

Create honest leadership with honest politicians: Oli

LPD stages huge rallies in Rangamati, Khagrachhari

STAR NATIONAL DESK

The newly formed Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) led by dissident BNP leaders held big rallies at Rangamati and Khagrachhari hill towns yesterday as a show of strength.

LDP Executive President Col. (Rtd) Oli Ahmed, secretary Maj. (Rtd) Abdul Mannan, Presidium member Rezwan Ahmed and local leaders addressed the rallies, calling upon the people to vote for LDP in coming election to 'create honest leadership with honest politicians', our correspondents reported.

A large number of people from distant and remote areas came to Rangamati and Khagrachhari towns through trawlers, buses and other transports to attend the rallies.

LDP activists alleged that BNP men, at many points, obstructed them from coming to the rally.

In Rangamati, people carrying banners and posters and chanting slogans marched the town streets in a festive mood and converged at the Old Court Building ground at Reserve Bazar in the afternoon. The ground was full to its brim. The rally was presided over by Rangamati LDP convener and former deputy minister Moni Swapan Dewan.

Oli told the meeting that LDP was floated by people who left BNP protesting corruption by a section of its leaders.

Leaders of the immediate past 4-party government did 'massive corruption' and 'plundered peoples resources' in last five years.

"BNP has distracted from its ideology and far away from what Ziaur Rahman and we had formed", he said.

Oli alleged that President and Chief Advisor to the caretaker government Prof Iajuddin Ahmed is implementing a BNP-Jamaat blueprint to hold a staged-managed election to help the alliance return to power by any means.

"People want a free, fair and credible election with participation of major parties and they will never forgive Iajuddin if can not do that", warned freedom fighter Oli.

"Resignation of four advisors reveals what he (Iajuddin) is doing at Bangabhaban", he said.

"The President negated what the advisors achieved through strenu-



LDP Executive President Col. (Rtd) Oli Ahmed addressing a rally at Khagrachhari town yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

ous efforts and hectic parleys with political parties to narrow the gap and resolve the crisis. He will have to bear the responsibility if election is not held and an unwanted situation is created", Oli said.

"We formed LDP with honest politicians including 26 former ministers and lawmakers of the former government to free the country from corruption", he said. Corruption by the immediate past BNP-Jamaat government crossed all previous records, he alleged.

People were simply bewildered by the galloping price hike of essentials in last five years due to syndicates formed by ruling party men, who plundered people's wealth.

BNP-Jamaat alliance will not return to power because of their alleged corruption and misdeeds, he said.

Col. Oli urged the people to exercise their franchise judiciously. "Identify corrupt candidates and don't vote them again", he said.

"We want people's support to create honest leadership with

honest politicians through a free, fair and credible election," he said.

He also urged the army to remain neutral during the election.

He introduced Moni Swapan as LDP candidate in Rangamati in the coming election and called upon the people to vote for him.

He urged all communities in the Chittagong Hill Tracts to maintain communal harmony to ensure sustainable peace and development of the area. He also warned that vested quarters are out to disrupt peace to serve their own interest.

LDP secretary Maj (Rtd) Mannan said problems in CHT can be resolved if honest people are elected.

The Rangamati rally was also addressed by Abu Zafar Ahmed Liton and Dr. Alo Rani Aich.

At Khagrachhari rally, Oli alleged that 30 corrupt persons in the immediate past government looted thousands of crores of taka and siphoned it to Singapore, Malaysia, Canada and London. They have to

be punished, he added.

He said it is a shame for the nation that killers who opposed independence moved in official cars fluttering the National Flag.

This should not be allowed any more, he told the crowd.

Oli told the meeting that LDP would field a candidate in Khagrachhari, but did not disclose his name.

Several thousand people, both Bangalees and indigenous, from different areas of the hill district attended the rally held at Muktamancha in the town with district LDP convener Abul Kashem in the chair.

He also criticised immediate past BNP lawmaker from Khagrachhari Wadud Bhuiyan, saying he amassed wealth illegally during the last five years.

LDP district secretary Nasir Uddin, joint convener Rafiqul Islam, Nuruzzaman, Anup Mohajan and Rabiul Islam also addressed the rally.

13 houses for Mujibnagar Ansar FFs

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Bangladesh Ansar and Village Defence Party (VDP) yesterday handed over 13 newly-built houses to 13 valiant Ansar freedom fighters and their families at Mujibnagar in Meherpur, says a press release.

The recipients included martyred ansar Waliul Islam Bir Protik and 12 ansars for offering guard of honour to the first head of state of the exiled interim government of Bangladesh at the very beginning of liberation war in 1971.

The 12 are Ansar Commander Yaad Ali, Assistant Commander Md Mohiuddin and ansars Md Nazrul Islam, Md Mofizuddin, Md Sirajul Islam, Md Asir Ali Mollick, Md Azimuddin Sheikh, Fakir Mohammad, Md Liaqat Ali, Md Hamidul Haque, Md Kismat Ali, Md Saheb Ali or their family members.

The two-room houses were handed over to each of them at a function held on the occasion of the district rally of Ansar and VDP at Mujibnagar.

Ansar and VDP director general (DG) Major General M Akbar Akter was present as chief guest while the director of training of Ansar and VDP and Khulna Range commander and Meherpur police superintendent (SP) were present as special guests.

Additional deputy commissioner (ADC) Dharendra Nath Sarker presided over the function. Over 200 team leaders and members attended.

Each house was built at a cost of Tk 2 lakh donated by own fund of Ansar-VDP.

The chief guest also distributed television, sewing machine, and other prizes among the team leaders in recognition to their commendable jobs.

