



Rangamati may witness a triangular fight

SHANTIMOY CHAKMA, Rangamati

With Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) participating in the parliamentary election in Chittagong Hill Tracts for the first time, Rangamati constituency may see a triangular fight, political analysts said.

In the past, support from the PCJSS, a regional organisation of the indigenous people in CHT, helped Awami League to win in the seat but this time PCJSS leaders Ushatan Talukder in Rangamati and KS Moug in Bandarban are vying as independent candidates for the upcoming election.

Five persons are contesting in Rangamati but the contest will be mainly limited to three candidates -- Dipankar Talukder from Awami League and Moitree Chakma from the



Dipankar Talukder four-party alliance and PCJSS leader Ushatan Talukder. All the five candidates are now busy in door-to-door visits to woo 3,31,812 voters in the constituency. In 1996, Rangamati AL chief Dipankar Talukder as party nominee was elected lawmaker from the constituency. Dipankar, however, failed to get party nomination for January 2007 parliament election (later cancelled) and filed nomination as an independent candidate. That time PCJSS top leader

PCJSS contestant Ushatan Talukder has pledged to establish lasting peace through full implementation of CHT peace deal, bridging gap between indigenous and Bangali people through ensuring communal harmony and overall socio-economic development of the hill people.

Still hopeful of win, Dipankar Talukder has pledged setting up a science and technology university and a medical college and work for infrastructure development in the hill district.

Four-party alliance candidate Moitree Chakma, the lone indigenous woman candidate in CHT, is also conducting campaign in full swing. She has pledged ensuring balanced development and communal harmony in the region and empowerment of women.

Rawshan lone woman runner in Mymensingh

AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

Jatiya Party presidium member Rawshan Ershad is the only woman in the district among 70 candidates running for December 29 parliamentary polls.

In 1996 election, Jatiya Party nominee Rawshan Ershad won Mymensingh-4 seat securing 72,130 votes against her nearest rival AL's Amir Ahmed Chowdhury Ratan who got 61,831 votes. BNP candidate late AKM Fazlul Haque was in the third position securing 55,838 votes. This time she is contesting on Grand Alliance ticket.

In 2001 general election, BNP nominee Delwar Hossain Khan Dulu won the race bagging 1,02,016 votes defeating AL candidate Principal Motiur Rahman who secured 83,380 votes. Rawshan Ershad of Jatiya Party got 47,077 votes while Amir Ahmed Chowdhury Ratan, an AL rebel



who ran the election as an independent candidate secured 28,893 votes. This year the scenario is different than that of the past years. For new demarcation of Mymensingh Sadar constituency, five unions of the char areas were taken with Mymensingh-3 (Gouripur) constituency. It is a big challenge for Rawshan to regain the seat fighting with the BNP candidate former State Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources AKM Mosharraf Hossain. Mosharraf got party nomination

instead of Delwar Hossain Khan Dulu. Khan was denied party nomination, as he was considered as loyal to BNP reformists. Mosharraf of Dulu would benefit Mosharraf who hails from Mymensingh-5 (Muktachacha) and is a "guest candidate" in Mymensingh-4 constituency.

Mosharraf was elected in 2001 and 1996 on BNP ticket from Mymensingh-5 seat. AL leaders and activists was very hopeful about the nomination of District AL President Principal Motiur Rahman from Mymensingh-4 constituency but at the end of the nomination drama, the senior most AL leader was dropped and Rawshan was given grand alliance ticket.

Talking to this correspondent AL supporters said the chances of regaining the seat would be higher if Principal Motiur Rahman was nominated by the Grand Alliance.

344 Dinajpur polling centres vulnerable

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Three hundred forty-four polling centres have been identified as risky in 13 upazilas.

The centres are 30 in Birganj and 16 in Kaharol of Dinajpur-1 constituency, 26 in Biral, 21 in Bochaganj upazila in Dinajpur-2, 42 in Dinajpur Sadar (Dinajpur-3), 19 in Khanshama and 26 in Chiribanda of Dinajpur-4, 37 in Parbatipur and 32 in Phulbari of Dinajpur-5, 27 in Nawabganj, 31 in Birganj, 14 in Hakimpur and 23 in Ghoraghat of Dinajpur-6 constituency, said sources in District Special Branch (SB) of Police.

Besides police force, patrol police and reserve force will also be deployed in the risky centres to ensure foolproof security and maintain law and order in all the polling centres during election, said Dinajpur superintendent of police (SP) Kalam Siddiquee.



Four candidates of Chandpur-3 (Sadar and Haimchar) constituency at 'Face the Voters' programme yesterday promised to work for stopping river erosion and uprooting corruption. They are from left: Advocate Selim Akbar of Gano Forum, Hafiz Masud Akhter of Gano Front, Shahjahan Talukder of BSD and Dr Dip Moni of grand alliance.

'FACE THE VOTERS' PROGRAMME IN CHANDPUR-3 Stopping river erosion will be 'first task,' all 4 say

ALAM PALASH, Chandpur

Four candidates in Chandpur-3 constituency in a "Face the Voters" programme Wednesday pledged that if elected their first task would be to check river erosion using all government allocation for the purpose and there will be no corruption regarding this.

The candidates who made the pledge are Grand Alliance candidate and Awami League central women affairs secretary Dr Dipu Moni, Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BSD) nominee Md Shahjahan Talukder, Gano Forum's Advocate Selim Akbar and Gano Front candidate Squadron Leader (ret) Hafiz Masud Akhter.

