



Activists of Jatiyatajadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) chasing their Chhatra League rivals a with sticks and rods on Rajshahi University campus yesterday. (story on page 16).

PHOTO: STAR

Victory eludes AL in Tangail-6 for long-running party feud

MIRZA SHAKIL, TANGAIL

Victory eluded Awami League for long in Tangail-6 (Nagarpur) constituency, once its stronghold, just due to intra-party feud.

Awami League could not win the parliamentary seat since 1973 election though it has good organisational strength. The issue is being discussed in party rank and file but front ranking district leaders are unmoved, frustrating party workers, insiders said.

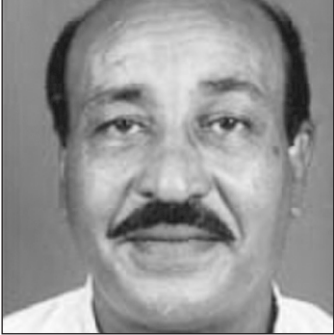
The party is divided into many factions over candidature for the coming election also, they said. AL candidates were defeated by BNP men in the constituency in last two elections.

Failing to narrow rivalry between party leaders, AL Presidium Member and veteran leader Abdul Mannan contested from the constituency in 1991 election but he was also defeated by BNP's Khondokar Abu Taher with a margin of 14,909 votes. Mannan however won from Tangail-5 (Sadar and Delduar upazilas).

After the 1991 election, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) leader Khondokar Abdul Baten joined AL along with his followers in 1992. Some local (Nagarpur) AL leaders and activists were disappointed over his joining AL and started opposing Baten.

Baten ran in 1996 election as an AL candidate but was defeated by BNP's Gautam Chakroborty. The vote difference however narrowed down to 1,950.

Baten got the party ticket again and contested in 2001, but was defeated by 4-party alliance candidate Gautam Chakroborty with a



Khandoker Baten



Ahsanul Islam Titu



SK Abdul Rahim



Tareque Shams Himu

margin of 1,878 votes.

Many party leaders blamed the then Nagarpur upazila AL president Golam Mohammad Khan Tareque for the defeat. Denied of party ticket, he contested the election as an independent candidate and got only 16,462 votes. Golam Mohammad died in a road accident on May 3, 2002. Grassroots level party men and political circles then thought that the inter-party feud in Nagarpur AL would come to an end.

But this remained a far cry. Several AL leaders are aspiring for nomination and declared their

candidature from the constituency in the coming election.

Prominent among the contenders are Golam Mohammad's nephew and Tangail district AL industry and commerce secretary Khan Tareque Ahsanul Islam Titu, assistant secretary of a central AL sub-committee Tareque Shams Khan Himu, industrialist SK Abdul Rahim Ilias, Maj (rtd) Tayebuddin Khan and Khorshed Alam Babul, a former member of national football team.

Ahsanul Islam Titu, Tareque Shams Khan Himu and SK Abdul Rahim Ilias are campaigning in the

areas, assuring their party workers that they would get nomination.

Party sources said Ahsanul Islam Titu is involved in various social and political activities for about two year and lobbying with party high-ups for ticket for the coming election.

Commenting on his uncle Golam Mohammad Khan Tareque's opposition to Khondokar Abdul Baten in last two elections, Ahsanul Islam Titu said, "That was Baten's failure. He could not unite party men."

Tareque Shams Khan Himu is also holding meetings with party workers and attending public functions.

Asked about AL's failure in 1996 and 2001 elections, he said this was due to fielding a weak candidate. When pointed out that Baten lost the two elections with narrow margins, he declined to comment.

He however admitted that inter-party feud was the main reason behind AL's defeat in the two last elections.

"AL will regain the Jatiya Sangsad seat defeating possible alliance candidate Gautam Chakroborty if I get the party ticket in coming election," Himu claimed.

When contacted, Baten said he was defeated by BNP candidate in last two elections with little margins due to hostility by some party men.

He said he would get alliance nomination in the coming election also. "Grassroots party leaders and workers are aware of the feud and they will work for me", he said.

Some dedicated leaders said Awami League has good prospect in the coming election if the party high-ups can narrow down the gap somehow.

Prime accused in B'baria Aug 17 blasts sent to jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Md. Shah Alam, the prime accused in August 17 bomb blasts in Brahmanbaria town last year, was produced before the court of a First Class Magistrate yesterday. The court sent him to jail custody.

He was arrested from Shimrail Kandi area of the town on Monday. Shah Alam was the gang leader and had made the bombs blasted at five points in the town, police said.

Brahmanbaria DB police filed a case accusing Shah Alam for the blasts.

The then government declared a bounty of Tk 25,000 for his arrest.

Shah Alam came to see his father Abdur Rahman Bayati at his house in the town on Monday.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of DB police led by Sub Inspector (SI) Ali Arshad raided the house and arrested Shah Alam.

