

BNP leadership suffering from political bankruptcy: Tofail

A top brass of the ruling Awami League yesterday questioned the sagacity of opposition leadership in calling to boycott the municipal elections and said hartals won't be able to stop it.

Talking to UNB over phone yesterday evening, Commerce and Industries Minister Tofail Ahmed wondered how a political party like the BNP that was in power could boycott elections and isolate them from the people at the advice of Jatiya Party

and Jamaat-e-Islami which have no candidates in the race.

"But, I understand, many formidable BNP candidates would file nomination papers for commissioners and chairmen in the pourasava (municipal) elections despite the call for boycott," he said.

Tofail recalled the first upazila election under Ershad in 1985, which was boycotted by the opposition, and said: "Despite our boycott call, many Awami League and BNP men contested the upazila chairman election and got elected to join the Jatiya Party."

In 1970, he said, Moulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani

was isolated from the people when he gave the call for boycotting the national election.

Tofail, a seasoned politician, said there may be grounds for Jatiya Party and Jamaat to abstain from the municipal voting since they have no candidates, but what's the reason for BNP to respond to Ershad's call.

"It appears that BNP has stepped into the trap of Ershad who is trying to use BNP with an ultimate plan to grab power... BNP leadership should be careful about this man (Ershad) who was unseated by the people for corruption and autocratic rule."

He said "Ershad has ganged up with Begum Zia with twin missions — disturb Awami League and damage BNP — in a bid to realise his ambitious dream of regaining power. Ershad divulged his mind when he says this country won't run under women leadership (Sheikh Hasina and Begum Zia)."

The Commerce Minister said BNP is now being led by Ershad, Kazi Zafar Ahmed and Barrister Moudud since its "leadership is suffering from political bankruptcy."

About the opposition demand for changing the Chief Election Commissioner, he said the last general election and the by-elections were held under the present CEC who was appointed by the caretaker government on the basis of consensus.

Under this CEC, Awami League lost by-elections in Barisal and Manikganj, where BNP won the seats, Tofail said. On the contrary, Sheikh Hasina's Tungipura seat was snatched away during Ershad's time while "my home seat" was snatched away during the BNP's rule in 1991, he added.

He said that left-front parties, Gano Forum and JSD are taking part in the ensuing municipal and city corporation elections.

Tofail said the opposition's plea for boycotting the election is not the issue. "Rather, it seems they're in a hurry to launch a movement to protect the killers of Bangabandhu and four national leaders by obstructing justice."

Govt decision hailed

Jamaat leaders not invited to state functions

By Staff Correspondent

Leaders of the central coordination council of Bangladesh Muktijoddha Sangsad hailed the government for not inviting Jamaat leaders Golam Azam and Matur Rahman Nizami to state functions.

In a press statement issued yesterday, Sangsad's central coordinator Ishfaq Aziz Ulfat and chief coordinator Sadek Ahmed Khan described the Jamaat leaders as "war criminals."

They expressed their heartfelt congratulation to the government for its decision not to invite the "war criminals" and hoped that the trend would continue in future. They should not be allowed also in political and social functions, the statement added.

Campe to take part in Calcutta book fair

Campaign for Popular Education (Campe), a body of private development organisations involved in education activities, will take part in the 10-day international book fair in Calcutta beginning on January 27, reports BSS.

A total of 25 private publication houses from Bangladesh will participate in the book fair.

Bangladesh has been selected as the theme country in the book fair.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to inaugurate the fair.

Arrangements have been made to exhibit and sell about 178 publications of different private development organisations of Bangladesh in the stall of Campe.

Books on child education programmes, adult education, health, human rights and development programmes and research as well as education equipment and posters will be kept for exhibition and sale.

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Patuakhali Division, Barisal

Tender Notice

Tenders in From No -2911 are invited from Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority's Engineering Division enlisted all class contractors.

