

SIDR-RAVAGED VOTERS

Runners find it tough to win their hearts

QUAZI AMANULLAH, Khulna

Voters of Sidr-hit constituencies in Khulna and Bagerhat districts will be guided no more by party affiliation while casting their votes in the upcoming national election.

The homeless and jobless people will evaluate the role of the candidates and their parties during the post-Sidr period while giving their verdict in the polls.

Sources said 31 candidates from six constituencies of Khulna city and district and 15 candidates from four constituencies of Bagerhat district are not in a position to face the voters of Sidr-hit areas to seek their votes.

"We did not get any of them by our side when Sidr claimed lives of innumerable men, women and children and rav-

aged hundreds of houses," said Anwar Hossain Panchayet who is the chairman of Southkhalia union parishad under Saronkhola upazila of Bagerhat district.

A total of 41,000 voters of Sharankhola upazila will give a befitting reply to all the three candidates contesting from Bagerhat-4 (Sharankhola-Morelganj) constituency, he added.

The three candidates contesting from this constituency are former state-minister Dr Mozammel Hossain of 14-party alliance, Professor Shahidul Islam of four-party alliance and Abdul Majid of Islami Shashantantra Andolon.

The same situation is being faced by four candidates of Khulna-5 (Dumuria-Phultala) and four candidates of Khulna-6 (Koira-Paikgacha) constitu-

ties. None of the candidates contesting from Khulna-5 played any commendable role during post-Sidr days to seek votes with moral courage, said Khan Ali Mansur, chairman of Dumuria Sadar union parishad.

Candidates contesting from this seat are Narayan Chandra Chana of 14-party, Mian Golam Parwar of four-party, Bidur Kanti Biswas of Bikalpadhara Bangladesh and Sheikh Jamil Ahmed of Islami Andolon Bangladesh.

In Khulna-6, Advocate Sohrab Ali Sana of 14-party, Shah Mohammad Ruhul Qudus of four-party, Nepal Krishna Das of Bikalpadhara and Rezaul Karim of Islami Andolon Bangladesh are yet to visit the waterlogged four unions of Koira upazila where over 25,000 people have been marooned since last September.

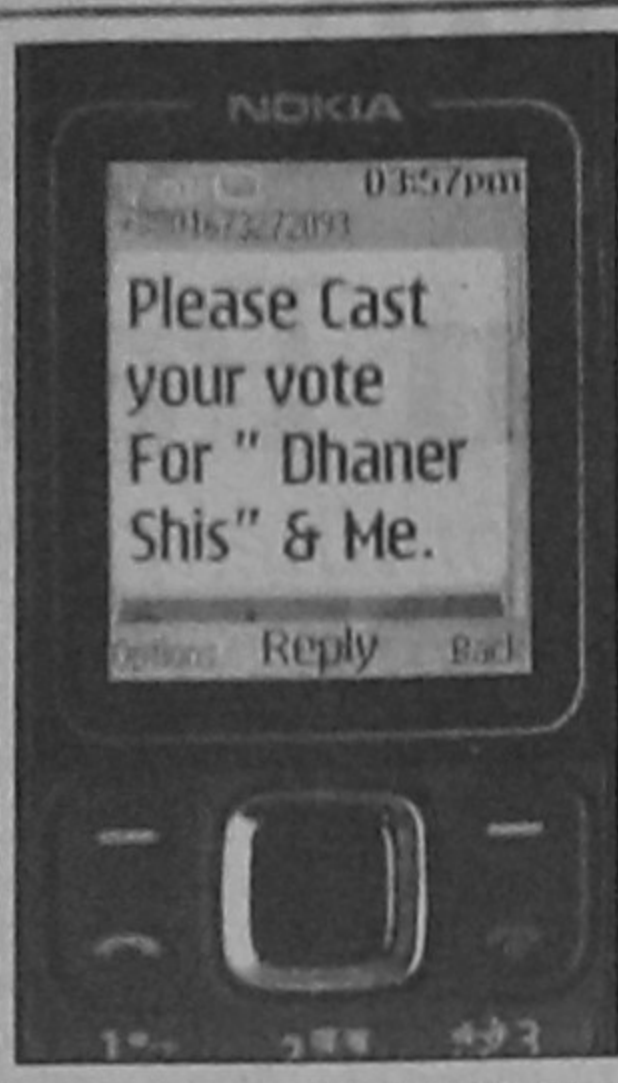


PHOTO: AZHAR UDDIN
Innovative SMS being sent to voters through cell phone to cast vote in favour of former Rajshahi mayor and Four-party Alliance candidate Mizanur Rahman Minu in Rajshahi-2 (Sadar) constituency.

NILPHAMARI-3 Faruque Kader being treated as 'outsider'

E A M ASADUZZAMAN, Nilphamari

Jatiya Party (JP) candidate Kazi Faruque Kader who won nomination of Grand Alliance for contesting in Nilphamari-3 (Jaldhaka and part of Kishoreganj upazila) is an 'outsider' in the constituency.

