

LDP body to be announced in Moulvibazar before Eid

BNP, JP leaders hold hectic meetings

RAJAT KANTI GOSWAMI, Moulvibazar

Liberal Democrat Party (LDP) will be formed in Moulvibazar soon with several front ranking BNP and Jatiya Party leaders joining it along with a large number of supporters.

Hectic meetings are being held to finalise committees at district and upazila levels, several BNP and JP leaders told this correspondent. The district committee may be announced before the Eid so that the party men can work for 'grand alliance' candidates in coming election, they said.

The committees will draw a large number of leaders who are unhappy with the present BNP leadership in the district led by party stalwart and former finance minister Saifur Rahman's son Naser Rahman.

Large sections of BNP and Jubo Dal leaders together with others from JP will join LDP to 'resist' Naser Rahman and his followers in the

district, they claimed.

"If things go as of now, the district committee may be announced before the Eid", LDP central leader and former lawmaker M A Mukit Khan told this correspondent yesterday.

A series of meetings have already been held at residences of JP leaders Md Suleman Khan and Syeda Hafsa Begum to form district and upazila committees and set campaign strategies, they said.

The convenor and other front ranking leaders of the district committee have been selected, they claimed but declined to disclose their names fearing retaliation by Naser Rahman's men.

When contacted, Suleman Khan and Syeda Hafsa Begum admitted holding of meetings. Suleman Khan is former president of Moulvibazar district JP and Syeda Hafsa Begum is a former JP lawmaker from women's reserve seat.

Other dependable sources also

confirmed that former general secretary of district BNP advocate Juned Ahmed, former organising secretary Musharraf Hussain Badshah, BNP leader and former upazila chairman Abdul Mosobir, BNP leader advocate Faruk Ahmed, Jubo Dal leader Matin Baksh, Chhatra Dal leader Ali Sabder Khan Babor, district Gono Forum secretary Bakshi Iqbal Ahmed, former secretary of Moulvibazar Bar Association Ashraf Uddin Choudhury Mintu are in the front line to organise LDP in Moulvibazar.

They claimed that at least 10,000 activists from different parties in the district will join LDP along with the leaders.

The aggrieved BNP leaders said Saifur Rahman was elected from Moulvibazar-3 (Sadar and Rajnagar) and Sylhet 1 (Sadar and Companygonj) constituencies in 2001 election. Though Moulvibazar

is his home constituency, he quit the seat to get his son Naser Rahman elected from there. Naser was elected in a by-election boycotted by Awami League.

After being elected, Naser 'captured' the post of district BNP president and expelled leaders like district general secretary Juned Ahmed, Joint secretary Muazzem Hussain Matuk, organizing secretary Musharraf Hussain Badshah and many other dedicated party men only to establish his 'monopoly control' over the organisation, they alleged.

These annoyed a section of BNP leaders, who became virtually inactive. Most of these leaders and workers will join LDP, they claimed.

Talking to this correspondent, Musharraf Hussain Badshah and Bakshi Iqbal Ahmed admitted their attendance to the meetings.

RANGPUR-1 Hartal observed to protest ticket for Ranga

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

A dawn-to-dusk hartal was observed peacefully in Gangachara upazila town yesterday.

Gangachara upazila unit of Jatiya Party (JP) enforced the hartal protesting nomination of Moshir Rahman Ranga, an 'outsider' by the party high command to contest from Rangpur-1 constituency in the forthcoming election.

Life came to a standstill in the upazila town during the strike period. No vehicle plied while all educational institutions, banks and commercial establishments were closed during the period. Attendance in all government and non-government offices was thin.

JP activists held a rally at noon in the town.

Gangachara JP president Motiur Rahman chaired the rally.

Speakers declared Ranga 'unwanted' in the constituency and vowed to resist him wherever they find him in future.

They urged party chairman HM Ershad to cancel the nomination of Ranga, otherwise, they threatened to choose a local leader who would submit nomination as an independent candidate today.

They alleged that Ershad had nominated 'outsiders' from their constituency in last three elections although they protested to his decisions.

Ultimatum for Lobi's ticket from Khulna-2

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A BNP faction here yesterday gave an ultimatum to party chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia till 3 pm today to field former lawmaker Ali Asgar Lobi in Khulna-2 constituency to contest the forthcoming election as a candidate of the Four-party Alliance.

