



ELECTION 2008

DHAKA MONDAY DECEMBER 15, 2008



They seek vote but every time forget their pledges

Patuakhali char people reluctant to cast vote as flood control, khas land issues not addressed

MD SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

Helpless people of three flood-prone upazilas of Patuakhali district are reluctant to cast their votes this time as commitment by election candidates to build flood control embankment and ensure proper distribution of khas land for them remained unfulfilled in the past.

"Earlier many candidates came to us before election and sought votes with the pledge to build flood control embankment to save us from tidal surge of the Bay and its adjacent rivers. But sorry to say, none of them were available after the election," said several fishermen, farmers and day labourers living on the char areas of Baufal, Galachipa and Dashmina

upazilas of the district.

Tidal surge and river water inundate dwelling houses and croplands every year as there is no flood control embankment in most of the char areas.

These included Char Pakda, Roy Saheb, Char Wadel, Char Barret, Char Moinpur, Char Eshan, Char Shoula, Char Karkhan and Char Kalaiya under Baufal upazila, Char Lata, Chot Baishdia, Chalitabinia under Galachipa, and Char Borha, Char Shahjalal under Dashmina upazila.

Several thousand people living in these areas are vulnerable to seasonal floods and get no help from the lawmakers.

"We never saw any MP beside us even at the time of natural calamity," said Abdul Haq, a fisherman of Char Roy

Saheb, when this correspondent visited the area on Friday.

"We are yet to know our MP. We never saw him in the past. We simply cast vote as per the instruction of the local UP member and influential men," said Jahara Begum, a housewife.

Distribution of khas land is another important issue for the people of shoal areas.

"We want proper distribution of khas land among the poor and landless people," said Baylet, a day labourer of Char Pakdal.

"We shall vote for the candidate who will take step to build flood control embankment and distribute khas land in proper way," said Kanchon Ali, a marginal farmer.

POLL EXPENSES IN PANCHAGARH

8 out of 9 depend on donation, loan

QUAMRUL ISLAM RUBAIYAT, Thakurgaon

Eight candidates out of nine in two constituencies in Panchagarh district are depending on loans and donations for meeting the expenses of contesting in the December 29 election.

Only Barrister Jamir Uddin Sircar who is contesting in Panchagarh-1 constituency as BNP-led four party alliance candidate will spend money from his own sources.

According to the affidavits submitted by the candidates with their nomination papers, they declared that donations and loans offered by their relatives and well wishers will be used, along with their own funds to bear their election expenditures.

However they did not mention how they would repay the money collected through loans and donations for their election fund.

In Panchagarh-1 BNP-led four party alliance candidate, Speaker Barrister Jamir Uddin Sircar will spend Tk 14 lakh. Of which Tk 6,74,634 will come from the royalty of his books and the rest amount will be collected from house rent and his honorarium.

Awami League-led grand alliance candidate in the seat Mozaharul Haque Prodhan will spend Tk 13 lakh on the election. Of the amount Tk 3 lakh will be collected from party sources and Tk 8 lakh will be given by relatives and different persons as loans or donations.

PDP candidate Delowar Hossain will spend Tk15 lakh. Of the amount only Tk 50,000 will come from his own money.

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) candidate Advocate Shafiqur Rahman will spend Tk 1.2 lakh. Tk 60,000 of it will be



SOURCE: THE MAPPA LTD

spent from his own fund and the rest will be collected from well wishers as donations.

Bangladesh Islami Andolon's Dr. Shajahan will spend Tk 4.1 lakh. Of the amount Tk 1.50 lakh will be collected as loans from his relatives and rest Tk 1.10 lakh as donation.

In Panchagarh-2 BNP-led grand alliance candidate Mojahar Hossain will spend Tk 14.04 lakh. Of which Tk 6.04 lakh will be loans from his relatives and friends.

Awami League-led grand alliance candidate for the seat Advocate Nurul Islam Shujan will spend Tk 15 lakh. Of the amount Tk 2

lakh will be donations from his relatives, Tk 3 lakh from seven lawyers of the Supreme Court as donation and the rest from his party sources.

CPB candidate Asrafur Islam will spend Tk 2.50 lakh. Of the amount Tk 1 lakh will be spent from his own money. Tk 50 will be collected from relatives as loans.

