

Focus on election-'91

# AL pledges parliamentary form, mixed economy

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Amendment of the Constitution, which blocked the trial of the killers of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman will be repealed. Sheikh Hasina, however, disagreed with a questioner that the Special Powers Act was black. She said the law which could detain Ershad can not be black. 'It is white', she asserted.

Awami League's economic policies encourage growth of private sector side by side with public sector. The party will create an environment for market economy injecting competitiveness in the economy. Answering to a question whether these policies are clear departure from socialist policy of Awami League Sheikh Hasina said socialism aimed at maximizing happiness of the people through development. She pointed to changes in the socialist world and said our development model would be evolved suiting the country's given condition. But Awami League's economic policy has no programme of going back to centrally planned economy as envisaged in a socialist development model.

About the foreign policy Awami League pledged to follow independent non-aligned foreign policy. The foreign policy also attaches importance to maintain friendly relations with SAARC, OIC and non-aligned countries.

### Political outlines

The manifesto also said that the main objective of the Liberation War was the all out effort to develop the national entity of Bangladesh, formulation of an economic system by putting an end to exploitation and inequality in the society and giving equal share to all communities so that they could practice their religion without any hindrance. The manifesto made it clear that the state policy would be totally non-communal and there would be no differential treatment to any caste, creed, race and tribe.

It said that the political and economic policy which was in line with the spirit of Liberation War had been changed through the killing of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on August 15, 1975. Since then killing, military coup, conspiracy and intrigue have taken place of

democratic norms to change government. The manifesto added, during the last 15-year period there was no rule of law and an opportunist class was formed in the political arena. The freedom fighters had been neglected, the anti-independence forces had been rehabilitated and the whole nation had been plunged into corruption.

The manifesto said that the people had toppled the autocratic Ershad regime through a mass upsurge with an objective to pave the way for democracy.

In its political and constitutional outlines the manifesto declared that the sovereignty of the people was the source of all political powers and any other process to seize the state power would be treated as illegal.

The Awami League pledged for introducing the democratic system in all spheres of life including establishment of an accountable parliamentary form of government. The party would ensure the formation of parliamentary government, change and transfer of power only through the ballots and in order to fulfil all these objectives the Awami League would restore the Constitution as it was prior to the Fourth Amendment, the manifesto added.

The constitutional outlines also include preservation of freedom of expression and freedom of press and fundamental rights through legal process. It also speaks of taking steps to ensure the neutrality of the mass publicity media, ensuring the freedom of judiciary for smooth continuation of rule of law and constitutional process and repeal of all laws detrimental to the fundamental rights preserved by the Constitution.

Termining Bengali nationalism as a long-cherished identity of people the manifesto pledged to preserve it.

About Bengali language and culture the party pledged that it would devote to preserve the traditional history of the Bengali nation and would resist any conspiracy against the history of Bengali nation, its language and culture.

### Economic Programme

Awami League in its economic programme announced

a firm stand against any further nationalisation of the trade and industrial enterprises.

The election manifesto of the party said it would extend all possible incentives to encourage 'free and spontaneous' private initiatives. Efforts will be made to strengthen management practices of public sector enterprise side by side.

If voted to power, the party will decide the priorities between the public and the private sectors in different fields on the basis of 'management efficiency, economic effectiveness and social needs'. An environment will be created an efficient and competitive market economy. The state will play a supportive role rather than a controlling one in the national economy.

In its exhaustive economic programme incorporated in the manifesto, the AL said it will concentrate its efforts on accelerated economic growth, distributive social justice blended with growth, popular participation in development mainstream and gradual attainment of self-reliance.

The party assessed the economic situation with a grim note and observed that wastage of resources, capital flight, growth of unproductive expenditures at the expense of productive investments in the past were responsible for the situation.

The party, if voted to power, will give the highest priority to poverty alleviation programmes. For this, agricultural sector will receive maximum support for development of physical infrastructure and improvement of technological base. Special programmes will be launched for the underprivileged sections to whom trickle-down benefits of economic growth do not reach.

For agricultural sector, the party committed itself to raising annual development allocations. Besides crops, programmes will be launched to develop fisheries, livestock and other non-agricultural sectors in the rural economy.

