

# Split in Khulna BNP widens ahead of union level conference

## Factions led by Mayor Shaikh Tayabur Rahman and former Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali hold separate party meetings, form rival confce committees

QUAZI AMANULLAH, Khulna

Intra-party feud in Khulna BNP has sharpened again centring the party's divisional union representatives' conference, scheduled for February 17.

Khulna city Mayor Shaikh Tayabur Rahman is the bone of contention this time also.

The Mayor claims that the party high command has entrusted him with the responsibility to conduct the conference as coordinator.

But the party faction opposed to him faxed a letter Wednesday evening to BNP Secretary General Mannan Bhuiyan and Senior Joint Secretary General Tarek Rahman urging them to confirm if the KCC Mayor's claim is correct.

Leaders of the anti-Mayor faction urged Bhuiyan and Tarek Rahman to 'strip the Mayor of the responsibility (as coordinator) even if his claim is true'.

They alleged that the Mayor is 'involved in corruption and is isolated from pro-people politics'. Party men discarded him long ago due to his doubtful activities, said leaders of the anti-Mayor faction led by

Nurul Islam MP and Whip Ashraf Hossain.

The conference can not held under KCC Mayor's supervision as he is far away from BNP politics, they alleged.

The two factions of Khulna BNP held meetings at separate places on Wednesday and formed two separate preparatory committees and four sub-committees to hold the conference.

Khulna city BNP Secretary Nazrul Islam Manju, when contacted, said the Mayor has been asked by the party central committee to take the responsibility of entertaining the union representatives at the conference, not to act as a coordinator.

Khulna district BNP member-secretary advocate Shafiqul Alam Mona who is also a ward commissioner said, "We will boycott the conference if the Mayor interferes as coordinator."

"The Mayor did not do any thing good to the people. Besides, he has no right to conduct such a big conference leaving aside senior most leader and former Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali", Mona said.

But the Mayor, when contacted, insisted that the party central committee has assigned him to act as coordinator to hold the conference.

"I have been made the chief coordinator. There is nothing to be worried about this", the Mayor said.

Meanwhile, the Khulna district BNP Convening Committee held a meeting on Wednesday at the party office with former Speaker Shaikh Razaak Ali in the chair.

Whip Ashraf Hossain, city BNP president M Nurul Islam MP, Secretary Nazrul Islam Manju, district BNP member-secretary Shafiqul Alam Mona attended the meeting, among others. The meeting formed a preparatory committee and two sub-committees for the conference.

On the other hand, the other faction held a meeting at Zia Hall on the same day with the Mayor in the chair. It was attended by, among others, Ali Asgar Lobi MP, Principal Maidul Islam and Abdul Mannan, central leader Sramik Dal, BNP's labour front. Two sub-committees were formed on that meeting.

On Thursday night, 27 leaders of ten thana BNP committees belong to the Mayor Lobi faction faxed a letter to Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan demanding 'disciplinary action' against member-secretary of district convening committee Shafiqul Alam Mona and city BNP Secretary Nazrul Islam Manju for their 'anti-party activities'.

They have accused Mon and Manju of disgracing the Mayor by branding him a corrupt politician. They alleged that Mona and Manju are 'fishing in troubled waters and creating confusion among party workers' by disgracing the Mayor who is the party's central secretary for forest and environment affairs and has been made chief coordinator for holding the conference.

They also alleged that Mona and Manju are involved in toll collection in the name of BNP after the four party alliance came to power. When contacted, Mona termed the 27 leaders 'sycophants and financial beneficiaries of Mayor'. Mona refuted the allegations against him.

Manju could not be contained as he is in Dhaka.

# Development project ignores Teesta shoals in Nilphamari

## People surprised, disappointed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Non-inclusion of Nilphamari district in the government's Char Jibikayan Project (livelihood project for shoal people) has created resentment among poor shoal people here.

The project designed to improve life of poor shoal people is financed by donor agency DFID of UK.

It includes programmes for income generating activities and vocational training, ensuring social security, development of communication, development of agriculture and marketing of agri-products, health care and supply of safe water.

The project will be implemented at a cost of Tk 500 crore funded by DFID.

It includes shoals in 149 unions in 28 upazilas of five districts -- Bogra, Sirajgang, Gaibandha, Kurigram and Jamalpur-- affected by flood almost every year.

But it has not included shoals of Teesta river in Nilphamari, where thousands of ultra poor people are badly affected by flood every year.

This has surprised all classes of people and created a resentment in the district where most areas are severely affected by munga (a period before and after harvest when there is job crisis).

