



16 years over, Shokrana yet to be tried for graft

HASIBUR RAHMAN BILU, Bogra
The trial of Tk3.13 crore food grain and gunny bag embezzlement case filed about 16 years ago against nine persons including four party alliance candidate in Bogra-1 (Sariakandi-Sonatola) constituency Mohammad Shokrana has not yet started.
Anticorruption Department in 1991 filed the case under 1974 Special Powers Act against nine persons including BNP leader Mohammad Shokrana and former district controller of food (DC Food) Jan-e-Alam Khan on charges of embezzling 51,000 gunny bags, 3857 metric tons of rice and

14.67 tons of paddy from Betgari food silo in Bogra.
BNP leader Mohammad Shokrana in his affidavit submitted along with nomination paper admitted filing of the case against him and said the High Court in 1994 quashed the case.
A source in the food department said, M/s Shafin Rice Mills owned by Mohammad Shokrana after signing agreement with the Food Department in collusion with the district level officials withdrew Tk about 3.12 crore using Weight Quality Standard Certificate (WQSC) without giving any food grain to Betgari food silo.
When the matter came to light the anticorruption



department investigated it and submitted charge sheet in the court against the nine persons.

A few days after the submission of the charge sheet the High Court acquitted Shokrana of the case. After a

few years another accused in the case Jan-e-Alam Khan appealed to the High Court for his acquittal and the proceedings of the case was suspended.
The proceedings of the case against Shokrana, a charge sheeted accused in freedom fighter Anwarul Kadir Anu murder case remained suspended by High Court order.
Anu's mother Jahanara Begum filed an appeal with the home ministry in September 2000 demanding trial of the killers of her son but no response has yet been received. Shokrana allegedly gunned down Anu at Dutta Bari area in the town in broad daylight on January 2, 1974.



Twelve loudspeakers in a row blaring slogans for Shamsul Alam in Chittagong-8, much to the inconvenience of city dwellers yesterday. Many candidates are not adhering to the electoral code of conduct.

ZOBAER HOSSAIN SIDDIQI

MEHERPUR-1

Waja main source of his income

A CORRESPONDENT, Meherpur

The lion's share of the annual income of a candidate in Meherpur-1 constituency comes from waja mahfils.
Maulana Mufti Abul Kalam Kasemi, district general secretary of Islami Andolon Bangladesh and candidate of the party, in the affidavit attached with his nomination paper said that he earned Tk 60,000 by giving religious lectures in the waja mahfils and Tk 36,000 from salary as a teacher of Madrassa.
He does not have any other source of income. He also does not have any immovable property, according to the affidavit.
In the affidavit he also said that he had only Tk 10,000 in cash and no deposit in bank. He gave the value of his movable assets as Tk 1.03 lakh only.

FIVE CHITTAGONG CONSTITUENCIES Internal rivalry clouds prospects of alliances

ABDULLAH AL MAHMUD, Ctg

Internal rivalry and nomination aggrieved aspirants may put AL-led grand alliance and BNP-led 4-party alliance candidates in troubles in five, out of 16 constituencies, in Chittagong.
The constituencies are Chittagong-4 (Hathazari and CCC ward no 1 & 2), Chittagong-8 (Kotoali), Chittagong-9 (Double Mooring-Pahartali), Chittagong-10 (Bandar-Patenga) and Chittagong-16 (off-shore island of Sandwip).
In Chittagong-4, Syed Wahidul Alam is contesting as 4-party alliance candidate with a hope for fourth consecutive victory while Jatiya Party (JP-Ershad) leader Barrister Anisul Islam Mahmud is vying for the seat as AL-led grand alliance.
But BNP men loyal to nomi-

nation aggrieved SM Fazlul Haq appear reluctant to work for Wahid till date.
In Chittagong-8 (Kotoali), AL reject Shamsul Alam won BNP-led 4-party alliance ticket to fight against AL nominee and grand alliance candidate Nurul Islam. Denial of AL nomination to Shamsul also disappointed Chittagong city AL President and CCC Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury. So Shamsul is believed to have blessing of Mohiuddin to get an upper hand over Nurul Islam, said the party sources.
A triangular fight is expected among BNP stalwart Abdullah Al Noman, AL nominee Dr Afsarul Amin and independent candidate Manjur Alam Manju in Chittagong-9 where Moshed Murad Ibrahim of JP (Ershad) is contesting as the grand alliance candidate.
In Chittagong-10, newly

