

TANGAIL-8 BY-ELECTION

AL aspirant's men block road demanding ticket

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail  
 Supporters of Abdul Malek, one of the ruling Awami League (AL) aspirants in Tangail-8 (Sakhipur-Basail) by-election, yesterday blocked Tangail-Basail Road for an hour, demanding party ticket for Malek.  
 Several hundred AL men first formed a human chain at Basail bus stand and the blocked the road at around 1:30pm, creating a tailback of hundreds of vehicles on both directions of the road.  
 They, however, withdrew the programme on request of local senior AL leaders.  
 The parliamentary seat fell vacant after its lawmaker Shawkat Momen Shajahan died in cardiac arrest on January 20.  
 Besides Abdul Malek, former general manager of

Bangladesh Bank and son of fell late Shawkat Momen Shajahan, Anupom Shajahan, joint secretary of Tangail district unit AL Zoaherul Islam, assistant secretary of central subcommittee of AL Ahtul Mahmud, college teacher Sayeed Azad and lawyer Abdur Rashid are seeking AL ticket for the by-election.  
 The bypoll is scheduled to be held on March 23.  
 Besides AL, Jatiya Party (Ershad) and Abdul Kader Siddique-led Krishak Shramik Janata League (KSJL) will take part in the by-election, sources said.  
 The last date for submission of nomination papers for the poll is today.  
 Scrutinizing of nomination papers will take place on February 26 while the last date for withdrawal of nomination papers is March 6.



As there is no permanent Shaheed Minar near their workplace, labourers of the warehouse of Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC) at Shibganj in Thakurgaon Sadar upazila place wreaths at a temporary one they made with banana trees in front of the godown, paying homage to the language martyrs on Friday.

Production resumes at Madhyapara mine

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Rock production, which remained suspended at Madhyapara hard rock mine for three months, will resume today.  
 Mine officials said fresh manpower recruited by Germania Trest Consortium [GTC], a Belarus-based company, will start rock production today.  
 The company signed an agreement with Madhyapara Granite Mining Company Limited (MGMCL) on September 2 last year for mine management, production and maintenance for six years.  
 During the period, the GTC will produce at least nine million tonnes of rock, official said.

Rock production at the mine came to a halt on November 25 last year as 308 miners and workers employed under Blue Star Company went on an indefinite strike to realise their five-point demand including 20 percent dearness allowance, abolition of the system of employment of workers and miners through outsourcing companies, reinstatement of the jobs of eight retrenched miners and regularisation of job of diploma engineers.  
 With the end of MGMCL's agreement with Blue Star Company on January 31 this year, all workers and miners recruited by the company have lost their jobs.  
 On January 27, GTC

started hiring fresh manpower. The company has so far recruited 189 workers and miners, MGMCL officials said.  
 Contacted, Syed Abul Fazal Md Nazmul Ahsan Haider, managing director of Madhyapara Granite Mining Company Ltd, said they handed over the mine to GTC authorities on Thursday. The company will resume rock production on Sunday, he added.  
 Zabeed Siddiqui, general manager of Germania Corporation Ltd, a local associate organisation of GTC, said 189 fresh workers and miners joined their duties on Thursday. The company will recruit 140 more workers and miners by March 2, he added.



Industries Minister Amir Hossain Amu inaugurates a daylong festival, marking the third founding anniversary of Barisal University on the campus yesterday.

BCL leader rescued after 23 days

UNB, Jessore

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) rescued local Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) leader Foyzal Khan from a place at Boro Baliadangi on the Jessore-Magura Highway early Friday after 23 days of his alleged abduction from the capital.  
 Son of Sarwar Khan of Ghope Central Road area in the town, Foyzal Khan, 36, is vice-president of Jessore district unit of BCL.  
 Assistant Superintendent of Police Mozammel Haque of Rab-6 Jessore camp, said early Friday, noticing a small gathering of people at Boro Baliadangi on the highway, a Rab patrol team rushed to the point.  
 As soon as the Rab team reached the spot, the people, numbering 4/5, got away.  
 The elite force then saw Foyzal lying with his hands and legs tied with rope.  
 Foyzal was main accused in the case for killing local Jubo League leader Shipon alias 'Tak' Shipon.

