

RANGPUR, KURIGRAM, LALMONIRHAT

## BNP divided, voices louder for democracy in party

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

BNP rank and file in Rangpur, Kurigram and Lalmonirhat districts are in a disarray due to lack of leadership in districts and division of the party at the top.

Grassroots leaders and activists in Rangpur are split over support to reformist leader Mannan Bhuyan or newly appointed party secretary general Khondker Delwar Hossain.

Asked for opinion on the current state of BNP, Rangpur district BNP president Rahim Uddin Bharosa declined to make any comment.

Senior vice-president Ashraf Hosen Borda also avoided a direct reply, saying he is too old to continue in politics. "I can not cope with what is happening (in the party) now."

He however criticised BNP's constitution that has given 'absolute power to the chairperson'. "It is undemocratic and needs reform", he said.

He wants reform and joint leadership in the party but is sceptical about Mannan Bhuyan's ability to bring about the 'desired

changes in the party'.

"Can Bhuyan really do it being surrounded by beneficiaries of the alliance government?" Borda questioned.

Secretary of Rangpur district BNP Habib-un-Nabi Khan Sohel is absconding. He could not be reached even by cell phone.

One of his aides seeking anonymity said he (Sohel) is with Khondker Delwar Hossain.

Talking to this correspondent, some mid-level leaders criticised Mannan Bhuyan for his 'betrayal with Khaleda Zia for power'.

But they also said BNP should not go back to 'dynastic politics'. This correspondent talked to a number of BNP leaders also in Kurigram and Lalmonirhat districts.

Kurigram district BNP president advocate Idris Ali hoped that majority of leaders at district and upazila levels except district unit secretary Saiful Islam Rana would extend their support to Khondker Delwar Hossain.

He said, "Before arrest, Khaleda selected Khondker Delwar as party secretary general and dismissing Bhuyan. Bhuyan

is nobody in the party now", he said.

He claimed that those who did corruption while in power have rallied round Mannan Bhuyan.

Idris said, "Rana may be with Mannan Bhuyan to escape arrest. He faces a number of graft charges."

Rana is absconding since the caretaker government took over. He was seen at Bhuyan's residence on TV on several occasions, Idris claimed.

Kurigram district organising secretary Shahiduzzaman Saju said, "We must learn from history. None in the past could survive in politics after leaving mainstream Awami League or BNP. Mannan

Bhuyan's mission will not succeed."

President of Ulipur upazila BNP, Tashbirul Islam, said, "Like Bhuyan, I also want reform and democratic practice in BNP but the way he (Mannan) is moving is

wrong." He however did not elaborate.

Idris said, "We are yet to ascertain whether BNP led by Mannan Bhuyan or Khondker Delwar Hosen is the mainstream of the party."

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Bhuyan's mission will not succeed."

Idris said, "I will leave politics if necessary. But I can not support either Mannan Bhuyan or Khondker Delwar Hosen."

Organising secretary of the district unit Hafizur Rahman Babla however expressed his full support to Mannan Bhuyan.

He claimed that most of the leaders in Lalmonirhat will support Mannan Bhuyan as Asadul Habib Dulal is with him. Dulal leads BNP in Lalmonirhat district, he said.



PHOTO: STAR

Army personnel along with villagers removing silt from Kobadak riverbed in Tala upazila in Satkhira to make the river navigable and solve persistent water-logging problem in the area. The photo was taken on Sunday from near Magura Bazar.

## Liberation War memorial damaged in Pabna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Criminals damaged a Liberation War memorial on the premises of Dulai Dr Jahurul Kamal Degree College in Sujanagar upazila in Pabna yesterday night.

The criminals also beat up college night guard Md Ramjan Ali as he tried to resist them at about 2:00am, said college sources.

Recently the college authority took steps against the criminals who used to take drugs on the campus and commit other crimes including occupying seats in the college hostel, Md Abdul Latif, principal of the college, told this correspondent over phone yesterday.

Damaging the memorial could be an act of revenge by the criminals, he said.

Night guard Ramjan Ali yesterday lodged a complaint to Sujanagar police accusing Lokman, Sumon, Hamjeh, Uzzal and some other unidentified criminals and process was on to file a case, police said.

## One lynched in Bagerhat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A mob yesterday lynched a suspected thief at Haji Enayeturah Dakhil Madrasa in Rampal upazila in Bagerhat, police said.

The victim is identified as Selim Fakir, 30, hailing from Gouramva union in the same upazila.

Quoting eye-witnesses, police said a murder was committed while Selim Fakir stole shrimps from an enclosure owned by Moulana Abdul Khaleque, also superintendent of the madrasa.

When contacted, Moulana Khaleque admitted the facts saying Selim was a thief.

## Tk 2 cr heroin recovered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday arrested an expatriate and recovered heroin worth over Tk 2 crore from his possession.

Zakir Hossain, a United Kingdom (UK) expatriate, was arrested with three-and-a-half-kilogram heroin following a raid conducted by the Rab team near Bagirhat Primary School.

Zakir had been staying at his village home at Bagirhat in Golapganj upazila for the last two months.

law enforcers were quizzing him till filing of this report yesterday afternoon.

## Untoward incident at Nilphamari court

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

An untoward incident was created at the Women and Children Repression Prevention Special Court here when lawyers threw files at each other as the court refused to extend interim bail of an accused yesterday.

Eyewitnesses and lawyers said Murad Ali, accused in a case filed under Women and Children Repression Prevention Act, appeared before the court on expiry of his interim bail.

His lawyer Laila Arjumand Banu Ity prayed for extension of his bail but Special Judge Abdur Rashid Mia rejected the prayer.

and sent the accused to jail.

The lawyer protested it by throwing files at the judge.

A peon of the court Kamal sustained minor injury in the incident.

Nilphamari Bar Association later held a meeting and discussed the situation.

On contact, Judge Abdur Rashid Mia said the lawyer failed to mention any specific reason for extension of her client's bail. Moreover, the accused was enjoying interim bail since February 16, 2004, the judge said.

Police have been deployed on the court premises.

## One gets 14-yr RI for acid violence 3 others get 10 years

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

A Satkhira court yesterday sentenced one person to 14 years' rigorous imprisonment (RI) and three others to 10 years' RI for throwing acid on a housewife and her child in 2005.

Judge Ashish Ranjan Das handed down 14 years' prison term to Taizul Islam and a fine of Tk 50,000 in default to suffer one year more RI.

Aizul Islam, Abdus Sattar and Ahsan Ullah Gain have been sentenced to suffer 10 years' RI each and fined Tk 50,000 in default to suffer one year more RI.

The court acquitted three other accused as the charges brought against them were not proved, court sources said.

On the night of December 11, 2005, Hasina Khatun, 30, wife of Habibur Rahman of village Pirojpur and her minor son Golam Mahmud received burn injuries when rivals led by accused Ahsan Ullah threw acid on them.

Habibur Rahman filed a case with Kaliganj Police Station accusing seven people including Taizul Islam, Aizul Islam, Abdus Sattar and Ahsan Ullah Gain on December 21.

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