

Focus on election- '91

BNP for multi-party democracy, free economy

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press freedom. She said that her party would make radio, television and other mass media autonomous so that these organisations can work independently.

Begum Zia stated that the agricultural sector would be given priority and farm loan upto Taka five thousand would be written off. Land tax will be exempted upto 25 bighas and farm inputs will be supplied at fair prices to attain food autonomy. The industrial base will be expanded to create more job opportunities and to boost production. As to foreign policy she said her party would maintain friendly relations with all the countries with particular emphasis on neighbours. She said that her party stresses the need to maintain closer relations with the Islamic countries.

Honest Govt

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia pledged for establishing an honest government free from corruption. Announcing the 15-point constitutional and administrative measures to be taken by her party Khaleda Zia said that her party would strive for bringing about a dynamism in the administration and making it free from corruption. She said that appropriate steps would be taken to engage the public servants in public services and stern action would be taken against indiscipline and corruption by any employee.

Other measures are: Ensuring the independence and neutrality of the judiciary and rule of law establishing the fundamental rights of the people through repealing all black laws.

Ensuring multi-party democratic system and freedom of expression by all parties. Guarding the independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty of the country and continuation of the policy of the late President Ziaur Rahman to build up an efficient, well equipped and strong defence force for protecting the independence and sovereignty of the country from foreign aggression.

Following a non-aligned foreign policy and friendship with all foreign countries on the basis of equality; establishing good relations with the neighbouring countries, specially with Muslim countries and an active policy against aggression, imperialism and colonialism.

Decentralisation of responsibility of all development and economic activities at village level by forming the village government in each village. Ensuring the freedom of Press and taking step to turn all publicity media into autonomous bodies with a view to making them neutral. Special efforts would be taken to develop the under developed northern districts and hilly areas.

BNP firm to better lot of masses: Khaleda

By Staff Correspondent

BNP chief Begum Khaleda Zia called upon the people to rally round her party in order to make the nation a prosperous one.

The BNP chief was addressing a big public meeting at Dhanmondi ground on Monday.

She said the people are reluctant to suffer any longer the pangs of the politics of starvation, corruption and anarchy.

The meeting was organised by the local unit of Jatityabadi Jubodal and presided over by Zamal Sharif.

Dhaka University Central Students Union Vice-President Aman Ullah Aman also spoke at the meeting.

Begum Zia said her party would remain firm in upholding the spirit of Bangladesh nationalism and protecting the independence and sovereignty of the country.

She said it was the BNP regime that introduced people-oriented policy to better the lot of the masses.

If voted to power, the BNP would surely strive for emancipating the people from miseries, she added.

The BNP chief emphasised on the ensuing polls and said it would pave the way for establishing a representative government. A representative government elected through free polls is the demand of the hour, she added.

Special opportunity to all freedom fighters and shaheed families.

Bringing about a radical reform in the education system and providing increased facilities to the students, eradication of illiteracy and implementation of compulsory primary education and making practical efforts to integrate the madrasa education into the mainstream of the society.

Steps to stop the sessions and ensuring the congenial atmosphere to hold examinations on schedule.

Establishing the four fundamental principles of the Constitution faith on Almighty Allah, democracy, nationalism, and a society based on social and economic justice.

Increasing the production of cloth in the country and ensuring clothes for all.

Establishing a good employer-employee relation for increased production.

Preservation of the rights of all citizens irrespective of religion, caste and creed and strengthening of national unity and solidarity.

Dwelling on the social and cultural heritage of Bangladesh

Khaleda Zia said that the BNP would try to develop a healthy culture in the light of Bangladesh nationalism.

The BNP Chairperson said that her party believed in gradual implementation of the universal declaration of UN charter on human rights.

The party manifesto of the BNP also lashed at the post liberation government and accused the then government for corruption and maladministration.

The then government neglected our armed forces and created a parallel force for party interest and later the party established one party rule through which the government officials, members of the armed forces were dragged in direct politics, she said. She said the activities of the party which was in power after the liberation of the country precipitated the establishment of autocratic rule in the past.

She said that the late President Ziaur Rahman came to power through a people's army mutiny and he was vested with the responsibility of protecting the independence and

sovereignty of the country which was earned through a bloody war.

Golden era

Khaleda Zia said that during the reign of the BNP the whole country was waked up with development activities and the reign of the BNP was the golden period for the nation. She said the BNP established the multiparty democratic system and had undertaken many development activities including canal digging, new mills and factories, ensured the rural health care facilities and above all, brought laurels from abroad for the country through independent and non-aligned foreign policy.

