

# Aspirant MP candidates vie for party tickets in Magura

**Hossain Seraj, Magura**

With the next general election nearing, some probable candidates in two constituencies in Magura district have started lobbying for party tickets and exchanging greetings with voters.

People are also now gossiping in public places about the probable candidates of leading political parties and their prospects as well. And speculation about the probable candidates for the upcoming parliamentary polls is going around.

Magura district is divided into two constituencies—Magura-1 and Magura-2. Magura-1 consists of nine union parishads in Sadar upazila including the municipality area and Sreepur upazila while Magura-2 consists of parts of Sadar and Shalikhanda and Mohammadpur upazilas.

In the last election held on June 12, 1996, Awami League candidates won the both constituencies. Professor Md Serajul Akbar now represents Magura-1 constituency. He bagged 73 thousand and 543 votes while his nearest rival Jatiya Party candidate got 49 thousand and 594 votes. BNP candidate, former minister Major General (Rtd) Majidul Huq, finished third managing 32 thousand and 621 votes. Jamaat-e-Islami candidate got five thousand and 706 votes.

Incumbent MP Md Serajul Akbar is the most likely candidate for the ruling party in Magura-1. He has already started mass contact programme throughout the constituency. Although Akbar stays in Dhaka, he is seen in remote villages on weekends.

Other probable candidates from the ruling party have also surfaced. District unit general secretary Altaf Hossain, central leader of AL's labourers' front Bangladesh Samik League Ramesh Chandra Roy and local AL leader Advocate Shariful Islam, who is reportedly enjoying the blessings of Forest and Environment Minister Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury.

In the constituency, main opposition BNP has no most likely candidate. A district BNP leader seeking anonymity told this correspondent the party is looking for an acceptable candidate and just waiting for instruction from

high command.

He also said if the four-party opposition alliance fields single candidate the equation will be changed in the constituency as elsewhere in other constituencies.

However, BNP's district unit Senior Vice President Advocate Ahmed Hossain, General Secretary Nazimuddin Ahmed and Vice President Iqbal Akhter Khan are lobbying party leaders for the nomination.

Advocate Hasan Seraj Suja is a probable candidate from Jatiya Party (Ershad). He also has started contacting voters. Other names from the faction of the party are yet to emerge.

Jamaat-e-Islami sources said BM Ershadullah Wahid is the party's likely candidate.

In Magura-2, AL's Biren Shikder is the present MP. In the last polls, he bagged 64 thousand and 208 votes, while BNP candidate former MP Kazi Salmul Huq Kamal got 55 thousand and 204 votes and JP candidate former minister Nitai Roy Chowdhury secured 26 thousand 877 votes. Jamaat candidate obtained 10 thousand and 78 votes.

In the constituency, present MP Advocate Biren Shikder and Shafiquzzaman Bachchu, son of late Asaduzzaman, who represented the constituency for many years, are seeking party nomination. Advocate Biren has already started meeting voters while Shafiquzzaman is busy lobbying big shots. He is reportedly being backed by SA Malek, political advisor to the Prime Minister.

Former MP Kazi Salmul Huq Kamal is highly probable candidate from BNP. Kamal, who is a renowned industrialist, often makes donations to educational institutions, mosques and temples. Other probable names are yet to surface.

Nitai Roy Chowdhury and Advocate Rokonzaman are seeking nomination from Jatiya Party (Ershad). Jamaat has no confirmed candidate in this constituency, although the party candidate got 10 thousand and 78 votes in the last election.

In the next election, according to political observers, main battle will take place between AL and BNP in the constituency.



A farmer uses traditional method to irrigate a cropland at village Kabirpur in Jhenidah district. The growers say the ongoing IRR1-Boro paddy cultivation has been facing setback due to lack of rainwater in the district as elsewhere in the country.

