

Polls schedule before meeting our demands to mean CEC's farewell

Jalil tells mourning rally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of the Awami League-led 14-party alliance yesterday alleged that the chief election commissioner (CEC) is preparing to announce the election schedule before realising their demands for reconstitution of the Election Commission (EC).

"Announcing the election schedule before meeting our demands will see the chief election commissioner's own farewell," Jalil said at a mourning rally organised by city Awami League (AL) in front

of the Nabisco factory at Tejgaon in protest of the killing of Wajidullah.

CEC MA Aziz and three other commissioners must be removed for the sake of holding a free and fair election, Jalil, also AL general secretary, told the rally.

It is regretful that the CEC and other commissioners, who have been publicly despised, met the president to discuss election schedule ignoring the caretaker government's proposal, Tofail said.

"Wajidullah's sacrifice will not go in vain. We will realise the demands of Wajidullah and others gave their lives

for and this should be our oath today," he said.

Wajidullah was killed at the Sonargaon intersection at Karwan Bazaar on November 13 when a police truck drove through a group of 14-party activists on the second day of their nationwide blockade programme demanding implementation of the alliance's 11-point task.

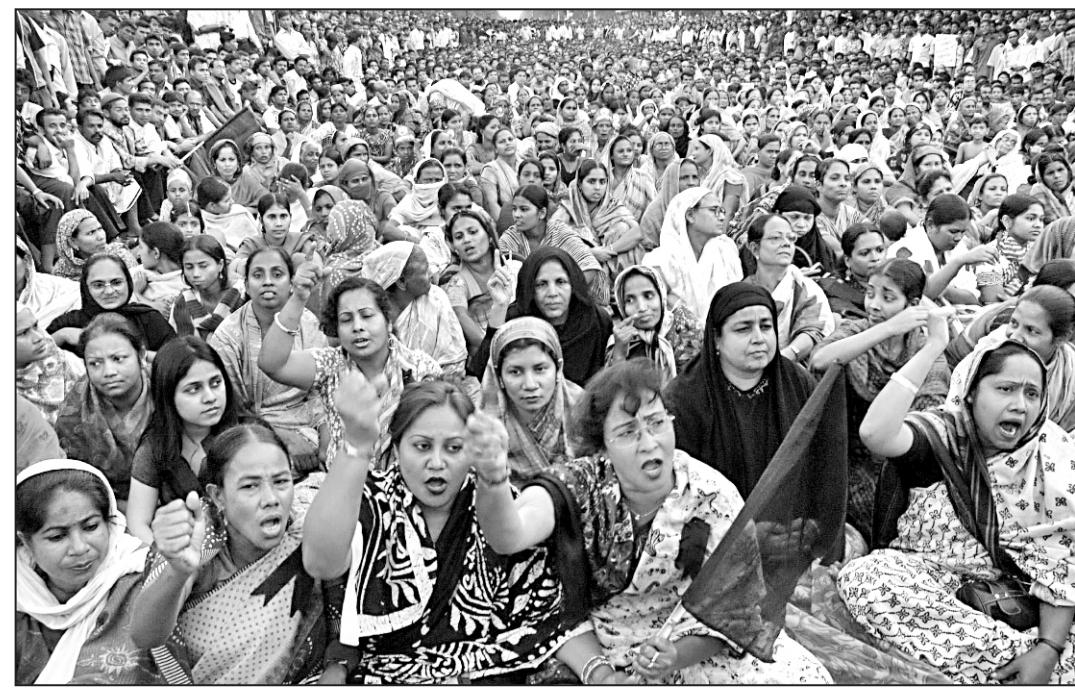
Tofail urged the president to meet their demands within the stipulated time—"before the ongoing movement turns into one for the president's resignation".

Referring to former prime minister Khaleda Zia's saying the election will be held "no matter who takes part and who does not", another AL Presidium Member Abdur Razzak said no election will be held in the country excluding the AL-led 14-party alliance.

The leaders of the 14-party alliance said a free and fair election is not possible without removal of the CEC and three other commissioners and reconstitution of the EC. They vowed to continue their movement until their demands are met.

The non-stop nationwide blockade programme will resume from Monday if the president fails to meet their demand within the period, they warned.

Senior 14-party leaders Surjani Sengupta, Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Matia Chowdhury, Obaidul Quader, Hasanul Haque Inu, Rashed Khan Menon, Mohammad Nasim, Dr Hm Iqbal, Mofazzel Hossain Chowdhury Maya and Pankaj Bhattacharya also spoke at the rally.



City Awami League stages a demonstration in front of Nabisco factory at Tejgaon in the city yesterday protesting the killing of Wajidullah who was killed under the wheels of a police van during the nationwide blockade by AL-led 14-party combine.

