

BNP won't let Satkhira-4 to go quietly to BJP

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

BNP will not 'surrender' Satkhira-4 (Kaligonj-Debhata) parliamentary seat to Bangladesh Jatiya Party (JP-Monju) in the coming parliamentary election as was done in 2001.

This was stated by BNP leader from the area Dr Shahidul Alam while talking to this correspondent yesterday. Alam, also a central vice-president of Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA), said he will seek alliance ticket to contest from there.

"BJP will not be a factor for BNP to win the seat as that party has virtually no organisation in the area", Alam said.

He however declined to make any comment in case the four-party alliance nominates a BJP or a

Jatiya Party (Ershad) candidate for the JS seat. Ershad's JP has reportedly reached an understanding with the ruling BNP and may join the four-party alliance.

BJP central leader Kazi Alauddin was elected from Satkhira-4 in 2001 election by defeating Awami League candidate Dr Ruhul Haque with a big margin.

On contact, Alauddin said alliance leader Khaleeda Zia will decide who would vie for the seat in next election.

"As I have done a lot of development work in the constituency, I deserve nomination to retain the seat", Alauddin said.

Jatiya Party's (Ershad) central vice-president and former MP Shahadat Hossain will also seek nomination from the constituency if his party joins the four-party alliance.

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"Kazi Alauddin took the opportunity as I was not in the polls race in 2001", Shahadat said claiming his contribution to implementation of many development projects including road construction.

Political insiders said Shahidul Alam has a large number party followers in Kaligonj and Debhata upazilas, who want him to be nominated.

Shahidul has already started meeting BNP leaders and workers in Satkhira-4 area to mobilise support to get nomination, they said.

On the other hand, a large section of BNP leaders and activists in Kaligonj and Debhata upazilas are opposing nomination of incumbent BJP lawmaker Kazi

Alauddin.

Shahidul's supporters are holding meetings and doing mass contact through out the constituency. Hardly a day passes without any programme to mobilise public support for Shahidul, said Prof Khoda Bux, convenor of Kaligonj upazila BNP.

"There is no chance for BJP to win this seat (Satkhira-4) in next election", said a senior leader of Satkhira district BNP seeking anonymity.

Alauddin however told this correspondent that he hopes to get alliance nomination but declined to comment if things go otherwise.

"If I do not get nomination then I will take a decision on my next course of action after consulting party central leaders", he added.



Tank lorries queue for fuel at Baghabari fuel depot in Sirajganj. The photo was taken on Thursday.

PHOTO: STAR

Rationing fails to ease diesel 'crisis' as demand increases

Stock at Baghabari depot may exhaust today

GOLAM MOSTAFA JIBON, back from Baghabari

Although diesel is being rationed from Baghabari depot for last six days to ensure even distribution in 16 northern districts, its supply at consumers' level is far from being eased because of increased demand for irrigation and alleged smuggling across the border in bulk quantities.

Rationing from depots of Padma, Meghna and Jamuna oil companies at Baghabari was started on August 21.

Diesel is being sold in rural areas at up to Tk 36 per litre. Sources among dealers claimed that the price may soar further as they are not getting supplies as per demand. The stock at Baghabari will be exhausted by today (Sunday) while two barges of Bangladesh

Petroleum Corporation (BPC) with about 60 lakh litres of diesel are stuck up in shallow water at Nakalia on the Jamuna in Pabna district since Thursday.

Sources at the Baghabari depot admitted that as on Thursday, Padma oil had a stock of about 13 lakh litres, Meghna 17 lakh litres and Jamuna 11.23 lakh litres. Supply is interrupted at times due to navigation problem but there is no crisis of diesel now, they said.

They said supplies have been increased by at least 150 per cent over that of last year but the demand also increased in an unprecedented proportion. They attributed the situation to use of numerous irrigation in fields for sowing Aman seedlings due to lack of rain in northern districts.

Senior agriculture officials here estimated that at least 80,000

pumps could be in operation in the 16 districts now.

Officials at Baghabari depot showed figures on increase in supply. In Jamuna depot, supply of diesel was 5.30 lakh litres on August 15, 5.83 lakh litres on August 17 and 5.95 litres on August 20 this year against 1.34 lakh litres on August 15, 1.70 lakh litres on August 16, 77,000 litres on August 17 and 1.57 lakh litres on August 18 last year.

Supplies to Padma and Meghna depots have also been increased manifold over previous years, they said showing official record.