## RDA staff assaulted in Rajshahi

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi**

A group of local hoodlums assaulted three engineers and four employees of Rajshahi Development Authorities (RDA) and damaged two vehicles in which they were travelling in Shalbagan area under Boalia police station in Rajshahi city last week.

Officials said a seven-member RDA team led by Executive Engineer Abdullah-al-Kafi along with a 15-member Ansar team went to the area with two official jeeps to survey a land owned by RDA. When they reached the spot a gang of local miscreants numbering 30-35 armed with sharp weapons attacked them and damaged their vehicles, they added.

They also snatched a mobile phone set from them, the officials said.

A case was lodged under Public Safety Act (PSA) in this connection.

## Three killed in Jhenidah

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah**

Three people have been killed in separate incidents in Jhenidah district.

Bodies of Jamaluddin, 32, and Laitu, 35, residents of Betbaria village under Moheshpur upazila were found in two separate places on Saturday with stab injuries.

Body of Laitu was recovered from Itepara under Banograg district in neighbouring India while Jamaluddin's body was found at Moheshpur upazila.

Unidentified hoodlums abducted them from Doharpara area under Moheshpur upazila on April 13.

The relatives of the victims caught a suspect, identified as Shaheen, from Darbeshnager and handed him over to police. According to the confession of Shaheen, police later arrested Liton and Sabuj from the same area.

Meanwhile, police recovered another body from a paddy field at Dadpukuria under the district on Saturday.

The victim was identified as Ehsan Uddin, 30. He was a day-labourer.

**Youth stabbed to death in Mymensingh**

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh**

A young man was stabbed to death in Mymensingh town recently.

The victim was identified as Md Ekramul Hoque, 22, son of Kazi Abdul Hamid of Char Sewhra Nowmohol area of the town.

He was a first year student of local Narirabad College.

Police said he was stabbed in Boundary Road area. A rickshaw puller rushed the victim to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH) in critical condition where attending doctors declared him dead.

A case was lodged.

**50 hurt, 200 houses damaged as storm hits Narsingdi**

**UNB, Narsingdi**

At least 50 people were injured and crops on several hundred acres of land damaged as nor wester accompanied by hailstorm lashed two upazilas in Narsingdi on Wednesday night.

The storm began at 9 pm and continued for about three hours. The affected unions are Nilkha, Char Madhua and Char Aralia of Raipura upazila and Alokballi, Nazarpur and Koriman of Sadar upazila.

Unofficial sources said crops including IRR1-Boro paddy on 30,000 acres of land were damaged and 200 houses collapsed in the storm.

**Six criminals held in Ctg**

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong**

Detective Branch of police in three separate raids arrested six criminals on Thursday and Wednesday in Chittagong.

Acting on a tip-off, DB police raided different parts of the city and arrested five people for their involvement in the theft of ten tons of TS Sheet from different areas of the city.

The TS Sheet worth around Tk 2.5 lakh stolen from port jolly area were recovered by Kotwali thana police from Lalodi Steel Mills factory a few days ago.

The arrested were identified as Md Zakir Hossain, 24, Md Abdul Malek, 42, Md Zakir Hossain, 30, Mohammad Hossain, 36 and Ameer Hossain, 25.

In another raid police arrested one Mohammad Ali, 28, for his involvement in looting money of Acme Laboratories Ltd from Teknaf in Cox's Bazar on Thursday night.

Around Tk 9 lakh was snatched away from Acme official from GEC intersection area in broad day light few months back.

## NEWS SNAPS

### Youth murdered

**UNB, Bogra**

A young man was killed by unidentified assailants at Mokamtala in Shnbganj upazila in Bogra district Friday.

Police said the assailants swooped on Nirmal Chandra, 32, son of Handas Chandra Mohanta of Ramchandrapur Goala village, while he was returning home at about 9 pm. He was stabbed to death. He was thought to have been killed following a land dispute. A case was filed.

### Housewife beaten to death

**UNB, Joypurhat**

A housewife was beaten to death allegedly by her husband at Unihar village in Kalai upazila in Joypurhat district recently.