Bangladesh Torikat Federation candidate Md. Sona Miah will spend Tk 87,500. Tk 21,000 of it will be spent from his own money and rest of the money will be collected from his well wishers and relatives as loans.

C'NAWABGANJ-3

BNP, Jamaat start campaign separately

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj

Nominees of BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami, both components of the four party alliance have started their election campaigns separately in Chapainawabganj-3 constituency with holding separate meetings in the district town.

Many leaders and activists of a faction of BNP participated in a Jamaat meeting at Poura Park. The meeting was presided over by its district ameer Rafiqul Islam. Among others Jamaat candidate former lawmaker Latifur Rahman spoke. There Amir Hossain, organising secretary of BNP, district unit, Mosidul Haque Masud, general secretary of poura BNP and Rafiqul Islam Bulbul, general secretary of Jubo Dal supported the Jamaat nominee.

BNP candidate former MP Harunur Rashid arranged an election meeting at the same venue on Saturday. Advocate Emdadul Haque, vice president of district BNP, presided over the meeting. Many leaders of a faction of BNP boycotted the meeting.

The leaders of two parties of four party alliance engaged in mudslinging against each other at both the election meetings.

GAZIPUR CONSTITUENCIES

29 cases against 9 candidates while Milon alone faces 10

A CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Of the 40 candidates contesting from five Gazipur constituencies in the 9th Jatiya Sangsad election nine are accused in 29 cases.

Four party alliance candidate in Gazipur-5 seat (Kaliganj and a part of Sadar) AKM Fazlul Haque Milon is accused in 10 cases.

From the affidavits submitted by the nine candidates it was learnt that the cases were filed on charges of murder, terrorism, extortion, corruption, violation of emergency powers rule, 1971 Special Powers Act, 1923 Official Secrecy Act and in the military courts. However, many of the cases have been quashed and suspended by the High Court.

The four party alliance has nominated BNP student affairs secretary AKM Fazlul Haque Milon to contest in Gazipur-5 seat. Nine cases were filed against him from January to June 2008. Another case was filed in April 2007. Of the cases nine are now under investigation.

Gano Forum candidate in the constituency Major (retd) Amin Ahmed Ansari was accused in a case with Gazipur Cognizance Court in July 2006.

In Gazipur-3 constituency (Sreepur and part of Sadar) four party candidate is former

state minister Prof MA Mannan. On January 5 this year ACC filed a case against him for earning wealth illegally and concealing information regarding property. The case is now under investigation.

Grand Alliance candidate in Gazipur-3 seat Advocate Rahmat Ali was accused in cases under 1974 Special

Powers Act and 1923 Official Secrecy Act with Dhaka Cantonment thana in February 2004. Besides, Rahmat Ali was accused in a case in martial law court.

Krishak Sramik Janata League candidate in the same seat Iqbal Siddiqui is accused in four cases with Gazipur and Tangail cognizance courts.

A case was filed against Awami League candidate in Gazipur-4 (Kapasaria) seat Tanjim Ahmed after 2001 election accusing him of killing BNP worker. Later his name was dropped from the charge sheet. Another case against him on charges of terrorism filed with Uttara thana in 2006 is now under investigation.

Four party alliance candidate in Gazipur-2 seat Hasanuddin Sarker was accused in two cases filed with Tongi thana under anti-terrorism act in 1993. In the affidavit he claimed that he was acquitted of the two cases.

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) candidate in the same seat Ziaul Kabir was accused in a case on different charges in 2006. The case is under investigation.

BSD candidate in Gazipur-1 seat Osman Ali was accused in a terrorism and theft case with Gazipur Chief Judicial Magistrate Court. The case is under investigation.

JHENIDAH-2

Aggrieved BNP leader, party men join AL

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Aggrieved BNP nomination aspirant Naser Sharif Jahedi Mohul yesterday joined Awami League (AL) along with several hundred party men protesting denial of nomination in Jhenidah-2.

BNP has nominated former lawmaker Moshirur Rahman in Jhenidah-2. This sparked an uproar among supporters of Mohul, party sources said.

At a meeting at Uzir Ali High School ground, Mohul formally joined AL taking his party workers and supporters along.

Former minister and AL leader Khaledur Rahman Tito, AL nominee from Jhenidah-2 constituency Shafiqul Islam Apu, Jhenidah district AL secretary Azizur Rahman spoke at the meeting with district AL president Abdul Hye in the chair.