Adequate supplies of agricultural inputs, appropriate subsidies, strengthened arrangements for procurement, marketing and storage operations will be the prime focus for ensuring a balance between input and output prices. The party said it will step

up efforts for accelerated industrialisation through adoption of policies for a mixed economy. The industries in the public sector will be efficiently run. Growth of large and smaller industrial units through skilled and efficient entrepreneurs in the private sector will be encouraged. A wholesale denationalisation policy will be avoided.

Steps will be taken by the party to declare export-oriented industries as the thrust sector and every support will be ensured to raise the country's export potentials. Foreign investors will be attracted to invest in Bangladesh only when a congenial environment for industrialisation is created, the party said in its manifesto.

The AL pledged to adopt effective measures for improving the balance of payments situation. It observed that foreign aid disbursements would slow down without steps for mobilisation of more domestic resources and attainment of greater self-reliance. The steps will include: simplified procedures for imports of industrial raw materials, discouragement of imports of non-essential particularly luxury items, and greater drive for exploration of newer export items.

The development strategy as charted out by the party in its election manifesto envisages more public investments in social sectors like education, health, social welfare and cultural affairs.

If voted to power, the party will exempt accumulated interests on agricultural credits up to Taka 10 thousand. Besides, all outstanding agricultural credits up to Taka five thousand will be waived, agricultural land holdings up to 25 bighas will be tax-exempted. Land reforms programme will be taken up for poverty alleviation, equitable distribution of farm assets and raising overall productivity of agricultural sector.

About the financial sector, the party said it would take moves to enable the development financial institutions including banks to play a stronger and more effective role for encouraging savings and supporting investments. Steps will be taken to channelise bank credits more to productive economic sectors. A greater emphasis will be

placed on improving efficiency in the financial sector for recovery of outstanding credits from the defaulters. Adjustments will be made in exchange rate policies and interest rate structure for encouraging savings and investments. Restoration of confidence in the capital market will constitute one of the major planks of economic policies of the party.

In the overall financial sector, the nationalised banks and financial institutions will play the decisive role, the party said in its manifesto.

### Liberation War

In the manifesto, the background of liberation movement as well as achievement of Awami League government was narrated while the failures of the subsequent governments were mentioned critically.

The manifesto stated that Bangladesh achieved independence after 23 years of relentless struggle of Awami League led by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The bold leadership of Bangabandhu encouraged and inspired the nation to carry on their struggle from the Language Movement of 1952 to the Liberation War in 1971.

As regards declaration of Bangladesh's independence, the manifesto said that Bangabandhu declared the independence on the night of March 25 of 1971 and directed the people to resist the aggression of Pakistani occupation forces and start the Liberation War. After this declaration Bangabandhu was arrested by Pakistani army and his trial began at a military court in Pakistan. The manifesto mentioned that it was Awami League leader M. A. Hannan who first read out Bangabandhu's Declaration of Independence from the Kalurghat centre of Chittagong radio station.

The manifesto described how the Mujibnagar government was formed in April, 1971 and said that the Indian army was withdrawn from the soil of Bangladesh on March 17, 1972. 'The withdrawal of the allied forces in such a short time was only possible for personality and statesmanship of Bangabandhu', the manifesto mentioned saying, 'this is rare in history'.

While describing the reconstruction work in the war-ravaged country, the manifesto said that the Awami League government only inherited a shattered economy, devastated communication systems, closed industries and an empty exchequer and the problem of rehabilitating one crore refugees who took shelter in India during the war.

The manifesto mentioned that the Awami League government could solve all these problems within a short span of time and implemented a number of development programmes and took steps to make the country a prosperous one through constructive planning. 'A significant success of the Awami League government was achieving recognition from almost all the countries and obtaining membership of the United Nations in a very short time', the manifesto added.

