

SATKHIRA-2 CONSTITUENCY

Alliance strained as BNP seeks ticket in Jamaat stronghold

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

Difference between BNP and its ally Jamaat-e-Islami has widened in Satkhira-2 as a BNP aspirant submitted nomination paper to his party seeking alliance ticket from the constituency, a stronghold of Jamaat.

Local BNP leader Lutful Kabir submitted nomination paper to contest from the parliamentary seat comprising Satkhira Sadar upazila, retained by Jamaat in 1986, 1991, 1996, 2001 elections.

Acceptance of Lutful's nomination paper by BNP has become a talk of the town with many political observers asking whether the party would challenge its ally in its stronghold. BNP did not sell nomination papers to party men in 45 Jatiya Sangsad seats countrywide, kept for its allies in the coming election.

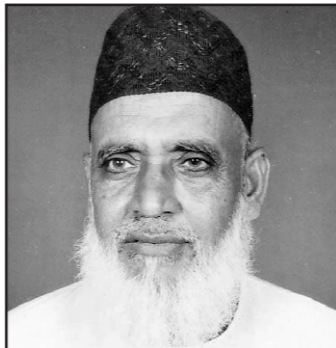
Sources close to Lutful claimed that he submitted nomination paper due to pressure from local BNP leaders, who on many occasions in



Lutful Kabir

recent days demanded a party man as candidate from the area. Many BNP leaders and workers claimed that Jamaat leader Abdul Khaleque Mondal was elected from Satkhira-2 in 2001 election with BNP votes.

Some political analysts claimed that Jamaat may face a tough task to retain the seat in coming election as a large section of BNP leaders and activists may resist its candidate, if nominated.



Abdul Khaleque Mondal

Many BNP leaders said the party men were unhappy with Khaleque Mondal as he allegedly ignored them during his tenure.

Talking to this correspondent, Lutful Kabir, a former leader of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), said he submitted nomination paper following pressure from party men and assurance from party high-ups.

He also claimed that the Jamaat

lawmaker did little development work in the area, which isolated him from people.

He (Khaleque) did not fulfill his pre-election pledges such as development of Bhomra land port, construction of Satkhira-Assassuni road and a bypass road on the western side of the town, Lutful alleged. BNP will not shoulder Jamaat's failure, he said.

Some front ranking leaders of Satkhira district BNP even said that they decided that they would field a party man to run as an independent candidate if the alliance ticket goes to Jamaat again this time.

Twelve out of 14 Union Parishad (UP) chairmen in the constituency belonging to BNP at a meeting earlier demanded nomination of a BNP man from the constituency allegedly because the Jamaat MP had ignored them.

They also alleged that the lawmaker did all works, even distribution of VGD cards and corrugated sheets, through Jamaat men ignoring local government bodies leaders, Alipur UP chairman and local BNP leader Abdur Rouf said.

"Maulana Khaleque won the last election with BNP votes. This time it will be hard to convince BNP supporters to vote him as he (Khaleque) has created a rift between BNP and Jamaat men in the constituency", he said.

Khaleque Mondol however claimed that alliance high-ups assured him of nomination. He also refuted allegations that alliance's polls pledges could not be implemented due to his failure. He claimed that he implemented many development projects. "We are trying to work with BNP to retain the seat", he told this correspondent.

Satkhira district BNP member-secretary Samsuzzoha Bablu however said he does not know anything about party high command's assurance to Khaleque Mondol.

Pirates kill fisherman, loot trawler near Sonadia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Cox's Bazar*

Pirates yesterday killed a fisherman, threw five others in the sea and looted their trawler near Sonadiya Island.

The killed fisherman was identified as Noor Hashem, 40, son of Fazalul Karim of Chirakul village in Sonadiya Island in Moheshkhali upazila.

Those tossed into the sea were Noor Hashem's two sons Abul Kalam, and Sattar, Abul Kasehm, Abul Hashar and Abdur Rahim. They were rescued by other fishermen but the body of Noor Hashem was not found, according to survivor Abul Kalam.

Mostafa Manjur Morshed Mahmud, Officer-in-Charge of Moheshkhali police station said they have heard about the incident.

