

Social challenges hold

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which means most women entrepreneurs are successfully running their businesses, said Syed Abdul Momen, head of SME banking, at the Brac Bank headquarter.

About the challenges women entrepreneurs face, he said paperwork becomes difficult for them since they are new to business.

"They often end up bribing government officials to get trade licences and tax identifications number," he said.

Appreciating the government initiatives to encourage female entrepreneurs, Nazneen Ahmed, a researcher at Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, said newcomers still face difficulties in transforming their ideas into reality.

They lack the know-how of making business plans and proposals, she added.

Besides, to get loans, they have to pass an evaluation by banks where they need to show records of an operational business for at least one year.

"But many of them need money to start a business. So, they cannot use these opportunities," Nazneen added.

The government can allocate a separate fund for new entrepreneurs -- to spend on training, logistical support, legal counselling and on disbursing loans -- without any guarantee of repayment, said Priti Chakraborty, director of Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

"More women would then start businesses. Even if they face initial hiccups, they would help generate employment," she added.

For overseas employment, the government signed an agreement with Saudi Arabia in 2015 to send women to work as housemaids. Until October this year, over 2.3 lakh women have gone to Saudi Arabia for work.

However, 7,000 of them returned after being tortured, injured, raped and at least five impregnated, said Brac's Head of Migration Programme, Shariful Islam.

Women jobseekers must go through screening and training so that they can go for skilled employment where they would get higher pay, respect and legal protection.

"The percentage of returnees may seem negligible but there is no survey on the wellbeing of female migrant workers there. Lack of remedy for those who return traumatised, with broken limbs, or impregnated is troubling," Shariful added.

Women have had opportunities to receive training but experts say those were not enough.

"She Power Project", launched by the government's ICT division in 2017, will continue until June next year to train 10,500 women on ICT. On completion, they will be given Tk 20,000 each to buy a laptop and be placed at local organisations to gather practical experience, before they start their own businesses.

The ICT division ran another project to train 14,460 women between March 2014 and June 2015 on ICT and freelancing.

All these efforts have not been successful in bringing more women out of their social and familial boundaries as economic indicators suggest.

Safety and other issues that limit women can be addressed by engaging and encouraging the private sector and by offering incentives like tax redemption for having a day-care on company premises, experts say.

A good example of income generation might be Joyeeta Foundation. Once its under-construction building is ready, it will cater to women entrepreneurs with facilities for a day-care and a place to display their products.

Founded in 2011 under the women and children affairs ministry, Joyeeta is currently located on two rented floors at Rapa Plaza in Dhanmondi, Dhaka -- is working with 180 rural women's groups across the country. The entire operation is run by women.

As many as 17,000 women showcase their products, like garments, handicrafts and food through Joyeeta. The organisation bears 20 percent of the rent with the rest taken care of by the government, said Kamal Hossain, deputy director of Joyeeta Foundation.