They claimed that a section of dealers are hoarding diesel or smuggling it across the border.

Tayob Ali, driver of tank lorry from Nazipur in Naogaon said, after waiting in the queue for three days, he got 4,500 litres on Thursday against a demand for

9,000 litres. The rationing has not improved the situation, he added.

Zahidul Islam, another driver at a filling station in Bogra said, he sought 18,000 litres for two tank lorries but got half of it after greasing the palm of a union leader with Tk 2000.

Mominur Islam from Gaibandha also said he got about half of the quantity he sought.

Jasmot Ali, a farmer in Chalonbeel said, he bought diesel at Tk 36 per litre to irrigate his land.

A high official at Baghabari depot seeking anonymity claimed that some dishonest dealers are either hoarding diesel or smuggling it across the border. While talking to this correspondent, Abul Bashar, in-charge of Jamuna depot, Abdul Jalil of Meghna and Shahjahan Hawlader of Padma made similar allegation.



Awami League General Secretary Abdul Jalil addressing a rally at Rangpur town before start of the 14-party opposition's long march yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Reforms a must to foil election engineering

Jalil tells pre-march rally in Rangpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Awami League General Secretary and co-coordinator of 14-party opposition alliance Abdul Jalil yesterday reiterated that there would be no election in the country without reforms of the caretaker system and the Election Commission.

He said, the ruling parties know that people would not vote for BNP-Jamaat as their life has become miserable under the rule of the four-party alliance government. So BNP and Jamaat are hatching conspiracy to retain power through election engineering, ignoring people's demand for reform, he said. Reforms is a must to foil their evil design, he added.

He was addressing a huge public meeting at Rangpur Public Library ground before the road march of AL-led 14-party combine. Jalil said, leaders of BNP and Jamaat made amasses wealth through corruption, and have politicised the administration to retain power.

He said, "BNP and Jamaat are

now going to tie up with Jatiya Party (Ershad) whose leaders also plundered public wealth through corruption during their his nine years' misrule".

Others who spoke at the rally include AL central leaders Abdur Razzak, Motia Choudhury, Mahmudur Rahman Manna, Abdul Mannan, JSD president Hasanul Hoque Innu, Workers Party president Rashed Khan Menon and Gonoratri Party president Pankaj Bhattacharia. It was presided over by Kazi Mazharul Islam Liton.

Hasanul Hoque Innu said, 14-party combine is fighting for establishing a secular, democratic and accountable government.

Abdur Razzak said, BNP and Jamaat in last five years killed a number of top AL leaders including former finance minister ASM Kibriya, Ivy Rahman, and Ahsanullah Master to make the party bereft of leaders.

Criticising the government, he said it is yet to place investigation report on August 21 grenade attacks on AL rally in Dhaka.

Rashed Khan Menon said, reforms are necessary to hold a free and fair election in a peaceful way.

Motia Choudhury said, people of Rangpur have been deprived of development during the tenure of the government.

Bogra has been brought under pipeline gas supply network whereas there is no commitment for gas supply to Rangpur, only 85 km from Bogra.

She said, gas will be supplied to Rangpur, a university would be set up here and Rangpur division would be formed if 14-party combine is voted to power in the next election.

Carrying banners and posters, several thousands people joined the long march. They walked about 8 kilometres from Public Library to Arjon point and chanted various anti-government slogans demanding reforms to the caretaker system and the Election Commission and to vote for 14-party alliance candidates in the coming election.

Phulbari coal mine project protested

RU CORRESPONDENT

Rajshahi University (RU) unit of the National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources, Power and Port yesterday formed a human chain in front of the central library demanding cancellation of Phulbari Coal Mine Project.

It expressed solidarity with the central committee's programme to lay siege to the Asia Energy Corporation Office at Phulbari.

Participants carried various placards and banners.

A meeting was also held where speakers said hundreds of people will be displaced and cultivable lands on about 135 square mile areas in two upazilas will be damaged creating adverse effect on ecology for the proposed project.

They demanded of the government immediate to cancel the project for maintaining balance of nature in the area.

Jute workers in Khulna call for hartal Tuesday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Jute mill workers called a dawn-to-dusk hartal here on Tuesday to press for realisation of 8-point demands and to protest violation of an agreement reached with jute minister Shahjahan Siraj at Khulna Circuit House on May 28.

The decision was taken in an emergency meeting at Khalspur office of Patkal Sangram Parishad Friday night. Parishad convenor Sarder Motharuddin presided the meeting.