The dead was identified as Shefal Begum, 25, wife of Fazlur Rahman Mondal. Police said Fazlu beat her wife to death on April 14 following a family quarrel. Victim's husband along with his mother and two brothers went into hiding soon after the incident. A case was filed with police in this regard.

### Five commit suicide

**UNB, Gopalganj**

Five people, three of them women, allegedly committed suicide in Sadar and Kotlajpara upazilas in Gopalganj Wednesday.

Of them, Nimai Roy of Manikhar village in Sadar upazila and Bhabotosh Baroi of village Fulban in Kotlajpara upazila hanged themselves following family feud. Besides, Sumati Kirtonia of village Katalgati, Jyotsna Begum of Sadar upazila and Tripti of Tarakanda in Kotlajpara upazila took their own lives by taking poison. Separate UD cases were filed.

### 3 held in connection with murder

**UNB, Joypurhat**

Police arrested three people from their houses in Kalai upazila on Tuesday in connection with the killing of a man.

The arrested were identified as Rana, 25, Rashid, 27 and Mostafa, 26, of Deugram village. Police said unidentified assailants killed Bachchu Mia on his way home from Punathal of the district on March 12. Later, his body was recovered from Shaheenpukur area at Deugram village.

### Tk 13 lakh valuables stolen

**UNB, Joypurhat**

Valuables worth over Tk 13 lakh were stolen from a trade centre of ITCL at Khetlal Bazaar in Joypurhat on Monday.

Police said mystery shrouded the incident as they put the trade centre under lock and key after Bangladesh Bank lodged a case against Islamic Trade and Commerce Ltd (ITCL). Meanwhile police arrested two people in connection with the theft. They are Bablu, 28, a hotel owner of the bazaar, and Binoy, 32. On confessional statement, police seized 232 pieces of CI sheet from the houses of Phulbar Ali Moksed and Nazimuddin of Mayum village in the same upazila. However, police could not arrest anyone of them.

### Two with firearms arrested

**UNB, Narayanganj**

Two people were arrested along with two firearms from Sadarpur area in Narayanganj town Friday night.

Police said they arrested Bakul Miah, 30, and Ruhul Amin alias Tiger, 35, with a foreign-made revolver, one country-made pipe gun and two rounds of bullet.

### Alleged terrorist held

**UNB, Pabna**

Police arrested an alleged hard-core terrorist of southwestern region from Sujannagar upazila in Pabna on Thursday night. The arrested, identified as Asaduzzaman Dablu, was the leader of Rajban-Kushita region of the outlawed Biplobi Communist Party. He was allegedly involved in the Joukor police camp looting in Rajban. He is also an accused of 20 cases, including murder cases.

Police said on information, they rushed to Chhiuly bridge where Dablu along with 12 of his associates was gossiping at dead of night. Sensing police presence, the terrorists fire at them. Police retaliated with counter fire and arrested Dablu from the spot. Police recovered a shutter gun, one cartridge and three rounds of live bullet from the scene.

### Three robbers nabbed

**UNB, Khulna**

Three people were caught red-handed while committing dacoity at a house in Khulna city's Tutpara area early Thursday.

The armed robbers were held by neighbours when they broke into 'Saikat Villa' at about 3am. They were handed over to police after a mass beating.

### Tk 2.50cr Titas Gas bills due

**UNB, Brahmanbaria**

Titas Gas Distribution and Transmission Company Limited has an outstanding bill of Tk 2.50 crore with different subscribers in Brahmanbaria district. An official said they have so far filed 25 cases to realise Tk 1.75 crore, but are yet to get any result.

He said the company is thinking to disconnect the lines of the subscribers who have not paid the bills. It urges them to pay the bills to get uninterrupted gas supply.

