

Boycotting parties to blame if polls lose acceptability: Khaleda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Blasting the Awami League-led combine for staying away from the January 22 election, BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday said the boycotting parties, not the participating ones, would be responsible if the election becomes 'less acceptable' due to the boycott.

Reiterating the position of the BNP-led four-party alliance, Khaleda said they would participate in the election, as there is a constitutional obligation to hold it within 90 days from power handingover.

About the much-talked matter of seeking Supreme Court's reference for taking more time to hold the election with all the parties' participation, she said, "The Supreme Court can explain the constitution but it can not issue any direction against or beyond the constitution."

Expressing her doubt whether Awami League will accept the Supreme Court's interpretation on the constitutional obligation for holding election, she said, "We have trust in the Supreme Court. But do they [AL] have any faith in the Supreme Court?"

Khaleda Zia, who addressed a press conference at a hotel in the capital, did not reply to any question of the journalists. BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan replied to the reporters' queries on behalf of her after her written speech.

Mannan Bhuiyan later said the president can send reference to the Supreme Court on a matter that is controversial and obscure but there is no obscurity about holding the election within 90 days.

Many leaders, workers and

activists of the BNP-led four-party alliance and pro-BNP professionals including teachers, doctors, lawyers and columnists gathered at the press conference venue.

"We urged all to take part in January 22 election as it would strengthen the democratic process if all the parties join the election," Khaleda Zia said at the conference.

"Awami League is trying to make the BNP a victim of an odd situation through boycotting the election. Conspiracy is going on to shift the

blame on us for holding election with the participation of lesser number of political parties," she said.

"They could not give an acceptable reason for changing their mind abruptly... There can be only one reason - disqualification of the Jatiya Party Chairman [Ershad] on legal grounds from contesting the election," Khaleda said.

The BNP chairperson said fake

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1



Four-party alliance leader and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia addressing newsmen at Hotel Sonargaon yesterday.

LDP announces 10-day blockade from Jan 12

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) yesterday announced consecutive blockade across the country from January 12 to 22, demanding resignation of Chief Adviser Iajuddin Ahmed and cancellation of the general election scheduled for January 22.

The party will hold grand rallies in Dhaka and two divisional cities on January 9, 10 and 11 to press for the demands.

LDP Secretary General Major (retd) Abdul Mannan announced the programmes after an emergency meeting of the party presidium at its Bardhara office.

He also said the LDP will discuss its decision to enforce consecutive blockade programme and propose it to the leaders of Awami League-led grand alliance.

"The blueprint of Iajuddin as prescribed by Khaleda-Nizami clique will not be allowed to be implemented through the January 22 election," he said.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Non-stop siege for 10 days if demands not met: Hasina

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina yesterday said if the grand alliance's demand for fair election is not fulfilled by January 7-8 blockade, a non-stop siege for 10 days will be enforced to resist "vote thieves."

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