

KISHOREGANJ-3

Most BNP leaders oppose Chunnu's joining party

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Kishoreganj

Ahead of the prime minister's scheduled visit to Kishoreganj today, BNP leaders and workers brought out a procession in the town Thursday night protesting possible joining of former judge Rejaul Karim Khan Chunnu to BNP.

Rejaul Karim may join BNP at a function in prime minister's presence here and also seek alliance nomination from Kishoreganj3 in the coming election, party sources said.

The prime minister is scheduled to inaugurate a newly built stadium in the town, reconstructed Kishoreganj railway and lay foundation of a nursing institute and hospital today.

During the Thursday's procession, leaders and activists of BNP and its front organisations chanted slogan against Rejaul Karim and urged BNP high-ups not to take him in the party.

The processionists paraded

different streets of the town and then gathered on compound of the Circuit House where Education Minister Dr M Osman Faruk was present.

The procession was organised by alliance nomination seekers from Kishoreganj Sadar (Kishoreganj-3) lawmaker Hasne Ara Gias Daizi and BNP leader Justice Habibur Islam Bhuiyan (ex-Jatia Party (Ershad) minister), municipal chairman Abu Taher Miah, former BNP lawmakers Masud Halali and Ataur Rahman Khan, Kishoreganj district BNP secretary Waliullah Rabbani, former JCD leaders Khaled Saifullah Sohel and Shah Nazrul Islam.

After organising the procession, they went to the circuit house and talked to Education Minister Osman Faruk to stop Rejaul Karim's joining BNP.

At the same time, Rejaul Karim, who was Dhaka Divisional Special Judge, reached the circuit house with at least 500 followers.

In presence of Osman, he told

his supporters that he was the founder vice-president of central JCD but did not continue in politics as he held a government job. Now that he is no more in service, he will concentrate in politics and wants to join BNP in presence of the party chief.

Additional police were deployed there to avert any untoward situation. The rival factions calmed down when Osman said he would discuss the matter with the prime minister over phone and she would decide whether Rejaul Karim would be formally taken in BNP.

Party insiders later told this correspondent that Rejaul Karim's joining would intensify the rivalry in BNP in the area and shatter election prospects.

Rejaul Karim Khan Chunnu was Dhaka Divisional Special Judge. He had to resign as he held public programmes in Kishoreganj-3 constituency. He is also an aspirant for alliance nomination in the com-

ing election.

Sources close to Rejaul Karim however claimed that he enjoys blessings of a Hawa Bhavan got assurance of nomination.

In 2001 election, four-party alliance candidate Masud Halali was defeated by Awami League's Sayeed Ashrafur Islam in Kishoreganj-3. Halali got 72,483 votes and Ashrafur got 82,062 votes.

At least BNP 10 nomination seekers are campaigning in the constituency, holding programmes separately.

There is no full-fledged district committee in Kishoreganj for over 12 years. A two-member district committee with Dr. Osman as president and Rabbani as secretary runs the party for about two years, sources said.

Factions loyal to Dr. Osman and Rabbani also held separate programmes marking BNP's founding day this year.

One shot by BSF in Thakurgaon

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A Bangladeshi youth was injured seriously when the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) fired gunshots at him in Tanaspur border of Pirganj upazila in Thakurgaon district yesterday.

The injured is Abdul Kuddus, 35, son of Mohsin Ali of Ronosia village.

BDR sources said Kuddus was shot at when he was cutting grass near Pillar No 340 of the border at about 6 in the morning resulting in his serious injuries on the spot. He was admitted to Thakurgaon Sadar Hospital in a critical condition.

Meanwhile, Yousuf Ali, 18, son of Kshemuddin of Choroigacchi village in Baliadangi upazila, Thakurgaon was wounded critically in BSF firing on September 23, family sources said.

Yousuf was shifted to Rangpur Medical College Hospital for better treatment the next day.



Police guarding a sub-station in Chittagong stadium area yesterday fearing attack by power-hungry people after Jumma prayer. Most power supply stations in the port city are now under police guard.

PHOTO: STAR

SPECULATIONS AHEAD OF PM'S VISIT TODAY

Shahin's return to BNP may change political scenario in Kulaura

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Moulvibazar

All eyes are riveted to prime minister Khaleda Zia's visit to Kulaura today as speculations are rife that 'rebel' BNP leader M M Shaheen who defeated the alliance nominee in last election may formally return to the party fold in presence of the party chief.

Shaheen's followers are upbeat, distributing sweets among party men, while there are opposition voices also, including that of BNP stalwart Saifur Rahman's son Naser Rahman, party sources said.

Talking to this correspondent during a visit to Kulaura yesterday, some followers of Shaheen claimed that the party chief at a public meeting may declare him (Shaheen) alliance nominee from Moulvibazar-2 constituency (Kulaura upazila).

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia is scheduled to inaugurate some projects and lay foundation of some others and address a public meeting at Kulaura Boy's High School playground today. This will be her second visit to Moulvibazar in 21 days. Earlier she visited Baralekha upazila, 30 kilometres from Kulaura, on September 16.

Her visit has steered speculations among political circles.

Shaheen, originally a BNP leader in Kulaura, contested the 1996 election with BNP ticket.

He sought alliance nomination in 2001 but the ticket went to Jamaat-Islami leader Dr. Shafiqur Rahman.

Shaheen contested the election as an independent candidate and was elected. He was then expelled from BNP for violation of party decision.

After the election, Shaheen made several attempts to return to BNP, but was repeatedly refused.