### Man electrocuted

**UNB, Bagerhat**

A man was electrocuted while catching fish from a pond at Mirzapur village in Bagerhat Sadar upazila Thursday night. Police said Nazu Sheikh, 32, met the tragic end of his life when he tried to catch fish from the pond which was kept electrified by the owner to prevent fish stealing. Police recovered the body Friday and sent it to Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

### BCL activists sued under PSA

**UNB, Tangail**

A number of Chhatra League activists, including its former general secretary of Madhupur upazila unit in Tangail district have been sued under the Public Safety Act (PSA) for attacking the upazila engineer's office. Police said the Chhatra League leader, Bikash Chandra Ghos, attacked the office on Monday as the engineer refused to sell tender form to him after the scheduled date.

The lender was floated for the construction of a bridge. Bikash also kept the office under lock and key for some time. The case against him was filed by the engineer himself.

# Water crisis prevails in Mymensingh town

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh**

Severe drinking water crisis has been prevailing in Mymensingh town.

Some three lakh people have been suffering for want of drinking water as most of the tube wells and roadside water taps have already gone out of order.

Supply of running water, supplied by municipality authorities, is also inadequate, local people said. People especially women with pitchers and other pots are seen in long queues in different places of the town to collect water.

Residents in Aumpatti, Building Area, Goulpukur Par, Amlapara, JC Guha Road, Akua, Nowmohal, Ramkrishna Mission Road are worst sufferers.

Md Shajahan Anser, a resident of Akua, said his hand tube-well has been out of order for over a month. Due to persisting drought ground water level has marked a sharp decline, he added. There is no supply of running water in the area.

# Ershad to rejoin alliance if M-N faction expelled

**UNB, Rangpur**

Jatiya Party (Ershad) Chairman HM Ershad on Saturday said his party is willing to rejoin the four-party alliance if it expels Matin-Nazur (M-N) faction of JP.

Addressing a workers' meeting of his party at Rangpur Town Hall, he lamented that although he had joined the alliance, it did nothing for his release from jail and for his party's selection symbol.

"I was released from jail by court orders, not through secret understanding with the government", he said.

Presided over by Karim Uddin Bharsha, MP, the meeting was addressed, among others, by Dr. Asadur Rahman MP, Abdur Rashid Sarker, MP, JP's Acting Secretary General ABM Shahjahan, Abul Masud Chowdhury Nantu, Abdur Rouf Manik and Mosheur Rahman Ranga.

Ershad said two factions of Jatiya Party cannot remain in the alliance together. He said the country wants a change and there is a golden opportunity ahead for his Jatiya Party.

He called upon the party workers to work hard so that JP candidates win all the 22 JS seats in greater Rangpur again in the next parliamentary election.

Making an election pledge, Ershad said if voted to power, JP will make Carmichael College a university.

# Irrigation hit hard by drought

**UNB, Nilphamari**

Sharp fall in ground water level and drying up of 11 rivers in Nilphamari district left 10,000 irrigation pumps useless, hampering cultivation on 1.5 lakh hectares of land.

As the northern district has not experienced rain in straight five months of the current dry season, a drought-like situation has been prevailing in the entire district, local people said.

Most of the 11 rivers, including the Jamuneswari, Charalkata, Burighora, Dewain, Karmadar, Mara Khaizan, Ghaghat, Khaizan, Buri Teesta, Teesta and Ghargharia and other canals and water reservoirs dried up in the meantime.

Local farmers said they used to use water from these rivers and water bodies in dry season for irrigation purpose.

In current season, local department of Agriculture Extension (AED) officials said, they targeted to bring 60,200 hectares of lands under IRR1-Boro cultivation, 21,000 hectares of land under wheat and around 35,000 hectares under other crops.

But practically farmers brought around double of targeted lands under cultivation and are now facing problems.

While talking to the news agency farmers Hamudul Islam of Etakhola and Tariqul Islam of Daroani village in Sadar upazila said their deep and shallow tube-wells became useless due to drastic fall in ground water level.

