

7 arrested over sabotage of Gazipur rail line

All from BNP, say police

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Police yesterday arrested seven leaders and activists of BNP and its front organisations, including a ward councillor of Gazipur City Corporation (GCC), in connection with a case filed over the derailment of a train in Gazipur.

All those who planned and implemented the sabotage are BNP leaders and activists, said Gazipur Metropolitan Police (GMP) Commissioner Mahub Alam in a press conference at the GMP media centre at 2:00pm.

The arrestees are Hasan Ajmal Bhuiya, 50; Sohel Rana, 38; Jannatul Islam, 23; Mehedi Hasan, 25; Zulkar Naim Ashrafi, 35; Shahanur Alam, 53; and Saidul Islam, 32.

According to a GMP press release, Hasan Ajmal Bhuiyan is the councillor of ward 28 under the GCC. He is the former president of Gazipur Metropolitan unit BNP, who was expelled from the party for participating in the last GCC election defying party decision.

Shahanur Alam is the president of

On December 13, a 20-foot stretch of rails was removed by saboteurs, leading to the derailment of the Mohanganj Express in Gazipur. One person was killed and several others were injured in the incident.

the same ward's BNP unit.

Sohel Rana is the former joint convener of Gazipur Sadar Jubo Dal.

Zulkar Naim Ashrafi held key positions at Jubo Dal and the city unit of BNP while Saidul Islam was the former vice president of Gazipur Sadar Jubo Dal.

Jannatul Islam and Mehedi Hasan are BNP activists, reads the press release.

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The Gazipur district administration officials, metropolitan and district police, PBI and railway police were present at the press conference.



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

The treasures of KAPTAN BAZAR

RBR

It is a whole new world altogether. Kaptan Bazar is an old and vibrant marketplace. The entire road is lined with butcher shops, tea houses, dry fruit souks, and the biggest pigeon market in Dhaka -- a motley mix but each category has its distinction.

Stinky garbage dumps at intervals, a bloody stench from the butcher shops and vegetable markets, spice stalls, and tea houses are meshed up in this lane. Once you brave the traffic, learn to ignore the dirty ambience and enjoy the treasure you will find in this timeworn open market.

Try to make the best use of the offers there.

The quality of the products, especially tea leaves, dry spices, and dry fruits is something I can vouch for. The wholesalers never compromise on this aspect.

Dry fruit souks have the most exclusive collection of sugar-free Sakura plum, which is a very tasty, delicious, and healthy palate cleanser. Whole fig in the dried form is an excellent snack for people who are



careful about calorie intake. We can always source the sliced and diced one but the whole form of the dried fig is rare. Black sultanas, green and golden raisins, and saffron -- the most expensive spice -- are found here.

Sweet and heady fragrant green cardamoms, the ones we do not get in the local markets are all found in Kaptan Bazar. There are a few varieties of green cardamom pods, from best to not-so-fresh. I love to stock up on this spice of extremely complex flavour profile and Kaptan bazar is the place I avail it from. It can be used in both sweet and savoury dishes. Like old Aunts I hide my cardamoms and saffron from my cooks and use them ever so stingily.

Then there are wholesale shops for tea leaves. Be it *masala*, *dhudh cha*, or *rong cha* -- you need to procure the best quality of loose tea leaves like Orange Pekoe, Orthodox, Fenning Orthodox Tea, or Premium Blend Tea. And these are definitely not found in your local grocery stores.

The wholesale market has tea shops that procure tea directly from tea auctions held in the port city. These shops sell to most, if not all, tea stores and stalls in Dhaka.

A considerably old fish market, in a dilapidated building, is also part of Kaptan Bazar fame. And of course, not to forget the pigeon market there. It is the

largest and most popular pigeon market in the capital, where the price of a pair of pigeons starts from Tk 500 and goes up to exorbitant heights depending on the rarity of the birds.

Many claim that Kaptan Bazar was established around the 1940s. It was originally incorporated into Thatari Bazaar but later, after the colonial rule ended, many ship captains when stationed at Sadarghat, shopped in this lane and it is from there it got its name Kaptan (Captain) Bazar.



ভাষা পরিষদের ডিভিশনাল সেক্রেটারি

Frustrated but still in AL fold

FROM PAGE 1

"We are extremely unhappy over Awami League's decision on seat-sharing. The party didn't keep its word," Workers Party Politburo Member Anisur Rahman Mollik told The Daily Star yesterday.

