

Opposition to cash in on 'flouted' polls pledges in Rangpur

Political leaders, civil society members tell Daily Star

RAFIQUE SARKER, Rangpur

In the coming election, Awami League and its allies will cash in on BNP-led alliance government's alleged failure in fulfilling its 2001 polls pledges on major local issues.

The government did not fulfil any of its polls pledges and sidelined Rangpur in major development projects, front ranking leaders of major political parties and civic bodies alleged while talking to this correspondent.

The BNP-Jamaat government did not keep any of its election pledges regarding development of Rangpur, AL leader Tipu Monshi said.

"This (alleged failure) will be a prime factor in motivating voters in favour of our candidates in coming election," said Rangpur AL joint convener Mosaddeque Hossen Bablu.

Reminding the pledges, Gonatantri Party Presidium member Mohammed Afzal claimed that before 2001 election, BNP-led alliance committed that if voted to power, they would set up an education board and a university, construct a bridge on Teesta and create Rangpur division comprising eight northern districts.

But they forgot the pledges they gave to the people of Rangpur, he said.

Abul Monsur, convener of Rangpur district AL, said the former Awami League government had

taken steps including land requisition for the proposed Rangpur Science and Technology University, a long-felt demand of people of the area.

When BNP-led alliance came in power, it shifted the project to Dinajpur, he said.

Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina had also declared in 2000 that Rangpur division would be created comprising eight northern districts. But nothing came about, he said.

Jatiya Party (Ershad) Presidium member GM Quader MP is also critical about BNP-Jamaat government's alleged flouting of promises.

"JP lawmakers raised the issues in parliament on several occasions but the government did not pay any heed to our appeal.

"May be because they did not get any seat from Rangpur in last election", he said.

Joint convener of Rangpur Unnayan Parishad Moyazzem Hossen Lavlu also claimed that before 2001 election, leaders of 4-party alliance committed to set up an education board in Rangpur but forgot it. "They possibly wanted it in Dinajpur", he said.

Rangpur Nagorik Committee convener Mohammed Afzal said AL government at the end of its tenure declared Rangpur a division and took steps to set up a science and technology university here.

The BNP-Jamaat government shifted the university to Dinajpur and did not take any step to create

Rangpur division, he said.

Rangpur BNP secretary Habibun-Nabi Khan Sohel however refuted the allegations.

The alliance government implemented so many development projects in Rangpur in last five years, he claimed.

"People of Rangpur are enjoying fruits of the development projects and I believe they will change their mindset and vote for alliance candidates in the coming election." He however did not elaborate the projects.

Sohel, who lost in the last election from Rangpur-3 constituency, said the alliance did not commit to set up an education board and a university in Rangpur.

"We told people that BNP-led alliance would consider these demands if it can form government", he claimed.

The BNP leader said the government has taken initiative to construct a bridge on Teesta and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia laid its foundation last month.

AL leader Tipu Monshi said it is an eyewitness.

"AL president Sheikh Hasina laid foundation of the bridge at the same site in 2000.

"Why Khaleda Zia laid foundation once again instead of taking steps and sanctioning money for the bridge whose foundation was already laid?" he posed the question.

2 patients die at Cox's Bazar Hospital in 2 days

Neglect alleged

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Two patients died at Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital in last two days due to neglect by hospital staff, their relatives claimed.

Jalal Mia, 13, son of Nurul Alam of Samity Para died as yesterday morning while Gopal Dey, 35, of Eidgaon village in Sadar upazila died Monday night.

Jalal died as an on-duty doctor refused to attend him. Gopal Dey died as another doctor refused to give him oxygen.

Doctors and nurses were on wildcat strike since Monday night after three staff nurses of the emergency wing of the hospital were beaten up by a group of patients following their refusal to give oxygen to a fellow patient Gopal Dey resulting in his death.

However, they withdrew their strike following intervention of the district administration officials on Tuesday night. But the hospital wore a deserted look as most of the patients left the hospital.

When asked, hospital superintendent Dr Dulal Chandra Pal said punitive measures will be taken against the staff.



PHOTO: STAR

An empty ward at Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital as most of the patients left it due to strike by staff. The strike was called off Tuesday night but new patients were not admitted.

AUG 17 SERIAL BLASTS Hearing deferred again in Khulna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

The date for framing charges against 19 accused of the August 17 serial blasts cases here including Jamaat al Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) kingpins Shaikh Abdur Rahman, Siddiqui Islam Bangla Bhai and Ataur Rahman Sunny was deferred again.

Khulna Speedy Trial Tribunal in Khulna yesterday deferred it because the JMB kingpins could not be produced before the tribunal.

