

# AL, BNP 'rebels' mount agitation for tickets

Hartal in Sirajganj, Narail, Netrakona: Protesters march streets wearing burial cloth in Chandpur

## STAR NATIONAL DESK

Agitation by nomination aspirants of different parties in their respective constituencies in several districts continued yesterday.

They staged show of strength by holding rallies, bringing out processions, blocking highways and enforcing hartal demanding nomination and cancellation of tickets to party rivals. Hartal was enforced in Sirajganj, Narail and Netrakona yesterday.

In Chandpur, several thousand Awami League leaders and workers brought out a procession and held a rally at the Shapla Chatter in the town yesterday rejecting the 'grand alliance' ticket to Prof Md. Abdullah and demanding nomination of AL leader Md. Yusuf Gazi from Chandpur-4 constituency (Sadar and Humchar upazilas).

Abdullah, a former BNP lawmaker recently joined the Liberal Democratic Party led by dissident BNP leaders Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury and Col (rtd) Oli Ahmed.

Yusuf Gazi is former president of Chandpur district Jubo League.

Speakers at the rally said leaders and activists of Awami League and its front organisation

will boycott Abdullah if the nomination is not changed, a correspondent reported.

AL leaders advocate Mojibur Rahman, advocate Anwar Gazi, Mokbul Maji, Jubo League leader Md. Ali Maji, Boju Mollah, Jafar Ahmed and Jahangir addressed the rally, among others.

Supporters of Md. Yusuf Gazi came from far away places to attend the programme, party men said.

Yusuf Gazi ran second in 2001 election, according to election officials.

On the previous day, several thousand supporters of BNP ticket aspirant Shaikh Farid Ahmed brought out a big procession in the town wearing burial cloth for his nomination from Chandpur-4 constituency. They demanded cancellation of the nomination to district BNP president and former lawmaker AS Sultan Titu.

In Chandpur-3 constituency, supporters of 'rebel' BNP leader Sabur Khan blocked Comilla-Chandpur highway at Baburhat on Thursday for cancellation of four-party alliance nomination of GM Fazlul Haq.

In Narail-1 constituency (Kalia upazila), a day-long hartal was enforced by supporters of district BNP senior vice-president Jahangir

Alam Biswas protesting nomination of former BNP lawmaker Dharendra Nath Saha. The hartal was observed peacefully and no untoward incident was reported, a correspondent reported.

Both Jahangir Alam and Dhirmendra Nath submitted nomination papers to contest the coming election from the constituency.

In Nareakona-5 constituency (Purbadhala and Dhubaura upazilas), Awami League activists loyal to grand alliance ticket aspirants retired DIG Abdul Hannan Khan and Principal Sirajul Islam

enforced a half-day hartal in Purbadhala upazila yesterday protesting nomination of Warasat Hossen Belal from the constituency. During hartal, they also held several meetings in the area, vowing to resist Belal, and brought out processions. There was chase and counter-chase between pickets and police at some areas of the upazila as the hartal enforcers stopped traffic on roads.

Road communication from Purbadhala to others parts of the district remained suspended. Both Abdul Hannan Khan and Principal Sirajul Islam submitted nomination papers to contest from the constituency but they were denied ticket by the 4-party alliance.

On Thursday, several thousand Awami League leaders and activists brought out a procession and held a rally in Netrakona town rejecting the nomination of central AL leader Manjur Kader from Netrakona-3 constituency (Atpara and Kendua upazilas).

They demanded nomination of party leader and industrialist Ifthakuruddin Pintu, who sought grand alliance ticket from the area and submitted nomination paper.

The procession was led by Khairul Islam, former president of Atpara upazila Awami League; Abu Taher, chairman of Ashujia Union Parishad in Kendua and also vice-president of Kendua upazila AL and six other UP chairmen in Kendua upazila.

They paraded slogans against Manjur Kader.

After the procession and the rally, they held a press conference at the News Media Centre at Chutabazar in the town, where they alleged that Manjur Kader is unpopular and not involved in political activities.

They urged the AL high command to nominate Ifthakuruddin Pintu in the interest of people of the area and the grand alliance.