There are 18 small and big shoals in Teesta river in Dimal and Jaldhaka upazilas in the district, inhabited by about 50,000 people.

Of those, the big shoals like Chare Kharibari, East Kharibari, Ekotar Char, Fakrotter Char, Chhatunama, Vendabari, Baish Pukur and Jhar Sinhaeswar are in five unions in Dimal upazila. Gopal Jhar, Char Vort, Alsiar Char are in two unions in Jaldhaka upazila. Besides, there are some small shoals.

These shoals are the worst

affected by flood and munga every year and the people become the first victims but are deprived of all facilities. Even NGOs do not go there, thinking that the people are so poor that they would not be able to repay loans.

Deaths from diseases and intake of unwholesome food are common there. Pure water and sanitation is absent. Those shoals are isolated as there is no means for communication except boats during wet season.

Talking to this correspondent, Forhanul Islam, Nilphamari district secretary of Jatiotabadi Krishok Dal, ruling BNP's peasant forum, said people of Teesta shoals deserve to be on top of any development programme taken for shoals. Their deprivation need not be described anew. Anybody reading any newspaper knows.

He expressed his surprise how the ultra poor on the Teesta shoals were excluded from the government programme. He urged the government to include Nilphamari in the Char Jibikayan Project. Otherwise the motive would turn into a hoax, he said.

Advocate Akhkhoy Kumar Roy, president of district Krishok League, said it is a surprise how government officials excluded the worst affected shoal people in the country. It would be most unwise if the government does not reconsider the matter.

President of Nilphamari unit of Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) Sreedam Das alleged that non-inclusion of Teesta shoal people in the project proves how the purpose of a government project for the poor is lost due to whimsical attitude of a section of officials.

There can not be any reason for exclusion of Nilphamari from such a project, he said.

Chairman of Tepakharibari Union Parishad in Dimal, Haider Ali,

said he and UP leaders of other shoal areas will launch agitation if Nilphamari is not included in the government's Char Jibikayan Project.

When contacted, the newly appointed Deputy Commissioner of Nilphamari, Rabindronath Roy Chowdhury said he will look into the matter.

## COP'S DEATH 19 Nalitabari AL men sent to jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

All the 19 Awami League leaders and activists arrested in connection with the death of a police constable at Taragonj in Nalitabari the February 6 countrywide hartal have been sent to jail.

They were arrested on Thursday and Friday. Their bail prayer was rejected when they were produced in court.

Sources in police and Nalitabari Awami League, when contacted over phone said cases have been filed against at least 50 local AL leaders and activists for picketing during then hartal.

Most of the AL activists are now fleeing homes fearing arrest, AL sources claimed.

Police are also raiding houses of AL men and harassing families, not finding party men, they claimed.

Constable Ashraf Siddiki, chased by pickets, was fatally injured as he dashed against a standing train at Taragonj station. He died at hospital.

The 19 sent to jail include Akhtarujjaman Nannu, Ahidur Rahaman, Mukhlisar Rahaman, Sujjan, Abdus Sattar, Yusuf Ali, Abdul Hakim, Nazmul Hossen Ramjan Ali and Mantaj Ali.



PHOTO: STAR

Journalists brought out processions in Moulvibazar (L) and Barisal on Friday protesting the murder of Khulna journalist Shaikh Belaluddin.

# Journalists protest Belal's murder

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Journalists, deeply shocked at the murder of Dainik Sangram Khulna Bureau chief Shaikh Belaluddin, came on streets again on Friday demanding steps to stop such incidents.

They brought out mourning processions in districts including Khulna, Moulvibazar, Satkhira, Patuakhali and Barisal.

In Khulna, Shaikh Belal's murder was condemned by local political leaders.

The leaders are Khulna City Mayor Shaikh Tayebur Rahman, Ali Asgar Lobi MP, Khulna city BNP Secretary Nazrul Islam Manju, former Speaker Razzak Ali, district Awami League President Shaikh Haroon-ar-Rashid, city Awami League President Talukder Abdul Khaleque MP, Jatiya Party leader Abul Hossain, Khulna city President of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) advocate Feroze Ahmed, Amir of the city Jamaat Master Shafiqul Alam and Workers' Party leader Hafizur Rahman Bhuiyan.

The leaders also prayed to Almighty Allah for salvation of the departed soul.

Our Moulvibazar Correspondent reports: Journalists here brought out a

protest procession and paraded the main streets of the town.