This is for the second time the hearing on charge framing against the accused was adjourned.

The other accused are Nasir Uddin Dafadar, Asadullah, Anisur Rahman Khokor, Maniruzzaman Munna, Asadul Islam, Abul Khair, Nayeem, Fakar Uddin Raji, Noor Ali, Momtaz, Habibur Rahman, Mahbubur Rahman Liton, Gias Uddin, Hafez Hujur, Rakib Hasan alias Ismail.

Rangpur AL council now on Sept 21

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Council of Rangpur district Awami League, scheduled to be held yesterday, will now take place on September 21.

The date has been shifted by party high-ups due to 'unavoidable reasons', said a party press release issued yesterday.

BNP, Jamaat face-off in B'Baria-4 constituency

SHAHIDUL ISLAM, B'baria

Alliance partners BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami are in a face-off over nomination from Brahmanbaria-4 constituency (Akhaura and Kashba upazilas) in the coming election.

Both the parties are campaigning for their prospective candidates BNP chairperson and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at a public meeting at Kashba on August 22 declared incumbent lawmaker and former cabinet secretary Mushfiqur Rahman as candidate of the constituency in the next election.

Akhaura and Kashba upazila Jamaat leaders and workers have launched a hectic campaign for Jamaat candidate Kazi Nazrul Islam Khadem, Ameer of the party in the district.

They held at least 42 public meetings in the area in last one week, party sources said.

On the other hand, BNP is also holding rallies in favour of Mushfiqur Rahman.

Awami League (AL) leader Shah Alam was elected from the seat in 1996 election.

Talking to this correspondent, some front ranking Jamaat leaders said they are already in the field and will seek alliance nomination for their party Ameer because after

winning the last election, BNP did not 'evaluate Jamaat in the area'.

They alleged that the incumbent lawmaker ignored Jamaat in all development works.

District Ameer Kazi Nazrul Islam said he was not directly involved with any development activity.

Talking to this correspondent, he however said Mushfiqur Rahman tried to maintain personal relation with him but local BNP leaders misguided him often.

Akhaura BNP secretary NM Hasan Khan said they are seriously campaigning for Mushfiqur Rahman because the party chief declared him as a candidate for the next election.

He claimed that there is no candidate in Jamaat to face the AL candidate in the constituency in the coming election.

On the other hand, Brahmanbaria Jamaat secretary Sayed Gulam Sarwar said by declaring the name of Mushfiqur Rahman, Khaleda Zia declared her party candidate, not an alliance candidate.

"This is not our headache. Jamaat is not present at Khaleda's meeting then", he added.

"Jamaat will not abide by such a declaration made by Khaleda as

regards candidature from Brahmanbaria-4 constituency", he further said.

Jamaat Ameer Kazi Nazrul Islam said his party has 3000 dedicated workers who are working for long in the constituency for the coming election.

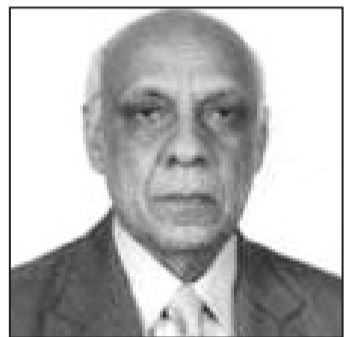
"They once worked for alliance candidate but now they are working for Jamaat candidate", he said.

Nazrul claimed that a section of BNP headed by industrialist Mia Abdullah Wazed, a former BNP MP, supports him.

Sources said Mia Abdullah Wazed was also an aspirant for alliance ticket. His hopes were dashed when Khaleda Zia announced the name of Mushfiqur Rahman at the public meeting. Now he is pushing Jamaat ahead, they claimed.

Industrialist and Jatiya Party (Ershad) leader Md Salim Mia Master is also working in the constituency seriously to contest in the election.

Political analysts said if BNP-Jamaat alliance can not field one candidate and JP remains in the race, AL candidate Shah Alam may have a good chance.



Mushfiqur Rahman BNP MP



Kazi Md Selim of JP



Kazi Nazrul Islam of Jamaat



Kalpa Ranjan Chakma



S S Chakma



Zahedul Alam

Khagrachhari AL 'dumps' Kalpa Ranjan Chakma

Indifference to party alleged by party leaders

JASIM MAJUMDER, Khagrachhari

Intra-party feud in Khagrachhari Awami League has deepened with majority of front ranking leaders opposing nomination of former minister and lawmaker Kalpa Ranjan Chakma from the parliamentary seat for his alleged indifference to party activities for long.