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Daud's men lock BNP office in Panchhari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Supporters of independent candidate Md Daudul Islam Bhuiyan yesterday locked the Panchhari upazila BNP office.
Former District Jubo Dal vice president Daudul Islam, also nephew of ex-lawmaker Wadud Bhuiyan, is contesting as an independent candidate following nomination of ex-chairman of Khagrachhari Hill District Council Samiron Dewan by BNP.
Daud's supporters led by former Upazila BNP President Amin Sharif locked the party office because of their failure to hold a meeting there.
Upazila BNP secretary Hedayetul Islam and his men are backing BNP nominee Samiron Dewan, party sources said.

Face to face with voters in Meherpur

A CORRESPONDENT, Meherpur

Four candidates in two constituencies in Meherpur yesterday faced voters at a question-answer session, organised by Shushasener Jonnya Nagorik (Sujon), a citizen's forum for good governance.

Sujon's district president Rabiul Hossain Bagha presided over the session attended by grand alliance candidate Jinal Abedin and 4-party candidate Masud Arun in Meherpur-1, and Islami Andolan's Abul Kalam Kasemi and Bikalpa Dhara candidate Amir Uddin Ahmed in Meherpur-2.

Jamaat-e-Islami rebel candidate Samir Uddin in Meherpur-1, grand alliance candidate in Meherpur-2 Makbul Hossain and four-party alliance candidate Amzad Hossain did not attend the programme.

Masud Arun kept mum when asked by Freedom Fighter Basir Ahmed asked him why the four-party did not recognise Bangabandhu as father of the nation and whether it would exclude war criminals from cabinet, if voted to power.

He said a university would be set up in the district as per the promise of his party chief Khaleda Zia. He begged pardon for his past misdeeds.

NARAIL-2 4-party runner sued for poll violence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Four-party alliance candidate former lawmaker Sharif Khushruzzaman has been sued for resorting to election violence.

Ekhlasur Rahman of Shierbar village in Lohagara upazila on Monday night filed the FIR with Lohagara Police Station naming 55 people including Khushruzzaman as accused for beating supporters of Awami League, according to police.

Sharif Khushruzzaman, who is prime accused of the case, staged a somersault to BNP from AL on November 29 to get nomination from Narail-2 constituency from where he was elected in 1991 and 1996 elections.

Muhith's pre-poll salvo against rival Saifur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Grand alliance nominee in Sylhet-1 constituency AMA Muhith yesterday said BNP nominee former finance minister Saifur Rahman can not shirk responsibilities for misdeeds done during 4-party alliance rule.

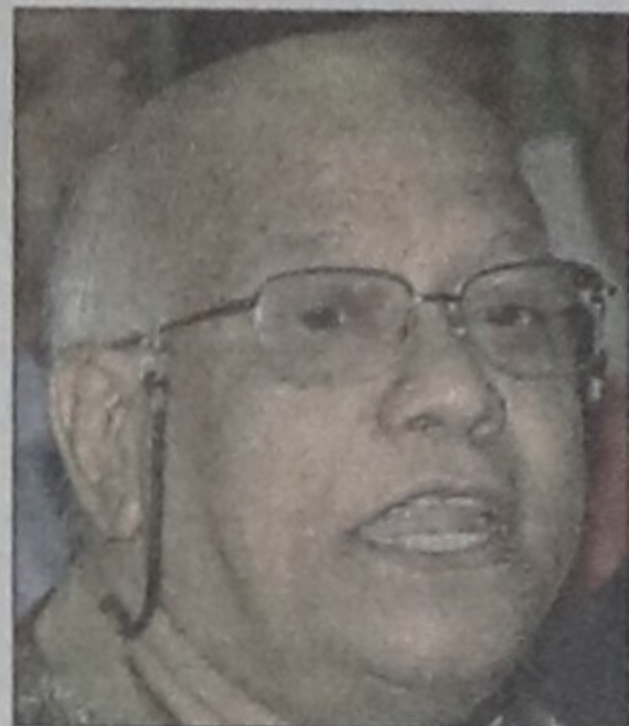
In the name of development, BNP-Jamaat leaders plundered public money and property and named many government-built institutions after party leaders illegally, Muhith said.
He was speaking at a view-exchange meeting with journalists in the city.