After the procession, a meeting was held at Moulvibazar Press Club which was presided over by Bokshi Iqbal Ahmed.

Speakers called upon the journalists to get united for their safety and security.

Among others, Press Club General Secretary Rajat Kanti Goswami (The Daily Star), Abdul Hamid Mahbub of Bangladesh Potrika, Akmol Hossain Nipu of Prothom Alo, Ashok Kumar Das of The Bangladesh Observer, MAMuhit of Jugantor, Shah Waliur Rahman of Amar Desh, Md Mostafa of News Today, Fozlul Karim of Janata), Tomal Ferdous of Bangladesh Today, Hasanat Kamal of New Age and Masud Ahmed of Manabjanin addressed the meeting.

Our Satkhira Correspondent reports: Journalists under the banner of Satkhira Press Club and Satkhira Reporters Club brought out separate processions and held a joint meeting at Satkhira Reporters Club presided over by journalist Subhas Chowdhury.

Among others, Prof Abu Ahmed, Kalyan Banerjee, Ram Krishna Chakrabarty, Abdul Bari, Kazi Dulal, Yarab Hossain, Momtaz Ahmed, Abdul Jalil and Rezaul Islam addressed the meeting.

Speakers demanded immediate arrest and punishment to the culprits.

Our Patuakhali Correspondent reports: A protest meeting was held at Patuakhali Press Club which was presided over by club president Md Zakir Hossain.

Among others, Abu Zafar Khan, advocate Alamgir Hossain, Foyezur Rahman, Golam Kibria and Jalal Ahmed addressed the meeting.

A three-day mourning programme was announced by the Press Club executives which include protest rally and human chain.

Our Barisal Correspondent reports: The members of Barisal Reporters' Unity (BRU) organised a condolence meeting at their office just after receiving the death news of journalist Belal.

BRU President Mir Maniruzzaman presided over the meeting while it was addressed, among others, by Toufiq Maruf, General Secretary of Barisal Journalists' Union (BJU), BRU Secretary Swapan Khondokar, Iftikhar Ali, Pulok Chatterjee, Ismail Hossain and Anisur Rahman.

# CTG BAR POLLS AL backed lawyers bag majority posts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Awami League backed Ainjibi Samanoy Parishad bagged nine posts including that of president in the annual election of Chittagong District Bar Association held here on Thursday.

Of the rest nine posts, ruling alliance backed Ainjibi Okya Parishad got six including that of senior vice-president and Samamana Ainjibi Parishad won the post of general secretary.

Results in the race for joint secretary and cultural secretary posts are withheld for recounting of votes, sources said.

According to the election commission sources, 1282 voters, out of 1553 cast their vote. The polling was held at the association office.

The Ainjibi Samanoy Parishad won four secretarial posts out of eight. Of the rest four secretarial posts, Okya Parishad and Samamana Ainjibi Pariahad got one post each.

The Samanoy Parishad candidates who bagged the nine posts are Khorshed Alam Chowdhury (President), Didarul Alam Chowdhury (Vice-President), Abdus Satter (Treasurer), Salah Uddin (Library Secretary). The five Executive Committee members, out of ten, elected from the Samanoy Parishad, are Paritosh Barua, Uttam Bishwas, Ranajit Das, Md. Alauddin and Md. Jane Alam.

Md. Shah Alam of Okya Parishad won the post of senior vice-president. The Parishad also won the posts of five Executive Committee member. Humayun Kabir Rasel of Samamana Ainjibi Parishad won the general secretary post.

# RU new recruits agitate inside admin building

RU CORRESPONDENT

The newly recruited 546 employees of Rajshahi University (RU) yesterday staged a demonstration inside the administrative building and held a meeting there demanding immediate confirmation of their jobs.

Earlier, they brought out a procession and paraded the main streets on the campus.

At a meeting, they said they will announce a fresh agitation programme if their jobs are not confirmed by February 15. The meeting was presided over by Rafiqul Islam Sarder.

The High Court earlier stayed their 'controversial' recruitment following a case filed by Abu Aslam, a lawyer, last year.

Their recruitment through alleged irregularity sparked a controversy on the campus.

# Muharram programme in Manikganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

A 10-day Muharram programme has been chalked out at Garpara Imam Bari Darbar Sharif here.

The programme includes 'Marshial', 'Matom', 'Milad Mahfil' and discussion on the lives and sacrifices of the Imams (A).

A four-km long Tazia procession of 20,000 devotees has also been arranged in observance of Ashura on Sunday. Hazrat Imam Hossain (A) embraced martyrdom in Karbala for the sake of justice.