(Clockwise) A BNP aspirant's supporters wearing burial cloth block a road in Chandpur town, Awami League activists lie on road during hartal in Purbadhala in Netrakona protesting nomination to a party leader, BNP men form human chain in Mymensingh town demanding change in nomination and an Awami League procession in Gaibandha-3 for ticket to their leader.

## Fair polls not possible under caretaker govt

All five candidates of 'grand alliance' in Rajshahi tell press conference

### STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

All candidates of Awami League-led 'grand alliance' from five constituencies in Rajshahi have expressed their doubt over holding of a free and fair election under the caretaker government because of its 'biased role'.

At a press conference they said they were feeling 'insecure' and apprehending intimidation of voters of minority and indigenous communities by candidates of four-party alliance and their musclemen.

'Grand alliance' candidates Sardar Amjad Hossain, AHM Khairuzzaman Liton, Fazle Hossain Badsha, Omar Faruk Chowdhury and Tajul Islam Mohammad Faruk spoke at the press conference held at a restaurant in the city Thursday evening.

Many other leaders of Awami League and its allies were present. They also alleged massive flaws in the voter lists in different constituencies. Citing an example, they said 2500 voters were shown in the address of Al Amin student mess in ward no. 30 in Rajshahi city though then mess can not accommodates more than 50 people.

They said they lodged complaints with the election office about 5000 illegal voters at 29 student messes in the city but that was not corrected.

Most of the police and administration officials are still following orders of four-party alliance leaders, they alleged.

Islamist militants including JMB activists and outlaws have not been arrested while illegal arms are still in hands of BNP-Jamaat cadres, they alleged.

They demanded adequate security and threatened that if any lack of neutrality was found in conducts of the caretaker government in any of the five constituencies, they all start movement leaving the elections.

Cadres of Islami Chhatra Shibir are using Rajshahi University halls and different students' messes in the city for their terrorist activities, they alleged.

They said, they raised the allegations at the law and order meeting held at the police superintendent's office prior to the press conference.

They also questioned neutrality of the caretaker government, saying killers of Rajshahi University teacher Prof S Taher Ahmed were released on bail

while those accused for Prof Yunus murder are yet to be arrested.

Sardar Amjad Hossain, candidate from Bagmara and Mohonpur area said cadres of the 4-party alliance are intimidating voters in his constituency.

AHM Khairuzzaman Liton, a candidate from Bagha and Charchat area said he apprehends of harassment of his party men by the law enforcing agencies and BNP-Jamaat cadres.

Fazle Hossain Badsha, vying from Rajshahi city and Paba upazila seat said, four-party alliance candidates are distributing money among voters. He demanded their arrest.

Omar Faruk Chowdhury, contesting from Tanore and Godagari area, protested the decision to keep mobile phone network closed on the election day and the order for deposit of legal arms of candidates.

Tajul Islam Mohammad Faruk claimed that police and election officials were playing partisan roles. He said, 18 people accused in Awami League leader Zahangir murder case were released on bail while Zahangir's brother Alamgir was accused in a 'false case'.

## PSTU admission from Jan 6

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Admission to first year honours courses in Patuakhali Science and Technology University (PSTU) for the 2006-07 session will begin on January 6, university sources said.

Admission will continue till January 10, the source said.

The university authorities published result of the admission test on December 27 which was held on December 26. As many as 1,765 candidates vied for 225 seats in the faculties of Agriculture, Business Administration and Management (BAM) and Computer Science and Engineering (CSE).

Candidates selected from the waiting list will be admitted on January 13-15, university sources added.

## Nomination to GF leader protested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD-Inu) here yesterday protested nomination of Gano Forum (GF) leader Mofizul Islam Khan Kamal as a candidate of the grand alliance.

Several thousands of party activists took out a procession here protesting the nomination. A rally was held at Manikganj bus stand on the Dhaka-Aricha Highway where speakers demanded candidature of JSD leader Iqbal Hossain Khan instead of Kamal. They feared the grand alliance might lose the seat if his candidature is not changed.