Act neutrally, allow advisers to function properly

Protirodh Committee urges CA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Samajik Protirodh Committee, an alliance of 38 rights organisations, yesterday urged the Chief Adviser to the caretaker government (CG) to act neutrally and allow the advisers to perform their duties properly.

At a press conference at the National Press Club in the city, the alliance leaders placed a 16-point demand to the (CG) to meet them within its tenure and if it is not possible then refer them to next government for their realisation.

The demands included removing chief election commissioner (CEC), reconstituting the Election Commission (EC), improving law and order and recovering illegal arms to hold a free and fair election.

Besides, fixing electoral expenditure and cancelling nomination if the limit is violated, declaring loan defaulters incompetent for contesting election and reshuffling the administration from central to grassroots level are also included in their demands.

The alliance also demanded ban on using religion as a tool of electoral campaign, preparing fresh voter list and cancelling recruitment of 300 election officers.

In a written statement, Rekha Chowdhury of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad demanded restoring Women's Development Policy 1997 and ensuring women's equal rights in all spheres of life.

'Ensure removal of CEC'

UNB, Dhaka

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) yesterday urged the President/ Chief Adviser to Caretaker Government to ensure the removal of Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Justice MA Aziz and Election Commissioner SM Zakaria to create an atmosphere for free and fair election.

A meeting of the JSD standing committee also expressed concern at the President's "failure" in creating neutral atmosphere for elections. The meeting said it appears that the President is acting under BNP-Jamaat's blueprint and influence.

"If the President fails to understand the minds of the people, consequences will be bad," a resolution of the meeting said.

The resolution blamed the President for pushing the nation towards uncertainty. It urged the people to remain alert against any conspiracy to foil the elections and democracy.

JSD President Hasanul Huq Inu presided over the meeting.

"The present caretaker government is not acting as a collective body and as such unnecessary delay is being made in taking decisions," said Dr Hamida Hossain, a rights activist.

Quoting a remark of Adviser Yasmine Mursheed, Mahila Parishad General Secretary Ayesha Khanam said the advisers are acting irresponsibly while they should deliver balanced speech.

The president assumed the charge of chief adviser violating the constitution and recruited an information officer outside the organisational structure, journalist Nasim Ara Huq said, adding

that he even did not give any clarification on the circular ordering for army deployment.

The speakers said the chief adviser should be neutral in performing his duty for holding a free and fair election.

Nazma Akhter of Aways Foundation, Selina Khalek of Bangladesh Mahila Samity and Mamta Begum of Mahila Mukti Joddha Sangsad also spoke at the press conference where representatives of Karmajibi Nari, Bangladesh Nari Pragati Sangha, AIN O Shishai Kendra, Women for Women and Baishi were present.



Mahila Parishad General Secretary Ayesha Khanam speaks at a press conference at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

WEATHER TODAY

Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said in a forecast.

Highest temperature 32.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Cox's Bazar and lowest 16.5 degree Celsius at Rajshahi.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:12pm today and rises at 6:16am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature	Humidity in celsius		
percentage	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	30.2	20.5	61	54
Chittagong	31.7	21.5	74	63
Rajshahi	29.6	16.5	77	—
Khulna	30.5	19.0	75	74
Barisal	30.5	18.5	82	—
Sylhet	31.5	18.8	65	69
Cox's Bazar	32.0	22.8	70	—

'Cancel contractual appointments in edn sector'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Front of Teachers and Employees (NFTE) yesterday demanded cancellation of all contractual appointments in the education sector.

Leaders of NFTE in a statement alleged that wives of several former ministers still hold different key posts and demanded their removal from the posts.

Besides, they also demanded removal of the vice chancellors of National University, Open University and chairs of all education boards.

FIRE AT EC'S RESIDENCE

None held yet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

None has so far been arrested in connection with the firing of several shots at the residence of Election Commissioner Mahmud Hasan Mansur at Mohammadpur in the city on Thursday.

Different branches of police and members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) are investigating the incident to find out the masterminds behind the attack, said a police source.

Police believe that the attack was carried out to create panic among the election commissioners and other political leaders living in the area.

Additional police have been deployed and different security measures taken around the house along with other houses of election commissioners, judges and political activists to avoid further untoward incident.

Obituary

Khondoker Abu Taher, former lawmaker from Tangail, passed away due to old age complications last night.

He is survived by his wife, two sons and a daughter.

His namaz-e-janaaza will be held at Dhammilon Road 7 mosque after Zohr prayers today.

Admirers have been requested to pray for salvation of his departed soul.

Shafiuiddin Dewan

Mohammad Shafiuiddin Dewan, former director of Islami Bank Bangladesh Limited, passed away due to a cardiac arrest at Birdem Hospital in the city on Thursday at the age of 76, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, two sons and three daughters.

Prof ANMA Zaher, chairman, board of directors, Principal Maulana Zainul Abedin, vice chairman and ATM Harun-ur-Rashid Chowdhury, executive president of Islami Bank Bangladesh Limited condoled the death of Shafiuiddin Dewan.