After the election, BNP stalwart Saifur Rahman's son M Naser Rahman, elected from Moulvibazar-3 constituency (Sadar and Rajnagar), was made president of Moulvibazar district BNP. After this, rivalry grew between the two lawmakers as Naser did not want Shaheen back to the party, the party sources said.



M M Shaheen

BNP in Kulaura is now divided into two groups, one is backed by Shaheen and another is by Naser, they said.

The rivalry was fuelled after former secretary to government Mufazzal Karim joined BNP in Kulaura. Mufazzal Karim extended his support to the Naser-backed faction as he also is an aspirant for ticket from Moulvibazar-2, party sources said.

On the other hand, independent lawmaker M M Shaheen has declared that he will seek BNP nomination, claiming that the 'majority' of local BNP men are with him.

Political observers said if Shaheen joins BNP at today's public meeting of the prime minister, the election calculation in Kulaura may be changed.

Asked by newsmen, Naser

Rahman declined to make any comment about Shaheen's joining BNP.

"I will never oppose if the party chairperson wants to take him (Shaheen) back to the party", he said.

Mufazzal Karim, known to oppose Shaheen's return to the party, said he (Shaheen) may be taken back in the party, but he does not know anything about this.

When contacted, Shaheen MP said, "I am loyal to BNP's ideology and always want to remain in the party. Besides, my well-wishers are pressing me to return to the party".

3 killed in Kushtia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Three people including a woman were killed in the district within a span of 12 hours on Thursday.

The dead are: Purnima 23, Shimul, 17, and Jhantu. Purnima was killed by her husband Akkas Ali for dowry at Asannagar village while Shimul was killed by criminals after snatching his rickshaw at Baradi in Sadar upazila and Jhantu was killed by his father-in-law Abdul Jalil following a quarrel with him at Nischintyabaria village in Khoksa upazila.

Miscreants burn houses

A CORRESPONDENT, Gopalganj

Unidentified criminals set fire to two tin-shed houses in absence of the house owners at Hizli of Jonasur under Kashiani upazila in the district recently.

House owners Oliur Rahman and his four brothers filed a case with Kashiani Police Station.

Rivals join hands against BNP MP in Dinajpur-4



Akharuzzaman

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Rivalry in BNP over nomination from Dinajpur-4 constituency intensified yesterday when vice-president of district BNP Md. Abdul Halim at a press conference sought nomination from the constituency in the



Hafizur Rahman

coming election.

Several front ranking local leaders of the party who were present at the press conference supported him and urged the party high-ups not to nominate incumbent lawmaker Md Aktaruzzaman. Halim is also president of Chirirbandar upazila BNP. The constituency comprise Chichirbandar and Khanshama upazilas.

Abdul Halim was flanked by at least 10 front ranking party leaders of BNP and its front organisations at the press conference, held at Dinajpur Press Club.

Halim and other leaders alleged that Md. Aktaruzzaman did little development work at the constituency in last five years.

They also alleged that Aktaruzzaman, along with Md. Hafizur Rahman, has tarnished the image of BNP in the area. Both are seeking nomination.

The said they would accept any nominee except Aktaruzzaman and Md Hafizur Rahman from the constituency.

Party insiders said Aktaruzzaman is backed by a powerful lobby at Hawa Bhavan in Dhaka while Hafizur Rahman enjoys blessings of prime minister's mother Begum Tayaba Majumbar.

Abdul Halim contested elections in 1991 and the 'controversial one



Abdul Halim

held on February 16, 1996. He also sought nomination in 2001 but was denied.

BNP leaders at the press conference also alleged that Akharuzzaman is not a man from Dinajpur-4 constituency though he claims that his forefathers were inhabitants of the area.

Halim also told newsmen that he informed prime minister and BNP chief Khaleda Zia on August 12 about the intra-party feud in Dinajpur-4 over nomination.

He also claimed that Aktaruzzaman created a rift in the party in the area. Several party committees were dissolved at his behest, which sparked off clashes.

Clashes also took place between supporters of Aktaruzzaman and Hafizur Rahman, speakers said at the press conference.

They also claimed that party men in Chirirbandar and Khanshama upazilas do not support Aktaruzzaman as he did not keep contacted with them after being elected in 2001.

Party leaders at union level were being threatened that their units will be dissolved if they do not support Akhtaruzzaman, they alleged.

4X2

5.5X2



Bangabandhu Parishad formed a human chain at Sat Matha road intersection in Bogra town yesterday protesting distortion of history of the Liberation War by Bangladesh Television.

PHOTO: STAR

17 fishermen abducted by pirates

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

A team of trawler owners of Patharghata yesterday went to Khulna for release of 17 fishermen and crew of a fishing trawler abducted by pirates in Narkelbaria in the Sundarbans on Wednesday, according to sources in the district trawler owners' association.

The trawler owners carried

ransom money amounting to Tk 5 lakh with them as per demand of pirates for release of the fishermen and crew of fishing trawler, FB Ismail. They will hand over the ransom money to the agents of pirates in Khulna. Later, pirates will release the fishermen on receipt of information from the agents by cell phone.

Earlier, 18 out of 26 abducted fishermen and crew were released

from pirates on payment of Tk 1 lakh as ransom on Sunday. Pirates abducted them in Katka area of the Sundarbans coast on September 30 where they went to rescue the trawlers capsized by tornado on September 19.

Fate of five other abducted fishermen is still unknown till filing of the report yesterday night, district trawler owners' association sources said.

11X3