

Dump Jamaat, field BNP man in Dinajpur-6

BNP leaders demand, blame MP for rift in alliance

KANKON KARMAKER, Dinajpur

BNP leaders and workers are demanding nomination of a party man from Dinajpur-6 constituency instead of fielding Jamaat candidate in the coming election.

The demand was voiced at several party meetings held in different areas of the constituency in recent days. BNP leaders and workers also criticised Jamaat lawmaker Azizur Rahman Chowdhury for his alleged failure in implementing alliance's polls pledges and sidelining BNP leaders.

Dinajpur-6 constituency comprises Birampur, Nawabganj, Hakimpur and Goraghat upazilas.

In 2001 election, Jamaat leader Azizur Rahman Chowdhury was elected with alliance ticket. He got 1,10,598 votes against Awami League candidate Md Mostafizur Rahman Fizu's 88,943 votes.

Front ranking leaders of the district committee were present at a



Azizur Rahman Chowdhury



Mokbulur Rahman Gorki

meeting held at Hakimpur on Wednesday. It was addressed by, among others, district BNP president Md Yousuf Ali, vice-presidents Md Abdul Aziz Sardar and Lutfur Rahman Mintu, assistant general secretary Md Mokbulur Rahman Gorki and Mozammel Hossain Badal.

Speakers criticised the role of incumbent MP Azizur Rahman Chowdhury. They alleged that he failed to meet the alliance's polls pledges and created a rift in the alliance by ignoring BNP men in different activities.

They demanded a BNP man as alliance candidate from Dinajpur-6 and said many party men will not be involved in campaign if a Jamaat

man is nominated again.

They also alleged that Azizur Rahman am even did not keep contact with BNP leaders and local people.

BNP will not shoulder Jamaat leader's failure, they said.

When contacted later, Azizur Rahman said he did not know about Wednesday's meeting. He claimed that BNP chief Khaleda Zia assured him of nomination from the constituency in the coming election.

He refuted the allegation that alliance's polls pledges could not be implemented due to his failure. He claimed that he implemented many development projects.

"We (Jamaat) are trying to work with BNP to retain the seat", he said.

Dinajpur district BNP president Yousuf Ali however said he does not know anything about Khaleda Zia's assurance to Azizur Rahman.



Jute sticks are no more a simple byproduct now as those fetch Tk 200-300 per bundle for farmers due to increasing fuel crisis. Dried sticks on sale at Mohonganj Bazar in Netrakona district.

PHOTO: JAHANGIR ALAM

Hurried road repair ahead of polls

HOSSAIN SERAJ back from Jhenidah

There is a rush for road reconstruction work in Jhenidah-3 constituency ahead of the election. Thirty-eight roads are being renovated in at a cost of Tk 5 crore in the constituency comprising Koachchandpur and Maheshpur upazilas.

But implementation of too many projects in such a short time during rainy season has drawbacks also. The work is not done properly as substandard materials are used, some locals alleged while talking to this correspondent. The roads are being renovated hurriedly only to secure vote, they said.

Contractors got the opportunity to use below standard bricks as local BNP lawmaker Shahidul Islam Master wants completion of the work before end of his tenure to show people, they said.

Talking to this correspondent, an official in the account section in Jhenidah LGED office "As contractors bought the works at higher rates from ruling party men they (contractors) are compelled to use substandard bricks to keep the cost lower."

Jhenidah LGED (Local Government Engineering Department) Executive Engineer however claimed that bricks being used in

the road repair are not of low quality.

During this correspondent's visit to the Maheshpur upazila, Sazzad Hossain and Ansar Ali of Jaguchha village said villagers obstructed the contractor from doing the repair work as low quality bricks were used.

This correspondent also visited the work in Koachchandpur upazila and talked to local people.

Abdul Aziz Malitha of Sherkhali village said old and substandard bricks are being used to build the road from Sherkhali to Mamunshia. He said seeing the sub-standard work, they submitted a written complaint to higher authorities but no action was taken.

Sources in Koachchandpur and Maheshpur upazila engineers' offices said, tenders were called on March 21 for construction of 38 roads at a cost of Tk. 5.35 crore.

Seeking anonymity a contractor said, "As genuine contractors were not allowed to purchase tender schedules, they were bound to buy the works from ruling party leaders at much higher rates."