Four organizations including Transparency International, Shujon and Committee for Resisting Corruption arranged the programme at Chandpur Bijo Mela Mancha from 11 am to 1.30 pm. Shujon general secretary Dr Badiul Alam

Majumder moderated it. Prof Mohammad Hossain Khan presided. More than 2,000 voters - both men and women - from different professions attended the programme.

Replying to a question Dr Dipu Moni said, "If I am elected I will work for implementing the party pledges. Besides, I have more plans to solve problems faced specially by women. I will implement my plans taking people with me."

Advocate Selim Akbar said he would take steps to stop harassment of the fishermen in the name of anti-jatka destruction drives.

Md Shahjahan Talukder said he would work to protect people's rights and to bring down the prices of essentials.

Hafiz Masud Akhter said he would work for freeing politics of corruption.

At the last phase of the programme Shujon member and veteran journalist Kamaruzzaman Chowdhury gave oath to the candidates. The candidates placed their hands on their breasts pledged they would not indulge in corruption.

Four party alliance candidate district BNP senior vice president GM Fazlul Haque, Bangladesh Torikat Federation nominee Mizanur Rahman, Bangladesh Khelafat Majlish's Md Hossain Akhand and Islami Andolon Bangladesh candidate Md Nurul Amin, though invited, did not attend the programme.

SIRAJGANJ-2 Fight between in-laws puts relatives in dilemma

GOLAM MOSTAFA JIBON, Sirajganj

Former minister and Bangladesh Jatiya Party (Matin) President Dr M A Matin is contesting against his brother-in-law and a former BNP state minister Iqbal Hasan Mahmud Tuku's wife Romana Mahmud in Sirajganj-2 constituency (Sirajganj sadar).

As a result, relatives and supporters of the two candidates are in dilemma over selecting the right candidate.

Both the contestants have already started campaigning including processions, meetings, rallies and mass contact in their electoral areas.

Dr Matin took part as an independent candidate in 2001 election for Sirajganj-7 seat (Shahzadpur) after being failed to get ticket from four-party alliance, while Tuku took part in the race as BNP-led four-party alliance candidate for Sirajganj-2 constituency.

At that time, both the contestants won their seats.

Romana is contesting as the candidate of four-party alliance with Dhaner Shish (paddy sheaf) symbol, as her husband Tuku failed to get nomination following his conviction in a corruption case.

Romana is a new face in the political arena.

Matin is contesting with Kathal (Jackfruit) symbol under the banner of Bangladesh Jatiya Party.

When contacted, both the contestants said they are hopeful about their victory.



Work of Taltali Bridge on the Taltali River in Barisal still remains incomplete although three former lawmakers promised several times to construct the bridge before elections.

EMPTY PROMISES IN BARISAL

How will they now bridge this gap?

RAFIQUL ISLAM, Barisal

Construction of Taltali Bridge over the Taltali River has remained incomplete although the matter was included in the election pledges of three former lawmakers.

Former president Abdur Rahman Biswas, his son Nasim Biswas and former Barisal city mayor Mojibur Rahman Sarwar, who were elected lawmakers in three elections in the past, had promised construction of the bridge that would help establish a direct road link from Muladi, Hizla and Mehendiganj upazilas to Barisal city.

Former president Abdur Rahman Biswas initiated a project and laid its foundation on February 5, 1995.

Quotation for construction of the bridge was called on February 2 in 1996 at an estimated cost of Tk 1.83 crore and Moitree Chakma International got work order on April 8 in 1996 to finish its construction within 15 months.

But the firm left the project after collecting Tk 1.33 crore in October 1999

when less than 35 per cent work of the bridge and 90 per cent of related road construction work remained unfinished.

During the BNP-led four-party alliance government, fresh tender was called on February 2 in 2002 to complete the project at an estimated cost of Tk 1.19 crore. But Roads and Highways Department (RHD) executive engineer stopped the procedure by issuing a letter on February 28, 2002.

Mojibur Rahman Sarwar, the then BCC mayor and former lawmaker, inaugurated resumption of the construction of Taltali Bridge on October 16, 2006 by extending the project cost from Tk 1.8 crore to Tk 4.7 crore. But the process again stopped in July this year. Executive Engineer of RHD in Barisal said the authorities stopped the construction work after faults were found in the design and structure of the bridge.

After clearance from the technical department of RHD, construction work of Taltali Bridge will resume soon, he said.

ইংরেজিতে শিক্ষা

দাদু, আই অ্যাম হাংরি, প্রিজ গিভ মি টু টাকা! হলিক্রস কলেজের সামনে এক বুড়ো ভিক্ষুক বাংলা বাদ দিয়ে ইংরেজিতে ভিক্ষা করছিল। মিষ্টি কথায় চিড়া না ভিজলেও ইংরেজি কথায় ভালোই পকেট ভরছিল বেচারী। পথিকদের মধ্যে বিভিন্নজন বিভিন্ন মন্তব্য করছিল। একজন বলল, 'হায়রে! কী অবস্থা! ভিক্ষাতেও ইংরেজি, আমরা সবাই ইংরেজি নিয়ে অনেক ফালফালি করি। ভিক্ষুক বেচারী কী দোষ করল? ইংরেজির গুণে দুটো টাকা বেশি পেলে ক্ষতি কী?'

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