BSF abducts 4 cattle traders

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) abducted four Bangladeshi cattle traders Tuesday night from Chapatala border village in Basirhat thana under 24 Parganas district in West Bengal India while they were returning to Bangladesh.

The abducted cattle traders are Akbar Hossain, Monsur Gazi and Babu Gazi of Nangla village and Mizanur Rahman of Hadipur village in Debhata upazila.

According to Abul Hossain of Hadipur village, BSF abducted the four along with the cattle when they reached near the border.

On contact, Maj Humayun of 41 Rifles Battalion confirmed the incident.

ANTI-PIRACY DRIVE IN SUNDARBANS

Top gang leader held, 13 firearms recovered

Rab claims pirates' dens busted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Barisal*

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in two days' anti-piracy drives in remote Sundarbans forests recovered 13 firearms, 355 bullets, four bags of ornaments and other valuables and arrested Jamal Sheikh, 'second-in-command' of Kamal-Sumon gang, the wife of its leader Kamal and another gang member Badsha.

Capt Riaz, media cell in-charge of Rab-8 told newsmen at its Barisal city headquarters that the law enforcers have made considerable success in busting

pirates' dens. The operation will continue, he said. The raids are being conducted on the basis of information on four notorious pirate gangs, collected in last three months. The gangs locally known as Kamal-Sumon Bahini, Motalib Bahini, Badal Bahini and BDR Bahini are active in Sundarbans forests and coastal areas. They collect toll from fishermen, making fishing in the Sundarbans and its coasts risky.

The three were arrested on Monday, said Capt. Riaz.

Acting on their confessions, joint forces led by Lt. Commander

Ariful Islam on the same day raided different pirates' dens in deep forests in Sharonkhola in Bagerhat district and recovered the arms and ammunition, he said. The firearms include nine guns, three 303 rifles, and one pistol. The recovered items also include some cell phones.

The arrestees will be handed over to police after interrogation, Lt. Col. Ershad said.

At least 50 fishermen were killed and over 600 fishing trawlers were looted by pirates in the Sundarbans and its coasts in last five years.



PHOTO: IQBAL SIDDIQUEE

Construction of the Tk 30 lakh bridge on Boro Khal in Rafinagar in Derai upazila in Sunamganj district is stopped since 2001. Local people claimed the work was suspended as the local lawmaker was from Awami League but LGED said it was due to fund shortage.

6X3

SOA LEADER MURDER
Hartal observed in Rangamati, Khagrachhari

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Adawn to dusk hartal was observed in Rangamati and Khagrachhari yesterday protesting killing of a leader of Somo Odhikar Andolon (SOA), an organisation of Bengali settlers fighting for establishing equal rights in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), our correspondents reported.

SOA enforced the hartal protesting killing of its leader Kina Mohon Chakma who was killed by unidentified assailants in Rangamati after abduction while going to attend an organisational meeting on Saturday.

The hartal passed off peacefully in Rangamati, but it was marked by sporadic clashes in Khagrachhari where picketers damaged houses, business establishments and vehicles during hartal hours.

Somo Adhiker Andolon supporters and indigenous supported Nagorik Committee members locked in clashes at several points in Khagrachhari during hartal period. Seven Somo Adhiker activists were injured during the clash. Later, police controlled the situation.

Somo Adhiker activists brought out several processions in the hill towns. Processionists chanted anti-peace accord slogans and demanded punishment to the killers.

Showdown by Nazrul's men in Khulna for alliance ticket

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

The BNP faction led by former lawmaker Nurul Islam staged a showdown in Khulna city yesterday demanding nomination of former secretary of city BNP Nazrul Islam Manju from Khulna-2 constituency in the coming election.

Over 5000 supporters brought out a procession in city in support of Nazrul Islam Manju.

Later, a rally was held in front of BNP office. Senior leader of city BNP Morshed Alam president over the rally.

Speakers at the rally urged the BNP high command to nominate Nazrul Islam Manju in Khulna-2, saying he is the 'savior' of Khulna BNP and have support of grassroots level party leaders and workers.

They also urged the party high command not to field any other candidate in the constituency who had no connection with people.

BNP in Khulna-2 will not accept any 'protector of terrorists' or a businessman as candidate, the speakers said.

Nazrul Islam Manju, now in Dhaka, has sought nomination from Khulna-2 constituency.

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8X3