

# The big fight with big question mark — who shall win?

Next parliament elections: Political activities in Moulvibazar district are gaining momentum with various political leaders busy trying to secure nominations for the major parties in the four parliamentary seats in the district.

From R K Goswami

MOULVI BAZAR, May 5: Political activities in Moulvibazar district are gaining momentum with various political leaders busy trying to secure nominations of the major political parties for contesting in the four parliamentary seats in the district in the next general election. The political climate here has warmed with many new faces announcing their arrival on the political arena in belief that parliament elections are round the corner.

The Awami League (AL) and Jatiya Party (JP) are the powerful parties in the district. It is observed. In the last parliamentary election, AL and JP secured two seats each, while Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) failed to capture any seat. Even Finance Minister (FM) M Saifur Rahman, who has contested in two seats alone from BNP suffered defeat.

Traditionally, Moulvibazar district is always a fertile land for opposition parties. JP was too weak to gain any popularity during its rule. But after mass-revolution in 1990, the JP appeared in the district as a powerful party.

Activities of BNP is too weak as the leaders and workers in the district are busy in different meetings and programmes taken up by the administration. M Saifur Rahman though a BNP backed politician at national level, but he failed to establish this image in the locality. Without any doubt, Saifur Rahman is now a popular personality in Moulvibazar. This performance has been gained from his personal image not from the party or political activities.

Beside this, BNP and its front organisations at different thanas is facing internal strife as well.

Internal strife are also prevailing in the AL, the largest political party in the district. Leaders and workers of AL and its front organisations are divided into small groups.

However, leaders of major parties are yet to make deci-

sions on the nomination of their respective party candidates.

According to local leaders, BNP is facing very difficult situation in giving nomination in three out of four constituencies of the district because none among the candidates seem to be fit to win the election. AL is also in the same position as number of nomination seekers are more than 3 to 4 in each constituency.

BNP may not be able to set strong candidates as there are no active politicians to win in the election race said a local senior leader of the party.

As parliament election is round the corner, Finance Minister (FM) M Saifur Rahman, who has been looking after the party matters in the district is trying to select better candidates in the constituencies. FM reportedly extended his political hand towards JP to close right candidates for BNP. At the initial stage, Rahman successfully attracted Ebadur Rahman Chowdhury MP, who was elected from JP ticket in Moulvibazar-1 constituency. On April-6, this year Chowdhury formally joined BNP.

Such offers from the ruling party was so far rejected by another sitting MP of JP, Nowab Ali Abbas Khan, who was elected from Moulvibazar-2 constituency and Ahad Miah, a powerful leader of JP at Moulvibazar-4 constituency. These two JP leaders rejected the offers through press statements and again expressed their full support and solidarity for the deposed president Ershad his party.

Recent political development on the issue of ensuing parliament election in Moulvibazar district as follows—

Moulvibazar-1 constituency comprising Baralekha thana. After joining of Ebadur Rahman Chowdhury, MP from JP to BNP, there will be two candidates from BNP. Another interested one is Baralekha thana unit President Asad Uddin Batal who was also a

candidate from the party in last election. If one is given nomination, other may be opposed and likely to work against party nominee giving opportunity for other party to win. Batal is still likely to get ticket from BNP for contesting the coming election probably depending on how much money he can spend!

Other possible candidates from different parties are Sirajul Islam (AL), Imam Uddin Ahmed (AL), Abdul Goni (Jamaat). AL nominees are likely to appear as very strong candidates.

Moulvibazar-2 constituency comprising Kulaura thana. Nowab Ali Abbas Khan was elected in last election from JP. A recent offer to join BNP was rejected by Khan through press statements which were published in different national dailies. So, Khan is likely to be a strong candidate from JP in ensuing election.

Sultan Mohammed Monsur Ahmed, a former DUSCU VP and central president of Bangladesh Chhatra League may get AL nomination for contesting the election. Monsur was also a candidate of AL in last election and was defeated with a small margin of vote.