Parvina's killers still remain scot-free

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

Six days have elapsed since the recovery of a woman's body in Sadar upazila, but police are yet to trace her killers.  
 Police recovered Parvina Khatun's body, with around 28 stab wounds in the torso, from the upazila's Rahmatpur rail gate point on Monday morning and sent it to Jessore Medical College Hospital for autopsy.  
 The previous evening, Parvina's husband Mohammad Khokon went to her father's residence in Enayetpur village in Jhenidah's Kaliganj upazila and brought her to his residence in Baliaghata in Jessore Sadar upazila, according to the case statement.  
 Parvina's brother, Abdus Sattar, who filed the case, said that his sister had been staying at her father's residence since February 13, after Khokon beat up and forced Parvina out of his house.



Parvina Khatun

Khokon used to frequently torture her for dowry since they got married four years ago. It was the second marriage for both of them, added Sattar.  
 The case, filed with Kotwali Police Station, accuses Khokon, son of Jaigir Fokir; his sister Rebeka Khatun, his nephew Rassel, son of Abdul Khaliq; and three/ four unnamed others.  
 "Police are showing indifference to the case," said Sattar.  
 However, Kotwali Police Station sub-inspector Jamal Uddin said, they have already launched drives to arrest the accused.

SPOTLIGHT: UPAZILA POLLS

Campaign heats up in 5 Noakhali upazilas

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

Aspirants are moving door to door seeking votes as elections in five out of nine upazilas in the district will be held on February 27.  
 Twenty-two candidates will contest for chairman, 22 for vice-chairman and 11 for female vice-chairman posts on the day.  
 In Companiganj upazila, Ahsan Ullah Palash (BNP), Mizanur Rahman Badol (AL), and Humayun Kabir (Independent) to vie for chairman post.  
 Anwar Pasha Chowdhury (AL) and Jahangir Alam (BNP), Arjuman Parveen (Independent), Md. Abu Bakar Siddique (Independent), Nilufa Momin (AL), Shamima Akhter (19 parties) and Rashida Parveen (Independent) to vie for vice-chairman post.  
 In Sonaimuri upazila, AFM Babul (AL), Khondkar Ruhul Amin (AL rebel), Md. Anwarul Hoque Kamal (BNP), Md. Shakawat Hossain Saku (BNP rebel),

(AL) and Bibi Joynob (AL) and Sahana Akhter (BNP) are vice-chairman aspirants.  
 In Sadar upazila, Md. Shehab Uddin Shaheen (AL), Mahbub Alamgir Alo (BNP), M H Shwaktot Reza Arman Chowdhury (AL rebel), A S M Moniruzzaman (Independent), Md. Solim Ullah (JSD Inu), Md. Habibur Rahaman Royal (Independent) to fight for chairman post.  
 Deldar Uddin Chowdhury (AL), Liakot Ali Khan (BNP), Kazi Janiat Hossain (Independent), Md. Amir Hossain (Independent), Md. Nur Hossain (Independent), Md. Abu Bakar Siddique (Independent), Nilufa Momin (AL), Shamima Akhter (19 parties) and Rashida Parveen (Independent) to vie for vice-chairman post.  
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Abu Naim Wajer Mohammad (Independent) and Md. Belal Hossain will contest for chairman post.  
 Md. Nizam Uddin (AL), Md. Sahab Uddin (19 parties), Alamgir Kabir (BNP rebel), Iqbal Hossain (Independent), Saleh Ahmed (Independent), Md. Alamgir Hossain (BNP rebel), Md. Nurul Alam (BNP rebel), Md. Fakru Islam (BNP rebel), Parveen Akhter (BNP) and Rashida Islam (AL) are vice-chairman aspirants.  
 In Chatkhil upazila, Jahangir Kabir (AL), Md. Anwar Hossain (BNP), Ahmed Hossain (AL rebel) and Sajjad Ahmed Chowdhury (AL rebel) are chairman candidates.  
 HM Ali Taher (AL), Md. Mohiuddin (19 parties), Nazmul Alam (JP), Rojina Akhter (AL) and Sharmin Akhter (BNP) will contest for vice-chairman post.  
 Nine lakh 35 thousand 7 hundred and 50 voters will cast their votes in 367 centres, official sources said.

