

# Another election nears but Rajnagar yet to get gas

## Graffiti remind pre-polls pledge as people prepare for agitation

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

It is not a fresh demand by the people of Rajnagar upazila. They are just asking the ruling party to fulfil its pre-polls pledge supply of pipeline gas.

"We want pipe line gas supply in Rajnagar upazila before the coming general election". Such graffiti is common in almost all areas of the upazila.

All upazila headquarters in Moulvibazar district except Rajnagar have been brought under pipeline gas supply through the north-east gas pipeline from Haripur to Ashuganj passes through Rajnagar upazila headquarters.

Pipeline gas supply to Rajnagar is an old demand of people there. Now, people irrespective of political affiliation are united on the issue.

Rajnagar people led by political parties will launch a tougher agitation if the government fails to fulfil its commitment soon, according to leaders of opposition Awami League.

"People have the right to get gas. We will fight in a body to realise this demand, which ever government comes to power in the next election", said Rajnagar upazila AL secretary Md Askir Khan while talking to this correspondent.

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman who was elected from this constituency (Moulvibazar-3) several time had promised to the people of Rajnagar that the upazila would be brought under pipeline gas supply but he forgot his promise every time, said Iffat Ara of Balishahasra area.

Saifur was elected to parliament from this constituency in 1979, 1996 and 2001 elections and became minister in every BNP cabinet.

Rajnagar is only 12 kilometres from Moulvibazar district headquarters.

An engineer of Jalalabad Gas at its Moulvibazar office said it is possible to supply gas to Rajnagar by installing a sub-station only.

Nazma begum, a schoolteacher said, in the last election, she voted for Saifur only because he promised to supply gas.

There are many who now accuse Saifur of flouting his election promise.

Businessman Imran Latif claimed that Saifur was elected from the constituency only on the promise to supply pipeline gas.

Another businessman Murshed

Bakht Bappi said Rajnagar is the nearest upazila to Moulvibazar district town, but it is undeveloped despite having resources and a good number of investors.

"We have a powerful minister like Saifur Rahman, but we are deprived of gas though the pipeline passes through the upazila headquarters".

Saifur's son M Naser Rahman MP, who was elected from this constituency in the by-election in 2001 told journalists earlier that gas supply to Rajnagar is not an issue to the people there. Some Awami League leaders are trying to make it an issue, he said.

Naser Rahman however said Jalalabad Gas officials have been instructed to give gas connection to people residing within 200 metres, he said.

## Khulna BNP leader hacked to death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Jabbar Morol, 45, secretary of Maguraghona union BNP in Dumuria upazila in Khulna was hacked to death Friday night.

The incident took place at Kanchannagor village when he was returning home from party office riding a motor cycle.

Quoting eyewitnesses, police said a group of four unidentified persons stopped him about 200 yards from his house and hacked him there. Doctors declared him dead when he was taken to Dumuria upazila health complex.

While fleeing, the killers wearing black masks raised slogans in the name of outlawed New Biplobi Communist party (NBCP), the witnesses said.

## Nutrition project for ultra poor

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

The World Vision on Friday launched a nutrition programme for pregnant mothers of ultra poor families and their children below three years in slum areas of Mymensingh town.

The international NGO has opened 16 centres in the town with a plan to open four more this year. The project will continue for three years, according to sources.

Under the programme, the mothers are being trained on how to make nutritious food from commonly available food items like rice, pulse, wheat, molasses and soyabean. It has opened some centres in areas including Gualikandi, Ram Krishna Mission Road, Khanchijuly, Patgodam and Kashor.

Mymensingh Civil Surgeon Dr Ruhul Amin Khan Jahangir inaugurated a centre at Krishtapur Malancha Colony on July 27.

The function was addressed by, among others, World Vision Programme Officer Adolf Marak and its officials Dr Dulal Chandra Pandit and Dr Jayanta Kumar Debnath.



Rab members yesterday arrested six cadres of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), ruling BNP's student wing, from Shah Neamatullah Hall of Rajshahi Polytechnic Institute along with firearms, ammo and lethal weapons.

# Give us promised lands

## Landless people demand in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Several thousand landless people at a rally in Kaliganj upazila on Friday urged the government to fulfil the promise made in 1998 by the then opposition leader Khaleda Zia to distribute government lands among the landless in Kaliganj and Debhata upazila.

The rally was held at Shaheed Zaheda Nagar (formerly Baburabad) in observance of the 8th death anniversary of Shaheed Zaheda, a landless woman killed in clashes with landgrabbers on July 27, 1998. The local people renamed Baburabad village after Zaheda following the incident.

Speakers at the rally reiterated their 8-point demand and vowed to continue agitation for distribution of government lands among the landless.

"I lost my wife but I am happy that the landless people are united to realise their 8-point demand", Shaheed Zaheda's husband Abdul Hamin said at the rally.

Braving rains, thousands of landless men and women from nine villages in Kaliganj and Debhata upazilas gathered near at the grave of Shaheed Zaheda to establish their right to khas lands and pay tribute to the memory of Zaheda.