## AL accord with Khelafat protested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Bangladesh Hindu, Bouddha, Christian Oikya Parishad here yesterday protested the five-point agreement signed between Awami League (AL) and Bangladesh Khelafat Majlish recently.

Held at Aqar estate here in the morning with Dr Atul Chandra Das in the chair, the meeting termed the agreement against the spirit of Liberation War as well as against the spirit of a secular, democratic and welfare state. They urged AL to scrap the accord immediately. They feared if the deal is implemented, it would destroy democracy, the spirit of Liberation War and constitution.

Among others, Hindu, Bouddha, Christian Oikya Parishad secretary Uttam Kumar Das, freedom fighter Manas Kanti Datta, Advocate Tapan Kumar Sukul and CPB leader Subhas Chandra addressed the meeting.

## BNP enforces hartal in Mirpur

Vows to resist Inu

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kusthia

BNP yesterday enforced a half-day hartal in Mirpur upazila in Kusthia district protesting the arrest of party leader Arman Hossain.

BNP activists tossed seven bombs at Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) offices in Mirpur and ransacked it, sources in JSD claimed. They also vandalised at least 22 shops at the upazila headquarters during the hartal.

The men declared to resist JSD president and 'grand alliance' candidate the Hasanul Haq Inu from Kusthia-2 constituency. Inu will fight four-party alliance candidate and former BNP lawmaker Sahidul Islam. Shahdul is also president of Kusthia district BNP.

Police had arrested Arman, chairman of Dhampur Union Parishad and vice-president of Mirpur upazila BNP, when he was allegedly leading an attack on Mirpur JSD office Thursday evening.

Police said Arman is a 'listed criminal' but could not be arrested as he was allegedly sheltered by Sahidul.

On Thursday, Arman along with about 50 party men attacked the JSD office and asked party leaders and activists there to leave the constituency, JSD sources claimed. Some of the JSD men were also beaten, they added.

When the news spread, JSD activists rushed to the spot and were locked in a clash with BNP men.

On information, Mirpur police rushed to the spot and nabbed Arman. Police also charged baton on JSD activists when they laid a siege to the police station demanding punishment of Arman.

Later, additional police forces from district headquarters went there to control the situation as several thousand JSD activists and supporters came on streets to protest the incident.

Arman was sent to Kusthia jail yesterday.

During the hartal, BNP activists attacked and ransacked the JSD office.

The grand alliance yesterday protested the incident and demanded arrest of those involved in the attack on JSD office.

A tense situation was prevailing in the upazila yesterday.



Torun Nagorik Uddog, a youth organisation, formed a human chain in Chittagong city yesterday demanding cancellation of Awami League's recent agreement with Khelafat Majlish.

## 4TH DAY OF STRIKE BY JUTE MILL WORKERS FOR SALARY

## Rail slippers torched, vehicles damaged in Khalishpur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Angry workers and employees of jute mills went berserk yesterday in different areas of Khalishpur industrial belt on the fourth day of their rail-road blockade programme to press their eight-point demand including payment of arrear salaries and Eid bonus. The agitation programme was announced earlier by the Patkal Sangram Parishad (PSP), which also gave a call for hartal in the industrial belts of Khulna and Jessore districts as part of movement.

The agitating workers while in a procession at Khalishpur damaged many autorickshaws, roadside shops and bill boards pelting stones and hitting those with clubs.

They removed rail tracks and set rail slippers on fire at Kashipur New Road under Khalishpur thana at about 9.30 in the morning.

Babul Akhter, staff reporter of Dainik Janmabhum published from Khulna, was injured when he came under attack at Kashipur when he was taking photograph of burning rail shippers. He was admitted to a local clinic. The attackers also snatched away his digital camera.

Other newsmen and photojournalists who were covering the incidents were chased away by angry jute mill workers, witnesses said.

All vehicles went off the roads and shops remained closed in Khulna-Jessore industrial belt in response to call for indefinite hartal given Wednesday night by Khulna regional unit of 'Dakshin Bangla Motor Bus Owners and Employees' Association' in support of the jute mill workers.

