

Govt has turned Bangladesh into a fundamentalist state

AL leaders tell rally

UNB, Dhaka

Leaders of the main opposition Awami League yesterday criticised the BNP-led alliance government, saying that it has turned secular Bangladesh into a fundamentalist country.

"The Khaleda-led coalition government has resorted to repression on political opponents to cling on to power by force," Awami League president member Zillur Rahman said, adding the ruling party leaders are becoming increasingly arrogant and are devoid of any political courtesy or culture.

He was speaking at a discussion meeting held to mark the 86th birth day of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The meeting, organised by Awami Secchhasebok League at Bangabandhu Avenue, was presided over by Secchhasebok League president Bahauddin Nasim.

Expressing concern over the abnormal rise of prices of essentials, AL presidium member Tofail Ahmed said government did not take any step to control the price-hike.

Referring to the claim of the Prime Minister that the country was now on road to development, Tofail said "there had been development only of the families of the Prime Minister and the ministers" under her regime.

Ershad leaves for London

UNB, Dhaka

Jatiya Party chairman HM Ershad left for London on a weeklong tour yesterday.

Party sources said Ershad went on private tour.

Wife Bidisha Ershad and son Erik Ershad accompanied the former President.

"If BNP decided that they would hold the election without reforming the caretaker government and in absence of Awami League, then it would be another farce election like the February 15, 1996," the AL leader said.

Party general secretary Abdul Jalil accused Finance Minister and the Prime Minister of "hatching conspiracies to foil the development activities by making the country friendless" and claimed both of them violated the constitution.

"The alliance government realised that their days are numbered... they are engaged in such activities to make the country friendless and inactive," Jalil said referring to recent comments of the Prime Minister and Finance Minister on foreign diplomats and donor agencies.

Jalil also observed that the people have no confidence in the government because they had brought down Bangladesh's credibility at zero level.

He urged the countrymen to take proper steps against those who are conspiring against Bangladesh to make the country ineffective.

He also appealed to democracy-loving people to get united and join the opposition movements aimed at pulling the alliance government from power.

AL organizing Secretary Abdul Mannan said this alliance government wants to make Bangladesh a vassal state and make the "unsettling the settled issues of the War of Liberation."

Dhaka University Teachers Association President AAMS Arefin Siddique said Bangabandhu was a born freedom fighter who presented an independent Bangladesh.

"On the occasion of the birth anniversary of Bangabandhu it should be our pledge to ensure early execution of the killers of Bangabandhu," he said.



Indigenous artists perform Manipuri dance at Shilpakala Academy auditorium in the city yesterday, the last day of the three-day Adivasi Cultural Festival.

Shafiq personal assistant to Bhuiyan

BSS, Dhaka

BNP Secretary General and Minister for LGRD and Cooperatives Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan has appointed former member of parliament Mohammad Shafiqul Islam as his personal assistant.

The decision will be implemented with immediate effect, a party press release said here yesterday.

Caretaker shot in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Miscreants yesterday shot and injured a caretaker of an under-construction building in the city.

Victim Mohammad Helal, 30, caretaker of a house at Kazipara

Rab nabs two with firearms

BSS, Khulna

The Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) members nabbed two people with firearms and three drug peddlers in Jessore and Khulna in the last two days.

A Rab team picked up one Abdul Halim, 38, along with a country-made gun from his house at Pachpota village under Dumuria thana in Khulna on Friday night.

The Rab sources said Halim, son of Moksed Ali Sardar, is an accused in a number of cases. He was handed over to Dumuria police yesterday.

Acting on a tip-off, another Rab team raided Buikora village in Abhynagar thana of Jessore in the early hours of yesterday and nabbed one Shahidul Islam alias Ripon, son of Bachchu Sardar, with a shutter gun and a cartridge. He was handed over to police.

The three drug peddlers were nabbed from Nayabati slum under Khalishpur thana on Friday evening. The Rab team also seized 40 litres of liquor and a huge quantity of ganja.

The arrestees are Tyeb Ali, 42, son of late Ismail Gazi, Bazur Rahman, 45, son of Jalal Mia, and Sharif, 30, son of Abdur Rab. They were handed over to Khalishpur police yesterday.

Khulna customs commissioner closed to NBR office

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Khulna Customs Commissioner Shahabuddin Nagari has been closed to the office of National Board of Revenue (NBR) for issuing an official order on March 8 suspending import and export activities at the Mongla Export Processing Zone (MEPZ) following allegations of tax evasion by two local companies.

The order was withdrawn on March 14 following when the investors assured the three-member inquiry committee of cooperating investigation of the allegations of tax dodging or any other irregularities.

The inquiry committee is to submit its report on or before March 23. The two local units facing charges of tax evasion started exporting their goods after withdrawal of suspension order, MEPZ sources said.

A reliable source at Mongla Export Processing Zone told The Daily Star that the customs has no authority to demand duty from investors of the EPZ that enjoy tax holiday.

UITS ceremony today

The University of Information Technology and Sciences (UITS) will hold a Matriculation & Recognition Ceremony 2005 at the Spectra Convention Centre at House # 19, Road # 7, Gulshan # 1, at 4.00pm today, says a press release.

State Minister of Education ANM Ehsanul Haq Milon will attend the ceremony as chief guest.

Sufi Mohamed Mizanur Rahman, chairman of PHP Group, will be present as the keynote speaker while Dr A Majeed Khan, vice-chancellor of the UITS, will deliver the address of welcome.

SSC EXAMS

378 more expelled

UNB, Dhaka

A total of 378 students were expelled yesterday for cheating in the Mathematics examination of the SSC and its equivalent examinations across the country.

Nine invigilators were also expelled on the day -- five under Madrasa Board, two of Technical Education Board, and one each of Dhaka and Jessore Board for helping students to adopt unfair means.

Of the total, 193 students were expelled for cheating under the general education boards -- 72 in Rajshahi Board, 47 in Chittagong Board, 27 in Dhaka Board, 17 in Comilla Board, 10 in Jessore Board and 20 in Barisal Board.

According to the reports, expelled students also include 141 under Madrasa Board and 44 under Technical Education Board.

Two fake examinees were arrested during the day -- one from Chittagong Board and another from Jessore Board.

1,769 more held

UNB, Dhaka

Police arrested 1,769 people on various charges from different parts of the country in the last 24 hours, as of 6.00am yesterday.

During the period, the law enforcers recovered some firearms, weapon and bullets.

FE Recruitment

The Financial Express intends to recruit some Apprentice Reporters and Sub-Editors immediately. Fresh university graduates having proficiency in English are invited to apply. Computer literates will be preferred. Applications accompanied by CVs must reach the undersigned by March 31, 2005.

Editor

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