"As prices of brick soared suddenly, most of the contractors were unwilling to start work. But as the local lawmaker asked them to complete the work anyhow, they are

doing the work hurriedly".

Contractor Abu Nasir Liton however claimed substandard bricks are not being used although. "Due to crisis of bricks, low quality bricks are being used in certain areas."

ALGED official in Koachchandpur upazila said they showed lawmaker Shahidul the repair work in Dora union being done with substandard bricks and other materials. The lawmaker asked contractor to complete the work before expiry of the government's tenure.

On contact, Maheshpur Upazila Engineer Shafiqur Rahman admitted that quality of construction materials used for the road repair was not satisfactory.

When contacted, lawmaker Shahidul Islam Master expressed his ignorance about use of low quality bricks.

"If such malpractice takes place, contractors and the LGED officials will be held responsible for this."

When asked about his directive to contractors to complete the work before expiry of government's tenure, "I must try to facilitate my voters and save them from walking on muddy roads."

BELLAL MURDER CASE Accused moving freely, alleges victim's brother

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sathkira

The main accused in the journalist Bellal murder case are moving freely under the nose of police because of their involvement in ruling party politics.

The slain journalist's elder brother Ainal Dafadar who is also the complainant of the case alleged this at a press conference held at Sathkira Press Club here yesterday.

The accused are also threatening the victim's family members including the complainant to withdraw the case or 'face the dire consequences', he said.

He said his brother Bellal came under attack by the accused at Pichhlapole village in Kalaroa upazila while he was returning home from Bakra village at about 8 pm on September 14.

The accused chopped him severely and he died at Khulna hospital the same night, he said.

"I filed a case with Kalaroa Police Station accusing 13 people including Momtaz Sardar, Sarwar Sardar, Abu Taleb and Rafiqul Islam", Ainal said. The accused are BNP and Jamaat leaders and activists. Local ruling party high ups are sheltering them, he alleged.

Accusing police of taking bribe from the accused, he sought intervention of Prime Minister and Home Minister.

Abducted college girl yet to be rescued

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Police could not rescue a college girl till yesterday, four days after she was abducted from Kaliakair upazila in Gazipur for Tk 2 lakh ransom.

Abducted Rozina Aktar, 20, daughter of Abdul Wohab of Majhukhan village, is a HSC student at Bhaol Badre Alam College.

Victim's family sources said a gang of six unidentified miscreants whisked Rozina into a white microbus at Mouchack bus stand at the upazila headquarters when she was going to college Thursday morning.

The abductors told her father on cell phone at around 8:30pm Thursday that they kept Rozina at Radio Colony in Savar, sources said. The abductors demanded Tk 2 lakh for her release and threatened her father that she would be killed if their demand is not met within two days, the sources said.

Rozina's father filed a general diary (GD) with Kaliakair police. On contact, Kaliakair police said they are trying to rescue her and have informed Savar police.

Rangpur AL body not formed as rivals clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Awami League could not form its Rangpur district committee during its council on Saturday due to a brawl between two rival factions over how to form the body.

The council was held after nine years. It was attended by AL Presidium member Suranjit Sengupta and some other central leaders.

The leaders left Saturday night as the committee could not be formed.

The clash between rival factions erupted as one group demanded voting for formation of the committee while the other said members of the district body be selected by central leaders and announced from Dhaka.

"Majority of the councilors wanted voting to form the committee but being influenced by a number of local leaders, the central leaders decided to form it in Dhaka", a front ranking leader told this correspondent Saturday night.

Party sources said Mochaddeque Hosen Bablu, Abul Monsur Ahmed, Elias Ahmed and Mohshin Ali Bengal declared themselves as president candidates while Rezaul Karim Raju, Delwar Hosen and Anwarul Islam as contenders for the post of secretary. Anwarul Islam, a member of the convening committee told this correspondent that a number of 'unpopular' misguided the central leaders, who left Rangpur without forming a committee.

Abul Monsur Ahmed, who allegedly tried to avoid voting, said he was not against voting but thought central leaders would do whatever they thought better.

Snatcher stabs cop

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

A policeman was stabbed by a snatcher at Kandipara here Saturday night, police sources said.

