

Communal forces get stronger day by day: Hasina

UNB, Dhaka

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the communal forces, not the BNP, are getting stronger day by day under the leadership of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia.

"She (Khaleda) thinks that the communal forces will keep her in power forever. But that would not happen," Hasina said while addressing the leaders and workers of Awami League and its front organisations from Comilla district at the party's Dhanmondi office.

Hasina demanded immediate resignation of Khaleda Zia, saying that the BNP-Jamaat alliance government has failed to ensure security of a diplomat, an MP and the common people as well. "She has totally failed to govern the country. She has no right to cling to power any longer."

The former prime minister alleged that "criminals" are now governing the country while the government stuffed the jails with AL activists after setting free "thousands of criminals".

"Where is the government? It has become non-existent," she said in a swinging criticism of her political foes.

The AL chief said the BNP-Jamaat coalition "indirectly" admitted to their link to the bomb attack on British High Commissioner Anwar Choudhury in Sylhet by not allowing the Sylhet mayor to bring out a procession.

AL leaders Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, Motia Chowdhury, Subid Ali Bhuiyan, Comilla AL leader Jahangir Alam Sarker and recently released Jubo League leader of Comilla (north) Sohel Mostafa Swapan were present.

Earlier, Hasina attended a meeting of AL's social cell at the party office.

DEFAMATION CASES

Daily Star, Prothom Alo editors get bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted bail to Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star, and Matiur Rahman, editor of the Prothom Alo, and its news editor Sanaulah, in two separate defamation cases after their surrender.

Jagannath Das Khokan, magistrate of the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) Court, passed the bail order upon a bond of Tk 10,000 with two guarantors.

Mahfuz Anam, Matiur Rahman and Sanaulah along with their lawyers appeared before the court at 12:30pm and prayed for bail.

A lawyer of Dhaka Bar Association filed the cases with the CMM's Court on April 6 against them for publishing a report under the headline 'CJ asked to replace 3 judges, five magistrates' on February 16.

Many other newspapers also carried the same story on that day but cases were filed only against The Daily Star and the Prothom Alo.