Sl. No	Name of work	Estimated cost	Earnest money	Price of schedule	Time limit for completion of work
1)	Protection with brick and herring bone bond of the Link Road at Boga Launch Terminal (2nd time tender).	2,50,000/=	6,250/=	400/=	45 (forty-five) days.
2)	Bank protection and Tender installation at Barguna Launch Terminal.	95,000/=	2,500/=	400/=	30 (thirty) days.
3)	Repairing of Khepupara Autogaze structure and installation at the proposed site.	88,500/=	2,500/=	400/=	30 (thirty) days.
4)	Construction and installation of 2 iron spud at Patuakhali Terminal. (2nd time tender)	5,55,500/=	13,900/=	400/=	45 (forty-five) days.
5)	Construction and installation of Barisal Autogaze Infrastructure.	1,72,300/=	4,300/=	400/=	30 (thirty) days.

Tenders of the said works will be received in the tender box kept at the office of the Executive Engineer, Patuakhali Division, Barisal/Khulna/Design & Planning Circle, Dhaka up to 12:00 Noon of 28/01/99 (15 Magh, 1405 BS) and will be opened on the same day at 12:15 PM in presence of the tenderers (if any). Amount of earnest money mentioned against the works must be submitted with the tender through Bank Draft/Cash Deposit/Pay-Order on any scheduled bank in favour of the authority. Tender form and necessary papers can be collected subject to obtaining receipt on depositing the price of the schedule mentioned against each work from the Zonal Accounts Office of BIWTA, Barisal/Dhaka/Khulna during office hours (except the date of opening tender). Terms & conditions will be attached to the tender schedule.

The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason.

Md. Asaduzzaman
Executive Engineer
BIWTA, Barisal Division
In-Charge
Patuakhali Division, Barisal.

PR-4/99
DFP-17/12/1
G-102

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer
PWD Division, Naogaon

Notice Inviting Tenders

No. E.E/Naogaon-12 (Twelve) of 1998-99

1. Sealed tenders in Bangladesh Form No. 2911 are hereby invited from the approved special class-I (one)/class-II (one) building contractors of PWD, class-II (two) building contractors of PWD Zone, Rajshahi and class-III (three) building contractors of PWD Circle, Rajshahi according to financial limit of classification of contractors for the undermentioned works and will be received by the undersigned as well as by the Executive Engineer, PWD Division No. I/II, Rajshahi/Natore, Pabna and Sub-Divisional Engineer, PWD Sub-Division, Nowabganj in their respective offices up to 12:00 Noon on 28.1.99 Eng and will be opened on the same day at 12:15 PM in presence of the tenderers who may like to remain present. Each tender shall be in a sealed cover with the name of work superscribed on it.

2. Tender Form will be sold up to

3. Name of work under each group with other particulars as below

Group No	Name of work	Estimated cost	Earnest money	Time allowed
I (One)	Establishment of Regional Duck Breeding Farm alongwith Hatchery at Naogaon (Subhead: Construction of Run in middle place of Grower shed No. 1 & 2) during the year 1998-99	Tk 9,30,079/-	Tk 18,602/-	20 (Twenty) days.
II (Two)	Establishment of Regional Duck Breeding Farm alongwith Hatchery at Naogaon (Subhead: Construction of Run in middle place of layer shed No 1 & 2) during the year 1998-99	Tk 7,61,787/-	Tk 15,236/-	20 (Twenty) days.
III (Three)	-do-do-do-do- (Subhead: Construction of Run for Layer shed No. 3) during the year 1998-99	Tk 4,90,970/-	Tk 9,819/-	20 (Twenty) days.
IV (Four)	-do-do-do-do- (Subhead: Construction of Run for Layer shed No. 6) during the year 1998-99	Tk 4,90,970/-	Tk 9,819/-	15 (Fifteen) days.

N.B. : If the tenders of the same lowest equal rates are received from more than one tenderer, contractors shall be selected from among those valid tenders by lottery on 8/2/99 Eng. at 12:00 Noon in the office chamber of the undersigned in presence of the tenderers who may like to remain present. In absence of anybody no claim whatsoever will be entertained.

Shamsul Kabir
Executive Engineer
PWD Division, Naogaon

DFP-947-14/1
G-105



(Top) As Eid is drawing nearer, people have become desperate to go home. With no seats in buses, they find truck as a good alternative to get home. (bottom) The rush is reflected in the traffic jam on the Dhaka-Tangail highway — Star photo

PM condoles death

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday paid tributes to elderly Awami League leader Syed Fazlul Haq BSc by placing wreaths at his coffin when his body was brought to Awami League central office at Bangabandhu Avenue, reports BSS.

