

# Chairmen, members of 108 UPs in Bogra on work abstention

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

The chairmen and members of 108 union parishads (UPs) in the district refrained from official jobs yesterday, the second day of their three-day work abstention programme.

The UP chairmen and members began work abstention from Tuesday as the central committee of Bangladesh Union Parishad Forum (BUPF) called the programme to press their eight-point demand.

The demands include hike in monthly honorarium for chairmen and members, abolition of clauses 34 and 77 of Local Government (Union Parishad) Act 2009, and direct allocation of funds of Test Relief, Food for Work and Annual Development Programme (ADP) and one percent of land tax to union Parishads.



PHOTO: STAR

Chairmen and members of 12 union parishads under Natore Sadar upazila take out a procession in the district town yesterday, demanding immediate arrest of the persons involved in the attack on one of the chairmen on Tuesday.

Abu Sufian Shafiq, joint convener of the district unit of Bangladesh Union Parishad Forum, said the central body of the forum will announce its next programme soon to mount pressure on the government to meet the eight-point demand.

**NATORE**  
Our Natore correspondent

reported that Chairmen and members of all 12 union parishads under Natore Sadar upazila began an indefinite strike yesterday demanding arrest of the criminals, who assaulted Brommapur Union Parishad Chairman and BNP leader Afzal Hossain, on Tuesday.

They took out a procession in the district town and

submitted a memorandum to the deputy commissioner (DC), demanding immediate arrest of the attackers.

Deputy Commissioner Zafar Ullah assured the protesters of bringing the culprits to book and urged them to withdraw the strike.

Later, the agitating UP chairmen and members held a rally in front of the

DC's office. At the rally, Golam Sarwar, chairman of Tebaria Union Parishad and president of Bangladesh Union Parishad Forum Natore Sadar upazila unit, said they will continue their strike until the people involved in the attack on Chairman Afzal Hossain are arrested.

The up chairmen and members will besiege Sadar upazila parishad office and hold a protest rally at the upazila headquarters on November 18, Sarwar said.

A gang of criminals swooped on Brommapur Union Parishad Chairman Afzal Hossain at Sadar upazila parishad office while he was collecting a nomination paper on behalf of a party man who will contest the upcoming election to the managing committee of Mirzapur High School in the adjacent Mirzapur union.

