

From BCL chief to AL second-in-command

STAR REPORT

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader has been made general secretary of Awami League. Here is his brief profile.

EARLY LIFE

Quader was born on January 1, 1952 in Bara Rajapur, a village under Companiganj upazila of Noakhali. His father Mosharrof Hussain studied in Calcutta Islamia College and happened to be a classmate of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. His mother Fazilatunessa was from a noble Muslim family.

Always a commendable student, Quader matriculated from Basurhat Government AHC High School. He completed HSC from Noakhali Government College and graduated from Dhaka University in political science.

His wife Isratunnesa Quader is a prominent lawyer.

POLITICAL LIFE

He took part in the six-point movement in 1966 and 11-point movement in 1969. In 1971, he participated in the Liberation War as the commander of Companiganj Thana Mujib Forces.

He was imprisoned in several stages of his political life. After 1975, he was jailed for two and a half years. While in prison, he was elected president of

Bangladesh Chhatra League and remained so for two consecutive terms.

Quader was elected a member of parliament from Noakhali-5 in the 7th parliamentary elections on June 12, 1996. On June 23, 1996, he was appointed state minister for youth, sports and cultural affairs.

He served as the secretary of cultural affairs and education of the central executive committee of Awami League from June 23, 2000 to December 26, 2002.

While serving Awami League as the party's joint general secretary during the tenure of post-1/11 caretaker government, he was arrested on March 9, 2007 and remained in prison for 17

months and 26 days.

In November 2011, he took oath as a minister. On December 5, Hasina made him the communication minister.

Quader was elected again a member of parliament from Noakhali-5 in the 10th parliamentary election on January 5 2014. He became communication minister for the second time.

The communication ministry was later renamed the Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges.

[Based on the information available at the website of Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges]



Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina holds a hand of party's outgoing general secretary Syed Ashraf Islam during the second and final day of the AL's 20th National Council yesterday.

PHOTO: BSS

Enter Quader exit Ashraf

FROM PAGE 1

Public Administration Minister Syed Ashrafur Islam, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid, four former ministers -- Dr Abdur Razzaq, Faruk Khan, Ramesh Chandra Sen and Abdul Mannan Khan -- and Jessore District AL leader Pijush Kumar Bhattacharjee are the new faces in the presidium, the party's highest policymaking body.

Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury, Health Minister Mohammed Nasim, Housing and Public Works Minister Mosharraf Hossain, former health minister Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, former home minister Sahara Khatun and Kazi Zafarullah retained their posts in the presidium.

Nuh-Ul-Alam Lenin and Satish Chandra Roy, who were in the just-dissolved presidium, have been dropped.

The party president and the general secretary are ex-officio members of the presidium.

Abdur Rahman, who was in the immediate-past central working committee, was made joint general secretary.

Mahbubul Alam Hanif, Dipu Moni and Jahangir Kabir Nanak retained their posts as joint general secretaries.

HN Ashiqur Rahman remains the party's treasurer.

Earlier, the council approved changes in the AL constitution to increase the size of the presidium to 19 from 15. The number of joint general secretaries was also increased to four from three, organising secretaries to eight from seven and central working committee members to 28 from 26.

The party constitution empowers the president to pick the working committee members as well. The working committee is made up of the presidium members, the secretaries and the general members.

HOW THINGS TOOK PLACE

As a political party registered with the Election Commission under the Representation of the People Order

2008, the AL must have elected leaders at every level.

The AL formed a three-member EC led by Yusuf Hossain Humayun to hold the elections.

As many as 6,570 councillors from 73 organisational district units and 490 upazila and 325 municipality units of the party were the electorates.

At yesterday's council session at the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh, the EC began the election process, after Hasina dissolved the previous ALCWC, party sources said.

The chief election commissioner told the councillors that they would hold elections for the posts of the president and the general secretary only.

He sought opinion of the councillors on a proposal that said the newly elected president and the general secretary will choose the party's other office bearers.

"The councillors endorsed the proposal unanimously," a councillor told The Daily Star.

Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, deputy

leader in parliament, proposed Hasina's name, which the councillors seconded.

There was no other candidate, so Hasina was reelected president for the next three years.

She has been AL president since 1981, the longest period for anyone to hold the post since the party's formation in 1949.

Syed Ashraf proposed the name of Road Transports and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader as his successor. Jahangir Kabir Nanak supported it and the councillors endorsed it.

Quader was in the immediate past presidium and is a former president of Chhatra League.

Born on January 1, 1952, in Noakhali, Quader studied political science at Dhaka University. He played an active role during the six-point movement in 1966. In 1971, he joined the Liberation War as commander of Companiganj Thana Mujib Force.

He was first elected a lawmaker in

1996 from Noakhali-5 and was made state minister for Youth, Sports and Cultural Affairs.