Narrating the killings of Bangabandhu and four national leaders, the manifesto said that Bangabandhu was the architect of independent Bangladesh who initiated the process of Second Revolution for building a self-reliant Bangladesh. To foil this revolution, the reactionary forces along with the defeated forces of the Liberation War killed Bangabandhu, his family members and others on the night of August 15, 1975. It was followed by the killing of four national leaders — Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed, Mansur Ali and Kamaruzzaman in Dhaka Central Jail on November 3 the same year. But the post-1975 government stopped the trial of the killers through fifth amendment of the constitution and rehabilitated them. An enquiry commission was constituted during the rule of President Sayem to investigate the jail killing, but the nation is yet to get the report of that commission.

The Awami League election manifesto categorically said that the trial of the killers must be ensured through necessary amendments and changes in the Constitution so that no head of the state are killed in future. 'The change of government should be done only through constitutional process, not by killings', stressed the manifesto.

## The Midnight File

### Four Iraqi Mig-21 shot down

RIYADHI, Feb 6: US F-15 fighters shot down four Iraqi Mig-21s trying to flee to Iran today, a Saudi military spokesman said. US military sources said there was still some confusion over the incident and it was not clear whether they were all Mig-21s, reports Reuter.

### US, UK discuss post-war ME

WASHINGTON, Feb 6: The United States and Britain have begun discussing post-war plans for the Middle East, and the British idea includes a possible role for Pakistan in that region. This and other ideas were discussed at a State Department meeting Monday between US officials and a British delegation consisting of Foreign Office, Defence Ministry and military representatives, reports PTI.

### Israel raids PLO bases

SIDON (Lebanon), Feb 6: Two Israeli helicopters today raided Palestinian positions in the Iqlim Al-Toufiah region of south Lebanon, security sources in the region said. The aircraft fired six air-to-surface missiles at two positions held by the Palestine Liberation Organisation's mainstream Fatah group, southeast of the port city Sidon, the sources said, reports AFP.

### Barre's troops beaten

NAIROBI, Feb 6: Rebels say they have crushed troops loyal to ousted Somali President Mohamed Siad Barre who had regrouped in a northwestern town. A radio broadcast by the rebel Somalia National Movement late Tuesday said the loyalists were beaten in daylong fighting in and around Borama, a town near Ethiopia's border in the northwest, reports AP.

### Manila coup leaders held

MANILA, Feb 6: Two prominent leaders of a bloody 1989 coup attempt were arrested Wednesday in what officials called a major setback in efforts to topple President Corason Aquino. Maj. Abraham Purugganan was taken into custody at midday after agents rammed his car on a street in Suburban Makati, police said. Purugganan surrendered without incident, but a companion fled toward a condominium, reports AP.

### Tamil rebels kill nine troops

COLOMBO, Feb 6: A land mine planted by Tamil Tiger rebels exploded under an army truck convoy Wednesday, killing nine soldiers and injuring 25 more, military officials said. In another attack on Wednesday, the rebels ambushed an army patrol and fatally shot two soldiers, the officials said, reports AP.

### Two killed in Delhi train accident

NEW DELHI, Feb 6: Two persons were killed and 28 injured when 14 bogies of the Delhi bound Dakshin Express derailed following a bomb blast near Sirpur town in Andhra Pradesh early this morning. The train coming from Hyderabad derailed between Vempallin and Sirpur town due to uprooting of a rail in a time bomb blast, the sources said, reports IFL.

## AL curbed rights

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rights, Khaleda said 'we didn't bow down to any pressure... we didn't participate in any election under the autocracy'.

Pledging to end unabated inflow of foreign goods to the domestic market, Begum Zia said her party would encourage growth of industries under private entrepreneurship.

She also spoke for restructuring of education system and reduction of the price of educational input for the spread of education.

Begum Zia in her speeches also strongly criticised the Awami League rule in 1972-75 for its failure in fulfilling the basic needs of the people.

'This party was responsible for the 1974 famine and deterioration of law and order, they killed democracy by introducing one-party rule, gagged the press, and curbed the rights of the people through the Special Powers Act'.

She accused Awami League of conspiring to dissolve armed forces and replace them with various 'private bahinis like Lal Bahini, Nil Bahini'. 'People do not want to see them in power again'.