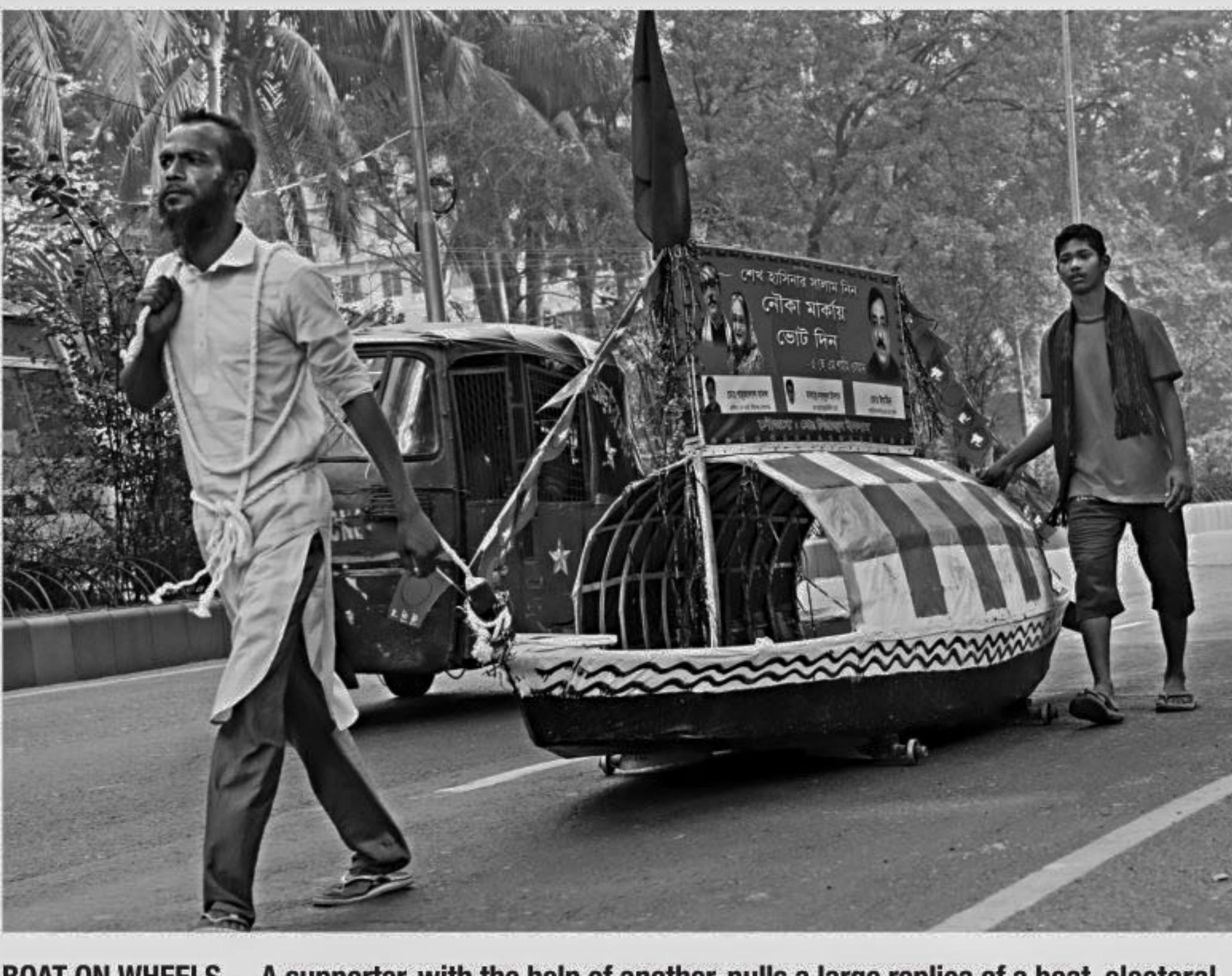


PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

BOAT ON WHEELS... A supporter, with the help of another, pulls a large replica of a boat, electoral symbol of Awami League, on a road in the High Court area in Dhaka yesterday.

Race between uncle and nephew

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will not support either of the two candidates from the Maijbhandari clan due to ideological differences," Azim said, adding, "They told us that had there been a candidate from AL, they would have fully supported him."

"We'll sit with Hefajat leaders and request them to vote for the 'boat' symbol, overlooking who the candidate is," he said.

Najibul said, "Although Saifuddin is a member of our family, followers of Maijbhandari ideology will vote for me. He may get some votes with the 'candle' symbol, but he is being discussed because he is my nephew, not the other way around."

He also claimed, "We have ideological differences with Hefajat but our personal relationship is good."

VOTERS CONCERNED BY VIOLENCE

Meanwhile, many voters in the constituency are anxious about possible polls-day violence, considering the number of attacks and clashes in the last few days.

Visiting the upazila on Friday, this correspondent found locals reluctant to talk about the upcoming national election. "We don't know what will happen on election day, as a number of clashes took place in the upazila centring campaigns," said Md Idris, a trader of Bibirhat Bazar.

On December 11, supporters of AL-led alliance-

nominated candidate Najibul Bashar Maijbhandari locked in clash with followers of AL rebel candidate ATM Payarul Islam at Nanupur Bazar. The clash left four people with bullet injuries.

On December 14, supporters of BNP candidate Azim Ullah Bahar were attacked while conducting campaign at the upazila's Heyanko Bazar. On December 23, Bahar and other BNP leaders and activists were attacked at Takirhat Bazar; 20 of them, including Bahar, were injured.

Contacted, Azim Ullah Bahar said, "Ruling party goons are repeatedly attacking our activists... They even attacked and injured me. Police is not taking any action against the attackers. Instead, they are harassing our men by conducting drives at their homes and arresting them without warrant."

"Under these circumstance, I'm worried about the fairness of the polls. If a fair election is held, I will win by a huge margin," he added.

Najibul denied the allegations. "We are not attacking anyone... They [Bahar and Saifuddin] are spreading lies about Bangabandhu and AL. So the locals got angry and chased them... Some of them were injured in the chase and counter-chase."

Asked, Babul Akter, officer-in-charge of Fatikchhari Police Station, denied the allegation of wholesale arrest. "We arrest only those who are accused in specific cases," he said.

NEWS IN brief

Bullet-riddled body of man found in Cumilla

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cumilla

A man was found dead with his body riddled with bullets on the bank of the river Gumti in Cumilla yesterday.

Locals found the body of the man, who was shot in the head and hand, at Char Viralla in Debidwar upazila, said police.