A former finance minister during Ershad's rule, Muhith faces BNP stalwart Saifur for the second time in the Sylhet-1. Muhith lost to Saifur in 2001 election.

Muhith, also a member of Awami League advisory committee, said the December 29 election will re-establish democracy and free people from the effects of 4-party alliance rule.
He claimed that the 4-party government during its tenure did false propaganda about their so-called development works to fool people. In fact, most of the major development projects in



Saifur Rahman



AMA Muhith

Sylhet region were initiated or implemented by former speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury during AL rule.
Projecting his views, the AL leader said, "We want to make Sylhet enlightened by developing educational institutions, ensuring health care services and uprooting corruption and violence."
He also praised the electoral reforms made by the Election Commission and the caretaker government.
"We hope there would be a better election this time with less flaws since we have got a better voters list with photo.
"It will stop casting of fake votes but many things are yet to

be done to ensure a fair election".
He suggested allowing campaign beyond 8 PM. The Election Commission does not allow campaign beyond 8 pm.
Maintaining law and order till the election and beyond is a must. But the decision to keep cell phone service off is not correct, Muhith said.
Former lawmaker Syed Zebunnesa Haque, Sylhet district AL President ANM Shafigah and secretary Iftakhar Hossain Shamim, city AL secretary Misbahuddin Ahmed Siraj and leaders of partners in the grand alliance were also present at the meeting.



Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad addressing a wayside meeting at Nomanai Maidan in Magura town in support of grand alliance candidate for Magura-1 yesterday.

Ershad sees grand victory for grand alliance

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Jatiya Party (JP) Chairman HM Ershad yesterday claimed that the grand alliance would secure a 'landslide victory' in the upcoming election as people want a change in real sense.

He urged the people to vote for Awami League led grand alliance candidates in the forthcoming parliamentary elections to build a country based on the dreams of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

"We want to build a new Bangladesh...A corruption and militant free Bangladesh", he said while addressing election projection rallies in Satkhira, held at Satkhira Government College ground and Kalaroa football ground.

Ershad held the BNP-Jamaat government responsi-

ble for price hike of essentials, militancy and corruption. He reiterated the grand alliance's pledges that it would try to scale down prices of essentials and fertiliser, curb militancy, ensure smooth power supply and create employment.
"We will break syndicates responsible for price hike of essentials and fertiliser", he said.

"You know me as a former president but I have another identity. I am elder brother of Sheikh Hasina and the relationship is above politics", he said.

Ershad also introduced Engineer Sheikh Mujibur Rahman of AL and Abdul Jabbar and Gola Reza of JP as grand alliance candidates in Satkhira-1 (Tala-Kalaroa), Satkhira-2 (Sadar) and Satkhira-4 (Shyamnagar) constituencies at the rallies.

PABNA-5 Shibir cadres attack BCL leader

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A local leader of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) was injured as the cadres of Islami Chhatra Shibir attacked him at village Peerpur in Pabna Sadar upazila when he was returning home after an election campaign on Tuesday night.

The victim, Md Moniruzzaman Sajib (22), son of Abdul Gofur of village Peerpur, is the vice president of Aataikula union unit BCL.

Moniruzzaman was campaigning for Gola Faruk Prince, AL nominee for Pabna-5 constituency, sources said.
He was admitted to Pabna General Hospital. Doctors at the hospital said he is improving.

Indigenous people to cast 'No' vote to protest false pledges of past MPs Soren campaigning against grand alliance man in Dinajpur-6

KONGKON KARMAKER, Dinajpur

The indigenous people of Dinajpur-6 constituency would cast 'No' votes this time as no candidate in the past fulfilled their election pledges on the issues of local indigenous people or commitments including solution to land grabbing and realising of their constitutional rights.
Two candidates are vying from the seat in the forthcoming parliamentary election-JP leader and AL led grand alliance nominee Delwar Hossain and Jamaat's Md. Anwarul Islam who is a candidate of BNP-led 4-party alliance. Both are out of favour of indigenous people.
According to local sources, the indigenous people used to ignore Jamaat candidate for his use of religion in politics.
Local sources say, the indigenous leaders of the constituency including Rabintra Nath Soren, who was denied nomination by the Grand Alliance for Dinajpur-6 seat have been campaigning at the constituency against the Grand Alliance candidate terming him alleged land grabber of indigenous people in the four upazilas of Dinajpur.
Md. Delwar Hossain is a rebel Awami League leader who got JP ticket after failing to clinch AL nomination from the constituency.
Besides, his nomination

