

Killing of party man by 'hired gang' flares up BNP feud

Victim's wife files case against Kishoreganj-6 MP

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Kishoreganj

Tension mounted in Bajitpur and Nikli upazilas (Kishoreganj-6 constituency) as Tuesday's murder of Nikli upazila BNP vice-president allegedly by musclemen fuelled factional feud in the ruling party.

Taher Uddin Tahu, 45, was shot dead at about noon when he was reading newspaper at his business centre at Hichia Bazar in Bajitpur.

As bullet-hit Taher fell on the floor, armed cadres Russel, Sadek and Bhutto stabbed him severely and escaped, police said quoting witnesses. Taher was also chairman of Gurui Union Parishad.

ASP Circle of Bajitpur-Nikli upazila Nazrul Islam later said, killer

Russel who was arrested from the spot admitted that he was a cadre of local lawmaker.

Taher's wife Josna Akhter filed a murder case with Bajitpur police station yesterday accusing 22 people including lawmaker Mozibur Rahman Monju and Hichia Union Parishad (UP) chairman Abul Fazal, police said.

Bajitpur police arrested another accused—Salam, 25—from Hichia yesterday, police said.

Russel and Salam were produced before a court in Kishoreganj yesterday. The court rejected their bail prayer and sent them to jail, court sources said.

BNP is divided into two factions in Kishoreganj-6, one led by lawmaker Manju and the other by BNP

nomination seekers Prof Tufazzal Hossain Badal, Salehuzzaman Khan Runu and Sheikh Mojibur Rahman Iqbal.

The factions are at odds for long, clashing with each, damaging each other's party offices, vandalising meeting venues and holding separate party programmes. Taher belonged to the faction opposed to the lawmaker.

Monju's rivals also formed a committee styled, "Save Bajitpur BNP from Manju".

On September 20, Manju's rally was vandalised by his rivals including Taher, locals said.

On September 18, some party men allegedly led by Manju vandalised Prof. Tufazzal Hossain Badal's party office, torched three motor-

bikes on its premises and damaged a TV set and chairs inside, Badal alleged earlier.

Protesting this, Prof. Tufazzal Hossain Badal, Salehuzzaman Khan Runu and Sheikh Mozibur Rahman Iqbal called on a public meeting at the upazila headquarter on September 23 while Manju called another public meeting at the same time.

The administration imposed Section 144 there to avert clash.

Talking to this correspondent, BNP insiders and political circles said, the rivalry will worsen and may lead to more killings if BNP high command does not intervene immediately to resolve the dispute.

Bus strike in Moulvibazar

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Moulvibazar

Bus owners yesterday went on an indefinite strike on the Moulvibazar-Kulaura-Chandgram route protesting damage of a bus at Brahmanbazar on the Kulaura-Moulvibazar Road.

The bus was set on fire by people after a road accident in the morning resulting in death of Kaiser Ahmed, 30, son of Abdul Gafur of village Alapur in Kulaura upazila.

After the accident, the driver lost control over steering and dashed his vehicle with a roadside tree causing injuries to 20 passengers.

The incident created a tense situation in the area. Local people set on fire the bus and put up a barricade on the road. The barricade was withdrawn following intervention of local elite.

Later, Moulvibazar-Kulaura-Chandgram Bus Owners' Association called a bus strike on the route for an indefinite period.



Jano Udjog, a local civic body, formed a human chain in Cheragi Pahar in Chittagong city yesterday protesting frequent loadshedding.

PHOTO: STAR

NETRAKONA-1 CONSTITUENCY

BNP lawmaker to clash with 2 party aspirants

ELECTION 2

JAHANGIR ALAM, Netrakona

Intra-party rift in Netrakona BNP has widened over nomination from Netrakona-1 constituency (Kalmakanda and Durgapur upazilas) in the coming election.

The party is divided into three factions, led by lawmaker MA Karim Abbasi, former convener of Kalmakanda upazila BNP Abdul Wahab and former central JCD leader Kaiser Kamal.

The three are seeking nomination and are engaged in mudslinging against each other.

BNP lawmaker Karim Abbasi is a man from Durgapur upazila. Party sources claimed that BNP leaders and activists in Kalmakanda said the lawmaker did little development work in their area as he was from another upazila. The two BNP factions in Kalmakanda are now united under the leadership Kaiser Kamal and Advocate Abdul Wahab, the sources claimed.