On July 27, 1998, several thousand landless people with bamboo and wooden sticks in hands had gathered at Baburabad (now Shaheed Zaheda Nagar) to resist when land grabbers tried to evict landless people from government lands.

There are about 2500 acres of khas lands in the area. This year the program was organised by Debhata-Kaliganj Bhumihin

Sangram Committee.

The rally was presided over by its president Wahab Ali Sardar. Satkhira district Landless Eviction Resistance Committee member Abdur Rahim was the chief guest.

They vowed to continue agitation till their 8-point demand is met. They blamed the local administration for its failure to implement the commitment made by the then opposition leader Khaleda Zia.

At a big gathering of landless people at Debishahr foot ball ground in Debhata upazila on August 8, 1998, the then opposition leader Khaleda Zia had said that khas lands in nine villages in the area would be distributed among the landless, the speakers said.

Earlier, the landless people carrying banners and posters brought out a procession in the area.

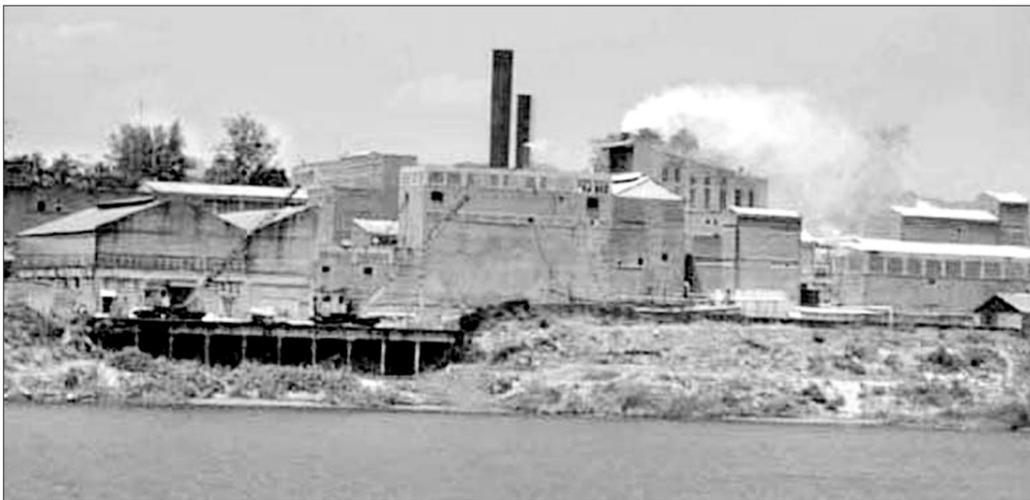


PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

The Karnaphuli Paper Mill in Kaptai was declared closed for 15 days yesterday due to crisis of raw materials.

# Magura AL splits protesting 'pocket committee'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

Intra-party feud in Magura district unit Awami League (AL) has taken a new turn as a full-fledged committee could not be formed 15 months after its council.

The infighting is now spreading to grassroots level, frustrating leaders and workers, giving way to a new faction in the party.

The council was held in April last year after about 12 years, where names of eight persons were

announced for eight posts including that of president and secretary.

By this time, municipality chairman Abdul Gafur, who was made joint secretary No. 2, quit AL and joined BNP, alleging lack of discipline in the party.

A full-fledged committee could not be formed despite repeated instruction by the party high command.

Talking to this correspondent, leader of the newly emerged faction, joint secretary Abu Nasir

Bablu, blamed the party president Altaf Hossain and general secretary MS Akbar MP for failure to form a committee.

"They are showing apathy to forming a committee, because both the president and the secretary want to retain their position in the party", Bablu alleged. He also termed the district AL as a 'pocket organisation of some people'.

"Its general secretary MS Akbar MP is the brother-in-law of party president Altaf Hossain and organ-

ising secretary Shafiquzzaman Bachchu is his (Altaf Hossain) son-in-law. They are all in all in the party", he said.

MS Akbar MP however denied intra-party feud and the allegation that it is a pocket committee. The new leaders were made in presence of central AL general secretary Abdul Jalil considering their 'competence', he claimed.

He also claimed that Magura AL president Altaf Hossain might have submitted a full-fledged committee to the party high command for approval.

But joint secretary Abu Nasir Bablu refuted his claim terming it incorrect.

Party insiders said, as the full-fledged committee is yet to be formed, many dedicated leaders have distanced themselves from organisational activities, weakening the opposition's out-governance agitation and its position in the next election.

"At least 11 programmes declared by central liaison committee of 14-party alliance could not be held in Magura as grassroots level

leaders and workers are frustrated with the district leadership and non-formation of a committee despite directive from the party high command," said Baki Imam, secretary of municipal unit of AL.

According to him, in a recent letter central AL general secretary Abdul Jalil asked the eight leaders in the district to form a committee within June 15. But it could not be formed due to internal feud, he said.

Party sources said that from January 2004 to April 2005, at least 14 incidents of clash also took place between rival factions led by Akbar and Altaf Hossain.

The dispute between Altaf and Akbar was temporarily buried after they were made president and general secretary of the district committee.

But their failure to form the district committee has created another group in the party, which is led by Abu Nasir Bablu, an aspirant for the post of general secretary.

8X3

6X2

12X3