BNP is not expected to do well in this constituency as the party has so far failed to select the right candidate. Late Ataur Rahman Advocate was BNP nominee in last election who obtained 3rd position. However, Advocate Abed Raja, son of former MP and President of central faction of a Muslim League ANM Yousuf, local BNP leader, M A Shaheen may seek BNP ticket for this constituency.

Other possible candidates in this seat are Lutfur Rahman (Left Front), Ilias Uddin Ahmed (NAP) and Sirajul Islam (Jamaat).

Moulvibazar-3 seat comprising of sadar and Rajnagar thana. Whip of the opposition in sitting parliament Azizur Rahman was elected in the last election defeating Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman.

This is an important constituency in the district as the home of FM Saifur Rahman is located in this constituency and district town is also included in this seat.

Saifur Rahman will contest in this seat. He is a popular and strong candidate from BNP.

Azizur Rahman, the sitting MP of AL is likely to get AL ticket once again.

Central leader of the woman wing of JP Nila Chowdhury, former MP Gias Uddin Ahmed Chowdhury, sadar thana President Syed Shahabuddin Ahmed are likely to seek JP nominations for this seat.

Other interested candidates from different parties are Abdul Hoque (Left Front), Golam Muhit Khan (NAP) and Sirajul Islam (Jamaat).

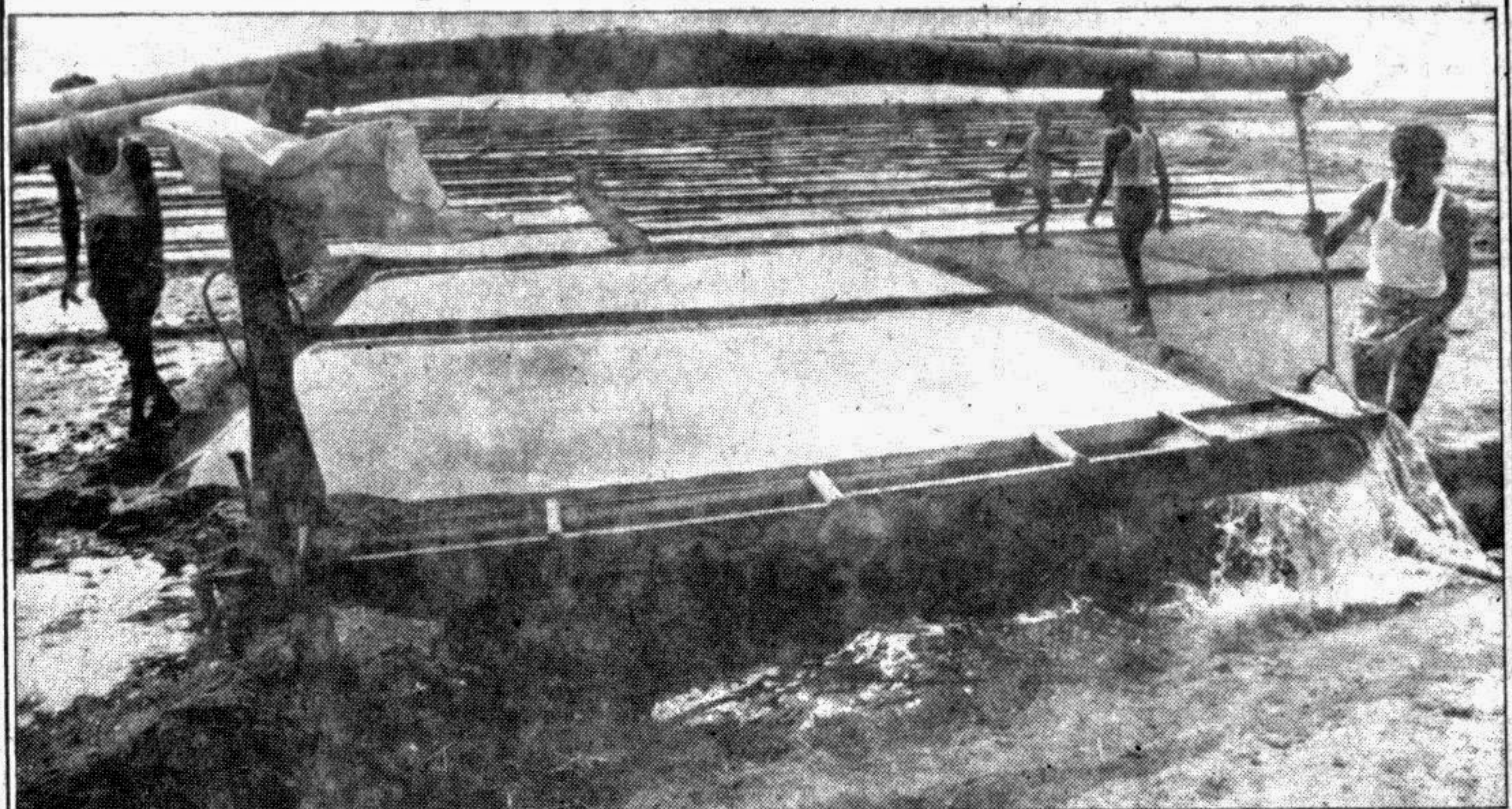
Moulvibazar-4 constituency comprising of Srimongal and Kamalganj thanas. Vice Principal Abdus Shaheed was elected MP from AL ticket in last election. This time, several leaders of AL are interested for contesting with party ticket in next election. They are: Sitting MP Vice Principal Abdus Shaheed, Dr Rama Ranjan Deb, President of Srimongal Pura AL Unit and SK Roy, President of Srimongal thana AL Unit.