They alleged that Moshirur, also district BNP president, harassed many BNP leaders and activists and misappropriated huge amounts of money by misusing power during the tenure of BNP-led four-party government.

Anti Corruption Commission (ACC) filed a case against Moshirur for allegedly hiding wealth worth around Tk5.98 crore.

82 quit AL in Nagarpur to protest Titu's nomination

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A total of 82 leaders and workers of Awami League (AL) from different union, ward and upazila committees under Nagarpur upazila in Tangail district resigned from the party on Saturday protesting AL-led grand alliance nomination to an 'outsider' Ahsanul Islam Titu instead of Khandaker Abdul Baten in Tangail-6 (Nagarpur-Delduar) constituency.

Among the resigned AL men are vice-presidents of Nagarpur upazila AL Rezaul Haque Bulbul and Seraj Uddin, Joint Secretary Khairul Hassan Tuku and nine other executive members of upazila AL, said party sources.

Upazila AL Publication Secretary, Abdur Rouf, himself a resignee, said they will now work for 'rebel' candidate Abdul Baten.

Freedom fighter Abdul Baten lost the 1996 and 2001 elections to BNP's Gautam Chakroborty with narrow margins.

Sylhet division now has 17 independent runners

IQBAL SIDDIQUEE, Sylhet.

As many as 17 rebel and independent candidates including some former lawmakers remained in the electoral race in different constituencies in the Sylhet division.

However, 35 submitted as independent candidates for 19 seats in the region.

AL man in Habiganj-2 and the JP candidate in Sylhet-4 did not withdraw their nominations even on central decisions. Besides, the grand alliance centrally decided to allow both the AL and JP candidates in Sylhet-3.

The much talked runners include, former BNP lawmakers Nozlr Hossain (belonging to BNP reformist faction) in Sunamganj-1, Syed Mokbul Hossain in Sylhet-6, Dewan Shamsul Abedin in Sunamganj-4, MM Shahin in Moulvibazar-2, central secretary general of a faction of Khelafat Majlish Maulana Abdur Rab Yousufi in Habiganj-2, late former JS speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury's daughter JP's Nasrin Rashid Karim in Sylhet-4 and advocate Abdul Mazid Khan in Habiganj-2.

In Sunamganj-1 BNP has fielded former BMA joint secretary Dr. Rafique Chowdhury while AL fielded newcomer Moazzem Hossain Ratan in place of their former lawmaker Syed Rafiqul Haque.

However, Nozlr is also a candidate for Sunamganj-4, throwing a challenge to the BNP's former JS whip Fazlul Haque Aspla.

In Sunamganj-3, Maulana Ishaque Amini of Khelafat Majlish is an independent runner where IOJ's former lawmaker Maulana Shahinur

Pasha Chowdhury is the 4-party candidate.

In Sunamganj-4, the grand alliance has JP's Mumtaj Iqbal where former lawmaker Dewan Shamsul Abedin is an independent runner. Abedin also wanted AL ticket.

In Sylhet-3, BNP rebel Jubo Dal central vice-president Abdul Quaiyum Chowdhury is an independent runner with symbol 'football'.

Although the grand alliance has fielded AL's former lawmaker Imran Ahmed in Sylhet-4, JP's Nasrin Rashid Karim did not accept it and she is running as an independent.

Barrister Kutub Uddin Ahmed Sikder and Zobayer Ahmed Chowdhury of JP are independent runners in Sylhet-5.

Former lawmaker Syed Mokbul Hossain who is running as an independent is facing former AL MP Nurul Islam Nahid.

"However, only Syed Mokbul Hossain among the 7 independent candidates in 5 seats of Sylhet district will be able to fight in a big way, a number of people believe.

In Moulvibazar-2, former lawmaker MM Shahin is again an independent runner as he failed to bag BNP ticket. Independent runner Shahin may enjoy BNP support as the BNP's Abed Raja's nomination was cancelled for loan default.

In Moulvibazar district too there are 5 independent runners, but except Shahin, none could be in the scene in a big way yet.

In Habiganj-2, AL's Abdul Mazid Khan did not withdraw his nomination although JP's Abid Ali Chowdhury had been given the Grand Alliance ticket. On the other hand, BNP led alliance partner Khelafat Majlish's Maulana Abdur Rab Yousufi is an independent runner here.

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