

Lift emergency to keep democracy on track

Speakers urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a book launching ceremony yesterday urged the chief adviser of the caretaker government to withdraw the state of emergency and release Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina immediately to keep democracy on track.

The launching ceremony of the book titled 'Dr Fakhruddin: Please Balte Din' by Abdul Latif Siddique, a freedom fighter and an AL central leader, was held at the National Press Club in the capital.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique, former president of Dhaka University Teachers' Association (Duta), said the book is a real picture of the time, and the writer has narrated the things that are happening in the country.

He said there was no provision for the state of emergency in the constitution of 1972.

"State of emergency is not at all desirable in a democratic country, and if the emergency period is prolonged, it doesn't remain as emergency anymore," he said, alleging, "The state of emergency is being misused in the country."

Prof Arefin said emergency is one of the impediments to reforms and it has become impossible for political parties to bring reforms in their parties due to emergency.

"We are moving backwards due to the activities of the then BNP-led four-party alliance government, caretaker government headed by President Iajuddin Ahmed, and the present caretaker government," he said.

A new type of autocracy has



(From left) Writer Abdul Latif Siddique, Prof Anwar Hossain, Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique and Prof Muntasir Mamun hold the copies of a book titled "Dr Fakhruddin: Please Balte Din" at a publication ceremony at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

started in the country, but we want democracy and for this we should be allowed to speak," he added.

Prof Anwar Hossain, general secretary of Duta, said the writer in his book has showed the interference of the armed forces in the country's politics and governance.

"In a word, an intelligence agency is now ruling the country, but we did not liberate our country to be ruled by this agency," he added.

Prof Anwar said the country is now on the verge of destruction and there is no alternative to wage movement.

Presiding over the ceremony,

noted historian Prof Muntasir Mamun said the writer has written what the people except the 'approved politician' wanted to say.

It is now clear who is the agent of whom and who is playing for whom, he added.

Prof Muntasir said the country is reeling under various crises which are deepening day by day.

"We cannot let the country plunge into darkness as we achieved independence by sacrificing thousands of lives," he added.

Author Latif Siddique said political parties are responsible for present crises as they failed to meet people's hopes and aspirations.

DU students damage three buses

DU CORRESPONDENT

Residential students of two dormitories of Dhaka University damaged three passenger buses near

DU dev studies deptt admission test May 9

DU CORRESPONDENT

The admission test for Master of Development Studies at Dhaka University (DU) under academic year 2008-09 will be held at 10:00am on May 9, says a press release.

The examination will be held at room no. 5002, 5014, 5020, 5030 and 4001 of Arts Building of the university.

Bangabazar in the city last night after a bus helper pushed a student out of a bus while he was getting down near his hall.

Students of Ekushey Hall and Fazlul Haq Hall went on the rampage at around 10:30pm after the student identified as Liton, a resident student of Ekushey Hall, suffered injuries in his hand.

The agitated students also forced a driver of one of the damaged buses to drive his bus to Ekushey hall premises.

Following the incident vehicular movement on the road from High Court Crossing to Bangabazar remained suspended for four hours.

Later, Ekushey Hall provost, police and leaders of bus owners association resolved the problem at a meeting.

UK hopes for polls without emergency

FROM PAGE 1
is not possible, emergency should be lifted to the maximum extent as soon as possible.

He made the observations while talking to reporters after separate meetings with Awami League (AL) acting president Zillur Rahman and BNP chairperson-appointed secretary general Khandaker Delwar Hossain.

During discussions with the UK envoy, Zillur said his party would not participate in any election without its president while Delwar said former prime ministers Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina would have to be freed without delay.

Anwar Choudhury said he hopes there would be a free, fair and credible election by this year-end and Bangladesh will make a step towards democracy by forming a meaningful parliament.

He also observed that the Election Commission (EC) and the Anti-Corruption Commission are working in unison towards an acceptable election according to the electoral roadmap.

He declined to comment when asked what if the two major political parties opt not to take part in the election without their heads.

He however said what is important is that there should be a level playing field so all political parties can participate in the election without having to suffer any discrimination or disadvantages. "If there is a level playing field, it is up to players to play."

The UK envoy said he is pleased to see 'good progress' being made in some critical areas like preparation of the voter list, which should be finished in July".

Everyone should strive to take the country towards a middle-income nation by 2020, he added.

Coming out of Zillur's Gulshan residence, Choudhury told reporters, "It was a farewell call. We've discussed many things-the cur-

rent state of affairs, concerns and hopes, and the forthcoming election."

The AL acting chief said he had talked about his party's demands at the 45-minute meeting that began at 11:00am.

"We've told him that first and foremost we want release of Sheikh Hasina. Our demands include withdrawal of the state of emergency, announcement of the election date and an end to price spiral of essentials."

Later, the Bangladesh-born British high commissioner went to meet Delwar at the latter's Nam flat.

He said people would not accept any stage-managed polls.

Besides, he said, the state of emergency must be lifted to restore the rights of political parties.

The government is filing cases to harass people while human rights violations have become commonplace," Delwar observed, adding that those detained are deprived of the treatment they are entitled to.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country during the period, Met Office said.

Highest temperature 38.0 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest 22.2 degrees Celsius at Sylhet.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:30pm today and rises at 5:20am tomorrow.

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

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius	Humidity in percentage	Morning	Evening
Max	Min			
Dhaka	35.0	25.4	64	63
Chittagong	31.4	22.5	73	78
Rajshahi	38.0	24.8	60	50
Khulna	36.5	24.7	72	58
Barisal	34.5	25.8	78	78
Sylhet	31.9	23.7	74	62
Cox's Bazar	30.7	24.5	53	75

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at a few places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Khulna and Barisal divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm.

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