Police recovered the body after being informed by the locals, said Jahirul Anwar, officer-in-charge of Debidwar Police Station.

The identity of the deceased could not be ascertained immediately, said the OC.

Police sent the body to Cumilla Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Haroon Al-Rashid passes away

CITY DESK

Md Haroon Al-Rashid, a retired country manager of Biman Bangladesh Airlines, died on Sunday, says a press release.

He is survived by his two sons -- Dr Mamun Al-Rashid and Amin Al-Rashid.



Haroon Al-Rashid's funeral prayers will be held at 1:00pm today at Baitul Aman Masjid on Road 7 in the capital's Dhammondi. A miliad mahfil will be held at their residences on Friday after the evening prayers.

Ershad's campaign yet

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voters of Rangpur-3 and found that although the elderly are still supporting JP, the young and first-time voters are refusing to support and vote for Ershad.

Rakibul Islam, 21, a student of Rangpur Polytechnic Institute, said that he does not want to waste his vote by helping elect someone who never works for the constituency.

"We want someone new, who will consider our interests and work for the development of the constituency," he said.

Two students of Begum Rokeya University also echoed the sentiments.

A total of 4,41,671 candidates would cast their votes in the constituency at 175 vote centres, though electronic voting machines.

Abdul Alim, commissioner of Rangpur Metropolitan Police, said all necessary steps have been taken to ensure a fair election. "There are no threats but we are ready to face any situation," he added.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Executive Engineer
PWD E/M Division-I, Chattogram
Phone: 031-723125

Date: 24-12-2018

e-Tender Notice (OTM)

This is to notify all concerned that the following tenders are invited in the National e-GP Portal:

Sl. No.	Tender ID No.	Name of work	Publishing date & time	Closing date & time
1	265239	Installation of connecting cable at different ward and OT of 150 KVA Auto Diesel Generator for Ancillary Building and Commissioning of that Generator as well as yearly fuel supply.	27 Dec 2018 23:00:00	13 Jan 2019 12:00:00
2	265238	Replacement of old burntout underground Feeder Cable & Feeder Box for ICU & SCANU from 300 KVA Generator to AC Plant of Chattogram Medical College Hospital.	27 Dec 2018 23:00:00	13 Jan 2019 12:00:00
3	265237	Renovation of Wom-out Air conditioning system at 5 OTs including Gynaec OT at Chattogram Medical College Hospital.	27 Dec 2018 23:00:00	13 Jan 2019 12:00:00
4	265236	Replacement of old burntout Feeder Cable & Feeder Box from 2000 KVA Sub Station to A-Block of Chattogram Medical College Hospital.	27 Dec 2018 23:00:00	13 Jan 2019 12:00:00
5	265235	Replacement of old pump motor set with a new 15 HP centrifugal pump motor set as well as installation of control starter & breaker; and installation of new fire extinguishers at different points as well as refilling of expired ones.	27 Dec 2018 23:00:00	13 Jan 2019 12:00:00
6	265234	Special repair work of old burnt-out MDB & FDB at ground floor of Chattogram Medical College Hospital.	27 Dec 2018 23:00:00	13 Jan 2019 12:00:00

These are online tenders where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP helpdesk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Md. Sarifuzzaman
Executive Engineer
PWD E/M Division-I, Chattogram

GD-2903

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
National Academy for Educational Management (NAEM)
Secondary and Higher Education Division
Ministry of Education
NAEM Road, Dhanmondi Dhaka-1205
www.naem.gov.bd

Dated: 24 / 12 / 2018

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following goods. Details are given below:

Sl. No.	Package No & Tender ID	Description of goods	Tender Last selling (Date & Time)	Tender Closing (Date & Time)	Tender Opening (Date & Time)
1	NAEM/e-GP-02/Classroom Automation/2018-19 ID No. 265719	Classroom Automation, Interior goods & Installation	08-Jan-2019 13:01	08-Jan-2019 14:01	08-Jan-2019 14:01

This is an online Tender. Where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender registration in the National e-GP system Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The tender security for this tender need to be submitted/deposited through any registered Bank branches until the dates as mentioned in tender notice in e-GP portal.

Further, information and guide lines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Kamal

(Prof. Dr. Md. Mustafa kamal)

Director (Admn. & Fin)

Phone: 55167408

e-mail: info@naem.gov.bd



সাধারণ বীমা কর্পোরেশন

ভাড়া আদায় ও প্রদান সেল (৫ম তলা)

৩৩, দিলক্ষণা বা/এ, ঢাকা-১০০০।

অফিস ভাড়া বিভাগ

General Manager

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প্রশাসন, আইন ও ভাড়া (৫ম তলা)

ফোনঃ ৯৫৬১২০৮৬

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