



ELECTION 2008



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BNP fields 12 new faces in Khulna div

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

BNP has fielded new faces in 12 out of 36 Jatiya Sangsad (JS) constituencies in 10 districts of Khulna division.

Of them, two former lawmakers are Awami League (AL) renegades. One of the 36 seats have been kept open for both BNP and Jamaat.

BNP has fielded own candidates in 26 constituencies and left 10 other seats for three components of four-party alliance including Jamaat.

Of the 12 new faces, Nazrul Islam Manju and Sharif Shah Kamal Taj are from Khulna-2 and 4 seats.

The two new faces of BNP contesting from Bagerhat-1 and 2 constituencies are Advocate Wahiduzzaman Dipu and MA Salam.

Engineer TS Ayub and Abul Hossain Azad are contesting for the first time in Jessore-4 and 6 constituencies.

For the first time, BNP has nominated Iqbal Akhter Khan Kafu to contest in Magura-1 constituency.

Altaz Hossain of Kushtia-1 and Amjad Hossain of Meherpur-2 seats are also new candidates.

Kazi Sikander Ali Dalim was elected a lawmaker with Awami League ticket from Khulna-3 seat in 1996. This time also he managed nomination from the same constituency with BNP ticket.

Meanwhile, Sharif Khasruzzaman who was elected a lawmaker with AL ticket twice is again on the polls race in Narail-2 seats but with BNP ticket.

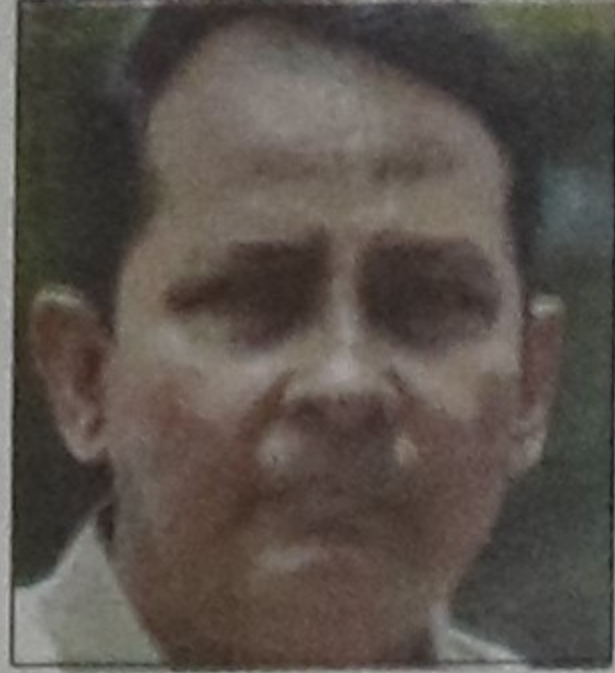
Top AL men skip Inu's campaign in Kushtia-2

AMANUR AMAN, Kushtia

No front ranking leaders of Awami League (AL) in Kushtia-2 (Mirpur-Bheramara) constituency is yet to take part in the campaign for AL-led grand alliance candidate Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) leader Hasanul Haq Inu.

However, a good number of grassroots leaders and activists of AL and Jatiya Party (JP) were seen attending campaign with the JSD leaders and activists as the JSD leader is contesting with grand alliance ticket with 'boat' symbol.

Inu, who started his campaign in Bheramara on



Hasanul Haq Inu

Wednesday, went to the house of AL leader Mahubul Alam Hanif the same day.

As Hanif was not at the house that time, Inu urged Hanif's

family members to work for him.

Inu also talked on mobile phone to Hanif in Dhaka and urged him to work with him for the greatest interest of the grand alliance, sources said.

Hanif, vice president of Kushtia district AL, contested in the seat in 1996 and 2001 elections and was defeated to BNP candidate Sahidul Islam.

Hanif was an aspirant for AL party ticket to contest in the coming election.

As Hasanul Haq Inu got nomination from grand alliance, frustrated Hanif instructed his followers not to work for Inu and Mirpur and Bheramara upazila AL in separate

meetings and press conferences on December 9 and 12 announced that they would not work for Inu.

Hanif at a meeting with his party men in Bheramara upazila on December 16 said that his nomination had been 'snatched'.

When contacted over cell phone, Inu said Hanif did not attend his campaign despite repeated request.

Inu, however, said, "A number of grassroots leaders and activists of Awami League are attending my campaign. I am hopeful of win with support from people in the area."

Most Bagerhat runners not rich, their affidavits say

AHAD HAIDER, Bagerhat

Most of the candidates contesting the national election in Bagerhat will meet their polls expenses by taking donations and loans from their relatives and well wishers as they are not financially well off.

This was learnt from the affidavits they submitted with their nomination papers to the Election Commission.

The highest estimated polls expense of a candidate in the district is Tk 11 lakh while the

lowest is Tk 50,000, according to the affidavits.

In Bagerhat-1 constituency four candidates are contesting. AL chief Sheikh Hasina in her affidavit said she would meet the whole Tk 11 lakh of her polls expense from own source. Her nearest rival BNP's Sheikh Wahiduzzaman Dipu showed his estimated election expense as Tk 11 lakh. Of the amount Tk four lakh will come from his own source and Tk four lakh will come from BNP central election fund.

Of other two candidates, BNP's Sheikh Shawkat Hossain's and Islami Andolon Bangladesh nominee Md Liakat Ali Sheikh. Sheikh Shawkat Hossain's annual income is Tk 2.05 lakh while Islami Andolon's Liakat Ali's income is Tk 1.60 lakh. Shawkat's estimated election expense is Tk five lakh—Tk one lakh from own source and collect the rest from relatives as donations. Liakat will collect Tk 5.20 lakh from relatives and well wishers.

