

# BNP MP Mokbul quits as Beanibazar party chief

## Intra-party feud in Sylhet looks set to take a new turn

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The intra-party conflict in Sylhet BNP may take a new turn

with the resignation of Mokbul Hossain MP from the post of president of Beanibazar thana BNP, party insiders said.

Mokbul resigned from the post after a meeting with his like-minded associates and supporters Friday night.

Many party men think that the resignation indicates his decision to fight the next parliamentary election as an independent candidate, as before.

However, he said, "I had to shoulder responsibility for a certain period in view of the internal feud in the party. Now, as the election is nearing and my work load increased, I decided to quit the

position".

But his followers in the party still expect that Mokbul would be in the polls race with party ticket.

On Thursday night, a pillar erected for laying foundation for reconstruction of Chandigaon Ghat-Pagrana Bazar road in Golapganj, scheduled to be opened by Mokbul, was razed to the ground by unidentified people.

It happened just four days after a JCD activist was killed in a BNP factional fight at Dhakadakhin Bazar in Golapganj upazila.

The ruling party lawmaker on the same day (Monday) faced a serious agitation by villagers and rival party men as he made some comments publicly against Privatisation Commission Chairman Enam Ahmed Chowdhury. At least 50 people were injured in clashes

around the upazila health complex.

Party sources said, since Enam Ahmed Chowdhury is an advisor to BNP chairperson and aligned with BNP stalwart Saifur Rahman, he might be tipped for party nomination in Sylhet-6 constituency (Golapganj-Beanibazar upazila).

In that case, Mokbul will run as an independent candidate, they said. Mokbul was elected a lawmaker in 1986 and in 2001 from the area as an independent candidate. He joined BNP in 2003.

However, he had blessings of Saifur and other BNP leaders in 2001, when there was none in the seat from BNP or from the alliance led by it. But he lost the confidence of Saifur, party insiders claimed.

Enam Ahmed Chowdhury had been in Saifur Rahman's camp since rivalry in Sylhet BNP went

public a few months ago.

Syed Mokbul Hossain alias Lechu Miah extended his support to ruling party lawmaker M Ilyas Ali in July last year when Ilyas openly took a position against Saifur Rahman.

After that, central BNP suspended Sylhet district BNP convening committee led by Ilyas in August last year.

Months ago, the committee was dissolved after the rivalry went public and the ruling party lawmakers became divided.

Since then, Mokbul Hossain and Shafi Ahmed Chowdhury MP had been with Ilyas Ali while Dilder Hossain Selim MP had been with the Saifur Rahman, lawmaker from Sylhet Sadar (Sylhet-1) constituency.

## Striking teachers block highway in Pabna

A CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Non-government schoolteachers as part of their countrywide agitation yesterday blocked the Dhaka-Pabna highway in the district to press their 8-point demand.

Their demands include implementation of 100 per cent wages from the national exchequer, increase of medical allowance and house rent and other facilities.

During the blockade programme, vehicular movement on the highway was seriously disrupted for an hour.

The demonstrators included teachers from different schools at Bera, Shanthia and Suganagar upazillas.

The striking teachers held a rally at the Kashinathpur intersection at 10 am yesterday.

They also brought out a procession from Kashinathpur.

Later, the demonstrating teachers held a meeting at Kashinathpur bus stand at 11 am with Kashinathpur Degree College Principal Titu in the chair.



Non-government schoolteachers and employees formed a human chain at Feroz-Jahangir square in Mymensingh town yesterday to press their demands.

PHOTO: STAR

## ALLOWING SALEHI TO TAKE EXAM

# 13 former Rucsu leaders demand VC's resignation

RU CORRESPONDENT

Thirteen former leaders of Rajshahi University Central Student's Union (Rucsu) in a joint statement yesterday demanded resignation of the Rajshahi University Vice-Chancellor for allowing RU Islamic Chhatra Shibir president Salehi to appear at examination despite his poor class attendance.

Mahabub Alam Salehi is a prime suspect in the murder of RU geology and mining department teacher Prof S Taher Ahmed. He was killed on the campus on February 1. Salehi is an accused in the case.

The 13 leaders including nine former vice-presidents (VPs) and four general secretaries (GSs) of Rucsu expressed grave concern that Vice-chancellor Prof Altaf Hossain, by exercising his 'special power' allowed Salehi to appear at Masters examination, scheduled to begin on August 12.