Kalpa Ranjan Chakma lost to 4-party alliance candidate Wadud Bhuiyan by 38,550 votes in 2001 election. Party men alleged that since then, most of the time kept himself away from party activities and other programmes in the district.

He did not stand by party men while several hundred activists were tortured and harassed allegedly by BNP Men and police by filing false cases, alleged AL general secretary Zahedul Alam while talking to this correspondent.

Zaher claimed that during the crisis he along with party president Zatintra Lal Tripura, vice-president Kujendra Lal Tripura, Panchhari College principal Samir Datta Chakma and other leaders steered the party.

Kalpa Ranjan even did not attend the August 15 programme in the district marking the death anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh

Mujibur Rahman, he added.

His recent move to regain his position in the party here has virtually angered leaders and activists. Mentionably, Kalpa Ranjan's workers recently displayed posters reading 'Kalpa Babur Bikalpa Na (no alternative to Kalpa Ranjan Chakma) in different areas of the district.

The party high-ups have been informed about Kalpa Ranjan's present position in the party and workers attitude towards him, said its incumbent president Zatintra Lal Tripura at a press conference on August 27.

Front ranking leaders including Zahedul Alam were present at the press conference.

Zatintra told the press conference that AL will regain the Khagrachhari parliamentary seat if any body except Kalpa Ranjan is nominated in the coming election.

"Despite repression and harassment by ruling party men we reorganised the party at grassroots level and regained strength without him (Kalpa Ranjan)", he said.

"As a minister he had many things to do in Khagrachhari. Awami League gave him so much but he did not give anything to the party here", Zatintra said.

Prof Samir Datta Chakma, a

nomination seeker, also echoed the same sentiment.

"Now the party is united and we have formed committees at village level without help of Kalpa Ranjan Chakma", he said.

He said, on August 23, when 14-party convener in Chittagong ABM Mohiuddin came to Khagrachhari leading the opposition long marched, Kalpa Ranjan Chakma received him at Ramgour with about 400 loyalists. "We received him at Khagrachhari with at least 50,000 party activists including women. This proves his position in the party here, Samir Kumar said.

Seeking anonymity, some other party leaders even alleged that Kalpa Ranjan is working as 'B team' of BNP lawmaker Wadud Bhuiyan.

When contacted, Kalpa Ranjan Chakma claimed that he has contact with party high-ups and would be the 14-party nominee from Khagrachhari in coming election.

Party sources said besides Kalpa Ranjan, six AL leaders may vie for nomination. They are Zatintra Lal Tripura, Zahedul Alam, Kujendra Lal Tripura, Prof Samir Nath Chakma former ambassador S S Chakma and newcomer Gayano Biash Chakma.

Abductors sue victim's father in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

The abductors who kidnapped two schoolboys here on September 6 are yet to be arrested.

But a vested quarter is allegedly hatching a conspiracy to implicate the father of a victim and another hotel owner in a false case.

A gang of traffickers abducted Alamgir, 14, son of Shariatullah, a rickshaw-puller at Kaikhali village and Sakil, 9, son of Nurul Islam Roni, a poultry farmer at Magura village in Sadar upazila from the Judge Court area in the town on September 6. The victims are students of class seven and four of Satkhira Government High School.

However, Sakil's father Nurul Islam Roni and Maniruzzaman Babu, a hotel owner rescued them from a physician's house at Dhanmondi in Dhaka who sheltered them at his house finding them crying in front of Suhawardi Hospital on September 7. Later, Roni and Babu handed over Alamgir to his

father Shariatullah at Kaikhali village.

With the instigation of a vested quarter, Shariatullah filed a case with Sadar Police Station yesterday accusing Sakil's father Nurul Islam Roni under women and children repression preventive act. They are also trying to implicate Maniruzzaman Babu owner of Baishakhi Hotel in the town in false case.

After the incident, over 3000 people mostly rickshaw van pullers led by Labsa Union Parishad chairman Abdul Alam brought out a procession and laid siege to Sadar Police Station demanding arrest and punishment to Roni branding him traffickers.

Local alleged that a vested quarter are hatching conspiracy against them to save the abductors.

On contact, Nurul Islam Roni said, he campaigned for a candidate against chairman Abdul Alam in the last Labsa UP election. Now, the chairman is hatching a conspiracy to take revenge on him.



PHOTO: STAR

BNP activists chasing Awami League workers in Nilphamari (L) and a closed shopping centre in Sirajganj town during hartal yesterday. Hartal was called in the two towns in protest against police action on Awami League leaders Asaduzzaman Noor MP and Mohammad Nasim MP in Dhaka on Tuesday.

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