Although Faruque Kader is a non-resident here he is lucky enough to get the nomination. He has come to Jaldhaka all the way from Dhaka for the lone purpose of election campaign. After confirmation of his nomination from Grand Alliance on December 11, he has rented a house at Thana Road in the district town to stay for 18 days from December 12 to 30. If he wins the election he will go back to Dhaka, locals said. If he is defeated the same thing will happen, they said.

When contacted, the house owner, Abu Kalam Azad said Faruque took rent his five-room house for 18 days only at the rate of Tk 3,000 per month. Faruque is utilising it for accommodation as well as his election campaign office, he said.

While trying to cross border to take shelter in India, 300 innocent Bengalees were killed by Pakistan occupation army at Kaliganj village in Jaldhaka upazila on April 27, 1971.

Near and dear ones of martyrs of Kaliganj massacre claimed that Kazi Kader was a mastermind of the massacre. They have launched a 'no-vote' campaign against his son.

Two big alliances to lock horns in Moulvibazar

RAJAT KANTI GOSWAMI, Moulvibazar

The main contest in all the four constituencies in the district will be between the nominees of Awami League-led Grand Alliance and BNP-led Four-party Alliance.

All but one each candidate of BNP and AL are old faces. BNP nominee in Moulvibazar-4 constituency Mujibur Rahman Chowdhury (Hazi Mujib) is a new face. AL nominee in Moulvibazar-3 constituency Syed Mohsin Ali is also a fresh candidate although he was elected thrice a chairman of Moulvibazar municipality.

However, there is no AL or BNP candidate in Moulvibazar-2 constituency as their candidature was cancelled due to loan

defaulting. Jatiya Party (JP) candidate Nawab Ali Abbas Khan has secured the Grand Alliance ticket in this seat. BNP high command is thinking to back an independent candidate named MM Shahin here.

AL nominees in Moulvibazar-1 and 4 constituencies and BNP nominees in Moulvibazar-1 and 3 constituencies are old faces.

Three candidates will contest in Moulvibazar-1 constituency. They are former state minister and BNP leader Advocate Ebadur Rahman Chowdhury (4-party Alliance), former AL lawmaker Md Shahab Uddin Ahmed (Grand Alliance) and Advocate Anwarul Islam (Independent). Both of them fought in 2001 elections where

Advocate Ebadur Rahman won.

Four candidates will vie for Moulvibazar-2 seat. But nominations of both AL and BNP candidates were cancelled here. Now the candidates in this seat are JP leader Nawab Ali Abbas Khan (Grand Alliance), MM Shahin (Independent), Maolana Badar Uddin Ahmed (Khalafat Mozlish) and Md Askir Miah (Muslim League). The fight will be between Nawab Ali and Shahin here.

Six candidates are in the election race in Moulvibazar-3 constituency. They are former finance minister and BNP leader M Saifur Rahman, AL nominee Syed Mohsin Ali, Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) nominee Syed Abu Zafar Ahmed,

Bangladesher Samajtantrik Dal (BSD) nominee Mamunur Rashid Sohel, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD-Rab) nominee Aliur Rahman and Independent candidate Dewan Shamim Afzal.

Saifur Rahman and Mohsin Ali will be in direct fight here.

Five candidates are in the polls battle in Moulvibazar-4 constituency. They are AL nominee vice-principal MA Shahid, BNP nominee Mujibur Rahman Chowdhury (Hazi Mujib), Islami Front nominee Maolana Abdul Muhit Hasani, JSD (Rab) nominee MA Malek and Independent candidate Pankaj.

Shahid was elected in this seat for four times. This year also the main fight will be between old rivals Shahid and Hazi Mujib.

When the RO sought his certificate...

A CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

At last his educational qualification came down to class eight from HSC within a few hours.

Munshiganj Sadar upazila chairman candidate and town BNP president Shahjahan Shikder submitted his nomination paper to the returning officer's office Saturday noon showing his educational qualification as HSC but later it was found that he passed only class eight.

When his educational certificate was sought he left the place along with nomination paper saying he would return soon.

When Shikder returned in the afternoon he attached a certificate to the effect that he passed class eight from a local school. Many people were present at the deputy commissioner's conference room at the time of the incident. A witness Abdul Kader said the probable people's representatives do such things what will common people do?

In the upazila 12 candidates including Shikder submitted nomination papers for the chairman post and 11 candidates including three women are vying for vice chairman post.

KHAGRACHHARI

Peace in hills, if elected, promises grand alliance candidate

Rebel AL man stages big showdown

JASIM MAJUMDER, Khagrachhari

Jatindra Lal Tripura, the grand alliance candidate in Khagrachhari in a meeting yesterday said only Awami League could bring peace in Chittagong Hill Tracts through various development initiatives.

