Change not possible

Says Dr Kamal

UNB, Dhaka

It is not possible to bring about qualitative change in the country with the promoters of unhealthy politics, said Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday.

"The government came to power with the 'Charter of Change' and build Digital Bangladesh. But, the common people have been suffering due to the skyrocketing prices of essentials and power and fuel price hike," he told a meeting of the party central committee at its office.

About the 'crippled' share market, he said a syndicate plundered the money from the market, forcing a number of small investors to commit suicide.

Dr Kamal urged all to forge a national unity against the unhealthy politics of the two major parties to protect the country.

EC FORMATION

BNP won't accept search committee

Says Moudud

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Accusing the government of staging a drama over Election Commission's (EC) formation, BNP standing committee member Moudud Ahmed yesterday said BNP will not accept the EC formed on the advice of the president's search com-

"The search committee is illegal and unconstitutional. The government will form an Election Commission in a couple of days following the advice of the search committee. They are staging a drama over the commission," he

Moudud was addressing a human chain organised by Swadhinata Forum before Jatiya Press Club in the city.

The programme was organised protesting violation of human rights and killing of Bangladeshis along the border by Indian Border Security Force and demanding withdrawal of "false" cases against BNP chief Khaleda Zia and her elder son Tarique Rahman.

Moudud, also a former law minister, categorically said BNP's position regarding the search committee and EC is clear. "It does not matter who is appointed to the Election Commission. BNP will not participate in the election if it is held under a partisan government."

President Zillur Rahman formed a search committee on January 22, following a series of dialogues with political parties, including BNP, which have representation in parlia-

ment, to propose names for new election commissioners. But BNP had said they were not bothered with the move as they think restoration of the caretaker government system should get priority as an election under a political govern-

The caretaker government system was scrapped from the constitution last year through the 15th amendment.

ment will not be free and fair.

Meanwhile, Opposition Chief Whip Zainul Abdin Farroque asked the government to move a bill in the current parliamentary session to restore the constitutional provision of the non-party caretaker government.

He was addressing a discussion organised by Center for Democracy and Peace Studies at Dhaka Reporters Unity.



The police check post mounted right on the footpath beside the city's airport road leaves no room for pedestrians to pass. The photo was taken near the Balaka office yesterday. PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

RAIL TRACKS FROM KAMALAPUR TO TONGI

Construction starts this week

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government this week will start construction of two more rail tracks (third and fourth) between Kamalapur railway station and Tongi junction to facilitate passengers with faster and frequent train service.

The project, expected to end by the next one and half years, will be implemented with supports from India, China, Japan and Korea, Railways Minister Suranjit Sengupta said yesterday.

"Initial activities of the project will be launched this week. Once the new tracks are set up, speed of the trains will be increased.

"We have a plan to operate shuttle and

commuter trains every 10 minutes on this route," Suranjit told reporters. The minister was visiting the spots which were recently freed from illegal occupants

alongside the rail tracks from Kamalapur Railway Station to Malibagh rail gate. Bangladesh Railway Director General Abu Taher said 10 more broad-gauge engines would be included in railway by the next 18 months. The new engines will run in

those new tracks. Meanwhile, the minister strictly directed Kamalapur to Tongi.

the officials concerned to evict all the illegal structures immediately to free the railway lands from encroachment. "The illegal occupants, in no way, should be staying on the railway's land," he said.

While visiting different spots, some unlawful occupants appeared before the minister with the demand to reconsider the decision of evicting them.

But the minister urged them to leave the lands voluntarily for the greater interest of people and development of the railway

Railway authorities on January 18 launched a fortnight-long drive to free the lands for the construction of the new rail tracks. BR has already issued notices to the inhabitants of around 80 buildings located from Banani to Mohakhali to remove the illegal structures immediately.

According to Bangladesh Railway's Dhaka divisional estate office, around 900 acres out of 17,600 acres land is currently occupied illegally in Dhaka division -- especially alongside the rail tracks from

Call to save Sundarbans

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a book launch yesterday stressed the need for collective efforts to protect the world's largest mangrove forest, the Sundarbans, and its biodiversity and blamed ignorance, unawareness, and carelessness of people for the destruction of the forest. Enayetullah Khan, chief editor of United News

Bangladesh (UNB), a news agency, who authored the book, "The Bangladesh Sundarbans", said very few efforts have been taken to save the Sundarbans. He stressed collective efforts to this effect.

Also founder chairman of Wildlife Trust Bangladesh (WTB), Khan said the WTB

has taken up a four-year Book on the countrywide campaign to Sundarbans raise awareness among the communities of the launched Sundarbans. The programme will kick

off on February 17 from Khulna University. Initially the WTB will campaign at 29 unions near the forest, with the slogan "Sundarbans is like our mother".

Expressing his gratitude to the persons who helped him in various ways to write the book, he said the book will represent the country's heritage abroad. Gowher Rizvi, foreign affairs adviser to the prime min-

ister, officially unveiled the book at the launching cere-

mony at the city's Cosmos Centre yesterday.

Vendor hurt as brick falls on him

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

fered serious head injuries after a brick fell on him from a seven-storied underconstruction building at DOHS of Mirpur-12 in the city yesterday. Doctors at Dhaka Medical

An ice-cream vendor suf-

College Hospital said the condition of the injured Alamgir Hossain, 13, and son of rickshawpuller Nazrul Islam of Kalapani in Mirpur, is critical. Alamgir's brother Md

Alhaj, who was with him during the incident, said they did not hawk ice-cream that day and decided to spend the weekend roaming around Mirpur.

"We were walking on a street in DOHS and suddenly the brick from somewhere up in the building fell on Alamgir's head. He immediately lost consciousness and started bleeding from the head," said Alhaj. Two workers of the build-

ing, being constructed by "Homes 71 Development Company", helped to take Alamgir to the hospital, he added. One of the workers,

Mohammad Khairul, said, "The brick might have fallen from the third floor where a worker was sweeping the floor."

Police are investigating whether the construction site had adequate safety measures, said Officer-in-Charge of Pallabi Police Station Shahabuddin Khalifa, adding that none from the victim's side filed any complaint.

ALCWC meet today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League Central Working Committee (ALCWC) sits today to discuss country's latest socioeconomical and political situation.

The meeting of the ruling party's highest decisionmaking body will be held at 6:00pm at the Gono Bhaban residence of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina who is also

the president of AL. AL General Secretary Syed Ashraful Islam has urged all the ALCWC members to attend the meeting in time to be chaired by the

party president.