Meherpur Poursabha chairman Alhaj Mutasim Billah and Mujibnagar upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) were also present.

Disgruntled ticket seeker revolts against party

Hilali vows to resist any alliance nominee in Kishoreganj-3

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

BNP presidents and secretaries in all the 11 unions and 99 wards in Kishoreganj Sadar upazila at a largely attended party workers' meeting in the town yesterday vowed to resist any alliance nominee but Masud Hilali from Kishoreganj-3 constituency in the coming election.

The meeting was held in Sholakia area after alliance ticket aspirant Masud Hilali returned from Dhaka disappointed.

Party sources said Masud told them that the alliance ticket may go to former judge Rezaul Karim Khan Chunnu, who joined BNP recently at the behest of former education minister Dr. Osman Faruk.

At the meeting, Masud Hilali declared that BNP men would enforce a rail-road barricade and isolate Kishoreganj from rest of the country if he is not nominated.

"BNP is not anybody's pocket organisation. It is a democratic political institution. We built the party in last 30 years and will not allow any newcomer to reap the benefit.

"If BNP high command ignores grassroots leaders' opinion, they will resist it", Hilali told the meeting, sources said.

Former judge Rezaul Karim Khan Chunnu appeared out of the blue in the constituency as a BNP nomination seeker, he said.

Hilali alleged that Chunnu influenced some central leaders and the Hawa Bhaban. That was evident when Kishoreganj district BNP



Rezaul Karim Khan Chunnu,

president and former education minister Dr. Osman Faruk arranged Chunnu's joining party in presence of party chief Khaleida Zia at Kishoreganj on October 7, ignoring a big demonstration by BNP men on the previous day.

The meeting was also addressed by Kishoreganj four-party alliance joint coordinator AT M Mostafa and Sadar upazila BNP secretary Badiul Islam.

The speakers alleged that Dr. Osman Faruk made Chunnu convener of Kishoreganj Sadar upazila BNP by dissolving a full-fledged committee which was formed through a council earlier.

Even district BNP secretary Waliullah Rabbani did not sign the dissolution letter, Hilali claimed.

Kishoreganj-3 constituency comprises Kishoreganj Sadar upazila covering the municipality and 11 unions.

In 2001 election, 4-party nomi-



Masud Hilali

nee Masud Hilali was defeated by Awami League (AL) candidate Sayeed Ashraf Islam with 12,320 votes. Masud Hilali got 39,591 votes and Ashraf got 51,911 votes.

Earlier, Masud Hilali got BNP nomination three times and won only in the February 15 controversial election in 1996.

Masud Hilali's aides said that he may join 'a newly floated party' if he is not given alliance nomination in the coming election.

On November 18, at least 11 people were injured in clashes between rival groups after Osman Faruk at a meeting on Islamia Chhatrabas compound in the town dissolved Kishoreganj Sadar upazila BNP committee headed by Masud Hilali.

Now, there are two committees in Kishoreganj Sadar upazila— one headed by Masud Hilali and the other by Chunnu.

RIB's Children Fair held in Rajshahi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

About 100 children from ultra poor families in 12 northern districts joined in a day-long 'Children Fair' at Natore District Council auditorium on Sunday.

The children and their teachers from 32 units of Kajoli Shisu Bikash Center told about their experiences with the newly evolved education system, which helps increase the literacy rate. Research Initiative, Bangladesh (RIB) organised the fair.

RIB chairman Shamsul Bari inaugurated the fair.

RU ADMISSION TEST

5 held for selling fake questions

RU CORRESPONDENT

Five people were arrested for selling fake admission test question papers on the Rajshahi University (RU) campus Sunday evening, campus sources said.

RU proctorial body members caught them in association with police.

Flare test not held at Bibiyana Gas Field

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

US company Chevron failed to do flare test at the north pad of Bibiyana Gas Field at a remote village in Nabiganj upazila of Habiganj district yesterday and day before in face of agitation by local people.

However, local administration will meet the leaders of the agitators in presence of the company officials at 4 pm today.

Local people are agitating for a long time for realisation of their 14-point demand.

The demands include supply of gas to villages in the upazila before transporting it to other parts of the country, development and construction of roads and bridges in the area, setting up of gas and power plants and creating job opportunity for local people in all gas-based establishments.

About 400 demonstrators kept the road leading to north pad of Bibiyana Gas Field blocked for

the last two days. They also took out processions on the approach road of the north pad. Processionists paraded the road chanting slogans in favour of their demands. As the company men failed to reach the gas field, they abandoned the flare test programme for two consecutive days.

The company officials held a meeting with the agitators for one-and-a-half hours Sunday evening. But it yielded no positive result.

On contact, a Chevron official said that they had been incurring a huge loss during the period.

The gas field was supposed to be readied for production after flare test in all seven wells in north pad, he said.

"We are hopeful to get a positive outcome from today's meeting", he said adding the company is ready to extend assistance to local people. We have already employed about 400 people from

the locality, he said. But, the decision to supply gas and rendering other facilities to local people depend on the Bangladesh government, he said.

Bibiyana Dabi Aday Bastabayan Parishad started agitation in 1997 just after start of work of the gas field by US Occidental company. The company met some of the demands but the major ones remained unmet till now.

However, there are allegations against a few leaders for taking personal benefits like small-scale contracts and others from the major project.

As a result, the agitation stumbled at times due to such activities, locals said. But, Bibiyana Dabi Bastabayan Parishad president Shajahan Siraj denied the allegations saying we are agitating for common people's interest, not for our own interest. We are not sub-contractors, he added.