



A group of Chhatra League activists, armed with sticks and rods, on the campus of Pabna University of Science and Technology yesterday morning. A few hours earlier, two rooms of the Bangabandhu Residential Hall were vandalised during a BCL infighting for supremacy in the university dormitory.

PHOTO: STAR

Mayhem for money



"All are busy making money. They locked in clashes over internal affairs to grab money."

NURE ALAM SIDDIQUEE,
CHHATRA LEAGUE PRESIDENT (1969-73)



"When politics based on ideology turns into politics of power and money, infighting and clash are unavoidable."

AL JOINT GENERAL SECRETARY ABDUR RAHMAN,
BCL PRESIDENT (1986-89)

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against tender violence and other misdeeds by any organisation even if it is backed by the ruling party.

Numerous incidents suggest that making money and establishing dominance over educational campuses and city areas have been the root causes of almost all the violence.

To keep them away from wrongdoings, Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader even offered them jobs and money if they need. But the offer proved to be inadequate.

In the past, BCL men were warned but very few of them were punished. Therefore, warning alone no longer work, say political analysts.

MONEY MATTERS

Mostly the wrongdoings of BCL and Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) -- student fronts of the AL and BNP respectively -- gave student politics a bad name after the restoration of democracy in 1991.

Since the fall of autocratic Ershad regime, Awami League and the BNP in turn has been ruling the country, except for brief periods when caretaker administrations held office.

It is money, not any ideology, which now matters. Desperation for making money in whatever ways possible eventually has changed the lifestyle of leaders of the two major student bodies.

Arun Dey, who has been running the historic Madhur Canteen (Madhu's canteen) at Dhaka University since 1975, has noticed changes in the lifestyle of student leaders over the last several decades.

In the past, they used to come to the canteen, a hub of student politics, by rickshaws or on foot. Sometimes, they did not even have the money to pay rickshaw fares.

"But now, they are seen alighting from cars," he told The Daily Star recently.

In the past, vice-presidents and general secretaries of Dhaka University Central Students' Union (Ducusu) and chiefs of student organisations used to reside in dormitories.

But that's not today's picture. They either have their own luxury apartments or live in similar rented houses, he observed.

Things started to change during the Ershad regime when student leaders were given money, said Arun, son of Madhusudan Dey, popularly known as Madhu Da, who ran the canteen from the late '40s. Named after him, the canteen has been associated with many national movements. Madhu Da was killed on March 25, 1971 by the Pakistan army.

"Massive changes started to take place as Khaleda Zia took office [in 1991]. Now there is no idealism. The future is bleak," Arun said.

When the BNP was in power, JCD dominated the scene and resorted to violence. And the BCL has been doing the same in the last eight years.

A section of leaders from both the organisations have allegedly made a fortune through unlawful means.

Now questions are being raised even within the organisations about the source of their high income. Some central BCL leaders themselves have inquired into the income source of the student body's president and secretary, pointing finger at their lavish lifestyle.

The BCL president pays Tk 55,000 per month as house rent, alleged other BCL leaders at a recent meeting.

One of the joint general secretaries of the BCL accused the president and general secretary of extorting Tk 7 lakh from the construction work of Sheikh Russel Tower at Dhaka University. The money was not shared with others.

Both the president and general secretary denied the allegation.

The meeting, however, reflects the cause of internal feud of BCL.

Asked about the reasons behind BCL infighting, AL Joint General

SOME INCIDENTS

In June, 2017, BCL infighting took place on Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University campus in the capital over tender manipulation.

A BCL activist was hacked to death during a factional clash over establishing supremacy for illegal yaba business in Riajuddin Bazar area of Chittagong city. The incident happened in February, 2017.

In January, 2017, Chhatra men locked in another factional clash on Chittagong University campus over tender manipulation.

A Sylhet BCL leader hacked college girl Khadija on her head, face and hands in 2016. The critically injured girl, however, survived miraculously.

The same year, BCL men locked in another factional clash over submission of a tender at Khulna Science and Technology University.

BCL infighting took place in Sylhet over sharing of gambling money and taking control of a cattle market.

In 2015, eight-month pregnant Najma Begum was shot in Magura during a shootout between two BCL groups. Bullets went through the baby, which was in the womb.

The same year, two BCL leaders were killed in a fierce factional clash on the campus of Hajee Mohammad Danesh Science and Technology University in Dinajpur.