A road-rail barricade programme was also announced at the meeting as part of the ongoing agitation.

3 Jubo League men hurt in BNP attack

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

At least three Jubo League activists were injured in an attack by BNP activists at Shalbagun in Sadar upazila yesterday.

The injured are Abul Kalam, 27, Abu Bakkar, 30, and Mohammad Nasir Uddin, 28. BNP activists allegedly attacked them for joining a long march on Wednesday.

District AL leader Prashanta Tripura alleged that the BNP cadres are torturing the party activists day after day but the administration did not take measures to halt the trend. He demanded immediate arrest of the attackers.

However, district BNP joint secretary Mostafizur Rahman Mitta refuted the allegations.

SYLHET LAWYER'S HOUSE 'Scrap lease by Sept 5'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The Sylhet unit of Arpita Sampatty Protirodh Andolan held a rally in the city yesterday protesting 'illegal' leasing of parental house of a senior leader by the district administration by listing it as a vested property.

The rally demanded cancellation of the lease of the house and property of advocate Dhrubojyoti Shyam by September 5 and withdrawal of the Deputy Commissioner, Additional Deputy Commissioner (Revenue) and Superintendent in vested property section in the district land settlement office. Otherwise, tougher agitation would be announced from a rally on that day, it was announced at the rally held at the Court Point.

Sylhet city Mayor Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran, Awami League leader and convenor of the Arpita

Sampatty Protirodh Andolan presided over the rally, addressed by political

leaders of all parties and social organisations. They included AL advisory committee member AMA Muhit, Sylhet Bar Association President Dewan Goalm Rabbani Chowdhury, Coal Importers Association President HajiDilwar Hossain, Sylhet Chamber of Commerce and Industry Director Shah Alam, AL general secretary Iftekhar Hossain Shamim, senior BNP leader Rafiqul Islam Shishu.

JP central organising secretary Abdullah Siddiqui, Samyabadi Dal leader Dhiren Singha, Abul Hossain of Workers Party, Sylhet Ganotantri Party president Arash Ali, JSD president Kolondar Ali and district CPB chief Bedananda Bhattacharya.

Another rally will be held and a human chain formed on September 5 to press the demand.

UP leader's house attacked by Jamaat men for protesting fake voter list

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A Union Parishad chairman's house was ransacked allegedly by Jamaat men in Chalitabunia union in Galachipa upazila as he protest inclusion of fake names in the updated voter list.

Chalitabunia UP chairman Liton Talukder told a press conference at Galachipa Press Club Friday evening that a set of updated voter list was sent to the UP office on Thursday. He did not hang in on the notice board as it included many fake voters.

He then challenged the local voter enumerator, Jahangir Alam, who is a madrasa teacher and local leader of Jamaat-e-Islami.

In the evening, a gang of about 50 people swooped on his house and ransacked it. Hearing cries, neighbours came to their rescue, ensuring a clash.

At least 10 people were injured in the clash, Liton claimed at the press conference.

District election officials at Patuakhali said 21.24 per cent new voters were enlisted in seven upazila in Patuakhali district in the updated voter list. The updating was

completed on August 20.

They said 3.51 per cent voters were dropped from the list as they died or were not found at houses.

They said, as per the updated voter list, there are 2,16,584 new voters in the district. The increase is 43,845 in Sadar upazila, 20,181 in Mirzagani, 10,000 in Dumki, 18,666 in Dashmina, 50,218 in Galachipa, 43,928 in Baulf and 29,544 in Kalapara upazila.

A total of 35,852 voters have been dropped from the list as they died or were not found at houses. Of them, are 8,626 in Sadar upazila, 26,069 in Mirzagani, 1,910 in Dumki, 2,458 in Dashmina, 7,728 in Galachipa, 7,326 in Baulf and 5,135 in Kalapara upazila.

The new voters would be added to the list prepared in 2000 which contains 10,19,680 voters including 4,97,703 female voters, sources said.

It is widely alleged that voter enumerators did not visit houses while updating the voter list. However, district election officer Md Mikail denied the allegations and said any left out voter could be enrolled even a day before of the election.



Sylhet Mayor Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran addressing a rally organised by Sylhet unit of Arpita Sampatty Protirodh Andolan at Court Point in the city yesterday protesting 'illegal' lease of ancestral house of lawyer Dhrubojyoti Shyam.

PHOTO: STAR

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