Life was virtually paralysed in the industrial belts during the

dawn-to-dusk hartal yesterday. Production in all eight state owned jute mills in Khulna-Jessore industrial belt is suspended since the blockade programme began four days ago.

Leaders of the Patkal Sangram Parishad (PSP) said workers and employees of jute mills will not compromise this time and quit streets until their eight-point demands is met.

They want payment of all arrears and Eid bonus by December 31. Otherwise, the situation will turn more violent in the entire industrial belt which may go beyond control of authorities, PSP convenor Sarder Motaharuddin said.

Meanwhile, top officials at jute mills in the area have been provided with security at their houses as they are feeling insecure with their families.

## WP LEADER BABU LAL SHIL MURDER

## All 19 accused acquitted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

A tribunal here on Thursday acquitted all 19 accused of Workers' Party (WP) leader Babu Lal Shil murder case of charges for failure of the prosecution to produce sufficient evidence against the accused.

The acquitted are Mozahar Sarder, Azizul Huq Molla, Biplob Molla, Nuru Sikder, Azizul Huq Sikder, Razzak Sikder, Soheli Sikder, Jalil Jomaddar Chhotru, Selim Sharif, Gias Farazi, Shipon Molla, Babu Sharif, Hemayet Sarder, Mizan, Mizanur Rahman

Sentu, Nurul Huq Sikder, Humayun Khalifa, Aminul Huq and Majid Khan.

WP leader Babu Lal Shil was shot dead while his wife was chopped by the outlawed Sarbahara Party cadres at his Uzirpur upazila town house on July 16 this year.

Victim's brother Taposkumar Shil lodged a complaint with Uzirpur Police Station without mentioning names of the killers. Uzirpur Police Station officer-in-charge (OC) Abdur Rob submitted the charge-sheet against 19 accused on September 24.

## BNP, Jamaat close ranks in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Khulna Jamaat at last agreed to forget and forgive its strained relations with former Whip Ashraf Hossain in Khulna-3 (Daulatpur-Khalishpur) constituency.

Differences between Ashraf Hossain and leaders of Khulna Jamaat-e-Islami were patched up at a close-door meeting held on Thursday night at AL Farukh Academy at Sonadanga in the city, sources said.

The meeting lasted for about two hours from midnight. It was attended by, among others, former whip Ashraf Hossain, city Jamaat Ameer Mian Golam Parwar, Nayeab-e-Amir of

Jamaat Prof Abdul Matin, city president of Chhatra Shibir Tariqul Islam Piku, Khanjahan Ali thana BNP president Mir Kaised Ali and ward commissioner Shahinul Islam Pakhi.

Sources in both Jamaat and BNP said Ashraf Hossain apologised for what happened on September 14 last year during a function held in Khalishpur Hardboard Mill in presence of Jamaat Ameer and former industries minister Matur Rahman Nizami.

Both sides agreed to 'forgive and forget' the past sour relations.

At the meeting, leaders of Khulna Jamaat assured alliance candidate Ashraf Hossain of their full support in the coming election in Khulna-3.