In 2013, a Chhatra League man and an eight-year-old boy were killed during a BCL-Jubo League clash on the premises of Central Railway Building in Chittagong city over tender submission.

In 2012, some BCL men tortured and stabbed Zubair, an honours final-year student at Jahangirnagar University's English department. He died the next day at a hospital.

Some BCL men brutally murdered Biswajit, a tailor, in old Dhaka the same year.

BCL activist shot dead in classroom

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Molla was sent to jail yesterday for allegedly raping a housewife, with her husband held hostage by the student leader's accomplices.

In another incident, Chhatra League activist Mahamudul Hasan Rupak, a third-year student of English at Chittagong University, was arrested on Sunday night from the university's Gate-1 area in a robbery case.

BLOODSHED CONTINUES

Police quoting witnesses said Khaled, an outsider in the college campus, along with some other activists of the pro-Awami League student front was sitting in the classroom around 12:30pm when some unidentified youths stormed in and shot him.

Hearing a gunshot, policemen went to the room and found Khaled dead, said Additional Superintendent of Sylhet police Sugyan Chakma.

According to law enforcers, the victim was from Panditpara of Beanibazar. He used to run a mobile phone shop in the upazila town.

Police picked up BCL activists Emdad, Fahad and Kamran in the classroom for interrogation.

The shooting occurred around an hour after Chhatra League factions, led by Pavel Mahmud and Abul Kashem Pallab, former convener of Beanibazar upazila Jubo League, clashed on the campus, said witnesses.

Contacted, Kashem said the clash ensued following an altercation between two junior students of the college.

He refuted the allegation that his supporters were involved in the clash.

Sylhet BCL leader Rayhan said no committee of the student front was formed in Beanibazar in last 12 years.

BCL sources said over 12 factions of the organisation were causing problems in the area. Among them, two or three are influential groups.

Police sent Khaled's body to Sylhet

MAG Medical College for an autopsy.

No case was filed in this connection till filing of the report last night.

The authorities of Beanibazar Government College yesterday shut the institution till July 22. They also formed a three-member committee to probe the incident.

INFIGHTING IN PABNA

Two rival BCL factions of Pabna University of Science and Technology clashed on the campus over control of Bangabandhu Residential Hall.

Supporters of the two factions, led by PUST BCL President Shanto and Vice President Yasir Arafat, engaged in chase and counter-chase. Two rooms of the dormitory were also vandalised during the clash.

Campus sources said the clash ensued over beating of Shanto's supporter Khalid Hossain, a student of statistics, by some supporters of Arafat on Sunday night.

Academic activities were hampered due to the trouble, said Proctor Awal Kabir Joy.

Later, BCL leaders of the two factions blamed each other for the clash.

Meanwhile, the BCL central unit yesterday suspended five of its PUST leaders from the organisation for violating organisational discipline, said a press release.

The five are vice presidents Yasir Arafat, Mahmud Chowdhury Asif and Abdullah Al Maruf; Joint General Secretary Mahmud Kamal Tuhin and Organising Secretary Sirajul Islam.

BCL LEADER HELD OVER RAPE

Police on Sunday night arrested Banaripara BCL President Sumon Molla from the house of Serniabat Sadiq Abdullah, joint convener of the Barisal city Awami League.

The Barisal SP sent a police team to the house after receiving a call from Sadik. The AL leader handed over

Sumon to law enforcers.

Sazzad Hossain, officer-in-charge of Banaripara Police Station, said a housewife filed a case Sunday afternoon accusing the BCL leader of raping her at a home in Banaripara's Beatal village, with her husband held hostage by Sumon's accomplices at another house in the village.

The arrestee yesterday gave a confessional statement under section 164 of CrPC to Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Sihabul Islam, the OC added. The magistrate later sent the accused to jail.

The BCL central unit in a press release yesterday said it expelled Sumon from the organisation for violating discipline.

ONE HELD IN ROBBERY CASE

BCL activist Mahamudul Hasan Rupak, a third-year student of English at Chittagong University, was arrested by Hathazari police on Sunday night from the university's Gate-1 area in a robbery case.

Truck driver Reazul had filed the case with Hathazari Police Station on April 21 over looting goods from the vehicle which was on the way to Chittagong from Khagrachari.