Workers Party, a key partner in the AL-led 14-party alliance, yesterday got two seats, although AL promised three.

"Awami League dropped one of our sitting MPs on its own, without even talking to us," Anisur said.

The two seats it got are -- Barishal-2 for party chief Rashed Khan Menon and Rajshahi-2 for party General Secretary Fazley Hossain Badsha. Workers Party's sitting MP Mostofa Lutfullah from Satkhira-1 has been dropped, contrary to AL's previous announcement.

AL initially decided to share Barishal-3 for Menon, sitting MP from Dhaka-8. But later, he was offered Barishal-2 constituency -- a result of negotiation with Jatiya Party.

AL shared three seats with JSD, leaving party General Secretary

Shirin Akter, sitting MP from Feni-1. JSD demanded six seats.

JSD President Hasanul Haq Inu repeatedly demanded withdrawal of AL "independents" along with AL-sponsored candidates, but AL did not do so.

An aggrieved Inu on Friday slammed the ruling party for neglecting its allies in "good times".

"It is suicidal to forge an alliance during crisis and neglect them later out of the complacency of getting out of danger. Among the pro-liberation forces, the giants should avoid arrogance, and the miniatures inferiority," he told a discussion.

AL had also assured Tarikat Federation of sharing a seat for its Chairman Syed Najibul Bashar Maizbhandari, sitting MP from Chattogram-2. The ruling party did not honour its pledge, making Tarikat unhappy.

AL did not even hold any discussion with its electoral partners Bikalpodhara Bangladesh and Zaker Party. In the 2018 election, Bikalpodhara got three seats and

won in two.

Zaker Party, which fielded candidates in 218 constituencies this time, withdrew from over 210.

Besides the allies and partners, AL's own candidates are aggrieved in many areas as they will face a tough challenge from their party colleagues.

Of the 71 sitting MPs who did not make it to the nomination list, at least 27 are running as "independents". Besides, around 300 AL "independents" are pitted against their party nominees in 231 constituencies.

Most AL nominees will be challenged by AL "independents", save for in 32 constituencies that are being sought by party heavyweights.

After yesterday's decision, AL candidates will run from 263 seats.

Five AL-nominated candidates -- Abdus Salam from Mymensingh-9, Nasirul Islam Khan from Kishoreganj-3, Shamim Haque from Faridpur-3, Enamul Haque Babul from Jashore-4 and Shammi Ahmed from Barishal-4 -- lost candidacy on different grounds.

Pinned down, JP settles for 26

FROM PAGE 1

GM Quader made her a presidium member of the party a week ago.

Besides, JP leader Salma Islam will run for parliament from Dhaka-1. But she will have to compete against an AL nominee.

In the current parliament, Firoz and another JP leader Syed Abu Hossain Babla are MPs from Dhaka-6 and Dhaka-4.

Disappointed at the prospect of competing against an AL nominee, Firoz, a co-chairman of the party, withdrew his candidacy.

However, when contacted, he said, "I withdrew because I didn't want to compromise. I am not angry at my party."

HECTIC NEGOTIATIONS

The JP began negotiations with the AL demanding walkover victories in 70 constituencies. It gradually lowered its expectations, and by yesterday morning, its demand was 31, according to several JP leaders present during the meetings with the AL.

In the end, it only gained Dhaka-18 to vie for.

JP leaders Kazi Firoz Rashid and Salma Islam said they were disappointed at how things turned out.

Party Chairman Quader was also disappointed and unsure about what to do, sources said, adding that JP leaders Anisul Islam Mahmud and Chunnun convinced Quader that their party had no choice but to participate in the election because no foreign power would support the JP.

JP insiders said, members of different government agencies kept Quader under watch so that he could not convince his fellow leaders to shun the election.

Quader has not made any public appearance in recent days.

Briefing reporters at the JP chairman's Banani office, Chunnun said, "We independently decided to participate in the election. There was no pressure."

He added that Quader requested all of JP's 283 nominees to participate in this election.

Talking to The Daily Star, several JP leaders criticised Quader for

including his wife in the list of 26 candidates who are likely to have easy wins.

Some leaders even said the real negotiation was done "under the table".

JP Jashore-2 nominee Mufti Feroz Shah said it was very sad how things turned out. "The party will suffer. The grassroot activists will be dissatisfied."