NO ALTERNATIVE

The 20th National Council of the ruling party began at Suhrawardy Udyan on Saturday.

In her introductory speech yesterday, Hasina urged councillors to elect a new chief. But the councillors cried: "No, no."

In the afternoon, she made the same call, only to receive the same response from the councillors.

"You have been electing me for the last 35 years since 1981. The party was divided when I took the responsibility. Now, the Awami League is organised and my responsibility has ended," she told the councillors.

Referring to the councillors' demand that she hold the post for life, she said it was not possible for anyone. "You have showed me great respect, and I should say goodbye with this honour still intact."

New hope for fruit growers

Germplasm Centre of the BAU introduces six types of fruit

AMINUL ISLAM with ANDREW EAGLE

Besides being one of life's little pleasures, fruit is an essential source of nutrition. In the interests of promoting an abundance of fruit, the Germplasm Centre of the Bangladesh Agricultural University is constantly striving to develop new varieties suitable for local conditions. The hope is to offer the public more fruit all-year-round, by protecting endangered fruit varieties and introducing new types of fruit as well.

Recently, six new types of fruit have been introduced: santol from Thailand, lychee-like rambutan from Indonesia, dragonfruit from Vietnam, a type of malta from Vietnam, a persimmon species from Japan and avocados, originally native to southern Mexico.

Scientists at the Germplasm Centre hope both farmers and the public can benefit from commercial production in coming years, also with an eye on export potential. Already in Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand, fruit export is huge business; Bangladesh

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2



Clockwise, rambutan, dragonfruit, santol and persimmon fruits. PHOTO: STAR

Get prepared to win

FROM PAGE 1

be maintained," she was quoted as saying by UNB.

Hasina-led AL secured victory in the last two parliamentary elections.

The AL-led alliance won a landslide victory by defeating the BNP-led alliance in the December 2008 polls overseen by the caretaker government.

The AL retained power winning three-fourth majority comfortably in the January 2014 "one-sided" polls, boycotted by the BNP-led alliance. As many as 153 out of 300 MPs were elected unopposed in that elections held under the incumbent Hasina-government.

According to the constitution, the next election will also be held under the Hasina-led present government either at the end of 2018 or in January 2019.

It remains uncertain whether the next polls will be inclusive as the BNP keeps demanding restoration of the polls-time non-partisan government system -- a demand that has repeatedly been rejected by the AL.

BSS adds that Hasina yesterday asked the party leaders and activists to stay alert so that those who pampered war criminals, those who killed people through arson attacks and are involved in money laundering cannot come to power.

Terming the honesty "a precious asset of politicians", the AL chief said she wants to see honesty among the leaders and workers of her party.

The AL's 20th National Council was held to elect new leadership to run the party for the next three years. But it largely focused on the government's development activities -- already implemented or those at the stage of implementation.

On the occasion, most of the major Dhaka streets were illuminated with colourful lights. Numerous placards, billboards and festoons were lauding various achievements of the government.

The slogan of the event was: "We are marching down the highway of development, now is the time for Bangladesh to stand tall."

AL GENERAL SECRETARY

1949	Shamsul Huq
1953	Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman
1955	Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman
1957	Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman
1964	Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman
1966	Tajuddin Ahmad
1970	Tajuddin Ahmad
1972	Zillur Rahman
1974	Zillur Rahman
1978	Abdur Razzaq
1981	Abdur Razzaq
1987	Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury
1992	Zillur Rahman
1997	Zillur Rahman
2002	Abdul Jalil
2009	Syed Ashrafur Islam
2012	Syed Ashrafur Islam
2016	Obaidul Quader

AL forms boards for national, local elections

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ruling Awami League formed its new Parliamentary Board and Local Government Nomination Board on the second and final day of the party's two-day national council at the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh yesterday.

The party formed the 11-member Awami League Parliamentary Board (ALPB) for national elections and the 19-member Local Government Nomination Board for local government polls.

AL chief Sheikh Hasina announced the parliamentary board comprising Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Amir Hossain Amu, Tofail Ahmed, Suranjit Sengupta, Kazi Zafarullah, Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, Syed Ashrafur Islam, Alauddin Ahmed, Rashidul Alam, and party president and general secretary as ex-officio members.

The members of the Local Government Nomination Board are Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Amir Hossain Amu, Tofail Ahmed, Suranjit Sengupta, Kazi Zafarullah, Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, Syed Ashrafur Islam, Obaidul Quader, Alauddin Ahmed, Abul Hasnat Abdullah, Rashidul Alam, Mohammed Nasim, Mahbubul Alam Hanif, Dipu Moni, Jahangir Kabir Nanak, Faruk Khan, Abdur Razzaq and party president and general secretary as ex-officio members. The party chief would be president while general secretary the member secretary of the board.