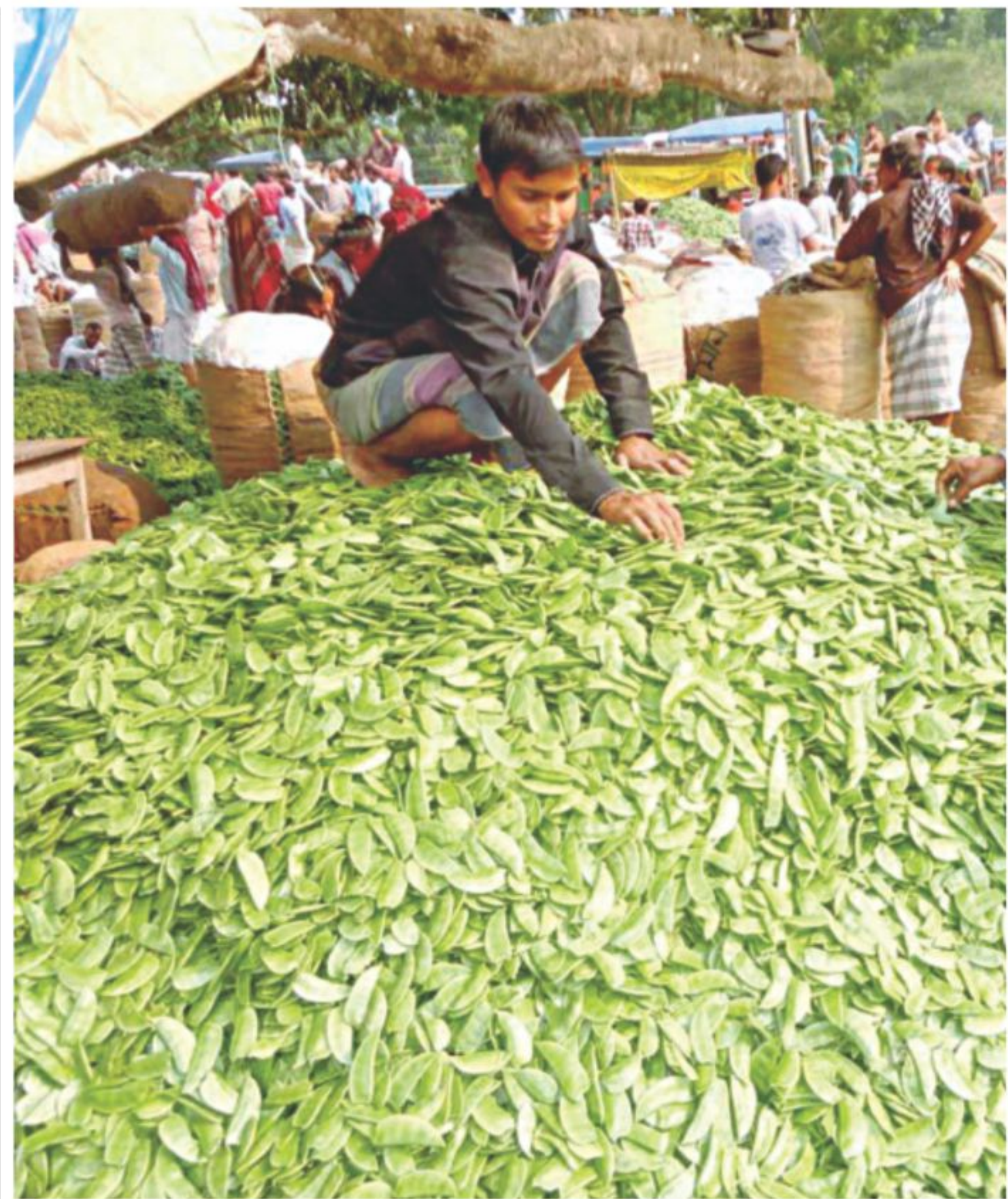


PHOTO: STAR

Sellers process beans for sale at Muladuli bean market in Ishwardi upazila under Pabna district.

## Tk 1cr beans sell a day at Muladuli market

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR  
TOPU, Pabna

Muladuli vegetable market in Ishwardi upazila under the district is buzzing with activities as the largest 'bean market' of the northern region sees trading of beans worth Tk 80 lakh to 1 crore daily during the ongoing reaping season.

Sixty to 70 trucks loaded with the popular winter vegetable go to Dhaka, Chittagong, Sylhet, Narayanganj and other areas of the country every day from Muladuli market, said Aminur Rahman Babu, a bean wholesaler, also a leading farmer of the region.

"The farmers from different villages of Muladuli union in Ishwardi upazila, Khidirpur, Par Khidirpur and Ramchandrapur unions of

Atgoria upazila, and Zonail, Haripur and the adjoining villages of Chatmohar upazila under Pabna district bring their produce to this market," said Abdul Hamid, president of Muladuli vegetable traders' association.

The farmers from Baraigram, Gopalpur and Lalpur upazilas in Natore district also bring their beans to Muladuli market, he said, adding, "Now a maund of bean is selling for Tk 600 to 650. The price will reduce within next couple of weeks when the supply becomes more available."

"We collect the beans from the farmers and later sell it to the traders coming from different areas of the country. At least 3,000 to 4,000 maunds of beans were

traded daily in this market during the last one week. The amount is increasing every day as the largest bean zone saw bumper production this year," said Md Robiul Alam Bachhu, a wholesaler at Muladuli market.

Muladuli union of Ishwardi upazila is the country's largest bean producing area where a large number of farmers cultivate bean as their main crop.