The ultimatum was given at a meeting of the city BNP convening committee held at noon at the residence of its member-secretary Shaharuzzaman Martuza, also president of Khulna Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The meeting also threatened that Lobi would lead over 5,000 leaders and activists of Khulna Sadar and Sonadanga thana BNP including 11 ward commissioners to join Awami League (AL) if the demand is not met by this evening.

Martuza presided the meeting while it was attended by 11 ward commissioners, eight ward level presidents and secretaries of Sadar and Sonadanga thana BNP units and 12 Jubo Dal and Chhatra Dal leaders loyal to Lobi.

Ershad's JP is no factor for me

Bidisha tells rally after submitting nomination paper from Gaibandha-1

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Jatiya Party chief HM Ershad's former wife Bidisha yesterday filed nomination paper to challenge JP in Gaibandha-1 constituency in coming election as an independent candidate.

JP leader Golam Kader earlier filed nomination paper from the parliamentary seat.

Bidisha, who was also a Presidium member of JP, was expelled from the party by Ershad.

She filed the nomination paper with Assistant Returning Officer in Sunderganj upazila.

Soon after filing the nomination paper, Bidisha addressed a public meeting at Bamondanga Abdul Huq College ground to begin polls campaign.

"Ignoring threat from JP, I have decided to contest from this constituency just to work for welfare of people", she said.

"I have come here because people of Sunderganj love me.

"I can not forget people of Sunderganj. They remembered me when I was in jail in a false case filed by Ershad.

"Jatiya Party expelled me without bringing any allegation against me", said Bidisha.

She also criticised Ershad, saying he has no ideology and policy. Jatiya Party earlier extended support to BNP-led four-party



Bidisha addressing a rally at Bamondanga Abdul Huq College ground after filing nomination paper yesterday.

alliance. Now they are with Awami League-led grand alliance. "Jatiya Party may split again at any time", Bidisha claimed.

She also criticised Ershad's wife Begum Rowsha Ershad for supporting the BNP-Jamaat government during its rule.

"She could not do anything for the people of Fulchari and Shaghata", Bidisha told in the meeting.

"If people of Sunderganj remain with me, I will win the coming election. Ershad's Jatiya Party is no factor for me", she said.

Dilemma for AL in Kushtia-2

JSD's Inu, AL's Hanif vie for ticket: Consensus would ensure victory

AMANUR AMAN, Kushtia

Leaders and activists of 14-party alliance in Kushtia-2 (Mirpur-Bheramara) constituency are in great suspense over who will be the candidate for the coming election there.

But they are confident of capturing the seat from BNP if a consensus candidate is fielded.

Awami League (AL) leader Mahbul Alam Hanif and Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) president and one of the key leaders of 14-party alliance Hasanul Haq Inu are vying for nomination from the constituency.

None filed nomination till yesterday, awaiting a decision in Dhaka, sources in AL and JSD said.

Hanif, vice-president of Kushtia district AL contested from the constituency in 1996 and 2001 elections but lost to BNP's Sahidul Islam.

Hanif scaled down the vote difference in last election when he lost with a marginal vote.

Political analysts said if nominated in the coming election, Hanif will be able to put up a tough fight to 4-party alliance candidate immediate past BNP lawmaker Sahidul Islam, allegedly because of internal feud in BNP and his (Sahidul)



Hasanul Haq Inu

declining popularity.

Sahidul won the seat in three election including the February 15 controversial polls in 1996.

According to district election office, Hanif got 28544 votes in 1996 election and 87,734 in 2001 election. Sahidul bagged 64,389 votes in 1996 and 100,544 in 2001. Sahidul got nearly 40,000 votes of BNP's ally Jamaat-e-Islami in 2001 election, they claimed.

On the other hand, JSD leader Hasanul Haq Inu ran in the constituency in 1991, 1996 and 2001 elections and got 21,411, 26327 and 38,877 votes respectively.

The analysts said the Awami League-led grand alliance may nominate Inu in the coming election



Mahbul Alam Hanif

only considering the present row between local Jamaat and BNP leadership over ticket.

The BNP-Jamaat difference has widened after Jamaat leader Abdul Wahid submitted nomination paper on Wednesday, ignoring BNP. Former lawmaker Sahidul Islam and another BNP leader industrialist MA Khaleque-filed nomination papers to contest from the seat. But the ticket is yet to be announced.