Let all be true to truce in Khagrachhari

District administration brokers much-wanted peace among rival parties, groups

JASIM MAJUMDER, Khagrachhari

At least 5,000 Awami League leaders and activists and several hundred BNP men who were 'not loyal to immediate past lawmaker', have returned to their houses in Khagrachhari, thanks to the initiative by the district administration that brokered peace among rival parties and groups.

The administration held 12 meetings since November 1 involving leaders of Awami League, BNP factions, Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), Jatiya Party (Ershad) and other smaller parties. The caretaker government took over on October 28.

The first meeting, presided over by Additional Deputy Commissioner Shamsuddoha, was attended by immediate past party BNP lawmaker Wadud Bhuiyan. He is in Dhaka since then, party men said. It was held at the ADC's office.

After accusations and counter-accusations, leaders of the parties at the last meeting held on Monday resolved that all political activists irrespective of parties will live in their houses peacefully. Belonging to a certain party is a right that should not affect or sour their relations, no one will harass any body else and all will avoid accusation and confrontation in political activity, sources in the parties and the district administration told this correspondent.

Monday's meeting was attended by among others, district BNP organising secretary Mostafizur Rahman Millat, press secretary Nazrul Islam and party's Sadar upazila secretary MN Afsar, district Jubo Dal president Abdus salam and secretary Syedul Islam

Babul, district Awami League joint secretary SM Safi, Chhatra League president Mong Shu Pru Chowdhury Opu secretary Didarul Alam, Jubo League convener Partha Tripura Jewel, Liberal Democratic Party convener Abul Kashem and joint convener Rafiquel Islam.

As per a decision of the meeting, 'peace committee' is being formed in each village to maintain harmony among activists of all parties. Such committees have been formed at some villages, the sources said yesterday.

The meetings also resolved that officials will review 'false cases' filed by rival political activists in last five years.

"Observing the (confrontational) situation, the administration and police officials took an initiative to broker peace among parties," Assistant Police Superintendent Mohammad Tareq said yesterday.

In last five years, at least 5,000 Awami League leaders and activists and several hundred 'dissident' BNP men were driven out by musclemen, district Awami League secretary SM Safi told this correspondent.

"No one having difference of opinion could stay at home in Khagrachhari during the tenure of 4-party alliance government" he alleged.

At least 13 political activists including Sadar upazila AL leader Nurul Islam alias PC Nuru, Matiranga AL leaders Mohammad Kamal Hossen and Mohammad Yasin, Matiranga Jubo League leaders Mohammad Ibrahim and Amir Hossain, Sechchasebak League leader Helal Uddin, Rahim, Mujib, Ramgarh upazila

Sechchasebak League leader Nurul Alam, Jubo League leader Mohammad Yasin, Chhatra League leaders Mongri Marna and Firoz Ahamad were killed during the alliance government but none of the accused have been arrested yet, he said.

At least 300 leaders and activists of different political parties were injured and 200 houses and business establishments damaged in clashes between parties in last few months in different areas of the district, the sources said.

Khagrachhari LDP convener Mohammad Abul Kashem said at least 3,770 cases were lodged against about 5,000 leaders and activists of Awami League, Jatiya party and BNP with nine police stations in the district only to harass them and their families. Some journalists also faced false cases, he claimed.

"Now we are happy as the administration took a nice initiative to protect us and our property", Kashem said.

Mostafizur Rahman Millat, joint secretary of district BNP, however said, "No honest politicians was driven out. Criminals driven out from the district by people and BNP had no link with those incidents".

"We want to do politics in a democratic way, not by driving out others from the district like Awami League", he said.

Jatiya Party (Ershad) central leader Mohammad Shahaz Uddin said, "It is a good to see that politicians are staying at homes with families which was impossible during BNP-Jamaat government".

8X3

VICTORY DAY ISSUE FFs demand removal of UNO in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Leaders of Debhata upazila unit of Muktiyoddha Sangsad at a press conference yesterday demanded removal of Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Biswajit Bhattacharya for not inviting freedom fighters to Victory Day functions 'to please anti-liberation forces'.

Subhas Chandra Ghosh, 'commander' of Debhata upazila Muktiyoddha Sangsad, in a written statement also alleged that the UNO made 'audacious remarks' when freedom fighters asked him why they were not invited.

"It is not the first and foremost duty of an official of the republic to keep the spirit of liberation war in state affairs. I observed the Day as per law", Subhas quoted the UNO as telling them when they went to meet him at his office yesterday.

He alleged that the UNO is serving interests of anti-liberation forces who are hatching conspiracy to destroy the spirit of Liberation War and distorting its history. The press conference was held at Satkhira Reporters Club in the town.

"His comments about the Liberation War hurt sentiment of not only freedom fighters but also people, Subhas said.

Freedom fighters Enamul Haque Biswas, Abdul Hamid and Abdul Wahab were present at the conference.

On contact, UNO Biswajit Bhattacharya refuted the allegation but could not give any satisfactory reply why freedom fighters were not present at Victory Day programmes in Debhata.

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