BNP is facing difficult situation in giving nomination to candidature in this seat, as there are no suitable candidate to win the election. To tackle the situation, Khaleda Robby MP is likely to get nomination. Beside this, Abdul Wali Siddiquee and former central leader of youth front of JP, now in BNP Abdul Mukit Khan may seek BNP nomination.

JP is a powerful party in this seat. JP nominee, Ahad Miah lost the seat with a very small margin of vote in last election. He may again get JP nomination for the contest.

Political leaders of different parties expressed their views said, there may be close fight between AL and JP in constituency no-1, 2 and 4 while BNP and AL may fight to win in constituency no-3.

## How salt is produced in Maheshkhali Island



Maheshkhali Island (Cox's bazar): Sea water allowed through small canals are being dried in blocks.



A white layer of salt, after drying for about five days, is produced. About 70 to 90 kg of salt is produced from each block.



After processing, the salt is stored underground.



Salt carried in bamboo made baskets are being sent to markets for selling.

All photos by A K M Mohsin



SHLHET: A H Saadat Khan speaking at a condolence meeting arranged to mourn the death of Abdul Bari, eminent social worker and businessman at village Srirampur recently. — Star photo

## 20,000 cases pending in Barisal dist

From Staff Correspondent  
BARISAL, May 5: About 20 thousand cases are pending in 19 courts under the Barisal Judge Court.

Sources said, there are two additional district and session Judge Courts, one 'artha rin court' three sub judge courts, ten magistrate courts and three assistant judge courts in the sadar thana under the district judge court. Nearly twenty thousand cases are pending in these courts. Of these two thousand civil appeals, three thousand criminal case appeals, one thousand criminal revision, about eleven thousand other appeals and more than one thousand other cases.

Besides, there are some election related cases, 'artha rin' court cases including some

## Severe drought prevails in Chuadanga dist

From Our Correspondent

CHUADANGA, May 5: Severe drought is persisting throughout Chuadanga district for a long time.

The scorching heat of the burning sun has made civic life miserable. Frequent power failures has aggravated the situation. The town roads were a deserted look as few dare to come out during day time. Demands for green coconuts and cold drinks are rising.