She said BNP had the mandate from the people through the 1978 elections, and just when President Zia was leading the country, once dubbed 'bottomless basket', towards self-reliance, he was killed 'in a conspiracy by Ershad and his accomplices'.

Khaleda told her audience that the trial of Ershad must take place on the soil of this country.

'He must be taken to Central Jail, and he will be tried according to law... there is no reason for keeping him in Gulshan house', she said.

The BNP leader also pledged to take necessary steps for meeting the demands of local people for development of Phulgazi and protect the area from erosion of Muhuri.

Earlier in the morning, Begum Zia offered fatcha at the mazar of Hazrat Pagla Mish at Tuzkhabari. She also met relatives at her ancestral home at Sirpur of Phulgazi upazila and offered fatcha at the graves of relatives.

She also addressed a huge public meeting in the Phulgazi High School premises. The meeting, which began with recitation from the Holy Quran and Gita, was presided over by her uncle Jamshed Hossain Majumder.

### Peace moves

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U.N. chief said when asked if he would respond to a second letter from Iraqi foreign minister Tariq Aziz blasting him for his silence in the face of U.S. and Allied bombings of Iraq.

In another development, Japan, the only nation in the world to experience a nuclear attack, has urged the nations engaged in the Gulf war not to use nuclear weapons.

While noting that the UN Security Council has not issued any resolutions or statements restricting nuclear or chemical war, Foreign Minister Taro Makoyama said he would like to ask nations involved in the Gulf war not to use such weapons.

### Five Party

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President was making an explanation to the United States Ambassador. Beside, he said this news through the national dailies and state run radio and television was also derogatory.

## SPA needed

From Page 1 Col 4 and Ershad.

She said the Fifth Amendment of the Constitution which barred the trial of the killers of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was the black law.

She said all ordinances and laws passed under martial law were black laws.

She said all these black laws would be repealed if her party was voted to power. But she did not make any commitment about the Special Powers Act except saying that it would be discussed in parliament.

Replying to a question if the religion-based parties would be allowed to function after reverting to 72 Constitution, Sheikh Hasina said parties would stay but nobody would be allowed to trade in religion.

Refuting an allegation that her party nominated the collaborators of Ershad and sold nominations to some people, Sheikh Hasina said the candidate Jahangir at Muradnagar wanted to be associated with Jatiya Party five years back.

He contested the upazila elections against Jatiya Party leader Kaikubad. She denied that he was a Jatiya Party leader. She also said he did not have that much money to buy the nominations. She asked the questioner about the selling of 98 nominations by a particular party.

When her attention was drawn to the demand for banning of the Jatiya Party, Sheikh Hasina said that it was true they did harm to the country for which they should be tried.

'But if you want to ban the politics of this party, then you also have to ban other parties that came to power violating the Constitution and formed the party remaining in power', she added.

In reply to a question on the possibility of a national consensus on the form of future government after the election, Sheikh Hasina expressed optimism saying, 'Those who want welfare of the nation and want to keep the process of democratisation unhindered,

will, of course, reach a consensus. But I will not be optimistic about those who might take a different course of action failing to get the election result in their favour'.

She said, 'We are doing politics and we are supposed to abide by the verdict of the people and that is the spirit of democracy'. She stressed on being tolerant for upholding democratic values.

In reply to a question on Kader Siddiqui's arrest, Awami League chief said that this arrest was totally illegal. She demanded immediate release of Kader Siddiqui and alleged that the killers of Bangabandhu were moving freely with arms. She also demanded the arrest of the killers saying, 'There is scope for doubt about the holding of a smooth election if these people can move freely with arms'.

When asked about the formation of a national government, Sheikh Hasina said that the matter can be considered after the election. She mentioned that the assistance from all will be essential to tackle the economic depression which has been worsened due to Gulf war.

About her party's chances of success in the election, Sheikh Hasina said, 'I have an estimate about the number of seats I am going to win, but I am not going to disclose it now'. She mentioned that some candidates from other components of the Eight-party alliance are also contesting the election with the symbol 'Boat'. She mentioned that there are other candidates from the alliance who were running with the symbol 'sickle', and urged them to withdraw.

