

## Salim Osman claims he humiliated atheist not teacher

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JATIYA Party lawmaker AKM Salim Osman on Thursday reiterated that he would not apologise and claimed that he did not humiliate a 'teacher or Hindu man' but forced an 'atheist' to go up and down holding the ears.

At a views exchange programme at Narayanganj Club, Salim Osman, drawing attention of health minister Mohammad Nasim, said, 'Come to visit Narayanganj...If needed, beat me with shoes but do not ask me to apologise.'

He said, 'Nasim Bhai, I had forced a man, who had insulted Allah, to go up and down holding ears, but a minister had made a traffic police to go up and down by holding the ears and nothing happened to the minister.'

Salim is facing rage of protests across the country for forcing Piyar Sattar Latif High School head teacher Shyamal Kanti Bhakta to

go up and down holding the ears after mob beating on May 13 on allegation of making derogatory remarks on Islam.

The mob was mobilised through an announcement from a local mosque that Shyamal made 'offensive comments about religion' while meting out corporal punishment to a student on May 8.

A video clip, which showed that Salim, Bandar upazila education officer AKM Nurul Amin and others were humiliating the teacher, when people were shouting Joy Bangla slogan, went viral on social media and drew widespread criticism.

In the face of widespread criticism, Salim reportedly had been behind a number of processions, rallies and others programmes, organised by local Islamist organisations and others in Narayanganj demanding punishment of Shyamal for his alleged derogatory comments on religion.

An education ministry

probe, however, found that the allegations of hurting religion sentiment by Shyamal were false.

Although Salim Osman is reportedly getting support from activists of local units of the ruling Awami League, its key central leaders are criticising him.

Mohammad Nasim, while visiting ailing Shyamal at Dhaka Medical College Hospital on May 21, said that Salim Osman should not attend parliamentary sessions 'if he has any shame' and 'should apologise to the nation'.

Salim Osman at Thursday's views exchange programme said that he cancelled his press conference on May 24 being asked by his party chairman HM Ershad.

Salim claimed that Shyamal had demanded Tk 1 crore from him.

Earlier on May 19, Salim claim that the teacher himself opted to go up and down holding the ears to save himself from public wrath.