In Bagerhat-2 seat, among the four candidates only BNP nominee MA Salam will meet his estimated election expense of Tk 11 lakh from own fund. In this seat AL candidate Mir Shawkat Ali Badsha will spend Tk nine lakh. He will collect the amount from different individuals.

LDP's Chasi AM Saidur Rahman's income is Tk one lakh. His estimated election cost is Tk four lakh. Though Islami Andolon Bangladesh candidate Md Jalal Uddin Hawlader does not have any money of his own he has prepared a budget of Tk 5.60 lakh.

Awami League candidate in Bagerhat-3 constituency Habibunnahar will meet her election expense of Tk nine lakh from her own fund. Her annual income is Tk three lakh.

In Bagerhat-4 seat AL candidate Md Mozammel Hossain's annual income is Tk 2.75 lakh. His election expense will stand at Tk 5.75 lakh. He will meet Tk four lakh from own fund and the rest will come from relatives as loans. In the seat Jamaat-e-Islami candidate Md Shahidul Islam has shown his estimated election expense at Tk 50,000 only. This is the lowest election budget shown in Bagerhat district.

Kamal-Mojahid rift widens in Faridpur-3

REZAUL KARIM, Faridpur

Rift between Kamal Ibne Yusuf and Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojahid has widened ahead of the parliamentary election.

Faridpur district BNP is now divided into two factions. One faction led by its president Zahurul Haque Shahazada Mia and secretary Advocate Syed Modarres Ali Isa is supporting Mojahid as a candidate of four-party alliance.

Supporters of independent candidate Kamal Ibne Yusuf are campaigning against Mojahid terming him rajakar for his criminal activities during liberation war of Bangladesh in 1971.

Loyals of Kamal Ibne Yusuf declared Mojahid unwanted and burnt his effigy while Mojahid staged a showdown violating polls code.

Taking advantage of rift in BNP, AL candidate Engineer Khondoker Mosharraf Hossain has geared up his campaign.

Feud dims AL prospects in Satkhira-3

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Internal rivalry between two factions of Assassuni upazila Awami League (AL) may dim the prospect of AL candidate in Satkhira-3 in the upcoming national election.

If the rift between the two factions is not mended, it will be hard for AL-led grand alliance to regain the seat from Jamaat, front ranking district AL leader Firoz Ahmed said. Jamaat has fielded Maulana Riasat Ali in the seat.

Assassuni upazila AL president former lawmaker Dr Mokhlesur Rahman and general secretary Shahidul Islam Pintu are leading one faction. The other is led by district AL industry secretary ABM Mustakim.

Bangladesh Swadhinata Chikitsak Parishad president and district AL senior vice-president Dr. AFM Ruhul Haque is the AL nominee.

Maulana Riasat Ali won the seat by defeating AL leader Dr. Mokhlesur Rahman by a small margin of about 11000 votes in 2001 election.



PHOTO: STAR

Chittagong city wears a festive look as election posters flood the port city. The busiest traffic island at Tiger Pass is decorated with posters of the contesting party candidates of Chittagong-8 constituency.

Minu prints 5 lakh posters

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Nearly 5 lakh posters are being used for election campaign of BNP candidate Mizanur Rahman Minu in Rajshahi-2 constituency where the number of voters is just half of the posters.

Prior to BNP chief Khaleda Zia's visit Thursday night, the entire Rajshahi city was almost covered with posters of Minu.

According to Minu's election workers, a truck loaded with papers for printing around five lakh posters are now stored at Provat Printing Press in the city.

Minu, also former Rajshahi mayor in his nomination papers submitted with the election commission stated that his annual income is Tk 25,000 from agriculture.

In his statement of probable election expenditure, Minu stated that he would spend Tk 3 lakh he earned as mayoral honorarium and agriculture.

He also stated that he would borrow Tk 5.75 lakh from his relatives, including Tk 3.75 lakh from relatives staying in the United States and he would get Tk 2.5 lakh voluntary donations.

Ctg-9 may see a tough battle of bigwigs

NURUDDIN ALAMGIR, Ctg

With tough contest looming large in vital Chittagong-9 (Doblemooring-Pahartali) constituency, all the four prospective candidates are passing time amid a frantic campaign.

Former minister and central BNP Joint Secretary General Abdullah Al Noman, Chittagong City Awami League (AL) Joint General Secretary Dr Afsarul Amin, independent candidate former acting mayor M Monjur Alam and Jatiya Party (Ershad) central Vice President Morshed Murad Ibrahim are contesting here.

BNP candidate Abdullah Al Noman won in 1991 and 2001 parliamentary elections from the then presti-

gious Chittagong-9 (Kotwali, now Chittagong-8) constituency. Chittagong BNP is looking forward to cashing in on his political background and strong party-base in Doblemooring and Pahartali areas.

Dr Afsarul of AL was earlier defeated in the poll battle but he continued maintaining close link with the local people and with strong support-base, he obtained party nomination for competing with 'boat' symbol.

Although JP candidate Morshed Murad got the green signal to compete (with poll symbol 'plough') from AL-led grand alliance following a seat-sharing deal, Dr Afsarul is surprisingly and very strongly staying in the race with full sup-

port from Chittagong city AL. This unique polarisation or agreement between the AL and JP puts the battle onto an interesting note.

But ward councillor Monjur Alam, a local resident, is likely to appear as a big barrier for the other three candidates. Alongside his extensive social and charitable works, a 'clean image' is Monjur's big advantage.

Locals said Monjur would get support from a section of supporters of both AL and BNP while the 'floating' voters may also favour him.

JP candidate Morshed Murad is comparatively less known in the political field but has a good reputation in the constituency and the city since he hails from a noble family.

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