Khaleda Zia in her party manifesto clearly stated that Ziaur Rahman was killed due to the conspiracy of the Ershad coterie and identified enemies of democracy.

Khaleda Zia said that during the nine years rule of Ershad the autocratic government in connivance with the identified circle which destroyed democracy in the country tried to abolish the BNP. The circle though had given lipservice to

the movement went for un-derhand dealing with the Ershad regime which was exposed through its participation in the 1986 election, she added.

With an oblique reference to the Awami League Khaleda Zia said that after the election the party bargained with the Government to join the Parliament which helped Ershad obtain a seal indemnifying his autocratic rule.

Khaleda Zia further said that the circle also conspired to help Ershad continue in power even after the dissolution of the 1986 Parliament but failed to join the 1988 elections. In the face of country-wide resistance to the autocratic rule. Although the circle boycotted the election this time it refused to launch any joint movement, she added.

The BNP manifesto also said that the BNP and its leader Khaleda Zia always stood for a united movement against the autocracy.

She said the last announcement of Ershad was reportedly made in consultation with the identified enemies of the democracy. It is also re-

ported that, there was a blueprint for sharing of power with the identified coterie she added. She said the ill-motivated attempts of the Ershad coterie went into vain due to pressure of the people and his last effort to announce another martial law was also dismantled due to intelligence of the patriotic leaders of the armed forces.

She said the prime and foremost duty of the caretaker Government was to hold a free and fair election and establish the constitutional rule through a national election.

Thrust on free economy

BNP announced a 20-point economic programme with its major thrust on policies favouring a "free and competitive economy" for promotion of private and foreign investments.

In its election manifesto, the party said it would support strong measures for building a developed economic infrastructure as the precondition for industrialisation and overall economic progress.

BNP stated that it would raise development allocations for roads, railway, riverine transport, gas, electricity and telecommunications.

If voted to power, the party will ensure implementation of Jamuna multi-purpose bridge and Meghna Bridge projects.

It made strong commitments for all concerted efforts to mobilise domestic resources, curb unproductive expenditures and utilize available external resources in priority sectors. The Annual Development Programme will be expanded to create more employment opportunities, build assets and ensure distribution of wealth on the basis of "social justice."

The party's economic programme laid stress on effective incentives to bolster savings and enforce financial discipline through strict budgetary controls in all areas of government expenditures.

Dynamic management

The national economic institutions such as power, telephone, railway and industrial concerns will be converted into profitable enterprises through efficiency and dynamism in management practices. Institutional changes will be made to ensure their competitive operations and accountability at all levels.

The party said it would adopt "firm and realistic steps" for maintenance of price stability, and enforcement of discipline in banking and financial sector.

The manifesto said the party, if voted to power, would not accept any foreign assistance on terms inconsistent with national interests and needs.

Limited import

BNP will limit imports of non-essential, less-essential or luxury items. If necessary, such imports will be banned. Priority will be given to non-labour-intensive export operations to help meet the deficit in balance of trade and attain greater self-reliance in development efforts.

It said agricultural sector would receive top priority for attaining self-sufficiency in food. The farmers will be given wider access to agricultural credits and power connections for effective use of irrigation equipment and boosting production.

The party announced it would write off agricultural loans (including the principal amount and interest) up to Taka five thousand. Canal excavation programme will be reintroduced and effective steps will be taken for flood control.

The programme stated that the party would vigorously pursue policies for creating a congenial investment climate including removal of all problems and difficulties hindering the growth of the private sector.

The party announced that it would take all realistic steps to meet the five basic needs of the people such as food, clothing, education, health and housing. Appropriate projects and programmes will be undertaken under the Fourth Five-year Plan to maximise the use of available resources with optimum efficiency. Steps will be taken to tackle population explosion problem. Available resources will be allocated for priority sectors such as poverty alleviation, agriculture, rural development, education, health and family planning.

The BNP stated that it would facilitate the integration of the women community in the development mainstream.

Technical training facilities will be expanded to impart skill free or on concessional terms to educated and unemployed youths.



Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina addressing a public meeting at Kawran Bazar in Dhaka yesterday. — Star Photo

Hasina

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lam in abide to cling to power. Sheikh Hasina alleged.

Referring to the present political situation the AL leader observed that there was no alternative to parliamentary form of government to resolve the mounting problems the nation is confronted with. She also said the establishment of parliamentary form of government is the only way to make constitutional politics stable.

She called upon the people to vote for "boat" to build a democratic order and rule of law as desired by the people.

We are pledge bound to establish an exploitation free society under a representative government, she said.

The meeting was presided over by Mustafa Choudhury, a local leader.

