

Govt plans Ershad-led 'dummy opposition' to hold 'farcical' polls

Abdul Hamid says in Kishoreganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Advocate Abdul Hamid yesterday said the 'unreasonable' stance of the ruling parties on opposition's reform proposals is leading the country towards a state of confrontation, which will be detrimental for the country and the people.

The opposition's demands are now people's demands and the government should accept those in the interest of holding a credible election, he said while addressing a conference of Sramik League, Awami League's labour front. It was held at a cinema hall in Kishoreganj town.

The veteran Awami League leader claimed that the government is planning to hold a 'farcical' polls

by fielding a 'dummy opposition' led by Ershad in absence of Awami League. He warned the government not to do so. Awami League, taking the people along, will resist the move, he said.

"People are united and they will foil the government's election engineering to retain power".

Abdul Hamid said BNP should take lessons from its February 15 'farcical' election in 1996. Before that (February 15) polls, the BNP chief had negated the concept of caretaker government to hold election. But the party had to accept it in the face of movement by people.

"They will accept the demands this time also", he said.

"Honorable Prime Minister, you should take lessons from the February 15 election.

"If you are sure about winning the coming election, then accept the reform proposals to hold a free and fair election", Abdul Hamid said.

The deputy leader of the opposition in parliament said the government does not want to accept the reforms because they are adamant to cling to power. Once out of power, their misdeeds and plunder of people's wealth will come to light, he said.

Hamid claimed that a senior BNP leader was caught in Malaysia with 12,000 crore taka and the money was forfeited by the Malaysian government.

He however welcomed the BNP chief's suggestion for talks between secretaries general of BNP and Awami League. They have shifted from their earlier stance not to hold talks without Jamaat in the face of opposition agitation, he said.

He urged leaders of the ruling alliance to accept the reform proposals before 14-party alliance's September 18 grand rally in Dhaka.

Hamid also criticised the government for what he called doing nothing to check the price spiral ahead of the Ramadan.

The council was also addressed by local leaders of Awami League and Seamik League including Ramesh Chandra Roy and Tofayel Ahmed, Habibur Rahman Siraj.

Sramil League President Abdu Matin Master inaugurated the council, presided over by its Kishoreganj unit president ABM Siraju Islam.

PHULBARI COAL Major parties criticised for 'inaction'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

The speakers at a roundtable here yesterday blamed major political parties for their alleged inaction while the government approved a foreign company's plan to extract Phulbari coal in open pit mining system without considering national interest.

They demanded cancellation of the deal with Asia Energy Corporation (AEC) to extract the coal.

Gono Unnayan Gronthagar, a Barga-based NGOs, organised the roundtable held at Dinajpur Press Club.

Coal should be extracted to generate energy to meet growing demands. But the deal with Asia Energy Corporation (AEC) allowed it to export over 90 of the coal, which energy starved Bangladesh can not afford, they said.

Md. Mossaddeque Hossain Labu, a member of the National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources, said major political parties ignored the whole thing when local people protested the open pit mining. They came after people were killed during protests, he said.

Dacoity in Moulvibazar Rupali Bank

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Burglars took away Tk 45.72 lakh by breaking the vault of Pubali Bank at Wapda Gate branch in Moulvibazar town Thursday night.

Police arrested four persons in connection with the incident.

The arrested persons are Habibur Rahman, Abdun Nur, Nur Miah and bank guard Motiur Rahman Chowdhury.

Police recovered two gas cylinders, one cutter, some polythene bags and a sharp weapon from inside the bank.

RU teachers condemn Sept 12 police action in Dhaka

RU CORRESPONDENT

The Progressive Teacher's Society at Rajshahi University in a joint statement yesterday condemned the police action on leaders and activists of 14-party opposition alliance during its programme to besiege the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) on Tuesday.

They asked the government not to use law enforcers to suppress the opposition and cling to power. By doing so, the government has

making police antagonistic to people.

They said police clubbed Awami League lawmakers Mohammad Nasim and Asaduzzaman Noor, which is unprecedented.

They demanded proper investigation into the police atrocities and exemplary punishment of those responsible for this.

The RU teachers also strongly protested the arrest of Proshika (a non government organisation) officials and workers in different areas of the country and demanded their immediate release.

The statement was signed by its convener Prof Abdus Shobhan and other teachers including Prof Muklasur Rahman, Prof Anando Kumar Shaha, Prof Moloy Kumar and Prof Hasibul Alam.