In the statement, they said abuse of the 'special power' by the VC is condemnable as it tarnished the image of the university. No such event took place in the university's 54 year glorious history, they added.

They questioned the 'impartiality and honesty of the VC as a teacher and his right to hold the post. "He permitted the killer of a teacher to sit for examination", the statement

said.

"The permission is illegal and politically biased. As the VC lost his moral right, he should resign from his post as early as possible in the interest of the university and students."

"We think he has no authority to stay as a guardian of 25,000 students", the statement said.

The signatories are former Rucsu VPs Abdur Razzak, Bayazid Ahmed, Prof Abu Sayeed, Abdur Rahman, Haider Ali, Mir Sawkat Ali, Nurul Islam Thandu, Ragib Ahsan Munna and Fazley Hossain Badshah; and general secretaries Sarder Amzad Hossain, Shamsul Haque Tuku, Jahangir Kabir Rana and Ruhul Quddus Babu.

## Agitation by RU marketing dept students continue

RU CORRESPONDENT

Several hundred students of marketing department of Rajshahi University yesterday staged a demonstration in front of the vice-chancellor's residence protesting reported selection of a 'controversial' person as a teacher of the department.

The students have been agitating for about a week demanding cancellation of the selection of Bakhtier Rana, who was sacked from a university in Chittagong earlier for immoral activities.

Yesterday's demonstration was triggered by RU authorities' shifting of the July 23 scheduled meeting of the Syndicate to July 28. The students claimed that the Syndicate meeting was shifted to buy time to allow the student's agitation to die down. The students also formed a human chain on the campus demanding cancellation of the selection.

The July 23 meeting was supposed to take a decision on appointment of Bakhtier Rana and seven other teachers in marketing department.

# 6X2



Awami League General Secretary Abdul Jalil addressing a meeting at Mohongonj Government Pilot High School playground in Netrakona yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

# Saifur-CEC discord a part of same blueprint: Jalil

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

Awami League General Secretary Abdul Jalil MP yesterday alleged that the ruling alliance is hatching conspiracy to hold the next general election as per a blueprint to cling to power.

The 'discord' between Finance Minister Saifur Rahman and Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Justice Abdul Aziz is a 'planned drama', being staged as part of the 'blueprint' to mislead people and political parties, he said while addressing a memorial meeting for AL leader Abdul Momin, held at at Mohongonj Government Pilot High School playground in Mohongonj.

AL Presidium member Suranjit Sen Gupta also addressed the meeting.

Jalil said, "This is nothing but a new drama and part of a conspiracy by the alliance government to hold the next general election under a blueprint. This drama proves that the CEC is a ruling coalition loyalist".

The AL leader also alleged that the ruling alliance is buying time in the name of dialogue with a plan to hold the next election as per their blueprint.

"BNP-Jamaat alliance is desperate to cling to power and for that they are taking recourse to pleas one after another just to buy time", Jalil alleged.

He said the ruling parties should realise that if things are not settled during their tenure, the country will plunge into a crisis as the opposition will not go to polls without reforms. In that case, BNP and Jamaat-Islami will have to bear the responsibility, the AL leader said. He urged BNP to come to a solution before the time runs out.

Presided over by Abdul Kaddus Azad, president of Mohongonj upazila AL, the meeting was also addressed by AL central leader Asim Kumer Ukil, Netrakona district AL president Shamsuzzoha, general secretary Ashraf Ali Khan Khasru and Shafi Ahmed.

## Extortionists kill expatriate in Kushtia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Miscrants killed a youth after abduction in Kushtia for refusal to pay them toll.

In Jhenidah, police are yet to trace whereabouts of a kidnapped police source, Sultan five days into his abduction.

Kushtia police Friday recovered strangled body of a youth, Sahidul Islam, 30, son of Rahmat Ali of Bhurkapara in Daulatpur upazila.

Police said, a gang of terrorists demanded Tk. 1 lakh toll from Sahidul, an expatriate in Saudi Arabia.

As Sahidul refused to meet the demand, the goons stormed into his house Monday at around 12:pm and picked up him at gunpoint.