Processionists will carry black and red flags chanting 'Hai Hossain', 'Hai Hossain' slogans.

Dressed with black uniforms, the devotees will perform being equipped with traditional weapons like sticks, swords and spears.

# Thousands line up to demand arrest of killers

FROM PAGE 1 Family-members of the victims of last year's August 21 grenade attacks as well as slain AL lawmaker Ahsanullah Master, AL leader Manjurul Imam and Mantaj Hossain also joined the demonstration.

There were also demonstrations at other parts of the city including Dhaka University campus, Science Laboratory intersection, Paltan intersection, Moliheel and Bangabandhu Avenue.

Kibria, his nephew and three AL activists were killed in a grenade attack on an AL rally in Habiganj on January 27.

Leading intellectuals, opposition lawmakers and politicians, freedom fighters, cultural and human rights activists, lawyers, teachers, students, professionals, development workers, housewives and commoners joined the silent protest from 4:30pm to 5:00pm.

Many participants carried black banners and waved small black flags while others held portraits of Kibria and placards inscribed with slogans demanding the trial of the killers.

As the 30-minute silent demonstration ended, Asma Kibria launched a mass signature campaign in front of her residence.

A large number of people stood in a queue to express solidarity with Kibria's family and signed a long white cloth. The mass signature campaign will continue across the country till March 2.

Main opposition AL and its front

organisations, Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), Gono Forum, Workers' Party, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) and Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh joined the demonstration expressing solidarity with Kibria's family.

Families of the slain lawmaker have urged Bangladeshi communities across the world to hold a similar silent demonstration in a public area for an hour today, starting at either 10am or 4pm local time.

"Spontaneous public participation has made me determined to continue the movement," Asma Kibria told newsmen.

"We will continue the movement with different types of non-violent programmes to press the demand of bringing the killers to justice," she said.

She also announced holding a mass rally shortly to unite people against violence.

Asma Kibria said members of the civil society should take an initiative in forming the people's inquiry commission to probe Kibria's killing.

Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain, who joined the demonstration, said, "People are united and have spontaneously taken to the streets demanding that the culprits be brought to justice."

He said people want a functional investigation into the killing of Kibria and such previous incidents in the country.

Referring to the frequent grenade

attacks, the eminent lawyer said national security is under threat.

Opposition Chief Whip in the Parliament Abdus Shahid said people have lost their confidence in the government. "People will not get justice for the killing of Kibria under the alliance government," he said, adding that the present government has no intention to find the culprits.

Jahid Ahsan Russell, AL lawmaker and son of slain AL lawmaker Ahsanullah Master, said, "I am here to seek justice for my father's assassination and also the killing of Shah AMS Kibria."

"We are here because we want the government to realise that people are really upset and want a change," he added.

Niva Momtaz, daughter of slain AL leader Momtaz Hossain said,

"For last the two years I have not received justice for the cruel killing of my father. I appeal to people to do whatever possible for bringing the culprits to justice."

AL Organising Secretary Saber Hossain Chowdhury and Supreme Court Bar Association President barrister Rokonuddin Mahmud joined the programme.

AL leaders Amir Hossain Amu, Abdur Razzak, Tofael Ahmed and Abdul Jalil joined the silent demonstration in front of AL's central office on Bangabandhu Avenue where several hundred opposition men gathered,

carrying portraits of Kibria and placards embossed with anti-government slogans.

Dhaka University teachers with a banner 'Teachers against violence' formed a human chain near the Central Shaheed Minar to protest the killing of Kibria.

Dhaka University Teachers Association President Professor AAMS Arefin Siddique and its General Secretary Dr Akhtaruzzaman led the demonstration.

Activists of Sammito Sangskritik Jote and Awami Sangskritik Jote also formed a human chain there.

Opposition backed student organisations held a demonstration near the TSC on the Dhaka University campus.

CPB General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim led the demonstration at Purana Paltan area.

Our staff correspondent from Chittagong reports: Thousands of people from all walks of life in the port city observed a 30 minute silent protest demanding punishment for the killers of Shah AMS Kibria.

Politicians, intellectuals, lawyers, cultural activists, teachers, students and journalists joined the silent protest staged at Shaheed Minar, Press Club and Lalidighi ground separately.

Eminent personalities including M Hamid, Liakawt Ali Lucky, Mamunur Rashid, Keramat Mawla, Dr Jamal Nazrul Islam, and poet Abul Momen took part in it.