10 hurt in AL factional clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

At least ten Awami League activists were injured in a factional clash in Dimla upazila yesterday centring abusive comments by a group of party men about Hamida Banu Shova, lawmaker from Domar-Dimla constituency.

Three of the injured men were admitted to Dimla Upazila Health Complex. AL sources said Upazila Chhatra League president, a supporter of Dimla Upazila Awami League president Aftabuddin Ahmed, made abusive comments about Shova at a tea stall at Babur Haat in Dimla town.

Aftabuddin is also a nomination seek in the coming election, party sources said.

As Shova's supporters heard about the comments, they swooped on the Chhatra League leader, ensuing a clash in which both sides used lethal weapon, sticks and brick bats. Later police intervened and dispersed the two groups.

2 held with Tk 46,000 forged notes

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

Two indigenous men were arrested with fake notes valued at Tk 46,000 from a residential hotel at Reserve Bazar in the hill town yesterday.

Acting on a tip off, a police and army team raided the hotel and arrested Bongshwar Chakma, son of Bharat Chandra Chakma of DSB colony in Jurachhari upazila and Fatik Chakma, son of late Hogendra Lal Karbari of Shuknachhari village of same upazila. All the forged notes are of Tk 500 denomination, police said.



PHOTO: STAR

Light Vehicle Drivers Association formed a human chain in front of Chittagong Press Club yesterday demanding punishment of the persons responsible for the death of a driver in police custody.

SUST teachers to announce fresh programme today

Rival teachers hold talks tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Agitating teachers of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST) aligned with Left parties and Awami League will announce a fresh agitation programme today to press their demand for immediate withdrawal of Vice-chancellor Prof Musleh uddin Ahmed to restore a 'congenial academic atmosphere' on the campus.

In another development, teachers aligned with the ruling alliance will sit with left leaning teachers tomorrow to discuss ways to resolve the deadlock at the university,

sources said yesterday.

The move for talks follows a proposal by the alliance backed teachers.

The alliance-backed teachers has so far been pressing for resumption of academic activities as well as promotion and recruitment in different departments under the present administration, which is being opposed by the left leaning teachers.

The Left teachers are demanding removal of the 'corrupt' VC and appointment of a new one from among them.

The sources said the latest move for a discussion between the two groups of teachers may find a way

out to the present impasse.

Meanwhile, female students of the varsity will stage a sit-in in front of the main gate of the varsity tomorrow (Sunday) for immediate end to the stalemate.

Opposition-backed student bodies will also bring out a procession from the city's Madina Market towards the university tomorrow as part of their agitation for VC's removal.

Academic life of about 65,000 students is facing a crisis as the authority failed to end the stalemate, created since killing of a student in police firing on May 14. The university was closed after the incident.

Create ministry for indigenous people

Speakers demand at workshop in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Indigenous leaders at a workshop on Thursday demanded a separate ministry for them to help them protect their rights and culture.

They also demanded constitutional provisions guaranteeing right to their land, alleging that their lands in different areas of the country are being grabbed by vested quarters and local influentials.

The discussion on "Indigenous people's rights to land and government property and actual wage", jointly organised by Action Aid Bangladesh, CPD Khulna and a local NGO Pragati Samaj Unnayan Sangstha, was held at Pragati Samaj Unnayan Sangstha auditorium at Shyamnagar. Principal Ashek E Elahi was in the chair.

It was addressed by, among others, Union Parishad Charmin Alamgir Haidar, Iswari Foundation's executive director Mahsin Ul Mulk, freedom fighters Abdul Mazid and Sheikh Haroon Ur Rashid, UP member Nurul Islam and journalist Ranajit Barman.

The indigenous people still suffer for discrimination and inequality and they are deprived of actual wage, they said. The Munda and other Adivasi communities in Satkhira are leading a sub-human life as lands of most of them have been grabbed and there are being socially discriminated, they said.

The contribution to social development is enormous but they can not enjoy the benefits of development, the speakers said.

"We have to create awareness about our rights", Sannasi Munda said.

The victims often can not take legal protection because of poverty. As they are minority, influentials often victimise, he said.

Representatives of local government bodies, teachers, journalists, NGO activists, representatives of local elite and member of the indigenous communities took part in the discussion.

6x2

10.5X4

8x3