According to the case statement, criminals held the driver and his helper at gunpoint and looted the goods after taking the vehicle to the central playground of the university on April 19.

The gang confined the two to a room of a dormitory and freed them the following day after selling most of the looted goods, it added.

Mollah Jahangir, investigation officer of the case, said around eight people were involved in the robbery. The law enforcers so far arrested three BCL activists of the university in this connection.

Our correspondents in Sylhet, Pabna, Barisal and Chittagong contributed to this report.

Measles, neglect killed

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person would be infected with the virus since temporary centre had been set up in the affected area to conduct an immunisation programme.

About Tripura Para having been left out of the government's vaccination campaign, Prof Azad said the vaccination programme was on as per a "micro plan" at the ward level, but somehow Tripura Para, a small area resided by 85 families, remained out of the coverage.

"Now we have decided to overhaul the whole micro-plan system at the village level," to check if any small area is out of the immunisation programme, he said, adding that a committee would be formed to find out the people responsible for the exclusion of the area.

All the children receiving treatment now are between one and 12 years. The symptoms include fever, rash,

breathing problems, vomiting, and blood in stool, said Azizur Rahman Siddique, civil surgeon of Chittagong.

Twelve-year-old Rina Laxmi Tripura got fever and rash on Sunday night. "She was fine till yesterday [Sunday] afternoon and worked in the orchard with me, but became sick at night," her father Trimal Tripura said.

She was admitted to the BITD in Fouzderhat yesterday.

CONDITION IMPROVING

The condition of many of the children admitted to the hospitals in Chittagong is improving.

Annabala Tripura was seen feeding her six-year-old son Sujan yesterday.

She said Sujan was now having food. "When we bought him to hospital, he was suffering from high fever and could not eat anything. Now he doesn't have fever."

Three siblings -- Jatindra, 7, Jharna, 5, and Swapna, 4, -- were seen taking

meal and playing together at the CMCH paediatrics ward.

Their father Suman Tripura said his children had fallen ill with similar symptoms over a week ago.

"Now I feel good, as my children are recovering."

Some children did not recover yet in the hospital. Sumita was one of them. The four-year-old was admitted to the CMCH on Friday.

Her father Nayan Tripura said he was worrying about his child.

Prof Pranab Kumar Chowdhury, head of the CMCH paediatrics department, said the children were getting well as they were responding to the treatment.

"Symptoms show that most of them are suffering from measles.... As the children were not vaccinated and they did not even take vitamin A capsule, their physical immunity was very poor."

More family members

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As per the existing law, enacted in 1999, one could face between seven years and minimum three years rigorous imprisonment or Tk 3 lakh fine or both for violation of the law. The proposed law suggested maximum jail term of three years and Tk 10 lakh fine or both.

Shameem said the law aims to check trafficking of organs and their illegal trade as well as improve healthcare services.

As per the proposed law, there would be a medical board in every hospital for deciding on transplant matters and a national cadaveric committee to oversee organ transplants, he said.

Besides, there would also be a four-member hospital certification board,

to be headed by a director of the health directorate. No organ transplant would be allowed in any hospital without the board's certification, he continued.

Shameem said the private hospitals would have to apply for certification from the board within 60 days of the enactment of the law.

He said under the proposed law, if anybody provides false information about the relationships between an organ donor and the recipient or encourages, provokes or threatens anybody to provide such information, the person could face up to two years imprisonment or Tk 5 lakh fine or both.

Shameem said if any doctor was convicted under the law, his or her

registration from the Bangladesh Medical and Dental Council would be scrapped and if any hospital or clinic violated the law, their organ transplant permit would be revoked and they would be fined.

Prof Zulfiqar Rahman Khan, chairman of surgery department of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) hailed the law saying it would bring discipline in organ transplants.

With the enforcement of the law, doctors would not be blamed anymore for illegal transplant of organs and it would bring transparency to the process.

Prof Zulfiqar, the president of BSMMU Teachers Association, lauded the extended list of family members who could donate organs.

ACC to charge Aslam Chy, 3 others

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managing director Badrul Haque Khan, who was earlier arrested in connection with the money embezzlement. Badrul was a general manager of Bangladesh Bank when he was arrested last year.

Contacted, ACC's Public Relations Officer Pranab Kumar Bhattacharya said Badrul's name was dropped because "no evidence over his