Karim Abbasi was elected from Netrakona-1 with BNP ticket in 1991 and 2001 by defeating Awami League candidate Jalaluddin Talukder. He was also BNP Whip during 1991-1996.

Kalmakanda upazila BNP leaders claimed that the lawmaker implemented development projects in Durgapur upazila, ignoring other areas.



Karim Abbasi

Kaiser Kamal

Abdul Wahab

On the other hand, Durgapur upazila BNP is also divided into two groups. One faction is loyal to Kaiser Kamal and another is led by Karim Abbasi.

As per the updated voter list, there are 3,04,541 voters in the constituency, 1,38,276 in Durgapur and 1,66,265 in Kalmakanda upazila.

The three rivals—Abbasi, Wahab and Kaiser Kamal—are holding workers' meetings and public rallies and lobbying with party high-ups for nomination, sources said.

At several public rallies, Kaiser Kamal and Abdul Wahab bitterly criticised Karim Abbasi saying, the alliance will lose the seat to the Awami League if Karim Abbasi is nominated because he has become unpopular for his partial attitude and alleged corruption.

"I believe the party will not nominate Karim Abbasi in coming election" Abdul Wahab said while talking to the correspondent.

Kaiser Kamal said, "I got hint

from Tarique Rahaman (first joint secretary general of BNP) about getting nomination"

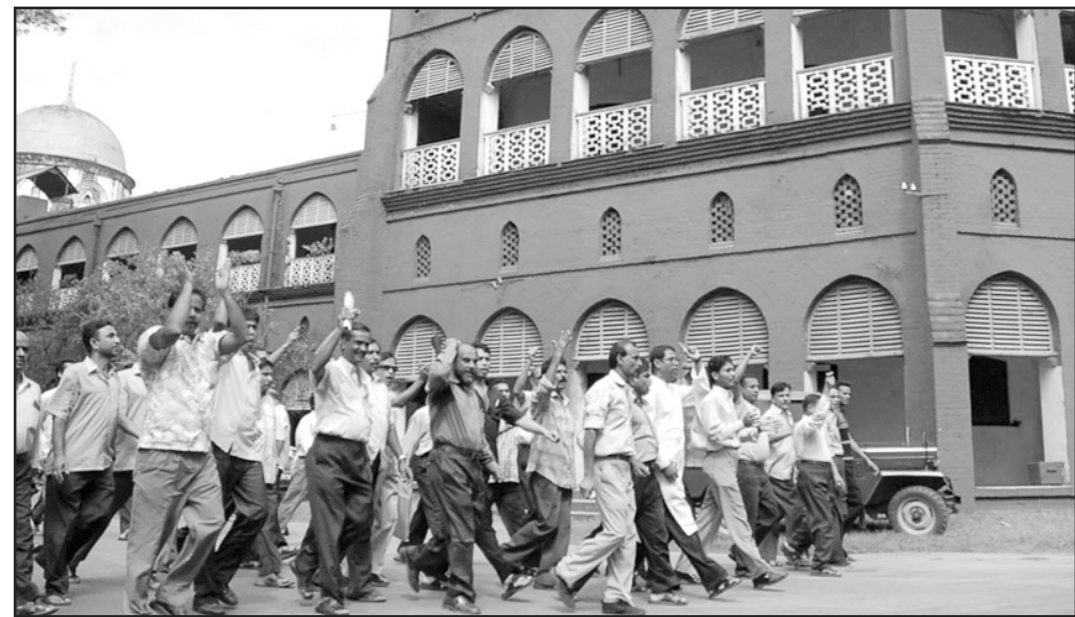
Muslimuddin Ahamed, president of Kalmakanda upazila BNP, said, "We believe party high-ups will nominate Kaiser Kamal as alliance candidate."

"BNP leaders and workers in Kalmakanda and a faction in Durgapur BNP will not support Karim Abbasi if he is nominated" he said.

Karim Abbasi refuted all the allegations. He told this correspondent that he is still popular in Durgapur and Kalmakanda upazilas.

"I have implemented many development projects in Durgapur and Kalmakanda upazilas during my period" Karim Abbasi said.

Those who are criticising me are isolated from party workers and people, he claimed.



Railway employees staging demonstration in front of its eastern regional headquarter in Chittagong (left) while a train is blocked at Bhatiyar yesterday protesting privatisation of the railway.



