

'Establishing non-communal society main challenge'

UNB, Dhaka

Finance Minister AMA Muhith yesterday said establishing a non-communal, prosperous and rights-based social structure is the main challenge before the country.

"This is also the goal of the spirit of the language movement," he said while addressing a two-day conference of language veterans at the Shilpakala Academy in the city.

Muhith inaugurated the conference where some 52 language veterans are participating. The conference is being organised by Ekushey Chetona Parishad.

He said the language movement of 1952 is the symbol of Bangalee national identity, adding that the language movement was the initial stage of the War of Liberation.

Muhith said the language movement, which took place to establish a rights-based society, could not materialise fully.

The language veterans, including Abdul Matin, recalled their memories of the language movement on the occasion. They also observed one minute's silence in memory of the language martyrs.

Accountability of political parties stressed

UNB, Dhaka

Academics and intellectuals at a roundtable yesterday stressed the need for ensuring accountability of political parties to establish rule of law and strengthen democracy in the country.

They observed political parties do not show any responsibility for the people for establishing rule of law, rather the parties work only for getting political gains, ignoring interests of the common people.

Sammilita Peshajibi Parishad organised the roundtable on 'Democracy and rule of law' at the National Press Club in the morning.

Former chief election commissioner Justice M Abdur Rouf, Supreme Court Bar Association President Advocate Khandakar Mahbub Hossain, eminent journalist Ataus Samad and former Dhaka University pro-vice chancellor AFM Yusuf Haider spoke at the roundtable with Dean of Arts Faculty of Dhaka University Prof Sadrul Amin in the chair.

Justice Rouf said the existing political parties have been destroying democracy in the name of democracy and if this trend continues, the rule of law will gradually be disappeared.

He said the principal objective of democracy is to build a common trust among the political parties, but, parties here do not trust each other.

Khandakar Mahbub said present government has released some 26,000 'criminals' by administrative order and rule of law can not be established such way.

He stressed the need for changing the mindset of the people for ensuring the rule of law. "If we can not change our mindset, we will not be able to ensure democracy," he added.

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Garment workers stage a demonstration in the city yesterday reiterating their demand for Tk 5,000 as minimum wage. Garments Sramik Trade Union organised the event.

Fundamental state principles to return

Law minister tells puja committee conference

UNB, Dhaka

Law Minister Barrister Shafique Ahmed yesterday said fundamental principles of the state as envisaged in the constitution would return with the Supreme Court verdict that scrapped the Fifth Amendment as illegal.

"People were inspired to join the War of Liberation to establish a non-communal society and secularism was the main pillar of the four state principles," he said at the biennial conference of Mahanagar Sarbojonin Puja Committee on Dhakeswari Jatiya Mandir premises.

Recalling the post-75 episode, he said Khandaker Mushtaque Ahmed who was then commerce minister promulgated martial law on August 20 in 1975 without showing any reason and became the president.

Afterwards the then Chief Justice Sayem breaching his oath became the chief martial law administrator and president. Later on Ziaur Rahman removed him and became the chief martial law administrator and president.

He said these regimes changed the constitution through martial law ordinances and erased the spirit and ideals of the War of Liberation.

The law minister said BNP coming to power in 1979 ratified all actions from August 15, 1975 to April 9, 1979 through the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution.

He said scrapping of the Fifth Amendment by the Supreme Court means all fundamental state principles before the amendment will be restored as it was.

Barrister Shafique assured that the government would consider formation of the Hindu Foundation for welfare of the Hindus, amendment to Vested Property Act and implementation of the judgment that scrapped Enemy Property Act.

Awami League leader Suranjit Sengupta MP inaugurated the conference.

Prof Dr Lalit Mohan Nath, Taposh Kumar Pal, Biresh Chandra Saha and Babul Devnath spoke at the conference with Mahanagar Puja Committee President Kajol Devnath in the chair.

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