



PHOTO: STAR

Patgram municipal area in Lalmonirhat wears a festive look as posters of mayor and councillor candidates flutter at different places of the town. Besides door-to-door campaign, miking and rallies also taking place every day.

# Voters demand manifestoes

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Voters from different classes of people in Nilphamari, Jaldhaka and Saidpur municipalities want that mayoral candidates publish manifestoes inscribing their development programmes and measures to be taken to solve problems in respective municipalities, if elected.

The candidates, however, are ignoring the issue ahead of the January 12 elections in those municipalities under Nilphamari district on the plea that the Election Commission did not give instruction in this regard.

During pre-election campaign, the candidates usually make lots of commitments of development works and to remain beside local people in well and woes but once elected, the incumbents forget their commitments and try to remain away from people, said several voters.

"Contestants in any kind of election

should make written commitment to the voters indicating their development plans and programmes so that the elected candidates feel obligation to implement those," said Gabul Saqlaen, secretary of Sushashoner Jonno Nagorik (Sujon), an organisation working for establishing good governance in the country.

"It has become a tradition that candidates in any election usually make verbal commitments for development, fair treatment to all etc. After the election is over, the elected candidates, except a few, tend to forget their promises. Local residents even do not find most of the elected representatives beside them," said Golam Mostofa, general secretary of district college teachers association.

"If the mayoral candidates publish their manifesto for the voters, it will help to ensure transparency of the candidates as well as strengthen democratic system," said Md Selim, a mem-

ber of Nilphamari Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

When contacted, AKM Aminul Haque, a mayoral candidate in Nilphamari municipality, said if the Election Commission gave directions to publish manifesto of candidates then he would be obliged to do so but it was not done.

Kabir Chowdhury, a mayoral candidate who is contesting for second consecutive time from Jaldhaka municipality, said, "The voters usually do not make mistake to vote for the candidates who have credibility and acceptance. Personality, character and love for people are great manifestos."

Sekandar Ali, district election officer, said, "The Election Commission's code of conduct for the candidates in municipality election does not have any clear guideline about whether the candidates would publish their manifesto in written."

## ELECTION fever

### Gaibandha: 4 candidates fined for breaching code of conduct

Four candidates vying for mayor and councillor posts of Gaibandha municipality were fined on Tuesday for breaching election code of conduct, reports our correspondent.

A summary court led by judicial magistrate Azizur Rahman on investigation found that the candidates printed oversized posters violating the election commission order.

The court fined mayoral candidate Momtazur Rahman Babu Tk2,000, ward councillor candidates Abdus Samad Rokon, Abu Hossain Abu and Abdul Hye were fined Tk1,000 each on charge of hanging oversized posters.

Meanwhile, one Nonku Chandra Barman on behalf of councillor candidate Emdadul Islam alleged that councillor candidate Binoy Kumar Bosnia breached election code of conduct in Sunderganj.

According to the allegation, workers of Binoy Kumar were distributing clothes, saris and cash among the voters for casting vote in his favour. The workers of the said candidate have also been threatening the supporters of opposition candidates.

The Returning Officer, also UNO Sunderganj said an investigation committee was formed to probe the allegation. Measures will be taken against other candidates if the allegations are found authentic, he said.

### Jhenidah: Rebel candidate's poll camp 'ransacked'

Kazi Ashraf Azam, rebel AL mayor candidate in Saikupa municipal election, has alleged that the supporters of AL nominated candidate Toyebur Rahman Khan ransacked his election camp on Monday, according to our correspondent.

He said at least 45 people led by Toyebur Rahman attacked his camp in Saikupa municipal town at around 1:00pm. They ransacked the camp, beat up some campaigners and locked the office, he added.

Azam said he informed the officer-in-charge of Saikupa police station and the returning officer of the incident.

When contacted, Returning Officer Ajmal Haque said Kazi Azam had alleged that the supporters of his rival candidate ransacked his election office in the

## FACE -TO-FACE PROGRAMMES

### More aspirants face voters, pledge to work for people

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Mayoral candidates in Mongla and Dinajpur municipalities responded to voters' queries in 'face-to-face with people' programmes yesterday and Monday.

Six mayoral candidates in Mongla municipality made their electoral pledges in the programme organised by citizens' rights organisation Sushashoner Jonney Nagorik (Sujan) at the auditorium of port workers union yesterday, reports our Bagerhat correspondent.

Sheikh Abdus Salam promised to complete the incomplete job of his elder brother late Sheikh Abdul Hye, former chairman of Mongla municipality.

Jalal Ahmed Bulbul said he will free the municipality area from narcotics and crimes and prevent trafficking of illegal logs from the Sundarbans, if voters elect him.

Former mayor Mollah Abdul Jalil said he will focus on the development of drainage system, roads and educational institutions.

Julfikar Ali promised to free the municipality area from corruption, build a children's park and create a fund for the poor students.

Shajahan Shikari said he will build up a modern tourism centre in the Sundarbans and try to upgrade Mongla municipality to a first class one.

Talukdar Akter Faruk promised to keep himself free from corruption and make the area free of extortion.

At the end of the programme all the candidates signed '13-point pledges' on behalf of Sujan.

Francis Sudan Haldar, president of Mongla unit of Sujan, presided over the meeting while Dr Badiul Alam Mojumdar, central secretary of Sujan, was the chief guest.

Our Dinajpur correspondent adds: Four mayoral candidates of Joypurhat municipality on Monday night stood on a single stage to answer the questions of the voters in the municipality area.

Sujan and 'district civil society' jointly organised the 'face to face with people' programme at Dr Abul Kashem Moydan in the district town.

The programme aimed at bridging gaps between candidates and voters about electoral commitments and their implementation.

The four mayoral candidates -- BNP-backed Fazlur Rahman, AL-backed Nanda Lal Parshi, independent Abdul Aziz Mollah and Jamaat-e-Islami supported Md Nazrul Islam answered questions of the local voters.

After the question-answer session, the mayoral candidates pledged to meet the voters' demands and eliminate corruption in the area.

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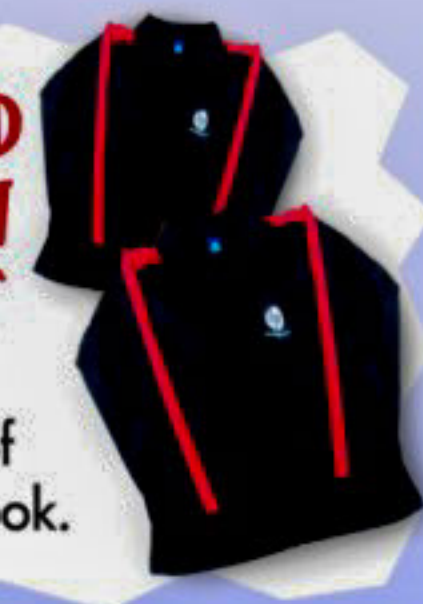
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