### Villager shot dead by BSF

From A Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Feb 6: Abu Shama, a day labourer, was shot dead by Indian Border Security Forces (BSF) at 10-30 a.m. on Monday at village Hudapara Kharemath near Baghadanga camp in Maheshpur upazila of Jhenidah



A colourful procession by female students of Kuwait Maitree Hall on Wednesday.

— Star photo

## Missiles rain down

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but Allied commanders say any ground war to retake Kuwait will probably wait until Iraqi forces take even more pounding from the air.

Throughout the night and morning hours Wednesday, Allied planes processed on and off their mission-a-minute campaign. One raid scored a possible hit on an Iraqi mobile Scud missile launcher, the US command in Saudi Arabia said in a communique, citing pilot reports.

Iraq has used the mobile launchers to fire rockets into Israel and Saudi Arabia, but the attacks have tapered off.

The Iranian news agency said three huge explosions in the Iraqi city of Basra could be heard in the Iranian city of Khorramshahr, 25 miles (40 kilometers) away. Basra is the site of Iraq's military headquarters for the Kuwait theater.

There were no ground engagements reported overnight between Allied and Iraqi forces along the border.

Anticipating ground fighting to come, the allies are rushing supplies to the desert frontlines. At forward staging areas today, huge Hercules C-130 transports were arriving every 30 minutes.

The cornerstone of any ground offensive may well be

an amphibious assault. Defense Department sources said a US Marine task force is maneuvering into position after a practice seaborne attack on the southern shore of the Arabian peninsula.

The task force — made up of about 17,000 Marines — is 'slowly working its way north', one Marine Corps officer said Tuesday.

Marine commanders say an amphibious attack, if it comes, will likely be the most difficult and dangerous part of an offensive to retake Kuwait.

Plots of F-16 fighter-bombers have begun firing infra-red guided missiles at Iraqi tanks in occupied Kuwait, sources said today.

Flying daytime sorties, with nighttime attacks by F-15E Eagles, the F-16 Fighting Falcons headed skyward from the largest airbase in Saudi Arabia.

They blasted tanks, armored vehicles and Iraq's elite Republican Guards.

On Tuesday they also started using infra-red guided Maverick air-to-ground missiles instead of less-sophisticated conventional bombs to wear down Iraq's ground-fighting capability.

French Jaguar planes twice attacked Iraqi artillery batteries in Kuwait today, the French Defence Ministry said.

Mirage 2000 fighters flew air defence missions and all planes returned safely to base in Saudi Arabia, it said.

Meanwhile the US battleship Missouri pounded Iraqi positions in Kuwait for a third successive day today, destroying hardened bunkers sheltering anti-aircraft weapons, a senior US military source said.

The United States and its allies also continued air strikes against President Saddam Hussein's elite Republican Guard, command and control installations and lines of communication in preparation for any ground assault.

The source said the Missouri, on which Japan surrendered at the end of World War Two, fired 54 rounds from its mammoth 16-inch guns just before midnight at a radar site and artillery position and then on Wednesday it fired at the bunkers.

The sources quoted an Iraqi officer who drove across US lines late on Tuesday as saying Saddam's death would end the war.

The Iraqi officer, one of two who deserted together, told the US officer who met him: 'You kill Saddam Hussein, then all this will stop,' the source said.

Four other Iraqis drove across US lines late on Tuesday.

## Hearing of Moudud's writ continues

Hearing of the writ petition of former Vice President Moudud Ahmed challenging his detention continued on Wednesday in the High Court Division of the Supreme Court, reports UNB.

Defending the detention, the Attorney General said it was justified because some activities of the arrested former Vice President had potentials of destabilising the present situation.

The Attorney General cited excerpts of Moudud's interviews published in a local daily and a foreign magazine, where he wished to participate in the coming elections and asked the caretaker government to remain neutral. He said Moudud had made a series of phone calls from his hide-out to Singapore, United States, and also the US Embassy in Dhaka.

### Industries

From Page 1 Col 6

6,000 units approved or registered before 1985 were asked to submit their reports and only 1,800 such units gave their reports.

Under the Investment Board Act show cause notices are being served to those units which have failed to submit their reports, the handout said.