WHO IS RUNNING FROM WHERE

Quader is running from Rangpur-3, Chunnun from Kishoreganj-3, Hafiz Uddin Ahmed from Thakurgaon-3, Rana Md Sohel from Nilphamary-3, Masud Uddin Chowdhury from Feni-3.

In 13 of the 26 constituencies, new faces are running for parliament on JP's electoral symbol of a plough. Some of them are HM Shahrar Asif, AKM Mostafizur Rahman, Abdur Rashid Sarker, Shariful Islam Jinnah, Nurul Islam Talukder, Ashrafuzzaman Ashu, Mashrekul Azam Robi, Salahuddin Ahmed Mukti, Johirul Alam, MA Munim Chowdhury, Abdul Hamid and Sirajul Islam Chowdhury.

Of the convicts, one was present at the courtroom yesterday.

Four prosecution witnesses testified before the court.

According to the case documents, a group of BNP leaders and activists and its front organisations assaulted on-duty police personnel and barred them from discharging duties in front of Victoria Park in Sutrapur during a protest procession on September 30, 2018.

SI Golam Hossain Khan filed the case with Sutrapur Police Station.

In other development, a Dhaka court handed down sentence to seven BNP activists for two and a half year's imprisonment over illegal gatherings and obstructing police from performing duties at Kadamtoli in November 2013.

Young Tigers attain Asian glory

FROM PAGE 1

and Rohanat Doullah Borson bagged three wickets each and Iqbal Hossain Emon took a couple.

The dominant victory capped off a brilliant tournament for the young Tigers where they emerged as the undefeated champions.

The team was clinical throughout the campaign, first finishing as group champions and then defeating a strong Indian team in the semifinal on their way to the final.

Player of the final and the tournament Shibly was the team's standout performer throughout the competition, accumulating 378 runs, highest in the tournament, in five games at an astounding average of 126.

Shibly was instrumental for Bangladesh in the final as well, as it

was his partnerships with Rizwan and Ariful that set the base for victory.

After the early wicket of Jishan Alam, the right-hander formed an unbeaten 125-run stand with Rizwan to settle the innings and then a 76-ball 86-run stand with Ariful to power the team to a formidable 282-8.

The target was too much for the UAE, who had lost to Bangladesh by 65 runs in their previous encounter in the group-stage.

Only two host batter's could get into double figures as Bangladesh kept taking wickets in regular successions.

With the win, the Under-19 team becomes the second Bangladeshi side to earn the title of being the best cricket team in Asia.

Before them, it was the Bangladesh women's team, who defeated India in

the final in Kuala Lumpur in 2018 to win the women's Asia Cup title.

As for the national men's team, the Asia Cup has remained a source of great heartbreak as despite reaching three finals in four editions, the Tigers have always faltered in the final hurdle in the continental tournament.

The maiden Asia Cup triumph also came at the right time for the young Tigers, as almost exactly one month later they will be vying to repeat the heroics of their ICC U-19 World Cup winning campaign in 2020.

The 2024 edition of ICC's flagship age-level event is scheduled to take place in South Africa, beginning on January 19, where Bangladesh have a chance to make up for their sorry showing in the 2022 edition, where they finished eighth.

Another 64 BNP men jailed over political violence

FROM PAGE 1

According to the case statement, a group of leaders and activists of BNP and its front organisations illegally gathered in Zindabahr Park area in Kotwali and tried to vandalise some vehicles on September 19, 2018, demanding the release of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia.

They also threw brick chunks at police, preventing them from carrying out duties.

Sub-inspector Akter Hossain filed the case with Kotwali Police Station.

In another case, the same court jailed nine activists of BNP for three years' imprisonment and two others for two years' imprisonment over political violence in Gulshan in September 2018.

Shahjahan Kabir Montu, joint

general secretary of BNP's Gulshan unit, and Shariful Islam, general secretary of JCD's Gulshan unit, are among the convicts.

Five prosecution witnesses gave depositions before the court in the case.

According to the case statement, on September 18, 2018, a group of BNP leaders and activists demanding Khaleda's release assembled on the street in front of Confidence Centre in Gulshan's Shahjadpur area and vandalised vehicles.

SI Salah Uddin Fakir lodged the case with Gulshan Police Station.

Another Dhaka court sentenced 38 BNP activists to two years' rigorous imprisonment in a case filed with Sutrapur Police Station in September 2018.