"More and more farmers are opting for profitable bean cultivation in Ishwardi and adjoining areas of the district. Around over 3.5 thousand hectares of cultivated land in the district, including 1500 hectares in Muladuli union alone, have been brought under bean cultivation this year while the area was 2200 hectares last year," Ishwardi upazila agriculture officer Md Khurshid Alam said.

"Tk 12/14 thousand is spent for farming bean on each bigha of land. If there is no natural calamity a farmer can get 80 to 100 maunds of bean in a season (production available for two months). Covering the production cost, a farmer can easily earn Tk 15 to 20 thousand from a bigha of land," he said.

Farmers have demanded arrangement of storage facilities to ensure fair price of the vegetable.



PHOTO: STAR

Sacks full of beans being loaded onto a truck at Muladuli for transporting to other places.



PHOTO: STAR

'Rebel' Awami League (AL) leader Amanur Rahman Khan Rana, contesting as an independent candidate in Tangail-3 (Ghatail) constituency, talks to people; right, AL nominated candidate Shahidul Islam Lebu shakes hands with a rickshaw-puller, ahead of the November 18 by-election.

## ALL THREE CANDIDATES BUSY IN GHATAIL

# Pre-poll promises to woo voters

MIRZA SHAKIL, Tangail

All the three candidates in Tangail-3 (Ghatail) by-election slated for November 18 are now busy in mass contacts to woo voters.

The Awami League (AL) Parliamentary Board nominated Shahidul Islam Lebu, former general secretary of Ghatail upazila unit of AL, as the party candidate but Tangail District AL Religious Affairs Secretary Amanur Rahman Khan Rana is also in the polls race as an independent candidate.

Electioneering by 'rebel' AL candidate Rana, who enjoys support of a good number of local party leaders and activists, is likely to make the by-election a contesting one, despite boycott by the main opposition BNP.

Jatiya Party (JP-Ershad) backed candidate Syed Abu Yousuf Abdullah Tuhin is another candidate in the by-election.

The parliamentary seat fell vacant after the death of ruling AL lawmaker Dr Matiur Rahman on September 14.

On November 4, a few central leaders of AL went to Ghatail and warned 'rebel' candidate Rana of expulsion from the party if he does not withdraw his candidature within three days while Rana on the same day declared that he will be in the polls race as 'a candidate of Ghatail people'.

Rana and Tuhin have sought deployment of army in the by-election to prevent 'possible rigging' while Lebu expressed his 'no objection' to the matter.

"I want deployment of army as Shahidul Islam Lebu, after being sure of his defeat in the by-election, is using the members of the law enforcement agencies to create panic among my workers and supporters," Rana said.

AL nominated candidate Lebu said, "I have no objection if army is deployed, for the sake of saving the voters from the criminals of independent candidate Amanur Rahman Khan Rana, resisting activities of the outsiders, and holding the election free and fair."

Tuhin has also emphasised deployment of army to ensure security of the voters and hold a free and fair election, especially against the backdrop of the tension 'due to the activities' of the two other candidates.

Asked about the matter, Syed Khurshid Anwar, returning officer of the by-election, also election officer in Mymensingh region, said the situation in Tangail-3 constituency ahead of the by-election is still calm and nice.

Visiting the constituency during the last couple of days, this correspondent saw that Shahidul Islam Lebu conducted processions and

meetings, telling the voters that he will arrange gas supply and check crimes in the constituency and raise his voice to turn the upazila into a district if he is elected in the by-election.

Amanur Rahman Khan Rana was found very busy in mass contact, telling the voters that he will serve the Ghatail people as their man if they elect him.

Syed Abu Yousuf Abdullah Tuhin and his workers are also going door to door, telling the voters that he will be by their side, if elected.

Meanwhile, the large 'vote bank' of main opposition BNP may appear as an important factor to decide the winner in the by-election.

The BNP voters, however, are still undecided as no party candidate is contesting the by-election and their leaders asked them not to take part in campaign in favour of any of the candidates.



PHOTO: STAR

Hatotepur High School in Mirzapur upazila under Tangail district remains highly vulnerable to erosion by the Bonsel River that is only a few metres away from the compound. The photo was taken recently.

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