PHOTO: STAR

BNP ticket seeker suspended on anti-party charge

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

A BNP nomination seeker has been relieved of party post for violating party discipline and doing anti-party activities.

Moulvibazar district BNP joint secretary Muazzem Hussain Matuk, also a nomination seeker from Moulvibazar-3 constituency consisting of Sadar and Rajnagar upazilas, was relieved of his post for passing comments against the district committee.

Moulvibazar district BNP executive committee took the decision at a meeting held here recently.

Matuk who is also chairman of Nazirabad Union Parishad (UP) in Sadar upazila lost his primary membership at the same time, said district BNP general secretary Md Faizul Karim Mayun.

However, Matuk said the district committee has no power to relieve him from the party post. "It is the central committee who can take action against me", he said.

Coalition govt forgot polls pledges about Satkhira

Opposition leaders and civil society members allege

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

The BNP-led alliance government could not fulfil any of its election pledges on major local issues during its five-year rule, front ranking opposition leaders and civil society members alleged.

"Satkhira earns over Tk 1500 crore foreign exchange a year by exporting shrimps but it was neglected by successive governments. The four-party alliance

government also sidelined the district in selecting major development projects", said Abdul Bari, general secretary of Satkhira Press club.

Taking to this correspondent, former minister during Ziaur Rahman's tenure Dr Aftabuzzaman said, before 2001 election, BNP-Jamaat alliance had committed that if voted to power it would set up an agriculture college, shrimp processing plant and a shrimp estate in Satkhira; a tourism centre at Munshigonj near the Sundarbans, develop Bhomra land port and construct a Satkhira town by-pass road and Satkhira-Assassuni road.

But once in power, they forgot the pledges, he said. Aftabuzzaman has retired from politics.

The alliance government did not keep any of its election pledges regarding development of Satkhira, said Nazrul Islam, general secretary Satkhira district Awami League.

"This (failure) will be a main factor in wooing voters in favour of AL candidates", said district AL president Engineer Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

He said, the last AL government set up a polytechnic institute and constructed a new jail complex and a Shushu Sadan and implemented many other development projects.

Former Awami League lawmaker Momtaz Ahmed also alleged that the 4-party alliance government flouted its promises.

Satkhira Nagarik Committee

Convener former lawmaker Habibul Rahman also criticised the alliance government. He said that before the election, alliance leaders here promised to construct a Satkhira town by-pass road but forgot it after going to power.

Satkhira Chamber of Commerce and Industries President Sheikh Azha Hossain alleged that before election four-party leaders assured people that they would develop Bhomra land port but did not take any step.

When contacted, BNP lawmaker Habibul Islam Habib refuted the allegations. He said development of an area in a continuous process, which takes a long time. There has been some progress and all the proposed projects will be implemented if the alliance government is voted to power in the coming election.

Satkhira district BNP member-secretary Samsuzzoha Bablu said the alliance government implemented many development projects in the district in last five years, he claimed.

"People are enjoying fruits of the development projects and I believe they will change their mindset and vote for alliance candidates in the coming election".

2 fishermen held for throwing nine from trawler into sea

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Two crew of a fishing trawler who hijacked the vessel a month ago after throwing nine crew and fishermen into sea were arrested in Kalapara on Wednesday.

FB Allar Daan, a fishing trawler registered with Cox's Bazar Fishermen Association remained missing for about a month after its departure from Cox's Bazar fishing port with 11 fishermen led by Munir Majhi, 38.

However, some other fishermen rescued a fisherman of the missing trawler named Abul Majhi in a critical condition.

Abul narrated them how two crew, Golam Kibria and Sani, took control of their vessel making nine crew and fishermen hostages. Then the two culprits chopped them and threw them to sea one by

one, he said.

Kibria and Sani returned to Mohipur-Alipur fishing port in Kalapara upazila with the hijacked trawler recently. They said that other crew and fishermen were washed away by a storm in the sea.

However, they went again to deep sea for fishing after recruiting fresh manpower. After sometime, they returned to shore and anchored their vessel at Amkhola canal in Alipur.

When Sani went to the fishing port on Wednesday, a fisherman of Cox's Bazar identified and caught him with the help of local people. After a mass beating, he admitted his crime. According to his statement, his accomplice Golam Kibria was also caught by people. Later, both of them were handed over to police.

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