Ministers, central leaders of the party and its front organisations and a large number of workers assembled in front of the party office to pay their last respect to the deceased who made immense contributions to the party during his long political life.

A member of the central working committee of Awami League Syed Fazlul Haq BSc died of old age complications on Saturday at his residence in Dhaka.

The Prime Minister, who is the president of Awami League, also placed wreath on behalf of the organisation. She remained in solemn silence for some time as a mark of respect to the departed soul. She offered special *manajat* for peace of the soul of Syed Fazlul Haq, who was a close associate of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The Prime Minister talked to the members of the deceased family who were present there and consoled them.

Among others, ministers and party leaders including Abdus Samad Azad, Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Amir Hossain Anwar, Abdur Razzak, Mohammad Nasim, Mosharrif Hossain, Mohammad Nooruddin, Mayor Mohammad Hanif, Dr S A Malek, Mohammad Quamaruzzaman, Mofazzel Hossain Chowdhury Maya Bir Bikram, Obaidul Kader, K M Jahangir, Mohiuddin Ahmed, Dr Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin, Mukul Bose, Sultan Mohammad Mansur, S S Halder, A S M Feroj, Alhaj M o q b u l H o s s a i n, Akhteruzzaman, Habibur Rahman Khan, were present.

'Opposition trying to create chaos'

KHULNA, Jan 17: State Minister for Relief and Disaster Management Talukder Abdul Khaleque has criticised the alliance of opposition political parties, saying that these political parties are out to create chaos and confusion in the country and to grab state power, reports BSS.

He was speaking at a meeting followed by an *iftar* party held at the Awami League office yesterday.

Presided over by Khulna City Awami League president Monjurul Imman, the meeting was also addressed by Secretary of Khulna District Awami League and Whip of Jatiya Sangsad S M Mostafa Rashidi Shuja, Awami League leader and the party mayoral candidate for Khulna City Corporation SMA Rob, S M Kamal, Shaikh Monirul Islam Momi, Chisty Sohrab Hossain.

Fazlul Haq BSc laid to rest

Veteran politician and Awami League leader Syed Fazlul Haq BSc was laid to eternal rest at the martyred intellectuals' graveyard, Mirpur yesterday afternoon, reports BSS.

Fazlul Haq, who was the Office Secretary and a member of the central working committee of Bangladesh Awami League, died of old age complications Saturday at his residence in Dhaka.

Earlier, cabinet ministers, leaders of different political parties, journalists and a host of friends and relatives attended his *janaza* held at the Baitul Mokarram National Mosque after *Zohr* prayers yesterday.

The body of the elderly politician, who was also the president of Bangladesh Book Publishers' Association, was brought to Bangla Bazar area in morning where the members of the association paid their last respect to the leader.

Tk 30.5 cr more EC aid for Bangladesh's flood victims

The European Commission has approved a further package of humanitarian aid worth 5.45 million euro (Taka 30.5 crore) for victims of last year's floods in Bangladesh, reports BSS.

This aid, managed by the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO), will enable humanitarian organisations to continue to provide relief to the flood victims. It includes to link relief with rehabilitation and development and in so doing seeks to reduce dependency on emergency aid, a press release said.

ECHO's partners for this programme are several non-governmental organisations including the NGO Forum for Drinking Water, Supply and Sanitation Cafod (GB), Concerned World Wide (Ireland), BRAC/Novib (Netherlands), Oxfam (GB and Bangladesh) and Aparajeyo/Terre des Hommes Foundation (Italy).

The principal activities undertaken will be crop recovery through providing seeds and other agricultural inputs to over 125,000 families, occupational rehabilitation by supplying inputs such as tools, saplings, fish fry and chicks to over 100,000 people to enable them resume their income-generating activities, housing by providing construction materials to repair and reconstruct 14,000 houses, the supply of clean water by repairing and installing over 30,000 tubewells, and sanitation by building over 27,000 latrines.