Farmers throughout the district which was traditionally deficit in food production suffer heavy due to two

special tribunals cases that are yet to be settled.

According to court sources, there is instruction from the ministry concerned that one judge of each court must settle at least six cases every month. In this process about one thousand five hundred cases may be settled every year. But these instructions could not be followed due to shortage of judges and courts. For quick settlement of these cases Barisal Bar Association several times have applied to the concerned authority to increase number of courts and judges here which is yet to be fulfilled.

Till now, thousands of people are coming to the courts often for early settlement of their cases.

successive crop failure this year owing to extreme unfavorable climatic condition. Farmer are apprehending widespread damages to standing IRRI-boro crops and are also doubtful of aus, aman and jute cultivation schemes as the soil has already turned hard like rock with innumerable cracks.

Continued drought accompanied by hot spell has caused the ground water level to fall by 70 in some places feet and as a result the water has totally gone out of the reach.

## Investigation report says JB official issued fake agri-loans

JAMALPUR, May 5: Janata Bank of Boshak Para branch issued fake loan worth over Taka one lakh as agriculture loan in Jamalpur pourashava during the 1988-89 financial year according to official sources.

It is reported that an inquiry body was formed in 1992 to investigate the matter. Later, the body submitted report against former manager, Serajul Haque, officer, Abdus Salam and Abdul Wadud at the Boshak Para branch in the town. But no action have been taken so far for mysterious causes, it is alleged.

The bank's branch disbursed over Taka one lakh among as many as 13 persons at village Haripur and Bonder Para in Jamalpur pourashava after the 1988 devastating flood.

It is alleged that none of the 13 persons received any agriculture loan from the branch. But the bank, according to document, gave loan against these persons.

Bank sources said they

## Timber worth Tk 15 lakh seized

From Staff Correspondent  
SYLHET, May 5: Smuggled timber worth about Taka fifteen lakh were seized by the law enforcing agencies from Kanaighat thana headquarters Monday.

In a raid jointly conducted by BDR, Customs, forests officials and police, the timber was seized from eight timber stores and four saw mills of the area.

## They disappeared 23 years ago

From Our Correspondent  
NARAYANGANJ, May 5: The 24th year of disappearance of Shaheed Salimullah and his younger brother, Shaheed Zahir Hossain, two noted businessmen and social workers of the town, was observed here Monday.

Local collaborators of the Pakistani occupation forces abducted the two brothers from their Deobhagh residence and took them to unknown destination on this day during the country's Liberation War in 1971.

received loan from the branch after 1988 devastating flood.

According to sources the lonees are daylabours and small businessmen. They are not land holders. But the bank disbursed agri-loan, people said, it is quite mysterious.

Recently, the lonees 13 persons submitted a written complaint to the local MP and Deputy Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Md Serajul Haque. The minister gave a written order to the bank for further investigation involving the matter.

Later, another inquiry team, headed by Siddiqur Rahman Manager of the main branch, Janata Bank at Jamalpur was formed. The team after investigation submitted their report against the same bank officials for disbursing of false agri loan.

It is alleged that during the period some bank officials, deliberately collected fake deed, document, name, photo and signatures by brokers and disbursed fake loans.

## Only 400 telephone lines for one lakh people

MADARIPUR, May 5: The town-dwellers of the district are facing problems due to inadequate telephone lines, reports UNB.

According to the official sources, there are at present only 400 telephone lines with the existing exchange which is inadequate to meet the growing demand of over one lakh dwellers.

The commercial activities have increased to a great extent with the upgradation of the sub-division into the full-fledged district and consequently the demand for the new connections has increased manifold.

The dwellers alleged that a large number of applications for new lines have been lying with the local telephone office for a long time.

Local leaders have urged the concerned authorities to take immediate steps to enhance the capacity of the local telephone exchange for the benefit of the flourishing trade and commerce in the district.