Informed by locals, the police later recovered Sahidul's body from a graveyard at Maniknagar village in Bheramara upazila.

Meanwhile, Jhenidah police could not yet rescue the kidnapped police source, Sultan, five days after his abduction.

Police and victim's family sources said one Palash, an alleged cadre of the outlawed Gono Mukti Fouz (GMF), called Sultan out of his Kacherkol house Monday morning. Since then Sultan remains untraced.

Sultan's wife Afroza filed a case with Saikupa police station.

Several sources claimed GMF cadres have killed Sultan.



## Top JMB man remanded

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Gharib Ullah, 45, a 'regional commander' of Jamaatul Mujahideen, Bangladesh (JMB) for Mymensingh and Jamalpur districts, was placed on seven days' remand yesterday when police produced him before a magistrate court here.

Garib Ullah, one of the masterminds of bomb blasts in four cinema halls in Mymensingh town in -- was arrested by Muktagacha police from a mosque at Dullah union in Muktagacha upazila on Friday.

He was produced before the court of First Class Magistrate Rukshana Tarannum, with a prayer for 10 days' remand.

Gharib Ullah of Binna Kuri village in Muktagacha was a senior teacher at Banda Chilatia Senior Madrasa in Jamalpur district.

# Save rivers in Kobadak basin

## Speakers at Satkhira dialogue demand

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Speakers at a dialogue here yesterday urged the government to take up a comprehensive and sustainable plan involving stakeholders to dredge all rivers in the Kobadak basin to save the southwestern region from growing salinity.

A Tidal River Management (TRM) approach should be made for that, they said at the dialogue on 'River Management in South-Western Zone and water Logging', held at the office Uttarman, an NGO, in Tala upazila.

It was addressed by, among others, Netherlands embassy representative Peter Jhon Son, Asian Development Bank (ADB) official Eyoko Hama, Scoti Mazzi of OXFAM, an international NGO,

Touhid Ibne Farid of Action Aid, Arifur Rahman of Manusher Jonno, an NGO, engineer Khalequzzaman and Uttarman director Shahidul Islam.

They said Water Development Board (WDB) implemented a Tk 28 crore project last year to dredge the Kobadak to restore its normal flow. But it failed to increase navigability as it was implemented in an unplanned way.

They said the Kobadak should be linked with Bhairab river. decrease in the flow of Kobadak has hastened the death of other rivers in he area including Hari, Shree, Bhadra and Shailmari, creating water-logging in vast areas.

Water logging in at least 109 beels (water bodies) in Kalaroa,

Tala, and Sadar upazilas in Satkhira; Jhhikargachha, Abhoynagar, Manirampur and Keshabpur upazilas in Jessore and Paikgachha and Dumuria upazilas in Khulna in the Kobadak basin has made life of millions of people miserable, also affecting agriculture, they said. This can be removed by implementing a comprehensive plan, they said.

They said, encroachments by land grabbers, leasing out lands of these rivers for shrimp cultivation and building bridges and dams in an unplanned way are hastening the death of these rivers.

They said, a political commitment is needed to save the rivers and the ecology in the areas.

# 8X3

# Tengratila people start fresh agitation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Affected villagers in Tengratila yesterday began a fresh 3-day agitation programme with a rally and a demonstration in front of the gas field office to press their 6-point demand including payment of compensation.

They will observe a token hunger strike at the main gate of the gas field from 8 AM to 4 PM today and submit a memorandum to the Upazila Nirbahi Officer tomorrow.

Another 3-day programme will be announced tomorrow, said leaders of Tengratila Dabi Aday Sangram Parishad which is organising the agitation.

Azimuddin Master, convener of the Parishad chaired the rally

The speakers said, the Canadian company is trying to

avoid payment of compensation to the people affected by the blow-outs during drilling, which damaged the ecology and croplands in the area.

They said they will continue the agitation till their demands are met.

The 6-point demand includes payment of Tk 84 crore in compensation for environmental loss, compensation to the 611 families, employment for locals in the gas field, establishment of a gas based 50 MW power plant near Tengratila, arrangement of supply of safe drinking water in the affected villages and establishment of a health complex in the area.

The affected people around Tengratila Gas Field in Sunamganj did not get the compensation even a year after the second blowout and fire that took place in the field on the night of June 24 last year.

# 4X3