AL expels 2 'rebels'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Awami League has expelled its two local leaders for contesting upazila polls in Ranishankoil upazila, violating party decision.  
 Abdul Quader, general secretary of Ranishankoil upazila AL was expelled for contesting for the post of upazila chairman while upazila AL member Babar Ali was ousted for contesting for UZ vice-chairman post as 'rebels'.  
 The expulsion decision was taken yesterday at a district AL committee's meeting held at the party office in the town with district unit president Ramesh Chandra Sen in the chair.  
 The meeting also decided to ask central BCL to take action against its central vice-president who contested for chairmanship in Ranishankoil upazila, ignoring the party's decision.  
 The meeting also decided to expel former president of Haripur upazila AL and also seating UZ chairman Shamim Ferdous Tagore and former upazila unit organising secretary Md. Jamal if they did not withdraw their candidacy for UZ chairmanship in Haripur within February 24.  
 Among others, acting general secretary of district unit AL Dipak Kumar Roy, vice-president Mokbul Hossain Babu, were present.

FEB 27 POLLS IN PIROJPUR

Jamaat, Hindus 'deciding factors' in 2 upazilas

HABIBUR RAHMAN, Pirojpur

Voters belonging to Jamaat-e-Islami are likely to play an important role in electing the chairman of Kawkhali upazila parishad in the district while the candidates in Nazirpur upazila are apparently looking to Hindu voters as the deciding factor for winning in the February 27 election.  
 Six candidates are competing for the chairman post in Kawkhali upazila where around 10,000 among 47,035 voters are adherents of Jamaat.  
 As there are two candidates from both Awami League (AL) and BNP for the chairman post, the votes of the two parties will be divided.  
 The situation leaves the possible winner of Jamaat votes in an advantageous situation.  
 BNP-led 19-party alliance backed candidate SM Ahsan Kabir, also present upazila chairman, is hopeful of getting all the Jamaat votes in the election.  
 Abu Sayd Mia Monu is the rebel candidate of BNP.  
 Neither of AL backed Moniruzzaman Talukder

Poltan and its 'rebel' candidate Abdus Shahid has any possibility of getting votes of Jamaat supporters.  
 Nimai Mondal and Humayun Kabir Talukder Raju are independent candidates in the upazila.  
 In Nazirpur upazila, among 1,16,684 voters, around 36,000 are Hindus who are likely to be deciding factor in electing the upazila chairman from four candidates for the post.  
 Both of AL backed MA Malek Bepary and 'rebel' candidate Dijdas Halder have expressed hope of winning with the votes from AL supporters and Hindus in general.  
 Malek Bepary is present chairman of Siramkathi union parishad (UP) while Dijdas Halder is two times former chairman of Dirgha UP in the upazila.  
 Enaet Hossain Khan is another 'rebel' candidate from AL in the race for the upazila chairman post.  
 BNP backed chairman candidate in the upazila, Md Nazrul Islam Khan is also hopeful of winning with support from party adherents as well as general voters from both the communities.

5 BNP men hurt in attack allegedly by AL activists

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

At least five activists and workers of BNP were injured as the fellows of an AL candidate swooped on them during an election campaign in Sadar upazila yesterday.  
 BNP Sadar upazila chairman candidate Mosharruf Hossain Pustee alleged at a press conference that people of AL leaders Noor Hossain Bhuiyan and Ataur Rahman Bhuiyan obstructed and attacked the poll campaigners at Munshirhat several times, injuring himself and four other members of his party.  
 He also termed the five unions of Mollakandi, Adhora, Shiloi, Char Keowar and Banglabazar as 'risky' and demanded strong security including temporary police camps in those areas till February 27 upazila polls.

34 BNP-Jamaat men sued in Atghoria for post-poll violence

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Two cases were filed against 34 BNP-Jamaat men, including the newly elected chairman of Atghoria Upazila Parishad, following a post-poll violence at Jumaikhiri village in the upazila on Friday.  
 The supporters of newly elected chairman Maulana Johurul Islam of Jamaat-e-Islami and defeated chairman candidate Md Shahidul Islam Ratan of Awami League locked in a clash after an unidentified gang set fire to AL supporter Md Rafikul Islam at the village in the morning.  
 At least ten people were injured and five houses and two motorbikes were vandalised during the clash.  
 Later, Rafikul Islam filed a case with Atghoria Police Station, accusing eight BNP-Jamaat men of setting fire to his house.  
 Local AL leader Md Nikhil

