natore, and Md Saidul Mondol, 32, of Char Mirkamari village in the upazila. Md Abdul Hai, officer in-charge of Ishwardi police station, said the boiler exploded with a big bang when Sajedul and Saidul were boiling paddy at the mill at Boroichora village around 10:00am. Sajedul and Saidul died on the spot, the OC said.

Launch strike called off

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Launch services on Dhaka-Patuakhali route resumed yesterday after six days of strike. Owners of double decker launches withdrew their strike at noon after 'fruitful' talks with local political leaders and administration. Md Mahbub Uddin, chairman of BWTA said, local political leaders including lawmaker, administrator of district council, municipality mayor and administration on Tuesday night assured the aggrieved parties of lawful action against the extortionists as soon as possible. In case of no action in time we will go for tougher programmes, he added. The double decker launches on the route went on strike on Thursday after a few ruling party men assaulted a launch supervisor at Patuakhali launch terminal for refusing to pay illegal toll.

JCD leader arrested

UNB, Jessore

A local leader of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) was arrested at Chormara Dighirpar in the town on Tuesday evening. Police raided the area and arrested Marufuzzaman Kanchan, vice president of district unit JCD. Police said he was arrested in connection with a case filed for a clash at Government MM College on November 27. Two groups of JCD activists blasted bombs and also fired shots during the clash. Mehedi Hasan, district unit JCD president, later filed a case with Kotwali Model PS against eight people, including Kanchan.