The city leaders M.A. Hanif, Muzaffar Hossain Patu, M.A. Aziz, Advocate Kamrul Islam and Mofazzal Hossain Choudhury Maya also spoke at the meeting.

Sheikh Hasina will address a series of election rallies to-day (Tuesday) at Raipura, Madhabdi, Belabo, Baburhat, Itkhola and Narshingdi.

The party leader as part of an election campaign will also visit Rajshahi tomorrow to address several meetings at Tanore, Mahanpur, Bagmara, Durgapur, Putia, Charghat and Bagha to mobilise public support in favour of the candidates nominated by the party.

The public meetings will be held at Natore, Gurudaspur and Lalpur on February 1.

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Jhenidah rally demands Ershad's release

JHENIDAH, Jan 28: Jatitya Party activists today staged demonstration here demanding release of their leader ousted President Ershad, reports UNB.

An estimated 1,000 demonstrators paraded main streets of the town in a procession carrying festoons and large portraits of Ershad detained in the capital.

Probe into abuse

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book satellite for transmitting her functions to Bangladesh. Roushan visited the United States in April, 1989 along with a big entourage and television crew. Her brother Mohiuddin, the then deputy permanent representative at the United Nations, booked ten-minute satellite time to send the news of his sister. It was done for several days at huge payment in foreign exchange.

The commission has been informed by the Cabinet Division that there is no official provision for "first lady" in Bangladesh. The Cabinet Division received a circular two years back from President's Secretariat to appoint a private secretary, one assistant private secretary and personal staff for the "first lady".

The commission is investigating charges against Roushan of taking huge loans from different banks without observing the normal procedure. These were done by abusing her power as the wife of president. The commission is also investigating the charge against former president Ershad that he exempted interest on huge bank loans taken by some of his relatives and influential colleagues.

The commission, set up to probe corruption charges against former president Ershad, his wife and his asso-

Task forces

ciates, received so far about 1500 complaints. About 500 complaints are against Ershad and his associates and 1000 are against high officials. The commission has taken up only a few of the complaints for investigation.

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still hypothetical, they noted. The interim government has strengthened the monitoring arrangements which were totally missing under the fallen regime, the sources pointed out. They said fortnightly review meetings on the state of the economy are being held. Three such meetings have been held so far.

About Boro crop prospects, the sources said availability of inputs such as fertilizer, seeds, irrigation support facilities and diesel is adequate. Credit disbursements are however slow because of "bunching of accumulated debts". But arrangements are being made by the Ministry of Agriculture to further strengthen inputs delivery arrangements at the farmers level to help attain the Boro crop target of 68 lakh tons.

The estimates of Aman production in the current year are about 93 lakh tons, they added.

Planning Commission sources noted that the political leadership would need to concentrate their efforts, after the parliamentary elections.

2 insurgents held

CHITTAGONG, Jan 28: Bangladesh security forces captured two members of the armed insurgents while another surrendered at two places of Chittagong Hill Tracts during the past three days an official source said here today, reports BSS.



Mr. Shamsul Haque Chowdhury, speaking at APSU rally yesterday in Dhaka. — Star Photo

No privileges for Ershad, APSU tells President

A seven-member delegation of All Party Students' Unity (APSU), led by DUCSU General Secretary Khairul Kabir Khokon, called on Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed at his official residence in Dhaka Monday evening, reports BSS.

The APSU leaders demanded that ex-President Ershad be immediately shifted to the Dhaka Central Jail and treated as an ordinary prisoner, allowing him no special privileges after the submission of charge sheets on specific cases.

They brought some of their problems to the attention of the Acting President.

The APSU leaders told the Acting President that diplomats and other foreigners residing in the country are friends of the nation and safety and security should be ensured by all of us. They also said that our people should show courtesy to the foreigners here in the interest of the nation.

Border towns bombed

Reuter informs: Iraq Monday reported heavy Allied air raids across the country. A British spokesman said the Blitz would continue until Baghdad's ability to repel a ground assault was reduced to a minimum.

Bombing on civilians

A Jordanian driver who left Baghdad on Saturday said Allied planes attacked civilian cars along the desert highway near Rutbah, 70 miles (112 kilometers) east of the Jordanian border. "I personally helped rescue 20 to 25 people

JP wants equal coverage on Radio, TV

Acting Secretary General of the Jatitya Party A.B.M. Shahjahan has urged the government to take steps for the news coverage by radio and television of all the political parties on the basis of the number of nominations they have made for participating in the coming elections, reports BSS.

Mr Shahjahan in a statement on Monday said the government had not announced any policy on the news coverage of the activities of the different political parties taking part in the elections, which is only 30 days away.