They said due to want of adequate water their green paddy fields have already turned into reddish.

They are some 47,928 deep and shallow tube-wells, LLP, Roar Pump and LLP in the district, local DAE and BADC sources said. Of which 9,841 remained inoperative for long due to fall in water level.

Of the inoperative irrigation machines, 2,063 are shallow tube-wells, 304 deep tube-wells, 60 LLPs, 4,901 treadle pumps, 24 roar pumps and 2,698 other categories.

Local farmers apprehended that crop production might face serious set back if irrigation can not be ensured immediately.

# Mosquito menace in Faridpur

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur**

Mosquito menace has gripped Faridpur dwellers. Mosquito population has increased alarmingly in recent days in the district headquarters, causing much suffering to the residents.

Just after dusk mosquitoes rule households, hampering normal life. Children and students are the worst sufferers. Sometimes in daytime mosquitoes reign in houses, offices and educational institutions.

People are seen using mosquito coils and other insecticides in daytime to drive away the insects. People are also hanging mosquito nets in houses in daytime.

Drains, derelict ponds and ditches in the town are the sources of mosquitoes. But authorities concerned turn a blind eye to the growing problem.

Meanwhile, traders of mosquito nets, coils, and other insecticides are doing brisk business in the city.

No step has yet been taken to combat the mosquito menace.

# Re-excavation work of Srimatkhali canal starts

**BSS, Naogaon**

Commerce Minister Mohammad Abdul Jalil recently inaugurated the re-excavation work of Srimatkhali canal of Shikarpur union under Naogaon sadar upazila.

Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) would carry out the re-excavation work by using 60 metric tons of wheat.

Officials said the re-excavation would pave ways for modern agriculture on 2,000 hectares of land. About 15,000 additional rice would be produced annually after completion of the programme.

The commerce minister also inaugurated two newly constructed community clinics at Shoikopa and Sarail recently. Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) constructed the clinics at a cost of Tk 500,000.

The minister reviewed the development works in Naogaon with union parishad chairmen, member and women members at Naogaon Sadar upazila. The public representatives informed the minister that development efforts of the present government surpassed all development works initiated by previous governments in the last 21 years since 1975.

Jalil said the government is determined to ensure active participation of the people's development in every tier of the development process. He alleged that thousands of Taka were misused in the past from the public exchequer to achieve narrow individual or group interest.

He called upon all pro-liberation forces to get united against enemies of democracy and development. He said development is a continuing process. But whenever the country starts its march towards progress and development a vicious circle of conspirators starts their activities to resist the development work of the country.



A colourful procession was brought out in Barisal town welcoming the new Bangla calendar year 1408 on April 14.

# Wheat procurement drive begins in C'nawabganj

**UNB, Chapainawabganj**

The government has launched the wheat procurement drive in Chapainawabganj district with a target of purchasing 3,800 metric tons.

The procurement drive began from April 1 and will continue till month end, district food office sources said.

The Food Department has so far purchased 500 metric tons of wheat through its six procurement centers in five upazilas of the district.

This year the price of wheat was fixed at Tk 8.90 per kg.

Following a bumper wheat production in the district and available storage facilities in silos, the Food Department expects to fulfill the target this year.

Another report from Thakurgaon says: Wheat farmers of the district have become unnerved as they cannot harvest their produces for lack of day labourers and reaping machine.

Sources said wheat on 70,000 hectares of land is ready for reaping in the district where farmers found it difficult to manage agricultural labourers for wheat harvesting.

Due to absence of adequate number of day labourers, the cost of harvesting wheat of one bigha of land rose to about Tk 1,000 which the farmers cannot afford.

Sources in the Department of Agricultural Extension said only 25 per cent of the cultivated wheat have been harvested and the rest is yet to be reaped.

The wheat must be harvested before the rainy days otherwise it would be very difficult to produce wheat seeds for the next season, said a DAE official.