Immigration police rescue 31 women at Zia International Airport in the city yesterday, who were reportedly being trafficked to Libya. (Story on Page 1)

Tributes paid to Bhasani

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

The 30th death anniversary of veteran political leader Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani was observed yesterday.

To mark the day, different political, social and cultural organisations organised various programmes at the mazar of the great leader at Santosh in Tangail.

The Santosh Islamic University Trust Board and Maulana Bhasani University of Science and Technology jointly organised a two-day programmes to pay homage to the legendary leader.

The programmes included placing wreaths, offering fateha and holding mazat mahfil at his mazar, special prayer, destitute feeding, discussion meeting, blood donation, painting competition for children, session of spiritual songs, photo exhibition and handicrafts exhibition.

Thousands of admirers of Maulana Bhasani from different parts of the country and outside came to his mazar at Santosh and paid tributes to the leader of the oppressed people.

Different social and cultural organisations also placed wreath at the mazar.

These included Maulana Bhasani University of Science and Technology, Santosh Islamic University Trust Board, Maulana Bhasani Foundation, International Faraka Committee and Khoda-e-Khedmatgar.

Different political parties also placed wreath at the mazar. These included Awami League (AL), Jatiya Party (Ershad), Jatiya Party (Manju), Krishak Sramik Janata League (KSJL), NAP (Bhasani), Workers Party and JSD.

Tangail district BNP organised a memorial meeting at Santosh.

Former minister for environment and forests and BNP leader Tariqul Islam attended the meeting as chief guest.

With Tangail district BNP Vice-president Shamsul Haque in the chair, the meeting was addressed by former minister for jute and textiles Shahjahan Siraj, former state minister for civil aviation Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, former state minister for expatriate's welfare and overseas employment Lutfar Rahman Khan Azad, former deputy minister for information Abdus Salam Pinto.

Five held in murder case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detective and Criminal Intelligence branch of police, formerly known as Detective Branch, arrested five people accused in Awami Svechchasebab League leader Haji Manir Uddin Manu murder case from Pirojpur area on Thursday.

The arrestees are Norman Ibn Bashar alias TVS Babu, Nazmul Huda alias Naju, Jashim, Mahfuz and Hafiz.

Police said the arrestees are killing-squad members of the infamous Shahadat Group, which allegedly carried out the murders of several businessmen of Mirpur area after failing to get tolls from them.

Police said they also seized a motorbike used in Manu's murder at Faridpur Cold Storage Ltd compound near Rajbari crossing in Faridpur district.

They said Babu and Nazmul top the list of criminals in Faridpur and they are accused in seven criminal cases including the sensational Ali and Kamrani murder cases.

A gang shot Manu, a businessman, dead as he was supervising a feast for destitute people on the 31st death anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in the city's Mirpur area on August 15. A bystander rickshaw-puller was also injured in the incident.

Qulkhwani

Qulkhwani of Mohammad Ali Tareque, a freedom fighter and former lawmaker, will be held at his residence at 8/7, Aurangzeb Road at Mohammadpur in the city after Asr prayer.

Ali Tareque, also a journalist, passed away due to a massive brain stroke on Thursday. He was laid to rest at state honour at the Mirpur Martyred Intellectuals' Graveyard after Juma prayers yesterday.

Admirers and friends have been requested to attend the qulkhwani and pray for salvation of the departed soul.



Mountaineers pose for photograph with the guests at a reception at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

Sack 4 advisers for holding talks with political parties

Demand Pro-BNP professionals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pro-BNP professionals at a roundtable yesterday urged President/Chief Adviser to caretaker government Iajuddin Ahmed to sack four advisers who held dialogue with different political parties 'violating the oath to the constitution'.

The roundtable on Ninth National Election 2007-Present Political Climate was organised by Bangladesh Sammilita Peshabji Parishad at the National Press Club in the city.

The professionals said the Awami League-led 14-party coalition is now holding conspiracies so that the Election Commission and the caretaker government cannot conduct the coming general election in January.

They called upon the president to make arrangements for announcing the election schedule and take stern action against those who are demanding the removal of Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) MA Aziz and other election commissioners.

"We appreciate the activities of the president. He is performing his duties under heavy pressure. We thank him as he did not compromise with the demands of Awami League," said Sadek Khan, chairman of the Press Institute of Bangladesh.

Prof Dr MA Majed, former adviser to caretaker government, said it is the first and foremost duty of the chief adviser and other advisers to hold election in time for safeguarding the democracy.

Senior lawyer TH Khan urged the caretaker government to arrest misinterpreters of the constitution to protect democracy.

He alleged that pro-Awami League lawyers have been misinterpreting the constitution under the banner of Supreme Court Bar Association and forming human chains and chanting slogans on the Supreme Court premises for long.

"It is completely illogical to demand

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