While patrolling the town in plane clothes, Habilder Julmat arrested the snatcher named Masum. But the culprit stabbed him indiscriminately while he was handcuffing him.

Habilder Julmat was immediately sent to Dhaka from Brahmanbaria Sadar Hospital in a critical condition.



A PUJA MANDOP WITH A DIFFERENCE: A banner demanding execution of Islamist militants who killed judges Jagannath Pandey and Sohail Ahmed in Jhalakathi is seen at a mandop at Fishery Road in Barisal city.

PHOTO: STAR

Nizami faces protest in his own constituency

A CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A programme of Jamaat Ameer and Industries Minister Moulana Motiur Rahman Nizami was postponed in Bera upazila in his Pabna-1 constituency on Saturday due to protest by local people. Pabna-1 comprise Bera and Santhia upazilas.

He was scheduled to open a newly constructed building of Brishalikh Primary School there at noon.

In the morning, several thousand people including family members of martyred freedom fighters from Brishalikh village and adjoining areas brought out a procession protesting his arrival and dismantled the plaque erected for the inauguration.

The demonstrators carried black flags and chanted slogans against Jamaat, calling it collaborators of Pakistani occupation army and killers of many people in the area.

Sources in the area said many people were killed by the occupation forces and their collaborators during the Liberation War.

Police were deployed in the area for the minister's programme but they did not take any action on the demonstrators. Jamaat leaders and workers who had gathered in the area in the morning also left seeing the demonstration, locals said. Demonstrations were also held Friday evening as news of Nizami's arrival spread in the area.

Brishalikh village and nearby areas are strongholds of Awami League. Awami League central leader Abu Sayeed hails from adjoining Shankipara village, sources said.

Nizami came to the area on a two-day visit. On Friday, he attended some other programmes in Santhia upazila.

When contacted Bera Upazila Nirbahi Officer Md Aminul Islam said

the inauguration ceremony was postponed and it will be held later.

He said the minister's programme was not officially scheduled earlier. It was planned on Friday when the minister came on a two-day visit to the area, he said.

Local Jamaat leaders blamed Awami League for the demonstrations. "AL activists dismantled the plaque and instigated the demonstrators", Bera upazila Jamaat Ameer Abu Daud alleged while talking to The Daily Star.

Awami League refuted the allegation. "Local people organised the protest as the killings during the liberation war are still fresh in their minds", Bera upazila Awami League leader and Bera Poursava Chairman Abdul Batin said.

Ghost mandops in Nilphamari

Misappropriation of DRO rice alleged

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Hindu Welfare Trust men have allegedly misappropriated 2.2 metric tons of government allotted rice by including 22 fake spots in the list of puja mandops (pandals) in the district.

They prepared the list allegedly in collaboration with a section of unscrupulous staff of the District Relief Office (DRO) here.

There are 485 puja mandops in six upazilas, according to the list of police. But the DRO made a list of 507.

The DRO allocated 100 kg of rice for each mandop. In this way 2.2 metric tons of rice was allotted for 22 'ghost' mandops, it was alleged.

Hindu Kalyan Trust district unit secretary asked the mandop

bodies to take money instead of rice saying it is a difficult task to lift foodgrains from the god-owns. He promised Tk 15 for one kg rice although the market price of each kg rice is between Tk 16 and 18. In fact, Tk 13 was given for one kg rice, many mandop bodies said.

Different mandop committee members said they protested the unfair practice but to no effect. The Trust men also threatened cancellation of quota of the protestors.

Sachendra Nath Roy, member of Kachukata Union Parishad (UP) in Sadar upazila who is also a member of puja mandop committee in his area alleged he got less than the promised money. He said the DRO made a list of 10 mandops in his union although the

actual number is 9.

In the DRO list, there are four mandops in Sona Roy Union in Sadar upazila. A mandop of the neighbouring Dinajpur district has been shown as a mandop of the union.

However, Hindu Kalyan Trust district unit secretary Tikendra Jit Miru denied the allegations saying the list was prepared after proper verification. Money was given instead of rice on request of the mandop committee members, he said.

The district relief officer informed local journalists that the entire process was done in collaboration with the executives of the district unit of the Trust.



The Sathkira-Khulna road (left) remained under floodwater in Noapara in Tala upazila yesterday. Displaced people have taken shelter on higher points on the highway.



PHOTO: STAR