

Encourage voters to come to polling stations: EC Rashida

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Election Commissioner Rasheda Sultana urged the candidates in Pabna to ensure a conducive environment for voters so that they can cast their votes freely.

“The Election Commission is committed to ensuring voters’ safety. To this end, we have enacted laws specifically focused on safeguarding the well-being of voters,” she said in a views-exchanging programme with candidates at Pabna deputy commissioner office.

The EC bears the responsibility of ensuring a free, fair, and credible election, but candidates have the role in bringing voters to the centres, she said.

Candidates of five constituencies were also present in the meeting. At the event, independent candidates claimed that the ruling party candidates are hiring goons who are moving around in the city and threatening the voters.

The local election officials did not do anything in this regard except issuing some show-cause notices, said Abdul Hamid Master, a district AL leader, also an independent candidate in Pabna-3 constituency.

Independent candidate Prof Abu Sayeed echoed the same, while raising concerns over a level playing field. He pointed out that his rival from AL is receiving high-security, but he is not.

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The battle of two Badshas Campaigning heats up in Rajshahi-2 as AL grassroots supporting independent

ANWAR ALL, Rajshahi

The Rajshahi-2 (Rajshahi city) constituency has become the battleground of two Badshas.

Bangladesh Workers’ Party’s general secretary and three-time lawmaker Fazle Hossain Badsha is vying in the polls with Awami League’s “boat” symbol from the AL-led 14-party alliance.

Meanwhile, AL’s Rajshahi city unit’s senior vice president Shafiqur Rahman Badsha, a teacher by profession, is contesting independently with the symbol “scissor”.

While Fazle Hossain’s chances of winning largely depend on the support of AL’s grassroots leaders and activists in the constituency, he has been unable to bag their support till yesterday.

Instead, the local AL men are siding with Shafiqur Rahman, according to insiders of both AL and Workers’ Party.

Since the beginning of electioneering on Monday, no local AL activists were seen at Fazle Hossain’s campaign. They were seen working for Shafiqur Rahman.

“Local Awami League leaders and activists are supporting me to protect the party’s existence in the city,” said Shafiqur Rahman.

“I don’t think it is right to say that the 14-party alliance will break if the ruling party men do not support the candidate with ‘boat’ symbol in the election here. The alliance was formed to fight the anti-liberation forces together, it is not an electoral alliance,” he also said.

Other aspirants from the seat include Saiful Islam Swapan of Jatiya Party, Abdullah Al Masud Siddiki Shibli of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, Yasir Alif Bin Habib of Bangladesh Sangskritik Mukti Jote, Md Kamrul Hasan of



Fazle Hossain Badsha



Shafiqur Rahman Badsha

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PHOTO: BSS

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina speaks at an interactive dialogue with the nation’s youth yesterday. The Center for Research and Information organised the event as part of its “Let’s Talk” series. Over 300 young individuals, from rural and urban backgrounds, took part in the event, moderated by Dr Senjuti Saha, eminent Bangladeshi scientist. The event was held at Dhaka district unit Awami League office in Tejgaon.

Four-way contest for Chattogram-2

AL, independent, two party chiefs in the mix

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Chattogram

Chattogram-2 (Fatikchhari) constituency will witness a four-way contest in the upcoming elections. The Awami League candidate Khadizatul Anwar Sony, a lawmaker from a reserved women’s seat and daughter of former lawmaker Rafiqul Anwar, is set to face off against the incumbent

the region.

Contacted, Nazibul said he was confident about winning.

“I won in this constituency four times in 1991, 1996, 2014 and 2018. I can feel the pulse of the voters,” he said.

“I have turned Fatikchhari from a locality of terrorism to one of peace, and so voters will cast their vote for me,” Nazibul added.

A former chairman of Suabil union parishad of the upazila, however, opined that AL candidate Sony and independent candidate Abu Tayab will mainly emerge as the top contenders from the seat.

Contacted, Tayab said he would surely win if the election is held in a free and fair manner.

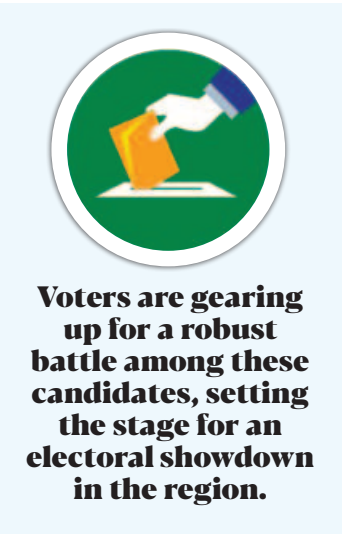
“I have been in politics since my student life and

was with the locals in their weal and woe. Voters will cast their votes for me,” he said.