## Killing of Somo Odhikar leader protested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

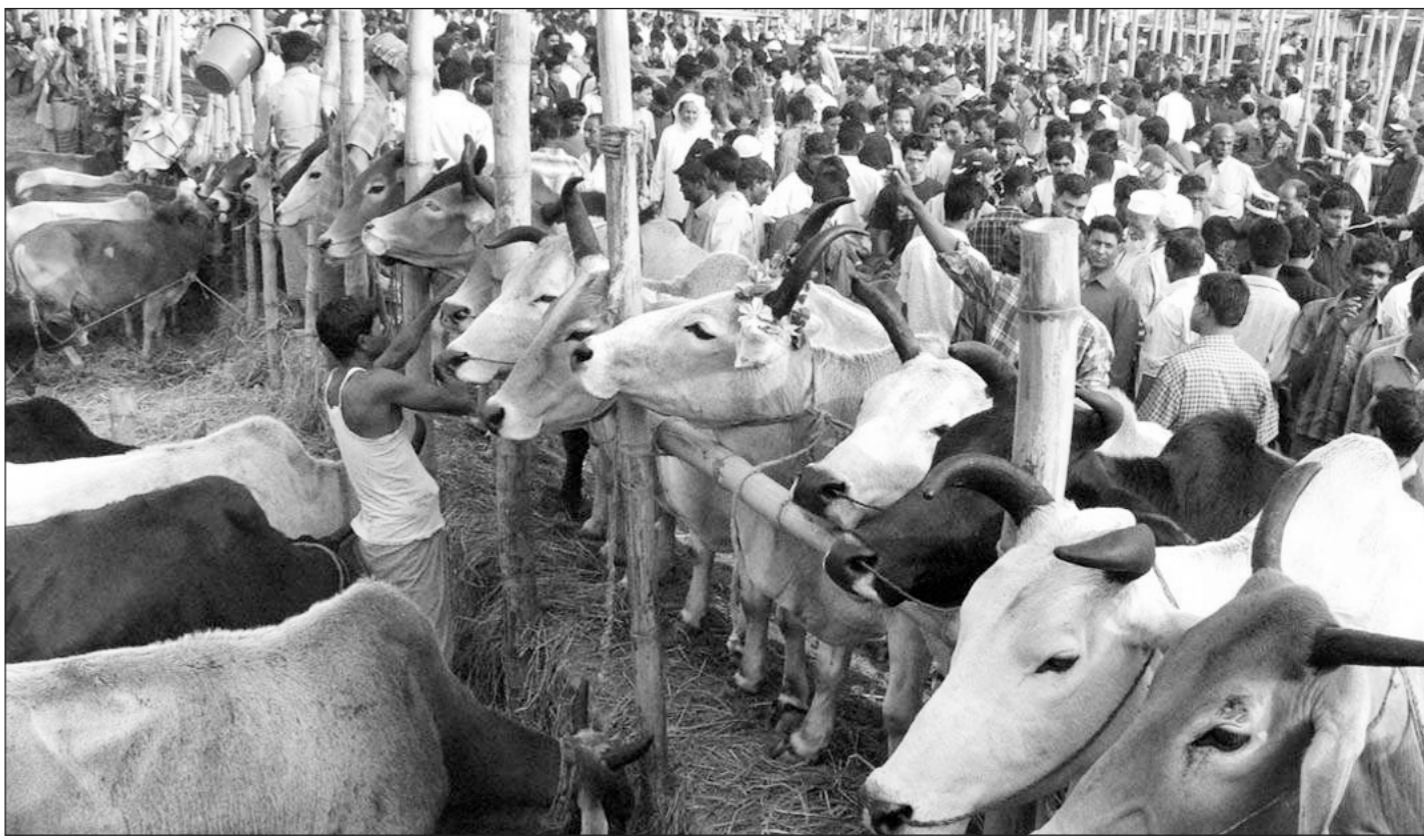
Somo Odhikar Andolan (SOA), a platform for Bengali settlers fighting for equal rights in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), yesterday protested the recent killing of its leader Kina Mohon Chakma and Ghilachhari army camp commander Captain Nurul Azam Gazi.

Kina Mohon Chakma was killed by unidentified armed miscreants on December 1 while Captain Nurul Azam Gazi of army was killed by armed activists of the United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) on December 17.

SOA activists brought out a procession in the hill town and submitted a memorandum to the Chief Advisor (CA) through Rangamati Deputy Commissioner (DC) containing their three-point demand which include removal of Santu Lama from CHT Regional Council, Taskforce and CHT Hill District Council.

Earlier, a protest rally was held in front of the DC office where speakers blamed Santu Lama for the killing by his armed cadres. They demanded immediate arrest of the killers and exemplary punishment to them, otherwise they threatened to boycott election and resist all election related activities in Rangamati, Bandaraban and Khagrachhari.

Among others, SOA president Mostak Ahmed Chowdhury, vice president Moniul Alam Humayun, secretary Jahangir Kamal, joint secretary Md Yunus addressed.



Supply of sacrificial animals in Chittagong city was adequate but buyers were seen shying away at Shagorika cattle market yesterday due to high prices.