from AL led Grand Alliance upset the dedicated leaders and supporters of AL and its other allies.
Talking to the Daily Star Rabintra Nath Soren alleged that most land of indigenous people of the area have been grabbed by the musclemen of former lawmakers including Jamaat's Md. Azizul Haque.
Besides, he said that this time AL led grand alliance has nominated JP leader Delwar Hossain who had grabbed indigenous people's lands.
Delwar Hossain could not be contacted for comments as his cell phone was found switched off. While visiting Nawabganj, Hakimpur, and Ghoraghat of Dinajpur-6 constituency The Daily Star

Correspondent found most indigenous leaders and activists are on the field urging the indigenous people to cast 'no' votes.
Rabintra Nath Soren, General Secretary of National Indigenous People's Council, told the Daily Star that Dinajpur-6 constituency has more than 80,000 indigenous voters out of total 3,74,107 voters.
He alleged that about 5000 acres land of indigenous people have been grabbed and 10 indigenous people have been killed since BNP led 4 party alliance came to power in 2001. Komol Soren, a victim of land grabbers alleged that no one is heeding the indigenous people's demands.

Minu sings again his gas pipeline song

ABU KALAM, Rajshahi

Four-party alliance candidate in Rajshahi-2 constituency Mizanur Rahman Minu again pledged yesterday that if elected, he will ensure pipeline gas supply in Rajshahi.
Ex-MP Minu, also a former Rajshahi City Corporation mayor, told a press conference that he will take long term projects for more development of Rajshahi.
He read a written statement at the press conference held at the BNP office in the city.
He also claimed that many development projects were implemented during BNP-Jamaat government.
He listed the development projects as the city bypass road, new city corporation building, modern rail station, judge court building, modern drainage project and Zia Children Park.
Minu alleged that his rival candidates are making false propaganda against him and the alliance government.
"Four-party will get most of the seats if the election is free and fair", Minu said. He also



hoped that the alliance will bag all the six seats in Rajshahi.
People of Rajshahi will again vote to four-party as they want continuation of development of Rajshahi.
Minu also declared his campaign and mass contact schedule at the press conference.
Central BNP leader Rafiqul Islam Dulal, Rajshahi district BNP organising secretary, Alauddin Ahmed and some other party leaders were present but no Jamaat man was seen.
Hearing Minu's election pledges, many voters told this correspondent that he pledged several times earlier to supply gas but did not fulfill his promise.

BANDARBAN 112 out of 162 polling centres vulnerable

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

Of the 162 polling centres in Bandarban parliamentary seat 112 have been marked as "important" or "risky", according to police.
The number of risky centres is more in Bandarban Sadar, Ali Kadam and Lama.
Helicopter will have to be used for conducting election in 15 remote centres in Ramnoma, Thanchi, Roanghhari and Ali Kadam.
District election office sources said, the number of polling centres in JS-300 seat (Bandarban) has been increased to 162 this time from 156 during the last election. Though earlier choppers were used in 13 remote centres this time it would be required to go to two more centres.
Officials concerned said considering lack of communication facilities and security the government and the Election Commission have been requested to arrange helicopters for transportation of the election officials and employees.
Detective Branch of district police said, of the 37 centres in Bandarban Sadar upazila 26 have been identified as risky, 18 out of 20 centres in Roanghhari, 11 out of 18 in Romnoma, 11 out of 13 in Thanchi, 26 out of 36 centres in Lama, all the 15 centres in Ali Kadam and 5 out of 23 centres in Naikkhongchhari have been marked as risky.
District Election Officer Kamrul Hasan, however, said in the latest guideline of the Election Commission instruction has been given to mention the "risky" centres as "important" instead of "risky".
Acting Police super Tutul Chakravarty said, police has marked the normal and important centres through investigation. Lack of communication, terrorism and crime prone areas, and number of voters in a centre have been considered in marking a centre as "important".