Party's amended constitution, which was approved by the council yesterday, brought the amendment of formation of "Local Government Nomination Board" as all the local government elections turned into partisan election from non-partisan character.

The party charter also brought an amendment that if any party man or woman contests election against party nominated candidates, he or she will be expelled directly from the party, and even if anyone opposes party

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

Australia Post

FROM PAGE 18

Duffy said: "It took a while to realise it was an old one. There's no way it could have been stored in there (the home's original letterbox) that long; I would say the postman has put it in there."

The postcard was sent by a person named 'Chris' from Papeete, located on the French Polynesian island of Tahiti, in 1966 to an Adelaide resident Robert Giorgio and described how Chris was enjoying himself greatly despite very humid weather.

Tim and Claire Duffy, who bought the home in 2015, believe that it was built by an Italian Robert Giorgio in 1963 and the card was addressed to him.

It was thought the card had been printed in the 1950s and showed an idyllic waterfront scene with bush surrounding colonial-era buildings.

Expressing regret over the late delivery of the postcard, an Australian Post spokesman said, "It is clear something went wrong 50 years ago after the postcard was posted in French Polynesia, and we apologise for the inconvenience."

Ctg Test on a knife-edge

FROM PAGE 1

England added just 12 runs to their overnight score. It was also only the ninth time that Bangladesh had taken 20 wickets in a Test.

After all, the Tigers had only twice previously successfully chased a total in the fourth innings of a Test, and even then it was a chase of 215 against a depleted West Indies side in 2009.

The skill and character shown in recovering from the loss of Shakib Al Hasan -- who became the fifth wicket when a Moeen Ali delivery took the edge of his defensive bat -- in the afternoon session with Bangladesh still 146 runs adrift and only debutants and bowlers to follow, is not only impressive but downright remarkable given that this is the first Test the Tigers are playing in nearly 15 months. In this regard, as impressive as Sabbir has been, no one was more instrumental than skipper Mushfiquur Rahim.

On a pitch that has now become more dust than dirt, Mushfiquur played out 124 deliveries against an attack that had sharp spin, reverse

swing and pace bowlers capable of knocking heads off. The innings of 39 will go down as one of his most virtuoso displays, but his contribution went beyond the runs he scored. He guided talented debutant Sabbir through the early stages, giving him the courage to give free rein of his attacking instincts against the spinners while being careful against the pacers on a pitch that had surprises in store.

This guidance eventually proved priceless as an hour and a quarter after tea Mushfiquur himself fell prey to a Gareth Batty delivery that reared up from a yard in front of the batsman to his chest which he was blameless in fending to short leg, and he departed with hunched shoulders with Bangladesh on 227 for six, still 59 runs away from glory.

But this was not the Bangladesh that would just fold. Sabbir had imbibed his lesson from his captain and carried on in a serene manner even as fellow debutants Mehedi Hasan Miraz and Kamrul Islam came and went for the addition of 11 more

runs. Miraz left in a near action replay of his first innings dismissal, playing across the line to Broad to be trapped in front in the 71st over, while Rabbi deflected an incoming delivery onto his pads on way to the hands of the short leg fielder off the paceman's next over.

Taijul, after being dropped by Ben Stokes off Batty at gully in the 76th over, looked increasingly assured by the end of the day, even hitting a down-the-track four over mid-on off Batty in what turned out to be the last over of the day.

The day had started with Broad being found well short of his crease in the second over of the morning as he and Chris Woakes decided on a risky run after the latter played Shakib to gully. In the next over, the 79th, Taijul picked up his second wicket, hitting last man Batty low on his front pad with bat close by. The decision of dismissal was reviewed, the 20th of 24 reviews for the match, but the decision stood.

Tamim Iqbal and Imrul Kayes then put on 35 for the first wicket, the

highest opening stand of a match in which the new ball has been synonymous with wickets. Tamim stuck around 33 deliveries for his nine before being caught off bat and pad at short leg off Ali a ball after he was given out caught by a stumbling take off his toes at slip by Joe Root, only for the review to show that the ball had missed everything.

Imrul, seemingly given the responsibility to keep the scoreboard ticking, swept his way to 43 off 61 before being caught at slip sweeping one too many with the score on 81. Mahmudullah Riyad and Mominul Haque then took the team to lunch. Mominul played resolutely for his 27 which was punctuated by four classy boundaries before being out leg-before trying to sweep Batty after lunch. Riyad, who looked edgy throughout his 36-ball 17, then played across the line to Batty to be plumb in front and walk off with Bangladesh at 108 for four.

Shakib batted well for his 24, which included a six off Adil Rashid over long on, but he was soon undone by an unplayable delivery.