The Midnight File

Ciskei coup leader killed

JOHANNESBURG, Jan 28: One of the leaders of a failed coup in South Africa's nominally independent Ciskei Homeland has been shot dead in a clinic in the homeland. Ciskei's military ruler Brigadier Oupa Gqozo told television news he had learnt of the death of Lieutenant General Charles Sebe early today, reports AFP.

13 executed in China

BEIJING, Jan 28: The government executed at least 13 people in a single day in the southern Chinese city of Canton, according to an official newspaper. A brief account in the Yangcheng Evening News, seen in Beijing on Monday, said a group of criminals "guilty of the most heinous crimes" were bound and taken to Canton's public execution ground at dawn Saturday. Executions in China are by a single bullet to the back of the head, reports AP.

Seven Tamil rebels killed

COLOMBO, Jan 28: Sri Lankan security forces battling Tamil separatist guerrillas in the island's northeast killed at least seven more militants in continued military operations officials said today. A military spokesman said government troops today ambushed and killed four Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) fighters in northeastern Welis Oya, where the rebels had previously killed dozens of Sinhalese villagers, reports AFP.

Poor turnout in Panama polls

PANAMA, Jan 28: Panama on Sunday held its first elections since the December 1989 US invasion but the poll was marked by high absenteeism. First results from the polling, which closed at 5 p.m. (2200 GMT) were expected to be released later, but little support was seen for either the US-backed government or backers of strongman Manuel Noriega, who was toppled in the invasion, reports Reuter.

Monk held with heroin

COLOMBO, Jan 28: A young Buddhist monk and a Tamil were arrested at Colombo airport after customs officers found 1.8 kilograms of heroin, worth 27,500 dollars, was hidden in a false bottom of the monk's suitcase, on their return from Madras, officials said Monday. The officials said police suspect the monk was being used by Tamil rebels to smuggle heroin and gold to fund the separatist rebellion in the northern and eastern Sri Lanka. The monk, who is in his early 20s, is attached to a temple in Colombo and had made five trips to India during the past two months, report AFP.

Indian companies in dire straits

NEW DELHI, Jan 28: Indian construction companies have become a major casualty of the Gulf war with nearly one billion dollars, due for projects undertaken, locked-up in Iraq. The companies, which were involved in these projects are now in dire straits with their ability to bid for other foreign projects eroded due to a precarious liquidity position resulting from the war, official sources say, reports PTI.

King Olav's funeral Jan 30

OSLO, Jan 28: More than 100 heads of state and government will attend the funeral of King Olav V of Norway on Wednesday, the Royal Palace announced. Britain's Prince Charles and the Princess Royal (Anne) will be among mourners along with Juan Carlos of Spain, King Baudouin of the Belgians and Prince Albert of Monaco, reports AFP.

Kuwait minefield

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mines." Major Cutchall told a group of about 100 marines during a recent lecture about mines.

He said satellite photos showed that between December 19 and January 5, Iraqi troops laid 60 kilometers (37 miles) of mines in a belt behind their border defence in eastern Kuwait.

There were signs that another huge minefield was being laid near Kuwait City, he said, and Iraqi helicopters and special artillery are expected to position more mines in the rest of Kuwait.

The mine belts are more than a kilometer (half-mile) wide and are in front of sand berms and anti-tank trenches or ditches that are expected to be filled with flaming oil.

US and Allied forces have various means to clear minefields and bombing and artillery fire are expected to destroy 80 to 90 per cent of the mines before combat engineers take over.

10 pc casualty likely

Away, among commanders in Saudi Arabia said: Front-line Army units when ordered to break through Iraqi defence can expect a 10 per cent casualty rate over a 30-day period.

Chemical potential

In Moscow the Commander of the Soviet Union's Chemical Warfare Units said Allied forces had scored hits on Iraqi chemical and biological weapons sites but had not yet destroyed all Iraq's potential.

36 asylum seekers

Iran said Monday 36 Iraqis escaping war crossed the border overnight and asked for asylum.

"The group are the first (Iraqis) seeking asylum in the Islamic Republic since the outbreak of the Gulf war on January 17," news agency IRNA said.

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Govt transports

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ways at 8 pm on other days. The Council of Advisers also resolved that ministries and divisions would take immediate steps for prompt implementation of the Government decision taken earlier to refix the working hours of the second shift of all mills and factories owned by the Government, semi-Government and autonomous organisations which operate in two shifts having working hours of the second shift between 10 pm and 6 am.

The Ministry of Industries will provide necessary assistance and encouragement to mills and factories in the private sector willing to introduce similar working hours for their night shift.