Jamaat is demanding the seat for long, claiming that BNP leader Sahidul will not be able to win this time due to his alleged irregularities, nepotism and displeasure of Jamaat activists he earned in last five years.

Banking on 4-party alliance's 'troubled position', 14-party leaders think they can capture the seat in the coming election.

They also count support from Jatiya Party (Ershad), which has a good number of votes despite its weak organisational strength. JP will not demand a candidate in the area, they said.

JP candidate Ahsan Habib Linkon got 24,695 votes in 1991 election, 40,106 in 1996 and 25,334 in 2001.

This calculation gives a hopeful picture for 14-party alliance, its leaders said.

This correspondent during a visit to the area on Sunday talked to many leaders and activists of AL, BNP, JP and JSD, and also voters. AL leaders were found soft on Inu's claim for nomination.

General voters were not rigid in choosing between Inu and Hanif, saying both have good images in the area.

If a consensus candidate is fielded, the AL-led alliance has a fair chance to win the seat, many of them said.

They said Hanif has vote banks in certain pockets because he is a diehard AL leader. Inu, if nominated, will also have to depend on AL vote, they said.

AL to resist Proshika chief Kazi Faruque

Demonstrations held, six-day protest programme announced in Khulna-2

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Awami League in Khulna Sadar

and Sonadanga thana will reject Kazi Faruque Ahmed, chief of Proshika, an NGO, if nominated as

a candidate of grand alliance from Khulna-2 constituency.

This was announced by Ajmol Ahmed Tapan, president of Sadar thana Awami League at a press conference held at Khulna Press Club yesterday. Leaders and activists of Awami League, Jubo League, Chhatra League and Sramik League in 16 wards under Khulna-2 (Sadar and Sonadanga) have taken an unanimously decision to boycott Kazi Faruque, said.

"We have announced a six-day programme to protest nomination of a seasonal bird like Kazi Faruque who has no right to claim our support as he was never involved actively in Awami League politics", said a visibly angry Ajmol.

The six-day programme includes protest processions in every ward and token hunger strike.

Ajmol said he will file nomination paper today to contest from Khulna-2. "I hope Awami League president Sheikh Hasina will prefer me to Kazi Faruque to contest from Khulna-2 where I served the people and my party for about thirty years", he said.

"Of course, I will not object to nomination of Khulna city AL general secretary Mizanur Rahman Mizan from this seat as he is a diehard leader of our party", he said.

Leaders and workers of AL and its fronts from 16 wards under Sadar and Sonadanga thana brought out a procession yesterday demanding nomination of Ajmol.

They declared Proshika chairman Kazi Faruque 'unwanted' in Khulna and asked him to quit the race.

Kazi Faruque collected nomination paper yesterday and may file it today, sources close to him told this correspondent.

Dowry claims doubly

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

A 70-year-old woman died instantly after hearing the death news of her five-month-old pregnant granddaughter for dowry by husband at Juniadah village in Mirpur upazila Sunday night.

Ill-fated Amena Begum died of heart failure as soon as she came to know that her granddaughter, Sapna, was beaten to death by her dowry-greedy husband at about 11.30 pm.

Sumon Hossain, an inhabitant of Juniadah village married to Sapna, daughter of Selim Uddin of the same village two years ago. At that time, Sumon took Tk 17,000 as dowry from his father-in-law. Within a few days of marriage, he demanded Tk 20,000 more from his father-in-law Selim through his wife.

But Selim expressed his inability

to pay the amount due to poverty. From then on, Sumon began to torture Sapna regularly.

On the fateful night, Sapna fell into death as she failed to endure the inhuman torture of her husband. Sensing danger, the killer husband hung Sapna with the ceiling of his room and fled the scene.

On receipt of the sad news, Sapna's family members rushed to the spot and found the body hanging with the ceiling of the room.

Being informed, police rushed to the spot, recovered the body and sent it to Kushtia General Hospital for post-mortem yesterday. The post-mortem report confirmed Sapna's death due to continuous beating by her husband.

A case was filed with Mirpur Police Station accusing Sumon and his family members.



PHOTO: STAR

Though killing of wildlife is banned, venison is being sold openly in markets in Khagrachhari town under the nose of forest department officials and the administration. Illegal venison was sold at Khagrachhari Bazaar at Tk 250 per kg yesterday.

6X2

7X3