Awami League government had signed peace agreement on December 2, 1997 with leading indigenous forum Jana Sanghati Samity (JSS) considering the interest of CHT people and later implemented many development projects. The process would resume if the people voted him, Tripura said.

He was speaking at a meeting at Ramgarh upazila in the hill district Khagrachhari.

Tripura also said if people voted him he will bring huge positive changes in the life of both indigenous and Bangali people.

Among other Grand

Alliance leaders Mohammad Shahaz Uddin, Mohammad Alim Ullah, Mong Shi Prue Chowdhury Apu, Kujendra Lal Tripura spoke.

Meanwhile the AL's rebel candidate Mohammad Zahedul Alam, who is contesting as an independent held a big showdown in the hill town yesterday.

After showing respect to martyrs in a meeting held at Mukta Mancha area he said that he would work wholeheartedly for the betterment of Khagrachhari people.

He promised to turn Khagrachhari Government College into a University College and Laxmichhari College into a Government College, if elected. He also promises to settle permanently the people of cluster villages and internal refugees.

District Chhatra League secretary Didarul Alam, district Jubo League convener Mohammad Rafiqul Alam, Kamal League convener Mohamud Uddin along with several hundred leaders and activists were present at the meeting.

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Grand alliance to face hurdles in Kushtia-2, 4

AMANUR AMAN, Kushtia

Two grand alliance candidates are likely to face problems in two Kushtia constituencies as the leaders and activists of Awami League (AL) say 'no' to them.

The candidates are Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) President Hasanul Haq Inu in Kushtia-2 (Mirpur-Bheramara) and Advocate Abdul Awal Mia, president member of Jatiya Party (Ershad) in Kushtia-4 (Khoksa-Kumarkhali).

Inu will contest with boat symbol while Awal with plough.

Earlier, AL nominated Mahbul Alam Hanif for Kushtia-2 and Sultana Tarun for Kushtia-4 as its candidate.

Sources said AL leaders and activists in both the constituencies are not attending the campaign with Inu and Awal.

"We will neither work nor vote for Inu," said Advocate Abdul Halim, general secretary of Mirpur upazila unit AL.

According to records, Inu ran in Kushtia-2 constituency in 1991, 1996 and 2001 elections and got only 21411, 26327 and 38877 votes respectively.

"Awal will not be able to hold a meeting gathering a thousand people as JP has no organisational base here," said AL



Inu Awal

Kumarkhali upazila unit General Secretary Abdul Mannan.

He said local AL leaders and activists know Awal as traitor as he betrayed AL candidate in 1996 election that caused defeat of AL candidate Abdul Hossain Tarun to BNP by only 361 votes.

Awal won the seat in 1991 election as AL nominee defeat-

ing BNP candidate. But he was denied nomination in 1996 and played against the then AL candidate Abdul Hossain.

Later Awal quit AL in January 2001 and joined JP politics.

When contacted, Inu called for unity of secular forces.

"We should think that our struggle is against the BNP-Jamaat alliance. So unity is a must. Any disintegration will be harmful for all," he added.

Awal urged AL leaders and activists to work with him as what he said there is bright prospect for grand alliance to win in his constituency.



PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKHI
Posters have flooded nooks and corners of Chittagong city as polls campaign gains momentum. The picture was taken from Agrabad Mistripara area yesterday.

Bimal Biswas says attack on him part of ploy to foil polls

A CORRESPONDENT, Narail

Bimal Biswas, General Secretary of the Workers' Party and Grand Alliance candidate for Narail-1 seat Tuesday said, sensing their defeat the unruly supporters of the candidate of four party alliance and his associate, an independent candidate, launched attack on him at a meeting on Monday.

"It is nothing but part of a conspiracy to foil the election. It is also a threat to the progressive forces," The Workers' Party leader said. He condemned the local police for not yet arresting the miscreants who launched the attack on him.

Speaking at a press briefing at a local hotel Biswas also said,

the landslide victory of the Grand Alliance in the ensuing national election couldn't be thwarted committing such activities. District Awami League president Advocate Subhas Bose and secretary Advocate Mohammad Ali were present at the press briefing, among others.

Kalia upazila Grand Alliance committee arranged a meeting at Puthimary Primary school

premises in Naragati thana under Kalia upazila Monday. Some unidentified miscreants pelted bricks at Bimal Biswas. He received serious injury. After being given first aid the Grand Alliance leaders shifted him from the area.

When contacted Officer-in-charge (OC) of Naragati police station Mosharrar Hossain admitted that they could not yet identify the miscreants.

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Correction

A news item published on Page-5 of The Daily Star on December 16 erroneously carried the headline 'Latif's withdrawal to better Azad's chance'. The headline would be 'Azad's withdrawal to better Latif's chance'. We regret the inadvertent mistake.

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