As an immediate response to the crisis, ECHO had approved a package worth one million euro (Tk 5.6 crore) in September last year and a further two million euro (Tk 11 crore) in October. These grants focussed on food, medical support, purification of water supplies, sanitation services and shelter.

Poura polls should be held in free, fair manner: Menon

Stressing the importance of an independent electoral system, Workers Party leader Rashed Khan Menon yesterday said the coming pourashava elections should be held in a free and fair manner to ensure people's participation, reports UNB.

"All future elections of the country, including the parliamentary one, depend on the coming local-body election," he told a general meeting of his party members in Tangail.

Chaired by Tangail district secretary of WP Ohiduzzaman Mottl, the meeting was addressed, among others, by party politburo member Mahmudul Hasan Manik, central committee member Hazera Sultana, Khan Firoj, Nawaj Chowdhury Power and Naresh Paul.

Turning to the country's present socio-economic condition, Menon said Workers Party and Left Democratic Front would continue their movement against black money, terrorism and communalism.

He said public life and property were not safe in the hands of the Awami government as the administration could hardly take action against extortionists and terrorists.

BNP wants to boycott elections fearing defeat: Zillur

KISHOREGANJ, Jan 17: LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Zillur Rahman has said BNP was giving threat of boycotting the local government elections in union with the anti-liberalisation forces and the autocrat apprehending massive defeat, reports BSS.

Because of its negative politics, the BNP is now isolated from the people, he said.

The minister was addressing a public meeting in Kullarchar today. Later, he distributed the government assistance for building houses to the flood-affected people.

The government has distributed Tk 3290 crore agriculture loan, arranged for 42 lakh VGF cards to provide food aid to two crore affected people and sanctioned Tk 50 crore for construction and re-construction of houses damaged in the flood, Zillur said.

He said the BNP was hatching conspiracy to destroy the democracy and deprive the people of their basic rights by destabilising society in the name of movement in alliance with Jamaat and Jatiya Party.

The minister said the opposition would not be able to create any issue out of its four-point demand as these have nothing to do with people's hopes and aspiration.

Zillur said the government had set an example of free and fair elections and the forthcoming elections of the local government bodies will also be held in a free and fair atmosphere.

The minister called upon the people to foil all conspiracies to deprive them of their fundamental rights by the BNP-JP-Jamaat alliance.

The minister distributed Tk six lakh to 1200 families as house building assistance.

Tk 30 cr project for rubber cultivation

RANGAMATI, Jan 17: The government has undertaken a plan to construct six rubber dams in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) at a cost of Tk 30 crore to bring about 20,000 acres of fallow land under rubber cultivation, officials said here yesterday, reports BSS.

They said sites of the proposed dams have been selected in the three hill districts of Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban after feasibility studies to provide sustainable services to the affected farmers of the region.

The construction of rubber dams was part of a government commitment following the landmark CHT peace accord.

The dams will be constructed in phases to promote rubber plantation in the region, officials added.

Khasru leaves for Singapore

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Abdul Matin Khasru along with his ailing wife left Dhaka for Singapore last night, reports BSS.

Family sources said the condition of his wife deteriorated suddenly yesterday afternoon and doctors at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University recommended she be taken abroad for emergency treatment. She will be admitted to the Mount Elizabeth Hospital in Singapore.

The minister requested all to pray for the early recovery of his wife.

4 dacoits held in Narsingdi

NARSINGDI, Jan 17: Polish thana police arrested four dacoits from Ginarid rail gate at Polish here on Wednesday night and recovered a foreign revolver and three rounds of bullets from their possession, reports BSS.

Acting on a tip off, a police squad led by sub-inspector Ajit Kumer gheraero the area and caught the dacoits.

The arrested were identified as Khandaker Jabad, 25 and Morshed Alam, 20, of Belabo, Babul, 24, of Chandar, Shibpur, and Awal Bhuiyan, 22, of Ashrafpur, Shibpur.

A case was filed with Polish thana in this connection.



Awami League chief and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina placed wreaths at the coffin of Fazlul Haq BSc at the party's central office in the city yesterday. A member of the party's central working committee, Fazlul Haq died in the city on Saturday. — PID photo

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