Contacted, BSP chairman Saifuddin claimed they did not have any ties with the ruling party.

“We are contesting from our party with our symbol. People want a change and so they would cast vote not for the symbol but for the candidate,” he said.

AL candidate Khadizatul could not be reached for comments.



Animal rescuer dies while trying to save parrot

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An animal rescuer lost his life while trying to save a parrot entangled in electric wires in Dhaka’s Keraniganj.



The incident happened in Hasnabad Insaf Bazar area of South Keraniganj around 6:00pm on Thursday.

Two other members of the voluntary organisation “RobinHood The Animal Rescuer” were injured in the incident.

Tashfian Atif, 22, succumbed to his injuries at Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery early yesterday, said Inspector Bachchu Mia of Dhaka Medical College Police Outpost.

Atif’s father Nazmul Hossain from Lalbagh said his son – who passed HSC examinations from Dhanmondi Ideal College – got involved in this voluntary work out of love for wildlife.

Afzal Khan, head of RobinHood The Animal Rescuer, said their office is located in Khilgaon. They rescue endangered animals.

On Thursday afternoon,

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DINAJPUR, RANGPUR AL, independents dominate polls campaigns

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

With electioneering going on in full swing, Awami League and independent candidates were seen conducting their campaigns in a vibrant and festive ambience in the constituencies of Dinajpur and Rangpur.

Contenders from other parties, including Jatiya Party, however, were barely visible.

This raises questions regarding JP’s strategy and preparedness for the upcoming election.

Apart from AL, JP and independent candidates, aspirants from Trinamool BNP, National People Party, Bangladesh Workers’ Party, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, Bangladesh Congress and Bangladesh Supreme Party are also contesting from the constituencies.

Among the independent candidates, many leaders of different parties including AL and JP are contesting the election. For instance, former JP leader Moshir Rahman Ranga is contesting from Rangpur-1 as an independent.

In Dinajpur, 26 aspirants are vying in six constituencies. Of them, JP candidates include Shahinur Rahman and Ahmed Sharif Rubel from Dinajpur-1 and 3 respectively.

Besides, five AL leaders are contesting independently from five Dinajpur constituencies.

Since no AL leader is contesting as independent from Dinajpur-2 (Biral and Bochaganj), things look easier for Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury, the AL candidate.

With electioneering having started from Monday, Dinajpur became flooded with posters and banners of AL and its independent candidates. However, the candidates of other political parties are yet to start their campaigns properly, with many of them yet to show up in their election areas.

Visiting different areas of Sadar, Biral,

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ROSE GARDEN to regain its glory

Renovation work to begin soon, museum opens for visitors next June

DIPAN NANDY

Once upon a time, Rose Garden, a grand architectural marvel located in Old Dhaka, used to be a centre for socialisation among the elites.

Adorned with Corinthian Greek motifs, this architectural marvel not only exudes timeless beauty but also witnessed the formation of the Awami League, etching its significance in the narrative of Bangladesh’s political landscape.

The ruling AL government acquired this 22-acre heritage site for Tk 331 crore on September 16, 2018, in a bid to preserve this structure by transforming it into a museum.

Though the mansion was acquired under the Dhaka Mahanagar Jadughar (Dhaka City Museum) project nearly five years ago, the works began this year after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated

the foundation stone of the mansion’s renovation project on July 5.

The project, currently overseen by the ministry of cultural affairs, involves relocation of the museum from the DSCC building to a three-storey structure beside the mansion and renaming it Dhaka Mahanagar Jadughar. National Museum, departments of archeology and architecture, and Shilpakala Academy are also involved in this project.

While the restoration work of the new museum building is almost complete, works to preserve the Rose Garden is yet to begin, observed this correspondent during a recent visit to the place.

The museum work is around 90 percent completed and will be open to visitors from next June, said Md Imrul Chowdhury, director general of the archeology department who is overseeing the project.

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Located in Old Dhaka, the Rose Garden was originally built in 1931. Architectural elegance aside, the building is also tied to the birth of Awami League. It was declared a protected archaeological site on December 21, 1989.

PHOTO: STAR