Kumar filed another case with the police station the same day, accusing 26 BNP-Jamaat men, including newly elected UZ chairman Maulana Johurul Islam, of vandalising houses and motorbikes.  
 Officer-in-Charge Md Monirul Islam of Atghoria Police Station said they arrested three of the accused-- Md Ajgar Ali, Md Azimuddin and Md Abdul Hamid--from the village on Friday while the rest had gone into hiding.  
 We are trying to arrest the rest of the accused in the cases, the OC added. The arrestees were yesterday produced in Pabna court that sent them to jail.  
 Contacted over cellphone, newly elected upazila chairman Maulana Johurul Islam said AL men attacked his supporters at the village without provocation.  
 He demanded withdrawal of the 'false' cases filed against BNP-Jamaat men.

SNIPPETS

Boy tortured 'by BSF'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

A Bangladeshi teenage boy was tortured allegedly by Indian Border Security Force (BSF) at Mondumala border point in Baliadangi upazila early yesterday. The victim is Md Alamgir, 15, son of Bahas Ali of Ratnai village. Locals said a BSF team caught Alamgir and beat him up mercilessly, leaving him seriously injured when he was crossing the border area to return home.

Strike at Islamic University

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

No classes were held at Islamic University (IU) yesterday due to the strike called by Jatyiatabadi Chhatra Dal. However, pre-scheduled examinations in different departments were held, said campus sources. JCD men halted six out of 38 buses carrying students at several points in Kushtia and Jhenidah towns in the morning. On Friday, JCD IU unit called a two-day strike, demanding immediate release of its general secretary Rasedul Islam, who was arrested on January 29 for his alleged involvement in torching a university bus on January 12.

Outlaw arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chuadanga

Police arrested an alleged outlaw in Jibonnagar upazila yesterday. The arrestee is Ali Mortuja Thandu, 40, a regional leader of outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (MLJ) Jonojuddha and son of Abdur Rahman of Hasadah Boddonathpur village in the upazila. Officer in-charge Shikdar Moshir Rahman of Jibonnagar police station said Thandu was accused in several cases including for robbery, extortion and arms.

3 missing in boat capsized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Three passengers went missing as a boat capsized in River Brahmaputra at Barober char in Kurigram district. They are Bablu Munshi, 43, Phool Mia, 45, of Gaibandha Sadar upazila and Hasen Ali, 50, of Sunderganj upazila. The officer in-charge of Gaibandha Sadar police station said as soon as the boat carrying over 100 devotees returning from a Urs mahfil at Kheter char in Baxiganj Upazila reached near Barober char, it hit a shoal. Ten passengers, who travelled on the rooftop of the boat, fell into the water. Of them, three remained missing. However, the rest managed to swim at the shore.

Criminals set school on fire

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Criminals set a school to fire at Lakhamipur village in Kumarkghali upazila early yesterday. Two rooms of Lakhamipur Government Primary School and 12 pairs of benches were burned down in the incident. Palash Kumar Dash, in-charge of Chourangi police camp, police were investigating the matter.

Arms, ammo seized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj

Members of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) recovered two pistols, three magazines and 10 of bullets from Kironganj border in Shibganj upazila early yesterday. Major Mizanur Rahman, deputy commander of BGB-9 battalion, said, a gang of smugglers along with arms entered the country's territory through Kironganj border at about 2:30 am. Sensing the presence of the border guards, the smugglers managed to flee leaving behind the arms and ammunition.

Young girl strangled

UNB, Joypurhat

A young girl has been strangled by criminals at Rajkanda in Akkelpur upazila. Police recovered the body of Rima, daughter of Dilbar Ali, from a bamboo cluster at the village on Friday morning. Police and locals said Rima went out of the house on Thursday morning to learn the holy Quran at a local madrasa and had not returned since then. Locals found the body of Rima with the neck tied with a scurf at the bamboo cluster near her house and informed police. Victim's mother Achhia Akter said Rima was supposed to be married with one Abu Bakar, son of Rafiqul Islam of Taluch Khapara village in Dupchachia upazila of Bogra district, on February 28. OC of Akkelpur PS Rezaus Sadique Reza said the girl might have been strangled in a pre-planned way.